EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL ACCEPTANCE OF CROSS-COUNTRY INSOLES IN FRANCE

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*THIS PAPER IS DONE AS A PART OF THE UNDERGRADUATE AT BI NORWEGIAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT. THIS DOES NOT ENTAIL THAT BI NORWEGIAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT HAS CLEARED THE METHODS APPLIED, T
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The bachelor thesis is written as a conclusive part of the Bachelor in international marketing at BI Norwegian Business School. It is the result of continuous work through the academic year 2013/2014 at Grenoble Graduate School of Business and for the Norwegian company Rottefella AS.

We would like to thank Torstein Myklebostad at Rottefella AS for his commitment and support throughout the process. With his guidance we managed to develop a research question that was relevant for the company, and thus felt meaningful for us to work with. We are highly thankful for the guidance we received from our supervisors, Pierre Hermant and Carolina Werle. By giving us constructive insight and necessary tools they have been of invaluable support.

A special thanks goes to all those who have participated in the research, both as respondents and as valuable helpers; teaching us how to ski, driving us and connecting us to their network. Without them, this experience would not have been complete. Finally, we place a great thanks to our friends and family for all their cheering, and Erik for saving the day whenever we faced technical challenges.

When creating the thesis the level of autonomy made us devoted and the learning curve have been steep. We are grateful for the opportunity of completing our education in Grenoble and the new knowledge we have attained through the academic environment and new international friends.

Thank you for all support and guidance.

Grenoble 10.06.2014

Ulrikke Frøshaug Ingunn Rode Grorud Emilie Hilsen
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rottefella AS launched an insole line specialized for cross-country skiing to the Scandinavian market in November 2013. The research question for this thesis was developed in cooperation with Rottefella and is stated as “Is there a potential market for cross-country insoles in France?” All methods and theories applied, we conclude that France is a strategic key market to enter. The company should further launch the insoles through their existing distributor, Rossignol.

The exploratory and descriptive studies uncovered a positive attitude towards cross-country skiing in France among the population living close to the Alps. The study further exposed two categories of users, driven by mainly utilitarian and hedonic motivation. The consumers that proved to be most utilitarian driven had a higher willingness to pay, while those driven by hedonic goals were the most sensitive towards the new insoles. Moreover, we found that the two forms for motivation are not mutually exclusive. Most of the respondents are driven by a combination of the two. In general, the population of our study is positive towards the insoles.

While product adaptation is not necessary for successful introduction to France, promotional adaption needs to be made in order to suit the French target market. When developing their promotional strategy, Rottefella should implement a combination of experiential and informative communication.
# EXPLANATION OF CONCEPTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Concept</strong></th>
<th><strong>Definition</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumers</td>
<td>Refer to the B2C market and the final user of the insoles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers</td>
<td>Refer to customers on the B2B market, such as retailers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customization</td>
<td>When an insole producer creates or alters their products in order to fit individual specifications and needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insoles</td>
<td>An extra strip of material to put inside a shoe for comfort or protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic ski</td>
<td>Unless stated otherwise, the term is used as a synonym for cross-country skiing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>A collective term for various forms of agreements, including agent and distributor relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance enhancing Insoles</td>
<td>Insoles specialized for cross-country skiing, both classic and skating. Gives advantages such as: Better balance, torsional stiffness, optimal position of the foot and more muscular power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product concept</td>
<td>Includes the three forms of insoles specialized for cross-country skiing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavian market</td>
<td>Norway, Sweden and Denmark. However, when the term is used in context with Rottefella’s cross-country insoles, the Scandinavian market refers to only Norway and Sweden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialization</td>
<td>When a company focuses their production of a limited range of products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardization</td>
<td>When an insole producer creates an insole or a line of insoles without making individual alterations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background for research

When writing this bachelor thesis we had to choose either a Norwegian company considering expanding their business to France, or vice versa. This thesis has been written in collaboration with the Norwegian company Rottefella AS (hereafter referred to as Rottefella).

Rottefella is a Norwegian niche company operating in both the business-to-business and the business-to-consumer markets (hereafter referred to as B2B and B2C). They specialize in ski bindings for telemark and Nordic ski, which they are distributing to the French market through Rossignol. In the last quarter of 2013 they launched a new line of performance enhancing insoles for cross-country skiers in the Scandinavian market. We will in this paper analyze whether or not the company should launch the same insoles to the French market and if so, which entry strategy they should apply.

The thesis is based on thorough research and analysis of the French cross-country and insole market. Due to lack of financial data from both markets, this thesis does not rely on a financial analysis. Information regarding the company’s internal factors has been provided through personal meetings, Skype calls and emails from Rottefella.

1.2 Project presentation

1.2.1 Rottefella

Inventor and skier Bror With established Rottefella in 1927. The adventure started when he broke his ski binding before a race, and decided to use a rattrap instead, which now have became the hallmark of the company. Today, the Norwegian company is one of the world’s leading producers of ski bindings for telemark and
Nordic ski. Their mission statement is *Powered by you, technology by us*, which express their focus on technology and design. Rottefella currently has 75 employees and a net profit of 24.03 million NOK in 2012; a decline from 2011’s 37.59 million NOK (Proff.no, 2014). They do not have any physical stores and distribute their products through authorized dealers. Lately, Rottefella has been embracing a new brand strategy and repositioning campaign, emphasizing their Norwegian heritage. Furthermore, they have moved from being an OEM-manufacturer for the French brand, Rossignol to now having their brand visible on Rossignol skis as a co-branding initiative.

1.2.2 Concept presentation

![Image of Rottefella's new product line](image)

*Figure 1. Rottefella's new product line*

Rottefella’s new product line consists of three types of insoles that are specialized for cross-country skiing, namely Xcelerator racing classic, Xcelerator racing skate and a touring insole. All the insoles will optimize skiing performance and the power transmission from skier to snow. The low heel position contributes to better balance and the unique side support prevents fatigue. The insoles fit into all types of cross-country ski boots, including boots from competitive brands. The antibacterial breathable foam efficiently transports moisture away from the skin, while the ergonomically designed PowerPlate provides stability and power transmission. Per May 31st 2014 they have sold 20,000 insoles and the products
has received positive response according to Torstein Myklebostad, marketing manager at Rottefella.

![Figure 2. Technical description of the Xcelerator insole](image)

### 1.3 Introducing the French ski market

The Alps\(^1\) has one of the largest densities of ski resorts in the world. Moreover, the French Alps has an increasing number of domestic and international tourists visiting these resorts every year, with 57.9 million skiers visiting in the 2012/2013 season (Vanat, 2014). However, during the past few years, it has been estimated that the French ski industry has lost between 300,000 to 400,000 national skiers (Vanat, 2013), which indicates that tourists visit the resorts for leisure activities more than skiing activities\(^2\) (see appendix 1, 2 and 3).

French organizations such as L’Union Nationale des Centres Sportifs de Plein Air (UCPA) is creating incentives to raise the French population’s activity level and to make Nordic activities more attractive. They arrange a variety of programs to teach the participants cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and alpine skiing, amongst others. Every winter 300 persons are participating in these activities (Atout France, 2012).

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\(^1\) The Alps include Austria, France, Italy and Switzerland

\(^2\) Such as alpine, snowboarding, snow shoeing and cross-country-skiing
1.4 Project definition and goal

In collaboration with Rottefella, we have identified and developed our research question, which is defined as followed:

“If there a potential market for cross-country insoles in France?”

Our research objectives are defined as follows:
1. To define attitudes towards cross-country skiing in France.
2. To identify underlying motivation for cross-country skiing in France.
3. To identify consumer segments and their characteristics.
4. To identify differences in consumer behavior.
5. To identify the potential acceptance of cross-country insoles in the French marked.

The goal of this project is to develop an understanding of the French market, identify French attitudes towards cross-country skiing and the potential acceptance of Rottefella’s new insoles.

1.5 Limitations

The subject of this analysis is potentially wide and it is necessary to define the limitations of the project with regard to its scope, time and resources. We will focus on the most relevant theory and statistics linked to the case and primarily concentrate on the B2C market. The geographical scope of this report will be the Rhône-Alpes region in France, focusing on the main cross-country ski resorts and mountains in Isère. This is partly due to convenience and because the Rhône-Alpes region is known for its many outdoors sports facilities and high density of ski resorts. Due to constraints in time and resources, only the most applicable and relevant theory will be applied.
2.0 APPLIED THEORY

In this chapter, we review relevant literature connected to our topic. This will involve bringing up the theories that we are using in our study. We explore motivation- and consumer behavior theory to define relevant concepts in order to develop an understanding of the topic. This theoretical framework will provide consistency throughout the research and analysis.

2.1 Motivation theory

Fanatic consumers are important for the companies, as they are less price-sensitive and thus represent an important economic commitment. Their motivation can be defined as “the process that cause people to behave as they do” (Solomon et al., 1999, p. 93). It is important to understand whether the motivation is hedonic or utilitarian, meaning that a skier can ski for the pleasure of skiing, or from a utilitarian perspective, to achieve a goal. The desired end-state is the main goal and may generate another buying or behavioral pattern. It further relates to how the communication should be structured. The satisfaction of utilitarian needs may cause the consumer to buy a product to achieve better performance, which generates an increased concern about the tangible aspects of the product, such as the material. In contrast, hedonic motivation means that the consumer might buy for more subjective reasons such as increased self-confidence. However, consumers might be motivated by a combination of both.

Ratneshwar et al., (2003), have analyzed the psychological mechanisms behind consumption in their book *The Why of Consumption*. According to their framework there are six levels of goals ranging from higher level to lower level (see figure 3 below). Higher level goals are considered more abstract and more inclusive (Ratneshwar et al., 2003).
Moreover, the authors define goal determination as consisting of two psychological forces, namely goal alignment and goal adaptation (Ratneshwar et al., 2003). At a higher level a skier might want to be healthy and active, and their life project could be to achieve a certain time at a yearly race. Finally, current consumption intentions are immediate goal fulfillments while feature preferences refer to specific product attributes such as price and brand.

Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Leci (2008) define vitality as energy that can be harnessed or regulated by actions. The research on vitality has been developed through several models, including Thayer’s (1996, 2001) model of energy (bio psychosocial), the ego-depletion model and the self-determination theory model of vitality (Ryan & Leci, 2008). These are relevant to further understand the underlying motivation for exercising or eating healthy, or for the recruitment to the cross-country sport. According to Thayer (1996,2001), calm energy is similar to vitality and involves the feeling of being energetic and in control (Thayer, 1996, 2001, cited in Ryan & Deci, 2008 p. 703) This state can be stimulated by exercising or eating, implicating the importance of a holistic approach to energy. From another perspective, the ego depletion model considers energy like a muscle in which self-regulatory behavior drains the vitality by extraction (Ryan & Leci, 2008). Considering energy as a limited resource, the model states that all behavior involving self-controlling actions results in a state called ego-depletion. The muscle requires a supply of positive energy to recharge, which, similar to the bio
psychosocial models, can be derived from a healthy lifestyle. A third concept of motivation is the self-determination theory model of vitality. The model claims that vitality is a consequence of intrinsically motivated physical activities (Fredric & Ryan 1993, cited in Ryan & Deci 2008 p. 707). This indicates that those who undertake activities to achieve a utilitarian or external goal might find the experience less rejuvenating and more draining. However, those who are hedonic motivated are likely to enjoy the activity as a way to recharge the energy level and by this receive positive side effects, such as reduced stress level.

Sheldon et al. (1996) claims that there are three basic human needs; autonomy, competence and relatedness. Fulfillment of these maintains or increases vitality. This was confirmed in an experimental study where changes in vitality pre to post-play where measured when the respondent played video games. The results indicated that those who experienced competence satisfaction maintained their vitality (Sheldon et al., 1996, cited in Ryan & Deci, 2008 p. 711). We can assume that exercising is an activity that may increase energy level. However, if the consumer experience incompetence, the activity is likely to feel draining and thus affect the ability to perform. Having a negative experience may therefore block the willingness to continue and in this way effect future recruitment. Vitality is linked to the feeling of rejuvenating, high level of autonomy and a positive feeling of competence. This can be further applied to understand the French cross-country ski market, the underlying motivation for skiing and the difference between utilitarian and hedonic goals.

2.2 Consumer behavior theory

Hedonic motivation is considered essential for understanding consumer behavior, according to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982). They emphasize the importance of emotional and irrational patterns in buying behavior. This has consequences for the communication of benefits of goods and services with mainly utilitarian functions. To trigger buying behavior amongst the experiential consumers, intangible values must be communicated. The consumer is not always a problem solver, but a pleasure seeker. Thus, the instantaneous pleasure and fun is a key indicator of a successful purchase – not the actual performance of the product.
This theory requires us to take a broader approach to our market research, as often applied segmentation variables such as demographics and socioeconomic status may be too narrowly scoped. An alternative approach is to consider needs for sensation seeking and creativity to identify individual differences (Zuckerman 1979, Raju 1980, cited from Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982 p. 136). The first need explains behavior from the tendency towards being fashion conscious, such as seeking new and trendy ski equipment or to participate in competitions. The latter need is connected to novelty seeking and can be connected to the desire of trying new things. Finally, Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) divide the consequences of consumer choice into the information processing perspective and the experiential perspective. From an information processing point of view (hereafter referred to as informative), the economic value is a determinant on the perceived benefit of the product and is linked to the consumers post purchase evaluation process.
3.0 EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

3.1 The French cross-country market

According to Atout France’s annual report of Les Activités Nordiques 2010/2011, the practice of cross-country skiing in France is continuing to decrease in popularity. In contrast to alpine and snowboard, Nordic activities are no longer considered as a driver for tourist attractions. In fact, most large ski resorts are offering cross-country only to satisfy their customers’ need for variation, although the cross-country market is not generating profits (Atout France, 2011). Cross-country resorts generated a total turnover of 9 million EUR in 2012, whereas Jura and Alpes du Nord increased their revenue by 19 and 8 percent. However, the total turnover is negative, and the number of skiing days per visitors is decreasing.

The 2010/2011 season experienced an increase in skiers buying seasonal cards for cross-country skiing. This could be due to early snow, but also a sign of a renewed interest from people wanting to practice cross-country skiing on a regular basis throughout the winter season. Haute-Savoie, Savoie and Isère are the top three departments to enjoy cross-country skiing, according to Atout France (2012). The 2012 national average price for a cross-country day pass is 6.97 EUR, an increase from 6.79 EUR in 2011. The prices range from four to ten EUR, whereas the Pyrénées has the highest average price (8.20 EUR) and Vosges the lowest (5.90 EUR).

The Federation of Rhône-Alps Nordique started in 2011/2012 a repositioning campaign called So Nordic! Their aim was to create a new image of winter activities as fun and accessible. According to La Gazette Officielle du Tourisme (2012, p. 6), they have invested 700.000 EUR to attract a new segment of young adults between 25 to 35 years. The Nordic associations are also creating incentives to recruit children to cross-country and make them discover and appreciate the sport from an early age. The Rhône-Alpes area has 83 developed resorts with cross-country slopes to attract both tourists and inhabitants.
Popular races such as *La Transjurassienne* and *La Foulée Blanche* have experienced a 16 percent increase of participants between 2011 and 2012. The number of skiers participating in more than one race per season has also increased. 22 percent of the skiers favor skating and are exercising regularly during ¾ of the season (Atout France, 2012). During *La Transjurassienne* 2012, there was a high proportion of young participants favoring skating, while those who favored classic skiing had a much more homogenous population in terms of age. During the season 2011/2012, one quarter of the most popular cross-country ski resorts in France had an average of less than 25 skiers visiting each day. The national average for all cross-country resorts was 128 skiers per day.

3.1.2 Market potential

Norway has one of the largest cross-country markets in Europe (Dahl, n.d.). It is difficult to compare the French and Norwegian cross-country markets because there is no accurate data available. However, for planning purposes, we will here estimate the potential market share based on numbers of skis sold in a small sized sports chain in France. An anonymous source from this chain has provided information that they sold 1206 cross-country skis (both for classic and skating) in the 2013/2014 season. Since the insoles are new and unknown in the market, we assume that a maximum of 10 percent of cross-country skiers are willing to buy

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3 Alpes du Nord, Alpes du Sud, Jura, Pyrénées and Vosges
the insole the first year. The average sales price of the touring, racing classic and racing skating insoles is 58 EUR. Estimated market potential the first year of introduction is therefore \( N \times MS \times P = MP \) (Bullen & Mundy, n.d.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of consumers (N)</th>
<th>Expected market share (MS)</th>
<th>Average selling price (P)</th>
<th>Estimated market potential (MP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1206</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>58€</td>
<td>6.995€</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Estimated market potential

Note that these numbers are based on one sports chain that has approximately 20 stores throughout France. If the insoles are introduced to additional sports retailers, the estimated market potential will increase. However, due to limitations mentioned in section 1.5, we do not have resources to estimate market potential of other sports chains in France.

3.2 PESTEL-analysis

To further understand the French market we conducted a PESTEL-analysis to provide an overview of important factors at a macro level.

3.2.1 Political

France is a permanent member of NATO, the G-8, the G-20, the United Nations Security Council, the EU and other global organizations. The country is developed and has a stable political environment (Central Intelligence Agency, 2014). As a member of the European Union, the principle of free flow of capital, humans, goods and services applies. This affects the international trade environment. Norway is not a European Union member, but enjoys the same trade rights through the EEA-EFTA agreement (EFTA, 2014).
3.2.2 Economical

According to IHS Global Insights Country Intelligence report (2014), the French economy is likely to stay stagnated during 2014. This can be explained by factors such as difficult labor market conditions and spending cuts in the drafted budget. Household consumption may also react to the increase of the value added tax, from 19.6 to 20.0 percent. France is part of the Monetary Union and the Euro is the worlds second most traded currency in the world (European Commission, 2013). After a peak in December 2013, the Euro is now gradually decreasing in value. This may affect the country’s economy by making the price of imported goods outside the euro zone more expensive.

3.2.3 Social

France is the third-most populous country in Europe, with a population of 66,616,416 (Insee, 2014). According to the French National Institute of Statistics and Economics (2013), 24.6 percent of the inhabitants are under 20 years, 51.2 percent is from 20 to 59 years and 9.1 percent are over 75 years old (2014). The population growth rate was estimated to be 0.47 percent in 2013, and the average life expectancy is 81.56 years. Health expenditures were 11.6 percent of GDP in 2011. The unemployment rate is rising, from 9.8 percent in 2012 to 10.5 percent in 2013, the highest in over 14 years (IHS Global Insight, 2014). The difficult labor market conditions are expected to keep private consumption under pressure (IHS Global Insight, 2014). The labor unions also fail to enhance the general wage levels, due to lack of job opportunities. In addition, the draft budget for 2014 focuses on spending cuts and increasing taxes on households. By increasing taxes, the French government risks further damage to the fragile economic growth, as private consumption is a main driver of economic growth. State-subsidized jobs are a measure from the French government that can be expected to generate a positive boost in the economy.

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5 Defined as the activities performed by institutions or individuals to promote, restore or maintain health
3.2.4 Technological

France is an innovation driven economy with an excellent technological and scientific environment. According to the global competitiveness report of 2013/2014, France scores 4.7 out of 7 points in innovation, 5.7 in technological readiness and is ranked as having the 4th best infrastructure\(^6\) in the world (World Economic Forum, 2013). Possessing an advanced industrial sector, France is a major exporter of motor vehicles and other engineered goods. Other competitive export categories are electronic products, chemicals, iron, steel, textiles, apparel, food and beverages (Utenriksdepartementet, 2014).

3.2.5 Environmental

The general climate in France consists of cool winters and mild summers. However, climate change is affecting ski resorts in Rhône-Alpes, where lack of snow is contributing to fewer opening days (Atout France, 2010). This is particularly crucial for the French cross-country industry because these resorts are located on a lower altitude than alpine resorts, which are areas more vulnerable to lack of snow.

3.2.6 Legal

The legal system in France consists of civil law and has two branches; *Droit Public* and *Droit Privé*, public and private law. *Loi Montagne* is a law adopted in 1985 (Convention Alpine), particularly dedicated to the development and protection of mountainous areas in France. It was due to this law that cross-country skiers all over France were imposed to pay for using slopes located in the mountains. Since 1/5th of French territory consists of mountains, this law has been important in the development of tourist areas without compromising the environment.

\[^6\] Here; transport, energy and communications
3.3 Porter’s five forces

Michael Porter’s model is a tool used to define the competitiveness of a company (Keegan & Green, 2011). If the five forces are high, the industry is not considered attractive to compete in (Johnson et al., 2008). This analysis is scoped to include sports insoles in the French market.

3.3.1 The threat of entry: LOW

France is a part of the European Union, which gives an easier entrance for companies within this union. There is no need for high capital investments and access to distribution channels are easy for new entrants. If a company holds production facilities, the right technology and resources, there is less need for a high level of industry experience. Patents and other intellectual property rights characterize the insole industry, which makes the barriers to entry higher. A quick search for semelle\(^7\) at the European Patent Office proved that there are 13,079 patent applications for insoles in France (European Patent Office, 2014). However, once patents are acquired, it is easy for companies to introduce these types of products on the market, and the barriers to enter are low.

3.3.2 The threat of substitutes: MEDIUM

Substitutes can be distinguished into three main categories; product for product substitution, substitution of need and generic substitution. Product for product substitution for insoles is socks. For instance, a major brand in this category is Swiftwick who offer different types of sports socks that will enhance performance, comfort and support (Swiftwick, 2013). We scope substitution of needs into two categories; needs related to sport and needs related to health. Consumer unawareness can contribute to consumers choosing a health product when they actually need a product related to sport, or vice versa. Therefore, the threat of substitutes is medium.

\(^7\) Semelle: The French word for insoles
3.3.3 The power of suppliers: MEDIUM

The insole industry is characterized by a high concentration of suppliers, particularly in Asia. Furthermore, powerful multinational companies gain bargaining power due to the amount of suppliers available. Switching costs are low and there is no dominance of powerful supplier brands. Both of these aspects are reducing supplier power. The possibility for integration forward by the supplier will increase the supplier power if they choose to sell directly to retailers instead of going through distributors. However, as the situation is today, the suppliers’ bargaining power is low.

3.3.4 The bargaining power of buyers: HIGH

The buyers are divided into B2B customers and B2C customers, distinguishing between the retailers who are buying the insoles to sell to the final consumers and the power of the individual consumer who are buying the insole for private use.

In France, the sports market are colored by a few dominating sports-chains and multiple single retailers. Consequently, the power of the sports chain is high as they can use their size as a negotiating tool. Furthermore, they provide a variety of brands. This can decrease the amount of dedicated space allocated to each brand, or they can refuse to include a new brand in their product assortment. This will affect the conditions for price margins and quantity. Buyers may also pursue backward integration, to strengthen the retailer brand. We therefore consider the bargaining power as high in the B2B market. However, in the B2C market, the final consumer has a low level of power since they buy for private consumption and select from the alternatives made available. According to Runfola (2014), the B2C buyer is more emotional and less rational when buying. Consequently, the bargaining power of B2C buyers is low. Finally, we emphasize the B2B buyers when evaluating the bargaining power of buyers, and thus conclude that the bargaining power of buyers are high.
3.3.5 Competitive rivalry: HIGH

Competitive rivals are companies with similar products and service aimed at the same customer group. Even though the products are differentiated towards different usage situations and needs, the competition is high. As stated above, the barriers to entry are low, there are numerous competitors in the industry, and strong buyers make the industry more competitive (Wilkinson, 2013). The buyers are likely to be more oriented towards product specifications than the brand itself, which will decrease brand loyalty. As a result, the competitive rivalry in the insole industry is considered high.

3.4 Competitor analysis

Osarenkhoe (2010) defines competition as “a dynamic situation that occurs when several actors in a specific market struggle for scarce resources, and/or produce and market very similar products or services”. What makes the companies successful is their ability to create, invent and innovate. Health and healthcare seems to become more important for the consumer, and today they are becoming more aware of the quality of their shoes compared to before (Footwear Insights, 2013). The competitor analysis will be focused on insoles made for sports activities. However, it is important to acknowledge that competition can come from other producers of insoles, such as orthotic health soles and generic soles.

The companies within the insole industry tend to differentiate by either customization and/or specialization. An overview of the major companies draws a picture of a clearly American based industry (see appendix 5). They are specialized on insoles and footwear and have established an international network of suppliers and retailers. As a result, they are located worldwide and the majority of the companies are also engaged in e-commerce. Superfeet is an American company who provides a wide range of insoles categories, such as for winter sports and healthcare. They are known for their good quality and foot support and have a high level of online presence. The price of the products varies from 20-45
EUR (Superfeet, 2014). Another American competitor is Sole who in addition to insoles sells performance socks and footwear. Due to their molding system, their products are considered more personalized than Superfeet’s. Their insoles target the categories health and activity, and ranges from 22-44 EUR in terms of price (Sole, 2014). The competitor considered most similar to Rottefella is Sof Sole. The company is known for their range of athletic footwear accessories divided into the categories performance, functionality and comfort. Their main strategy in to become the “The Sole of Performance™” and they clearly communicate the technology behind their products. Their price range is between 15-30 EUR (Implus Corporation, 2013). Finally, an important competitor is the French brand Sidas. They have their headquarter in Grenoble, which is a city known for its outdoors sports environment. They also focus on performance and technological aspects of the insoles (Sigma Sport, 2014).

Rottefella is not considered experts in the insoles marked. However, according to Kotler and Keller (2009), an attractive niche is where the customers have a distinct set of needs; they will pay a premium price to the firm that best satisfies them; the niche is fairly small but has size, profit and growth potential and is unlikely to attract many other competitors. Thus, Rottefella gains certain economics through specialization. In other words, niche marketers specialize in understanding their customer’s needs and what type of benefits they seek so thoroughly that their customers are willing to pay a premium price for their products. Rottefella is the only company who specialize in cross-country insoles. What distinguishes them from their competitors is that they target a new and unserved market. Furthermore, they resemble Sof Sole and Sidas with their kernel values, which include performance, technology and design. Before entering the market, one should be aware that the competitive rivalry is high and there is a low level of differentiation. Many of the competing companies share the same values of performance and technology and are within similar price range. If Rottefella wants to succeed when penetrating the French market, it is crucial that they focus all their communication efforts on their unique product concept, which is cross-country skiing.
3.4.1 Perceptual map

Rottefella’s imagined position in the French insole market is illustrated in the perceptual map above. The brands are compared through customization versus standardization, and if they are leisure/comfort focused or technology/performance focused. Since most of the competitive brands are in the sport segment, there is no surprise that most of them are on the performance/technology side of the perceptual map. This is also the case for Rottefella; the company is focusing on innovative technology and to create insoles that are performance oriented. The insoles they offer are standardized in the sense that the products cannot be customized to fit individual needs, except from the integrated memory foam in the sole. Online research of three sport chains\(^8\) in France shows their selection of insoles in a price range from 2-60 EUR.

\(^8\) Decathlon, Au Vieux Campeur and Go Sport
4.0 INTERNAL ANALYSIS

Rottefella’s company policy can be closely linked to a blue ocean strategy, which denote an environment where products are not yet well-defined, competitors are not structured and the market is relatively unknown (Kim and Mauborgne 2005, cited from Hollendsen 2007 p. 115). Rottefella is considered a niche company, which continuously seeks unserved and relatively unknown markets. They are relying on innovation and value creation to avoid head-to-head competition and to create a sustained, profitable growth.

4.1 The value chain

The value chain describes the categories of activities within an organization, which, together, create a product or service (Johnson et al., 2014, p. 83) and is a useful tool for managing a company’s knowledge and organizational capabilities.

4.1.1 Support activities

4.1.1.1 Firm infrastructure

Rottefella has a divisional organization structure, with 75 employees divided into five departments. Each department is autonomous when it comes to decision-making, and main production is in-house, with the exception of the insoles production in China. The company has an egalitarian business structure, where everyone is entitled to participate in meetings, planning and communication between different departments and its managers.

Figure 6. Rottefella's organizational structure
4.1.1.2 Human resource management
Rottefella’s HR function is managed within the economic department, and it is the financial manager that handles issues such as absence, dismissals and recruiting. The recruitment process differs from the type of position that needs to be filled. The company develops their employees through autonomy and a “learning-by-doing” approach. Monetary bonuses are the main type of reward. According to Rottefella’s marketing manager, their main challenge is that they lack enough human resources to expand internationally on their own. This makes the company highly dependent on partners when exploring new opportunities abroad.

4.1.1.3 Technology development
Technology development is one of the company’s main focus areas. At Rottefella, technologies are not developed through the traditional research and development process. Instead of calling it R&D, Rottefella calls it I&D; Innovation and Design. This implies both developing new product technologies and also that the company has their own engineers and industrial designers. Rottefella also collaborates with commercial agencies to rejuvenate their brand image through new visual design.

4.1.1.4 Procurement
Rottefella is an innovative company and is constantly working on analyzing market trends, finding the best suppliers, and to develop products of superior quality and design for a reasonable price. More specifically, for the bindings they purchase everything except the plastic, while the insole production is being subcontracted. They have approximately 12 suppliers divided between plastic, steel and packaging. Several suppliers reduce the risk of being too dependent on one supplier. The distributors are responsible for representing Rottefella at promotional events, such as stands, trade fairs and other international activities. Rottefella gain economies of scale by outsourcing their insoles production to China. This serves as an illustration of how important the procurement processes are for the company.
4.1.2 Primary activities

4.1.2.1 Inbound logistics
The production department is in charge of quality control, communication with the subcontractors and to make sure logistics are well functioned and timely. They have developed relationships with their partners in order to assure effective distribution channels and to gain access to the best technology within the industry. The insoles are transported from China in a container on a cargo ship (space for 20,000 insoles). This normally takes six to eight weeks, but if needed, the company has a buffer to be able to transport the goods faster by flight.

4.1.2.2 Operations
The company’s operations can be divided in two categories. For the bindings, machinery and production facilities are installed in-house (including 17 plastic molding machines). The company has control over the whole process, from assembling to transformation into the final product. For the insoles, the production is being outsourced. Before being shipped from China, the insoles are being quality controlled by external representatives. Once arrived in Norway, the products are being repackaged to match Rottefella’s standards and design.

4.1.2.3 Outbound logistics
Rottefella has a network of distributors in more than 20 countries. However, in Norway, Sweden and Russia, they deliver the products through direct export. As of today, the insoles are made available through traditional retail channels such as major sports chains and retailers specialized for cross-country skiing. While the bindings are usually sold as a package solution, the insoles stipulate new challenges. These products require a new approach to selling, whereas the existing distributors lack proper training, capacity and resources to follow up on the sales of insoles. This issue requires a new strategy, and Rottefella acknowledge the need for new solutions when introducing the insoles to new markets in the future. Finally, the e-commerce is minimal, involving only B2B customers at the moment.
4.1.2.4 Marketing and sales
Rottefella’s marketing and sales can be divided in two categories, domestic and international. In Norway, Rottefella is promoting their products themselves and create advertisements in collaboration with design companies. They work consistently with their branding strategy by promoting a fresh and appealing image for the consumers. Marketing is easier in their domestic market since they have a better perception of who their customers are. They sell directly to retailers and are not dependent on having a distributor for placing the products on the market. However, in international markets, Rottefella is collaborating with different distributors. The company provides promotional material and the partners are responsible for translations and local adaptations.

4.1.2.5 Service
Rottefella’s service policy is satisfied customers. All activities and services should enhance or maintain the value of their products. The company follows the principle of “customer is king”, and all reclamation is handled internally.
4.3 Analysis of strategic capabilities

In order to understand the strategic position of Rottefella, we will conduct a VRIO analysis of their value chain and strategic capabilities, based on our findings in the resource-based view (see appendix 8).

4.3.1 VRIO

4.3.1.1 Value
A valuable resource or competence is contributing to the company’s ability to exploit opportunities and neutralize threats, in order to react to risks and chances provided by the environment (1st Moover Consulting Group, 2010). Due to lack of differentiation in the insoles market, it is difficult to determine Rottefella’s long-term competitive advantage. However, the company’s level of specialization in cross-country and telemark bindings contributes to their valuable status as experts within the cross-country market. Their innovative technology, company history and brand recognition are contributing to neutralizing threats from competitors at the moment. This can change according to changes in the competitive environment and when launching the insoles outside Scandinavia.

4.3.1.2 Rarity
The low level of differentiation in the insole market makes it difficult to obtain long-term competitive advantages. However, compared to competitors, Rottefella has a unique and rare approach to technology development when embodying the term Innovation and Design. By combining this with their core competence in regards to the development of ski bindings and market know-how, Rottefella will have the opportunity to gain competitive advantage for their new product concept. The product concept is considered rare, and is contributing to obtain competitive advantage. There is no other insole on the market today with the same functions that is also specialized for cross-country skiing. However, it is important to also acknowledge common resources as well, since they create competitive parity and are contributing to the survival of the company.
4.3.1.3 Imitation
The unique historical conditions that led to Rottefella’s first development of ski bindings in the late 1920’s, gave them a first mover advantage. Their continuous strive for product development and innovation has enabled them to maintain their competitive edge ever since, and thus avoid the threat of imitation by always being ahead of competition. Rottefella’s high level of knowledge and existing agreements with some of the world’s leading ski brands are difficult for other competitors to imitate. Furthermore, the social complexity of the organization is vital for Rottefella’s capabilities, and factors like company culture and the firm’s reputation with customers are hard to imitate. Finally, imitation can be made difficult due to design patents, trademarks and other intellectual property rights. However, the product concept is easily copied and therefore not considered a long-term competitive advantage.

4.3.1.4 Organization
Rottefella’s divisional organizational structure facilitates innovation. The interdisciplinary cooperation and autonomy between industrial designers and engineers foster creativity, which leads to sustainable competitive advantage.
4.4 The BAKKA-model

The BAKKA-model is used to describe the factors that influence a company’s decisions in the different stages of the internationalization process. A company is dependent on internal dedication and support in order to succeed in the internationalization process (Solberg C., 2010, pp. 119-123).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Trial export</th>
<th>Extensive export</th>
<th>Intensive export</th>
<th>Multinational marketing</th>
<th>Global marketing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Export motive</td>
<td>Operative</td>
<td>Operative</td>
<td>Strategic/operative</td>
<td>Mostly strategic</td>
<td>Mostly strategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of market</td>
<td>Random, neighbor countries</td>
<td>Several markets</td>
<td>Market concentration</td>
<td>Market expansion</td>
<td>Consolidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market share</td>
<td>Invisible</td>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>Increasing</td>
<td>Large in specific markets</td>
<td>Large in key markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>“One man show” part time</td>
<td>“One man show” fulltime</td>
<td>Export division</td>
<td>International division</td>
<td>Global or transnational organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrance strategy</td>
<td>Distributor “Piggyback”</td>
<td>Distributor Agent</td>
<td>Agents Sales offices in main markets</td>
<td>Sales office Licensing Production</td>
<td>Sales office Production Alliances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing mix</td>
<td>Product modification Limited promotion Low price</td>
<td>Product modification Some promotion Low price</td>
<td>Cultural adaption Product commercial Medium price</td>
<td>Cultural adaption Profile development High price</td>
<td>Global products Global promotion and PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial results</td>
<td>Minimal or negative</td>
<td>Minimal or negative</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Mutual dependent on home market</td>
<td>Price leader Main source of income</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The BAKKA-model
As shown in table 2, Rottefella is mostly located in the intensive export phase, which is characterized by sales of national products but with minor adjustments abroad. For example, they have made adjustments in the Russian market in regards to their ski bindings, where the market demands simpler and cheaper products than in the Nordic markets. In the intensive export phase it is still representatives from the domestic organization that pursue the different markets, which also is the case for Rottefella.

Their export motive is both strategic and operative and the choice of market is in between market concentration and market expansion. The company is concentrated in the sense that they exist in every international cross-country market. Moreover, Rottefella is showing signs of market expansion by continuously developing their product range and utilize new technology. They consolidate their position in concentrated markets by finding new uses, new segments and additional products that are relevant for cross-country markets worldwide. Furthermore, Rottefella is internationally recognized as market leaders with their binding system. The organization’s internationalization process is structured as a “one man show” fulltime, where they do not yet have an export or international division. Rottefella uses a distributor or agent as an entry strategy and their marketing mix consists of some cultural adaptions, promotions of the products and medium to high price. According to numbers found on proff.no, Rottefella’s financial result in 2012 is considered to be positive (see appendix 7).

The main criticisms of the model is that it does not consider how different sectors needs to implement different internationalization strategies and that not all companies follow a step-by-step process when expanding abroad. The model does not value the need for external partners, a strategy that has been highly relevant for Rottefella.
5.0 SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis is a useful tool to gain an overall picture of an organization`s strategic position (Johnson et al, 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue ocean strategy</td>
<td>Weak international brand recognition in the B2C market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic, valuable partnerships</td>
<td>Highly dependent on distributors and sales personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong position in the domestic market</td>
<td>Insignificant e-commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert in their niche market</td>
<td>Lack resources to expand internationally on their own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter disciplinary cooperation between employees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7. SWOT-analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large density of cross-country resorts in France</td>
<td>Environmental changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased sales of seasonal cards</td>
<td>Lower marked demand in France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French skiers participating in more races</td>
<td>High competitive rivalry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational incentives</td>
<td>Low frequency of cross-country skiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic situation in France combined with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low prices for cross-country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1 Strengths

Rottefella implements a blue ocean strategy, which allows them to obtain market shares in new and unserved markets. They further gain a competitive edge by continuously focusing on innovation, design and knowledge about their niche market. This has lead to a position as experts in the domestic market, and is considered a basic foundation for further expansion. They also possess an important position within the B2B market, and their strategic cooperation with globally recognized brands are an acknowledgment of their quality products. The agreement with Rossignol, allows the brand name on the products, is an important step towards higher visibility towards the B2C market. Their organization is
egalitarian and allows interdisciplinary cooperation between the employees. This is considered a competitive strength since it promotes innovation, flexibility and the possibilities of quick adaption.

5.2 Weaknesses
Rottefella’s tradition of being an OEM-producer for brands such as Fischer, Madshus and Rossignol have weakened their position in the B2C markets. A second weakness is that the company lacks the necessary resources to establish an export department, even though they are present in more than 25 countries. Consequently, they do not have the organizational strength to enter new markets alone. This makes them highly dependent on their distributors and agents. Thus, their ability to control the communication and development of the brand is weak and must be considered when entering a market with a new product as it might lower the potential acceptance. Finally, compared to competitors in the insoles market, Rottefella’s e-commerce is considered a weakness as it only serves B2B customers. Further development could potentially allow a higher visibility to the consumers.

5.3 Opportunities
French organizations such as UCPA are creating incentives, both on a national and local level, to facilitate a higher activity level amongst the population. By offering free cross-country courses as well as other sport activities, they might spark the interest and the recruitment to the sport. France has a large density of cross-country resorts, and the Rhône-Alpes region alone have 83 resorts specialized for cross-country skiing. In this region, people are buying more seasonal cards compared to day cards, indicating that skiers want to practice cross-country more frequently. Finally, the interest for participating in cross-country ski races has increased. This may further indicate that the French cross-country market is becoming more performance oriented. The PESTEL-analysis revealed a stagnated economic situation in France, which could imply a possible opportunity in the cross-country market, as the prices for practicing cross-country is considerably lower than alpine. As a result, consumers that find alpine activities
too expensive might explore other cheaper alternatives, such as cross-country.

5.4 Threats

As described in the PESTEL-analysis, the environmental changes are a current threat. The main concern is the decreasingly lack of snow and higher temperatures. However, this varies from season to season and lies outside Rottefella’s control. A threat of more concern is the low frequency of skiers, with ¼ of ski resorts reporting less than 25 skiers per day. In combination with the estimated market potential from one sports chain, these two factors are a major threat for companies within the industry. It is therefore important to concentrate the company’s effort on specific geographical areas that has the largest market potential. Finally, a high competitive rivalry in the insole market, where French and American brands has the largest market share, is a potential threat for Rottefella. The competitive situation may negatively affect the visibility and potential acceptance of the insoles in France.
6.0 METHODOLOGY

The French culture is difficult to understand without being familiar with the context as a whole. Our tendency towards subjective reasoning is, according to the Theory of Social Constructivism, a result of our nature of perceiving the reality. Thus, we are constructing the reality we study by how we define and analyze (Gripsrud et al. 2011). Our research perspective is a combination of positivistic and social constructivist, and can be defined as pragmatic. This will further have consequences for our choice of methodology.

6.1 Research design and choice of design

According to Gripsrud et al. (2011), it is common to separate the research into three main groups of design when applying the pragmatic approach. First, exploratory design is especially suitable when one has little knowledge about the research field. The aim is to develop an overview and understanding of the topic. Second, the descriptive design is suitable when the researcher has a basic or fundamental understanding of the field. The purpose is to describe the situation and explain the factors that impact the research question. Finally, the causal research design seeks to explain the correlations between event (X) and event (Y) under certain conditions (Z). This involves conducting experiments and isolated research. Both our case study and its limitations will affect the choice of design, and we will conduct a combination of exploratory and descriptive design.

6.2 Exploratory design

6.2.1 Methods

According to Alan Wilson (2006 p. 33), the aim of exploratory design is "to develop initial ideas or insights and to provide direction for any further research needed". Primary and secondary data is the main sources used to develop a comprehensive insight about a subject. Naresh K. Malhotra (2010, p. 132) defines
primary data as data that "are originated by a researcher for the specific purpose of addressing the problem at hand" and secondary data is defined as "data that have already been collected for purposes other than the problem at hand. These data can be located quickly and inexpensively" and is often a natural place to start.

6.2.2 Choice of methods

At the beginning of an exploratory study, a lot of information can be gathered by using observational techniques. Observation is often used to measure behavior, and can, in some cases, provide more reliable data than through communicative techniques. We chose to include observational methods in our exploratory research in order to get an overview of the French cross-country culture. However, it is important to emphasize that it may be difficult to come up with statistically valid data regarding this type of method, because of the lack of structure.

We evaluated the choice between conducting focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews, and there are clearly positive and negative aspects with both. The focus group facilitates a discussion between the respondents, and is also considered an inexpensive and effective alternative. However, opinion leaders may color the perspectives of the group. Health and physical activity can be subject to social stigma; thus the participants could be reluctant to reveal their true attitudes in a group. Semi-structured interviews are often used to retrieve more sensitive information, or when personal experiences and attitudes are of interest. The advantage by using this technique instead of focus groups is that the respondent is not subject to group influence. By using semi-structured interviews we can identify important factors and trends, and combined with observational research and secondary information, our findings in this phase will work as a foundation for the descriptive design.
6.2.3 Observation

We conducted two unstructured observations. One at sports stores in Grenoble city and one at a ski resort in Lans en Vercors (see appendix 11).

6.2.3.1 Key findings and analysis

The observational studies at sports stores in Grenoble and at the ski resort in Lance en Vercors generated key elements to include in our further research. Firstly, the allocated retail space in-store was minimal compared to the alpine section. According to the sales clerks, the knowledge level about additional cross-country equipment was low and they experienced little interest from the consumers. While spending one hour in each store during the afternoon, no one explored the cross-country section. Moreover, in Lans en Vercors, cross-country equipment was available for rent at half the price of alpine equipment. Spending one hour in the rental store, we observed that no one was looking for cross-country equipment. We continued our observational studies at the cross-country slopes and identified different types of skiers. One category consisted of younger skiers clearly driven by utilitarian motivation. They were skating in a fast pace, and seemingly practicing cross-country as a form of exercise. The other category consisted of an older generation that was practicing classic skiing with friends or a partner. They spent time eating lunch outdoor, enjoying the nature and socializing.
6.2.4 Semi-structured interviews

We chose to conduct 10 semi-structured interviews, whereas four is B2C and six is B2B. In the interest of the respondents, all names are fictional and the respondents are kept anonymous.

6.2.4.1 Result and analysis

Health and lifestyle

The respondents are valuing having a healthy lifestyle and many claims that being healthy is an important aspect of their life. When asked to describe the French attitude towards health, program director Charlotte (30) says that she sees an increasing trend of people eating biological products. She believes social perception and concern about others’ opinions is a reason why many, especially women, are concerned of staying healthy. She also address that more people are participating in sports events and competitions at a non-professional level, which can be illustrating a utilitarian goal of acknowledgment or a monetary reward. However, the feeling of competence can be connected to increased vitality, and thus be a hedonic factor (Ryan & Leci, 2008). On the other hand, ski enthusiast and previous owner of a ski store, Léo (36) describes a more hedonistic motivation, where he emphasizes that attitude towards health can be correlated to people’s social environment and habits. He believes that growing up close to the mountains facilitated his active lifestyle and made him more prone to enjoy different types of activities. Clément (34) is a former teacher and researcher on snow that recently started his position as a sales employee at a small sports chain in France. Being active and social motivates him. He finds exercises such as climbing and cross-country skiing as a way to spend time with friends and meet new people. The contact with nature is another motivational factor emphasized by several of the respondents. For instance, project leader Claire (30) value outdoors activities more because of her office-job. When it comes to activity, the respondents are motivated by being in the nature, the ability to combine activity and social life and the positive feeling of accomplishment and wellbeing afterwards. This reflects a feeling of personal autonomy, which gives a positive feeling of reenergizing. Hedonic motivation may further be illustrated in the way
the respondents emphasize the nature and their positive feelings instead of their accomplishments and performance.

*French skiing culture and cross-country*

Laurent (53) is the global marketing director at a major French ski brand and is in charge of the Nordic\(^9\) business activities of this brand. He states that France has a more alpine oriented culture. According to him, the French cross-country ski market is very small with only 35,000 to 40,000 skis sold annually. But more people than before are being recruited to cross-country from other fitness activities such as bicycling, running and mountain biking. Clément, being a huge sports enthusiast, supports this. Laurent further states that the ski resorts only generate revenue from alpine activities, while the cross-country slopes require a lot of resources without being profitable. Victor (30), a tourist developer in the Isère region, shares his concern, and specifies how maintenance of cross-country slopes is contributing to deficits at ski resorts in Rhône-Alpes and bordering regions. The only reason many ski resorts provide cross-country slopes is to attract a wider segment of ski tourists. Alexandre, managing director at one of the largest cross-country resorts in France, is concerned about what he says is a decrease in the cross-country market. The ski resort he is managing has lost 50 percent of the skiers the last 10 years. The feeling of low competence might result in demotivation for those who try cross-country skiing. He hopes that initiatives such as free ski classes every Saturday will contribute positively to a feeling of accomplishment and thus the recruitment of new skiers to the sport.

*Perception of cross-country skiing*

France is diverse in terms of climate and landscape and it is therefore likely that the interest for cross-country skiing is geographically connected. The respondents explain that cross-country is more recognized as a sport in the Alps than in other parts of the country. To exemplify, Christian, a former professional skier now responsible for the ski department at a small sized French sports chain, draws connections to football in terms of recognition, while the image of cross-country in other regions of France is that *skiing is for old people*. To the population outside mountainous areas, cross-country has an image of being old fashioned and

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\(^9\) Here: Including cross-country, snowshoeing and other winter activities
boring. Charlotte shares this perspective, adding that cross-country skiing is not a part of your culture if you are from Paris.

There is identified a general perception of cross-country skiing as technical and difficult. Clément claims that this may be a contributing reason to why cross-country has a bad reputation, explaining that the sport is viewed as difficult and not as fun as alpine skiing. Alexandre has experienced how the recruitment to the sport is challenged by this bad reputation and the consumer’s lack of knowledge and patience. New skiers are surprised by the amount of technique to be learned and does not know how to prepare the equipment. A feeling of unsatisfying competence is according to Ryan and Leci (2008) closely related to the self-determination theory model of vitality, which explains how the feeling of being drained of energy decreases the motivation to continue. Christian has the same experience and states that most people want to learn skating instead of classic. They do not take their time to learn the appropriate technique before heading out to the slopes, leading to demotivation and disappointment when it appears that they cannot master the activity properly. This could affect the future recruitment to the sport. According to Alexandre, the industry has failed to sell the activity as a leisure activity, focusing too much on the performance and technical aspects. By doing so, the industry tends to attract more utilitarian driven individuals rather than communicating that cross-country is a sport suitable for both leisure and exercise. Consequently, the industry may lose potential customers that are driven by hedonic motivations. As stated by Laurent, this may already be the case, since consumers coming from other fitness activities seem to be dominating the new recruitment to the sport.

*Description of a typical cross-country skier in France*
Aligned with the finding that cross-country is a sport suitable for both leisure and exercise purposes, the respondents identified two types of *a typical cross-country skier* during the interviews. On one hand, they drew a picture of a tough and sporty man between 25-50 years, wearing professional equipment from head-to-toe that also enjoys other performance oriented activities. The respondents are thus applying an explorative description, indicating that the typical skier are sensation seeking. According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) the sensation
seeking consumer are likely to enjoy competition and games and to be fashion conscious. This perceived stereotype is further supported by Alexandre, who also elaborated on explaining the other type of a cross-country skier; according to him, this is a person with long red socks, blue pants and pullover; a symbol of the outdated and unpopular qualities of the cross-country industry. Laurent is also distinguishing between skiing styles. According to him, the performance oriented skiers often start with skating, while leisure oriented skiers are more oriented towards the classic style. To him, skating is generally perceived as more active, young and challenging.

Respondents Laurent and Christian divide cross-country skiers into three categories. Laurent talks about those with a Nordic culture, people who are used to snow and live close to the slopes. To them, skiing is a part of their life. Christian agrees, saying that this first category consists of performers and competitors, typically men between 25-60 years, who are involved in sports such as running, bicycling and trail. Both respondents states that while the first category is male dominated, the second category is where women are more represented. Being physically active motivates these consumers and performance is not the reason why they practice cross-country. This group is more price sensitive, as many of them practice the sport as a cheaper alternative to alpine skiing. Claire is a good example, as she explains that she is price conscious and to her, cross-country is a more economic alternative to alpine. This group is less likely to spend money on extra equipment, something Charlotte illustrated when she told that she preferred to buy her ski equipment second hand. The third category of skiers is more diversified, consisting of a more equal distribution of gender between 50 to 80 years. They enjoy cross-country skiing as a leisure activity. To them, the sport is a part of their culture and tradition. They are generally not concerned about equipment and performance and prefer to go classic skiing. There are therefore reasons to assume that the consumers can be divided into two purchase patterns. The first group is those with a more utilitarian attitude towards equipment, who emphasize the product attributes and performance as a success factor. The second group consists of those who hold an experiential or holistic approach when purchasing. According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982)
they enjoy the emotional benefits of the products, indicating that comfort and design is more likely to trigger their behavior.

Willingness to pay and brand preferences
The willingness to pay varies according to type of category a customer belongs to. Christian explains that in his customer base, the performers/competitors never look at the price and 10 percent of those have a need to “show off”. These people are usually coming from the bicycling sport where there is an established culture for having the best equipment. Moreover, the second and third categories are more challenging to sell to since they generally follow a budget and are more price-sensitive.

“When somebody come an tells you; I really want a good ski, and I ski like that and I want to do a long distance race, they just don’t look about the price. Never.”

– Christian, employee at a small sized French sport chain.

The respondents rank technical functionality and/or quality as the main purchase criteria when buying cross-country equipment. Léo is willing to pay a high price in order to buy equipment of excellent quality. When asked about brand preferences, respondent Clément values quality over brand. He explains that he usually purchase equipment from several brands in order to attain the highest quality to the best price, indicating cognitive and rational consumer behavior. Several other respondents also claimed that brand was not of significant importance when buying equipment nor that they are sensitive to French brands. However, the respondents from the B2C and B2B markets have different opinions about this topic. From Christian’s experience, French brands are particularly strong in Grenoble and the demand for French brands increase according to results in major competitions such as the Winter Olympics. This can be connected to a more experiential behavior as the consumers may not be fully rational but seeking perceived status and novelty. Consequently, Christian expects Rossignol to have great sales next year, after the performance of Martin Fourcade in the Sochi Olympic Games this year. Since the brand is a sponsor of Fourcade, consumers are asking specifically for his equipment and signing up on waiting lists in the
store. However, he further claims that the majority of their customers “don’t know what they are using, and they follow what salesmen tell them to do”. According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) the tendency to just accept the salesman’s proposal, indicates a low level of involvement in the purchase process. Clément, however, are very involved and seek a high-level of knowledge about the products. He is more utilitarian motivated and increased performance is a key value. However, he also displays sensation seeking traits through his wish to try new products.

*Motivations for cross-country skiing*

Although the respondents have a performance oriented image of the typical cross-country skier, there are also other motivational factors in play when they are explaining their own motivation for skiing. Christian goes skiing for the pleasure of it, where the feeling of glide is important to him. In addition to being hedonically motivated, Léo also considers cross-country skiing as an alternative to jogging and bicycling during the winter. When emphasizing that he went cross-country skiing 20 kilometers three to four times a week he showed utilitarian motivation traits, by stating his performance. However, the two motivations may not be mutually exclusive as he further lists the feeling of being alone in the nature and discovering the slopes as his main motivation. Claire supports his view that enjoying nature is highly important, and she skis approximately two times each season. She also considers cross-country skiing as in the same category as other types of activities she enjoys, such as jogging. To summarize, the respondents representing Rottefella’s possible customers identify two main motivations for skiing. The most important motivation is the ability to spend time outdoors and enjoy the nature, while the second one is the ability to perform, exercise and to have a substitute for other sports activities during the winter. In several cases, the respondents are neither hedonic nor utilitarian motivated, but a combination of the two.
Attitudes and behavior related to cross-country equipment

“We have a very special thing in France. It is that there is a very strong market for rental skis.”
- Laurent, global marketing director at a major ski brand in France

Laurent further elaborates that the reasoning for the strong rental market for cross-country equipment in France is because of the *Association Loi de Mil* of 1901, which regulates the benefits attained. It is allowed to make money but not to make profits, and therefore the organization of the cross-country market has been developed around associations. These associations are not purely commercial and have in the spirit of the people transformed the business into something inexpensive by developing a rental system. To Christine, owner of a café located at one of France’s largest cross-country destinations, owning your own equipment is more important when you practice cross-country skiing frequently or when you live close to the slopes. Léo supports this, and adds that renting equipment can be a way to have access to the newest models on the market. All of the respondents own their own cross-country skis and additional equipment, but several of them rented before they learned the technique and became more active. Léo and Clément own multiple skis, respectively three and ten pairs for different parts of the season. Consequently, they may be described as novelty or variety seeking consumers.

Attitudes and behavior related to insoles

The exploratory research revealed that two of the respondents have personal experience of using insoles. Wanting to reduce pain negatively motivated both Léo and Clément when they first tried insoles. Moreover, Clément explained that he has been testing several professional sports products for magazines, including insoles. The main reasons for using insoles for him would be to improve his technique and also to satisfy his excitement for everything new. Charlotte considers that Rottefella’s insoles would be more interesting for performance oriented skiers, and since she does not consider performance as one of her motivations, she would not buy them. Claire has never considered buying insoles for cross-country ski because she finds the shoes already comfortable. Based on
these findings we see that there are different opinions between the respondents, that some may use it to reduce pain and others don’t see the benefit of the product at all. Considering the utilitarian nature of the product, it might not succeed in communicating explorative values to the consumers and therefore be more tempting to the skiers with a utilitarian motivation.

From a professional point of view, Christian describes insole customers as those who are concerned about performance, a better sensation or who have orthopedic issues. The store he works at sells insoles from Sidas and Superfeet, but at a five percent level. This is because the consumers lack awareness about insoles and rarely consider asking for it. Both Christian and Laurent stated that the sales clerks must be trained in communicating the benefits of the product. This is even more crucial for cross-country insoles due to lack of awareness. According to Christian, insoles will only sell if they are focused on the performance oriented customers. They are the ones who are not concerned about price and who are interested in improving their performance and obtain better muscle use and push. They are typically cross-country enthusiasts and always up-to-date on the newest. He explains that “the basic customers just don’t want to pay”, and highlights that the product cannot be too expensive compared to comparative products and estimates a price level of 35 EUR. Laurent draws associations to the running marked, and says insoles are well recognized by those customers who are highly involved in running. Consequently, the increased recruitment from running and other fitness segments can be a positive trend as insoles are more common in other performance-oriented sports. However, he considers the cross-country market in France to be too small to achieve sufficient quantity. To him, cross-country insoles might be too specific. The product may succeed if it manages to clearly communicate its benefits to both consumers and retailers, further emphasizing the importance of trained and sales motivated employees.
6.2.5 Conclusion exploratory findings

The results derived from the exploratory study identified key traits and motivations among the respondents. It seems to be changes in the cross-country market and that cross-country is starting to increase in popularity. However, the sport is considered technical and difficult compared to alpine, which can lead to decrease of motivation and a feeling of being drained if the technique is not properly taught. The population in mountainous areas in France seems to pay a lot of attention towards fitness and health. This is resulting in more people wanting to expand their exercise routine by finding winter supplements for summer activities. Moreover, the semi-structured interviews identified three categories of skiers. The first group consists of competition driven men that are motivated by utilitarian goals and have a high willingness to pay. The second group consists of more females, where the main reason for skiing is to be physically active. They are more price sensitive and motivated by hedonic values. The last group consists of the most leisure oriented skiers that prefer to go classic skiing. They do not care about performance or additional equipment. The rental market for cross-country skiing in France is very strong. However, all the respondents in this study owned their own skis and claimed they valued quality over brand in a purchase situation. When asked about their attitudes towards cross-country insoles, the respondents thought it was most applicable for those who practiced to perform. The full analysis of the exploratory findings will be further discussed in conjunction with the descriptive findings in part 6.4.

6.2.6 Limitations

Language barriers often led to misunderstandings during the interviews, and occasionally, leading questions had to be used in order to give additional information for the respondent to understand the question. Also, poor language skills may have prohibited the respondents from fully expressing themselves. Furthermore, we had to change our interview guide and create two separate guides, aimed at B2B and B2C respectively. In the beginning of the process we only had one interview guide, which lead to that B2C respondents were asked to
make generalizations about the French skiing culture, a topic of which they had no extended knowledge about, but felt they had to answer.

6.3 Descriptive design

By applying expressions and knowledge from our exploratory research, we are able to generate replicable knowledge about the consumers and the market through the final descriptive research. The goal is to quantify the incidents that we have explored (Wilson 2006). Based on the finding in the exploratory research we have developed two hypotheses that will be further explored through the descriptive part of the thesis.

1. The performance-oriented skiers are positive towards the introduction of Rottefella’s new cross-country insoles.

2. In France, cross-country skiers are motivated by utilitarian values.

6.3.1 Methods

According to Gripsrud et al. (2011), the purpose of descriptive design is to describe a particular situation, and acquire a thorough understanding of the research field. A common applied technique is to conduct a survey using questionnaires. In opposition to exploratory design, there is not possible to explain the connection between phenomenon. However, we are able to identify covariance.

Alan Wilson (2006) states that there is two applied methods for collection of descriptive data, interviewer-administered and self-administered. The self-administered method is convenient as it is less time consuming for the researcher and you may reach a larger population. However, one of the main challenges is that the response rate might be low as the population lack incentives to reply. Consequently, the risk of skewed distribution is present as the respondents might be the ones with a particular interest of the subject or not answer all questions. Interviewer-administered interviews are more time- and cost intensive, but the researcher has the opportunity to motivate the respondent to answer all questions.
and to evaluate the respondents’ level of investment and attitude (Wilson, 2006). Furthermore, the survey may be colored by factors such as the interviewers choice of respondents.

6.3.2 Choice of methods

The chosen descriptive research methods were street interviews and online delivery. To target our population we considered it most efficient to meet respondents at the ski resorts. Autrans holds the center for Nordic ski in the Rhône-Alpes, they organize free cross-country skiing lessons and La Foulée Blanche\textsuperscript{10}. This is therefore a relevant place for us to meet a variety of skiers and conduct our descriptive research. However, it is important to be aware of the likelihood of a biased population when only distributing the survey at one location. The self-administered method of online delivery is used as a supplement to our street interviews. This is both because of convenience and as a way to reach a broader population. As a supplement we used the statistical online service Qualtrics to distribute the survey through social platforms for cross-country skiing. The applied format is the interactive questionnaire. According to Alan Wilson (2006), the benefit of this layout is that the respondents see one question at the time and are thereby not influenced by the other questions.

6.3.2.1 Samples

Our objective is to research attitudes and behavior towards cross-country skiing in Rhône-Alpes, consequently the most applicable method to use is a non-probability convenience sample. Although it may negatively affect the ability to generalize, it is a relevant method to use when a client is seeking an indication of trends in the market place (Wilson, 2006).

\textsuperscript{10} A well known ski race in France established in 1979
6.3.2.2 The questionnaire design process

The design of the questionnaire is highly important as “Questionnaire design is all about effective two-way communication” (Wilson, 2006, p. 263). The aim is to minimize the noise\(^{11}\) and facilitate an understanding between researcher and respondent. Our goal was to conduct between 100 to 150 questionnaires. The sample is relatively small but it is prevailing for this type of study. Small samples increase the likelihood of sample error. However, we have to balance the sample size with available resources and time constraints.

The qualitative findings have uncovered relevant concepts for our research question *Is there a potential market for insoles in France?* To explore this further there is a need to define the concepts that are relevant for our analysis. The following concepts are therefore *motivation for cross-country skiing, attitudes towards cross-country skiing and equipment* and *sensibility towards cross-country insoles*. The first concept explores factors such as performance or social motivation that drives the respondents behavior. Attitudes towards cross-country equipment and skiing are measured by introducing claims such as *I buy my equipment to enhance my performance*. Sensibility towards cross-country insoles is measured by requesting the respondents to rank their sensibility on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is *Not sensible*. Finally, *Willingness to pay* is measured by an open-ended question, asking the respondents to type in the amount they would have paid for the insoles. Moreover, we applied the same solution to *age* and *hours skiing* as collecting numeric data provide valuable insights about the respondents. Our final goal is to identify characteristics to describe different segments within the cross-country market.

To develop the survey we categorized the concepts into attitudes, behavior and demography. Amongst these we found attitudes to be of particular interest, as the product is not yet launched in the market. To facilitate understanding of the product we explained the concept on the questionnaire and included a product

\(^{11}\) Noise can be defined as incomplete and or not understandable answers, perception and complicated questions (Wilson, 2006)
picture. We choose to not include an *I don’t know* alternative in the questionnaire as we considered it difficult to analyze. However, we included a neutral value to avoid forcing the respondents to answer incorrectly.

Pre-testing is considered important to identify and correct design flaws (Wilson, 2006). We tested the questionnaire on 10 respondents and uncovered the need to further clarify some of the questions to avoid misinterpretation.

### 6.3.3 Validity

The validity of a scale relates to whether the differences in the scores on the scale reflect true differences in what is being measured (Wilson, 2006). Moreover, one distinguishes between content validity and construct validity. Content validity includes the correlation between the concept definition and operationalization, while construct validity tests whether the indicators that are believed to measure the same theoretical variable are high (convergent) or low (divergent) correlated with each other (Gripsrud et al. 2011). In retrospective, the statements *I would not buy this product because* (...) and its corresponding alternatives may not have been valid in terms of construct. The answer of this question may have differed due to the respondents’ personal opinion about the insole. For instance, respondents that are negative towards the product may have answered their true opinions, while positive respondents may have forced themselves to picture what their opinions might have been if they did not want to buy the insole. Reliability will be discussed at the end of part 6.4. The data collection consisted of a total of 118 participants, whereas 18 were collected online and 100 collected through street interviews at Autrans.

### 6.3.4 Data cleansing

Data cleansing is necessary to identify inconsistencies that could be found in the data collected from the survey, and to check if there are any missing respondents that need to be clarified. All answers were transferred into the SPSS predictive analytics software data program, where the data was carefully analyzed to identify possible outliers or extreme values. Extreme values deviates significantly from the
rest of the dataset, and it expresses how much the observations on average deviates from the mean. The next step is to look for missing responses on all questions and suspicions for unreliable answers.

Out of the 18 people that participated in the online survey, two of these had not responded properly by giving no answers on any of the questions. They were therefore excluded from the data set. Out of the 100 street interviews there was one respondent that had extreme values on the questions How much are you willing to pay? and How many hours in average do you practice cross-country skiing per month? The answer given was twice as high as the maximum value of all the other respondents’, and even though he may have given true answers, we saw that this had a major impact on the data set. This respondent was not part of our target group and was therefore excluded. The final amount of respondents in the quantitative research is 115 people.

6.3.5 Results from SPSS analysis

6.3.5.1 General findings and description of the sample
The analyzed sample consists of 115 respondents, whereas 87 percent were collected manually during two different days at a cross-country resort in Autrans. The gender distribution was almost equal, where male entailed 53.5 percent of the respondents.

The mean age of the sample is 40.9 years (SD=16.116), the median age is 41 and the respondents are in the age group from 12 to 74 years. The age variables were later recoded into three categories. The category Young (0-30 years) represents 31.6 percent of the sample, Adults (31-50 years) represents 40.4 percent, and Senior (51+ years) represents 28.1 percent of the sample.

As anticipated, 96.5 percent of the sample is French and the four largest regions in terms of residence are Rhône-Alpes (72.2%), Pays de la Loire (4.3%), Languedoc-Roussillon (4.3%) and Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur (3.5%). Of these regions, Pays de la Loire is the only one not bordering to Rhône-Alpes. Furthermore, 7.8
percent of the sample are in the category *Unknown*, which consists of respondents living abroad from France, or respondents from France who did not type in their place of residence.

87 respondents answered the question regarding willingness to pay for Rottefella insoles, and the average price is 49.74 EUR (SD=49.826). Furthermore, the average time spent practicing cross-country skiing per month is 9.76 hours (110 respondents, SD=8.759).

For the question *Are you sensitive towards this product?* 42.20 percent of the respondents said they were highly sensitive or sensitive towards the product. 29.80 percent claimed that they were not sensitive towards Rottefella’s insoles.

The majority of the sample prefers to go cross-country skiing with friends (50.4%) and family (42.6%). Based on information retrieved from the exploratory phase, cross-country is perceived as a social activity, and the descriptive findings reflect this. In 20.9 percent of the cases, the skiing alone preference was chosen. The reason why the number of total respondents exceeds 115 (173 replies) is because several respondents chose more than one alternative (see appendix 13 for all descriptive data from SPSS).
6.3.5.2 Analysis of behavior

Rottefella’s Xcelerator racing system increases the joy of skiing, both for the competitor and the casual skier. Therefore, we want to start the analysis by looking at the sensitivity of the product and if a high degree of sensitivity correlates with one or more of the three types of practicing cross-country skiing: for performance, to spend time with friends and family or to enjoy the nature.

H0: There is no correlation between the groups
H1: There is a correlation between at least two of the groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>How much are you willing to pay for the product</th>
<th>Are you sensitive towards this product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to enhance my performance</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N</td>
<td>.332** .002 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to spend time with friends and family</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N</td>
<td>-.054 .623 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to enjoy the nature</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N</td>
<td>-.225* .038 85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

We see that there is a positive correlation between those who practice cross-country skiing to enhance their performance and how sensitive they are towards the new insoles. The t-test shows a p-value $0.011 < \alpha (0.05)$, which means that we can reject H0 because it is found significant correlation that H1 is right. There is a positive correlation of 0.242 between the two groups sensitivity and
performance. However, there is no statistically significant correlation between sensitivity towards the product and the two other categories.

Looking at the other correlation in the table, we also see a positive correlation of 0.332 between those who practice cross-country to enhance their performance and willingness to pay, with a p-value of 0.002 < than α (0.01), which means that those who are more likely to practice cross-country to perform also are willing to pay more for the insoles. Moreover, there is a negative correlation of -0.225 (p-value 0.038 < than α (0.05)) between those who practice cross-country to enjoy the nature and willingness to pay. The correlation analysis has proved that the more they practice cross-country to enjoy the nature, the less they are willing to pay for the insoles.

After establishing a positive correlation between sensitivity and performance, we want to further explore and analyze how performance oriented cross-country skiing is related to purchase behavior in terms of performance enhancing cross-country equipment. Thus, we conducted a correlation analysis with the following hypothesis

H0: There is no correlation between skiing to improve performance and buying performance enhancing equipment.
H1: There is a correlation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>I buy my equipment to enhance my performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to enhance my performance</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The t-test shows a p-value 0.000 < than α (0.01). There is a positive correlation of 0.493 between those who practice cross-country to enhance their performance and
those who buy performance-enhancing equipment. This is an important finding, since Rottefella’s new insoles are marketed as performance enhancing equipment.

Secondly, we want to see whether or not the ones practicing cross-country to perform are concerned about having equipment that looks fashionable.

H0: There is no correlation between those who buy cross-country equipment to enhance their performance and those who buy their equipment to be fashionable.
H1: There is a correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>I buy my equipment to look fashionable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I buy my equipment to enhance my performance</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation 0.375**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The t-test shows a p-value 0.000 < than α (0.01), which means that we can reject H0. There is a positive correlation of 0.375 between those who buy cross-country equipment to enhance their performance and those who buy their equipment to look fashionable. This further indicates that the ones who practice cross-country on a more professional or dedicated level, are to some extent, also concerned with their image and looks.

6.3.5.3 Analysis of attitudes

In the explorative phase, several respondent mentioned that many consumers tend to be very price sensitive and claimed that it is crucial that Rottefella’s insoles is priced to match competitive brands. We will therefore analyze the variable willingness to pay to identify common traits within the sample.

H0: There is no correlation between how much a respondent is willing to pay for the product and how sensitive they are towards the product
H1: There is a correlation
The t-test above shows a p-value 0.000 < than α (0.01), which means that we can reject H0 because it is found significant correlation that H1 is right. There is a positive correlation of 0.393 and we can conclude that the more sensitive a respondent is towards the insoles, the more he/she is willing to pay for it.

By conducting an ANOVA test we want to see if there is differences between sensitivity towards the product and age. The independent variable is age_cat2 (young, adults and seniors) and the dependent variable is Are you sensitive towards this product.

H0: μ1 = μ2 = μ3
H1: At least one of the means is different

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANOVA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you sensitive towards this product  and age_cat2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum of Squares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The descriptive data shows us the average sensitivity of the categories Young (2.92), Adults (3.48) and Seniors (3.26). However, the ANOVA-test shows a p-value of 0.123 > than α (0.05), which means that the differences from the descriptive table are not significantly different from each other and we have to
6.3.3.5 Demographics

During the exploratory phase we found that many of the respondents are indicating that people living close to the slopes and mountainous areas\textsuperscript{12} are spending more hours practicing cross-country per month. Also, we want to see if there are differences between age and hours spent cross-country skiing and if men have a higher willingness to pay than women. This is interesting to analyze since it gives us a better perception of the demographics of the sample by comparing their means.

To test our first demographic hypothesis an ANOVA-test will be conducted. The dependent variable is *How many hours in average do you practice cross-country skiing per month* and the independent variable is *Region categories*. We want to see if there are significant differences between the sample coming from mountainous areas and the sample coming from non-mountainous areas.

\textbf{H0:} \mu_1 = \mu_2 \\
\textbf{H1:} \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \\

The descriptive data tells us that there are 86 respondents from mountainous areas and 24 respondents from non-mountainous areas. The mean is clearly different between those two groups, with 10.45 average skiing hour per month of the respondent coming from regions in the Alps, while the average skiing time for the other group is 6.02 hours. With a 95% confidence interval, we want to test if these differences are significant different from each other.

\textsuperscript{12} The term *mountainous area* is here defined as Rhône-Alpes, Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur and Midi-Pyrénées.
The ANOVA-test shows a p-value of 0.030 < than \( \alpha \) (0.05), which means that we can reject H0. There is a significant difference in skiing time and region of residence. People coming from mountainous areas tend to ski in average four hours more per month than people from non-mountainous areas.

In our second demographic hypothesis, the dependent variable is *How many hours in average do you practice cross-country skiing per month* and the independent variable is *Age_cat2*. We want to see if there are significant differences between young, adults and seniors and how much time they spend cross-country skiing.

H0: \( \mu_1 = \mu_2 = \mu_3 \)
H1: At least one of the means is different

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>368.676</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>368.676</td>
<td>4.834</td>
<td>.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>8236.554</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>76.264</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8605.230</td>
<td>109</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ANOVA-test shows a p-value of 0.010 < than \( \alpha \) (0.05), which means that we can reject H0. There is a significant difference between how many hours the three different segments spend cross-country skiing, but we cannot say where the difference is. In order to find out this, we will further test the category *Young* compared to the category *Senior*.

H0: \( \mu_1 = \mu_2 \)
H1: \( \mu_1 \neq \mu_2 \)
The young go skiing in average 5.88 hours (SD = 6.07) and the seniors go skiing in average 12.04 hours (SD = 11.88). This is a large difference, and we want to see if this difference is statistically significant by conducting an ANOVA test with these variables (see appendix 14.2.2).

### ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many hours in average do you practice cross country skiing per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>597.782</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>597.782</td>
<td>7.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>5100.652</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>82.269</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5698.434</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ANOVA-test shows a p-value of 0.009 < than α (0.05), which means that we can reject H0. There is a significant difference between how many hours the young and senior segment is skiing.

Finally, the open-ended question *How much are you willing to pay for this product* was recoded into two categories, 0-49 EUR and 50-99 EUR and we want to test if men have a higher willingness to pay than women.

H0: There is no association between gender and willingness to pay
H1: There is a significant association

### Gender * Price group Crosstabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender * Price group Crosstabulation</th>
<th>Price group</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-49 EUR</td>
<td>50-99 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Homme</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femme</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>.441&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.506</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.690</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>.440</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.507</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher's Exact Test</td>
<td>.436</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>.599</td>
<td>.344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.75.
- b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The chi-square gives a p-value of 0.344 > than α (0.05), which indicates that there is no significant association between gender and willingness to pay. We have to keep the null hypothesis.

### 6.3.5.4 Segmentation

An exploratory approach to segmentation is applied by describing the sample using the respondents that proved to be most sensitive towards the product. We selected cases on the variable scores 4 and 5 on sensitivity, and found their frequency and means on the variables listed in the table below and in appendices 12.3.3-5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many hours in average do you practice cross country skiing per month</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>10.5978</td>
<td>10.27814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much are you willing to pay for the product</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>60.5714</td>
<td>55.63499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40.9362</td>
<td>16.87087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to enhance my performance</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.6170</td>
<td>1.13354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to spend time with friends and family</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4.3830</td>
<td>.89814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to enjoy the nature</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4.5106</td>
<td>.74811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Females (53.2%) are most sensitive towards the product, and 66.7 percent comes from mountainous areas (see appendix 14.3.1 & 14.3.2). They practice cross-country skiing 10.60 (SD=10.28) hours per month and are willing to pay 60.58 EUR (SD=55.63) for the insoles. The average age is 40.94 years old (SD=16.88). They tend to practice cross-country to enjoy the nature (M=4.51) and they appreciate cross-country as a way of socializing with friends and family (M=4.38). Finally, they score average 3.62 on how much they agree to the statement *I practice cross-country ski to enhance my performance*. This indicates a segment that is more hedonic motivated. Their purchase behavior is that they buy their cross-country equipment to feel comfortable (M=4.21) and does not agree to the statement *I buy my equipment to look fashionable* (M=2.02). They are more likely to buy Rottefella’s insoles for comfort reasons (M=4.53) rather than performance reasons (M=3.58). They would not buy the insoles just because they are considered as “latest news” (M=2.16) (see appendix 14.3.3).

Since the respondents that chose the highest values on sensitivity towards the product are more hedonic motivated, we want to explore the different values and frequencies of the utilitarian motivated respondents. Thus, we selected cases on the scores 4 and 5 on practicing cross-country for performance reasons. Men (56.5%) are most performance oriented, and 80 percent comes from mountainous areas. They practice cross-country skiing 11.26 (SD=8.64) hours per month and are willing to pay 63.56 EUR (SD=58.80) for the insoles. The average age is 41.13 years old (SD=15.41). The majority of these respondents prefer to go cross-country skiing with a partner (48.4%), with friends (40.3%) and family (37.1%). 24 percent favors to ski alone (see appendices 14.3.4-7).
6.3.6 Conclusion descriptive findings

The results given in the descriptive study gives us a more comprehensive understanding about our research objectives, which will be thoroughly discussed in part 6.4. Based on the findings in this study there is evidence that people coming from mountainous areas close to Rhône-Alpes are more frequently visiting cross-country slopes during the winter season. A one-way between subjects ANOVA illustrated that there were no differences between age and sensitivity. However, there is a positive correlation between sensitivity towards the product and those who practice cross-country to enhance performance. Performance oriented skiers was also positively correlated with a high willingness to pay. Performance and fashion is also positively correlated, and the same is willingness to pay and sensitivity towards the product. An ANOVA test showed that Seniors spent more time in the slopes than the Young, and a chi-square test proved that there was no association between gender and willingness to pay.

6.3.7 Limitations

When approaching respondents in the cross-country slopes in Autrans, many of the subjects were standing together with a partner or a group. When answering the questions, some of them read out loud and sometimes the partner told the subject about his/hers opinion and the subject answered according to this. We told them to answer separately, but it is likely to assume that this generated some misgiving answers. Moreover, the respondents may have been extra positive when responding the questionnaire since we were three Norwegian girls conducting research for a Norwegian brand. Language barriers may have also been an issue when translating the questionnaire from English to French. Due to constraints regarding time and resources, Autrans was the only place the street interviews were conducted. Under other circumstances, additional relevant cross-country resorts could be visited.
6.4 General discussion

The general discussion will be aimed towards answering our research objectives stated in section 1.4 and our two hypotheses that was found during the exploratory phase of the study, namely 1) *The performance oriented skiers are positive towards the introduction of Rottefella’s new cross-country insoles* and 2) *In France, cross-country skiers are motivated by utilitarian values.*

When defining *attitudes towards cross-country skiing in France* it is important to take into account that this is a niche market. The exploratory research showed that the skiing culture is more alpine oriented and it seems that the sport has failed to develop a strong recognition within the country. There are however, positive attitudes from the people who live in the Alps. This is confirmed by an ANOVA test showing significant differences between region and hours spent skiing. Recruitment to the sport is currently dominated by the sports- and fitness segment. This might represent a shift of image; from previous recognition as dull and boring towards more health and performance oriented. The stereotypical skier is described in two contrasting ways by the respondents; *The competitor dressed up in the newest equipment* which is a male between 25-60 years and *The old man with the red socks and a pull-over* indicating an outdated view on cross-country skiing. Success of French professional skiers, such as Martin Fourcade is assumed to positively boost the interest for cross-country skiing. However, the recruitment is challenged by the lack of technique and knowledge, which is considered as demotivating and draining, according to the self-determination theory (Ryan and Leci, 2008).

The exploratory research identified three underlying types of motivation among skiers; performance, nature and social reasons for practicing cross-country. However, the descriptive research identified two types of motivation, whereas one is performance and the second one is a mix between practicing cross-country to enjoy the nature and to spend time with friends and family (appendix 15.3). To practice cross-country for performance reasons proved not to be correlated with enjoying nature or social reasons, and we have come to a final conclusion of two
main reasons for skiing. The first group of skiers is hedonic motivated, emphasizing the wish to enjoy the nature and spend time with friends and family. They practice cross-country skiing for leisure. The second group is driven by utilitarian motivation, where performance and competitiveness is considered most important. The exploratory study discovered how the B2B respondents were concerned that the leisure values of cross-country skiing were not communicated enough. However, the amount of skiers reporting that they enjoy both the nature and performance while skiing shows that this might be an overstatement and further that the two motivations not necessarily exclude each other but act as mutually enhancing. The majority goes skiing to enhance their performance while enjoying the nature with their friends or family. Consequently, there might be a need to apply a broader perspective of the typical skier.

It is not possible to identify distinguishable customer segments, their characteristics and behavior based on results only from the descriptive phase. We found that potential users are characterized by being located in mountainous areas, and the majority of cross-country skiers live close to the Alps. This has been confirmed from several respondents in our semi-structured interviews and also when testing this hypothesis in SPSS, the data told us that the four largest regions in terms of residence are all closely linked to Rhône-Alpes (except Pays de la Loire).

In combination with the descriptive and exploratory phase two main user groups has been identified, which we chose to call The Performers and The Hedonists. On one side, the hedonists have softer values, and use cross-country as a way of spending time and socialize with their friends and family. The feeling of being close to nature is essential for them when doing cross-country. The descriptive study supports this. The Hedonists are the ones that are likely to be found having a picnic in the slopes, enjoying themselves and living in the moment. Furthermore, they are more likely to ski classic than skating. This is consistent with our observation. They are more likely to buy cross-country ski equipment to feel comfortable and are not concerned about looking fashionable when skiing (appendix 15.2). Finally, this group is the most sensitive towards Rottefella’s insoles and is willing to pay in average 60 EUR. However, when conducting a
correlation test, willingness to pay was negatively correlated with practicing cross-country to enjoy the nature and not correlated with spending time with friends and family. Thus, the statistical results are mixed. On the other hand, The Performers are likely to use cross-country as a supplement for other sports, such as running and cycling. They prefer to go cross-country skiing with a partner or friends. While The Hedonists consist of more females, The Performers consist of a larger share of men. 80 percent of the performers live in the mountainous areas with immediate access to skiing facilities. Descriptive data of this group shows us that they are in average willing to pay 63.56 EUR for the insoles. This was confirmed by a positive correlation between willingness to pay and how much they agreed that they went cross-country skiing for performance. This is further consistent with the information received from the exploratory research as several of the respondents stated that the performance oriented customers are the ones who are less price sensitive. They are competitive at heart and their image is important to them. According to correlation analysis, the one’s who buy cross-country equipment to enhance their performance also buy equipment to look fashionable. This confirms our exploratory findings that the need for “showing off” is prevalent for the performers.

Finally, it is crucial to explore and discuss the potential acceptance of Rottefella’s cross-country insoles in the French market. In general, 42.20 percent of the respondents in the questionnaire answered that they were sensitive or highly sensitive towards the product, which inclines that there is a potential acceptance for this product in France. While The Performers may recognize the product as a valid supplement to their exercise regime, The Hedonists is prone to buy the insoles for comfort. Comfort was perceived as an important attribute for both segments, but it is not the determining factor for willingness to buy. B2B respondents assumed that the insoles would only sell if Rottefella focuses on the performance oriented customers, which is supported by findings from the descriptive phase where sensitivity towards the product is correlated with those who practice cross-country to enhance their performance. However, when looking specifically on the respondents with high sensitivity towards the product, traits of hedonic motivation overshadow the utilitarian motives. However, the groups are not mutually exclusive, since many respondents throughout the study showed
traits of both utilitarian and hedonic motivation. This answer and disprove our first and second hypothesis developed after the exploratory research. Both the performance and leisure oriented skiers are positive towards the introduction of the insoles, and cross-country skiers are driven by both utilitarian and hedonic motivation. We therefore see a potential acceptance for all three of Rottefella’s insoles. The touring and Xcelerator racing classic insole is suitable for the hedonic consumers that are most sensitive towards the product, while the Xcelerator racing skating insole should be targeted towards the consumers that are performance and utilitarian oriented that has a higher willingness to pay.

6.4.1 Reliability

The findings in this study has been made during a short time frame, in one specific region of France and therefore it will not grasp the full complexity of the French cross-country market. It would be interesting to conduct the research again in other ski resorts and regions, in order to fully measure the reliability of the data.
7.0 STRATEGY

7.1 Strategic problem definition

A thorough analysis of the current situation for Rottefella has lead to the following strategic problem definition;

“Should Rottefella enter the French cross-country market with their new insoles, and if so, which is the most suitable entry strategy?”

7.2 Is France an appropriate market?

The Alps stands for more than 80 percent of the major ski resorts in the world and is a suitable test market before entering other countries such as Austria, Italy and Switzerland. Even though the French skiing culture is more oriented towards alpine activities, our research shows that cross-country skiing is a popular activity in the mountainous areas. Rottefella is facing global competition in their existing markets. According to Solberg’s nine windows (1997), Rottefella is currently located in the fourth window Seek niches in international markets and are showing traits of moving upwards in the table, towards Consider expansion into new markets (see appendix 16). France is a strategic key market for Rottefella since this is where many of the main competitors have their domestic or most profitable markets, and is certainly an appropriate market.
7.3 Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholders are all those who are influenced or influences the strategy of the company. A stakeholder map identifies their level of power and interest and how these must be considered when choices are made (Johnson et al. 2008).

7.3.1 Minimal effort

Stakeholders with low power and low level of interest should be subject of minimal effort from Rottefella. Individually, the B2C customers are placed in the category of low interest and low power. However, under certain conditions and when grouped together, their power can increase significantly to the level where they have the ability to block and influence the B2B retailers, resulting in either a more positive or negative attitude towards Rottefella’s insoles. Existing agreements with suppliers will not play a central role in Rottefella’s strategic development as long as they continue to meet set conditions.
7.3.2 Keep informed

Employees and shareholders should be kept informed since they have high interest in Rottefella’s strategic choices but not much executive power. However, if shareholders are not kept informed they have the ability to enforce their power, moving towards either keep satisfied or key players.

7.3.3 Keep satisfied

B2B customers are divided into two categories, namely retailers and brands. Retailers include relevant sport stores and chains, while brands refer to independent customers such as Fischer and Madshus. They have a high level of power but are not particularly interested in Rottefella’s strategic choices as long as it does not concern them. Professional skiers have a high power to influence consumers, which again will attract the press and gain media’s attention. Their interest is low. However, if acquiring relevant sponsorships and other deals, their interest towards Rottefella will increase, placing them as potential key players.

7.3.4 Key players

Rossignol is considered a key player as Rottefella’s only distributor in France. The company will be highly influential when considering choice of entry strategy because selecting another partner could damage the existing relationship. The management and board of directors have both high level of power and interest, and their support are important for a successful introduction of the insoles. Finally, competitors need to be considered as key players since the product concept is easy to imitate.
7.4 Marketing mix

McCarthy identified the marketing mix as “the activities used to create, communicate and deliver value for customers” (McCarthy & Perreault, 2002) and these activities represent how Rottefella can use the tools to influence their buyers.

7.4.1 Product

Rottefella should launch the Xcelerator skating, Xcelerator classic and the touring insole to the French market without making product adaptions. According to Keegan (1995, cited from Hollensen 2014, pp. 496-497), a combination or adaptation of product and promotion should be applied as a key aspect of the marketing strategy. A promotion adaption strategy involves leaving the insoles standardized and making local adjustment to the promotion of the products (see appendix 17). The insole industry is considered standardized, so there is no need for cultural product adaption when introducing the insoles to the French market. Rottefella’s package design reflects quality and communicates the benefits of the product. Finally, the company can gain a valuable position in the market by focusing on promoting their brand. The benefit this entails includes better chance for product differentiation, better identification and awareness, and over time possible brand loyalty (Hollensen, 2014).

7.4.2 Price

The price level of the insoles should take into account the following factors; the price level of the competitors (between 10-50 EUR), fixed and variable costs, currency exchange, the consumer’s willingness to pay (average 49.74 EUR), company objectives and their positioning strategy. In addition, there are no trade barriers between Norway and France that are likely to influence the price. Since Rottefella is entering a niche market, expectations regarding volume should be low, instead focusing on acquiring higher margins and thus a more premium price strategy. The exploratory research illustrated that Rottefella should launch their product at a price level close to the competitors. However, pricing can be a
strategic way to position the brand. When launching a new product concept, a higher price level is a way to gain profits before competitors enter with a lower price. All factors considered, we recommend Rottefella to apply a pricing strategy between market pricing and skimming (Hollensen, 2014). Finally, choice of entry strategy is likely to affect chosen price as potential agents or distributors most likely have a price strategy and guidelines, which must be incorporated.

7.4.3 Place

Distribution method is of critical importance due to the need for high visibility and continuous refill of the products in store shelves. Consequently one should seek to minimize the use of independent retailers and focus on main sports-chains in the mountainous areas in France. The most relevant distribution strategies for Rottefella will be further explored in the SFA-analysis (see section 7.5).

7.4.4 Promotion

The potential users of the insoles are both hedonically and utilitarian motivated. Rottefella should therefore make sure to implement a mix of both experiential and informative communication when promoting the products in France. This means that both product specifications and the subjective value of the product should be communicated (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Training of in-store employees and developing their product knowledge are critical success factors if the insoles are going to be recognized in France. Rottefella should continue to allocate samples of the insoles as giveaways to sales clerks. They ought to demand their potential partners to continue Rottefella’s successful promotion strategy of celebrity endorsements, using French cross-country skiers. To further facilitate knowledge about the product, we recommend Rottefella to introduce sales incentives in-store the first season. The activity must be coordinated with a possible agent or distributor, and could include giveaways and/or an experience for the sales clerks with the highest sales percent.
7.5 SFA-analysis

Based on our market research, we propose the following four entrance strategies, which will be further explored through an SFA-analysis.

1. Stay in existing markets
2. Enter the French market by establishing a sales office in France
3. Enter the French market through existing distributor Rossignol
4. Enter the French market through an agent

According to their position in the BAKKA-model, we consider Rottefella to be in the extensive export phase (see section 4.4). This affects their choice of entry strategy and implies that they should use a distributor or agent when entering a new market. However, looking at the BAKKA-model holistically, their main position in the internalization process is in the intensive export phase. It is therefore natural for them to consider expansion through establishing their own sales office. We also evaluate the alternative strategy of staying in existing markets.

Below we have evaluated the key suggestions in an SFA-analysis and given them a score of low (1-2), medium (3) and high (4-5). The alternative with the highest score is considered to be the most suitable, feasible and acceptable option. The different variables are weighted differently, according to their importance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Suitability</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Acceptability</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Stay in existing markets</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation and learning (+)</td>
<td>Possess resources to enter the market (-)</td>
<td>Stakeholder culture/wish to expand (-)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not address the opportunities (-)</td>
<td>Risk (+/-)</td>
<td>Shareholders ROI (-)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low demand in France (+)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sales office</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control (+)</td>
<td>Lack of organizational resources (-)</td>
<td>Expensive – affect shareholder profits (-)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brand building (+)</td>
<td>Time consuming (-)</td>
<td>More autonomy (+)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fragmented retailers (- -)</td>
<td>Market knowledge (-)</td>
<td>High risk (-)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Distributor Rossignol</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning from partner - access to network (++)</td>
<td>Established relationship (+)</td>
<td>Low risk (+)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cannot fully focus on Rottefella’s products (-)</td>
<td>Production capabilities (+)</td>
<td>Lose autonomy (-)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less individual brand building (+/-)</td>
<td>Timing, fast access to market (++)</td>
<td>Well-known partnership (+)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strict, strong negotiating power (-)</td>
<td>The distributor might lack the necessary knowledge to promote the insoles (-)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Agent</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brand building (+)</td>
<td>Direct contact (+)</td>
<td>More autonomy (+)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual goals as Rottefella (+)</td>
<td>Production capabilities (+)</td>
<td>Rossignol – powerful blocker (- -)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing control (+)</td>
<td>Requires monitoring (-)</td>
<td>Less economic risk (+)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. SFA-analysis of Rottefella's four potential entry strategies
7.5.1 Stay in existing markets

The option to stay in the existing markets (Norway and Sweden) allows Rottefella more time to prepare and gain knowledge about appropriate future markets. This can be of importance since the French cross-country skiing culture is different than the Scandinavian. The demand for this product is potentially low in France, which will affect potential return on investments for the shareholders if the export activities do not generate profit. However, by staying in existing markets the company can neither seize the opportunities the French market provides, nor exploit their advantage of being the first provider of cross-country insoles. This option has a weak feasibility. Contrary to the other options there is no risk related to expanding the product line internationally, but the product concept is imitable and the risk is therefore related to not expand. By not expanding their insoles to appropriate new markets, the competitors may imitate the concept and steal Rottefella’s potential market shares.

7.5.2 Enter the French market by establishing a sales office in France

As stated in the five forces analysis the retail market in France is fragmented, implying that Rottefella has to establish a relationship to a numerous retail chains and independent retailers. This requires extensive use of human resources. Consequently the company must establish a sales office in France to be able to monitor and conduct sell in to the B2B customers, which is expensive. With this entrance strategy the shareholders are likely to become a blocker and move from keep informed to key players in the stakeholder map. Furthermore, time is of the essence as the concept of cross-country insoles is easily imitable by the competitors. Considering that France is a domestic market for several main competitors, Rottefella must act fast to gain a first mover advantage. The company’s lack of market knowledge combined with need to act quickly might damage the entry and extend the duration of the process. The considered risk level is from this perspective high both economically and due to lack of market knowledge. Rottefella has a strategic goal of increasing their brand recognition and to obtain this possibility, establishing a sales office is strategically sound.
They will gain more control of the market communication, sales process and also gain a larger share of the profits. However, considering the investment criteria of this option, in terms of economics, time and resources, entering the French market by establishing a sales office is neither suitable, nor feasible.

7.5.3 **Enter the French market through existing distributor Rossignol**

One of the most important factors that enhance the suitability of this strategy is that Rottefella gains access to the cross-country network by capitalizing on their valuable relationship with Rossignol. This network includes benefits such as retailing agreements, visibility, co-branding, knowledge of the market and the ability to learn from their partner. Furthermore, this strategic option is highly feasible; the distribution relationship is already established, Rottefella have the necessary production capabilities to expand their insole line into the French market and it is therefore a time-efficient alternative. Rossignol is a strong brand in France and can fight off possible competition more than Rottefella can do individually. The acceptability for entering the French market through their existing distributor is considered as high from several holds in the stakeholder map. The managers and board of directors may be positive to maintain the relationship with Rossignol. Nonetheless, this option may go against their desire to develop a stronger brand recognition of Rottefella on an international level, and by enter the market through this distributor, the company may have to transfer a high level of autonomy to Rossignol in terms of decision-making. Finally, according to the internal analysis, the existing distributors might lack sufficient competence level to promote the insoles.

7.5.4 **Enter the French market through an agent**

The most important task for an agent is to promote sales and distribute the product to the market. An agent will promote the brand Rottefella and increase the brand recognition. At the same time, a close relationship needs to be established in order to keep control of distribution. By entering France through an agent, the company will gain direct contact to the market, and over time build up their own network and knowledge. Rottefella has flexible production and logistics facilities that are
able to meet changes in demand. By going through an agent the company will gain more autonomy and it is also less financial risk related to this option than establishing their own sales office. However, monitoring this whole process from abroad can be challenging, especially since Rottefella currently does not possess enough resources to establish an international division within their company.
8.0 RECOMMENDATION

Based on our research we recommend Rottefella to enter the French market through existing distributor Rossignol. When choosing the entry strategy, continuing the distributor agreement was recognized as the most best alternative, as the company lack human resources and market knowledge to enter with the other strategies. By using Rossignol’s existing retailer network and cultural knowledge, we find the chances of success higher.

France is experiencing a shift in attitudes towards cross-country, moving from dull and old-fashioned towards a more trendy and performance oriented image. Even though the French cross-country market is considered smaller than the Norwegian, this is the domestic market for several of their largest competitors in terms of both insoles and cross-country. It would therefore be strategically important to enter fast to gain a first mover advantage.

Rottefella’s insoles differ from competitive products by their specialization towards the cross-country market. The insole industry relies heavily on product innovation and technology, meaning that there is challenging to differentiate based only on these terms. The three insoles should be introduced to the French market, with a special focus on brand positioning. Their pricing strategy should be between market pricing and skimming, leaning towards a premium price strategy in the introduction year. Finally, the promotion may communicate both hedonic and utilitarian values, and it will be beneficial for Rottefella to continue their tradition of celebrity endorsement, and also to train and create sales incentives for employees at retail sites.
9.0 FURTHER RESEARCH

Our research is a snapshot of the French cross-country market, whereas all our exploratory and descriptive raw data were collected between February and April, as we had to finish before the ski season were over. For future research, it would be beneficial to follow the trends in the market within a longer time-frame to develop a deeper level of knowledge. Furthermore, covering a larger geographical area would potentially allow more comparisons and also a more representative collection of data. Language constraints may have hindered some of the respondents to express themselves freely and therefore limited the flow of the semi-structured interviews. Now being aware of this, we highlight the potential to gain further insight by approaching the interviews with a fluent language level or a translator.

The group has strived to obtain relevant market statistics and numbers, to support our analysis. However, we see a clear potential for collecting more data on the retail market both in France and Norway.
10.0 REFERENCES


http://mountainlex.alpconv.org/index.php/national/france


http://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/backwardintegration.asp


11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Major resorts worldwide

Distribution of the number of major resorts worldwide (47 resorts): There are a limited number of major resorts worldwide. More than 80% of them are located in the Alps.

Source: (Vanat, International Report on Snow and Mountain Tourism, 2014)

Appendix 2 – Evolution of skier visits

Source: (Vanat, International Report on Snow and Mountain Tourism, 2014)
### Appendix 3 – Country overview; ski activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of ski areas (the number of areas &gt; 4 lifts)</th>
<th>Number of major resorts &gt; 1 lift (SV)</th>
<th>Number of lifts</th>
<th>Skier visits (SV)</th>
<th>SV/lift</th>
<th>National participation rate (in % of population)</th>
<th>Number of skiers (national)</th>
<th>Proportion of foreign skiers</th>
<th>SV per inhabitant</th>
<th>SV per foreign visitor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>10 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>3111</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>#/N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>5 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>2 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>6014</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andorra</td>
<td>3 3 1 1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>140 2184805</td>
<td>15606</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>17059</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aragonia</td>
<td>22 10 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>8 50000</td>
<td>62500</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>98414</td>
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<td>Armenia</td>
<td>3 1 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>10 7 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2082600</td>
<td>31818</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>45350</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>254 199 14</td>
<td>3028</td>
<td>5312600</td>
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<td>36.0%</td>
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<td>1.64</td>
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<td>Azerbaijan</td>
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<td>83333</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>47941</td>
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<td>6 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1200000</td>
<td>176000</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>192518</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.32</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia and Herzegovina</td>
<td>18 4 0 0 0</td>
<td>50 40000</td>
<td>90000</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>193768</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.64</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>32 7 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1200000</td>
<td>10909</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>349082</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>260 73 1 0 0</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>1220000</td>
<td>10246</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>519380</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>21 9 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>1220000</td>
<td>10246</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>519380</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>350 77 0 0 0</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>6090000</td>
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<td>0.4%</td>
<td>5718426</td>
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<td>20000</td>
<td>4000</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td></td>
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<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>17.0%</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>325 233 14</td>
<td>3595</td>
<td>5922600</td>
<td>156490</td>
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<td>8537970</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
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<td>1000000</td>
<td>7143</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>14322000</td>
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<td>14566508</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>0.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>22 12 0 0 0 0</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
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<td>5000000</td>
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<td>5.0%</td>
<td>496794</td>
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<td>0.01</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
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<td>63959</td>
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<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2000000</td>
<td>9981</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>Iran</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>39 216 5 0 0 0</td>
<td>27127</td>
<td>28100000</td>
<td>13211</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>4918594</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

14 The number of ski areas includes some very small ones; for instance in France, only 233 areas have more than 4 lifts and concentrate most of the activity
15 Average last 3 seasons or estimate
16 Ratio of domestic skier visits divided by the population.
17 Ratio of skier visits of foreign visitors divided by the total number of foreign visitors.
### Appendix 4 - Rossignol’s yearly sales of skis and boots in France

#### Comparatif (volume et valeur) - commandes initiales 11/12 - 12/13 - 13/14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fond</th>
<th>volume (nombre de paires)</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CI 11/12</td>
<td>CI 12/13</td>
<td>CI 13/14</td>
<td>13/14 vs 12/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SKIS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adultes</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 048</td>
<td>14 692</td>
<td>18 260</td>
<td>24,3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juniors</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 327</td>
<td>3 633</td>
<td>3 124</td>
<td>-10,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>25 375</td>
<td>18 525</td>
<td>21 385</td>
<td>15,4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAUSSURES de SKI de FOND</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adultes</td>
<td></td>
<td>38 740</td>
<td>26 011</td>
<td>34 559</td>
<td>32,7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juniors</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 190</td>
<td>3 860</td>
<td>3 541</td>
<td>-8,1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
<td>42 935</td>
<td>29 871</td>
<td>38 098</td>
<td>27,4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Rossignol, 2014
Appendix 5 – A list of the largest insole companies in France

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Est.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Super Feet</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td><strong>Known for:</strong> Manufacturer of insoles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Specifications:</strong> Trim/easy fit, and custom insoles. Large range of products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Places of presence:</strong> Retailors only in Vancouver, distribution all over in Europe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Number of employees:</strong> 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Price level:</strong> From 20-45€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Unkn own</td>
<td><strong>Known for:</strong> Manufacturer of performance socks, footbeds (insoles) and footwear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Specifications:</strong> Offers personalized insoles through a molding system. Diverse range of insoles for health, activity and custom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Places of presents:</strong> North- America, Europe, Asia and Australia. Have web-shop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Price level:</strong> From 33-44€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spenco</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td><strong>Known for:</strong> Innovative healthcare company.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Specifications:</strong> Divided into two main categories; stability, classic, comfort and performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Places of presents:</strong> Products sold in over 84 countries around the world. Have web-shop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Price level:</strong> From 15-37€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FootBalance</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td><strong>Known for:</strong> Production of only customized insoles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Specifications:</strong> Medical background. Two categories; quick fit and 100% customized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Places of presence:</strong> Sold by retailers in 20 countries on 3 continents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Price level:</strong> Approximately 45€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidas</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td><strong>Known for:</strong> Technology, innovation, and performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Specifications:</strong> Has a wide collection of insoles specialized to winter sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Places of presence:</strong> Worldwide, Numbers of employees: around 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Price level:</strong> From 10- 35€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td><strong>Known for:</strong> global brand in the biking industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Specifications:</strong> Specialized on bikes and bike equipment. Insoles developed for performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Place of presents:</strong> Delivers worldwide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Price level:</strong> From 25-37€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sof Sole</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td><strong>Known for:</strong> Athletic footwear accessories.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Specifications: producers of insoles, socks and shoe care. Focus on performance, functionality and comfort. Have web-shop.

Place of presence: Located worldwide. (No store locations in France)

Price level: From 15-30€


Appendix 6 – A list of the largest cross-country companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Est.</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Diamond Equipment</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Formerly Chouinard Equipment (founded in 1957), Black Diamond first entered the ski market in the early 1980s with the XCD telemark binding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fischer</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>One of the largest brands through the 1960s-80s,. Today Fischer concentrates on back-country and cross-country skis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peltonen</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Produces competition level skis with advanced nanocarbon technology at the Heinola ski factory, markets cross-country skis for all price classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rønning treski</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Historic producer of mainly cross-country but also other types of skis such as Telemark, Big Mountain, and Hunter. Currently the only producer of wooden skis in Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SkiTrab</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Family run company. Specialises in lightweight ski touring skis for competition and recreational use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rossignol</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>Introduced one of the first successful all-round fibreglass ski designs. Built a major conglomerate in the 1990s, including Rossignol, Dynastar, Lange, Look, Kerma and other brands. CEO, Bruno Cercley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salomon</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Started as a binding company, but made a famous foray into boots during the 1980s, and finally to skis in the 1990s. Another major conglomerate of the 1980s/90s, along with K2, Head and its primary competitor, Rossignol. Salomon owned Atomic, Volant, Dynamic and non-ski sporting companies Wilson and Arc'Teryx. Purchased by Adidas in 1997 and sold to Amer Sports in 2005.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Wikipedia, 2014)
Appendix 7 – Rottefella’s financial statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Statement</th>
<th>Rottefella</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year</strong></td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Sales</td>
<td>158,745,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Profit</td>
<td>24,029,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return on Assets (%)</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Results (%)</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current ratio</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity ratio (%)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt Ratio</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Proff.no, 2014)

Appendix 8 – The resource-based view

The resource-based view is a tool to analyze the internal conditions of a company, where the competitive advantage and superior performance of an organization is measured by the distinctiveness of its capabilities. Johnson et al. (2008, pp: 95-99), further define the strategic capabilities as “the resources and competences of an organization needed for it to survive and prosper”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Competences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Threshold capabilities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Core competences</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threshold resources</td>
<td>Unique resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tangible</td>
<td>• Tangible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intangible</td>
<td>• Intangible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Johnson et.al 2008)
Resources and competences

The physical and non-physical assets of an organization illustrate the difference between tangible and intangible resources. These are divided into four broad categories, namely physical resources, financial resources, human resources (tangible) and intellectual capital (intangible). Competences are defined as “the skills and abilities by which resources are deployed effectively through an organization’s activities and processes” (Johnson et.al. 2008), meaning that it is not enough for a company like Rottefella to have exquisite resources if they are not used effectively.

The physical resources of Rottefella include their main office in Klokantarua, production facilities in Norway and China and distribution partners in more than 25 countries. Their website has been updated and redesigned and is attractive and easy to navigate through for final consumers.

The financial resources of Rottefella are considered to be strong; with operating revenue in 2012 of 158.745 million NOK and earnings before income taxes was 33.425 million NOK in 2012. The liquidity ratio is considered as good (1.7) and Rottefella has a profitability of 46.9 percent (proff.no, 2014).

Human resources consist of their own employees, which counted 75 in 2014. According to Rottefella’s marketing manager, Torstein Myklebostad, their main challenge is that they lack enough human resources to expand internationally on their own, and due to this they are dependent on distributors and agents when launching new products abroad.

The intellectual capital of Rottefella consists of patents in product innovations and “goodwill”. In Norway, the brand recognition can also be considered as an important intellectual capital. Due to extensive use of OEM agreements and distributors, Rottefella as an independent brand is not as recognized abroad. However, in the home market the company still struggles with the coherence between their brand identity and positioning and the brand image in the consumers mind. According to Myklebostad, the brand is still perceived as
traditional and non-exiting in the Norwegian market. Lately, Rottefella has been working to improve their brand image, by communicating and emphasizing on their technology and innovation and has also redesigned and updated the brand logo, product packaging and their website.

Threshold competence

Threshold levels of competence will change according to activities from competitors and new entrants, or if critical success factors change. To develop new and efficient ways to accommodate orders and customer service is a competence that allows Rottefella to adapt to future needs. They are currently solving this by providing a retailer portal for online orders and a free E-learning program to all retailers. To meet the future requirements and needs from customers, Rottefella will have to make trade-offs in order to create customized and additional value for both customers and consumers. Rottefella’s main threshold competences include their knowledge about the Norwegian market and their brand image. However, they cannot compete at the same level as their main competitors based on only their threshold capabilities.

Unique resources and core competences

Johnson et al. (2008) defines core competences as “the skills and abilities by which resources are deployed through an organization’s activities and processes such as to achieve competitive advantage in ways that others cannot imitate or obtain”. A unique resource for Rottefella would be the company’s established brand in the telemark and Nordic skiing, resulting in a high level of specialization. As a result, this will contribute to their competitive advantage when launching insoles for the cross-country market. Moreover, Rottefella’s combination of skills and resources are enabling them to create and sustain their core competence in the production and development of ski bindings for telemark and Nordic ski.
Appendix 9 – Rottefella’s product line

Telemark
- NTN Freeride
- NTN Freeride Colour Edition
- NTN Mounting plate and heel
- Freedom

Children
- Dino
- Nemo

Cross Country Insole
- Touring
- Xcelerator Insole
- Xcelerator Skate Insole
- Xcelerator Classile

Back Country
- Super Telemark
- BC Manual
- BC Magnum
- BC Auto

Touring
- Mounting Plate
- Touring Auto
- Touring Manuel

Active
- Exercise

Racing
- 9 Prod:
  - Xcelerator SSR
  - Xcelerator Xcelerator woman’s edition
  - Xcelerator junior
  - Xcelerator Skate Spacer
  - Xcelerator flex

- Marit Bjørgen Signature edition
- Petter Northug Signature edition
Appendix 10 – Rottefella’s product description for insoles

**Touring**
- The insole is made of anti-bacterial Aureright™ breathable foam, which efficiently transports moisture away. It helps to keep the warmth, while the ergonomically designed ¾ length PowerPlate provides the flexibility and stability. There is a comfort plus zone under the forefoot, which helps stabilizing and improves comfort.

The insole has a full layer of reflective insulation fabric making it warm on cold days. Extra support in the heel part helps keeping you less fatigue, and to increase the joy of skiing the whole winter through.

**Xcelerator Classic**

The Insole is designed to help you ski faster. Features are tailored to cross-country classic skiing.

Anti-bacterial Aureright™ closed-cell breathable foam efficiently transports moisture away from the skin. It helps the skier to stay warm, while the ergonomically designed ¾-length PowerPlate provides stability and power transmission.

The comfort plus zone under the forefoot further enhances stability and maximizes comfort. Specially constructed Powergrip under the toes gives better grip and kick control for peak performance.

**Xcelerator Skating**

The Insole is designed to help you ski faster. Features are tailored to cross-country skate skiing. Enabling maximum utilization of core muscle power.

Anti-bacterial Aureright™ closed-cell breathable foam efficiently transports moisture away from the skin, while the ergonomically designed full-length power plate provides the necessary stability and power transmission.

Source: (Rottefella, 2013)
Appendix 11 – Observational studies

The 14th of February 2014, we started our work by observing different sports-stores in Grenoble in order to map what types of equipment available in the stores. The first store is a medium sized store located close to the city center of Grenoble. After not finding any types of ski equipment for cross-country skiing in their ski department, we contacted one of the employees, which told us that they did not sell cross-country equipment this year. This can be interpreted as a sign of the lack of popularity for cross-country skiing, since both snowboard and alpine skis were heavily represented throughout the store. The employee also claimed that the demand for cross-country skis and equipment was relatively low, and he also indicated that their customers were skeptical towards buying specialized insoles. Moreover, he told us that consumers preferred to buy alpine equipment and rent cross-country equipment. The second store only had one model of cross-country skis and barely any equipment. Also here, an employee confirmed that the demand for cross-country skis and equipment was low. The third store is a store focusing more on high quality goods and outdoor sports, and they had a larger ski department than the other stores we visited. They had a medium range of cross-country skis, several different types of additional equipment and we found Rottefella’s cross-country ski bindings. However, also here the employees confirmed that cross-country equipment does not sell very well compared to alpine. He further explained about a lack of consumer knowledge in regards to additional ski equipment for cross-country skiing.

We also conducted an observational field trip to Lans en Vercors on the 27th of February 2014. In order to observe the consumer behavior at the resort and the behavior in the slopes, we divided us in two groups, leaving one person to observe the station and two persons to observe the activity in the slopes. Our findings at the ski center was that the prices related to cross-country skiing are on average half of the prices for alpine activities, both the price for renting the equipment and use of the slopes. People around this area were all dressed for alpine, and there was no sign of cross-country skiers. This was also confirmed during observational studies inside the cabin that rented out ski equipment. We sat
inside the cabin for one hour to observe the consumer behavior, and of the 43 people renting equipment within that hour, 100 percent rented alpine equipment.

In contrast to the alpine slopes, the cross-country slopes were quite empty. We observed a majority of senior couples (age between 60-75 years) and a few younger couples (25-35). Some were skiing classic in a very calm pace to enjoy the silence and the nature. The younger users seemed to be more interested in skating in a faster pace, using it as a form of workout. Furthermore, we observed several users skiing alone in high speed, wearing more professional ski outfits and equipment. To them, exercise and performance seemed important. Also, there were a few children in the slopes, aged 10-15. When we had been skiing for 1.5 hour, we arrived at one of the many rest areas. One group of middle-aged skiers were eating lunch at the tables; sharing wine and different types of food. On the table beside, another couple shared a warm meal and hot beverage on a thermos. They appeared not to be concerned about time; this was all a part of a social day outside, enjoying the scenery and the great weather.
Appendix 12 - Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Dans le cadre de notre licence à l'École de Management de Grenoble, nous réalisons une étude du marché Français du ski de fond.

Remplir ce questionnaire ne vous prendra pas plus de 7 minutes et vos réponses resterons anonymes.

Merci pour votre participation!

### Pratique sportive et exercice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pas du tout d'accord</th>
<th>Pas d'accord</th>
<th>Indifférent</th>
<th>D'accord</th>
<th>Tout à fait d'accord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Je pratique le ski de fond pour améliorer mes performances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Je pratique le ski de fond pour passer du temps avec ma famille ou mes amis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Je pratique le ski de fond pour profiter de la nature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Preférez-vous skier:**

- [ ] Seul
- [ ] Avec un partenaire
- [ ] Avec votre famille
- [ ] Avec des amis
- [ ] Autre

### Comportement envers l'équipement sportif.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pas du tout d'accord</th>
<th>Pas d'accord</th>
<th>Indifférent</th>
<th>D'accord</th>
<th>Tout à fait d'accord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J'achète mon équipement sportif pour améliorer mes performances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J'achète mon équipement sportif pour être à l'aise dans la pratique de l'exercice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J'achète mon équipement sportif pour être à la mode</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combien d'heures par mois pratiquez-vous le ski de fond en moyenne?

[ ]

**Description du concept:**

Rottella est une entreprise spécialisée dans les fixations de ski nordique et dans les ski télémark. Ils envisagent de lancer une nouvelle gamme de produits pour le marché français.

Imaginez que vous vous rendez dans un magasin de sport et que vous trouvez en rayon le modèle de semelles thermo-formées suivant:

“Ces semelles sont spécialement conçues pour pratiquer le ski de fond (classique et skating). Elles présentent l'avantage de procurer un meilleur équilibre, une position de pied optimale, un support talon renforcé et apportent plus de puissance musculaire. Les semelles thermo-formées s'adaptent à tous les types de chaussures de ski, et sont spécialement étudiées pour "mémoriser" la forme de votre pied."
Etes-vous sensible à ce type de produit ?

Merci de marquer votre réponse sur l’échelle de 1 à 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Combien seriez-vous prêt à payer pour ce produit ?


Raisons pour acheter ce type de produit

Merci de choisir l’affirmation qui vous correspond le plus et répondre à toutes les questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pas du tout d’accord</th>
<th>Pas d’accord</th>
<th>Indifférent</th>
<th>D’accord</th>
<th>Tout à fait d’accord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pour améliorer mes performances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour le confort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pour être équipé de matériel dernier cri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Raisons pour ne pas acheter ce type de produit

Merci de choisir l’affirmation qui vous correspond le plus et répondre à toutes les questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pas du tout d’accord</th>
<th>Pas d’accord</th>
<th>Indifférent</th>
<th>D’accord</th>
<th>Tout à fait d’accord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Je n’en vois pas l’intérêt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engendre plus de frais</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Je ne tirerai pas avantage de ce produit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sexe:

Homme

Femme

Âge:

Nationalité

Lieu de résidence

Niveau d'études:

- Lycée
- Licence
- Master
- Doctorat/DEA

Secteur d’emploi:

- Fonctionnaire
- Marketing/Communication
- Agriculture
- Banques/Finance
- Services
- Détaillants
- Sport
- Santé
- Administration
- Autre
Appendix 13 – Descriptive data from SPSS

13.1 Collection method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.2 Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homme</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femme</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.3 Age

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>40.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>16.116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.4 Age categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 13.5 Nationality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marocco/France</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 13.6 Region of residence

**Region of residence in %**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region of residence</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Rhône-Alpes</th>
<th>Basse-Normandie</th>
<th>Île-de-France</th>
<th>Languedoc-Roussillon</th>
<th>Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur</th>
<th>Pays de la Loire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 13.7 Willingness to pay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How much are you willing to pay for the product</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>49.74</td>
<td>49.826</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 13.8 Average hours practicing cross-country per month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many hours in average do you practice cross country skiing per month</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>9.76</td>
<td>8.759</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13.9 Social skiing preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a partner</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With family</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix 14 - Results from analyses in SPSS**

14.1 Attitudes

14.1.1 Description ANOVA test: Are you sensitive towards this product and age_cat2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.9167</td>
<td>1.13074</td>
<td>.18846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.4783</td>
<td>1.14967</td>
<td>.16951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3.2581</td>
<td>1.41345</td>
<td>.25386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>3.2389</td>
<td>1.23400</td>
<td>.11608</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.2 Demographics

14.2.1 Descriptives: How many hours in average do you practice cross country skiing per month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval for Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Bound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>10.4535</td>
<td>9.27445</td>
<td>1.00009</td>
<td>8.4650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mountain</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6.0208</td>
<td>6.34254</td>
<td>1.29467</td>
<td>3.3426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>9.4864</td>
<td>8.88522</td>
<td>.84717</td>
<td>7.8073</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.2.2 Descriptives: How many hours in average do you practice cross country skiing per month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many hours in average do you practice</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cross country skiing per month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.8750</td>
<td>6.07027</td>
<td>1.01171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12.0357</td>
<td>11.88052</td>
<td>2.24521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8.5703</td>
<td>9.51059</td>
<td>1.18882</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14.3 Segmentation

14.3.1 Gender and 4/5 on sensitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Homme</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femme</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.3.2 Place of residence and 4/5 on sensitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Mountain</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mountain</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.3.3 Description of segment that scores 4/5 on sensitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I buy my equipment to enhance my performance</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.4419</td>
<td>1.07576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy my equipment to feel comfortable when I practice</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4.2128</td>
<td>.80585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I buy my equipment to look fashionable</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.0233</td>
<td>1.14410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for buying_Performance</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.5778</td>
<td>1.05505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for buying_Comfort</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>4.5319</td>
<td>.62035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for buying_Latest news</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2.1591</td>
<td>.93866</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.3.4 Gender and 4/5 on practice cross-country to enhance performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Homme</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femme</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.3.5 Place of residence and 4/5 on practice cross-country to enhance performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid Mountain</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mountain</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 14.3.6 Social preferences and 4/5 on practice cross-country to enhance performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 14.3.7 Description of segment that scores 4/5 on practice cross-country to enhance performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many hours in average do you practice cross country skiing per month</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>11.2627</td>
<td>8.63751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much are you willing to pay for the product</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>300.00</td>
<td>63.5556</td>
<td>58.80072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>73.00</td>
<td>41.1290</td>
<td>15.40650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 15 – Other relevant results from SPSS

15.1 Correlation between sensitivity and reasons for not buying

It is interesting to test to see whether or not there is a correlation between sensitivity towards the product and reasons for not wanting to buy the insoles.

H0: There is no correlation
H1: There is a correlation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for not buying the product</th>
<th>Are you sensitive towards this product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No interest</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: -.440** Sig. (2-tailed): .000 N: 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too expensive</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: -.434** Sig. (2-tailed): .000 N: 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No perceived benefit</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation: -.518** Sig. (2-tailed): .000 N: 103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

We see that there is a negative correlation between all the reasons for not buying the product and sensitivity, which indicates that respondents that responds that they are highly sensitive towards the insoles are disagreeing to the statements No interest, Too expensive and No perceived benefit. The t-test shows a p-value 0.000 on every variable < than α (0.01) and since there is only 1% chance of making a type 1 error, and we can reject H0.
15.2 Correlation between skiing behavior and purchase behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman's rho</th>
<th>I practice cross country ski to enhance my performance</th>
<th>I buy my equipment to feel comfortable when I practice</th>
<th>I buy my equipment to look fashionable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correlation coefficient</td>
<td>.465**</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>-.070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.664</td>
<td>.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| I practice cross country ski to spend time with friends and family | Correlation coefficient | .110 | .127 | -.053 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .271 | .187 | .593 |
| N | 102 | 110 | 104 |

| I practice cross country ski to enjoy the nature | Correlation coefficient | -.017 | .190* | -.254** |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .866 | .046 | .009 |
| N | 103 | 110 | 104 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
15.3 Correlation between reasons for practicing cross-country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman's rho</th>
<th>I practice cross country ski to enhance my performance</th>
<th>I practice cross country ski to spend time with friends and family</th>
<th>I practice cross country ski to enjoy the nature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to enhance my performance</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) N</td>
<td></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to spend time with friends and family</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>.114</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) N</td>
<td></td>
<td>243</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I practice cross country ski to enjoy the nature</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.352**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed) N</td>
<td></td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td>109</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

15.4 Correlation between those who practice for performance and reasons for buying Rottefella’s new insoles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I practice cross country ski to enhance my performance</th>
<th>Reasons for buying Performance</th>
<th>Reasons for buying Comfort</th>
<th>Reasons for buying Latest news</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N</td>
<td>.384**</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.308</td>
<td>.417</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>104</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Appendix 16 - The nine strategic windows

The nine strategic windows is a model developed by Solberg (1997) and is used by companies to develop sustainable strategies when faced with global competition. The model is based on how global the industry is and the individual company’s ability to adapt to this internationalization (Solberg & Lien, 2008, p. 11).

Rottefella operates in an industry that is characterized as international and they currently have a low to medium internationalization capability. According to this model they should therefore seek niches in international markets. The company has limited experience with international business, but they are in a market with global competitors. Therefore, Rottefella has chosen a strategy of distributing their products through partners in all the important international markets. By seeking niches Rottefella can limit their reference market and gain competitive

Table 4.3 Solberg’s nine strategic windows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The business’ internationalization capability</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Stay in the home market</td>
<td>Seek niches in international markets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Consolidate position in established markets</td>
<td>Consider expansion into new markets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Search new businesses</td>
<td>Prepare for globalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seek niches in international markets</td>
<td>Prepare for possible acquisitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Search for global alliances</td>
<td>Search for global alliances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Prepare for globalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Prepare for possible acquisitions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Search for global alliances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Strengthen your global position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multilocal   How global the industry is   Global
advantage over competitors in regards to specialization in technology, innovations, product development and quality.

Over time, when they develop their internationalization capability and organizational strength through an export department, Rottefella will probably move towards the window *consider expansion into new markets*. The company has developed a strategic position in international markets and has also developed a more international business culture. Strategically, the company should consider a more global approach by establishing networks and market position in strategic key markets\(^{13}\).

The advantage of the nine strategic windows is that it easily communicates the basic ideas behind it, but it has been criticized for being too vague in terms of how to define the critical variables, and that it requires information that the company does not always hold, but which is central for the strategic consideration the company have to undertake on the basis of the model.

*Appendix 17 – The product/communication mode*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Adapt</th>
<th>New</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>Straight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>adaptation</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapt</td>
<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>Dual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>invention</td>
<td>adaptation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Hollensen, 2014, p. 496)

\(^{13}\) Strategic key markets refer to the markets where the main competitors have their domestic/most profitable markets.
Appendix 18 – Interview guide B2B

General comments before the interview starts (5-10 min)
Hello, and welcome to this interview in connection with bachelor thesis in international marketing. This interview will last about one hour, and we appreciate that you answer as accurately as you can on our questions. All questions will be related to the French winter sport market, and more particularly cross-country. We will start with general questions first, and then focus more on issues relating directly to your knowledge and opinions about specialized insoles used for activities. Please take your time; there is no hurry to respond. If it is fine by you, we wish to record our conversation. The recordings will be destroyed after our thesis is delivered, and no later than 1st of July 2014. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Demographic questions (5 min)
Name:
Age:
Gender:
Nationality:
Position:
How many years of experience in this industry?

General questions (15 min)
Health and culture
- How would you describe the French/Norwegian attitude towards health?
- What do you think are the underlying motivation for physical activity?
- Do you feel like the French government is creating incentives to inspire the population to participate in sports? And how?

Skiing
- How would you describe the French/Norwegian skiing culture?
- How important is it for consumers to own their own ski equipment? Why?
  - Rent, buy
- Do you believe the majority of customers will prefer to buy ski equipment from French brands? Why/why not?

Key questions about cross-country skiing (20 min)
Cross-country skiing
- What is your perception of CCS in France/Norway?
- Which areas are most popular as a CC destination?
- How would you describe a typical CC skier?
- What do you think are their motivations when CCS? (Leisure, exercise)
- Do you go cross-country skiing? Why/why not?
  - If yes:
    - What is your personal motivation to go CCS?
    - How often?
  - If no: Why do you think others go CCS?

Ski equipment
- Which preferences do you believe customers have towards additional ski equipment?
  - What are the essentials?
- Do the need for additional ski equipment vary according to type of usage?
  - Exercise
  - Recreational
- How would you say ski equipment links to a person’s need for status?
- How do you think perceived quality affects attitudes toward price?
- Are you willing to pay more for ski equipment that will enhance your performance? Why/why not?

Insoles
- Why do you think people spend money on additional insoles?
- In your opinion, in what type of situations would people want to use insoles?
- Do you have any personal experience regarding the use of insoles?

Concluding follow-up questions (5 min)
- Are you willing to buy insoles specialized for cross-country skiing?
- What criteria would you be looking for if you were buying these types of insoles?

Summary (10 min)
- Have I understood you correctly?
- Is there anything you would like to add?

That was all we wanted to ask you. We want to thank you for your time and wish you a pleasant day.
Appendix 19 – Transcripts B2B

Christian
Employee at a small French sport chain, responsible for the ski department
Former professional skier

Nationality: French
Gender: Male

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately between 40-50 minutes. We wish to record the conversation for the purpose of transcription, if you approve that. All answers will remain anonymous.

Christian: Well, I think there is one difficulty in the French market, ehm, and this is that the ski clubs
Interviewer: Yes?
Christian: Are, they are buying the skis directly with the brands, there is a, I know Autrans ski club will buy the skis at Rossignol. But they don’t go to, I don’t know, Go Sport, Intersport or Vieux Campeur there is a big big problem.
Interviewer: Okay?
Christian: All the clubs are buying their skis directly of the brands, Rossignol, Fischer, Madshus and so on.
Interviewer: If we understand you correctly, do for example many in Autrans have Rossignol equipment? Why?
Christian: Yes, because the boss of the Nordic division in Rossignol lives in Autrans and they are testing all the new skis and all the new stuff in Autrans.
Interviewer: So this is an issue for all the sporting stores here, that they go directly to the brands?
Christian: Yes, and there is just, you have, I think three big places for Nordic skiing. You know Jura?
Interviewer: Yes.
Christian: Jura, Vercors, and maybe Haute Savoir. You know Haute Savoir?
Interviewer: I have heard about it, but not been there.
Christian: Mont Blanc.
Interviewer: Ok
Christian: There is a big place for the market, and I think, for the ski sellers in the Nordic, the Jura is representing, I think a 70% of the market (drawing the numbers on paper). In Jura, Nordic skiing is popular like in Norway.
Interviewer: Oh, okay.
Christian: This is the only place in France where cross-country skiing is a big, big sport. But here, you have the problem with Rossignol because they are all living in Vercors. (drawing) I think its 20% market in Vercors, (drawing) here, you see, here are the Alps, okay?
Interviewer: (Confirming)
Christian: Here you have the Pyrénées, you know the Pyrénées?
Interviewer: Yes.
Christian: Here I think there is a very little market; it’s just a 5% of the market in France. You have big, big sellers here, like Jean-Prof Sport, You don’t have something to write on? (finding paper) Ehm, (respondent writing down different stores) This is the top Nordic sellers in France, okay? I think there is four leaders in the cross country ski market in France, but
Interviewer: (respondent pointing at the list) so this is actually
Christian: This is, you know Go Sport, this is a discount, but they are, this is discount, they have new collections but they are sell all collection, and they really destock more and more. They sell in

“Nordic ski has more visibility now because more French people are winning”
Swedish and I think in Germany, in Finland to I think but you can go to see their website, and I think you will see countries were they work.

This one (respondent pointing) I think is two thousands pair skis by year, this one I think (pausing)
And I think at (the store) (respondent writing)

**Interviewer:** Do you have any knowledge about who the skiers are?

**Christian:** Who? You have the competitors, they are not in this market (respondent pointing at the written list), ehm they are the cyclists, you know the men that want sport in winter, and it is the most part of this market, men are doing cycling, and trail or running or sports like that. This is, I think a big part of this market. Ehm. But you don’t have many regions in France where people will buy Nordic skis you know. You just have the Alps, Jura and the Pyrenees a little and there is no more. We have Nordic skis in Paris at (the store), its, like they are selling skis, but in Grenoble its just more and more.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so you think its increasing in Grenoble?

**Christian:** Yes, It’s a really good market in Grenoble.

**Interviewer:** Since how long has it been improving?

**Christian:** Sorry?

**Interviewer:** So, has it been improving year by year or has it been stable?

**Christian:** Improving year by year, This is the fourth winter and we have a evolution, maybe in two years it will be not the same but I think this year, the Nordic ski is. The skis, bindings and shoes at (the store) it’s a you want a (pointing at the number, writing: 40000 €/ month October to March)

**Interviewer:** Ok, so from October to March?

**Christian:** From October to March, ok?

**Interviewer:** Yes. What are they buying? Are they looking for particular brands or are they just going to buy equipment or, what kind of preferences do the customers have?

**Christian:** The preferences of people?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Christian:** Ehm, You have, I think, 20 % want high level skis, ok? I think, yeah, 40 % just medium level and ehm, 20% classic skis and 20% you know, I don’t know the word in English, but in French we have randonne Nordique. This is cross-country skis that are larger, with bindings like telemark. Do you know?

**Interviewer:** Yes. How would you define high-level skis?

**Christian:** Sorry?

**Interviewer:** How would you define high-level skis?

**Christian:** What kind of people?

**Interviewer:** Yes, what kind of skis they are? Is it expensive or technical?

**Christian:** Oh, yes, this 20% (previously written), they will buy really expensive skis. Do you know these skis or not? You know Rossignols Elexium or Fischer carbonlight?

**Interviewer:** But do they buy specialized equipment? E.g they choose that type of binding and those kinds of skis, and (pointing at medium level skiers) here, do they buy packages?

**Christian:** Not packages, they have to choose, ehm, yes. And for this part (pointing at high level), people want to make some race, like Trans Jurassienne and Foulée Blanche, you know?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Christian:** And they really want good stuff and this is, most of these people are cyclists in the summer, or trailers, or something like that.

**Interviewer:** So they are buying products that can help them perform?

**Christian:** Yes, yes.

**Interviewer:** Could you describe them? Like, are they males or females, which age?

**Christian:** In this sport? (Pointing to high level skiers) No, in age I think it’s between 25- 60 in this category. But I think it is 90% for males. And just 5 or 10% for women. But here (pointing to the medium level skiers) I think there are 60% of women.

**Interviewer:** Women are in the medium level?

**Christian:** Yes, because, when you want to sell something to women, in ski, when you have, just have, her husband or something like that. Most part of the time, women will “oh, I’m just at a medium level, not really good” and if you talk with the husband, maybe he is not better than his wife and he says “Yes, I’m a really good skier and I really want good equipment”. Really, in France, its crazy.

**Interviewer:** Sounds familiar.

**Christian:** Yes, really? (Laughing)

**Interviewer:** Maybe international? Who are the lower level skiers?
Christian: All persons. In classic there is a, I think the most part is 50–80 years old. In this categories, yes, I think they are between 50–80 years old.
Interviewer: Ok, Male or women or?
Christian: Ehm, that’s a balance.
Interviewer: But, we read something saying that Nordic skiing is kind of a “geeky” sport and that it has a bad reputation? What is your opinion?
Christian: Here in France? No, it is not bad reputation. But, here, its a sport, like other sports. We are in the Alps and in the mountains and it’s a sport like football for us. But if you go to Paris or Bordeaux, its eh, the cross country skiing is for old people. Really, they are thinking that you do cross country skiing with big socks and they are thinking this.
Interviewer: It’s a stereotype?
Christian: Yes.
Interviewer: But do you think that the skiers here know all about the equipment? Now the techniques?
Christian: Its what?
Interviewer: Could the be that it is a challenge with Nordic skiing that you have to have the knowledge about the right type of wax, you have to have the knowledge about the techniques, and that some people find it very difficult. Do you think that is a challenge?
Christian: In France we have a problem with skis because you have I think, most of people who wants to learn cross country skiing, don’t want to learn classic. And this is the basic.
Interviewer: Yes?
Christian: It is not possible. You don’t have I think, I don’t know the word in English, but in French we call it: La Casse. Eh, this you are not really performing in skating when you start. You will ski for 30 minutes and you will feel (using facial expression to express exhausting). But in classic you can walk. And you have to learn something. You have to learn the balance, to learn, I think, the base of cross-country skiing. And in France a lot of, the most of people who want to learn cross-country skiing just want to learn the skating.
Interviewer: ok?
Christian: And I think this is a basic problem in France.
We don’t have a really good skier in, I don’t know, when you go skiing, the only good skiers you se are the competitors and no more.
Interviewer: So you only see the skaters?
Christian: Yes, and you have 95% who don’t ski very well. I think they are in good physical condition but technically its not. It’s an error.
Interviewer: But what do you think are their preferences when they buy equipment? Or maybe they are concerned about other things?
Christian: In these two categories (pointing to high level and medium level) you can easily sell with the ski bindings and shoes, the wax, and the iron and, because in this category (pointing to classic skiers), noboody have wax and iron. In this; yes. But in this; no. And I think you can easily sell wax and iron and table to wax and maybe if they don’t have they will buy some glasses.
Interviewer: But are they sensitive to price? For instance, like those who are high-level skiers, do you think they are willing to buy, pay “whatever” if it’s the best equipment? How is their price sensitivity?
Christian: How is?
Interviewer: How is their price sensitivity? How price concerned are they?
Christian: When somebody comes an tells you, “I really want a good ski, and I ski like that and I want to do a long distance race”, they just don’t look about the price. Never. They just want something that will be really good, and they just want to be better with this product and the skis and shoes and. But in this category (medium level), they are looking for price. I think you can sell, to this category high level shoes and medium level skis.
Interviewer: Why is that?
Christian: Because, I think, and my colleagues too, that if you want to ski very well you need to be really, you ehm. There is a, you have to have shoes with precision, you know. And if you don’t have this you cant ski very well, you don’t have really good balance, and you don’t have really good push. In skating when you want a good push, if you don’t have the heel very tight, you can’t push. (use hands to illustrate), You can’t stay in balance. It is, gliss – I just forgot the world in English, like eh.
Interviewer: Glide?
Christian: Yes, if you want to glide correctly, you have to push in a good sense. It’s stronger.
Interviewer: Ok. Have you sold any insoles or have you heard about any one using that?
Christian: Insoles? Yes, we sell insoles like Sidas, you know?

Interviewer: Yes I do.

Christian: And Superfeet, we sell these two kinds of soles, but its just, I think we sell five percent of insoles with the shoes.

Interviewer: But when your customers come in and ask for additional soles, what kind of soles are they looking for?

Christian: For me, it’s Sidas. If they really want quality, we will sell the Sidas, the multi activity, because I think, the multi activity by Sidas, you don’t have. She is not a stiff. Its, you have to form it on the “wack” and you can, but you know its something like that (shows with his hands): Here you have the heel, and here is really, I think its really stiff in this part (heel), but if you want to be good on cross country skis, you don’t have to have something stiff in this part (front). Because you will push, and then (illustrates: slide in the shoe), and eh, in skating too, you can push really, and you can glide really long time if you have something to stiff on the front. In this part of the feet, because you will push and you will stay behind in the shoe, and this is a really bad problem with the new Salomon shoes in the World Cup.

Interviewer: Okay?

Christian: The shoes are too stiff here.

Interviewer: But what are the criteria’s when the customers come and buy insoles? What are they looking for?

Christian: Oh, you have all cases. There is someone who just want to have better sensation in the shoes, and they want to feel more, what is under the feet? No, they just want more precision, you know. And there is someone has problems like, the foot is moving, or problem on the arch or on the heel. You will put a insoles within, but you have all the cases, you cant sell this kind of product to just one category.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you need to have different insoles for all the different customers?

Christian: Yes, I think, but if you want to sell it you have to have employees, that will make some effort to

Interviewer: That is trained to educate the customers?

Christian: Just to sell. Just to sell. There is a big problem, I think it’s on the outdoors sports market; if you want to make money, you have to sell additional sales. And ehm, there is a problem, a lot of sellers are just like “ok, I sell the ski, but we don’t earn any money with skis.” In France, you don’t win any money with skis. You earn money with socks, you earn money with glasses, you win money with some accessories, but never on skis, ski shoes or something. The French market is in skis is a really, really hard market and everybody is, doing everything to get a less price.

Interviewer: So you don’t have a margin anymore?

Christian: No margin. I don’t know, I think when you sell a ski like Rossignol Lexium, this is a, this year we sell it for 360 € and I think that we win, for the ski 20€. When you have paid the ski, and you have paid the taxes, the French charges, you just have 20€ left or something. You can’t win lot of money with skis. You have to win money on other things.

Interviewer: So, is it difficult to motivate the sellers, when they don’t earn that much?

Christian: Oh, I think it difficult to, you know in this market you have some, some employees who really like this job, this universe and they will do the job better than they can. And you have 50% who are just here for the job and for the pay. No more. And its, I think its really, you have to be professional to sell this type of product. There are not many shops where the employees are very professional.

It’s just my impression. But I’ve has been working at (the store) since ten years. Ok, and before, I really know this industry and this environment. And if you want to sell something like your Rottelfella insoles, you have to work with good employees to sell it. And that’s is very, this is my notes (Showing a paper with notes about the insole). Can you read French?

Interviewer: Better than speaking at least (laughing).

Christian: Here, this kind of touring product will be sold at just, and just, if the sellers take attention to that market (pointing to high level skiers) and this is the market who will be interested in insoles, who will buy for better performance, like ah, this a, better muscle use and better push. This is for the experts. They will be more interested in, by this type of product.

Interviewer: So, the more medium to lower level customers, why wouldn’t they be interested?

Christian: I think the basic customer just don’t want to pay. In France, when someone tells you, “I want classic skis and I just have, I think 200 €, and I want skis, bindings, shoes and sticks”. Ok, no more, 200, no more. And we can’t sell this kind of product, in France, when people are not interested in buying, ehm. In this part.

Interviewer: So, you would say its easier to sell this for the customers who doesn’t have a budget?
Christian: They just want whatever it takes to give them better performance and more comfort?

Interviewer: And how much do you think they will be willing to pay for this kind of product?

Christian: I don’t know, is it a step-in insole?

Interviewer: Yes, its memory foam

Christian: Yes, its step-in, you don’t have to warm it?

Interviewer: No.

Christian: Eh, ok. This kind of product, if you want to sell it, I think 30-35 €, no more. For Sidas you have a step-in for 35 € and Sidas is a French brand.

Interviewer: Ok, so you think that is important as well? If it is a French or Norwegian brand?

Christian: Yes, I think that here, Sidas is just local, and people think that its yes, good. Ah, I think French people, not all French people, but French people, like to buy French.

Interviewer: But do you think they are also brand loyal? That they want everything from one producer or do they mix, like for example having bindings from Rossignol and skis from other?

Christian: Ah, yes! For the shoes, when someone arrives at the shop and says “I want the Rossignol lexium, and in 44”, Okay, and can I see you foot please? And you see that ok, Rossignol is not possible, but you will try it now, and you will see that it’s not possible. We take good attention to the good fitting of the shoes, that’s really important. But someone has a Fischer boot, with Rottefella bindings and Rossignol skis. Just for us, it is most important for to make a good choice for the shoes first, and after we develop the skis.

Interviewer: Ok, yes.

Christian: That’s really, really, really important. I think. But here we are really specialists. We have two biathlon athletes; we have two former biathlon athletes who are selling cross-country skis here. And for us it is really important to have a good image. And when someone comes to see us for buying skis, we just want this person, when he goes skiing, to think about us and it will be, he is thinking “Oh, I need something for ski, I think about (the store)” And for us that is, I think it’s the basis.

Interviewer: But if someone comes in and say: “I want Rossignol shoes”, What would be theire underlying reason?

Christian: For this period, if someone wants Rossignol shoes, it’s because of Martin Fourcade.

Interviewer: Ok. So celebrity endorsement and skiers performance in big ski events, is this important for the brand?

Christian: Yes. I think next year, Rossignol will do, I think the best, next year. I think next year they will do the best season. I think, since 15 years, because of, since Sochi, peoples come to visit us in the shop and “do you have the skis of Martin Fourcade?” No, this is the ski of next year and “Can you keep it for me when they arrive?”

Interviewer: So you have waiting lists?

Christian: Yes, yes. In this market it is I don’t know, 20 or 25 % of the persons want the skis that are winning, and I think there is a second factor. There is this people like to buy products that who are special.

Interviewer: You think those kind of people wants this kind of products because they want to show their products to others?

Christian: 10% of this part, yes. Just for show, but not just. I think in this part of customers there are a lot of people who are doing cycling. And in cycling there is a race of the most beautiful bicycle. And I think, in France the market of Nordic skis are coming to this way. I think. Because of a, there is a, when I speak with this category of customers, they are doctors, they are engineers, I don’t know, high class. High-class people, and there is a big part of this market is skating, you know. I think the way of cross-country skiing in France is going really towards big price and ah, I think products will be more expensive.

Interviewer: Is it connected to prestige?

Christian: Yeah, and do you know the big part of cross-country shoes will be more and more expensive. Do you know that?

Interviewer: No. Is this for the whole industry?

Christian: Yeah, because you have the Madshus, they have the shoes of the high level is Nanskates and is at 1500 and, no 650€.

Interviewer: For the shoes?

Christian: Yes. The shoes. And the next Salomon, its, I think its just 60 pairs in France to sell. And it’s a, I think 850 €.

Interviewer: So you have these special editions?

Christian: In (the store) we do not have these, because it’s a micro market. I think that just this and this shop will have (pointing towards the sheet) these kinds of shoes. But, we don’t need it. In Grenoble we will have the high level shoes of Rossignol. This year it was at 260 € I think, the
special edition. And next year that’s 100 € more. And the other, in two years, it will pass another level to. That will be more.

**Interviewer:** Ok, but do you think that will exclude some of the lower levels from the sport?

**Christian:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** Ok.

**Christian:** No, no, they don’t want to exclude, but I just think there is more, I think that the cross-country market will be more like Touring market. You know ski- touring?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Christian:** I think that the direction with the market with special products, and more carbon. The reason because the price will be really up next year is because of carbon. You have, last year, you have just shoes like with just like one part like this (respondent drawing) in carbon. And next year, this part will be carbon too (respondent drawing), and this part too (respondent drawing). And the year after, in three years all this part will be in carbon too, like here and here (drawing). All this part will be in carbon, and that is really expensive to produce. And it’s really expensive to sell.

**Interviewer:** Is it because of need for differentiation or is the market changing due to this new technology?

**Christian:** Eh, I think the market is changing because cross-country is changing. I mean, that I think in the world there is better and better, and I think its better and better and I think its because you have more visibility in countries like France. The Nordic ski have more visibility because more French people are winning.

**Interviewer:** So that’s important?

**Christian:** I think, if for three years, if there is no French people who win the market will be more difficult. For this kind of customer, it’s a big part of their choice.

**Interviewer:** When France does it well in competitions, do you see any differences when people buy?

**Christian:** Yes, people will, this is a, when you sell skis to this part of people, ehm, this is not people who are just doing cross-country skiing to times per year. I think for this part it’s more like 60 or 80 days of skiing per year. And after they the season, in April or May, they are doing cycling or running or something like that. For this level (pointing at medium level on a list) sport is not the same engagement, but I think that they are sportsmen too, you know.

**Interviewer:** Can it be linked to the activity level?

**Christian:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** So you have the most active here and the least active here, at the bottom? (pointing at the list).

**Christian** For this one not the same. Because you can have some persons doing this who are also doing this (pointing at higher level).

**Interviewer:** Ok. So what are your preferences when you go skiing?

**Christian:** Me?

**Interviewer:** Yes, why do you go skiing?

**Christian:** For me, if I go skiing, I just go for me. Because I was competitor, and now I’m not. So I just want to ski for my pleasure. But I was competitor, I don’t ski with low-level skis, because I have the technique and.

**Interviewer:** So you are used to high quality skis and don’t want to go down?

**Christian:** Yeah, really. You cant, when you ski since 20 years, with good skis, you cant come back to the low- level skis, because it’s not the same sensation or feeling for your feet’s. And I think the most important, in cross-country, is the feeling under your feet. The glide feeling, I think is really better than alpine-skiing. That’s, the glide feeling is really particular.

**Interviewer:** I noticed that you sell ski-bindings from Rottefella and other brands. Does customers know what they want or do you recommend different brands?

**Christian:** Yes, I recommend, we, I think we recommend Rottefella for 80%, its just. But when people are trying the shoes, if they feel better in a Salomon shoe they will have a Salomon binding, but in 80% of the cases we are recommending Rottefella. Because I think the system is really, really better. And Salomon, the system Salomon, is, the system pilot is from the Winter Games in 1988, when Bjorn Daehlie won the 50 km, it was with the first generation of Pilot, of Salomon Pilot, and they have not changed since this time. And I think it’s, now, its really outdated. And the Rottefella system, is I think better and more in, progressive.

**Interviewer:** So what do you think, the perception of Rottefella, do they have a particular image in France? Or do people know about Rottefella?

**Christian:** People are thinking that Rottefella is Rossignol. Because of 20 years ago, when you have, 20 years ago in France you cant find branded shoes like Alpina, there is no Alpina. There is not the Fischer shoes, and you cannot find more than two brands in shoes in France 15 years ago.
Its Salomon and Rossignol. And the bindings, Rottefella was sold at Rossignol skis, and where not branded Rottefella.

**Interviewer:** No?

**Christian:** Lot of people is thinking that it’s the same.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so they don’t really have this image yet, in France. Is it distinctive enough?

**Christian:** No. You have to show what is a Rottefella product and why it’s better.

**Interviewer:** Ok, and then you think it’s important to target the segment (pointing at high–level skiers), should they focus on the functionality of the product to signal the position?

**Christian:** Yes, they should really focus on it. If they are marketing. I often tell to people, when I speak about Rottefella, I think I tell them, just “It’s a Norwegian brand, and I think Norwegian can explain us a lot of things about cross-country”.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so it’s not a disadvantage that they are Norwegian, but French people prefer French brands?

**Christian:** Yes. The French people don’t like things that are made in China. Just if it’s made in Norway, or in Deutschland, I don’t know, in Austria, its good. It’s ok. In Europe it’s ok. But here, in this city (Grenoble) it is really important with Rossignol.

**Interviewer:** But should the products be made in Europe or is it enough to have a brand from for example in Norway?

**Christian:** I think in the insoles it is not the most important factor. When the people want to buy a jacket or shoe or something like that its really important. But not for the insoles.

*Thank you for your participation.*
Alexandre

Managing director of a large cross-country resort in France

Nationality: French
Gender: Male

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately between 40-50 minutes. We wish to record the conversation for the purpose of transcription, if you approve that. All answers will remain anonymous.

Interviewer: We have heard that you are engaging in activities to improve the knowledge about cross-country skiing in France?
Alexandre: I don’t understand the question.
Interviewer: I heard that there is a lot of, So Nordic! etc., that you have campaigns to increase awareness. Marketing so people can be more aware?
Alexandre: Yeah we try that.
Interviewer: How long has this been? When did you start the So Nordic! campaign?
Alexandre: The resort was developed during the Olympic Games in Grenoble.
Interviewer: In -68?
Alexandre: Yeah in -68. And since -68 we have developed tracks and activities, all equipment and everything. So we have a very strong reputation of, you know, Nordic tracks and Nordic activities. We have a big event for that aussie, also. And we have developed every time our tracks and we are the first snow canons in Nordic skis in France. We can produce a lot of snow and we are the first in this domain. So it is important.
Interviewer: And now others have the snow canon as well, or only here? You are the only one to produce the snow?
Alexandre: We are the first and we are the first for the volume.
Interviewer: But how do you consider the attention towards cross-country skiing now?
Alexandre: It was important in -68 and it is important now.
Interviewer: So it is stable?
Alexandre: The main activity for the resort, but now alpine skiing is very important too.
Interviewer: Ok, so, do you have any ideas about who the people who go cross-country skiing, who they are?
Alexandre: First of all the market is decreasing. We have lost 50% of frequentation of number of customers
Interviewer: 50%?
Alexandre: Yes. Since 10 years. 12 years now, so
Interviewer: That’s a lot.
Alexandre: Yes that is a lot. And our activities, our business our money, is equal but we have increased the price. So we lose the frequentation and we increase the price to break even.
Interviewer: Do you know the reason for why it is decreasing?
Alexandre: Because we, in France, it’s general not only for (referring to the skiresort). In France and Nordic activities we have sold activities as sport, not for leisure, or walking, or picnic or. So, we (pausing). A lot of people don’t want this part of sports and they rejected these activities. And skating is a sport. So it is very difficult and we, now we developed tracks, classic tracks, more than for skating.
Interviewer: To accommodate those who want to go for leisure?
Alexandre: Or walking, with family and friends. But now our business is equal, it is okay, but our customers have changed.
Interviewer: The age?
Alexandre: They are younger. Between 45 years old and 60. But not many people after 60 years old or before. We have a lot of older people as our customers and ehm a lot of families with young people, you can se.
Interviewer: We met some earlier today, families with children.
Alexandre: Yes it is important because children are our next customers. For us and all the resorts here.
Interviewer: Do you see any specific trends in the market?
Alexandre: The market in France is, we say that it is mature. So we can’t expect big increase or big decrease, it’s mature.

Interviewer: What kind of measurements do you introduce to create attention? The ski school, école du ski?
Alexandre: Oui.

Interviewer: And I also heard that you have a program every Saturday, with free skiing classes?
Alexandre: Yes.

Interviewer: How do you feel the response is to that?
Alexandre: We try to develop quality, because now to keep these customers we try to develop qualities and some entertainment around the ski activities. So it is 2 hours around the free ski on Saturday, or ski during the night, a lot of moments, good moments for the customers outside the ski journey.

Interviewer: So you try to do a lot of different things to create more attention?
Alexandre: Yes.

Interviewer: But do you know who are participating in these events?
Alexandre: A lot of families with younger children.

Interviewer: But do you have a lot of marketing around these events or is it something people hear about?
Alexandre: No, we have not time to develop a lot of marketing and we don’t have a lot of money to put in this activity, so it is all communication as marketing. Nordic ski is very important for the resort but it don’t produce a lot of money or a lot of big business. Alpine skiing yes, but Nordic skiing is a little ehm.

Interviewer: Is it because it costs more to have the slopes in the right condition?
Alexandre: Yes. And good slopes in good quality and it costs a lot for us and for our organization. For the (pausing) To prepare the slopes. And ehm.

Interviewer: Do you think that when you set the price higher, does it exclude some of the skiers?
Alexandre: I don’t understand your question.

Interviewer: (trying to speak French) Pour archant (pausing) Le economique (pausing) Tu peut (pausing) Exclude des segment. Ehm. By raising the prices. Tres chere pour le moyen family ou?
Alexandre: What, the price strategy?

Interviewer: Yes?
Alexandre: Nordic activities are cheaper, yes really.

Interviewer: So you can. So you have (pausing) So the limit of the economy is not a barrier to go skiing? They can afford it, no? Compared to alpine, it’s more expensive?
Alexandre: Yes, alpine is around eh 20€ for a day and Nordic is around 8€ for a day, so it’s (pausing) cheaper.

Interviewer: Do you think the Olympic games (pausing)
Alexandre: Sochi or -68?

Interviewer: Sochi. Do you think it has any effect?
Alexandre: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: Do you se more activity when there is Winter Olympics?
Alexandre: No, but I think that for children between 12 and more, they have seen the athletes skating and they have (pausing) We have seen that just after the Olympic games we can see more children in the slopes and they want to try and they want to (pausing).

Interviewer: They see it on TV and want to try it themselves?
Alexandre: To do the same that Martin Fourcard (pausing) or
Interviewer: Yes. But do you see that (pausing).
Alexandre: Or Bjørndalen!

Interviewer: But do you see that after these events there is a peak and then it goes down again, or is it
Alexandre: Yes. Sometimes. It is like that, yes. But you can have 100 people want to try and only 10 will be very (pausing) new customers during the next season so. But it is important for us.

Interviewer: Do you know if the equipment, the ski equipment, is it common to buy or rent?
Alexandre: A lot of our, a lot of our customers are buying the equipment, yes.

Interviewer: Ok. Are they those who ski frequently?
Alexandre: Yes.

Interviewer: How is it when you buy here, you buy seasonal cards or do you have the frequency of seasonal cards contra like one time tickets? Is there many people buying single tickets or daytime tickets or is it monthly or season?
Alexandre: Season card is 30 percent of our sales, after we have (pausing) comment en anglais… (French mumbling). For journée?
Interviewer: Oh. A day, yes?
Alexandre: Yes. And after the six day, semaine, for the week. 30 percent each segment.
Interviewer: Ok 30/30/30. What is the remaining ten?
Alexandre: The very. The most (pausing) At the beginning of the selling, in December, it is really important for us to produce snow and to be open before the other, the other resorts to sell season cards. It is really important, yes. For our business.
Interviewer: When do you open the slopes?
Alexandre: Eh this year it is, it was the 30, uhm twenty, twenty (pausing) twenty of November.
Interviewer: Oh. Ok. It is quite early?
Alexandre: Yeah. Yeah it’s early. And (pausing) generally it’s around the beginning of December.
Interviewer: Ok so you could start sooner this year.
Alexandre: In Nordic. In Nordic yeah.
Interviewer: When do you think you have to close the slopes for this season?
Alexandre: At the end of March.
Interviewer: You need to be quick when trying to complete our survey!
Alexandre: You have to question for customers?
Interviewer: Yes. Because Rottefella is considering to introduce, Alexandre: Can I? (Points toward the questionnaire)
Interviewer: Yes, sure. It is actually in French as well. (reading).
Interviewer: What do you think is the main brands they use here for cross-country skiing?
Alexandre: For skiing? For boots? Ehm, no?
Interviewer: Yeah well, if its like Rossignol have a bigger market share than Salomon?
Alexandre: Rossignol, Fischer, Salomon, one way? And for walks and. You know Volla?
Interviewer: Yes?
Alexandre: But Rossignol is just down in the valley and a lot of people is (pausing) of Rossignol. Lives here in this area, in Vercors, so.
Interviewer: So they use Rossignol equipment?
Alexandre: Yeah they use it. It is one of the partners of the resort, so we have Rossignol.
Interviewer: We were thinking we could continue to talk about cross-country equipment?
Alexandre: Ok, ok.
Interviewer: Ahm, but I don’t know if you know if it’s common to use extra insoles for skiing?
Alexandre: No. No. Not so common in France.
Interviewer: No?
Alexandre: No. I don’t know ehm the same product in other (pausing). So it is a product for athletes?
Interviewer: It’s a product for athletes and also for leisure.
Alexandre: But for competition, for people who practice Nordic skiing in competition or?
Interviewer: Yes its performance enhancing and they are testing it on eh professional skiers. They have three different. So you can get one for skating, one for classic and then you have the difference between if you want to perform, go faster and better and get a better grip, or if you want more comfort and stability.
Alexandre: And eh, what is the opinion of the Norwegians who buy this product?
Interviewer: I think that they positive towards the product. They just launched it on the market this season, so this season is the first that they try.
Alexandre: Yeah. But the difference of Norway and Sweden and France, it’s eh Nordic ski is a very little little little market in France. And we don’t have the Nordic culture. For example, there’s not. Our customers (pausing), don’t use wax. They don’t know how to put and apply on the ski, and they bring the skis to the sport shop and they do it. So they don’t have a cultural approach to this.
Interviewer: No, its difficult to know “should we have the blue one or red one? How big is the market in France in general?
Alexandre: Very small, very small. Yeah.
Interviewer: So that’s one of our main reasons to research if (pausing) to understand the cultural differences between the Nordic market and the French market and. Yes. And to see if there is any possibilities
Alexandre: Mhm mhm.
Interviewer: If you don’t buy wax, you might not buy other extra equipment’s?
Alexandre: Perhaps you for this type of product you its easy. You buy and you put on your shoes and its finished. So with wax it’s harder and you have to learn about how to apply it.

Interviewer: Do you have any, do you do anything to teach the consumers about wax, or?

Alexandre: No. No.

Interviewer: Is it more the shops?

Alexandre: Yeah, in shops yes. But eh and in the shops there is sometimes a lesson, a lesson, yes? For waxing your skis. But it’s not so popular in France. And I have some friends who bring their ski in the sport shop but they don’t use wax and apply themselves on the ski.

Interviewer: If you don’t have the right wax on the skis as well it is not that funny. We have been trying these wax free skis and then we had these big lumps of snow on our skis, so we couldn’t go up and we couldn’t go down.

Alexandre: Because the reason is a lot of Nordic skiers in France are not (pausing) they are not learned the wax or the Nordic culture in clubs or associations or in a (pausing) so the practice, they beginning to practice Nordic skis at 30 years old.

Interviewer: Yes?

Alexandre: It’s new customers for skis and they don’t have the (pausing) Apprentisage?

Interviewer: Yes. But so, Nordic skiing is not an association sport, it is something you do privately in France, you don’t enroll in a club or an association?

Alexandre: Yes but (pausing) there are a lot of clubs for children and they have everything about Nordic, wax and the technique.

Interviewer: So is that something that is increasing in popularity or is it something that has always been many, a lot of clubs?

Alexandre: Uh it’s always been but eh the difference is the new customers have not learned in club and they try skating immediately. They want to skate because they see the games on television, and they want to practice right now.

Interviewer: Ah, imagine start skiing in your thirties. It must be difficult.

Alexandre: Yes, and when we explain all the technical things to this new customers they say whoah!! Boring!! To complicated. “Très complique et (speaking French) wax” Il sont du mal a pied, se pas de passion de consommate. Il va faire de ski fond.

Interviewer: Compared to alpine, or?

Alexandre: Yes. Le semelle existe pour ski alpine. (Speaking French)

Interviewer: What do you think about the statement that some people goes hiking or running in the summer and then they go cross-country skiing in the winter because then they will be in the mountains, in the forest, and they will have the same scenery but they can do it all year. More like a supplement to, le substitute, skiing is a substitute to jogging and,

Alexandre: And, yes. It’s like eh fitness activities.

Interviewer: And you have the same movement.

Alexandre: And in France there is a new leisure or sports I don’t know really, what it it, it’s called Nordic walking.

Interviewer: Ok, Nordic walking?

Alexandre: Yes.

Interviewer: Is it with those raquette?

Alexandre: Walking with the,

Interviewer: Raquette? Snowshoes?

Alexandre: No, not snowshoes.

Interviewer: Oh yes we have that in Norway as well, when you power walk it’s called in Norway. What do you call it? Poles. The sticks.

Alexandre: The same sticks for Nordic ski and you walk. It’s like speed walk. Like fitness. And next summer we have developed a big event about Nordic walking for 1000 people. Here, in this place. And it’s really a new sport in France. It’s developed in town, so a lot of people in town are practicing this sport and after they can practice in mountains and (pausing) is the motivation.

Interviewer: If people enjoy the Nordic walking then that they might try the Nordic ski in winter?

Alexandre: Not sure.

Interviewer: I understand that it is the first time, but could it be a way to recruit people since people want to be active all year?

Alexandre: Yes they want to be active, but they don’t like the technique of Nordic ski, it’s very difficult for people.

Interviewer: Is it because when you are young you are not afraid of anything, you just and downhill and not afraid to fall?

Alexandre: Yes.
Interviewer: When you learn it as a child it might be easier because you don’t have to learn the technique because you learn and fail simultaneously. But maybe adults want to learn it immediately and if they fail they want to do something else that is easier. Do you have any statistics about how long they are skiing; do people go skiing for a day trip like in the weekends or is it (pausing) Do they drive up here and skiing for an hour or two during the week?
Alexandre: We have some people who come here to practice during all the weeks, because they do only Nordic skis. And after we have families who practice alpine ski in the morning and Nordic in the after noon, and next day it’s snowshoes and.. So they practice different activities during the week, during two days. And (pausing) but its families. Because children want to discover all the activities. And after we have people in couples who are passionate of Nordic and they come here to make ski, too.
Interviewer: Are they generally from Rhône-Alpes or is it also French people from all places in France, do you have a lot of French tourism?
Alexandre: We have 70 % of Rhône-Alpes and after Paris or another region from France, but a lot of local customers. 1 % of English. Have you seen Autrans is “twin” with Lillehammer?
Interviewer: Yes, I have seen it, with the Norwegian flag. That’s nice. There were several people talking about Lillehammer. The one we asked earlier today as well, he has been to Lillehammer because he knew someone there. Have you been to Norway, Lillehammer?
Alexandre: No, in Sweden and Finland but not Norway. For master cup I went to Falun in Sweden to prepare the event and to. Because they is hold the master worldcup in 2007 I think and Autrans two years ago. 2 years after.
Interviewer: Is cross-country skiing an important income for this area?
Alexandre: Yes. Local economy. For hotel, for sport shop of course. Yes. And for local employment.
Interviewer: And you provide free shuttle bus?
Alexandre: Yes, if you buy your ski pass here in Autrans.
Interviewer: But if you could describe a typical French cross-country skier, how would you describe him/her?
Interviewer: But do you see, is it more femme or homme?
Alexandre: It’s difficult (pausing) Men, 50 years old. And (pausing) who made one or two competition during the winter, but not more. They practice two times during the week for two hours, max. I think, but it’s very difficult to know.
Interviewer: But then it sounds a bit like people do participate a little in some competitions? So they practice regularly? That they do it a couple of days per month.
Alexandre: Yes, but we haven’t got a lot of competition open to everybody in Nordic skiers
Interviewer: Do you know which competitions that are the biggest one in France?
Alexandre: In France the biggest event is Trans Jurassienne; it’s in the Jura region and after its Autrans with the Foulee Blanche ski marathon.
Interviewer: And when is it usually?
Alexandre: January. And this in February.
Interviewer: And that perhaps is something that contributes to the stereotype of cross-country skiing to be sporty, instead of a family activity perhaps? If it’s.. Does it increase the association with performance instead of leisure, you think?
Alexandre: No, I don’t understand your question. Between leisure and sports?
Interviewer: If there is a lot of attention around these events, does it create an image of a very performance oriented sport instead of leisure family activities?
Alexandre: Alors, Trans Jurassienne bring the sports and the competition, and here in (referring to the skiresort) we have an event with lots of families and children. Because, we have four days of events. Two days is only for children, only children in the slopes, after we have one day for classic ski and the last day, the biggest, with skating, with families and competition. We mix the two, leisure and sports in the same day, in the same event, on Sunday.
Interviewer: So you make an event out of it?
Alexandre: Mhm. And before we’ve (pausing) 16.000 participants and now, 7.000 in four days of activities. And (writes), And the during the 80s, we have train that will come from Paris to Grenoble only to bring our customers to le Foulée Blanche. In train. That was really a big event, with TV and yes.
Interviewer: Yes, we heard that it was a really big peak in cross-country in the 80s.
Alexandre: Yes. And, limage du ski fond, est très grande. Aujourd’hui il est plus petit. Le frequentation et un momentant, le ski fond dans sport de le trail, le running, tout les activites Nordic running, le ski fond se un activitie la ce mode aujourd’hui, mais (referring to the ski resort)
les activités, le trail se marche beaucoup. Le commence, mais le ski fond, ce danse activités, se (pausing) Mais, sévèrement, se légère. Mais peut être demain, sera prendre les activités cours.

**Interviewer**: Some sports are often in cycles?

**Alexandre**: In the economy it’s a lot of theory of cycles (pausing)

**Interviewer**: Do you see, like when you have classic, and skating, and biathlon, you have the most popular within, is there like different segments or is they like all mixed?

**Alexandre**: For our customer or France?

**Interviewer**: France.

**Alexandre**: They all are. Because in France we don’t have the culture of Nordic ski so someone in Lyon or Grenoble can’t make the different between classic, biathlon or skating – it’s Nordic ski.

**Interviewer**: But you have a bigger culture with alpine?

**Alexandre**: Yes. We have in France the biggest domain for alpine skiing in the world, but only 8% of the population are going to spend holiday in an alpine resort.

**Interviewer**: Only 8%?

**Alexandre**: Yes, the rest is (pausing) rempoussant le ski fond pour vacance hiver, pour ski alpine.

**Interviewer**: Mais, the rest they come from Italy, Switzerland?

**Alexandre**: Russian! Russians, and Italian and Belgium, Netherlands, and English of course. Lot of English. But Russians are very important in big resorts.

**Interviewer**: We have also heard that it is a trend that when you go to a resort you want to have all the different activities there, so you can’t have just alpine, you must have ski du fond and snow shoeing and, because people don’t want to have just one activity, they want to choose?

**Alexandre**: Yes, that is true. The main thing during summer, hiking, cycling, swimming pool, spa, lot of thing. But the customers choose just one. But in the brochure you need to have all to be attractive.

**Interviewer**: So that’s a challenge for a resort, to have all these activities?

**Alexandre**: Yes, because all these activities are not équilibré... ehmm. Roundtable.. ehmm What’s the word. (mumbling in French) It’s an economic term.

**Interviewer**: Value, profit, income.

**Alexandre**: Profitable. So you have to, too have all these activities, but all the activities are not profitable.

**Interviewer**: Ski du fond is profitable, or no?

**Alexandre**: Just a little bit.

**Interviewer**: So it’s more like helping to attract people to the resort.

**Alexandre**: Alpine is profitable, Nordic ski are not so much. And swimming pool is absolutely not profitable. We have a swimming pool during the summer, but it’s not profitable. (Checking his computer)

**Interviewer**: We accessed the So Nordic! website, so we managed to download all the pictures and everything, the. It’s a very good site. (Silence) Do you have any numbers or statistic about how many French go ski du fond during a season? In (referring to the ski resort he manages).

**Alexandre**: In (ski resort)? Oh yes. In other resorts no, but in (referring to ski resort), yes. Of course yes. I give you. (clicking from computer). Ehm (pausing) Could be difficult to explain this in English, but uhm. To measure frequentation on utilize quelque chose le s’appelle “journée skier”. Because we have ski pass for season, we think it’s about the people use, about 20 day of ski during the season. And we sell 2 ski pass for the week and for the day, so we mix all the,

**Interviewer**: Data?

**Alexandre**: Data, and we have this statistic, and in Nordic ski, next season we have this number of “journée skier”. It’s the frequentation, you understand?

**Interviewer**: Frequency?

**Alexandre**: No, not frequency.

**Interviewer**: The total amount of visitors during the season?

**Alexandre**: Ehm, yes. It’s difficult in English to explain this ratio.

**Interviewer**: But is it with people that visit several times, that they come back frequently? (on the computer, searching Google translate)

**Alexandre**: Yes, number of visitors.

**Interviewer**: That comes back?

**Alexandre**: If one person come and buy for a season, he comes 20 times in the resort.

**Interviewer**: Ah, so it’s the, you multiple the tickets sold with the estimated visited times?

**Alexandre**: Yes.

**Interviewer**: Ok, so you estimate that 130.000 visitors,

**Alexandre**: In the season.

**Interviewer**: Ok. And actually, it’s been. This has increased since last season (pointing on sheet).
Alexandre: Yes, but a bit up and down. Like snow. Yes. And here it’s in alpine ski. You know it’s similar.

Interviewer: But, do you think that is because (referring to the ski resort) is known for cross-country, so people go here most for cross-country?

Alexandre: Yes, we are the third resort in France for good cross-country skiing, so this number is important. And after you can see here, how one visitor brings money to our organization from Nordic ski and for alpine skis.

Interviewer: So you see that it’s only five times in but different. Three times more with alpine. Is the alpine skier paying for cross-country?

Alexandre: Well no and yes. No. But it’s not the same model organization. So it’s difficult to compare. Alpine skiing is very expensive activity for us, with the, a lot of equipment. In Nordic you have not so much, the slopes and (pausing) It’s another economic model.

Interviewer: Interesting. Ok, so thank you so much.

Alexandre: If you want, it is not a secret so you can take this (giving the paper to interviewer).

Interviewer: It’s great, thank you!
Victor

Work with tourist development in France, Grenoble

Nationality: French
Gender: Male

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately between 40-50 minutes. We wish to record the conversation for the purpose of transcription, if you approve that. All answers will remain anonymous.

Interviewer: We were kind of surprised to find out that in France you often have these resorts for cross-country skiing, and you pay to get access?
Victor: What do you mean?
Interviewer: You have ski resorts for cross-country skiing as well, which you pay to use. Is that a common way of going cross-country skiing?
Victor: Yeah, yeah that’s right. And what we call in France, Ski Nordique, that is like cross country skiing and also like snowshoeing. People who go snowshoeing use all the slopes from the cross country skiing, so there is this big thing; let’s say you go cross country skiing, you pay like 7€ and all the people come on your space. They destroy everything. It is a really big thing, but it is starting to change. For example in the Alps, it is almost free everywhere but soon that will change.
Interviewer: Do you think it will be more expensive in the future to go cross-country skiing?
Victor: Maybe not, because they won’t pay anything more. It started in -85 and then it was a big thing that they had to pay. Before that, it was free. It was a special law to protect mountains and areas, and from that moment they started to pay. 7€ is not much, but I don’t think they are willing to pay more. It is the people that are doing the snowshoeing that must pay.
Interviewer: Yes, because they are destroying the slopes? We have kind of the same challenge in Norway with dogs, running in the slopes.
Victor: Yes exactly. Because normally you have the lines and the area for skating, and the tracks. People with snowshoes they destroy all the tracks. I don’t know if they are aware of that, I don’t know if they just don’t care. That is the big challenge in the Alps. I have brought some articles. Some interesting stuff, like number of kilometers, tracks, everything related to Ski Nordique. Iseré is the third destination in France (showing the articles).
Interviewer: It is the first ski destination?
Employee-tourism: It’s not the first destination, it is the third. The first is Haute Savoir, you see approximately where it is? Haute Savoir is like Chamonix. And you also have a lot of other, smaller ski resorts.
Interviewer: Is there many people that go skiing outside the resorts?
Employee-tourism: Some people do it but it is like not so many. Because they like having proper tracks.
Interviewer: And do you get more drive and exercise when you have the tracks, because then you can really go fast, instead of when you have to make track yourself?
Victor: Some people do it, like ski touring. I also do it sometimes but not with the same skis. Smaller, like the alpine then I do ski touring. I put what you call special stuff on my skis and then I can just climb the mountain.
Interviewer: Do you use a special type of..
Victor: We call it skin.
Interviewer: Oh, skin? There is no use of wax?
Victor: I have glue on my skin then I attach the skin under my skis, at the top. Then it’s like sticking.
Interviewer: It allows you to walk upwards?
Victor: Yes exactly. So that is what I do with alpine skiing, but some people also do it with cross-country skiing. Yeah, so (pausing) It’s really thin. I don’t know how they do. Because when you go cross skiing, the snow is almost several meters, not many people do that. It’s more like people living in the mountains for 50 years.
Interviewer: Ok, so they use the skis as a tool to get from A to B?
Interviewer: Because then you take them off when you are going downhill again?
Interviewer: Do people buy their own ski equipment here or do they often rent it?

Victor: Yes, you take the skins off and then you go down. Yeah, well. That’s a type of way to go skiing. Cause if you go to, like to, or whatever, its like, so when you buy the skis you have the one to go to ski resorts or ski touring. If you take the one for ski touring then you can ski everywhere. You go wherever you want.

Interviewer: I don’t know about that, but you can ask domain ski able France. I don’t know who to contact, but, (Writing it down.) We call them DSF, and here they have relevant data about lifts, about the kind of people using the lifts and I guess they have people renting ski equipment. They must have it. In all the resorts you can ask it. The other federation is Nordique France.

Interviewer: We tried to email them, but they haven’t answered yet. We are thinking about going there tomorrow.

Victor: To the local or the national one?

Interviewer: No, we meant we are going to the ski resort.

Victor: You can also go to Nordic Isère, and the guy is (pausing). Actually you should meet this guy. (Name of the guy). Yeah actually, I can send the contacts to you. This guy is in charge. This is the director. You could also meet the president, but I don’t think he have time to see you. And tell them that you heard about Nordic Isère from pousiere, Nordique, that’s like a communication campaign that they just launched, so he will be happy to hear that. He will like it. Actually, this is – just a few words about this and he will like it. 

Interviewer: We will research it.

Victor: And this association, Nordic Isère. To summarize: People from the Grenoble area are offered to go cross-country skiing. For in the mind of these people, cross-country is for old people or whatever, so they do this to make people discover, or rediscover this type of skiing. Every weekend you can have like a free pass with professional tutors, so (pausing). It started in December and then it will end at end of March. And its for free, you can also do it yourselves.

Interviewer: We should do it for research!

Victor: They give you all the ski equipment, you can also have drinks there, and you have the tutor. I did it in December to test it out, and they even told us that there was no one doing cross-country skiing so we could just go skiing and come back whenever we feel like it, they had enough for the next people. And you just go there.

Interviewer: And it is every Saturday and Sunday?

Victor: Yes, it is also sometimes on Wednesdays. Have a look at their websites.

Interviewer: Yes, maybe we could take ski lessons.

Victor: Yeah yeah, it is really good. I love cross-country skiing but I am really bad about going down because the skis are really thin. They give you technical moves and you just do practicing. Actually, you just tell them what you want to practice and they will show you. So yeah, that’s quite nice.

Interviewer: It is a really good initiative as well.

Victor: Last year, about 2000 people did it. So that is interesting. You should just try it. It’s a good place to start. And at national and local level, Atout France, which is like the French tourism development agency that is making reports. Here you have 2009/2010 and here you have a summary of 2011/2012 (showing the reports).

Interviewer: This is incredible; because this is the exact same thing we have been struggling to find in regards to the ski market. We have been searching every database for information like this.

Victor: That’s what I thought. Normally you have to pay for this I think. I think these ones are really interesting because they give you all the trends. And the trends are on national and local level. You can find like eh, about the Northern Alps, the Southern Alps, the minimum areas like Isère. You see here like Vercors. You know like the little mountain? They don’t go at that level, but still you have like the info about the regions.

Interviewer: I think that information on a regional level is sufficient enough for our studies.

Victor: Yeah. And maybe (name) can give you some information, but I’m not sure. Let’s say you have, like, 22 ski resorts in Isère, but on the 22 they all have cross-country skiing, but some other places they only have cross-country skiing. Ahm.. There is a map.. (Finds the map) Maybe it’s easier to explain. Well. I can send you, email you all this information because you can’t read it. Let’s say you have 22 plus 2 resorts that only have cross-country but some of them are really small. So in, because if you have a ski resort you must have cross-country skiing. Because people come in a group, and sometimes they prefer alpine, cross-country (pausing). If they don’t have it, people won’t come to this resort, because as you are an entrepreneur, which is in charge of lifts and everything, it costs you money to have cross country slopes. You don’t make money on that. You lose money.

Interviewer: Okay, but you’ll need to have it?
Victor: You need to have it otherwise people would not come.
Interviewer: Because you have to offer a whole package for an entire group?
Victor: Exactly. And that’s what’s, Yeah, that is what’s the trend in all the resorts. You must have the largest offer of slopes, in order to satisfy everyone in large groups. We know that if you go one week skiing, less and less people go skiing every day. They want to go to the spa. They want to go snowshoeing. They want to go to the casino.
Interviewer: People might want to experience as much as they can during a holiday, travel to other places etc.?
Victor: Yes, that’s what’s happening. Here (point on map) you have much more of like ski resorts and they only have like the Alpes Noir. The, what do you call is? Steep? When the mountains are not flat enough in order to go cross-country. Otherwise it is quite challenging. But all the small spots, like around Grenoble, are really famous because its like half an hour by car, so its really easy. You just wake up in the morning, it is sunny and you take your skis and just go.
Interviewer: You want it to be easy access?
Employee-tourism: Yes, and it is quite cheap, compared to the alpine resorts. But if you want to go skiing every weekend that can be quite expensive. But we also know that people that go skiing, they have money.
Interviewer: Do you think that being able to go skiing is some kind of status symbol for some people? Or do they do it more to spend time with their family or exercise?
Victor: Yeah, it’s more like ahm.
Interviewer: Or is it just like you have to have a certain income in order to go skiing on a regular basis?
Victor: Yeah, I think so. That is why the local authorities are trying to help all young people from here (Grenoble) to get to the mountain to discover it. Because people live here, but sometimes they have never been skiing. So that’s why the Grenoble City Hall is having these types of operations.
Interviewer: The discounted trips, and free initiatives?
Victor: Conceige general Iseré is also doing that. They don’t charge anything, transportation and accommodation and so on. They just take the kids, put them on a bus, they take you for three days and you don’t have to pay anything.
Interviewer: Wow, that is a very good initiative. But do you think that it also have to do with health? I was reading some reports that makets it seem that it is a trend that the government tries to give positive incentives.
Victor: It’s more like for the wellness. But cross-country skiing is used in order to get healthier. And there is like a really nice initiative in Verrecour. Like a guy is doing tai chi chuan, you know what that is? (Nodding). And the guy has made like eh.. Oh, what is it called? Sorry, my English is not so good.
Interviewer: Oh no, we also struggle to find the right words.
Victor: Ehm. It’s like just training with cross country skiing.
Interviewer: Tai chi?
Victor: Yes. And he’s making every three months large events. And also technical events only for the professional. And this is for self-preparation, in order to get good energy. If lets say you you pick one activity for wellness, you pick cross-country skiing, in the French mind.
Interviewer: Ok, so it is not the main way of exercise?
Victor: No, people do like alpine also because like the parents did it like in the past. In the seventies where people were all the French people were going to the mountain because it was like cheaper than before, but still for people with some money. It was just in people’s minds. My father was doing it, so..
Interviewer: Would you say that this is a part of your heritage, a tradition?
Victor: Just for certain kind of people. But now, like the young generation, they have less and less this state of mind. They want to do other things. So (pausing) Yeah that is why the French market is not increasing. That’s just normal.
Interviewer: Yes, we have talked to other with the same impression, that young people would rather do more action sports. Cross-country with wind sail and etcetera. I have never heard of it, but do you understand what I mean?
Victor: Yes, people do like wind surfing. Actually there is like an international sport of wind surfing in a lake near Grenoble. It is really interesting in the summer, on an artificial lake. The warm wind from the mountains creates a perfect condition for this. So since local people are used to do this in summer they want to do the same in the winter. So we (pausing) So we decided to make two spots for like, snow surfing, I don’t know what you call it but. I forgot the name. You have spots only for that activity, and there is like ehm, like national federations in charge of all
these places making sure that everything is fine in case something happens. And it is really dedicated. It is really special because it is a new activity that they are trying to develop.

**Interviewer:** Perhaps a new way to attract younger people as well?

**Victor:** Yeah, and its not like a, we can all do it. It is less scary compared to windsurfing. You don’t have the waves and so on. That’s is one of the activities being developed. Because when you have special spots, people go there. There won’t be families, kids everywhere

**Interviewer:** Are people going skiing with their families?

**Victor:** Yes, it is more and more with a group of friends. We call it tribute.

**Interviewer:** In cross-country, or skiing in general?

**Victor:** In general. Yeah, more general. But with cross-country I also do it with my friends. But cross-country is a little bit different. My personal experience is that people go just by themselves.

**Interviewer:** Why is that?

**Victor:** And you do it for yourselves; you do it for your own wellness. It’s not something you share with other. You go straight, so it gives you time to think and get rid of stress. When your moves are synchronized you can just think about whatever you feel like. It is really easy. And you don’t even realize that you are doing a sport. That is one of the things that I like. You can just look around, most of the time it is pretty and (pausing).

**Interviewer:** Are equipment important? When you go skiing is it more for recreational activity or more to perform in any way?

**Victor:** No, no, I have other activities to exercise. This is a way of exercising without exercising. I do a bit of badminton, just walking up to the mountains or whatever. In Grenoble there is like so many outdoor activities, you have the choice. You can go climbing, mountain bike or whatever.

**Interviewer:** It seems like a very sportive city.

**Victor:** That’s a bit what the local authorities are trying to sell to engineers, you have different spots. They come to Grenoble because of the mountains and that you have the choice every season.

**Interviewer:** Actually, the company that we are writing for they currently are cooperation with Rossignol but they want to launch a insole line to improve your performance. So we would like to see what the trends are and why people do cross-country skiing; Is it to compete, do exercise, or is it for recreational activities because it’s a very high tech insole, to improve your muscle efficiency.

**Victor:** So they know that the, lets say that not any kind would buy (pausing) that they need special customers?

**Interviewer:** Yes, they operate in a niche market.

**Victor:** Then uh. Then maybe I will give you the contact of the guy with tai chi chuan, in the French federation for cross-country skiing. Uhm, well, I think this association is (pausing). His name is (name). I will send you the contact details. Actually I do help him to build like a, he is international of tai chi chuan in Autrand (Nordic Isere). We call it la mecchue (Mekka) for cross-country skiing. Since the 80s. That is why there is so many big events. Ski events. You should definitely meet him. I will send you the name of the director. What he is developing, is a strategy to improve wellness, wellbeing and performance in cross-country skiing, caling it XPO. He is currently working with the French ministry to label it or.

**Interviewer:** To make it more popular, to brand it?

**Victor:** Yes. That can be something interesting for you. And so, This XPO thing; before you were just renting rooms in Autrans. Because you didn’t have proper infrastructure. And that’s what they decided. They said well, we think there is market for that. So they are building huge buildings for that. And I am helping them find the current, the good place. It must be somewhere that it is like good spirit, or.. Location is important. And uh, he is building until like 2015, next year I think. His association is based in Grenoble, but he likes to have like, to go to different places to like Autrans, to go to training there and he is like making trainees. Like 200 or 400 people are also doing that as a group (tai chi) nor only the professionals.

**Interviewer:** So if you go there you could risk seeing a group of 200 people doing tai chi?

**Victor:** Yes, sometimes. He is renting all the accommodation.

**Interviewer:** It seems trendy to be spiritual, to be centered, to be able to perform in your professional life and so on.

**Victor:** Yeah, like with yoga, pilates, tah chi chuan.

**Interviewer:** Do you think they do it to balance the dynamics of doing cross-country?

**Victor:** I don’t think so, If you go to one of the resorts it is not so dynamic for all of them. It’s not like uhm. That they are looking for performance. Just a few of them. If you can find statistics on that (pausing) But it is really a connection with combining different forms. We help out this guy, and um, what we made is like a. the location we found was like um, all the cross-country slopes was next to his place, the next building. So you can just leave, stop by. And you know, that is what
the French people like. Just go out of the building or out of the flat, out on your skis and then you are ready.

**Interviewer:** It can’t be too much effort?

**Victor:** Exactly. Easy approachable is really important.

**Interviewer:** It is really interesting trying to understand the culture, because I think it’s very different from the Norwegian one; it is a new approach to skiing.

**Victor:** I guess so.

**Interviewer:** We are used to that cross-country skis are the basics, the first type of skis you’ll buy. But here it seems it is more like the opposite, that people in general tend to lease their equipment, or invest in alpine rather than cross-country.

**Victor:** Yeah I think if they are going to buy equipment they will pick the alpine one. Maybe you can contact Decathlon and so…

**Interviewer:** Yes, we have been talking to employees at sport stores in Grenoble center. We have also been in contact with someone who had previously been working in a sport store, but is now active in cross-country skiing. We are trying, and everyone is very nice and trying to help us. But you can see in the store that cross-country isn’t that big; they have these whole sections of alpine and snowboard and then you have a tiny corner with a couple of cross-country skis from last season.

**Victor:** They don’t either have a big range of choice. But you should go to Espace Montagne, you know this shop? St Martander, you know McDonalds? The campus with all the universities, by the main road. B or C tram. Type it in Google and you will find it, Espace Montagne St Martander. I guess they can give you information about what they sell and so on. They are really professional.

**Interviewer:** Yes, here it seems people really know the equipment; they have time to tell us about their customers. And we are also allowed to, after this stage we will move on to the quantitative phase of the study where we need to gather information from between 100-200 respondents, so we need to get started.

**Victor:** If you want to this kind of survey you should contact the guy in (…)Nordique, he will love it. If you give like, if you go every weekend, I don’t know of like after the scale is really good or not. But if you want to get data, you can gather information from him and this organization. And once you are there you can ask people that are going, that are just there, but you can also ask people that came especially for this operation (the free skiing initiative mentioned earlier) to get in contact with potential users also.

**Interviewer:** Yes, the main challenge is to get a broad specter of respondents, the variety of people to answer. Thankfully, we have our meeting with our tutor next week and she will look through it and see if the questions are OK and measurable and all the technical aspects behind it, and hopefully it is ok and we can start give out surveys and travel to these locations after then.

**Victor:** And you can enjoy wine chaud.

**Interviewer:** Yes. The whole project has been really positive, and we really appreciate that you had the time to help us. This has been really great.

**Victor:** Yes, no problem. I have been working abroad and gotten a lot of help from locals there, so I look at it as my way of giving back.

**Interviewer:** Thank you for your participation. Do you have any questions?

**Victor:** No.
Interviewer: So just general, your name?
Laurent: My name is ___ (Laurent)
Interviewer: Age?
Laurent: 53, unfortunately.
Interviewer: You are French?
Laurent: Yes I am French.
Interviewer: From this region, or?
Laurent: Yes, I am living close to Autrans, in Villard de Lans, I don’t know if you know it.
Interviewer: Yes, we have been there.
Laurent: For cross-country?
Interviewer: No, we actually went there for observation to see how many people rented the skis, and (pausing) just to make some general observations before starting the study.
Laurent: Ok, so I am from this village.
Interviewer: It’s a beautiful village. So, could you describe your position here at (The company)?
Laurent: Ok, so I am in charge of the Nordic business activity. So, my mission is to coordinate all departments that are working for Nordic. So, the development, the marketing, I am in charge directly of the marketing, (the brand) department.
Interviewer: In France, or everywhere?
Laurent: Everywhere. And so most of the people working for the Nordic is here, but there is in some of the countries people in charge of the Nordic activity in their own market. Like Canada, USA. My, I have to coordinate the work of all those people, and. My objective is to develop the turnover, the margins, the quantities of this business.
Interviewer: And for how long have you been working?
Laurent: For (the brand)?
Interviewer: Yes.
Laurent: I started working for (the brand) in 1986.
Interviewer: Good. Ok, very general, about the culture in France; How would you describe the French attitude towards health?
Laurent: Ehm. People are more and more interested by this value I’d say. The fitness is one of the value, which is improving a lot in France, and the advantage of cross-country is that this activity bring this value. The value of the fitness, the health.
Interviewer: What do you think is the underlying motivation for people who go cross-country skiing? Why do they go cross-country skiing?
Laurent: Ehm. There is different kind of people. People who have what we would call the Nordic culture, they are born in this, they are from the mountains, they use to live in on the snow. And so for them it is a part of their life. Not as high as in Norway, but a little bit like this. And then there is a lot a people, two kinds of people. People who use to alpine because of the economical crisis, they have more difficulties in the past, economical difficulties, and instead of going skiing seven days a week in alpine, they started few years ago to for example alpine skiing four-five days, to go cross-country one-two days. Because of the money, and so there is those people and then there are also all the people who are coming from the sport. From the bicycle, the running, from the, every kind of sport, who like to have, in the winter an activity and continuity with what they are doing the rest of the year. And so, people interested with the fitness and health, are also in this category.
Interviewer: So would you say that cross-country is more important for active people, let’s say, in comparison to alpine?
Laurent: Yes, lets say, in the past in France, the image of the cross-country was really really bad. The, maybe I shouldn’t say that to you, but the image of a cross-country skiing was a guy with red
sacks (illustrating the length of the socks by pointing on his knees), blue pants and red pullover. You know what I’m speaking about.

**Interviewer:** Oui, oui.

**Laurent:** So, in the mind of the people it was not a sport is was just a way to move on the snow, to walk, and (pausing). So it was a very old image, or it was a very hard image with, with the image of the racer that you see at the end of a race. So you have two really different images. Opposites images. Today, it’s much more in the trend, much much more. It’s considered as a cool sport, a real fitness sport, and not anymore has old, or a sport for the old people. You understand what I mean?

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Laurent:** Today, the image is completely different. The image that we have from the racing and biathlon and cross-country, are much more modern than in the past. It’s true also that we have in France a few very good racers, and it helps the image. Like Martin Fourcade and Jesenau Muisapluiere (pausing) in Nordic combine, different like this. So the image has changed completely during the last 10 years I think. So cross-country is much more modern than 10 years ago.

**Interviewer:** That is a good trend.

**Laurent:** Yes it is a good trend. And the skating is also changed a lot in the mind of the people.

**Interviewer:** Do you see differences between skating and the classic?

**Laurent:** Yes. Most of the people that are coming from the sport, start with the skating. In France, it’s much more active, modern, young, even sometimes it’s more difficult. Then there is the people in the clubs. They do both, the classic and the skating. And then there is all who started to ski several years ago, and still they are doing classic technique. Do I answer to your question, or?

**Interviewer:** Yes. So all the clubs, they serve both?

**Laurent:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Do you see any, is it more skating, do people go directly to skating?

**Laurent:** When they are coming from other sports. People coming from alpine, cycling, you know, they are much more motivated to go on skating, because it looks, for them, an activity that is much more fun than classic. Even if it’s not true, when the snow conditions are perfect, classic is something, which can be fantastic. But we don’t have in France this culture of the classic as you have in Norway. And ehm, the cross-country is something that is much more young than what it is in Norway. And I think this is also why skating has been very quickly accepted by the people. And also, because of the quality of the tracks. If you have been to Autrans or some other place, we have a lot of kilometers, we have skating, classic, both most of the time, so it’s participating for the motivation of the people to come skating.

**Interviewer:** So would you say that there’s a bigger part of younger people compared to older people? Is it more younger people who go cross-country skiing?

**Laurent:** Except the clubs. But the clubs are in the mountains, with people from the mountains. So. If you compare the population of the clubs with the population that are coming for the cross-country skiing, the population of the clubs are very small. Then, according the levels that you have in terms of shape, technique (pausing) The level will be different. If you, if the objective is just to have fresh outdoor experience, most of the people will walk with the skis, so it would be the classic technique. If your objective is to have sportive activity, then more and more people are interested in the skating. I am speaking for France, not the rest of the world.

**Interviewer:** It is France that we are researching. There is indeed big differences.

**Laurent:** If you go to the USA, there is big differences even from the east to the west.

**Interviewer:** Exactly. Do you know approximately how many cross-country skiers there is in France?

**Laurent:** I think that there is about 1 million skiers. I can check the number and send it to you. But this one million are not going every year on skis. The market is very small, it represents 35-40,000 pairs of skis every years. So compared to what you are selling in Norway, this is approximately 10% of what you are selling in Norway.

**Interviewer:** That says a lot, especially if one think that we are only 5 million people.

**Laurent:** Yes, yes, exactly!

**Interviewer:** It is like you said, it seems to be completely different cultures. For us, cross-country is the first thing do, in France, does people tend to try alpine first?

**Laurent:** That was true in the past, what you say. Today, more people are coming from the fitness spirit, let’s say, some of them they come directly from the running, the mountain bike, the cycling to the cross-country. And then we could imagine that their children come also directly. But it is true that the France, I would say the snow culture in France, is more alpine oriented for sure, than cross-country oriented, for sure.
Interviewer: But do you see a change in this trend?
Laurent: It is kind of changing, but it would be, it would never reverse the scale. Alpine will stay the main winter activity for sure.
Interviewer: And we also have been talking with managers of resorts, and they say that alpine is the sport they make money on.
Laurent: Exactly. Around the alpine give economical weight, which is not the case in cross-country. So the interest of the ski resorts are more on the alpine than the cross-country. And most of the time they have some alpine resorts, that decided 2-3 years ago that it could be interesting for them to build outside cross-country resort. For example at Villard de Lans we had first the alpine, and maybe 30 or 40 years ago they started to build cross-country. As a little bit of alpine resort, the cross-country come years later.
Interviewer: There is more to accommodate the need for when people travel together in group they want to do different things?
Laurent: Yes, and the family, you have the parents and the children who go to the alpine, and maybe the grand parents that will go to the cross-country. That is the image of the cross-country sometimes.
Interviewer: We are trying to find out how the French people attend during the purchase process, do they want to have their own skis, or rent skis, or?
Laurent: We have a special thing in France, its that this is a very strong market for rental skis. And this is because when the cross-country started to be developed in the 1968, after the Grenoble Olympic Games, which was organized in Autrans for cross-country, the structure of the organization of the cross-country has been developed around what we call “Association”. We have in France what we call “Association Loi de mil”, law of 1901. You can have a company, but you can’t, according to the law, make benefits. So it must be reobjected, you can have some people working with a salary, you can make money, but you cannot have benefits. It’s a typical construction, and all the cross-country ski started by this. We started to build what we call “Foyer de ski de fond”, have you seen that?
Interviewer: Yes, I’ve seen.
Laurent: And this is not pure commercial institution. We say “Association”. And so, in the spirit of the people, cross-country is something very inexpensive. And then it had been organized around the renting.
Interviewer: So it kind of started as a renting business?
Laurent: Yes, yes, and then at the beginning, 90% of Nordic activity was in rental shop, or “Association”. And so it is still in the spirit, we are well organized with rental activity, more and more people are buying skis, especially at the top level, but as soon as.. Most of the time, people discover cross-country by going to rent materials. And not only one time, but a few times. And this is only one they consider they will have this activity very often during the winter. When they consider that they want to progress, that they realize they need good materials, they buy. But not before. And then we also have some rental shops that organize to rent high level skis.
Interviewer: So you have like special shops?
Laurent: No, no. But for example at Villard de Lans we have a store where you can find the, not the top-top, but good skis at high level for rental.
Interviewer: Nice. We kind of talked about it before, but is there a big market for leisure?
Laurent: Yes, definitely. We speak a lot about sport, racing, fitness. But this is not the main volume. The main volume in terms of quantities in pairs of skis, what we call the touring. The people who don’t know how to ski but just want to do something. The fact that they are on the skis, they have the feeling that they do something. But today, for example the snowshoes, is in real competition with cross-country touring in France. And that means that for the people, what ever you have – cross-country or snowshoes – it is the same.
Interviewer: So it is a bigger segment?
Laurent: Yes yes, for sure. Even if the French market is more and more orientated to the sport and fitness activity.
Interviewer: You mentioned outside that you also do cross-country skiing. Personally, what is the main values for why you do it?
Laurent: Me personally, let’s say that I am one of the people that have more Nordic culture. I started very young; I have been racing and participating in the sport before working for (the company). So I do not imagine not skiing during the winter. Even if I don’t have the option to be in the slopes very often.
Interviewer: So why do you feel, what does cross-country give you that you don’t get from other snow activities?
Laurent: Cross-country skiing, you have the glide, and (pausing) You have three values, three benefits; I think the glide, which means pleasure, the outdoor environment, and the fitness, sport activity. Which is not the case with alpine, even though alpine is a sport activity for sure.  
Interviewer: Yes, so it’s a mix of those three values. Which preferences do you believe the customers have towards ski equipment?  
Laurent: Are you speaking about brand, or?  
Interviewer: Also if they are like, tend to go to special brands, or if equipment is not so important?  
Laurent: You know, there is two kind of consumers. There are the people that follow the Nordic activity, they follow the racing, they know everything. They know the materials the rest use, so they can follow. This is why we have some resiting, this is why we are working with the club to all those people to come with us. Then there is the people who want to start with the activity, they don’t mind about racing, they mind about fitness or just healthy, and they will do what the salesmen will push them to do in the store and that’s it. So our objective is to out the skis in the stores, because we know that when the skis are in the store, the salesmen will do what they have to do to sell it.  
Interviewer: But is this something you focus on as well? To sell equipment as an extra, or is it mainly skis itself?  
Laurent: No. So we have ski boots, poles, binding, even if it’s not (the brand) binding. Eh, and we are trying to have what we would call accessories all around this activity. Thermobelt, you know different things. And we also are working on the suit, the ski suit for Nordic.  
Interviewer: Do you know anything about the consumers, what kind of perceptions they have towards (the brand)?  
Laurent: In France it is very special because this is the domestic market of (the brand). We have a strong image of alpine, we have the (the brand) and (another brand), I think more than 30% of the market share, maybe 40%, so this is a lot. So (the brand) is well known, specially in alpine, and I think that it can help also the cross-country. But once again, there is people, most of the people they don’t know what they are using, and they follow what salesmen tell them to do. But it’s true that (the brand) has, in France, a really good image in alpine and also cross-country.  
Interviewer: Do you do anything special to make sure that your sellers are pushing the (the brand’s) sale?  
Laurent: Yes, we make some clinics, to be sure that they have all the arguments to sell. But I think that we could do better, much better.  
Interviewer: Yes, it is an ongoing process where you always have to change, there is always new products?  
Laurent: Yeah, so we, The way to give to the salesmen of stores the motivation needs to be improved as well. And this is one the objectives for my job. To ensure that in every store, (the brand) will represent a motivation for the people.  
Interviewer: So how do you motivate the sellers to promote products from (the brand)?  
Laurent: There is many activities, there is specific interests for the salesman, if he practice cross-country he can be equipped, there is some, I mean, it is a commercial negotiation. There is a lot of possibilities.  
Interviewer: We talked a bit about the ski equipment and why people do cross-country skiing. Status and such, is it a trend now in the market? That people tend to be more fit, to do fitness, and cross-country can be a substitute for that during the winter?  
Laurent: Yes, but unfortunately, how France is, you have the mountains in the East, the South, little bit in the middle and that’s it. So the people who are living in this part is not very big compared to the French population. It is not like in Norway, in a normal winter you can go skiing everywhere.  
Interviewer: So it’s very centralized?  
Laurent: Yeah, in France, people have to move a few hours before finding the snow. Yes it is a difficulty we have. We have a big population of about 60 million, but in fact the population which is supposed to be interested in cross-country or alpine, are much more smaller.  
Interviewer: So do you know if there are many people from the north of France that go cross-country skiing?  
Laurent: Those people I think that they are more in the touring approach. Because, and the, the sport or fitness people coming from the north of France, they will not try to find an activity during the winter because they can go running or bike almost all the year. Here, people that are living here where it is snow, they are missing the things they can do, and they go skiing. Alpine, snowboard, cross-country, snowshoes (pausing) And this is their only activity and makes a big difference. It is separating the population.
Interviewer: Rottefella just launched their insoles in Scandinavia, and we are trying to see if there is a market for cross-country insoles. Have you any references/preferences within insoles?

Laurent: Today, the people who are really practicing sports, like running, like trail… More and more, because they run a lot, they use insoles. They have some money and when they are really involved in the activity, they seek for personalized insoles. So we have different factories close to here that will do that. And then, what propose Rottefella, today Rottefella proposed this to cross-country. But the market of the cross-country in France is very, very small compared to the market who run. I mean (pausing) So if they want to succeed in France with the insoles, with the quantities, maybe in the meantime they will try to approach the cross-country market with this, maybe they should also be interested by the running market. They can succeed if they really bring something new, if they really bring some consumer benefits, and also some retailer benefits. If they are able to bring those three things together, I think they can succeed.

Interviewer: But do you use insoles for skis?

Laurent: Today? No, it does not exist like this. For example, we make the sole at a sole factory that is already combined in the shoe.

Interviewer: But people that do want insoles, they tend to have it specialized?

Laurent: Yes, yes, for the people who are (pausing) I don’t know in English, “Doctor of the foot”?

Interviewer: Yes.

Laurent: Yes, for the people who are involved every day, those people they need something most of the time. And something very personalized. Then there is all the people who try, but not everyday, and they could be interested in something that Rottefella is trying to launch on the market.

Interviewer: But the main market for insoles today is running? Do you see any other trends, for alpine etc?

Laurent: Well I think that on most of the alpine boots, I’m not speaking of (the brand), the quality of the insole is not really good. The brand does not put a lot of money on this. So there is also an opportunity. And then the market of alpine is much bigger than the alpine for cross-country.

Interviewer: Exactly.

Laurent: If they are able to really find, to launch a product that is really technical, easy to use, I think they can succeed. Of course, the price is also important.

Interviewer: Are the French people in general price sensitive?

Laurent: Yes, what do you think?

Interviewer: We have asked several people this question, and received different responses

Laurent: If you want to do volume, then for sure. Then yes. If you want to be on a very high level, on a quality level, then of course the people really need to spend money, for sure. But the proportion of those people are not the main proportion, and far from the average…

Interviewer: Can you say a number indicating the classic market compared to the skating market?

Laurent: Hmm, 70%. Because most of the French market is coming through what we call “Foyer de ski de fond”, and “Foyer de ski de fond” is, eh (pausing) The main part of the market is touring skis. Even though you can find some skating some really classic skis, but the proportions is more oriented towards children and touring. In France, in the cities, which is close to the mountain, we have programs and most of the schools can propose five days on snow to the children. And when they go cross-country, they go through “Foyer de ski de fond” where they have cross-country skiing.

Interviewer: Do you believe the French government is making incentives to make cross-country more popular?

Laurent: Not really. But cross-country is organized to give the possibility to give the children that are in the schools close to the snow, to discover this activity at a very, very low price.

Interviewer: For example, with the Olympic games, do you think this will have an effect on the season?

Laurent: Yes. It participates to the image, for sure. The media speak during three months I’d say. But again, some people are more involved. A guy like Martin Fourcade is known not only by people within the cross-country, but most of the people – so it helps. Unfortunately, the Olympic Games is only every 4 years, so we know that this year there is an interest, but we know also that this interest will decrease a little bit during the next years.

Interviewer: Ok, so you see a peak every once in a while when the sport is in the media?

Laurent: But the most important thing is the snow. If we have snow close to the city, the market is going really well, the sales are going really well, and the activity is working. The people use to
make some time to go for alpine, they don’t use the same for cross-country. There is more proximity activity than it is for alpine for example.

**Interviewer:** Ok, so they prefer to go by car, drive for 30 minutes and then you are there.

**Laurent:** Yeah, so it means that the population that can go for the cross-country is very limited.

**Interviewer:** Do you go rollerskating?

**Laurent:** I used to, but not know.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that could be a substitute for cross-country skiing?

**Laurent:** Rollerski? No. This market is improving for sure, but at Oslo you can see some people going to work with roller ski, and also in Norway you have this sport culture. In France it is not like this. You can go on roller ski when you really know how to ski. And once again, most of the people that go ski, they really don’t know how to go. Rollerski can’t compare to cross-country.

**Interviewer:** Could the technique itself be an issue itself for people who want to go cross-country skiing?

**Laurent:** Yes, for sure.

**Interviewer:** It is very interesting when you talk about the culture differences, of course, but that way you go cross-country skiing different than the Norwegian way. We have to propose to Rottefella an entrance strategy in France, or of they shouldn’t.

**Laurent:** For Rottefella I think that the market with this kind of product is through the clubs. And the clubs they have the control, with Fischer, Salomon, Rossignol, these three brands together – we have the control. So, but this is another product. But it will be, I think it would be difficult. So if they want to come in, maybe the best will be to work with one of this three brand, as an importer or to push (pausing), and it can not be Salomon, for reasons you can imagine, so it has to be (two brands)

**Interviewer:** Yeah, you have a good relationship?

**Laurent:** With Rottefella, yeah yeah.

**Interviewer:** We also see that now Rottefella logo is on the bindings, compared to before.

**Laurent:** Yes, (name) pushed us a lot to go in this way, and (pausing) So, in the short term it is not for sure in the benefit for (the company). Because we would benefit from having ski boots, bindings, everything. But we found some economical agreements that helped us develop our program so I think this is a fair agreement. Because it push their brand, and for us it helps us with some support, to push.

**Interviewer:** Do you think that if they to enter with the insoles with a partner, should they continue to focus on promoting their Norwegian brand, or their partner brand towards consumer?

**Laurent:** No, it depends on what you want to do. If you want to be in cross-country, (the brand) are very well known, so it will work. If you are coming in other activity, like running and so on, Nike is not French, Adidas is not French, Reebok is not French (pausing) Eh, French brand are for sure not the strongest. But in cross-country, French brands are dominating. (Brand) and (brand). I don’t speak about (competitor), because I know that Rottefella would never go. It would create some big difficulties between Rottefella and us. But they will not help the (competitor).

**Interviewer:** No, we don’t know so much about this particular part. I mean, (brand) is a big competitor so, (Finishing up the interview)

*Thank you for your participation, this was very interesting and useful for our future research with our projects. Do you have any questions you want to ask us?*
Interviewer: How would you describe the French attitude towards health?
Christine: Towards health?
Interviewer: Yes.
Christine: I think it’s more and more important. Yes, I think people, they pay more attention to health and we hear so many things about the air and what we eat and what’s good to do and ah (pausing), and so yeah I think it’s more and more important.

Interviewer: Do you think a lot about it yourself?
Christine: Yes, I try to, to pay attention to yeah global thing, but I’m not so much into it. I don’t, ‘eat that because its not good that’. I like to enjoy after all so.

Interviewer: What do you think are the underlying motivation of physical activities like cross country skiing, why do people want to exercise?
Christine: I think for the, for the health, yeah for the body and, and also for the nature, for being outside, then just enjoying being outside and doing some exercise outside. And, well when I was younger, the Nordic ski was really big activity, it was kind of like, old fashion. And since maybe it 10 years or a bit less maybe, its more and more vague.. and the, well I guess because the, the slide, yeah its more and more, its better and, and yeah people have a look towards the outside activities. The interest is more and its more, everyone can do it. And you can enjoy if you are not so good you can just enjoy the walk and if you are good you can really enjoy the gliding and the, the good exercise then..

Interviewer: Yes. Do you feel that the French government is creating incentives, if they do some things to inspire the French people to do more sports?
Christine: You mean the French government? Or the local government?
Interviewer: Yes the French government, but also the local.
Christine: Ehm, well, yes actually the local ahm, they try to improve the slopes and the, the equipment and the communication and well, because for the local it’s the, what, give them money what’s, yeah, and what makes the town live. And also for the region Rhône-Alpes ehm, yeah I think the French government tries to go towards that but its hard because like Nordic skiing is still small compared, and it doesn’t give so much money compared to alpine skiing. Its much cheaper but then to, to take care of the slopes, all the equipment’s its not so much cheaper then the alpine skiing so, Yeah the government, and less money compare to, with Nordic, with Nordic skiing than alpine skiing.

Interviewer: How would you describe the French ski culture?
Christine: It depends were you’re from I think, because I’m from the Alps, from Chamonix so there yes its where people are skiing. Here we are still in the Alps and its most Nordic sport, Nordic ski sport in France so I think, yeah its (pausing) Ski people, but if you go more on the west side they are not skiing people, if you go to the north of France they are not skiing people and mainly I think France is not a skiing people. Skiing country, it’s more you know, the Nordic countries.

Interviewer: But do you have many visitors from everywhere, in France?
Christine: No, not that much. Here we have lots of Belgium people
Interviewer: ok?
Christine: Because I think Belgium, they during the summer they go to the sea, and the Mediterranean sea, which is the closest, so they pas by here because its kind of mountains but its so high for them and its on the road so. But, yeah no we don’t have so many, so many foreigners here.

Interviewer: How important do you think the consumers, the once that are here, to own their own skis or equipment’s?
Christine: For most of the people like, I don’t think it’s so important. Because, I think it’s important if you really do practise the sport. But if you just want to exercise and just (pausing). Please yourself with, you know exercise and outside and just experience the Nordic skiing and enjoy your holidays, I don’t think you should, really, own your own equipment or, So they can rent it. Its easy to rent, its not expensive to rent so if you just use it, you know just a while, maybe a week per year, its really no use to buy it and (pausing) yeah, you, you buy something you don’t, if you don’t use it much, you wouldn’t know how to care of it and so its not going to be good for me in three years. Yeah it’s better to rent it I think. I buy my own equipment’s because I, I ah..

Interviewer: You live here?
Christine: Yeah, so yeah. I try to use it as much I can even if I don’t use it that much as I would like to.

Interviewer: But do you think there are many who rent skis rather than buying?
Christine: Yes, yes the once that comes here for holidays. The once that lives here, I think most of them buy it.

Interviewer: But is it most people who live here, or is it..
Christine: It depends, right now its holidays, because it’s the French holidays, it’s the end, but its been four weeks that was French holidays and there were more, yeah, people on holidays, but in January and beginning of February and maybe the two last weeks coming to next week it will be more local people, and they will have their own equipment.

Interviewer: Do you have any thought about the consumer’s preferences with regards to the nationality of the brand when they are looking for equipment?
Christine: Not really. I think they will prefer to buy one that they heard about it, but no its good and. Yeah, I don’t think French or the country, really matter no. Well it depends if it’s, yeah it depends which country maybe which brand but, yeah.

Interviewer: What is you perception of cross-country skiing in France?
Christine: Well, its good, its good its and it takes more and more importance I think. It’s, it’s more in the mood of people, Nordic skiing and specially now with the, the Olympic Games and with, you know the..

Interviewer: Yes, and you did good in Biathlon, it was good!
Christine: Yeah, the French where good! And the winner was from here, from Villard. Martin Fourcade. He is from Villard.

Interviewer: Ok! Where do you think there are popular destinations for cross-country skiing?
Christine: Well, I would say here!

- The Interview unfortunately ended because of unexpected work.
Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately between 40-50 minutes. We wish to record the conversation for the purpose of transcription, if you approve that. All answers will remain anonymous.

Interviewer: How do you see the interest from the customers, regarding cross-country skiing?
Hugo: Basically, at the moment there is becoming more and more people interested in cross-country skiing, because at the same time it is more open, it is more the real mountain you can see that and at the same time it is sold cheaper, so we are having a lot more interested there. As snowboard is a bit more complicated and there are more skiing in cross-country because it is to hard to do snowboarding and it is a lot of tiring because of the back and all that, but it is definitely a lot more people more interested in that kind of things. A little bit more now for the materials that there is basically for free for a long time, the material last so pretty much positive that, but at the same time that now, more people join the piste and go for off-piste.

Interviewer: Do you think is has been influenced by Tour de Ski or?
Hugo: I think so. What is a lot of role skiers there, the competition really showing that off-piste is a lot more interesting.

Interviewer: And The National French team are doing quite good in Olympic Games right now
Hugo: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: The sales of the cross-country skis, When customer comes to by cross-country skis do you sell them as a whole package solution with shoes, skis etc. or..

Hugo: It is quite complicated, because ah, Proposing not really, because the thing is that it is to complicated, than if they buy kits it is never going to work for everyone, because the thing is that you got skis that can do this and then you got the expression that are stronger ahm (pausing) that is quite different right there, and then you get the price that get over as the same as before, quite expensive yet the kit, so normally a lot of people want to buy the skis for this and they’re aren’t kind of looking around and it is the same ide for the shoes.. It could never be acceptable to run, because you have to adopt to the kit and to the person and at the same time ahm, if we do sell it to them, then we can always make a price fully kit, but, it is complicated.

Interviewer: In this store, which brands are you selling?
Hugo: Dinefit, Dinestar, Black dimand (lot of French speaking) Demir.

Interviewer: Do you know which one you sell the most off?
Hugo: Ehm, Dinefit. Do you have any thought about why this brand compared to the others? Ah, it is because it is the biggest brand. And the most, like a, known. The best materials where.. The thing is that you don’t really have a lot of brands that are lasting for a long time, not in cross-country on its own, because it’s as.. You got to have a material that lasts, so that is probably why it is so strong, this thing, because it is (pausing) used to be used for a long time. That’s why the best stays the best.

Interviewer: And how will you describe a typically buyer, as a cross-country skier?
Hugo: I don’t know

Interviewer: Is it people from here, are there tourists..
Hugo: No, a lot of people from the, from Grenoble will definitely be the target, and not a lot tourists. Ahm, most tourist they drove from Paris, so only for ski on station. Not for cross-country ski. Ahm, they might end up doing one day, but all that will happen on the ski field, higher (pausing) but normally there are locals that we get.

Interviewer: Is it younger people or older people?
Hugo: Yeah, it is definitely younger people that are starting. Cross-country skiing is the beginning of old people. But now, there is definitely, cross-country skiing is just for pleasure and then you get cross-country ski now that is for up string, where you got a lots of cliff-jumping, ahm, you got
car racing, and with the parachute, a sport that is really getting along. A lot more advanced and a lot younger, you rarely see older people doing. Step by step.

**Interviewer:** You mentioned when we talked about last time, that people use to rent or lease skis. Is that an alternative for cross-country ski?

**Hugo:** It is possible yeah, we don’t do it here, but it is definitely possible, because the higher the materials, the basically the same price for ski-pass, so, it is about the same (pausing) at the same time it is ski card free, its like, I think, 30 Euros for a day and to hire, skis cross-country, it is like 24, so it is pretty good. It is not that bad really.

**Interviewer:** So that is kind of attractive.

**Hugo:** It is yeah, but at the same time, you don’t really want to do that every single day if you want to go, because the material can be quite complicated, it is better if you have your own, because it works better. Yeah, it is a bit different.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any experiences with sales of insoles for skis?

**Hugo:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Can you tell us about that, do people purchase the insole when they are buying their ski-shoes or,

**Hugo:** Ehm, we do, because the insole is something that’s pro-consumer support. I do CDS. CDS is among the brand we have here. Ah, they came in, don’t really know that much about it. Told me that I have to.. well, kind of like a must sell a insole with the shoes, but personally it is quite hard to tell, like, I have done it a couple of times, but it is more possible if the clients they get it afterwards, because what you have to do is eh, hard to say because, you know it is a lot into it, if you are going to buy a shoe today, you don’t know if you really need it as more, probably if you a really rich, you can say, yeah, yeah, its going to be god, but as pretty rear to have someone that comes at the very beginning that wants, its always a couple of moths after when they, as the question.

**Interviewer:** If you are supposed to introduce a new line of ski-insoles in you store, what do you think will be the main challenges?

**Hugo:** Ahm, the main challenges would be the price, have to make a price that will be as expensive as the others, because it’s a part, basically to do ah.. (speaking French with the manager) so you haft to a price analysis, you haft to do something that is eh (pausing) like its just technical, you can say. Ehm, here you go, 59 Euros for the insoles for the ski-boots, and its worth there, format to their foot. The same time, it is quite expensive because it is a the first kind of model. It heats up and it is ruining something for me. Its when you heat it up, you get to take the shape of your feet, but at the same time is it not really solid, it is a little bit, but not as a soused, there is a lot there, so it is quite complicated if I want to do it in my brain. I would haft to tray to make a material that’s really cheap, but really looks like works well. Eh, I don’t know. It is an impression, when the client looks at it to buy, they already look at it the technical side that’s one of the side criteria, its really works extra form, I’m sure we will sell this I think..

**Interviewer:** So now, it more like an exclusive thing.

**Hugo:** Yeah. The heating one, its really cheap. Because it’s really expensive.

**Interviewer:** You have a new business plan there,

**Hugo:** It is too complicated, but I am sure when that started, the CDS are getting a million euros to stop it, so, I will be happy either way.

*Thank you for your participation.*
Appendix 20 – Interview guide B2C

General comments before the interview starts (5-10 min)
Hello, and welcome to this interview in connection with bachelor thesis in international marketing. This interview will last about one hour, and we appreciate that you answer as accurately as you can on our questions. All questions will be related to the French winter sport market, and more particularly cross-country. We will start with general questions first, and then focus more on issues relating directly to your knowledge and opinions about specialized insoles used for activities. Please take your time; there is no hurry to respond. If it is fine by you, we wish to record our conversation. The recordings will be destroyed after our thesis is delivered, and no later than 1st of July 2014. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Demographic questions (5 min)
Name:
Age:
Gender:
Nationality:
Work position:

General questions (15 min)
Health and culture
- Do you pay attention to health? If yes in what way, if no why.
- What are your underlying motivations for doing physical activities?
- Do you feel like the French government is creating incentives to inspire the population to participate in sports? And how?

Skiing
- How would you describe your attitude towards skiing?
- How important is it for you to own you own ski equipment? Why?
  o Rent, buy
- What is your perception towards French and international brands?
- Do you prefer to buy ski equipment from French brands? Why/why not?

Key questions about cross-country skiing (20 min)
Cross-country skiing
- What is your perception of CCS in France?
- Which areas do you usually go to and why?
- How often do you go CCS?
- Do you consider yourself as a typical cross-country skier? Why/Why not?
- What is you motivation to do cross-country skiing?
- What are your motivations when CCS? (Leisure, exercise)

Ski equipment
- Which preferences do you have towards additional ski equipment’s?
- How could ski equipment’s be linked to a personal need for status?
- How would you perceive quality and your attitude towards price?
- Are you willing willing to pay more for ski equipment that enhance your performance? Why/why not?

Insoles
- Do you have any personal experience regarding the use of insoles?
- What would be your criteria’s to spend money on additional insoles and why?
- What types of situations would you considered if buying an insole?

Concluding follow-up questions (5 min)
- Are you willing to buy insoles specialized for cross-country skiing?

Summary (10 min)
- Have I understood you correctly?
- Is there anything you would like to add?

That was all we wanted to ask you. We want to thank you for your time and wish you a pleasant day.
Appendix 21 – Transcripts B2C

Clément

Employee at a small French sport chain in Grenoble
Former teacher and researcher on snow

Nationality: French
Gender: Male (34)

Note: The respondent needed an interpreter so his colleague Christian participated in the meeting and also had some comments in this interview.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately between 40-50 minutes. We wish to record the conversation for the purpose of transcription, if you approve that. All answers will remain anonymous.

Interviewer: Is health important for you?
Clément: Yes, Yes. For sure.

Interviewer: Why?
Clément: I practiced sports since the beginning of (pausing) so my health is really important for me. I take care of, I do a lot of sports I’m a cyclist, triathlete also, cross-country skier and I’m a climber also.

Interviewer: Ok. Outdoor or indoor or?
Clément: Yeah, outdoor, both.

Interviewer: So Grenoble is perfect for you then. You have everything here in Grenoble.
Clément: Yeah, yeah, that’s why yeah..

Interviewer: Why is it important for you to do all this types of sports? (He had problems understanding the question) Do you feel better or is it because of (pausing) maybe not only to be healthy but to be social.
Clément: Yeah, yep I think its general. Its good for health, its good for social because you are climbing with other people, you are always meeting new people. And, I’m also a ski teacher.

Interviewer: Ski instructor? For ski de fond?
Clément: Yes, so (pausing) I’m always, for cross-country ski yeah, so I always meet new people, and its because I feel better after sports, so, and also the contact with the nature. It’s, I don’t really practice indoor sports. Sometimes climbing indoor but, always outdoor or.

Interviewer: Have you ever thought that you would be, like to become the best cross country skier in the world or is it more about you doing it because its fun?
Clément: Ahm, I think I practice a lot of sports because I, I like to be a ‘rookie’, do you understand?

Interviewer: No, athletic?
Clément: Beginner, no (pausing) I like to learn some new things, some new techniques, always. And some new sports or, ahm, I start cross-country skiing four years ago..

Interviewer: Ok. How did you get started cross-country skiing?
Clément: Why, like, because I live in, in the ski station for Nordic skis, so I tried it and I hated it, the first year. So during two years I, I did not ski because I, I think its to hard for me and after I, I come back and I, now I like it a lot so.

Interviewer: Do you know why?
Clément: Ahm, its hard to say (pausing) it’s really not easy in the beginning so you have to go and go again and (pausing) I don’t know. We went one day, I had a feeling that, oh its nice and, and after I watched a lot of videos to learn everything and so, to improve every day.

Interviewer: Good. Was it any specific kind of skiing, classic or skating or both?
Clément: Skating yeah. Ahm, I start skating four years ago and classic only two years ago.

Interviewer: And how would you describe the French ski culture? In general. Do you know a lot of people who go cross-country skiing?
Clément: Ahm, yeah.

Interviewer: Does it depend on, (The two of them discussing the topic in French)
Clément: In France there are (pausing) most of the people don’t care about cross-country skiing.
It’s not in the culture, but there is some place like, Vercors, you know?
Interviewer: Oui.
Clément: Like Jura, there is some place where the culture is important of Nordic and.. so I live in
this place so, everybody around me, practice cross-country skiing so ahm, and I think a lot of,
every day, every year a lot of people practice (pausing).
Interviewer: Cross-country ski?
Clément: Yeah, because I think its very about the image, because and, and now its changing ahm,
with the medals, the champions and the television and everything running higher every day, every
year
Interviewer: So it’s increasing?
Clément: Yeah, it’s I think so, ahm, it’s what I saw in my area where I live ahm (pausing) so,
every school, all the children go, practicing cross-country skiing now. So it’s new, ahm, I think
Interviewer: And you are a teacher for them?
Clément: Sometimes yeah.
Interviewer: Ok. Over to another thing, do you own your own ski and ski equipments?
Clément: Eh, I own is buy?
Interviewer: Yes.
Clément: Buy ok, Yes.
Interviewer: Is that important? To have your own skis?
Clément: Yeah, Yes for sure. Ahm, I, (pausing) For my all the skis, the poles, the bindings and
everything stuff is very important for me. So I (pausing).
Interviewer: Why is it important?
Clément: Ahm, because ahm, it’s the only thing that change your, your technique. It’s you, but
materials also, also you can, there is a lot of things to improve your skiing, you technique, or
health and your skis so everything is important. For better glide and better sensation so, that’s
important.
Interviewer: When you buy skis and ski equipment’s, is it important for you to have a specific
brand? Brand like, or is it more about the quality itself? Or should it be a French brand? (the
respondent has difficulty’s understanding the question)
Clément: Yeah, I think its quality more then brand yeah. Because I have, Rossignol skis, Fisher
skis, Salomon skis also I have.
Interviewer: How many skis do you have? (they start speaking in French)
Interviewer: Cross-country skis?
Clément: Yeah. It’s 3 or 4 classic and 3 or 4 skating, yeah, it’s a, 2 for, ‘stone ski’
Interviewer: Stone ski?
Clément: Ahm, yeah.
Interviewer: Ok, and is it important to have the whole image? I mean, do you have to have like
the whole ski dress and.. Do you have everything, like the skis, the gloves and.. (no respond) You
know the ski clothes for the Olympics (hos colleague starts explaining in French)
Clément: Yeah, everything.
Interviewer: You have everything, And is that important? When you go cross-country skiing?
Clément Ahm, I think both its, ahm comfort to have good equipment and also good image ahm
(pausing) yeah its important, for me.
Interviewer: Talking a bit more about cross-country skiing, How would you describe, well we
already talked a little bit about it, but how would you describe yourself as a cross-country skier?
Are you more interested in cross-country ski the other, do you spend a lot of time with this sport,
compared to other sports or? Just a general description of you as a cross- country skier.
Clément: Ahm, during the two-three years, I spend a lot of time skiing and improved my
technique so that, to become a ski teacher.
Interviewer: Ok. Did you take any courses or?
Clément: No. So I learned by myself, a lot. And (pausing) I spent a lot of time. So, during the two
last winters I was able, a lot of time for me, but I, I have a lot of skis and a lot of equipment’s and,
I spend a lot of time in skiing. So have the level to, to become ski teacher. So it’s very short time,
two years to become, it could be intense. That, well, I do everything I, prepare it, during the, ahm,
the summer to. To do roller skis.
Interviewer: Oh, you do?
Clément: Yeah. And everything to prepare, specifically regulations or, to, yeah, and everything.
Interviewer: Ok. But if you had to describe your core motivation for, do you know what I mean?
(Clément: No) Core motivation like, what makes you want to teach this kids hot to do cross-
country skiing? What’s the drift or the inner- feeling that tells you that you want to do this, (Does
not understand) ahm, Motivation?
Clément: Yeah, but I (pausing)
Interviewer: Does it motivate you to teach other people to go cross- country skiing?
Clément Ahm, a lot, because I run by my self and started skiing very late, so ahm, I know that the
fantastic sport and, yeah, I like to show this to the people to,
Interviewer: And was it you friends that told you, yeah you should really go cross- country skiing
or you family or you,
Clément: No. Not my family. And, yeah some friends yeah and, and me. But, I think its because I
live in a area where cross- country skis are very important. And a lot of champions live here, My
neighborhood are a big champion and everything so (pausing) it helps to motivate for, and I like to
learn so, in every sport I do the same thing ahm, I start climbing late and I improved my self and
after I choose another sport and, yeah.
Interviewer: How many sports have you tried?
Clément: I don’t know,
Interviewer: But do you have some impression that cross-country skiing can be a bit too technical
for people. They try cross-country skiing but its difficult so they stop and it’s not so interesting.
Clément: Yeah.
Interviewer: Do you think this is maybe why its not so popular in..
Clément: Ehm, it could be yeah..
Interviewer: Or because it’s less popular, it’s not the main sport?
Clément: I think its, yeah, that’s it. More the difficulty then the yeah, I think if, but if people start
skiing, after it’s ok. Because the first time, the, to motivate them.
Interviewer: You have to get past the...
Clément: Yeah, yeah, because in France, like cross-country skiing is not, not a good image, practicing
is not fun or it’s not like ahm, alpine ski or snowboard or (pausing) so people don’t try it, but if they try I think its ok after.
Interviewer: But do you think it’s more a leisure sport then, leisure, more like to go for a trip
more then to be, to exercise?
Clément: Ahm, it’s 50/50. Yeah, for someone who practice sports, like running or cycling or any
thing, could be a very good exercise but for all, the beginner category of a person it for leisure.
Just a trip and, just move and, so I think its 50/50. In France I think, yes.
Interviewer: Well, (they start talking in French) You mentioned roller skating. Do you think that’s
a substitute for cross-country skiing? During the summer?
Clément: Yeah, for sure.
Interviewer: Or is that a common sport in France?
Clément: Uncommon
Interviewer: Uncommon, so it’s like cross-country skiing or?
Clément: Yeah, (starting speaking in French again) Only competitor’s practice roller skating.
Christian: It’s really confidential, I think we sell ahm, (confidential information) by year. And we
are a good place for the roller ski place, you know. It’s really a little market.
Clément: It could change, because ahm, since this year we have new tracks to practice roller
skiing so.
Interviewer: Ok. Is it similar as for cross-country skiing that you have an own place where you
pay for a ticket to, to use the field?
Christian: Ahm, not now, but I think in the future, in a few months that will be possible. Because
in France ahm,
Clément: Now its for free to practice, but in a few moth..
Interviewer: Ok. Why?
Christian: Because in France, ski is money.
Interviewer: It’s a bit strange that you don’t have more roller skaters. Because you have all the
skiing and you have all the mountains and, I think I read something about, Grenoble is like the
flattest city in France that perfect for roller skiing.
Clément: They are making new tracks for roller skiing and a shooting ranch and everything so,
yeah, and I think that it will change during the, the years coming. But roller skiing, before only
competitors, but now it’s not on the road with the traffic and everything so it’s better and I think
that more people are, a lot of people practice skis for, during the winter, the popular race and they
want to improve every year.
Interviewer: Yes, and they cant go on holiday for the whole summer.
Clément: Yeah, and the, they can wait for December for the snow so even if they are not the national competitor, they want to improve themselves, so, they are going to use the tracks for ski.

Interviewer: Do you think this could help the, help the cross-country skiing to become more popular as well?

Clément: Yeah. For sure.

Interviewer: Have you ever participated in any competition? Cross-country skiing? Have you tried any competition?

Clément: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Which once?

Clément: Ahm, all the ‘Foulée Blanche’, stuff like that.

Interviewer: Did you win?

Clément: No

Interviewer: Are you sensitive when it comes to price and skis? If you see that, this is too expensive I will not buy this or is the price more a recognition of that this is a good product?

Clément: Hmm, good question.

Interviewer: If you understand what I mean? When you go to buy..

Clément: Yeah, yeah I understand. I think I know what I want. Because I talk with competitors and I try some stuff, so I know what I want and I look everywhere to have the right price, what I want so,

Interviewer: Yes. Good quality and low price?

Clément: Yes, yeah.

Interviewer: So quality is the main thing or?

Clément: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Not brand either?

Clément: Not brand, no. Because I, I think ahm (pausing) for example one brand do very good stuff in classic shoes and another brand is very good on skating or I have a lot of brand and, In every brand you have good quality and one product or two products, I think so. That’s why I have a lots of brands. Because of better quality of one brand (pausing) do you understand what I mean?

Interviewer: Yes. No, but its very technical and for Rottefella, I mean they are very focused on their bindings, their capacity and so on, but now they have developed this new insole. Are you using insoles?

Clément: Am, yeah, for, only for classic shoe.

Interviewer: Ok. Can you explain why?

Clément: Ahm, because I tried some insoles and I saw there was a good one for and I, it’s not the insole for skiing its insoles for everything I think, (speaking in French to the other guy)

Christian: There is three categories; low hard, and high and medium hard.

Clément: I use it on the boots and I think it’s nice for me so ahm, I stay like this, but it’s not specific for skiing. And in skating I, I have no insoles.

Interviewer: And why did you start using insoles?

Clément: Ahm, the first time it was for running. Because my, I start running for triathlon. I have some problems with the feet, so I went to a shop and, they give me a good shoe and good insole so, so that was the first time. But I know, I also have a very good insole for cycling, but I make in ‘Sidas’ also, but it was a very special insole ahm, made only for me and, and I don’t use it.

Interviewer: You don’t use it?

Clément: No. Because I (pausing), in fact also I write articles on magazines for I’m testing in materials for cycling, so I went to ‘Sidas’ to make ahm, because they make a new product for cycling, you know. They start new for cyclist, so I tried it, they made it for me, and I tried it for one moth and I write an article, but for me it was awful. Yeah, so, I don’t use it.

Interviewer: Have you tried different types of insoles, or do you know a lot about the industry, the competition or?

Clément: No, no I’m just no one, I have some insoles for my cycling shoes ahm, but not this one, another one from ‘Specialized’, you know this brand? No. ‘Specialized’ it is an American brand, they make like, and everything from,

Interviewer: Yes, customized insole that you can

Clément: Yeah. And I tried some insoles for them, and it was nice so I’m, I will stay with these one. But it’s a minimal insole, I can buy it everywhere, you know, and for me its very useful in running.

Interviewer: Do you think it could be useful for cross- country skiing as well?

Clément: (long pause) Why not, yeah. Ahm, I have never tried it so, I think that, ahm

Interviewer: Or would you be more, I don’t know, if you go into a store and you see insoles for cross-country skis, would you be interested?
Clément: Yeah, I’m very interested about the revolution of materials so, I would try it for sure.
Interviewer: And what would be the reason for using insoles in cross-country skiing?
Clément: I think maybe, because it depends, help me have a better feeling, ahm, sensation or technique and, everything is good to try so, why not and, you see. Always stay in new stuff, its interesting so, and some it works and some times it does not work for me so its, for me its interesting to have new feelings or sensations. But classic skiing is very close to running, so, why not, its good.
Interviewer: But you use the same insole for running and for the classic?
Clément: What?
Interviewer: You use the same insole for.
Clément: Yeah, yeah for me it’s the same yeah. And its, its not so bad for, (pausing)
Interviewer: Do you both see any trends, if people is asking for insoles when it comes to skis or cross-country skis? (long pause) never really thought about this? Maybe its like, as you, Christian, told us last time that its, about the employees that has to educate the customers because some customers doesn’t know what it is,
Christian: Yeah, yeah. The customers does not know. That’s right. The customer doesn’t know about cross-country, and if you don’t, tell her, that they can have more comfort of, or more preferences or feet stabilization, they don’t know it and ahm, we have to educate this to the sellers that, and they have to be really interested by the cross-country skiing and by the insoles. If you don’t have these two conditions you can’t sell it, I think it’s really important to have a seller who are really good in terms with the cross-country because, it’s a really little market and if you want to, make a different in this market you have to.
Interviewer: You have to stand out?
Christian: Yeah, yeah. You have to, I think the seller is really important. Really, really. That’s, I think the more important part in France, with the lower price, the same I think, it has to be really good. They had to be really interested about the product. But in alpine skiing it is really more easier to sell some insoles. But, in, I think its, if you wan to sell it we can, but I think it’s a big effort from,
Interviewer: It relies on the seller?
Christian: Yeah. And it’s, if you don’t sell an insole, you have to do an insole, like ‘Sidas’ you know in ah, and that’s really more work and, when you are in a Sather day in December, you cant, you cant. Your really cant. That’s impossible. There is a lot of people in the shop and you cant
Interviewer: Thank you so much, do you have any future questions? (asking both participants)
Participants: No.

Meeting finished with small talk
Léo

Previous owner of a ski store
Ski enthusiast
17 years of experiences in the ski field

Nationality: French
Gender: Male (36)

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately between 40-50 minutes. We wish to record the conversation for the purpose of transcription, if you approve that. All answers will remain anonymous

Interviewer: How many years of experience do you have in the ski-industry?
Léo: Oh, in the ski-industry I have 17 years, because when I started my, my high school I also started to, to work as a help in a little shop and then I stayed so about five years ago, five years later sorry, I was made, I was made the manager of this shop, and then a second shop so, voilà, so I started in ah 1993 and I finished my last season, winter season in 2008.

Interviewer: And it was a ski-shop?
Léo: Yes it was a ski shop, I was renting and selling skis, it was essentially alpine skis, so skis, snowboards, ski boots, also what we call in French “Raquet” to walk and little bit of Nordic, but not so much.

Interviewer: So in General, how would you describe the French attitude towards health?
Léo: I think that like, everyone else in the world, one must be concerned, but in France I think that people are more concerned perhaps because of the social security it’s easier to go to see a doctor or to buy some drugs to improve our health or to avoid to be sick so.

Interviewer: What do you think are the underlying motivation for physical activity?
Léo: In France?

Interviewer: Yes.
Léo: I think that they started to make some thoughts, the politics started to make some effort, but they are not so, so old. Personally, I had the luck to, to grow in a city where sports were really important, so that’s why I was able to, I was always connected to, to sport and if because I started for, in fact I was born in Chamrousse in the ski-resort so I was able to ski as I was about three years old and then my parents moved in another city not so far from Chamrousse, but, teachers was very, had in mind that it was important to develop as child.

Interviewer: So, would you or can you say that it depends from which region in France you come from?
Léo: Neh, maybe, maybe that for each region it may be of the city you live if you grow up, if you are grown up in ah mountain, maybe it will be easier to activate to sports activities then in some big city’s because to practice sports, generally you need some equipment, and, as I told you I have grown up in a small city, but there was a lot of country side so eh, just to go running or to practice rugby it was easier, but when you are grown up in a city where there are just eh, big big buildings it is not so easy if you don’t have a tennis quart or staff like that.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the French government is creating incentives to inspire the population to participate in sports, if they are doing something to help with a system that motivates the people to do sports?
Léo: I think that it has been put in place in about ten years by our politicians in France, because quite like a lot European countries or, people are eating a lot of bad food, so people are, so we are a little bit more reserved I guess here in France, but I know that eh, it can, its really a good problem for children now, because children are more and more watching tv or not moving so much so that why politicians decided to, to incentive, so yeah.

Interviewer: A bit more about general skiing, how would you describe the skiing culture in France?
Léo: Oh, it very eh, the French skiing culture is very old, because the, ok, I’m not sure of that, but a lot of people say that eh, skiing has been, alpine skiing has been, first been experimented in France. And maybe not so far from here, in Chamonoxus, they say that it’s a French man, his name was “Emil Alle”, so I was not sure if that was in the year, you have some skis which are called à ski Alle(e), yes, so but I’m, you know that also the skiing was developed here, early, because we had luck to have the first winter sport organized in Chamonix, so it was in the 1924 is it, I remember, so it, it helped me to.

Interviewer: First winter sport, which winter sport, the Olympics?

Léo: Yes, yes the Olympic games, yes I know that it existed before, but not as a game, you know that eh, skiing was a practice, but as eh way of moving for people who, Scandinavia also in other countries, like Switzerland or Austria, that it really became a hobby for people eh, by the beginning of the 80s. And it also was the beginning of the winter tourism in fact.

Interviewer: How important is it for the consumer, do you think, to own their own ski equipment?

Léo: That depends of the population. When you are not far from mountains, I think that ahm (pausing) almost 50 or 60 % of the people who wants to have their own skis and material, but we know also that a lot of people who want to go skiing are not living so close, so it’s not so easy for them to travel with skis, and also a lot of people want to have new brands, the ala mode, the stuff like that, so it is easier for peoples who just rent the skis and have the best material to chose.

Interviewer: Do you think there is more, higher percentage of people who rents, than who buys?

Léo: Ehm, about 40 % according to me, buy. More or less, ehm, and this people who are renting the skis so like I told you they want to have always the newest skis etc., and its always linked to the fact that often they just want, they just come skiing just for one week a year, so that can be, they have three week all together of holiday during the winter. But as it is really really expensive to come to live and to rent the skis so generally, people just take one week as maximum to, to spend their holidays.

Interviewer: Do you believe that the majority of consumers would prefer to buy ski equipment from French brands, is it important for them to buy from French brands?

Léo: Ehm, I think that it was important until the late 90s, nowadays I’m not sure that people just want to have French skis, but as you know, French skis are the best! No, I’m not sure that but what is obvious that French industry in the ski, the ski industry so, is one of the best, so that why people just get these brands because they are, ehm a bit less expensive then some skis like VK2, which are American, or Atomic, Austrian skis which are so imported and maybe that a little bit more expensive. But I, it is true that people are, (pausing)

Interviewer: So it is related to the function of the skis or, do you think it is more related to the culture?

Léo: In fact it’s true that they have tourism because the first one is maybe because of the quality and its also a kind of ehm, sensitive reason, because, French sport, French sports men which are participant ski, like Chanclaud Kile, who gain gold medal in Olympic games in Grenoble, so he was, he was skiing with Rossignol skis, so that’s why people were like they so that, Rossignol skis was the best, because they were winning competitions so maybe that’s why, the reason.

Interviewer: Cross-country skiing. What is your perception of cross-country skiing in France?

Léo: Hmm, According to me, French cross-country skiing was well developed the 70s and the 80s and the decreased, but then, a lot of people working in this industry field observing ehm, kind of revivals of this practice, because we have now some French, some French champions also who are known, so its one of the best to promote this sport and also I guess that maybe the material it’s a little bit more comfortable, because if you take a cross-country boots from the 70s it was a kind of, just the kind of sneakers, really not comfortable and maybe it also, and also the skating, skating has allowed this, this increasing of practice. Because 20 years ago we just, we just new the classic, classic ski, cross-country so it was in France it has kind of etiquette which was, we say that it was a ski for “papy and mumy”, so it was not so funny and also skating allowed, kind of higher level of performance, when practice. Because you are available to get a little bit faster and you are also moving your shoulders, your, it’s a different technic, so.

Interviewer: Do you have any perceptions of why the cross-country skiing decreased?

Léo: Maybe just become less popular for, because as I told you, it was, it has the etiquette to be less sportive then other sports and also, because during the 90s the skis had, the alpine skis had a revolution, because you had parabolic skis which appeared, so it was again easier to learn alpine skiing then just to ski with back-country skiing. Because even if you had no technique you had, you quickly able to, to go in any kind of slopes so it has, and it was also the beginning of snowboard, so a lot of sports which be very funny to young people so that’s why everybody went to that. Even people were older then 40 years or 50 years old, so I guess it was because of that.

Interviewer: Which areas is the most popular place as a cross-country ski destination in France?
Interviewer: That’s ok, how would you describe cross-country skier with your own words?
Léo: Hmm, briefly, ehm people between 20 and 50 maybe, generally people practicing sports, three or four times a week. Generally they are also running the summer season or cycling. Generally they like all types of sports which makes you, have, heart beating very high.

Interviewer: What do you think are the motivation for cross-country skiing?
Léo: First of all, I am cycling tourist during the summer season, so I was looking for something to do quite similar during the winter and the, I also have the chance, as I told you, so, to have Grenoble, Chamrousse and then there are very nice place, small resorts, but very nice skiing which is called la Celle, and its just a fantastic way to discover the slopes and just to be quit alone down the trees and to enjoy, that’s it, so that my true first motivation, but then when I was able to have a little of technique I just enjoyed this practice so I decided to improve my, my frequency and then first year I was just renting my skis, but just last one year, because the year, the year after I bought my skis, my shoes and I was also taking my seasonal pass.

Interviewer: Why did you first rent and not buy?
Léo: Just to be sure that I will enjoy this sport and will have so many activities to do during the winter time so it’s not easy to take one sport to go to one practice, to let back another so I had, I mostly practicing so alpine skiing, snowboarding, back-country skiing, sometimes raquette, so I had to check, so it is very difficult to have choose, but as I told you I really really enjoyed them, this practice, this sport and so I decided to be, to have a minimum of technique and to enjoy it as in French ce just envoyer, is just value, to, as its to, I think as to enjoy this sport really you haft to gain a minimum of technic, because the, at the beginning it is quite difficult to learn to learn to get in scale, the then to be able to do one or more kilometers and then to go for the hills which are gaining, gaining, gaining percentage of claiming skills so when by the end you are able to to go anywhere else, any plays you want and to, don’t say oh, ok its to high or to long for me. Its just pleasure so.

Interviewer: Do you think that could be an issue when you recruiting new people to start cross-country skiing, because it could be very difficult in the beginning so you have to kind of past the first level?
Léo: I think that its is an issue to make them, we say in French, its difficult to get them more then one or twice time a year. If you are keen on your technique if you are, you have some skills it would be ok, I think that you will be naturally more then five times or six times or more then till 15 or 20 times a year. But why your technique is just so, I think that you will say, ok just for one day with my mates and they all take the sun and, so, that can be the issue.

Interviewer: What is you personal motivation? How often do you go cross-country skiing?
Léo: About three or four times a week, if I can. The minimum of two times a week, during a winter time and now, with the minimum of 20 kilometers a day. The main motivation, just to be outside.

Interviewer: Why ski de fond and not for example snowboarding?
Léo: Because I have done it during about 17 years, because as I told you I started to work when I was about 15 years old, and so I was working everyday during the week and during the season so I had low time, just I had break. So during my break I was always on the ski slopes and enjoying my ski. So I had no more time for anything else so, I thought that when I was two or three years ago, I thought it was the time to, to discover something else and that’s why I came to do cross-country skiing.

Interviewer: Which preferences do you believe costumers have towards additional ski equipment?
Léo: Generally, yes I think that when you first buy your equipment you have the basic one, then people just want to be well dressed, so not to be to cold when they are on the slopes, a good legging, short, and with glows and that is. And when they get more and more technical I think that they will change their equipment’s more easily, in order to have eh skis, which are a little bit. The weight is important so they want their skis to be little bit more light.

Interviewer: But do you think that the, it could also vary between if its people who do it for training or people who do it for pleasure or social purpose?
Léo: Hmm if you are just talking about the skating, I think that the larger amount of people will go for sport sensation. Now if you talk about classic, I think it is just to who to enjoy their time outside and to have fun with nature.

Interviewer: The ski equipment itself is not really important?
Léo: Not important in that sight.

Interviewer: How would you say that ski-equipment links to the persons needs for status? Do you think they can earn higher status?
Léo: I think that of the status that the first, first thing coming into, the first position so that they want to be efficient. I think, so status is also important. We know it was not the case, marketing wouldn’t be existing no more, but I think that if you have very good skis, looking, with good looking, eh., and the skis are not so good on the fields, eh.. I think that a larger amount of people will get rid of that skis and take skis which looks a little bit more ugly, but if the skis are more efficient on the field it will be the best thing for them.

Interviewer: How do you think perceived quality effect, there attitude towards price, their sensitivity? Is there a combination between price and status?
Léo: It can be but I will rather say that the first combination is between, between the technical components of the skis and their efficiency and then the price. So people can buy their skis with prices quite expensive, it will not matter because they first want to be well occupied, well with good skis so, and the, and also as we know, generally you have good equipment’s, you don’t haft to change it each year. A ski could last, even, and its more the case for back country skiing, you keep your skis a minimum of five years I think, so people could, should pay the price.

Interviewer: People will rather go towards the quality, more than for the price?
Léo: exactly. For example for me status is not really, really important, but I was very attentive to the technique to my skis, and the price was not a problem. Even if I don’t want to buy things to expensive, but as I new I will keep them for a long time, I was able to pay it a very high price.

Interviewer: Are you willing to pay more for ski-equipment that will enhance your performance?
Léo: I think that depends of the frequency you go ski. Personally I have several winter sports prices, so I’m not sure of that, but but maybe I can be able to change my skis, more rapidly then I was thinking of when I started. So I think I could answer yes, but as I told you, that depends on the people and what they do, when they are not on back-country skiing, because there is so much to do so, and its also, takes a lot of place in your house, because personally I have about five different sorts for alpine skis. And for other disciplines I have two or three different skis, because you cant, according to me, you are not wiling to take the same skis when the winter begin and you very good snow generally, and you are going for free ski, or if you just want to ski on the slopes with a lot of mugles, so I don’t know, you have to choose, your equipment, so according to me its one of my first patient. I have this amount of skis, but I have, as I told you I have also, want to go practicing snowboard so I have also two snowboards, I have also a peer of skis for Back country skis.

Interviewer: Why do you think people spend money on additional insoles? If they do so?
Léo: Because if so, I know this by heart, because I was retailing, selling ski boots, and if you are not well feeted, you will not enjoy your ski-time. So its really really really important to be well feeted, and for some people its so hard to get the right shoes that they must have insoles, which are perfectly feeted so

Interviewer: Do you believe this is something, in general the consumers are worried about?
Léo: For back-country skiing (pausing) maybe not at the beginning, maybe not, because when you are starts, as I told you the first thing you want is to stay in scale and not to fall, so you are not, if the shoes are a little bit to large, It does not matter. But when you are, when your level improves, then you are willing to take a little bit more, a little bit faster, you go faster and you want also to have the best sensations, so now you can be really really aware that the shoes is the major issue of this technical parts of your improvement. So I think that (pausing) that after it might be more the case. But for example for traditional skiing, if you are not good feeted you know, because alpine ski boots are thinner that back-country skiing so.

Interviewer: In your opinion, in what kind of situations will people like to have or use insoles?
Léo: When they just to enjoy their performance, if they are practicing sports everyday, you must to be very comfortable with your feet. Because if you have just, just for example if you have just run for 20 minutes, I think regular shoes will be ok, but when you starts to improve the time of running you will see quickly you are not well feeted, as for any other sports needing be well feeted, you will see very soon, so maybe you are people who are practicing sports more than three or four times a week and which need to be feeted, to have good shoes, they will not really go to this kind of refexion so do I have to buy insoles, foe example I was discussing that with one of my mates who is practicing sports three or four times a week, she is not yet so keen on cross-country
skiing but she have just start one or two years ago, but she is already thinking to have insoles in her shoes.

**Interviewer:** In general as well?

Léo: Yes, yes because she know that maybe se could take the soles for her sneakers so

**Interviewer:** Do you have additional insoles?

Léo: Yes, yes I have. But they, no brand. Specially done by my footologist. Specialist for the foot, so he have done it. This is something everyone can have get done.

**Interviewer:** Do you have good experiences with your insoles?

Léo: Oh, yes, it changes my life! Really. But when I first started cross-country skiing it was not really a problem, but then I was going very very far, and you cant afford to be bad, so I new it was a problem so I took it also for skating and it gave a good different on the feeling.

**Interviewer:** So do you believe that it could be a market for insoles?

Léo: Yes, absolutely.

Thank you for the interview, it has been very interesting to hear about your thoughts regarding the French culture, the cross-country ski perceptions and your thoughts about the insole. Do you have any questions?
Claire

Project leader in public sector
Occasional cross-country skier

Nationality: French
Gender: Female (30)

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately between 40-50 minutes. We wish to record the conversation for the purpose of transcription, if you approve that. All answers will remain anonymous.

Interviewer: How would you describe the French attitude towards health? Hmm.. Is health important for the French or?
Claire: Yeah, I think so. Ehm particularly trying, depends some people, but, many people that try improve their, the way they, they eat and what they eat. With local production or, you sometimes. And with doing sport, but ahm, maybe, I have a point of view where, particular important view, because my friend are doing sport to, so I live in this kind of, sports atmosphere, so maybe, its.. its me. I think it is important. Depends on the people. Some, but sometimes we don’t ehm como, we are not paying, most of the French people are not paying a lot of attention to alcohol and things like that its, applied what ‘apero’, with something like that and it is not really good. There is a lots of access, but it’s also some room

Interviewer: What do you think are underlying, what is the motivation for the health, physical activities and so on
Claire: My motivation?
Interviewer: Yes, what motivates you to go to the fitness?
Claire: Sometimes, I need (pausing) I think it’s, how to say, I think its necessary to, to sports. I fell that I’m, I feel better when I do sport and I feel that I miss something when I don’t do sport. So..

Interviewer: It’s kind of your lifestyle?
Claire: Yes it’s necessary to do sport really frequently.

Interviewer: Does it make you feel better?
Claire: Yes. And most of my time in, during work is inside. So sometimes I go, I’m doing jogging or that, to be out. And to go to the mountains or you know.

Interviewer: Yes, especially now when the weather is so nice and everything. Do you feel like the French government is creating, inspiring the people to do sports?
Claire: No, I don’t think so. I think its most, more local associations or. Your direct with friends, family that can let you, that can yeah, drive you to do sport. That, neither the government.

Interviewer: But are they mostly by private people, not by the government? (respondent did not understand) Those associations, are they managed by for example the parents, the school or is it the government?
Claire: That can be finance, can have from local authorities, but there is no direct (pausing) I think not, direct link with government. But there is sport in school.

Interviewer: Ok. Do you know how many hours of sport?
Claire: When I was in school it was, two, I think it was two hours a week. I don’t know if it’s more now or, I don’t know that.

Interviewer: How would you describe the French ski culture?
Claire: How was I when I did skiing?

Interviewer: Yes, or do you think there is a culture for cross-country skiing?
Claire: Yeah, I think when I was old, well I’m born in Grenoble, so when I was six or seven, something like that, ehm, my parents brought me to ski during one week, during the winter holidays. Then in school I, I was doing ski, ehm during ahm (pausing) I don’t know, eight or twelve years old, something like that. And if I had heard about ski, ehm the question is..

Interviewer: Well, ski in general?
Claire: Yes, as I was living there (in Grenoble), I always heard people that do skiing during the weekend so, very young I heard about it.

Interviewer: And your parents took you to go skiing?
Claire: Yes, it was not every weekend, ehm, very passionate mama, but every year we had one week skiing with the uncle and cousin and,
Interviewer: Ok, but do you think it’s local based?
Claire: I know lot of friends that are born in other regions, ehm in France and they, it depends, but most of them have discovered skiing young. But I also have some friends here in Grenoble that was born in Grenoble that never go skiing. Yes, ehm their parents didn’t have this too, and so they, they didn’t ehm teach them.
Interviewer: So its not really a cultural thing. Like culture connected to wine or the cheese or..
Claire: In France, I think ahm its spread (speaking French: ‘an attitude to different things’) I think that as my friends that are born there that have never go skiing are an exception to, most of the time the people that, and that are born there, but don’t have enough money, with the skiing it’s expensive so, I don’t know how much is the ahm combien (speaking French) How much it is for a skipass or, I don’t know exactly. You have to, much of the time you need a car to.. you have some bus, but I think its few year ago, it was more complicated.
Interviewer: Oui, to get there?
Claire: Yep.
Interviewer: Do you own your own skis and ski equipment’s? Ehm.. Ski du Font, if you have your own or do you rent skis?
Claire: ah, ok. I have my own skis. Its one of my friend that gave me them, Because he change his materials, and the, the other one. So old, classic skis.
Interviewer: Good. Is it normal to have your own skis, ski du fond?
Claire: Depends on your practice. If you go skiing, I don’t know (pausing) more the five or seven time, during the winter, Think its better to have, but if you just go skiing one, two or three times, maybe its not, yes. And I am not really an example because this year I have been three times.
Interviewer: Do you have any preferences about any ski brands, should it be any specific brand?
Claire: It’s really because I haven’t tried a lot of them. I just have mine, and I’m not sure of the brand. I think its Rossignol, but I’m not sure.
Interviewer: Ok, so its not so important to have a specific brand, but do you think other, French people are sensitive to this, that it is a French brand and, do you think that could be?
Claire: I think ehm I think they pay attention to the brand, but I don’t know if, if its really important to them that the, that the ski are French or, I know the friend that, me, he skis, ehm, he did a big, he did some comparison between brands before, before (pausing) before buying them, but I don’t know if he, the French one are better or not. And for me its, its not really important.
Interviewer: What’s the main ski destination in France? Any specific ski places, for ski du fond? Where do you go skiing?
Claire: Ehm this year I go to Autrans. Three hours
Interviewer: Is that’s one of the biggest ski places?
Claire: Yes, and that’s also one of the well known places. And the other, the other years before, I have been to Chamrousse, ehm oui. I have, five years ago, I was living in Chamrousse, and then I went to ‘Leflicla’, the ‘Massive the boch’ and,
Interviewer: Do you think, it’s easier to go skiing if its not so far away?
Claire: Yes, because one of the advantage cross-country skiing is, is that you just go and, go skiing two or three hours and you are not, ehm, you don’t need to spend the whole day, and you can do the, something else during the same day. So if you just have to go, to spend three minutes or one hour to go skiing its ok, but its more, but if its more, its not really interested to ski.
Interviewer: Ok, can you try to describe a typical French cross-country skier?
Claire: Most of the time its, I think I have the, the picture of people that are really sportive one. It’s not my case. But (pausing) I don’t know that if you do cross- country skiing you do it very ‘affond’ (French) you go cross-country every weekend something like that, but it’s not my case so, different people. But yeah some time I don’t have the profile, the most of the cross-country skiing. No.
Interviewer: But do you think, if you take the sportive cross-country skier, do you think they will be paying more attention to the equipment’s, like specialized equipment’s for skis?
Claire: Yeah, I think so. I think they try to improve their equipment from one to another or to be more comfortable and sometimes, I think sometimes its, people that are, who like competition, so to improve them, and help them in that. I think so.
Interviewer: What is your motivation to go cross-country skiing?
Claire: Ehm because, of the landscape. It’s a nice kind of place. Because of the, the feeling of sliding in the slopes, because it’s a kind of effort I like, jogging, swimming, something like that. Ehm because ehm, its less expensive then ski other kind of ski. Its less dangerous than, then ski du ronden (pausing) and, its kind of, even if its sportive its kind of time, and you’re in harmony with
nature. You can take your time, you don’t have to (Speaking French) waiting in the line for the ski-lift. Most of the time there is less people in the cross-country skiing than, the type of skiing. Ehm and, yes. For all the reasons.

**Interviewer:** So now, moving over to a bit more specific questions about the ski equipment. Is it important for you to have up to dated equipment?

**Claire:** I think, there are most kind of people that think so.. But maybe, some, some most want to have more comfortable equipment to take more pleasure to do ski. Ehm.. and some that like competition want to improve most, more and more and equipment.

**Interviewer:** Do you think, or could cross-country skiing be more like a “ guy” sport? Or a masculine sport, than a feminine sport?

**Claire:** I don’t think so, no. If I look at my circle with my friends that do cross-country skiing, ehm, I think its, it’s the same between men and woman, I think.

**Interviewer:** Do you think the equipment could be connected to status, like could it be a fashion to have better equipment’s then the others? Could it be a connection there?

**Claire:** No I think there could be a connection, yes. I don’t know, but I think that could be a connection. They want to show them and send good picture of themselves and that they’re in, they’re not out. Maybe less than the other kind of ski, like snowboard or something kind of that. Or its different, different way of (pausing) I don’t know.

**Interviewer:** Do you think ski du fond could be more about fitness than compared to snowboard and so on?

**Claire:** Yes, I think so.

**Interviewer:** You kind of mentioned it, but do you think that French people are willing to pay more for better skies, or do they, do they have any specific attitude to price? Are you willing to pay extra to get better equipment?

**Claire:** No I think it’s possible to pay more, I think it’s better. It depends on the investment, the involvement of the person that’s doing the sport. If it’s really, really important he can pay a lot or more. For me for example, no. I mean, I pay attention to the price and not the, not the brand. Just to be comfortable and it’s ok.

**Interviewer:** So a little bit about competition. Have you ever seen any insoles for cross country skis before, or ever thought about buying insoles for your skis?

**Claire:** Insoles, le semelle? Ehm.. if I have ever thought about it (pausing) No I never think about it. Because I, I find that the shoes are, most of the time, already comfortable. So, in comparison between ski shoes other ski, like snowboard, ehm it’s, more and more comfortable so, no I never think about soles.

**Interviewer:** Do you know a lot of other ski brands here in France? Any other brands that might be a big competition for cross-country skiing?

**Claire:** Cross-country skiing? I’m not really ahm, no.

**Interviewer:** If you were thinking, that you would go and buy insoles, would you go online or directly to a store?

**Claire:** Ah (pausing) I think I go to the shop, because I’m not ehm, ‘avertie’, I don’t know enough about technics, about the materials so.. I need some, some advice. I think. So, maybe I have a look online, to have an idea of the price. But I think I go to a shop.

**Interviewer:** What kind of customers, people do you think will buy the equipment for skis? We talked a bit about it but..

**Claire:** For advanced skiers, yeah, I think people that, who goes skiing very often. But, ehm if you want to discover cross-country skiing in the beginning, sometimes its really ehm

**Interviewer:** Is it difficult to find a place to learn, to get to know how to ski?

**Claire:** No skiing, but if you don’t know (pausing).

**Interviewer:** If you don’t know ski du fond at all, is it difficult to discover it?

**Claire:** I don’t think so. Because, most of the station, ski resorts, ahm, offer some have some teachers to teach you, yes skiing, so even if I have already did cross-country skiing, years ago, last year I did some, some lessons. I did, three hours of lessons and years before the same. And its nice to, to begin to.. to begin the season with, (talking French) with good advice.

**Interviewer:** When was the first time you went skiing?

**Claire:** First time I think, I think it was in Chamrousse, and then, so first year, I, I take on lesson, one hour, and after it was some group lessons, lesson with group. It was, in Lesapé, Chamrousse. And, last year it was in Autrans.

**Interviewer:** In classic or skating?
Claire: No, in skating. I’m not really interested in classical cross skiing, it’s more skating. Ehm think it’s a bit, monotone lesson, I don’t know how classical. And I did it when I was young and ehm, I’m not very interesting in doing it.

Interviewer: How old were you the first time you went skiing?
Claire: I think it was in school, it was, eight or nine something like that.

Interviewer: But you did cross country skiing in school?
Claire: Yes, I, we had some lesson, I don’t really remember, maybe during one or two moths. One day a week, something like that. I know its, it exists, now the, the children of one of my colleague go skiing, children in school. But when I speak, some of my friends, lots of them, where discussed by the (pausing) when they did it in school, because they,

Interviewer: Where they where kind of forced?
Claire: Yea, I don’t know, maybe it was not well organized or they remember that they where cold, that the where (speaking French) had a bad memory, so a lot of them. But maybe with skating there is, new dynamic, new

Interviewer: Do you think that your lifestyle or your values is a part of why you like to do sports and ski du fond?
Claire: Yes, I think so.

Interviewer: Which values?
Claire: Ahm health. Nature, to, take advantage of the nature. Discover, discover new landscape or new sensation. And sometimes, it could be to have an occupation during the winter. Or when you can do less things, less activities it is nice to have one ehm specially for this season. And for value (pausing) I don’t know. I sad them.

Interviewer: This year you went three times?
Claire: Last year I went maybe five or six times. So it’s that, every year I tell me, I will go more this time, I need more level, high level, its it depends on the snow of the meteo and sometimes I have the, como, ehm (mon vie plus mon fort) ehm, the lie, I’m don’t have the same motivation during the (pausing) for example this year, went skiing in December and I think in January there are, not very cold weather and lots of snow so I don’t have enough, ah motivation, so I, I don’t, I didn’t go anymore.

Interviewer: It strange how much the weather can effect yourself;
Claire: Yes, its very strong for me.

Interviewer: And then during the winter the days are shorter and you have to wake up and its,
Claire: yes, and sometimes its difficult.

Interviewer: Do you know about any Norwegian brands in France?
Claire: I know some, brands from oh, countries from the north, but I don’t know if it’s Norway or, like the North Face, it’s a..

Interviewer: Yes, I think actually its Canadian, but its not. I’m thinking, do you know, if there could be an attitude to Norwegian products, good or bad or
Claire: Yes, I think if it is equipment come from, Norway or the Nordic its, it must be more an open attitude ehm positive attitude. Because there is a picture, an image of, sportive people with the equipment. I think it’s the image. It is not my point of view. Ehm, maybe, maybe there is an, an, during last years, we speak more about French brands and protects French brands, and buy French brands, so it can have effect, some consequence, but yes.

Interviewer: Yes, like buying food from the locals and
Claire: Yeah. But for technical equipment’s, I think its less, there are less consequences.

Interviewer: Do you think that French people are loyal to the French culture the French brand that they consequently go to buy French things?
Claire: It depends for example, for cars, my parents (pausing) have (rachte reenult) so and I think it could be, yes some people has it, the, have it. Especially for cars. I don’t know if its for others, I’m not shore.

Interviewer: For food and wine,
Claire: yes its different for food. I think we could be very (pausing) and prefer to have French products or even local products. But for other types of products, I don’t know.

Perfect, Thank you so much for your time and participation! Do you have any questions?
Charlotte
Program coordinator
Business School in France
Occasional cross-country skier

Nationality: French
Gender: Female (30)

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. It will take approximately between 40-50 minutes. We wish to record the conversation for the purpose of transcription, if you approve that. All answers will remain anonymous.

Interviewer: So, starting with some very general questions, how would you describe the French attitude towards health?
Charlotte: The health (pausing), its kind of difficult. I think its changing at the moment. You mean regarding health or sports or?
Interviewer: People, are they thinking about health, is it important for the French people to do sports or what they eat?
Charlotte: I think (pausing) even more now than for example with like the bio. Like the food
Interviewer: Yes?
Charlotte: I think its really a new trend and people try to respect that, and I mean to be careful what they buy and as well buy more local products then products that are produced elsewhere. (pausing) but I guess other people they don’t care as well. I mean, there is to kind of people I would say. And perhaps they are more careful about what their children for example. And for the sports, I guess it’s the same to, even now like in the region, you think that people go ski, a lot of them ski, but I have a lot friends, they don’t ski, they don’t climb, not hike I guess a lot of people do sports. And different kind of sports. Does sports that are represented, and you can do pretty much everything.
Interviewer: Yes, it’s a sporty area?
Charlotte: Yes, especially Grenoble! It is, yeah, its perhaps more then other city’s. And, but for example in Grenoble people like biking, you see a lot of bikes everywhere. I guess that’s not the same in other city’s in France, but yes, I guess it’s a bit changing, and,
Interviewer: Is it changing into being more focus, or less?
Charlotte: Yes, I think it is being more, yeah. Especially for the sport, for example if you take into consideration the French, for example Grenoble – Vasille, semi-marathon. I think a lot of friends are taking place in France. Many people subscribe, they are not like professional, ahm
Interviewer: It’s that supported, is it the government that organize these events or the region, or who are organizing these events?
Charlotte: Ehmm I guess it’s more perhaps the clubs, the semi-marathon is organized by the athletic club in Grenoble, but I think it’s perhaps as well ehmm.. It’s ah, how do you say, its also by of the government as well, you know the minister of the sport, I think to do a lot of things. And they as well finance the clubs. And ahmm..
Interviewer: So the clubs are promoting the events?
Charlotte: Yes.
Interviewer: Do you think the government is providing a good platform, for helping the French society to do more sport and to motivate people to do sports, or to eat healthier?
Charlotte: That’s a good question. I think they do, for example if you can take into consideration why did like a promotion of (pausing) its like five vegetables per day for example. But that, and it really started like two or three years ago, but still talking about that. And I think yeah, yeah the government is quite proactive towards that, for example, as well on the TV- advertisement they need to show a little sentences like on the, when there is like food that in the advertisement that is not healthy and you need to eat five vegetables every day, something like that. I don’t know if it really works, but at least they do something. But apart from that I am not really aware of what they do so its difficult to say, ahmm I guess there is a lot of programs that, and for example in France and tv for example you have a lot, cooking show you know?
Interviewer: Yes
Charlotte: I think people think that, ok I can do that at home, instead of eating things that is already made (pausing).
Interviewer: Yes. And what do you think are the underlying motivation for physical activities?
Charlotte: Ehm I guess to be, yeah to be seen, perhaps to lose weight for some people. And some I think, perhaps it’s one of the, for example I talked to (a friend) yesterday and he was going to a gym-club, and he said, ah now it’s because its spring, see a lot of women coming back, you know before the summer (everyone start laughing) and its funny. I will say that, but perhaps as well to be with other people, like you do sport, collective sports and I think that is one of the motivations as well. And, perhaps do the activity outside like to go biking, to be in the nature and something that interests ehm
Interviewer: And then you can do, be in the nature, with friends
Charlotte: Yeah. Yeah I think it could be a mix of that. I mean, this is why, I think is why, this way I’m doing sports I guess, to be outside with people, and.. Yeah, and perhaps to have a challenge as well.. Yeah a goal, not just running because of running, but perhaps you go to a competition or if you subscribe to something you can be motivated, that could be a personal advantage.
Interviewer: Yes, absolutely. How would you describe the French ski culture, in general?
Charlotte: In general?
Interviewer: All skis, alpine and cross-country
Charlotte: Ehm, I think it’s a part of the a bit of people, a lot of people ski, but its quite expensive as well. So, I guess it’s more like people (pausing) all people that are near the mountain regions that go skiing, often, but I guess yeah, it’s quite expensive. But culture, I guess it depends on where you are from, in France as well. For example if you are from Paris, that’s not a part of your culture, to ski, unless your parents do, Ahm what they did in the past.
Interviewer: And then, yes maybe then its more status or if you can afford to go a week to the mountain compare to here where you can just go outside,
Charlotte: Yeah, and a lot of people are, that are not a part of this region that never ski because its to far, its to expensive. Ehm but I guess for example in Grenoble because we had the Olympic Games in -68, I think its still, I mean if you talk to, they will say yeah, it’s in the -68, we had the Olympic Games so it’s still known (pausing) I don’t know. I guess it depends on. I wouldn’t say that there is a French culture of ski. Ahm. I wouldn’t say that, I don’t know if I should say some more, I don’t know (pausing) Its because they don’t have the access and perhaps the price, its as well you need to learn how to ski, its not like running or. So yeah, and its quite as well, for people that don’t ski, it could be risky as well to start skiing. Like you feel that you will fall or that you will have an accident or.
Interviewer: Yes, and some mountains, it’s like extreme sport. And also when people start later it can be much scarier.
Charlotte: Yes, sometimes my parents don’t ski because they never learned when they were kids. And yeah, then it was not in their habits. Even if the are from here or they live here, their family never ski so it was not a part of their habit and culture, to go ski. But I know other families that went skiing, like all the week. They are in the weekend with the kids and.. its apart of their culture.
Interviewer: So its just differs from, kind of the family culture you know what to past?
Charlotte: yeah perhaps. Yeah like your friends go skiing or. I remember when I was ski I started like every Wednesday you go to the ski club and you do ski every Wednesday, but I didn’t really like it, I mean I didn’t like that so I stopped and because of my family didn’t ski that much so I didn’t continue after that. And then I started again like (pausing) 10 years ago, because I wanted to. But.. Yeah I guess it depends. Its personal I guess, it’s different with that. I know a lot of people even here, they don’t ski so.
Interviewer: Do you have ski sessions in school?
Charlotte: Yes. Mais, I guess it depends on the school where you go, but usually as in primary school you can start learning ski at school, you do.. you are . Like you go perhaps during the winter once a week, or so it is, I guess it’s more like here perhaps more country skiing that the.. and alpine.
Interviewer: So you had a choice?
Charlotte: Ehm, I guess it depends of what the school proposes. Ahm for example for me it was only cross-country ski, but it was because it was a small school, we didn’t had a lot of choices. Ehm but the after outside school you can just go to the ski club and they organise like on Wednesday or Saturdays. I guess a lot of school propose ski sessions.
Interviewer: Do you think people do, ehm become a member of this, ski schools or is it normal to be a part of,
Charlotte: for kids?
Interviewer: Yes.
Charlotte: Yeah, yes ehm I think so yeah. I guess it depends on the motivation on the kid as well or if his interested. But I guess a lot of kids go. And this is why, where they learn I guess for the
first time. For example if their parents don’t ski its where they can learn and, but after primary school, perhaps at the collage, perhaps they can learn still. But after that I guess schools don’t propose after like a curtain age I would say after 14, you don’t have the possibility to do it with your school. Or if they have like a special track, or a special teacher that does yeah

**Interviewer:** But you talked about that its, it tend to be expensive to go, in a regular basis, and. So what do you, ehm how important is it for the French people to own their own ski equipment?

**Charlotte:** Ah but I think if you live nearby ski resorts I guess its, kind of better to have your own skis.

**Interviewer:** yes, you will maybe be more willing to buy?

**Charlotte:** Yes. Yes I think so. I think if you don’t live near ski resorts ahm you only come back there once a year, it’s then more to rent there skis because its, to travel to come to the ski resorts it’s more convenient not to have the skis with you and, for example I know, I have one of my cousins, she lives in Paris, I think she has here own skis, her own ski boots, but when she comes to Grenoble to ski she takes her own ski boots to rent the ski. It’s to difficult you know to take it to the train and (pausing) so I guess if you live, I mean lot of skiers they have their own skis. And yeah, it’s quite expensive, but for example eh, before the season start you can buy like for (speaking French) ‘ocation’?

**Interviewer:** Do you mean like a day pass, or a discount pass?

**Charlotte:** No discount but I.. Ocation, it’s the new, not new skis but the, the second hand and a lot of, how do you say that, like second hand and

**Interviewer:** Stores?

**Charlotte:** not stores, but like..

**Interviewer:** Market?

**Charlotte:** Yeah kind of but, for example a lot of towns organize their own second hand day for example. And, and you go to a specific place, people leave their second hand skis and equipment and everything and then the day after you can just go and see the equipment and buy one that fit you for example and a lot of towns around they do that. It is organized by the ski associations ah and they go like in the, I don’t know, sport school or, you know depending where the town can reserve the room for them. And, it’s quite common for people here I guess buy this, especially for, because when your kids grow up, your going to buy always new skis and ski boots or, So I guess there is, there is market. I mean here around Grenoble for that.

**Interviewer:** Do you think people are more willing to buy alpine skis or equipment than cross-country ski or equipment? And why?

**Charlotte:** I don’t know. I guess it depends on what they do or I guess that more people that do alpine skis then cross-country skis, so I will perhaps say they buy more alpine skis then.. But I guess it depends on the, what people do. I don’t know. But I will say that cross-country ski, I guess it’s a bit more expensive then ski, ehm I know, I bought my equipment, like second hand equipment, the new once, it was really expensive (pausing) ehm, I, Yeah I guess its more expensive then Alpine. If you look at the price for (pausing)

**Interviewer:** We heard that cross-country is usually, the to do it, you know to pay for the slopes and to rent the equipment like the, that tend to be cheaper.

**Charlotte:** Yep, to.

**Interviewer:** Then alpine, so it’s a bigger investment at the beginning but..

**Charlotte:** Yeah, its true that and ski pass compared to alpine like, it’s really cheap. I guess it depends on in which ski resort you’re in (pausing) for example I guess Autrans its more expensive than if you go to ‘Porconion’ or ‘Lason ‘Dacor’, but I guess its one Euro difference. And to rent, yeah I guess it’s less expensive. But if you go often, I mean when we started skiing cross-country we didn’t buy our materials because it was, you don’t know if you like it, if you are going to go often or not. And after one or two years you think, oh, I will buy my equipment. Because it is kind of expensive to rent it.

**Interviewer:** Yes, I think that sound reasonable, to try before you buy. Especially for the sport were you can actually rent your equipment and then if you can buy later and then you know that you can use it for years.

**Charlotte:** Yes. I guess it depends if you live here or somewhere else. It’s the same I guess with alpine ski.

**Interviewer:** Yes. If you try to imagine a typical cross-country skier. How would you describe that person?

**Charlotte:** Ehm would say it is an athletic person. That like sports ahm, like ‘adurance’ as well, ‘adurance’ do we say that? Is, how do you say that in English?

**Interviewer:** Oh, I think I know what you mean, you know when you go for a long jogging and your heart is racing? Cardio?
Interviewer: Yes, do you think there, is it more women or more men that do cross-country skiing?
Charlotte: I guess more men. Ehm I mean when I ski I see more men than women. But I guess..
Interviewer: Do you have any preferences, if they would rather go skating or if they go classic?
Charlotte: it’s more if you are a part of a club or ahm classic, I think, I guess I will say its more like older people do classic style, ahm.. And perhaps more as well but. I don’t do classic so it’s, I guess when you’re a kid you started with classic. Classic style. Ehm, but yeah I will say in the general term more men. When you look around and you see more men doing cross-country ski. But I guess perhaps it tends to change as well and, did do a lot of promotion like advertisement to cross country ski, for example in some resorts there is like special days (pausing) ahm, where they, you have like ski, ehm free and teachers that can learn how to ski. I guess it’s a lot of things to promote. I think there is more people now that do cross-country skiing then (pausing) and I guess there is a lot of advantage is than doing alpine ski because you don’t wait in a queue, its less expensive, you are more part in, of the nature ahm, I guess it’s a total different experience. To do cross country ski than alpine ski. Hm, this is what I, I think.
Interviewer: Is it a supplement for those who like jogging or hiking, in the summer and then if you do this during the winter?
Charlotte: Yes because you can as well compare it with jogging. It is more challenging than alpine ski and more sportive also.. I guess it could be an disadvantage as well because some people they don’t practise, they don’t do cross-country because they feel not sportive enough to do it.
Interviewer: Which areas do you like to go to?
Charlotte: I like Vercor because I mean we live closeby so it is easy to go to Vercors, ehm. Yeah, we mainly go to Vercors, sometimes ‘Chamrousse’. It is definitely ahm (pausing) its around 14 km of tracks ehm, in ‘Chamrousse’ it’s nice too. And then, we go sometimes to the ‘Savoir’ on the other apartment ‘Savoir’ they have ‘bession’ I don’t know if you have heard about this ski resort ‘bession’ it’s the biggest ski area in the ‘Savoir’ department ‘Bession’. Ehm and then, I know there are a lot of places more in the north like in ‘Jura’, but I’m never been. I have never been there.
Interviewer: I don’t know, do you think it’s more like, if you want to go cross country skiing would you prefer to go to the closest one or would you plan for a whole trip?
Charlotte: Ahm depends because sometimes we go to ‘Bession’ so it’s like 2h drive to there. Ehm but it’s a rally nice place. And, I mean I know this place because my family its from that small village and when we heard that there where a lot of cross-country ski so we were just like lets go and it is a really nice, authentic village. But we do not go there every weekend or (pausing) just go once a year perhaps. And that’s what we do, but
Interviewer: But that is more for leisure then maybe, then the exercise itself, if you want to exercise then
Charlotte: Yeah, true, yeah, yeah, its more to have a day out and (pausing) because its kind of a long way as well,
Interviewer: Enjoy with friends and family and
Charlotte: And then, but what, which is good like if you go to the ‘Vercors’ for example you can just go for the morning, the afternoon, you are not in a rush because for example its one o’clock, ok lets go skiing, ok! You can just go and (pausing) you still have time to ski where else if you be future then that you will have to plan in advance, ok on that day I’m going ehm yeah. I guess we are quite lucky to be here. I don’t know, in Norway do you live near some ski resorts or?
Interviewer: Yes, it is usually very easy to go skiing. Cross-country at least, maybe not alpine.
Charlotte: There are some places in ‘Chartreuse’ as well, but I have never been there, I don’t know if you have been to ‘Chartreuse’?
Interviewer: No, no this time in France went so fast.
Charlotte: Yeah its nice, but have you been to other places in France or did you have time to travel?
Interviewer: A bit. yes. But we have not been visiting so many ski resorts. Not so fan of snow. That is a good thing about Grenoble. If you want its just 15 minutes with the bus and then you come to “wonderland” you have snow everywhere.
Charlotte: Yes, it’s different. Yeah, and I guess one of the advantages as well to be here in the region, it’s like going skiing, but just choose as well when you want to go. For example if the whether is not good, ok you don’t go you don’t care really because we live near bye so yeah, that’s one of the advantages as well.

Interviewer: So, maybe a little bit about ski equipment. Do you have any preferences?

Charlotte: Ah, ok. Not for the ski equipment. I guess I wouldn’t have preferences, ahm (pausing) I mean I have the same clothes and it has been like 10 years that I have the same and perhaps I will change if they are to old or to ahm but I don’t have preferences. I think I bought something for like two years ago, I (pausing) really didn’t need it, but it was really nice so (laughing) ehm, it was not so expensive, but I guess, I guess it depends, perhaps young people are more focus on that or you know about the trend and, the colors as well, because you see more like people with bright colours at the moment, its quite of the trend. But then like, if the trend changes then you haft to buy a new one because, because (pausing). I guess more young people.

Interviewer: Do you think they are also concerned about the brand, and how so?

Charlotte: Yeah, I think so. And I guess it depends on what ski you do as well. For example for people that surf, I guess (pausing) its different brands are more like surf, ahm I don’t know the brands, but, quicksilver or this kind of brands, I don’t know about that (laughing). And perhaps people that ski it’s different. I guess for cross-country skis its different as well, I mean they are different.

Interviewer: Do you know if you would rather buy French brands?

Charlotte: Hmm, I don’t know, if it’s French (pausing) I guess I am not really sensitive about the French, if it’s a French brand or not. And, but for example for the French brand we have ‘Lafuma’, have you heard about ‘Lafuma?’ But no? Ehm (pausing) its quite famous French brand. And they have their factory near, its like one hour drive from here. So sometimes we go there because they have a special room, and it’s less expensive to buy on the factory then on the shops. So, sometimes we go there and we find really good, it’s really good products. They have as well ‘Millet brand, ‘Millet, do you know it? ‘Millet?

Interviewer: Yes, because of the quality?

Charlotte: We know that its, a good quality, but I guess with the (pausing) like foreign brands, they are good quality to so.. I guess for sports you find a lot of quality products as well ehm, I would not say I buy because it’s French. Perhaps more because of the price, and the quality of the product. (long break - silence) I mean I know a lot of people that uses their equipment that they had since a long time its, ahm before I do so. Yeah I don’t know, and because of the second hand market as well, for kids for example you can buy, not that expensive things and.. and you have as well the shop, its you know the, ‘Decathlon’ and ‘GO –Sport’, they offer good products, not that expensive. Ehm (pausing) I guess ‘Decathlon’ is one of the main shops where you can find equipment’s and ski equipment’s as well. Ehm I go often to ‘Decathlon’ as well.

Interviewer: Is quality important for you?

Charlotte: Yeah, I think it’s important. The quality, and for example if you buy a jacket I needs to be warm enough, ehm, or wind, stop, for example. Ehm yeah I think the quality is important. Especially if you want to keep your equipment’s for a long time it’s (short silent) Quality and yeah, the price I would say. Because it could be expensive as well to have sport equipment. And (pausing) so it needs to be mixed between the quality and price.

Interviewer: Ahm, this is like competition

Charlotte: I don’t know competition (start laughing)

Interviewer: This is more basically, how much you are willing to pay?. Do you know, well you said something in the beginning about that cross- country skiers are sportive. Do you think they also be more like, thinking about performance? Is it more like an performance sport, you want to do well, or is it more like leisure, or maybe bought?

Charlotte: I guess it’s both. I would say. When you ski I see a lot of people you see they are for he performance or yeah, but you see as well family, so you know people that just do it on. Or the one time in just like, I guess it will take bought, perhaps for, like for the performance people are more men then woman. Ehm.. yeah, but you see a lot of people with the like, the good equipment the, You know they think, yeah they are very good!. And yeah

Interviewer: Do you think it could be related to a status?

Charlotte: I don’t think, it is not like a fashion thing. I wouldn’t say that. I don’t think this is the (pausing) how do you say, comment dire

Interviewer: In French?

Charlotte: I don’t think that, people that do cross skiing, cross country ski they do it to do like in a fashion way. Or to be, that you look at them, ah yeah his very good or I think it’s a different way of doing ski, that alpine ski. For example if you go to do the alpine ski yeah you will se people

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with really nice equipment, and everything so its, ah its just show off, but I don’t think that in the cross country ski it’s the same. It’s another attitude and,

Interviewer: How are people dressed when they go cross-country skiing?

Charlotte: Well here, it’s not the same thing. Even, like for example if you take Grenoble, people just dress how they want to do dress, like for example if you go to Paris, yeah you see a big different between people in Grenoble and people in Paris. Here you can just, yeah I don’t know, walk with your hiking shoes or your color tee, you don’t care about your patterns, and I guess its.. yeah, I guess it could be the same, it depends. Yeah, I think people did, Yeah I think that, perhaps they consider more the sport it self then their.. patterns, and the experience.

Interviewer: We have the last question, its about the insoles, do you know? Do you personally use insoles?

Charlotte: No I don’t. But you mean insoles that you can buy in shops or?

Interviewer: yeah, it’s like an additional sole that you put, ‘un semelle’

Charlotte: but its not a medical insole?

Interviewer: No, its, this sole from the company its all about the performance or comfort and specialized within cross country skis, so only for cross country ski. Do you think people would consider to be interested insoles? You have the gloves and so on. Do you think that insoles could be an equipment as well? In that category?

Charlotte: Ok, but (pausing) ahm, I would say no, but ahm like if you talk about performance. I guess it’s more like people that are really into that sport that will think of, ok I will might need one. But for example for people that just go for leisure, like once a month or perhaps they will not need it (pausing) but I guess people that are more focused on their performance or, they, yeah perhaps it would be interesting. But do they have some? I’m not really aware about that, that you can buy or what kind of things that you can buy in France as well.

Interviewer: No, it’s very new. So its just a new product that they made, trying to differentiate them self,

Charlotte: ok, but I mean it does exist on the market? I mean for other brands or

Interviewer: yeah, it does, well like for alpine I think its quite normal.

Charlotte: Ah, yeah ok especially, I mean once I was renting my ski boots for the cross-country ski, I found it difficult to find the right one. Because you know when you try them in the shop you don’t know if its going to fit really, and when you try in the slopes its like, ah, no.. its hurting or (pausing) but if I had some practice with insoles its

Interviewer: Yeah, because you need movements?

Charlotte: Oui, and I, for cross country ski, for example when I ski, when (pausing) last two or three times my feet’s was a bit hurting so I don’t know if this would help or you know. Hmm, not have this situation, its (pausing) could be like medical performance, perhaps mix of I don’t know.

Interviewer: Yeah they have different, different models for different. One for performance and one for more comfort and stability. And: yeah, also some torsional stiffener, you know when you twist your foot, well its really technical but (lathing) But it seems like a really interesting product

Charlotte: Because when I last time with some of my friends it was I think the first time that they where skiing cross country and they said, oh my feet’s are hurting a lot, and perhaps they didn’t have the right position you know, into the boots. That could help like people (pausing) But for the performance I don’t really what can go, that can bring to.. perhaps the stability.

Interviewer: Yeah. But it wouldn’t be anything you would, like oh maybe its good to have insoles. Would you think it would be the shoe that was wrong sized? Instead of thinking the sole is

Charlotte: Ah, no I think it’s the, well, yeah, because one, for example last time I was, me feet was really hurting and I saw that, ah, perhaps if I had the proper insole, perhaps I had be better. Ahm I don’t think it was the size of the shoes because I have my own shoes. And or perhaps I think that I don’t have the right position you know in skiing (pausing) ahm if it could help for example like that, that would be good. Ahm I wouldn’t buy it for the performance, because that’s not my (pausing) because I just and, I mean I like, I mean like challenge, challenging but not into the performance. For example (my friend) he’s more into performance.

Interviewer: Yes, if everyone was like that it would have been perfect.

Charlotte: But yeah, I guess there is a small market but I, how many people could be interested, I guess there is some.

Interviewer: It seems that there is a small market, yes.

Charlotte: Ehmm I mean a lot of people ski ehmm, but, yeah I mean you need to find your interest. Perhaps try one and see what’s the difference, what could be with or without, and yeah, why not, I mean (pausing) I guess if you go like in ski shops and there is a lot of things like that, you are not aware of, but when you create the need perhaps.
Interviewer: Yeah, yeah exactly. I mean you see a lot of things but you are like, well I don’t need to have all this, ski equipment and.
Charlotte: and what is the price, do you know, this?
Interviewer: well, around 50 Euros maybe? They have one a bit cheaper to fit more the leisure segment and then the more performance based insoles are more expensive.
Charlotte: But I guess if it could last for some years it’s (pausing) the price I would say its ok. Because if you compare like ski boots its quite expensive. I guess to buy like new ski boots I don’t know cross-country, so. And you cant buy them in France now?
Interviewer: Not the insole, they are new in Norway as well, they introduced them this winter actually.
Charlotte: It could be nice to try.

Good. Well, thank you for your time. It was great to have your thoughts and knowledge about this field.