The Role of End-user Needs within a WMC Business Ecosystem

A Comparative Case Study

KäPy – End-User Orientation to Development of Business-Ecosystems (BE) in Wood-Based Multistorey Construction (WMC)

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Finland, 5.5 M inhabitants
Households based on family size, 1960-2015

This slide is adopted from the presentation of Autio, M (2017), Käpy Researh seminar 06.02.2017
KäPy Funding and Project Group

- **Funded by Tekes and partner companies** (Lapwall Ltd, Dasos Capital Ltd, Puusta Innovations Ltd, upwood design Ltd, Westas Group Ltd, HTJ (Constructor Agency) Ltd, Thermowood Association)

- **Designed around concrete WMC building projects** during 2016-2018
  - BE operation and value-creation
  - Consumer needs and attitudes
  - Cities as gatekeepers to WMC

- **Partner Universities:** Vaasa,
- **Linköping, BOKU, UBC**

- **Website:**
  http://www.woodenliving.net/
Consumers, housing, wood material in urban residential buildings?

Consumers have generally highly positive perception of wood material – but mainly in other uses than WMC?
=> Ultimate questions?

- How to create a positive brand for sustainable housing/living in WMC?

- How to strengthen successful business ecosystems in WMC via emphasizing consumer needs and expectations?

- What are end-consumers’ expectations, needs and perceptions on housing – WMC in particular?
Research project framework

WMC BE – End-user information in product/process development and marketing
Qualitative, Case Study

Consumer housing (WMC) related needs and perceptions? – Quality perceptions to wood (material) apartments? – Segments?

- Needs, preferences, choice criteria – quality vs price/use costs/economics
  - Future needs (recognizing shifting needs…)
  - Perceived total quality of housing solution, elements/dimensions
  - Perceived "WMC" brand

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Methods and Data: empirical thematic interview data, a WMC project

Picture by Juho Pöyhönen, 2017
Case WMC Project 1 (2017, Finland):

• Interviews = seven (spring 2017)
• Two-storey wood element loft, a city in Central Finland
• 14 apartments, 40-60 sqm²
• Newly established neighbourhood, 2-3 km from the city center
• 06/2017: each apartment is sold
• Construction fall 2016 – spring 17
• Marketing of homes 2016-2017
• Residents move in June 2017
• Couples/single households

Picture by Juho Pöyhönen, 2017
Some early insights: *choice criteria, perceptions* of ”a suitable apartment”

- Ownership of the apartment is a value as such: *investment*, resale value: *new*
- ”Overall affordable solution”
- Childhood environment / type of the building
- Type of the building (loft, ”feeling of a single house”....)
- Location, neighbourhood, ”near the center, near nature...”
- Pets
- Quietness and privacy, functional *storage space*
- Exterior also matters: Decking, terraces, garden
Some early insights: the choice process

The process

• Characteristics **compensate each other** in the choice process: eg. location vs. size

• Choice is a **team decision**, other people are (always) consulted

User needs during the building process:

• Possibility to impact the choice of interior materials, colors etc. is positive (not decisive)

• During the construction process: information and timeliness, **delivery when promised.**
Some early insights to interviews: wood and sustainability

- **Ecological materials appreciated**, wood included

- **Durability** (life cycle) and **interior air quality** of the building - **Healthy building – healthy people!**

- **Wood is considered ”good” to health and environment** – but **prejudices also exist**: Some bad experiences from older wooden houses with moisture problems and related poor air quality (Others: similar bad experiences from concrete houses...)

- **Overall perception:** – **positive** - **but not a critical criteria** (not all the interviewed knew that the building is wooden...)

- **Low knowledge** of wood as construction material!

- Energy and waste management solutions are of interest – both ecological and economic concerns
Next steps:
The Planned Project 2017-2018, GAPs

• Repetition of interviews in Case 1 (same respondents/same building) within 6-12 months from moving in – GAP? experiences vs. expectations

• Survey – consumers living in MWC buildings - Finland

• Survey 2017-2018 consumers in a few cities (NOT necessarily WMC residents) GAP? (WMC residents/others)

• Comparisons between Finland/Austria (– Sweden?)

• Comparisons between consumer perceptions – BE enterprise perceptions – GAP? (Finland Cases & Surveys)

• Interested in joining?!
Thank you!
Taste of Wooden Living - KäPy

www.woodenliving.net  http://woodenliving.net/in-english