

Vysoká škola polytechnická v Jihlavě
Katedra cestovního ruchu

HAMPTON JITNEY COMPARED TO STUDENT AGENCY

Jana Křihová

Jihlava 2009

HAMPTON JITNEY COMPARED TO STUDENT AGENCY

HAMPTON JITNEY COMPARED TO STUDENT AGENCY

Jana Kříhová

Vysoká škola polytechnická v Jihlavě

Katedra cestovního ruchu

Mgr. Zdislava Kratochvílová

Stupeň odborné kvalifikace: bakalář

Jihlava 2009

ABSTRACT

Jana Kříhová: Hampton Jintey compared with Student Agency. Vysoká škola polytechnická Jihlava. Katedra cestovního ruchu. Vedoucí práce Mgr. Zdislava Kratochvílová. Stupeň odborné kvalifikace: Bakalář. Jihlava 2009. Stran 44.

Cílem této práce je porovnání dvou přepravců poskytující služby na poli meziměstské přepravy osob. Práce je založena na osobních zkušenostech s oběma přepravci. Práce obsahuje stručnou charakterizaci každého přepravce. V práci jsou zahrnuty výsledky z dotazníkového výzkumu zaměřeného na spokojenost zákazníků s poskytovanými službami.

Klíčová slova: Hampton Jitney, Student Agency, meziměstská doprava, autobusová přeprava.

ABSTRACT

Jana Krihova: Hampton Jitney compared with Student Agency. The College of Polytechnics, Jihlava. Department of Travel/Tourism. Supervisor: Mgr. Zdislava Kratochvilova. Scale qualification: Bachelor. Jihlava, 2009. Pages 44.

The aim of this work is to compare two carriers providing inter-city transportation. It is based on experience of the writer with both companies. The work contains brief characterization of each carrier. A survey was carried out for this work. The results are used as additional information about satisfaction of the customers with provided services.

Key words: Hampton Jitney, Student Agency, inter-city transportation, bus carriers.

PREAMBLE

This work grew up as one of many conditions of completion of studying on the College of Polytechnics Jihlava. The topic of the work is a comparison of two carriers Hampton Jitney and Student Agency. I want to find out which carrier is better in provided services. To get the answer I composed a questionnaire which helped me to make a conclusion.

The work is intended for everybody who wants to know differences between Czech and American inter-city transportation. It means for everybody who wants to find out, where are the weaknesses of already mentioned companies, what should be changed and what could be improved.

I would like to express a big thank to my supervisor Mgr. Zdislava Kratochvilova for her expertly leading of my work as well as for her patience and willingness.

I must not to leave out to thank every respondent who devoted to me precious time and filled out my questionnaire.

Last and big thank belongs to my family and friends who supported me during writing. Sincerely I can say that I would hardly finish my work without their huge help.

Obsah:

Preamble.....	6
1 Introduction	9
2 Hampton Jitney Inc.....	10
2.1 Services	10
2.1.1 Regular Lines Long Island – New York	10
2.1.2 Charters	14
2.1.3 Boston	15
2.1.4 Florida Tours.....	15
2.1.1 Race Tours	16
2.1.2 Limousine Service.....	17
2.1.1 Express Package Service.....	17
2.1 Fares and Discounts	18
2.1 Payments	20
2.2 Reservations	20
2.3 Before the Trip	21
2.4 During the trip	21
2.5 After the Trip.....	22
3 Student agency.....	23
3.1 History	23
3.2 Activities of Student Agency	24
3.2.1 Language Stays	24
3.2.2 Work Stays.....	24
3.2.3 Visas.....	25
3.2.4 Charters	25
3.2.5 Insurance	25
3.2.6 Bus Services.....	25

3.3	Tickets	26
3.3.1	Ticket for a Fixed Date	26
3.3.2	Open Ticket.....	26
3.3.3	Credit Ticket	27
3.3.4	Electronic ticket	27
3.4	Fares and Discounts	27
3.5	Payments	28
3.6	Reservations	29
3.7	Before the Trip	29
3.8	During the Trip.....	29
3.9	After the Trip.....	30
4	Questionnaire.....	31
5	The final assesement	35
6	Conclusion.....	39
7	Sumary of Citations.....	40
8	Sources	41
9	Enclosures.....	42
9.1	Summary of Charts	42
9.2	Summary of Graphs	42
9.3	Summary of Enclosures	42

1 INTRODUCTION

After a long time of thinking about my topic for my bachelor thesis I made a decision and chose the real one. I named it: “Comparison of Hampton Jitney and Student Agency”. I want to concentrate my attention on the inter-city transportation. I found this topic very interesting because I want to compare and find out the strength and weaknesses of both companies. Hampton Jitney is a big American company with a long history. However, the service of Student Agency is only new and developing. Both companies are well known in their own countries and in the domain.

I have very good experience with Hampton Jitney as I worked for them for the last three summers. Unfortunately I have not had an opportunity to be employed by Student Agency but I have already been on the bus as a passenger. From time to time I go with the company from Jihlava to Prague and now I also use their new service from Prague to Ceske Budejovice. Thanks to my trips I found out that the services provided by Hampton Jitney are really similar to the services offered by Student Agency and it strongly took my attention.

2 HAMPTON JITNEY INC.

Hampton Jitney was founded in 1974 and it is a pioneer on the field of transportation services on Long Island.

The company takes care of transport of people mainly between eastern Long Island (the Hamptons) and Metropolitan New York. Hampton Jitney provides services from and to the northeastern part of the United States of America and Canada as well. We cannot forget to come up their service from Florida to Long Island and back. Among new services belong the trips to and from Boston, Foxwoods Casinos, North Fork Line, Brooklyn and this year was added lower Manhattan. Furthermore, they organize a lot of tours, race tours, charters, and limousine service.

Hampton Jitney started with one van but now operates with many luxury buses and limousines. Hundreds of people use their services for 365 days a year. Passengers can rely on style, comfort and safety of offered vehicles.

2.1 Services

2.1.1 Regular Lines Long Island – New York

Incomes from regular lines are intended for the biggest profit of the company. In the introduction of Hampton Jitney I meant “The Hamptons”. This designation is used for an area which is occupied mostly by wealthy people from New York and Florida, who built spectacular residences here. Possibility to meet a famous artist, writer or musician is high here.

Most of the tourists visit “The Hamptons” actually Long Island basically because of the world-famous beaches, museums and art galleries. The attendance rapidly grew up after 11th September 2001. New Yorkers looked for a sanctuary and quiet in their summer residences.

Among regular lines we count: Montauk Line, Westhampton Line and North Fork Line.

2.1.1.1 Montauk Line

We talk about an area between Southampton and Montauk. This Line is the one which is the most encumbered. In high season it can happen that for every hour there are three or more buses: on Fridays, from New York to Long Island and then on Sundays and Monday mornings from Long Island to New York.

Stops: Montauk, Napeague, Amagansett, East Hampton, Wainscott, Sag Harbor, Bridgehampton, Watermill and Southampton and in certain time Manorville.

2.1.1.2 Westhampton Line

Westhampton Line is the shortest one. It starts and finishes in Hampton Bays. The bus always begins and finishes in Southampton. The way from Southampton to Hampton Bays takes approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Sometimes, when the bus is not supposed to be full, it can be combined either with Montauk Line or North Fork Line. Westhampton Line is a little bit reduced on off peak days. According to my opinion, it is firstly because there are less people travelling on these days and secondly the owner of the company comes from a town in the area.

Stops: Hampton Bays, East Quogue, Quogue, Westhampton and Manorville.

2.1.1.3 North Fork Line

As I have already mentioned, this line belongs among the new services. It is not so new like, for example Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan, but compared with the South Fork lines it is a new booting service.

Three years ago Hampton Jitney bought a company which carried customers from New York to Long Island (North Fork) and back. So it was considered a company with exactly the same specialization. Hampton Jitney preserve the stops and for two years the prices as well. Last year the prices increased, but just a little bit.

Stops: Orient Point, Orient Village, East Marion, Peconic Landing, Greenport, Southold, Peconic, Mattituck, Cutchogue, Laurel, Jamesport, Aqueboque, Riverhead, Tanger Outlet

2.1.1.4 Stops in Manhattan

Buses coming from Long Island make stops along the Third Avenue at the streets 39th, 42nd, 51st, 61st, 67th, 72nd, 79th, 86th. All of them are located on the East Side of Manhattan. Moreover, a couple of certain night trips can go on West Side of Manhattan to 86th, Central Park, then to Broadway and streets 86th, 79th, 72nd and 64th as well.

On the way back from New York to Long Island people can catch Hampton Jitney buses on 86th street between Lexington and Third avenues, at 69th on Lexington, 59th on Lexington and the last one is on 40th again between Lexington and Third avenues.

2.1.1.5 Airport Connections

Like everybody knows New York belongs among the biggest cities in the world and therefore there are two airports. Hampton Jitney tries to be helpful to the customers and sake of that reason if people ask the drivers they are able to make stops in Queens. Exactly on the way to the city the stop is on exit 23 off Long Island Expressway (further only L.I.E) in Flushing Queens, Main street. For customers making reservation in advance the reservationist can offer the phone number of a taxi company cooperating with Hampton Jitney.

On the way to Long Island the stop is on exit 25 off L.I.E in Fresh Meadows in front of Fresh Meadows Cinema Plex.

In both directions passengers can get to or from John Fitzgerald Kennedy's Airport and the second one is La Guardia Airport. It always takes approximately 20 to 30 minutes by taxi for both airports.

One more Airport connection stop is for McArthur airport and this stop is called Islip. The location of the stop can be found on exit 60 off L.I.E going westbound (to the city). It is in front of Exxon station on the corner of the Service Road & Ronkonoma Avenue. Going eastbound (from the city) it is at the Southeast corner of Ronkonoma Avenue & the Service Road.

2.1.1.6 Ambassador Class

It is a service for customers with higher expectations. These types of buses are full size buses, but only for 30 to 33 passengers. There is a small kitchen with coffee maker and microwave. So the attendant can prepare fresh coffee, hot chocolate, tea and so on. These buses are more comfortable, the offer of the services is more expanded and the leg room for is bigger as well. Hampton Jitney owns only couple of buses so that is why these buses are limited only for Montauk and Westhampton Lines. For Westhampton Line there are set up only two buses. One goes on Fridays (from New York) and the second one on Sundays (to New York) and only during high season, it means usually from July to September.

The demand for the first or so called ambassador class is increasing. Therefore customers, if they want to go by these buses, have to make reservations. In case they change their mind, they are obliged to cancel the reservation or they would be charged a fee of 20 USD from their credit card. The credit card number together with other information (address etc.) about the customer the reservationist needs to confirm reservations.

2.1.1.7 Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan

Both of these lines are new and not so known. Service to and from Brooklyn runs only on Fridays and Sundays and it is always a “combined” trip. A combined trip means that one bus is running from (to) Montauk and the second one from (to) North Fork. They meet each other in Manorville and passengers from one of the buses have to switch. Mostly, the passengers of the buses from North Fork Line have to switch the buses.

The service to and from Lower Manhattan runs on Fridays, Sundays, and on Monday mornings and only from or to Montauk.

Fares and conditions are the same as for Montauk, in the case of Brooklyn, North Fork lines.

2.1.2 Charters

Hampton Jitney can make all the arrangements to take groups anywhere passengers have planned, whether it is a day trip or a weekend excursion.

Hampton Jitney can order tickets, reserve rooms and arrange meals (at group excursion rates). The plans can be made either by customers or Hampton Jitney without any charge.

Charters are offered especially after high season because company is not so encumbered and has more available buses and drivers. The prices depend on distance travelled and the number of passengers.

2.1.2.1 Offer (1)

Try a day trip and tour to the scenic Mystic/Groton area of southern New England. Or tour beautiful nearby Montauk and Sag Harbor.

How about a weekend in a quaint, affordable Quebec City (see photo) or in Pennsylvania Dutch country?

Feast on a pre-show lunch at Tavern on the Green or Sardi's, then enjoy a Broadway matinee.

Visit the Bronx Zoo, or one of the many other fascinating places in the New York metropolitan area.

Or try something different:

* A family reunion or birthday party on a Hampton Jitney "Ride to Nowhere".

* The Hampton Jitney "Mystery Tour" will pick up your group and take them on a scenic, fun tour-but only we (and your group leader) know where.

From elegant to economical

Hampton Jitney's fleet of motorcoaches is available for your group to charter. We offer a choice of vehicles and services designed to meet your transportation needs, all at competitive prices. Hampton Jitney offers charter customers two classes of travel service to choose from: First Class and Coach Class.

First Class service can provide any or all of the amenities listed below and also includes onboard attendant service. First Class charters are on wide-body, late model coaches, equipped with a lavatory, air conditioning, individual reading lights and seat adjustments. VCR equipped coaches are also available.

For school groups, civic organizations and others, Coach Class charters are an economical way to take advantage of the quality equipment and service offered by Hampton Jitney. You'll receive every Hampton Jitney service (except an onboard attendant and refreshments) and top quality equipment, at a lower price.

First Class Service Options:

* Beverage Service: Coffee, juice, water and soft drinks are available.

* Meal Service: danish or muffins through complete light meals for lunch or dinner on board.

* Light Snacks: Hampton Jitney can provide individually bagged snacks such as potato chips, pretzels, etc.

2.1.3 Boston

Hampton Jitney also provides services to Downtown Boston. Trips to Boston run throughout the year for Holiday Travel via The Port Jefferson Ferry. Passengers can get on in Southampton, Hampton Bays, Farmingville or Port Jefferson and they travel straight to downtown Boston except a quick stop in Newton. The price is \$59 one-way or \$98 round-trip. Reservations are required as well as credit card number to hold the reservations.

2.1.4 Florida Tours

It is quite a new service between Florida, New York, New Jersey. It is mainly aimed at people looking for warmer weather, so called "snowbirds". Passengers travel to or from Florida aboard either Hampton Jitney's regular or Ambassador Class buses. For customers, who want their car to be delivered to their destination, Hampton Jitney also ships the cars.

It is a two-day trip with accommodation and half-board in a hotel in North Carolina. As soon as passengers get to the destination, their cars are ready there, so they can just jump in and drive away.

Hampton Jitney sends always two professional drivers and an attendant. They can get snacks, beverages, entertainment and pillows on all trips. Trips run on a regular schedule to Florida beginning Sunday, September 21, 2008. The Final 2008/2009 trip will depart Wednesday, June 17, 2009. (2)

The Ambassador Class trips offer features, such as a wide body "captain's chair" leather seats and fewer seats overall, for more leg and elbow room.

Enhanced snacks and beverage options help to make the Ambassador Class service a fine choice for motor coach travel. Ambassador Class trips run on a regular schedule to Florida beginning Saturday, October 11, 2008. The final 2008/2009 trip will depart Tuesday, May 19, 2009. Please see the link above to see fares and schedules for the Ambassador Class Service.

East Coast Locations: Kingsland (GA), Titusville, West Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale

West Coast Locations: Tampa, Sarasota, Ft. Myers

Boarding Locations for Regular and Ambassador Service: Passengers traveling to or from Florida may board or disembark at any of these four "NORTHERN" locations: The Omni (Southampton Long Island), Hampton Inn (Exit 63), Long Island Expressway in Farmingville, Park 'n' Ride (Exit 49), Long Island Expressway in Huntington, or at the Holiday Inn, East Windsor, New Jersey (Exit 8 off the NJ Turnpike). All CARS being transported must be loaded or unloaded at the OMNI, Hampton Inn or at the Holiday Inn.

2.1.1 Race Tours

In 1990 Hampton Jitney's started offering 1 day race trips for NASCAR® to Pocono and Dover Downs. Later Hampton Jitney added tours to New Hampshire, Richmond, Michigan, Martinsville, Nazareth, Darlington, Rockingham, Daytona, Talladega, Homestead, and Bristol.

If customers are not Race fans, Hampton Jitney Tours has a variety of Tours including Tours of Canada, Atlantic City, Broadway Plays, Major Sporting events, and our Snowbird Service to Florida. The fares are based on distance.

2.1.2 Limousine Service

Hampton Jitney Limousine & Sedan Service provides the ultimate in comfort and convenience. Each late model limousine is fully equipped with a stocked bar, VCR, cellular phone and stereo cassette radio (3). And each can carry from one to eight people in style. The prices are counted according to distance and number of people and services.

2.1.1 Express Package Service

If anybody needs to simply get anything from or to New York the same day they can use Hampton Jitney package service. It is possible package prepay or pay by cash on delivery.

Chart 1: Prices for sending a package by weight (4)

up to 25 lbs	\$25
26 lbs- 50 lbs	\$40
over 50 lbs	Call HJ

Chart 2: Prices for sending a package by size (5)

up to 3' wide x 4' long x 2' high	\$25*
over 3' wide	Minimum \$50**
over 4' long	Minimum \$50**
over 2' high	Minimum \$50**
* as long as package is 25 lbs or less	
** as long as package is not over 50 lbs	

2.1 Fares and Discounts

Every single line, tour or charter, has different fares even though they are similar. I have already mentioned approximate fares for tours and charters so in this chapter I will attend to regular lines.

Of course, the prices are dependent on peak and off-peak days. The only exceptions are the ambassador class and North Fork line because the fares here are constant and fixed no matter what day it is.

Peak days are for Hampton Jitney the busiest days and they are: Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays. Off-peaks days are the rest so Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. In these days Hampton Jitney offers discounts for seniors (over 60 years) and accompanied children under 12 years old.

Babies under 2 years always travel at no charge. In case the bus is supposed to be full, parents have to have the child on a lap. If they want to get a special seat for the baby they are obliged to pay full fare for a seat.

Passengers travelling with pets, surfboards and bicycles are charged as well.

Chart 3: Summary of fares and discounts on Montauk, Westhampton and North Fork Lines

		Montauk	Westhampton	North Fork
Peak Days	One-way	\$30	\$30	\$22
	Round-trip	\$53	\$53	\$40
Off-peak days	Regular	One-way	\$30	\$26
		Round-trip	\$53	\$49
	Seniors & Children	One-way	\$26	\$22
		Round-trip	\$49	\$45
Ambassador Class	One-way	\$38	\$38	—
	Round-trip	\$65	\$65	—
Cancer Care and company		\$18	\$18	—
Pets		\$10	\$10	\$10
Bicycle and surfboards		\$15	\$15	\$15

From time to time customers can find various types of discounts in magazines, newspaper and on many products. The height of discounts reaches up to \$10. They may take the advantage of the discounts during paying on the buses. Other types of discounts are books of value pack tickets. Hampton Jitney has different value pack tickets for each line. For certain time a year company offers bigger discounts if the applicant buy more than 1 book of tickets.

Chart 4: Overview of value pack tickets (6)

	Montauk & Westhampton line (12 tickets in book)	Ambassador (10 tickets in book)	North Fork line (12 tickets in book)
5+ tickets	\$225/\$18,75	\$225/\$22,50	–
2 - 4 tickets	\$235/\$19,58	\$235/\$23,50	–
1 ticket	\$240/\$20	\$240/\$24	\$210/\$17,50

Note: In the chart there are written prices for value pack tickets books / 1 ticket.

2.1 Payments

Passengers can pay on the buses by cash, credit card or special tickets issued by Hampton Jitney. The attendants are also allowed to accept cheques if the passenger is a member of Hampton Jitney's express club.

In case anybody needs to prepay a trip for a child, a friend, a family member, an acquaintance etc. they can visit either a front desk in base (Southampton, Omni) or see the attendant or bus driver on every stop. On the other hand they cannot pay on-line or over the phone during making a reservation.

Cancer care passengers and the person travelling with them have to have a cancer care card issued by Hampton Jitney and identification card.

2.2 Reservations

To make a reservation for any of Hampton Jitney Buses is really easy. Customers can choose from two ways. They either can call direct to Hampton Jitney or they can make reservation on-line.

Hampton Jitney set up couple conditions what passengers can or cannot do during making reservations. For example they are not allowed to make reservation for more than one bus. If they do that, one of their reservations could be deleted.

To make reservation for ambassador and foxwood trips they need to give the reservationist credit card number, billing address and phone number otherwise it cannot be confirmed.

To reserve a seat on regular buses they need only phone number and name. It is easy and fast. If anybody needs to change or cancel reservations they have to call to Hampton Jitney there is no way to cancel it on-line.

Passengers with reservation must be at the stop at least 5 minutes before departure otherwise their seat can be sold.

2.3 Before the Trip

First think what passengers should do but they are not obliged to do it before trip is to make reservation. As soon as they have a reservation they can come on any of Hampton Jitney's stops.

If the bus is supposed to be full the attendant will firstly check names then passengers will give their luggage to the driver or attendant who put it in the luggage bay underneath the bus. Customers without reservation can get only in case if anybody with reservation does not show up.

In case the bus is not expected to be sold out (e.g. only 30 people booked) everybody with reservation can get on and the attendant does not have to check the names.

2.4 During the trip

First of all the attendant plays safety video, after that comes the serving to the customers. In the morning passengers can get muffins (two flavours) and water or juice. On the ambassador class, in addition to this they get coffee or hot chocolate. In the afternoon there are snacks (chips, pretzels, party mix) and water or lemonade, on ambassador they serve wine (red or white), soda, müsli bars, cookies and better choice from snacks. The price includes everything and on the ambassador, unlike regular lines, customers take as much as they want. On regular lines they are eligible to get just one

beverage and one type of snacks or muffins. Furthermore, on Montauk and Westhampton line newspaper and magazines are available.

All of Hampton Jitney's buses are equipped with wireless internet. Again on the ambassador service there is better possibility to work on the laptops even though they are charged off. On each Ambassador bus there are plugs.

Serving is followed by attendant's announcement so passengers find out prices, way of the payments and what they are allowed or not allowed to do on the bus.

After the announcement there is time for payment and then collecting garbage. Now the bus is almost in the final destination so once again announcement where the bus is making stops and then drop off.

2.5 After the Trip

Passengers collect their luggage and leave. But company needs to keep customers so if they make reservations on-line, they have to fill out contact information so Hampton Jitney sends them offers in hopes they will come again. Hampton Jitney has a big advantage because there are only two companies except train going from New York to "Hamptons" and back.

Hampton Jitney is the bigger and more reliable one. Moreover buses run almost every hour, during high season almost every half hour. Although trains are faster, they do not run so often because Hampton Jitney buses are mostly sold out.

In my opinion passengers always come back happy.

3 STUDENT AGENCY

Student agency Inc. is a Czech company with registered office in Brno. This company concentrates on selling educational and work programs abroad, selling flight tickets and providing bus service. Although Student agency is the biggest seller of flight tickets and the biggest negotiator of educational language courses and work programs in the Czech Republic, it is better known as an operator of bus transportation Student Agency Express alias “yellow line”. In these days Student Agency provides service on 6 national lines and on 15 international lines connecting Czech and Slovak towns with Europe.

3.1 History

In 1993, Radim Jancura (FOR) in Brno got the idea of establishing the company. He was interested in brokerage activities, au-pair programs in Europe and the U.S. Three years later was founded company Student Agency, Ltd. and the business is extended to mediation of language, education programs abroad, work programs and bus services. In 1998 Student Agency became the largest au-pair agency in the world and got the International Association of IAPA awards. Furthermore, the company entered the Slovak market, introducing a branch in Bratislava. The biggest expansion began in 2000. Since that, the number of employee has been still increasing and turnover changed more than 100%. It started with a new activity and it was selling tickets worldwide. Between years 2003 – 2004 the company was looking for gaps in the market where there was a lack of quality services at affordable prices. And therefore in 2004 Student Agency launched a national bus service – yellow lines Student Agency Express on the route Prague - Brno. In next couple years the company runs further yellow lines in Plzeň, Liberec, Košice, Ostrava, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Denmark, Vienna, Hungary, Germany and Italy. In 2007 Student Agency opened new branches in Karlovy Vary, Olomouc and Jihlava. Besides that company was expanded for routes Karlovy Vary - Praha, Zlín - Brno – Praha and for international destination Norway and France. In this year was company awarded as the best bus carrier in the Czech Republic, according to TTG (2007) and a trophy SUPERBRAND of the Czech Republic.

3.2 Activities of Student Agency

This company has a wide offer of providing services and these are:

- Language stays
- Au-pair stays
- Selling flight tickets worldwide
- Bus services
- International work stays
- Renting cars
- Visa services
- Arranging tours
- Insurances
- Arranging accommodation
- Renting cars

3.2.1 Language Stays

It is set up for applicants either for students or for everybody who is interested in studying foreign languages. Thanks to Student Agency customers are able to study German (in Germany, Austria), English (in USA, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, New Zealand etc.), Spanish (in Spain, Mexico, Ecuador, Argentina, Cuba, Chile etc.), Italian, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, etc.

3.2.2 Work Stays

International work stays are appointed not only for students but they are one of the basic activities of Student Agency. The stays take usually three months but it is possible that they can continue up to one year. Customers can work in a lot of places in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, USA or Canada. Most of the time it is a work program connected with an opportunity of studying a language in a particular state.

The applicants can choose from offer jobs on farms, in tourism sphere, in support services or they can be employed as an au-pair.

Working stays in Australia and New Zealand must be related to studying at one of the cooperating universities. As soon as the customer or the student gets there, they can start looking for a job. If anybody is not interested in studying but needs or wants a new working experience in foreign companies, especially in Canada, the person is suitable for the Co-operative Education Program. He or she will stay there for 8 weeks at least, but a language course must always constitute half of the stay.

I could name other and other working programs such as Work and Travel in USA, Professional Internship and so on which is Student Agency able to negotiate.

3.2.3 Visas

Student Agency helps with obtaining visas to more than 80 countries around the world, for example USA, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia (business, tourist or transit visas), Argentina and many more.

3.2.4 Charters

As I have already mentioned, Student Agency is the largest ticket seller in the Czech market. This is due to the fact that Student Agency started in 2007 cooperating with online system SkyEurope. At the end of the year they began to work with CLICK4SKY and it helped to expand the offered services in the field of low cost flight tickets.

3.2.5 Insurance

Everybody needs insurance when travelling abroad. Student Agency helps to deal with travel insurance and gives advice with vaccinations. The insurance covers not only traditional insurance but personal accident insurance, baggage insurance, medical expenses, and insurance for cancellations as well.

3.2.6 Bus Services

Now we get to the most, for us, important part of this company, and it is bus service. Student Agency firstly operated only international bus service to cities in Germany, Switzerland, Benelux, England, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Hungary, Austria and Slovakia, later on Denmark, France.

The company also works as a broker selling tickets to other carriers who go for example to Bulgaria, Poland, Lithuania, Spain, Serbia, Romania, Croatia, Greece, Belarus etc.

As mentioned above, in 2004 the company started operations on domestic or, if you want, national routes. The first route went from Prague to Brno. Later, a stop in Jihlava was added on this route. Then other lines followed, such as Prague - Pilsen, Prague - Liberec, Prague - Ostrava, Prague - Karlovy Vary, Prague - Zlin, Prague - Cesky Krumlov.

3.3 Tickets

Passengers can choose from different types of tickets. If the customer decides to be an owner of one of the tickets, he or she gets discounts on fares and it is easier for them to make reservations as well.

3.3.1 Ticket for a Fixed Date

This type of ticket is bought for a specific route, date and time. Generally, customers do not have to have a ticket during checking-in, it is enough to have a bar code ticket. They do not even need a reservation. But the ticket for a fixed date is already set up for the date, route and specific time. It is possible to exchange or cancel this ticket. However, the customer is to come to the sale office at least 30 minutes before departure. For the cancellation of the ticket the customer can be charged 10 CZK.

3.3.2 Open Ticket

It is not set up for a specific route, date or time. It is just for one journey, but customers must book it first before the particular travel.

If anybody needs to ensure a place in the connection for someone who is abroad or he cannot buy a ticket, then is nothing easier than visiting a selling place of STUDENT AGENCY and buy a ticket.

A person, who needs to travel, will be checked in only on the basis of number of barcode of the ticket, so again it is not necessary to have a ticket.

Passengers also have an option to purchase several tickets and then book the seat as they need.

3.3.3 Credit Ticket

It can be issued in the form of credit card, which passengers are able to recharge in the sale office or on the website of Student Agency. With charged credit ticket customers are allowed to book up to 5 seats for one line or according to their need up to 10 lines. The validity of this ticket is unlimited.

How to Get Credit Ticket?

- 1) You can register on Student Agency's website.
- 2) Passengers will receive e-mail confirmation of the registration.
- 3) Finally, they have to visit one of the sale offices, but they are not obliged to pick up their credit ticket. (It is enough to know 2 of 3 data - the number of tickets, bar code, or the name of the owner. All this information is to be found in the confirmation e-mail.)

3.3.4 Electronic ticket

The electronic ticket has the characteristics of an open ticket - it is issued for a specific route, date and time. It is used by owners of VISA and Master Card or on-line account payee, who can buy tickets on line. As usual, the checking-in passengers need only bar code, the name or number of the ticket.

3.4 Fares and Discounts

Student Agency provides many different trips which can have different length and conditions. Therefore I will not itemize all of them but only example. I have chosen trip from Prague to Karlovy Vary.

Only students and disabled people get discounts. As you can see below, discounts are available for students under 15 and students under 26. A student ID must be provided.

One more type of discount, called HAPPY, a passenger can get at certain time on the route from Prague to Brno.

The Company sends more buses especially on Fridays and Sundays. The buses do not have to be owned by Student Agency and the provided services need not be as good as on the “yellow buses”.

Passengers can take pets on board at no extra charge.

Chart 5: Summary of fares of Student Agency on the route Prague – Karlovy Vary (7)

Tarif	Credit Ticket	Open Ticket	Ticket With Fixed Date and Time
Basic	80	110	140
Student to 26 years with student's ID (ISIC, EURO 26 STUDENT)	70	90	105
Student to 15 years with student's ID	53	53	53
Child to 15 years (babies under 3 years no charge with no possibility to get a seat)	70	70	70
Disabled people	35	35	35
No charge by law	–	0	0

3.5 Payments

Tickets for a fixed date and time and open tickets can be bought only in the sales offices of Student Agency. Customers can deposit money for their credit tickets through websites or in the office. The payment for electronic tickets is possible through websites only.

3.6 Reservations

To reserve a seat on any Student Agency bus can be done in two ways. One way is to make a reservation on-line. The bar code, the number of the ticket, name and a required seat is needed. The second way is to send text message with all of the information but it is not necessary to know exact seat. The system will allocate one of the open seats.

If passengers want to make reservation through text message they need to know abbreviation of the towns they are going from and to. Reservation may be made 5 minutes before the departure. If a customer wants to pay on-line, it must be made at least 60 minutes before the departure.

Cancelling reservation is as easy as making is. The only condition is that it must be canceled at least 30 minutes before the departure.

3.7 Before the Trip

Both companies have similar conditions. It is always better to make reservation because they a seat can be guaranteed and a client prevented from troubles. Taking luggage on board is similar, too. In Student Agency only the driver takes care of it. Before the passenger gets on, the attendant checks the bar code out as well. There is a visible a variation. Even when the bus is not sold out, the attendant needs to check to know that the passenger has already paid.

3.8 During the Trip

Passengers of Student Agency have free warm beverages such as coffee, tea, cappuccino or hot chocolate included in the price. Customers can also take newspapers and magazines. On top of that, clients of Student Agency can buy other refreshments, such as ice tea, water, soda, energy drinks, bears, mu□sli bars, and dried meat.

Thanks to watching movies during the trip travelling is getting more enjoyable and comfortable. Passengers can also choose from one of the radio stations. The control panel for operating the stations is right next to each seat.

Of course not everybody wants to watch movie or listen to music, therefore passengers get head phones so those who are sleeping or who are not interested in the movie are not disturbed.

3.9 After the Trip

Certainly passengers have to collect their luggage. And even later if they do not throw their ticket out, they could get discounts in many shops in Bratislava, Prague, Brno and Ostrava.

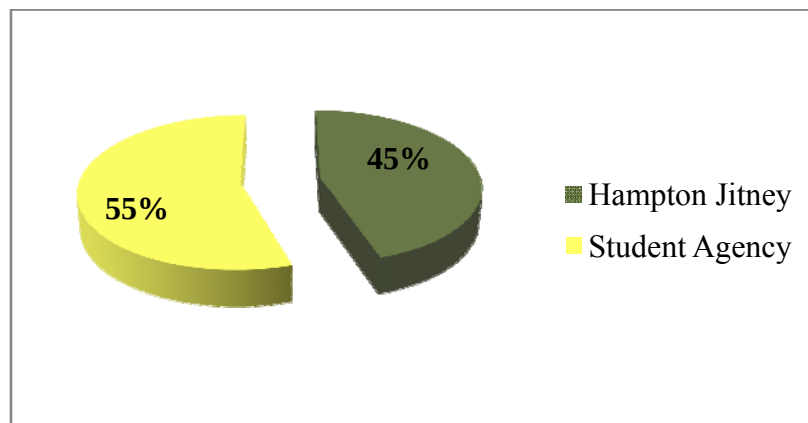
4 QUESTIONNAIRE

To find out which company is better and more favourite I have made a questionnaire. I decided to ask my colleagues from Hampton Jitney, but I asked only those who know Student Agency as well, it means I asked only Czechs. Finally I found 20 respondents who have experience with both companies. They helped me to state which carrier is better and in which services. In the questionnaire I mentioned only the features which both companies have. I did not want to know anything about employees or coordinating because even though all of them were employed in Hampton Jitney they do not have to know anything about operating of Student Agency buses and there may be some prejudice about employees.

1) Which carrier, do you think, offers better refreshment?

According to most of the respondents Student Agency serve better refreshment. 55 % said is for Student Agency and 45 % for Hampton Jitney.

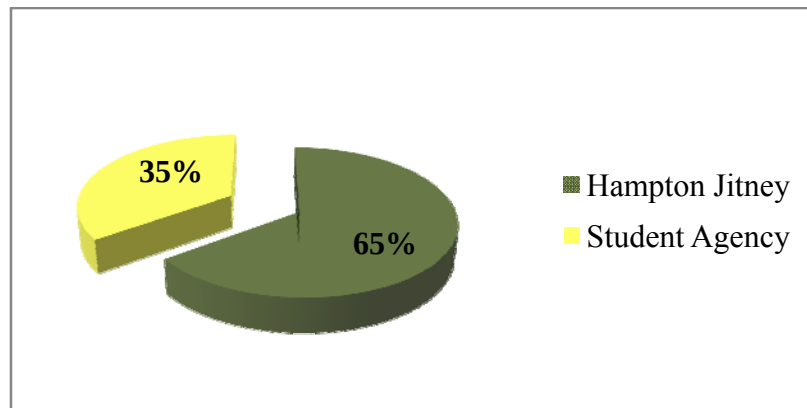
Graph 1: Refreshment



2) Do you prefer the method of payment in Student Agency or Hampton Jitney?

Answers for this question are mostly in favour of Hampton Jitney. In my opinion it is because they can pay on the bus, not in advance. The disadvantage of paying in advance is that if customers do not catch the bus they can pay twice for one trip.

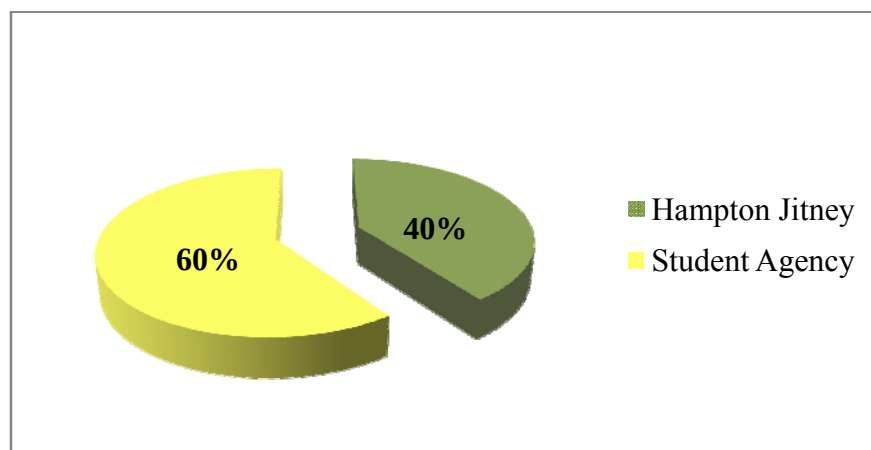
Graph 2: Payments



3) To make, cancel or change reservation is easier in Student Agency or in Hampton Jitney?

Respondents answered that making, cancelling and changing reservations is easier in Student Agency.

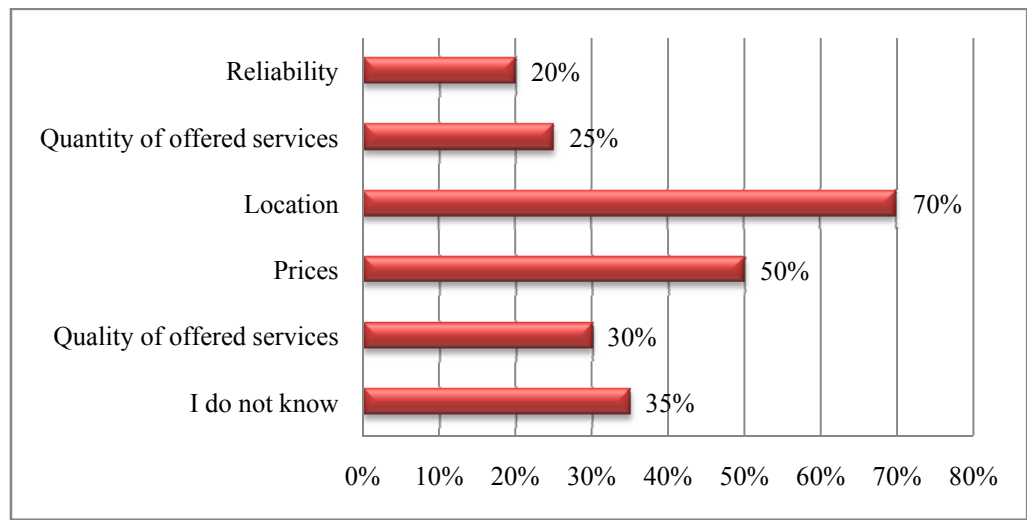
Graph 3: Reservations



4) Where do you see the strengths of Hampton Jitney?

I wanted maximum 3 answers for this question and mostly the answer was location with 70 %, followed by prices 50 % and the third answer was “I do not know” with 35 %.

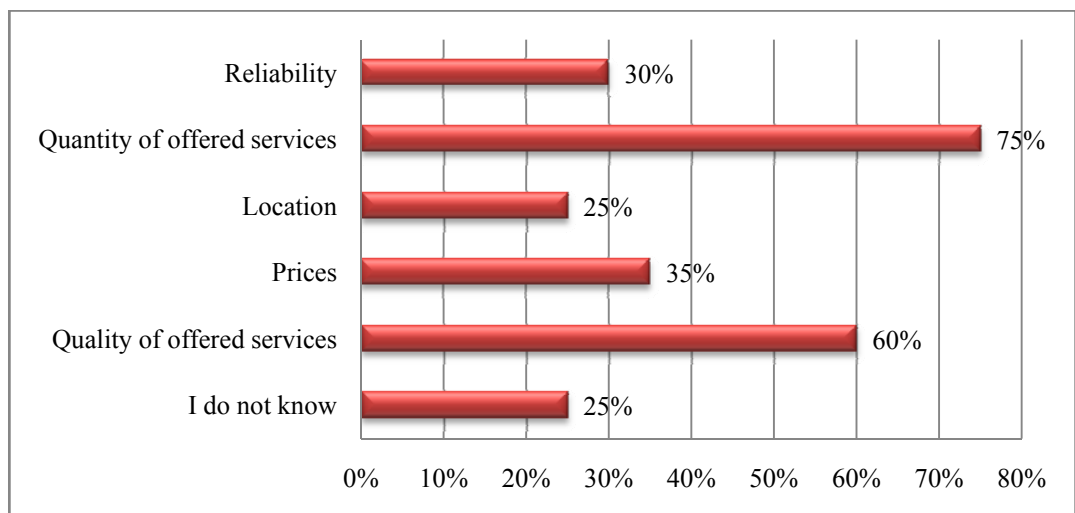
Graph 4: Strengths of Hampton Jitney



5) Where do you see the strengths of Student Agency?

75 % of respondents think that Student Agency is strong in quantity of offered services, 60 % mean it is in quality of offered services and 35 % said the strength is in prices.

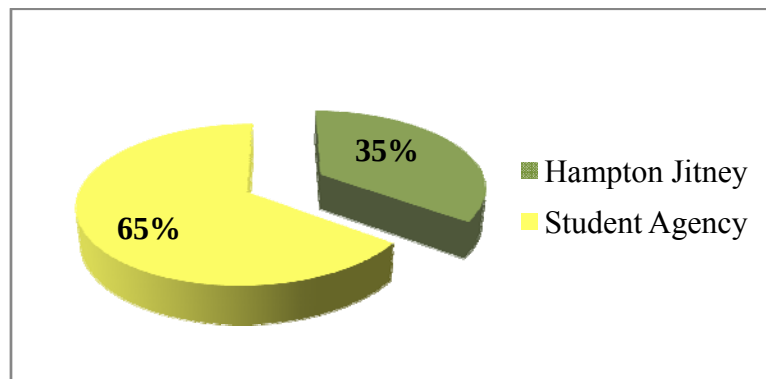
Graph 5: Strengths of Student Agency



6) If you have to choose between these two carriers which one would you take?

The respondents mostly answered Student Agency to be accurate it was 65 % and for Hampton Jitney the rest. It means 35 %.

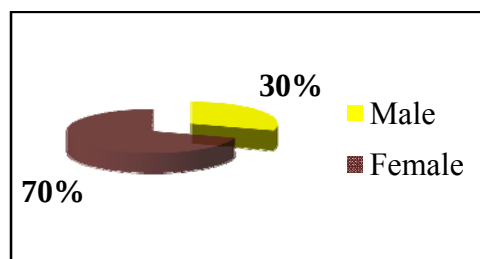
Graph 6: Preferred carrier



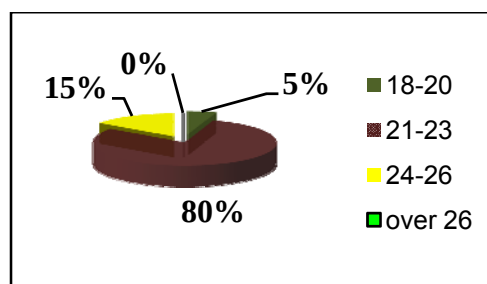
7) Personal information

Between respondents were 70 % females and 30 % males apply to age 80 % of the respondents were in the age 21 – 23, 15 % were 24 – 26, 5 % 18 – 20 and nobody was over 26 years old. I did not ask them anything about education because from the Czech Republic can be there only students of a college or people who just finish studying.

Graph 7: Sex



Graph 7: Age



5 THE FINAL ASSESSEMENT

In the previous chapters I attend to detailed information, services and offers of single companies. Now I will take everything once again and I will try to compare each of the service or offer. I will also use the results of the questionnaire.

According to my questionnaire we can say that Student Agency won without any doubt. From four questions concerning of comparing of the companies got Student Agency three positive answers. Let's look at the reason why Student Agency should or should not win. Student Agency is a company operating in many different branches of tourism. On the other hand Hampton Jitney is just a carrier with a long-lasting tradition. Therefore we cannot see the Student Agency all but just one part of the provided services.

Buses of both companies are designated for long distances and they seem to be on the first look very luxurious. Unfortunately for Hampton Jitney it is just an appearance. The exterior is really nice but the interior looks old, as the buses and company is. There is not enough space for legs so passengers do not dare to recline their seat to sit comfortably. However, Student Agency can afford new and really comfortable buses with enough space for legs and space between the seats. Of course the reason is that it is the biggest seller of flight tickets. Competitors to Student Agency buses could be only first class buses - Ambassadors.

Because both companies are well-known in their territory, neither of them has to spend extra money on advertisements. All needed information can be found on websites or customers can get answers to their questions on the bus from the attendants. Websites of both companies inform not only about news but customers can make reservations, find information about fares, schedules and discounts as well. Both websites are simple, organized and very informative.

As you could see above, there are differences in reserving seats. In my opinion and from experience as well, it is much easier to make reservation in Student Agency but only if you have one of the prepaid tickets (open, credit, fixed date and time or electronic).

Nowadays everybody has the internet access and in case customer is on the route and cannot get on-line he/she easily sends a text message with information from where to where wants to go, bar code and if the bus is available he/she will get a seat. If they do not have a ticket they have to visit one of the sale places to buy it.

Hampton Jitney's customers can also reserve a seat on-line. They can do so also over the phone, which is sometimes much more difficult. I had to make reservations when I was in USA and on peak days we had up to 35 people holding on the line and it is a big disadvantage. For Hampton Jitney it is a fact that as soon as a customer makes the reservation, they can just come to the stop, get on and pay on the bus. So according to me I would not say, like 60 % of my respondents, that it is easier to make reservation in Student Agency. I prefer to make reservation and then pay on the bus. It is more comfortable than looking for an office.

Regrettably, in Hampton Jitney it is very common to overbook the bus. Then, if everybody shows up, many troubles arise. The customers who have to wait for a next bus are always "no charge", they are understandably really disappointed and of course annoyed. Fortunately it is not very common that everybody appears. Hampton Jitney has a strong reason for overbooking, though. A lot of people make reservation and in many cases they do not come. Sometimes it is very confusing and it could be a disadvantage.

Unambiguously Student Agency has much lower prices. A big help for Student Agency is that they do not offer only carrier services but they profit from the rest of their activities. For this reason Student Agency is able to offer tickets for 1 CZK or give a grant to the travelers. However, Hampton Jitney is dependent on profits only from carrier services. In spite of that a big plus for this company is that it is an exclusive carrier between Long Island ("Hamptons") and Manhattan. Therefore Hampton Jitney can set up the prices as they need, of course not too high. Hampton Jitney is losing in background for customers waiting for their buses. The stops are mostly opened without any benches or at least a shelter. In the questionnaire I asked the respondents: "Where do you see the strengths of Hampton Jitney (Student Agency)"? Two of the most often answers for Hampton Jitney were location (70 %) and prices (50 %). It is evident that these two possibilities are connected. For Student Agency talks quantity (75 %) and quality (60 %) of offered services.

The interest in both Hampton Jitney and Student Agency is growing. It happens during peak days (especially Fridays and Sundays) that they need more buses than they operate. Therefore they rent buses from other companies. In case of Hampton Jitney the services and type of the rental buses are almost the same as those people are used to get on the buses of Hampton Jitney.

On the other hand, Student Agency rents buses and services of lower quality. It is a really bad advertisement for this company.

As of comparing the offer of the provided services on the boards of rental buses I have already mentioned that unequivocally the better one is Hampton Jitney. But when we compare the companies on the regular lines and their own buses, it is not easy to say which is better. On each type of buses there are attendants, free refreshments, magazines and newspapers. However, bigger choice of refreshment is on the board of Student Agency, and passengers, as I have already written above, can dulcify their trips by watching a movie or listening to the radio. On the other hand both companies offer a free wireless internet access but only on the Hampton Jitney's buses it is always possible to connect. According to my respondents (55 %) the better one, concerning the refreshments, is Student Agency, but in my opinion it is hard to say which carrier is better because I do not think only about the refreshments, but also about the services in all. If anybody asked me about the refreshment I would vote for Student Agency.

I have also mentioned that the most important aim of the companies is to keep customers, which is really hard. It is necessary to advertise again and again. In this consideration I have to assess both companies in a really positive way. Each of the carriers offers various discounts and coupons.

So finally we can see a negative assessment of the American carrier in refreshments, prices, background of the stops, the way of checking-in and equipment of the buses. The biggest minus for Student Agency would be seen in getting the tickets, unsatisfactory services on the boards of rental buses, no internet connection although it is offered and no package services, as a result. It is not such a big problem but it could even improve their services.

At the beginning I thought that it would be hard to say which carrier is better but as I compare the offered and provided services, I would say that even though it is a relatively new service of Student Agency, they provides the services better. On the other hand they took an example from foreign companies and maybe one of them could be Hampton Jitney. I think it is always easier to find mistakes of others and prevent making the same ones.

6 CONCLUSION

I made a decision to compare Hampton Jitney and Student Agency. The aim was to compare their offered and provided services. In my work I analysed each company and their services. I wanted to know if a new and secondary service of Student Agency could surpass a company with a long tradition and big experience in the field of bus services. I cannot say it was easy to determine which of the carriers is better, because each of them is doing a great job and in both cases there are companies with an exclusive position in particular market.

However, it was important to realize that Student Agency is involved in many sectors of tourism, that it is the biggest seller of flight tickets and it is a negotiator of educational language courses and work programs, so it makes it easier to perform better in the bus transportation. It is easier mainly because of big profits from other parts of the business. Thanks to the profits, the company can afford better buses and better provided services. Furthermore they do not need to set high prices to be profitable.

However, Hampton Jitney is experienced but without a large base. They have to rely on their good name and a wide scale of the bus services only. Of course, as you can see in the thesis, Hampton Jitney is fortunately the biggest carrier between Manhattan and “Hamptons”.

At the end of my work I named Student Agency as a better company. A huge help in the decision making, was a questionnaire I had made. I can say that Hampton Jitney, however, is the best carrier in the market, where it is impressive. Moreover I think it would really be a strong competitor of Student Agency here in the Czech Republic.

7 SUMMARY OF CITATIONS

- (1) <http://www.hamptonjitney.com/cgi-bin/nav.cgi?page=charter.html>
(nedatováno), 17. 10. 2008
- (2) <http://www.hamptonjitney.com/cgi-bin/nav.cgi?page=ny-florida.html>
(nedatováno), 17. 10. 2008
- (3) <http://www.hamptonjitney.com/cgi-bin/nav.cgi?page=limousine.html>
(nedatováno), 20. 10. 2008
- (4) <http://www.hamptonjitney.com/cgi-bin/nav.cgi?page=package-express.html> (nedatováno), 20. 10. 2008
- (5) <http://www.hamptonjitney.com/cgi-bin/nav.cgi?page=package-express.html> (nedatováno), 20. 10. 2008
- (6) <http://www.hamptonjitney.com/PDFS/VPOrderForm.pdf> (nedatováno),
11. 11. 2008
- (7) <http://www.studentagency.cz/mainpage.php?switch=101884>
(nedatováno), 14. 11. 2008

8 SOURCES

www.hamptonjitney.com

www.studentagency.com

9 ENCLOSURES

9.1 Summary of Charts

Chart 1: Prices for sending a package by weight (4)	17
Chart 2: Prices for sending a package by size (5)	17
Chart 3: Summary of fares and discounts on Montauk, Westhampton and North Fork Lines	19
Chart 4: Overview of value pack tickets (6)	20
Chart 5: Summary of fares of Student Agency on the route Prague – Karlovy Vary (7)	28

9.2 Summary of Graphs

Graph 1: Refreshment	31
Graph 2: Payments	32
Graph 3: Reservations	32
Graph 4: Strengths of Hampton Jitney	33
Graph 5: Strengths of Student Agency	33
Graph 6: Preferred carrier	34
Graph 7: Age	34

9.3 Summary of Enclosures

Picture 1: Map of Long Island	43
Picture 2: Map of Manhattan	43
Picture 3: Hampton Jitney's bus	44
Picture 4: Interior of Hampton Jitney's regular bus	44
Picture 5: Interior of Hampton Jitney's ambassador bus	44
Picture 6: Student Agency's bus	45
Picture 7: Interior of Student Agency's bus	45

Picture 1: Map of Long Island



Picture 2: Map of Manhattan



Picture 3: Hampton Jitney's bus



Picture 4: Interior of Hampton Jitney's regular bus



Picture 5: Interior of Hampton Jitney's ambassador bus



Picture 6: Student Agency's bus



Picture 7: Interior of Student Agency's bus

