

Sverrir Sv. Sigurdarson - February 2019

# Overview of Opportunities

Innovation, Market Concepts Development and Design  
Call For Partnership and/or Angel/Seed Funding  
Offer For Project Assignment/Consulting

Innovations in Noise  
Phobia Therapy p. 6

Audio hi-fi design &  
marketing innovation p. 13

De-alcoholized  
wine innovation p. 11

Design brands p. 19



+ Introduction of past accomplishments with the true origins of the Vatnajokull National Park in Iceland and consequences there of, p. 24

## Synopsis

This short book outlines business opportunities developed and at various stages of exploitation, by Sverrir Sv. Sigurdarson. The opportunities are in the fields of:

1. Pet market, noise phobia therapy.
2. Wine market, new type of de-alcoholized wine.
3. Audio hi-fi electronics, especially loudspeakers, a new approach in design options.
4. Two designer brands, inspired by pets, and the Viking age.

The market potential of these opportunities may range from some hundred thousand US\$ annually, to millions, to tens of millions, and at most to several Billion US\$ annually combined.

Part two of the book tells about Sverrir's past accomplishment, in discovering the opportunity, then researching and developing, and introducing the propositions, arguments and strategies that opened up the case among politicians, and led to them making the decision of forming the Vatnajökull National Park in East-Iceland, which is Western-Europe's largest national park. Sverrir is, in short, the original, argumentative mastermind behind the national park. This accomplishment perhaps unique in the 20th century for a person in Sverrir's situation, but did also create some very pressing challenges for Sverrir that need to be explained.

The contents of part one in this book describes opportunities, and should not be seen as a binding offer of any kind. The contents of part two in this book describes situations and events as they were experienced and observed by the author. The author receives the right to withdraw and make null and void any part of the book without further notice.

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# Introduction

This book presents an overview of innovations in product and services, and business opportunities, which I, Sverrir Sv. Sigurdarson of Reykjavik, Iceland, have been working on developing. This is part one of this book.

The book also presents, in part two, an overview of past accomplishments, which were on a world class scale and perhaps unique in the 20th century. However, developments in the business and political environment made the situation very challenging, having effects that have extended up until this day. This issue matters, because in order to believe in the opportunities listed in part one, it is necessary to understand the accomplishments and challenges of part two.

## I am seeking

**I am seeking financing, investment, partners and/or collaborators to exploit an opportunity or opportunities in the way that best fits each one. If your interest is awakened, please don't hesitate to contact me with an email, [sverrir@sverrir.info](mailto:sverrir@sverrir.info), and we can then arrange for further discussions.**

## In part one

The opportunities that are the subject of part one are in short:

1. An opportunity in specialized services for pet owners, with innovations in the process design of noise phobia therapy. Pets that this would apply to are in almost half of all homes, or around 140 million homes in the west. There could also be derived opportunities from having established positive contact with the pet owners. **This opportunity is close to being ready for launch.**
2. An opportunity in the international market for table wines, a market which is in total worth around US\$ 300 Billion. This is, more specifically, a new approach in non-alcoholic wines. I believe that this new type of alcohol free wine could even expand the current market, and that the market for this new type could become some single-digit-percentages of the total market, and it could also expand the market. Each one percent is today worth around US\$ 3 Billion. **This opportunity is at the idea stage.**
3. An opportunity in the market for audio hi-fi equipment. Originally, this was an opportunity in all hi-fi equipment and loudspeakers. Following changes in consumer behaviour, the opportunities are mainly in the markets for loudspeakers, especially larger, higher-end speakers. The innovation could make loudspeakers more desirable for people to buy and enjoy. I boldly believe that the innovation, including innovation in design, promotion and sales, could even 2-3 x the sales of high-end loudspeakers, for the company utilizing it. The opportunity is based on thorough market research, a very clever and flexible use of a certain production technology, plus developing new ways of marketing. **This opportunity is at the idea stage.**
4. A designer brands opportunity. I am in the process of building two designer brands. One of them is inspired by pets, and the other by the ancient, Nordic Vikings. Both could have quite large market potential, and the pet inspired line could be marketed as merchandise with the noise phobia therapy solution, and vice versa. **Designs from these two brands are already offered for sale on the web.**
5. Finally, a short overview of other opportunities, including free ideas on Ideabun.com.

## **In part two**

Part two of the book tells of previous accomplishments that are probably unique in western history in the 20th century. But it seems I encountered some serious challenges because of these.

Years ago, I developed strategic propositions about how the Icelandic government could strengthen the nature image of Iceland, to improve the condition of Icelandic businesses, mainly tourism, and help in the creation of new jobs. This would be by creating a very large nature conservation area, or a national park, on and around the largest glacier in Europe, the Vatnajökull glacier in East-Iceland. It would be the largest of its kind in Western Europe, and could become one of the internationally famous national parks and draw attention to the unspoiled nature of Iceland.

I did this in pro bono work, while being a business student at the University of Iceland, and received important reactions. This included among other prizes in two competitions, and an editorial (editor's letter) in Iceland's largest and politically very influential newspaper, where it said that the idea should be taken into good consideration when deciding the future of Iceland's highland.

It turned out that the government decided to form such a park, in a political process I didn't know about, at the same time when I was finishing my studies and attempting to start a career. This is now the largest national park in Western Europe, the Vatnajökull National Park. It has been estimated that the national park can become very valuable in the future. I later learned that no other had ever proposed or presented ideas or arguments for doing this.

That meant, that I was only person who had brought it to the attention of politicians that this option existed, and arguments for it. I was the mastermind behind Western-Europe's largest national park, while still a university student. It is very unusual that a university student is presenting ideas on a national scale, which leads to the government of the country deciding to do what the student was proposing, and the results of it is something that is the largest in Western Europe (or some other continent). This was without doubt an accomplishment that few university students have matched in the 20th century.

However, at the same time, very harsh disputes were starting, where nature conservationists were trying to stop huge hydropower and heavy industrial developments in the same area. This led to a very poisonous atmosphere, which seems to have created some very serious challenges for me in building a successful career. An understanding of these developments is necessary, so that the reader can form a realistic view of my accomplishments and potential.

Let us now turn to part one, which holds some brief explanations of the innovative opportunities.

## Part One – Overview Of Opportunities

### 1 Noise phobia therapy service for pets

**Main idea:** Innovation in noise phobia therapy for pets, named WeStopFear. The new process design should be easier, simpler, safer, more natural and more bearable.

**The problem:** Due to their in-born instinct, developed in the nature through millions of years, animals are constantly on alert to sounds that may signal danger for them. Sounds that are from known, dangerous sources, as well as unknown sounds, may lead to an instant fear reaction in animals, through an automatic reaction in the sympathetic autonomic nerve system. If they are unable to flee the perceived danger, as pets often are in their confined situations, this fear can escalate and become a serious noise phobia. Modern, industrialized, society has meant that animals are set out for hearing many more unknown sounds than in their natural habitat.

Around 20% of all dogs, and up to 50% of dogs of certain dog breeds (herding and working dog breeds), may be prone to becoming seriously suffering from inordinate fear of phobia.

Noise phobia therapy is a way to work with this fear, either as a preventive measure, or to treat the problem. The problem is that the process has been rather complicated and has called for high levels of involvement by the pet owner. There have also been dangers of mistakes in the process, that may lead to setbacks, escape behavior, injury or even death at its most extreme. Solutions have mainly been available on CD discs, that are slowly becoming technologically obsolete.

If all pets would receive this therapy as a preventive measure, rather than dealing with a problem afterwards, then the average health level, well-being and the feeling of being secure would improve for those pets. Problems, injury and even premature death would be less frequent, and owner would enjoy happier and more relaxed relationships with their pets.



**WESTOPFEAR**  
SOLUTION FOR DOGS

**The solution:** I have developed an innovative solution that has the goal of making the implementation of the process easier, simpler, and safer, and to make the experiencing of the therapy more natural and more bearable. The new solution, named WeStopFear, was developed using the methods of process analysis, process re-design and re-engineering. The main innovations in the process are called Simple Secure Steps, Natural Intervals and Volume Anchor. The delivery

technology of this new therapy can be through streaming audio, downloadable MP3 sound files, or CD discs. It also includes extensive instructions and support services.



In the conventional noise phobia therapy, the user has one set of sound files, and then must adjust the volume manually for each playing session. It is possible to make mistakes, that can have negative consequences. In the Simple Secure Steps, with Volume Anchor, there are several sets of sounds with preset volume levels. This means that it is not possible to make the mistake of playing the sounds too loudly, too early, in the therapy, and setting the volume is much easier for the user.

I have also made a preliminary design of how an app would be organized. The app would make the implementation of the therapy better tailored for each situation, and more seamless. Instead of the Simple Secure Steps, this would feature Simple Secure Flow, while the Volume Anchor and Natural Intervals would remain unchanged as parts of the process.



In order to implement the therapy, it is necessary to use an audio system of some sort, with amplification and loudspeakers that are capable of generating the sounds in the places where the therapy is done, in such a way, that the sounds are realistically similar to the sounds in reality. If users currently don't own such equipment, then a part of the business model can be to rent or sell such sound systems. They can for instance be relatively powerful wireless sound devices, which would be connected to the user's mobile phone or computer.



**Possible market size:** The types of pets that can benefit from this therapy are around 450 million, living in around 140 million homes, or half of all households in the Western world. Those are all pets that have reason to listen and be on alert to sounds in nature. Ideally, a long term relationship would be built with the pet owners, since the therapy should not be implemented only once, but should

ideally be maintained over the life span of the pet. This would call for a subscription service. Through this relationship and the trust that would be built, one would attempt to develop other revenue sources. Estimating the possible market size in dollars at this time, however, is difficult.

**Where is this idea at currently:** A membership website with all sound files and instructions is close to being ready for use. The website also has a „30 second fear test“, which will allow dog owners to sign up to an email list, answer questions, and get answer about whether their dog is in danger of suffering from noise phobia, and what can be done. The address is [www.westopfear.com](http://www.westopfear.com).

**What needs to be done to launch the service:**

1. The website will be using the Active Campaign email list service. So-called automations need to be programmed that define the user path, and give the user access to different Simple Secure steps as the user progresses through the process.
2. The idea is, among other, to use the 30 Second Fear Test to inform and recruit new users, and to use UpViral to incentivize new sign ups, so UpViral needs to be synced with the Active Campaign and Active Member systems.
3. Payment processors need to be integrated.
4. As I look at the member's area of the website WeStopFear, it is apparent that the pages are a bit too crowded with text. Too much reading material. So the task at hand would be to create simpler pages that the users would interact with, and then there would be links to the pages that have already been created with extensive instructions. It might also be a good idea to adjust some graphics and logo designs, which were designed by me.
5. I would be interested in creating special WeStopFear-branded versions of products in the DuFauna product line (which I design), and offer them as merchandise to WeStopFear users and enthusiasts.
6. To organize and set up the long-time running of the social media presence of WeStopFear, including Instagram, Pinterest (infographics), Facebook and Youtube.
7. It is necessary to look into utility patent and trademark registrations possibilities of the various aspects of the services, to protect the brand and solution.

Apart from these, the WeStopFear solution is actually quite close to being ready for launch.

The app, on the other hand, with the envisioned Simple Secure Flow process architecture, is currently at the idea stage.



**Pilot project – fireworks sounds:** I set up a pilot project, and created a website in Iceland, to test the service. It focused on one type of sounds, fireworks, which Icelanders do a lot of during the new years. The name of the website is Flugeldahljod (fireworks sounds) at [www.flugeldahljod.com](http://www.flugeldahljod.com). On the website, the user could choose from the conventional way of noise phobia therapy, or the new Simple Secure Steps method. There were sections for dogs, cats, horses, birds, small mammals, and households with several types of pets. The website opened in the fall of 2016, and became quite popular with hundreds of sign ups (Iceland has around 300,000 inhabitants). The website was



featured on the front page of a national newspaper with an interview with me inside (DV), and I was interviewed in the evening news on a national TV channel (Stöd 2), and the 12 o'clock news on national radio (RÚV).


Infographic with instructions:

MEMBER'S  
AREA  
INFOGRAPHIC


# WESTOPFEAR

SOLUTION FOR DOGS

SIMPLE  
SECURE  
STEPS™



VOLUME  
ANCHOR



NATURAL  
INTERVALS

1. CHOOSE PLACE, AUDIO DEVICE & MEDIA
2. SET OR FIND VOLUME
3. PLAY
4. OBSERVE

Play in today's place, the sound file/CD of the step you are at now:

Dog is slightly uneasy?	➔	Good! Continue at this volume
Extremely fearful (rare)	➔	Stop and contact your vet
Indifferent and relaxed?	➔	Goal reached in this place
Relaxed/indifferent in all places?	➔	Next time: Go to the next step

When you have gone through steps 1 2 3 4 and are in Step 5 :

Step 5 Relaxed in all places?	➔	<b>Congratulations!</b> <b>The therapy is finished!</b>
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INFOGRAPHIC © 2017 WeStopFear - Topfauna LLC


Keep in mind these details when you implement the WeStopFear therapy

**You:** During this WeStopFear desensitization/habituation therapy process, show no response yourself - Don't feel sorry for your dog - By showing no interest in the sounds, you teach your dog that the sounds don't matter - Let the sounds appear „by coincidence“ with no connection to you.

**Play:** Play the sounds in the different places where your dog spends time - Choose the media type for the audio device in each place (MP3, streaming audio or CD) - Play track #1, the piano tune, and set the volume to a comfortable listening volume, or find the volume setting you determined earlier, on the form - Play the sounds in random order - Go through the sounds once each day - Don't let more than 2-3 days pass without doing the therapy - Throughout the year, and before known stressful events, play the sounds to maintain the noise tolerance.

**Reaction:** You should not bring out a strong reaction from your dog. Always start the process at Step 1, (very low volume). Continue to steps 2, 3, 4 and 5 (full volume) when your dog has become indifferent in all places. Do not start playing louder, just to see if you can get a stronger response from your dog. That is called “flooding”, a more forceful approach which should not be done.

**Other:** Avoid other unrelated stimuli that may distract while the sounds are playing. Inform your family and neighbors if necessary about the process, so all will tolerate the sounds - Consult your veterinarian before starting. See the Signs of Fear and Phobia in Dogs, the Main Instructions, and the Important Details, in the member's area of the WeStopFear member's website, for comprehensive training instructions.



The setup of the WeStopFear service is such, that the user will be able to start using it, and finish it, at any time during the year. However, since the Flugeldahljod service focused on fireworks sounds, the pet owners had to start the therapy in October or November, which few of them did. Most people started thinking about the fireworks craze and its effects on their pets right after Christmas, just a few days before the new years. That was too short of a time to conduct the actual therapy.

Despite that, the website gave me valuable experience, and I got some direct feedback from users who had tried both the old and the new process.

**How will this be best implemented?** The WeStopFear project is run by TopFauna LLC, which is a Delaware LLC formed and owned by me. It can be turned into a C-Corporation, for the purpose of allowing others to invest in it. This is essentially an Internet / tech operation. It seems to me that this business idea is best developed in a company, and that I would not be interested in a project management or consulting job for another company in building it up. The company TopFauna could then have exit potential in being sold to a larger player in the market.

**More information:** See [www.westopfear.com](http://www.westopfear.com) for more information. There are screenshots there from the member’s area and 30 second fear test, on the page [www.westopfear.com/screenshots](http://www.westopfear.com/screenshots).

**Overview of solutions for all possible pet types:**



## 2 Innovation in the de-alcoholized wines market

**Main idea:** Market opportunity in de-alcoholized wine.

**The problem:** De-alcoholized wine isn't considered good tasting, so the greatest majority of wine drinkers are not interested at all in it. But drinking a beverage without alcohol is very desirable for those who are, generally or in certain circumstances, not interested in alcoholic intake.

**The solution:** Modifying the taste of de-alcoholized wine so that it is better tasting, and closer to the taste of wine that contains alcohol. You might say that this new product would be more real tasting. De-alcoholized wines are well known, with several brands on the market. This product idea introduces a factor to the product mix which doesn't seem to be found in the market (or I couldn't find it), changing the characteristics and content. Because of that, it is questionable if this could be called de-alcoholized wine, or if some other name needs to be coined for the product category.

**The main positive benefits of the new product:** De-alcoholized, or alcohol free, table wine doesn't make you drunk with the loss of clear thinking, doesn't affect your ability to drive a car, is okay to drink for pregnant women, can be safely consumed by those participating in sports, contains one-third to one-sixth the amount of calories as does wine with alcohol, and doesn't have various negative effects on health that are caused by alcohol. De-alcoholized red wine still contains many chemicals, like anti-oxidants, that are considered to have positive health benefits. It is thus an attractive choice for those who want to steer clear of the negative sides of wine with alcohol. Of course, wine with alcohol will continue to be available for those who want to drink that.

**Possible market size:** With the global market for table wines approaching US\$ 300 Billion. Keeping in mind the positive benefits of this alcohol-free product, it is easy to envision that great tasting de-alcoholized wine could in the end have even as much as 1-5% of the total market, because of the benefits that many will see from drinking it. People would be able to drink this wine-like drink in places and situations where they couldn't before. Thus, the total market for this new approach could be as large as US\$ 6-15 Billion annually in the global market. The market, however, would quite likely be saturated between many smaller brands, just like the wine market. This is the largest of the business ideas that I have envisioned, although the market would probably be fractioned as the wine market is today.

**Could this be Halal?** Another thing to consider is whether this product could be attractive for Muslims. For the product to receive classification as being *Halal*, or permissible for consumption according to traditional Islamic law, the alcoholic content would have to be exactly 0%. This can be achieved via specialized processing techniques. Muslims are around 1.7 Billion so this would be an issue to consider, as this new type of de-alcoholized wine is supposed to be better tasting, or more realistic tasting, than previous de-alcoholized wine offerings.

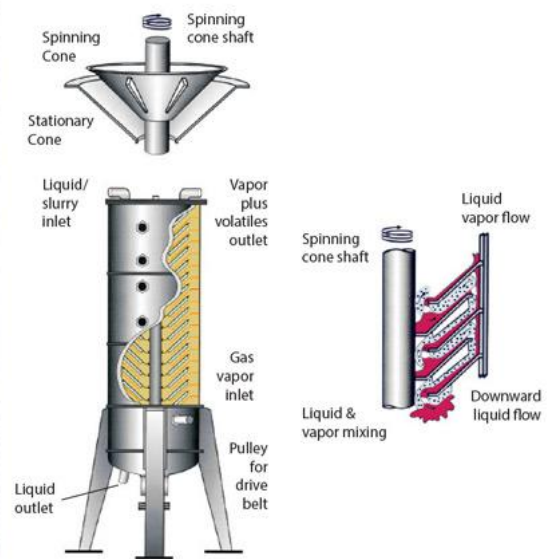
**Where is this idea at currently:** This opportunity is for the most part at the idea stage. I have done some blending tests, with promising results. I have also had some considerations regarding the different de-alcoholization processes, manufacturing processes, the bulk wine market, the chemical elements of wine, of things that have to do with the taste experience including the chemosensory perception of the flavor of alcohol, based on chemosensory irritation, taste, and olfaction, and then the taste experience when alcohol is not present, and other factors that I will not disclose. I have also been reading material about beverage marketing and how to build a New Age beverage brand.

**How will this be best implemented?** I can envision a new company that would develop and offer non-alcoholic wine in this new way, owned by me and other investors who have expertise and knowledge in the wine and beverages markets. Or I might have the possibility of taking on a project management or consulting job for a company in this field, in building up a new brand.

**More information:** There are some more considerations on this page:

[www.ideabun.com/focus-ideas/wine-idea-2](http://www.ideabun.com/focus-ideas/wine-idea-2)

Image, clockwise from top-left: 1. Grapes and wine, 2. spinning coil column de-alcoholization technology explanation diagram, 3. Spinning coil column production unit by Flavourtech, 4. Spinning cone centrifugal thin film vacuum evaporator “EVAPOR” production unit by Okawara.



## **3 New opportunity in Audio hi-fi equipment; up to 18000 times more consumer interest in product attribute**

**Main idea:** Revealing a very promising potential opportunity in the global US\$ 15-20 Billion market for audio hi-fi equipment, especially loudspeakers but perhaps also hi-fi components, based on research and strategy development, and also based on recent changes in a certain production technology. The opportunity is not based on a technological innovation basically, but on a psychological innovation or realization, so to speak, (no patents or trade secrets are discussed here).

**The problem:** I believe that for decades, the main companies in this part of the international audio/video consumer electronics markets never had a correct understanding of the market they were operating in. They had a good understanding of the technology, and believed they were selling a technological solution. They did not have the best possible approach to all the potential consumer groups in their potential market, or what the fullest range of customer satisfaction could be about. This could mean that these equipment are serving the needs well among some groups, but could be doing it much better among groups that could be deeply interested in enjoying music, but are less interested in acquiring current types of offerings to do so. This may mean, in short, a very large lost market potential, perhaps without the companies fully realizing it. This difference may be huge. The key question is: What are people seeking through using these equipment? Why would people want to buy them, both people who buy and more importantly, who consider it but don't buy? The right answer is the key to unlocking new potential, a set of needs that were there all the time, but relatively new innovations may open new possibilities.

My recent investigation into market data has shown me, that there is a huge gap between how the equipment have been, and what important consumer groups may be more interested in. For instance, in the data I gathered, there were more than 5,000 (five-thousand) times more individuals interested in a certain field of experience, rather than how these equipment are often portrayed. That was more specifically 92 million individuals against of around 17,000 individuals.

**Further steps:** I would like to offer my time and work in defining, researching and unleashing these opportunities, as a consultant, project leader or staff member of a company that has the willingness and ability to go after this opportunity. Let's look at this a bit further.

This opportunity is possibly, or probably, outside the areas where you have been most actively looking for new opportunities. It may even be that you have concluded that this is not an area of potentially strong growth. If you decide to go ahead and participate with me further, be prepared to get a completely new insight from a new viewpoint into consumer values and preferences, consumer pain points, and new solutions using a flexible production technology and the internet, where the value chain is re-organized in a new and flexible, cost effective way, with the goal of opening new opportunities for market penetration, fantastically successful promotional initiative, sales growth, revenue growth and improved profit margins.

### **The three steps to find the right path:**

1. A theory on what the situation really is, or how well current product offerings are answering the full spectrum of needs and preferences of different potential buyer groups, including groups that might have potential to become customers, but have been less interested. This means creating the theoretical framework to understand the forces in human psychology

that may be active here. A theory on how it may be possible to increase price premium, and especially to increase interest among possible buyers in the more expensive, higher-end equipment, or more specifically, make certain affluent groups interested who were less interested before.

2. Research that can be conducted to find out about how interested different consumer groups are in the product features in question. In short what may entice them to buy and use. A key area to investigate is: How have consumers been probed until now, what questions have been asked, what is the angle, and how could consumer opinions data be gathered to reveal a new angle, a more accurate picture, that may open up a vista of new opportunity? There is, for instance, a rather simple and not costly way available to gather key data.
3. Given that the outcome of the research conducted to test the theory is as I believe it will be, then I can present recommendations on how the product offerings can be altered. It is rather straight forward, using flexible production technologies that have become more widely used recently, and would also call for a new emphasis in design, promotion and sales.

**The Solution:** The main function of audio hi-fi equipment is understandably to deliver sound in the most satisfactory way possible, within all limits set. However, even if the makers of these equipment don't like it, then it is a fact that these equipment have two basic functions. The main function (delivering audio), and the „second function“. So what is the „second function“, and how can it be better served? Here are clues.

Audio hi-fi equipment are often quite big and well visible, especially big, higher-end loudspeakers. It came to my attention long ago that not everyone is interested in the visual effect that these objects have on the place they are in. I saw very clearly what the problem was. They buy these equipment to listen, but they will also have these objects in their homes, before their eyes. So how they perceive and judge these objects, emotionally speaking whether they realize it or not, is done in the same way as they perceive and judge all other large and visible things that are going to be visible in the living room. They judge them based on the basic function (here, to create sound), but also on the second function, how they look. Together, these two factors create the overall „rating“ and influences how these things rank against all other things they might be interested in spending their limited, hard-earned money on. This might mean that people interested in enjoying music at home are less interested in investing in these equipment, and to set them up in their own homes. People's purchase decisions, according to my theory, are not fixed, they are extremely changeable. In a split-second, the possible buyer can make a decision of what to buy, not just choosing between two different audio offers, but between such equipment or something totally different, another product or service category entirely, and that is based on the total emotional reaction. To win the sale, you must offer something where the two functions both serve in a superior way. Audiophile „equipment nerds“ often seem to be very important target markets for these companies, but I believe that interest in these products could be increased considerably among other groups, simply because they are interested in high-quality enjoyment of music, and especially other finer things in life, even if they are not interested in the technology as such, (see the numbers here after).

I often see remarks, in editorial content of audiophile magazines, in advertising, and on the websites of equipment makers, that they strive to create equipment that do the only thing they say that matters: To deliver the best sound. Many offer hi-fi equipment that are very „hard core“ technological electronics equipment, and they look as such. It is true, that for some consumer groups, this is all that matters. They don't care about the second function, all they want is the best new tech and the best sound. But there are other groups that care very much about both functions.

In fact, the number of those who are especially interested in equipment and technology that deliver sound, are dwarfed by those who are more interested in what the second function is active in. Of these, women are quite important, but men are as well. The fact is that women influence 80-90% of household expenditures, and make decisions on 57% of all consumer electronics purchases, and much more can be said (Barletta, *Marketing to Women*). How can you win the hearts and checkbooks of women? Here are some numbers:

**Hard-core audio hi-fi fans are those who have been detected as being interested in high-end audio or home audio. Audio hi-fi equipment is used to listen to music. How many of those interested in music are interested in high-end/home audio? And how many of those interested in music are interested in the aesthetics of their homes, i.e. interested in interior decoration? And who are only interested in music, not the other stuff?**

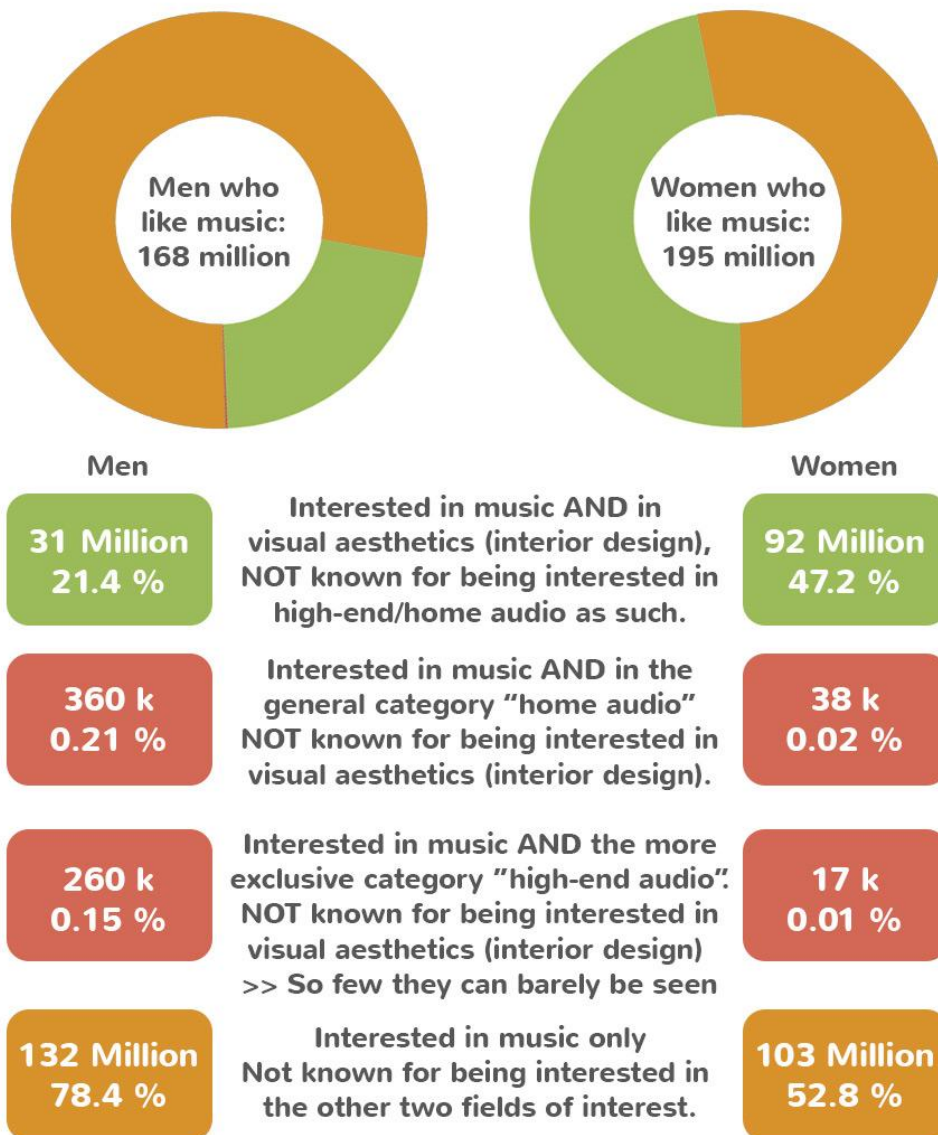


Chart researched & made by Sverrir Sv. Sigurdarson

According to easily accessible market data, I found the following: There are more women interested in music than are men, 195 million women versus 168 million men. \* Audio hi-fi equipment allow you to play music. Among men and women, ages 20-65+, in the Western World (minus Japan), let us

take a look who are interested in music and high-end audio equipment, but not interested in the „second function“ I spoke about (here, „interior design“ but other similar interests give similar results). Let's call that interest 1. Then how many are interested in music and the second function, but not interested in high-end audio devices as such, and we call that interest 2. Among women, there were only 16,700 women with interest 1, while there were 92 million women with interest 2. This is a 5,500 fold difference. Among women in the USA and Canada only, the difference was more than 18,000 times. That is 1,800,000 % (one point eight million %) more interest! If you look at interest in general home audio, rather than high-end audio, then there is somewhat more interested in that, so there the difference is „only“ 2,400 fold.

Surprisingly, since men are often seen as being more technologically thinking and interested in equipment of all sorts, the same difference is also very large. There were 260,000 men who had interest 1, while there were 36 million men with interest 2. The difference is 138 times. If you look at interest in Home Audio instead of interest in high-end audio, the difference is 100 fold. If you present and portray hi-fi audio most strongly from the viewpoint of being technologically advanced, home audio equipment, then you are obviously not hitting the home run with everybody.

So how good are the equipment makers in serving the second function? Makers of audio hi-fi equipment have always had trouble with the second function. It is understandable, because serving the second function, with extremely varied and personal preferences, and making and offering equipment that serve those, is both costly and has extreme business risk. There is a great risk of manufacturing, and stocking too much of one thing, offering it and hoping to sell, but not being able to sell it, and having too little of something else. Therefore, a great number of equipment makers have almost completely refrained from serving these different needs. They even boast that the second function isn't important at all, and they completely shun it. But it is important nevertheless, among many. Whether that is based on conscious thought, or an unconscious feeling, then I believe it can often be the key to the final decision. The numbers above indicate that very clearly.

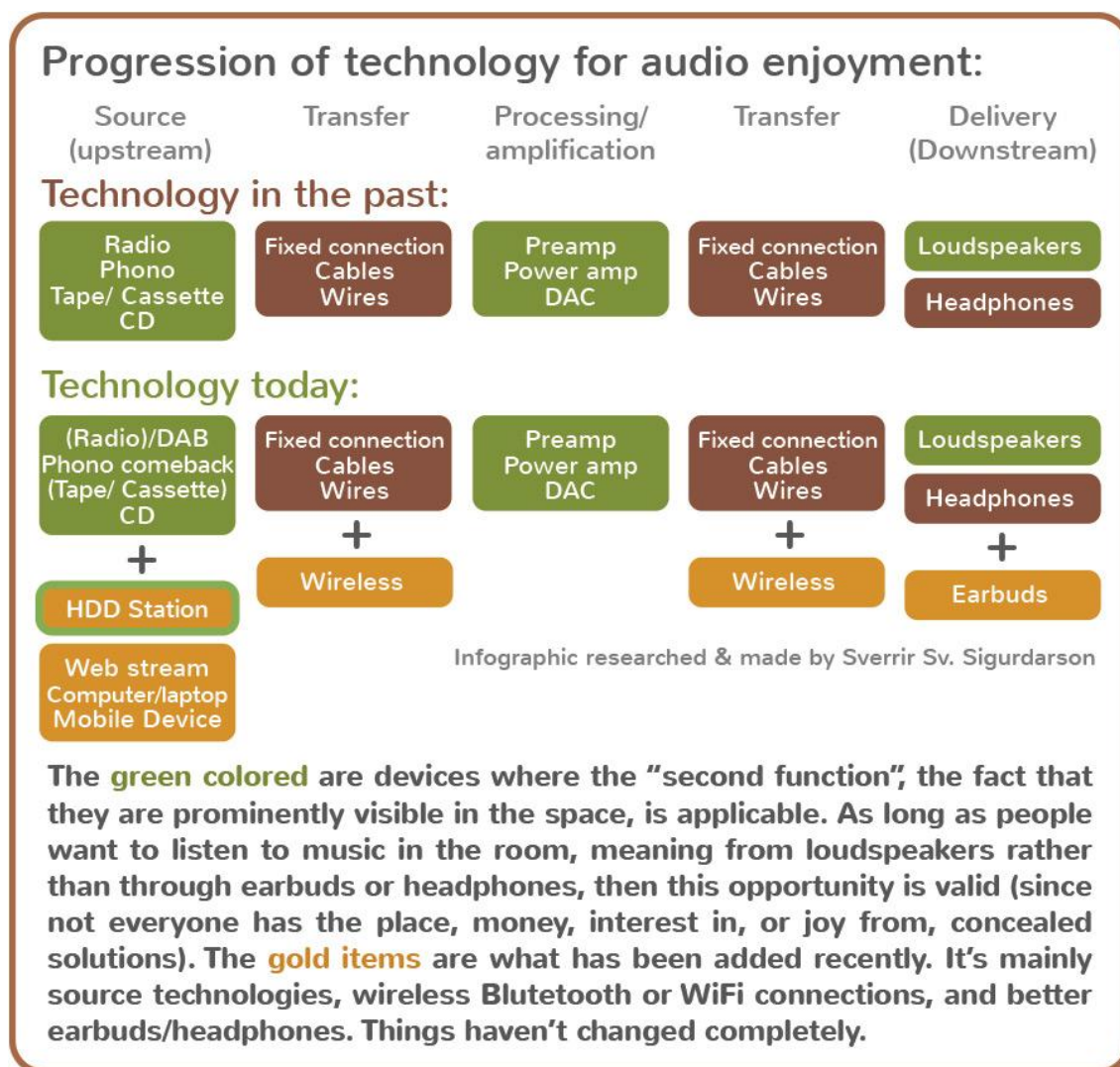
**Recent changes increase potential:** This opportunity has been known to me for long, it's one of my oldest ideas. I always found this opportunity most interesting, but the manufacturing solutions were complex and potentially expensive. This meant that responding to these unfulfilled needs in the market seemed to make sense mainly in the most premium luxury segments of the market. Partners that would have made sense were companies like LVMH, Groupe Richemont, and Pinault-Printemps-Redoute (now Kering). Those companies were not very accessible for me at the time.

However, there have been recent changes in production processes which change this situation, and make it very exciting. It would now be possible to offer solutions to less premium segments of the market, or from medium priced I think, and then up towards premium luxury high-end. I can now point out a more flexible, cost effective way of serving this secondary function. It would be the goal of a project undertaken by me to present the research and argument for how that could be done.

The solution when it comes to both loudspeakers and components could use a relatively simple technological solution, which has recently become quite widely used, and to use the internet and information technology solutions for sales. It would be rather simple for loudspeakers, and slightly more complicated for components, but both could be very attractive business wise, as it seems to me that serving better the second function could open vast possibilities. Instead of being bland, boring, unsatisfying, the possibility would now be to being able to offer absolutely drop dead gorgeous equipment, which will possibly set a new standard in how the „second function“ is served.



The idea would be to go after a larger market, with higher margins and increased profitability. It could allow to increase the diversity of product offerings, without driving cost and risk through the roof. The innovation may allow a loudspeaker company to use less expensive raw materials in the build of the loudspeaker, allowing for cost reduction.



**Possible market size:** The opportunity is in the market for audio hi-fi, which will be roughly worth around US\$ 15-20 Billion around 2018-2022, according to various forecasts. The solution has the goal of building mid-range to premium offerings in the market (which however was difficult with the previous manufacturing technologies), with the ability to charge higher price premiums, and increase profitability. The solution did include innovations or new approach in market research, design, manufacture and assembly, promotion, sales and delivery of these equipment. A key concept here could be „a new/additional definition of style focused and high-end hi-fi.“

I believe, that how the market is divided between different levels of price premium is a reflection of two things: The level of affluence of different groups among the public, and how accurately the offerings on the market reflect the full spectrum of needs and desires of those markets. I believe that this match has not been accurate in the home audio equipment markets. This means that the industry has not been fully offering the types of products that all groups would be most delighted to acquire, use, and talk about. It might be possible to change the mix of offerings, and move the market towards the „natural“ proportions in terms of the premium price levels.

The evaluation was based on a certain distribution of price premiums, based on known numbers about the distribution of people into groups of affluence. These groups were: Conventional offerings, (around 88% of total number of customers), Style offerings (10%), Stylish premium luxury offerings (1.8%) and Top tier prestige luxury offerings (0.2% of total number of customers). The results gave me the preliminary, theoretical conclusion, that the possibilities of improved sales numbers, margins, profitability, and stock market prices of companies that would implement this successfully, could be „very considerable“ and perfectly in scale with the basic size of the market.

Recent changes in how people enjoy music, with emphasis on mobile devices, wireless tech, earbuds and headphones, has changed the scope of the general opportunity. For that reason, I am not saying what the preliminary conclusion was, regarding possible changes on market value. The market size is difficult to predict, before the research and analysis has taken place mentioned before.

Let us put it this way: If you evolve the focus in how the product is conceived, designed, presented and positioned, emotionally speaking, from being very technology audio equipment device focused (which around 398,000 men and women show special interest in, in the Western countries\*), and you move the balance towards incorporating better, and responding better to, a focus on the „second function“, (which around 128 million men and women show special interest in), then what may the effect be? The answer is: I cannot predict accurately at this moment, but it could be significant. The future market size is only predictable when the basic focus of products offered are predictable. A change in this focus could unleash forces with surprising results.

**How will this be best implemented?** In this audio hi-fi opportunity, as well as regarding the opportunity described in Chapter 2 (de-alcoholized wine), I am in a similar situation as I was when I was introducing my ideas regarding the Vatnajökull glacier: I had a bold, strategic vision, facts to point out, good arguments, and a blueprint for a solution that might be economically very valuable. What happened then was so spectacular that something similar was seldom seen in the world history of the 20th century, but for myself the consequences were far from positive. Now I have to ask what are the best steps to take? I am not interested in repeating the severe challenges that I seem to have encountered as results of the Vatnajökull case (see Part Two in this book). What is the best way of creating a vehicle that can successfully exploit these opportunities in the audio hi-fi sector, according to my discoveries, in a way that is healthy, just and fair, and offers opportunities for growth and value creation for those who are involved?

This text here is openly available, but obviously doesn't say much about the actual consumer preferences or the solutions on how to take advantage of the opportunities in this US\$ 15-20 Billion market globally. I do have almost full ideas about that already. My logical next step would be to work on the research, interpreting the results, strategy formation and forming of a marketing and execution plan, with collaborators or for the company I am working for. The further results would of course only be available for those I have reached an agreement with. Now is the time to secure that.

I am interested in working for or with in some way a company that is already well-established in the audio hi-fi consumer electronics. A strong contender in luxury markets could be very much interested also. Both have their pool of knowledge and resources, and I have my vision and strategy. I offer you to enter discussion on how this can be done in the best way for all parties involved.

If your interest is awakened, I suggest that you or someone also reads the other parts of the e-book „Overview of Opportunities“ to better understand the author of this is, his background, history, past accomplishments, and potential. (\* Based on easily attainable market data from a social website).

## 4 Design brands: Look Viking! and DuFauna

**Main idea:** I am in the process of building up two designer brands. These are:

**Look: Viking!**, with designs that are based on patterns found on actual archaeological finds from the Nordic Viking era (approximately 792-1050 AD).

The main **characteristics or design policy** of **Look: Viking!** is to create mid-level to higher end style luxury-style products, with patterns from the Viking age. There are a number of brands that create clothes, jewelry and other products in Viking styles, but these are positioned in the culture that emphasizes brutal masculinity, black t-shirts, black leather, steel jewelry, grotesque forms including skulls (which were not motives used by the actual Vikings), tattoo, motorcycles and such. **Look: Viking!** on the other hand is seen as offering designs and products that are similar to premium brands that are often rooted in the art and designs for the higher classes of past centuries, like baroque, rococo, empire, english lords and aristocracy. But **Look: Viking!** will instead focus on Norse Viking patterns. In short, the Vikings were not outlaws, they were the kings and nobility of their countries, and **Look: Viking!** will emphasize the finer things in life.

**DuFauna**, with designs that are inspired by the pets we love – dogs and cats, and others.

The main **characteristics or design policy** of **DuFauna** will be the pets motives, focusing both on pet types and individual pedigree breeds, in many colors, where the motives are hand drawn vector images. We know print patterns that are based on flowers and abstract elements. **DuFauna** will be based on animal faces and bodies, where these images will be used as flowers and abstract forms are in pattern designs. There will also be designs where one face has a prominent position in the design.

Both brands will in the beginning utilize print on demand technologies, where a design is created in electronic format, and when a design is bought, it is made and shipped to the buyer.

**Possible market size:** Currently, the TV drama show Vikings, (HBO), is the fifth most popular show in the world. With this popularity, I hope that people will be interested in the Viking style. Viking styled products can also be in interesting addition to the tourist market in Iceland. However, such offering would not use print-on-demand technologies, that are relatively expensive per piece. Rather, they would need to be mass-produced to be economical.

Dogs and cats are of course owned by many, as we know. However, the market is very saturated with hundreds of thousands of products in each product category. So standing out is a long-term game. The ideas is that, among other, that these products may be offered as merchandise to WeStopFear customers.

It is very difficult to estimate possible market size for these two brands, so I don't attempt to do it.

**Where is this idea at currently:** Designs are already for sale from both brands. See examples below.

**How will this be best implemented?** This project is already operating under my LLC company Topfauna LLC, but it may be necessary to move it to another company if more happens with the noise phobia therapy service. It might be a good idea to form a collaboration with someone with expertise and finances in the designer brand space.

**More information:**

See Look: Viking! designs at [www.lookviking.com](http://www.lookviking.com).

A few Look: Viking! designs – based on basic patterns in Borre style (850 to 950 A.D.) and Broa style (790-850 A.D.), from Viking era archaeological finds in Sweden and Danelaw (England under Danish Viking rule), and then the designs are by me:



**More information:**

See DuFauna designs at [www.dufauna.com](http://www.dufauna.com).

**A few DuFauna designs (all designs by me):**



## **Look: Viking! videos**

A video showing the coloring of the blue/brown Broa styled scarf in the upper right corner, created in a one hour long live stream video on Facebook on December 30 of 2017.

1 minute excerpt is here: <https://youtu.be/AQ4A-VCcMds>

7 minutes excerpt is here: <https://youtu.be/2mLB5XctqeA>

## **DuFauna videos**

Drawing faces, among those the Chihuahua and Pug faces seen in the designs above.

Video is here: <https://youtu.be/ug9gg7pmoYI>

Creating a new color scheme for a beach towel, 1 minute excerpt.

Video is here: [https://youtu.be/9dv\\_nF-WL9M](https://youtu.be/9dv_nF-WL9M)

Promotional video, created for Instagram.

Video is here: <https://youtu.be/PdgDqQ-TXcQ>

## 5 Other ideas

Other opportunities and ideas can be found on the website of Ideabun, [www.ideabun.com](http://www.ideabun.com).

The website is named IdeaBun (like a hamburger bun with some juicy meat of ideas inside), or the name can be seen as being based on „idea abundance“. I created this website to showcase the many ideas I have developed.

They are so great in numbers, that I decided to offer many of them for free. Anyone can use an idea he or she likes that is offered as a free idea. There are fourteen free ideas currently on the website.

Apart from the four main opportunities that have been described above, here is another opportunity that can be mentioned specifically as well, as it is linked to the pets ideas:

**Pet friendly Christmas decorations:** Dog and cat owners, especially cat owners, know that pets can be very interested in Christmas decorations. Decorations can, however, be dangerous for pets, especially those made of glass that are prone to breaking. The idea is to develop pet-friendly, or break and chew resistant, Christmas decorations, so that pet owners can decorate their homes without worries. As there are cats in around 36 million homes and dogs in 43 million households just in the US, then this may in fact be a sizeable market.

**How will this be best implemented?** I can envision a new company that would develop and offer these products, owned by me and other investors. This idea, interesting as it is, is however not at the top of my list of priorities.

## Part Two – Past Accomplishments

In recent years, I have been working on speculating and developing the business opportunities outlined in Part One. I have also worked individual projects to make ends meet.

What I have been doing, and the general situation, has it seems been greatly influenced by another past project and its consequences. To understand Sverrir Sv. Sigurdarson, who he is, what he's been doing, one must understand that project. Let's turn to that.

### In short:

During my years as a university student studying business administration, I developed and presented independently the ideas that became the strategic foundation behind the government's decision of forming the Vatnajokull National Park, which is Western-Europe's largest national park. I was the only one in history to ever present ideas and arguments for that, as the Vatnajokull glacier and other glaciers in Iceland were a type of area that conventional nature conservationists were never interested in. The fact that I was the mastermind behind such a huge decision of the government, while being a university student working alone and uncompensated, is probably nearly unique in Europe's history in the 20th century. It is very uncommon that undergraduate students influence national governments so directly in such a large decision. The historical data is available, which proves my part in this and outlines the limited activity of others in discussing or presenting their own propositions, in the years before the issue was taken up by the parliament. This data is all in Icelandic, among other in a book named *Skrefin ad Vatnajokulsthjodgardi*. However, I only presented the very novel ideas for others to speculate about. I wasn't campaigning for this, and didn't put much work into talking to people and establishing contacts. Thus I wasn't connected in the political process. I actually didn't know about the decision that was being made, and many didn't know about my fundamental role either, as my name wasn't being held up high. I was an unknown and unconnected university student. At the same time, there were fierce disputes starting over a proposed hydropower and heavy industry project in the same and nearby area, between nature conservationists and those who supported the project. The project would be the largest in Iceland's history, worth US\$ 3 Billion combined. This probably meant that there were some who didn't like, or were suspicious of, the proposed national park at the same time as they were campaigning for the large hydropower projects, in a struggle with nature conservationists who were trying to stop the large projects. Instead of enjoying some benefits for my contribution, I encountered some very serious challenges. These challenges have continued for far too long, in fact with a long standing status quo due to lack of knowledge, and need to be understood for me to be able to continue with other, promising opportunities. That is why this story is explained here.

### The Vatnajokull National Park

The Vatnajokull National Park is Western-Europe's largest national park. It covers around 14,000 square kilometers, or around 14% of the total area of Iceland. Within its boundaries are some of the country's most remarkable natural landmarks, and the geological diversity is very great. Within the park, you find Vatnajokull which is Europe's largest glacier, Oræfajokull which is Iceland's highest peak, Dettifoss which is Europe's most powerful waterfall, and a number of other waterfalls, active volcanic areas both under the ice cap and outside, some of which have erupted in recent years, and mountains, rivers, sands, lavafields, highland meadows, springs, geothermal areas, and more. It



includes the famous Jokulsarlon glacier lagoon, which was featured in two James Bond movies. The national park has the potential as a natural wonder of becoming well-known among the public in the western world, and could become very valuable economically, as a magnet for foreign tourists, according to official estimates.



**Images from the Vatnajökull National Park, various photographers.**

The national park is also situated close to the reservoir of the Kárahnjúkar hydropower station. The decision of forming the park was taken around the same years of the decision to build the hydropower station and the accompanying aluminum smelter, and that is not a coincidence.

## The true origins of the first, basic propositions

So the question is, how did it happen that politicians at the time one day had in front of them a proposition for forming this type of a park, in this location? Why were they interested in the decision of forming it? What kind of arguments had been presented for them? The political majority at the time was center-right wing, with the ministers in the government coming from those parties. The right wing party had historically been very uninterested in nature conservation, and instead, being very pro-hydropower and heavy industry. The fact that this political party turned out to be interested in forming a huge national park in the vicinity of the hydropower project was very unusual, so the arguments must have been unusual too.

If historical data is analyzed, then it becomes clear that the decision of politicians in the beginning to form the national park must have been influenced by two thoroughly argued theories, or strategies. Number one was the theory that the image of Iceland for its unspoiled nature could be strengthened, by creating a very large protected area or national park, and tourism and even others sectors of the economy could benefit from that. This was a proposition for creating jobs.



**The three first newspaper articles from January of 1995, and three additional papers distributed in 1995 to all members of parliament, ministers and other influential individuals.**

Number two was the unusual theory, that if Icelanders decided to go ahead with large hydropower- and heavy industry projects, then it could be beneficial to create a very large nature protection area

at the same time, to show a positive attitude towards nature. The hydropower and industrial sector could even benefit from that, in the big picture. This was thus a proposition for consensus.

These two strategies were of an entirely new kind, compared to ordinary nature conservation ideas. The proposition was that this kind of park could be formed on and around the Vantajokull glacier. Conventional nature conservationists had never been interested in protecting the glaciers of Iceland, and they would never present an idea that hydropower projects could benefit from a large park that would be formed alongside such projects. They were generally very opposed to any new energy projects, and wanted to protect the nature rather than to see such projects becoming a reality. Nature conservationists had presented many wishes regarding areas to be protected. These areas were on the so-called Nature Conservation List (Náttúruminjaskrá) which is a kind of a waiting list with areas that have not been formally protected. There were somewhere around 260 areas on the list, but Vatnajokull and the other large glaciers were not on the list. This simply shows how nature conservationists were not interested in the glaciers.

Strategy number one was based on the increasing interest in environmental matters and the protection of nature among the public, in the two decades before this. This had created an increased demand for experiencing unspoiled nature, which Iceland had a lot of. A large, continuous protected area with many natural wonders, could be promoted as a very remarkable area to visit, more than trying to promote many natural wonders, one at a time. Creating this huge protected area could in fact be very easy to do, and cheap. Much of the area was protected already, and all that was needed to do, to create the largest area of this kind in Western-Europe, was to protect the 79% of the Vatnajokull glacier that wasn't already protected. This continuous cluster of around 12 protected areas could then be made into one large, national park.

## **The scope of public discussion: It didn't exist**

Generally, one would assume that the political decision of establishing such a huge national park would be based on extensive discussions and wishes among society at large, that had been going on for a long time before being dealt with by the parliament. Historical data shows however, that official and carefully worked out propositions about this came from only one individual. No formal or extensive propositions or wishes had come officially and openly from anyone else, ever.

This one individual who was responsible for all propositions that were presented to society and politicians, in the years before Parliament and government ministers decided to form the national park, was me, the author of this book, Sverrir Sv. Sigurdarson. At the time, I was a student of business administration at the University of Iceland. This project was my own initiative, and I worked alone and unassisted on it.

The thoughts that started this work were inspired by an economic downturn that Iceland experienced around 1990. I wanted to develop and present a proposition for an option, which the government could do in order to create new opportunities for the country. The work on this started in 1993, the basic propositions were presented in 1995, and my final contribution came out in December of 1998.

## **My strategies presented and received positive reactions**

I received some strategically important reactions for this work. I started by sending the ideas to several international hotel companies, to see if they would respond and how positive or negative

their responses would be. A high percentage responded, often signed by senior management, and they sounded positive enough, so I decided to go ahead and present the ideas. I presented the basic ideas in three, consecutive newspaper articles, and three essays that I sent to a number of influential individuals and institutions, including all members of parliament and ministers. The third paper included the second strategy, of how large hydropower projects could benefit from nature conservation projects.

After a tip-off in a letter I received in the fall of 1995, from the managing director of the State planning agency, I submitted my ideas to a prestigious idea competition held by the Ministry for the environment and the State Planning Agency. The results of the competition jury were presented in September of 1996. I received a top prize in the competition. After that, I presented the winning entry in a speech in a symposium that was held, where the minister for the environment, the environmental committee of the Icelandic Parliament, and many other leading figures listened my presentation, and watched the slides presentation.

I was then asked to give an interview in Iceland's largest newspaper, Morgunbladid, which appeared on January 28, 1997. The day after came what was perhaps the most remarkable reaction. The newspaper ran an editorial where my ideas received much praise, I was mentioned as the author of the idea, being a university student, and the paper concluded that this idea should be carefully considered when the future of Iceland's highland would be decided. I believe that this may have been the only time in the 20th century, where this newspaper ran an editorial about a university student who was presenting some ideas, alone and not connected to any professor or institute at the university, or official student politics. The paper wasn't just a newspaper, it was a very influential political institution in itself in Iceland, although it wasn't formally a participant in the decision processes and implementation and administration of the parliament, ministries and state.

## Propositions, and the Vatnajokull National Park today

**Sverrir proposition  
no. 1, 1995**



**Sverrir proposition  
no. 2, 1995**



**Sverrir proposition  
no. 3, 1996-1997**



**Guttormsson, parlia-  
mentary referendum  
1998**



**Vatnajokull  
National Park**



All propositions for this kind of protected area, and the park today.



Finally, I was offered to be among authors in a book with 22 young writers, where the chairman of the publishing committee was the prime minister of Iceland, who was also the leader of the right-wing political party. I had joined the party in 1997. In the book, I wrote about how the Icelandic economy could benefit from an improved nature image of the kind that a large park on Vatnajökull could improve. What was special was, that all the authors in the book had already finished their studies and started their fruitful careers. They would later become government ministers, mayor of Reykjavik, dean of a university, CEOs and be in other prominent positions. The only exception to this was myself, as I was the only one who was still a student when the book was published. The book was published in December 1998, and I graduated with a degree in business administration from the University of Iceland in February 1999. I graduated with first class grades.

## **Parliament and ministers made their decision**

What happened in the same time was quite dramatic. In parliament, a proposition for a parliamentary referendum had been set forth in February of 1998, about four national parks on four glaciers. The proposer was a left-wing member of parliament, Mr. Guttormsson, and an opponent of the right-wing political party which held the chair of the prime minister. What was interesting, was that neither he nor conventional nature conservationists had ever before presented a proposition for protecting glaciers. The majority in the Parliament wasn't interested in forming four national parks on four glaciers. Since 1930, there had only been established three national parks in the country. But for some reason, the majority was interested in having the minister for the environment look into, whether a national park on the Vatnajökull glacier would be feasible. A parliamentary referendum on that was passed on March 10 of 1999. The cabinet of ministers then formally decided that the Vatnajökull national park should be established, in September 2000. What was special was that I didn't know about the case in the parliament. I had little connections, and it didn't generate a lot of attention. I first read about it in the papers, in September of 2000.

## **Harsh disputes were rising with bad consequences**

There were more things happening as well. When I decided in 1995 to present my ideas about forming a large nature conservation area or national park on Vatnajökull, there hadn't been much of disputes between nature conservationists and proponents of hydropower or geothermal power stations, and heavy industry projects. I hoped that I would be able to put this idea into open daylight, without getting into trouble. I wasn't planning to do more, but one thing led to another, and I continued adding to this. At the end of it, in the beginning of 1998, such disputes were rising. They were about an area named Eyjabakkar. A year later, plans for Eyjabakkar were laid aside, and instead the hydropower sector was interested in a three times larger hydropower project at Kárahnjúkar. These disputes increased to become the largest dispute in Iceland for many years, as the Kárahnjúkar project and the accompanying aluminum smelter that would use the electricity produced, were to be the largest combined project in Iceland's history. It would be worth US\$ 3 Billion. The Eyjabakkar and Kárahnjúkar area were both within or right next to the area where the national park would be, depending on where the limits of park would be.

One can be certain, that there were some who supported this gigantic project who were very suspicious of the national park. Usually by many, nature conservation areas and hydropower projects were seen as complete opponents.

## **A challenging situation**

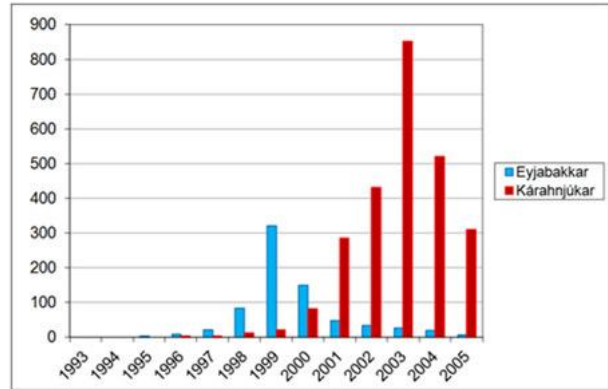
So, around 1999-2000 a very complicated situation had arisen. I was entangled into this situation, it seems, without me having had any interest in being that, and without me having full information about what was going on. In short, this situation included:

1. I had finished my involvement in developing and introducing my Vatnajokull ideas, with the publishing of the book in December of 1998.
2. Mr. Guttormsson had introduced his proposition of a parliamentary referendum for four glacier national parks in February of 1998, which was rejected in February of 1999, and then turned into a proposition of a parliamentary referendum for a national park on Vatnajokull only, also in February of 1999. I had no idea of this.
3. I was finishing my studies, graduating, and starting a career, in February of 1999.
4. Mr. Guttormsson was making a deal with the center-right-wing government of the referendum about Vatnajokull National Park being accepted by the parliament.
5. The hydropower and heavy industry sector had started campaigning for a hydropower project in the Eyjabakkar area, close to the park. This was met with great opposition from nature conservationists, many of whom were partners of Mr. Guttormsson, politically speaking. These plans turned into the sector campaigning for an even larger project at Kárahnjúkar, which was close to Eyjabakkar, in March of 2000.
6. The hydropower and heavy industry sector, traditionally influential in the right-wing political party, was thus probably quite skeptical about a huge national park on Vatnajokull, which was in the same area as the Eyjabakkar and Kárahnjúkar. But a part of the right-wing party was making a deal with Mr. Guttormsson about forming the park.
7. It was easy to trace who had been talking about forming a park on Vatnajokull glacier, even if it was the left-wing Guttormsson who had pioneered the case in parliament.
8. I wasn't able to talk to anyone as I had no idea about what was happening in parliament. I first learned of the Vatnajokull National Park after it had had been decided, in September of 2000. At the time, my situation was already very challenging, and the factors that could change that to the better weren't available.
9. I had never spoken in any meaningful way to the left-wing member of parliament, Mr. Guttormsson at the time, but perhaps someone thought there was a connection since he was proposing what was very close to what I had talked about, which was perhaps not a serious thing but didn't win me any points, wasn't a reason to give me any support, with certain individuals in the right-wing people.
10. It should be very clear, that this kind of a situation isn't normal at all for a young man, who is simply a university student, and not politically active, or connected, at all.

What happened for me, was that instead of building a fruitful career, I faced a very challenging situation when it came to getting, and keeping, a proper job. I am sure that the fierce, many years long disputes between nature conservationists and the hydropower sector, and the plans for the national park right in the area, created a very poisonous environment for me. I was just a newly graduated, unconnected and inexperienced person with a business degree. Business life generally wasn't positive towards nature conservation at the time. I didn't receive any threats or hostilities, but the career reputation of a person with a business degree is more fragile than many think, and it can be easy to influence it in a negative way.



The first step towards the park was in September of 2004, when the Skaftafell National Park in the south region was expanded. A selfie taken by myself with the Skaftafellsjökull falling glacier behind. From the ceremony, Siv Frídléifsdóttir who was minister for the environment (Central Party), myself and park staff. I very kindly received a lift with the minister and deputy minister from Reykjavik to Skaftafell, as I didn't own a car at the time, here on the picture with the minister's chauffeur in the middle.



The chart shows how disputes over Eyjabakkar (blue) and Kárahnjúkar (red) escalated between 1999-2005



The front page of the social media network www.seevatnajokull.net which I created in 2008-2010



Raising of the flag with the logo of the Vatnajökull National Park, when the park was founded on June 7, 2008.

## I had been the only one with a valuable idea

It was half a decade later that I finally learned about my fundamental role in the arguments for the formation of the Vatnajökull national park. Then I learned that in Iceland's history, only one person had presented focused ideas and arguments for protecting the whole of the Vatnajökull glacier and surrounding areas into one protected nature area, before the matter was discussed in parliament. Conventional nature conservationists had never done that. This meant, that there was only one man



who had brought to the attention of the center-right political majority of politicians, that it was possible to do something like this on the glacier, with attractive arguments for doing it.

At the time when I learned this, there had also been presented evaluations of how the national park could possibly increase foreign exchange revenues from international tourists, who would be drawn to Iceland because of the national park. The numbers were very high. In today's prices, the turnover in the economy could increase by as much as US\$ 300-800 million per year. It should be noted that the Icelandic nation, and economy, is roughly around 1/1000 of that of the United States, so similar numbers in the US as percentage of GDP (gross domestic production) would be around 1000 times higher. A small food for thought. This revenue increase could increase government tax revenues so, that they would be sufficient to pay the running costs of all universities in Iceland, and even more than that. It seemed clear that the side project I had worked on when I was a university student could possibly pay itself off very handsomely for the Icelandic nation.

I tried to introduce my role in laying the theoretical foundation for the national park, and to point out how valuable it could be. That I did in 2004 and 2005. But unfortunately, the disputes over the huge hydropower project had reached its absolute top the year earlier, and were still very much active. Those who talked about nature conservation weren't popular at all in the business world. The national park itself wasn't formed until four years later, in 2008, after the hydropower plant and aluminum smelter had been built, and the disputes had obviously died out.

My challenges regarding career and financial income weren't resolved. After a certain time, this kind of situation is feeding on itself. Even if nobody is against you, as the disputes have long died out, then the long time where one has been in a challenging situation becomes an influential factor in itself. In 2008, the entire banking system of Iceland collapsed, and a deep recession set in.

## **The video**

In 2009, I created a video about the economic potential of the national park, which has comparison with estimated economic impact of national parks in the USA and UK (and many nice photos). I created an English version, which can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/npV3J3L621g>

## **Misunderstanding regarding the true origins**

When I introduced the ideas for forming a large, protected area on the Vatnajökull glacier, I was the first in history to do that. Those who reacted positively were mainly open-minded individuals who were connected to the right-wing political party, the Independence Party. However, historically, supporters of the right-wing party were not interested in nature conservation or new protected areas. They were pro business, pro industry, pro hydropower projects. Thus, I sense that the idea was sort of an orphan within that party.

In parliament, it was the ultra-left-wing Mr. Guttormsson who presented his novel idea of focusing on forming four national parks on four glaciers at the same time. This was rejected, but out of it came the solution of forming the national park on Vatnajökull glacier. That solution, the right-wing Independence, and the central Progressive Party (Framsoknarflokkur) were interested in giving their support to. Because of this, the general understanding became that it was wholly a project initiated by Mr. Guttormsson. His supporters on the left wing of politics have been very comfortable holding up the story, that the Vatnajökull National Park is his idea, and his idea only.

Myself, the actual thinker behind the proposition and strategic arguments for Vatnajokull, haven't been remembered for this. Of course, when I was introducing my ideas years ago, I actually tried to generate as little interest around myself as possible. I never talked about my ideas at school, and I didn't spend much time connecting with people to have a discussion. I was too busy working on my university studies. So there is a reason why not many have been remembering my part. But that doesn't change the fact that I am the one who formed the strategic ideas that opened the eyes of those who were in charge in politics. Those were parties that had never been very keen on forming large nature conservation areas.

## **The full story was not easily visible**

The challenges that I endured regarding building a normal career started very early. In a perfect world, you would be surrendered by people who have perfect access to correct information immediately, and who see things in a balanced and just manner, and are ready to support a good cause and support someone who wrongfully is in trouble. In reality, unfortunately the situation wasn't so. People saw that my career wasn't developing like it should be. Usually, when someone is facing such a development in his career, that is because that individual has done something horribly wrong, has violated some important rules, or the person is suffering from some personal problems that are causing the challenges.

This was not the case with me. I had been doing good and just things, in fact things that are close to unique. I hadn't done anything wrong, and I wasn't suffering from any personal problems. The bad thing was that the good things I did seem to have collided with some of the most massive disputes and struggles of economic interests in latter times, where hugely powerful special interests were ready to pull strings in many ways, openly or behind the scenes. And it wasn't openly obvious.

Correct information about what was going on at the time wasn't available to me until it was too late to even try to do anything. And when information seemed to be becoming clear, then I couldn't trust that people around me, friends, acquaintants and family, would have access to the information, or would be interested, or would have full understanding and acceptance of the complex political and economic interest situation that had been built up, and was unmatched in latter times. So the fact was, that instead of having people's full understanding and support, I was viewed as a troubled individual of some sort, and many people, but not all, were closer to turning their back on me rather than showing me support. The situation was complex, and people didn't all react in the same way in the same moment.

There are people who know the truth about the origins of this large idea, but they are not many.

## **Not often seen in Iceland**

As time progressed, I also realized a few things about Icelanders. I couldn't be sure, that Icelanders would be able to fully understand and support the situation. Icelanders are known to be early adopters of new technologies, new fashion, and so on. But it is a fact, fact that most of these technologies and innovations are researched, developed, tested and first marketed abroad, among the large, developed nations. This means that people don't have much experience, and thus not much knowledge, about the development process itself, which often requires much work and care.

The work on researching and developing the idea for Vatnajokull glacier was conducted in Iceland, by myself, but I soon realized that Icelanders didn't have a good understanding of what it meant.

Plus, information about that process weren't formally accepted, even if I was trying to present them to further my case. Perhaps they didn't realize, that such a huge project could actually be the fruit of work done by an unknown university student. Thus, I learned that they didn't really believe in my accomplishment.

The situation is made more complicated by two things. First, it is for the fact, that among the right-wing in politics there was historically a great dislike for nature conservation. Nature conservation was seen as the enemy of business and the industries. There were even voices talking negatively about nature itself and the highland. Historically, nature had been seen as an enemy by many through the centuries, a dangerous force in the lives of Icelanders, and these negative attitudes were still lurking beneath the surface of the Icelandic psyche. Even if tourism has boomed spectacularly in recent years, increasing 8 fold since I was introducing my ideas, and tourism is now the main generator of foreign exchange revenues for the nation, then these negative emotions haven't given way officially, being fully replaced by positive attitudes towards the nature and its protection by everyone, officially and openly. But I feel that the atmosphere is shifting, and believe it will in the next five years.

The second thing that made things more complicated is the individuals who made my situation challenging, as they were among the most influential and connected in Icelandic society. To get ahead in society, to get and keep a good job and build a career, seems to have been very challenging for a young, recently graduated person with a business degree.

So these three things, the inexperience and lack of understanding among the older generations regarding research and development, the negative attitude towards nature, and the people who probably disliked the Vatnajökull ideas, and thus perhaps disliked my contribution and possible future contributions (although actually I wasn't planning any further contributions), made the situation very challenging. On top of this, there are more sides to this issue that explain why things developed as they did, but I will not talk more about that here.

One thing might however explain a bit better what was unusual in this. In the years before and during my university years, I was developing and introducing strategic ideas on protecting a glacier, to form a large protected area in order to improve Iceland's possibilities in marketing the tourism industry and create new jobs. Was this something that was very common among young people, like playing football, watching TV and going to parties is? Actually, no. Doing this, with this kind of thinking, wasn't common at all. Was I then in some way different from the most common type of Icelanders? Yes, actually that is the case. Not necessarily better or worse, just different and that is the reason why I was doing things that weren't commonly done.

A big part of my ancestry has Danish/Swedish roots, as my family was an influential one in Iceland when Iceland was part of the Danish kingdom (Iceland became an independent republic in 1944). Before that, my ancestry probably stretches south to Prussia, now part of Germany. My grand-grandfather for instance provided catering and banquet organizing for the king of Denmark, Christian X, who was also the king of Iceland, during the very few visits of the king to Iceland back then. The point is that people in Denmark, Sweden and Prussia would think, work and organize things differently than ordinary people in northernly and remote Iceland at the time. That is based on the different societies. These roots in the past do still have some influence today, although society has also changed much. Icelanders are very bright and capable in many ways, they are very agile, resourceful and masters of tactics. But in my opinion, they are not always good at seeing the

big picture and present organized results, they are not always good at disciplined discussion, and they are not very strategic. The people of Denmark, Sweden and Prussia are probably more in that department.

The idea about protecting the Vatnajökull glacier would be, at first sight, a ridiculous idea, and nature conservationists had never suggested anything of the kind. But the argument was researched and thought out to the extreme, it was very strategic and economical, and there were some very influential and broad minded individuals who saw, that this would be a good idea. So it was passed as a political decision by the parliament and cabinet of ministers in a very short time, although actually this was something that only one person had ever talked about, an unknown university student. I understand the ordinary Icelander very well, as I grew up in Iceland, but this part of my background, and this kind of thinking and how it is different from the normal Icelandic way of approaching life, they don't understand it. When normal Icelanders are confronted by my way of thinking, many don't understand. It is the truth that sometimes when people don't quite understand things, they find it weird, or even react negatively. For me, to start developing a strategic proposition was a natural and logical thing, but many weren't „on the same boat“ so to speak. Trying to discuss this with people in Iceland, I repeatedly experience lack of understanding. They don't seem to get it, what is the difference between this, and the usual innovations that come to Iceland automatically, without anyone in Iceland having had anything to do with it. In case if you were wondering what kind of guy does something like this, with these results, then here is the answer. But maybe this kind of activity, and these kinds of results, are rare in any society?

It should be obvious, that it would have been better for me not to develop and introduce the Vatnajökull ideas. But I did, and now I must find a way out of that maze. If I hadn't introduced my ideas, then there would be no Vatnajökull National Park today. The situation would have remained mostly unchanged, because someone must point out an option in the beginning and present good argument for it, which at least some of those in the ruling political parties find interesting. Nobody was likely to do that, not in this location on a glacier, and not in such a way that the right-wing in politics would be interested. This is something which many don't understand or don't want to acknowledge. The park is there today, the largest in Western Europe, a medium size government institution with up to 100 employees in the summertime, founded by the government after the decision of politicians. There are many who will be unable to fathom that this huge phenomena wouldn't exist if it hadn't popped out of the head of a completely unknown university student in the beginning, more than two decades ago.

As time passed, It wasn't that anyone was actively working against me. They simply weren't doing anything, neither to improve my situation or to make it worse. Things remained unchanged, and it has to be said that time passes very quickly.

Stepping forward and telling the whole story could be very risky. I could not be sure that people would understand or if they would find the story interesting and trustworthy. Those who had taken part in the disputes, which I did not take an active part in, were among the most powerful and best connected in society. To step forward and tell the story could be risky, when only a short time had passed since the end of the disputes (and disputes are still going on, this time in other areas). Thus, I had to simply endure and try to find a peaceful way out of these challenges, while the disputes between nature conservationists and pro-energy and industry continued, and the government was building the national park without my participation.



The front page of the book *Skrefin að Vatnajökulshjódgarði*.

## Where is the proof?

This text has described situations and events that are in many ways out of the ordinary. They are especially out of the ordinary for a humble university student, who simply has before him the general task of commencing his studies to finish a degree and start a career. Where is the proof for what has been described here?

The main set of proof is in the book *Skrefin að Vatnajökulshjódgarði*, or „The Steps Towards The Vatnajökull National Park“ which is 282 pages long in A4 format, with more than 100 color images. This book is supposed to contain, as far as I was able to collect, all contributions to the discussions, and a description of all that happened before the Icelandic Parliament started discussing the possibility of national parks on glaciers. These are events and discussions that took place from 1992 to 1999. The main focus, of course, is to pinpoint which propositions, which contributions, and which discussions influenced the politicians to make this decision, as the parliament was presided by the central and right-wing political parties.

It can be said that around 80-90% of all that was contributed regarding the possibility of forming this kind of area on Vatnajökull specifically, was contributed by me.

The book, which is in Icelandic, can be found in libraries in Iceland. It can also be downloaded for free in PDF format on the web page [www.seevatnajokull.com/bok](http://www.seevatnajokull.com/bok).

## Explaining this is probably necessary

I am not ready to accept what most people will conclude automatically, that the challenges I encountered were simply my fault (as such challenges would very often be). That is not the case here. Therefore, explaining this entire story is necessary, so that I may have a better chance of doing something positive with the four opportunities that are described in part one of this book. The truth is, that what happened around the Vatnajökull issue was not a blunder by me, but a rather unique story that deserves to be known.

## Entrepreneurial projects

The ideas for Vatnajökull aren't the only ideas I have generated. For instance, the original idea for audio hi-fi equipment is in fact an older idea than the Vatnajökull glacier ideas. And the audio hi-fi idea still holds promise. My focus has been on trying to create my own opportunities.

What happened to the propositions, arguments and strategies about Vatnajökull that I developed, is a world-class accomplishment for sure. Not many have matched this in the 20th century.

But I believe that my other ideas have potential that is not of a lesser scale, although they will never become as big in terms of geographic area.

What I am most interested in is to continue, and create success and wealth through implementing some or all of the opportunities that are described in Part One of the book.

Let's make that the goal.

### **Sverrir Sv. Sigurdarson**

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### **About the author**

Sverrir Sv. Sigurdarson, born 1967 and living in Iceland currently, holds a university degree in business administration (Cand Oecon or candidatus oeconomiae) from the University of Iceland, a degree that takes four years of full studies to finish. The partly emphasis in his degree was on marketing. Sverrir was also an art student in Iceland's leading fine arts college, the School of Arts and Crafts (MHÍ). He also dabbled in carpentry, and has taken courses or educated himself in creative writing, internet marketing, website design and videography. Sverrir sees himself as a creative, artistic thinker, but firmly rooted in reality with his advanced business degree. This short book explains his previous accomplishments and future focus in innovation and entrepreneurial projects.



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