

Agora 2.0 Attraction Analysis

Case analyses, product development and recommendations including the VIPER study



Lise Lyck



Part-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund and European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument)Part-financed by the European

eu.baltic.net



**Copenhagen
Business School**
HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

AGORA 2.0 Attraction Analysis

- Case analyses, product development and recommendations including the VIPER study

Lise Lyck

Preface

This publication presents the analysed attractions from the EU-project AGORA 2.0 based on partner information, theory and accessible secondary data. The attractions involved in the AGORA 2.0 project are divided into the five different categories of attractions. The categories are Castles, Red Brick Gothic, Sand Dunes, Forests and Stones.

The following culture and nature attractions are included in this project:

- Castle: Skokloster Castle, Sweden
- Castle: Häme Castle, Finland
- Castle: Narva Castle, Estonia
- Castle: Olavinlinna Castle, Finland
- Castle: Bistrampolio Manor, Lithuania
- Castle: Šešuolėliai Manor, Lithuania
- Castle: Kronborg Castle, Denmark
- Red Brick Gothic: Saint Bendt's Church, Denmark
- Red Brick Gothic: Sorø Abbey Church, Denmark
- Red Brick Gothic: Saint Nicolai's Church, Greifswald, Germany
- Red Brick Gothic: Cultural Centre Saint Spiritus, Greifswald, Germany
- Red Brick Gothic: Saint Nicolas Church, Lüneburg, Germany
- Red Brick Gothic: Lüneburg Town Hall, Germany
- Red Brick Gothic: Saint John's Church, Tartu, Estonia
- Sand Dunes: Råbjerg Mile, Denmark
- Sand Dunes: County of Łęborg and Słowiński National Park, Poland
- Sand Dunes: The Curonian Spit - Neringa Municipality
- Sand Dunes: The Curonian Spit – Immanuel Kant State University, Kaliningrad
- Forests: Ligatne Nature Trail, Latvia
- Forests: Rossony District, Belarus
- Forests: Slītere National Park, Latvia
- Stones: Stones and archaeological monuments from pre-historic period, Estonia

The categories chosen in the AGORA 2.0 project are characterized by being in different stages of development. For the Castles and Red Brick Gothic associations have been established implying a mid-level of tourism attraction development, while the attractions in the other groups, Sand Dunes, Forests and Stones, are in the very first stage of development. Attractions not being a part of an association have severe problems in creating transnational products.

The publication is one of three publications in the AGORA 2.0 project produced by TCM/CBS. The first publication is a toolset to use for creating attractions. The present is the second. The third publication analyses strategy, organization and frame for development of nature and culture tourism

attractions as tourism product in the Baltic Sea Region. The publication stresses the problematic between national and transnational tourism attraction development.

The purpose of the project and the transnational products is to develop a learning platform for tourism development by having the partners engaged and participating in the process. From this they learn theory and practice as well as knowledge creation and an experience sharing.

This publication has been written with the assistance of a number of employees at the Centre for Tourism and Culture Management at the Copenhagen Business School. Especially Scientific Assistant Mads Willemoes Hjardemaal and Research Assistant Thomas Fogde-Schmidt are to be thanked for contributing with productive and qualified research as well as analysis to this book. Furthermore, Søren Toftelund Clausen, Anders Munkesø Kjærboell, Katarzyna Petersen and Rasmus Lund shall be thanked for their help with contributions, editing and proofreading. Thank you all very much for your commitment.

Furthermore, thanks to the partners who have intensively engaged in the cases and in the learning and cooperation process and thanks thank to the lead partner Wilhelm Steingrube and Betina Meliss.

Read the cases and get inspired.

Lise Lyck

AGORA 2.0 Attraction Analysis - Case analyses, product development and recommendations including the VIPER study

© Copenhagen Business School and Lise Lyck 2012

Published: Copenhagen Business School, printed in Denmark by Rosendahls – Schultz Grafisk A/S

ISBN 978-87-92019-20-2

List of Content

Preface.....	3
List of Content	7
1. Introduction.....	9
2. Castles	11
2.1 Skokloster Castle.....	13
2.2 Häme Castle	21
2.3 Narva Castle.....	33
2.4 Olavinlinna Castle.....	41
2.5 Bistrampolio Manor, Lithuania.....	47
2.6 Šešuolėliai Manor, Lithuania	51
2.7 Kronborg Castle	55
The Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea.....	63
3. Red Brick Gothic	67
3.1 Saint Nikolai’s Church, Greifswald	69
3.2 Cultural Centre Saint Spiritus, Greifswald	77
3.3 Saint Nicolas’ Church, Lüneburg.....	81
3.4 Lüneburg Town Hall.....	87
3.5 Saint John’s Church, Tartu.....	91
3.6 Saint Bendt’s Church	97
3.7 Sorø Abbey Church.....	103
The Brick Gothic Association – The European Route.....	111
4. Sand Dunes	115
4.1 County of Łęborg and Słowiński National Park, Poland.....	117
4.2 The Curonian Spit – Lithuania and Kaliningrad.....	125
4.3 The Curonian Spit – Lithuania.....	126
4.3 The Curonian Spit – Kaliningrad	131
4.4 Råbjerg Mile	137
5. Forests	143
5.1 Ligatne Nature Trail, Latvia.....	145
5.2 Rossony District, Belarus.....	149
5.3 Slītere National Park, Latvia.....	155

6. Stones	161
6.1 Stones and archaeological monuments from pre-historic period in Estonia.....	163
6.2 Madsebakke	169
7. Transnational tourism products developed or in the pipeline	173
8. Conclusion	177
9. VIPER study	179
9.1 Introduction.....	179
9.2 The validity of using questionnaires	179
9.2.1 Advantages of using questionnaires.....	179
9.2.2 Disadvantages, pitfalls and problems of using questionnaires	180
9.3 The AGORA 2.0 questionnaire.....	181
9.3.1 Identification information	183
9.3.2 Tourism Satellite Account	184
9.3.3 Problems identified in the Agora 2.0 questionnaires	185
9.4 The statistical use of the questionnaires.....	188
9.4.1 The initial plan for the questionnaire survey	188
9.4.2 Analysis of what factors that affect the general satisfaction with an attraction.....	189
9.4.2.1 Presentation of hypotheses.....	189
9.4.2.2 Analysis of the hypothesis	191
9.5 Conclusion VIPER study	193
10. Literature list.....	195

1. Introduction

In this publication SWOT-analyses of each attraction will be followed by an introduction of the history of the different case attractions in the AGORA 2.0 project. After the historic description of each attraction there will be a presentation of the context in which the attraction is situated. There will also be a description of the cliental that visits the attraction. In the last section of each attraction presentation there will be strategic recommendations for how to increase the number of visitors and how to develop a Baltic Sea Region, BSR, tourism product. Furthermore, the transnational products produced in the project will be presented together with the products that are in the pipeline. At the end, the VIPER study that was unfolded during the project period will be examined.

The purpose of the historic introduction is to create a platform for a Baltic common values and maybe identity in northern Europe, BSR. By developing this platform for each attraction it will be possible to link the different attractions to a common idea, period, person or time and through this create a common basis for developing transnational tourist attractions in the BSR. Linking the different attractions together will create an opportunity to take advantage of the heritage asset the BSR share but do not currently use for product development and marketing purposes.

The physical context, or key influences, of the attraction is the conditions and surroundings such as climate, geography, presence of large towns and airports and so forth. By providing a physical context of the attraction it will be possible to assess the opportunities of the attraction. By doing this, attractions with similar conditions can learn from each other on how to overcome difficulties and how to take advantage of partially or unused opportunities. This also creates an opportunity to continue future cooperation.

Two other important factors are language and culture. Language and culture often function as barriers to cooperation because the differences of understanding each other as well as where people come from easily can lead to misunderstandings and difficulties when trying to cooperate.

Following the context section is a description of the cliental of the attraction. This description is based on the questionnaires (the VIPER study) that each attraction has been handing out during the project. This is important because it gives each attraction a concrete picture of the visitors of that specific attraction. By doing this the managers and the staff are provided with useful knowledge about the visitors that gives them the opportunity to either further develop this specific customer segment or to target other customer segments, which are not being targeted at the moment.

Questionnaires are a good tool to provide this information. However, the number of questionnaires that has been filled out for each attraction does in general not meet the minimum requirement to draw definitive conclusions. Hypothetically, for instance when there are no more than 100 – 300 filled out questionnaires, an extraordinary day with a bus full of Spanish visitors that all fill out a questionnaire will give a misleading idea about the percentage of Spanish visitors and the percentage of the distribution between foreign and local visitors. To make definitive conclusions the number of questionnaires should be 1200+ and precautions should be taken when handling out the

questionnaires, for example that the questionnaires are collected over a whole season so as to get a picture of a whole year and not just one month or day. If the use of the questionnaires is continued after the end of the AGORA 2.0 project, which we recommend, keep these considerations in mind.

The strategic recommendations are based on the information and findings of the four previous sections; i.e. SWOT, history, context and visitor profile and the models from the first publication. They will focus on how to increase the number of visitors through product development and marketing development. They will also focus on how to improve cooperation and how to reach the project goal of creating transnational attraction based on common values in the Baltic Sea Region countries related to heritage.

The purpose of this publication is to describe the different attractions, then analyse the collected questionnaires and based on the description and the analysis identify common problems and issues among the attractions. The questionnaires are crucial in this process because they provide a picture of the demand side and therefore explain the visitors' view of the attractions. The idea has been to focus on the different attraction within the project groups, Castles, Red Brick Gothic, Sand Dunes, Forests and Stones; because they share the same kind of visitors why clear similarities exist among these attractions. Unfortunately, there has not been collected enough questionnaires in any of the two years of collecting in any of the attraction groups, to make definitive conclusions. Therefore, this publication also serves as a guideline for the project partners to continue developing their attractions and their cooperation by continued use of the questionnaires and through this, analyse their cliental and cooperate around common challenges. This pilot publication therefore only has limited product development recommendations at the transnational level and only some recommendations to those attractions that has handed out and collected questionnaires from their visitors.

2. Castles

2.1 Skokloster Castle

SWOT-analysis of Skokloster

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skokloster Castle has unique artefacts from the 17th century. • Skokloster Castle is one of the world's most famous and unique baroque castles. • The interiors of the castle are intact and carefully conceived with the aim of preserving the castle and the environment for future generations. • Skokloster Castle attracts visitors from the whole world. • Vertumnus is one of the most famous paintings in the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of visitors. • Lack of strategically cooperation – county, business association, networking etc. • The castle has the image of being uninteresting and living its own life, lack of context and difficult to access. • Lack of strategic marketing activities. • Accessibility
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make all the employees interested in the work of making the brand of Skokloster Castle stronger, more attractive and to achieve the goal of getting more visitors. • Increase the number of reasons why you (tourists) should visit Skokloster Castle. • Increase the degree of priority – identify values that have a meaning for the local population, the county and local commercial business. • Developing partnerships that will gain Skokloster Castle coming success. • Stress the uniqueness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard competition – Skokloster Castle compete against other museums, entertainments, sports activities, people's spare time. • The time is gone, when Skokloster Castle was a part of the history education in school. • Difficulties to prioritize, what is the most important issue – critical needs for Skokloster Castle: Develop the infrastructure, conservation and maintenance together with the national board of property. • Reduced economical support from the state.
Conclusions	
<p>As Skokloster Castle no longer can expect a steady amount of students visiting the sight in relation to their history classes at school, a greater amount of tourists have to be attracted. This can be done through increased marketing activities. However, as the economic support from the state is declining it has become vital to establish partnerships. A greater effort of Skokloster Castle has to be put into this activity such that a sound economic base can be established again. The main purpose of the marketing activities is to get rid of the rather dusty and static image that it seems like the castle is representing at the moment.</p> <p>Furthermore, the internal strategic activities have to be prioritized. Instead of aiming too broad, management has to decide on the most vital activities and then carry them out first. Asking the question “<i>What will bring most value to the castle?</i>” would be very relevant as a beginning. There is a need for a focused strategy for a unique cultural heritage.</p>	

History of Skokloster

Skokloster castle is situated on the scenic shores of Mälaren, one hour drive from Stockholm. Mälaren is Sweden's third largest lake and has more than 1.000 islands. There are lots of small industrial towns by the lake, because Mälaren is directly connected to the Baltic Sea via Stockholm. Mälaren is also popular as a holiday destination for anglers. Besides Skokloster there are many other historic castles and ruins, most notably Gripsholm castle from 1380, now owned by the Swedish royal family.

Origin

Skokloster Castle was built by Count Carl Gustav Wrangel (1613-1676), a powerful and influential individual in the mid-seventeenth century. He initiated the work on the castle in 1654 on this spot because that was where he was born, the name originated from the old monastery nearby, Sko Kloster (Kloster = monastery) from 1230. Carl Gustav's ambition was to build a castle and monument to himself that reflected the whole world, which is why Skokloster today is the home of more than 50.000 artefacts (Bergström: 2001, 36). The castle itself is built in baroque style and has stayed untouched for more than 300 years. The building is uniquely authentic and only marginal restoration has been made in order to enhance the original characteristics, many of the rooms are in the exact condition as 300 years ago (MIS: 2011)¹. The castle is not a fortress or fortification, rather it is a large white four-story building with many windows to allow light to enter, in each corner of the building there is an octagonal tower. There are especially four features at Skokloster that stands out, the armoury, the library, the textile collection and the collection of paintings.

The armoury

The armoury consists of three rooms with naturally darkened wooden walls. In these rooms Carl Gustav had his armourer hang up about 2000 items, from armours and swords to stuffed exotic animals, kayaks from Greenland and Indian artefacts from the New World. As such the armoury was a place of fascination and wonderment, because it took the visitor to parts of the world they could scarcely imagine and showed them artefacts from unknown cultures and countries (Skoklostersslott: 2011).

The library

The library was placed with much consideration inside the castle, because books at the time were extremely vulnerable to light and damp. Therefore, it was placed according to the advices of Vitruvius "damp winds come up [*from the south*], which breed and nourish the worms, and destroy the books with mould" (Vitruvius: *The Ten books on architecture*). Vitruvius recommended that libraries should be facing east.

Three different families collected the books between the sixteenth and nineteenth century (Bergström: 2001, 38). Carl Gustav started the collection which is estimated to have consisted of

¹ MIS, Museums in Stockholm.

around 2.400 books. These books were in a variety of languages and very diverse on subjects. However, they were scattered upon his death in 1676 because his children and grandchildren inherited the collection. A quarter of Carl Gustav's books remain on Skokloster (Skoklostersslott: 2011). Nils Brahe, Carl Gustav's son-in-law inherited Skokloster and extended the collection further. Count Carl Gustav Bielke of Salsta Castle testified his collection of books to his nephew Erik Brahe. As such the collection on Skokloster has grown through time and today consists of more than 20.000 books. Some of these books are rare and valuable, others are simple and inexpensive (Bergström: 2001, 38).

The textiles

The collection of textiles consists of about 4.500 objects, some of them dating all the way back the Carl Gustav's time on Skokloster. There are tapestries, articles of clothing, upholstery fabrics, oriental carpets and a small linen collection (Bergström: 2001, 39). Of the well preserved textiles many are viewed in their original context. This gives the audience a unique opportunity to get a feeling of the atmosphere of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Carl Gustav Wrangel's bedroom is in very good condition.

The art collection

Skokloster Castle is also home to an extensive collection of thousands of paintings from the fifteen century up until 1961. Carl Gustav collected 150 paintings and since his death the subsequent owners have preserved and extended the collection (Skoklostersslott: 2011). The collection consists of portraits, religious, mythological and historical paintings, landscapes and still-lives. One fourth of the collection was acquired by the Brahe family who succeeded Carl Gustav on Skokloster. Especially two artists are of great interest. David Klöker Ehrenstrahl (1628-1698) was engaged by Carl Gustav and painted ten pictures which reside at Skokloster today. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (1621-1674), a student of Rembrandt, painted the picture of Joseph and his brothers (Skoklostersslott: 2011).

As a part of the extensive art collection there is a unique series of paintings that are based on emblems from the sixteen century book *Emblemata Horatiana* by Otto Vaenius first published in 1607 in Antwerp. These paintings represent the art of Sweden's age of greatness in the mid-seventeenth century. In this period Sweden became one of the influencing powers in European affairs (Mödersheim: 2008, 232). The collection of paintings along with books and other artefacts has resided on Skokloster since the eighteenth century but is believed to have been commissioned by Count Niels Bielke (1644-1716) for his manor at Salsta. It is believed that the collection was painted in the early eighteenth century and transferred from Salsta to Skokloster's large library holdings because the Bielkes' from Salsta and the Brahes' of Skokloster were close allies (Adams: 2008, 95).



Photo:Spamula.net

The most famous picture in the Skokloster collection is Vertumnus (the painting above). It is known all over the world and this is one of the items that make Skokloster a unique place to visit. Another unique factor is that there is neither heating nor electric light in the castle. All items have been untouched for hundreds of years.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Skokloster

There is a general misconception that Sweden is cold and inhospitable. But in July, the tourist season, the temperature average is 17.2 °C or 63.0 °F that is higher than that of Copenhagen. Also there is 18 hours of daylight in Stockholm in July again compared to Copenhagen that has 17 hours in July.

Skokloster is located between Stockholm and Uppsala. There are 60 km from Stockholm to Skokloster castle, which takes about 50 minutes by car. From Uppsala the distance is 45 km and takes about 45 minutes by car (Krak: 2011). There is easy access to parking on the grounds where there is no fee for parking. Visitors using wheelchairs or walkers can drive directly to the castle. When the visitors are not travelling by car, Skokloster is accessible by public transportation. There is a bus directly to Skokloster castle from Bålsta. Bålsta is connected directly to both Uppsala and Stockholm via trains. A third option is to take the canal tour from Stockholm or from Uppsala, both directly to the castle (Skoklostersslott: 2011). However, it requires some time.

From May 1 – June 14 and Sep 1 – Sep 30 the castle is open to visitors on Saturday and Sunday from 12.00 – 16.00. From June 15 – August 31 the castle is open on a daily basis from 11.00 – 17.00. The admission price is approximately 7.5 € per person. For a visit accompanied by a guide the admission price is 12 € per person (Skoklostersslott: 2011).

It is possible to get guided tours both in and out of opening seasons. From October to April it is possible to order guided tours. The tours take about an hour. Outside the regular season it is also possible to book a guided tour together with launch. This takes two hours. In the tourist season a typical visit is estimated usually to take 1 – 3 hours. It is possible to spend time in the park, in the castle on your own or in one of the cafés.



Photo: Jens Mohr / Skokloster Castle

Also situated close to Skokloster castle is Stockholm airport and university which makes Skokloster accessible for young people and tourists coming to see Stockholm.

Connected to the castle are also a museum store, a café and a restaurant. Skokloster also has a workshop for kids from June 15th to August 14th in the hours 12 pm to 16 pm. The park around Skokloster is open all year around. There's no competition for customers with other attractions in the area.

Visitor Characteristics of Skokloster cliental

From 2006 to 2010 the number of visitors has been reasonably steady. The number of total visitors range from an estimate of 44.760 to 38.668. The number of guided tours range from 26.397 in 2006 to 21.224 in 2009. The guided tours rebounded a little in 2010 with 24.715 guests.

Approximately one third of the visitors at Skokloster castle have visited the castle before and of the persons that filled out the questionnaires the average number of visiting times per person that visited more than ones is 2, 8 times. Most of the awareness for Skokloster is created through mouth to mouth, but also the internet and travel brochures and guides seems to create awareness. More than 80 pct. of the visitors arrive by car and what the visitors are most happy about is the general satisfaction with Skokloster which scored 4.4 out of 5. The lowest satisfaction rate at Skokloster is the transportation options. With a score of 3.3 it is only just above indifferent. 80 pct. of the visitors

uses between one hour and half a day at Skokloster and approximately two third of the visitors are on a day trip from home and the last third is on a day trip from their holiday destination. This last thirds motivation for going on holiday has three main reasons; relaxation, cultural trip and visiting family and friends. This group also mainly resides in hotels or with friends and relatives and traveling by car or by plane is dominant. Virtually nobody visits Skokloster alone. The average group consists of 2.8 adults and every third group brings 2.3 children.

The questionnaires indicate that there's an even distribution of ages between 20 and 60. However, it is Skokloster's own belief that the majority of the visitors are between 41 and 65 years old and that most of these visitors have university degrees. 56 pct. of the total number of visitors is women and 18 pct. come from abroad. It is Skokloster's belief that a little less than half of the visitors are foreign and that there are many visitors from France, Austria, Belgium and Germany.

Besides the visitor numbers from 2006 to 2012 none of this can be concluded with any certainty as there were too few questionnaires collected in 2011 (151 questionnaires) and none in 2012.

Strategic Recommendations for Skokloster

This section is divided into two parts. The first part is recommendations and suggestions on how to increase visitor numbers on short-term by looking at both product and marketing development. The second part is recommendations and suggestions on how to create a common BSR heritage, to increase the number of visitors in the region in the long run.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: Skokloster has a more or less finished product, in the sense that the castles interior is very well preserved. However, although all the items in the castle are well preserved there are many rooms with an overrepresentation of items and poor lighting.

There is therefore room for improvements concerning the display of items and how they are presented to the visitors. This is in danger of creating a conflict between the wish to preserve authenticity. This paper therefore recommends cooperating with other castles that has experience in dealing with similar problems. Although the castle of Versailles is in a whole other league of attraction development, inspiration on how to display and keep authenticity at the same time could be obtained here.

It is recommended that the visitors become more activated. If the visitors are activated they remember more of the visit and are more likely to re-visit or recommend others to visit. In the booklet the experience wheel was described and trying to fulfil more of its components can help when trying to improve a product. The more components from the experience wheel Skokloster can activate the better it is for the visitor experience. A baroque garden outside the castle could for example be both authentic and an opportunity to ensnare the senses. Another recommendation in this project is also to create geocaching sites both inside and outside of the attraction. Visual effects

and sound media are also helpful to create a more complete and memorable experience. These suggestions might not be specifically applicable, but something similar might.

Skokloster's SWOT-analysis raised concerns about being hard to access and as the satisfaction rating showed it was the lowest scored. However, it was not below indifferent, which indicates that it is not really a problem to the visitors. There is less than an hour's drive from Stockholm and Uppsala and there are three boats directly to Skokloster. The accessibility is a relative thing. How accessible the attraction is perceived to be to the visitors depends on how much time guests can spend at the attraction compared to how long they have to travel to arrive at the site. The recommendation would therefore be to make the trip worth taking by increasing the activities at the site. If the castle is fully occupied this paper recommends activities on the surrounding grounds, picnic places, trails around the castle and in the woods, sites with canopied fireplaces etc. The data from the questionnaires showed that 40 pct. used over an hour but less than two hours at the attraction. If there's an hour transport to and from Skokloster a tourist might find the transportation time too long compared to the time spent at the site.

The last suggestion concerning product development comes from Häme castle in Finland. At Häme castle the attraction is open all year around. The advantage is that time pressure on turning a profit is lowered on the very short summer period. However, this paper is mindful of the fact that Skokloster has no heating and lights. Make that a part of the experience for the visitor. Offer a free cup of coffee and explain the conditions of even the nobles in the seventeenth century. Having a fall, winter and spring product would improve sales.

Recommendations for marketing development: The biggest obstacle for Skokloster at the moment is image and marketing, as observed in the SWOT-analysis. As recognized in the SWOT-analysis there is little cooperation with other tourist attractions in the area. Making agreements with other tourist attractions that share the same clientele as Skokloster to hand out each other's brochures is an easy way to distribute materials among tourists and to increase awareness. By showing a little map with driving instructions and opening hours on the back of your brochure accessibility can be raised. Another idea for cooperation could be to offer a discount when a visitor has a coupon from one of your partner attractions. For example when a visitor at Gripsholm castle buys a ticket, it says on the ticket that the ticket is a 1 € discount when visiting Skokloster Castle, and the same would be the case when someone buys a ticket at Skokloster he or she gets a 1 € discount if they visit Gripsholm castle. If the targeted customers are middle-aged people, with wishes of cultural experiences, then your marketing should follow this description. It is important to advertise where your clientele looks for information; this means that the internet might not be Skokloster's first priority for advertisement. However, the updated homepage of Skokloster is very informative, easy to use and pleasing to the eye. This definitely informs foreigners better about the key information concerning a visit to Skokloster.

The questionnaires showed that the mouth to mouth approach for advertisement is working somewhat. This explains the high number of revisits. But there are also a significant number of

tourists seeking and finding information in travel brochures despite the fact that this has not been a prioritized marketing strategy. This could explain why there are less foreign visitors than expected and it could be the reason to develop these areas of marketing. The questionnaires also suggest that it is a wide variety of people of all ages, with and without kids and with different motivations to visit Skokloster, though the lack of the number of questionnaires makes them inconclusive, a broader marketing could be beneficial.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

The keywords here are authenticity and quality in reference to culture and history. Skokloster has been kept as close as possible to its baroque style during restorations. The nature of the attraction makes Skokloster very authentic. Therefore extensions or developments in product(s) at Skokloster should remain culturally and historically in harmony with the rest of the attraction.

One of the characteristics of authenticity is the very limited supply of goods. The unique items at Skokloster offer insight to regional as well as Baltic culture. As such Skokloster has a product that can only be seen at this specific location. Focusing on heritage will therefore attract both local audience who wants to get knowledge about the region and foreign visitors from the rest of the Baltic.

What Skokloster needs is to get more exposure. Stockholm is a metropolis and developing a market here will create a demand for cultural and historical exhibits. By doing this the area around Stockholm will be attractive to tourists that are culturally interested. Doing so, Skokloster will implicitly make important contributions to help form a Baltic culture heritage. The cooperation about tackling common problems in this project should be continued in order to improve on these areas.

2.2 Häme Castle

SWOT-analyses of Häme castle

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES

(=structure of staff, facilities and use of them, activities and process of action)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The only Medieval brick Castle in Northern Europe • Good professional skills to lead the Castle • Summer guides are well-educated students of history • Developed organizing of Castle's events • Events are regular (Europe Day, Three Castles Epiphany, Easter Market, Christmas Market and theme guiding) • Versatile, international and high quality exhibition management • State run castle, good sponsors reasonable price of entrance fee • Four museums in the same castle hill area, regular staff meetings, combined entrance ticket to the castle and three museums, marketing co-operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent non-professional staff is occasionally not committed to work • Lack of long term exhibition plans • Summer guides work only short periods of time (New ones have to be educated every year) • Structure of staff is incorrect (number of non-professional staff is higher than professional staff) • State program of productivity (reduce of number of personal) • Money from the state budget is depending on the economic situation of the state
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique facilities to arrange events etc. • Co-operation between the Castle and Hämeenlinna Historical Museum, Prison Museum and The Artillery Museum of Finland • Different EU-projects • Development plan and vision of Castle Hill gives the castle and three museums the tools to co-operate and make a brand of Castle hill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminishing funds in National Board of Antiquities budget • Diminishing funds of sponsor budgets • Facilities and areas are in a poor shape because the castle does not have enough money for conservation work • The force to increase the entrance fee • Sponsors are hard to get

Conclusions

- To support the non-professional staff to participate to the planning of events and happenings, arrange and take part to the different kind of event organizing seminars. More economical and other responsibility to the staff to arrange events.
- Long-term sponsorship agreements both for events and exhibitions.
- Organizing events that are economically profitable, sustainable and give good image to the castle and partners.
- To make it possible for the permanent staff to increase their skills by education and field trips.
- To found an exhibition work group to make an exhibition strategy to the castle and make an exhibition plan for 3-4 years.
- To increase and develop the co-operation of the castle's staff.
- Since the castle and three museums all have a little of money for marketing, co-operation is needed and everyone benefit from it.
- We need a product to market and that product is Castle Hill (=castle and three museums), marketing plan has to be made with co-operation with professional marketing people with good knowledge of history.
- If the entrance fee has to cover all the expenses of castle, the amount of visitors will sink.
- The politicians must recognize the value of the castle and we have to network with the local and national politicians.

PROCESSES AND ORGANIZATION

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The education of the summer guides is well-organized, regular, and versatile and has a high quality. • Self-organized events have high quality with many visitors, whose feedback is positive. • Co-operation with the restaurant and other event organizers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent non-professional staff won't participate actively in the summer guides' education. • Permanent non-professional staff won't participate actively in organizing events. • Lack of research of the castle's history
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of National Board of Antiquities supports the change, which is happening in the castle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of events decreases.
Conclusions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are premises and Management's support to development. • Education plan for the professional staff has to be done and motivating the permanent non-professional staff to participate more in events. • Education plan for non-professional staff has to be established. • Lifelong learning. • The castle doesn't have resources to use volunteers in castle's daily work since we do not have the capacity to educate volunteers (only 3 professional=historians staff members). 	

CLIENTS, NETWORKS AND INFLUENCY

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-organized networks exist already (Hämeen Linnan Ravintolat Oy, City of Hämeenlinna, Hämeen Sanomat, Hämeen Matkailu, The Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea-members, AGORA 2.0) • Good relationships and network in National Board of Antiquities. • More than 100,000 visitors yearly. • Häme castle is well-known regionally, nationally and internationally. • Exhibition activities increase historical knowledge of visitors. • Cooperation with others (culture, sport, school) is good and long lasting. • Coordinator Anne Parikka has excellent network with politicians and Finnish society. • The castle has own websites, www.nba.fi and is participating many other websites (www.fort.fi, www.baltic-castles.org) and some of the exhibitions are on internet (Facebook) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking is too dependent on the coordinator. • Lack of marketing allowance in budget. • Castle's websites are old fashioned. • Hard to reach clients that does not have access to the internet.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development plan of networking (exhibitions). • Increasing marketing and communication. • Marketing and communication strategy. • Increasing the number of visitors by using social media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminishing amount of sponsorships in exhibitions. • Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc.) can be misused.
Conclusions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole staff participates in networking. • The castle's recognisability is good. • Marketing allowance has to be added to budget and marketing and communication strategy has to be done. • Professional person with knowledge of history to take care of marketing and communication. • Most of the visitors are well educated ladies in their 50's; by the social media we could get teenagers and young adults to get interested in history and the castle. 	

PROFESSION, WORKING ABILITY

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretaries are educated to their profession. • Coordinator is able to cooperate and to run, develop and organize castle's operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent non-professional staff has not got historical understanding and they have a lack concerning the will to further education.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibilities to self-development and the will to learn are good (lifelong learning) and the will to do so among the younger members of the staff is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the members of the staff are getting old, which decreases ability to work. • Muutosvastarinta = opposition to changes in the castle and National Board of Antiquities.

Conclusions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to motivate the staff to keep their physical condition good. By organizing possibilities to exercise (swimming, gym etc.) and paying partly the costs, the castle is preventing musculoskeletal diseases of the staff. To organize lectures in ergonomics is way of teaching the staff good practices in their daily work. • To increase evaluation of work and to be proud of the work that has been well done, increase the good spirit among staff members (we did it), flow phenomenon. • Staffs learn to appreciate each other's work and support each other. • To be open minded and honest.

SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finland is the best country in the world (Newsweek August 2010). • Well-organized Education. • History is highly valued by the Finns and the knowledge of History is good. • Social and Economic gaps between Finns are not relevant. • The Castle is an important attraction and the entrance fee is very suitable. • The Castle is owned by the State of Finland. • Finns speak several languages. • Häme Castle is partner in many EU projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Budget is given by the Ministry of Education and Culture. • The Castle location geographically is not very significant (100 km northwest from Helsinki). • Schools are not able to use the Castle in teaching because the lack of money. • The cost of living is high.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle is a wanted partner in many kinds of co operations, networks and projects. • Multi-culture has always been Häme Castle's policy. • The Castle is not only a tourist attraction but a history learning centre. • Finland is a safe country to visit and travel (clean climate, beautiful nature, peaceful country, exotics). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic depression. • Climate change. • Terrorism and vandalism. • Closeness to the railways (transportation of chemicals etc.) • Change of economic, social and political values. • Decreasing budget.
Conclusions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Heritage must be taken care of in spite of the threats. • International co-operation has important role and should be increased. • State-owned Castle has a certain security and continuity, but at the same time the changes in political, economic and social climate can affect the castle more than other non-state-owned tourist attractions. 	

Final conclusions:

Häme castle and Olavinlinna castle are both state-owned and run castles and belong to National Board of Antiquities in Finland. Häme castle together with Olavinlinna castle form Castles Unit. Häme castle and Olavinlinna castle attracted 36.3 pct. of total visitors of all castles and museums of National Board of Antiquities in the year 2009. National Board of Antiquities runs 18 museums and two castles.

Häme castle was built by the Swedes after they conquered Finland at the end of the 13th century. Häme castle is an important local and national symbol and tourist attraction.

Visitors are not only able to see and visit a historical site; they have a chance to learn from local, national and world history and about the everyday life in the castle during different time periods, thus giving them a wider sense of history.

Häme castle and challenges of today:

- To achieve nationwide recognition of importance and value on both an emotional and economical level
- The restoration work done years ago
- Informative and physical accessibility
- Häme castle needs workers who have wide variety of skills and knowledge, not only cleaning or guiding etc. (multitasks)
- Economics of the state of Finland affects Häme castle in every way
- EU funds and participation of EU projects
- **Identifying the challenges of tomorrow already today**

Häme castle and challenges of tomorrow:

- * Visitors want more than just a guided tour
 - Experiences of history through interpretation
 - Need of workers who have wide variety of skills and knowledge
 - changes in political, economic and social climate affects the castle

Physical condition of Häme castle:

- Earlier restoration work and maintenance work
- Funding
- Accessibility (physical & informative)

Häme castle needs wider networking and co-operation in spite of the networks we have already

- Local, regional, national and international
- Benefits for both castle and tourists
- Use of social media (Facebook etc.) and internet

PASSAGE FROM INFORMATION SOCIETY TO *INTERPRETATION* SOCIETY

- Theme tours based on historical facts
- Special ready-made tour packages for different groups and occasions
- Happenings and events based on historical facts

Know your history to understand your future!

Cultural history is part of everyday life and Häme castle turns it into a party!

History of Häme Castle

Häme Castle is one of Finland's medieval royal castles, and it is situated in Hämeenlinna, which is the main city of the South Finland Province and Häme Region. It is believed that the castle is built at the end of the 13th century, and many historians associate it with the Swedish crusade of Earl Birger in Sweden's effort to consolidate its power in central Finland. Regardless of when it was founded, the castle would undergo constructional and nationality changes for centuries to come (NBA, 2012).

The predecessor of Häme Castle, Vanai Castle, was built by the Finns on the banks of Vanajavesi Lake. Seven years later the castle was occupied by Sweden, who used to the castle to extend its religious and political influence in the region. At the same time, the castle changed name, and "Häme Castle" became the residence of the Swedish castle commandant. Apart from the ground floor, Häme Castle was built entirely of bricks, and therefore stands apart from the other castles in Finland, which were built in natural stone up until the end of the 15th century. With its square ground plan, choice of bricks as material, and almost cubic mass, the castle is very similar to the castles built by the German orders in the Baltic countries and Eastern Prussia during the middle ages. The interior hierarchy of the rooms was organized so that all the finest rooms were on the first floor.

In the 16th century Gustav Vasa turned Häme Castle into an administrative and economic centre, and bailiffs were put in by the king to run the castle and serve the purpose of the Swedish crown. By the end of the century, however, the castle was no longer inhabited and fell into disrepair. Despite numerous attempts to restore the castle, it lost status as the region's administrative centre due to an outdated military function in the 17th century (Finland Castles, 2002).



Photo: The National Board of Antiquities

New Functions for the Castle in the 18th Century

Going into the 18th century, the function of Häme Castle developed as the Swedish army's main base and magazine. It was decided to add buildings, bulwarks and moats which turned the castle into a fortress with the purpose of increasing inland defences. In the beginning of the 19th century, however, the castle was temporarily turned over to the Russian army, while in the 1830s the castle was partially converted into a prison, a labour and correction institution as well as a division for the Russian soldiers (who had control of the area in that period). However, only 28 years later it was decided to disband all functions except for the prison utility. In fact, the castle was turned into the only penitentiary in Finland for women, while also functioning as a labour camp for women.

In 1953, the Finnish government decided to close the prison and to renovate it as a monument, while it did not open to the public until 1979. The aim of the renovation work was to restore the pre-1880 exterior of the castle to make it appear as it did before the prison period (NBA Häme History, 2012).

The Castle Today

Today, Häme Castle is in excellent condition – the whole castle has been restored except for the demi-lune (which is a 'half-moon' outwork that protects the stretch of wall between two bastions, in this case in the northern entrance). Therefore, visitors can still see the oldest part of Häme Castle, referred to as the fortified camp. This includes a square-shaped grey stone wall, with defensive towers at the northern, eastern and southern corners. The walls are 33 meters long and about 7 meters high. In addition to the walls, impressive sights in this part of the castle include a 12-metre-deep well which, although now dry, can still be seen near the east corner of the fortress.

In summary, the medieval castle of Häme, situated by the shore of Lake Vanajavesi in Hämeenlinna, was built in the end of the 13th century. Häme Castle was one of first places in Finland to use red bricks as building material, which makes it unique in a Finnish context. The castle has since functioned as a defence fortress, the home of the castle manager, a military facility and as a prison. Altogether this has made Häme Castle a historical memorial of cultural importance to Finland, with a design dominated by its redbrick walls (NBA Häme History, 2012).

Key influences of the visitor experience at Häme Castle

Häme Castle is situated fairly central within the city of Hämeenlinna, which is approximately 105km north of Helsinki. The castle itself is just off route 3/E12 and not far from Hämeenlinna train station. The station is on the main line from Helsinki to Tampere and there are trains every hour – the journey takes 30 minutes from Tampere or one hour from Helsinki. The castle is on the opposite side of the river from the station, making it a 10 minutes' walk (NBA, 2012).

Two museums are placed in correlation with the castle; the prison museum and the Hämeenlinna museum, and just north of the castle there is a third museum, the artillery museum, which has an extensive collection of artillery from all ages. The museums have separate entrance fees, but it is possible to buy a combined ticket for 15 €, which includes the castle and all three museums.

Furthermore, Häme Castle houses permanent as well as temporary exhibitions. Terra Tavestorum (The Land of the Häme People) is a permanent exhibition which features archaeological artefacts found during more than 100 years of research carried out in Häme, and shows the prehistory of the area. Other permanent exhibitions are 'The History of Brick', 'The Treasure of Vaaraslahti in Pielavesi', 'Medieval Church Art' and 'The Restoration of the Castle'. There is also a museum shop, which sells souvenirs of the castle to please visitors of all ages. The shop also sells products made by artisans in Hämeenlinna as it is hoped to cherish local traditions as well (NBA, 2012).

Guided Tours and other Facilities at the Castle

Guided tours are arranged around the area in four different languages; Finnish, Swedish, German and English – although some of these are only during the summer period or upon special request. On agreement the castle also offers special theme tours, set in the late 18th century Gustavian period, that give a chance to experience both the dramatic and hilarious aspects of social life and witness the grand dresses of the period.

A summer café is open from the 2nd of February to the 15th of August every year, and the Great Hall now houses a restaurant which is opened when booked in advance. Additionally, many annual cultural events are held at the castle, including Europe Day, Three Castles Epiphany, Easter Market, Christmas Market as well as jazz concerts. The castle also houses rental facilities such as meetings, seminars, celebrations and exhibitions. The castle is more or less open to the public six hours a day all year around with a few exceptions (NBA, 2012).

The area around the Castle

As the castle is placed in the city of Hämeenlinna itself, possibilities of accommodation are numerous. In the city, visitors can stay at hotels such as Apartment Hotel Villa Aino and Hotel Cumulus which are both placed in the city centre, while there is also the option of camping in natural beauty at the Aulanko Holiday Village just outside the city. Besides what the castle itself offers in the food category, the city of Hämeenlinna has many restaurants and cafés serving everything from Asian food to pizza to local Finnish food.

In relation to the weather in the region, June, July and August have temperatures as high as 22 degrees, while the rest of the months are a lot colder going all the way down to -9 degrees in December, January and February. In these months it also rains a lot with some months having 20 days of rain a month, while it is not uncommon to have about 10 days of rain during summertime.

Visitors interested in exploring the area around Häme Castle have a lot of possibilities for different sights. For example, Aulangon näkötorni (picture on the right, 2.2 km away) is an observation tower overlooking the valley of Vanajavesi. The one hundred-years-old tower is 150 meters above sea level and is situated in the eastern part of the Hämeenlinna Aulanko parkland. The tower attracts 90.000 visitors each year, while the park has as many as 400.000 visitors every year. Also, only 6.3 km away is the beautiful Vanajanlinna, which is a castle, designed by architect Sigurd Frosterus. The architecture of the castle area reflects architectural trends from around 1910 to the turn of the

1920s, with touches of Baroque and Renaissance, as well as their more modest Nordic adaptations. The construction of the main building began in 1919 and was completed in 1924. Nowadays, the place runs as a hotel and restaurant, making the small trip from Hämeenlinna worthwhile. Moreover, the Medieval Stone Sacristy in Lepaa (14.7 km away) and the Park of Sorrows (45.2 km away - memorial monument for nearly 150 pro-Russian socialists who were executed on this site during the Finnish Civil war) are both worth seeing while in the region. Lastly, the city of Hämeenlinna itself has a marketplace as well as many cafes and restaurants worth visiting.

Visitor Characteristics of Häme castle cliental

The castle has around 100,000 visitors yearly, most of which are well educated ladies in their 50s. The management team, however, has plans of targeting teenagers and young adults in the future by using social media.

From the 500 questionnaires collected in 2011, 64 pct. of visitors were at the attraction for the first time. That means that 36 pct. have been at Häme Castle before, and their average of times visiting is 2,8 times. 25 pct. of the visitors have been recommended to visit the castle by relatives or friends, 11 pct. encountered it on the internet, 11 pct. were simply passing by, and 6 pct. noticed it in travel guides/brochures. 83 pct. of visitors arrived by car / caravan, showing a clear tendency of how they prefer to get to the attraction. In fact, the same is the case for how visitors not only get the attraction, but also how they get to their holiday destination. It could furthermore indicate what possibilities for transportation they have. 60 pct. of visitors spent one hour or more, but less than two hours, 24 pct. two hours or more but less than half a day, and 13 pct. spent between half an hour and an hour. In other words, most visitors spend quite a while when visiting Häme Castle. This is naturally positive, as it means that the attraction and its surroundings have offerings that make visitors stay for quite a while. In relation to accommodation during their stay, 36 pct. of visitors are staying at hotels, 25 pct. are staying with friends or relatives, 14 pct. are staying at camping sites, and 10 pct. are staying at holiday homes. The remaining 15 pct. has chosen other options. This could indicate that there are many different options for accommodation; however, the clear majority of visitors prefer to stay at hotels or with relatives. Only 5 pct. of visitors are travelling alone, leaving 95 pct. of visitors to be accompanied by somebody. The latter is on average accompanied by 2, 4 adults and 2 children. Only 4 pct. of visitors in the collected questionnaires are foreigners, while 25 different nationalities have visited the attraction in the period.

In 2012, unfortunately, only 82 questionnaires were collected. From a population of 100.000 visitors that number is too low to make conclusions from this data.

Strategic Recommendations for Häme castle

The strategic recommendations are based on the above analyses. These are divided into two parts, namely how to increase visitor numbers in the short term by looking at both product and marketing development, and then in the second part recommendations and suggestions on how to create a common BSR heritage, to increase the number of visitors in the region in the long run.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: The following will look into whether the product (i.e. the castle itself) is fully developed or if there is room for improvement. It is argued that the castle has a lot to offer such as events, exhibitions, facilities, and of course the history itself. Furthermore, the management team has many interesting thoughts on collaboration and future marketing possibilities. However, it is recommended that visitors should be activated even more. According to much theory within experience economy, it is important that any attraction thinks about how and why it is marketed as it is. Pine and Gilmore (1999), for example, put up a model explaining ways of implementing experience into the business model of any attraction, the so-called experience realms. Here, four different approaches are used, while implementing as many of these as possible should optimize the business. Interestingly, the experience wheel, cf. “Booklet for creating attractions”, uses the same train of thought so the reader should be familiar with the terms at this point.

The Experience Wheel in Context with Häme Castle

The following part will attempt to put the abovementioned into context with Häme Castle. This should be seen as a way of putting theory into practice, which should make it easier for the reader to absorb. This contextualization of the experience wheel is, however, the only one being unfolded in this publication, and in that way it serves as a source of inspiration for further utilization of the (idea behind the) theory. In relation to *entertaining* the visitor, it occurs when he/she passively absorb the experience, and the castle can do this by making the visitor view a performance, listen to or reading stories about the history of the castle from the 13th century. This can be done by putting up a small cinema and signs and speakers around the area. Inherently, Häme Castle has an advantage in *educating* the visitor but to truly inform the visitor and increase his knowledge, the elements that Häme Castle chooses to implement must actively engage the mind. One way of doing this is targeting kids by creating plays or treasure hunts that are based on the history of the castle. In that way, the kids will have a lot of fun while it is really about helping them learn in a way that exercises their creative muscles. The fact that the castle has been a prison is an element that could be used in the plays if implemented thoughtfully, of course.

The guest in an *escapist* experience is completely immersed in it, becoming an involved participant who is able to affect the actual performance. This can e.g. be done by theatrical plays depicting the history of the castle as Häme Castle has many stories since it has been under Swedish, Russian and Finnish rule during the last 800 years. Also, using some kind of a virtual cyberspace game in the area is a way of activating this type of experience, although high costs of doing so should be considered. In many ways, the guest at Häme Castle can be categorized as an *aesthetic* visitor as these normally immerse themselves in an attraction but themselves have little or no effect on it, so in that way that type of visitor just wants to be at the attraction, immersing it. The history and the beautiful sight of the castle facilitate this for the visitor. Although price of implementing these types of experience realms should be considered, it is important to remember that the richest experiences encompass aspects of all four realms. Therefore, Häme Castle should consider ways to integrate these four elements into one, unified experience for visitors.

Recommendations for marketing development: This part investigates how Häme Castle can market itself in the future. The castle is one hour away from Helsinki so in order to make the trip even more worthwhile, it is recommended that Häme Castle should collaborate with neighbouring attractions. Some of these are mentioned in the descriptive analysis above. Here, the idea of Castle Hill (i.e. castle and three museums working together) is also a very good thought, and definitely a good way to turn a weakness into strength. In doing so, the idea of a combined ticket is already unfolded in the latter, while collaboration in the former could consist in handling out coupons to the neighbouring attractions giving a discount of, say, 10 pct.. In order to create further synergy, the local tourist organization should obviously advertise for the collaboration, and there might even be the opportunity of knowledge sharing in order to enhance both parties' business models. This is pivotal since the SWOT analyses mentions that marketing budget is very tight, and that there is a desperate need for more sponsors and funds and for less dependency on the macroeconomic situation.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

In relation to developing the castle, it must be remembered that attractions that are based on culture and heritage tourism have their success anchored in the authenticity of the attraction, which is why Häme Castle should of course not be rebuilt or changed completely. Many of the suggestions above could arguably be targeted against children so it is important for management to consider the delicate balance between the *authenticity* of the attraction (and the target group interested herein) and the new *experience implementations* (which could mean new target groups). The unique items at Häme Castle should therefore be restored since they can only be seen at this specific place. Therefore, developments in the product of Häme Castle should remain in unison with the rest of the attraction but with thoughts to innovation and new ways of running business. Of course much of dilemmas lie in getting the messages out to potential visitors so instead of relying on product development only, focus should be equally put on marketing. Having a tight budget here, it could be argued that the answer lies in collaboration, not just in terms of the Castle Hill-project but across the region of Hämeenlinna and even more so across the Baltic Sea Region. The latter is fulfilled as Häme Castle takes part in the Castle Group activities that are embedded in the AGORA 2.0 project. For example, this group has had castle-meetings during the whole period, which has meant 11 meetings that has resulted in concrete product development across the region, such as the photo exhibition of 44 member castles of The Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea as well as the so-called Castles' Passport, i.e. transnational tourism products have been produced.

2.3 Narva Castle

SWOT-analysis of Narva Castle

Strengths
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Unique geographical position and one half of the unique architectural and historical ensemble. Narva castle is situated right on the border between Estonia and Russia (EU and Russia, West and East) overlooking Narva River. It is rather unusual for two fortresses/castles of different architectural styles to be situated so close to each other.2. Narva Castle was rather recently renovated<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Since the castle was badly damaged during the WWII, the reconstruction works took place in the second half of the 20th century – rather recently. The most recent restoration was done in the Northern Yard. However the eastern wing of the castle is not open for public awaiting its turn.3. Recently introduced successful tourist projects – Northern Yard (2007) and Carl Linné Garden (2009).<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. http://www.narvamuuseum.ee/pohjaou/?menu=eng&next=teadus2010b. http://www.narvamuuseum.ee/?lang=eng&next=linneaed&menu=menu_kula4. High quality permanent and temporary exhibitions.5. Museum has developed several functions, i.e. place for exhibitions, organization of events (concerts, seminars, weddings etc.), educational programs for school children.6. Narva Museum has established good cooperation with other Estonian museums (exchange of temporary exhibitions, participation in festival of Estonian museums since 1998) and with international partners through the Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea. Development of mutual project with the Narva City government.7. Museum employees are good specialists, who are flexible and able to adjust quickly to changing environment.
Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Poor logistics and infrastructure inside the museum<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. The castle and gallery are not easy accessible for people with physical disabilities.b. There is no adequate parking space, bicycle stands, museum shop.2. Tourist activities are dependent on seasons, i.e. the Northern Yard is open only in summer.3. Lack/outdated technical support. Security system, climate control system and electrical equipment are outdated, need upgrade/change.4. Permanent exhibition is of good quality but needs to be updated/improved.5. Difficulties of finding the right marketing strategy. The museum uses mostly printed leaflets/brochures, but they seem to be inefficient. Just recently the museum began using social media, but the results need time.6. The majority of museum employees lack language (including Estonian language) skills to service foreign and Estonian-speaking tourists. Service level in general is rather low.7. Narva and Ida-Virumaa (county where Narva is situated) have a rather bad reputation in Estonia. It's one of the most “problematic” regions of the country (high criminal and unemployment rates, the majority of population are Russian – ethnic minority). While the reality may not be that bad, stereotypes are difficult to change.

Opportunities

1. Museum has much of development potential – restoration of the eastern wing, Kristervall bastion, renovation of the Castle Park, updating and improving permanent exposition etc. If the town bastions get restored, it also can give boost to the museum.
2. Development of new tourist products and services (building new conference centre in the eastern wing, developing new education programs etc.) and applying for different funds for financing.
3. Increased cooperation with local (Narva College of Tartu University) and international partners, incl. Ivangorod Fortress.
4. Finding the right marketing strategy for local inhabitants and incoming tourists (right balance between traditional marketing and usage of social media).
5. Improving the employees' Estonian and English language skills through language courses. Free of charge Estonian language courses have taken place since spring.
6. Using the unique geographical situation of the museum. The museum is situated right next to the border/transit point, where tourist buses stop and wait until getting permission to cross the border. The castle is unique position to provide people with something to see while they wait.

Threats

1. Uncertainty in economic and financial situation. During the economic crisis the museum's budget was cut by 1/3, which is the biggest cut out of all Estonian museums. Due to that 22 employees were laid off.
2. Relations between the museum and Narva city government are complicated and depend too much on people's personalities, which makes them very unpredictable and unstable.
3. Lack of highly professional employees in the region; low salaries that do not encourage much motivation. High competition from private sector for the qualified workforce.
4. Strict border control between Russia and Estonia discourage many Russian tourists from visiting Narva. Unstable political relations between the two countries may damage the potential tourist ties.
5. Narva and Ida-Virumaa may not in the near future discard the negative image, which damages the touristic potential.
6. Increasing competition from other tourist centres in Estonia (castles in Kuressaare, Haapsalu, Rakvere, and Tallinn).
7. Decrease of tourists' interest due to draw towards light entertainment.
8. Museum is a budget organization and completely depends on the Narva city government – lack of decision power when it comes to issues of finances, prices, salaries etc.

Conclusions

Although Narva Museum has a lot of potential to develop, it will take a lot of time and financial resources to make the museum a truly modern attraction. Using money from EU and other projects could be a way to accomplish the tasks that cannot be financed by the budget resources. The museum should focus on improving marketing tools, finding the balance that would attract both local people and tourists to the castle and gallery, and at the same time not jeopardizing the quality of the services (exhibitions, research materials etc.).

The quality of service and employees' language and people skills should be improved. Being a budget organization puts a lot of constraints on decision-making. One of the possible solutions is to become a foundation.

History of Narva Castle

Narva Castle is the most visited site in the town of Narva. In fact, the main tower of Narva Castle, Tall Hermann, is the iconic symbol of the town. The castle was built in a convent style consisting of four wings, which surround the courtyard and are fortified from the outside. Throughout time, the favourable location on the border between Estonia and Russia and at the crossing of trade routes has had a significant impact on the town and the castle. However, during war periods, the location and status of the town also made Narva an opportune target. Interestingly, most rulers have made their contribution to the castle.



Photo: Andres Toode / Narva Museum

Generally, it has been supplementing and reconstructing the existing structures but also establishing new fortification systems. Ultimately, a substantial amount of resources has been invested in fortification of the castle. The current fortifications of the castle is therefore characterised by the many different eras that has played their role throughout history (Narva Museum, 2012).

Although the exact age of Narva Castle and the town of Narva is still debated among historians, they agree on the sequence of events. Firstly, around the 13th century, the Danes, having conquered Northern Estonia, built a wooden border stronghold at the crossing of the Narova River and the old road. Under the protection of the stronghold, the earlier settlement developed into the town of Narva. Following several conflicts with the Russians, the Danes started building a stone stronghold at the beginning of the 14th century. In 1347, the Danish king sold Northern Estonia (including Narva) to the Livonian Order, who rebuilt the area so it corresponded to their needs. In 1558 the Russians conquered the town of Narva from the Order, and in 1581 the Swedes conquered it from

the Russians. Although the use of firearms had occurred already during the Order period, the castle's defences had not been sufficiently modernised. Therefore, when the Swedes came they had relatively easy access to the castle and the surrounding area due to their much more updated arsenal, conquering Narva in just two days. Moreover, they understood that – in order to maintain power of the area – they needed to improve the defence of the castle. At the command of the Swedish king Johann III, modernisation work was started immediately (Narva Museum, 2012).

Despite the investments into Narva's defences, made during almost a half a century, the Swedish Kingdom had to admit in the mid-17th century that Narva's defences could not withstand the quickly developing offensive weaponry in society. Although there were plans of expanding Narva in terms of surrounding the town with new defence facilities, they had to admit that they could only deal with repairing the existing fortifications. In fact, the modernisation of Narva Castle required unprecedented resources. During the last years of work, over 1,500 men worked on the construction and over 40,000 state talers per year were spent. Ultimately, the modernisation of Narva Castle cost nearly 900,000 talers in total. Owing to such colossal expenses, Narva obtained one of the most powerful defence systems in Northern Europe of those days.

The reason why Swedish rule ultimately had to surrender was the location of Narva - by the river. Due to the river, earthwork could not be established in front of the bastions, which made their high and powerful stone walls defenceless against directly aimed gunfire. Therefore, Russia conquered Estonia when the country won the Great Northern War. Narva, remaining in the inland, as a result lost its actual strategic importance. Although Narva remained in the list of Russian fortifications as a fore-fortification of St. Petersburg for one and a half century, there was no real military need.

Aviation attacks from Soviet in March 1944 completely destroyed Narva's baroque old town, and constant gunfire demolished Narva Castle, including the Tall Herman Tower and parts of the western forecourt. Renovation of Narva Castle was begun in the 1950s, and work on the castle is actually still continuing. Today Narva's former military objects are open to the town's inhabitants and visitors: the Narva Museum is situated in the castle, and the surrounding park is a walking and recreation area.

July 22, 1950 was the opening day of the museum in the garrison tower of the Narva castle. In 1986, the first stage of the Narva Castle's renovation finished. The Long Hermann tower and the western and southern wings of the castle were opened for visitors. In 1989, the permanent exposition that reflects on the period from 13th until 18th century was opened. In 2007, the Northern Yard of the castle was restored and the centre of experimental history was opened for public. The centre focuses on the reconstruction of 17th century (Early Modern Period or the Swedish period) urban life. The Narva Museum consists of two parts – the Narva Castle and the Art Gallery. The latter is situated on the bastion Gloria in the 18th century building, which was used for military purposes.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Narva Castle

The town of Narva is the easternmost point of the European Union and the only location in Estonia that offers an unobstructed view of neighbouring Russia. Together, Narva Castle on the one bank of the river and Ivangorod fortress on the other bank, form a unique architectural ensemble (Narva Tourism, 2012). Narva is located 215 km from Estonia's capital, Tallinn.

No international flights arrive at Narva's airport, which means if you're travelling to Estonia by air, you're going to be arriving in Tallinn. By car, driving from Tallinn to Narva is fairly simple, using the trans-European network of road connections (E20). In fact, Narva has good road connections to Tallinn, Tartu and Saint Petersburg. For anyone who is without a car, the bus is by far the most convenient way to get from Tallinn to Narva. Each day between more than 40 express buses make the 3.5-hour trip from the capital, departing from Tallinn's coach station. Tickets cost 9-12 €. It is also possible to travel by train. Trains from Tallinn to Narva commute every day. Trains that connect Moscow and Tallinn also make a stop in Narva. The castle is situated about two km from the main train and bus station. One of the busiest bus stops is situated five minutes' walk from the castle (Bastis Narva, 2012).

Ticket prices for the castle visit ranges from 2 € in the wintertime to 5 € during the summer season. Moreover, it is possible to obtain student, senior and family discounts, while combined tickets to the Art Gallery is also sold. Three days a year, there is free admission for all, May 14th and 18th. On June 1st, admission is also free due to it being Children's Day (Narva Museum Services, 2012). On the castle's territory, car parking is allowed on a little square in front of the big gate only with the permit of Narva Museum. Free parking is also possible on the Peter Square just hundred meters away in front of the castle or in the yards of the nearest buildings (Bastis Narva, 2012). Moreover, WiFi is available, sanitary facilities and information boards are accessible. Unfortunately, the museum itself is not wheelchair accessible.

Narva Museum is located in Narva Castle. The main exhibition covers the history of Narva in the 16th and 17th century. Usually temporary exhibitions take place in the Tall Hermann tower. Concerts are also held in the museum. Narva Castle has three permanent exhibitions, namely "Medieval Narva", "Narva during Swedish authority (1581-1704)" and "Narva as a part of Russian empire from the 18th till the beginning of the 20th century". There are two other permanent exhibitions that visitors can see if they visit the Art Gallery, namely "Painting, sculpture, ornamental and applied art objects in Narva Museum" and "Crosses, Icons and Diptychs, and 18th - 19th centuries".

Important tourism elements such as hotels, bars, restaurants and entertainment facilities are continuously developing in the town. Narva (both the town and the castle) also has dedicated tourist guides, who can be booked for both larger and small groups. In fact, the castle offers different types of guided tours / excursions as visitors can choose between different historical aspects of the castle's history (Narva Museum Excursions, 2012). Outside the town one can find pristine nature and hiking routes ranging from the Sinimäe hills to the coastal resort of Narva-Jõesuu, which is only 12 km away from Narva. Narva-Jõesuu is truly worth visiting with its beautiful coast, parks

and pine forests (Narva Tourism, 2012). In the town itself, the town hall and the cascades are also worth a visit (Visit Estonia, 2012).

Visitor Characteristics of Narva Castle cliental

In 2011, 394 questionnaires were collected from Narva Castle; in 2012 only 159 questionnaires were collected.

According to the questionnaires from 2011, 69 pct. of visitors visited Narva Castle for the first time. However, the remaining 31 pct. who has visited the castle before are quite loyal as they in average have visited the castle 3, 7 times. In terms of awareness, 32 pct. became aware of the attraction from relatives or friends, 14 pct. from the internet, 11 pct. from tourist guides or brochures, 10 pct. from the tourist information, and 11 pct. were simply passing by.

57 pct. of the visitors have reached the attraction by car, showing a clear tendency of how they prefer to get to the attraction. More than half the visitors spend 1-2 hours at the attraction, while 26 pct. spend between 2 hours and half a day. 17 pct. spend 30-60 minutes, while almost no one spends less than 30 minutes. Only 3 pct. of visitors spend more than half a day at Narva Castle. In other words, most visitors spend a satisfactory amount of time when visiting Narva Castle, although rarely more than a day.

Most visitors are coming to see the castle itself, while only a few are coming for special events or temporary events. Many would definitely recommend the attraction to friends, while only few (less than 0, 5 pct.) definitely would not recommend the castle. As recommendations create word-of-mouth, this is naturally a positive sign of what Narva Castle has to offer. The clear majority of visitors visiting Narva Castle are there for three reasons: they see it as a holiday to relax, a cultural holiday or they are there to visit friends or relatives.

In relation to accommodation, 32 pct. are staying at hotels, 28 pct. staying private with relatives or friends, while the rest is spread equally on the rest of the categories. 90 pct. of visitors are accompanied by others when visiting the castle. 62 pct. of visitors are females, and in terms of age the majority of visitors are between 20 and 40 years old. 44 pct. of visitors are from Estonia, while 35 pct. come from neighbouring Russia. 4 pct. come from Latvia, and the rest is from European countries, although with a few persons from the US and Australia.

The 159 questionnaires collected in 2012 showed approximately the same results. There cannot be made any definitive conclusions from these results, because the variations that did show up from 2011 to 2012, is more likely to be caused by the low questionnaire numbers, than by anything else.

Strategic Recommendations for Narva Castle

The strategic recommendations are divided into two parts, namely how to increase visitor numbers in the short term by looking at both product and marketing development, and then in the second part recommendations and suggestions on how to create a common BSR heritage, to increase the number of visitors in the region in the long run.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: The fact that less than 0,5 pct. would definitely not recommend Narva Castle as well as both overall impression and general satisfaction was rated at 4,5 could indicate that castle management are already doing many things right. For example, it is great that many different types of tours are offered, and it would be interesting to look into the satisfaction with these in terms of content and offers. This could be done by including a question on this in a possible questionnaire in 2013, which could also target to a further degree why and which elements visitors are satisfied with. Narva Castle is doing great in sanitary facilities and cleanliness (which has not been the case at many other attractions in the AGORA 2.0 project), while price (3, 8), transport to the attraction (3, 9), and parking facilities (3, 9), catering facilities (3, 6) are elements that management should look into improving. Naturally, price is difficult to change, as it is assumed it reflects costs and market conditions. However, parking facilities and transport to the attractions are elements that could be improved. Especially, accessibility is important for tourism, so it is recommended that the castle tries to develop this area. This could be done by cooperating with local transportation actors, in order to make it easier for visitors to access the attraction. However, it should be mentioned that price, accessibility and parking have actually had a minor increase in satisfaction rates from 2011 with 0, 2-0, 3, which could indicate that management has done something to improve this part. Nevertheless, these are still the areas where the castle is rated the lowest.

In terms of segmentation, a clear majority of visitors are between 30 and 50, while the average age of visitors was 34 in 2011 and 37 in 2012. This could indicate that there is room for both attracting younger people and empty nesters. It is therefore recommended that castle management should look into possibilities of attracting these new segments, in order to increase visitor numbers. For attracting younger people and children, the case of Kronborg Castle in Denmark has done many product implementations that could serve as inspiration for Narva Castle. Empty nesters could, for example, be attracted by implementing exhibitions that are interesting for these segments. However, it should be underlined that generally speaking Narva Castle is doing quite well, as most parts of their facilities are rated above 4,0, while they also have relatively many loyal visitors that are willing to recommend the attractions to friends and relatives.

Recommendations for marketing development: Generally, it seems that management at Narva Castle is quite developed and aware of operations and what works in its context. Management has arranged collaborations, implemented social media, and it has direct contact to stakeholders. However, it would of course be interesting to look into whether these initiatives are successful in their context. Narva Castle also has a useful homepage; however, it could comprise more information on accessibility and available services. Nevertheless, Narva Castle has –according to the questionnaires – managed to raise the level of awareness through internet from 2011's 14 pct. to 2012's 19 pct. Also, awareness created through brochures/guides and other attractions have increased with a few percentages. Although the increases are so small that nothing definitive can be stated, it could indicate that some of the initiatives stated above have been successful. It is therefore recommended

that Narva Castle continues with these marketing implementations, and a potential questionnaire survey could reveal whether there is foundation for further continuation of these, or a need for new initiatives.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

Narva is already collaborating across the BSR, as it is part of the Castle Group, also including Skokloster and Häme Castle. This means that management has held and attended in total 11 meeting during the project period. Among other things, this means that Narva Castle have contributed with developing such products as a history conference for experts of culture heritage, castles and museums, but also for public arrangements. In fact, it was hosted by Narva Castle in 2012, and it will also take place in 2013, when arrangement will be done the Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea together with Latvian members. Narva Castle has also contributed to the photo exhibition of 44 member castles of the before mentioned association, which have taken place in Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Poland. As these product developments have great potential, it is recommended that Narva Castle continues this process, while it is also suggested that management opens up for further collaboration with partners outside the current association. Ultimately, this could lead to further knowledge-sharing and product development, which should eventually lead to increasing visitor numbers.

2.4 Olavinlinna Castle

SWOT-analysis of Olavinlinna Castle

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • historical monument which is multifunctional: houses both private and public occasions • venue of the Savonlinna Opera Festival since 1912 • relatively well-known in Europe • geographically close to Russia, which attracts Russian tourists • open for public all year round • offers insight to the history of Finland under the influence of both Sweden and Russia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of resources due to the financial situation of the National Board of Antiquities • location of the castle in a relatively small town • the castle as a building itself sets certain limitations • the contrast between busy summer season and quiet winter • the castle is not easily accessible to disabled persons
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the castle is open all year round which makes it possible to develop different kind of events • co-operation with entrepreneurs and local authorities provides more resources to develop new functions for the castle • possibility to find new partners and funding for events via EU projects • educationally exploitable in various ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of personnel outside the summer season • the overall condition of the castle may rapidly deteriorate unless it is taken care of • if the government funding to the National Board of Antiquities is not sufficient it may reduce both the opening hours of the castle and the events held in the castle

History of Olavinlinna Castle

Olavinlinna was built into a scarcely populated but military and geographically important area. When the Grand Duchy of Moscow tried to extend its power by starting to threaten the Swedish border, a new fortification - Olavinlinna - was needed to strengthen the defence of Sweden's border in the east. Olavinlinna was founded in 1475 by a Danish knight called Erik Axelsson Tott, who at the time served as the governor of Vyborg Castle (Finnish castles, 2012).

The geographical location of the castle and its appearance

Its geographical location was chosen from a defence point of view. The steep and rocky landscape made it difficult for the enemy to approach the castle, while the waterways could be used to transport building material. First a so-called main castle was built, consisting of three towers. It almost took ten years before the main castle was completed, after which the building of the so-called bailey was started. The bailey had two towers and the building work was finished at the end

of the 15th century. Hence, the castle with five towers actually represented one of the most modern defence architecture of its time (Finnish NBA, 2012).

Wars and ownership of the castle

The castle's ability to defend itself was put to the test quite early. In fact, a war broke out already in 1495 and the Russians made several attacks towards the castle. Also, during the 16th and 17th century the castle was subject to numerous attacks. However, after centuries of wars and ownership of many different countries such as Russia, Sweden, Denmark and Finland of course, the castle lost its military importance in the Finnish War in 1809, when Finland became part of Russia (Finnish castles, 2012). When military activity came to an end, the castle served as a prison for a short time, after which the castle was deserted. It then gradually started getting reputation as a tourist sight and an attraction (Finnish NBA, 2012)

Restoration of the castle occurred in the late 19th century as well as in the 20th century. The latest large-scale restoration began in 1961 and was finished in 1975, just in time for the castle's 500-years-anniversary. Today, Olavinlinna is one of the most well-known sights in Finland and many events are held inside its restored halls and rooms (Finnish NBA, 2012).

Key influences on the visitor experience at Olavinlinna Castle

Opening hours at Olavinlinna Castle are divided into five seasons, being January 2nd - April 30th, May 2nd - May 31st, June 1st - August 14th, Midsummer, August 15th - December 14th. Depending on the season, opening hours are then between 10.00 and 12.00 and closing hours between 15.00 and 18.00. Last guided tour of the day starts one hour before closing time (Finnish NBA, 2012). Olavinlinna is closed in 2012 on certain days, namely January 1st (New Year's Day), April 6th (Good Friday), April 7th (Holy Saturday), April 8th (Easter Day), April 9th (Second Easter Day), May 1st (May Day), December 6th (Finnish Independence Day) as well as December 16th - January 1st (Finnish NBA, 2012). Furthermore, the castle's halls and rooms can be rented and used for all kinds of events. Fazer Restaurants takes care of the catering during such events.

Exhibitions and the museum shop at the castle

There are two small exhibitions in the castle: 'the Castle Museum' displays artefacts found in the castle or artefacts that are related to the castle, while 'the Orthodox Museum' displays icons and other religious artefacts both from Finland and Russia. The museum shop at Olavinlinna Castle has a wide range of the National Board of Antiquities' publications, historical books as well as different souvenirs for diverse segments. Moreover, visitors in a wheelchair are able to visit the museums and the courtyards with assistance (Finnish NBA, 2012).

New exhibitions are introduced each year. In 2012, an exhibition called "If the walls could tell - pickings from the phases of the castle" was introduced, telling about the defensive use of the castle and the life within it. Exhibition boards are situated along the guided tour inside the castle. In addition, there are also exhibition boards in the courtyards and on gun platforms of the castle. The idea is that each board tells about the theme of the place where it is situated. On the exhibition

boards there are short texts in Finnish, Swedish, English and Russian. Also 3D models have been produced, interpreting the three historical phases of the castle (Finnish NBA, 2012).

Guided tours at Olavinlinna Castle

Olavinlinna Castle also has guided tours. It is possible to go on a tour experiencing the castle, its halls, rooms and towers throughout the year, which takes approximately an hour. Furthermore, the castle houses two small museums and three courtyards which can be visited without a guide when the castle is open. However, it should be noted that there are certain limitations. For example, during the winter season guided tours are mainly in Finnish. Tours in other languages should therefore be agreed upon with the castle management and booked beforehand. During the summer season, from June 1st till August the 14th, there are guided tours in English and Finnish every hour and in Swedish at 12pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Saturdays. In July guided tours in Finnish even start every 30 minutes, while tours in Russian take place from Tuesday to Saturday on the hour from 1pm to 5pm. Personal guides can also be booked in one week's advance, and guided tours are furthermore available outside the opening hours upon agreement (Finnish NBA, 2012).



Photo: The National Board of Antiquities

Entrance fees and transportation to Olavinlinna Castle

As of 2012, entrance fee for adults are 8 €, groups over 10 persons pay 6 € each. Students, conscripts and senior citizens pay 6 €, children from 7-17 years old cost 4 €. A combined family ticket (2 adults and 2 children) costs 18 €. Finnish school groups accompanied by a teacher costs 2, 50 € each, and children under seven years old are free of charge. It is also possible to buy a combined ticket for Olavinlinna Castle and Savonlinna Provincial Museum, at the price of 9 euros for adults and 4 euros for children in the age of 7 to 17 (Finnish NBA, 2012).

In terms of accessibility, Olavinlinna Castle is situated on a rocky hill in the Kyrönsalmi stream. Driving to the attraction with car, visitors can find the castle easily as there are road signs if they come from both west and east Finland, just look for Linnankatu Street and Olavinlinna Castle. Linnankatu Street leads to Olavinlinna, so both signs are valid. In fact, many other tourist attractions can be found along this street, for example Nestori - Saimaa Nature Centre, Riihisaari - Savonlinna Provincial Museum and some shops and cafes can be encountered. During winter season, parking spots can be found nearby the castle along Linnankatu Street. Cars can also be left in a car park located on Tottinkatu Street. During summer season (June-August), travellers should, however, be aware of special traffic arrangements and traffic signs. It is also possible to come to Olavinlinna by boat and on a charter cruise (Finnish NBA, 2012).

Visitor Characteristics of Olavinlinna Castle cliental

In 2011, 111 questionnaires were collected from Olavinlinna Castle; in 2012, 117 questionnaires were collected. In 2011, three quarters of the visitors had not visited the castle before. In both years, there are three main awareness sources, the Internet, recommendations, and travel guides/brochures. What is noticeable here is that awareness from other attractions is on 3 pct., although there are many other tourist attractions in the area. Four out of five are using the car as a means of transportation to the castle.

In 2011, 68 pct. spend between 1 and 2 hours at the castle, whereas the number actually increased in 2012 to 73 pct. The number of visitors spending between 2 hours and half a day at the castle has, however, decreased (with 8 pct.). Based on the questionnaire collection, this indicates that visitors are spending fewer hours at the attraction, which is naturally not beneficial, as it means that they are less entertained. This reduces the chance of them returning as well as spending money at the castle.

In terms of accommodation, one third of visitors are staying at hotels in both 2011 and 2012. Camping sites and holiday apartments seem to be popular in both years as well. It could therefore be argued that these are places where management at Olavinlinna could consider handing out brochures and leaflets, in order to attract more visitors. The percentage of foreigners at the castle in 2011 is a bit higher in 2011, but is probably more due to coincidence than reality, considering the low number of questionnaires that was collected in both years. Both years, however, there is clear majority of people coming from Finland.

Strategic Recommendations for Olavinlinna Castle

The strategic recommendations are based on the above analysis. These are divided into two parts, namely how to increase visitor numbers in the short term by looking at both product and marketing development, and then in the second part recommendations and suggestions on how to create a common BSR heritage, to increase the number of visitors in the region in the long run.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product for development: According to the questionnaires, management at Olavinlinna needs to focus primarily on two aspects of the attraction, namely catering (score: 3, 6)

and parking (score: 3, 2), which has both declined from 2011 to 2012. Also, these are by far the two categories that have received the worst rates. Generally, however, Olavinlinna Castle is doing quite well with relatively high numbers in the 15 different categories. In both the measured years, cleanliness, service/assistance and content of the attractions are rated the highest. Therefore, there is no reason to focus on these. Also, it should be underlined that the categories of overall impression and general satisfaction are rated high, both with 4, 5 (2012) and 4, 4 (2011).

Both years, approximately 95 pct. are accompanied by others when visiting, and the average age of visitors is 37-38. In relation to age, it seems that Olavinlinna has been relatively good at attracting persons in many different ages, as the majority of the visitors' ranges from 20 to 50 years-old. This could indicate that Olavinlinna is targeting many different segments, as well as segments that prefer to travel with company. Therefore, it is important that Olavinlinna focus on developing products that appeal to the current segments. Nevertheless, management could consider targeting the segment of empty nesters and maybe persons travelling alone, as these are currently not attracted to the castle's offerings.

Recommendations for marketing development: Travel guide/brochure has decreased from 37 pct. in 2011 to 21 pct. in 2012. Even though caution should be taken due to the low sample of participants in 2012, this indicates that Olavinlinna should consider refocusing on travel guide/brochures, as it seems that it is a good way of spreading awareness for visitors. Awareness through the internet has decreased by 3 pct. from 2011 to 2012, which is somewhat unusual in a time with much focus on the relative cheap ways of exploiting the internet for marketing purposes. Therefore, management at the castle should consider more use of such tools as social media, which is almost free (besides the working hours need from staff for maintenance). For Olavinlinna, it also makes sense, as the castle still does not have a large proportion of young people, which are often encountered on many different social media pages such as Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace etc. However, for a realisation of more young visitors the castle naturally needs the product itself to be relevant for this segment. Another option for marketing at Olavinlinna is to cooperate with the other attractions, and have them hand out each other's brochures. Apparently, this is not taken place (cf. the low awareness figure 2 pct. in 2012), which is a shame as it is another relatively cheap tool for the marketing of your attraction.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

Olavinlinna Castle is part of the Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea. This means that management have attended in total 11 meeting during the project period. Among other things, this also means that management at Olavinlinna has contributed with developing transnational products that have and will be relevant for many stakeholders in the BSR. It is therefore recommended that Narva Castle continues this process, while it is also suggested that management opens up for further collaboration with partners outside the current association. Eventually, this could lead to further knowledge-sharing and product development, which should ultimately lead to increasing visitor numbers.

2.5 Bistrampolio Manor, Lithuania

The Bistrampolio Manor is a project partner that joined AGORA 2.0 late in the project. Therefore there is no SWOT-analysis available for this attraction.

History of Bistrampolio Manor

The Bistrampolio manor can trace its history back to the end of the fifteenth century. In 1695 the manor was given to the Bistramai family that owned and ran it. In 1850 the manor that stands today was constructed by that family. In 1940 the manor was nationalised whereby the family lost control of the manor. During the fifty years of national ownership the manor was unfortunately neglected. After Lithuania regained independence in 1991 the descendants of the Bistramai family was offered to take the manor back and restore it, but they rejected the offer. Instead the manor was handed over to the Cathedral of Christ the King in Panevezys in 1997. This new owner also neglected the manor and its surroundings and therefore the Youth integration possibilities centre has supervised and rebuilt the manor as of 2003.

The restoration of the manor has taken place in four separate phases. The first phase was commenced in 2007 where the facade of the central manor was renovated and the old icehouse was restored. Furthermore the surroundings of the manor were rearranged and a museum of smugglers of forbidden Lithuanian books was established. The second phase of restoration took place from 2008. During this phase the remaining buildings were restored and a sculptural park were established that portrayed all the important historical events in the history of the manor. The third phase was also commenced in 2008 and aimed at turning the former stud farm into a concert-conference hall. The restored and rebuilt and converted stud farm was completed in 2010. The fourth and so far the latest phase of the restoration started in 2010 and lasted until the middle of 2011. In this last phase the manor was adapted to hotel needs.

Attractions at the manor

Surrounding the manor is a beautiful old park with three pools and a cemetery. The park has been renovated during the first rounds of renovations in 2007. In the summer of 2009 a wooden sculptures were erected in this park and at the approaches to the manor. These sculptures depict important historical events in Lithuanian history as well as cultural aspects of Lithuania.

Besides the park Bistrampolio manor also offers a museum explaining an important chapter in the manors history, namely the smuggling of forbidden Lithuanian books. This museum is located in the old power station of the manor. The old ice house has also been restored and nowadays serves as the information centre of the manor.

In the middle of 2010 the former stud farm was turned into a concert-conference hall with room for up to 400 people.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Bistrampolio Manor

The Bistrampolio Manor is conveniently located approximately 17 km away from the fifth largest town of Lithuania, Panevezys. As the infrastructure is quite good between Panevezys and Bistrampolio the trip can be completed in approximately 20 minutes. Furthermore the capitol, Vilnius, lies approximately 135 km away, a distance that can be travelled in less than one and a half hour due to the part of the Via Baltica highway that stretches from Panevezys to Vilnius. The relatively short distance to these large cities makes the Bistrampolio Manor a destination for daytrips from the towns. As mentioned above the manor has undergone extensive restorations and therefore today appears as a well maintained example of architecture and park design from the mid-nineteenth century.



Photo: Friends of Bistrampolio Manor

The weather in and around Penevezys is transitional between maritime and continental. The climate is generally wet with rainfall varying from 100 mm to 200 mm every month. The winters in the area are cold with an average temperature just below freezing. Summers are on the other hand warm with average temperatures in June to August above 20 degrees.

Visitor Characteristics of Bistrampolio Manor cliental

This project group joined after the questionnaires from 2011 had been collected and therefore no questionnaires exist from this year. However, from 2012 432 questionnaires have been collected and processed and it is from this data that the visitor characteristics are drawn. As with other questionnaire data in this study the low response rate makes it impossible to give definitive conclusions but the number still enables indications of the characteristics of the visitors to be made. The visitors at Bistrampolio consist of 84 pct. local tourists that are on daytrips away from their homes. The remaining 16 pct. of visitors consist of people that are either taking a daytrip from their holiday destination or people who visit the manor as part of an organised tour. As explained below the relatively small proportion of foreign tourist might represent a potential for a growing number of visitors.

When visiting the manor 81 pct. of the tourists asked in 2012 answered that they spent two hours or more at the manor. This means that the Bistrampolio manor is well suited for day trips which should enable the manor to attract people from as far away as Vilnius. The visitors generally employ two means of transport to get to the manor. 55 pct. arrive at the destination by car while 44 pct. travel to the manor by tour busses. Visitors at the destination have in 66 pct. of the cases visited the attraction before, which is a very high number. At the same time 62 pct. declare that they intend to visit the manor again in the future. The visitors that bring children to the manor on average bring 2.4 children.

Strategic Recommendations for Bistrampolio manor

As mentioned above 84 pct. of the visitors at Bistrampolio manor are local tourists. The fact that 81 pct. of the visitors spend more than two hours at the manor means that this extended period of time that people spend at the attraction makes it possible to attract people from farther away as the time they spend on transport correspond with the time they are able to spend at the attraction. Therefore there are a potential in attracting people from cities such as Panevezys and Vilnius. In order to attract people from these places both marketing and product development is needed.

Recommendations for product development: As mentioned above the average number of children that visitors bring to the manor is 2.4. At the same time the child friendliness was one of the aspects in which the manor scored worst. When asked about the 'child friendliness' the average answer is that it is neither satisfying nor dissatisfying. By offering educational games or activities for children the satisfactory will most likely go up. Such educational games could be to create a number of questions regarding different parts of the castle and the adjacent surroundings and hand them out to the children.

Recommendations for marketing development: The manor web page focuses on the accommodation as well as conference activities available at the location and offers a booking service. However it fails to describe the manor as a tourist attraction separate from its function as a hotel. Especially the museums and the sculpture park that have been constructed at the sight are great opportunities to attract people from Panevezys and Vilnius. As the webpage is especially important as a source of information for foreign tourist the web page needs to be developed as to account for the offers that the attraction have to offer. Furthermore, it is important that a development is not only made on the Lithuanian site but also on the foreign language sites.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

Through the reconstruction, renovation, the reparations and the creation of the park Bistrampolio manor is a unique heritage product for tourists. When the webpage has been improved and marketing efforts intensified, the visibility of the manor will be improved and so will the Lithuanian heritage. If the manor is marketed as an attraction with heritage offers, it is important that the visitors receive an experience that matches these expectations. It is therefore important that there are available and interesting materials for the tourists to read and learn from.

2.6 Šešuolėliai Manor, Lithuania

The Šešuolėliai Manor is a project partner that joined AGORA 2.0 late in the project. Therefore there is no SWOT-analysis available for this attraction.

History of Šešuolėliai Manor

The English cottage style manor that exists today was built by the Končius family during the late 19th and early 20th century. This architectural style is rare in Lithuania and makes Šešuolėliai Manor a unique piece of architecture on these parts. During the interwar years the manor was acquired by a Lithuanian army colonel named Jonas Variakojais who retreated West in 1944. After the reestablishment of the Lithuanian independence the ownership of the manor was transferred to the heirs of Jonas Variakojais. Today the manor is in the possession of the Petrauskas family.

The Šešuolėliai Manor and the estate belonging to the manor were in a poor condition up until 1998. At this point the new owners renovated the entire estate by recreating the old parks and ponds and renovate the buildings. Especially the manor underwent extensive restoration that lasted for more than a year. The result has been that the estate now stands as well maintained and true to its historical roots as ever.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Šešuolėliai Manor

Šešuolėliai manor is located between the Lithuanian cities of Vilnius and Panevezys. The Vilnius - Panevezys - Riga highway enables visitors to quickly travel the distance from these cities. From Vilnius the approximately 60 kilometres can be travelled in about 50 minutes. Lithuania's fifth largest city called Panevezys is located approximately 100 kilometres from the Šešuolėliai Manor. Due to the highway this distance can be covered in one hour and 15 minutes.

The climate in and around Vilnius is transitional between maritime and continental respectably. Therefore, Vilnius and the area surrounding it have a vast discrepancy between hot summers with temperatures reaching as high as 30 degrees and cold winters with temperatures reaching below freezing. The possibility of rain exists all year round but most rain falls during the mid-summer season.

Visitor Characteristics of Šešuolėliai Manor cliental

This project group joined after the questionnaires from 2011 had been collected and therefore no questionnaires exist from this year. However, from 2012 467 questionnaires have been collected and processed and it is from this data that the visitor characteristics are drawn. As with other questionnaire data in this study the response rate makes it impossible to give definitive conclusions, but the number still enables indications of the characteristics of the visitors to be made.

Generally visitors employ one of two means of transport when visiting the attraction. Firstly, 47 pct. of the visitors travel to the destination by car. Secondly, 47 pct. of the visitors travel by bus. These means of transport fits well with the secluded location of the manor. When at the manor 45 pct. of

the visitors spent two hours or less at the attraction and 83 pct. spent a half day or less at the attraction.



Photo: Friends of Šešuolėliai Manor

Most people who visit the Šešuolėliai manor are local tourists. This is reflected by the fact that 83 pct. of the visitors at the manor are for people on a one day trip away from their homes. For the remainder of the tourists 13 pct. visit the manor as a part of an organised tour while the remaining 4 pct. visit as a part of their vacation. Most visitors are between 20 to 50 years old and they are almost exclusively from Lithuania.

Strategic Recommendations for Šešuolėliai manor

The Šešuolėliai manor is distinguished by the secluded nature of its location relative to major cities. The transportation from major tourist sites is therefore time consuming which can discourage some from undertaking the trip. In order to persuade people to undertake the trip both marketing and product development is needed.

Recommendations for product development: The secluded nature of the manor is a great advantage as it offers peace and quietness for the visitor. However in order to persuade the visitors to undertake the journey the attraction needs to offer activities that correspond to the time spent on traveling there.

The survey revealed that almost half of the visitors spent less than two hours at the manor. As the transport from Vilnius and back again takes approximately two hours the time spent at the attraction compared to the transportation time can discourage many from undertaking it. By extending the offer to the visitors and through that extending the time they are able to spend at the attraction the more like it is that tourist will undertake the journey to the manor.

Alternatively cooperation with other similar attraction in the area could be undertaken and joined tours arranged so people would get too spent more time at attractions compared to the time it takes to get to the area.

Recommendations for marketing development: When examining the webpage of the manor one thing that catches the attention is the lack of information. Besides two short sections on the estate and its history, a short introduction to the manor as a hotel and contact information the webpage does not offer any information about the manor or the estate. In order for people to undertake the journey from the major tourist hubs of Lithuania the manor need to present what it has to offer for tourists and not just for hotel guests.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

The process of restoring and repairing the old manor gives the visitors an opportunity to experience a unique piece of Lithuanian history and architecture. However, to develop a BSR heritage, this experience must attract a foreign audience. There are several possible ways to achieve this, but the point is to get the message across. Cooperation about marketing efforts between attractions in neighbouring countries is one way to achieve this. Another is to improve the webpage as mentioned above.

2.7 Kronborg Castle

SWOT analysis of Kronborg

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique renaissance castle in Northern Europe. • Myths and history related to the castle (Hamlet, Holger Danske etc.) world known • UNESCO’s List of World Heritage Sites. • Location in the landscape, next to the sea and surrounded by the historical town of Elsinore. • Appeals to a lot of client segments. • Exploitation of digital media such as speakers and projectors to actively involve the visitor and save money (compared to hire people who dress up as it used to look like). • Plan to build a cultural centre surrounding Kronborg together with the culture yard (“Kulturværftet”) and the shipping museum (“Søfartsmuseet”). ➢ With the castle as an international landmark. ➢ Collaborators have different product to offer. • Collaboration with VisitNordsjælland and Wonderful Copenhagen in their marketing efforts. • Focusing on Word-of-mouth (a free form of marketing) and press releases. • Management with a thoughtful and good strategy on how to get more visitors. • Easily accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too few revisits (most Danes only visit twice during a lifetime). • Attraction is based on its history, not museums etc. • Takes more resources and demands a lot from the visitor in order to get the full potential out of the visit. • The primary reason for people to visit is the shell of the attraction, i.e. the castle seen from the outside. This makes it difficult to get people inside and pay – more than once. • Approximately 300.000 people (on top of the paying visitors) use the grounds of Kronborg every year without paying • Limited marketing budget of 400.000 DKK.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good chances of getting the desired number of visitors in the future. • Probably true though that it is the castle that has the real value for visitors, and not so much the conference centre etc. (which only brings in a minor increase in visitors). • Focus on product development within the closed area could bring in many new visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although it is good to develop the product, the primary reason for visits is the castle itself. • There is a delicate balance between developing too much and too little in the product portfolio. • It is not always about developing the cultural sites but just as much about marketing.

History of Kronborg

At the seaward approach to the sound of Oresund lies Kronborg Castle in Elsinore. It is the most famous castle in Denmark and is visited each year by about 200,000 tourists. This is primarily due to the castle being one of Northern Europe's most important renaissance castles as well as the fact that it is known all over the world for Shakespeare's play Hamlet. Interestingly, ever since its construction, Kronborg has been the scene of historic wars, banquets, romances and power struggles

(SES Kronborg History, 2012). It is also the castle that gave the Danes the opportunity to collect the very famous Oresund toll. This was possible due to the fact that Denmark at that time also included the now Swedish part Skåne, Halland and Blekinge.

The building

Kronborg Castle was named after King Frederik II in 1577, but its history goes right back to the 1420s, when Erik of Pomerania built the strongly fortified castle known as "Krogen" ("The Hook"). From here the king's men controlled the shipping in the Sound and collected the unpopular 'Sound Dues', a special toll that all passing ships had to pay.



Photo: Thomas Rahbek, Kronborg

In 1574 Frederik II expanded the fortifications together with Hans van Paschen, and in 1577 the rest of the area was expanded in cooperation with Anthonis van Opbergen. It eventually meant that by 1585, Frederik II had rebuilt an outdated castle and turned it into a magnificent renaissance castle with towers and a spire, adorning it with columns and sculptures. He was influenced by the European princes, for whom wealth rather than military might had become the symbol of power. Unfortunately, it was struck by fire in 1629 when only the chapel survived. Only eight years later in 1637 Christian IV rebuilt the castle, carrying out modernization and many new decorations in a baroque style, but afterwards the castle was actually temporarily taken over by the Swedes. In the years that followed, work was carried out on the outer fortifications, and in 1690 Christian V built the Crownwork as an advanced defence against a land attack (SES Kronborg History, 2012).

The castle's ground and its functions throughout history

The total area of Kronborg castle and the surrounding buildings is 28,724 square feet. The castle has nine towers, of which four stairwell-towers are without spire and the mighty telegraph tower is not equipped with a spire either. The tallest tower at Kronborg is the trumpet tower, which rises 62 meters above water and 59 meters above the courtyard.

In the initial decades the castle was primarily a residence for the royal family, but in 1785 the army converted it into barracks. A number of rooms were rebuilt, but after the army left the castle in 1923, it was thoroughly renovated and restored to the condition from the days of Frederik II and Christian IV. The castle has then been a museum since 1935. During the period 1998-2010, the castle has undergone extensive developments in order to turn it into a modern exhibition centre and visitor attraction. The restoration of the buildings and the fortress areas go hand-in-hand with the development of the historical presentation of the castle to the public. Interestingly, Kronborg was included on UNESCO's World Heritage in 2000 (UNESCO, 2012), as a unique example of a renaissance castle which at the same time has played a significant role in the history of Northern Europe. The appointment was fulfilling accordingly to a long lasting wish from the Danish government, and Denmark now has four treasures of world heritage, namely the Jelling Stones (appointed in 1994), Roskilde Cathedral (appointed in 1995), and in 2004 Ilulissat Isfjord (Greenland) got into the list (SES, 2012).

Kronborg and its connection to Shakespeare's Hamlet

Hamlet's association with Elsinore and Kronborg presumably came about due to the city's status as one of the world's most important towns in the 1600s. At that time Elsinore had become a traffic hub for international shipping thanks to the 'Sound Dues'. The town was also regarded as a cultural centre due to the newly built royal castle, Kronborg. It is, however, unknown whether Shakespeare actually ever visited Elsinore. Nevertheless, it is known with certainty that a number of English and Scots players from his retinue performed as visiting actors at Kronborg and in the town of Elsinore. They could have been the sources of the stories about the illustrious castle on the Sound that reached Shakespeare and which inspired him to set the play here.

Hamlet is one of the most famous and frequently performed stage plays in the world. Since the 1600s, countless theatrical productions at the castle and many other venues have endeavoured to keep the legend of Hamlet alive. That is why Kronborg is now known all over the world as Hamlet's castle, and Elsinore is known as the Town of Hamlet (SES Kronborg History, 2012).

Ultimately, King Frederik II's Kronborg is both an elegant renaissance castle and a monumental military fortress surrounded by major fortifications with bastions and ravelins. Some of the historical rooms have collections of renaissance and baroque interiors, and among the most important attractions are the 62 m long ballroom, the wonderfully preserved chapel and the statue of "Holger the Dane". Having described the history of Kronborg, next part will take a look at the key influences on the visitor experience.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Kronborg

The local weather and access to Kronborg Castle

The weather in the area around Kronborg, Nordsjælland (North Zealand), is as in the rest of Denmark. There are good possibilities for sunshine during the months of May, June, July and August. Temperatures in this period are usually between 16 and 25 degrees. Spring and fall are between 5 and 16 degrees, while the winter period often gets colder. Unfortunately, it tends to rain a lot in Denmark but Nordsjælland is not the region that is hit the most. During the summer period the visiting guests has excellent opportunities for beach trips along the beautiful Oresund coast (SES, 2012).

In terms of transport, distance from the capital of Copenhagen is 47, 3 km, and it takes about 45 minutes travelling with either train or by car. If you go buy train, you take the coast line from Copenhagen central station to Elsinore station or the HHG Line from Gilleleje to Grønnehave Station. On foot from Elsinore station it takes approximately 15 minutes. There are also frequent buses to and from the castle. When driving in by car it is useful to know that there is a 4 hour limited parking on the parking area at Kronborgvej.

The castle's opening hours are from 10.30 to 17.00, Monday through Sunday, during the summer months of May to September. The rest of the year Mondays are closed while opening hours the rest of the week are at least from 10.30 to 15.00, although Kronborg is closed for the public on the 24th, 25th and 31st of December as well as the 1st of January. A visit used to take most visitors about an hour but many new developments have been implemented to extend the visit.

Prices for entering are 6, 5 € to 12, 5 €, depending on how much access you want, and guided tours in English for individual guests are free with a valid ticket. Guided tours for groups (max. 35 persons with one guide) are available for a price of 124 € (excl. entrance fee).

There is good access for physically disabled to the castle courtyard, while it is, however, not possible to move around indoors with wheelchairs. Strollers are not allowed on the area but can be parked in the 'strollers parking lot' just next to the ticket sale booth. Furthermore, the castle offers storage cabinets that can be used with a deposit of 2, 5 € (SES, 2012).

Shops, restaurants and other facilities at Kronborg castle

The museum shop is placed just next to the ticket sales and is open 30 minutes before and after the castle's opening hours. Café Kronen and Café Brohuset on the castle's ground serve food and drinks that can also be enjoyed outdoors on the ridges or in the picnic area. From Slotsgården visitors have access to a specific area where it is allowed to enjoy their own food and drinks. It is not allowed to bring food and drinks on the rest of the area. Furthermore, Kronborg has created a modern conference centre in the heart of the castle, which gives people the possibility to sense the presence of history in the old vaults and rustic stone walls while at conferences. The management at the castle offers to adapt to specific requirements, and the place have the setting and the possibilities

to do so. There are public sanitary facilities in Kronværksporten and in Slotsgården. In the latter place, there are also sanitary facilities for physically disabled (SES, 2012).

The region surrounding Kronborg castle

In the region, there are many beaches that can be visited on a daytrip from Copenhagen, while it is even better to rent a summerhouse along the coast and stay for a longer period. From the city of Elsinore it is possible to do a daytrip to Helsingborg in Sweden – in fact, ferries leave every half an hour from the port all year round. Driving around the area, two other lovely castles can be visited, namely Fredensborg Slot and Frederiksborg Slot. Moreover, the region is surrounded by beautiful nature having many forests, beaches, and fields.

Visitor Characteristics of Kronborg Cliental

Kronborg has around 200.000 visitors every single year but management has set a goal to reach 400.000 people in the future. The three primary visitor segments are:

- Upper class, educated families with children
- Empty nesters who are fascinated by culture and art
- Foreign tourists

About 50 pct. of visitors are Danes or Southern Swedes and the other 50 pct. are foreigners, which has been the pattern in the last decade. By far, most tourists are staying in the capital of Copenhagen, taking a daytrip to North Zealand including Elsinore and Kronborg, thereby not staying overnight at local accommodation. Visitors have in many years travelled in big groups, coming in with buses, but this trend has changed towards many more individual visitors in recent years. Management sees this as a new trend in the global travel form, where a majority now dares to travel alone.

Unfortunately, Kronborg castle has too few revisits. For example, most Danes only visit twice during a lifetime. However, a satisfaction survey is done every year, and on a scale from 1-5 Kronborg castle has for many years been lying in the area from 4 to 4.5, which must be seen to be rather satisfactory. Nevertheless, after having implemented the ‘The Castle of the Sound Dues’ exhibition, they managed to raise it. Ultimately, it meant that the number of visitors giving 5 went from 63 pct. to 95 pct. This is probably due to the fact that the new exhibition and other developments in the product (please see later) has activated the visitor much more while at the same time informed the visitor in a much better way (which was a clear challenge only using signs and guides earlier).

In addition to the latter approximately 300.000 people use the grounds surrounding Kronborg every year without paying, which constitute a big weakness for the castle. These are e.g. locals going for a walk or jog.

The goal to reach 400.000 visitors a year is being pursued by focusing on getting more revisits, developing the product (emphasising digital media and activating the visitor) and getting even

more good word-of-mouth (which is a free form of marketing). Management do not focus on nationality and profile of visitor but more on getting them to stay longer at the attraction.

Strategic Recommendations for Kronborg Castle

As earlier mentioned, Kronborg Castle is not an official partner of the AGORA 2.0 project, and has mainly been included as a source of inspiration for the other castle attractions. Thus, the castle serves as a best-in-class example of product development, which is why the recommendation part of this chapter is different from the others. Therefore, it will be a mixture of what the castle management has already done and what they plan to do, which is then combined with recommendations based on the experiences that has been encountered in the other cases.

Strategy on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product development: Kronborg Castle has been particularly good product development. In fact, they have implemented many different types of media that can attract diverse segments. For example, they have made an exhibition called 'The Castle of the Sound Dues', which uses interactive information technology, thereby making it possible for the visitor to discover the stories of kings, wars, gold and vanity. Among many things, you can hear the fate of one of the Kronborg prisoners-of-war on your mobile phone and follow the World Heritage Route round the castle. Kronborg has also invested in children friendly activities where children can let loose their fantasy at Kronborg's new playground On the Queen's Bastion or play soldiers on the ramparts of Kronborg.

Furthermore, besides the many special events during school holidays, the castle has a number of permanent activities for the kids. The booklet 'Kronborg for children' contains a series of questions that kids can answer on their way through the palace halls. Questions like these excite curiosity and provide an entertaining way to learn how Kronborg has undergone great changes through 600 years. The booklet also encompasses a map over a route that children can follow, and Kronborg has just added two new rooms into the route. These rooms offer spectacular views over the Sound, and in one of the rooms you can build Lego models of the castle or other things you have been inspired by on the grounds. There is also the opportunity to draw or paint the experiences. In the other newly opened room, you can explore Kronborg in a completely different way. There is a model of Kronborg in proportions 1:30 that the kids can climb on.

Moreover, Kronborg is part of a plan to build a cultural centre surrounding Kronborg together with the culture yard, "Kulturværftet", and the shipping museum, "Søfartsmuseet", (see picture above). With the castle as an international landmark, it converts Elsinore harbour and the former shipyard area into a new cultural hub, building a new culture and a new museum of trade and shipping. The relocation of the museum from the initial place at the castle to the new place in the harbour also means that in 2012 about 1300 square meters will be released for other purposes. In doing so, Kronborg takes advantage of its great location and can at the same time create synergies with the two other attractions.

The idea of starting a conference centre was grounded in the fact that management wanted to get more visitors outside high season. This has worked partly, getting a few more thousand visitors inside the premises but not sufficiently compared to the fact that the castle wants to reach 400.000 visitors in the future.

Adding everything up, the management at Kronborg castle has in recent years done a lot to develop the castle into an attraction with many vibrant and diverse experiences. Most importantly, management has understood that modern visitors have expectations of an experience that speaks to all senses. They want to feel, smell, touch and participate actively. However, there is still room for development. Kronborg still has a large unused potential, which is exemplified by the fact that around 300.000 people every year use the premises without paying. There should therefore be looked more into whether it possible to convince some of these people to actually get inside and pay. For example, some of these are elderly people on pension who like the area and therefore stroll around every so often. Therefore, it could be an idea to make a “Discount card” or “Annual card”, where they can get access to the closed area for a reasonable price. Also, product development targeted at the empty nesters segment seems to be missing a bit as many elderly people do not know how to use modern electronic equipment (which is the new primary tool used at Kronborg). In other words, focus on product development *within* the closed payment area could bring in many new visitors. However, it is a delicate balance between developing too much and too little in the product portfolio, and focusing on the correct products to develop and for which purpose. Quality over quantity is the key aspect. Here, it has also shown that it is the castle that has the real value for the visitors and not so much the other products e.g. the conference centre etc. (which only brings in a minor increase in visitors). It is not always about developing the cultural sites but just as much about marketing, which next part will look into.

Recommendations for marketing development: The management at Kronborg castle has a budget of 400.000 DKK, approximately 53.300 €, which is very limited. Therefore, Kronborg is only marketed within the borders of Denmark, and it is done by focusing on three key areas:

- *Word-of-mouth:* if visitors have a good experience they tell their friends, families etc. Therefore, Kronborg is putting a lot of work into constantly evolving in its professionalism of being a good host
- *Press and other media:* can be a somewhat cheap effort by marketing through articles etc. in the media as well as social media
- *Collaboration with VisitNordsjælland and Wonderful Copenhagen:* a win-win situation for all parties

Furthermore, the Danish ministry of finance called Palaces and Properties Agency, has made a homepage that incorporates many attractions, which is also helpful for Kronborg in its quest for getting even more visitors.

Not much can be done with a fixed amount in the marketing budget, and management has effectively met this challenge by focusing on cheap types of marketing as well as collaborating with partners. It is, however, important that the money that is spent on marketing is targeted and

successfully tells potential users of all the new initiatives taken at the castle. The approaches that Kronborg has taken so far, however, can serve as a source of inspiration for other attractions in the BSR, as these are for the most part also struggling with very limited marketing budget.

The Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea

Using the motto: “44 Castles, One Sea, Common History”, the Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea is a large association of castles and museums. In fact, it was the first network in 1990s connecting some of the most important monuments and sites in the Baltic Sea Region. The association was founded in Malbork Castle, Poland in 1991, and the idea was to provide a forum where people working with their nations’ history and cultural heritage could meet, create networks and exchange knowledge and ideas. Still today, the aim is establishing and maintaining a network for teaching and learning amongst colleagues from similar castles and museum collections. It is a non-political and non-profitable association, which aims are to promote Baltic Sea Region identity and make the cultural heritage worldwide known (visitcastles.eu, 2012).

The association has six pillars, being research, restoration, education, marketing, management and tourism. Currently, it has 44 member castles in nine countries around the Baltic Sea. To become a member, castles must be open to public and they have to be owned by the state, town, local community or a foundation. So far, there are thus no private owned castles included. Also, a member castle has to be a museum, and not a hotel, restaurant or the alike. Members will be accepted by the General Assembly, which is held once a year, and the annual fee is 80 Euro (visitcastles.eu, 2012).

All members will have their information on the association’s website; they will be present in a new book, which will be published in the spring 2013, and in a large photo exhibition. Also, the members are receiving and sharing important information and findings. In the association’s board there is a representative from each country, and the board and president are elected for three years. The general assembly meets annually and one member from each country is chosen to be a representative in the board, which meets twice a year. Besides this, the association has a working group preparing lectures of different topics for the meetings (visitcastles.eu, 2012).

Within the AGORA 2.0 framework, the association has also proven to be successful as it has helped facilitating important product developments for the castle group in the project. Amongst others, a large photo exhibition, a castles’ passport and a history conference can be mentioned.

Overview 1: Members of the Association of Castles and Museums around the Baltic Sea:

Country	Castles
Denmark	Sønderskov Manor Vordingborg Castle Rosenborg Castle Sønderborg Castle Koldinghus Castle Kronborg Castle Nyborg Castle

Estonia
Vastseliina Castle
Narva Castle
Haapsalu Episcopal Castle

Finland
Turku Castle
Raseborg Castle
Suomenlinna Sea Fortress
Svartholm Sea Fortress
Lappeenranta Fortress
Olavinlinna Castle
Häme Castle
Kastelholm Castle

Germany
Eutin Castle
Gottorf Castle

Latvia
Turaida Castle
Ventspils Rundāle Palace
Bauska Castle
Cēsis Castle

Lithuania
Trakai Peninsular Castle
Grand Dukes' Palace in Vilnius
Biržai Castle
Gediminas Castle Tower

Poland
Pomeranian Dukes' Castle
Malbork Castle

Sweden
Royal Palace of Stockholm
Skokloster Castle
Malmöhus Castle
Nyköpingshus Castle
Gripsholm Castle
Kalmar Castle

Russia

Vyborg Castle
Peter and Paul Fortress
Suvorov Museum
Military-Historical Museum
Old Ladoga
Oreshek Fortress
Kaliningrad Castle

3. Red Brick Gothic

3.1 Saint Nikolai's Church, Greifswald

SWOT-analysis of Saint Nikolai's Church

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Famous through the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich. • Beautiful architectural mix: brick gothic, baroque tower, partly romantic interior. • Very visible, in the city centre, easy to access. • Well-trained voluntary workers responsible for tours, system of children guides. • Engaged priest – also in tourism issues. • Receives governmental funding for restoration. • No entrance fee. • Hosts plenty of exhibitions, concerts and festivals. • Cooperation with the University of Greifswald (tours, concerts, training of guides). • Positive visitor feedback („unique, modest“). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainly restored, but changes from the 80's highly controversial, do not please everybody. • Not enough cooperation with tourism office. • Non-expert workers at the entrance, lack historic knowledge. • Not linked enough to other Red Brick Gothic attractions. • Opening hours are relatively short. • Not that much foreign language material.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness rising on the role of the famous painter Caspar David Friedrich. • More visibility for tours guided by children, e.g. in schools and for day visitors with kids. • Cooperation and networking with other tourist attractions in the city. • Offers for day visitors and visitors of the university seminars. • More foreign language materials. • Active development of exciting stories around the church (e.g. picture of a whale found on the wall). • Developing sponsorships and partnerships for the planned communication centre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other attractive offers around the corner, other buildings, and the old city centre, other cities, beaches. • Pressure for entrance fees grows out of financial reasons. • In Eastern Germany churches and religion are for many people still „unfamiliar“. • Non-expert workers at the entrance not motivated and informed enough to serve the public this could have a negative effect on image.
Conclusions	
<p>Some possible measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer training sessions by voluntary guides for non-expert workers at the entrance to increase their engagement and interest in the church and their work there. • Develop attractive materials on the role of the painter Caspar David Friedrich in the church – for example together with the Caspar David Friedrich Gesellschaft. • Promotion of the tours guided by children for schools; also to bring whole families to church by distributing the existing flyers actively or per electronic media, emails, newsletters etc., which is not that cost intensive as producing flyers. • Promoting the church also for the (foreign) visitors of the university e.g. by electronic media, newsletters etc.: using mailing lists of the university. • Regular meetings, workshops, brainstorming sessions with other touristic players in the city for new products, stories etc., (tourist information, university, city). 	

History of Saint Nikolai's Church

The city of Greifswald is situated in northern Germany between the two largest islands of the country, the isle of Rügen and the isle of Usedom. Greifswald is the fifth largest town in the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern County.

During the medieval times parts of the area has been controlled by Denmark and from the peace of Westphalia in 1648 up until 1814 parts of Vorpommern was controlled by Sweden. Since 1456 Greifswald has also been a university city. It has approximately 12000 students besides the 55000 residents in the city. Greifswald is characterized by the old merchants' houses and the many gothic redbrick buildings. The concentration of gothic redbrick buildings is due to wealth accumulated in Greifswald during the hanseatic period (Vorpommern: 2012). This period started in 1370 after the Treaty of Stralsund which ended the war between Denmark and the hanseatic cities.

Origin

The city of Greifswald is very old and dates back to the hanseatic period from around 1200 to its dissolution in 1669.

The medieval brick church in gothic style is mentioned for the first time in a document from around 1248. The church has a nearly 100 meter high tower, which has come down twice. It contains old frescoes from the 14th and 15th centuries, which are still partly covered. In the church there are grave stones, epitaphs and the very famous "Rubenow-Tafel", a wooden panel from 1460 (the most well-known object in the church). The church has often been pictured by romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich. Today, the church offers concerts, guided tours and exhibitions

Caspar David Friedrich, 1774 – 1840.

Caspar David Friedrich was a German Romantic painter and is considered to be one of the greatest within this direction and the artist that most clearly defines it. He studied at the Royal Danish Art Academy in Copenhagen from 1794 to 1798. He was taught by prominent Danish artists but he never connected with the Danish romanticism (Gyldendal: 2012).

His paintings has many religious and spiritual undertones and nature was often combined with a divine awareness and especially his landscape paintings carry themes of death, infinity and the loneliness and solitude of man. Among his most famous paintings are *Kreidefelsen auf Rügen* (1818), *Mondufer am Meer* (1822), *Das Eismeer* (ca. 1823), *Morgen im Riesengebirge* and *Der Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer* (1818). After his death Romanticism was followed by Realism and Impressionism, but in the 1960's interest for Friedrich's pictures grew enormously both in and outside Germany (Gyldendal: 2012).

Eldena Monastery

In 1199 Eldena monastery was built by Cistercian monks east of what is now Greifswald city. The monastery was very influential from the early 13th century until the early 15th century. This was until the reformation in 1533 after which the monastery fell into decline. Since 1827 restorations

have been on going to ensure the conservation and protection of the monastery but also to identify archaeological areas.

The monastery has been a favoured object for artists, the most prominent is architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel, garden architect Peter Joseph and above mentioned painter Caspar David Friedrich. It is through the motives of Caspar David Friedrich the monastery has acquired its international acknowledgement.

Like Saint Nicolai's Church, Greifswald, and the other German churches in this presentation, Eldena monastery is one of the objects on the European route of Red Brick Gothic, see logo to the right.



Photo: EuRoB

Saint Nicolai's Church

Ever since the church was built in medieval times, it has been the symbol of Greifswald city. The church is named after the holy Nikolaus von Myra (270-343.) patron saint of seamen and merchants. There has not been found any remains of the original building. The church was rebuilt in a much more glorious manner due to the hanseatic development. The appearance of the church was changed again in the 15th century to give it the shape and size of a basilica. In 1457 the church

raised its status by being elevated to collegiate church and this resulted in yet another extension and in the beginning of the 16th century the spire was added to the tower which made it an impressive 120 meters high. This, however, did not last long because a storm tore down the spire again as early as 1515. The tower was rebuilt in 1609 only to completely collapse in 1650. This time the damages were much larger. It was rebuilt short after in the present baroque style.

From the view platform on top of the 100 meter high tower the whole city is visible. The inside of the church is a clear contrast to its exterior. Inside the church is painted in a pale grey colour, a sharp contrast to its red exterior. This is also a contrast between the gothic exterior and the romantic interior. This appearance was given to the interior between 1820 and 1833.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Saint Nikolai's Church

The church is located in the old town centre of Greifswald. There is easy access to cafés, restaurants and hotels. The church is open to the public and there is no admission fee for general entrance. There are guided tours every Wednesday at 11 am and the tours are forty-five minutes long. This tour costs 2 Euro. There is also the possibility of getting a guided tour by children and on Thursdays in July, August and September the church has a forty-five minutes candle light evening from 9.30 pm.

Besides this the opening hours of the church in November to April is 10 am to 4 pm from Monday to Saturday and 11.30 am to 3.30 pm on Sundays. From May to October the church is open from 10 am to 6 pm between Monday and Saturday, on Sundays it's between 11.30 am and 12.30 pm and again between 3 pm to 6 pm.

Saint Nicolai's church is on the European Route of Brick Gothic and so are a lot of other Red Brick Gothic buildings in Greifswald. Therefore tourists in Greifswald have other red brick attractions to visits which make them all collectively more attractive for tourists.

The webpage of Saint Nikolai's church has historic information in English, but no information about entrance fee, parking facilities, guided tours and opening hours in English.

Visitor Characteristics of Saint Nikolai's Church cliental

The questionnaire data used for the German Red Brick Gothic cases in this publication, Saint Nicolai's church, Cultural Centre Saint Spiritus, Saint Nicolas church and Lüneburg Town hall, is a collection of questionnaires collected at these attractions and at Saint Johannes church, Saint Marys church, Saint Michaels church and at the Dominican Monastery. The reason for this is that not one of the latter attractions has collected enough questionnaires to say anything about the cliental, see publication 1. The combined data ended up on 639 collected questionnaires in 2011 and 149 collected questionnaires in 2012. This is not enough to determine any changes from 2011 to 2012, but it is possible to generalise somewhat about the cliental of the Red Brick Gothic visitors in Germany. The description below is therefore a generalisation and applies to all the German Red

Brick Gothic attractions in this publication. Statistics from each separate attraction was sent to the respective places, so they have been able to make use of figures that suit their specific context.

In 2011, 82 pct. of visitors at the German red brick attractions visited for the first time. This number was 83 pct. in 2012, indicating that very few visitors are returning to experience the attractions. It shows that there is an interest to visit the attraction, but not to revisit. 67 pct. of visitors came by car to the attraction in 2011, while this number was reduced to 56 pct. in 2012. Users of public transportation have doubled from 8 pct. in 2011 to 16 pct. in 2012. This could indicate that the surrounding infrastructure has been improved, which would be very beneficial to any attraction, or it could be mere coincidence, due to the low number of questionnaires that was collected in 2012.

In terms of awareness, most of figures have not changed from 2011 to 2012. However, it should be noted that travel guide/brochure has decreased with 5 pct. in the two years. This might be due to management has changed the marketing. In fact, a 5 pct. increase in awareness through the internet can be seen, meaning that management might have changed focus. As long as you can still reach your target group(s), this can often be seen as a beneficial alteration in your marketing efforts, since the internet will in most cases be cheaper to market yourself than through travel guides, brochures and other printed material.

All satisfactions levels are rated between 3, 9 and 4, 6 in 2011, which is to be seen as relatively positive, especially because some of these have actually improved since 2011. However, management at the red bricks attractions should be aware of parking facilities, catering facilities and shopping facilities, as these satisfaction rates have actually decreased slightly in the measured years.

In 2011, 62 pct. of visitors at the German red bricks attractions spend less than 30 minutes visiting. However, this number was reduced to 38 pct. in 2012, meaning that visitors have started spending more time at the placed, which is of course, beneficial. Consequently, a 15 pct. increase in visitors spending between 30 minutes and 1 hour as well as a 5 pct. increase in visitors spending between one and two hours have been witnessed. In terms of motivation, relaxation and cultural holidays are ranked high in 2011, taking up 57 pct. of the total. This number has decreased slightly in 2012, down to 51 pct., but overall the figures look very much the same. City breaks is ranked third in both years.

The average age at the Red Brick Gothic attractions in 2011 was 55, which is interestingly a number that dropped to 44 in 2012. A clear majority of visitors are between 50 and 80 in 2011, which is the same picture in 2012, although a large increase in people between 20 and 30 can be seen. It would therefore be interesting to look into whether (some of) the attractions have focused on getting younger segments to visit.

The gender division was 58 pct. women and 42 pct. men in 2011, which changed slightly in 2012 to a 60/40 pct. division instead. In both years, about 88 pct. of visitors are accompanied by others. The percentage of foreigners have increased from 4, 3 pct. in 2011 to 7 pct. foreigners in 2012.

However, since only 149 questionnaires were collected the last year, any action based on all the above figures should be taken with cautions.

Strategic Recommendations for Saint Nikolai's Church

The strategic recommendations are divided into two parts, namely how to increase visitor number in the short term by looking at both product and marketing development, and then in the second part recommendations and suggestions on how to create a common BSR heritage, to increase the number of visitors in the region in the long run.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: It is clear that most of the visitors spent a short amount of time at the attraction. Although there are many other attractions nearby, there is still a need to make the visitors feel that the visit to Greifswald is worth making. Therefore there is a need to develop initiatives to extend the time spent at the church. One recommendation is to have better options for guided tours. This could very well attract many new visitors because the church has such a rich history.

Since there is a concentration of Red Brick Gothic attractions in Greifswald, cooperation between the sites could also create the possibilities to create a joined product, where visitors for example get transport/routes between attractions, guided tours and museum visit in one package. The museum visit should be connected to the history of the red brick buildings, like Caspar David Friedrich. He is one of the most famous romantic painters and is born in Greifswald. His art, primarily paintings, is exhibited all over the world. The exhibitions are reaching from California to St. Petersburg and therefore his art can truly be said to be known globally. There are permanent exhibitions in Hermitage Museum St. Petersburg, J. Paul Getty Museum California, National Gallery of Canada Ottawa, Neue Pinakothek Frankfurt and Stadel Museum Munich. Recently more than 90 pieces was exhibited in Stockholm and it is opportunities like this that is ideal to promote Greifswald and the Red Brick Gothic buildings.

The awareness of this global artist, the history of the old hanseatic city and the history of the buildings are all elements that make a combined product possible. Making a product, like a guided tour through Greifswald, that shows unique places, buildings, historical sites and combines the artist, the hanseatic times and the buildings has the potential of being marketed all over the world and include museums worldwide.

A product like this has to provide the visitor with maps, routes, guides and historic material in one package. This will make the product easily accessible to the potential customers.

This is just one example of a combined product. Product development and promotion through already known persons or attractions and cooperation between partners of mutual interest, museums and others attractions, are essential to this product. This kind of product has the advantage of appealing to both a local and foreign visitors.

Another product development could be to make access to food and drinks easier, in order to meet the unsatisfied visitors.

There is a need to attract foreign visitors since virtually none visits the church. Firstly the product of the website should be much more available for visitors who don't speak German. Secondly, there should be signs and guided tours also available in English.

Recommendations for marketing development: The new products and the existing ones need better marketing. There is no available English information about opening hours, parking facilities, guided tours, prices and the membership of the European Route of Brick gothic route on the webpage. This will discourage foreigners to visit the church.

Part of the marketing development is therefore also to get more foreign visitors to fill out the questionnaires in order to get an idea of their opinions.

By developing a joined redbrick gothic product in Greifswald it will be useful to take advantage of this cooperation to promote the attractions at the other attractions. When so many visitors, more than fifty pct., have plans to visit other redbrick gothic attractions, it is not a good sign that more than a third of the visitors became aware of the attraction by accident. There are clearly visitors for redbrick attractions present, but for some reason Saint Nikolai's church is not marketed the place where tourists look for information. Marketing at the different red brick sites could help increase the number of visitors.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

The city of Greifswald has both been under Danish and Swedish rule. By promoting the history of the city and its building it will be possible further develop the BSR heritage, because the common heritage is embedded in the historic significance of the city.

By combining marketing and product development, for example by inviting and educating school classes or other initiatives like this it will be possible to promote the history of Greifswald and get more visitors.

To promote heritage it is necessary to get the message to the visitors and to as many visitors as possible. By having historical interesting products, like hanseatic history, artistic products and periodical significance the BSR heritage will emerge over time.

3.2 Cultural Centre Saint Spiritus, Greifswald

SWOT-analysis of Saint Spiritus

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No restoration funds needed, fully restored in 2003-2004. • Has the oldest crypt in Greifswald. • Very popular high level cultural events. • Attracts individual tourists in the summer. • Management is interested in servicing visitors and developing offers for them. • Also offers tours for visitors on request. • Engaged and skilled personnel are responsible for tours besides their main activities. • Cooperation for the tours with the Nordic institute of the university. • Positive visitor feedback. • No entrance fee for the building. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not well known among visitors as a Brick Gothic object. • Not enough time to promote object. • No budget for promoting tourism offers. • Program flyers exist, but no further material on the building and its history is available. • Relatively little information on the website on Brick Gothic. • No available resources for tourism staff. • No financial recourses for the restoration of the crypt are available.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness on Brick Gothic elements of the building; storytelling about interesting history and eras. • Better marketing for Red Brick Gothic. • Renovation of the crypt and opening it to visitors. • Attracting visitors outside the summer season for workshops and events related to history. • Tourists bring contacts to international artists and, in turn, artists spread the word about the Centre to potential tourists. • Developing partnerships for funding, in order to hire additional co-workers for touristic work. • Cooperation with the Nordic institute of the university. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not interesting enough; visitors will go to see other Brick Gothic highlights. • Existing staff will have no time for tours etc. in the future. • Funding for extra staff and materials can't be found. • No funding for the crypt can be found. • Tourism will stay only a minor issue.
Conclusions	
<p>Some possible measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the Brick Gothic history more effectively for the visitors of the events and courses by using the already existing materials of the European Route of Brick Gothic such as flyers, travel guides and rollups. • More contact with the European Route and the city of Greifswald in Brick Gothic marketing issues. • Better promotion of the Red Brick Gothic background on the website. • Searching for stories from the interesting history to be used in marketing. • Searching for sponsors and cooperation partners (e.g. universities) to realize historic workshops and events. • Searching for funding for renovating the crypt. • Focus on specific items 	

History of Saint Spiritus

The Cultural Centre Saint Spiritus is located in Greifswald. Therefore, it shares the same origin and town history as Saint Nicolai Church. Just like Saint Nicolas church, it would also be beneficial for Saint Spiritus to incorporate the significance of the artist Caspar David Friedrich and the old Eldena monastery for cooperation on marketing efforts and product development. This case should therefore also include the sections on introduction, Origin, Caspar David Friedrich and Eldena monastery from the Saint Nicolai's church Greifswald case just above.

Saint Spiritus hospital

Shortly after the presentation of the Lubeck law in 1250 the city of Greifswald has had a hospital. It is first mentioned in a document from 1262, but it is believed the hospital bought one of the existing wings as early as 1647.

In this medieval time, the community had the idea to establish care and housing for the needing. Because of this idea of charitable society the hospital took care of the poor, the elderly, the immigrants and the foreigners. At this time the hospital was dependent on donations to buy food and medical supplies. At some point the hospital inherited both land and wealth through the testament of Katharina Rubenow.

Despite the many years of war and despair the hospital and its buildings have survived and are now regarded as the oldest buildings in Greifswald. This is why it's still possible to see the old walls, pillars and rooms with frescoes in Red Brick Gothic style.

Cultural Centre of Saint Spiritus

The old hospital is now converted to a cultural centre. Its appearances have changed to a modern look and the old buildings in the back are not visible from the street anymore. They are however converted into a café with a beautiful courtyard with a view to Saint Nicolai's Church to enjoy the refreshments in. The old history as a hospital is not forgotten despite the change from Medicare to culture. Today the building is used for cultural offers to the public so although the purpose inside the buildings is changed, they still serve the public. During a restoration in 2003 - 2004, the Brick Gothic elements were made visible again.

In this sociocultural centre is a variety of offers to all ages and interests from galleries and jazz to pottery workshops. From the café in the courtyard there is a view to the tower of Saint Nicolai's church.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Saint Spiritus

Saint Spiritus is located in the centre of Greifswald and therefore there are great accessibility to other café, attractions and hotels. There is no admission fee. The opening hours of the centre are on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11 am to 4 pm. On Tuesdays it is 1 pm to 6 pm and on Fridays it is 10 am to 12 am.

Unlike Saint Nicolai's church Saint Spiritus is not on the European Route of Brick Gothic but there are a lot of other red brick gothic buildings in Greifswald. Therefore tourists in Greifswald have other red brick attractions to visits which make the area all the more attractive for tourists.

The webpage of Saint Spiritus centre has no information in English. There should especially be information about entrance fee, parking facilities, guided tours and opening hours in English. There should also be links on the homepage of Saint Spiritus to the homepage of European Route of Brick Gothic.

Visitor Characteristics of Saint Spiritus cliental

There have not been collected questionnaires from Saint Spiritus. There is no basis for assuming that Saint Spiritus and Saint Nicolai's church has the same cliental. It is based on the product difference between the two attractions. Where Saint Nicolai's church is trying to attract tourists, Saint Spiritus is more involved in cultural activities and courses for local members. The café however is more appealing to tourists. Since the Red Brick Gothic tourists is a major part of the tourism in Greifswald Saint Spiritus should, if they want to attract more tourists, appeal to the same cliental as the other Red Brick attractions, therefore the data from the other Red Brick Gothic attractions in this publication could also apply to the analysis of Saint Spiritus if there is a wish to change cliental.

Strategic Recommendations for Saint Spiritus

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: The same challenge exists for Saint Spiritus as the rest of the other Red Brick Gothic attractions, to make the visit "worth" making. Creating joined products is the key to solving this problem. For example, Saint Spiritus is basically located next door to Saint Nicolai's church. Combining a product of entrance fee plus coffee or guided tour plus coffee could get visitors to visit both places and not just one of them. The product recommendations for Saint Nicolai's church above also applies for Saint Spiritus, that section can therefore be read in continuation of this case.

Recommendations for marketing development: From the questionnaires on red brick attractions in Greifswald in general, it is clear that there is not a lot of foreign visitors. There are a number of reasons for this. It is very difficult for foreigners to obtain information about Saint Spiritus. There is no information in English. There is no links to the European Route of Brick gothic. This means that no one will find Saint Spiritus. There should also be links to other tourist webpages. For example <http://pharm1.pharmazie.uni-greifswald.de/pdf/Centre.pdf>, which is a map over the centre of Greifswald and provides the visitor with a route to walk or to drive on bike, sites to see, places to visit and much more.

More cooperation between all the involved partners in Greifswald is recommended. If EuRoB (European Route of Brick Gothic), the attractions and the tourist offices work closer together and link to each other, it will benefit every involved partner. The EuRoB webpage links to a lot of

homepages for attractions, but the problem occurs when these sites do not have available information in English.

As the questionnaires showed at the other red brick attractions in Greifswald, a lot of the visitors visit the attractions because they accidentally passed by. By cooperating on promotion there is a better chance to create awareness on all of the attractions. By creating joined products, handing out material on other Red Brick Gothic attractions to visitors and increase the availability of information on the internet it will be possible to increase the awareness of the attraction and get more visitors.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

Like the recommended product developments, the recommendations for heritage development are also shared with Saint Nicolai's church. This is the case because they share the same heritage given their location and age.

3.3 Saint Nicolas' Church, Lüneburg

SWOT-analysis of Saint Nicolas' Church

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique features: old city model; paintings of Hans Bornemann; stellar vaulted ceiling; crypt. • City model picturing old Lüneburg (ca. 1660) in tower hall → standard part of all guided city tours → many visitors. • Situated centrally in the core of Lüneburg old town, next to market place. • Positive publicity due to 600 years of St. Nicolai celebrations. • Long opening times: ten weeks in the summer until sunset. • 30 voluntary workers, 8-9 of them very motivated voluntary guides for the offered own tours. • Own materials in several languages (but no take-away flyers for foreigners) • Restored, receives funding for reparations. • No entrance fee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neither largest nor oldest church in town. • Quite small staff: tourism causes lot of work for the priest, sacristan and secretary. • Tourism causes costs (e.g. energy, toilet, cleaning), but no financial resources for these costs, since churches receive funding according to the number of their community members and not according to the touristic needs. • Not enough resources for coordination of voluntary workers and developing offers for tourists. • Coordination of events and tourist groups sometimes difficult (literally full of groups in the summertime). • No donations received, since a tourists travelling in a group have no time for that.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of offers for day trippers and shopping tourists, e.g. „30 minutes organ for lunch“. • Raising awareness among locals to keep the interest (600 year celebration of St. Nicolai created lots of public interest and participation). • Recruiting more voluntary staff. • More materials concentrating on Brick Gothic heritage together with other objects, wide distribution, joining forces. • More events (with a small entrance fee?) together with other Brick Gothic objects. • Evening opening times with special offers (tours with mediation etc.). • Cooperation with local companies (sponsoring), initializing booster clubs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxes going down for churches. • Pressure for entrance fee grows. • Tourism will cause more costs than it creates revenue. • Evening opening times are not cost-effective. • Staff won't have enough time to manage the tourists.

Conclusions

Some possible measures:

- The communication activities should be maintained / strengthened (e.g. active public relations) to keep up the local public interest attained during the 600 years celebrations.
- The communication should also be directed to stakeholders (company magazines, newsletters) in order to reach their interest and eventually funding (for materials, cooperation's, visitors etc.).
- More promotion for evening opening times and more offers for evening visitors (e.g. candle light / mediation tours); since evenings are times for individual visitors who are more interested on the church as a religious object and also maybe more willing to donate etc.
- More contact with the other Brick Gothic objects in the city to develop joint activities.

History of Saint Nicolas' Church

St. Nicolas is the youngest of the Lüneburg churches. It was a place of worship for the common people, especially sailors and salt-barrel coopers. Construction is recorded to have begun in 1407. The construction of the west tower was started in 1460 but not completed, as it had to be demolished in 1830. The neo-Gothic tower was completed in 1885. Comprehensive repairs were needed to the deprived church between 1845 and 1869. In 2009, the parish celebrated 600 years of St. Nicolas together with the city.

The three-nave basilica has side chapels, while the nave itself is only four bays long. The choir in the church has an ambulatory with radiating chapels. A hexagonal crypt with central support is located under the raised choir.

The nave consists of two stories almost equal in height. The ground floor arcades are structured by octagonal piers, and the sides of these piers are concave. Above the arches runs a fine tracery frieze. Above this the outer walls retreat, creating a walkway open to the nave. Three-light clerestory windows illuminate the nave (EuRoB, 2012).

The church is rich in gothic works of art, of which a few are mentioned here. The four-winged high altar, originally placed in St. Lambert's Church but demolished in about 1860, is ascribed to Hans Bornemann. The shrine in the church was made by Lüneburg artist Hans Snitker the Elder in about 1440. The ambulatory contains the remains of a high altar from the former Heiligental abbey church. The panel paintings showing views of the city of Lüneburg are also ascribed to Hans Bornemann. The choir stalls include older elements, such as an end depicting a bishop and ape from about 1420 and a high end with St. Nicolas and Virgin from the late 15th century. A large crucifix by Cord Snitker from about 1470 is located at the west termination of the north aisle, and in the crypt there is a small crucifix from the first half of the 15th century. The font is the work of Ulricus from about 1325. The tomb of the Lüneburg mayor Hinrich Viskule from the late 14th century is located at the west wall of the southern aisle. Also, there is a city model of old Lüneburg, which most of the city guides include in their tours (Eurob, 2012).

Key influences on the visitor experience at Saint Nicolas' Church

Saint Nicolas' Church is placed in Lüneberg, which is South of Hamburg, between the Elbe Valley and the Lüneburg Heath, and about 176,000 people live in the District of Lüneburg. The largest city in the district is the Hanseatic City of Lüneburg, with 71,000 inhabitants. The church itself is placed downtown, close to the main train station. This means that there is a great variety of restaurants, cafes and hotels nearby. Average degrees in June, July and August are about 22 degrees, while the rest of the year is dominated by lower degrees. Being located in Northern Europe, rain occurs occasionally throughout all seasons.

The local tourist information offers five different guided tours around the city (Lunenbug, 2012). Also, the church offers a tower mounting upon special request. Opening hours at the church are January-March: 10am to 4pm, and April-December: 10am to 6pm. For visitors especially interested in red brick churches, many places surrounding the city of Lüneberg have churches, including St. John's Chapel at Adendorf, St. Viti's Church at Barskamp and Betzendorf's Church of St. Peter und Paul.



Photo: EuRoB

Visitors looking for both a cultural and active vacation can take advantage of the Mecklenburg Lakes bike route. It connects Lüneberg with Parchim, located on the Elde River. Interestingly, the cyclist will find impressive monuments attesting to the influence of Red Brick Gothic architecture in the region when cycling along the 178 kilometre long track (Eurob biking, 2012).

Visitor Characteristics of Saint Nicolas' Church cliental

The questionnaire data used for the German Red Brick Gothic cases in this publication, Saint Nicolai's church, Cultural Centre Saint Spiritus, Saint Nicolas church and Lüneburg Town hall, is a collection of questionnaires collected at these attractions and at Saint Johannes church, Saint Marys church, Saint Michaels church and at the Dominican Monastery. The reason for this is that not one of the latter attractions has collected enough questionnaires to analyse anything about the cliental, see publication Booklet for creating attractions – Tools from the AGORA 2.0 workshops. The combined data ended up on 639 collected questionnaires in 2011 and 149 collected questionnaires in 2012. This is not enough to determine any changes from 2011 to 2012, but it is possible to generalise somewhat about the cliental of the Red Brick Gothic visitors in Germany. The description below is therefore a generalisation and applies to all the German Red Brick Gothic attractions in this publication. See results under “Visitor Characteristics of Saint Nicolai's Church cliental”.

Strategic Recommendations for Saint Nicolas' Church

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: It is important to give the visitors the feeling that the visit was worth making. There is a serious risk that visitors will not get his feeling when they stay less than half an hour. Having guided tours easily available in German as well as English is one way to prolong the visit. Combining the visit at Saint Nicolas church with neighbouring attractions, cafés, museums or shops will besides getting a longer stay also give the visitors a chance to get a better experience. Cooperation about product development with other interested parties is recommended.

The 2011 survey also showed a clear tendency of a non-existing international customer segment. There can be a number of reasons for this. To improve it there is some products that need to be available. English information about practical concerns should be on the webpage, like opening hours, café opportunities, parking facilities, availabilities of guided tours and so forth. There should be guided tours and/or signs with interesting information for the customers; otherwise the church will just be another building.

The visitors were unhappy about the condition of the sanitation facilities. Improving these conditions would make the overall experience better and help make customers recommend the attraction as well as return for another visit.

Recommendations for marketing development: As mentioned above, the webpage needs information in English in order to market the attraction for a foreign cliental. The webpage should also link to the webpage of The European Route of Brick Gothic (EuRoB). It is clear that more than half of the visitors pass by the attraction by coincidence. This means that they were not aware of the existence of the attraction. There is therefore a need to cooperate with local tourist information centres, other attractions, EuRoB and foreign partners to create awareness about the attraction. If

there's no information about better and new product there is a risk that product development will not create an increase in visitor numbers.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

To develop heritage tourism at Saint Nicolas church in Lüneburg, it will be an advantage to use the rich history of the city. If the history of Lüneberg is incorporated in the product development, like a guided tour or a combined visit to a museum and the church, the historical heritage will become visible. This will be of interest to many potential customers in more than one way. It will attract more visitors directly to the church, but indirectly it will make Lüneburg more attractive to tourists in general and over time increase the number of guests in the city and eventually increase the number of visitors in Saint Nicolas.

3.4 Lüneburg Town Hall

SWOT-analysis of Lüneburg Town Hall

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautiful, unique features: combination of Gothic, Baroque and Renaissance. • Situated centrally, next to the market place and tourist information. • Positive publicity: e.g. one of the rooms „the most beautiful Gothic parlour in Germany“(Dumont). • Attractive flyers and materials. • Attractive guided tours several times a day; special tours, tours in other languages for groups. • Very well preserved, funding for restoration from the German Foundation for Monument Protection. • Reasonable entrance fee. • Opened six days a week. • Professional touristic management made by Lüneburg Marketing GmbH. • Enough personal resources, one staff member responsible for tours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sightseeing only possible during guided tours, e.g. bound to certain times. • Limited visitor capacity due to security and preservation reasons. • Events, e.g. exhibitions not possible in the building. • Not easily recognizable as a Brick Gothic object. • No museum shop (yet, but is being built). • Only limited foreign language information available.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique elements outside and inside could attract visitors from around the world. • More marketing in foreign markets. • More foreign materials for foreign tourists already in town. • More marketing for exciting special tours. • Raising awareness among the locals. • Developing more offers for younger visitors. • Museum shop and “cozier” new entrance which are being built. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure for higher entrance fee. • No acceptance for entrance fee. • No acceptance for limited visiting times and limited visitor amount.
Conclusions	
<p>Some possible measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication activities should be strengthened to generate / keep up knowledge and acceptance for the object and its sensibility (e.g. no events, no uncontrolled visitor streams possible due to restoration reasons). • Marketing and communication activities to underline the exclusiveness of the experience. • Creating experiences around the object but not always necessarily in the object; e.g. museum shop. • Expert seminars in the object – for networking and showing others how to tourist manage a popular object and without injuring the historic structure. 	

History of Lüneburg Town Hall

Lüneburg origin

The Hanseatic city of Lüneburg dates back to the 14th century, but already in the 13th century the city sought political and economic independence. Lüneburg has always been famous for its salt production so when it joined the Hanseatic League in 1363 the export of salt brought much wealth. Lüneburg was through the hanseatic period first and foremost a city of commerce. As such it was an independent city between 1392 and 1637. This unique status ensured that the wealth remained in the city. Although the city remained a member of the league its export declined due to the introduction of other competitors on the salt market and a decline of herring. The herring industry was the largest consumer of salt at that time.

The early wealth the membership brought is displayed throughout the city. There are numerous impressive buildings all over the town and the old port along with the old loading crane is still visible.

Town Hall of Lüneburg

The oldest sections of the town hall dates back to 1230. As time passed by the different sections was added to the building according to its needs. Due to this ad hoc architectural plan, the different sections of the building displays the period from which it was built. The chancellery, the gallery, the sovereign hall and the mayor's chamber is all built in gothic style. The council chamber is one of Germany's largest renaissance halls and is decorated with impressive woodworks. - The baroque facade was finalized in 1720. Behind the facade "hides" one of the biggest medieval town halls of Europe. The interior features a unique mix of medieval and renaissance elements. The Town Hall has rooms and architectural elements from 14th until 18th century. Highlights include: Fürstensaal (1450), Gewandhaus (around 1300), Gerichtslaube (14th century), Bürgermeisterkorkammer (1491), Alte Kanzlei (1450), Große Ratsstube (1566-1584). Nowadays the Town Hall is used as a city hall with facilities for the city administration, Lüneburg Marketing GmbH, tourist information and a restaurant.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Lüneburg Town Hall

Saint Nicolas' Church is placed in Lüneberg, which is south of Hamburg, between the Elbe Valley and the Lüneburg Heath, and about 176,000 people live in the District of Lüneburg. Largest city in the district is the Hanseatic City of Lüneburg, which has more than 71,000 inhabitants. The church itself is placed in the middle of the city, close to the main train station. This means that there is a great variety of restaurants, cafes and hotels nearby. Average degrees in June, July and August are about 22 degrees, while the rest of the year is dominated by lower degrees. Being located in Northern Europe, rain occurs occasionally throughout all seasons.

The local tourist information offers five different guided tours around the city (Lunenborg, 2012). Also, the church offers a tower mounting upon special request. Opening hours at the church are January-March: 10am to 4pm, and April-December: 10am to 6pm. For visitors especially interested

in red brick churches, many places surrounding the city of Lüneberg have churches, including St. John's Chapel at Adendorf, St. Viti's Church at Barskamp and Betzendorf's Church of St. Peter und Paul.

Visitors looking for both a cultural and active vacation can take advantage of the Mecklenburg Lakes bike route. It connects Lüneberg with Parchim, located on the Elde River. Interestingly, the cyclist will find impressive monuments attesting to the influence of Brick Gothic architecture in the region when cycling along the 178 kilometre long track (Eurob biking, 2012).

Visitor Characteristics of Lüneburg Town Hall cliental

The questionnaire data used for the German Red Brick Gothic cases in this publication, Saint Nicolai's church, Cultural Centre Saint Spiritus, Saint Nicolas church and Lüneburg Town hall, is a collection of questionnaires collected at these attractions and at Saint Johannes church, Saint Marys church, Saint Michaels church and at the Dominican Monastery. The reason for this is that not one of the latter attractions has collected enough questionnaires to say anything about the cliental, see publication 1. The combined data ended up on 639 collected questionnaires in 2011 and 149 collected questionnaires in 2012. This is not enough to determine any changes from 2011 to 2012, but it is possible to generalise somewhat about the cliental of the Red Brick Gothic visitors in Germany. The description below is therefore a generalisation and applies to all the German Red Brick Gothic attractions in this publication. See results under "Visitor Characteristics of Saint Nicolai's Church cliental".

Strategic Recommendations for Lüneburg Town Hall

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: Like the other Red Brick Gothic attractions it is important to give the visitors the feeling that the visit was worth making. There is a serious risk that visitors will not get his feeling when they stay less than half an hour. Having guided tours easily available in German as well as English is one way to prolong the visit. Combining the visit at Lüneburg Town Hall with neighbouring attractions, cafés, museums or shops will besides getting a longer stay also give the visitors a chance to get a better experience. Cooperation about product development with other interested parties is recommended.

The 2011 survey also showed a clear tendency of a non-existing international customer segment. There can be a number of reasons for this. To improve it there is some products that need to be available. English information about practical concerns should be on the webpage, like opening hours, café opportunities, parking facilities, availabilities of guided tours and so forth. There should be guided tours and/or signs with interesting information for the customers; otherwise the church will just be another building.

The visitors were unhappy about the condition of the sanitation facilities. Improving these conditions would make the overall experience better and help make customers recommend the attraction as well as return for another visit.

Recommendations for marketing development: As mentioned before, the webpage needs information in English in order to market the attraction for a foreign client. The webpage should also link to the webpage of The European Route of Brick Gothic (EuRoB). It is clear that more than half of the visitors pass by the attraction by coincidence. This means that they were not aware of the existence of the attraction. There is therefore a need to cooperate with local tourist information centres, other attractions, EuRoB and foreign partners to create awareness about the attraction. If there's no information about better and new product there is a risk that product development will not create an increase in visitor numbers.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

To develop heritage tourism at Lüneburg Town Hall in Lüneburg, it will be an advantage to use the rich history of the city. If the history of Lüneburg is incorporated in the product development, like a guided tour or a combined visit to a museum and the church, the historical heritage will become visible. This will be of interest to many potential customers in more than one way. It will attract more visitors directly to the church, but indirectly it will make Lüneburg more attractive to tourists in general and over time increase the number of guests in the city and eventually increase the number of visitors in Lüneburg Town Hall. Cooperation between the different attractions in Lüneburg will also serve this purpose.

3.5 Saint John's Church, Tartu

SWOT-analysis of Saint John's Church

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse cultural and spiritual program, representing both traditional and new/alternative spiritual practices • Meditation chambers, candle altar, breathe work sessions etc. • Terracotta sculptures are unique in the whole Europe • Participation in networks: Eurob.org and St John's Cultural Quarter • Access to the church-related networks, "end customers" • Good location and access: church located in the Centre of Tartu and good access to Tartu by public transportation (plane, bus, train) • Open 5 days a week (6 days in summer period) • Free entrance for visitors (charges apply for groups and viewing platform visitors) • Ecumenical openness • Good co-operation with the public sector and other partners. Common activities with the city, participation in a program of national holidays (Independence Day, Victory Day) and events and services of the University of Tartu • Good representation in Estonian National Broadcasting. TV-broadcasted national ceremonies and events, public recordings and live broadcasts of concerts and comments and opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient funding • Staff's professional skills are irregular in the field of tourism and serving the visitors • Incommodiousness: lack of rooms suitable for hosting different events and activities in the same time, lack of small-sized rooms on the street level and church loft not renovated. • Unheated church (due to insufficient funding) • Visitors lack of knowledge about the heritage of the red brick gothic and uniqueness of the terracotta sculptures • Lack of other Red Brick Gothic heritage outside the city (insufficient basis for networking)
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To offer the opportunity for alternative spiritual activities on a regular bases • The growth of the spiritual tourism/pilgrimage • There is a lack of a spiritual centrum in Tartu • Rich religious-cultural variety in the area (Lutherans, Orthodox, Catholic, Old Believers) • Active and growing congregation: potential for developing services and staff • Cooperation in the neighbourhood: Jaani Cultural Quarter and Hugo Treffner Gymnasium. • Conference tourism • Ecumenical co-operation • Good potentials for direct marketing: church networks, Russia & Latvia as growing markets • Cross-marketing in the co-operation with partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of sustainability of products in the situation of insufficient funding • No acceptance for entrance fee (tourist groups)

Conclusions

The most significant strengths of the church are related with the position of Jaani Church in the Public sector and the easy access to the end customers. If the goal is to develop new tourism products, the lack of other Red Brick Gothic heritage in the area is an important weakness. These circumstances can be successfully combined with the opportunities given by the variety of other heritage in the area and the growing potential of spiritual tourism, which is actually very much related to the heritage tourism. There should be a focus on the unique form of the sculptures.

History of Saint John's church

Tartu City

The city of Tartu dates back to the six hundred century to the erection of Tarbatu fortress. In 1030 the fortress was raided by the Russian prince Jaroslav the Wise who built a new fortress to control the area. In 1061 the Estonians had had enough of being under Russian rule and recaptured the castle. In 1224 Tartu was invaded again but this time it was German attackers. The Germans were only in control for a short time because in 1234 Dmitri of Novgorod was assaulted, captured and destroyed the castle. The Russians did not bother with the settlement of German merchants that had risen up and during the 1280's Tartu joined the Hanseatic League, mainly managing the trade between Lübeck and Russia (Lukka: 2009).

During the medieval times Tartu has been located in the centre of conflict for hundreds of years. There has been a constant fight for power between Sweden, Denmark and Russia and in 1721 the population of Tartu was down to 21 inhabitants. The population eventually recovered and Tartu went on to be the cultural centre for the awakening of Estonian nationalism in the second half of the 19th century (Lukka: 2009).

Tartu Jaani Church

Although the church has been destroyed a number of times, the medieval identity of the church is still obvious. Medieval architecture is a valuable and important part of Estonian heritage and Saint John's church is a very unique building in this context. The uniqueness is due to the extensive collection of terracotta sculptures, which is extremely rare in a European brick gothic context, more on this below (Altoa: 2012).

The origin of the church is not fully known. It is certain that there has been a congregation since 1323, but whether or not the church in some form existed at that time is unknown. There has however been found evidence of a wooden building by archaeologists where the church is standing today (Altoa: 2012).

The present building is a product of different construction plans and different restoration projects. During the original construction the design of the interior was changed, which in turn let to changes in the supporting beams. This affected the foundation and ultimately the walls of the church became seriously unstable. These faults and general restoration was rectified between 2002 and 2004 and in

2005 the church opened for visitors. The church was restored to medieval appearance (Altoa: 2012).

Terracotta Sculptures

The collection of terracotta sculptures at Saint John's church consists of approximately one thousand pieces which are almost seven hundred years old. Many of these sculptures are currently kept in storage rooms due to the delicate condition they are in at the moment. The burnt clay is especially vulnerable to corrosion due to salt accumulation in the clay. Therefore, many of the sculptures are currently under restoration, which is a time consuming process due to the delicate condition of the sculptures and the status of being under heritage protection. Focus should be on these.

There are sculptures everywhere inside and outside the church. They come in all shapes and sizes; from the very elaborate Enthroned Christ with Mary and John the Baptist to the smaller decorative figures.

Viewing platform

The observation platform is accessible from the room in the thirty meter high steeple of the church. From the platform there is an amazing view of the historical old Town of Tartu. When the visitor has climbed the 135 steps to the platform he or she can see the heart of Tartu. This is an ideal starting point for a visit to Tartu because it provides the visitor with a bird view of down town Tartu and therefore this viewpoint is a good starting point for anyone who is interested in the history of Tartu and the surrounding areas.



Photo: Peeter Säre

There is no admission price for children under the age of seven to visit the viewpoint but for adults there is a ticket price of 1.6 € and for student and seniors the price is 1 €.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Saint John's Church

The church is located in Tartu city, which is the second largest town in Estonia. There are more than 100.000 inhabitants and the city is located less than 200 km away from Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. Because Tartu is a relatively large town it has both an airport and a university. Besides Saint John's church there is a wide variety of other tourist attractions in the town, from art Galleries to Viking museums.

The church is open to the public from Tuesday to Saturday between 10 am to 6 pm from the 1st of September to the end of May. In June, July and August the opening hours is extended to 7 pm. The church has a regular Sunday service at 11 pm.

On the webpage of Saint John's church there is great information on the history of the church and practical information for the tourists, like opening hours. On a smaller note there could be a remark about parking facilities and general entrance fee. But the webpage does indicate that parking facilities are good because of the location of the church and that there is no general entrance fee. The webpage is very informative about the viewing platform from the church tower.

Given the central location of the church there should be good access to dining places and accommodation facilities. The city of Tartu also has a webpage with lots of useful information for potential tourists; among other things it presents daily and upcoming events in the vicinity. Primary awareness sources are recommendations, the internet, and travel guides/brochures, while many have also visited by chance.

Visitor Characteristics of Saint John's Church cliental

In relation to Saint John's Church no questionnaires were collected in 2011, as the partner had not joined the project at that time. Therefore, the analysis of visitor characteristics for the church will be based on the figures from 2012, where 366 questionnaires were collected.

At Saint John's Church, 63 pct. of visitors are visiting for the first time, while the rest are (on average) visiting 8 times, which is a very high number compared to other attractions in the project. The primary means of transportation at the church is walking (50 pct.). Primary awareness sources are recommendations, the internet, and travel guides/brochures, while many have also visited by chance.

In terms of time spent at the church, 53 pct. of visitors spent less than 30 minutes and 32 pct. spend between 30 and one hour. This means that only 15 pct. of visitors spend more than one hour at the attraction, which is a number that could be improved by improving the product. When they visit, 75 pct. of visitors are accompanied by others, mainly adults. The average age of visitors at the church is 39 years-old, and it seems that ages of the visitors are spread rather equally from 10 to 60 years-

old. 61 pct. of visitors are females and 39 pct. are males. Of these, 52 pct. are from the home country, Estonia. It means that Saint John's Church actually has a very high number of foreigners visiting the attraction, with most people coming from Germany (10 pct.), Russia (8 pct.), and Finland (6 pct.).

The primary motivations for people to come visit the church are that they are on cultural holidays (29 pct.), holiday to relax (23 pct.) and on a city trip (13 pct.). In terms of accommodation, 20 pct. are staying at hotels, 20 pct. private and 13 pct. at youth hostels, while the rest is spread across the other categories. These two dimensions are interesting to look into, because they can state how the average visitor prefers to have his/her vacation, and where you can reach them with your marketing efforts.

Strategic Recommendations for Saint John's Church

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: Parking facilities (3, 5) and catering facilities (3, 8) are rated the lowest, so these elements should have the attention from the management at the church. Also, sanitary facilities could be improved, although it is rated relatively decent. Generally, however, Saint John's Church is doing great in terms of satisfaction rates in the questionnaire survey. In fact, the overall impression and general satisfaction are both at 4, 6. Also, price, price performance, service / assistance, content, and cleanliness are rated very high. This means that in relation to product development at their own church, management have to focus on very few things that should be improved. What should be mentioned, however, is that a very clear majority (85 pct.) of visitors are spending less than one hour at the attraction, which could indicate that they is not enough entertainment for visitors. Therefore, it could be considered to improve shopping facilities and ways of entertaining even further. For example, museum or exhibitions related to the church could be beneficial. Internationally, it could be an idea to collaborate more with similar attractions, and in that way create products such as events or exhibitions that can be used by all partners. Of course, the fact that it is a church sets certain limits for the Saint John's (and might also be a main reason for the relatively short time spend at the place), but it is argued that the recommended product developments listed above will not compromise this perspective.

Recommendations for marketing development: Saint John's church has a very well developed webpage with useful information on English, making the attraction available for foreigners. To improve the awareness of the attraction cooperating with all the interested parties in Tartu is recommended.

Combining efforts can boost tourism and therefore it is recommended taking the initiative to create this kind of cooperation. Even further of free tools for marketing the attraction on the internet should also be exploited. According the 2012-survey, very few concrete marketing tools have been part of spreading awareness for the visitors. In fact, the internet is on top of list, even though it only has a relatively low number of 12 pct. The rest is more or less equally spread on the rest of the

available tools for spreading awareness, which means that most of the tools have less than 6 pct... In that way, it could be argued that management at the church should focus on fewer, but more concrete tools, in spread of trying to exploit all available tools. Here, the internet has some free opportunities such as social media that could be exploited. Travel guide/brochures also seem to have been relatively successful for the attraction.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

Like the other Red Brick Gothic attractions it is recommended to develop heritage tourism at Saint John's Church through the rich history of the city. If the history of Tartu is incorporated in the product development, like a guided tour or a combined visit to a museum and the church, the historical heritage will become visible. This will be of interest to many potential customers in more than one way. It will attract more visitors directly to the church, but indirectly it will make Tartu city more attractive to tourists in general and over time increase the number of guests in the city and eventually increase the number of visitors in Saint John's Church. Cooperation between the different attractions in Tartu will also serve this purpose.

3.6 Saint Bendt's Church

SWOT-analysis and general descriptions about visitors, marketing efforts and future strategies is provided by Holger Rasmussen – late Chairman of Saint Bendt's Parish council.

SWOT-analysis of Saint Bendt's Church

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medieval church with cathedral. • The first red-brick church in northern Europe. • Roman style. • Important and elaborate part of Danish and Swedish history through more than 200 years. • Lots of historical purpose and items. • The present building is from the 1160's, beautiful and equipped with a tower. • Primary funds, 95 pct., are from the ministry of the Danish church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor previous marketing effort. • Not enough public attention. • Not in top 10 of popular churches in Denmark in a recent investigation. • Enormous reliance of one economic source.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new parish council that was elected three years ago is more focused on marketing than previous councils. • There is a need for and potential possibilities for marketing in international miscellaneous guides. • There is a unique marketing opportunity for old Danish history by the use of the church. • Opening hours have recently been extended. The church is now open from 10 am to 5 pm each day and personnel are available to help tourists. • There are scheduled improvements of the website. • Conservation and renovation of the church museum is underway. • There are possibilities for outside investment. • Visits are free, but there is encouragement for voluntary donations. • Future cooperation with Sorø Church is a possibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That previously unused possibilities remain unused. • There are significant administrative limitations in form of marketing expertise, time and funds. • The project of promoting the church as a tourist attraction is heavily reliant on the parish council. • There is parish council elections every fourth year, therefore the tourist attraction project is almost totally dependent on the persons in the council. • Re-election is therefore a threat. Next election is one year.
Conclusions	
<p>For many years tourism has not been a priority at Saint Bendt's Church and therefore marketing and product development have been virtually none existing. However the latest parish council has started to promote the church and will continue to do so as long as possible which means as long as there is a consensus among the members of the council. The church has enormous potential as a tourist attraction, both the building and the history of the same is of a highly unique and</p>	

exceptional quality. The challenge is to start promoting the church both internationally and locally. The product is finished, promotion and marketing efforts is the area of focus for Saint Bendt's church, which is already being prepared and executed.

History of Saint Bendt's Church

The building

Saint Bendt's Church was built from 1160 to around 1200 by King Valdemar as a monument to his father Knud Lavard who was murdered in Haraldsted Forrest. It is constructed of red-bricks in roman-time style and is the oldest red-brick church in northern Europe (Munkevejen: 2011). The building style and technique seems to be influenced by the Lombardy (Nordenskirker: 2011).

In 1900-1909 during restorations of the church, remnants of a previous church was found in the walls and in the floor of Saint Bendt's Church. The size of the older church is estimated to be around the size of the ship of the existing church. Some of the artefacts found during the restoration are now on display in a small museum inside Saint Bendt's church (Nordenskirker: 2011).

At first the church was dedicated to Maria and Knud Lavard, but later it was rededicated to the cleric saint Benedict, hence Bendt's (Nordenskirker: 2011).

Early history

Knud Lavard was buried in front of the high altar in the old church (Nordenskirker: 2011). In 1141 the remains of Knud Lavard was dug up and shelved because miracles had occurred around the grave. The 8th November 1169 pope Alexander III officially accepted the miracles concerning Knud Lavard. At the same celebratory ceremony for Knud Lavard in 1170 King Valdemar's son Knud, was crowned king Knud VI. In 1182 Valdemar the Great was buried in a temporary grave and is believed to have been properly buried under the rule of Valdemar the Victorious.

A major fire razed the church in 1241 and the restoration lasted up until 1268. Around 1300 the church was again devastated by a large fire and in 1411 Margrethe 1st donated a large monetary gift which was used to renovate the building and buy interior, of which it is believed that the choir chairs in the church today is bought from that monetary gift.

Later history

After the reformation the estate of the church was surpassed to the throne and in 1660 the monastery was surpassed to private ownership. In 1806 both the monastery and the church was razed by a fire. The church was renovated from 1817-1817 but the monastery was torn down. Since then the church has gone through further restoration, both in 1868-1869 and in 1900-1909. During these restorations small glazed tiles was found, believed to be grave tiles. These tiles are on display in the church along with coins found during the restoration as well (Nordenskirker: 2011).

From 1584 the church functioned as a place of governance. Laws were adopted here and kings praised. The last king to be praised here was the duke Christian who would later be King Christian the 4th. The last time the church was used as a place of governance was in 1805 at which point the power structure had changed (Munkevejen: 2011).

Tombs and Murals

The church is home to the tombs of Valdemar the Great and his family it therefore represents a significant part of Danish history. In front of the high altar the rulers of Denmark resides up until Erik Menved. In the tomb of Valdemar the Great a led tablet was found with inscriptions on both sides. The two inscriptions are from different times. One of them is from the actual burial and the other from the relocation of the grave after the completion of the church. The tomb of Erik Menved and his wife queen Ingeborg is commemorated with a black limestone. The limestone is large and decorated with carved pictures, symbols, figures, metal plates and inscriptions.

Besides tombs of the important persons of the time, there are, although damaged, very important murals in the church, especially the politically significant cross section which indicate the turbulent environment of the time. These murals are dated back to 1235 and are estimated to be the oldest ones in the church. The large number of murals has been covered and uncovered at different times, which explains the varying conditions of the many murals all around the church on both walls and pillars. The murals have many symbolic, political, historical, cultural and decorative meanings and together with the tombs and the history of the church they form a vacuum of unique Danish history and heritage.



Photo: BJ Astrologi

The christening font in the church is made from sandstone and is dated to around 1150. Like the church the font is richly decorated. The font shows scenes from the childhood of Jesus.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Saint Bendt's Church

The church is located in Ringsted, in western Zealand, right in the middle of the city.

Saint Bendt's church is open for the public from the 1st of May to the 15th of September between 10 am and 17 pm. The rest of the year it is open daily from 1 pm to 3 pm. Guided tours in the church is possible if booked in advance with the church clerk.

There is a small shop in the church where it is possible to buy postcards, souvenirs and literature about the church and its history. There is no entrance fee.

There are two restaurants in the proximity of the church and Ringsted is easily accessed from the highway. Along the highway in the proximity of Ringsted there has been put up visible signs raising awareness of the church.

The church in Sorø is situated 16 kilometres away and is also rich in culture and history. This church is an interesting site to visit for tourists that find Saint Bendt's church interesting. In Ringsted the local museum "Historiens Hus, (House of History)" which focuses on the medieval age is considering opening an exhibit and tourist office directly opposite the church if funds from the municipal returns with the new promotion of the church. "Historiens Hus" is not cooperating much with the parish council at the moment. It is new and helps to make the use of the tours more effective. For instance they arrange free tours in the church every Saturday and these tours are very popular among both children and adults. These tours are only advertised in the local newspaper.

Visitor characteristics of Saint Bendt's Church cliental

Saint Bendt's church is at the moment primary a church of the Danish common church. As such the church functions as a place of churchly service every Sunday with about 150 attendances and as a place of weddings, funerals, christenings and confirmations.

Because there is no fees for visiting the church there is no exact number for how many visitors the church has a tourist attraction. However it is estimated by the parish council chairman that about 6000-8000 tourists visit every year. There is between 50 and 100 busses with groups that get guided tours every year.

Because of the characteristics of the church most visitors are people that are interested in the history of the church, the tombs, murals and building.

The Dagmar cross is the most significant and known feature of the church among foreigners. Many of the visitors are Swedish; probably do to the fact that the kings buried inside the church at the time also ruled parts of Sweden.

Both local and foreign visitors are impressed and taking in by the size and the history of the church, visitors are very positive about the visitor experience of Saint Bendt's.

Strategic Recommendations for Saint Bendt's Church

Like the other attractions there will now be analysis for the purpose of recommendations for future developments of the attraction. The analysis will be based on information from the above analysis which in turn is based on interview information from the chairman of Saint Bendt's parish council.

The reason that the parish council is the primary source of information is that it has taken many steps and made lots of initiatives the past three years. Saint Bendt's church parish council is also the primary source because the attraction was added after the initial SWOT analyses and after the initiation of the questionnaire investigation.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: The church parish council already has a more or less finished product in terms of contents. The neglected museum inside the church is being renovated and re-launched.

In cooperation with churches in Copenhagen, popular concerts in Saint Bendt's church have been arranged. This has been done in order to attract a wider audience and create exposure and attention about Saint Bendt's church. However even though the content of the product is finished, how it is perceived and delivered to the visitors might not be. The visitors need to have access to the history of the church at Saint Bendt's. Information signs and brochures, something to touch, something to smell and taste, those kinds of things gives the visitor an experience. For a relatively small amount a walking and biking route could be created. This route could take the visitor through the church and other interesting places in Ringsted. This could be combined with a similar route in Sorø. The two routes should therefore be connected. In an international context it would be beneficial to cooperate or maybe even join the European Route of Brick Gothic and have the routes on this webpage. They are also developing bicycle routes and therefore it would be useful to have a collection of these products on both their website and links from Saint Bendt's church to European Route of Brick Gothic.

Another obvious opportunity is to cooperate with Sorø church. There could be some demand for a combined tour with Sorø Church 16 km away. This church has an equally rich history especially concerning Absalon and his role in early Danish royal history. This will make a broader appeal for the audience because a trip to mid-Zealand will be more substantial. Cooperation will also be beneficial due to a collective effort.

Although there is very limited funds in Ringsted municipality there are ideas for opening a combined museum and tourism office directly opposite the church if tourism in Ringsted in general improves. To show this kind of improvement the church should start counting the tourist visitors, to get an idea about the effectiveness of new and improved products. Saint Bendt's church has a good product, but the potential is not utilized. Pilgrimage from the place Knud Lavard was murdered to the church, approximately 12 kilometres, should be printed.

Recommendations for marketing improvements: The most significant improvement concerning marketing is the fact that the parish council is now aware of the area and concerned about Saint Bendt's as a tourist attraction. Opening hours has been extended, website scheduled for improvement and the museum part updated, all this means that accessibility has been improved. The council is well aware of the fact that promoting in international context is needed and the council is

also working on getting historians involved and interested in literature and research about the church and its history and through this get exposure of the church.

The councils marketing vision is to spread the knowledge of the church significance in Danish history and the magnificence of the building itself. Through this they count on attracting more of the same clientele they already attract. However, knowledge about what clientele that visits the church is only very rough estimates. In efforts to increase visitor numbers it is recommended that the church make a visitor survey to, among other things, find out where people come from, how old they are, what country they come from, how they got there and how they honestly find the experience of the visit at Saint Bendt's. This information is very useful in marketing efforts.

The council and "Historiens Hus" is well aware of possible future cooperation, but especially "Historiens Hus" lack funds and therefore further plans of mutual promotion of Ringsted as a place to come for tourists depends on the success of the church councils efforts in marketing.

Both in the church council and in "Historiens Hus" there are no professional marketing staffs; if the funds were available professional staff probably could speed up the process.

Therefore, the main recommendations are to cooperate closely with Sorø Church, improve the webpage and to promote the path between the place where Knud Lavard was murdered and the church. This is suitable for organized walks and for runs.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

The parish council of Saint Bendt's church has the opportunity to have a closer cooperation with other red brick attractions in the BSR. So by promoting the history of Saint Bendts Church the BSR heritage will be developed and nurtured. There are good historic connections from this part of Zealand to the Baltic area and the Swedish wars and in extension the Swedish conquest of this area, in other words Skokloster, Olavinlinna castle, Narva castle and Häme castle etc.

By making the history of Saint Bendt's more visible and accessible to the visitors and by increased marketing efforts the Baltic Sea Region will get a strengthened cultural heritage. However, this is only the case if Saint Bendt's Church is marketed outside Denmark otherwise the Baltic heritage will not be strengthened. Information in both English and German should be available on the internet and inside the church in the material available for tourists.

3.7 Sorø Abbey Church

SWOT-analysis and general descriptions about visitors, marketing efforts and future strategies is provided by Jens Kristian Poulsen – Director of Stiftelsen Sorø Akademi.

The situation of Sorø Abbey Church is a little different from the other attractions in this paper, because it's privately owned by Sorø Academy. Sorø Academy's goal for Sorø Abbey Church is not that the church is supposed to create a profit or in other ways maximize the number of visitors. On the other hand it is not Sorø Academy's goal to discourage visits to the church. The church and the museum are accessible for the public but regardless of the number of visitors Sorø Academy maintains the building because it is a unique part of the academy.

On the other hand Sorø Abbey Church is the largest tourist attraction in Sorø and since the number of students that enrol in the academy is dependent partly on the popularity of the city and what the city offers, Sorø Academy has an interest in developing a strong tourist attraction to create local attractiveness.

SWOT-analysis of Sorø Abbey Church

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The church is located together with the academy and the beautiful surrounding nature, which makes a complete and diverse attraction. • Rich and important historic heritage connected to the church. • The newly established "Munkeruten, (the Monk route)" a bicycle route, passes right through Sorø. • The church is privately owned, so there are fewer restrictions compared to a public owned church. • Cooperation with "Sorø business and tourism office" • Cooperation with local municipality. • Sorø Abbey Church is the largest tourist attraction in Sorø. • Like in many southern European countries signs along the highway point to the attraction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privately owned, which means the church is also privately financed, in this case by "Sorø Erhvervsakademi". Funds are therefore limited. Ecclesiastical activities are however financed by the Danish public church. • No public funding.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no real efforts to try and attract more tourists to the attraction; therefore there are possibilities to attract a larger audience by making an effort. • The church can function as a place for concerts and other arrangements. • Cooperation with other tourist attractions. • Increased awareness due to better marketing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of the church and the museum inside are expensive, and funds are limited.

Conclusions

The church does not generate an income and therefore the number of tourists is of little concern to Sorø Academy but what the academy is interested in is a city full of life and offers for its population so as to attract students. The church is very significant to Sorø and contains a large and important part of early Danish royal heritage. The attraction has many strengths and lots of opportunities to develop but funding are limited and so is the motivation as long as the academy has enough students. The challenge is therefore to create incentives for the owners to improve the attraction or to make efforts that can benefit the city, restaurants etc.

History of Sorø Abbey Church

The Building

Work on Sorø Abbey Church was started by monks from Esrum, northern Zealand, in 1161 and ordered so by bishop Absalon. At that time the grounds housed a monastery as well. It is unknown when the construction of the church was completed, but in 1201 Absalon was buried in front of the high altar so the church is believed to have been more or less completed at that time.

Sorø Abbey Church and Saint Bendt's Church are constructed at the same time and both are red-brick buildings. The red-brick was very contemporary at the time. Like Saints Bents church it is believed that the Lombardy masons from northern Italy came to Denmark and trained Danish masons. This building style became very dominant in all European church constructions in this period (Nordenskirker: 2011).

Contrary to Ringsted church which is built in a slightly more flamboyant way Sorø Abbey Church is simplistic in its expression. The two churches are very similar. Both have a nave and two aisles with transepts and side chapels (Nordenskirker: 2011). The building has been excavated many times and in 1970 remnants of the floor from o. 1200 was found. The floor is believed to have been produced locally and furthermore believed to be the first Danish tiles. These tiles are now on display on the Danish National Museum in Copenhagen and in Sorø County museum.

Early history

There are a lot of old preserved antics. The altarpiece frame work is from 1654, the chancel arch crucifix is from 1527, the choir lattice is from 1653, the pulpit is from 1650, the christening font is made of sandstone and is from 1655 and the organ is from 1774. There is also a few murals preserved these are dated between 1250 and 1500 (Nordenskirker: 2011).

Before Sorø Abbey Church was built there was a small benedict church on the site. Bishop Absalon's parents, Asser Rig and Mrs. Inge, were buried in this church. So when Absalon decided to build Sorø Abbey Church it was his wish that it should serve as the burial place for his lineage, the Hvide bloodline. The burial place in front of the high altar was reserved for the bishop himself. After the completion of the church Skjalm Hvide's and his brother Toke's coffin was moved to Sorø. In 1947 a lead sheet was found in the grave with an inscription that said "Here lays Skjalm, the archbishop Absalon's granddad." Also Absalon's parents' graves were transferred to Sorø Abbey

Church in 1285. Absalon's grave was placed in front of the high altar, but later the altar was moved in front of the grave. On the grave there is a statue of Absalon in full episcopal vestment and he is raising his hand in blessing. The statue has other symbolic details as well (Nordenskirker: 2011).

Besides Absalon's personal ambitions for Sorø Abbey Church, it served as a highly religious monastery. The fryers were so busy with their religious duties that they did not have time to maintain and preserve the building and the land belonging to the monastery. Therefore the church was also home to a congregation of less important and pious fryers, whose main purpose was to take care of the church, the grounds and the true fryers (Nordenskirker: 2011). Throughout the middle age the reputation and prestige of the monastery grew considerably due to the hard religious work of the fryers.

After the murder of King Erik Klipping in Finderup barn his son Erik Menved made a deal with the monks of Sorø to donate back lands that had been withheld from them and in return they guaranteed that that his brother Valdemar had a proper burial. His other brother Christoffer II was also buried in Sorø Abbey Church, to the left of Absolon. Later also Valdemar Atterdag's body was moved to Sorø Abbey Church. Later his daughter Margrethe I was buried next to her father, see the picture above. The church is therefore very significant because it contains many rather large and significant pieces of early Danish royal history.

Later history

The grave of Absalon was first opened in 1536, then again in 1827 and last by the Danish National Museum in 1947. In 1536 Absalon's ring and a shrine was found. In 1827 the ring, the shrine and the lead text plates was removed from the grave and in 1947 the skeleton was examined. The grave pieces are now on display in the church (Nordenskirker: 2011). These items are unique attractions.

After the reformation in 1536 the crown became the supreme ruler and the monastery therefore belonged to the crown. In 1586 two thirds of the rich monastery became the economic base for an academy and school in Sorø. In the sixteenth century with King Christian the Fourth's academy the church was decorated with a lot of baroque furniture, among other things the large organ. The importance of the academy is visual by the graves inside and outside the church, where Ludvig Holberg and B.S. Ingemann is buried (Sorø sogn: 2011). Both are famous Danish writers. Ludvig Holberg is today considered the father of Danish literature. He wrote both scientific and comedian books and to this day his characters are being portrayed in modern works. Holberg donated his fortune to the academy. B.S. Ingemann was the headmaster until the academy closed in 1849 and was a scholar of both Danish language and literature. He is one of the most celebrated Danish authors of hymns, having written very popular Christmas hymns which are still being sung today.

Absalon, 1128 – 1201.

From 1158 to 1192 Absalon was bishop of Roskilde and from 1177 he was archbishop of Lund (SV). As such he was one of the most prominent and powerful politicians and religious lords in Denmark in the 12th century. Absalon and his brother Esbern joined foster brotherhood with

Valdemar the Great and when the latter became the supreme ruler of Denmark in 1157 Absalon gained office as bishop of Roskilde. Absalon must have been one of the first Danes to get an education from the University of Paris and he was therefore chosen to rearrange the Danish church because Valdemar and the previous archbishop did not see eye to eye (Gyldendal: 2012).

Absalon was the leading character in the Danish kings' crusader politics. He changed the way the Danish church functioned to a far more pro-papal attitude. It was a new power base in the Nordic countries. As such he became the soul of Danish foreign politics and the reason that Denmark and the Vatican became close allies. With all this influence Absalon managed to get control over large parts of the inner Baltic Region and large parts of northern Germany (Gyldendal: 2012). These parts were home to Slavic tribes which had had nearly no resistance during the Danish civil war before Valdemar the Great and had therefore pillaged the Danish coasts. Absalon created a line of coastal defence and began hunting pirate ships and occupy enemy territory. Absalon was very active in these campaigns and fought many battles. He also built a castle, Absalon's Castle, in Copenhagen (Danmarkshistorien: 2012).

When Absalon was elected archbishop he maintained his position as bishop of Roskilde. To be both bishop and archbishop was extremely rare and a testimony to the influence Absalon had and the respect he had among his peers and the pope. In 1167 Absalon was given Copenhagen and the surrounding lands. At that time Copenhagen wasn't large at all, it was a small trading area and its original name was, directly translated from Danish, Harbour of the traders. The main commodity was herrings. Only in 1417 Roskilde Church surrendered its claim on Copenhagen (Gyldendal: 2012).

Key influences on the visitor experience at Sorø Abbey Church

Sorø Abbey Church is located at the edge of Sorø city on the grounds of Sorø academy right next to Sorø Lake. The church is open to the public and opening hours is about to expand so that the church is open from 9am to 5pm. There are also plans to let the church be unattended by staff during the day and instead develop an app for tourists to download. This app should serve as a guide for visitors.

Parking facilities are also very good and they are free. There's in no entrance fee as well. Unfortunately there are few restaurants and hotels in Sorø and not a lot of other attractions to visit, but a new art museum have recently opened in Sorø. Guided tours of the church can be booked through Sorø Erhvervs- og Turistkontor (Sorø Business and tourism office). These kinds of information are important to potential visitors. As Sorø Academy is not heavily marketing the Abbey Church, it is very hard to access information. Both the webpage for Sorø Business and Tourism office and the webpage for Sorø parish do not display this information and the webpage for Sorø parish doesn't come in English. The webpage of Sorø Business and Tourism office does have a very well developed and diverse description of the offers of Sorø which needs to be added.

Saint Bendt's Church is located 16 kilometres away in Ringsted and has a very rich cultural heritage as well. Cooperation between the two churches would be ideal because they very much appeals to the same cliental. Both have good accessibility from highway E20.

Sorø municipal council wishes that the city becomes a cultural centre. The municipality has the option of creative use of the church so there is a need to create cooperation between the municipality and Sorø Academy. This cooperation could be the platform to develop Sorø Abbey Church as a tourist attraction.

Visitor characteristics of Sorø Abbey Church cliental

Like Saint Bendt's church, Sorø Abbey Church also serves as a church of the Danish common church. Between 100 and 150 people attend the Sunday services. Sorø academy has no entrance fee. The number of tourists visiting the church is estimated to be 30.000 visitors. Around 20 pct. of these visitors are estimated to be foreigners traveling from the neighbouring countries of Denmark. Most visitors are middle-aged and culturally interested. A lot of the tourists also visit the Academy garden and the academy itself in combination with the church visit. In the church there is a small exhibition with the pieces from the grave of Arch bishop Absalon on display, these pieces are almost 900 years old. Especially two pieces are very famous and unique; Absalon's ring and his staff, both are on display in the church.



Photo: Sorøbib

Guided tours are only performed in Danish, but it is possible to get a guided tour in English if arrangements are made with Sorø business and the tourism office.

Strategic Recommendations for Sorø Abbey Church

Like Saint Bendt's Church, Sorø Abbey Church was added to the AGORA 2.0 project after the initial SWOT-analyses and after the initiation of the questionnaire investigation. Therefore the following recommendations for future developments of the attraction is in large parts based on the information provided by the Director of Stiftelsen Sorø Akademi - Jens Kristian Poulsen.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors:

Recommendations for product development: Sorø Abbey Church distinguishes itself from the rest of the attractions in this analysis by not having a direct need of visitors. However, it does have a need for students and one of the features making Sorø Academy unique is the academies ownership and right to use of the 1000 year old and historically rich church. Therefore Sorø Academy needs the church to be a good product that can market both the academy and the city.

The story of the church and Absalon is historically fascinating and interesting and tells the story about Denmark as a superpower with strong connections to the pope. Information on signs, pamphlets, brochures and maps with different routes around the grounds will help the visitors access this part of the product. Concerts, conferences, storytelling for kids on Saturdays and other initiatives like these will help visitors see, understand and appreciate the product in whole new ways. Inviting classes from elementary school and giving them guided tours will both educate the children and serve as prime advertisement for the academy among its potentially future students.

A stronger cooperation between Saint Bendt's Church and Sorø Church would be an advantage for both. This in turn would make Sorø and Ringsted more likely to be visited since there would be "enough" things to see to fill out a whole day. On this note it is also recommended for Sorø Abbey Church that routes with sites and a brochure to take along is developed, both in Danish, German and English. It would also, like Saint Bendt's Church, be a good idea to cooperate with the European Route of Brick Gothic.

Recommendations for marketing improvements: As mentioned above, inviting school children for guided tours is also good promotion for the academy; it creates awareness for future students.

The webpage of Sorø parish needs updating. It needs to include links to the European Route of Brick Gothic and opportunities to access information about the church in English. It is also recommended that the academy takes contact to Sorø Business and Tourism office and suggests adding information about opening hours, fees, parking facilities and a link to the homepage of the parish. This will improve accessibility by attracting visitors that would otherwise have gone someplace else because they had too many unanswered questions about practical information. The marketing in total should be more professional.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage:

As mentioned above Sorø and Absalon have many connections to places in the Baltic Sea Region. As archbishop of Lund and conqueror of the shores of Poland Absalon influenced more than just

Danish history, he influenced the Baltic Region. The battle efforts of Absalon was followed by his nephew Valdemar the Victorious, Valdemar the Great's son, who went on a crusade to Estonia and according to the legend by the grace of god received Dannebrog (the Danish flag) from heaven in 1219 and won the decisive battle in Estonia.

If Sorø Abbey Church is promoted through its rich history and combined with advertisement in the Baltic Sea Region there is a strong potential for making a considerable contribution to a common Baltic Sea Region heritage. If it is not in the interest of Sorø Academy or in their capacity to make these developments this paper recommends that Ringsted parish council in their marketing efforts try to incorporate the history of Sorø Abbey Church and Absalon and by doing so Ringsted Church will have a more complete product to market.

However, the BSR heritage will only be strengthened if Sorø Church and Academy is marketed in English outside of Denmark. Therefore there should be elaborate information in English both on the internet, in the church and in the material available for tourists.

The Brick Gothic Association – The European Route

The association was founded on 26 September 2007 by constitution, while activities started in 2008. Due to efforts from the German Foundation for Monument Protection, two European projects and different initiatives undertaken by individual members, today the European Route of Brick Gothic encompasses cities, regions and heritage sites located in the southern Baltic region (eurob.org, 2012).

The association is comprised of members that are conscious of the value, significance and potential for cultural tourism to be found in their Brick Gothic heritage sites. These members have therefore decided to pool their resources in order to expand awareness of the cultural inheritance to be found at these sites amongst the broader public. The purpose of the European Route of Brick Gothic association is thus the promotion of art, culture, scientific research, historical learning and understanding amongst nations and people. The overall aim is ultimately to foster, develop and promote a sustainable form of cultural tourism along the route (eurob.org, 2012).

It has 45 members, of which 32 are ordinary members and some additional are waiting to join. Any type of institution or person can be a member of the association. However, ordinary members are usually cities or a region, e.g. the Island of Rügen. In the case of cities or towns, in order to be obtained there should be a basic tourism infrastructure like tourist information, gastronomic services, and usually there should be an agreement from political side. It is also important that the members have the capacity to develop tourism, by being responsible for the marketing aspect, and that there is a relevant heritage side, including churches and parishes. Lastly, a member should be within a certain geographic proximity, as all members are from the Baltic Sea Region. Also, minor associations, like the Lüneburg monasteries, can be members. In this case, the six monasteries of Lüneburg count as a full member, although they share the costs. The cost to be an ordinary member though is 2500 Euro (eurob.org, 2012).

As of 2013, management will consist of an executive secretary and a head of managing board, both from Germany, as well as four other representatives from Gdansk in Poland, Haderslev in Denmark, Greifswald in Germany and Lüneburg in Germany. Ultimately, the foundation of the association should lead to cooperative product development with participation of tourism experts, heritage specialists, and stakeholders.

Overview 2: Members of the European Route of Red Brick Gothic

Country	Red Brick Gothic attraction
Denmark	Haderslev
Estonia	St. John's Church Tartu Dome Cathedral
Germany	Bad Doberan Minster and Charnel House Markt 11 St. Mary's Church Greifswald Ruins of the Eldena monastery St. Nicholas' Cathedral Stralsund Town Hall St. Mary's Church Stralsund St. Nicolas' Church Stralsund Church of the Holy Spirit Stralsund St. George's Church St. Nicholas' Church Wismar St. Mary's Church Wismar Church of the Holy Spirit Wismar St. Mary's Church at Bergen St. John's Church at Schaprode St. Mary's Church in Waase on Ummanz Poseritz Church St. John's Church St. Nicholas Church Lüneburg St. Nicholas' court in Bardowick Lüne Yard City Gates of Neubrandenburg St. John's Church and Franciscan Monastery Chapel of St. George Treptow Gate Rathaus Parchim St. Marienkirche St. Georgenkirche

Poland

Artus Court Gdansk
St. Mary's Church Gdansk
St. Nicholas' Church Gdansk
Warmia Chapter Castle
High Gate
Cathedral Church of St. James the Elder
Old Town Hall Olsztyn
Mazowieckich Dukes Palace
Plock Science Association
Defence Tower Plock
City Walls Plock
Malachowskiego College
Trumpet House
Town House Stargard Szczecinski
St. John's Baptist Church
Bastion
The Pyrzycka Gate
The Gothic House
St. John's Church Szczecin
Old City Hall Szczecin
St. Peter's and Paul's Church
St. James Cathedral
The Bridge Gate Torun
Cathedral Basilica of St. John the Baptist St.
John the Evangelist
The Leaning Gate Torun
Copernicus' House

Source: www.eurob.org

4. Sand Dunes

4.1 County of Lębork and Słowiński National Park, Poland

SWOT-analysis of County of Lębork and Słowiński National Park

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sand dunes landscape in Słowiński National Park • The wealth of natural and geographical advantages of the Baltic counties (Słowiński National Park, „Blue Land”) all year long • Cyclical cultural and sport events (Codfish Festival, Offshore angling championship) • Promotion of Łeba ("Principality of Łeba”) • Existing tourist facilities (e.g. agro tourism, horse riding, biking, windsurfing, yachting) • A very good natural conditions and ecological tourism development (Słowiński National Park as a world biosphere reserve designated by UNESCO) • Five different tourist trails (walking and cycling) of 200 km length • Birds habitats as an attraction for ornithology lovers and professionals • Many museums and sightseeing places nearby • Good recognition of the sand dunes abroad • Very diversified landscape including sand dunes, the sea, lakes, rivers, grass fields, forests and peat lands • Dunes being an inspiration for artists, painting workshops, film and commercial film set-ups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under-consumption of assets and natural resources • Insufficient use of trails • Insufficient cooperation with Scandinavia and the Baltic countries - the closest neighbours. • Lack of markings and descriptions of some hiking trails • No water routes • The considered tourism season only being from May 1st to 31st of August • Limited frequency of the public transportation after season • Limited accommodation and gastronomy base after the season • No possibility to rent a bike after the end of the season • Language barrier , lack of knowledge of English among people employed in tourism industry • Lack of local merchandising • Low accessibility
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poland in the European Union, access to the EU funds for development • Extensive experience in obtaining EU funds • Fashion (in Poland and in Europe) to new forms of tourism • To be a part of St. Jacob Route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seasonality in tourism • Unforeseeable weather • Complicated procedures and the high demands of institutions providing financial support
Conclusions	
<p>As it is difficult and time consuming for the County of Lębork to obtain financial support from public institutions, corporate sponsorships are important to maintain a steady cash flow. Such funding could benefit the county in several ways. Firstly, improve marking and descriptions of hiking trails. Without these, the visitors have few incentives to visit the place. This results in an insufficient use of trails. Thus, it can also be questioned whether or not the right amount of trails exists at the moment taking the current demand into consideration. Secondly, increased funding could help the County of Lębork to establish closer relationships with the neighbouring counties. Such relationships could be efficient for knowledge sharing and eventual mutual marketing activities.</p>	

History of Lębork and Słowiński National Park

Introduction

Słowiński National Park (SNP) is a National Park in Pomeranian Voivodeship, northern Poland. It is situated on the Baltic coast in the county of Lębork, between Łeba and Rowy. The northern boundary of the Park consists of 32.5 kilometres of coastline and covers a total of 18.618 hectares.

The park is especially known for its sand dune belt, called the shifting sand dunes, which constantly moves at a rate between 3m to 15m per year. The highest of the sand dunes is Dune Łącka which is raised approximately 40 meters above sea level, with sand from the Baltic Sea in the north and sand from Lake Łebsko in the south. There are around 140 kilometres of tourist trails for walking. By the lakes there are observation towers and along the trails one can find benches and resting areas. The park is recognized by several international organizations for its natural value and it is placed on several international networks of protected areas, which among others include: UNESCO MAB program, World Nature Sanctuary and Ramsar wet-land area (UN).

History of the sand dunes

The wind activity has been causing the formation of numerous barchans-like sand dunes, at the coast between Rowy and Łeba for during the last 3000 years. The sands from the sea barrier sands has transformed into arc sand dunes as well as numerous “*Relic Mountains*” and deflation forms. Due to this the sand dunes of the park differentiates in look and genesis based on the different periods they were created. Contemporarily, the moving sand dunes on the “*Łebska Spit*” are the youngest of the sand dunes. It can be seen that they are relatively new due to the fragments of previous sand dunes covered by soil being uncovered in between the sand dunes. Archaeological findings from these soils helped to determine the beginning of the modern dune creation phase as the first half of the 16th century.

The pace of the sand dunes translocation is not uniform on the entire “*Łebska Spit*”. Its western and eastern parts are occupied by groups of parabolic sand dunes, characterized by their mobility of up to 3 m/year. The middle part of the “*Spit*” (between the Łebsko Lake and the sea, at the length of approx. 5 km and the width of 1 km) is occupied by barchans and barchan-like sand dunes moving with the speed of 2 - 10 m/year, this is the area of contemporary moving sand dunes. Western and north-western winds dominate this area causing sand transportation and are moving the sand dunes in an eastern and south-eastern direction, which pushes some of the sand dunes into the Łebsko Lake as a result. The sand movement starts when the wind blows with a speed of 5 m/s. The sand rolls on the smoother windward slope and when it reaches the dune's top, it pours down the steep protected slope. In this hard working way, the wind relocates all the material of the dune, from the west to the east, therefore accordant with the direction of the dominating winds. The largest significance of the dune movement is the very short lasting storm-winds at the speeds of above 10 m/sec, which has much more significance than the long lasting winds of lower speeds. The highest intensity of eolian processes is observed in the autumn-winter period.

History of Słowiński National Park

On January 1st, 1967 The Słowiński Park was officially established, making it the 11th domestic national park, and concurrently, the second seaside National Park in Poland, after the Wolinski Park. This was the success of the Polish environmental protection supporters, supported many years by the efforts of distinguished specialists in the environmental field as well as of provincial authorities'.

On the basis of the executing act, the Minister of Forestry and Wood Industry enacted an order on December 10th, 1996 in the matter of determining the borders of the SNP and the limits binding its terrain (MP No 66, item 317), predominantly defining:

- a. The area of the Park, i.e. 18.069 hectares, as well as a detailed course of the borders and the areas under protection
- b. The areas being under strict and partial protection
- c. Director's manner of managing and the competences
- d. Limits and prohibitions binding on the terrain of the Park.

Consecutive years brought the alteration of legal conditions of the functioning of the Słowiński National Park. First by the appearance of the nature preservation Act of October 16th, 1991 (Register of Acts No 114, entry 492) and its amendments of 2002, and subsequently by the Act of nature preservation of April 16th, 2004 (Register of Acts No 92 entry 880).

The published legal acts and executive regulations required certain activities of the management of the Park. Among these was the priority was to regulate the legal status of the territory situated outside the park, which during time, was to be taken over by the management of the SNP.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Słowiński National Park

The park is open from dusk till dawn all year long. There are trails for walking, as well as four educational nature paths in the park, with routes in a total of 170 kilometres. The routes enable direct contact with the park nature without infringing the regulations of its protection. From the numerous towers and viewing bridges, one can admire the arrangements of ecosystems and landscapes of the SNP. In the four nearby museums of Smółdzino, Rowy, Kluki and Rąbka, one can find various exhibitions. In the Museum of Nature in Smółdzino one can find exhibitions about environmental protection, beaches, sand dunes, lakes, forests, and archaeology. Furthermore, the museum offers a guided museum tour for 5 euro. The Museum of Nature in Smółdzino is open:

- From May 1st to September 30th - every day from 9.00 to 17.00
- From October 1st to April 30th - from Monday to Friday from 7.30 to 15.30.

Another attraction is the Museum of the Słowiński Village in Kluki with approximately 100.000 visitors every year. It is an antique building museum where one can find farmhouses from 18th, 19th and beginning of 20th century, all of those being built in Kluki village and moved to the museum in the 1980's. The village of Kluki has an interesting history influenced by geo-political situation of the 20th century. Kluki village was established in the 19th century and inhabited by s West Slavic ethnic group which was a part of the Kashubs. The Slavic inhabitants spoke their own dialect, a

mixture of German, Polish and Kashub's dialect, but from the 18th century the expansion of the German language was gradually removing the Slavic dialect from use and replacing it with "plattdeutsch" that has been spoken until the 1960's. After the World War II the Polish communist authorities started to re-polonaise this region and by year 1976, there was nobody left of the indigenous population in the village of Kluki.

The Museum of the Słowinski Village offers the permanent exposition of twelve historic buildings with the authentic interior design and furniture, as well as temporary expositions of different kind e.g. Pomeranian landscapes in painting. Apart of that, the museum arranges several events annually. The events aim to present the daily life of the farmers by immersing guests into traditional food making, folk music and farmers 'tasks.

Museum is open:

- From May 4th to August 31st every day from 10.00 to 18.00
- From September 1st to April 30th from 9.00 to 16.00

The admission cost oscillates from 1.5 to 2.3 €. Moreover, the museum offers guided tours for 14 €.



Photo: Tomasz Awdziejczyk

The trails for walking are also accessible for practicing bicycle tourism. It is possible to rent bikes from rental shops situated in Rowy, Smołdzino, Smołdziński Las or Rąbka. An example of a bike track is the "Dissolved Railway" leading through the old rail embankment from Ustka to Rowy. In the summer months it is possible to cruise through the Łebsko Lake on the passenger boat "Ohar" with the route of Łeba-Kluki-Łeba, or to take the boats "Alka" and "Kormoran" with the route of Łeba-Rąbka-Wyrzutnia-Łeba.

Practicing water sports is permitted in the specially defined areas on the lakes of Łebsko and Gardno. The same regulations apply to angling from coast or boat.

Horse-riding enthusiasts have the possibility to engage in horse-riding classes in Nowęcín, Smóldziński Las and Smóldzino.

In the park there is an absolute ban on vehicles apart from in specially designated areas. There are a variety of parking lots located nearby all parts of the park. The entry to the Słowiński National Park and using its parking lots in the period from May 1st to September 30th is charged between 0,5 – 2 € per hour for parking and 0,5 – 1,5 € for entrance. For people solely intending to visit the beach, special free of charge passages to the beach are marked.

The Park does not offer own accommodation amenities. However, there are a variety of private suppliers in the surrounding cities that offer hotels, pension houses, and private lodges of various service and price levels.

Visitor Characteristics of Słowiński National Park cliental

From the data collected through the questionnaires several important aspects of the visitor characteristics of the cliental and their perception of the attraction can be identified.

The visitors primarily consist of an equal amount of females and males in the age of 30 to 50.

The visitors of the attraction are dominantly returning visitors (on average approx. three visits per visitor), who travel by car/caravan and became aware of the attraction from the Internet. They go to the park mainly to relax and for recreational purposes. Generally, their satisfaction and overall impression of the attraction is rated highly with an average score of 4, 2 out of 5 and 4, 3 out of 5, respectively. Furthermore, the visitors rate all of the aspects of the attraction analysed above 3. The adequacy of parking facilities is rated the lowest with a score of 3, 3 meaning just above indifferent. What is very notable is that only 6 pct. of the respondents biked to the park and 33 pct. of them generally spend time biking in the country of Lębork. It is rather unfortunate if these two measures are a fair reflection on the usage of bikes in the park as Lębork's trails for walking and biking can be seen as one of the key experiences.

Another known characteristic of a tourist in this area (from the Łeba tourism product diversification analyses, 2004) determines that he/she:

- Likes active leisure more than seating at the beach
- Appreciates good cuisine
- Likes fun, dancing and cosy ambiance
- Loves the sea
- Is amazed by the moving sand dunes phenomenon
- Is an open minded person, that easily make friends with others
- Is a young person or has a „young spirit”
- Loves nature
- Financially belongs to a middle class
- Approximately 1/3 of tourists uses walking or biking trails (16 pct. uses bikes rentals)

- Approximately 91 pct. of tourists visits the sand dunes in Łeba (SNP)
- Approximately 60 pct. of visitors uses the nautical port in Łeba
- 11 pct. rents kayaks in Łeba
- Most tourists are domestic

It is also notable that all of the respondents of the questionnaire are from Poland. If this is a fair reflection of the visitor characteristics then it is a fact that no international tourists are visiting the attraction. However, it would be very interesting for SNP to identify how many international visitors they have in order to determine if improved international marketing efforts are needed. Language problems are enormous, because most only speak polish.

Strategic Recommendations for Słowiński National Park

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product for development: As identified in the SWOT analysis the use of trails can be optimized as well the size of the trail system can be increased. The trail system can serve as a good way to engage and educate the visitors on the great nature phenomenon existing in the park and can be used to immerse the visitor into the tourist experience. This could for example be by having interactive information posts along the trails, that educates about the nature of the park and have educational games or activities for children. The “nature paths” already existing within the park could be used as a point of departure for creating the paths, so that all paths and trails essentially offer the same high level tourist experiences.

Another possibility for SNP to develop its product is to leverage its excessive portfolio of product offerings by developing them further, especially those that can attract off-season tourism. As described in the section above SNP has a very wide array of offerings and events such as angling, windsurfing, eco-tourism development etc. Many of these offerings could be the basis of events outside the traditional summer season that could boost demand during the periods with few visitors. Additionally, existing events such as the “Codfish Festival” in December and angling championship in September could be expanded and marketed to increase its popularity. Furthermore, it can be investigated if there is demand for other types of events that could be launched to boost demand. It should be seen as important to boost off-season tourism as the park is already open all year around and thus would benefit greatly from the increased off-season demand. Especially initiative to promote tourism from abroad should be undertaken, but it demands that the language barriers can be overcome.

Recommendations for marketing development: Several initiatives could be undertaken to improve the marketing of SNP.

Firstly, the very unique and extraordinary sand dunes of Leborg County could be marketed more intensively. The sand dunes can be seen as the county’s most unique attraction, because only a few other places in the world have the same kind of sand dunes. Therefore, they are a possibility to give the tourists an experience that can only be found here.

Secondly, SNP could benefit from focusing its marketing efforts on the many park recognitions that it possesses, such as the Natura 2000, UNESCO “Man-Biosphere”, etc. These brands that identify the park as an important eco-system can be used to brand the park as an environmental phenomenon with high brand recognition associated with UNESCO, UN (through the Ramsar Convention), etc.

Thirdly, the English version of the webpage should be improved. It currently offers a wealth of interesting information for the visitor under the “tourism” section of the webpage. However, the various tourist offers that can be found in the park are scattered around the webpage and thus hard for the visitor to find. It could be beneficial to create a specific part of the webpage for the tourist offers in the park, so that the visitor knows exactly what can be experienced by visiting the club. Furthermore, the English version of the webpage is written in a confusing language that at times can be impossible to understand. If the park is to attract English-speaking visitors through the use of the internet then the webpage must be re-written in order to ensure that the information is easy to understand.

Fourthly, the wide variety of tourist offers in the county of Lebork and SNP could be marketed more intensively both internationally and domestically. Especially the wide array of activity-based tourism could be interesting for many segments, but also the agro-tourism offers could be marketed in order to promote demand. In the visitor characteristics section it is identified that there is much space for improvement in getting the visitors to engage in the sports activities possible in the park such as biking and windsurfing.

As most people go to the park to relax, it could be beneficial to promote the recreational activities available in the park.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

For the development of a Baltic Sea Region heritage the county of Lebork can engage in cooperation with other natural heritages in the Baltic Sea Region to promote the different environmental attractions that can be seen in the region. Thereby the tourists can be informed about, and encouraged to, visit the Baltic Sea Region and the many exciting environmental attractions available for the tourists to see. By cooperating with other attractions in the Baltic Sea Region the common history and heritage of the region will be more visible and be a possibility for promotion and marketing.

4.2 The Curonian Spit – Lithuania and Kaliningrad

The case study of the Curonian Spit has a slightly different format than the rest of the cases in the publication. As the attraction are geographically located and managed by two different countries, its common history will firstly be examined, after which the cases are divided into two cases that are following the normal structure, beginning with a SWOT, then key influences, followed by visitor characteristics and the recommendations for each attraction. Neringa is examined first, followed by Kaliningrad.

History of the Curonian Spit

The Curonian Spit is a unique strip of a land, created by the constant erosion of the remains of the former Lagoon's forests and soil caused by the sea and the wind. It is the highest spit in Northern Europe.

The peninsula of the Curonian Spit, divides the Curonian Lagoon from the Baltic Sea. The Northern part (the biggest part) of the Curonian Spit belongs to the Republic of Lithuania. The other part, where Pilkopos, Rasyte, Sarkuva and some other smaller settlements are, belongs to Kaliningrad, a region of the Russian Federation. In 1923 the Northern part of the Curonian Spit (territory of 52 km in length) was given to the Republic of Lithuania. During the period of 1939-1945 the whole spit belonged to Germany. After World War II, the Northern part of the peninsular went to Lithuania again. Currently, the part of the Spit that belongs to the Republic of Lithuania (0.8 thousand ha) is being administrated by the Municipality of Klaipeda City, and the remaining part (approximately 25.6 thousand ha) is administered by the Municipality of Neringa

Since the year 2000 the spit has been included in the list of World Heritage of UNESCO as a site of cultural landscape having many natural and cultural values. The spits beaches are also internationally recognized. In 2002, they were awarded a blue flag (primarily Nida beaches), meaning that the beach meets high standards of environment protection and service quality.

In 1961, the main settlements of the Lithuanian part of the Curonian Spit - Alksnyne, Juodkrante, Pervalka, Preila, and Nida - were united into the Neringa town. Currently, around 2,600 people permanently reside in Neringa. Today, the Lithuanian part of the spit is located in the Kursiu Nerija National Park.

Waves of the Baltic Sea formed the Curonian Spit more than 5000 years ago. The origins of the Nerija's (the spit's) name relate to Kuršiai—a western Baltic tribe who lived on the current Latvian and northern Lithuanian seacoast and in the south stretched to the areas of Klaipeda. Urbanisation of the Curonian Spit began in the 13th century, when the crusaders of the Teutonic Order occupied this territory and built several castles. The most important of them was Rasytė (Rossitten, currently Ribachiy). At the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries, the Kuršininkai population settled at the Curonian Spit. The Kuršininkai were fishermen who used specially constructed boats, named kurėnai. Affected by the specific nature of the Curonian Spit local residents were constructing buildings covered with reed. Today, in the settlements of the Curonian Spit one can see

the carved decorations and weathercocks on the buildings. These weathercocks are evidence of the main activity of the old residents of Neringa - fishing. In the 15th century the entire Curonian Spit was covered by dense forests. The old residents considered trees to be sacred, and thus did not touch them. Later people began to cut down the trees with no pity, destroying the forests and leaving nothing to prevent the sand from moving with the wind, making it slide along the peninsula towards the Curonian Lagoon. During this movement, huge sand dunes buried many fishermen villages on their way towards the lagoon. It is believed that there are as many as fourteen villages buried under the sand in the Curonian Spit. As the issues associated with the movement of the sand became evident the authorities realized the movement had to be stopped. It was discovered that pine roots are the best way of preventing the moving sand. Two centuries ago, they started planting the Curonian Spit sand dunes again and this process still continues today. The seacoast sand dunes fortification and planting work in the Curonian Spit is the biggest project of its kind in the world.

Tourism in the area started to develop from the middle of the 19th century. Juodkrantė was the first settlement among the current Neringa settlements to offer tourist services, showing tourists amber excavations and the further processing of the amber. Following this, rapid growth of Juodkrantė began. In 1881, the Juodkrantė resort committee was established, which was later rearranged into the Resort Society by the beginning of the 20th century. In the beginning of the 20th century, new types of buildings, summerhouses and hotels, appeared in Juodkrantė. Old fishermen homestead buildings were rearranged and reequipped in order to adapt them to tourists. In 1904, a large recreation complex was built in the resort. During the years of independent Lithuania (1923-1939), the resort was famous for various healing and mineral waters. Meanwhile, Nida was famous as a Mecca of artists. In 1900, the headquarters of the German artist colony was established in the hotel of H. Blodė. This society existed until 1945. The hotel of H. Blodė was one of the most famous German hotels. In 1930, a famous German writer, laureate of Nobel Prize T. Mann built his house in Nida. Even though the Soviet period affected the urban face of Nerija, today it is the only place in Lithuania with the preserved, nearly untouched, ancient settlements of the former fishermen villages.

4.3 The Curonian Spit – Lithuania

SWOT-analysis of the Curonian Spit – Lithuania

The SWOT analysis below is a consolidation of the individual SWOT analysis of the five sand dunes: *The Protective Dune Crest*, *The Drifting Dunes (Sklandytojų Dune)*, *Vecekrūgas (The Old Inn) Dune*, *The Grey Dunes* and *Horns (Bulvikio horn)*.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical value (<i>Protective Dune Crest, Vecekrūgas, Horns</i>) • High Esthetical Value (<i>Drifting Dunes, Grey Dunes</i>) • Good Infrastructure: Close to bike paths (<i>Grey Dunes, Vecekrūgas</i>), Conveniently accessible by supported means of transportation (<i>Vecekrūgas, Horns</i>) • Habitat of Natura 2000 (<i>The Grey Dunes</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expensive maintenance (<i>The Protective Dune Crest, The Grey Dunes</i>) • Absence of stable funding policy (<i>The Protective Dune Crest</i>) • Visitor-sensitive environment (<i>Protective Dunes, Drifting Dunes, Grey Dunes</i>) • Lack of information (<i>Vecekrūgas, Horns</i>) • No recreational infrastructure (<i>Vecekrūgas</i>)
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing from Structural Funds (<i>Protective Dune Crest</i>) • Applying volunteer labour (<i>Protective Dune Crest</i>) • The emergence of recreational infrastructure – paragliding, thematic tours, cultural heritage tourism, educational camps (<i>Protective Dune Crest</i>) • Exploiting the legend and planting method for tourism as marketing tools (<i>all dunes</i>) • Natura 2000 (<i>The Grey Dunes</i>) Development of transportation infrastructure (<i>all dunes</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global warming (threat of the water-level rise) (<i>Protective Dune Crest</i>) • Termination of financing - political nuances (<i>Protective Dune Crest</i>) • New methods of strengthening the dune may displace the heritage (<i>Protective Dune Crest</i>) • Danger of extinction (<i>All dunes</i>) • Closing for visitors due to the over carrying capacity (<i>The Grey Dunes</i>)
Conclusions	
<p>One of the most important activities for Neringa Municipality is to obtain a stable flow of funding. If this cannot be achieved with the state, Neringa Municipality should turn to the private sector to find sponsors. If funding becomes more stable the municipality will have the possibility to improve some essential features in connection to the dune, e.g. car and bike parking facilities. Without necessities like these, it is clear that tourists have less incentive to visit the sand dunes.</p> <p>One of the most important activities for Neringa Municipality is to obtain a stable flow of funding. If this cannot be achieved with the state, Neringa Municipality should turn to the private sector to find sponsors. If funding becomes more stable the municipality will have the possibility to improve some essential features in connection to the dune, e.g. car and bike parking facilities. Without necessities like these, it is clear that tourists have less incentive to visit the sand dunes.</p>	

The information from the SWOT analysis is used to produce recommendations for the Neringa Municipality on the sand dunes as an overall attraction and therefore each sand dune is not analyzed independently. Hence, the findings of the SWOT analysis are used as guidance to identify possible

points of improvement that can be applied to increase the attractiveness of the sand dunes of the municipality on a larger level.

Key influences on the visitor experience at the Curonian Spit – Lithuania

Entering the park costs between 3 and 15 Euro from 1st of September to May 31st and between 6 and 21 Euro from June 1st to August 31st, depending on the type of vehicle. It is free of charge for the remaining months. Parking is available at various spots in the park for between 3 and 15 € per day or 0, 5 – 1, 5 € per hour. However, as identified in the SWOT analysis, parking is not available at every sand dune, which can be problematic for the visitors as the distance between the points of interest in the park can be relatively large.

There are approx. 20 accommodation facilities available in the region ranging from guesthouses to hotels and with a price range from under 17 to 115 € per person/night.

Additional to sand dunes several other tourist attractions and activities are also available to the visitors:

- There are over 13 museums, galleries, and exhibition houses in the municipality covering a wide aspect of themes including art, history, sea, and famous local people.
- There are several cultural attractions in the area, such as old cemeteries, a light house, old fishermen houses and sculptures.
- Several trails including an educational ecological walking path, biking trails, snowboard trails and orienteering tracks.
- Several other physical activities such as fishing, sailing and boat trips and bird observation.

Visitor Characteristics of the Curonian Spit – Lithuania

501 questionnaires were collected from the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit in 2012. In 2011, no questionnaires were collected, which means that it is not possible to track changes and development between the two years. However, 501 questionnaires should make the results from 2012 somewhat reliable.

68 pct. of visitors at the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit visited for the first time, and the average visiting numbers of guest that visited more than once was only 1, 4. This could indicate that the interest in returning to the attraction is not that great from visitors.

45 pct. of visitors come to the attraction by car, while 26 pct. actually get their by biking. Especially the latter is interesting, as it indicates that there is a large segment that is interesting in sport activities. This is will be examined in the recommendations.

In terms of awareness, 32 pct. of visitors have heard about the place from the landlord, 23 pct. from the tourist information, 15 pct. from flyers, and 10 pct. from recommendations. This is interesting, as it could mean that many locals take part in promoting the Curonian Spit. Furthermore, many of

these types of awareness sources are cheaper than promoting the site in the radio, newspaper, TV etc.

Generally, the Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit is doing great on the overall satisfaction rates such as admission price (4,6) and price performance ratio (4,8), information about the attraction (4,6), Content of the attraction (4,6) and overall impression (4,7) and general satisfaction (4,5). However, it should be considered to look into sanitary (2, 9) and catering (2, 8) facilities. Also, transport options (3, 7), service / assistance (3, 8), and shopping facilities (3, 7) could be improved at the attraction.

25 pct. spend less than half an hour, 31 pct. spend between 30 min and 1 hour, and 43 pct. spend between 1 and 2 hours. This means that only 1 pct. of visitors spend more than 2 hours at the Curonian Spit, which means that there is a definite need for more activities that could have people stay longer. One of these could be geocaching, which is reviewed in the recommendations part.

Most visitors are visiting the Curonian Spit to relax (27 pct.), because they are on a city trip (22 pct.), cultural holidays (21 pct.) and activity holidays (13 pct.). In terms of accommodation, 26 pct. of visitors are staying at hotels, while the rest is somewhat equally spread on different accommodation types.

98 pct. of visitors are accompanied by others, with more than 2 adults and 1 child on average. 60 pct. are females, 40 pct. males. 62 pct. comes from Lithuania, which means that the attraction actually has quite high number of foreigners visiting (38 pct.), with Germans taking up 22 pct. of the total visitors. Russians and Latvians take up 3 pct. each, while the rest is spread on other European countries and the US.

Strategic Recommendations for the Curonian Spit – Lithuania

Following the overall structure of the paper, next part will look into strategic recommendations based on the above analysis.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product for development: according to the outcome of the SWOT analysis and the questionnaire survey, the supporting facilities of the Curonian Spit, such as parking facilities, are inadequate. The supporting facilities are a requirement for an attraction wishing to become a favourable tourist destination as the visitors find them necessary to find the stay pleasant. This is not only limited to parking facilities but can also include sanitary facilities, kiosks, cafés, shopping facilities, benches etc. Development of these could also help improve the low amount of time that visitors spend at Lithuanian side of the Curonian Spit.

Furthermore, the actual attractions and activities in the other can be further developed to enhance tourist demands. In order to create valuable tourist experiences, it is necessary to find out the

specific demands of potential visitors and create tourist experiences in relation to this. One possibility is to look at what other sand dunes have done to develop products that attract visitors, such as Slowinski National Park's use of events to create off-season demand.

In terms of transnational products, it is recommended to implement routes for both biking and cars. These could go along the sand dunes, crossing the countries of Poland, Kaliningrad and Lithuania. Therefore, management responsible for the attractions in each of the three countries should join forces and improve the overall experience at all three attractions. The routes are meant to be self-guided, which means that management only has to set up the basic framework in terms of finding useful roads, nice restaurants and accommodation possibilities etc., and then plot it into a map. This map could even be interactive, so that visitors could add elements along the routes themselves. Geocaching is also an option that could help prolong the stay of visitors, which is currently very low.

Recommendations for marketing development: As with the majority of the sand dune attractions there is a lack of information in English, which is essential in order to establish demand for international tourists. This implies that demand could potentially be increased by having extensive information about the dune and surrounding areas available on the webpage of the municipality. Furthermore, engaging in promotional activities in the surrounding area and abroad could help to increase the knowledge about the sand dunes. One way of doing this could be to place promotional material, such as leaflets and maps, close to where the tourists of the area resides, e.g. in hostels, hotels, summer houses etc. Additionally, special events hosted in the sand dunes can be marketed to the local inhabitants in order to create awareness and interest in the events.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

For the development of a Baltic Sea Region heritage the Neringa Municipality can engage in collaboration with other natural heritages in the Baltic Sea Region to promote the different environmental attractions that can be seen in the region. This way the tourists can be educated and encouraged to visit the Baltic Sea Region and the many exciting environmental attractions available for the tourists to see. Sharing the Curonian Spit with Kaliningrad, transnational cooperation between the countries seems obvious and natural.

4.3 The Curonian Spit – Kaliningrad

SWOT-analysis of the Curonian Spit – Kaliningrad

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid tourist object the whole year round • The highest moving dune in the Russian part of the Curonian Spit • The second highest dune in Northern Europe (64 meters) • Unique composition of wet forests and hot sands • Registered nature monument (since 2000 – UNESCO heritage) • Wonderful point for sightseeing • Included in all tourist programs within KO • Equipped with platforms for sightseeing, information desks, paths • All nature objects of the spit are visible from the dune 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High accessibility (low level of protection from the non-organized tourists) • The most remote tourist object at the Curonian Spit from KD-centre • Direct connection of sand dune with bay-waterline makes the complex more vulnerable • The opposite tourist streams within the route are not segregated
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and equipment the new ecological routes to other dune complexes with the aim to reduce the pressure • Equipment of the dune complex for tourists (Bio-WCs, etc.) • Organizing the joint ecological tourist routes for both countries (LT and RU) • More possibilities for visitors (with widening the net of paths within the route) • Elaboration of schedule for visitors, and controlling by the NP employees (as a part of ecological and recreational monitoring) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extinction of the rare plant species (some of them are endemics) • High attractiveness of sand to be used as physical object for sliding • Very intensive development of the settlement Morskoye placed very close to the object (2 km) could affect the danger for the dune
Conclusion	
<p>The SWOT analysis was made by Associative partners of the project AGORA 2.0 from Kaliningrad region. The object of the research in Kaliningrad region was Dune complex “Ef”, within WP5 “Shifting sand dunes”. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the dune complex “Ef” were defined and analyzed. Among the strengths of the dune “Ef” we can pay the attention to the most important of them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The dune is accessible for tourists the whole year round, even in winter time, when it is covered with snow. It is a fantastic view in winter time and in any season. The tourist object dune “Ef” is equipped with platforms for sightseeing, information desks, paths, which is very important for the comfort of tourists, and for the ecological safety and nature security of the area, as the dune belongs to the natural National park. - The dune is highest in Northern Europe and Russia (64 meters). There are no similar open 	

(not covered by plants) and moving sand dunes in the Russian part of the Curonian Spit, and almost has no analogues in the Northern Europe.

- The dune “EF” belongs to the Curonian Spit which is included into the UNESCO heritage list as a unique artificial nature object in year 2000.

The greatest weaknesses of the dune “Ef” are the following:

- The opposite tourist streams within the route are not segregated. It is more important especially in summer time (high-season) when there are a lot of tourists who come to the dune “EF” (organized groups and individuals). Due to the overloading of the paths within the routes by tourists, there is no free space on the paths. Thus, most of tourists have to step aside from the paths and walk on the grass and sand. It creates a danger for the nature, and makes the tourists feel uncomfortable. Also a lot of non-organised tourists (without guides) come to dune “Ef” and brings danger to the nature of the dune.
- Direct connection of sand dune with bay-waterline makes the complex more vulnerable. Every year the dune loses the sand in the waters of the Curonian bay, especially during the stormy and windy weather. The unique flora of dune is suffering due to this nature influence.

There are 5 opportunities defined for the dune complex “Ef”. The most important of them we could define are the following:

- There is no one joint ecological route within the two sides of the Curonian Spit (Russian and Lithuanian part together). Thus, there is a good opportunity for developing such routes for tourists from Russia and Lithuania. Such routes will also be of special interest to tourists from other BSR and EU countries.
- Elaboration of schedule for visitors, and controlling of visitor’s flows by the National Park employees. This activity is needed first of all in order to make the tourist flows more organized, and to count the number of tourists/visitors of the dune complex with the aim of evaluating, monitoring and regulating the tourist flows.

There are also some important threats in the prepared SWOT analysis:

- Some of the rare plants are disappearing because of tourists, who disrupt them, but some of plants disappear due to lack of people who monitor and take care on these rare plant species.
- Very intensive development of the settlement Morskoye placed very close to the object (2 km) could create the danger for the dune in the future. As soon as the dune “EF” is a moving dune and could be easily destroyed, the close placing of the settlement makes danger for the dune. On the other hand, the dune itself could be dangerous for the buildings of the settlement which will be placed in a dangerous proximity to the dune as there are some evidences from the past when whole villages were covered with the sand of the moving dune.

Thus, we can say that the dune complex “Ef” is one of the most popular tourist objects in the Kaliningrad region. However, it is very sensitive and susceptible to external influences (natural as

well as artificial). The area of the complex has a lot of unique species of fauna (some of them are endemics and included into the “Red book” of the Russian federation. The threats of the dune complex “Ef” could be closed down on the local, regional and federal level. The programmes on eco-education should be elaborated and disseminated in educational institutions for children. Furthermore, it is necessary to strengthen the international cooperation with close neighbours (Lithuania) in order to create the new tourist routes within the Curonian Spit and to elaborate and implement the new transnational and transnational projects for promoting the unique nature object in the Baltic Sea Region – Curonian Spit, and to protect the environment of such sensitive pearl of the region.

Key influences on the visitor experience at the Curonian Spit - Kaliningrad

The Curonian Spit on the Kaliningrad side is situated in the middle of the protected area of the Curonian Spit National Park. The park is 60 km from the city of Kaliningrad, which means that it is 45 minutes trip by car or bus from the capital. The national park Curonian Spit has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since the year 2000.

Six different hiking trails will allow tourists to discover the Curonian Spit from different sites, and thereby also observe the diversity of species. The highest point of the sand dune is named Epha’s Height, in honour of dune inspector Franz Epha. His work allowed stopping the huge sand dunes from moving by stabilising them with plants, saving many villages from being buried by sand.

In terms of accommodation facilities, the best option is to stay in the city of Kaliningrad and then drive or go by a tourist bus to the attraction. Additional to the sand dune, several other tourist attractions and activities are also available to the visitors. For example, Lesnoye village, National Museum of Curonian Spit, Museum of wood, Muller Dune, and Fringilla can be mentioned. Also, several other physical activities such as fishing, sailing and boat trips and bird observation are available. Those who are not interested in the natural beauty of the park may during the warm season swim in the waters of the Baltic Sea and relax on beautiful sandy beaches.

Visitor Characteristics of the Curonian Spit - Kaliningrad

The questionnaire survey made at the Kaliningrad side of the Curonian Spit is slightly different compared to the other surveys in this publication. This is because it has been handed out and made by the representative of the attraction; Immanuel Kant State University of Russia. However, many of the questions correspond with the original VIPER study in AGORA 2.0, and 1000 questionnaires have been collected which means that the results should be reliable. It reflects the visitor characteristics of 2011, and no survey was made in 2012.

46 pct. visited the sand dune for the first time, which means that 54 pct. of visitors have been at the Curonian Spit before. 32 pct. of visitors came by car, 31, 5 pct. by tourist bus, and 21 pct. by public transportation. 61 pct. of visitors are staying at hotels and 21 pct. private with relatives or friends.

In terms of awareness, a travel program takes up 21 pct., recommendations 17 pct., tourist information 10 pct., general knowledge 9 pct., while the rest is spread on many different awareness sources. Many of primary awareness sources are relatively cheap promotion tools, so this is beneficial for the attraction.

Only 4 pct. of visitors spend less than 30 minutes at the attraction, which is good because it is important that visitors spend time at the attractions, as it usually means that they are enjoying the experience. This essentially means that they might return and that they might spend more money while visiting (given that the attraction offers the opportunity of doing so). In fact, 19 pct. spend half a day and as much as 39 pct. spend the whole day visiting the Curonian Spit on the Kaliningrad side. It should here be noted that this the highest average of time spend during the two years the surveys have been done. However, in turn it should also be mentioned that visitors have to cover a much larger geographic area than, for example, visiting a castle or a red brick gothic attraction, so that has to be taken into account as well.

55 pct. of visitors are males and 45 pct. female. 29 pct. of visitors are under 18, 35 pct. are between 18 and 30 years-old, 21 pct. are between 31 and 45 years-old, 15 pct. are older than 45. In terms of country of origin, 63 pct. comes from Kaliningrad and 7 pct. from other Russian areas. This means that 30 pct. of visitors at the Kaliningrad side of the Curonian Spit are foreigners, with 19 pct. coming from Germany and 8 pct. from Poland, while the remaining 3 pct. of visitors are from Belarus, Ukraine, Australia, Netherlands, and Switzerland.

Strategic Recommendations for the Curonian Spit - Kaliningrad

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product for development: Generally, visitors spend quite a lot of time at the attraction and they seem to be somewhat satisfied, so maybe many different product developments are not needed. However, there is always room for improvement, and the following will give some recommendations to the Curonian Spit on the Kaliningrad side.

First of all, access to the sand dunes in Kaliningrad could be made easier. Both public transportation and tourist busses seem to be in scarcity, and it would make sense to improve the road conditions from the main city of Kaliningrad to the attraction. Also, signs pointing to the Curonian Spit could help make potential visitors aware of the attraction. Generally, more signs and information inside the National Park could also improve the experience. Furthermore, if more foreigners should the region in general and the attraction in particular, visa rules should be made much easier. This has been implemented in St. Petersburg, so it should be possible in this part of Russia as well. Also, supporting facilities are a requirement for an attraction wishing to become a favourable tourist destination as the visitors find them necessary to find the stay pleasant. Therefore, such elements as parking, catering and shopping facilities need to be excellent as well.

In terms of transnational tourism products, it is recommended for the Kaliningrad side of the Curonian Spit to have more and better cooperation with especially the Lithuanian side of the sand dune, but also with their Western neighbours, Poland. Establishing routes crossing the three countries, for example, would improve what the attractions can offer, and would most likely make it more interesting and worthwhile for both locals and foreigners to visit. Inside each park, geocaching is an element that could improve the experience as well. Lastly, it is also recommended to implement ferry routes that could take visitors to see the sand dunes from the seaside. This will, however, take (probably private) investments, which makes it more difficult to implement than the other recommendations.

Recommendations for marketing development: First of all, there is an extreme need for more and better webpages in English, and eventually also German and Polish, as most foreign visitors come from these two countries. Even searching for the whole region of Kaliningrad, it is difficult to find anything on tourism in the area. Therefore, before anything else is done, it is important to improve the conditions for potential visitors for searching for information on the internet.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

Since the Curonian Spit is divided between Kaliningrad and Lithuania, there are plenty of opportunities for knowledge sharing and for cooperating, in order to improve the visitor experience at both attractions, while at the same time taking advantage of the common Baltic Sea Region heritage.

4.4 Råbjerg Mile

SWOT-analysis on Råbjerg Mile

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many interested visitors every year • Largest moving dune in Northern Europe • Protected by the state • Beautiful area around the dune • Very experienced guide • Unique flora and fauna • Close to Skagen town and therefore close to a very popular tourist area • A lot of different events • No entrance fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance from Denmark's capital • Only one professional guide at the Dune • Dependent on government funding • Declining government funding
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More available guides • Cooperation with other attractions in Skagen • Cooperation with other sand dune attractions • Cooperation with Skagen Turistforening in Skagen town • New events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time horizon – Råbjerg Mile will (in its very nature) disappear within the next 120 years • Further cuts in government funding • Lack of personal commitment
Conclusion	
<p>Råbjerg Dune has a lot of strengths and is a part of a dynamic tourist area connected to Skagen town. This town is a popular tourist destination, but the government funds for guided tours and creation of events are getting reduced over time. The opportunities are very dependent on personal engagement because the dune is owned by the Danish government. The sand dune is therefore not a product in the usual sense, because there is no form of direct sale.</p> <p>Events at the dune are a significant strength, but they rely heavily on the personal commitment from the only guide at the dune. Combined with the very limited and declining funds, the opportunity for events is getting reduced over time.</p>	

History of Råbjerg Mile

Råbjerg Mile is Denmark's largest migrating dune, located at "Bunken Klitplantage" between Skagen and Frederikshavn, in the northern part of Denmark. It is also the largest moving sand dune in Northern Europe. It is estimated that more than 250,000 people visit the sand dune every year.

Origin

Throughout much of the 1500th and 1600th century, the areas around Skagen – and other places in Denmark – were ravaged by sand drifts where the sand was brought in from the west and gathered

in large sand dunes. These sand drifts may have occurred for several reasons: Firstly, there was a period of cooler climate (called "the little ice age"). It meant that the sea pulled back a little, resulting in more sand beach area. Secondly, the period had a more intensive use of livestock and peat. Unfortunately, it meant that the sand drifts destroyed farmland, roads and drove people away from their homes. Interestingly, "The Buried Church" ("Den tilsandede kirked") still stands as a testament to the time when most of the associated houses and farms disappeared. To stop the sand drifts, the state bought a large proportion of the surrounding area and planted various coniferous trees from the end of the 18th century that were able to tackle the difficult growing conditions. But even though the plantation helped to stabilize the sand drifts, it ultimately meant that some magnificent natural areas disappeared. It led to protests from such prominent locals as the writer Jeppe Aakjær². The discussion ended when the state in 1900 bought the area around Råbjerg Mile so that it could remain a natural area but more importantly a monument and reminder to future generations to what damage the sand drifts had caused earlier.



Photo: Skagen Turistforening

Over time the sea has deposited huge areas of sand north of Skagen, increasing the size of Jutland considerably. To keep ships from hitting these massive deposits of sand new lighthouses has had to be built every one hundredth year, because the old lighthouses over time, ended up far in land. These deposits and lighthouses stands today as a testimony of the changes of the landscape of northern Jutland.

² Jeppe Aakjær: 1866 – 1930. Very famous and beloved Danish poet and novelist. He was a keen Jutlandish and dialect writer with a critical voice to the established society.

The Sand dune itself

The dune covers an area of approximately 2 square kilometres and is up to 35 m high. Therefore, Råbjerg Mile is one of the biggest sand dunes in Europe, containing about 3.5 million m³ of sand, thereby forming a "mini desert". On a hike through Råbjerg Mile, there might even be a risk of moving into quicksand. Interestingly, on several occasions international film companies have actually entered the desert scenes of Råbjerg Mile to film what could look like Sahara or a "western desert".

Råbjerg Mile is a migrating coastal dune, which means that the wind moves it about 15 meters annually in the east-north-easterly direction. The dune thereby leaves a low, moist layer of sand behind it, trailing back westwards from Skagerrak, where the dune originally formed more than 300 years ago.

The top of the sand dune is a good vantage point, making it a unique view over the beautiful nature surrounding Skagen's top. In fact, more than 6000 acres of dune and dune heaths are preserved in one of Denmark's most distinctive natural areas. Also, behind the sand dune itself you can, among other things, see skeletal pines that have been covered by the dune for more than 40 years and have now come into view after its passage.

Råbjerg Mile has u-shaped mounds of sand with convex noses trailed by elongated arms, which makes it a parabolic dune. This is due to the fact that the wind keeps the sand in the middle of the dune dry, because there in this part is far to the groundwater, while the sides are wet because these are close to the groundwater. Vegetation therefore grows easily along the sides, while the dune (made of sand) moves faster in the middle, leaving quite a spectacular sight from the top. Fascinatingly, deserts are formed in the exact opposite way, since these are far away groundwater, making the arms come forward instead.

The size of the sand dune has been nearly constant over the past 100 years, which is partly due to the material from the old sand dunes which it is now eating its way through, and partly due to the fact that the terrain in front of the mile is higher than the mile.

Conservation of the sand dune

Through conservation the sand dune's continued voyage has been secured, although it has not yet been taken into account that in 100 years it will actually bury the main road to Skagen. In fact, everything indicates that the sand dune will continue its journey towards Kattegat, so if no other initiatives are taken it is estimated that it will reach the road in the year 2200 and end its days in Kattegat by the year 2230.

While the majority of all sand dunes have been stabilised by planting, Råbjerg Mile has been left to allow future generations to understand the adventure of drifting sand dunes (see later parts). The central area of the sand dune was purchased by the State in 1900 (to secure free passage for the

dune), and after the Conservation of Nature Act in 1917 further surrounding areas were purchased. The sand dune is, however, now drifting out of the government-owned area and discussion over further conservation legislation is taking place.

Plants and Wildlife in the Area of Råbjerg Mile

The sand dune itself is free of vegetation but the area in front of the dune with its many temporary ponds and wet areas contains a large number of uncommon or rare plants that are adapted to the particular environment. Amongst other plants, 10 species of the genus *Juncus* and Denmark's smallest plant *Crassula aquatica* can be found here.

A spring day in Råbjerg Mile the air is filled with the sound of thousands of croaking beach toads (*Bufo calamita*), and in reality the area is where you can find the largest proportion of its kind in Denmark. Also, adders (*Vipera berus*) occur commonly in the terrain. Careful observation, however, is needed to explore the beautiful snake as it disappears at the slightest tremor in the ground. Here, the greatest chance of finding one is a sunny spring day, where adders are tanning on south-facing slopes. The area around Råbjerg Mile is also known for its migrating birds, especially during spring. The huge terrain west of the sand dune is often used as a resting place for migrating eagles and owls, just as roosting cranes can be seen at the small lakes. Rare breeding birds include tawny pipits (*Anthus campestris*), curlews (*Numenius phaeopus*) and cranes (*Grus grus*).

Key influences on the visitor experience at Råbjerg Mile

Råbjerg Mile is 16 km southwest of Skagen in Northern part of Jutland, Denmark. There are public busses that take you to the area from the surrounding towns, and it is easy to get there by car. Skagen is, however, one of the furthest points away from the capital of Copenhagen with about five hours driving.

In the area of Råbjerg Mile itself there are possibilities of accommodation. There are two places, where it is possible to either sleep in a shelter or a tent if visitors bring one themselves. There is also a small camp for organised groups (with permission). Moreover, there is a camping site that is well designed and big, suitable for longer stays.

In the local tourist shops it is possible to get a hold of a brochure that contains a map with four different hiking trails throughout the dune, and at nearby places such as Hulsig and Bunken visitors can find beautiful beaches that are suitable for people of all ages.

Being part of nature, Råbjerg Mile is open year-round and free of charge. The best months to visit the sand dunes are June, July and August due to the weather conditions in Denmark. Råbjerg Mile is situated in the top of North Jutland with many beautiful sites nearby. For example, Skagen is known as the town with the most sunshine in Denmark, while it is also surrounded by unique scenery and many white sand beaches. There are also many exciting museums, monuments and castles in the area.

Visitor characteristics of Råbjerg Mile

Råbjerg Mile is like the other Danish attractions not a partner in the AGORA 2.0 project. Therefore, they have not had the opportunity to collect data material and therefore it is not possible to describe the cliental that visits Råbjerg Mile.

Strategic choices for Råbjerg Mile

As earlier mentioned, Råbjerg Mile is not an official partner of the AGORA 2.0 project, and has mainly been taken in as a source of inspiration for the other attractions. Thus, the attraction serves as a best-in-class example of product development, which is why the recommendation part of this chapter is different from the others. Therefore, it will be a mixture of what the management has already done and what they plan to do, which is then combined with recommendations based on the experiences that has been encountered in the other cases.

Strategy on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product development: Management at Råbjerg Mile has taken many great initiatives in order to improve the attraction. However, there seems to be a need for still more activation of visitors in order to enhance the experience at Råbjerg Mile. This way, the attraction will become less dependent on the guides that are currently a large part of the success at Råbjerg Mile.

It is therefore recommended that two or three different routes are created. The routes can then be visualized in a brochure, which visitors can obtain at Skagen Tourist Bureau and other stakeholders (hotels, restaurants, other attractions etc.). This will be overall new product, and it lays the foundation for the rest of the products. For example, it would make sense to create specific viewpoints that are put into the route/map, and that have certain stories attached to them. QR codes that explain the place, viewpoint, plants, story etc. would also create a larger totality in the visitor experience. The attraction could also benefit from more signs to help and ensure that visitors get to experience all aspects of Råbjerg Mile. A small kiosk (at least, open during summer time) could also make the trip to Råbjerg Mile even more worthwhile. Lastly, it would make sense to start a larger international cooperation with e.g. some of the partners that have been taking part in AGORA 2.0, as these have many of the some challenges as Råbjerg Mile.

Recommendations for marketing development: Management at Råbjerg Mile should look more into marketing, as it seems that the current approach is not effective. Simply relying on the local tourist information is not sufficient. The attraction should make more use of local tourism actors to promote. The webpage should be updated with more information and pictures. Brochures and the internet should utilize more languages, such as for example Eastern European ones. It is also advised to look into smartphones technology, and maybe even combine marketing with product development.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

There are very few sand dunes like Råbjerg Mile. The unique sand dunes and the flora and fauna surrounding it are a fantastic signature of the area and are marketed as such. By telling the story of the sand dune and the area the city of Skagen markets itself among other things through the sand dune. By doing so the local culture, artists and Danish heritage is displayed to all the visitors of Skagen town. This serves to an example for other attractions to be inspired from and learn from.

5. Forests

5.1 Līgatne Nature Trail, Latvia

SWOT-analysis of Līgatne Nature Trail

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination known throughout generation since 1975 on national level. • Located in the Gauja National Park - close to other nature and culture heritage destinations within the NP. • Attractive enough to be a destination for local tourists. • Different offer throughout the year (animals in living conditions close to natural, horse riding, infrastructure for water tourists of River Gauja, botanical trail, national and international cycling routes, cross-country skiing). • Good infrastructure. • Local guides (multi language). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High maintenance costs – wooden paths and human resources. • Limited number of human resources. • Almost no marketing.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop wide cooperation with local tourism providers and tourism attraction points in GNP creating an eco-destination with social and economic benefit for the area. • Free area/territory to create additional attractions on the site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on governmental funds, belongs to administration of NP (potential threat due to unpredictable change of policies).

History of Līgatne

Situated on the banks of Daugava River, the Līgatne Nature Trail is a part of Gauja National Park located near the town of Līgatne. The Gauja National Park was established in 1975 in order to give visitors an opportunity to experience the nature and wildlife living in Latvia and teach about the necessity of protecting it.

The Līgatne Natural Trail offers the visitors more than five kilometres of hiking through some of the typical Latvian woodlands. The area functions as an open-air zoo where animals and birds indigenous to the country live in their natural habitat. The animals found on the trails are brought in from different places in Latvia. These animals are either wounded or domesticated and are therefore not able to survive in the wild (VisitLīgatne, 2012; Latvia Travel, 2012).

Key influences on the visitor experience at Ligatne Nature Trail

The local weather and access to Ligatne Nature Trail

The weather in Latvia is temperated and higly influenced by the Baltic Sea. The weather changes throughout the year but generally it is mild and humid. The winter is often dominated by snow and an average temperature of -6 degrees but a staggering -30 degree is possible. The winter normally gives way for autumn during March even though it can occur anywhere between February and April. During spring the vegetation starts to blossom and the weather is generally warm and sunny but arctic air masses can bring about cold weather and even snow during this period. The summer falls in the period June till August and is generally quite warm. The average temperature is 19 degrees but temperature up till 35 degress are not uncommen. Despite of the warm weather the evening gets quite chilly and during July and August thundersorm accompanied by heavy rains occur. The Autumn is the periode with the most rain but with temperatures up till 20 degrees. The autumn period is the time where the forest are the most beautiful with its red and yellow autumn collours (Lavtvia Travel Conditions, 2012).

The city closest to Ligatne is Riga, the capital of Latvia, that is situated 70 kilometres west of the city and the park is easily accessible by car. Taking public transport from Riga is possible but requires a train journey of one hour and 45 minutes followed by a bus ride lasting 15 minutes finished off by a 2 kilometres walk (maps.google.com.)



Photo: Celotajs

The trail is open to the public all year round with opening hours on weekdays from 9 to 18 and 9 to 19 during the weekends. If booked in advance, a guided tour around the area or to some of the sights situated in the area with Latvian, Russian, English or German speaking guides is possible. The price for entering the trail is approximately 3, 6 €. The admission fee for students are approximately 1, 4 € while preschool children, disabled people and students from children's homes have free admission.

The region surrounding Līgatne Nature Trail

Besides from the Līgatne Nature Trail the area offers a number of other attractions including both cultural as well as sporting activities.

The city of Līgatne is best known for its paper mill that has produced paper of high quality since it was founded in 1815. The founding of the mill led to the expansion of Līgatne itself as more houses were required for the workers of the mill. Today, the factory still produces paper in its historic buildings. Guided tours in the mill are available (VisitLīgatne, 2012).

Surrounding Līgatne is the highest concentration of sandstone rocks in Latvia and as many as 333 caves. These caves are carved into the rocks a long time ago by locals to store food for the winter. Nine meters under the ground lies a 2000 square meter bunker from the cold war. Its secrecy grading was only removed in 2003 and tourists now have the opportunity to see how the bunker would have functioned during a nuclear war (VisitLīgatne, 2012). Besides these cultural sites the area also offers activities such as horseback riding, skiing and a number of water sport activities (VisitLīgatne, 2012).

Visitor Characteristics of Līgatne Nature Trail

Unfortunately, CBS has not received any questionnaires from the Līgatne Nature Trail area. Therefore, it is not possible to describe any characteristics of the visitors of Līgatne Nature Trail with any certainty.

Strategic Recommendations for Līgatne Nature Trail

In the SWOT analysis it is described that there is a great success attracting local tourists which means that the recommendations below are targeted at foreign tourists as this is the greatest potential for an increase in the number of visitors. The main tourist destination for foreigners in Latvia is Riga and the Līgatne Nature Trails is conveniently situated in the vicinity of it. Despite of its location, however, the Nature Trail face a number of difficulties in reaching the customer base that exist in Riga. It is from this vantage point the following recommendations are made.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product for development: The proximity of Līgatne Nature Trail to Riga, the greatest tourist centre in Latvia, seems to be an untapped potential for the trail. Therefore, one of the main tasks for the trail should be on drawing tourists out of the city and into the National Park. Tourists visiting Riga by car have easy access to the park and daytrips are therefore a great potential

for an increased number of customers. A hindrance in attracting people from Riga to the park for these one-day-trips is the fact that guided tours need to be booked in advance. This arrangement prevents people from going to the park because of the weather or other events that cannot be planned in advance (Barslund, 2007: 20-22). Instead of pre-booking the tours, a scheduled program for guided tours around the area would attract tourist as this would make guides more easily accessible. Furthermore, these scheduled tours could be arranged in cooperation with the other sights in Gauja National Park so that the tours at different attractions in extension of each other or that a guided tour could include a number of attractions.

For tourists that travel by other means than car, the journey to the park by public transport can seem like a large investment for a day trip. In order to make the trails an attractive and accessible place to visit, an alternative to the public transport that currently exists is needed. A way to achieve this would be to arrange tours from Riga to the trail during the peak season. To spread the costs of such tours, and to make the tour more attractive to tourists, the tours can be coordinated with other attractions in the Gauja National Park such as the paper mill, the bunker and the caves.

Recommendations for marketing development: The Līgatne Nature Trails seems to be developed in the direction of tourist traveling specific for the natural experiences and therefore specific for the national park. For this purpose, the webpage is highly developed and has an easily understandable English version with comprehensive information and possibility for further contact. However, the trail does not seem to take advantage of its location.

As mentioned above, the proximity to Riga is a great potential asset for Līgatne Nature Trail as they can draw on this tourist hub for visitors. In order to tap this resource, it is necessary for visitors in Riga to be made aware of the trails existence. Even though Līgatne Nature Trail is already mentioned in the tourist map 'Riga and its Surroundings' on the latvia.travel webpage it is necessary to advance the knowledge of the trail throughout the attractions in Riga as well in order to make tourist aware of the trails existence. To this end, advertisement material should be placed on relevant tourist sites throughout Riga.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

Līgatne Nature Trail has a very authentic product because it depicts Latvian nature as it exists today. In and around the park there are numerous other attractions, from recreational activities, holiday destinations, World War II bunkers, antique industry and unique nature. Cooperation with these attractions and with partners in the AGORA project will help promote the region and the country. This promotion will display the local and Baltic heritage unique to this region. The significant requirements of Līgatne Nature Trail is to cooperate with interested parties, like other attractions, tourists offices and government branches and market the attraction through this cooperation.

5.2 Rossony District, Belarus

SWOT-analysis of Rossony

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecologically clean region. • Unique natural heritage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The most forest-covered district in Belarus ▪ Unique wild nature (biodiversity) ▪ Two special protected areas ▪ Lots of lakes and rivers ▪ Marshes ▪ “Gifts of the forest” (berries, mushrooms, herbs). • Human potential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hospitable people ▪ Educated people ▪ Experience in the field of rural tourism • The district has already developed Local Agenda-21. • Unique tourist product (the first Greenway in Belarus was developed in the region). • Tranquillity. • Organic traditional food. • Folklore. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of infrastructure. • Low accessibility. • Lack of information about the region. • Bureaucratic management system in the district. • Permanent conflict within the region between local community and authorities. • Hardships to find financing for further rural and ecotourism development. • Low variety in tourism offers. • Lack of significant historical monuments
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of local economy on the basis of sustainable use of local resources • Potential investments in agro ecotourism development • Development of agro ecotourism resort that might become national pilot project • Possibility of inclusion of Rossony agro ecotourism resort in the National program of tourism development with further governmental support • Use of Rossony experience as a pilot model for Belarus (holding various trainings, seminars, conferences, study tours) • Membership and cooperation with international organizations (Slowfood, Greenways international etc.) • Development of specialized tours (emphasis on ecotourism) • Development of transnational routes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass tourism development can lead to exhaustion of resources due to their excessive use • Competitive initiatives • Threat of imitation of created tourist product

History of Rossony

The district of Rossony as it is today was founded on July 17, 1924, and is located in the north-western part of the Vitebsk Oblast province. The district consists of 1,900,000 km² of which 60 pct. is covered by forest and 20 pct. by agriculture. The district consists of 145 towns and villages and has a population of 12,000 people, 6,000 of which are living in the rural areas. The administrative centre is located in the town of Rossony which is situated on the northern shore of the lake Rossony, 276 km away from Minsk and 150 km away from the centre of the region in Vitebsk. Over the decades the district of Rossony has belonged to a number of different owners.

Besides the Belarusians both the Russians, the Polish and the Lithuanians has controlled the area over time. These changes has come about as a result of wars, and even though the battle have stood for more attractive prices such as Polotsk and Pskov the Rossony district and the area around it has witnessed some important historical events. During the rule of the Russian tsar Ivan the Terrible, the Sokol fortress was built at the junction between the rivers Dryssa and Nischa. During a war with the Polish some years later the fortress was overrun and demolished. The area also saw battle during the Napoleonic war, in 1812, where the Battle of Vitebsk was fought. Further along the historical trail, the area posed an immense problem for the German armed forces during the Second World War as the area was one large partisan zone. The German response to the partisan activities was to burn down villages and after the war the population of Rossony had been reduced to half its size. Despite the changing masters of the area and the battles played out here the people in the area has not been heavily influenced by these outsiders. On the contrary, the people of the region have managed to build up and maintain their community in pact with the surrounding nature (Rossony, 2012).

Despite of the historical events that have unfolded in Rossony district, as pointed out in the SWOT-analysis, the area lacks historical monuments. Instead Rossony plays on its picturesque nature and has, as the first in Belarus, developed a Greenway, the so called *Blue Necklace*. The Blue Necklace is a road that connects the different settlements using trails that run along the water arteries of the region. On its way, the trails introduce the tourist to historical places, local legends, people of interest as well as folklore and handicraft. The route spans 200 km and is formed as a circle which allows the visitors to start and finish wherever on the tour they like. Furthermore, the trail is organized for tourist on different ability levels according to the physical shape and age requirement.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Rossony district

The local weather and access to Rossony

In general, the climate of the forestry locations of Belarus such as Rossony is characterized as lukewarm, humid and relatively continental. The winters in Rossony are severe with temperatures in January at an average of -7.8 C° and a snow blanket that on average measures 35 cm in thickness. Normally the snowing starts in the beginning of December and the last remnants disappear in the end of March. Opposed to the cold winters stand the moderately hot summers with an average temperature of 17.7 C° in July. The period of vegetation is from the middle of May to the end of September and the climate is especially favourable for such vegetation as pine, spruce, birch, aspen

as well as black alder and white alder. Therefore a considerable part of the forest is primarily covered by these types of trees (Rossony Partners, 2012).

The level of infrastructure in the region is quite low which makes transport to the area troublesome. There are no public transport leading to and from the area so transportation by car is the only real option. The standard of the roads, however, is not that good and the experience driving on these roads has been described as follows: “On a way from a big city going by car you mark that the road becomes narrow and not of a good condition. Many people at their first time coming ask themselves a question: “Where am I going? What a wild place it is!”” (Rossony Location, 2012). The roads leading to the villages in the Rossony district are not asphalted which mean that the roads become impassable in rainy weather. This can be a massive hindrance in advancing tourism in the area.

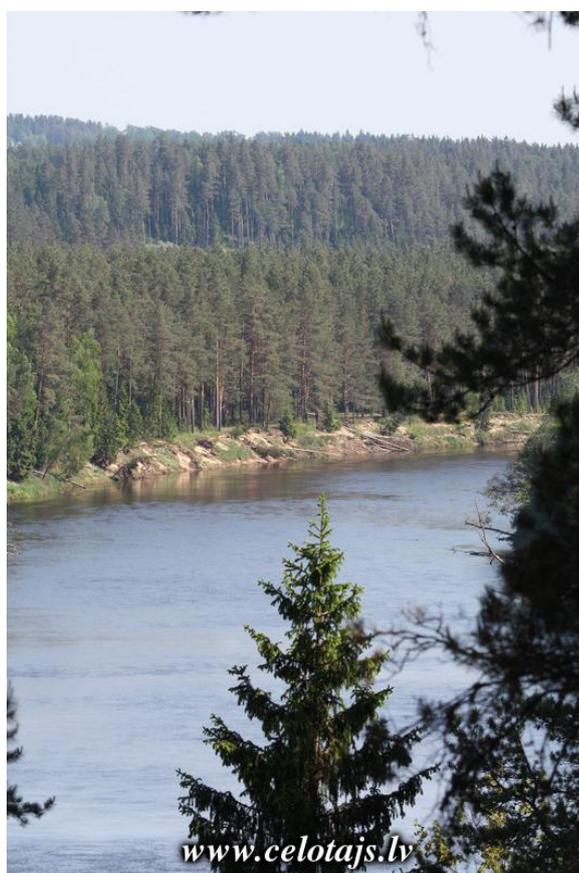


Photo: Celotajs

The region surrounding Rossony district

Vitebsk Oblast is a province of Belarus with its administrative centre in the city of Vitebsk. In 2009, the region had 1.230.800 inhabitants with a population density of 30.6 p/ km² which is the lowest population density in all of Belarus. The reason for this low population density is to be found in the region's territory. Throughout the region of Vitebsk Oblast a total of 70 pct. of the area is covered by forest while 49 pct. is covered by bogs. Furthermore, 192 lakes dot the area while 15 small and large rivers cut their way through the landscape. The nature of the area results in an immense and

diverse wildlife with more than 200 species of birds residing in the area together with wolves, capercaillie, black grouse, lynx and other forms of wildlife.

Visitor Characteristics of Rossony district

Unfortunately, CBS has not received any questionnaires or other descriptions of the clientele from the Rossony area. Therefore, it is not possible to describe anything about the characteristics of the visitors of Rossony with any certainty. However from the development stage of the district, the type of product available to the visitors and the statements from the district themselves it is assumed to be locals that use the area for recreational purposes and international tourists attracted on what Richard W. Butler (see CBS publication “Strategy and Framework for Tourism in the Baltic Sea Region countries”) has described as the exploration stage which means that the area attracts visitors that seek unexplored and not established tourist attractions (Butler, 2006: 4-6).

Strategic Recommendations for Rossony district

Before considering which product developments that can be undertaken in order to increase the number of visitors, one question needs to be answered. As Rossony district points out in the SWOT-analysis, any product development needs to appeal to and use the uniqueness of the area and not only focus on appealing to mass tourism, because this might result in a threat to the heritage products. These heritage products are both the unspoiled nature but also the tranquillity that are found in the region. One way of examining how to achieve a healthy development is to consult the local stakeholders. These stakeholders can give input in the assessment on how many visitors the area can accommodate and still maintain authenticity. After this assessment has been made, the strategy can be made to ensure that the heritage products are the source of development. Another obstacle is accessibility to the region and the inexperience of creating transnational products.

As for the product of Rossony, the eco-centred approach of this region seems to be well developed. Besides the Greenway that has already been set in place the region is working on the Agenda-21 which will ensure further sustainable development as well as a green economy.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product development: Since there is no available information from the visitors in Rossony district, it is hard to recommend specific product developments. It is therefore recommended that some sort of information from the visitors is collected in order to investigate which sorts of products they would like and what improvements the existing products could use. When this information is available it will be possible to identify in which areas where the visitors have a high level of satisfaction and where they don't.

It is also recommended that Rossony district cooperate with other attractions in the area about joint products, for example a combined tour, in order to offer the visitors easy solutions. Cooperation with the other AGORA partners is also recommended in order to create transnational products. When cooperating with attractions in other countries a channel for marketing is also easily available.

Recommendations for marketing development: As mentioned in the SWOT-analysis, the area suffers from a low accessibility as well as lack of information about the region. These two limitations on marketing will be discussed throughout the following section.

The low accessibility discussed above is a major problem when trying to attract international tourists. The problem is directly linked to the issue of lack of information. As infrastructure is costly the idea of improving the infrastructure will in the vast majority of the cases be an unrealistic recommendation. Instead of increasing the accessibility the attraction needs to make the attraction worth visiting as well as spread information about the attraction. As mentioned above the product seems to be well developed and if this is the case the focus should probably be put on information.

The English webpages for the Rossony area are written in basic English and it is for the most part quite easy to understand and navigate. The webpage offers a lot of information regarding the nature and history of the Rossony region as well as describing different places to live while visiting the area. In contrast to this wide variety of background information stands the lack of more practical information about the possibility of guided tours, tourist information and other relevant information. As mentioned earlier, the accessibility of the area is quite low and therefore very detailed travel directions are needed to accommodate foreign tourists that do not speak the language nor know their way about the region. Therefore, putting more basic information on the webpage could be an idea for reaching a broader international audience.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

Rossony district offers a chance to experience Baltic nature first hand. The many beautiful waterways and trails make the region appealing to naturalists and this is the contribution to BSR heritage. In order to reach potential visitors with this message, it is important to highlight these features, cooperate with other attractions and to create and maintain cooperation across borders. If cooperation can be sustained it is possible to create awareness and this will promote the natural heritage of the Baltic Sea Region.

5.3 Slitere National Park, Latvia

SWOT-analysis of Slitere National Park

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative in Latvia. • Attractive enough to be a destination for local tourists. • Located in Slitere NP – close to other nature and culture heritage destinations within the NP. • Available throughout the year. • Exclusive – only in attendance of advanced guide, professional. • Low maintenance cost (no infrastructure needed, no full time human resources). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Far from the capital (main markets). • Not flexible – advanced target audience (early morning hours, long distances, no infrastructure, not easy access). • Only two guides. • Cannot guaranty to see exact animal. • Not accessible with public transport. • Low variety of other services (restaurants etc.)
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide awareness raising (product created for the first season with high potential). • Develop tourism service cluster (cooperation with other local stakeholders). • High potential to extend related nature-based products. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance of fragile environment. • Potential danger from animals (ticks, wild boar etc.)
Conclusions	
<p>As maintenance costs are high and funding is very reliable on the government seeking out corporate sponsorships can be a possibility. It would make the organization less vulnerable to governmental changes. Furthermore, it would make it possible to improve marketing activities, as they are almost non-existent at the moment. This would create greater awareness and thus attract more visitors.</p> <p>The amount of human resources is limited. A way to overcome this implication is to hire volunteer staff. There will be some training and administration costs, but overall, the costs will be much lower than hiring part-time or full-time staff.</p>	

History of Slitere National Park

The Slitere National Park is situated in the Western Part of Latvia in the region of Kurzeme. It was established in 2000 on the basis of the Slitere Reserve and is part of the Natura 2000 network which is a network for European specially protected areas. The park represents a unique opportunity to experience the history of the Baltic Sea. An integral part of the Slitere National Park is the coastline which consists of sandy beaches, several kilometres of sand dunes and vegetation of dry pines. The Latvian countryside tourism association (Lauku ceļotājs) offers 14 different routes for hikers,

cyclists, water tourists, car tourists and those interested in watching animals and birds in the landscape. A requirement for walking on certain trails is that you are accompanied by a guide.

The Lighthouse

Besides the coastline, the National Park also offers sights such as the old Slitere lighthouse that stands on the steep slope of the Blue Hills. It is the second oldest lighthouse in Latvia (built in the period 1849-1850) and is situated 82 meters above sea level. In 2002, the lighthouse was converted into a museum and an observation point as it is situated five kilometres inland and therefore gives a great opportunity to observe the surrounding forest, the seashore as well as the sea. Furthermore, the lighthouse serves as an excellent observation point for watching migrating birds during the spring. Another place to observe the migrating birds and the natural scenery is by Cape Kolka, where the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga meets.



Photo: Celotajs

Flora and Fauna

In general, the national park is rich on animals and beside the migrating birds in the spring the park is home to a number of rare and protected reptiles and amphibians. Along the coast, the fishing village's offers visitor a chance to learn about the Liv cultural heritage that forms a substantial part of the cultural heritage of Northern Europe (Latvia Slitere, 2012; Latvia National Parks, 2012).

Key influences on the visitor experience at Slītere National Park

The local weather and access to Slītere National Park

The weather in Latvia is temperated and higly influenced by the Baltic Sea. The weather changes throughout the year but generally the weather is mild and humid. The winter is often dominated by snow and temperatures that on average is -6 degrees but can reach a staggering -30 degree. The winter normally gives way for autumn during Marh even though it can occur anywhere between February and April. During spring the vegetation starts to blossom and the weather is generally warm and sunny but arctic air masses can bring about cold weather and even snow during this period. The summer falls in the period June till August and is generally quite warm. The average temperature is 19 degrees but temperature up till 35 degrees are not uncommen. Despite of the warm weather the evening gets quite chilly and juring July and August Thundersorm accompanied by heavy rains occur. The autumn is the periode with the most rain but with temperatures up till 20 degrees can occur. The autumn period is the time where the forest are the most beautiful with its red and yellow autumn collour (Latvia Travel Conditions, 2012)

The largest city in the vecinity of the park is Ventspils that lies approximately 60 kilometers away. Ventspils is one of the tourist centres of Latvia and offers historical sites as well as leisure activities. Further away, approximately 155 kilometers away, lies Riga. By car, the park is accessable from Riga with an approximately two and a half hours drive. Besides car there are no possible acces to the park, as public transport does not go there. The park is open on daily basis for visitors all year round while the attractions situated within the park has set opening hours.

The region surrounding Slītere National Park

The region surrounding the Slītere National Park is rich on sights and places of interest. One of the attractions in the proximity is the Ventspils International Radioastronomy Centre at Irbene. The radio telescope measures 32 meter in diameter and is the 8th largest in the world. Originally the installation was constructed by the Soviet Union to intercept radio signals as well as telephone conversations taking place in the NATO countries. After Latvia regained independence in 1994 the radio telescope was converted into a scientific station that measures radiation and sounds from the corners of space. As the installation is no longer a military secret tours of the area is possible and visitors are even allowed to climb the platform of the telescope (Latvia Travel, 2012). From the platform of the telescope it is possible to see two lighthouses. One of the lighthouses is the Ovisi lighthouse which is considered to be the oldest remaining lighthouse in Latvia. The lighthouse was finished in 1814 and has kept is architectonical appearance until present day (Latvia Tavel, 2012). The other visible lighthouse is the Miķeļbāka lighthouse. With its 62 meters the lighthouse is the tallest lighthouse in the Baltic region.

Further east is the Dundaga Castle constructed in the third quarter of the 13th century by the Riga Dome Cathedral Chapter. The castle passed to private ownership and the last family who resided here was the Osten-Saken family who owned the castle from 1711 until the agrarian reforms of 1920 (Latvia Travel, 2012) Not far from the castle is the Kubali School-Museum which for many

years served as the only school for children of peasants in the Dundaga estate. It is the oldest log school in Kurzeme which has been preserved until today (Latvia Travel, 2012).

Visitor Characteristics of Slitere National Park

Unfortunately, CBS has not received any questionnaires from the Slitere National Park area. Therefore it is not possible to describe any characteristics of the visitors of Slitere National Park with any certainty.

Strategic Recommendations for Slitere National Park

Whereas Ligatne Nature Trail, mentioned earlier in this book, has the great advantage of proximity to the tourism centre of Riga the Slitere National Park lies far from the nation's capital. In order to go to the park a tourist from Riga would have to drive two and a half hours each way which makes it highly unattractive for a one day trip. The problem of attracting tourist for a multiple day visit is as described in the SWOT-analysis the lack of other services in the proximity of the park. It is with this point of departure the following recommendations are made.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product for development: If cooperation between the attractions of Kurzeme is not possible or if a continued focus on Riga is maintained the accessibility of the park should be improved. As the Slitere National Park is not possible to reach by public transport a large segment of the visitors coming to Riga by other means of transportation than car is excluded. Therefore, arranged transportation to the park can serve as a way to increase the customer base. As with the recommendations to Ligatne Nature Trail it is advisable to arrange this tour from Riga so it stops by several attractions. This enhances the incentive for tourists to take the long trip as well as spreads out the cost of operation between multiple attractions.

One of the weaknesses drawn out by the park is the limited number of guides available to undertake the guided tours around the area. The number of guides is a structural hindrance to the number of visitors that can visit the trails. As it is a national park that consist of a fragile environment an unbridled number of tourists are not desirable for the area. Instead management should determine the level of visitors the park can handle without ruining the nature and set the number of guides hereafter. As the maintenance cost of the park is high and the funding is highly reliable on government funds any additional guides need to be relatively cost effective. There are two available options in order to increase the number of guides with a minimum of expenditure. The first way is as mentioned in the SWOT analysis to find volunteers in the local community to act as guides in the peak season. These volunteers have the advantage of being almost cost free and have a long time span as most volunteers are able to stay on as guides for many years. On the other hand, a major disadvantage can be lack of language skills and the question whether volunteers can be found all together. The other way to increase the number of guides is to hire university students to perform guided tours. The advantage of this is primarily the knowledge in their field as well as language skills. Due to the language skills these students will be able to undertake guided tours for foreign tourists. The major disadvantages of these students are their salary as well as the short time span

one can expect them to stay on as guides. As such these two groups offer advantages in different fields and it is possible to draw on these advantages. The volunteer guides can be used for guided tours of native Latvians while the university students can be charged with the guided tours of foreigners.

The great advantage of both of these types of guides is the flexibility they offer. During the peak season during the summer months it is possible to upgrade the number of guides without having to pay them all year round. If two guides are enough to cover the demand outside the peak season only seasonal guides should be employed. It is important to note that even though both of these alternatives are relatively cost efficient the new guides still needs training which must be taken into consideration.

Recommendations for marketing development: From the SWOT analysis, it is shown that the parks sees one of its weaknesses as being situated far from the capital and therefore far from the main markets. By focusing on attracting visitors from Riga the Slitere National Park has to compete with other national parks such as Ķemeru National Park and Gauja National Park that both are closer to Riga and accessible by public transport. The difficulties reaching the park are combined with a scarce supply of accommodation at the park. Both of these elements make it difficult to use tourist in Riga as a customer base as the park is hard to access and the possibility of staying there are limited. Instead of trying to compete on a marketplace where the park has great disadvantages, in comparison with similar providers, the park should try to position itself in a context where the competition is less strong. As the region surrounding Slitere National Park has a great variety of sights and attractions there are a breeding ground for a combined effort to draw more tourists to Kurzeme. By attracting more people to Kurzeme the national park will have a larger customer base to attract visitors from. The appeal of the park for visitors in Kurzeme will be higher than for visitors in Riga due to the proximity its proximity.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

The Slitere National Park function as a showcase of Baltic identity both through the picturesque landscape that shows the harsh state of the Baltic nature but also through the fishing villages that show an important part of the Baltic heritage. Because of the product similarities, Slitere National Park shares a lot of the same opportunities, obstacles and recommendations as Rossony district. It is important to get the message across to the visitors. That means making sure that the available product is heritage itself. Information about potential experiences, different sites and the history of the area is therefore important features that need focus. Like Rossony district it is important that Slitere National Park cooperate with both local and foreign interested parties in order to share knowledge about both product development and marketing efforts. By bringing all of these elements together, the Baltic Sea heritage will be more visible and accessible to the public.

6. Stones

6.1 Stones and archaeological monuments from pre-historic period in Estonia

SWOT-analysis of stones and archaeological monuments

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1585 cup-marked stones in the whole territory of Estonia. A numerous type of monument, spread in almost all regions in Estonia • Protected by state as cultural and/or natural monuments • Not deteriorated by weather and human activity • Little need for regular maintenance, suitable for local communities to take care, signposting of cup-marked stones is the responsibility of the state • Representing a higher value compared with “normal” big stones; • Culture heritage and storytelling as an added value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very specific type of nature and human activity, but widely spread • Sometimes not in the original location • Little scientific information available • Responsibility to care for and maintain the stone lies on the owner • Little money available for information boards and maintenance • Stones do not stand out as tourist attractions – no infrastructure like shops, hotels, visitor centres can be built around them • Stones are not included as an attraction on <i>www.visitestonia.com</i> that is the main platform for marketing communication
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness attracting people to similar sites across the Baltic Sea area may contribute to the popularization of the Estonian stones • Unknown, interesting and mystery feature for people coming from countries where such stones do not exist • To become an eye-catcher - “core” of a rest area with further information • Little knowledge about such stones provokes ideas and imagination, legends and stories connected with the stones • Connecting feature between geological nature and human culture • Source to learn and understand history from times when written sources did not exist • Cup-marked stones are not recognised on the European level, on regional level they often carry the identity of the region or local community • Smaller villages or regions may promote themselves by displaying a local well-known stone – e.g. picture of the stone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too small objects for foreign visitors who e.g. experienced large rock carvings in Sweden • Difficult to analyse, scientific research is still not concluded • Economic activities (construction work, road building etc.) may cause removal or crushing such stones • Stones as small objects are often ignored in land planning processes and as such may easily get damaged

<p>on brochures or post cards etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stones offer good opportunities for schoolchildren to learn about their local history, they strengthen ties between generations – e.g. grandparents show the site of a cup-marked stone to their grandchildren who then write down memories and stories connected with the stones, research of local history and landscape. • Religious connotation of cup-marked and cult stones for people believing in the powers of natural objects • Focus on some of the easier accessible areas 	
---	--

History of the cup-marked stones in Estonia

The cup-marked stones are a geological phenomenon created with a human impact i.e. the cup-shaped holes engraved in them. The stones of this kind have been found in Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark and Estonia. The majority, approximately 90 pct., is located in Estonia and most of them are located in the Northern Estonian districts of Harju, Jarva and Virumaa. The stones are distinguished by one or many round-bottomed cup-marks depending on the size of the stone. The holes typically have a diameter of 3-10 cm that is placed on the top or on the sloping surfaces of the stones. They differ in dimensions; from pocket size stones up to those of the size of building e.g. the largest discovered stone, the parish of Lehmja-Loo Suurkivi in Juri, have a circumference of 23 meters and is 3 meters high. Until now approximately 1750 cup-marked stones have been discovered in Estonia. 72 pct. of them have ten or more cup-marks engraved on them and only 11 of them have more than 100 cup-marks.

The research concerning cup-marked stones in the Nordic countries and Estonia indicates that the distribution of the stones is closely related with the agricultural use of the areas. Farmers and their ploughing are believed to have spread the existing stones in the landscape. Although the localization of the stones is not related with the burial places, they are however linked to the asserted fields and therefore may be considered as an indicator of primitive agriculture.

The exact age of the cup-marks cannot be scientifically determined but the estimated age is considered to be somewhere between the end of the Bronze Age and Pre-Roman Iron Age, whereas the origin and idea of cup-making undoubtedly came to Estonia from Scandinavia. These artefacts are recognized as signs of the influence of the Scandinavian culture in the Bronze and Iron Age in the Estonian territory.

The original purpose of either the cup-marked stone or the holes themselves was and still is a field of research for a number of scientists. Their collective work reveals ideas about different concepts

of religious, medical and astral origins. The first interpretation interprets the cup-marked holes as the offering stones where particles of food and blood were placed in the hollows and offered to the divinities. Another possible interpretation is that the holes were believed to have a supernatural force boosting agriculture fertility and the holes were used for these rituals. These rituals actually survived in the local legends and myths. The cup-marks have also been interpreted as symbols depicting the solar system. Nevertheless, scientific reasoning is complemented by oral heritage present in the local native tradition that is embracing all the theories mentioned above.

Key influences on the visitor experience at the sites

Although the cup-marked stones represent natural and human history, promoting them as a tourist attraction is a challenge. The stones are spread widely in the northern part of Estonia and therefore they are difficult to establish as a tourist destination or even as one of the attractions at the specific destination. The locations of the stones, in the woods or on agricultural fields limit the possibility for building the surrounding infrastructure that would enrich the experience of the tourists. Therefore, it is problematic to develop the stones as an attraction and market them as a tourist product for visitors that in fact would be interested in the history of stones but still not stimulated enough to visit their locations.



Photo: AGORA 2.0

However, there have been attempts to increase the availability of the cup-marked stone locations to the visitors. The project tried out several routes of different complexity and different historic background. This was mainly concentrated on two major stone groups. The first group is the sacrificial cup-marked stones that are scattered all over Estonia. These stones are without any significant infrastructure linking them and this makes them difficult for visitors to access. The second group is the meteorite crater field („stones from the sky“) that in the last years has developed a well-functioning Visitors Centre with supporting services and is well represented in national and International tourist guides. The reason for trying to introduce cup-marked stones to a

broader audience was that such stones are represented in several countries around the Baltic Sea (Scandinavia, Estonia, Germany, less in Latvia and Lithuania) and they represent a culture that once was common in all these Baltic Sea region countries, but has lost its significance and meaning. A pilot test excursion has been organised for people on an open invitation: i.e. an advertisement of the routes on the home page of the Estonian Heritage Society and among its partners. This was difficult to promote due to inaccessibility of communication forums deriving from competition among competing businesses in the tourism sector. This meant that it was mainly people interested in cultural heritage that followed the news from the Estonian Heritage Society that attended the pilot tours. The buses were always packed, the organizers had to turn down people because of first-come-first-serve basis as all seats were immediately booked. The people who attended the pilot tours gave very positive reactions: they did not mind the lack of sanitary facilities and good roads to the objects, but appreciated the sites and knowledge that they gained from previously unknown heritage sites. It was concluded that these tours were mainly of interest to “specialized interest groups” like geologists or archaeologists and they appreciated the guidance from professional heritage specialists. These pilot tours were also well received by local schools both by the teachers and the students.

Visitor Characteristics of Estonian Heritage Tourists

Due to the differences between the routes of the pilot tours (cup-marked stones on unknown landscapes and the meteorite crater field with a well-functioning infrastructure) it was difficult to establish visitor characteristics. There is no available information about the visitors who come to see the cup-marked stones, because these heritage objects are located on open landscapes and are rarely monitored, except for organised guided tours, planned maintenance, voluntary work etc.

The Kaali meteorite crater field is included in the local tourist route of Saaremaa, where there is a well-functioning visitor centre and a museum with relevant services. From these places some statistical data is available. That is only to some extent because the actual heritage objects, i.e. the meteorite craters, are free to visit for everyone and there is no data available on how many people that visit the site annually. The data on visitors exists only for the museum, i.e. how many people that purchase a ticket. Over the years the estimation has been that less than half of the total numbers of visitors who visit Kaali also visit the museum. In the past years a number of concerts and other public events have been organised in the Kaali crater field. The conclusion so far has been that there is some success in promoting Kaali as a site of natural and cultural heritage. A definite success has been tours for schools where local teachers have expressed satisfaction about having a professional historian to educate about the site and students have genuinely taken an interest in sites that in earlier times have been important to people. To illustrate that the remote places today have not always been marginal, they may become important again in future.

Strategic Recommendations for the Estonian Heritage Society

The Estonian heritage Society has a great and complicated challenge due to the fact the “attraction” they wish to promote is scattered over a very large area. This makes the recommendation a bit more complicated because conventional product developments is less applicable to this attraction.

Recommendations on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product for development: The Estonian Heritage Society has tested pilot trails to sites previously unknown to the general public. The amount of interest was a surprise for the Estonian Heritage Society. All the tours were fully booked and the visitors were very interested and satisfied with the trip. In the aftermath of these excursions schools from all over Estonia has been asking for similar excursions. This lead to conclude that the Estonian Heritage Society has a unused potential for developing specialised tourism in this case concentrating on cultural and natural heritage that have not yet been awareness around before. Developing these form of excursions could be a both popular, profitable and heritage promoting.

Knowledge about these sites might be limited but further research is not inconceivable because the sites have significant emotional power especially for the local population and with the interest of international visitor the popularity of the stones could improve.

One of the conclusions was that there is dire need for explanatory information boards that would guide tourists to such sites, because a lot of people visit the sites without a professional guide. The boards would also mean a lot to the local inhabitants; because this would serve as a reminder that their country once was of an important trade route and a place with cultural heritage.

Recommendations for marketing development: If the Estonian Heritage Society manages to create a successful product, it is important to sustain this success with useful marketing efforts. Cooperation with local tourism organisations and other attractions are crucial to reach a large audience relatively fast because the product probably will be costly if busses and guides are the main components of a new implemented product.

Recommendations for development of Baltic Sea Region heritage

It is hard to contribute to the BSR heritage because the cup-marked stones have no definitive history and therefore not a real contribution to a common heritage. They do however have a local significance and apparently some appeal to tourists both local and foreign. If the interest continues to grow, then the marketing efforts should grow and hopefully this will lead to a broadened awareness of the stones and by that Estonian heritage which has much to contribute to Baltic Sea Heritage. For this to happen a lot of factors has to develop in a positive direction and it is difficult to predict the future, but there are possibilities.

6.2 Madsebakke

History of Madsebakke

Rock carvings are pictures and signs that are carved into rocks more than 2500 years ago. Rock carvings can be found many different places on the Danish island, Bornholm. In fact, the largest rock carving site can be found on the island, and it is called Madsebakke. Madsebakke is situated between the towns of Allinge and Sandvig on the northern part of the island. On a sloping rock, visitors can find approximately 14 pictures of ships, five wheel crosses, five footprint figures, and many cup-shaped marks. The reason that the number is an accurate is that a large number of the rock carvings are difficult to see after many years of changing weather conditions. Therefore, in order for visitors to be able to see them, they have actually been repainted at Madsebakke. At Hammerholm, which is also located on Bornholm, visitors can find rock carvings that have not been repainted. These are, however, best experienced on guided tours (Bornholmsnatur, 2012). By examining the shape of the rock carvings at Madsebakke, it is possible to date the rock carvings to the early Bronze Age, 1100-500 b. C (Kulturarv, 2012). Today, these rock carvings still exist and from the attraction, visitors can view the Baltic Sea. The name “Madsebakke” refers to the owner of the hill (“bakke” in Danish) in 1719, who was called Madtz, which is a typical Danish name that has, however, since change to the contemporary Mads.

In the end of the 1800 century, two similar sites nearby were ruined, and it is still possible to see certain remains. Also, the island has other existing sites, where ship pictures can be encountered, although in a much smaller scale. The largest excavation at a rock carving was completed at Madsebakke in the summer of 2004, and this has meant that many traces of human activity have been encountered. One of the most interesting findings is probably a number of holes after pillars, which could indicate that there used to be a fence or another construction by the rock carvings (Bornholms museer, 2012). The date is still uncertain, but in case these findings actually belong to the rock carvings it would be an extraordinary discovery, as it could mean that the activities on the site has not been limited to rock carvings.

Key influences on the visitor experience at Madsebakke

Bornholm is part of Denmark, and the small island is situated in the middle of the Baltic Sea. In terms of accessibility, visitors can fly to Bornholm in just 35 minutes from Copenhagen, they can travel from Ystad in Sweden in just 1 hour and 20 minutes, and they can get from Copenhagen by car, bus or train in 2 1/2 hour. Once on the island, Bornholm is served by an extensive network of main and minor roads and the island is only about 40 kilometres across its widest point. For example, the island has more than 200 kilometres of signposted cycle paths, enabling cyclists to ride around the island in peace and quiet. Also, there are public buses and tourist coaches available. Madsebakke itself is situated 24, 5 km north of the main city, Røne.

The island of Bornholm is known as “The Island of Sunshine”, and has generally more sunshine than the rest of Denmark due to its more south-western position. Especially during the summer

period, the island is crowded with tourists, and it has a lot to offer in terms of both gourmet experiences and outdoor activities. Bornholm can in that way offer many interesting elements for tourists such as live music events, sport activities, nature, art and culture (Bornholm, 2012).

On the webpage of the Danish Nature Agency, different tours on Bornholm in general and on the rock carvings in particular can be booked. It also contains relevant information as well as many different brochures dealing with the rock carvings and the nature on Bornholm (Bornholmsnatur, 2012).

Visitor Characteristics of Madsebakke Tourists

Madsebakke is like the other Danish attractions not a partner in the AGORA 2.0 project. Therefore, management has not had the opportunity to collect data material and therefore it is not possible to describe the clientele that visits Madsebakke. However, it can be mentioned that approximately 20.000 people visits the attractions each year. Of these, the most part is public school students. On the island of Bornholm itself, more than half a million visit every year, and of these 80 pct. are regulars, who return roughly every year (Bornholm, 2012).

Strategic Recommendations for Madsebakke

As earlier mentioned, Madsebakke is not an official partner of the AGORA 2.0 project, and has mainly been taken in as a source of inspiration for the other attractions. Thus, the attraction serves as a best-in-class example of product development, which is why the recommendation part of this chapter is different from the others. Therefore, it will be a mixture of what the management has already done and what they plan to do, which is then combined with recommendations based on the experiences that has been encountered in the other cases.

Strategy on how to increase the number of visitors

Recommendations for product development: Overall, the Danish Nature Agency that controls the nature on Bornholm has had focus on four different elements in order to improve the visitor experience at Madsebakke, namely buying surrounding areas, creating new and maintain old path systems, improving accessibility, and focusing on communication and promotion. The overall purpose has been to improve the conditions for existing visitors, but even more so to attract new visitors (although no specific target groups have been appointed). The final result has been a new path between Madsebakke and Hammerholm, as this has been the area that the Danish Nature Agency has focused on improving. In order to this, first of all, it was necessary to buy some of the surrounding privately-owned fields, as it was otherwise not possible to cross the area, without having to walk along large roads etc. Hereafter, new paths was implemented, and much focus has also been on accessibility, as the Danish Nature Agency at Bornholm recognizes that this is important for tourists.

The Danish Nature Agency has not focused on attracting specific segments as such, since it is acting on behalf of the Danish state, which essentially means that it has a responsibility to maintain and create attractions that suits everybody. However, it has focused on improving the conditions for

people that are not used to taking advantage of the benefits of nature. Therefore, recently, minor implementations to improve the trails and tracks for hikers have been one of main focus areas. This means that the paths themselves have been improved and are now more accessible, and that signs have been put up along the paths. It should here be mentioned that the Danish Nature Agency has an equal focus on improving the conditions for both locals and for tourists, and in that sense the agency is very multifunctional. Another initiative has been the implementation of QR codes, showing pictures of what the rock carvings used to look like. This is a great implementation, because it activates as well as educates the visitor, which essentially means that the experience is enhanced. The rest of the communication initiatives will be examined in the part on marketing development.

Another nature initiative in the area is that Bornholm has been given the responsibility of taking care of seven European bisons, as part of a larger EU initiative. There are four purposes with the project, of which the most relevant for the AGORA 2.0 project is that many visitors will have an extraordinary experience that should ultimately make them return to Bornholm. Two of the bisons have been equipped with a GPS so that it is possible to track their movements and behaviour. Among other things, it should then eventually be possible to make a map of this that visitors can see at the attraction (Bornholm Bison, 2012). Ultimately, this should improve the experience for visitors at Madsebakke and Bornholm.

Management at the Danish Nature Agency at Bornholm believes that there is still too much sub optimizing in Danish tourism, and that there should be more focus on cooperation and implementation, as well as obtaining risk-taking investments that are long term focused. At Bornholm, the framework is in place, but it needs to be exploited. Here, one recommendation could be to focus more on funding from external partners from both the private and public sectors of tourism. For example, AGORA 2.0 has been one concrete project, where the overall goal has been to implement products at the attraction. Furthermore, it could also be recommended to focus on more specific segmentation of visitors (demographics, country, motivation etc. of current and potential visitors), as this should correlate with the products Madsebakke is offering. Also, Madsebakke could put its attention on even more of the near markets. In fact, a large part of Eastern Europe is not far away from Bornholm, and some of these economies are on the rise.

Recommendations for marketing development: The attraction is represented on many different webpages, of which many of these are in Danish, English and German. Also, brochures are produced in four different languages; Danish, English, German and Polish. These can furthermore be found at different tourism actors on Bornholm. Overall, this means that Madsebakke is promoted through different channels and to many different nationalities, which is naturally beneficial to the attraction. However, as mentioned earlier more focus on segmentation could be helpful in the attractions' marketing efforts to get even more visitors. Also, more help from neighbouring attractions and other tourism actors (hotels, restaurants etc.) could prove successful in promoting Madsebakke. The Danish Nature Agency has (so far) unsuccessfully tried to start a better and more extensive collaboration with VisitDenmark, but it is recommended that it continues, since

VisitDenmark as Denmark's tourist organization must have an interest in exploiting one of the most interesting (and maybe even most unexplored) parts of Denmark's tourist sector.

7. Transnational tourism products developed or in the pipeline

Five themes for attraction development were appointed in the AGORA 2.0 project:

- Castles
- Red Brick Gothic
- Sand Dunes
- Forest
- Stones

Within each theme, cases mainly from the participants in the AGORA project were appointed for further analyses and for product development. The cases were supplemented by new cases from Denmark to demonstrate 1) new options as well as 2) functioning as learning examples for product development. These cases include: Kronborg Castle included in the castle category. It is a world heritage attraction situated in Denmark. The idea with including Kronborg castle is to demonstrate how different features of an attraction can appeal to all senses and thereby create a unique experience and also to illustrate that story telling about an attraction and use of existing literature (Shakespeare: Hamlet) can make an attraction still more interesting and unique. Sankt Bendt's Church in Ringsted and Sorø Church in Sorø, both in the category of Red Brick Gothic, were added to enlarge the market development for Red Brick Gothics. To the sand dunes, Råbjerg Mile in Denmark was included as a well-developed sand dune attraction in Denmark that can be linked to the other sand dunes and serve as inspiration. Forests and stones were the most difficult categories. In fact, it was difficult for the partners to focus on stones that could be developed as attractions. In fact, only one case was developed, a case from Estonia. In order to give inspiration for further development for the stone attraction in Estonia a similar stone case from Denmark was included. The Danish stone case has during the last years gone through a real attraction development and is today a well-known cultural heritage attraction in Denmark (Madsebakke in Bornholm).

In this publication, all the single cases have been analyzed and in the section with publication and in the recommendations products produced or in the pipeline can be found.

Development of transnational Baltic Sea Heritage products

The appointed cultural heritage attractions were at different development stages. Most developed were castles and Red Brick Gothic attractions as they already had established transborder associations and thereby created a platform for product development for transborder products. Next to these two categories in the development stage, the sand dunes come as they already had been developed in a *national* development process. Forests were at a very first stage in a national attraction development phase. Stones were in an embryonic phase or not developed as attractions at all.

Development requirements

In work package five we can develop output design and ideas for product and service developments. Furthermore, we can give the attractions *instruments* needed for attraction development. It is done in a publication published 2012 (“Tools for products development in AGORA 2.0”). We can also assist by being a *sparring partner* and by demonstrating how *demand* must be included before a

successful attraction development can be achieved. The demand is the main topic in the VIPER-study. It is done by the development of a questionnaire to identify customer needs.

The number of questionnaires we collected from the partners in the project was however too few to make comprehensive demand analyses, but the data we have received have been used to illustrate how demand must be taken into consideration. Furthermore, the developed questionnaire is a product that can be used by the attractions in the future when more demand information is needed, i.e. it is a useful and lasting product for further demand investigation.

Establishment of new products includes product innovations and service. It can only be achieved locally by the partners as establishment involves investment in capital and human resources as well as involvement of the authorities. In other words, implementation is out of reach for the work package five leader, and should be handled by the attractions themselves.

The new products and services implemented

The partners have already established the following products and service developments and some are planned to be realized in the near future:

- An international historical conference with the main theme: “History of the Baltic Sea Region via Local History”. It was held in Narva in November.
- A castle route passport that gives information on all the castles and museums in the association on all the castles and museums in the association in the Baltic Sea. The more castles they visit, the more chances they have to receive a price.
- Design of timeline for Häme, Narva and Skokloster castles.
- A development plan for the future of the castle association was created last year, and flyers about the association were printed.
- A route developed by the sand dunes group, crossing Poland, Kaliningrad and Lithuania, including maps for the route
- A Baltic Sea Route of Red Brick Gothic including both a longer route and a shorter around trip with connections to Poland and Denmark.
- A Forest guide including Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Belarus.
- Series of self-guiding and driving tour in the just mentioned forest guide.
- Series of guided wildlife tours to the places described in the guide.
- Geocaching points.
- A pilgrimage route named Via Livonica
- A Baltic Sea Wonder Contest
- An investigation of student preferences for Baltic Sea attractions
- A comprehensive statistical system named BASTIS that together with the VIPER study can be used by all wanting to develop transborder products in the Baltic Sea Region
- Brochures on all the attractions and themes developed in a series.

Experiences from the Baltic Sea transborder product development

1. All who works with product development and marketing of products know that success in form of development of competitive products demands a mixture of cooperation and competition in form of an effective frame for development
2. The frame in the Baltic Sea Region is ineffective. There is too much competition and too little cooperation
3. The reasons are that the national tourism boards and organizations are governed by national competition. It is because the money given to the national tourist organizations mostly is given by the single states to promote national tourism. In general, no money is set aside for transborder Baltic Sea product development
4. Only associations and corporations with a transborder ownership can create transborder products. It is why the castle association and the red brick gothic as well as hotel chains etc. can develop transborder products
5. In exceptional cases transborder products can be created without common ownership. It is, for instance, the case for cruises in the Baltic Sea as “Pearls on the String”. Without cooperation there would be no product.
6. If the EU goal of EU being the world tourism destination number one (see European Commission Brussels 30.6.2010 “ Europe, the world’s No 1 Tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe) shall be realized programmes with funding and/or regional agreements on minor, specific tourism activities as for example biking around the Baltic Sea will be needed.

Development of transnational Baltic Sea Region tourism products is long termed project. It will take years before the cooperation level and the financial resources will be sufficient for a competitive product development.

Existing EU programs can promote slow, marginal improvements of cooperation, but the existing national state orientation of transnational tourism product development is up hill. The AGORA 2.0 project clearly illustrates this problematic dilemma. Progress could possibly be improved if linked to common Baltic Sea countries values as education and improvement of the environment, i.e. by including more educational elements as well as enhancing participation by young researchers in the projects and by giving sustainable development more weight in the programs.

8. Conclusion

23 attractions within the five themes; Castles, Red Brick Gothic, Stone, Forests and Sand Dunes have been analysed. Concerning the castles, there is an interesting transnational product to develop and a platform in the form of the Association of Castles and Museum around the Baltic Sea has already been established. The main problem is that it is very expensive to maintain the buildings. The castles are national attractions and even at the national level it is difficult to secure that there is enough capital to keep the buildings at a low maintenance standard. It implies that there is already no money for restoring the buildings or for marketing of the national heritage. Furthermore, it is difficult to see realistic financing sources that will invest in the heritage buildings and treasures.

Concerning the Red Brick Gothic, it is an advantage that an association already exists. However, the association includes mainly Red Brick Gothic attractions in Poland and Germany. So to be real strong as an association more red brick gothic attractions from other Baltic Sea Region countries will have to be included. Also, the financial position for the association will have to be strengthened. It is likely that private-public financing can be established to strengthen the association, but it needs a more market-oriented platform with a well-developed marketing competence.

Concerning the sand dunes, it will not be capital demanding to have a product developed, but it needs much more cooperation that is the case today. Furthermore, skills and education are needed. Especially English language skills. A unique and interesting product can be developed if the right entrepreneurs and developers can be identified.

Concerning the forests, product development is at a very early stage, and the first recommendations will be to have a stronger national development of the natural assets as well as of the management that shall take care of the development.

Concerning the stones, the identification stage is just in its beginning. National products can maybe be developed, but it will not be products that can create so much income. In other words, it will be low-cost products initiated by local entrepreneurs.

A common problem for transnational tourism development in the Baltic Sea Region is if there is a tourism demand for development of Baltic Sea Region attractions. For the time being, it is not the case. Furthermore, national interests are in favour of a national tourism development.

9. VIPER study

9.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to show the thoughts, ideas and application of the questionnaire in the AGORA 2.0. To accomplish this aim the study will be divided into three sections. The first section will deal with the theoretical pro and cons of using questionnaires. The second section will present the questionnaire and the thoughts and ideas behind its creation as well as the pitfalls identified in it. The final section will show how the data would have been employed if sufficient amount of data had been collected as well as a study that is possible to undertake given the amount of data collected. It is meant to be used by the attractions in the future when more information on demand is required.

9.2 The validity of using questionnaires

The method applied in this study is the self-completion questionnaire. As any other method this type of data collecting has a range of advantages as well as disadvantages. In the following section some of these advantages and disadvantages will be portrayed in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the chosen method.

It should be mentioned that this review of questionnaires and the thoughts that goes into a questionnaire study is not complete. Instead it should be seen as a review of some of the main points that one need to take into consideration before undertaking such a study. Even though there are a lot of commonalities in studies using questionnaires it is important to stress that each study is unique and that there are specific considerations that need to be taken into consideration in each individual study.

9.2.1 Advantages of using questionnaires

There are a number of advantages that are generally obtained by using questionnaires. The advantage generally revolves around the time- and cost effectiveness in obtaining the desired data, the exclusion of biased information as well as the convenience of the respondent. This list of advantages is of course not exhaustive but the following section is intended to give an insight into some of the basic reasons for choosing questionnaires as a mean to gather information.

What is encountered in almost all studies is the limited amount of resources available in conducting surveys and the limited time span in which to conduct it. Therefore it is an advantage that the data collection by questionnaires in general is inexpensive and fast compared to other methods of data collection. However, it cannot be stressed enough that one should never use a survey method simply because of low costs or speedy collection. The survey method should correspond with the questions that need to be answered, but the cost and time are nevertheless an advantage of this method.

Another advantage of questionnaires is the fact that there are no external factors that influence the respondent when answering the questions. When a person is interviewed they might feel pressured to answer the most appropriate thing instead of the actual truth. The main advantage in this context is that questionnaires are filled out anonymously and that the respondents therefore are more inclined to answer the truth.

Finally, there is the question of convenience. The questionnaire is often sent to the respondents in order for them to fill them out in their own home when it suites them. This is the most convenient way for the respondent but as described above generally has the disadvantage of a low response rate. The other way of distributing the questionnaire is by handing them out and collecting them again. This is of course less convenient than being able to answer the questionnaire at home but is still more convenient and less time consuming than an interview (Bryman, 2008: 217-218).

9.2.2 Disadvantages, pitfalls and problems of using questionnaires

On the downside questionnaires also pose a number of limitations and challenges. One group of limitations is the inability to collect further data while another is the limited extent of a questionnaire. As with the previous sections the disadvantages listed here are not exhaustive but some of the most prominent are mentioned.

When using questionnaires one accepts the fact that it is not possible to return to the respondents to collect further data or ask following questions. The result is that is that the internal validity of a questionnaire survey can be quite low. Internal validity is whether the causal relationship between two variables exists (Bryman, 2008: 32). The reason why the causality between two variables is hard to determine can be explained by a simple example. Picture the following scenario: respondents that answer that they are not satisfied with an attraction generally also answer that they spent a small amount of time at the attraction. The question now is whether they are dissatisfied because they spend a small amount of time at the attraction and therefore do not get the full out of it or whether they spent a small amount of time at the attraction because they are dissatisfied. These two examples have different causalities. In the first case the time spent at the attraction led to the dissatisfaction while the second case portrayed the dissatisfaction as the cause of time spent at the attraction. This lack of ability to determine causality is one of the main problems with questionnaires and one that need be accepted in order to use this method of data collection.

A second disadvantage to questionnaires is what has been labelled respondent fatigue which is when respondents get tired of the questionnaire and therefore does not complete it or wind up completing the questionnaire inadequately. In order to circumvent this problem the length and complexity of the questionnaire should be limited to a reasonable level. The consequence is that the amount of data that can be collected from a questionnaire survey is limited to the amount that will not result in respondent fatigue.

9.3 The AGORA 2.0 questionnaire

The reason behind the individual question is described in the publication “Booklet for creating attractions – Tools from the AGORA 2.0 workshops”. This study will focus on the ideas behind the creation of the questionnaire and the problems identified in conducting it.

Figure 1: Questionnaire from the AGORA 2.0 project

<i><Name, address and logo of the organisation / attraction></i>			
Dear Guest,			
We are pleased to welcome you in ... (Name of organisation/attraction).			
In order to optimise our offer according to your wishes, we would like to know more about your opinions and yourself as our visitor.			
We therefore kindly ask you to fill in this questionnaire after your visit.			
This is an anonymous survey so that your answers cannot be traced back to you personally.			
Thank you very much for your support!			
A1	Are you visiting this attraction the first time?		
	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰¹ Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰² No, I've already been here ____ times	
A2	How did you become aware of this attraction? (More than one answer possible!)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰¹ References on the Internet	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁶ Information in travel guide/brochure	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹¹ By chance / passing by
	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰² Recommendation by relatives / friends	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁷ Information at other attractions	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹² Recommendation by the landlord
	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰³ Television show	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁸ Flyer	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹³ Report on radio
	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁴ Advertisement in newspaper/magazine	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁹ Report in newspaper/magazine	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁴ Other (please specify):
	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁵ Recommendation by the tourist information	<input type="checkbox"/> ¹⁰ Poster	
A3	How did you get here?		
	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰¹ By public transport	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰³ By car / caravan	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁵ Walking
	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰² By excursion, booked tour (motor coach, bus)	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁴ By bicycle	<input type="checkbox"/> ⁰⁶ Other (please specify!):

(Continued next page)

A4 How satisfied are you with the following aspects at this attraction? <i>Please rate the aspects on a scale from "very satisfied" to "not satisfied at all". Please make only one cross per aspect!</i>							
		very satisfied	satisfied	neither... nor	not satisfied	not satisfied at all	Can't rate/ not applicable
01	Admission price	<input type="checkbox"/>					
02	Price performance ratio	<input type="checkbox"/>					
03	Options for transport to the attraction	<input type="checkbox"/>					
04	Service / assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
05	Opening hours	<input type="checkbox"/>					
06	Child friendliness	<input type="checkbox"/>					
07	Parking facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>					
08	Content of attraction	<input type="checkbox"/>					
09	Information about the attraction	<input type="checkbox"/>					
10	Sanitary facilities (toilet, washbasin,..)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
11	Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>					
12	Shopping facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>					
13	Catering facilities (cafe, restaurant,..)	<input type="checkbox"/>					
14	Overall impression of this attraction	<input type="checkbox"/>					
15	General satisfaction with your visit	<input type="checkbox"/>					

A5 How much time did you spend on your visit to this attraction? (Please, only one answer!)			
01 <input type="checkbox"/>	Less than 30 minutes	03 <input type="checkbox"/>	One hour or more, but less than two hours
02 <input type="checkbox"/>	30 minutes or more, but less than one hour	04 <input type="checkbox"/>	Two hours or more, but less than half a day
		05 <input type="checkbox"/>	More than half a day
		06 <input type="checkbox"/>	The whole day

A6 Optional: one or two questions regarding the local attraction added by the responsible person of the survey	

B1 For what reason are you here today? (Please, only one answer!)			
01 <input type="checkbox"/>	I'm on a daytrip from my holiday / business destination at.....	02 <input type="checkbox"/>	I'm on a daytrip from my home residence at
	.	03 <input type="checkbox"/>	I'm on a touring (excursion)
			→ go to question no. B5

B2 What is the main reason / motivation of your trip? (More than one answer possible!)					
01 <input type="checkbox"/>	Holiday to relax	04 <input type="checkbox"/>	Cultural holidays	07 <input type="checkbox"/>	Natural holidays
02 <input type="checkbox"/>	City trip	05 <input type="checkbox"/>	Wellness/health holidays	08 <input type="checkbox"/>	Visiting friends or relatives
03 <input type="checkbox"/>	Shopping trip	06 <input type="checkbox"/>	Activity holidays	09 <input type="checkbox"/>	Business trip / meeting, conference
10 <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):				

(Continued next page)

B3	<i>In what kind of accommodation are you staying? (Please, only one answer!)</i>		
	01 <input type="checkbox"/> Hotel	04 <input type="checkbox"/> Private room	07 <input type="checkbox"/> Private, with friends or relatives
	02 <input type="checkbox"/> Guesthouse/B&B	05 <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday apartment	08 <input type="checkbox"/> Camping site / caravan
	03 <input type="checkbox"/> Youth hostel	06 <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday home	09 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Please specify!</i>):
B4	<i>How did you get to your holiday / business destination? (Please, only one answer!)</i>		
	01 <input type="checkbox"/> By plane	03 <input type="checkbox"/> By car, caravan	05 <input type="checkbox"/> By bicycle
	02 <input type="checkbox"/> By train/bus (public transport)	04 <input type="checkbox"/> By bus (excursion, touring)	06 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>Please specify!</i>):
B5	<i>Are you travelling alone or are you accompanied by somebody?</i>		
	01 <input type="checkbox"/> I am travelling alone	02 <input type="checkbox"/> I am accompanied by	
	_____ adults (please fill out the number)	(18 years and older including yourself)	_____ children (please fill out the number) (under 18 years)
B6	<i>Please provide the following information for ONE PERSON ONLY!</i>		
	Your age: _____ years	Your gender:	01 <input type="checkbox"/> Male 02 <input type="checkbox"/> Female
	In which country do you live?		
	Please give the postal code of your home address:		

Thank you again for your support!

The questionnaire aims at collecting two types of information's. The first type is the identification information while the second is information about the attraction. The next two sections will describe how these two types of information are incorporated into the questionnaire and the reason why.

9.3.1 Identification information

The identification information concerns questions designed to collect different information about the respondent. Such information concern age, gender, travel arrangements, nationality and so forth. This information is collected through question B5 and B6 in the questionnaire.

The reason for collecting such information is that it allows the researcher the opportunity to divide the visitors into different segments and through that learn more about what type of people the attraction attract. For instance it is important to know how many children people generally bring to the attraction to determine whether efforts should be put into developing the activities for this group.

9.3.2 Tourism Satellite Account

The term Satellite Account (SA) is a term developed to measure the size of an economic sector that is not defined as an industry in national accounts but defined by consumer decisions including direct, indirect and derived impacts of the demand. As tourism as a sector is not defined in the national account a combination of five different sectors is needed to measure its size. The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) consists of decisions made by tourists in the sectors: transportation, shopping, attractions and events, accommodation and catering. The TSA can be divided into two different subfields, namely business tourism and leisure tourism. The AGORA 2.0 project focuses on the leisure tourism but elements of business tourism exists.

The questionnaire created in the AGORA 2.0 project builds on these five sectors in order to reflect all the aspects of tourism. As the aim of the questionnaire is to identify the visitors view of the attraction as well as factual information's regarding their visit. As a consequence this questionnaire mainly asks about the attractions and the transportation, shopping, accommodation and catering related to the attractions.

Transportation

The transportation sector is incorporated into the questionnaire at several different places. Firstly the transportation to the holiday destination is mentioned in question B4 while the transportation to the specific attraction is asked in question A3 and A4-03. Furthermore, the parking facilities that are highly relevant for transportation is mentioned in question A4-07. Therefore different aspects of transportation are covered by the questionnaire.

Shopping

The shopping facilities are not an area of focus for this study. The way shopping is included into this survey is by examining the possibility of shopping at the examined attractions. This is examined in question A4-12 by asking the visitors about their satisfaction with the possibility of shopping at the attraction.

Attractions and events

The attractions and events naturally take the main focus in the questionnaire as the main aim of the questionnaire is to examine the satisfaction with the attractions. Examples of how this is included in the questionnaire are in question A2 where the visitor is asked how they got aware of the attraction. Furthermore all the questions in A4 are somehow related to the attraction either directly or indirectly.

Accommodation

In order to identify the manner of accommodation the visitors employ during their vacation question B3 asks what kind of accommodation they use during their entire vacation.

Catering

Catering is related to the catering facilities adjacent to the attraction. In question A4-13 the visitor is asked directly about their satisfaction with the catering facilities such as restaurants and cafes at the attraction.

9.3.3 Problems identified in the Agora 2.0 questionnaires

As mentioned the number of questionnaires collected is a cardinal point in this type of analysis. In order to make definitive conclusions the number of questionnaires should be +1200 and precautions should be taken when handling out the questionnaires, for example that the questionnaires are collected over a whole season so as to get a picture of a whole year and not just one day or month. For example, when there are no more than 100 – 300 filled out questionnaires, an extraordinary day with a bus full of Spanish visitors that all fill out a questionnaire will give a misleading idea about the percentage of Spanish visitors and the percentage of the distribution between foreign and local visitors. Recommendations based on this kind of misleading information would ultimately result in a waste of resources and could be potentially harmful for the attraction. If the questionnaire is used by attractions after the end of the Agora project, which we recommend, these considerations should be kept in mind. Continuing to use the questionnaire has the advantage of tracking changes over many years. This gives each attraction valuable insights about the effects of product developments as well as marketing efforts in relation to demand.

Therefore, the overall recommendations are that:

- The number of questionnaires should be +1200, although it was agreed in the AGORA 2.0 project that a minimum of +500 would be satisfactory
- Questionnaires should be collected over a whole season or on specific dates spread out over the duration of one year
- To remember that misleading information ultimately will result in a waste of resources
- To continue using the same questionnaire, as it has the advantage of tracking developments over many years

As is the case most projects the Agora 2.0 project has experienced some problems with the collection of data from the attractions. Problems are easier to pinpoint in retro perspective than they are to anticipate.

There were several problems discovered with the questionnaires. There are many examples of visitors putting in two answers to questions where only one is allowed. This is a general problem and the result is often that no answer is registered. It is also obvious that many visitors have misread the question about how many they are traveling together. A lot of visitors write that they are traveling with someone, but when writing how many they are traveling with, including themselves, they only write one. This situation can be undone by simply adding one person, but in all the cases where people are traveling in a group larger than two, the right answer is not obvious. There have

also been cases where several people have filled out the same questionnaire resulting in no answer of gender and age.

There have also been several problems with the distribution of the questionnaires at the individual attractions. First of all the majority of the attractions in the AGORA 2.0 project has either not handed out any questionnaires at all or has only collected data in one of the two years 2011 and 2012. Of those attractions that have been handing out questionnaires, none has collected enough to generate any conclusive results and not over a sufficient timeframe.

Furthermore, there is reason to believe that some attractions might have read the questionnaire out loud to the visitor instead of the visitors reading it themselves and that attraction has lacked questionnaires in English. These are serious methodological problems because the visitor will be more inclined to answer what he/she can remember instead of being able to look at all the answer at the same time. If there are no questionnaires in English, then there is no way for foreign guests to participate and then the data won't reflect the opinions of this group of visitors at the attraction. Last but not least there has not been the sufficient amount of participation in the joint partner meetings during the project. These meetings have been the primary forum to explain the use of the questionnaires. Unfortunately, the result is that no attraction in the project has collected sufficient data to make really significant conclusions. The precondition required for making product development suggestions based on the questionnaire data was that each attraction in the project groups collected data, because the product development suggestions had to be transnational. Below there is an overview of the data collected during the project. The data is divided into project groups:

Overview 3: Received questionnaires

Received data materials, Agora 2.0 questionnaires:			
Country:	Attraction:	Collection year 2011:	Collection year 2012:
	Castles:		
Lithuania	Bistrampolio Manor:	0	432
Finland	Häme Castle:	499	82
Estonia	Narva Castle:	394	159
Finland	Olavinlinna Castle:	111	117
Lithuania	Sesuoletiu Manor:	0	467
Sweden	Skokloster Castle:	151	0
	Red Brick Gothic:		
Germany	Dominican Monastery, Prenzlau:	27	22
Germany	Town Hall, Lüneburg:	0	0
Germany	Cultural Centre Saint Spiritus:	0	0
Germany	St. Johannes Church, Lüneburg:	108	0
Germany	St. Mary's Church, Greifswald:	147	53
Germany	St. Michaels Church, Lüneburg:	63	1
Germany	St. Nicolai's Church, Greifswald:	199	0
Germany	St. Nicholas' Church, Lüneburg:	95	73
Estonia	Saint John's Church, Tartu:	0	366
	Sand Dunes:		
Russia	Curonian Spit, Kaliningrad:	1000	0
Poland	Lebork, Slowinski national park:	100	402
Lithuania	Neringa Municipality:	0	501
	Forests:		
Latvia	Ligatne, Latvia:	0	0
Latvia	Slitere, Latvia:	0	0
Belarus	Vitebsk, Belarus:	0	0
	Stones:		
Estonia	Estonian Heritage Society:	0	0
TOTAL		2894	2675

Comments to the table above:

The Danish attractions are not included in this matrix because they are not partners in the project and therefore they have not had the opportunity to hand out and collect questionnaires. Their role has mainly been to give inspiration for further development of attractions and theme groups.

The aim of the collection year 2012 was to get between 500 and 1200 filled questionnaires from each attraction and preferably collected over a sufficient timeframe. If achieved, this would give reliable data capable of providing the attractions with an idea of the present situation among its customers; however it will not be very good at describing any developments. On the other hand, the attractions will be able to track developments themselves if they follow the guidelines of the use of the questionnaires after the end of the AGORA 2.0 project.

However, the platform of the data collection and combined with the BASTIS webpage will be extremely useful to the attractions in the future and potentially more valuable than the project itself.

This requires that the attractions take advantage of these tools in the years to come, because these will provide the information needed to improve their business.

In regards to solutions, most of these problems can be addressed with sufficient training of the personnel at the different attractions and with a clearer set of guidelines. Another solution is to pay a company for making the demand analysis. As demand information is extremely important for decision making it must be recommended if the attractions themselves cannot carry out the task to get the data.

9.4 The statistical use of the questionnaires

As shown in overview 3 above there was not collected a sufficient amount of questionnaires at one attraction in both of the years to conduct a survey on the development between the two years. Therefore this section is not able to produce the study that was initially planned and therefore only a short presentation of the plan will be given. However, some of the data will be used for another analysis in the following.

9.4.1 The initial plan for the questionnaire survey

The initial idea behind collection questionnaires at two different points in time was to enable the attractions to track and analyse the results of the product implementations. When a dataset from a given year and attraction has been collected the data from that year can be punched in and analysed. In the following year a new set of data can be collected. In between these two points of data collection the product implementation has occurred. Hopefully the analysis will be able to identify the impact of the product implementation. If general information and dining possibilities has been improved, it should be showed in the data analyses by an increased satisfaction with these facilities. If implementations of new improvements have not had the desired effect the administration will get knowledge about this as well.

The questionnaires can also help to identify the customer segment of an attraction. With this kind of knowledge marketing efforts can become more efficient and cooperation between attractions that share cliental can be established. This kind of cooperation is crucial when trying to develop the tourism industry in a transnational environment.

However, as mentioned above the lack of collected questionnaires as well as the insufficient implementation of product developments such a study cannot be undertaken. Instead the factors that affect the general satisfaction of the visitors at an attraction will be analysed in the next section using the collected data from three different attractions in the AGORA project.

9.4.2 Analysis of what factors that affect the general satisfaction with an attraction

From the analyses itself, problems can become visible that the administration did not know existed. Maybe the visitors would like guidance to other attractions in the area or improved guided tours. But only when the visitors are asked about their opinion will the problems become visible to the administration. The current study will create a number of hypotheses that will be tested using three sets of collected data from the attractions: Häme Castle, the Curonian Spit and the Sesuoleliu Manor. It is important to notice that this study is only meant to shed light on the possibilities using the collected data. If employing a similar study at the individual attraction the variables ought to be chosen from the situation that particular attraction find itself in.

9.4.2.1 Presentation of hypotheses

The study that will be undertaken comprises seven different hypotheses that combined are expected to shed light on which factors that affect the general satisfaction with an attraction.

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis is built on the assumption that the overall satisfaction is positively related to the transportation to the attraction. The satisfaction with the transport to the attraction can include a number of factors such as the possibility of public transport, the maintenance level of the roads and so forth. These factors are believed to influence the general assessment of an attraction positively and therefore the relationships believed to be positive. This means that a greater satisfaction with the transport lead to a greater general satisfaction. From this the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁: Satisfaction with the transportation to the attraction is positively correlated with the general satisfaction

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis relates to an idea that the satisfaction with the information about an attraction is positively correlated with the general satisfaction. The assumption is that the more satisfactory the information is the more the attraction correspond to the visitors expectations and through that increase their general satisfaction. The hypothesis proposed therefore becomes:

H₂: Satisfaction with the information about the attraction is positively correlated with the general satisfaction

Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis proposes that there is a positive correlation between the satisfaction with the service and assistance at the attraction and the general satisfaction. The reason for such an assumption is that the more satisfied a visitor is with the help received the more she/he will get out of the attraction and will therefore be more satisfied. The proposed hypothesis is:

H₃: Satisfaction with the service/assistance at the attraction is positively correlated with the general satisfaction

Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis does not relate to the general satisfaction but instead relates to the time spent at the attraction. The notion is that the higher the satisfaction with the admission price at the attraction is the longer time will the guest spend at the attraction which means that there is a positive correlation between the two variables. The hypothesis thus becomes:

H₄: Satisfaction with the admission price is positively correlated with the amount of time spent at the attraction

Hypothesis 5

This hypothesis builds on the assumption that satisfaction with the catering facilities is positively correlated with the perceived cleanliness at the attraction. As we suggest the perceived freshness and quality of food/drinks is closely linked to how the guest perceive the cleanliness at the attraction. The hypothesis suggested is:

H₅: Satisfaction with the catering facilities is positively correlated with the satisfaction of the cleanliness at the attraction.

Hypothesis 6

The sixth hypothesis builds on the assumption that satisfaction with the cleanliness at the attraction is positively correlated with the time spent at the attraction. The reason is that if people perceive the attraction as unclean the incentive to stay for a prolonged period of time is low while cleanliness can induce people to spend more time at the attraction. The suggested hypothesis therefore becomes:

H₆: Satisfaction with the cleanliness is positively correlated with the time spent at the attraction.

Hypothesis 7

The seventh and final hypothesis put together the findings from hypothesis 4 and hypothesis 6 and examines whether there is a correlation between the time spent at the attraction and the general satisfaction with the attraction. It is somewhat difficult to determine whether the general satisfaction leads to the time spent at the attraction or the time spent at the attraction leads to general satisfaction. In this study the causality is believed to be that the time a person spends at an attraction is an expression of how interesting it is and how many things there is to do. Therefore the causality is believed to go from time spent to general satisfaction. The hypothesis proposed becomes:

H₇: The time spent at the attraction is positively correlated with the general satisfaction with the attraction

In order to clarify the hypothesis a model is drawn out in which the hypotheses is illustrated.

Figure 2 – The hypotheses of what affect the general satisfaction of an attraction

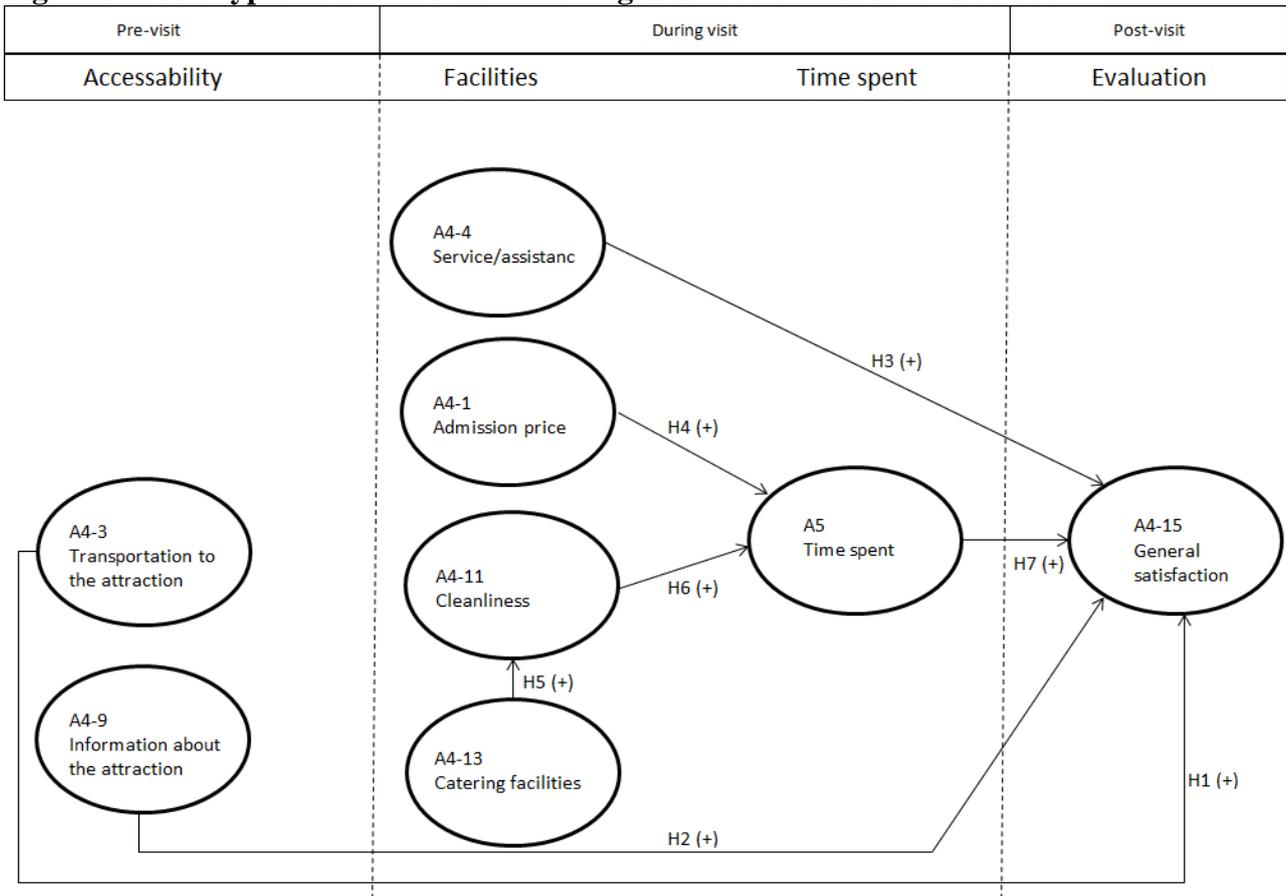


Figure 2 is divided up into three different times during a visit to an attraction. Firstly, the pre-visit phase depicts the time before the visitor arrives at the attraction and is shown in column one. In this column lies the question of accessibility meaning how easy is it to get to the attraction. The second column shows the time that the visitor actually spent at the attraction. This column is divided into two types of questions: questions about facilities and about the time spent. The final column shows the time after the visit has taken place. At this point the visitor is able to evaluate the visit.

9.4.2.2 Analysis of the hypothesis

In order to test these hypotheses three cases will be employed. These are chosen primarily due to the amount of data available in each of the cases. The cases are the following: Häme castle, the Coronian Spit and Sesuoleliu manor (see overview 3). As mentioned earlier one of the main problems in the data collection has been the poor amount of questionnaires collected. The three cases selected all have more than 450 questionnaires filled out.

Table 1 – Use of data from 3 attractions

	Häme castle	The Curonian Spit - Lithuania	Sesuoletiu manor
H1	0,228**	NS	0,316**
H2	0,316**	0,406**	0,251**
H3	0,449**	0,233*	0,268**
H4	NS	NS	NS
H5	0,270**	0,310**	NS
H6	NS	0,148**	NS
H7	NS	0,208**	NS

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

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

NS - Not Significant

The first thing apparent when looking at table 1 is that hypothesis H4, H6 and H7 seems to have no or little correlation between the variables. This means that this analysis has not been able to identify any correlation between 1) satisfaction with the admission price and the time spent at the attraction, 2) satisfaction with the cleanliness and the time spent at the attraction 3) time spent at the attraction and the general satisfaction with the attraction. Therefore these three hypotheses will not be treated any further as they are evaluated to give very little explanation. Instead the focus of attention will be on the remaining four hypotheses that each gives insight into the general satisfaction of the visitors at the three attractions.

Hypothesis 1

This hypothesis concerns whether there is a positive connection between the satisfaction with the transportation to the attraction and the general satisfaction with the attraction. The correlation analysis indicates that in two of the three cases there is a positive correlation. The responsibility for transportation and infrastructure is often controlled by the government or other state agencies, why the single attraction will have to discuss the transportation possibilities with the authorities in order to have it changed. However, it can demonstrate that satisfaction with the infrastructure actually leads to greater satisfaction with the attraction in general when there is a good accessibility.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis shows a high degree of correlation between the satisfaction with the information about the attraction and the general satisfaction. Unlike the first hypothesis this area is something that the attractions have a high degree of control over themselves. By making sure that the attraction has updated and relevant web pages the attractions can enable the visitors to find the necessary information about them and through that increase the visitor's general satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3

As in the second hypothesis the third hypothesis shows a high degree of correlation. The third hypothesis thus shows that the satisfaction with the service and assistance the visitors receive at an attraction influence the general satisfaction with the attraction. Again this is a parameter that the attraction is able to influence through their actions. By offering a high level of service and assistance to the visitors a more satisfied crowd of visitors can be achieved.

Hypothesis 5

Hypothesis 5 shows that there is a positive correlation between the satisfaction with the catering facilities and the satisfaction with the cleanliness in general.

9.5 Conclusion VIPER study

This VIPER study has shown that there have been numerous difficulties in collecting the required amount of questionnaires from the attractions. Therefore the original plan for this study had to be changed: instead of showing the consequences of the product developments this study examines which factors that affect the general satisfaction at the attractions. The study shows that transportation to the attraction, information about the attraction and service and assistance at the attraction all help increasing the general satisfaction. Furthermore, this study shows that the catering facilities have an influence on how the cleanliness of the attraction in general is perceived. These findings are interesting for all attractions. However, in order to find the factors that are of importance to the guests at each specific attraction the attraction should undertake its own study as this might give more precise results for the specific attraction.

10. Literature list

Adams, Alison (2008): *Emblematic Paintings From Sweden's age of Greatness: Nils Bielke & the Neo-Stoic Gallery at Skokloster*, Published in *Renaissance Studies*, vol. 22, issue 4, pp. 595-596.

Altoa, Kaur (2012): <http://www.jaanikirik.ee/?nodeid=29&lang=en> Date: 21.06.2012.

Bach (2012): <http://www.bach-cantatas.com/Pic-Tour-BIG/Luneburg-31-Nikolai.jpg> Date: 26.06.2012.

Barslund, Jan. (2007). *Naturturisme – position eller udvikling?*. *Naturvejlederen*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 20-22

Bastis Narva, (2012):

http://www.bastis-tourism.info/index.php/Heritage_Sites:Narva_Castle Date: 15.10.2012.

Bergström, Carin M. (2001): *Skokloster Castle – one of the world's foremost Baroque museums*, Published by Blackwell Publishers in *Museum International*, no. 210, vol. 53, pp. 36-40.

Bornholm (2012):

<http://www.bornholm.info/what-to-see?language=en> Date: 27.11.2012.

Bornholm bison (2012):

<http://www.naturstyrelsen.dk/Naturbeskyttelse/Naturprojekter/Projekter/Bornholm/Bison/> Date: 27.11.2012.

Bornholms museer (2012):

http://www.bornholmsmuseer.dk/helleristninger/lokaliteter/Madsebakkeopt/Madse_altom.html
Date: 27.11.2012.

Bornholmsnatur (2012):

<http://bornholmsnatur.naturstyrelsen.dk/natur/Helleristningerne/> Date: 27.11.2012.

Bryman, Alan. (2008). *Social Research Methods*. Third Edition. Oxford University Press

Butler, Richard W. (2006). *The Tourism Area Life Cycle – Applications and Modifications*. Channel View Publications

Danmarkshistorien (2012): <http://danmarkshistorien.dk/leksikon-og-kilder/vis/materiale/absalon-ca-1128-1201/> Date: 13.3.2012.

Eurob (2012): <http://www.eurob.org/index.php/Brick+Gothic+Buildings;114/4> Date: 26.6.2012.

Eurob biking (2012): <http://www.eurob.org/index.php/The+Brick+Gothic+Bike+Tour;377/4> Date: 26.6.2012.

Eurob.org (2012): <http://www.eurob.org/index.php/1/4> Date: 19.11.2012.

Finnish castles (2012):

<http://www.muuka.com/finnishpumpkin/castles/olavinlinna/olavinlinna.html> Date: 15.10.2012.

Finland Castles (2002):

<http://finland.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=160061&nodeid=37598&culture=en-US> Date: 15.10.2012.

Finnish NBA (2012):

http://www.nba.fi/en/museums/olavinlinna_castle Date: 15.10.2012.

Gyldendal (2012):

http://www.denstoredanske.dk/Danmarks_geografi_og_historie/Danmarks_historie/Danmark_fpct.C3pct.B8r_Reformationen/Absalon Date: 13.3.2012.

http://www.denstoredanske.dk/Kunst_og_kultur/Billedkunst/Billedkunst_pct.C3pct.B8vrig_nyklas_sicisme/Kunstnere_tyske_pct.C3pct.B8strigske_schweiziske/Caspar_David_Friedrich Date: 17.4.2012.

Krak (2011): <http://map.krak.dk/ruteplan/> Date: 9.8.2011.

Kulturarv (2012):

http://www.kulturarv.dk/1001fortaellinger/da_DK/madsebakke Date: 27.11.2012.

Latvia National Parks (2012):

<http://www.latvia.travel/en/national-parks> Date: 4.12.2012

Latvia Slitere (2012):

<http://www.latvia.travel/en/slitere-national-park> Date: 4.12.2012

Latvia Travel (2012):

<http://www.latvia.travel/en/natural-scenery-ligatne-area> Date: 4.12.2012

Latvia Travel Conditions (2012):

<http://www.latvia.travel/en/climate-and-weather-conditions> Date: 4.12.2012

Lukka, Lilian (2009): http://www.tartu.ee/?lang_id=2&menu_id=9&page_id=787 *Welcome to Tartu, A brief History*. Date: 21.06.2012.

Lunenburg (2012): <http://www.lueneburg.de/en/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-1297/> Date: 26.6.2012.

MIS, Museums in Stockholm (2011):

<http://www.stockholmmuseum.com/museums/castles/skoklosters-slott83.htm> Date: 8.8.2011.

Mödersheim, Sabine (2008): *Emblematic Paintings From Sweden's age of Greatness: Nils Bielke & the Neo-Stoic Gallery at Skokloster*, Published in *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 61, issue 1, pp. 232-233.

Munkevejen (2011): <http://www.munkevejen.dk/?show=page&id=3203#55> Date: 31.8.2011.

Narva Museum (2012):

http://www.narvamuseum.ee/?next=linnus&lang=eng&menu=menu_ajalugu Date: 15.10.2012.

Narva Museum Excursions (2012):

http://www.narvamuseum.ee/?lang=eng&next=ekskurs&menu=menu_kula Date: 15.10.2012.

Narva Museum Services (2012):

http://www.narvamuseum.ee/?lang=eng&next=piletid&menu=menu_kula Date: 15.10.2012.

Narva Tourism (2012):

<http://tourism.narva.ee/?mid=61> Date: 15.10.2012.

NBA (2012):

http://www.nba.fi/en/museums/hame_castle Date: 15.10.2012.

NBA Hame History (2012):

http://www.nba.fi/en/museums/hame_castle/history_of_the_castle Date: 15.10.2012.

NordensKirker (2011):

http://www.nordenskirker.dk/Tidligere/Sankt_Bendts_kirke/Sankt_Bendts_kirke.htm Date: 31.8.2011.

http://www.nordenskirker.dk/Tidligere/Soroe_kirke/Soroe_kirke.htm Date: 13.3.2012.

Rossony (2012):

<http://rossony.com/en/location2> Date: 4.12.2012

Rossony Location, 2012:

<http://rossony.com/en/location2> Date: 4.12.2012

Rossony Partners (2012):

http://Rossonyles.partnerinfo.by/index_en.php Date: 4.12.2012

SES (2012):

<http://www.ses.dk/da/SlotteOgHaver/Slotte/Kronborg/> Date: 15.10.2012.

SES, Kronborg History (2012):

<http://www.ses.dk/da/SlotteOgHaver/Slotte/Kronborg/KronborgsHistorie.aspx> Date: 15.10.2012.

Skoklostersslot (2011): <http://www.skoklostersslott.se/default.asp?id=1783&refid=2565> Date: 5.8.2011.

Sorø Sogn (2011): <http://www.soroe-sogn.dk/> Date: 13.3.2012.

UNESCO (2012):

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/696> Date: 15.10.2012.

Visit Estonia (2012):

<http://www.visitestonia.com/en/related-blocks/what-to-see-and-do/narva-visitor-centre?seed=257087383> Date: 15.10.2012.

Visit Stockholm (2011): <http://www.visit-stockholm.com/framesmaster.htm?http://www.visit-stockholm.com/excursions-stockholm/skoklostermotor.htm> Date: 6.9.2011.

Visitcastles.eu (2012): www.visitcastles.eu Date: 19.11.2012.

VisitLigatne, 2012

<http://www.visitligatne.lv/pub/?id=41> Date: 4.12.2012

Vorpommern (2012): http://www.vorpommern.de/hanseatic_city_greif.html Date: 17.4.2012.

Andres Tvauri: *Cup-marked stones in Estonia*, <http://www.folklore.ee/folklore/vol11/stones.htm> Date: 5.10.2012.

Weaver, David & Lawton, Laura (2006): *Tourism Management*, Published by John Wiley & Sons, Australia.

This publication presents the analysed attractions from the EU-project AGORA 2.0 based on partner information, theory and accessible secondary data.

The attractions involved in the AGORA 2.0 project are divided into the five different categories of attractions. The categories are: Castles, Red Brick Gothic, Sand Dunes, Forests and Stones. Furthermore, best-in-class examples from Denmark have been included as a source of inspiration for the categories.

Transnational products produced within each of these categories are also presented.

The approach to tourism in the Baltic Sea Region and the EU is also discussed. There is too little cooperation and too much competition and this constitutes a clear hindrance for a transnational tourism development in the Baltic Sea Region. No specific funding is available for development of transnational Baltic Sea Region tourism products and the states use the resources mainly on national tourism purposes.

The publication ends with presenting the VIPER study that was unfolded during the project period in order to identify tourism product demand for the attractions.

The publication is meant to be studied by all who have an interest in attraction and tourism product development in a transnational context in the Baltic Sea Region and also by persons with interest in how nature and culture tourism products can be developed.

Lise Lyck

ISBN: 978-87-92019-20-2



Part-financed by the European Union (European Regional Development Fund and European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument) Part-financed by the European



eu.baltic.net



**Copenhagen
Business School**
HANDELSHØJSKOLEN