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Tourism Management

Cross-Border Tourism At the Example of Oldenburg (Germany) and Groningen (Netherlands)

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Abstract

This thesis is a case study of the border region of Northwest Germany and Northeast Netherlands. The partner cities of Oldenburg (D) and Groningen (NL) are in focus of this research and cross-border tourism between the cities is investigated. The geographic location and the similar structure of both cities create a very particular situation for cross-border tourism.

Based on a wide range of destination image and cooperation theory described in the literature, primary research has been conducted to explore the particularities of cross-border tourism in this case study region.

As the focus is on destination image, the desired image and the pursued promotional activities of the involved stakeholders are elaborated. All research is been done for both sides and thus, expert interviews are conducted with tourism officials and stakeholders of each city to emphasise the interplay of promotional strategy.

Further, extensive data collection is realised by short interviews or questionnaires with the citizens of each city. As the citizens of the partner city are potential tourists the perceived image is investigated.

The promoted and the perceived images of each city are compared to show similarities and deviances.

These gap analyses are the basis for conclusions and recommendations on how to improve mutually beneficial tourism development and on how to exploit the full potential of already existing positive images and of cooperation synergies.

Table of Contents	Page
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vi
List of Appendices	vi
List of Abbreviations	viii
1 Introduction	Page
1.1 Rationale and Introduction to Topic	1
1.2 Aims and Objectives	2
1.3 Chapter Overview	3
2 Literature Review	Page
2.0 Introduction	4
2.1 Tourism Destination Marketing	4
2.1.1 Tourism	4
2.1.2 Destination	5
2.1.2.1 Infrastructure	7
2.1.3 Marketing	8
2.1.4 Tourism Destination Marketing	8
2.2 Destination Image	11
2.2.1 Definition of Destination Image	11
2.2.2 Destination Brand compared to Destination Image	12
2.2.3 The Image Formation Process	13
2.2.4 The Image Promotion Process	17
2.2.5 Image Analysis	21
2.2.6 Image Analysis Table	23
2.3 Cooperation in Tourism – Across Borders	25
2.3.0 Introduction	25
2.3.1 Working together in Tourism	25
2.3.2 Communication	28
2.3.3 Culture and Cross-Border Cooperation	28
2.3.4 Possible Impacts of Cooperation	29
2.3.5 Possible Joint Activities	30
2.3.6 Underlying Research Questions	32

3 Methodology	Page
3.0 Introduction	33
3.1 Secondary and Primary Research	33
3.2 Research Philosophy and Research Approach	33
3.3 Research Strategy	35
3.4 Multi-Method Approach and Reliability of Data	36
3.5 Research Methods – Data Collection	36
3.5.1 Questionnaires	37
3.5.1.1 Questionnaires for Image Analysis	37
3.5.1.2 Questionnaire Design	37
3.5.1.3 Sampling and Realisation	38
3.5.1.4 Evaluation of Questionnaire Method	39
3.5.2 Questionnaires to Tourism Officials	39
3.5.2.1 Evaluation of Questionnaire Method	39
3.5.3 Interviews	40
3.5.3.1 Evaluation of Interview Method	41
3.5.4 Observation	41
3.5.4.1 Evaluation of Observation Method	41
3.6 Research Ethics and Reliability of Data	42
3.7 Bias and Limitations	42
4 Findings and Analysis	Page
4.0 Introduction	43
4.1 Main Stakeholders	45
4.2 Oldenburg and Groningen: Self-Image and Partner City Image	45
4.2.1 The Desired Image of Oldenburg	45
4.2.2 The Desired Image of Groningen	47
4.3 Cooperation – Self-Assessment	50
4.4 Selection of Applied Marketing Tools	54
4.5 Tourism Facts and Figures	59
4.6 Image Analyses	60
4.6.1 Image of Groningen – by Oldenburg citizens who have been there	60
4.6.2 Image analysis of Groningen by Oldenburg citizens who have not been to Groningen	63
4.6.3 Image of Groningen – Student Questionnaire	66

	Page
4.6.4 Gap Analysis for Groningen	67
4.7.1 The image of Oldenburg – by Groningen citizens who have been there	68
4.7.2 Image Analysis of Oldenburg by Groningen residents who have not been to Oldenburg	71
4.7.3 Gap Analysis for Oldenburg	72
4.8 Public Express Guest Surveys	73
5 Conclusions	77
6 Recommendations	79
7 Final Conclusions and Further Research Ideas	82
8 Bibliography	84
Appendices	91

List of Tables	Page
Table 2.1: Joint Realisation of Cooperation – Results	30
Table 3.1: Characteristics of Positivism and Phenomenology	33
Table 3.2: Major Differences between Deductive and Inductive Research Approaches	35
Table 3.3: Interview Details	39
Table 4.1: The development of the Partnership between Oldenburg and Groningen	44

List of Figures	Page
Figure 2.1: The Basic Tourism Model	4
Figure 2.2: Tourism Destination Management	6
Figure 2.3: The Process of Destination Marketing	10
Figure 2.4: Stages for an Effective Marketing Strategy	10
Figure 2.2.1: Factors influencing the Formation of the Tourist's Image	15.
Figure 2.2.2: Stage Theories of Destination Image – After Gunn	16
Figure 2.2.3: Destination Image Promotion Model	20
Figure 4.1: Shared Interest in Shopping and Culture in Groningen	62
Figure 4.2: Gap Analysis for Groningen	67
Figure 4.3: Shared Interest in Shopping and Culture in Oldenburg	70
Figure 4.4: Gap Analysis for Oldenburg	73

List of Appendices	Page
App. A: Table of Relations	91
App. B: Affects of Marketing Communication Tools on 'AIDA'	93
App. C: Attributes influencing the Perceived Image of a Destination	95
App. D: A Proposed Framework for Destination Marketing Alliance Formation	97
App. E 1: Questionnaire Yes – been to Oldenburg	100
App. E 2: Questionnaire No – not been to Oldenburg	103
App. E 3: Questionnaire Public Express to Oldenburg	105
App. F 1: Questionnaire Yes – been to Groningen	110
App. F 2: Questionnaire No – not been to Groningen	113
App. F 3: Questionnaire Public Express to Groningen	115

App. F 4: Students Yes – been to Groningen	119
App. F 5: Students No – not been to Groningen	120
App. G: Questionnaire to Oldenburg Tourismus und Marketing GmbH	122
App. H: Questionnaire to Marketing Groningen	130
App. I 1: Questions Public Express	138
App. I 2: Transcript Interview Public Express	139
App. J 1: Questions City of Oldenburg (WFIB)	143
App. J 2: Transcript Interview WFIB Oldenburg	145
App. K 1: Questions City of Groningen (DUPEA)	150
App. K 2: Transcript Interview DUPEA Groningen	152
App. L: Questions and Interview DENIES	156
App. M 1: Main Stakeholders and Events of both Cities	
App. M 2: Cultural Analysis after Hofstede	
App. N: Public Express Advertisements	
App. O: Image Analysis of Groningen ‘yes’	
App. P: Image Analysis of Groningen ‘not been’	
App. Q: Gap Analysis Data Groningen	
App. R: Image Analysis of Oldenburg ‘yes’	
App. S: Image Analysis of Oldenburg ‘not been’	
App. T: Gap Analysis Data Oldenburg	
App. U 1: Public Express Analysis – Guests from Groningen	
App. U 2: Public Express Analysis – Guests from Oldenburg	

List of Abbreviations

D	International code for Germany
DMO	Destination Management (or Marketing) Organisation
DUPEA	Department for Urban Planning and Economic Affairs - Groningen
DZT	Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus, German National Tourism Board
GR	Groningen
MG	Marketing Groningen
NL	International code for the Netherlands
NWZ	Nordwest Zeitung (Oldenburg daily newspaper)
OL	Oldenburg
OTM	Oldenburg Tourismus und Marketing GmbH
PX	Public Express
USP	Unique Selling Proposition
VVV	Tourism Board of the Netherlands, subdivision in Marketing Groningen
WOM	Word of mouth

1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale and Introduction to Topic

In times of the world wide financial and economic crisis, tourism is affected by changing markets due to adjustments of people's concern about wealth. Several studies have analyzed changes in travel behaviour since the beginning of the banking crisis. In early 2009, the 'Dresdner Bank' conducted a study outlining a look into the future of tourism (Behre 2009), in which difficulties are forecasted for the travel industry. While consumers save in terms of business travel, private holiday will rely on domestic tourism and tourists from the neighbouring countries. Germany is strongly affected by decreasing trends in business travel. Approximately one third of German inbound tourism is business travel; this is about twice as much as in other countries (Behre 2009).

Countries that are severely concerned with the crisis like the USA will generate less international tourism. Therefore, tourists of neighbouring countries become very attractive. For Germany, neighbours like Switzerland, Austria, Denmark, and of course the **Netherlands** are potentially growing source markets. For Dutch tourists, Germany is easily accessible and already popular. The same applies for the German tourism market which is the most important source market for the Netherlands. Next to good accessibility, also the possibility to arrange holidays relatively spontaneously without the need for a flight or a hotel booking is encouraging tourism to a near destination. The Dutch prefer to travel individually and independently and dislike all-inclusive package tours (DZT 2009). Until recently, the Germans preferred to save their money in other situations and spend their income on vacation. Additionally, decreasing energy fees and a low inflation should strengthen the consumers' disposable income (Behre 2009). Another study, published in 2009, highlights that German tourists are planning to do as many trips as in 2008 and that they also want to spend a similar amount of money for it. Even though an increase in demand is not forecasted, a possible decrease will not be significant. However, additional vacation trips and short trips will be the first area of private holiday where consumers would save (AHGZ 2009). Similarly, Luft (2007:i) points out that after the consolidation of trends in tourism demand and demographic as well as social-economic influences, new market patterns need to be considered in all tourism branches, e.g. recreational tourism, city tourism, health tourism.

The DZT (2009) analyzed the travel market and describes the trends for 2009 as 'closer, shorter, better priced.' This means that more guests from neighbouring countries are expected and further, that more bookings will be realized at short notice. To summarize, neighbouring countries are important source markets for cross-border mutual tourism

development. The two case cities Oldenburg and Groningen are situated in Germany and the Netherlands respectively. They cooperate in tourism enhancement and share similar developments, thus are relatively comparable.

The researcher is a citizen of the city of Oldenburg and numerous newspaper articles in the local press concerning the city partnership with Groningen encouraged the idea to investigate aspects of cross-border tourism. An important characteristic of the two cities is their geographical proximity of 130 km and their assumed cultural similarity. In 2008, a new score of Dutch tourists came to Germany. This is 9.7 million overnights or a rise in 7.7 % compared with 2006, when the Soccer World Cup was held in Germany. The Netherlands account for Germany's most important source market, and vice versa.

Based on these positive numbers, the partner cities of Oldenburg and Groningen also participate in this development. By cooperating in marketing and communicating positive images, both aim to mutually attract tourism. A 10-Point-Program for the strategic cooperation was set up for the time period of 2008 to 2012 – 'Tourism and Marketing' are part of this program.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

Overall aims of this dissertation

- 1) To explore the cross-border cooperation in city marketing of Groningen (NL) and Oldenburg (D): strategies and activities to promote both cities as tourism destinations to each other.
- 2) Additionally, to analyse the destination image which citizens of Groningen have of Oldenburg and vice versa.

The following objectives were set up to achieve the overall aims

- 1) Literature Review
To review and analyze literature on destination marketing with special focus on destination image formation and promotion as well as on cooperation between stakeholders and between destinations across borders.
- 2) Primary Research – Case Cities Oldenburg and Groningen
To examine cooperation practice between the case study cities of Oldenburg and Groningen. Further, to elaborate the desired destination image of each city and joint marketing strategies.
- 3) Primary Research – Perceived City Image and Travel Behaviour
To conduct image analyses of both destinations held by the residents of the respective partner city and to highlight major travel motivations.
- 4) Primary Research – Gap Analysis
To critically compare promoted and perceived image of each city and to identify major difference and similarities as a basis to tap the full potential.
- 5) Conclusion and Recommendations
To develop a set of conclusions and recommendations on effective cooperation strategies across borders and their effects on destination image.

1.3 Chapter Overview

An overview of the dissertation introduces the following chapters in short.

Chapter 1 provides a rationale and introduction to the topic. The aims and objectives of the thesis are stated clearly and an overview of the chapters shows the structure of this work.

Chapter 2 represents the review of relevant literature. The first section elaborates tourism destination marketing principles and processes, explaining separately in short also tourism, destination and marketing. The second section focuses on destination image including both image formation [by (potential) tourists] and image promotion [by the destination]. An academic framework for an image analysis is prepared. In the third section, cooperation in tourism, especially across borders, is explained. A set of research questions is developed.

Chapter 3 clarifies the approach to research as well as the chosen research methods. A multi-method approach with expert interviews and questionnaires as well as observation is applied.

Chapter 4 represents the analysis of the findings of primary research in relation to the research questions. Oldenburg and Groningen are separately analysed in terms of image promotion practice and joint efforts regarding cross-border cooperation in tourism development are explored. Additionally, an image analysis is conducted among the residents of each city to reveal the current image of the partner city. The image promotion findings are compared with the results of the image analyses.

Chapter 5 draws the conclusion of the major research findings to lead to **Chapter 6** with a set of recommendations for enhanced mutual tourism development at both destinations. This chapter ends with a final conclusion and suggestions for further research.

An overview of how each objective is linked to secondary and primary research is shown in Appendix A.

2 Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

Since tourism features a negotiation between two forces namely the supply-side and the demand-side (Pike 2008:26), this dissertation aims at researching how both sides interrelate in terms of destination image. To approach this topic, the single terms of '*tourism destination marketing*' are defined to lead to a description of the destination marketing process. Destination image is a tool of destination marketing. With the thesis' focus on destination image, the difference between *brand* and *image* is clarified. Next, to explore the demand side, the literature review about *image formation* analyses how destination image is formed and influenced. *Image promotion* processes and practices are explored next. Furthermore, strategies to conduct image analyses are presented as a measurement of congruence between image promotion and image perception. The next part then discusses cooperation in marketing between destinations, especially between cities. The objective is to elaborate potential benefits regarding the generation of synergies in promoting specific images and to mutually attract visitors.

2.1 Tourism Destination Marketing

2.1.1 Tourism

Beginning with tourism there is no single definition used by governments, the tourism industry or by academics. The WTO (2007) defines that 'tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes.' For the case of this dissertation in which also day trips are discussed, referring to a definition including day trips harmonizes the term of tourism. Therefore, the WTO further defines that *tourists* are those who stay somewhere overnight while those who return home within 24 hours are called *excursionists* or *day-trippers*. A term that includes both tourists and day-trippers is *visitors*. The terms *visitor* and *tourist* will be used interchangeably including day-trippers. According to Leiper, the basic tourism model is shown in figure 2.1:

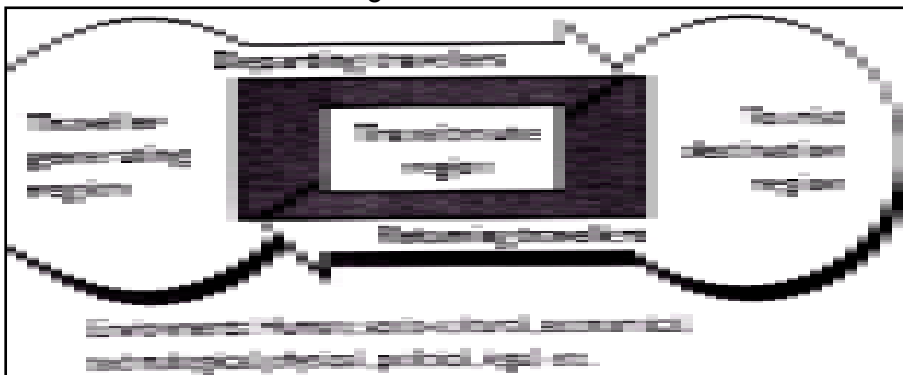


Figure 2.1: The Basic Tourism Model Source: Leiper 1990 in Cooper et al. 2005:9.

This system highlights the elements of tourism as tourists, traveller generating regions, transit routes, tourist destination regions and the tourist industry. The next section describes the 'tourism destination.'

2.1.2 Destination

The following will define the term *destination* in relation to this dissertation's focus on destination image. Similar to *tourism*, there is no one all-encompassing definition of a *destination*. Supporting this, Downs and Stea (1977:24) argue that 'there is no one universal way of looking at the world that everyone must use.' This means that people's perceptions differ from one person to another, change over time and are influenced by experience. The WTO (2002) describes a *tourism destination* according to the following characteristics:

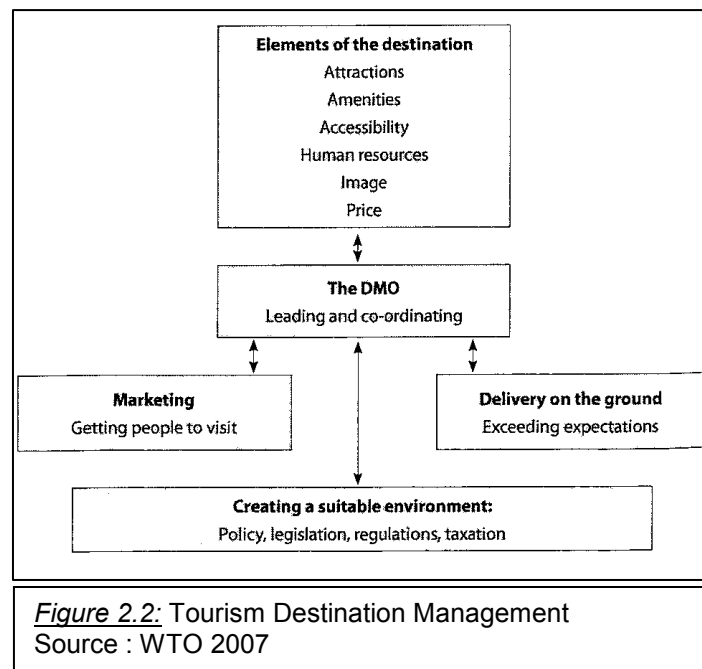
- The fundamental unit, on which all the many complex dimensions of tourism are based;
- The focal point in the development and delivery of tourism products and implementation of tourism policy;
- The basic unit of analysis in tourism;
- Offers a broad range of products, experiences and services under the destination brand;
- Cluster: co-location of activities (products and services) that are linked horizontally, vertically or diagonally along the value-chain and served by public and private sector. An accumulation of tourist resources and attractions, infrastructures, equipments, support services and administration whose coordinated activities provide the expected tourism experience (Pride 2008);
- Physical, but also intangible (image, identity, personality).

It has physical and administrative boundaries defining its management, images and perceptions defining its market competitiveness. Local tourism destinations incorporate various stakeholders often including a host community, and can nest and network to form larger destinations (ibid). Kotler *et al.* (2006:726) add actual and perceived boundaries like physical boundaries of an island, political boundaries, or even market-created boundaries. Section 2.3 of this dissertation highlights the aspect of boundaries more in detail as the two case cities Oldenburg and Groningen are in two different countries.

Bieger (2008) views a destination as the actual product and the competitive unit in tourism that needs to be led as the strategic business unit. The physical elements of a destination, e.g. buildings and their architecture, parks, the transportation system or its geographical setting, are an important component when developing the city's image. This first impression could lead to an image of the city as being historical, traditional, or modern (Kolb 2006). Then, services like hotel rooms, theatrical productions, concerts, shopping or sports are also part of the tourism experience. Further, the image can arise from the locals in terms of ethnic culture, lifestyles, or emphasis on family fun (Kolb 2006). Physical elements and services combined form the image the city represents.

The basic elements of a destination attract visitors and influence their level of need satisfaction. Figure 2.2 illustrates these elements which shape destination experiences and destination appeal (WTO 2007).

Attractions and events are two tools used by destination marketers as main strategies to attract visitors. Attractions can either be natural, man-made or cultural, for example Niagara Falls, the Grand Canyon or, respectively, shopping malls, the Vatican or theatres and art galleries (WTO 2007). Other factors are less tangible but similarly attracting to visitors such as uniqueness and emotional or experiential triggers (WTO 2007:1).



Events that fit into the culture of the local community and reoccur on a regular basis are possible sources of sufficient economic return and support a positive image of that destination (Pike 2008). The second element is a range of public and private amenities, services and facilities at the destination. Accessibility is the third point (Ritchie and Crouch 2003). The destination should be easily accessible to a large population base via road, air, rail or cruise ships. Also easy travel within the place is a positive attribute. Additionally, visa regulations, ports and regulations of entry influence this aspect. Fourth, the promotion of a positive destination image and raising awareness of attractions and unique characteristics of

the place need to be addressed to the target market. Some tools to realize the planned promotion are (e-) marketing and branding or travel media. The fifth element price is an important competitive factor in relation to other places including costs for transportation to and within the destination, accommodation or food as well as currency exchange rates. Sixth, the human factor is a significant element of the tourism experience, thus service personnel should be well-trained and involvement of local community is crucial to increase satisfaction with tourism development and a welcoming atmosphere. Weaver and Oppermann (in Wachowiak 2005) add pull factors such as cultural links, peace and stability as well as pro-tourism policies.

Types of destinations offering heterogeneous bundles of tourism products are countries or nations, regions, states or provinces, islands, cities, towns and villages, or also self-contained centres like Disneyland, resorts and national parks (Kolb 2006; Kotler *et al.* 2006; WTO 2007).

2.1.2.1 Infrastructure

Infrastructure is an important aspect of each destination that contributes to shaping the image in the visitor's mind. A well developed infrastructure builds an advantage of location. However, it needs to be distinguished between tourism infrastructure and common infrastructure of a destination. Issues like electricity, gas or waste, garbage or traffic and transport development belong to basic public realities and are original offers. The location and involvement of a destination in terms of transport connections and links is often co-determining its grade of attractiveness. In the case of cross-border tourism, also involving shorter distances, a good infrastructure means for potential tourists to reach the destination easily and with relative speed (Luft 2007:40).

In contrast, traffic and especially cars can harm the value of recovery. Many cities in Europe, however, have implemented steps to restrict traffic, keeping cars and buses out of the city centre, e.g. Park and Ride, shuttle buses and pedestrian zones.

Being part of the tourism infrastructure, the number of museums, hospitality and accommodation, galleries and art studios, theatres and concert halls increased as well as the attractiveness of mega events in music, sports and arts (Luft 2007:107).

The third element of 'tourism destination marketing' will be described next in order to lead to a well rounded explanation of the complete term.

2.1.3 Marketing

In contrast to consumer goods or products, a 'tourism product' differs in four basic characteristics namely intangibility, inseparability, perishability and variability or heterogeneity (Kolb 2006:214; Kotler *et al.* 2006:42-45). In tourism, no 'real' products are marketed and sold, but rights – from the guest's point of view – and duties – from the providers' point of view (Oepen n.d.).

In fact, marketing is a broadly used concept applied on various different product types, such as tangible physical products, intangible services, experiences, persons, places and cities (Difu 2005), organizations, information and ideas (Kotler *et al.* 2006:9). Even though cities are not economic or commercial organizations, their activities need to be oriented towards their customers to survive increased competition. Following the business idea of common economic enterprises also cities aim at developing competitive advantages and a strong positioning in the market to become a destination of choice for visitors, business and also citizens.

The American Marketing Association (AMA 2009) describes marketing as 'an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering [highest possible] value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders' as well as the society at large. A major aim is establishing future customer loyalty. Mainly, two aspects of the marketing mix can be influenced by a DMO, promotion and distribution. A destination can be distributed directly or indirectly via distribution channels such as subsidiaries. Promotion is explained later (see image promotion). *Price* and *product* are determined by each business reflecting the city's overall pricing strategy and range of products. The goal of marketing policy is the choice of the best method to promote the tourism product in the fastest, most effective and simplest way to the targeted customer (Oepen n.d.:96). How a destination can be marketed will be explained in the next sections.

2.1.4 Tourism Destination Marketing

To begin this section, the superordinate concept of destination management incorporates destination marketing, thus will be explained in short. It is the coordinated administration of the basic elements named above, including marketing (see figure 2.2). A Destination Management Organization's (DMO) role is to lead and coordinate activities of various organizations within the destination under a coherent strategy to achieve common goals (Van

den Berg *et al.* 2002; WTO 2007). Tourism can have a multiplier effect on the entire economy of this city (Kolb 2006:2; Kotler *et al.* 2006; Pechlaner *et al.* 2006).

Since the tasks are complex, all organizations involved need to strive for collaboration towards the achievement of a collective destination vision. A DMO is the strategic planner for destination development. With regards to the case study cities of this dissertation, the DMOs looked at are local DMOs being 'responsible for the management and/ or marketing of tourism based on a smaller geographic area or city/ town' (WTO 2007:3).

The basic elements (fig. 2.2) are supported through marketing. However, the basis for the development of successful marketing strategies is the creation of a suitable environment in which tourism can develop properly (WTO 2007). The right social, economic and physical environment can be achieved through various elements such as:

- Planning and infrastructure
- Human resources development
- Product development
- Technology and systems development
- Related industries and procurement.

While other aspects of destination management face inwards, destination marketing faces outward with the aim to raise awareness, to attract visitors to the destination and 'to persuade' them to spend their time and money there. The WTO (2007:5) lists destination marketing's key functions:

- Destination promotion, including branding and image
- Campaigns to drive business (...)
- Unbiased information services
- Operation/ facilitation of bookings
- CRM (Customer Relationship Management).

Different to marketing a tangible product where the producers and marketers determine the product design, a DMO does not have noteworthy control on the tourism services it is committed to market (Pike 2008:248). Consequently, DMOs do not invest many resources in new product development. 'Therefore, the marketing process is not one of designing products to meet market needs, but of attempting to find markets that are likely to be interested in the destination's current products and then communicating an attractive proposition' (Pike 2008:248; McCartney *et al.* 2008). Kolb (2006) adds that the city can be more developed to meet the needs of visitors. Also Ritchie and Crouch (2003:96) confirm that 'the DMO is not the destination' but has a coordinating function. According to Kotler *et al.* (2006:727), 'the desire to become a recognized destination presents a difficult marketing challenge', but can be overcome when destination marketing is recognized as an important tool to develop or

preserve a location's popularity. A favourable destination image influences potential visitors to come and current visitors to repeat their travel to this destination (Selby and Morgan 1996).

Next, the destination marketing process as overall area is explained to lead to destination image promotion and formation. Most results of studies on destination marketing process are comparable with three, equally important major steps – analysis, planning or conception and realisation (Bieger 2004; Konken 2004). A multitude of instruments from the product marketing process can be transferred (Bornemeyer 2002:12). Involving many details and respecting different stakeholders' interests, preparation and planning are time consuming. The marketing process is interminable with the obligation to stay flexible and to take into account the changing current situation (Selby and Morgan 1996). By continuous situation analysis, goals and strategy may be revised and modified to strengthen the desired image. Meffert's model (1989 in Bornemeyer 2002:13; fig. 2.3) illustrates the steps and their interrelation and Page (1995; fig. 2.4) adds city product development according to the needs of identified target groups. The image construction is the consequent desirable last element. The realization phase reflects the results in the form of marketing campaigns and projects. It is the public promotion of the desired image.



Figure 2.3: The Process of Destination Marketing
Source: Meffert 1989:275

In the words of Pike (2008:116) destination marketing is a 'forward thinking discipline which involves matching organizational resources with environment opportunities.'

Figure 2.4: Stages for an effective Marketing Strategy

1. Auditing the market
2. Identifying the target market
3. Identifying the qualities of the city
4. Developing and shaping the city product
5. Constructing the image of the city

Source: Page 1995:209

2.2 Destination Image

One can say that *destination image* influences the traveller's destination choice and buying decision and that 'the individual traveller's satisfaction/ dissatisfaction with a travel purchase largely depends on a comparison of his expectation about the destination, or a previously held destination image, and his perceived performance of the destination' (Chon 1990:3 in Pike 2008b:541). A gap analysis results in information about the grade of tourist satisfaction.

A significant amount of tourism research and according primary research refers to tourist attitude towards a tourism product (Ryan 1995) including perception, motivation, behaviour as well as expectations and satisfaction. Ashworth and Voogd (1990:20) argue that 'all goods and services are marketed to a greater or lesser extent through the promotion of images held by the consumer about them.' 'Marketing organisations are forced to sell images' because that is the only thing a potential tourist knows before travelling destination (Selby 2004:66). Unknowing tourists buy 'on trust, and evaluate only upon visiting' (ibid:66). Destination branding is said to be 'at the very heart of destination marketing' (Pike 2008b:174). In this chapter, the difference between image and brand will be defined to lead to destination image formation. This serves as a basis for destination image promotion by the destination. In a table, image analyses studies are summarized to identify the most common research criteria and methodologies.

2.2.1 Definition of Destination Image

Kotler *et al.* (1993 cited by Anholt 2002 in Morgan *et al.* 2002:42) define destination image as

the sum of beliefs and impressions people hold about places. Images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with a place. They are a product of the mind trying to process and pick out essential information from huge amounts of data about a place.

The image is the expression of all knowledge, prejudices and emotional thoughts, representing an entity to an individual (after Echtner and Ritchie 2003:38; Lawson and Baud-Bovy 1977 and Mazursky and Jacoby 1986 in Baloglu and McCleary 1999:872). Kotler *et al.* (2006:287) state that 'destination image should convey a singular or distinctive message that communicates the product's major benefits and positioning' to achieve a 'mental construct and representation of...a place which is not physically before the observer' (Fridgen 1987 in Baloglu and McCleary 1999). Dichter (1985 in Baloglu and McCleary 1999:871) defines image as an overall impression as a result of the evaluation of individual attributes which may

contain both cognitive and emotional content. The author's own image definition is a composition of the previous ideas:

Destination image is a mental construct expressing both objective knowledge and subjective emotions after evaluating various attributes to gain a holistic impression of the place. The image can only be influenced indirectly by a DMO and is modified through the guest's perception of reality.

A destination image may vary between regional markets, segments and travel contexts. Image has two sides: (1) the destination aiming at promoting the destination's realities and (2) the targeted visitor receiving information to form a destination image.

2.2.2 Destination Brand compared to Destination Image

In many related studies the topics of destination brand and destination image have not been separated clearly and researchers agree that there is confusion regarding demarcation, managerial implications, realization, and related measurements. Thus, this section compares *brand* and *image*.

Some say that both are closely connected whilst others say that image and branding are very different, despite their opinion that branding is done with image (Tasci and Kozak 2006). Kozak (in Tasci and Kozak 2006:304) states that brand is 'more sustainable' and its creation and demolition take more time than image. Overall, historical, political, cultural and natural sources together serve for both the shaping of destination image and the structure of the brand. This reflects that they are interrelated concepts. Image is seen as an important building block in branding and brand image. An image of a destination is often held in the people's minds also in the absence of specific branding activities, but by just mentioning the name certain image and associations arise.

Aaker defines destination brand (1991 in Ritchie and Crouch 2003:196) as

a name, symbol, logo, trademark or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination; furthermore, it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination. It also serves to consolidate and reinforce the post-travel recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience.

Brand is the expression of a destination's self-image, it is more concrete and can be analysed more specifically as symbols and slogans are clearly presented. Conversely, image is rather vague and abstract and each individual has a personal, multifaceted image influenced by various factors (see section below). One destination can be perceived very differently and thus, each destination has many images. However, both image and brand are closely interrelated and influence each other mutually as they need to match for achieving a

distinctive position in the evoked set of targeted customers (Tasci and Kozak 2006:308-310). The major point of distinction between brand and image lies in the 'centre of gravity': brand is viewed as a product of marketing activity by destination marketers and image is viewed as a product of consumer perception thus less controllable than brand. A brand can sometimes be associated with a shorter period of time as for example Germany using the FIFA World Cup 2006 as the theme for branding strategies for the time around that event. The overall image however, is seen as a more settled and constant concept which takes time to be changed. Brand 'will place the image of the city in the mind of the potential visitor along with the benefits a visit will provide' (Kolb 2006:12). Benefits can be functional, emotional and self-expressive and will influence decision making (Pike 2008b:225) relating to cognitive, affective and conative image concepts. Pike (2008b:179) writes that 'a brand is representing an identity for the producer and an image for the consumer.' Brand builds on image and takes it one step further.

Effective branding mirrors well-planned and executed marketing practice and also the private sector is more likely to engage both in the form of support and in marketing. Hotels, restaurants and transport advertise jointly via effective communication vehicles and will also develop new products and services to improve the tourism product (Morgan and Pritchard 2002 in Morgan *et al.* 2002).

2.2.3 The Image Formation Process

In competition for visitors, it is necessary for tourism officials of a given destination to understand and know what (potential) customers need in order to design and promote the product accordingly. Understanding image formation builds the basis for all image promotion activity done by the destination.

As Albert Einstein is quoted as saying 'it is easier to split an atom than to change a preconceived opinion' (in Konken 2004:29). Thus, a positive preconceived opinion about a place is favourable in terms of destination choice, repeat travel or loyalty, and recommendation to others via good word of mouth (Bieger 2008; Kolb 2006; Konken 2004). Good public reputation of a place is closely related to a perceived attractiveness of that place. The image of a city arouses clear value concepts and associations in the consumer's mind (Konken 2004). Tourists mentally categorize places based on how they perceive their image. Four types of categorization sets are proposed by Tasci and Kozak (2006:299):

- Consideration / evoked set
- Inert set
- Inept set
- Unawareness set

As the consideration set is the selection of alternatives that a tourist is aware of and is also likely to visit, destinations compete for a strong position in the evoked set of five to seven alternatives (Echtner and Ritchie 1991). Favourable influences to get into this set are satisfaction through past visits as well as good word-of-mouth. Images are shaped by image factors and may change over time and after reception of new information. Caused by stimulus satiation, humans are often led by spontaneous behaviour which can be favourable for a destination image especially as image formation is a long-term process. Image intensifies an either positive or negative attitude towards a place and is a tool for decision guidance (Konken 2004:37).

Next to the tourism product's characteristics of complexity and multidimensionality, subjectivity plays an important role. The image can be understood as being subjective but it is related to objective facts. Each individual mixes their images with impressions about residents, retailers, other tourists, and the employees delivering the tourism services (Gallarza *et al.* 2001:57). 'But most of all, the intangibility of tourism service hinders image assessment as it depends on invisible elements of pre-visit selection and a pre-taste of the destination' (Fakeye and Crompton 1991 in Gallarza *et al.* 2001:57). They conclude that images are more important than tangible aspects since 'perceptions, rather than reality are what motivate consumers to act or not act' meaning to travel to the destination or not (Guthrie and Gale 1991:555 in Gallarza *et al.* 2001:57; Beerli and Martín 2004).

However, despite the common agreement amongst theorists and practitioners on the importance of destination image, most researchers and authors 'recognize a lack of conceptual framework around destination image' (Gallarza *et al.* 2001:57). Fakeye and Crompton (1991:10) claim that image studies are invariably atheoretical. And until today, researchers 'have not been successful in completely conceptualizing destination image' (Echtner and Ritchie 1991:10). Indeed, an understanding of the strategic importance of this subject is crucial to successful image promotion and marketing.

As image formation is highly complex, the model proposed by Baloglu and McCleary (1999) serves as a guideline for this thesis as it is also recommended as 'an excellent overall and comprehensive approach to this topic' (Gallarza *et al.* 2001:60).

Based on several studies on image formation, the results of this model show that both stimulus factors and tourists' personal characteristics influence and determine a specific image.

Stimulus factors are (after Baloglu and McCleary 1999):

- Previous experience to the destination
- Distribution
- Information sources:
 - *type* primary: previous experience; intensity of visit
secondary: organic, induces, autonomous
 - *amount* of information
 - Nine major information sources have been identified to have an impact on image formation. These are travel agents, brochures/ travel guides, friends/ family members, airlines, tour operator/ company, advertisements, books/ movies, articles/ news, and direct mail from destination (Baloglu and McCleary 1999:880). Nowadays, also travel-blogs are a significant source of information and others' experience. Also celebrities and famous entertainers may support image campaigns for a destination.

Personal factors are:

- psychological factors: values, motivations, needs, wants, personality;
- social factors: age, education, marital status, others.

Baloglu and McCleary (1999) point out that word-of-mouth from friends and relatives is the most important source of information. Age and education are those variables where differences in image could be observed best. The illustration (fig. 2.2.1) summarizes the various factors having an impact on image.

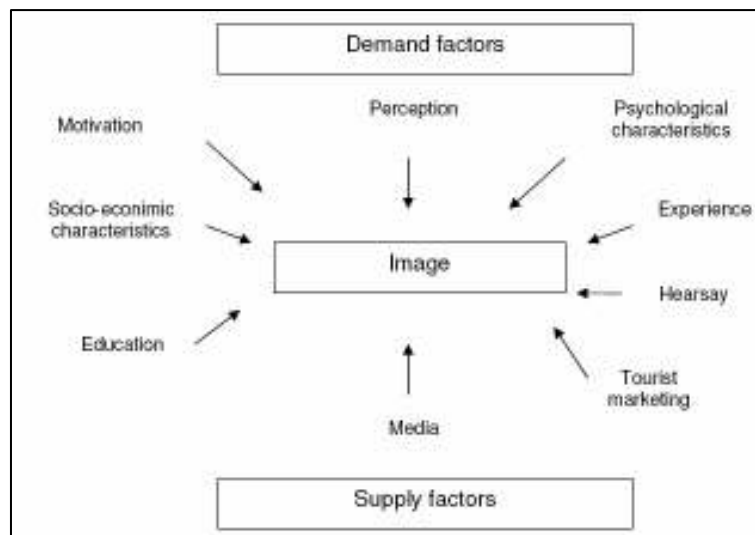


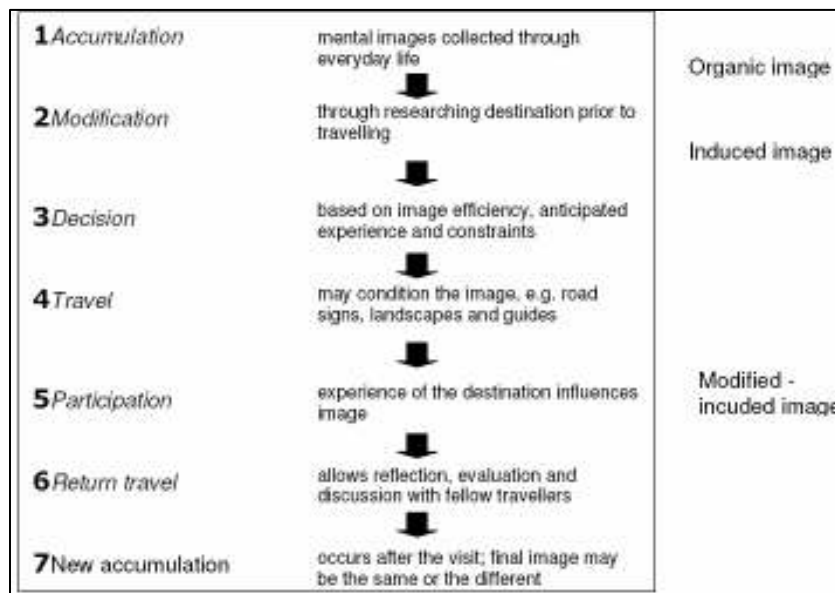
Figure 2.2.1: Factors influencing the Formation of the Tourist's Image. Source: Jenkins 1999:3.

Echtner and Ritchie (2003; Ritchie and Crouch 2003) analyse destination image in three major dimensions according to which destination image can be measured. One dimension combines the measurement of individual *attributes* and the measurement of the *holistic* impression. Another dimension shows the difference between *functional* and *psychological* characteristics of a place; functional characteristics are directly observable like the price, psychological characteristics are rather difficult to measure such as friendliness and atmosphere. The third dimension distinguishes between *common* and *unique* aspects of a place. Unique features like the Taj Mahal/ India or the Brandenburg Gate/ Berlin are easier to

find and promote than a 'unique aura' as for example 'mystic Nepal' or 'romantic Paris' (Echtner and Ritchie 2003:43).

An individual forms an image by 'reasoned and emotional interpretation' (Beerli and Martín 2004:658) of two closely interrelated components which are perceptive/ cognitive and affective. The 'cognitive component is an antecedent of the affective component and ... evaluative responses of consumers stem from their knowledge of the objects' (Beerli and Martín 2004:658). The combination of the cognitive and affective components forms the overall or compound image of the destination.

Gunn (1972 in Selby 2004:70) identified seven steps in image building showing that image is not a static construct (figure 2.2.2). Accordingly, people who have never been to the



place or have not been exposed to commercial information can have an image of it. The visit itself modifies this image, thus there is a difference prior and after a visit and also after several repeat visits.

Figure 2.2.2: Stage Theories of Destination Image
– After Gunn. Source: Selby 2004:70

Relating back to Baloglu and McCleary's stimulus factors, Gunn confirms two types of image influences, the organic and the induced images respectively. Contrary to products' image, the distinction between organic and induced images is unique to destinations as its formation is influenced heavily by both secondary and primary information sources and not mainly through commercial information. People come across those organic images on a day-to-day basis through independent information sources and of course through word-of-mouth and their own actual visit (Hankinson 2004). The general media or movies create the initial destination awareness and motivation (Pike 2008b). In this relation, the media is also named a 'definer of reality' (Altheide 1997:18 in Croy 2004:5). Next, induced images are chosen by the destination itself to be used as direct tourism advertising and promotion. Croy (2004;

Hankinson 2004) states that organic images have a greater credibility than induced images for potential tourists as these are independent from the destination. Consequently, destination managers do not have direct influence or control on (organic) images displayed in the media or movies, but they hope that they represent 'their reality.' A useful tool is working on public relations and having a good standing with the media and general public. After visiting the destination, own experience is used to modify the image to a more realistic, more complex and differentiated compound image.

Based on a study of Fakeye and Crompton from 1991, there is a difference in images held by non-visitors, first-time visitors and repeat-visitors as their motivations and experience are different. Further, image must be differentiated between first-time and repeat-visitors (Beerli and Martín 2004). Repeat-visitors reflect their own travel experience to form their individual image, the first-time visitor is mainly influenced by the media, newspapers, magazines or radio spots but most importantly by word-of-mouth.

2.2.4 The Image Promotion Process

In order to be recognized and to gain an adequate share of the global tourism market, it is crucial for destinations 'to establish a recognized and valued tourism position and...image in the market' (WTO 2007:41). Not every place can be branded; it does neither provide the desired competitive advantage nor the distinctive image in any case. Strategic image management is more effective. A consumer's choice for destinations and experiences is more and more increased by differentiated products meaning that these destinations offer something of unique value. However, in the words of Jack Trout, originator of the positioning concept (in WTO 2007:42), 'competition is not a battle of products or services, but is a battle of perceptions in the customer's mind.' The marketer's aim is to create a strong destination which has the potential to decrease substitutability and to establish a perceived niche in the marketplace to consumers by providing unique associations (Morgan and Pritchard 2002 in Morgan *et al.* 2002).

Based on the relationship a consumer develops to the chosen destination, marketers increasingly focus on differentiation through loyalty and also an emotional appeal, not as much on tangible characteristics and relating benefits. However, emotional appeal alone is not enough to become a favourable destination of choice. Again, product positioning is highlighted as the essence of destination marketing (Konken 2004; Pike 2008b). Ritchie and Crouch (2003:200) outline 'market position' as how a destination is perceived by both potential and actual visitors with regards to experiences (and associated benefits) in

comparison to competing tourist places. It is indispensable to apply a segment oriented marketing strategy (Bieger 2004) as the competitive position depends upon the market segment of relevance. Each segment seeks different experiences from a vacation to a destination – ‘while a destination may be competitive primarily with a particular destination regarding one type of experience, this same destination may be an irrelevant competitor for other types of experiences’ (ibid:203). According to Gilmore (2002 in Morgan *et al.* 2002), people choose activity first and destination second. ‘A short break in a major city can involve good food and wine, along with visits to art galleries, theatres or concert halls, plus the spiritual fulfilment of time spent in a cathedral or in the surrounding countryside’ (Gilmore 2002:65).

Destinations sell dreams and promise pleasure, thus, reality on the ground needs to make these promises believable to satisfy rational needs. To summarize, the basis is a unique combination of fascination and trust.

Market research provides destination marketers with crucial information on the most suitable and profitable target group(s). A SWOT situation analysis and an accurate assessment of the current image held by major target groups are of vital importance to a successful imaging strategy (Bieger 2004; Xiang and Vogelsong 2002:194). Statistical data regarding tourism trends and competition reveal a direction for development. Ritchie and Crouch (2003:190) state that destination marketers should ‘realistically delineate the strengths of the destination in terms of the experiential benefits it can provide to the potential visitor.’ It is a major task to identify those experiences which have the best competitive advantage over other destinations; these can then be called Unique Selling Propositions (USP) and competitive advantages (Kolb 2006). Several types of leisure market benefits and experiences are e.g. adventure, quick get-away, VFR experience, special events, attractions or entertainment experiences. Next, management is then able to start strategic planning and to realize the process of ‘experience market matching’ based on the comparison of certain experiences the destination ‘is capable of offering and the needs, wants and behaviours of markets where it is deemed that the destination is potentially competitive’ (ibid). Throughout the entire image promotion process, creativity and clear communication is crucial (Bornemeyer 2002; Kolb 2006; Konken 2004; Kotler *et al.* 2006; Morgan and Pritchard 2002 in Morgan *et al.* 2002).

Rockart (1979 in Bornemeyer 2002:58) defines critical success factors as ‘for any destination ‘the limited number of areas in which results, if they are satisfactory, will ensure

successful competitive performance for the organization. They are the few key areas where *the things must go right* for the business to flourish.'

'An image is a communication channel and a way of expression' (Xiang and Vogelsong 2002:194), a tool of destination management, and image promotion is an indispensable part of destination marketing (ibid). Therefore, Xiang and Vogelsong define *destination image promotion* as 'a strategy to enhance a destination's competitive position through the identification and promotion of its image. Destination image promotion is an important strategy in place marketing and promotion.' Besides attraction marketing, infrastructure marketing, and people marketing, Kotler *et al.* (1993) highlighted image marketing as one strategy of place marketing. The destination brand benefit pyramid according to Morgan and Pritchard (2002 in Morgan *et al.* 2002:31) can also be applied for image as the levels are similarly important for image building.

-
- Level 5:** What is the essential nature and character of the destination brand/ image?
 - Level 4:** What does value mean for the typical repeat visitor?
 - Level 3:** What psychological rewards or emotional benefits do tourists receive by visiting this destination? How does the tourist feel?
 - Level 2:** What benefits to the tourist result from this destination's features?
 - Level 1:** What are the tangible, verifiable, objectives, measurable characteristics of this destination?

Now, place marketers are prepared to 'formulate the specifics of the advertising/ promotion types and themes that will be necessary to build the desired destination image (Ritchie and Crouch 2003:204). The image or marketing plan is assembled. Relating to Yang, Guo, and Wang (1999 in Xiang and Vogelsong 2002:195) image marketing strategy is made up of three parts:

- image projection
- image transmission or image promotion
- and image reception.

As this is the section about the influence of a DMO or a destination on image, the destination itself including its attributes and resources, and further mainly induced images for marketing and promotion are in focus (Beerli and Martin 2004; Pike 2008b). The induced images can be directly controlled and influenced. It has been suggested that 'those destinations that rely less on natural attractions and more on contrived or human-built facilities will be more dependent on induced image-formation agents to maintain a healthy tourism industry' (Gartner 1993).

Pike (2008b:205) states that image can be destination determined which implies that 'a destination cannot do much to create an image that is different to what it actually is.' The promise made in advertising and promotion has to match reality at the visited place, i.e. delivery on the ground (WTO 2007; compare with section 2.1.4).

To realize planned activities and projects successfully and timely, Konken (2004:334) views the following steps as necessary:

- Conduct of initial procedures having a signal character as well as speedy execution of first activities reaching a broad audience;
- Gradual implementation of these planned activities and continual work on strategic planning to advance the projects to better achieve set objectives;
- Continuous efforts to achieve publicity, and work on public relations.

As such, there is no theoretical framework for promoting image in the 'right' way to customers. All research on this topic revealed various practical methods of marketing and promoting a specific image.

Figure 2.2.3 shows the destination image promotion model by Xiang and Vogelsong (2002:196).

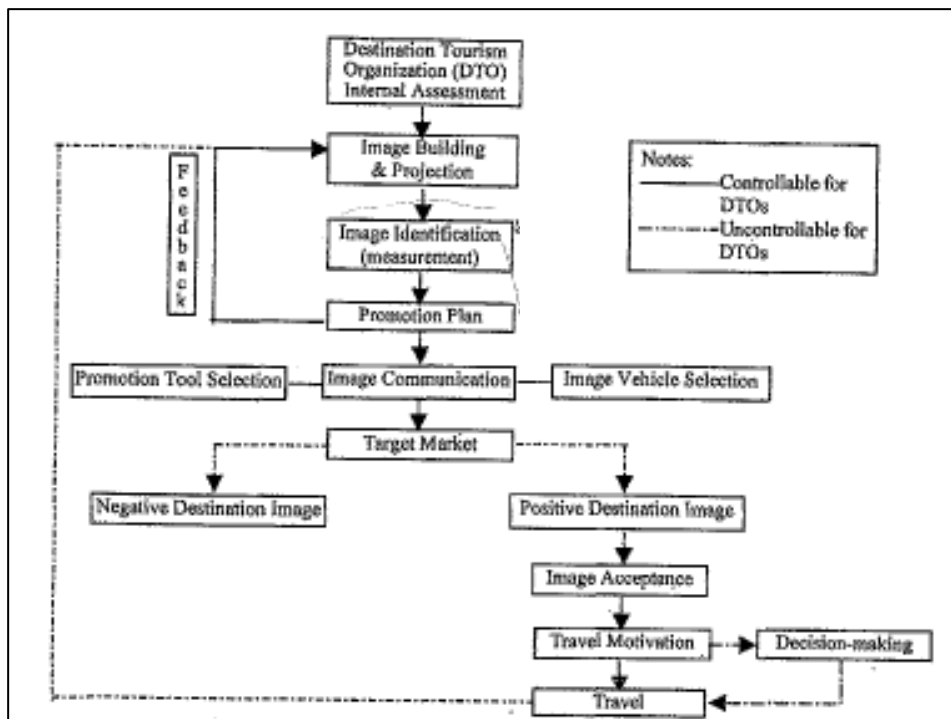


Figure 2.2.3: Destination Image Promotion Model.
Source: Xiang and Vogelsong 2002:196.

Image building and projection is the actual establishment of a specific image. The two tasks of the promotion process are the image identification (as being an image analysis of the current image) and image communication. In image communication, the DMO sends the designed message to the audiences. This is supported by the selection of adequate tools and vehicles. Image vehicles are (A) slogan, theme and positioning, (B) visual symbols, and (C) tourist events. Adequate promotion tools are (1) traditional advertisements, (2) promotion materials (like brochures, maps, posters, albums, DVD, CD-ROMS, slide-shows, etc.), (3) public relations as the maybe most effective and creative method to promote destination image (including hosting press conferences, arts and sports events, fam trips, newsletters and picture libraries, information kits, etc.), (4) attending and hosting exhibitions, travel marts and tourism conventions and (5) the Internet (ibid:195).

All these tools can strategically be combined with each other and the promotion vehicles in order to communicate the image to the audience. Appendix B (Luft 2007) combines the AIDA model with allocated marketing communication tools to show their affect on the consumer's mind. The promotional challenge is to cut through the constant 'bombardment of communication messages with a succinct, convincing message' to markets via a careful selection of effective communication channels that are deemed trustworthy and reliable by the traveller (Baloglu and McCleary 1999:891; Kolb 2006:213; McCartney *et al.* 2008:184; Oller and Giardetti 1999). They have to try to isolate those messages that might lead to a negative perception and change of the image. An 'optimum communication mix' (McCartney 2008) should aim at strengthening the positive image by being trustworthy and honest. By this, also induced images may increase in tourist's perceived credibility and importance to have a significant influence on destination decision. As such, the transmission and development of destination image can be understood as being a continuous process from projection of images to reception of these images by the intended target travellers, through whatever media are appropriate to reach potential tourists' (McCartney *et al.* 2008:183).

2.2.5 Image Analysis

As one important step of marketing research is the assessment of the current destination image, this section investigates methodologies for image analysis. Also the level of awareness needs to be assessed with methods such as 'top-of-mind' and 'prompted recall' (see Ritchie and Crouch 2003:190). A low level of awareness and a poor or misunderstood image lead to much higher costs 'for efforts to enhance the destination's competitive appeal in a given target market' (Ritchie and Crouch 2003:190). Statistical information provides data

solely on the dominant market segments and only primary research can deliver essential evidence on socio-demographic attributes and psychographic criteria (Pike 2008a). *Guest surveys* can serve as a controlling instrument of marketing efforts through highlighting any differences in the actual-theoretical comparison. If tourists' associations match with the desired image destination marketers want guests to have, marketing efforts have been successful (Luft 2007:259). Already in 1983, Seitz (1983:151-153) conducted an image analysis *questionnaire* about three German cities. He investigated *factors* influencing image:

- cultural expectations (like historical city, architecture, possibility to retrieve information)
- economic factors (like price-value relation, guest friendliness)
- location factors (like shopping possibilities, festivities)
- nature related factors (attractiveness of nature/ surrounding environment, weather)
- prestige related expectations (like possible recommendations to friends).

Since there does not exist a universally valid scale of attributes to measure destination image, Beerli and Martín (2004:659) proposed a selection organized into nine categories (see App. C). As can be seen in the author's work of gathering image analysis studies (see section 2.2.6), the attributes and methods used by various researchers are all similar. Often, shopping and internationality are motivators for crossing national borders, relating to a positive image (Timothy 2005). Attributes need to be chosen according to the 'attractions of each destination, on its positioning, and on the objectives of the assessment of perceived image' (Beerli and Martín 2004:660).

While there are diverse lists referring to the measurement of possible attributes, the measurement of the holistic image is more complex to standardize but has to run parallel to attribute measurement (Ritchie and Crouch 2003). The answers provide researchers with main themes and images common for the destination in focus. Echtner and Ritchie (2003:46) found out that most research focuses on the common, attribute-based components of an image. They postulate that the most complete measure of destination image should include both types of structured and unstructured methodologies: e.g. given standardized scales to measure perceptions of functional and psychological attributes in conjunction with open-ended questions with the aim to capture the holistic impression with highlighting unique features and auras. Section 2.2.6 summarises four image analysis studies, fractional as other studies also followed similar approaches. Based on aforementioned attributes, the selection and applied methodology for this thesis are common practice to elaborate current destination images.

2.2.6 Destination Image Analysis - Comparison

Nr	Author	Title and Journal	Research Objective	Object of Analysis	Method Used	Key Findings Factors measurement and of success	Research Limitations
1	Chon, K., Weaver, P., and Kim, C.	Marketing Your Community: Image Analysis in Norfolk. <i>Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly</i> , Vol. 31, issue 4, pp. 31-37. 1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To analyze the travel market in the state of Virginia/USA to investigate if wants of in-state travellers are homogeneous - To analyze perception differences based on destination attributes - To analyze the image to segment the market to define the trend towards mini-vacations (3 days) 	Residents of four regions of Virginia. 401 (potential) consumers of Norfolk as a destination for mini-vacations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Attributes elaborated through tourism information material, Internet/print ads b) Focus groups c) Questionnaire d) IPA importance-performance analysis 	The four analyzed regions perceived Norfolk differently as a destination. Not all in-state residents perceive one destination the same. IPA: How well does the destination perform on the attributes, and how important these are perceived by tourists. <u>15 attributes</u> : availability of water sports; festivals; scenic beauty; easy access to the area; pleasant attitudes of local people; restful and relaxing atmosphere; shopping facilities and opportunities; variety and quality of restaurants; availability of entertainment; suitable accommodation; tours of naval base and ships; facilities for golfing and other sports activities; historical interest; cultural interest.	This research study focuses on one destination only, without providing a frame of reference to another destination.
2	Pizam, A., Neuman, Y. and Reichel, A.	Dimensions of Tourist Satisfaction with a Destination Area. <i>Annals of Tourism Research</i> . Vol. 5, no.3, pp. 314-322. 1978	- To discover tourist satisfaction with Cape Cod/Mass. and to set up a list of factors to measure satisfaction	685 vacationing tourists at Cape Cod/Mass.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Survey of 685 vacationing tourists b) Factor analysis: 8 factors that influence tourist satisfaction at Cape Cod 	<u>8 factors influencing satisfaction</u> : 1 beach opportunities 2 cost 3 hospitality 4 eating and 5 drinking facilities 6 accommodation facilities 7 environment 8 extent of commercialization	This research study focuses on one destination only, without providing a frame of reference to another destination.

3	Prayag, G.	Image, Satisfaction and Loyalty – The Case of Cape Town. <i>Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research</i> . Vol.19, no.2, pp. 205-224. 2008	- To investigate the relationship between destination image, overall satisfaction and visitors' loyalty. Which image attributes are the best predictors of satisfaction, overall image and loyalty?	585 international visitors at six of Cape Town's most popular tourist attractions	a) Questionnaire to international visitors in Cape Town b) Multiple regression to identify the influence of destination attributes on evaluative factors c) Structural equation modelling to test the hypothesized model	Destination image has both a direct and an indirect influence on visitor loyalty towards a destination. Image should be measured using both cognitive and semi-affective components. <u>Image attributes:</u> Basic& comfort facilities, tourist attractions& ambience, safety& infrastructure, variety& accessibility. Primarily, 'ambience' influences both evaluative factors and future travel behaviour. 'Variety of things to do' and 'accessibility' do not have major influence on the three research elements. Two attributes predict revisit, while all four predict recommendation. A positive overall image leads to <u>satisfaction and thus, loyalty.</u>	The list of image attributes is insufficient. Satisfaction was operationalized by using only one measure, multi-item measures are recommended for future studies. Include more semi-affective and pure affective image components. A longitudinal study examining future behaviour influenced by satisfaction and mediating variables like service quality, perceived value, trip quality, past behaviour. Study to influence of nationality, gender, age (demographic characteristics) to determine post-experience evaluations.
4	Yen, T.-H., da Gama, G. and Rajamohan, S.	Perceived image of India by U.S. business travellers. <i>The Marketing Management Journal</i> . Vol. 18, no.1, pp. 121-131. 2008	To explore the effectiveness of segmenting business travellers by using destination image variables as the segmenting criteria. To generate new knowledge for marketers to suit business travellers' needs	322 U.S. business travellers to India at San Francisco Airport.	a) Survey with 27 cognitive, affective or overall items (5 point Likert Scale choice). This resulted in mainly 6 factors b) Cluster analysis to segment the sample on the base of the 6 factors. Affective and overall results were also used.	<u>6 main factors were stated by the respondents.</u> 1 culture & heritage 2 natural resources 3 general infrastructure 4 night life 5 social environment 6 lodging services The business travellers can be grouped into 3 clusters named 'veterans, enthusiasts, and novices.' Destination image is used as the segmenting criterion. Image differences according to age, gender and first-time or repeat traveller were found.	Generalization is not possible due to convenience sampling. Practically, a larger number and variety of samples needs to be taken. Differentiate between non-travellers and travellers. Analyse image's affect on tourism spending

2.3 Cooperation in Tourism - Across Borders

2.3.0 Introduction

The worldwide expansion of economic relations and financial flows is accompanied by cultural harmonization, a compression of space and new migration patterns. This development can be seen as both advantageous and disadvantageous. This chapter describes marketing collaboration between destinations to increase mutually beneficial tourism development. Special interest lies on the cross-border aspect and possible results of cooperation in tourism. Pike (2008) states that there are numerous mutually beneficial opportunities for destinations to develop. However, often those opportunities are left unused. In times of increased competition, two (or more) competing destinations can also cooperate at the same time for various reasons. From the tourist's point of view, positive synergies can only be generated through combining the variety and diversity of the tourism offers of both destinations (Luft 2007:41).

Collaboration or cooperation can be initialized by diverse motivations; there are various types of cooperation with different foci and different durations. Preconditions for cooperation are impacted by e.g. crises, existing networks, visionary leadership, economic and technological change or the existence of an interaction of third party convener (Wang and Xiang 2007). Cooperation is a highly dynamic, cyclical process. As a guideline, Wang and Xiang (2007:79) proposed a framework model towards *destination marketing alliance formation* showing major steps in Appendix D.

2.3.1 Working together in Tourism

Types of cooperation can be differentiated according to different relationships with various degrees of formalization, integration, and structural complexity (Wang and Xiang 2007). It could be a loose, informal connection and short-term only for a specific one-time event. Or it could be for multiple purposes and occasions and thus, long-term and more formal. Destinations could for example cooperate as *partner cities*. Close cooperation usually includes dealing with confidential data to provide information on the past to build future strategy upon. Therefore, trust is a crucial factor for effective creativity. Collaboration means also to decide how much time is spent on the project as well as the agreement upon the commitment to share power and responsibility for the realization. The members of the cooperation build an interdependent network; consequently almost every action has an impact on the participants and on common efforts.

There are various cross-border cooperations for tourism as for example EUREGIO, INTERREG, COMREGIO, Saar-Lor-Lux-Trier/ Westpfalz or Ems-Dollart-Region (EDR), or nature parks caring for and protecting the natural beauty of the border lands (Wachowiak 1994). 'However, in many border regions, cross-border cooperation in tourism has not yet developed enough to make the founding of a private umbrella organisation an option' (Wachowiak 2006:105). Some borders are only perceived while others are real barriers (Timothy 2001).

'Collaboration involves relationships between stakeholders when those parties interact with each other in relation to a common issue or 'problem domain' (Bramwell and Lane 2000:4). Each stakeholder has resources such as knowledge, expertise, constituency and capital. Nevertheless, one stakeholder alone may not provide all these resources to achieve all goals. The pooling of these resources supports the realization of common goals.

Every tourism destination comprises a variety of groups called stakeholders. Fair, harmonious and sustainable tourism destination development has to take into consideration all of the stakeholders' interests. Some of these interests are compatible whilst others are conflicting. The variety of stakeholders within each destination will have to cooperate with the stakeholders of the other destination. The tourism industry at the destination seeks an adequate return on investment as they are responsible for the existing development of the tourism branch. A variety of 'customers' is accommodated with different functions of a city and has their share and interest in its development (Cooper *et al.* 2005; Kotler *et al.* 2006). Even when they are not directly involved in image creation from a tourism perspective, all stakeholders contribute to the creation of the city's image which is perceived beforehand by potential and experienced by actual visitors as well as other stakeholders. As Luft (2007:i) states, the improvement of efficiency of tourism advancement can only be achieved through consolidated collaboration of involved tourism suppliers by functionalizing their offers to competitive units. As tourism has diverse benefits, most destination stakeholders are affected by it. One is direct employment in e.g. hospitality and restaurants or in support industries like tourism consultants. Another benefit is the multiplier effect as tourism expenditure recycles throughout the entire local economy. Another one is that the tax burden can be shifted to non-residents as well and that state and local revenues can be derived from taxes through tourism (Kotler *et al.* 2006:727). From an economic view, cooperation means the collaboration of mostly a few, judicially and economically independent businesses to enhance the collective competitiveness (Scherhag 2007 in Becker and Quack 2007).

Regional marketing is one form of cooperation. Seen from a geographical perspective, regional marketing is a level higher of city marketing. Regional marketing deals with marketing of several cities, counties or districts in an accurately defined region (Konken 2004). Compared to marketing for a single city, the tasks of regional marketing appear to be more difficult due to the complexity, size and political responsibilities of the region concerned (Bornemeyer 2002:8; Konken 2004). It is promoting a number of touristic locations that can be marketed as one tourism region defined by exact borders in the mental map of the visitors (Konken 2004). Regional marketing develops initiatives to solve regional problems and to position the region against competitive tourism regions. The importance of regional cooperation is increasing since the European Union supports their structural development financially. Single cities are mainly too insignificant to be aided with similar funds. Money is given to regional activities and therefore, cities and districts have to cooperate to achieve common goals. Cooperation for tourism for example includes the conjoint analysis of the tourism infrastructure in order to establish a suitable conception. Specific fields are retail, education, research or preferred settlement location for enterprises and organizations.

Tourism destinations can collaborate in partnerships with competing cities to generate synergies. By working together, both sides involved share their resources and combine efforts to develop a marketing strategy plan (Kolb 2006). In marketing plans, joint promotions can be elaborated aiming at addressing the same potential customers. Other collaboration aspects can be seen in the form of joint advertising and public relations campaigns as well as in developing and promoting shared tourist packages. To reach this, the parties involved pool their budgets and can increase the breadth of promotion for their cities. To mutually benefit from this cooperation, Kolb (2006) points out that similar budget sizes are a good basis for success. Furthermore, joint special sales incentives in terms of, for example, ticket partnerships for museums in both cities are typical. Another form of collaboration is joint promotion to travel intermediaries where both partners share a booth at a trade fair or go on joint sales calls. By sharing employees with special talents and thus pooling expertise, the tourism authorities can increase staff expertise without actually increasing their staff size, which normally leads to higher costs.

Successful cooperation is supported by similar characteristics and shared, realistic expectations about the outcome of joint activity. Thus, common goals need to be agreed upon in clear solution statements and to strive for the joint achievements in the most efficient way.

2.3.2 Communication

Regular, honest and clear communication is essential to avoid misunderstandings, especially when working in teams, communities of interest and consortia (Scherhag 2007 in Becker and Quack 2007). The ability to agree on compromises and to accept new perspectives and constructive criticism are important, too. Communication is essential to allow smooth cooperation among the stakeholders of one destination and also the appropriate authorities at the other destination. It is important to coordinate independent stakeholders and convey to them that cooperation is of medium- or long-term benefit to (almost) all stakeholders (ibid).

Next to the spoken or written word and the meaning these entail, an increased importance is ascribed to non-verbal communication through which a personal relationship is being established (Reisinger and Turner 2003). Information, thoughts and feelings are exchanged between the communication partners. Interaction between humans is multilayered. However, in economic matters and relationships the message's fact-side is of major concern.

Preconditions that make it easier are for example similar cultures and traditional values, a similar mentality of the colleagues and equal preferences for communication behaviour and channels. Also close spatial connection facilitates a stronger bond with each other as personal meetings can be realized on a more regular basis (Konken 2004:76).

2.3.3 Culture and Cross-Border Cooperation

The cultural and social characteristics of a destination are often the second most influential aspect after physiographic factors in terms of the place's attractiveness (Ritchie and Crouch 2003). Culture is expressed in various forms which influence the visitor's overall picture; architecture, the religion, leisure activities, arts and music as well as handicrafts, history and the modern use of technology, traditions, the gastronomy and of course the language spoken and written (ibid).

In the course of globalization and open borders in Europe, travel across borders is not hindered by visa requirements or the like. However, perceived boundaries may hinder visitors to experience cross-border tourism.

Going to new places may generate some form of risk and stress to which each individual reacts in a different way. Self-confident persons are more likely to take on psychological risk, meaning to travel to new places (Hampden 1971 in Ryan 1995:44; Reisinger and Turner 2003). Contrasting, Smith (1990 in Ryan 1995) argues that different personality characteristics do not influence destination choice but rather the style of travelling, i.e. package holiday or independent holiday-making. Even though most holidays are motivated by

relaxation, holiday can also be a generator of stress situations. Travel to a 'foreign country with a different culture, a language that the holiday-maker does not speak, and customs which are unfamiliar' might cause stress. Reactions to risks and stress vary upon variables such as the situation, the tourist's personality and the perception of the situation by the tourist (Ryan 1995:46). Doing business across borders may also be influenced by cultural characteristics of both sides. In terms of cooperation in international destination marketing, cultural differences based on Hofstede's studies might serve as a guideline on how to successfully work with each other. This will be applied later in the Analysis Chapter. Tourism cooperation with another destination, especially in another country, also brings the foreign culture closer to home. The awareness of the new place increases and perceived familiarity develops.

2.3.4 Possible Impacts of Cooperation

In short, Kolb (2006; Timothy 2001; Wang and Xiang 2007) summarizes major *advantages* of cooperation in tourism as follows:

- Stretch promotional budget and spread costs for marketing innovations
- Combines financial assets have more impact and more possibilities
- Competitive image building
- Enhancement of competitive advantage
- Better distribution and reach of target groups
- Enter new markets; increase market portfolio; travel destinations
- Makes more effective use of staff; team work; soft skills
- Combined skills and expertise increases knowledge pool, expertise and competences
- Innovation; new perspectives; change; learning to improve communication skills
- Expansion of personal and business networks
- Economies of scale and scope
- Gain access to new / more technologies
- Potential to strengthen the successful cooperation; future projects
- Packages offer visitors a more extensive product (product development)
- Easy currency exchange or even same currency
- Easy travel across borders into new destinations
- Get to know and familiarization with new cultures and customs

Possible *problems* could lead to conflicts or even to an end of the cooperation:

- Verbal and non-verbal communication leading to misunderstandings; language barriers; inadequate use of communication channel
 - No realistic goals and no clear strategic planning
 - Impatience, weakening interest, frustration
 - Missing participation of important groups and/ or opinion leaders
 - Missing professionalism; unsuccessful city-marketing agencies
 - Dominance by individuals, especially by political stakeholders
 - Inefficient and ineffective time and capacity management
 - Different expectations about possible joint investments
 - Different level of perceived uncertainty of business opportunities
- (Kolb 2006; Konken 2004; Wang and Xiang 2007; Wang 2008)

2.3.5 Possible Joint Activities

Various results may reflect successful steps of cooperation between destinations, e.g. joint promotional efforts (Timothy 2001). A diversity of tourism achievements and offers shows the potential of realizing attractive cross-border product bundles (Wachowiak 1994:60). A catalogue of measures shows a selection of what could be done to encourage tourism. Twelve categories show conjoint tourism projects (table 2.1).

1) Recreational Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maps with descriptions and information about sights and regional specifics ▪ Development and recommendation of routes along sights ▪ Various maps for different target groups like hikers, cyclists, equestrians, vehicle drivers and motorcyclists, and for those exploring the region by canoe or kayak
2) Single Advertising Efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Efforts and material to promote existing tourism offers such as press trips, creation of brochures and tourism guide books/ flyers, publishing of event calendars ▪ No conjoint marketing concepts are applied here as both parties promote their destination with the new area as an enlargement of the existing offer. It could also be the initial program with following joint projects.
3) Transmission of Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction of common shortages and reciprocal advancement and support through the communication and forwarding of activities and problems to the partner. ▪ Shared address databases to facilitate establishing of contacts
4) Placement of Leisure Time Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support of distribution through displaying the partner's brochures and information material in the tourist information office ▪ Support of direct and concrete delivery of information and procurement of the partner's offers
5) Touristic Leisure Paths and Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conception and infrastructural realization of touristic routes as a means of expansion of the tourism product of the region ▪ Construction and upgrading of hiking trails for various target groups ▪ Conceptualization of routes along cultural and precious sights of the region ▪ After realization: joint promotion and marketing of these touristic routes

6) Activities to elaborate Joint Marketing Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advancement of the joint development and marketing strategies to bring forward tourism to and within the region ▪ Granting of studies about cross-border developments ▪ Elaboration of a combined logo ▪ Joint presence of fairs and exhibitions
7) Communities of Interest / Joint Venture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of communities of interest with the aim to promote and optimize future joint projects and to realize concrete activities ▪ Work shops and study groups ▪ Expansion of common information offices as a measure to jointly service the guests
8) Information Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conceptualization and realization of computer based information systems to better promote tourism products and attractions of the region ▪ Desirable including the possibility of rooms reservation systems and the booking of concrete offers (such as ticketing)
9) Festivities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning and realization of cross-border events, festivities and celebrations ▪ One-day events ▪ Several days ▪ To represent cultural particularities, similarities and differences between the partners ▪ Increase the feeling of familiarity and feeling of togetherness or relatedness ▪ Supraregional promotion of the destination image
10) Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Construction of e.g. buildings to expand the tourism product
11) Packages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cross-border tourism products, with various foci of interest, ranging from one day trips to more day vacation ▪ Including various tourism product aspects like transport, accommodation, catering, presentation of typical sights and attractions like culinary specialties and traditions
12) Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other projects that could not be allocated.

Table 2.1: Joint Realisation of Cooperation – Results (Wachowiak 1994:60-63).

The enhancement of the tourism product has been the focus of these efforts. A strengthening and enlargement of the offers may lead to a better competitive positioning and may attract a wider range of people from the surrounding area and also from further away. Seasonal variations may be counteracted by the development of more product elements and interesting offers are available throughout the year.

Further reading is recommended in the bibliography, but the process is too multifaceted to be explored more in detail at this point.

The following chapter presents the approach to research and the chosen methods. The methodology chapter builds the link between the theoretical base of the literature review and the practical applicability revealed through primary research.

2.3.6 Underlying Research Questions

Following the review of related literature about destination marketing, image formation and promotion and also cooperation in tourism, a set of research questions is developed to show a research gap. The theoretical background will be applied to two case study cities to exemplify the specific realities of these destinations. An image analysis for Oldenburg and Groningen together has not been conducted before.

- What are the motivations for collaborative destination marketing?
- Which stakeholders cooperate and how formal is the cooperation?
- What are advantages and disadvantages of the cooperation?
- What image does each city aim at promoting?
- Which promotion tools are applied to communicate the cities' unique value?
- How is the promoted image perceived by the target group?
- Which factors influence the image?
- Which are the major attractions of the other city encouraging mutual visits and a particular image?
- Are the promoted and the perceived images identical?
- How does the marketing cooperation influence the perceived image?
- How can cooperation within one destination and across the border be improved?

3 Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapters have outlined the rationale for this dissertation's topic, its aims and objectives and have analyzed existing studies relevant to this topic to build the framework for primary research. Primary research was done to underpin the theories of destination image formation and promotion, and to explore the practices of cooperation in tourism marketing at two case destinations. The research process consists of a series of steps and Finn *et al.* (2000:3) state that a good researcher should be – 'apart from intellectual skills like the ability to analyze, apply knowledge, synthesize and evaluate' – strongly motivated. First, an explanation of secondary and primary research will give an overview and leads to research approaches. The selected research methods will be identified, justified and evaluated. Further, this chapter presents a discussion on access and ethics, reliability of data, bias and limitations encountered during the research process.

3.1 Secondary and Primary Research

Both secondary and primary data were collected to answer the research questions of this thesis. Generally, secondary data is collected first to find out what research has already been done on that particular topic to build background knowledge (Finn *et al.* 2000:41). Secondary data can be used to examine trends over time, to merge data from a range of resources and to gain a broader view of social conditions and change (Finn *et al.* 2000). Objective 1 has been achieved by gathering secondary data. In order to gain an in-depth insight into the topic, academic books and articles, newspapers, the Internet and also primary literature such as other bachelor theses were used as sources of knowledge.

The literature review data refers to destination marketing, destination image and cooperation in tourism in general and to analyze the strategies and practice of a particular example, primary research was carried out in Oldenburg and Groningen. The secondary data sets the context to achieve objectives 2 to 5 (Denscombe 2007).

The approach that was used to collect primary data is of *phenomenological* and qualitative in nature including research methods such as *interviews* and *observation*. Additionally, questionnaires were collected to gather quantitative data to conduct an image analysis.

3.2 Research Philosophy and Research Approach

Before selecting reasonable research methods, the researcher needs to decide how to approach the topic. The term research philosophy refers to the comprehensive way in which

knowledge is developed through research and how it is gathered. Two views relate to research philosophy – positivism or phenomenology (Saunders *et al.* 2000). *Table 3.1* provides a short overview of the main characteristics of each.

Table 3.1: Characteristics of Positivism and Phenomenology	
Positivism	Phenomenology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assumes an external world determining behaviour ➤ Strives for explanation, prediction and control by dividing into parts and isolating them ➤ Mechanistic processes for explaining social behaviour ➤ Researcher is objective and value-free ➤ Truth has to be confirmed with empirical evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social reality is multiple, divergent and interrelated ➤ Analysis from the actor's own perspective ➤ Human behaviour is how people define their own world ➤ Reality is the meaning attributed to experience and is not the same for everyone
Source: after Finn <i>et al.</i> 2000:6-7	

First, positivism will ‘adopt the philosophical stance of the natural scientist’ as the researcher will work with an observable social reality which can be generalized in the end of the research process (Saunders *et al.* 2000:85). It is based on the assumption that there are patterns and regularities in both the natural and in the social world (Denscombe 2007). According to positivism, the most suitable approach to research is deductive (see table 3.2). Preferred methods include questionnaires and surveys (Saunders *et al.* 2000). To allow for generalisations, samples should be of sufficient numerical size.

Second, phenomenology argues that the positivist approach is not flexible enough as the ‘social world of business and management is far too complex to lend itself to theorising by definite ‘laws’ in the same way as the physical sciences’ (Saunders *et al.* 2000:86). Since business situations are unique to individual circumstances, phenomenology allows a richer insight. It aims at describing authentic experiences to facilitate the topic’s complexity (Denscombe 2007). This approach does not aim at creating generalisations, but rather at understanding the specific situation including values, attitudes, meanings and behaviour as well as the realities behind it. According to Denscombe (2007:85), phenomenology ‘scratches beneath the superficial aspects of social reality’ and is ‘far removed from any high-minded, abstract theorizing.’ Contrary to the deductive approach, ‘only research methods rooted in the philosophy of phenomenology’ enable the researcher to ‘get a feel of what is going on’ (Saunders *et al.* 2000:86, 88). This approach is called inductive research (see table 3.2).

Consequently, a smaller sample size and qualitative data make it possible to develop alternative explanations of the analyzed phenomena.

Table 3.2: Major Differences between Deductive and Inductive Research Approaches	
Deductive	Inductive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scientific principles ➤ Moving from theory to data ➤ The need to explain casual relationships between variables ➤ Quantitative data ➤ Application of controls to ensure validity of data ➤ Operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition ➤ A highly structured approach ➤ Researcher independence of what is researched ➤ Necessity to select samples of sufficient size in order to generalize conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Gaining an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events ➤ A close understanding of the research context ➤ Qualitative data ➤ A more flexible structure to permit changes of research emphasis as the research progresses ➤ A realisation that the researcher is part of the research process ➤ Less concern with the need to generalise
Source: Saunders <i>et al.</i> 2000:91	

According to the topic of destination image and its complexity, the author decided to follow the phenomenological philosophy and conducted research to gather qualitative and quantitative research at the destinations.

To use the inductive approach seems more suitable as destination marketing and image promotion do not follow a conceptual framework, and image formation is not a static process but highly individual.

3.3 Research Strategy

This section on research strategy will outline how the researcher will address answering the research questions. Saunders *et al.* (2000:85) list various strategies that can be deployed, for instance experiments, surveys, case studies, grounded theory, and ethnography or action research. These and others can be allocated to the deductive or to the inductive approach respectively. In accordance with a phenomenological approach, the researcher’s decision to select a case study will be underpinned by the following arguments.

A case study is a good choice to gain a rich understanding of the context of events, relationships, experiences or processes. A case study tends ‘to draw out analysis that has a wider applicability’ (Finn *et al.* 2000:81). As Holdstock (2006:3) cited Mitchell (1983:200) in his PhD Thesis, every qualitative researcher ‘infer(s) that the features present in a case study will be related in a wider population not because the case is representative but because our

analysis is unassailable.’ Therefore, it is the researcher’s first obligation to understand this one case, not to understand other cases (Stake 1995). A case study is rather a snapshot from the industry than an attempt to generalise (Moore 2000). Good practice may be adopted by other destinations to learn and improve. Denscombe (2007:36) points out that the ‘aim is to illuminate the general by looking at the particular.’

Qualitative research aims at meeting criteria such as relevance, theoretical completeness, integration or clarification and modifiability of the particular phenomenon in focus (Holdstock 2006). Consequently, questions of “what?” and “how?” can be answered as in surveys, but additionally, “why?” questions can be explored to clarify complex interrelations. Multiple sources, a variety of research methods and a variety of data enable the researcher to ‘unravel the complexities’ and gain a more “holistic” understanding of the topic (Denscombe 2007:36). Therefore, it is considered to be a worthwhile strategy to explore and challenge existing theory (Denscombe 2007; Saunders *et al.* 2000).

3.4 Multi-Method Approach and Reliability of Data

The use of interviews, questionnaires and observation can be named ‘multi-method approach.’ Being similar to ‘triangulation’, both involve practice of viewing things from more than just one perspective and combine the views from different stakeholders (Denscombe 2007; Saunders *et al.* 2000; Stake 1995). The application of various methods allows for improved accuracy of the findings which relates directly to increase validity of data. Another advantage is that it provides a fuller picture of the topic as complementary information is gathered. If the methods provide similar findings, these are likely to be more accurate and authentic (Denscombe 2007). The researcher’s credibility increases as there is some consistency across the methods applied (Finn *et al.* 2000). Variances in data collected at another point or by another researcher shall not depend on the research methods but only on the situational and individual variations (Denscombe 2007). The interviews and the observation are qualitative research whereas in this case, the questionnaires are both qualitative and quantitative.

3.5 Research Methods – Data Collection

Interactions with experts and tourists always gave new impulses and strengthened the claim that this topic is very complex and multifaceted. Conversation with experienced, familiar travellers from both cities shaped the basic factor pool for the list of attributes for the questionnaire to the citizen. Their knowledge and experience highlighted important aspects and travel motivations. Conversation is ‘a multifaceted approach – part theory, part method of

data acquisition, part method of analysis' (Bryman 2004:365). Also the Internet, the homepages of both cities and print material like brochures were other initial sources of information.

In summary, two types of questionnaires were created, for image perception and image promotion respectively. Four face-to-face expert interviews have further been realised to analyse the image promotion and destination marketing side. Most practitioners perceive both quantitative and qualitative research as valid, both complementing each other, and yet both having different objectives and problems (Ryan 1995:28).

3.5.1 The Questionnaires

Two types of questionnaires have been conducted:

- To conduct image analyses amongst residents of each city;
- To the two official tourism institutions exploring image promotion and marketing as well as cooperation issues.

3.5.1.1 Questionnaires for Image Analysis

To answer research questions aiming at elaborating the frequency of travel or sociodemographics, a survey is an adequate choice. In contrast, for research questions relating to tourist motivation or preference, interviews, focus groups, projective techniques or observation might be better to obtain more individual answers. Qualitative research with respondents' comments and in-depth interviews are likely to produce a richness of information and feeling about the issues of research such as attractions, travel, places and the experience at the location (Ryan 1995:28).

Luft (2007:262), visitor surveys are the most commonly applied research method in tourism market research. Qualitative, planned conversations with people familiar with both the author and with each destination as well as analyses of advertisement material and the Internet formed the basis research. Conversation has a long and honourable tradition in research (Ryan 1995:111) even though they are no formal interviews and no transcript has been done.

3.5.1.2 Questionnaire Design

The first draft of the survey was given to eight people familiar with both cities as a pilot questionnaire to test the easiness of understanding the questions, their appropriateness as well as bias free choice of phrasing (Ryan 1995:136). Five people from OL and three from GR provided their knowledge on major attractions as an input to shape final questions. This proves that 'qualitative research can be a source of ideas, insights and new perspectives

upon a problem' (Ryan 1995:28-29). Through conversation and thus checking and reassuring the reliability and validity of findings made in promotion material, the final key variables in the questionnaires became more encompassing and achieved a broader perspective (Ryan 1995:29-30).

Advantage of local knowledge exists as the author is from Oldenburg. Therewith, the majority of attributes could be verified easier and respondents were reached easier (Ryan 1995:101). In contrast, the city of Groningen was not very familiar to the researcher prior to this study.

The thesis aims at differentiating between the images held by travellers and non-travellers respectively. Furthermore, a guest survey for Public Express reveals specific information regarding repeat-travellers and their image of each city. Thus, to analyse the image of Oldenburg held by Groningen residents, three questionnaires were composed in Dutch to guarantee full understanding:

- (A1) Yes, I have been to Oldenburg (App. E1)**
- (A2) No, I have not been to Oldenburg (App. E2)**
- (A3) Yes, I have been to Oldenburg and I travel with Public Express (App. E3)**

To analyse the image of Groningen, questions in German were asked to Oldenburg residents:

- (B1) Yes, I have been to Groningen (App. F1)**
- (B2) No, I have not been to Groningen (App. F2)**
- (B3) Yes, I have been to Groningen and I travel with Public Express (App. F3)**

As Reisinger and Turner (2003:168) claim criticism, respondents are forced to choose from prepared lists to express their image and travel motivations. Therefore, the author combines closed and open questions to provide respondents with a variety of dichotomous choice, multiple choice, Likert Scale and forced choice (Kolb 2006:166).

3.5.1.3 Sampling and Realization

The researcher and the author's tutor, Prof. Dr. Moeller, set 30 pieces as a minimum for each city image analysis. Finally, a total of 215 questionnaires were collected. Respondents were chosen randomly on various days for several hours as street surveys in the inner cities of GR and OL. Another collection method was with the support of Public Express allowing reachability of passengers during several bus transfers (1.5 hours each). A presentation on the microphone introduced researcher and topic and asked for permission to hand out the questions. As respondents were individually approached, all questionnaires were filled out and also in the bus, all questionnaires were collected. A separate questionnaire was

conducted among students at an OL Gymnasium of classes 5 to 9 aged 11 to 17 in order to include children as potential and actual visitors influencing family decisions (App. F4 and F5).

3.5.1.4 Evaluation of Questionnaire Method

Enough responses have been collected to represent a tendency based on the findings from this sample. Negative aspects that need to be considered are that designing, piloting, collection and analysis are very time consuming. Regarding the image measurement towards single attributes or the holistic image, Ritchie and Crouch (2003) recommend combining both in the image analysis. Thus, open ended questions are time consuming to analyse but are necessary to provide for enough room of expression. As the research is not conducted online, the analysis is done step by step by utilising the statistics programme of SPSS or EXCEL.

Financially, printing all questionnaires was sponsored and the bus rides between Groningen and Oldenburg were very kindly granted by Public Express. Moreover, there is a limit of questions maintaining the goodwill of respondents (Saunders *et al.* 2000). Friendly approach and conversation and a little bag of Haribo candy was a well accepted reimbursement for the time taken.

3.5.2 Questionnaires to Tourism Officials

The two official tourism authorities of both cities – *Oldenburg Tourismus und Marketing GmbH (OTM)* and *Marketing Groningen VVV (MG)* – were approached by an email cover letter introducing the researcher and the chosen topic and including respective questions and the request for an expert interview. Unfortunately, time constraints on behalf of OTM did not allow for a personal interview. Instead, an extensive questionnaire was offered to be answered (App. G). The questionnaire was tested for relevancy by Mr Marquardt (Public Express). An information brochure of the FH Bad Honnef and a current CV of the researcher provided proof of credibility. The same approach was made to MG (App. H). Both questionnaires are identical, containing 46 questions partly identical with questions about perceived city images by the visitors. And both open and closed questions aimed at crystallising the desired image of the destinations as well as cooperation practice.

3.5.2.1 Evaluation of Questionnaire Method

An in-depth interview was preferred as the interviewer 'can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings, which the questionnaire can never do' (Bell 1999:135). However, the questionnaires plus additional information from the cities' websites served their purpose to answer the research questions.

3.5.3 Interviews

To give a short overview, the three main interview types are structured, semi-structured and unstructured/in-depth interviews. Structured interviews are similar to questionnaires using predetermined lists of questions (Denscombe 2007; Oppenheim 2000; Saunders *et al.* 2000). As the topic requires exploration of more complex, subtle phenomena a combination of semi-structured and in-depth interviews encouraged to develop new ideas and to express thoughts, beliefs and experiences and to 'speak their minds' (Denscombe 2007:176; Moore 2000). Each interviewee was given prepared questions as a guideline. According to Oppenheim (2000), additional questions have the function to motivate respondents to continue the communication. All questions and respective transcripts of field notes can be found in the Appendices. Table 3.4 shows an overview of interview details. Interviewees were approached by email cover letters similarly as described in section 3.6.2.

Table 3.3: Interview Details				
Date	Time	Interviewee(s)	Location	Questions and Transcript
12 May 2009	11a.m. – 1 p.m.	Public Express Mr Christoph Marquardt Ms Jinke Zantinge	Public Express Office in Oldenburg	Appendix I1 I2
25 May 2009	4–6 p.m.	Public Express Mr Christoph Marquardt Ms Jinke Zantinge	Public Express Office in Oldenburg	
29 May 2009	9:30 – 11:30a.m.	Wirtschaftsförderung Oldenburg/ Büro für Internationale Beziehungen Mr Roland Hentschel Mrs Ina Lehnert-Jenisch	Office for Economic Affairs Oldenburg	Appendix J1 J2
5 June 2009	9:30a.m. – 1 p.m.	Wirtschaftsförderung Groningen Mr Gerard Tolner Mr Ron Torenbosch	Office for Economic Affairs Groningen	Appendix K1 K2
17 June 2009	11a.m. - 1 p.m.	DENIES Mrs Bettina Fabich	Technologie und Gründerzentrum Oldenburg	Appendix L

The information gathered can be called 'privileged information' as the researcher had contact with key contact persons in the field. 'The depth of information...can produce best 'value for money' if the informants are willing and able to give information that others could not' (Denscombe 2007:175). The owner of the major private transport enterprise operating between the places in focus, the German and the Dutch colleagues of the Office for Economic Affairs/ The Bureau for International Affairs, and the owner of an institution working on cultural links between Dutch and German cooperations are such key players.

No tape recorder was used. A crucial advantage of field notes is additional information of context, location, atmosphere or non-verbal communication which recording alone might miss (Finn *et al.* 2000). All interviewees welcomed the researcher with a very friendly attitude and willingly contributed to the completion of this thesis. Coffee or tea enhanced the interview experience.

3.5.3.1 Evaluation of Interview Method

Personal contact is very important in order to present oneself as a credible researcher who is truly interested in the topic. A friendly atmosphere encourages talking more freely, however, being aware of the guarantee of privacy. All interviews took at least two hours which again reflects the complexity of this topic and its potential for further discussion. Despite being a time consuming research method, the researcher highly values the information and recommendation to other contacts.

3.5.4 Observation

As research questions 'and objectives are concerned with what people do, an obvious way in which to discover this is to watch them do it. This is essentially what observation involves: the systematic observation, recording, description, analysis and interpretation of people's behaviour' (Saunders *et al.* 2000:218). The approach adopted is 'participant observation' to discover the influence of the situation's context.

The researcher also became a 'transboundary tourist' by joining tourism offers and using *Public Express* to observe travellers to both destinations and their interactions with others. Conversation while answering questionnaires provided further insight into travel behaviour. In Groningen, city's facilities like shops, restaurants, bars or the tourist office were used to become more familiar with the city as a tourism product. Delbridge and Kirkpatrick (1994 referred to in Saunders *et al.* 2000:225) categorise the generated data into 'primary, secondary and experiential.'

3.5.4.1 Evaluation of Observation Method

The various situations observed and participated in supports the ability to conduct research in both case destinations. Familiarity with places and the mentality of the people is considered indispensable. Through this, the efforts of cooperation as well as reasons and motivations for mutual tourism could be experienced first-hand. New impulses were gained and the two cities 'grew closer together.'

3.6 Research Ethics and Reliability of Data

Research ethics will emerge throughout the entire process of academic work. 'In the context of research, ethics refers to the appropriateness of your behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject' of the work or are affected by it (Saunders *et al.* 2000:130). 'Access to documents, people and settings can generate ethical problems in terms of things like confidentiality' and the right for privacy remains throughout (Denscombe 2007:46; Bell 1999; Moore 2000; Saunders *et al.* 2000). 'Ethical problems of survey research may be rather less difficult than those of qualitative research' (Saunders *et al.* 2000:139). In questionnaires, anonymity is guaranteed as no name or contact details are requested. Potential benefits were highlighted to destination marketing authorities, to encourage support. The researcher's full contact details were provided in all requests.

During interviews, the interviewees offered new contacts. With reference to other contact personnel, the cooperation between the institutions became visible and access was kindly granted. Additionally, the offer to ask for further information was made by all.

3.7 Bias and Limitations

Next to ethics, there are two forms of bias, namely interviewer bias and response bias (Denscombe 2007; Saunders *et al.* 2000). First, interviewer bias includes for example comments, the tone of questioning or non-verbal communication like facial expressions. Collection and interpretation of primary research might be influenced by assumptions of secondary research. However, as Holdstock (2006) highlights, a distinction between '*prejudgement*' and '*preconceived ideas*' on the one hand and '*valuable prior experience*' on the other must be drawn. Second, response bias can be influenced by the perception of the interviewer through appearance and behaviour. The respondent may be willing to answer but may still be sensitive to revealing too much information. However, in Bell's words (1999:115), often 'the most useful evidence can be derived from biased sources which reveal accurately the true views of an individual...'

More time would have given the opportunity to conduct more interviews on the image promotion side, especially with those tourism officials responsible for destination marketing.

The next chapter presents and analyses the findings of the primary research and compares the results with the literature review and the elaborated background theory.

4 Findings and Analysis

4.0 Introduction

Following the literature review as the theoretical basis and the methodologies chapter, this chapter presents the findings and the analysis of primary research; therewith approaching objectives 2, 3 and 4. Here the theoretical context is compared and applied to a 'real' case. As theory is commonly an ideal construct for practice, the primary research conducted in Oldenburg and Groningen identifies how these destinations cooperate and how visitors perceive destination image. The first section begins with a short presentation of each city and the history of their cooperation explains the origins of the partnership. Each city's self-image and the image of their partner city leads to an investigation of this cooperation. A selection of joint marketing activities sets the cooperation in context. Good practice but also problems of cooperating across a national border with another culture follows, including suggested support for improvement. The second part shows the image analyses findings for both cities. These are compared with the desired image of each city to highlight potential directions of improvement of the tourism products 'Groningen' and 'Oldenburg'.

Facts about Oldenburg

Oldenburg is spread on an area of 102,973,387 sqm. Since January 2009, Oldenburg has 160,000 citizens, out of which 6% are foreigners. In terms of population age, OL is 'older' than GR. The city is one of the very few German cities that are still steadily growing. Various architectural highlights reflect the former importance of Oldenburg as a count and grand duke residency. There is not much industry; the city is dominated by trade and services. Major industry is in automobile supply, chemistry, glass and others. Also, Oldenburg's IT sector is developing fast - Oldenburg is 'City of Science 2009'. Oldenburg has several national and international relationships. Next to friendships, there are six partnerships with cities: *Groningen*, Cholet (F), Machatschkala (RU), Mateh Asher (IL), Taastrup (DK) and with the island of Ruegen. A very close friendship exists also with Kingston upon Thames. For the year 2007, the city issues figures of 21 accommodation facilities like hotels or bed and breakfast pensions with 1,547 beds. A total of 104,942 guests were counted with 9,555 non German visitors (Stadt Oldenburg 2009b).

Facts about Groningen

Groningen is the youngest Dutch city; Groningen has about 185,000 citizens and with more than 30 percent of the total population is under 30 years and 50 percent is younger than 35

years (Hunte Report 22 March 2009; NWZ 27 March 2009); about 46,000 of these are students. In 2007, a study of the EU nominated Groningen as the most liveable European city. Various Dutch ministries awarded the inner city as one of the best in the Netherlands in 2005 and 2007 (Hunte Report 22 March 2009). It is the Dutch 'City of Talent 2009' expression its ambition towards innovation, research and entrepreneurship (MG 2009a). As a centre of trade, industry, education and culture, Groningen is the most important city in Northern Netherlands. Numerous city partnerships exist and Groningen is undertaking all kinds of projects together with its partner cities and many mutual visits are taking place (Gemeente Groningen 2009). The Germans are Groningen's largest minority group, with more than 3000 Germans residing (Interview DUPEA 2009).

To provide background knowledge of the partnership, the history is summarized (table 4.1).

Table 4.1: The development of the partnership between Oldenburg and Groningen

A connection between the two cities exists since the late 1940s. Further sports events took place in the 1950s. The relationship was deepened in the year 1981 with the beginning of regular contact between the local district courts of Oldenburg and Groningen. On 1 December 1989, the existing good relations between the two cities led to the official conclusion of the Contract of Partnership. On 22 December 2006, both cities signed a declaration of intent. From then onwards, the contacts were extended and strengthened continuously by various institutions: universities, chambers of commerce and industry, leading companies meet on a regular basis. Furthermore, the city councils of Groningen and Oldenburg are constantly jointly present on exhibitions. Specifically mentioned are the numerous day trippers to OL and GR. With the Single European Market as a background, the partnership with GR builds a meaningful possibility of cooperation, mainly in the fields of economy or exchanges of expertise in communal politics.

Due to Groningen's similar city size, structure, and location, it is always a dialog partner for Oldenburg. Therewith, often an overlapping of interests and also problem structures is present.

(Source: Stadt Oldenburg 2008a)

A national border and 130 kilometres separate the two cities. The **10-Point-Program** for 2008 to 2012 aims at strengthening cooperation across the border in the fields of 'Tourism and Marketing.' Major ideas and plans are strong cooperation by shared goals to jointly attract mutual tourism. Specific information shall communicate benefits and provide reasons to visit. The newspapers report the current situation on tourism as follows: One is known to each other and a visit in the twin city is labeled as 'visiting friends' (NWZ 27 March 2009).

4.1 Main Stakeholders

Diverse stakeholders are involved in the cross-border activities between OL and GR. Individual one-time projects also exist within the official city partnership. Not all projects and not all stakeholder opinions and interrelationships can be analysed, due to time limits and due to constant changes of the current situation. Therefore, the author focuses the research on major stakeholders; two within each city and their equivalent in the partner city (refer to Appendix M1 to see the short presentation of each).

Legend of References:

OTM = Oldenburg Tourismus und Marketing GmbH; DMO Oldenburg

MG = Marketing Groningen; DMO Groningen

WFIB = Oldenburger Wirtschaftsförderung & Büro für Internationale Beziehungen;
Department of Economic Affairs and International Relations

DUPEA = Department for Urban Planning and Economic Affairs – City of Groningen

PX = Public Express

DENIES = Deutsch-Niederländisches Servicecenter für Sprache und Kommunikation

CMO = City Management Oldenburg

GCC = Groningen City Club

4.2 Oldenburg and Groningen: Self-Image and Partner City Image

Both cities show similar structures and are centres of dynamic and economically growing regions. Numerous institutions of science, education and culture contribute to an innovative landscape with high attraction power and good quality of life (WFIB 2009). Both are exemplary modern and lively cities that unfold a new urbanity (Stadt Oldenburg 2008) and both have no competing city within 20km (WFIB Interview 2009). Despite their sizes, both cities do not appear to be large cities (WFIB). Appendices J1, J2 and G (OL) and App. K1, K2 and H (GR) present the questions and the interview transcripts on which the following analysis is build. Further, App. I1, I2 and L provide the questions asked to Public Express and DENIES.

4.2.1 The Desired Image of Oldenburg

OTM and the interview partners for OL describe **Oldenburg** as a creative, urban city. It is a relaxed city with a comfortable atmosphere, with a historical inner city and appealing architecture that represents an harmonic city impression. The beautiful inner city and its large pedestrian area are its major asset. It has a number of sub-centres around the city centre, offering more shopping experiences. It is slower and more traditional and conventional (Marquardt 2009). OL wants to appear as a middle-sized city (WFIB). Shopping is listed by all

sources as the best reason to come to Oldenburg. Unfortunately, GR tourists do not come to OL for cultural events (WFIB 2009). In contrast Oldenburg tourists may also go to GR to attend exhibitions e.g. at the Groninger Museum.

As Oldenburg's official DMO, OTM is the major institution responsible for marketing the city and is financed by the city. The marketing activities focus on the city and its vicinity as well as the entire region. Marketing activities are mainly both short and long term but are changing at the moment. The executive management filled out the questionnaire indicating the desired image of OL as it is to be promoted. To recommend OL, she summarized 'Oldenburg is a loveable, attractive 'Übermorgenstadt' (a city of the future) with sophisticated cultural offers.' It aims to be an urban and modern city of science. OTM believes that major associations with the city are: shopping, the university, city trip, fairs in the Weser-Ems-Halle, 'Kultursommer', museums, the Lambertmarkt and bicycles. On a trip to Oldenburg tourists expect mainly cultural experiences, spending time with the family and with friends, enjoying a city trip and shopping. As USPs of OL, OTM lists shopping, niche events like the ceramics and pottery days or the film festival, its gardens and its architecture. These USPs have been in major focus of city marketing projects. Asked to assess diverse attributes the city offers (with 1 to fully agree and 5 to not agree at all), OTM fully agrees to the claim that shopping facilities are very good (-1-); they assess the attractiveness of the nightlife with a -3- as well as the popularity of cultural events with a -3-. The OL residents and shop workers are perceived as friendly (-2-). The major reason, according also the WFIB team, is besides shopping, the Lambertmarkt in December. An image analysis has never been conducted; however, a situation analysis is currently being worked on. Very important is the analysis of strengths and weaknesses during research and during implementation of the marketing process. Gathering valuable feedback on marketing activities, the level of awareness and the level of popularity can not be realised as financial resources are insufficient.

The OTM uses diverse marketing tools to promote the city: Advertisements for example in the radio, in print media and on posters; also in cooperation with travel agencies and tour operators, brochures, maps and images; Public Relations in terms of organising press conferences and to be present at fairs throughout the region. No attendance at trade fairs or congresses is indicated, nor is the organisation of such fairs in OL planned. The Internet is another marketing tool with its own web site and numerous (day or weekend, typical German, group or individual) offers in Dutch and English, and also linking to other tourism organisations like the Bremer Touristik Zentrale or CMO.

The target groups in focus are OL residents and visitors as well as local businesses and institutions. Day trippers and city travellers with at least one overnight stay and small groups are approached. The ages of the main target market ranges from 26 to 45 years and from 46 to 65 years. No information is captured about their profession. Germany is perceived as the most important source market for domestic tourism but also the Netherlands receive Dutch promotional information about OL as a tourism destination. This material is however not always in Dutch and not adjusted to the Dutch culture. But the OL tourist information offers information about GR and transportation possibilities. They are a subsidiary of PX. So far, no newspaper inset has been published in a Dutch newspaper.

Regarding the 10-Point-Program and cooperation with GR, OTM highlights that both cities promote each other mutually and that GR is a target market. Beginning in the early 1990's, great potential is seen towards a stronger cooperation with Groningen in terms of tourism. The magic formula for successful cooperation is 'joint development and concrete actions.' Joint marketing activities with GR have been in terms of presence at fairs, personnel exchange including a training of the other city's team to introduce the tourism product better. Despite the personnel exchange, no regular contact exists between the DMOs of GR and OL but they communicate in English and German via telephone or emails. OTM does not perceive language as a barrier to communication. The tourism offers of both cities are similar, addressing the same target groups and thus, enhance the tourism product.

A gap analysis is shown after the presentation of the perceived images held by the residents. This serves to identify main similarities and differences in the promoted and the perceived images of the city.

Oldenburg perceives its partner city **Groningen** as more cosmopolitan, pulsating, more modern and more dynamic with the courage for something new (WFIB and PX). This reflects in their partly modern and 'crazy' architecture and its many individual shops with old antiques and its own flair. The university plays a more important role than in OL and the many young people and the numerous bicycles make it more hectic.

4.2.2 The Desired Image of Groningen

The city of **Groningen** is described by MG and the Dutch interview partners as the 'City of Talent' and want it to be young, innovative and dynamic (Hunte Report 22 March 2009). Its interesting mix of modern and old architecture attracts several visitors and dominates the city's appearance as a cultural and architectural city (DUPEA 2009). It is the third best city in the Netherlands for the elderly and was awarded as best inner city in 2005 and 2007.

Compared directly with OL, GR perceives itself as more hectic and vibrant, louder and with more traffic. OL is more traditional and civil, the people are friendlier and more relaxed, and the Germans are assumed to be more reserved while Dutch are more direct and open.

The main reason to come to GR are its daily markets e.g. the fish market and the flower market. Also German holidays are good for GR tourism as Germans come to shop when their stores are closed. Also 'smoking weed' is assumed to be a motivator. Studying and of course shopping, especially on Sundays and on special holidays when German shops are closed. GR residents often drive across the border to shop in large supermarkets where products are cheaper; alcohol in particular is less expensive in Germany. The Dutch show a preference for some German goods such as red wine or sweets.

Marketing Groningen is the official DMO of Groningen and is financed by the city of GR. Annually, about € 800,000 are given to MG for marketing, of which € 75,000 are designed for public events, activities and PR. All in all, the city spends about € 1 m per year on city marketing. Additionally, MG also receives financial support from the province for TV and news promotion. From the perspective of MG, Groningen ranks -1- in terms of its good shopping facilities, an attractive nightlife, appealing cultural events and its very friendly citizens and in own words, GR is promoted as a 'very very nice city'. Desired associations with the city are shopping, nightlife/ going out, the university, city trip, museums and bicycles. MG thinks that visitors expect culture, a city trip, shopping and entertainment when coming to GR. Its USPs are listed as a city with a small cultural centre which is very suitable for exploring on foot and which is very comfortable with all the young students. Those USPs have been integrated intensely into the city marketing activities. Also marketing strategies are both long term and short term oriented. The desired image MG wants to promote is that GR is a cultural city with very good accessibility, an impressive jumble with small lanes, large shopping promenades, large free squares, idyllic courtyards and historic buildings. Furthermore, exclusive clothing stores with selected designer goods, antiquarians, fancy furniture stores or small art galleries invite for rambles through the lanes of Groningen (Hunte Report 22 March 2009). This is what makes a trip to GR worthwhile. As in OL, the marketing activities are focused on the city and its vicinities as well as the surrounding region. Applied marketing tools include for example advertisements on TV, in printed media and on posters. Diverse brochures, maps or images are also distributed via travel agents. The Internet is used via an own website and can be read in German as well.

The main target market is aged 26 to 45 years and well earning, young to middle-aged professions in general are addressed via marketing campaigns. Besides the Netherlands as

GR most important source market, also Germans and especially Oldenburg and its region are considered as target markets. The good accessibility is the best reason to include the German borderland region into marketing strategies. However, no specific advertisements are created for the OL market, but rather for the whole of Germany. MG assumes that most of the OL residents know GR and know how to get there. Nevertheless, they see more potential for cooperating in tourism and MG believes that OTM knows GR so well that it can promote it in the tourism information in OL. Like OTM, MG also sells Public Express tickets and engages in joint marketing activities. PX is also seen as the major source of information about OL. The Dutch team stated that they have regular contact with OTM and that communication is in German. Overall, GR agrees with OL that the cities are not very different and advance the tourism offers to similar target groups. Groningen has much to offer and some interesting facts have been gathered by the university.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every fifth person in Groningen is a student; • As a large student city, the cultural scene is remarkably big and diverse; • For bars, there is no curfew, they are allowed to stay open 24hrs; • Many famous bands performed in Groningen's bars and clubs, e.g. Nirvana, U2, White Stripes; • The most important museum is the 'Groninger Museum' hosting great collections of modern art and being designed to controversial architecture by Italian Alessandro Mendini and Phillippe Starck; • Museums range from modern art to comics, tobacco museums to science museums; • Biggest pub quarter in NL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has the largest natural gas-field in Western Europe; • In Groningen is the world's largest sugar factory; • The city is closed to cars and therewith very safe for bikers and pedestrians; • Groningen is first in Europe when it comes to the ratio of bicycles in traffic: about 50% of all ways are done by bike (Amsterdam or Bremen only 22%) • World's largest exporter of home-made dairy products; • 'Dutch society is well-educated, open, egalitarian, tolerant and not afraid of unorthodox solutions; • Most beautiful public toilet • Noorderzon – two week theatre festival • Smallest 3-star Grand Hotel in the world with only one room 'De kromme raake' <p style="text-align: right;">(Source: HUG 2009a, 2009b)</p>
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Also a gap analysis is shown after the presentation of the perceived images held by the residents. This serves to identify main similarities and differences in the promoted and the perceived images of the city.

Both cities' representatives highlight the international experience of a trip into the 'neighbour' as highly interesting for tourists. Spontaneous travel without booking is attractive and within a short time people can cross a border to spend the day in another country with different cultures and customs, food, stores and fashion. The feeling to be close to home but yet in another country is considered as fascinating (DUPEA and WFIB 2009).

4.3 Cooperation – Self-Assessment

This study, written in May and June 2009, aims at investigating whether 'Tourism' as one of the aspects of the 10-Point-Program is already 'deepened, enhanced, and intensified' as planned in 2008. This relates to the cooperation model of Xiang and Wang and the stage of 'evaluation'. Additional value is aimed to be achieved by cooperating on various levels with each other. The expert interviews provide the basis for a thorough self-assessment of the status quo from each side.

Since 2006, the strategic orientation of the Oldenburg WFIB focuses on internationality to further strategic development. The promotion of economics and development of cooperation with partner cities and communes run parallel as both are interrelated (WFIB 2009). An international direction and improvement of partnerships is the aim. The city of OL creates the tourism product and OTM is responsible for the marketing. Many offers are presented on both Internet pages. 'OTM is very independent and the city has the desire that OTM does more in terms of partnership with Groningen!' (WFIB 2009). They perceive the attitude of the tourism official to believe that tourism from GR is a fast-selling, automatically developing item that does not require extensive promotion. Many initiatives have not been pursued with the needed enthusiasm and came to nothing. To summarise, 'all points of the 10-Point-Program are running smoothly – but not tourism' (WFIB 2009). There is no intensive cooperation and no serious meetings have been done. Initial efforts have not been pursued sufficiently. 'The efforts of one city should be bundled in order to change and to reach something!' (WFIB 2009). The WFIB wants to adopt a mediator role and wants to bring the two tourism marketing OTM and MG together again to revive the cooperation. They want to be the interface between the various institutions involved to coordinate successful progress.

Very similar statements are made by the Dutch side, thus the current situation of cooperation is probably seen with a realistic and critical self-assessment. Also the Dutch state that there is chaos between the institutions and cooperation is not very well organised. As in OL, the local DMO MG is responsible for marketing the city. Many activities however, are not efficiently marketed and thus, demand for certain offers is too low (DUPEA 2009). 'Much is planned but not enough has been realised since the signing of the 10-Point-Program agreement in 2008' (DUPEA 2009). Also Public Express and DENIES agree that there is only little exchange between OTM and MG. Mrs Fabich from DENIES states an imbalance of competition and cooperation as a possible reason, both cities seek a win-win-situation which hinders increased efforts towards joint projects (DENIES 2009).

However, the cooperation with the DUPEA in Groningen, the equivalent to the WFIB in Oldenburg, is running very satisfactorily and both sides value that also personal friendships developed out of city partnership projects. They jointly work on EU projects, bilateral developments with Bremen and other cities, and on various levels such as alternative energies, business set ups, science or architectural cooperation. Regular meetings, once a month, and contact via telephone or email are common. Language is not seen as a problem and a creative blend of German, Dutch and English facilitates communication. Twice a year, colleagues of both cities visit each other to get to know how they work and to promote joint ideas.

Nevertheless, the different cultures play an important role in cooperation across the national border. Asked to characterise the Dutch and the Germans, Mrs Fabich highlighted some points. These are similar to Hofstede's results (see Appendix M2).

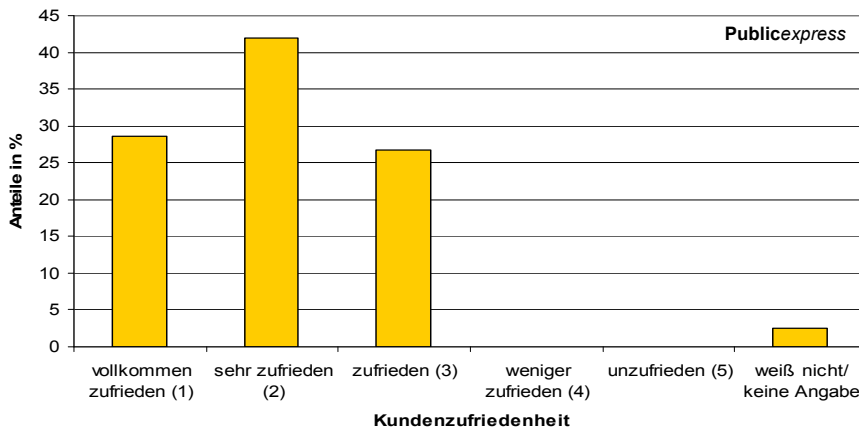
Netherlands	Germany
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rough planning - More in short notice - Answer delayed which influences agreement or acceptance - Time plans include the need for improvisation - No need for perfectionism, rather pragmatism - More relaxed; unstressed - Smaller distance - Hierarchy is lower than in Germany → problem: then also nobody feels responsible or pushes straight work - Focus on team work - More flexible, also more flexible work systems to adjust to personal needs; - Less fluctuation at work/more loyalty (info transfer is at times difficult) - More keen on experiments - Mistakes are allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreements are kept and details are planned and agreed upon long in advance - Long discussions - Due to Dutch 'poor' time management, results are often not as expected and dissatisfying; Germans get nervous - Need for perfectionism - High avoidance of insecurity and ambiguity; good preparation - Distance and hierarchical - Team work and also individual achievements - rather fixed systems in working systems - adapting working concepts from other countries - Mistakes are severe and could lead to loss of face
<p>→ ‚Deutscher Perfektionismus‘ meets Dutch Pragmatism'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different expectations - Problems of interpretations - Different self-conception - Would be an ideal combination <p style="text-align: right;">(Source: DENIES Interview 2009)</p>	

The interview partners of both cities agree that the stated problems are accepted as cultural differences and that personal empathy as well as the enthusiasm for joint successful project implementation compensate for any problems to ensure a very positive evaluation of the partners.

To counteract misunderstandings and to support realisation of projects across the Dutch-German border, DENIES offers workshops with culture and language training. Both, OTM and MG as well as the team of the WFIB and DUPEA participated at workshops and also engaged in personnel exchange. The aim is to get to know how each side is working and to understand cultural habits; an understanding of similarities and differences is the crucial basic element for successful cooperation. A shared vision and the desire to realise ideas is essential for any further steps. The tourism offices wanted to be able to approach guests from the other city in their mother tongue to promote city offers more effectively. Workshops and training are time consuming, require a lot of effort and full enthusiasm of the participants. Nevertheless, it is seen as a prolific starting point and in the passage of time, cooperation will become a normality and cultural characteristics will be more familiar. A strong network of institutions and potential participants exists but needs to be deployed better to use the full potential of this city partnership.

Besides the cooperation of the Cities Economic Offices, marketing projects and endeavours of **Public Express** are emphasised by the institutions on both sides. Mr Marquardt, the owner of this private, long-distance intercity bus company, found that too much focus was on individual transport, there were too few operators and offers regarding public transportation, also across European borders. The desire was to establish a transport service to fill this market niche. The strategy developed to serve the transportation market gap from Oldenburg across the German-Dutch border to Groningen. The Deutsche Bahn is judged as too expensive and travel time is too long. Since its foundation in 2004, PX established a very good image and a high level of consumer awareness. PX received feedback and praise as innovative, creative, fair priced with transparent pricing strategies and with a sympathetic team. In 2005, a passenger inquiry results in satisfactory ratings with 70.6% for grade 1 and 2 (see figure below). New routes are constantly developed, additional destinations are integrated and the steadily increasing guest numbers indicate that this niche is successfully operated and serviced. Higher capacity utilization and better management of demand are seen as ongoing tasks. Further transportation gaps across the border are planned to be serviced in the near future. The homepage is in Dutch, German and English and tickets can be bought online (40%), in distribution offices (40%) and directly on the bus (20%). PX research revealed that 40-45% of customers are attracted through WOM. Students of the Oldenburg University receive a discounted price.

Peak seasons for mutual travel are May to July and December and the Friday to Sunday are the peak times during the week and the numbers of Dutch and German guests are balanced.



In 2008, about 60,000 Dutch visitors used PX (NWZ 20 December 2008). From 2007 to 2008, passenger numbers increased by 60% and the mayor of Oldenburg, Mr Schwandner, praises the

development of this successful 'commuter traffic', especially around Christmas with about 300 Dutch passengers per day (NWZ 20 December 2008). The Flower Market in Groningen on Good Friday is the most profitable day of operation of the year and makes up for weaker phases. For special occasions, about 25 busses bring the visitors to the destination while on a regular basis two busses serve the route Groningen – Oldenburg – Bremen four times a day. Appendix N shows some advertisements of Public Express and partners. Regular advertisement tools used are flyers distributed in the cities, posters, the Internet, information booths in the city and at various fairs. The yellow PX coaches are very eye-catching and carry ads.

As a private enterprise, Public Express aims at cooperating with institutions at each respective final destination. Compared to Oldenburg, Groningen does a lot more to promote the city, they are better sales and promotion people' (Interview with Mr Marquardt). Best cooperation activities are realised with Marketing Groningen and the GCC. The GR side do promote the highlights of their city much better and know how to bring their message across. They are good marketing people and know what German visitors seek. GR is known better across the border and campaigns have a wider reach whereas OL is not known to many in NL. OL as a destination for the neighbours mainly around Christmas and earlier, many travelled to OL and Bremen, today, more stay in the bus for another 30 minutes to get to Bremen. This is 'a mirror of reality' as more Germans go to GR than vice versa, thus marketing shows success in travel patterns to Groningen.

In terms of cooperation with Oldenburg, joint marketing activities are generally running slowly and are tough. With OTM and CMO, there are no current joint marketing activities. 'Oldenburg sells itself terribly', upcoming changes are often not seen and actions and

reactions are slow. They rely on their current positive image and status, again tourism is said to be a fast-selling item, thus not much is done to improve tourism development. Mr Marquardt calls this a fallacy as poor advertisements for the Lambertmarkt in 2005 resulted also in low visitor numbers, compared to satisfactory numbers in the years with special promotion. There are too many stakeholders involved and their interests are not properly coordinated to generate best possible synergies. This applies partly for both cities and the problem grows when the two come together. Mr Marquardt claims that the border is still in the minds of the people, meaning the institutions. 'No joint set of aims and strategies is developed in one city to be present as a unity to the partners'. Also Mrs Fabich believes that if one side were to act more enthusiastically also the other side would be motivated for joint strategies.

The great potential of the regional proximity needs to be recognised by both sides. The entire economy of each city benefits from the level of recognition PX has established since 2004 and institutions rely on the company's successful efforts to increase awareness and to bring visitors to the city. However, some stakeholders might not yet be aware of the positive benefits and advantages of this cross-boundary bus service for their individual business.

All interview partners and also OTM and MG agree that the beauty of the inner cities of both Oldenburg and Groningen and great shopping facilities are their major assets attracting the majority of tourists. However, also both cities perceive that their cultural offers are not well known throughout the region. They believe in the attractiveness and value of their cultural impressions and events and want to increase the level of awareness to current and potential tourists from the nearby partner city. The foreign language should not be an obstacle as e.g. dance and theatricals can be enjoyed without the language skills.

4.4 Selection of Applied Marketing Tools

Over the years, an uncountable amount of newspaper articles (PR), marketing campaigns and projects including promotional material have been created to motivate tourism. Some promotional campaigns run successfully for years while others have not been pursued further after initial trial. It is important to reach the target groups with a distinct message and to offer benefits and values to generate visits. A selection of realised joint marketing projects is presented below, however the need to gather all information is considered as impossible and unnecessary. The aim is to give a short overview indicating that promotion is pursued on various ways.

General Media Coverage

Oldenburg is better covered by the media and the local newspapers regularly write about the partnership between the two cities. Unfortunately, no concrete numbers of released articles could have been researched but the interviewees' statements as well as the author's own experience show that OL informs its citizens well (DUPEA 2009). No specific newspaper inlays have been published introducing and promoting the offers of the partner city; both sides however think this is a very effective strategy to reach many people. On the German side, often images are included in articles while the Dutch newspapers do not often use pictures (DUPEA 2009).

The *Nordwest Zeitung* issued a few volumes of 'Grenzenlos' in the late 1990s: it is a special edition newspaper that introduces the Dutch-German borderland, its particularities and its cities, towns and villages. Stories of local people are told and typical German and typical Dutch events are presented. Shopping and museums, festivities and culinary highlights are presented for the year. They further write about meetings and interactions between the people to get to know each other better; stereotypes and clichés shall be reduced on both sides.

Public Express also receives a lot of media coverage on new routes and its offers, in the papers, on TV and the radio in both countries.

The Internet

The homepages of both cities can be accessed in all three languages Dutch, German and English. Various offers according to categories such as culture, sports, architecture, city highlights and events are listed and illustrated with images. 'Typical' happenings are explained and guests are invited to join in. OTM has a link to the WFIB and vice versa and MG is the number one Internet site for tourism in Groningen. Both cities are also presented on the Internet sites of the Netherlands and Lower Saxony respectively. The site of OTM is interlinked with CMO and diverse brochures, e.g. shopping guide or parking systems can be downloaded in German. Weekend arrangements for individuals and small groups can be booked via OTM and an online event calendar lists the upcoming specials of OL. MG is connected with GCC and the 'Groningen Uitburo' for cultural information and nightlife highlights. Museums and other cultural institutions are presented and their contact details are given including a website link to see the programme. Both also introduce the surrounding region as a surplus to a visit to the city. Besides ticketing, the homepage of Public Express also posts city information, especially about special occasions.

Lambertmarkt – Public Express and the Presseamt/ PR Office Oldenburg

In 2004, the Lambertmarkt in OL was marketed together by the city, PX, OTM, the Hermes Hotel, a OL restaurant, a clothing retailer and an electronics store realised advertisements for promote the Christmas Market Groningen. Flyers were translated into Dutch and were distributed in Groningen. As from then on, the market is seen as a 'fast selling item' by OL tourism officials. PX and the PR office benefits from this disinterest (PX 2009) and construct their campaigns around this event in December. As the major attraction of OL during the entire year, the marketing campaigns are built on favourable ground as the market is very popular. Posters are set up in the inner cities. As the PR Office of OL and Public Express market the Lambertmarkt, they used an innovative advertisement strategy to reach the masses of people at a soccer match in Groningen. They showed a presentation like PowerPoint with images of Oldenburg on the big screen. 'The city always needs to be promoted' say Mr Marquardt (interview PX 2009). Also flyer campaigns and poster campaigns with children as angels are used to present Oldenburg and its Christmas Market in Groningen. These advertisement tools are said to 'not be very costly but effective.' The public relations office is head of public relations and press work for the city. Annually, it issues about 1,000 press releases and answers some thousand press inquiries from journalists. Tasks are press conferences, photo shoots, the coordination of the Internet page of the city www.oldenburg.de and the cultivation of the city's corporate design. It issues a monthly event calendar with about 300 happenings in the city and the surrounding area.

Flower Market in Groningen

Every year, Public Express and the GCC create flyers in German to attract guests to the market. The market is already the most popular attraction in Groningen for visitors from OL. Also a large newspaper advertisement and diverse articles have been published to create interest. The offer of PX provides the offer of transportation and times and places are listed, this facilitates the decision and encourages action. App. N shows the PX 2009 flyer for the Flower Market.

Promotiedagen – Trade Fairs

The Promotiedagen is one of the largest business and economic trade fair events in northern NL and takes place in Groningen every year (4 and 5 November 2008). It is mainly a B2B trade fair with 700 exhibitors of all branches and more than 30,000 visitors. It is a platform to promote OL in NL. Also the city of OL with OTM and 'Oldenburger Wirtschaftsförderung' has been present with 14 businesses and institutions from OL to be present as an entity to the Dutch business world. They shared a 100 sqm booth and created the 'Oldenburg Mile-

Oldenburg Plein'. Public Express organized shuttle transfer for business people on both days. The Hanse Messe in Oldenburg adopted the same program and did not adapt to cultural differences, therefore it was not a success. Both interviewee parties said they aim at intensifying joint presence at fairs for residents. Also Public Express has been present three times but also on non-business fairs.

Holland Wochen – Holland Weeks

Oldenburg organised the festival 'Holland Week' according to the motto 'Cultuur'. The CMO and the Oldenburgisches Staatstheater went to GR to meet with the Chamber of Commerce, Marketing Groningen and the GCC to introduce the idea and to get support to plan it jointly. Throughout the entire city of Oldenburg, the Dutch culture was present inside and outside in the form of dance, theatre (Macbeth in Dutch), readings, music, documentaries, seminars, but also typical food like pancakes on an old 'pancake-ship' from Groningen, waffles or liquorice. A flower market and the Dutch flair in the city led to the newspaper heading 'Ganz Oldenburg im Hollandfieber' [Oldenburg in full excitement for the Netherlands] (NWZ 21 February 2004). Also a representative from the Staatstheater is cited to have said that this festival will initiate much more than most projects or events before (ibid). The Holland Week aims at reducing prejudices playfully and wants to show the multifaceted beauty of the neighbour country without using only stereotypes. A leaflet with detailed program information and locations has been distributed by all participating partners in the inner city. OTM was responsible for ticketing.

International Friendship Meeting

The Oldenburger Wirtschaftsförderung WFIB organised the 1st International Friendship Meeting in May 2008 and residents from all partner cities were invited for three days. Cultural exchange, joint adventures in the region, workshops, presentations and discussions and dance were organised by the host city and its guests. Various topics also in relation to the official Europe Day on 9 May 2008 were worked on in groups to further cultural exchange. Most guests were accommodated with their OL hosts and got to know German living. The end of this friendship meeting was a barbeque party with cocktails and fireworks. The newspapers were present and reported.

KIBUM - Kinderbuchmesse

In 2008, the Office for International Relations, the Groninger Uitburo (culture) and the city library OL realised the project to bring the children of the partner cities together. For ten days, the book fair welcomed German and Dutch children with 'Hartelijk Welkom! KIBUM trifft Niederlande'. More than 400 literary pieces and events have been created around the topic

'the Netherlands'. Dutch writers read and presented their books to German and Dutch children. The kids learned about the Dutch Santa Claus, poems and songs and organised a city tour for their Dutch friends.

Local children from Oldenburg and their Dutch guests enjoyed city tours and the cultural exchange. 'Wir möchten die niederländische Literatur und Kultur vorstellen und ein facettenreiches und aktuelles Bild der Niederlande und der niederländischen Sprache vermitteln' [we want to introduce Dutch literature and culture and we want to present the multifaceted and current image of the Netherlands and the Dutch language], says Mr Schumacher from the Department of Culture (Stadt Oldenburg 2008b). Sponsors of both countries made the KIBUM possible and a great success. Public Express provided for the transport of the children (App. N shows the PX KIBUM flyer).

Cultural Institutions

Separately from their presence on the city's Internet site, cultural institutions also promote their offers individually.

For five weeks, the Metropolis Region of Oldenburg and Bremen combined their museums and those of Delmenhorst and Worpswede to promote each other and the whole region in order to increase attraction: posters and advertisement flyers in Dutch were distributed in the Netherlands and also in Groningen. The projects website was in Dutch and also a special brochure. Dutch tourists who are interested in arts and culture are the target group.

The Oldenburger Staatstheater does not have a direct cooperation with a theatre Groningen, however the work together on an artistic level with the Dutch side. The PR office stated that the expenses would not be remunerative as the majority of visitors from NL comes to OL only for a day, and most of them do not stay for a night to experience a theatre night. A great success is the 'Festival Go West' that presents Dutch theatricals to allow interesting insight into the Dutch theatre scene including the invitation to get together afterwards with Dutch artists for discussions and 'Kraut und Käse'.

The Groninger Museum and the Horst-Jansen Museum (OL) had a joint ticketing program based on a shared development association. The Horst-Jansen Museum is promoting its exhibitions in the Netherlands. In contrast to theatres with shows at night, museums have the better advantage to attract day guests as a visit to the museum can be included in a day trip or can be the perfect alternative for a rainy day outside. The Groninger Museum is the most famous museum of GR and every passenger from the bus or train station passes the building which is itself a piece of art – designed by the Italian architect Mendini.

A bilingual museum guide featuring Dutch and German museums of the neighbouring regions and provinces exists; however they are not distributed well and German museums are presented in German and Dutch are presented in Dutch, thus eventually not fully understood by interested people.

Dutch artists currently display their work in Oldenburg and vice versa.

In Groningen, much German music is played in the radio and it is very popular (DUPEA 2009). The big music festivals in Groningen also have German artists performing on stage.

Regarding advertisements, cultural differences include also different habits and viewing patterns with the messages sent. Thus, advertisement campaigns – slogans and images – need to be aligned to suit the characteristics of the country.

City Campaigns

The most current campaign is the '*Inner City Campaign 2009*' for Groningen: Groningen City Club, the City and Marketing Groningen got together with the slogan 'There is no place like Groningen' and aim at continuously communicating the city's assets such as good accessibility, shopping and architecture. In coherence with the city's events, highlights and shopping Sundays of the year, the campaign will attract tourism, especially from the border lands and Oldenburg. The Internet, billboards, city busses, newspaper inserts, advanced PR work, event flyers and information boards will promote the attractions of Groningen in 2009. This campaign will be realised with financial efforts of more than € 70,000.

The findings of the image analyses among the residents of each city are presented next.

4.5 Tourism Facts and Figures

The city of *Groningen* initiated a tourism monitor, and since 2002, regular analyses of the city's tourism development have been summarised by Marketing Groningen and the City of Groningen. 81% of all guests are overnight guests with 2.6 nights in average, 19% are from a foreign country and even from Germany 11% (in 2005 it were 6%). However, those German tourists are not from Oldenburg. The economic effect can be counted by number of 'visitors x length of stay x spending (average)'. Average spending with overnight stay is € 73.84 while a day tourist spends on average € 43.09. In 2007, the number of overnight tourists accounts for 7% of all tourism with 120,000 and day visitors amount to 93% with 1,521,000 visitors. In total, the economic effect of tourism was thus € 226,211,739 in 2007. Compared to 2005, day visitors increased by 117,029 (Grontmij Nederland 2008). The stated travel motivators and main attractions match with the findings of this thesis.

Also *Oldenburg* is profiting of increasing preference towards short city trips. Its offer of shopping, atmosphere and sightseeing facilitates to attract new target groups and to participate in the city tourism trend. Since nearly all hotels in Oldenburg are linked to the OTM Internet site direct booking numbers can be observed. From 2004 to 2007, overnight stays increased from 157,028 to 177,739. According the numbers by OTM, OL welcomed 11 million day visitors in 2007, which is a 40% increase to 2006. From these 11 m, 82% are visiting for leisure purposes. In terms of gross turnover, 50% is spend on retail trade, the gastronomy is not benefiting as much. In average, € 27.60 is spent by day visitors. For 2005, gross turnover was € 370 m: 83% by day visitors, 11% by visiting family and friends, and 6% by overnight stays in a hotel. 14% of all overnights is made by foreign guests (OTM 2008).

4.6 Image Analyses

The results of the image analyses among residents of both partner cities are represented consecutively to identify distinctive differences and similarities. Major reasons for both travel and non-travel reveal great potential for improvement of the city product and mainly for the promotion of the existing product range as the WTO (2007) had outlined.

Respondents who have not been to Groningen or Oldenburg include both, those who do not want to travel and those who want to but did not do so for various reasons. The focus will be on elaborate also 'cultural' interest as all interviewees uttered statements such as 'Groningen citizens do not come to Oldenburg for cultural offers, unfortunately' (WFIB 2009), 'museums do not really use their potential' (Mr Marquardt 2009) or also DUPEA wishes that Groningen's cultural highlights attract more people.

4.6.1 The Image of Groningen – by Oldenburg citizens who have been there

This section combines all respondents from the 'YES' questionnaires collected via street surveys and with Public Express to give a total sample of 108 respondents who have been to Groningen. An individual section analyses specific PX findings.

All respondents have a positive image of Groningen! (Female 61/ male 47; see *table A and B* in App. O). The satisfaction rate and the desire to return are very high (99%) and also 98% will recommend others to travel to GR. The loyalty can be seen in *table C* indicating the number of times respondents have been to the city. More than 'once' applies for 83% and 66% of those have been to GR three to more than ten times. Thus, the majority are repeat travellers and 50% relied on the own car and 49% took a bus, Public Express. The city partnership is known to 79.6%, and 38.9% of all are aware of some cooperation in tourism.

To ten of all respondents a city slogan is known from newspapers, posters or busses but has not been specified.

The majority (92%) visits GR for a day, and those who stay longer sleep at a friend's house or camp site. Most visitors travel with the partner (34%), with their family (32%) or with friends (22%). Regularly and alone travelling respondents have mainly been students.

Regarding *information sources*, in most cases, the initial idea to travel to GR comes by WOM from friends and family members (38.9%). Not on the list of possible choices are newspapers, however many Oldenburg respondents added local papers such as the 'Nordwest Zeitung (NWZ)' as another source of information and motivation. In terms of specific information, most respondents did not engage in active information search but relied on WOM and stated that they visited GR without exhaustive planning; they travelled spontaneously (30.6%). Other major sources of detailed information are the Public Express website and relevant other Internet sites. With only 9.3%, the tourist office in Groningen (MG/VVV) is a contact point whereas the tourist bureau in OL is not approached as a source of information about Groningen. Appendix *table D* shows a relation between the information source and the number of times been to GR. Especially, WOM is important for first time travellers and repeat travellers up to five times, then its influence decreases as people gain own experience. Accordingly, no further specific information is gathered as certain things are known and people travel spontaneously to a familiar place.

Asked to compare the cities, main *similarities* are the city sizes and their comprehensibility/ compactness and cosiness, good shopping facilities and the inner city shopping areas, the nice atmosphere and the flair, and their characteristic as bicycle cities. Also the universities and the friendliness of the people are mentioned. Main *differences* are that GR seems more maritime and has the 'Grachten' (canals) as a major advantage (25%). OL is perceived by 17% to be more metropolitan and to have better parking, whereas GR impresses by national and cultural variety. GR features older and different houses and shops (architecture), more and other shopping possibilities in a better inner city (17%). GR markets and the coffee shops are also listed as major differences. Even though it is another country, visitors do not feel uncomfortable or strange while being across the national border.

Balanced are feelings categorizing GR as having metropolitan flair or small town flair but 43% think GR is 'well known' and 'attractive' (78%) featuring 'impressive sights' (62%). About half of the respondents think GR is a tourist place and often crowded with visitors (56%). 81% feel it is lively and pulsating, with very friendly people (78%) and a great atmosphere (89%). The market scene is very popular and varied as agreed by 53% and fully agreed by 40%.

About 60% value the attractiveness out the international and local restaurants. The price-performance ratio is not of significant direction to OL respondents, however, 95% agree with good accessibility and the right distance for a city day trip. Therefore, 92% of all respondents come for a day (table E).

For 82% 'shopping' and the diversity of 'markets' and 'flowers' are the major associations, followed by 'bicycles' (43%), 'coffee shops' (39%) and 'museums' (31%) and 'Grachten'.

Why OL visitors come to GR can be observed at their expectations or motivations. Again, shopping is the major motivation (63%) in line with spending time with family and friends (61%). Enjoying a city trip (50%) including the experience of cultural impressions (42%) and the indulgence of local culinary offers (43%) is expected. The Flower Market as a once in a year event is motivator for 25% of this sample. Not surprisingly, the ratings of diversity of shopping are agreed upon by all respondents – 45% fully agree and 49% agree. The high amount of people who do not agree with the attractiveness of nightlife reflects the inability to state an opinion due to the length of stay as a 'day trip'. Cultural importance and fame is agreed upon by 53% while 18% do not agree.

Analysis

The high amount of loyal visitors reflects the success of GR to highly satisfy expectations. Most visitors developed a positive attitude towards GR and have been to the city several times, many even come on a regular basis. The high numbers of repeat travel correlate with WOM as a major information source or initiator (WTO 2007). Positive experiences in the city

are communicated to friends and family which motivates others to visit as well. Intense media coverage in the NWZ and other local papers in OL is very beneficial for a high level of awareness. Compared to GR with lower media coverage, GR residents are not as much loyal and interested in OL (see Image Analysis of Oldenburg).

To increase interest and to manage demand more efficiently towards cultural experiences, diverse information sources should promote special offers, events and



Fig. 4.1: Shared Interest for Shopping and Culture in Groningen

happenings in GR. Figure 4.1, accompanying this text, highlights the correlation between the expectation to go shopping and an interest in culture. There is a great interest in culture, thus this is a good starting point for marketing campaigns for cultural offers.

As many repeat travellers do not have to look up the street map any more or consult the Internet before leaving home, few surrounding information is gathered and many interesting aspects might be left unseen. An event calendar outlining special occasions for a longer period in advance might be a useful tool to present interesting information in one piece. High potential offers can be presented to:

- Visitors motivated by *shopping* as these are also highly interested in *culture*. This applies to all sampled age groups as can be seen in tables F, G and H (App. O).
- Also *markets* and *culture* are potentially an interesting combination as can be seen in tables I, K and L (App. O).

General needs of a holiday named by non-travellers like relaxation and recreation, sightseeing and experiencing something new are comparable with the perceived image of Groningen: It offers a great combination between a lively large city with lots of shopping and culture, but is not overrun by tourists and has a pleasant atmosphere. Strolling around in an enjoyable atmosphere and is often considered as very relaxing. This also reinforces the potential to satisfy non-travellers by convincing them to compare word of mouth with reality.

Other recommendations are presented in the recommendations chapter to cumulate innovative ideas for image promotion efforts.

4.6.2 Image analysis of Groningen – by Oldenburg citizens who have not been to Groningen

The questions posed intend to identify major reasons for not having been to Groningen. They further serve to investigate whether the perceived image of non-visitors is negative or positive and how this image is formed. In how far does the image differ to those who have experience with GR? In total, 27 responses have been collected from OL citizen to find out how they think about GR. *Table C* shows the family status of the respondents. In the top-of-mind question, most often Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Groningen have been listed as most famous Dutch cities.

The *overall image* of GR is very positive and also without first-hand experience, Oldenburg residents assess the GR with a positive tendency. The perceived image can be summarized as: lively (50%) and attractive (54%), family friendly and welcoming to visitors (84%) with a nice atmosphere (47%), impressive city with interesting sights (47%) and a great market scene (63%). Of all respondents, 66% believe it is a known/ famous city with 34%

assuming that GR has a metropolitan flair. Not significantly mentioned, and therewith not negatively perceived or told by friends, are the level of cleanliness and the price-performance ratio. Being aware of the good accessibility and the good distance for a day trip (60%), 74.1% *plan* to go and experience GR first hand! Those who do not plan on coming list reasons such as to have no time, to plan to visit other places first, or to not find GR appealing.

As *reasons* why they have not been to GR yet, the majority of respondents said they did not have an opportunity yet. Further, 11% of all said they had no information about the city and its attractions, and another 7.4% believe that the offers in Groningen do not differ significantly in comparison to Oldenburg to be worthwhile a trip. The distance of about 130 km and the foreign language are not considered as obstacles.

Nevertheless, these reasons are not interrelated with a negative image and the majority of respondents plan to visit (74.1%). The overall image of Groningen is with 92.6% agreement very positive and about 67% are aware of the existing city partnership, whereas only 30% realize joint cooperation efforts specifically in tourism. Newspapers and PX are main sources of information. About half of the respondents generally travel with their family (51.9%) or with their partner (29.6%). Four major aspects are in general important for holidays namely 'relaxation/ recreation/ recovery', 'sightseeing in (famous) places of interest and to see something new', 'nature and natural sights', as well as 'tranquillity'.

Despite no first hand experience, specific associations with the city show that most people first think of shopping (77.8%), markets and flowers (77.8%) and coffee shops (55.6%). To experience these attributes are also the major motivations to visit soon. Most respondents (92.6%) agree and agree fully that shopping facilities are good.

Regarding the attractiveness of nightlife, 11.1% totally agree and 48.1% agree. Separated by age, 52% the 26 to 45 year olds with a positive image agree. In total, only 26% associate nightlife with the Dutch neighbour city, and separately 16% of the up to 25 year olds. Regarding the diversity of international and local restaurants, 63% can not judge on this.

To evaluate cultural offers of GR as famous or renowned, 92.5% of all respondents think this applies. However, no association to 'museums' is made by about 78% which matches with the dominant indecisive opinion about the categorization of museums as either modern or conventional. Also, the majority (53%) can not say whether they think that GR hosts cosmopolitan cultural events and exhibitions; however, many believe that cultural offers are cosmopolitan (37%), modern (33%) and unique rather than boring (7%) and similar to other cities.

Most (81.5%) believe that GR residents are friendly and sympathetic. This matches with their categorization as a family friendly city that is very friendly towards visitors.

Analysis

This very positive perception of Groningen is mainly due to the satisfaction of visitors who have been there and who influence friends and family by positive word of mouth. The city partnership receives constant favourable PR by the Oldenburg newspapers and media including pictures. Consequently, a high level of awareness and interest exists to form a positive attitude. To build on this, knowing the reasons for non-travel will be the first step to counteract by better communicating what GR has to offer, thus to successfully present the right *opportunity*. More information should be available at more diverse places to constantly keep the interest up and to invite to GR. Repeating the short distance strengthens the opportunity to have a short get-away also when not much free time is available. A city trip to GR can be realised also with no exhaustive planning and preparation. As 'shopping', 'markets and flowers' as well as the 'city experience' itself are appealing, offers should be *bundled* with cultural highlights since so many expect something 'cultural'. Most tourists also expect GR to be more metropolitan than OL, thus the city can 'prove' that it has a lot to offer. Public Express is well known in OL and more joint projects could generate more visits – for special occasions and especially also for first-time travellers. It is important to get into the 'short-list' (DUPEA 2009) and to be present in the consideration set, to get them to travel once, and to satisfy expectations to then create a relationship with loyal neighbours. High potential combinations are:

- *Shopping* combined with *markets* and *flowers*: 76% of females (9.5% of males) interested in shopping associate also 'markets and flowers'; (App. F2 table A).
- *Shopping* and *culture*: 14% of the up to 25 year olds, 57% of the 26 to 45 group and 24% of the third age group with an association to shopping also believe that cultural offers in GR are interesting; (*table B*).

As indicated by MG, Groningen's major target group is aged 26 to 45, and findings show that it offers good potential for cultural interest. As most trips will be day trips, nightlife will not be in focus for OL guests. However, it could be improved for all age groups as interesting music events, theatre shows, architectural pieces, museum nights etc. could be offered in packages with discounted hotel nights attracting overnight stays to support local hospitality. Many offers can be enjoyed without the language as an obstacle and the whole family can enjoy various attractions. Due to the current positive image even without own experience, there is great potential to increase visitor numbers from OL to GR. Many loyal guests are good evidence

that GR is able to verify its positive image by delivering reality on the ground. The recommendations chapter presents a set of ideas!

4.6.3 Image of Groningen – Student Questionnaire

A separate questionnaire about Groningen investigated the image held of Groningen and the travel behaviour by 120 students at an Oldenburg Gymnasium, aged 10 to 17 years (App. F4; F5). Beforehand, no significant differences between male and female students could be observed. In total, 88 of the students have not yet been to GR while 32 have been to GR once (60%), twice (16%) or thrice (12%). All travelled by car (100%) with their family or with a group of friends and stayed for a day (94%). As reasons for the trip, the enjoyment of spending time with the family in a nice city and to go shopping are named by the majority. Flowers and markets rank high as well (44%). Dutch culture (19%) and typical food (16%) are also interesting. Best attributes of the city are its architecture, flair and atmosphere and its people. The shopping facilities, Dutch candy and the animal park are positive associations with GR. Only few negative aspects are highlighted such as too many people on special days (35%), parking or traffic as well as the Dutch language with 18% each.

Those 32 students who have not been to GR named major reasons as ‘no opportunity yet’ (58%) or ‘not enough information to be motivated’ (33%). A very high number has not even heard about GR (73%) and do not have any associations (28%). For 23%, the Netherlands are of no interest for holidays. The investigation contains questions regarding estimations regarding geographical distance between OL and GR and the number of residents/ size of GR. More than half (54%) believe the distance is 200 km or more; 72% estimate the distance larger than its actual 130 km. However, with only 6% distance is only a minor reason for non-travel. Even though OL is smaller than GR, 57% estimate GR to be smaller, 28% even think it is a small city with up to 100,000 residents; 43% think GR is larger than OL.

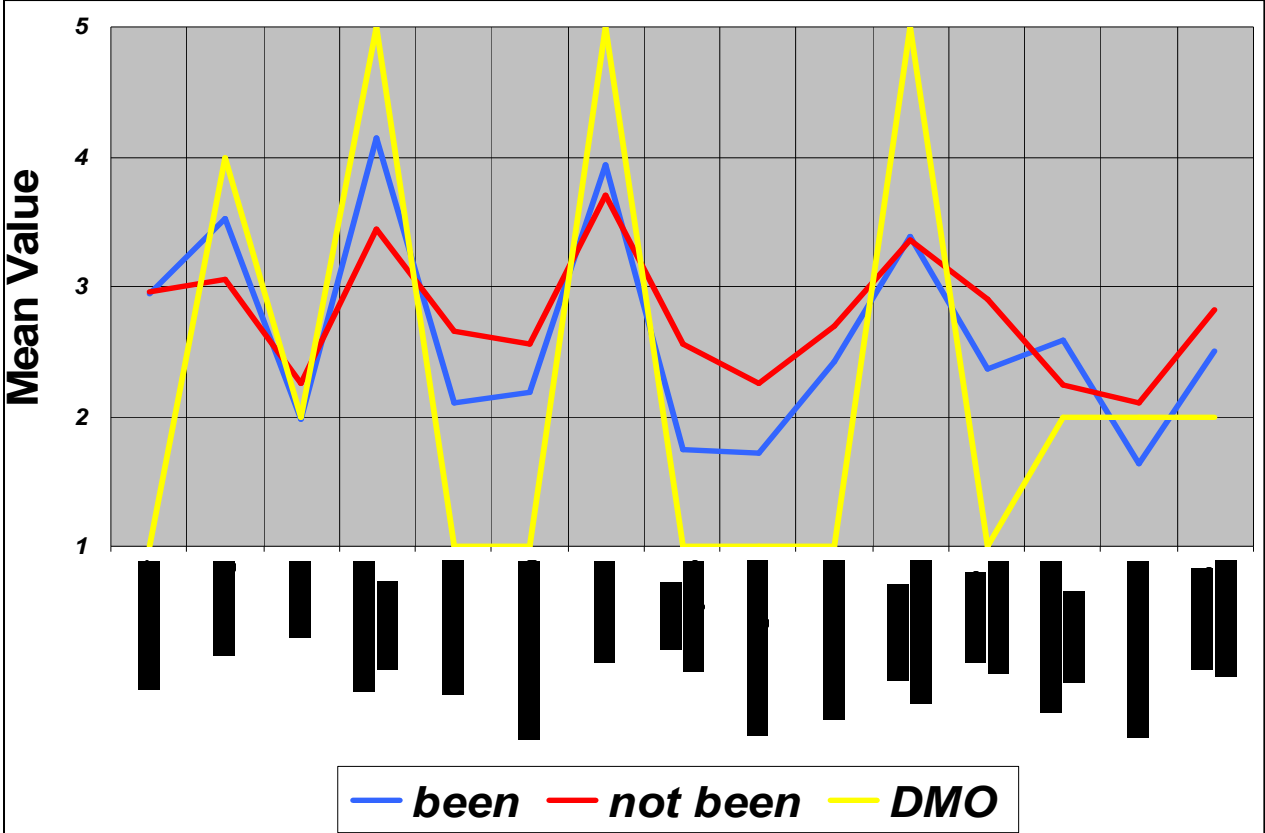
As children have a major influence on their family’s holiday decisions including destination choice, their preferences and satisfaction are decisive. Summarizing, the foreign language is not an obstacle and the attractiveness of GR as a sympathetic, typical Dutch city with great shopping facilities correspond with the findings of the official thesis sample. Since about one third of the student sample has not yet been to GR, the city of GR could easily approach OL schools and invite students to experience their city. GR could increase general awareness by organising a sweepstake among OL schools, possibly entailing media coverage. The winning classes could earn a one-day school hike or a school trip with a few nights in cooperation with the local youth hostel. The tourism planners of the city could organise a city rally to let the

young visitors discover main attractions and hidden places. Corresponding with the very positive image held by those who have been there, first-time visitors are likely to also be very satisfied with the tourism product. Consequently, the students will tell their parents and friends about this unique experience leading to increased interest through WOM. Next, the city has to communicate family offers in the Internet to cater for specific information search.

Even though no study has been conducted among Dutch students, the author draws the conclusion that the image of OL will be similar to the official sample. Thus, OL could similarly approach schools in Groningen. Only one school of each city join the official partnership and engage in regular exchanges with learning the other language. This could be intensified by regularly offering school hikes, joint sports days or visits to cultural events.

4.6.4 Gap Analysis for Groningen

Figure 4.2 summarised the findings from Marketing Groningen and travellers to Groningen (see also App. Q for percentages). Marketing Groningen rates 10 of the 15 attributes with the maximum best [applies fully ++]. As responsible for marketing, these high values can be seen as desirable goals to support a very favourable image of the city. They aim at selling the city for best value. The respondents agree with this positive estimation and the overall tendency is positive. However, in 9 cases, they assess the respective attribute slightly lower, with maximum counts on [applies +]. The graph illustrates both *experiences* of those who have



been to GR and *expectations* of those who have not yet been there. In general for this sample, it can be highlighted that first hand experience always leads to more positive estimates than no experience. MG wants to promote GR as a city with big city flair, 67% think this applies while also 45% estimate small town flair. This related back also to the students' questionnaire and the prevailing belief that GR is similarly sized or smaller than OL. The absolute agreement towards the attributes of 'lively', 'hospitality/ friendliness', 'impressive sights', 'general attractiveness', 'pleasant atmosphere', 'diversified market scene', 'modern museums', 'cosmopolitan cultural events' and 'diversified restaurants' are assessed slightly lower than by MG. The largest gaps are seen for 'modern museums' and 'cosmopolitan cultural events': MG rates the offers with highest agreement while the majority of all respondents 'have no idea' but a positive tendency based on experience or expectations.

4.7.1 The image of Oldenburg – by Groningen citizens who have been there

This section presents the image analysis findings for Oldenburg. 52 citizens from Groningen were asked to define their image of Oldenburg. Also a separate PX study is prepared.

21 men and 31 women were asked with about 58% in the age group 26 to 45 (see *table A and B* in E1). Compared to a 99% satisfaction rate of a visit in Groningen, 'only' 89% are fully satisfied with a trip to Oldenburg and plan to return. All respondents will recommend others to do a trip to Oldenburg. Regarding information sources, one third said they did not gather information but came to OL spontaneously, 25% researched in the Internet, and 23% relied on WOM. The tourist information OTM in Oldenburg was consulted by 15%, mainly by those who came more than ten times. *Table C* shows the number of times that GR respondents have been to Oldenburg and *table D* highlights the information sources used in correlation with the numbers of times been there. Those who have been to OL once retrieved information mainly from friends and were motivated to experience the destination first hand; those who visited three to five times rely on the Internet for specific information. The majority however did not engage in active information search prior to departure. As also for Groningen, the majority are repeat visitors as 29% were in OL already three to five times, and 21% were in OL five to ten times; 15% each have been visiting once or twice. This relates to the findings that all returning guests have a positive image of the city of Oldenburg (100%). Regarding the city partnership, 60% are aware of it and 17% are aware of tourism cooperation efforts. Furthermore, about 10% think they know a city slogan but did not specify which one.

Most respondents used Public Express as their means of transportation with about 46% and another 39% used their own car. The services of the train were used by 8%. Day trippers

are represented with 73% while also 19% stay over night and remain at a friend's house. Travel accompany is mainly the family (23%), then friends (21%) or the partner (19%). The dominant status of this sample is 'single' or in a 'partnership' (44% each).

Asked to compare the cities in own words most characterised OL and GR as nice and attractive student cities with pleasant atmosphere. Socialising with friendly people or the welcoming and friendly flair is also mentioned for both. Oldenburg is perceived to be cleaner than Groningen; OL has more specialised stores and more historic buildings while it also has fewer facilities to go out and also fewer cafés. Due to the high number of students, GR is described as younger.

People who have experience with OL associate 'shopping' (83%) and also 87% expect to shop in the city. Shopping facilities and the diversity of offers is evaluated as very good or good by 96%. The neighbours from GR further associate 'city trip' (27%) with OL and also more than half are motivated by the expectation to experience a 'city trip' (56%), also a 'trip into another country to strengthen the feeling of a get-away' (27%) and 'excursions' (12%) are expected. Also in the spring time when research was conducted, the Lambertmarkt is strongly associated with OL (65%) as well as other 'markets' (29%). Regarding the diversified market scene, 61% agree that there is a lot to experience in Oldenburg. More than half expect some cultural experience (52%) or entertainment (19%), and 40% state that they want to spend time with their family and friends. Despite a 15% association with 'museums', cultural offers are assessed to be renowned or famous by 44% while 39% only agree partly to this claim. No opinion is given from 73% towards the classification of museums being either 'modern' or 'conventional'; further, also the evaluation of rather 'cosmopolitan cultural events' or 'boring leisure time facilities' is not clearly stated by 65%. Additional associations or expectations were not stated by any respondent. 'Nightlife' and 'going out' is associated by 27% whereas 46% rank its attractiveness as partly applying and 35% think it is attractive.

The image of OL can be described as having big city flair (54%); however, also 31% perceive it rather as small town flair. The majority thinks Oldenburg is known (53%) and perceives it as an attractive (85%) and lively city (73%). Of all respondents, 46% agree that OL has impressive sights to offer; it is however neither perceived as an overrun tourism destination nor as a lonely hot spot. This leads to the assumption that it is perceived as very comfortable. OL residents are assessed to be 'very sympathetic' (33%) or 'sympathetic' (52%). The city is further perceived as very family friendly and welcoming to guests (31%) while also 15% experienced unfriendly service encounters. This relates to 23% who do not agree that OL has a pleasant ambience. However, 77% perceived the atmosphere as very

pleasant. Only 20% plan to enjoy local food but 62% believe that restaurants are diverse and offer interesting choices. OL is popular for 85% of the respondents as it is easily accessible and has good parking; only 12% think it is quite far away from GR. Also, the price-performance ratio is positively noticed by 69% by the Dutch guests.

Analysis

All respondents who have been to Oldenburg at least once hold an overall positive image. More than 85% have been to Oldenburg more than once which represents that the city is delivering a satisfactorily tourism product to its Dutch visitors. Two main attributes attract visitors from GR to OL: the clear focus of attention is on shopping throughout the year for a favourable price-performance ratio and on the Lambertmarkt in December. Besides, no other unique attribute of the city is highlighted and the Lambertmarkt is only once a year. The Dutch are characterised as very adventuresome which reflects in the high interest to do city trips that also go into another nearby country to enjoy cultural experiences.

More specific promotion could communicate that OL has more to offer than ‘only shopping’. A day trip to this atmospheric city can be combined with a visit to an exhibition in a museum. *Table F* (see figure 4.3) represents the correlation between the interest in both shopping and culture.

Also *tables G and H* outline the potential for a combination of offers of these two fields separated by age group. For the age groups of 46 years and older, 100% of those that are attracted to shopping are also interested in culture. Especially, typical German celebrations like the Lambertmarkt are attractive and should be included into the planning of culture promotion. Throughout the year, there are various music or art events which could easily be used to enhance the tourism product by offering more than shopping. A diverse range of attractions will lead to increased popularity and WOM which increases tourism arrivals. By this, an additional pillar is developed to support OL’s attractiveness and touristic appeal throughout all seasons of the year.



4.7.2 Image of Oldenburg –

by Groningen residents who have not been to Oldenburg

In total, 28 of all respondents have not been to Oldenburg. Most famous German cities are Berlin (71%), Hamburg (50%), Munich and Bremen (29% each). Only 82% have heard (much) about OL. Main reasons for not having been to OL are 'no information about the city' (36%), 'no opportunity yet' (25%), 'Germany in general is not attractive for holidays' (11%). German as a foreign language and similar offers as in GR are negative for 14%. Overall, non-travellers hold with 82% a positive image about OL. No knowledge about the city partnership is existent for 64% and 96% are not aware of any tourism cooperation. PX is listed as the best example for tourism cooperation and the newspapers as sources of information. The overall image can be described as attractive due to its proximity to GR (76%) and 48% believe the price-performance ratio is better than in NL. Oldenburg is seen as impressive with interesting sights (56%) and attractive (44%) and lively (36%). The atmosphere is nice (56%), OL is popular or known (44%), and by the majority (72%) neither perceived as very touristy nor as a lonely hot tip. Comparing with GR, 28% think OL has rather the flair of a smaller city and 24% assume it has a rather metropolitan flair. OL residents and service personnel are considered to be very friendly (96%) and welcoming to guests (64%), and its cleanliness (48%) is positively assumed.

General expectations of a holiday are 'much to see', an interesting culture and museums (56%), opportunities to go out and enjoy life (36%), as well as great cities (32%) and relaxation, sun and sea (24% each). Most GR respondents travel with their partner (39%), with friends (29%) or their family (14%).

The top three associations with Oldenburg are shopping (54%), the Lambertmarkt around Christmas and 'city trip' (each with 39%). However, these associations are not interrelated as a motivation to travel to OL. Those 50% who plan to experience OL are motivated by this questionnaire (20%) while just a few have been curious before to compare WOM with reality. The good bus link is supportive for 8%. The other half wants to travel other destinations first and is not interested in OL, may however travel any time later. A great number does not know enough about OL to be attracted to it.

The opportunity was given to enter additional associations with OL, however none of the respondents had a precise idea. While shopping is the major association, it is only assessed as partly good or not good by 25%. Nightlife is only an association for 21% while it is assumed attractive by 43%. Compared to general expectations during holiday, culture in OL

is assessed as partly renowned by 36%, and 39% agree that OL has cultural offers of interest. However, 20% do not think it applies.

Analysis

Since the Dutch respondents sample consists of 50% men and 50% women, the researcher did a comparison regarding gender and the major city associations. It can be stated, that male and female images of Oldenburg show no significant differences (see App. E2 *table A*). This means that (induced) images via advertisement are likely to address both genders by promoting to the compound market. However, more women are willing to travel. Further, regarding a relation between age group and an association with shopping, more than half of the age groups 26 to 45 years and 46 to 65 think of shopping. However, 'Lambertmarkt' is predominantly named by age group 46 to 65 years and least by the youngest group. Of those planning to travel, 57% of the youngest group have no association with museums whereas with 14% they are also the group with strongest museum associations, others are even less.

Coherent with the lower level of press coverage in GR about the partnership with OL, GR residents are not well 'fed' with information. OL is not in the short-list of many as some have not even heard about it. As this questionnaire was often stated initiator of interest for many, most GR did not intend to visit OL at all. More general awareness needs to be created first by e.g. more PR in cooperation with various media in GR. Knowing that most GR citizen associate shopping, the Lambertmarkt and 'city trip' with Oldenburg, bundles of attractions should be offered. The focus of actual visits during the year is prior to Christmas time. To increase interest in other fields such as cultural events – 'Kultursommer' or the 'Promenade' in the summer time, more and different information distribution is crucial.

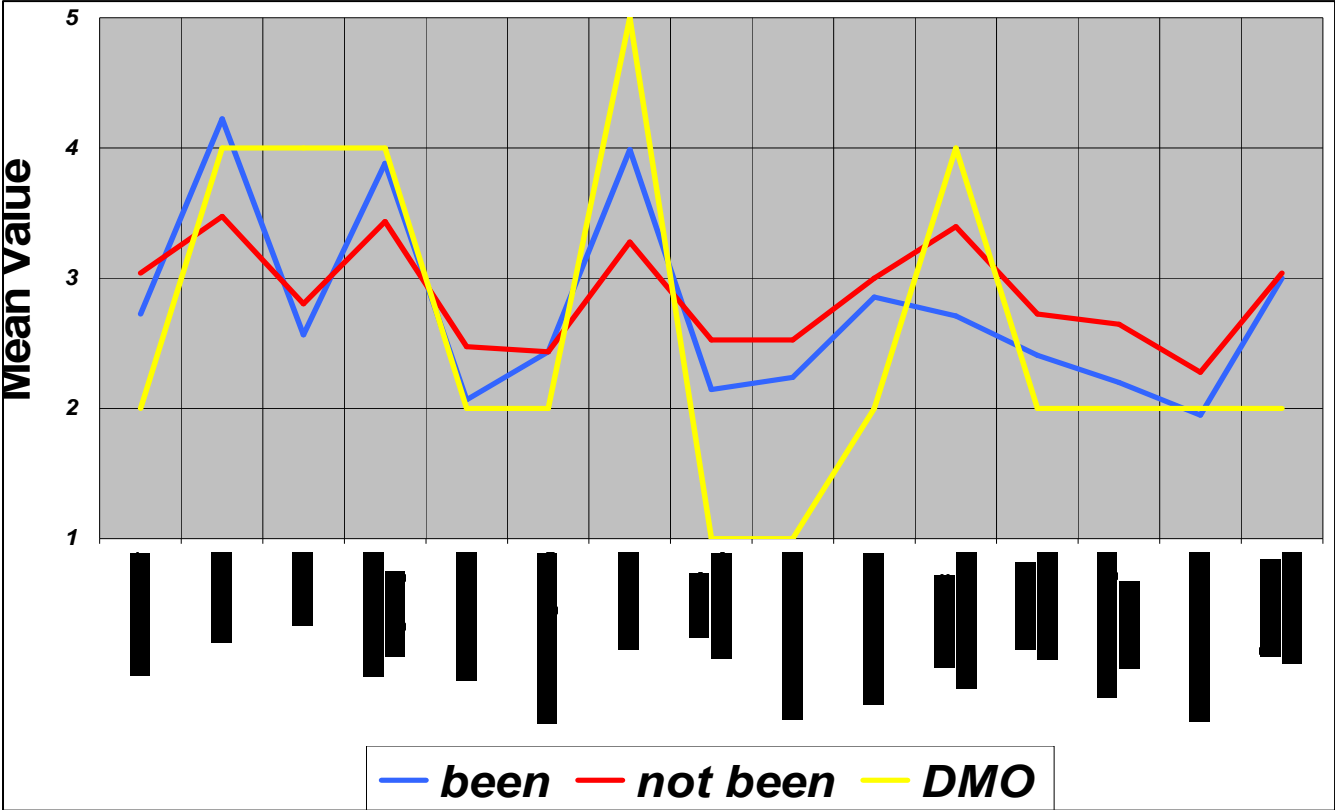
No easily identifiable benefit or USP of OL is listed by the Groningen market. A stronger position must be achieved to be better noticed. With attributes such as OL's great atmosphere, the short distance and the favourable price-performance ratio, bundles with price reductions should be offered. High potential bundles of offers are:

- *Shopping and culture*: Having an association with shopping, 40% of the 26 to 45 year olds agree that culture is famous and 20% of the up to 25 years agree partly.

4.7.3 Gap Analysis for Oldenburg

Figure 4.4 shows a comparison of the findings from the questionnaires and the opinion of OTM as Oldenburg's tourism marketing office. In contrast to MG, OTM did not rate all attributes at the highest rank. A significant difference in the images is the 'pleasant atmosphere' in the city, where visitors also made some dissatisfying experiences. Further, the

general attractiveness of the city and its diversity in markets are perceived less good than desired by OTM. Most visitors and non-visitors agree that OL is rather a city with big city flair but also a high number associates small city flair, especially those who have not yet been there. Oldenburg’s cleanliness is another point of difference but OTM evaluated less than visitors. Compared to Groningen, the majority does not fully agree with OTM’s belief in a diverse market scene or in the liveliness of the city. While German visitors do not mention the price-performance ratio, the Dutch are attracted by a favourable win. Similar to those responses for Groningen many respondents can not do a statement regarding the classification of museums or the character of cultural events.



In short, the findings of the gap analyses correlate with Mr Marquardt’s statement that Groningen sells itself better. Also those residents of OL who did not travel have stronger associations in mind than residents from GR and two third rate GR as ‘known’. In OL, GR is very present in the newspapers and thus, the ‘level of awareness’ is higher than in GR. Some people have not even heard about GR and had never planned to visit. Groningen’s vibrancy and Oldenburg’s cleanliness are major differences while the distance is evaluated similarly adequate for a day trip, however OL respondents perceive it shorter. Overall, visitors from Oldenburg have a more positive evaluation towards GR than respondents from Groningen who are often ‘simply uninformed relating to the reason of ’no information about the city.’

4.8 Public Express Guest Survey – Passengers from Groningen

This section identifies the satisfaction with the private bus company Public Express. 26 surveys have been answered by Dutch guests on their way to/ from Oldenburg. (App. U 1)

Females and males have been equally in the bus whilst the 26 to 45 year olds have been dominant with 69% followed by 23% aged up to 25 years. Those using PX the first time will stay this one day and others who have used PX before may also stay longer. The majority of this sample has used PX before (62%) but the other 38% are first-time users.

The idea to use PX came mainly through advertisement (62%) and by WOM from friends or family (31%). Regarding overall satisfaction, 77% are satisfied and 15% are very satisfied. Dutch guests highly value the ‘times’ – departure and arrival times as well as punctuality (92% - compare *table A*). Satisfaction with the prices and the places (arrival and departure) are similarly well perceived with 85% each (compare *tables B and C*). Guests are not as satisfied with the ‘service’ (54%) and ‘additional information’ (on board or prior to departure) of the destination. *Table D* shows the distribution of ‘no satisfaction with information’ according to numbers of times the people have been to Oldenburg: 76% of regular passengers and those ‘three times up to more than ten times’ are not satisfied with ‘information’. About 8% obtain city information from PX.

From all PX passengers, 69% know about the city partnership of OL and GR and 39% indicate cooperation in tourism. PX is named as the best example for this including bus advertisements and promotional campaigns. All respondents have a positive image of OL, expectations and associations can be compared directly with those of the respondents who have been to OL already.

Public Express Guest Survey - Passengers from Oldenburg

To analyse the Oldenburg opinion of Public Express, 43 questionnaires were gathered.

Equal numbers of females and males have been in the bus whilst the age group of up to 25 year olds is presented with 47% and 30% are from the third group of 46 to 65. Most travellers’ status is single (33%) or in a partnership (33%). The predominant travel accompany is with the partner (33%). Those using PX the first time will stay this one day (95%) and others who have used PX before may also stay longer. Those who have one or more overnights stay with friends (7%), at a camp site (7%) or in a hotel (1 to 4 stars combined: 9.4%). The slightly larger majority has used the services before (54%). The other 47% are first-time users. For Oldenburg users, WOM (58%) is the major source of initial idea to choose PX. Advertisements are listed with 42% to be the second most important source of information. Regarding overall satisfaction, 74% agree and 16% are very satisfied.

Satisfaction rates are however different to those of guests from Groningen to Oldenburg. To compare the assessment of the researched attributes directly, the results are presented opposed to each other.

Satisfaction with:	Guests from Oldenburg	Guests from Groningen
Times	77 %	92 %
Places	74 %	85 %
Service	37 %	54 %
Prices	54 %	85 %
Additional Information	7 %	15 %
Overall Satisfaction Grades 1 and 2	91%	92%
City Partnership	79%	69%
Tourism Cooperations	44%	39%

Overall satisfaction is equal, but the Dutch' opinion about the service elements of PX is more positive.

In detail, the distribution of 'no satisfaction with information' according to numbers of times the people have been to Groningen is shown in *table A* (App. U2). About 7% obtain city information from PX. It shows that specifically those who have been to GR three to ten and more than ten times are not satisfied with information (61%). With 5% those who have been to GR once are satisfied with information. *Tables B and C* show a relation between the numbers of times been in GR, overall satisfaction with PX and the age groups. With 20%, those been to GR twice or five to ten times show highest overall satisfaction.

From all German PX passengers, 79% know about the city partnership of OL and GR and 44% notice efforts in tourism cooperation.

Analysis

The high number of first-time users from both cities shows that both Oldenburg and Groningen are attractive destinations and that tourism numbers are steadily increasing. Mr Marquardt successfully filled this transportation gap (compare to interview) as PX constantly attracts new passengers. Similarly, the high number of repeat passengers indicates a high degree of satisfaction with the city as a tourism product as well as with the offers made by PX. Oldenburg passengers received most information about PX through WOM while the Groningen passengers state that advertisements were their major source to decide for PX. For Germans, WOM is a reliable organic source of information which encourages others to experience the recommended city or service themselves. This relates to Baloglu and McCleary's (1999) claim that WOM is the most important source of information. Relating to more media coverage in OL, good PR relations are favourable and have a wide reach through WOM. In GR, marketing campaigns conducted by PX show their success additionally

to media coverage. Flyers, posters or innovative ideas as the soccer stadium spot (compare with marketing tools section). The majority of respondents praised that PX is the best solution for this cross-border transfer as it is fast and affordable. Some improvement suggestions are: to offer more rides per day also around noon and later on Saturday nights as well as later in the summer time. Also listed are desirable discounts for students from GR and for pupils as well as toilets on board.

The low satisfaction counts for destination information, show great potential to counteract easily. The author suggests providing comprehensive information material about each final destination city on board, on the website and per email directly after booking. Approximately 100 minutes of drive can be used perfectly for reading interesting information material to learn something new. Sponsors of each city should cooperate and contribute to create appealing brochures and flyers that possibly include vouchers or discounts. Incentives must be offered to create *desire* (compare with AIDA App.). A cheap city map with the highlights and the tourism office will reduce certain insecurities and can inspire for new ideas. By this, cities are presented as partners and advertise to a large audience. This might also lead to newspaper articles again. Further, the 150 subsidiaries selling PX tickets can be equipped with appropriate information. Also TV spots will improve information distribution to visitors on board. As already planned by the PX team, *Publicvision* on board will increase excitement and familiarity (Marquardt 2009). Images can be conveyed well in a combination of words/ music and pictures/ impressions and provide possible activity suggestions for the day.

The researched city images of visitors to both cities are in general identical with the research specifically conducted among PX passengers. Most interestingly, the major difference between those using the car or PX is the perceived city size. The need for an own sense of direction in the city and the search for parking spaces influences the perception of big-city flair. Those arriving with PX perceive OL or GR respectively as a smaller city since they get not need to care about traffic.

To summarize, the proximity between GR and OL is on the one hand an advantage for very high numbers of day trippers, but on the other hand also a disadvantage for the hospitality sector. As the majority stays for a day, no hotel booking is needed. To the hospitality industry of both cities, the residents of the neighbour city are no target group with great potential. The overall positive images are an ideal base for more effective marketing to stimulate cross-border tourism.

5 Conclusions

To conclude the analysis chapter and to approach objective 5, main findings are summarised. The overall positive images of both cities – held by those respondents with own experience and by those without – are remarkable and reflect in positive tourism numbers. No severe gaps between the promoted and the perceived image have been detected. As stated in the literature review by Richtie and Crouch (2003), current positive images are easier to strengthen than negative images to change. Therefore, the case study cities do not need to change their images, but need to reinforce the positive image in order to achieve a stronger position in the consideration set of the residents in the partner city (Tasci and Kozak 2006).

The opening of the European borders and the same currency facilitates cross-border tourism between Oldenburg and Groningen. Both cities have a similar structure, size and quality of life, and their inner cities, the buildings' architecture and the pleasant atmosphere are each city's major assets. According to Beerli and Martín (2004) the attributes of a place make it unique and so attractive. The clear focus is on day trips and major motives are the desire to enjoy a day trip to the city and to stroll through town, go shopping, go to restaurants and to get pleasure from the city flair and its people. Besides shopping, Oldenburg is especially interesting to guests from Groningen for the Christmas Market, and Groningen attracts with its markets, especially the Flower Market on Good Friday. The internationality and a foreign culture are further motivating a trip across this border. The geographic distance of 130 km between the partner cities is too far to call them 'neighbour' cities. However, no other bigger cities, besides Bremen, are in similar proximity for a day trip. Many people, especially those who have not visited, perceive the distance as relatively long since the cities are not directly located at the border; this forms the special conditions of this 'cross-border' tourism situation. The exact numbers of day visitors can not be counted, but based on the short distance and primary research findings, only very few overnights are generated by tourists of Oldenburg or Groningen respectively. Those who visited perceive the distance as adequate for a day trip. Estimations after research lead to the assumption that about three quarters of Oldenburg residents have not been to Groningen, while the ratio for non-visitors from Groningen is even higher.

The positive image on both sides is further improved due to the fact that Oldenburg and Groningen are partner cities. The partner city is frequently present in the local media and its name is always combined with the add-on 'partner city'. It is not an anonymous city on the other side of the border but a 'partner' or a 'friend' and consequently, favourable associations are made to form an overall positive image. This is the main advantage of this cooperation.

Regarding tourism, it is impossible to measure a direct influence from this partnership and no assumptions of how the situation would be without the partnership can be made. Nevertheless, it contributes well towards the current positive images held by the residents. German respondents are with 73.5% in average well informed about the partnership, the Dutch are aware of it with 51.5% in average. Regarding perceived cooperation in tourism the general knowledge is less: respondents from Oldenburg noticed joint tourism efforts with an average of 34.5%, whereas respondents from Groningen with only 17% in average.

The current tourism development and the positive image are a great opportunity for cross-border tourism marketing and numerous promotion projects have been realised. The private bus company Public Express increased the level of awareness by promoting the easy accessibility through its affordable public bus service. Both cities grew 'closer together' in the peoples' minds. On 26 June 2009, the newspaper praises Public Express winning the Business Award 'Best Public Passenger Transport' (NWZ 26 June 2009). The DZT trend for 2009 'closer, shorter, better priced' is already valid for the residents of the case study cities. Easy, convenient and well priced transportation makes the cross-border experience possible for only one day and brings the neighbour country 'closer'.

The city partnership leads to cooperation of several institutions also on diverse higher levels. Examples are collaboration in energy and technology development, the universities' networks and meetings of both mayors. Newspaper contributions frequently remind the residents of the presence of the partner city. A 10-Point-Program was jointly signed for 2008 to 2012 and cooperation in all aspects apart from 'tourism and marketing' proceeds satisfactorily. The cooperation between the tourism offices of both cities is assessed not sufficient and did not advance as planned. Other institutions cooperating more successfully and enthusiastically share a joint vision and pursue the aim to improve partnership on all levels. Cooperation shall become prosperous normality and therefore, effective coordination of all stakeholders is desirable. The aim is to 'transform' and evolve into stronger partnerships (compare cooperation model by Wang and Xiang 2007).

The conclusion can be drawn that steadily increasing tourism numbers between Oldenburg and its neighbour on the other side of the Dutch-German border are not mainly generated by explicit cross-border cooperations in tourism. As tourism officials consider mutual tourism as 'a fast-selling item' that increases also without omnipresent joint projects, a lot of potential is unused and many opportunities pass by.

The geographic proximity as well as their individual attractiveness as atmospheric cities by themselves account for the positive images and the majority of generated tourism, namely

day trips. These are each city's strengths and advantages around which marketing efforts towards Oldenburg or Groningen respectively should be constructed. Focussing on already successfully recognized attributes and using the current power of attraction will be a promising strategy.

The next chapter highlights a set of recommendations for effective cooperation strategies to increase general awareness and to motivate mutually beneficial tourism development.

6 Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusions, some recommendations are given as starting points for more effective joint developments of mutual tourism between Oldenburg and Groningen to approach objective 5. As the images of both cities are very positive already and since many respondents are repeat visitors, recommendations are made to also increase the desire of those who have not yet been to the city for various reasons as well as to increase the interest of those who have not heard about it at all. The suggestions for improvement can be split into two major strategies: first, to improve general destination knowledge and second, to build on knowledge by communicating specific offers.

(1) Since the majority of respondents who did not visit the city yet stated reasons as that 'no opportunity' was given yet, or that 'no time' made the city trip impossible, or that 'no interest' due to 'no information' about the city, this is elaborated as the major problem. The unknowingness regarding the real distance or the worthwhile attractions and offers needs to be reduced by providing basic information clarifying unfavourable or wrong assumptions. As generally all residents of the partner city are potential day visitors, specific campaigns need to put across how close the cities are and how well the infrastructure is developed. The 'Autobahn' can be used as it directly links Oldenburg with Groningen; the 130 km of 'Autobahn' can usually be driven without traffic congestions realising to reach the city within an hour. The reason 'no time' is counteracted as the proximity and good infrastructure allow good access for a day trip. Also Luft (2007) confirmed that this is a crucial point in tourism marketing.

Both cities are similarly structured and their size varies only by 20,000 citizens. Their geographic location is similar including comparable weather conditions. Based on the main motivations and present associations with the city, the highlights and advantages need to be communicated clearly to provide 'the right opportunity'. To emphasise the beauty of the inner cities and their impressive architecture, the attractiveness of shopping facilities and local markets points out those attributes that are highly appreciated by those who visit repeatedly.

Oldenburg is a typical German city and Groningen is a typical Dutch city, cross-border tourists seek to experience another culture and also want to enjoy clichés. Cultural differences and the language are not considered as problems and the mentality of the people can be very inspiring. By constantly highlighting the benefits, restraints would be reduced as well as the distance or anxiety of those who are interested. Furthermore, new interest of those who have not heard about the destination will be awakened.

This campaign could be realised with local newspapers as a prize competition. To win, the article must be read in order to retrieve correct information. The winnings are attractions and marketing articles of the respective city and its sponsoring partners. Hotels, restaurants, theatres and museums, the tourist information office, local shops and Public Express for transportation are potential sponsors who in parallel promote their own services and products. The 'Oldenburg Bike' would be eye-catching and bags with the logo would show presence. An additional method was presented in the students' questionnaire analysis as approaching schools and students will always also have an affect on the families through word of mouth (compare Image Analysis GR). Winning school trips also requires researching specific information, and an actual visit including a city rally will improve familiarity with the city. Furthermore, young people will soon have the purchasing power to also visit on their own.

Projects could also be realised with local TV stations showing short spots or a documentary of the partner city. A good general knowledge combined with the existent positive image is the basis for further marketing campaigns as the destination shifted into the consideration set. The interest is aimed to be turned into desire to finally lead to action (compare AIDA in App. B).

(2) With the basic knowledge and awareness of the city as a basis, the city can place specific advertisements and information on special occasions and concrete offers. As the partner city is now 'closer' the residents become more *receptive* for these concrete offers. The city's advantages need to be repeated to confirm the desire to visit. With concrete marketing campaigns through a set of communication channels, target groups with diverse fields of interests are introduced to the city and are actively invited to satisfy their curiosity on site. The high loyalty rates indicate the great potential of repeat-visitors, thus to motivate the initial visit is the most difficult task for tourism officials.

Diverse advertisements have been conceptualised to approach the residents of the partner city but have often not reached expected demand. Thus, the ratio of induced and organic images indicates that organic images are dominant and favourable. According to

Baloglu and McCleary, the information received from friends or family are the most reliable. For reaching the (potential) tourist's emotion and mind, studies found out that 'memory was greatest for pictures, less for concrete words, and least for abstract words' (MacInnis and Price 1987:477 in Croy 2004:5). This leads to the growing interest of tourism planners in the image as a tool to get to their customers by addressing all senses.

In order to realise successful marketing campaigns, the coordination within one destination needs to be improved. Scarce human and financial resources need to be pooled to generate synergies of mutual benefit. The stakeholders need to agree upon a common direction of marketing with shared goals according to the 10-Point-Plan; and division of labour would centralise marketing efforts and efficiency would increase. As Luft (2007) confirmed, the advancement of tourism is only possible through effective collaboration. Regular workshops and culture trainings will help to avoid misunderstandings by communicating honestly with each other and a mediator position could be beneficial to overview all marketing efforts. Joint presence at fairs would further increase general awareness as it offers a point of contact for residents.

Specific offers need to be communicated via diverse media channels to reach segments with different interests. A good strategy is to offer bundled products of different character within the city and to also integrate attractions of the surrounding area, e.g. the islands and the sea, museums or typical farm houses on the countryside. Attraction power can be increased by improving the tourism product bundle. Bilingual brochures with descriptions and maps are essential basic information materials. As the interview partners seek more brochure exchange, the tourism offices could cooperate in frequent exchange. Chapter 2.3 also shows a list of joint results. Public Express already benefits from bilingual eye-catching material.

Specific information search is often done online, thus an 'interactive program designer' can be established to compose individual visitor programs. These may also be downloadable on mobile phones. It will summarise target group specific information which the city tourism offices OTM and MG also receive to assess and improve the touristic offers and information distribution. The already existing online event calendars need to be promoted better. A printed events calendar would present all upcoming events and exhibitions in one piece in combination with a newspaper insert about the partner city.

It is further important to 're-invite' those who are in the city by providing them with enough information to return and make them leave with a 'feel good feeling' (DUPEA interview 2009). Discount offers will stimulate return travel. Markets or Park and Ride sites could be used as well as public TV screens that show what is currently happening in the city.

City Festivals like the 'Holland Wochen' with food, music, dance and theatre from the partner city familiarise and invite residents. Public festivities and sports days are a very good opportunity to introduce the partner and to get in contact. A desirable focus of both cities is to promote cultural offers more. Nevertheless, it will be difficult to motivate overnight stays; but attractive combinations with hotels might convince to stay longer than one day. Many tourists to Groningen realise the architectural master pieces and historical buildings as a new attraction besides shopping (Grontmij Nederland 2008). Intense promotion is required for 'Oldenburger Promenade', 'Kultursommer' or the 'Dream Gardens' in Oldenburg and the festivals of film and music 'Noorderzon' and 'Noorderlicht' in Groningen to invite guests.

The dynamics of both cities and their regions will further strengthen the cooperation. For their region, the partnership is already of great importance, also on an international basis as more attention received than each of the cities could realise alone. Integration with the Metropolis Region including Bremen will lead to benefits from a more efficient promotion of the entire region and the expertise of joint forces.

A last recommendation is the creation of a city brand to reinforce cohesion of stakeholders in Oldenburg. Similar to Groningen and the 'Inner City Campaign 2009', a shared, impressive slogan and a unique symbol will express the character and the highlights of the destination. All efforts towards tourism development will then be determined towards joint goals under an 'umbrella' that is recognised by both internal and external stakeholders.

Not all recommendations can be listed here. Since this study is the most current image analysis of the target market 'residents of our partner city', all interviewees kindly requested the findings of this dissertation. Joint projects may be initiated and old cooperation ideas may be revived in order to strengthen and generate Dutch – German synergies.

7 Final Conclusions and Further Research Ideas

To conclude this dissertation, the aims and objectives stated in the introduction have been approached with several research questions as a guideline. The aims to explore this specific cross-cultural cooperation between Oldenburg and Groningen and to analyse the current images of both cities were achieved with the support of the given objectives. To achieve the first objective, literature and theory relevant to this topic was reviewed and analysed. The results of the literature reveal that also in theory, this topic is lacking a conceptual framework and that no 'right' strategy for cooperation and image promotion can be given. Often, too many stakeholders act side by side which is validated by the author's research findings for objective two. Next, objective three was achieved by analysing the current images of both

cities through image analyses. Main attractions and travel motivations were elaborated and compared with the promoted images in gap analyses for each city. Thus, also objective four has been achieved. Summarising the major findings and providing a set of recommendations reveals that this cooperation has great potential to be advanced. Stakeholders' efforts have to be coordinated better to generate synergies, to increase destination awareness and to motivate more mutually beneficial tourism between both partner cities.

Since the topic is very complex and since all aspects had to be examined from two sides, only a selection of realised joint projects has been investigated. A capture of all institutions' efforts and all promotional action is not within the realms of possibility of this thesis.

As it is a case study research, no generalisations can be made; however, other cooperations in tourism in cross-border regions might experience similar institutional confusion, disunity and a lack of clear communication. The given recommendations may serve as a guideline also for other places that aim at generating better cross-border synergies in tourism development.

Regarding further research suggestions, a longitudinal study could explore in intervals whether cooperation plans of the 10-Point-Programm have preceded further, the effects on image could be analysed in parallel. Relating, possible changes in visitors' associations resulting from intensified mutual marketing efforts may be observed and interpreted in another study.

To observe the realisation of a joint project from the beginning of planning to its finalisation and implementation could be realised. A linked, direct assessment of potential affects on visitors' images could be conducted. Since the cooperation between Oldenburg and Groningen is on various levels, cooperation in tourism can not be analysed in isolation. With regards to tourism and the multiplier effect, cooperation in tourism is cross-sectional and several institutions work on similar goals. For further research, additional stakeholders can be interviewed for their contribution to destination marketing. For example, the hospitality industry, restaurants and the retail sector in the inner city can be investigated in more detail to obtain a broader view on marketing efforts. As leisure tourism has been in focus of this study, business travel with a focus on meetings facilities and conferences might be of interest due to geographical and cultural proximity.

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Further Recommended Readings

Destination Image

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Review of 142 Image Analysis Papers by

Pike, S. (2002). 'Destination Image Analysis – a review of 142 papers from 1973 to 2000.' *Journal of Tourism Management*. Vol. 23, pp. 541-549.

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Cooperations in Tourism

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Krakover, S. and Gradus, Y. (eds.) (1999). *Tourism in frontier areas*. Lanham/ MD: Lexington Books.

Rumley, D. and Minghi, J.V. (1991). *The geography of border landscapes*. London: Routledge.

For a more detailed on cross-border tourism studies, please refer to the work of

Wachowiak, H. (ed.) (2006). *Tourism and Borders: Contemporary Issues, policies and international research*. Hampshire: Ashgate.

Chapter 9 (pp. 149-266) provides a summary of related terms as well as a very detailed list of related studies.

Appendix A

Table of Relations

Appendix A: Table of Relations

Research Approach – Link to Objectives and Literature Review

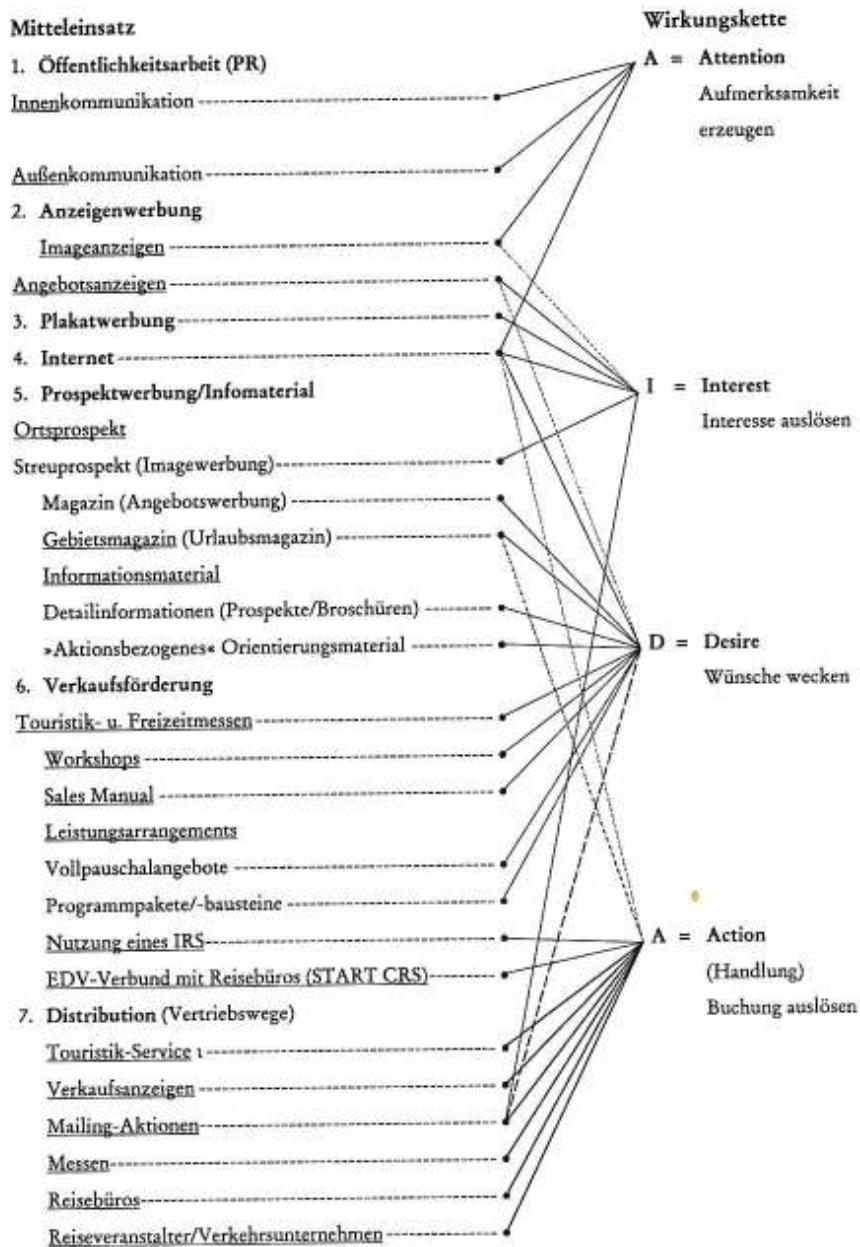
Objective	Objective achieved through	Chapters
Objective 1	Literature Review – Secondary Research	Chapter 2 – Literature Review
Objective 2	Interviews, Questionnaires and Observation	Chapter 4 – Findings and Analysis
Objective 3	Questionnaires to Residents	Chapter 4 – Findings and Analysis
Objective 4	All Primary Research and Literature Review	Chapter 4 – Findings and Analysis
Objective 5	Conclusions and Recommendations	Chapter 5 and Chapter 6

Appendix B

Affects of Marketing Communication Tools on 'AIDA'

Appendix B: Affects of Marketing Communication Tools on 'AIDA'

Source: Luft 2007:300



Appendix C

Attributes influencing the Perceived Image of a Destination

Appendix C: Dimensions/ Attributes influencing the perceived image of a destination
 (Source: Beerli and Martín 2004:659)

Table 1. Dimensions/Attributes Determining the Perceived Destination Image

Natural Resources	General Infrastructure	Tourist Infrastructure
Weather Temperature Rainfall Humidity Hours of sunshine	Development and quality of roads, airports and ports Private and public transport facilities Development of health services	Hotel and self-catering accommodation Number of beds Categories Quality
Beaches Quality of seawater Sandy or rocky beaches Length of the beaches Overcrowding of beaches	Development of telecommunications Development of commercial infrastructures Extent of building development	Restaurants Number Categories Quality Bars, discotheques and clubs Ease of access to destination Excursions at the destination Tourist centers Network of tourist information
Wealth of countryside Protected nature reserves Lakes, mountains, deserts, etc. Variety and uniqueness of flora and fauna		
Tourist Leisure and Recreation	Culture, History and Art	Political and Economic Factors
Theme parks Entertainment and sports activities Golf, fishing, hunting, skiing, scuba diving, etc. Water parks Zoos Trekking Adventure activities Casinos Night life Shopping	Museums, historical buildings, monuments, etc. Festival, concerts, etc. Handicraft Gastronomy Folklore Religion Customs and ways of life	Political stability Political tendencies Economic development Safety Crime rate Terrorist attacks Prices
Natural Environment	Social Environment	Atmosphere of the Place
Beauty of the scenery Attractiveness of the cities and towns Cleanliness Overcrowding Air and noise pollution Traffic congestion	Hospitality and friendliness of the local residents Underprivilege and poverty Quality of life Language barriers	Luxurious Fashionable Place with a good reputation Family-oriented destination Exotic Mystic Relaxing Stressful Fun, enjoyable Pleasant Boring Attractive or interesting

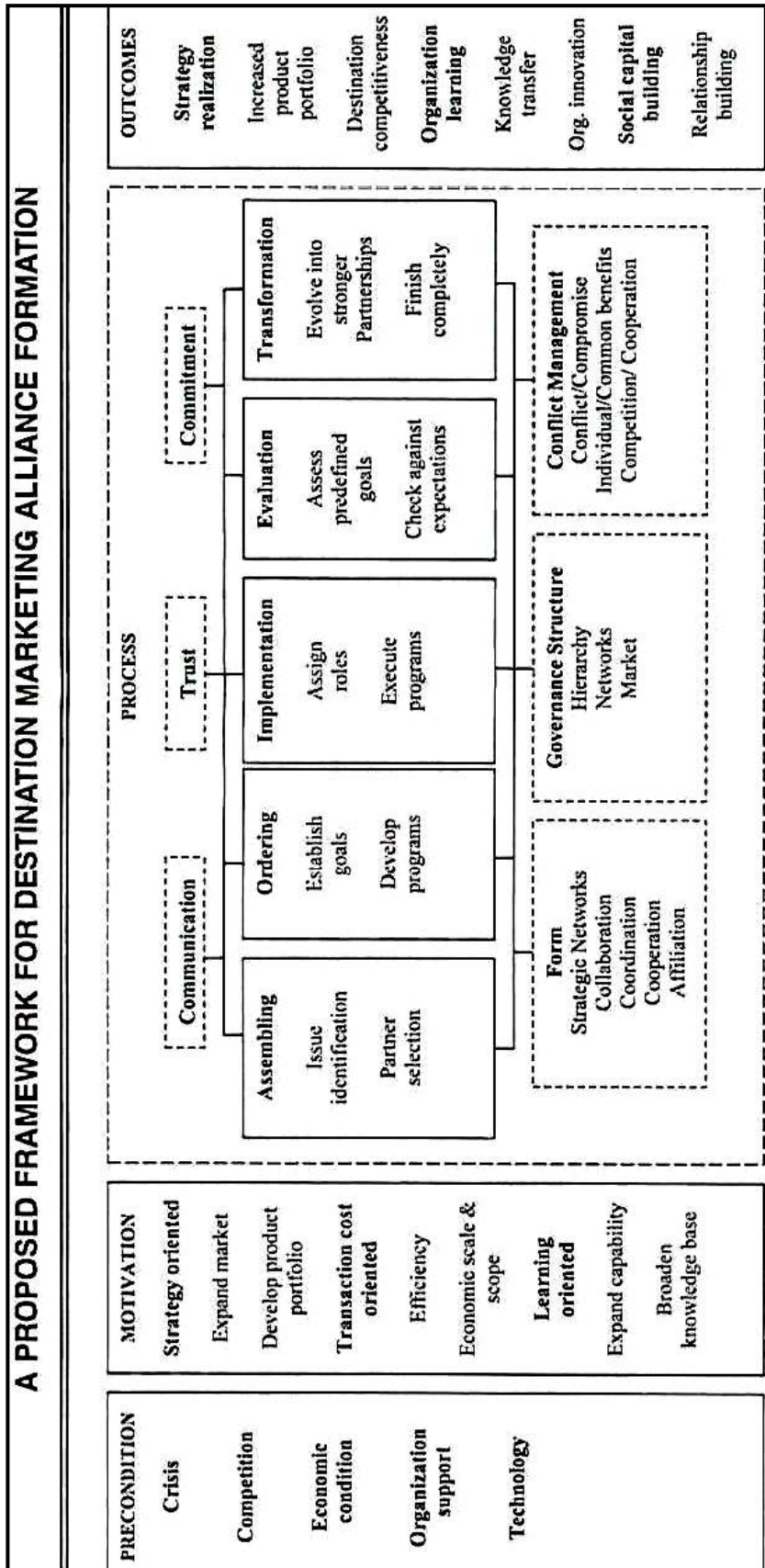
Appendix D

A Proposed Framework for Destination Marketing Alliance Formation

Appendix D: A Proposed Framework for Destination Marketing Alliance Formation

Source:
Xiang

Wang and
2007:79



Appendix E

App. E 1: Questionnaire Yes – been to Oldenburg	100
App. E 2: Questionnaire No – not been to Oldenburg	103
App. E 3: Questionnaire Public Express to Oldenburg	105

Geachte dames en heren, ik vraag u om uw ondersteuning bij mijn afstudeerscriptie. Het thema is 'aspecten van toerisme in de stedenband Oldenburg en Groningen'. Bij voorbaat dank voor het invullen van deze vragenlijst!

Algemene vragen

0. Bent u al een keer in Oldenburg geweest? Ja Nee

1. Hoe vaak bent u al in Oldenburg geweest?

- een keer twee keer drie- tot vijf keer vijf- tot tien keer
 vaker dan tien keer regelmatig: _____

2. Met welk vervoermiddel bent u tot nu toe naar Oldenburg gereisd?

- trein bus auto/ motor overige: _____

3a. Hoe lang blijft u normaal gesproken in Oldenburg?

- dagtrip 2 dagen, 1 overnachting inclusief langer dan 2 dagen

3b. Heeft u in Oldenburg overnacht? Nee, alleen een dagtrip

Ja:

- bij vrienden/ verwanten logementhuis/pension (halfpension)
 jeugdherberg vakantiewoning (eigen proviand)
 in een hotel (1 - 2 sterren) camping
 in een hotel (3 - 4 sterren) overig: _____

4. Met wie bent u gereisd?

- alleen met de familie ((groot-)ouders/kinderen)
 met uw partner met vrienden
 met een klein groepje (t/m 10 personen)
 met een grote groep (meer dan 10 personen)

Wat is uw beeld van Oldenburg

5. Heeft u een positief beeld van de stad Oldenburg? Ja Nee

6. Wat schiet u te binnen als u aan Oldenburg denkt? (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- winkelen musea fietsen
 markt (& Kramermarkt) stedentrip
 universiteit paarden
 gaan stappen/cafés en kroegen/musiek beurzen in de Weser Ems Halle
 kerstmarkt (Lambertimarkt) overig: _____

7. Wat zijn uw verwachtingen van een bezoek/vakantie in Oldenburg?

(meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- cultuur (musea, tentoonstellingen, kerken, historische bouwwerken en tuinen, enz.)
 sport, activiteiten
 wellness en recreatie
 tijd doorbrengen met familie en/of vrienden
 streekgerechten en dranken genieten
 een tochtje naar het buitenland om het "vakantie idee" te verstevigen
 stedentrip
 winkelen/shoppen (b.v. koopzondag)
 entertainment (nachtleven, muziekfestivals, kermis, "Kultursommer")
 ondernemingen, tochtjes
 overig: _____

8. Graag per regel aanvinken hoe u persoonlijk de stad opvat!

	Helemaal van toepassing ++	Van toepassing +	Geen uitspraak/ geen idee 0	Van toepassing +	Helemaal van toepassing ++	
Flair van een grote stad						kleinsteeds
Vies/smerig						netjes
Bekend						onbekend
het is er de dood in de pot/ saai						levendig
gezinsvriendelijk, gastvriendelijk						onvriendelijk, weinig service
Indrukwekkende stad en bezienswaardigheden						Stad is niet aantrekkelijk, teleurstellend/ tegenvallend
Niet attractief						attractief
Prettige sfeer						Geen sfeer, saai
gevarieerd: Markt/ weekmarkten						Ontbrekende ofwel te kleine markten, eentonig
Moderne musea						Conventionele musea
Recreatiemogelijkheden zijn eentonig en / of niet aantrekkelijk						Extraverte manifestaties/ evenementen
Restaurants zijn aantrekkelijk/gevarieerd/ streekgerechten						Restaurants zijn niet aantrekkelijk
De prijs/kwaliteit verhouding is goed, niet duur						te duur, duurder dan thuis
Bereikbaarheid is goed, dagtrip						De afstand is te groot, tamelijk ver
Stad is overvol/ te veel toerisme						eenzaam, geheime tip

9. Hoe schat u Oldenburg in? (per regel maar een antwoord)

	Helemaal van toepassing	Van toepassing	Gedeeltelijk van toepassing	Niet van toepassing	Helemaal niet van toepassing
Beschikt over prettige/ goede mogelijkheden om te winkelen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biedt een aantrekkelijk night-life/nachtleven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staat bekend voor culturele manifestaties en evenementen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heeft een sympathieke bevolking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10a. Wat zijn overeenkomsten tussen Groningen en Oldenburg? _____

10b. In hoeverre zijn er verschillen tussen Groningen en OL? _____

Verzameling van informatie

11. Bent u bekend met de stedenband Groningen-OL? Ja Nee
ook met de coöperatie in het toerisme? Ja Nee

Indien ja, hoe weet u dat?: _____

12. Heeft u ooit een slogan of een reclamecampagne over OL gehoord?

- Ja Nein

Indien ja, kunt u deze kort omschrijven?(krant, radio, plakkaat, enz.):

13. Waar heeft u informatie over Oldenburg verzameld?

- internet
 Bij de toeristeninformatie in Oldenburg (ter plaatse)
 bij de toeristeninformatie in Groningen (bv. VVV)
 door verhalen van vrienden en/of verwanten
 ik heb helemaal geen informatie verzameld, ik ben er gewoon heen gegaan
 met het openbaar vervoer

14. Werd aan uw verwachtingen voldaan? Gaat u nog een keer naar Oldenburg?

- Ja Nee

Indien nee: waarom zou u niet nog een keer naar Oldenburg willen gaan?

15. Zou u een trip naar Oldenburg bij anderen aanbevelen?

- Ja Nee

Indien nee: waarom niet?

Persoonsgegevens

Alle gegevens zijn volledig anoniem en dienen alleen voor statistische analyses en wetenschappelijke verwerkingen.

Hoe oud bent u?

- tot 25 jaar 46-65 jaar
 26-45 jaar 66 of ouder

Bent u:

- vrouw?
 man?

Tot welke beroepsgroep behoort u?

- beambte werknemer
 arbeider/arbeidster gepensioeneerd
 kaderlid; hoogeplaatste ambtenaar huisvrouw/-man
 leerling; student vrijberoepsbeoefenaar; zelfstandig
 boer overig

Wat is uw status?

- Single/ alleenstaand getrouwd (met kind/ kinderen)
 alleen met kind/ kinderen (geregistreerd) partnerschap
 getrouwd (zonder kinderen ofwel kinderen wonen niet meer thuis)

Hartelijk bedankt voor de moeite die u heeft genomen!
Met vriendelijke groeten,
Amelie Westerheide
amelie.westerheide@fh-bad-honnef.de



Internationale
Fachhochschule

Bad Honnef · Bonn

International University
of Applied Sciences

Geachte dames en heren, ik vraag u om uw ondersteuning bij mijn afstudeerscriptie. Het thema is 'aspecten van toerisme in de stedenband Oldenburg en Groningen'. Bij voorbaat dank voor het invullen van deze vragenlijst!

Algemene vragen

0. Bent u al een keer in Oldenburg geweest? Ja Nee

1. Welke 3 steden in Duitsland schieten u spontaan te binnen?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

2. Heeft u ooit van Oldenburg in Duitsland gehoord?

Ja Nee

3. Waarom bent u nog niet in Oldenburg geweest? (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- is te ver weg; geschatte afstand: _____ km
- een reis naar Duitsland is voor mij niet van belang
- ik heb nog geen gelegenheid gehad
- Duits als vreemde taal is voor mij een belemmering.
- het aanbod/de mogelijkheden lijken te sterk op het aanbod in Nederlandse steden zoals b.v. Groningen of Amsterdam.
- Ik ben helemaal niet in het bezit van informatie over de stad en de attracties.
- overig: _____

4. Welke aspecten vindt u het meest belangrijk voor uw vakantie:

5. Met wie gaat u het vaakst op reis?

- alleen met de familie ((groot-)ouders/kinderen)
- met uw partner met vrienden
- met een klein groepje (t/m 10 personen)
- met een grote groep (meer dan 10 personen)

Wat is uw beeld van Oldenburg

6. Heeft u een positief beeld van de stad Oldenburg? Ja Nee

7. Wat schiet u te binnen als u aan Oldenburg denkt?

(meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- winkelen musea fietsen
- markt (& Kramermarkt) stedentrip
- universiteit paarden
- gaan stappen/cafés en kroegen/musiek beurzen in de Weser Ems Halle
- kerstmarkt (Lambertimarkt) overig: _____

8. Bent u bekend met de stedenband Groningen-OL? Ja Nee

Ook met de coöperatie in het toerisme? Ja Nee

Indien ja, hoe weet u dat?: _____

9. Hoe schat u Oldenburg in? (per regel maar een antwoord)

	Helemaal van toepassing	Van toepassing	Gedeeltelijk van toepassing	Niet van toepassing	Helemaal niet van toepassing
Beschikt over prettige/ goede mogelijkheden om te winkelen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biedt een aantrekkelijk night-life/nachtlevens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staat bekend voor culturele manifestaties en evenementen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heeft een sympathieke bevolking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Vink aub aan hoe u zich de stad vorsteld! (per regel een antwoord)

	Helemaal van toepassing ++	Van toepassing +	Geen uitspraak/ geen idee 0	Van toepassing +	Helemaal van toepassing ++	
Flair van een grote stad						kleinsteeds
Vies/smerig						netjes
Bekend						onbekend
het is er de dood in de pot/ saai						levendig
gezinsvriendelijk, gastvriendelijk						onvriendelijk, weinig service
Indrukwekkende stad en bezienswaardigheden						Stad is niet aantrekkelijk, teleurstellend/ tegenvallend
Niet attractief						attractief
Prettige sfeer						Geen sfeer , saai
gevarieerd: Markt/ weekmarkten						Ontbrekende ofwel te kleine markten, eentonig
Moderne musea						Conventionele musea
Recreatiemogelijkheden zijn eentonig en / of niet aantrekkelijk						Extraverte manifestaties/ evenementen
Restaurants zijn aantrekkelijk/gevarieerd/ streekgerechten						Restaurants zijn niet aantrekkelijk
De prijs/kwaliteit verhouding is goed, niet duur						te duur, duurder dan thuis
Bereikbaarheid is goed, dagtrip						De afstand is te groot, tamelijk ver
Stad is overvol/ te veel toerisme						eenzaam, geheime tip

11a. Bent u van plan binnenkort/oit naar Oldenburg te gaan?

Ja Nee

11b. Indien ja: waarom?

11b. Indien nee: waarom niet?

Persoonsgegevens

Alle gegevens zijn volledig anoniem en dienen alleen voor statistische analyses en wetenschappelijke verwerkingen.

Hoe oud bent u?

- tot 25 jaar 46-65 jaar
 26-45 jaar 66 of ouder

Bent u:

- vrouw?
 man?

Bij welk beroepsgroep hoort?

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 arbeider/arbeidster gepensioneerd
 kaderlid; hoogeplaatste ambtenaar huisvrouw/-man
 leerling; student vrijberoepsbeoefenaar; zelfstandig
 boer overig

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Geachte dames en heren, ik vraag u om uw ondersteuning bij mijn afstudeerscriptie. Het thema is 'aspecten van toerisme in de stedenband Oldenburg en Groningen'. Bij voorbaat dank voor het invullen van deze vragenlijst!

Algemene vragen

0. Bent u al een keer in Oldenburg geweest? Ja Nee

1. Hoe vaak bent u al in Oldenburg geweest?

- een keer twee keer drie- tot vijf keer vijf- tot tien keer
 vaker dan tien keer regelmatig: _____

2. Met welk vervoermiddel bent u tot nu toe naar Oldenburg gereisd?

- trein bus auto/ motor overige: _____

3a. Hoe lang blijft u normaal gesproken in Oldenburg?

- dagtrip 2 dagen, 1 overnachting inclusief langer dan 2 dagen

3b. Heeft u in Oldenburg overnacht? Nee, alleen een dagtrip

Ja:

- bij vrienden/ verwanten logementhuis/pension (halfpension)
 jeugdherberg vakantiewoning (eigen proviand)
 in een hotel (1 - 2 sterren) camping
 in een hotel (3 - 4 sterren) overig: _____

4. Met wie bent u gereisd?

- alleen met de familie ((groot-)ouders/kinderen)
 met uw partner met vrienden
 met een klein groepje (t/m 10 personen)
 met een grote groep (meer dan 10 personen)

Wat is uw beeld van Oldenburg

5. Heeft u een positief beeld van de stad Oldenburg? Ja Nee

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 kerstmarkt (Lambertimarkt) overig: _____

7. Wat zijn uw verwachtingen van een bezoek/vakantie in Oldenburg?

(meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- cultuur (musea, tentoonstellingen, kerken, historische bouwwerken en tuinen, enz.)
 sport, activiteiten
 wellness en recreatie
 tijd doorbrengen met familie en/of vrienden
 streekgerechten en dranken genieten
 een tochtje naar het buitenland om het "vakantie idee" te verstevigen
 stedentrip
 winkelen/shoppen (b.v. koopzondag)
 entertainment (nachtleven, muziekfestivals, kermis, "Kultursommer")
 ondernemingen, tochtjes
 overig: _____

8. Graag per regel aanvinken hoe u persoonlijk de stad opvat!

	Helemaal van toepassing ++	Van toepassing +	Geen uitspraak/ geen idee 0	Van toepassing +	Helemaal van toepassing ++	
Flair van een grote stad						kleinsteeds
Vies/smerig						netjes
Bekend						onbekend
het is er de dood in de pot/ saai						levendig
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12. Heeft u ooit een slogan of een reclamecampagne over OL gehoord?

- Ja Nein

Indien ja, kunt u deze kort omschrijven?(krant, radio, plakkaat, enz.):

13. Waar heeft u informatie over Oldenburg verzameld?

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14. Werd aan uw verwachtingen voldaan? Gaat u nog een keer naar Oldenburg?

- Ja Nee

Indien nee: waarom zou u niet nog een keer naar Oldenburg willen gaan?

15. Zou u een trip naar Oldenburg bij anderen aanbevelen?

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 alleen met kind/ kinderen (geregistreerd) partnerschap
 getrouwd (zonder kinderen ofwel kinderen wonen niet meer thuis)

Hartelijk bedankt voor de moeite die u heeft genomen!

- Vragen over de Public Express -

Vragen over de Public Express

A) Bent u vandaag voor de eerste keer met de Public Express op reis?

- Ja Nee

**B) Als u al vaker met de Public Express gereisd bent, hoe vaak ongeveer?
Reist u regelmatig met de Public express?**

**C) Waarom hebt u ervoor gekozen met de Public Express naar Groningen
ofwel Oldenburg te gaan?**

- Door verhalen van vrienden/kennissen
 Reclame: waar hebt u die gezien?
-

Overig: _____

D) Bent u tevreden met het gezamenlijke aanbod van de Public express?

- 1-zeer tevreden
 2-tevreden
 3-noch tevreden noch ontevreden
 4-ontevreden
 5-zeer ontevreden

E) Bent u tevreden met:

- de reistijden? (punctualiteit bij het vertrek, de regelmaat van de ritten)
 de plaatsen van af- en aankomst?
 de service? (in de bus, in het internet)
 de prijzen?
 de extra informatie? (event tips, bezienswaardigheden enz.)

**F) Hebt u nog punten van verbetering voor het bedrijf van de
Public Express?**

* * *

Hartelijk bedankt voor de moeite die u heeft genomen! Ik wens u een behouden
vaart een een mooi verblijf!

Met vriendelijke groeten,
Amelie Westerheide
amelie.westerheide@fh-bad-honnef.de





Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren, ich bitte Sie um Ihre Unterstützung meiner Diplomarbeit zum Thema „Tourismusaspekte in der Städtepartnerschaft: Oldenburg und Groningen.“
Vielen Dank im Voraus für das Ausfüllen meines Fragebogens!

Allgemeine Fragen

0. Waren Sie schon einmal in Groningen? Ja Nein

1. Wie oft waren Sie schon in Groningen?

- einmal zweimal drei- bis fünfmal fünf- bis zehnmal
 öfter als zehnmal regelmäßig: _____

2. Mit welchem Verkehrsmittel sind Sie bisher angereist?

- Zug Bus PKW/ Motorrad Sonstiges: _____

3a. Wie lange bleiben Sie gewöhnlich in Groningen?

- Tagesausflug 2 Tage inklusive 1 Übernachtung länger als 2 Tage

3b. Haben Sie in Groningen übernachtet? Nein, nur Tagesausflug

Ja **Wenn ja, wo?**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bei Freunden / Verwandten | <input type="checkbox"/> Gasthof/ Pension (Halbpension) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jugendherberge | <input type="checkbox"/> Ferienwohnung (Selbstverpflegung) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> im Hotel (1 - 2 Sterne) | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> im Hotel (3 - 4 Sterne) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges: _____ |

4. Mit wem sind Sie gereist?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allein | <input type="checkbox"/> Mit Freunden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mit dem Partner/der Partnerin | <input type="checkbox"/> In kleineren Gruppen (bis 10 Personen) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mit der Familie ((Groß-)Eltern/Kinder) | <input type="checkbox"/> In größeren Reisegruppen (ab 10 Pers.) |

Ihr Bild von Groningen

5. Haben Sie ein positives Bild von der Stadt Groningen? Ja Nein

6. Was fällt Ihnen spontan zu Groningen ein? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shoppen | <input type="checkbox"/> Museen | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ausgehen/Kneipenszene/Musik | <input type="checkbox"/> Marktbesuche | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Universität | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee Shops | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Städtereise | <input type="checkbox"/> Blumen | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grachten | <input type="checkbox"/> Fahrräder/ Fahrradfahren | |

7. Was erwarten Sie von Ihrem Urlaub/ Besuch in Groningen?

(Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- Kultur (Museen, Ausstellungen, Kirchen, historische Anlagen, etc.)
 Sport, Aktivitäten
 Wellness und Erholung
 Zeit mit der Familie, Zeit mit Freunden verbringen
 Regionale Speisen und Getränke genießen
 Ausflug sollte ins Ausland gehen, um den Urlaubsgedanken zu verfestigen
 Städtetrip
 Shopping (z.B. verkaufsoffener Sonntag)
 Unterhaltung, Entertainment (Nachtleben, Musikfestivals, Jahrmärkte)
 Unternehmungen, Ausflüge (z.B. Grachtenfahrt)
 Blumenschau, Natur
 Sonstiges: _____

8. Bitte kreuzen Sie pro Zeile an, wie Sie persönlich die Stadt empfinden!

(pro Zeile bitte nur eine zutreffende Antwort ankreuzen)

	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	Trifft zu +	Keine Aussage / keine Ahnung 0	Trifft zu +	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	
Großstadtflair						Kleinstadtflair, provinziell
Schmutzig						Sauber
Bekannt						Unbekannt
Ausgestorben, langweilig						Lebendig
Familienfreundlich, gastfreundlich						Unfreundlich, wenig servicebereit
Beeindruckende Stadt, Sehenswürdigkeiten						Nicht interessant, enttäuschend
Unattraktiv						Attraktiv
Schöne Atmosphäre						Keine Atmosphäre, langweilig
Abwechslungsreich: Markt/ Wochenmärkte						Fehlende bzw. kleine Marktszene, eintönig
Moderne Museen						Konventionelle Museen
Eintöniges, wenig ansprechendes Freizeitangebot						Weltoffene Kulturveranstaltungen
Vielfältige und regionale Restaurants						Unattraktive Restaurants
Gutes Preis-Leistungs-Verhältnis, preiswert						Zu teuer, teurer als in der Heimat
Gute Erreichbarkeit, Parken, Tagesausflug						Zu große Entfernung von OL, relativ weit
Überlaufen, Touristenort						Einsam, Geheimtip

9. Wie schätzen Sie Groningen ein? (pro Zeile bitte 1 Kreuz)

	Trifft vollkommen zu	Trifft zu	Trifft teilweise zu	Trifft nicht zu	Trifft überhaupt nicht zu
Verfügt über gute Einkaufsmöglichkeiten/ Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bietet ein attraktives Nachtleben	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ist bekannt für seine Kulturveranstaltungen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hat eine sympathische Bevölkerung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10a. Welche Ähnlichkeiten haben Oldenburg und Groningen? _____

10b. Inwiefern unterscheiden sich OL und Gr. von einander? _____

Informationssammlung

11. Ist Ihnen die Städtepartnerschaft Groningen-OL bekannt? Ja Nein

Auch die Kooperation im Tourismus? Ja Nein

Falls ja, woher?: _____

12. Verbinden Sie einen Slogan/ eine Werbekampagne mit Gr? Ja Nein
Falls ja, bitte beschreiben Sie dies kurz (Zeitung, Radio, Plakat, etc.):

13. Wo haben Sie Informationen über Groningen gesammelt?

- im Internet
- in der Touristeninformation/ Tourismusbüro in Oldenburg
- in der Touristeninformation/ Tourismusbüro in Groningen (vor Ort)
- durch Erzählungen von Freunden und/ oder Verwandten
- gar nicht, ich/ wir sind einfach hingefahren
- durch Public Express

14. Wurden Ihre Erwartungen bisher erfüllt? Kommen/ reisen Sie wieder nach Groningen? Ja Nein

Falls nein, warum würden Sie nicht wieder nach Groningen reisen?

15. Würden Sie einen Urlaub in/ einen Ausflug nach Groningen empfehlen? Ja Nein

Falls nein: warum nicht?

Angaben zu Ihrer Person

Alle Angaben sind anonym. Sie dienen ausschließlich statistischen Zwecken und der wissenschaftlichen Auswertung.

Wie alt sind Sie?

- bis 25 Jahre
- 26-45 Jahre
- 46-65 Jahre
- 66 und älter

Sind Sie

- weiblich?
- männlich?

Zu welcher Berufsgruppe gehören Sie?

- Beamter/Beamtin
- Arbeiter/in
- Leitende/r Angestellte/r; leitende/r Beamter
- Auszubildende/r; Student/in
- Landwirt/in
- Angestellte/r
- Renter/in
- Hausfrau/Hausmann
- Freiberufler/in; Selbständig
- Sonstiges

Welcher Status trifft auf Sie zu?

- Single/ Alleinstehend
- Allein mit Kind/ Kindern
- Verheiratet (ohne Kinder, bzw. Kinder aus dem Haus)
- Verheiratet (mit Kindern)
- In Partnerschaft lebend

* * *

Herzlichen Dank für Ihre Zeit und das Ausfüllen dieses Fragebogens!

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Amelie Westerheide

amelie.westerheide@fh-bad-honnef.de



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Allgemeine Fragen

0. Waren Sie schon einmal in Groningen? Ja **Nein**

1. Welche 3 holländischen Städte fallen Ihnen spontan ein?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

2. Haben Sie schon jemals von der holländischen Stadt Groningen gehört?

Ja Nein

3. Warum waren Sie noch nicht in Groningen? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- liegt zu weit entfernt; geschätzte Entfernung: _____ km
- Holland im Allgemeinen ist für mich als Reiseziel nicht von Bedeutung.
- hat sich bisher nicht ergeben, keine Gelegenheit gehabt
- Holländisch als fremde Sprache ist für mich ein Hemmnis.
- Angebote sind nicht ‚anders genug‘ als z.B. in Oldenburg oder Bremen.
- Habe keinerlei Informationen über die Stadt und ihre Attraktionen.
- Sonstiges: _____

4. Nennen Sie Aspekte, die Ihnen in Ihrem Urlaub am wichtigsten sind:

5. Mit wem reisen Sie meist?

- Allein Mit Freunden
- Mit dem Partner/der Partnerin In kleineren Gruppen (bis 10 Personen)
- Mit der Familie ((Groß-)Eltern/Kinder) In größeren Reisegruppen (ab 10 Pers.)

Ihr Bild von Groningen

6. Haben Sie ein positives Bild von der Stadt Groningen? Ja Nein

7. Was fällt Ihnen spontan zu Groningen ein? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- Shoppen Museen Sonstiges: _____
- Ausgehen/Kneipenszene/Musik Marktbesuche _____
- Universität Coffee Shops _____
- Städtereise Blumen _____
- Grachten Fahrräder/ Fahrradfahren

8. Ist Ihnen die Städtepartnerschaft Groningen-Oldenburg bekannt? Ja Nein
Auch die Kooperation im Tourismus? Ja Nein ***Falls ja, woher?:***

9. Wie schätzen Sie Groningen ein? (pro Zeile bitte nur 1 Kreuz)

	Trifft vollkommen zu	Trifft zu	Trifft teilweise zu	Trifft nicht zu	Trifft überhaupt nicht zu
Verfügt über gute Einkaufsmöglichkeiten/ Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bietet ein attraktives Nachtleben	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ist bekannt für seine Kulturveranstaltungen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hat sympathische Bürger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Bitte kreuzen Sie hier an, wie Sie sich die Stadt vorstellen! (pro Zeile 1 Kreuz)

	Trifft voll- kommen zu ++	Trifft zu +	Keine Aussage / keine Ahnung 0	Trifft zu +	Trifft voll- kommen zu ++	
Großstadtflair						Kleinstadtflair, provinziell
Schmutzig						Sauber
Bekannt						Unbekannt
Ausgestorben, langweilig						Lebendig
Familienfreundlich, gastfreundlich						Unfreundlich, wenig servicebereit
Beeindruckende Stadt, Sehenswürdigkeiten						Nicht interessant, enttäuschend
Unattraktiv						Attraktiv
Schöne Atmosphäre						Keine Atmosphäre, langweilig
Abwechslungsreich: Markt/ Wochenmärkte						Fehlende bzw. kleine Marktszene, eintönig
Moderne Museen						Konventionelle Museen
Eintöniges, wenig ansprechendes Freizeitangebot						Weltoffene Kulturveranstaltungen
Vielfältige und regionale Restaurants						Unattraktive Restaurants
Gutes Preis-Leistungs- Verhältnis, preiswert						Zu teuer, teurer als in der Heimat
Gute Erreichbarkeit, Parken, Tagesausflug						Zu große Entfernung von OL, relativ weit
Überlaufen, Touristenort						Einsam, Geheimtip

11a. Planen Sie, demnächst/ irgendwann einmal nach Groningen zu reisen?

- Ja Nein

11b. Wenn ja: was reizt Sie an Groningen?

11b. Wenn nein: warum nicht mal nach Groningen?

Angaben zu Ihrer Person

Alle Angaben sind anonym. Sie dienen ausschließlich statistischen Zwecken und der wissenschaftlichen Auswertung.

Wie alt sind Sie?

- bis 25 Jahre 46-65 Jahre
 26-45 Jahre 66 und älter

Sind Sie

- weiblich?
 männlich?

Zu welcher Berufsgruppe gehören Sie?

- Beamter/Beamtin Angestellte/r
 Arbeiter/in Renter/in
 Leitende/r Angestellte/r; leitende/r Beamter Hausfrau/Hausmann
 Auszubildende/r; Student/in Freiberufler/in; Selbständig
 Landwirt/in Sonstiges

Welcher Status trifft auf Sie zu?

- Single/ Alleinstehend Verheiratet (mit Kindern)
 Allein mit Kind/ Kindern In Partnerschaft lebend
 Verheiratet (ohne Kinder, bzw. Kinder aus dem Haus)



Internationale
Fachhochschule

Bad Honnef · Bonn

International University
of Applied Sciences



Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren, ich bitte Sie um Ihre Unterstützung meiner Diplomarbeit zum Thema „Tourismusaspekte in der Städtepartnerschaft: Oldenburg und Groningen.“
Vielen Dank im Voraus für das Ausfüllen meines Fragebogens!

Allgemeine Fragen

0. Waren Sie schon einmal in Groningen? Ja Nein

1. Wie oft waren Sie schon in Groningen?

- einmal zweimal drei- bis fünfmal fünf- bis zehnmal
 öfter als zehnmal regelmäßig: _____

2. Mit welchem Verkehrsmittel sind Sie bisher angereist?

- Zug Bus PKW/ Motorrad Sonstiges: _____

3a. Wie lange bleiben Sie gewöhnlich in Groningen?

- Tagesausflug 2 Tage inklusive 1 Übernachtung länger als 2 Tage

3b. Haben Sie in Groningen übernachtet? Nein, nur Tagesausflug

Ja **Wenn ja, wo?**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bei Freunden / Verwandten | <input type="checkbox"/> Gasthof/ Pension (Halbpension) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jugendherberge | <input type="checkbox"/> Ferienwohnung (Selbstverpflegung) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> im Hotel (1 - 2 Sterne) | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> im Hotel (3 - 4 Sterne) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges: _____ |

4. Mit wem sind Sie gereist?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allein | <input type="checkbox"/> Mit Freunden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mit dem Partner/der Partnerin | <input type="checkbox"/> In kleineren Gruppen (bis 10 Personen) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mit der Familie ((Groß-)Eltern/Kinder) | <input type="checkbox"/> In größeren Reisegruppen (ab 10 Pers.) |

Ihr Bild von Groningen

5. Haben Sie ein positives Bild von der Stadt Groningen? Ja Nein

6. Was fällt Ihnen spontan zu Groningen ein? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shoppen | <input type="checkbox"/> Museen | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ausgehen/Kneipenszene/Musik | <input type="checkbox"/> Marktbesuche | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Universität | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee Shops | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Städtereise | <input type="checkbox"/> Blumen | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grachten | <input type="checkbox"/> Fahrräder/ Fahrradfahren | |

7. Was erwarten Sie von Ihrem Urlaub/ Besuch in Groningen?

(Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- Kultur (Museen, Ausstellungen, Kirchen, historische Anlagen, etc.)
 Sport, Aktivitäten
 Wellness und Erholung
 Zeit mit der Familie, Zeit mit Freunden verbringen
 Regionale Speisen und Getränke genießen
 Ausflug sollte ins Ausland gehen, um den Urlaubsgedanken zu verfestigen
 Städtetrip
 Shopping (z.B. verkaufsoffener Sonntag)
 Unterhaltung, Entertainment (Nachtleben, Musikfestivals, Jahrmärkte)
 Unternehmungen, Ausflüge (z.B. Grachtenfahrt)
 Blumenschau, Natur
 Sonstiges: _____

8. Bitte kreuzen Sie pro Zeile an, wie Sie persönlich die Stadt empfinden!

(pro Zeile bitte nur eine zutreffende Antwort ankreuzen)

	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	Trifft zu +	Keine Aussage / keine Ahnung 0	Trifft zu +	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	
Großstadtflair						Kleinstadtflair, provinziell
Schmutzig						Sauber
Bekannt						Unbekannt
Ausgestorben, langweilig						Lebendig
Familienfreundlich, gastfreundlich						Unfreundlich, wenig servicebereit
Beeindruckende Stadt, Sehenswürdigkeiten						Nicht interessant, enttäuschend
Unattraktiv						Attraktiv
Schöne Atmosphäre						Keine Atmosphäre, langweilig
Abwechslungsreich: Markt/ Wochenmärkte						Fehlende bzw. kleine Marktszene, eintönig
Moderne Museen						Konventionelle Museen
Eintöniges, wenig ansprechendes Freizeitangebot						Weltoffene Kulturveranstaltungen
Vielfältige und regionale Restaurants						Unattraktive Restaurants
Gutes Preis-Leistungs-Verhältnis, preiswert						Zu teuer, teurer als in der Heimat
Gute Erreichbarkeit, Tagesausflug						Zu große Entfernung von OL, relativ weit
Überlaufen, Touristenort						Einsam, Geheimtip

9. Wie schätzen Sie Groningen ein? (pro Zeile bitte 1 Kreuz)

	Trifft vollkommen zu	Trifft zu	Trifft teilweise zu	Trifft nicht zu	Trifft überhaupt nicht zu
Verfügt über gute Einkaufsmöglichkeiten/ Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bietet ein attraktives Nachtleben	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ist bekannt für seine Kulturveranstaltungen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hat eine sympathische Bevölkerung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10a. Welche Ähnlichkeiten haben Oldenburg und Groningen? _____

10b. Inwiefern unterscheiden sich OL und Gr. von einander? _____

Informationssammlung

11. Ist Ihnen die Städtepartnerschaft Groningen-OL bekannt? Ja Nein
Auch die Kooperation im Tourismus? Ja Nein

Falls ja, woher?: _____

12. Verbinden Sie einen Slogan/ eine Werbekampagne mit Gr? Ja Nein
Falls ja, bitte beschreiben Sie dies kurz (Zeitung, Radio, Plakat, etc.):

13. Wo haben Sie Informationen über Groningen gesammelt?

- im Internet
- in der Touristeninformation/ Tourismusbüro in Oldenburg
- in der Touristeninformation/ Tourismusbüro in Groningen (vor Ort)
- durch Erzählungen von Freunden und/ oder Verwandten
- gar nicht, ich/ wir sind einfach hingefahren
- durch Public Express

14. Wurden Ihre Erwartungen bisher erfüllt? Kommen/ reisen Sie wieder nach Groningen? Ja Nein

Falls nein, warum würden Sie nicht wieder nach Groningen reisen?

15. Würden Sie einen Urlaub in/ einen Ausflug nach Groningen empfehlen? Ja Nein

Falls nein: warum nicht?

Angaben zu Ihrer Person

Alle Angaben sind anonym. Sie dienen ausschließlich statistischen Zwecken und der wissenschaftlichen Auswertung.

Wie alt sind Sie?

- bis 25 Jahre 46-65 Jahre
- 26-45 Jahre 66 und älter

Sind Sie

- weiblich
- männlich?

Zu welcher Berufsgruppe gehören Sie?

- Beamter/Beamtin Angestellte/r
- Arbeiter/in Renter/in
- Leitende/r Angestellte/r; leitende/r Beamter Hausfrau/Hausmann
- Auszubildende/r; Student/in Freiberufler/in; Selbständig
- Landwirt/in Sonstiges

Welcher Status trifft auf Sie zu?

- Single/ Alleinstehend Verheiratet (mit Kindern)
- Allein mit Kind/ Kindern In Partnerschaft lebend
- Verheiratet (ohne Kinder, bzw. Kinder aus dem Haus)

* * *

Auf der folgenden Seite sind nun noch ein paar Fragen zu Public Express!

Fragen zu Public Express

A) Sind Sie heute zum 1. Mal mit dem Public Express unterwegs?

- Ja Nein

B) Falls Sie schon öfter den Service von Public Express genutzt haben, wie oft etwa? Fahren Sie regelmäßig mit?

C) Wie kamen Sie auf die Idee, mit dem Public Express nach Groningen bzw. nach Oldenburg zu fahren?

- durch Erzählungen von Freunden oder Bekannten
 Werbung: Wo haben Sie diese gesehen?

Sonstiges: _____

D) Sind Sie zufrieden mit dem Gesamt-Angebot von Public Express?

- 1**-sehr
 2-zufrieden
 3-weder noch
 4-unzufrieden
 5-sehr unzufrieden

E) Sind Sie zufrieden mit:

- den Fahrtzeiten? (Pünktlichkeit bei Abfahrt, Regelmäßigkeit der Fahrten)
 den Ab- und Ankunftsorten?
 dem Service? (im Bus, im Internet)
 den Preisen?
 den zusätzlichen Informationen? (Veranstaltungstips, Sehenswürdigkeiten, etc.)

F) Haben Sie Verbesserungsvorschläge an das Unternehmen von Public Express?

Vielen herzlichen Dank für Ihre Zeit zur Beantwortung dieser Fragen. Weiterhin eine gute Fahrt und einen schönen Aufenthalt!

Mit freundlichen Grüßen
Amelie Westerheide

amelie.westerheide@fh-bad-honnef.de



NEIN

Nein - ich bin noch nie in Groningen gewesen !

(Bitte ankreuzen)

1. Hast Du schon einmal von **Groningen** als **Partnerstadt** Oldenburgs gehört?
O ja O nein

2. **Warum** bist Du noch nicht in Groningen gewesen? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- O liegt zu weit entfernt
- O hat sich bisher nicht ergeben, keine Gelegenheit
- O Die Sprache ist ein Hemmnis für mich.
- O Holland im Allgemeinen ist für mich kein Reiseziel.
- O Angebote dort sind nicht anders als in Oldenburg
- O Ich habe zu wenig Informationen über die Stadt und ihre Attraktionen.
- O Sonstiges :

3. **Schätzungen** über Groningen (Info: OL hat ca. 160.000 Einwohner)

Einwohnerzahl Groningens: _____ Einwohner

Entfernung OL nach Groningen: _____ km

4. Welche **Vorstellungen** verbindest Du mit Groningen ? (vom Hörensagen)
(Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- gute Einkaufsmöglichkeiten O
- billiges Einkaufen O
- Sehenswürdigkeiten O
- Lebendige Großstadt O
- Sympathische Stadt O
- Typisch holländisch O
- Schöne Cafes/Restaurants O
- Vielfältige Märkte O
- Ähnlich wie Oldenburg O
- Sonstiges:

Personendaten: Alter: _____ Jahre

O Mädchen

O Junge



Tourismusaspekte in der Städtepartnerschaft

Oldenburg – Groningen

Wirkt sich eine Städtepartnerschaft positiv auf das Image beider Städte aus und wird dadurch beidseitig der Tourismus gefördert?

Dieser Fragebogen dient als Grundlage für die Darstellung der Stadt Oldenburg. Ziel dieses Fragebogens ist die Herausarbeitung des **Images der Stadt Oldenburg**, welches unter anderem durch die OTM kommuniziert wird. Ebenso ist die Erkennung des Potentials von Groningen und Oldenburg als Partnerstädte für die beidseitige Tourismusförderung im Fokus. Bitte beantworten Sie die folgenden Fragen möglichst präzise und vollständig. Gerne können Sie auch zusätzliche Kommentare einfügen, wenn Sie meinen, dass dies die Ergebnisse noch vervollständigt und somit verbessert. Vielen herzlichen Dank im Voraus!

DAS BILD DER STADT OLDENBURG

1. Bitte kreuzen Sie in jeder Zeile die eher zutreffende Beschreibung an.

	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	Trifft zu +	Keine Aussage / keine Ahnung 0	Trifft zu +	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	
Großstadtflair						Kleinstadtflair, provinziell
Schmutzig						Sauber
Bekannt						Unbekannt
Ausgestorben, langweilig						Lebendig
Familienfreundlich, gastfreundlich						Unfreundlich, wenig servicebereit
Beeindruckende Stadt, Sehenswürdigkeiten						Nicht interessant, enttäuschend
Unattraktiv						Attraktiv
Schöne Atmosphäre						Keine Atmosphäre, langweilig
Abwechslungsreich: Markt/ Wochenmärkte						Fehlende bzw. kleine Marktszene, eintönig
Moderne Museen						Konventionelle Museen
Eintöniges, wenig ansprechendes Freizeitangebot						Weltoffene Kulturveranstaltungen
Vielfältige und regionale Restaurants						Unattraktive Restaurants
Gutes Preis-Leistungs-Verhältnis, preiswert						Zu teuer, teurer als in der Heimat
Gute Erreichbarkeit, Parken, Tagesausflug						Zu große Entfernung von OL, relativ weit
Überlaufen, Touristenort						Einsam, Geheimtip

2. Bitte kreuzen Sie hier pro Zeile an, wie Sie Oldenburg einschätzen!

	Trifft vollkommen zu	Trifft zu	Trifft teilweise zu	Trifft nicht zu	Trifft überhaupt nicht zu
Verfügt über gute Einkaufsmöglichkeiten/ Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bietet ein attraktives Nachtleben	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ist bekannt für seine Kulturveranstaltungen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hat eine sympathische Bevölkerung	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Was fällt Ihnen spontan zu Oldenburg ein? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shoppen | <input type="checkbox"/> Museen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ausgehen/Kneipenszene/Musik | <input type="checkbox"/> Marktbesuche |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Universität | <input type="checkbox"/> Lambertimarkt/ Weihnachtsmarkt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Städtereise | <input type="checkbox"/> Pferde |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Messen in Weser-Ems-Halle | <input type="checkbox"/> Fahrräder/ Fahrradfahren |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kultursommer | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges: _____ | |

4. Was erwarten Touristen Ihrer Meinung nach bei einem Besuch in Oldenburg? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- Kultur (Museen, Ausstellungen, Kirchen, historische Anlagen, etc.)
- Sport, Aktivitäten
- Wellness und Erholung
- Zeit mit der Familie, Zeit mit Freunden verbringen
- Regionale Speisen und Getränke genießen
- Ausflug sollte ins Ausland gehen, um den Urlaubsgedanken zu verfestigen
- Städtetrip
- Shopping (z.B. verkaufsoffener Sonntag)
- Unterhaltung, Entertainment (Nachtleben, Musikfestivals, Jahrmärkte)
- Unternehmungen, Ausflüge
- Sonstiges: _____

5. Wie würden Sie jemandem Oldenburg in eigenen Worten empfehlen?

6. Welche sind Oldenburgs Alleinstellungsmerkmale (USP Unique Selling Proposition), durch die Oldenburg sich eindeutig von anderen Städten abhebt und einzigartig/ interessant macht?

7. Mit welcher Intensität werden die genannten Alleinstellungsmerkmale bisher im Rahmen des Stadtmarketings zur Profilierung der Stadt genutzt?

Sehr intensive Nutzung sehr geringe Nutzung

8. Welches Image möchte Oldenburg nach außen tragen?

9. Was macht einen Ausflug nach Oldenburg Ihrer Meinung nach lohnenswert? Was sind die touristischen Highlights?

IMAGE VERMARKTUNG

10. Wurde schon einmal eine Imageanalyse durchgeführt? Ja Nein
Falls ja: Wann? Wo? Wie? Und was waren signifikante Ergebnisse?

11. Gibt es Marketingaktivitäten, die gezielt zur Imageprofilierung dienen?
Falls ja, bitte beschreiben Sie diese kurz:

12. Auf welchen geographischen Raum beziehen sich die Marketingaktivitäten schwerpunktmäßig?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> gesamte Region | <input type="checkbox"/> einzelne Stadtbezirke |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stadt Oldenburg und ihr direktes Umland | <input type="checkbox"/> Innenstadt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unmittelbares Stadtgebiet | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sonstige: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> keine Aussage möglich |

Vermarktung der Destination Oldenburg

13. Die folgenden Kennzahlen beziehen sich auf den Einsatz ausgewählter Instrumente zur Positionierung der Stadt. (Bitte tragen Sie die Werte ein, bei Nichtnutzung eines Instruments geben Sie bitte eine 0 ein)

Anteil des Gesamtjahresbudgets für Marketing:

ca. %

Anzahl der Messepräsenzen pro Jahr:

ca. Messe(n) (In/Ausland)

Anzahl der Messepräsenzen in NL (pro Jahr)

ca. Messen

Anzahl (pro Jahr) der veröffentlichten Presseberichte zu den Marketingaktivitäten

ca. Presseberichte

Presseberichte

- Regional:

ca.

Presseberichte

- Überregional:

ca.

Presseberichte

Anzahl der im Rahmen des Stadtmarketings
etablierten und auch zukünftig regelmäßig
stattfindenden Veranstaltungen (z.B. Lambertimarkt)

ca.

Veranstaltung(en)

14. Welche Marketing-Instrumente werden angewandt, um die Stadt zu vermarkten?

Werbung Ja Nein Welche?: TV Radio Printmedien Plakatwerbung
 sonstiges: _____

Werbematerial Ja Nein Welche?: Werbung (verteilt durch z.B.
Reiseveranstalter) Broschüren Karten Poster Fotos CD-ROMs DVDs
 Slide-Shows sonstiges: _____

Public Relations/ Öffentlichkeitsarbeit Ja Nein Welche?: Organisation
von Pressekonferenzen von Kunstevents von Sportevents von Fam Trips/
Kennlernreisen für Journalisten und/oder Reisebürovertreter
 sonstiges: _____

Präsenz auf (Fach-)Messen und Kongressen Ja Nein Nennen Sie bitte die
Hauptmessen, auf denen Oldenburg präsent war/ regelmäßig ist:

Organisation und Veranstaltung ebendieser Messen und Kongresse Ja Nein
Welche?: _____

Internet Ja Nein Welche?: eigene Web-Seite Verlinkungen mit anderen
Dienstleistern der Stadt; wenn ja mit welchen?: _____
 Verlinkung mit anderen Tourismus-Organisationen Falls ja, mit welchen?: _____

15. Unsere Stadtmarketingaktivitäten sind langfristig ausgerichtet.

Voll und ganz zutreffend keinesfalls zutreffend
Keine Aussage möglich

16. Der Analyse von Stärken und Schwächen unserer Stadt wird im Rahmen des Stadtmarketings große Bedeutung beigemessen.

Voll und ganz zutreffend keinesfalls zutreffend
Keine Aussage möglich

17. Daher basieren die Aktivitäten auf den Ergebnissen einer umfassenden Situationsanalyse, um die strategische Grundrichtung zu erkennen.

Voll und ganz zutreffend keinesfalls zutreffend
Keine Aussage möglich

18. Dient eine andere Stadt als Vorbild für die (touristische) Entwicklung und Werbung? Woher holen Sie die vielen Ideen für die Kampagnen und Werbung? Ja Nein

ZIELGRUPPE(N)

19. Welche Zielgruppen werden durch die Marketingaktivitäten angesprochen bzw. sollen angesprochen werden? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> eigene Bürger | <input type="checkbox"/> ortsansässige Unternehmen/ Institutionen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Besucher / Touristen | <input type="checkbox"/> auswärtige Unternehmen/ Institutionen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mitarbeiter der Stadtverwaltung | <input type="checkbox"/> sonstige: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> potentielle neue Bürger | <input type="checkbox"/> keine Aussage möglich |

20. Falls Sie in der vorangegangenen Frage Besucher/ Touristen gewählt haben, gibt es für diese Zielgruppen eine detailliertere Definition? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

Besucher/ Touristen:

- Tagesgäste (keine Übernachtung)
- Messegäste
- Urlaubsreisende (mind. eine Übernachtung)
- Urlaubsreisende (mit mehr als einer Übernachtung)
- Familien
- Singles
- Alleinerziehende mit Kind/ Kindern
- Großeltern mit Kindern
- Jugendliche
- Senioren
- sonstige: _____

21. Welches Alter hat die von Ihnen angesprochene Zielgruppe bzw. die Zielgruppen?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bis 25 Jahre | <input type="checkbox"/> 46-65 Jahre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26-45 Jahre | <input type="checkbox"/> 66 und älter |

22. Zu welchen Berufsgruppen gehört die Zielgruppe überwiegend?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beamter/Beamtin | <input type="checkbox"/> Angestellte/r |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arbeiter/in | <input type="checkbox"/> Renter/in |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leitende/r Angestellte/r; leitende/r Beamter | <input type="checkbox"/> Hausfrau/Hausmann |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auszubildende/r; Student/in | <input type="checkbox"/> Freiberufler/in; Selbständig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landwirt/in | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges |

23. Ist Deutschland Ihr wichtigster Quellmarkt?

- Ja Nein

24. In welchen anderen Ländern wird noch für Oldenburg als Tourismusdestination geworden?

25. Gibt es somit auch gezielte Werbung in anderen Sprachen? Ja Nein
Falls ja, in welchen Ländern und in welcher Form?

26. Gibt es Zeitungseinlagen, in z.B. einer niederländischen oder gar Groninger Zeitung?
Ja Nein **Falls ja, in welcher Zeitung?**

Zusammenarbeit mit Groningen

Basierend auf dem *10-Punkte-Programm* zwischen den Partnerstädten Oldenburg und Groningen für 2008-2012 wird ein reger wechselseitiger Besuch der Bürger und Bürgerinnen angestrebt. Die Kooperation der beiden Städte soll bestehendes freundschaftliches Zusammenarbeiten ‚Vertiefen – Verstärken – Verstetigen.‘ Zudem ist ein wünschenswertes Ziel, dass die Städte sich gegenseitig bewerben.

27. Aus welcher Region/ Stadt kommen die meisten niederländischen Gäste? Kommen viele aus Groningen?

28. Wird in Oldenburg für Groningen geworben? Ja Nein
Wird in Groningen für Oldenburg geworben? Ja Nein

29. Sollen Groninger als Gäste gewonnen werden? Ist Groningen ein Zielmarkt? Ja Nein
Falls nein: warum nicht?

30. Da Groningen so nah zu Oldenburg liegt und in Groningen viele Deutsch sprechen und verstehen: wie wird konkret versucht, Groningern einen Besuch in Oldenburg attraktiv zu präsentieren? Gibt es Marketing bzw. Werbung/ Hinweise für Oldenburg (auf niederländisch) in Groningen?
 Ja Nein
Falls nein: warum nicht?

Falls ja: haben Sie noch ein Exemplar bzw. einen kurzen Einblick?

31. Werden niederländische Gäste mit speziell konzipierter Werbung angesprochen? D.h. gibt es Werbung, die speziell die niederländische Kultur anspricht und somit anders ist als z.B. deutsche OL-Werbung?
 Ja Nein
Falls ja, nennen Sie bitte auffällige Kultur-Ähnlichkeiten und -unterschiede:

32. Sehen Sie Potential in einer engeren Kooperation in Bezug auf Tourismusförderung mit Oldenburgs Partnerstadt Groningen? Ja Nein

Falls nein: warum nicht?

33. Wenn Sie Potential sehen, wie würde Ihr Erfolgsrezept für erfolgreiches Kooperieren lauten?

34. Kooperiert OTM mit dem Busunternehmen *Public Express*?

Falls ja, wie sieht die Kooperation aus?

35. Wurden bereits konkrete Marketingaktivitäten mit Groningen realisiert?

Falls ja: Wie sehen diese aus?

Falls nein/nicht mehr: Warum nicht?

Wer hat z.B. die Teilnahme bei „Oldenburg kocht“ oder die Oldenburger Präsenz bei den „Promotiedagen“ in Groningen mit organisiert?

36. Seit wann gibt es gemeinsame Marketingbemühungen?

37. Worin liegt der Schwerpunkt gemeinsamer Marketingaktionen mit Gr.?

38. Bekommt man über OTM Informationen über Groningen oder über mögliche Transportmöglichkeiten? Ja Nein

39. Gibt es (regelmäßigen) Kontakt zur Tourismusvertretung Groningens (z.B. Marketing Groningen (MG)/ VVV)? Ja Nein

40. Wie kommuniziert OTM mit MG/ VVV? In welcher Sprache und durch welches Medium?

41. Gibt es Probleme in der Kommunikation (sprachlich bedingt)? Ja Nein

42. Welche Ähnlichkeiten haben Oldenburg und Groningen Ihrer Meinung nach?

43. Inwiefern unterscheiden sich Oldenburg und Groningen von einander?

44. Würden Sie eher sagen, dass die Städte Oldenburg und Groningen das touristische Angebot der Region ergänzen, weil:

- sie ähnlich sind und daher die gleiche(n) Zielgruppe(n) ansprechen (Erweiterung) oder
- sie unterschiedlich sind und daher viel Neues bieten (Ergänzung)?

45. Wie holen Sie Feedback über Marketingaktivitäten, Bekanntheits- und Beliebtheitsgrad Oldenburgs ein?

- Ja. Regelmäßig? Mit welchen Mitteln? _____

- Nein. Warum nicht? _____

46. Was für Auszeichnungen hat Oldenburg schon für die touristischen Angebote bekommen?

Bitte nennen Sie Ihre Position im Unternehmen und die Dauer Ihrer Arbeit im Tourismus: _____

Vielen herzlichen Dank nochmals für Ihre Mühen, mich tatkräftig durch das Ausfüllen dieses Fragebogens zu unterstützen! Bei Bedarf lasse ich Ihnen gerne die Ergebnisse der Imageanalyse als Dank für die Auskünfte zukommen!

Gerne stehe ich Ihnen für Rückfragen zur Verfügung:
Amelie Westerheide - Trommelweg 80 – 26125 Oldenburg
Tel: 0441-383200 – Handy: 0176-82102639
Email: amelie.westerheide@fh-bad-honnef.de

Ich freue mich auf Ihre Antworten um meine Diplomarbeit vervollständigen zu können!





**Tourismusaspekte in der Städtepartnerschaft
Oldenburg – Groningen**
**Wirkt sich eine Städtepartnerschaft positiv auf das Image
beider Städte aus und wird dadurch beidseitig der
Tourismus gefördert?**

Dieser Fragebogen dient als Grundlage für die Darstellung der Stadt Groningen. Ziel dieses Fragebogens ist die Herausarbeitung des **Images der Stadt Groningen**, welches unter anderem durch Marketing Groningen und VVV kommuniziert wird. Ebenso ist die Erkennung des Potentials von Groningen und Oldenburg als Partnerstädte für die beidseitige Tourismusförderung im Fokus. Bitte beantworten Sie die folgenden Fragen möglichst präzise und vollständig. Gerne können Sie auch zusätzliche Kommentare einfügen, wenn Sie meinen, dass dies die Ergebnisse noch vervollständigt und somit verbessert. Vielen herzlichen Dank im Voraus!

Wat is uw beeld van Groningen

1. Graag per regel aanvinken hoe u persoonlijk de stad opvat!

	Helemaal van toepassing ++	Van toepassing +	Geen uitspraak/ geen idee 0	Van toepassing +	Helemaal van toepassing ++	
Flair van een grote stad						kleinsteeds
Vies/smerig						netjes
Bekend						onbekend
het is er de dood in de pot/ saai						levendig
gezinsvriendelijk, gastvriendelijk						onvriendelijk, weinig service
Indrukwekkende stad en bezienswaardigheden						Stad is niet aantrekkelijk, teleurstellend/ tegenvallend
Niet attractief						attractief
Prettige sfeer						Geen sfeer, saai
gevarieerd: Markt/ weekmarkten						Ontbrekende ofwel te kleine markten, eentonig
Moderne musea						Conventionele musea
Recreatiemogelijkheden zijn eentonig en / of niet aantrekkelijk						Extraverte manifestaties/ evenementen
Restaurants zijn aantrekkelijk/gevarieerd/ streekgerechten						Restaurants zijn niet aantrekkelijk
De prijs/kwaliteit verhouding is goed, niet duur						te duur, duurder dan thuis
Bereikbaarheid is goed, dagtrip						De afstand is te groot, tamelijk ver
Stad is overvol/ te veel toerisme						eenzaam, geheime tip

2. Hoe schat u Groningen in? (per regel maar een antwoord)

	Helemaal van toepassing	Van toepassing	Gedeeltelijk van toepassing	Niet van toepassing	Helemaal niet van toepassing
Beschikt over prettige/ goede mogelijkheden om te winkelen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biedt een aantrekkelijk night-life/nachtleven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staat bekend voor culturele manifestaties en evenementen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heeft een sympathieke bevolking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Wat schiet u te binnen als u aan Groningen denkt?

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winkelen | <input type="checkbox"/> Musea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gaan stappen/cafés en kroegen/musiek | <input type="checkbox"/> Markt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Universiteit | <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee Shops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stedentrip | <input type="checkbox"/> Bloemen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grachten | <input type="checkbox"/> Fietsen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overig: _____ | |

4. Wat zijn uw verwachtingen van een bezoek/vakantie in Groningen?

(meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- cultuur (musea, tentoonstellingen, kerken, historische bouwwerken en tuinen, enz.)
- sport, activiteiten
- wellness en recreatie
- tijd doorbrengen met familie en/of vrienden
- streekgerechten en dranken genieten
- een tochtje naar het buitenland om het "vakantie idee" te verstevigen
- stedentrip
- winkelen/shoppen (b.v. koopzondag)
- entertainment (nachtleven, muziekfestivals, kermis, "Kultursommer")
- ondernemingen, tochtjes
- overig: _____

5. Wie würden Sie jemandem Groningen in eigenen Worten empfehlen?

6. Welche sind Groningens Alleinstellungsmerkmale (Unique Selling Proposition USP), durch die Groningen sich eindeutig von anderen Städten abhebt und einzigartig/ interessant macht?

7. Mit welcher Intensität werden die genannten Alleinstellungsmerkmale bisher im Rahmen des Stadtmarketings zur Profilierung der Stadt genutzt?

Sehr intensive Nutzung sehr geringe Nutzung

8. Welches Image möchte Groningen nach außen tragen?

9. Was macht einen Ausflug nach Groningen Ihrer Meinung nach lohnenswert? Was sind die touristischen Highlights?

IMAGE VERMARKTUNG

10. Wurde schon einmal eine Imageanalyse durchgeführt? Ja Nein
Falls ja: Wann? Wo? Wie? Und was waren signifikante Ergebnisse?

11. Gibt es Marketingaktivitäten, die gezielt zur Imageprofilierung dienen?
Falls ja, bitte beschreiben Sie diese kurz:

12. Auf welchen geographischen Raum beziehen sich die Marketingaktivitäten schwerpunktmäßig?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> gesamte Region/Provinz | <input type="checkbox"/> einzelne Stadtbezirke |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stadt Groningen und ihr direktes Umland | <input type="checkbox"/> Innenstadt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unmittelbares Stadtgebiet | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sonstige: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> keine Aussage möglich |

Vermarktung der Destination Groningen

13. Die folgenden Kennzahlen beziehen sich auf den Einsatz ausgewählter Instrumente zur Positionierung der Stadt. (Bitte tragen Sie die Werte ein, bei Nichtnutzung eines Instruments geben Sie bitte eine 0 ein)

Anteil des Gesamtjahresbudgets für Marketing:

ca. %

Anzahl der Messepräsenzen pro Jahr:

ca. Messe(n) (In/Ausland)

Anzahl der Messepräsenzen in D (pro Jahr)

ca. Messen

Anzahl (pro Jahr) der veröffentlichten Presseberichte zu den Marketingaktivitäten

ca. Presseberichte

Presseberichte

- Regional:

- Überregional:

ca.

Presseberichte

ca.

Presseberichte

Anzahl der im Rahmen des Stadtmarketings
etablierten und auch zukünftig regelmäßig
stattfindenden Veranstaltungen (z.B. Blumenschau)

ca.

Veranstaltung(en)

14. Welche Marketing-Instrumente werden angewandt, um die Stadt zu vermarkten?

Werbung Ja Nein Welche?: TV Radio Printmedien Plakatwerbung
 sonstiges: _____

Werbematerial Ja Nein Welche?: Werbung (verteilt durch z.B.
Reiseveranstalter) Broschüren Karten Poster Fotos CD-ROMs DVDs
 Slide-Shows sonstiges: _____

Public Relations/ Öffentlichkeitsarbeit Ja Nein Welche?: Organisation
von Pressekonferenzen von Kunstevents von Sportevents von Fam Trips/
Kennlernreisen für Journalisten und/oder Reisebürovertreter
 sonstiges: _____

Präsenz auf (Fach-)Messen und Kongressen Ja Nein Nennen Sie bitte die
Hauptmessen, auf denen Groningen präsent war/ regelmäßig ist:

Organisation und Veranstaltung ebendieser Messen und Kongresse Ja Nein
Welche?: _____

Internet Ja Nein Welche?: eigene Web-Seite Verlinkungen mit anderen
Dienstleistern der Stadt; wenn ja mit welchen?: _____
 Verlinkung mit anderen Tourismus-Organisationen *Falls ja, mit welchen?:* _____

15. Unsere Stadtmarketingaktivitäten sind langfristig ausgerichtet.

Voll und ganz zutreffend keinesfalls zutreffend
Keine Aussage möglich

16. Der Analyse von Stärken und Schwächen unserer Stadt wird im Rahmen des Stadtmarketings große Bedeutung beigemessen.

Voll und ganz zutreffend keinesfalls zutreffend
Keine Aussage möglich

17. Daher basieren die Aktivitäten auf den Ergebnissen einer umfassenden Situationsanalyse, um die strategische Grundrichtung zu erkennen.

Voll und ganz zutreffend keinesfalls zutreffend
Keine Aussage möglich

18. Dient eine andere Stadt als Vorbild für die (touristische) Entwicklung und Werbung? Woher holen Sie die vielen Ideen für die Kampagnen und Werbung? Ja Nein

ZIELGRUPPE(N)

19. Welche Zielgruppen werden durch die Marketingaktivitäten angesprochen bzw. sollen angesprochen werden? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> eigene Bürger | <input type="checkbox"/> ortsansässige Unternehmen/ Institutionen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Besucher / Touristen | <input type="checkbox"/> auswärtige Unternehmen/ Institutionen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mitarbeiter der Stadtverwaltung | <input type="checkbox"/> sonstige: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> potentielle neue Bürger | <input type="checkbox"/> keine Aussage möglich |

20. Falls Sie in der vorangegangenen Frage Besucher/ Touristen gewählt haben, gibt es für diese Zielgruppen eine detailliertere Definition? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich)

Besucher/ Touristen:

- Tagesgäste (keine Übernachtung)
- Messegäste
- Urlaubsreisende (mind. eine Übernachtung)
- Urlaubsreisende (mit mehr als einer Übernachtung)
- Familien
- Singles
- Alleinerziehende mit Kind/ Kindern
- Großeltern mit Kindern
- Jugendliche
- Senioren
- sonstige: _____

21. Welches Alter hat die von Ihnen angesprochene Zielgruppe bzw. die Zielgruppen?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> bis 25 Jahre | <input type="checkbox"/> 46-65 Jahre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 26-45 Jahre | <input type="checkbox"/> 66 und älter |

22. Zu welchen Berufsgruppen gehört die Zielgruppe überwiegend?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> beambte | <input type="checkbox"/> werknemer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> arbeider/arbeidster | <input type="checkbox"/> gepensioeneerd |
| <input type="checkbox"/> kaderlid; hoogeplaatste ambtenaar | <input type="checkbox"/> huisvrouw/-man |
| <input type="checkbox"/> leerling; student | <input type="checkbox"/> vrijberoepsbeoefenaar; zelfstandig |
| <input type="checkbox"/> boer | <input type="checkbox"/> overig |

23. Sind die Niederlande Ihr wichtigster Quellmarkt?

- Ja Nein

24. In welchen anderen Ländern wird noch für Groningen als Tourismusdestination geworden?

25. Gibt es somit auch gezielte Werbung in anderen Sprachen? Ja Nein
Falls ja, in welchen Ländern und in welcher Form?

26. Gibt es Zeitungseinlagen, in z.B. einer deutschen oder gar Oldenburger Zeitung?

Ja Nein *Falls ja, in welcher Zeitung?* _____

Zusammenarbeit mit Oldenburg

Basierend auf dem *10-Punkte-Programm* zwischen den Partnerstädten Oldenburg und Groningen für 2008-2012 wird ein reger wechselseitiger Besuch der Bürger und Bürgerinnen angestrebt. Die Kooperation der beiden Städte soll bestehendes freundschaftliches Zusammenarbeiten ‚Vertiefen – Verstärken – Verstetigen.‘ Zudem ist ein wünschenswertes Ziel, dass die Städte sich gegenseitig bewerben.

27. Aus welcher Region/ Stadt kommen die meisten deutschen Gäste?
Kommen viele aus Oldenburg?

28. Wird in Oldenburg für Groningen geworben? Ja Nein
Wird in Groningen für Oldenburg geworben? Ja Nein

29. Sollen Oldenburger als Gäste gewonnen werden? Ist Oldenburg ein Zielmarkt? Ja Nein

Falls nein: warum nicht?

30. Da Groningen so nah zu Oldenburg liegt und in Groningen viele Deutsch sprechen und verstehen: wie wird konkret versucht, Oldenburgern einen Besuch in Groningen attraktiv zu präsentieren? Gibt es Marketing bzw. Werbung/ Hinweise für Groningen (auf deutsch) in Groningen?

Ja Nein

Falls nein: warum nicht?

Falls ja: haben Sie noch ein Exemplar bzw. einen kurzen Einblick?

31. Werden deutsche Gäste mit speziell konzipierter Werbung angesprochen? D.h. gibt es Werbung, die speziell die deutsche Kultur anspricht und somit anders ist als z.B. niederländische Werbung?

Ja Nein

Falls ja, nennen Sie bitte auffällige Kultur-Ähnlichkeiten und -unterschiede:

32. Sehen Sie Potential in einer engeren Kooperation in Bezug auf Tourismusförderung mit Groningens Partnerstadt Oldenburg? Ja Nein

Falls nein: warum nicht?

33. Wenn Sie Potential sehen, wie würde Ihr Erfolgsrezept für erfolgreiches Kooperieren lauten?

34. Kooperiert Marketing Groningen mit dem Busunternehmen *Public Express*?
Falls ja, wie sieht die Kooperation aus?

35. Wurden bereits konkrete Marketingaktivitäten mit Oldenburg realisiert?
Falls ja: Wie sehen diese aus?

Falls nein/nicht mehr: Warum nicht?

Wer hat z.B. die Teilnahme bei „Oldenburg kocht“ oder die Oldenburger Präsenz bei den „Promotiedagen“ in Groningen mit organisiert?

36. Seit wann gibt es gemeinsame Marketingbemühungen?

37. Worin liegt der Schwerpunkt gemeinsamer Marketingaktionen mit OL?

38. Bekommt man über MG/VVV Informationen über Oldenburg oder über mögliche Transportmöglichkeiten? Ja Nein

39. Gibt es (regelmäßigen) Kontakt zur Tourismusvertretung Oldenburgs (z.B. OTM)? Ja Nein

40. Wie kommuniziert MG/ VVV mit OTM? In welcher Sprache und durch welches Medium?

41. Gibt es Probleme in der Kommunikation (sprachlich bedingt)? Ja Nein

42. Welche Ähnlichkeiten haben Oldenburg und Groningen Ihrer Meinung nach?

43. Inwiefern unterscheiden sich Oldenburg und Groningen von einander?

44. Würden Sie eher sagen, dass die Städte Oldenburg und Groningen das touristische Angebot der Region ergänzen, weil:

- sie ähnlich sind und daher die gleiche(n) Zielgruppe(n) ansprechen (Erweiterung) oder
- sie unterschiedlich sind und daher viel Neues bieten (Ergänzung)?

45. Wie holen Sie Feedback über Marketingaktivitäten, Bekanntheits- und Beliebtheitsgrad Groningens ein?

- Ja. Regelmäßig? Mit welchen Mitteln? _____

- Nein. Warum nicht? _____

46. Was für Auszeichnungen hat Groningen schon für die touristischen Angebote bekommen? Ähnliches wie ‚beste binnenstad‘?

Bitte nennen Sie Ihre Position im Unternehmen und die Dauer Ihrer Arbeit im Tourismus: _____

Vielen herzlichen Dank nochmals für Ihre Mühen, mich tatkräftig durch das Ausfüllen dieses Fragebogens zu unterstützen! Bei Bedarf lasse ich Ihnen gerne die Ergebnisse der Imageanalyse als Dank für die Auskünfte zukommen!

Gerne stehe ich Ihnen für Rückfragen zur Verfügung:
Amelie Westerheide - Trommelweg 80 – 26125 Oldenburg
Tel: 0049-441-383200 – Handy: 0049-176-82102639
Email: amelie.westerheide@fh-bad-honnef.de

Ich freue mich auf Ihre Antworten um meine Diplomarbeit vervollständigen zu können!



Internationale
Fachhochschule

Bad Honnef · Bonn

International University
of Applied Sciences

Appendix I 1: Public Express Questions

Mr. Christoph Marquardt – Inhaber / Owner

Date: 25 May 2009; 4 – 6 p.m.

-
- (1) Wie entstand die Geschäftsidee für Public Express?
- Wie wurde entdeckt, dass für die Strecke Oldenburg-Groningen Bedarf besteht?
 - PE hat also eine Marktlücke gefüllt?
 - Wie viele Busse fahren für PE?
 - Wie viele Mitarbeiter hat PE? Vollzeit/Teilzeit etc.?
-
- (2) Fahrgäste:
- Wie ist die allgemeine Auslastung?
 - Wie ist die Verteilung von Oldenburgern und Groningern (in der Woche, übers Jahr verteilt)?
 - Was denken Sie, sind die Hauptgründe für die Reisen zwischen OL und Gr?
-
- (3) Gibt es auch auf der niederländischen Seite solch ein Busunternehmen?
Ist Eurolines eine Konkurrenz?
-
- (4) Gibt es irgendwelche Unterstützung / Zusammenarbeit?
- Mit der Stadt **Oldenburg** (z.B. OTM; CMO; IHK; Uni Oldenburg;...)
 - Mit wem?; was genau?; wann?; Erfolge?
 - Mit der Stadt **Groningen** (z.B. VVV/ Marketing Groningen; Uni; etc.)
 - Mit wem?; was genau?; wann?; Erfolge?
 - Mit Zeitungen? Wieviele Zeitungsberichte über PE?
-
- (5) Worin bestehen Probleme in der Zusammenarbeit (mit OL und dann auch mit Gr)?
- Was läuft besonders gut in der Zusammenarbeit? Welche Kooperationen laufen schon besonders lange?
 - Mit welchen Werbekooperationen hat es angefangen?
-
- (6) Wo liegt der Schwerpunkt bei Werbekooperationen?
z.B. Shopping, Museen / Kultur, Sport, Märkte, Blumenschau
-
- (7) Welche Bedeutung haben besondere Aktionen in Groningen und Oldenburg?
z.B. der Blumenmarkt in Gro.? Kramermarkt; Lambertimarkt?
- Darf PE all solche Aktionen als Werbeinhalt nutzen?
 - Gibt es Kommunikation im Vorfeld, sodass PE in Kenntnis gesetzt wird, was für Veranstaltungen kommen und somit besser planen kann?
-
- (8) Wie betreibt PE Werbung/ Marketing?
- In Oldenburg und in Groningen:
 - Örtliche Zeitungen
 - Internet
 - Plakate (auch in den Innenstädten von OL/Gr ?)
 - Messen?
- Was tut PE, um die zwei Städte gegenseitig zu bewerben?
(z.B. Fahrgastfernsehen Publicvision...)
-
- (9) Wie ist Ihr Image von Oldenburg bzw. Groningen? Worin bestehen die hauptsächlich touristischen Anreize?
- (10) Sind Sie zufrieden mit der Vermarktung der beiden Städte, besonders mit OL als hier ansässigem Unternehmen?
-
- (11) Was würden Sie sich wünschen, um die Partnerschaft der Städte Oldenburg und Groningen noch mehr zu nutzen, um den grenzüberschreitenden Tourismus zu fördern?
- Haben Sie konkrete Vorschläge zur Verbesserung der Zusammenarbeit um das Potential weiter auszuschöpfen?
-
- (12) Dient eine andere Grenzregion als Beispiel/ Vorbild für Ideen zur Werbung/ Zusammenarbeit?

Appendix I 2:

Transcript of Expert Interview with Mr Marquardt of Public Express Summary of field notes to highlight major statements

Date: 25 May 2009

Time: 4 – 6 p.m.

Location and atmosphere: the interviews and meetings took place in the office of PX in Oldenburg. A very friendly and welcoming small team realised the interview process to be without interruptions by telephone calls. Some personal information and opinions about the cooperation between OL and GR have been uttered which will not be presented here. The first contact was done on Good Friday as the researcher participated in the cross-border tourism to experience the Flower Market in Groningen.

The first meeting served to get to know each other and to discuss information collection during bus rides between OL and GR. A time frame was agreed upon including individual action when an appropriate number of travellers had booked to make the effort worth it. All rides have been kindly granted for free. An additional check of the image analysis questions and special questions regarding the PX guest survey finalised the questionnaire preparation. As being highly involved with contact persons on each side of the border, Mr Marquardt kindly introduced certain contact personnel to approach with reference to PX for additional information.

Furthermore, very kind support with an introduction to SPSS was given by Office Manager Mrs Jinke Zantinge. Two days of exhaustive data processing and analysis as well as providing the researcher with marketing material is highly appreciated.

(1) Advantages and potentials of long-distance intercity transportation was the topic of the dissertation by Mr Marquardt. The interest in main line traffic has always been there and as Europe grows together, he found that too much focus was on individual travel. There were too few operators and offers regarding public transportation, also across European borders. The desire and plan was to establish a transport service to fill this market niche. Since Mr Marquardt's place of residence was and still is Oldenburg, the strategy developed to serve the transportation market gap from Oldenburg across the German-Dutch border to Groningen. The offers of the Deutsche Bahn are judged to be not satisfactory as they are relatively expensive and take longer than the car. Thus, to found a business that operates transportation not in the form of city busses but in the form of intercity buses linking major specific places on both sides of the border was the aim. The niche was served even though scepticism was shown by others especially in the early times. However, constant roadway supports meaning new routes and destinations as well as increasing numbers of passengers are a proof of the successful recognition of a niche. More routes in general and more transfers per day, especially at the weekends, is planned and realized constantly.

Regularly, two busses serve the route between Groningen, Oldenburg and Bremen. The busses operate four times a day from Bremen going to Groningen, where three of them stop in Oldenburg. The night bus links Groningen and Bremen directly. There are three stopping points in Oldenburg and two in Groningen to suit the needs. At special days and occasions, about 25 busses drive the route. Starting in August 2009, more gaps are planned to be closed by offering service in the middle of the day between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and to also accommodate the different levels of demand during the days of the week. Higher capacity utilization and better management of demand is seen as a continuous task.

PE has several employees who are 'outsourced': the 11-12 bus-drivers are from a local bus company who also lend the busses for special demand. There are about 20 team colleagues, students and interneers, a graphic artist for advertisements and two full-time workers in the Oldenburg office, including the owner. A new team member will be recruited in August for marketing and sales and also accounting will be intensified. In total, there are about 120 ticket agencies in the Dutch and German border regions. This is to promote the existence of this transport service and the facilitate bookings.

(2) During the regular week, the weakest days are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday; more passengers are on board in the end of the week and on the weekends. The months of January, February and November are the weakest months whereas June, July, May and December are very popular months for both the Dutch and the German visitors.

However, special occasions like the 'bloemenjaarmarkt/ flower market' in Groningen on Good Friday compensate for weaker phases.

In the mean time, the numbers of Dutch and German travellers is balanced. However, again special occasions in both cities attract at different times of year, Oldenburg welcomes Dutch visitors during the winter months for Christmas Market and Groningen is the destination for the flower market every April. Major reasons for using PE services are tourism, students and employed people who study or work at the other side of the border.

(3) Diverse bus companies operate in Europe to serve the long-haul travel demand. One of them also stops at Oldenburg and Groningen three times a week. However, the focus is on long-haul meaning that the busses also drive to e.g. Stockholm and Amsterdam. Cheap, no-frills airlines are their major competition and receive grants. The other bus companies are not seen as competition by Mr Marquardt. PE's strategy is 'to remain below the cheap prices of no-frills airlines' and other means of transport. The area of PE service is aimed to be between 100 to 300 kilometres. New plans for the beginning of next year are worked on for the region of the Ruhr and Brussels. Also airport shuttles to the airports of Düsseldorf/ Weeze and Mainz/ Frankfurt Hahn are planned. The existence of such a bus service as PE offers is a 'novelty in the market'. The Deutsche Bahn has the monopoly, thus there is not much diversity on the supply side. Additionally, judicial frameworks are difficult and complex.

(4) Joint activities with the institutions of Oldenburg and Bremen are generally running only slowly and tough. Slow acting and reacting are maybe due to the product being relatively new. Further, there are too many different stakeholders involved and their interests are not properly coordinated to generate best possible synergies. There are also a lot of honorary posts that also influence relations with Groningen. With OTM, Oldenburg's official tourism authority, there is no cooperation with PE besides its function of selling tickets for PE. Also with CMO – City Management Oldenburg (retail association) there are no joint promotion efforts. The IHK, the Chamber of Commerce is the transport board and cooperation is strategically. With the Oldenburg University cooperation realized success as a benefit for reduced student tickets.

In 2004, marketing cooperation for the Christmas Market in Oldenburg: city of Oldenburg, Public Express, Oldenburg Tourismus und Marketing GmbH, Hermes Hotel, Ratskeller (restaurant in inner city), Leffers (clothing) and Saturn (electronics) realize joint advertisement efforts to promote the Christmas Market also in the partner city Groningen. Promotional flyers for the target market of Groningen were produced and distributed in Groningen. Since then, it is "seemingly considered as a fast-selling item." Since 2005, PE and the *Presseamt/ Public Relations Office* of the city of Oldenburg advertise this event jointly. The PR office holds the supervision function for the Christmas Market. It is the major attraction throughout the entire year for visitors from Groningen.

Groningen does a lot more to promote the city, "they are the better sales and promotion people." This is also reflected in the fact that generally more Germans travel to Groningen than Dutchmen to Oldenburg. This is a "mirror of reality" as marketing shows success in travel patterns to Groningen. Best cooperation activities are realized with the *Groningen City Club* and *Marketing Groningen*. One example was for the book fair KIBUM (Kinder-Buch-Messe) in Oldenburg were OL and GR created posters to advertise in Groningen.

Therefore, some stakeholders might not yet be aware of the positive benefits and advantages of this cross-boundary bus service. The visitors bring buying power to both cities, indicating expenditures of averagely € 80 and during Christmas time also up to € 200. This transportation offer brings new potential in terms of tourism and related economies.

With the establishment of Public Express, this cross-boundary bus transfer is expected to further stimulate and strengthen the city partnership between the two cities. More joint advertisements and promotional campaigns were planned to promote Oldenburg in Groningen.

Since August 2006, PE also operates between Groningen and Bremen, with Oldenburg being situated in the middle. Numerous newspapers reported and this was even on the title page of a major newspaper in Groningen. A big success, in both cooperation and promotional realisation was for the Paula-Modersohn-Becker Museum in Bremen in 2008 which attracted many visitors from Groningen.

Media coverage: Many articles have been published on both sides about offers and activities of PE. "But as it is with the media something new need to be placed soon to raise new awareness." A Dutch paper published interviews with passengers and one journalist in Groningen is very cooperative and friendly as he constantly releases favourable articles. A full-page advertisement by PE has been shown in the Weser Kurier, a regional German paper. Also TV and the radio on both sides reported about PE and events in both cities.

Regular used advertisement tools are flyers distributed in the cities, the Internet, information booths in the city and at fairs. PE has been present three times at the Promotiedagen, an economic fair in Groningen, and at the Reiselust in Bremen which is a fair at the airport in January. They were also present at the airport during orientation week of the university in Bremen. Further, they attended the public promotion event 'Reisemeile' in the inner city of Bremen. At the Koninginnedag (the Queen's day) on 30 April, PE is present in Groningen with an information booth.

(5) One major difficulty in creating thorough image/ promotion campaigns is the not-cooperation of the stakeholders at one destination. Thus, the problem grows when it comes to cooperation with another destination like Groningen. No joint set of aims and strategies is developed at one city to be present as a unit to the colleagues in the other city. Some projects run parallel. A major problem appears to be disinterest by certain stakeholders. Underlying is the fallacy that the tourists will be attracted to the Christmas Market (and to the city in general) either way, also without special advertising as its degree of popularity is considered high. However, in 2005, advertisement was poor and so were visitor numbers. Thus, PX and the PR office benefit from this disinterest and construct their campaigns around this event in December.

Considered as innovate is the use of the advertisement strategy to use the amount of people together at a soccer match in Groningen. PX and the PR Office showed a presentation like PowerPoint with images of Oldenburg on the big screen. "The city always needs to be promoted." Also flyer campaigns and poster campaigns with children as angels are used to present Oldenburg and its Christmas Market in Groningen. These advertisement tools are said to "not be very costly but effective."

(6) Shopping is regarded as the major theme and thus, the major motivation for mutual tourism. Also the typical markets are attractive as people like to stroll around to experience e.g. the fish market or the flower market.

Museums do not really use their potential, for example the Horst-Jansen Museum in OL is not known supra-regional. Also not too interesting are the amusement fairs in Oldenburg and Bremen. Also sports events such as soccer or basketball are not stimulating major travel.

(7) (Partly, previous answers are responding to this question, too.) Flower market as major attraction to Groningen. Germans search for the 'typical Dutch attributes'. The Oldenburg Christmas Market is now established as a strong brand with a wide range of awareness.

The entire city's economy benefits from the level of recognition PE established since 2004. It has a very good image or public reputation. Many rely on their efforts to increase awareness and to bring visitors to both cities.

Unfortunately, often offers for joint activities come at too short notice to PE so that thorough research and planning is not possible anymore. The invitation for a fair at the airport Bremen was not well organised and the fair did not take place a second time.

(8) Besides all marketing efforts, 40-45% of all visitors are stimulated by word of mouth from friends or family! About 40% of all tickets are sold online in advance, 40% in distribution offices and 20% are bought in the bus. An incentive for early bookings is planned to better manage demand. Media

coverage is considered as very important as it has a wide reach. However, the right extent is important; too much can be seen as annoying by (potential) visitors.

Internet: German, Dutch and English homepage with transit information and also current information on events at both (all three including Bremen) destinations.

Poster actions in the inner city of Groningen: about 15 joint activities in the past years. They are affordable and are seen by many people.

The presence on fairs started relatively late and is planned to be intensified.

On board, there are flyers about recent events, current routes and future plans. On board TV Publicvision is planned but had to be postponed due to technical problems. During the ride, information about the specific final destination shall increase interest and familiarity.

(9) The image of the company of Public Express is perceived as: innovative, creative, sympathetic team, fair price-performance ratio and transparent pricing strategies. Friendly to children as to a certain age, kids are free and up to 12 years the ride is only €1. More family friendly tariffs are planned.

The image of the cities:

Oldenburg: slower, decreasing student numbers, more traditional and conventional, beautiful inner city with a large pedestrian area;

Groningen: younger, more dynamic, more open, the university has a more important function; the entire city is lively/ active/ crazy/ pulsating;

(10) Oldenburg sells itself 'terrible'. Upcoming changes are not seen and are not perceived as important to counteract or to adjust to them. They rely on their current status and their current image which is positive! However, Groningen is better known across the border and its campaigns have a further reach. Oldenburg's authorities are inactive, lazy, and sedate as they do not do much for tourism. There are 'dead corners' in the city which could be used for nice facilities improving the city's image.

The Dutch are better sales people and do much better in promoting the highlights of their place. They know better how to bring their message across. They are good marketing people and know what German visitors seek. For Groningen citizen, Oldenburg is mostly in their mind during Christmas time. In earlier times, many Groningen citizen travelled to Oldenburg and Bremen, today, more stay in the bus for another 30 minutes to get to Bremen.

(11) OL has to use its potentials much more and build their tourism development on these. The China Initiative (economic cooperation also with Groningen to China) is strengthened but the people in the region are not recognized as a great potential! To recognize and use these markets is the essence of further profound development. Other border regions like Münster – Enschede develops slowly as well, and Venlo and its counterpart are a agricultural region.

"The border is still in the heads of the people."

"Even though there is a city partnership, there has much been signed but nothing happens."

"Also along with Oldenburg's theme for 2009 'Stadt der Wissenschaft / City of Science 2009', much has been planned with Groningen but nothing is realised."

Public Express is a 100% private business. It is not subsidized and thus no burden to tax payers.

However, the potential is not seen. Only a few are aware of the benefit of this bus company, namely the retail businesses, including partners of GCC and CMO.

Germany has a lower price level, whilst the Netherlands have a higher income and are called bargain hunters. On both sides, hotels are affordable. Also the Oldenburg Hermes Hotel was at the fair and shows interest in the Dutch market.

OTM as the DMO should bundle all ideas and budgets to finally reach something!

Planned: TV spots, passenger surveys and information also from other tourism suppliers in the bus.

(12) No. Individual development of this region.

Appendix J1

Oldenburg und Groningen – eine erfolgreiche Partnerschaft in Europa

Die grenzüberschreitende Städtepartnerschaft und wechselseitiger Tourismus

-I-

- 1) Bitte erläutern Sie bitte die Grundfunktionen und die Hauptaufgaben des Büros für Internationale Beziehungen.
- 2) Wie ist die genaue Aufgabenverteilung der verschiedenen Institutionen Oldenburgs?
 - OTM
 - CMO
 - IHK
 - Private Unternehmen wie z.B. Public Express?
 - Stadt Oldenburg mit dem Büro für Internationale Beziehungen und dem Presseamt

OTM gilt als das offizielle touristische Dienstleistungsunternehmen für die Stadt, dennoch finden sich auf der Internetseite der Stadt OL viele touristische Angebote. Wie sind die Aufgaben getrennt? Gibt es Absprachen über die ‚Arbeitsteilung‘ oder ‚Befugnis‘ bestimmte Projekte zu organisieren und zu bewerben? Arbeiten die einzelnen Organisationen zusammen oder stehen sie in Konkurrenz zueinander?

- 3) Mit welchen Stellen in Groningen arbeiten Sie zusammen?
- 4) In welcher Sprache kommunizieren Sie miteinander?
- 5) Gibt es viele persönliche Treffen? Durch welche Medien wird noch miteinander kommuniziert?

-II-

Das 10-Punkte Programm in Zusammenarbeit mit der Stadt Groningen

Gemeinsamer perspektivischer Rahmen mit 10 Bereichen und gemeinschaftlich festgelegten Zielen. Tourismus und Marketing ist einer dieser 10 Bereiche. Tourismus übt den Multiplikatoreffekt aus. Kultur und Wirtschaft, sowie Bildung und Sport sind meist eng mit Tourismus und der Attraktivität der jeweiligen Stadt verbunden.

- In wie weit ist die Zielsetzung bis heute, speziell auf touristischer Ebene, fortgeschritten und umgesetzt worden?
- Wie wird ein reger gegenseitiger Besuch der Bürger und Bürgerinnen gefördert/beworben?
- Was macht die jeweilige Stadt einzigartig?
- Was denken Sie, ist die Hauptattraktion/ der Hauptgrund, nach OL bzw. nach Gr zu reisen?
- Welche konkreten Anlässe locken Touristen nach Groningen, und welche Anlässe ziehen Groninger nach Oldenburg?

- Worin liegen Ihrer Meinung nach die größten Ähnlichkeiten und die größten Unterschiede der beiden Städte?

Groningen war in die Bewerbung Oldenburgs für die ‚Stadt der Wissenschaft 2009‘ eingebunden und gemeinsame Ideen wurden entwickelt.

- Wird nun in Groningen für einen Besuch nach Oldenburg geworben, um die vielen Wissenschaftsstadt-Aktionen zu erleben? Gibt es hier Werbung auf niederländisch?

-III-

Werbung/ Öffentlichkeitsarbeit

- Gibt es Werbung auf niederländisch für Oldenburg (außer auf der Web-Site)?
- Welche Werbemittel werden genutzt?
- Auf welchen Messen in Groningen präsentiert sich Oldenburg?
- Auf welchen Messen in Oldenburg präsentiert sich Groningen? Anzahl der Messepräsenzen?
- Gibt es Zeitungseinlagen von Oldenburg in einer Groninger Zeitung?
- Dient eine andere Grenzregion als Vorbild/ Beispiel für einige Ideen der Zusammenarbeit?

-IV-

Kultur

- Welche Kooperationen sind im Bereich Kultur von besonderer Bedeutung?

-V-

Sport

- Ein ‚Groningen-Oldenburg-Sporttag‘ war geplant. Woran ist dieser gescheitert? Ist für die Zukunft ein neuer Versuch geplant?

-VI-

Erfolg und Probleme

- Welche Projekte laufen besonders gut und lange?
- Gibt es auch Probleme / Konfliktpotential in der Zusammenarbeit (evtl. wegen kultureller Unterschiede)?

-VII-

Zukunft

- Was schätzen Sie, in wie weit schöpft die Kooperation das volle Potential in Bezug auf Tourismus aus? Sehen Sie noch viel Potential für langjährige Zusammenarbeit?
- In welchen Bereichen kann noch viel mehr getan werden?
- Welche gemeinschaftlichen Aktionen und Projekte sind für die (nahe) Zukunft geplant?

-VIII-

Haben Sie Zahlen über:

- Wie viele Groninger arbeiten in Oldenburg? Und wie viele Oldenburger arbeiten in Groningen?
- Wie viele Studenten der einen Partnerstadt studieren jeweils in der anderen?
- Wie viele Touristen kommen aus Groningen? (pro Monat/ Jahr). Wann sind die Hauptreisezeiten für deutsche bzw. niederländische Gäste?
- Wissen Sie, wie viele regionale / überregionale Zeitungsberichte über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen Groningen und Oldenburg erschienen? (vllt. 2008 oder bis jetzt in 2009)

-IX-

Wie wird Erfolg gemessen?

- Wurde schonmal eine Image-Analyse über Oldenburg durchgeführt?

Appendix J 2:

**Transcript of Expert Interview with Mrs Ina Lehnert-Jehnisch and
Mr Roland Hentschel (Fachdienstleiter)
City of Oldenburg
Department for Urban and Regional Planning and Economic Affairs
Office for International Relations
[Wirtschaftsförderung – Fachdienst Regionalentwicklung
Büro für Internationale Beziehungen]**

Summary of field notes to highlight major statements

Date: 29 May 2009

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location: the interview took place in the office of Mr Hentschel. No disturbance by the telephone, colleagues or customers interrupted the flow of conversation. The atmosphere during the interview was relaxed and started with small talk to lead to the topic. Mrs Lehnert-Jehnisch also contributed to this interview and thus, the depth of information came from two expertise sources.

-I-

(1) Major task of the Oldenburg 'Wirtschaftsförderung' are promotion of innovation; regional cooperations and projects (also in the Metropolis region Oldenburg – Bremen); international relations especially also with the partner cities; EU subject such as application for subsidies and EU projects; cooperation of universities and academic institutions; support of business set-ups and spin-offs directly from university; technology transfer; cluster management in energy, IT and fields of media; presentations and trade fairs.

The Office for International Relations was formerly named Office for Communal Partnerships. Since 2006, a new focus is on internationality to further strategic development. Promotion of economics and development of cooperation with partner cities and communes run parallel as both are interrelated. An international direction and improvement of partnerships is the aim. There are various aspects of cooperation, e.g. in economic and in tourism, some are more formal while others are less formal to be eventually finished easier. OL has a good reputation and other cities like to cooperate with OL in various fields.

(2) OTM: their major task is marketing! The city creates the tourism offers (in general) whereas OTM composes bundles like e.g. ticketing or weekend offers. They are involved in tourism planning and realisation but the city has the control; OTM focuses on the promotion of what the city has to offer. Offers are presented on internet sites (city and OTM). They are independent.

OTM closely works with CMO City Management Oldenburg and organise for example the Dream Gardens in the inner city. OTM also promotes the City of Science offers during 2009. However, OTM is very independent and the city has the desire that OTM does more in terms of partnership with Groningen! The head of OTM said that tourism is a fast-selling item and that not too much needs to be done; Tourism does not have a great impact on the retail businesses of the city, thus has a small effect. CMO once introduced the plan to welcome Dutch tourist in Dutch but that did not last long. Also OTM and the Dutch MG/ VVV engaged in personnel exchange, but this also did not last long! The desire by the city is that this is re-activated. And further, also more brochure exchange is desirable!

The efforts need to be bundled in order to change and to reach something! Initiations are mostly not pursued further when small problems arise. Better cooperation between the institutions is aimed at.

The IHK is the counterpart to the Kammer van Koophandel in NL. There is a close bond, and the NL side does more, also in the region of Osnabrück. Together they support business set-ups, also in the Ems-Dollart region.

Next to Public Express, also DENIES is a private business offering communication training. Language courses, workshops about culture and intercultural cooperation are offered for NL and D colleagues to facilitate working with each other and to avoid misunderstandings.

(3) The office of both mayors (OL and GR). With the Department of Urban Planning and Economic Affairs. Much cooperation also with the EU programs including also other cities. City and urban planning, cultural offers and IT and bilateral relations are in focus of this cooperation.

(4) Between very young colleagues, English is the dominant language whereas between the others, a mixture of German, English and Dutch is common. The language is no problem.

(5) Personal meetings of colleagues and also in committees of the mayors. Also trilateral relations with Bremen are intensified in workshops. The city aims at being the interface between the various institutions involved in this city partnership. Mutual visits are common and several times a week, the colleagues communicate via telephone and email. In the mean time, also some families met privately, real friendships developed. On a joint presentation in Brussels and at the General Consulate of NL in Hamburg: both sides know each other and the partnership is already well developed to represent the team as reliably. Also the media communicates intensively about this partnership between Oldenburg and Groningen.

-II-

'All points are running smoothly – but not tourism.' There is no intensive cooperation and no serious meetings have been agreed upon yet. After initial efforts, there have been misunderstandings between VVV and OTM, thus further cooperation stopped. The city wants to adopt a mediator role and wants to bring VVV and OTM together, with the help of a workshop at DENIES. Also tourism fairs in NL and D shall bring both sides together.

An *idea* is to further visitor exchange with a residents' day to bring together citizen of both cities. However, political discrepancies hindered a smooth realization. As the city is no private enterprise, it is influenced by political power. There is a lot going on between the institutions of both sides.

The 1st International Friendship Meeting was realised and lasted three days and visitors from all partner communes attended. Together, the idea for the project 'Creative Cities' developed between OL, Taastrup (Denmark) and Groningen. If it is financially supported by the EU depends on Interreg regulations. In 2010, a friendship meeting is planned with the French partnercity Cholet.

With Groningen, the cooperation is not only through their city partnership but it is broader build around four topics: Science, economy, culture and personnel exchange. For the famous book fair KIBUM 'Kinderbuch Messe' *the Netherlands* have been topic and the motto was 'Hartelijk welkom – KIBUM trifft Niederlande'. Dutch writers read and presented their books to German and Dutch children. The kids learned about the Dutch Santa Claus, poems and songs and organised a city tour for their Dutch friends. Also the universities and hospitals work together: a new caring study course from NL offers internships during the studies in hospitals in OL.

The cities: Groningen has about 46,000 students and a young student city, is more cosmopolitan; they have the courage for something new; architecture is modern and courageous with no straight lines, it is a very attractive city, even though it does not appear to be as large as it is. They interpret the topic 'water' in a unique way and integrate it very well into their city image. Many individual, crazy shops with own flair and old antiques; many people live in the inner city which is not so much common in OL; Groningen does not have large malls like the Famila Center in OL.

Oldenburg: is more relaxed and has a more comfortable atmosphere; the inner city is more historical; many shops are chains and are rather similar to other German inner cities. The architectural image is more harmonized as no 'crazy architecture' is present. It is cleaner than GR. It has subcenters like the new IKEA and Famila Center (a large complex with lots of retail stores, supermarkets and food courts a bit out of the city).

Main reasons to come to GR: the festivities, flower market, fish market, many young people, music events and music culture festivals.

It is just one hour away and people cross an international border. No pre-organised booking is necessary and one can go spontaneously. The internationality is highly interesting! Travel mainly on holidays where German shops are closed.

Transfer between both cities is easy and cheap with Public Express.

Main reasons to come to OL: to experience the city and to go shopping. The Christmas Market (Lambertmarkt) is during the year the main attraction, also the amusement fair Kramermarkt as they do not have this in NL.

Groningen citizens do not come to OL for cultural offers (unfortunately). The other way round, OL may go to GR to attend exhibitions in the Groninger Museum. The Groninger Museum and the Horst-Janssen Museum (OL) had a joint ticketing program due to the shared development association.

Most tourists come from NL in the winter time while many OL go to GR throughout the entire year.

In comparison: share a similar structure, are both centres of their region and have a focus on the service sector and economy. Both have no competing city within 20km. The quality of life; attractive inner cities and interesting architecture; not much industry but science (IT, media). Both cities do not seem like large cities! Esp. Oldenburg's aim is to not appear as a large city but to rather present itself as a middle-sized city.

Differences are: in GR the university plays a major role (image, influence, science). Architecture is different, industrial areas and service facilities; GR has various city departments for the inner city who act more independently; in OL the Famila Center is a strong competition for the inner city shops; with the traffic and uncountable bikes in GR it is more hectic; OL has more green space.

Oldenburg is a creative, urban city. The City of Science 2009. City of Science: For the City of Science, also Groningen contributes with a program and in the late summer they come to Oldenburg again to start it in the inner city. Joint activities are planned (entry in Dutch in the program brochure.) The theme for this is 'Living for the elderly'. The entire brochure has not been printed in Dutch, does not 'really invite' Dutch tourists to join in. A science road show is also going to GR to present findings there.

-III-

This year, OL may probably not attend the economic fair Promotiedagen is a specialised fair for economic businesses. Also the Hanse Messe in OL is similar, however the cultural aspect have not been adjusted thus it was no success. In NL, the fair is very relaxed and easy going, providing a chance for interaction and networking, also smaller businesses are present. Dutch colleagues go there after work, while in D fairs are usually visited during work and are more focused on results and a comparison

of efficiency (if it is worth it to go there is important). Unfortunately, no residents are present, only business.

There are no newspaper inlays, only for the Promotiedagen where OL is presented. GR advertises in the OL newspaper NWZ for Sunday shopping and the flower market.

There is no specific other region that serves as a role model for cooperation.

-IV-

In the facilities of the BBK ‚Bund Bildender Künstler und Künstlerinnen für Niedersachsen‘ in Oldenburg, also Dutch artists present their art; images and paintings.

The theaters of both cities cooperate and sometimes promote each other in their brochures. Also OL artists exposed their creations in the Galerie Noord, however no PR work has been done to communicate this.

-V-

A joint sports day has been planned but did not realise. It was planned based on political interests from the German side (PR and friendship). It is planned to be done 2010 and the sports clubs of the cities are very interested in participating and marketing this event.

-VI-

Good is the communication between the two Offices of Urban Development/ Economic Affairs of both cities. Concrete projects have been realised and are planned for the future. The Christmas Market (D) and the Flower Market (NL) are the most successful events. The presence on the Promotiedagen was good but needs to be improved to achieve better results in the future. The joint efforts for the ‚Creative Cities‘ in which city districts are rebuilt to improve the city image and to apply energy and architectural expertise (e.g. Bahnhofsviertel in OL). Support of artists, designers, theatre and actors, computer scientist and media experts; the aim is to further talent, technology and tolerance and use them for growth initiatives.

Problems are often that planned activities are not implemented! Or not with the needed time communicated in advance. The City of Science is not promoted in NL as desired, some advertisement campaign on Public Express busses did not happen as planned, the China Initiative is not as advanced as planned. With the Dutch colleagues it is often that they get back on certain issues too late or not at all and that deadlines pass. They are sometimes considered as not reliable, with no good planning and bad preparation! Much is decided upon and done in the last minute. Furthermore, communication problems between the two official tourism authorities OTM and VVV are not favourable for successful development.

Cooperation shall become normality!

-VII-

Much needs to be done by tourism promotion, for example a German Internet site about Groningen on the Oldenburg site to create the direct link.

Also the cultural offers of both cities should be coordinated better to encourage spontaneous travel to experience cultural offers like visiting a museum.

Much more needs to be done for tourism. Also from EU funds, however OL is too far away from the border to receive funds as other Interreg projects (75-80% subsidies), only Leer (D) and Groningen receive such funds, excluding OL.

Idea: More joint fairs shall familiarise business and residents with partner city and improve good image. Many projects regarding cooperation are just beginning and need more time to develop into fixed standards.

The trilateral efforts with Bremen need to be strengthened as it is already successful (museum: Paula-Modersohn-Becker).

Also in terms of city development: technology, business set-ups and appointed teams for support, companies to settle or opening branches in both cities.

Recognized is the relatively bad train connection, this needs to be improved; in general a better infrastructure is desirable.

Joint plans for architecture and buildings with (alternative) energy.

Schools should cooperate more: students' exchange, learning NL/ D, schools should have a partner school.

They currently work on an action program 2009/2010 according to the 10-Point Program: special occasions shall improve the set goals and achieve better results.

In Groningen, a German Week is planned by GCC (retail association).

Culture: in 2011, the Tan-Dynasty will be presented in GR, and OL plans to be integrated and to build an axis to also present some cultural highlights.

-VIII-

Exact numbers can be retrieved from the IHK/ Koophandel. Many commuters of the faculty from university. Only few enterprises share branches in OL and GR, most of them are related to energy. The Groningen uni is very popular for OL students as it is relatively nearby and offers a lot also nightlife.

-IX-

The advancement and intensification of cooperation developed over time, they agreed upon more and more shared projects and efforts. It was not oriented towards a specific goal or has neither been systematically.

Interesting questions are: why is cultural program not of interest?

What besides the inner city is attractive and known to GR tourists?

A more in depth insight into travel motivations is desired.

What is the overall image of Oldenburg for visitors/ non-visitors from Groningen?

What can OL do to improve and to use its full potential in a better way?

How is OL competitive position compared to Bremen, Hamburg, or Osnabrück?

Appendix K1

Oldenburg und Groningen – eine erfolgreiche Partnerschaft in Europa

Die grenzüberschreitende Städtepartnerschaft und wechselseitiger Tourismus

-I-

- 1) Bitte erläutern Sie bitte die Grundfunktionen und die Hauptaufgaben der Wirtschaftsförderung. Gibt es auch in Groningen ein Büro für Internationale Beziehungen wie in Oldenburg?
- 2) Wie ist die Aufgabenverteilung der verschiedenen Institutionen Groningens?
 - Wie sind Sie mit *Marketing Groningen/ VVV* verbunden?
 - Gibt es einen Verbund des Einzelhandels wie das City Management in OL?
 - Private Unternehmen wie z.B. Public Express?
 - Arbeiten die einzelnen Organisationen zusammen oder stehen sie in Konkurrenz zueinander?
- 3) Mit welchen Stellen in Oldenburg arbeiten Sie zusammen?
- 4) In welcher Sprache kommunizieren Sie miteinander?
- 5) Gibt es viele persönliche Treffen? Durch welche Medien wird noch miteinander kommuniziert?

-II-

Das 10-Punkte Programm in Zusammenarbeit mit der Stadt Oldenburg

Gemeinsamer perspektivischer Rahmen mit 10 Bereichen und gemeinschaftlich festgelegten Zielen. Tourismus und Marketing ist einer dieser 10 Bereiche. Tourismus übt den Multiplikatoreffekt aus. Kultur und Wirtschaft, sowie Bildung und Sport sind meist eng mit Tourismus und der Attraktivität der jeweiligen Stadt verbunden.

- In wie weit ist die Zielsetzung bis heute, speziell auf touristischer Ebene, fortgeschritten und umgesetzt worden?
- Wie wird ein reger gegenseitiger Besuch der Bürger und Bürgerinnen gefördert/beworben?
- Bitte beschreiben Sie das Image, das Groningen ausstrahlen möchte.
- Was macht die jeweilige Stadt einzigartig?
- Was denken Sie, ist die Hauptattraktion/ der Hauptgrund, nach Groningen bzw. nach OL zu reisen?
- Welche konkreten Anlässe locken Touristen nach Groningen, und welche Anlässe ziehen Groninger nach Oldenburg?
- Worin liegen Ihrer Meinung nach die größten Ähnlichkeiten und die größten Unterschiede der beiden Städte?
- In wiefern unterscheiden sich die Menschen? Ihre Mentalität?

Groningen war in die Bewerbung Oldenburgs für die ‚Stadt der Wissenschaft 2009‘ eingebunden und gemeinsame Ideen wurden entwickelt.

- Wird nun in Groningen für einen Besuch nach Oldenburg geworben, um die vielen Wissenschaftsstadt-Aktionen zu erleben? Gibt es hier Werbung oder Anregungen auf niederländisch?
- Ähnlich ist ja auch ‚Groningen, City of Talent‘: wird angestrebt, auch Oldenburger dafür nach Groningen zu locken? Wie?

-III-

Werbung/ Öffentlichkeitsarbeit

- Gibt es Werbung auf deutsch für Groningen (außer auf der Web-Site)?
- Welche Werbemittel werden genutzt? Welche Rolle spielt PR?
- Auf welchen Messen in Oldenburg präsentiert sich Groningen? Anzahl der Messepräsenzen? Gemeinsame Messeauftritte mit Oldenburg?
- Gibt es Zeitungseinlagen von Groningen in einer Oldenburger Zeitung?
- Dient eine andere Grenzregion als Vorbild/ Beispiel für einige Ideen der Zusammenarbeit?

-IV-

Kultur

- Welche Kooperationen sind im Bereich Kultur von besonderer Bedeutung?

-V-

Sport

- Ein ‚Groningen-Oldenburg-Sporttag‘ war geplant. Woran ist dieser gescheitert? Ist für die Zukunft ein neuer Versuch geplant?

-VI-

Erfolg und Probleme

- Welche Projekte laufen besonders gut und lange?
- Gibt es auch Probleme / Konfliktpotential in der Zusammenarbeit (evtl. wegen kultureller Unterschiede)?

-VII-

Zukunft

- Was schätzen Sie, in wie weit schöpft die Kooperation das volle Potential in Bezug auf Tourismus aus? Sehen Sie noch viel Potential für langjährige Zusammenarbeit?
- In welchen Bereichen kann noch viel mehr getan werden?
- Welche gemeinschaftlichen Aktionen und Projekte sind für die (nahe) Zukunft geplant?

-VIII-

Haben Sie Zahlen über:

- Wie viele Oldenburger arbeiten in Groninger? Und andersherum?
- Wie viele Studenten der einen Partnerstadt studieren jeweils in der anderen?
- Wie viele Touristen kommen aus Oldenburg? (pro Monat/ Jahr). Wann sind die Hauptreisezeiten für deutsche Gäste?
- Wissen Sie, wie viele regionale / überregionale Zeitungsberichte über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen Groningen und Oldenburg erschienen? (vllt. 2008 oder bis jetzt in 2009)

-IX-

Wie wird Erfolg gemessen?

- Wurde schonmal eine Image-Analyse für Groningen durchgeführt?

Appendix K2:

Transcript of Expert Interview with Mr Gerard Tolner, Mr Ron Torenbosch
City of Groningen
Department for Urban Planning and Economic Affairs
Policy Development Section

Summary of field notes to highlight major statements

Date: 5 June 2009

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Location: the interview took place in the building of the Dept. of Urban Planning and Economic Affairs in Groningen. At a table in an open corridor, the interview was casual and the 'Du' was offered right away. This reflects one aspect of intercultural differences and was very interesting to experience first-hand. Many colleagues passed by and some of them stopped, interested to see what was going on. A very friendly atmosphere realised a very informative conversation with great ideas for improved tourism development. Additional information has very kindly been given during the interview to highlight particular aspects and has been sent also after the interview.

-I-

(1) In short the major tasks are the preparation of information about the site city of Groningen for business development, support for business start-ups, or application for EU subsidies, networking for EU projects, as well as regional and international affairs in terms of economy. The tasks are similar to the Oldenburger Wirtschaftsförderung. However, no integrated 'Office for International Relations' exists for Groningen. Close cooperation with all partner cities is aimed for. And for particular projects, different groups of people with specific expertise gather to work on this project. The assignment of tasks depends therefore on the project itself and on its intensity. Special focus towards Germany is on Oldenburg (as a partner city), Bremen and Hamburg. In general, the economic focus for development and networking is on northern Europe, across Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Poland Russia, and the three Baltic states. (see www.nordconnect.eu)

In the Netherlands, the Drenthe Province (county) borders the city of Groningen in the south. They do not engage financially in tourism marketing with Groningen but the benefits from travellers who visit Groningen and also go to Drenthe.

(2) Connection to Marketing Groningen (MG)/ VVV: The city of Groningen is the sponsoring body for MG, it is a foundation. Annually, about € 800,000 are given to MG for marketing, esp. € 75,000 are designed for public events, activities and PR. All in all, the city spends about € 1 m per year on city marketing. Additionally, MG also receives financial support from the province for TV and news promotion. The interviewees state that there is little chaos between the institutions and that it is not very well organised. MG is thus responsible for marketing the city.

Similar to the City Management Club in Oldenburg, Groningen has the GCC Groningen City Club (www.groningencityclub.nl). They coordinate the Sunday shopping days. Less than half of the city's enterprises are members, but they all benefit from common efforts like Christmas decoration. VVV and GCC cooperate and build a good network with businesses in Groningen. However, many joint activities are not marketed well and thus, demand is low.

(3), (4) and (5) Most contact to the Oldenburg site is with the Oldenburg Wirtschaftsförderung (see transcript expert interview II) and also Public Express. Once a month, the colleagues from both cities meet. Otherwise, regular contact is via telephone and email. Communication is usually a mix of German, Dutch and also English.

For more than 25 years, Germany is the most important source market. In Groningen the Germans build the largest minority (many students). Most of them speak good Dutch which is fascinating for Dutch and they are pleased by their efforts. Also German students are considered as more ambitious than Dutch students.

-II-

Much is planned but not too much has been realised since the signing of the agreement in 2008. Joint travel to China to further the China Initiative has successfully been done and is planned for the future to be repeated. Applications for EU funds are shared but commonly, Oldenburg is already too far away from the border to receive financial aid.

Cross-border cooperation is also worked on with the German city of Haren an der Ems. The members of the department had a trip to Bremen to get to know their German colleagues and to experience team building activities to have fun together. This should be done with OL colleagues as well. Regularly, twice a year, colleagues of both cities visit each other to get to know how they work and to further joint ideas. Also sports games have been done together, as well as a choir of public servants. Could be more often.

Desired image of Groningen: *City of Talent* as the title for 2009, Groningen wants to be young, innovative and dynamic. It has a mixture of modern and old architecture. It is the 3rd best city in NL for the elderly, and in 2005 and 2007 it was awarded best inner city in NL. It's a cultural and architectural city.

Main differences between the two cities: Similarities since both are centres (Oberzentrum) of their region and have similar structures and a similar size and nice inner cities. GR is more hectic, louder, more traffic, vibrating. OL is more traditional and civil, friendlier, more relaxed. The Dutch are seen as more open and more direct whereas Germans are rather reserved.

Main reasons to come to Groningen:

- the markets: fish market, flower market
- smoking weed
- study
- shopping as open Sundays on German holidays like Good Fridays or 3 October are highly attractive. During the summer months however, there are no open Sundays from Mai to end of August. A Groningen mega supermarket is often open on Sundays and attracts many German visitors. Also the football stadium is in that complex, a large cinema, fitness clubs and food courts. They often promote price differences via flyer at cars. This supermarket found a gap in the law and can thus open also on public holidays and Sundays where others might not open. Especially, coffee is much cheaper in NL than in D and many Germans shop large amounts of coffee since there is no coffee tax. Many Dutch people drive across the border and to Oldenburg to shop in large supermarkets as it is cheaper. Especially, liquors and other alcoholics are less expensive in Germany.
- A large famous furniture house presents design furniture. *Idea:* This can be seen as a niche target group that is potentially also interested in other cultural offers. Special ads could attract their attention.
- internationality: in a short time people can cross a border and can spend the day in another country with different culture and customs, food, stores and fashion. The feeling to be close to home but in a somehow other world is considered as interesting.
- the sea is only 4 km away

From a culinary point of view, some German goods are very popular for the Dutch: German red wine, cake, red fruit jelly and poppy-seed cake as well as chocolate coating.

Special occasions for Germans to come to GR:

- holidays where German shops are closed
- flower market on Good Friday
- open Sundays for shopping
- music scene: Euro Sonic (festival) in 2007 'Germany' was topic

-III-

Posters in Dutch of Oldenburg have been placed around the city for various projects, for example by Public Express, Christmas Market, museums, but also Bremen and its airport.

Fairs: the business fair 'Promotiedagen' in Groningen with participation of OL. But this is rather a fair for B2B (business to business contacts) and not for private people or tourists. Another small fair in Oldenburg was not of interest to attend a second time. In the radio, quite a lot of German music is played (Peter Fox, Nena, Wir sind Helden, Reinhard May). Special bars and clubs always play famous and new style music from all over the world.

Idea: Newspaper inserts with information about GR are not yet done, but are desirable to raise attention and create interest. Often, no pictures are included when there are news about the partnership. In Oldenburg there is more PR work. Enough people are interested in this cooperation but it is not yet fully effective and efficient. More should be done in the media!

The border regions of Gronau/ Muenster and Enschede, also Aachen and Maastricht and Venlo are sources of ideas for further improvement of mutual development.

-IV-

From December 2009 to April 2010, the *Groninger Museum* hosts an exhibition by the German young designer and professor Bernhard Willhelm featuring his unconventional fashion. Idea: Place advertisement flyer at Park and Ride stations to raise awareness for current and upcoming exhibitions.

Groningen has a Museum Card with which all entry fees are free.

It exists a bilingual museum guide featuring Dutch and German museums; however they are not distributed well German museums are in German and Dutch are presented in Dutch, thus eventually not fully understood by interested people. Idea: combine this museum offer with maps and the possibility to print out the driving directions and to additionally book hotels.

A new 'Forum', a large building with lots of facilities, is soon starting to be built at the Grote Markt. Architects and their suggestions have been selected by the residents.

Idea: construction should be combined with events around the building to familiarize people with it.

For many cultural offers and activities no language skills are needed as it is dance, images, or music! It can be enjoyed by everyone.

-V- (dismissed during interview, not specifically discussed)

-VI-

The language is no problem for working with each other. Rather the mentality: in D, many rules need to be accepted before starting a project but then it will be realised with enthusiasm. The Dutch often do not have an agenda, are poorly prepared and business needs many and long discussions. Everything takes longer and often no real effort is seen. Germans are more ambitious.

Potential conflict could arise between the two when a new enterprise needs to decide in which city to set up business.

-VII-

Fairs should also be organised to address the private market, not only business. It is important to represent the city to potential tourists as an entity at a fair. Destination marketing is important and should ignore borders, also borders between Dutch provinces.

GR is attractive to many target groups! A great potential is seen in an **online, individual program** coordinator where city's offers can be combined according to individual preferences. By this tourism offers can be combined across all fields. It is important to get into the short-list with competition. The programs could also be sent on the mobile phone when people are on the road already.

When once been to GR most people come back! It is therefore important to invite them to come back (e.g. at the flower market). Current event calendars should be placed at Park and Ride sites to invite them back. It is important that guests leave with a 'feel good feeling' and tell friends.

Narrow-casting with individualised advertisements when e.g. people wait in line somewhere could show what is currently happening in town. Web cams could also display publicly some impressions of Groningen.

More online forums should be set up for exchange of experiences of visitors to present 1st hand experiences of Groningen and Oldenburg. One portal serves as an important source of information already with regards to questions about GR.

Offers should also be **bundled** with shopping and the attractions of other, surrounding destinations to improve the tourism product and attract tourism to experience the wide range of offers. The aim is to also attract visitors to stay longer than one day and to also contribute to the hospitality industry and experience the wide range of offers.

The local events calendar should be enlarged and should constantly include happenings in Oldenburg and Bremen to combine offers in the tourists' minds. Newspapers of all three cities should publish these.

Info screens are only in Dutch but should be in German and English, too. Also the internet site of the bus enterprise of the local busses should be in English and German. A music festival will be organised with Public Express in August 2009.

Regional TV showing spots and interviews with citizen and tourists of both partner cities to talk about their experiences and share insider tips. Summarize information on internet site.

It is important to measure clicks on the website after launching a specific project. The Internet is potentially the most important source of information, not so much tourist information offices. Further, it is important to know your customers: ask them at the tourist info how they enjoy their stay and what they would improve. Interaction and feedback are important.

-VIII- (dismissed during interview, not specifically discussed)

-IX- (dismissed during interview, not specifically discussed)

Appendix L:

Transcript of Expert Interview with Mrs Bettina Fabich Owner of DENIES

Deutsch-Niederländisches Servicecenter für Sprache und Kommunikation
Summary of field notes to highlight major statements
Date: 17 June 2009 Time: 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Location: The interview took place in the office of DENIES within the 'Technologie- und Gründerzentrum Oldenburg'. Mrs Fabich currently has a Dutch intern who also attended the interview; she studies in Groningen and does this internship for about five months with DENIES. After beginning small talk and a short introduction, the interview was mainly led by the interviewee as Mrs Fabich started to talk freely about the status quo of the cooperation between OL and GR. The atmosphere was friendly and also personal questions were asked to the researcher regarding further career development and findings of the research so far.

Questions that served as a guideline for this interview are integrated.

Assessment of the status quo of this cooperation:

Only little exchange between OTM and MG (DMOs). Both cities have an established tourism arrival status built around its major attractions: OL and the Lambertmarkt and some cultural offers, and GR mainly its shopping and market scene. No crucial need is seen to engage in exhaustive marketing efforts as visitors of the partner city are present already. More focus is put on Hamburg and Bremen as these include overnight stays in hotels. An intense will to strengthen and revive tourism cooperation is not really aspired by the tourism institution, thus many projects do not grow or fail. For years, no concrete contact has been between OTM and MG due to unknown reasons, maybe some conflict whose reason nobody knows anymore. More enthusiasm is needed to do something. OTM should work closer together with the city (= Wirtschaftsförderung).

An imbalance between competition and cooperation is seen and named as another reason for less will to change anything. By promoting each other, guest numbers could shift to lead to losses in the own market. Both seek a win-win-situation, hindering increased efforts towards joint projects. For the Promotiedagen (business fair) in GR, not much effort was done by OL. Visitors were not approached correctly to generate business.

Contrarily, the teams of the Departments of Economic Affairs (Wirtschaftsförderung) of both sides are working very well with each other. They approached each other and invested a lot into good relationships. At an early stage they participated in a 40h workshop to learn the language (see question below).

Please describe the characteristics of the Dutch/ Netherlands and the Germans/ Germany. This includes cultural differences also in mentality of people.

Netherlands	Germany
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rough planning- More in short notice- Answer delayed which influences agreement or acceptance- Time plans include the need for improvisation- No need for perfectionism, rather pragmatism- More relaxed; unstressed- Smaller distance- Hierarchy is lower than in Germany→ problem: then also nobody feels responsible; push straight work- Focus on team work- More flexible, also more flexible work systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- agreements are kept and details are planned and agreed upon long in advance- due to Dutch 'poor' time management, results are often not as expected and dissatisfying; Germans get nervous- need for perfectionism- high avoidance of insecurity and ambiguity- distance and hierarchical- team work and also individual achievements- rather fixed systems in working systems- adapting working concepts from other countries

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to adjust to personal needs; more children day care - Less fluctuation at work/more loyalty (info transfer is at times difficult) - More keen on experiments - Mistakes are ok 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mistakes are severe and could lead to loss of face
<p>→ ‚Deutscher Perfektionismus meets Dutch Pragmatismus‘</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different expectations - Problems of interpretations - Different self-conception - Would be an ideal combination 	

Does the interest for cooperation come from both sides?

In terms of the Wirtschaftsförderung teams, both sides are enthusiastic and willingly to cooperate. In terms of OMT and MG/VVV, no interest is shown from either side.

Most business clients of Denies are by recommendation through WOM from other businesses. Further awareness of this idea is presented at events and fairs and on the website. It is financed privately and the coaching is paid by the clients.

What are possibly the major problems/ fields of conflict for this city partnership and cooperation?

Both sides are not realising enough effort to do more, a shared vision do be willingly working together and to create synergies is not present sufficiently. This is the basis for joint projects. Both want more cooperation results but few efforts are shown, and if one side is more enthusiastic, it could pull the other one. As OTM and VVV do not have any direct competition, no ‘need’ to cooperate is seen. Very low fluctuation within the tourism official teams supports the gridlocked situation.

Long time ago, OTM team learned a bit Dutch to please and welcome Dutch tourists better, a 24 h seminar provided information – telephone requests, service point, pronunciation, offering products, presentation of city – this ended after a short period already. It is a lot of additional effort to learn a new language and to invest into familiarisation with a new culture. OTM tried to realise this after work with few human resource/ capacities which are negative preconditions.

Another major problem is the language barrier which is at times exhausting to learn or to deal with. Also legislative regulations, cultural differences are difficult for cooperations.

What does a DENIES workshop look like?

Main work of DENIES includes: German Dutch communications, "Nederlands" in practice for Germans and business German for the Dutch, coaching and consulting for business set ups, cultural offers to familiarize with other culture, consulting and advising, translations (<http://denies.de/>). All types of business are clients. Wirtschaftsförderung workshop: duration of 40 hours with the aim to understand each others culture and language actively and passively. Small talk was trained to communicate and to also work on the websites. The right situation must be given as well as the desire to work together and to invest in it. Learning from each other to generate synergies is important as well as to agree on compromises.

The ideal work shop: 2 days with 1 day in NL and day 2 in Germany. First step: culture training: Where are the differences between NL/D, stereotypes, characteristics of this branch as all branches are very different. Be aware of own cultural habits and those of the partner. Second: to jointly elaborate the specific problems or the shared project of the client. Third: brainstorm ideas for solutions (put own ideas in the back and be open to new input) to adjust/ improve old traditions and methods. How are habit regarding answering via email, how much time to take for an answer, how are projects generally realized and worked on?, what are the budgets and how is the business working (family enterprise?), strategic direction to explain how what works, interpersonal importance: exchange of information for self-reflection and presentation to the partner. Show where deficits are.

Written and verbal agreements upon project steps need to be taken to confirm. Joint rituals e.g. intervals of meetings. Protocol minutes should be sent to every participant in their mother tongue to guarantee full understanding of the points. Continuous inquiries verify current agreements and ideas and avoid misunderstandings. A project manager overviews the adherence to agreements and the

process of the project. In this case, Mr Hentschel and Mr Torenbosch are these project managers with the right will to cooperate. Furthermore, it is necessary to respect sustainability: when the contact people change jobs or retire, expertise and contact details and all relevant information must be given to the next generation to guarantee further process towards successful city partnership.

What is necessary to successfully cooperate across the Dutch – German border?

What are you/ DENIES doing to support successful cooperation?

Dutch is easy to learn for Germans as it is similar, also German is easy to learn for the neighbours. Enthusiasm and the willingness to learn something new will show fast success and improvement. To approach another culture in their language is a very positive way to increase a positive attitude, and to further business.

It is important to translate promotional material into each language and to adapt to the media landscape. However, this is costly and time consuming and requires HR.

Differences can also lead to synergy effects! Input from others and third parties can serve as self-reflection. Working together is like 'Spiegel vorhalten' to analyse own behaviour and customs. Personnel transfer is possible, thus additional value increases. Constant communication and continuous effort are necessary.

Hard work is necessary in the beginning to establish joint projects and to make cooperation a matter of course. Diverse, creative, attention grabbing marketing strategies will increase popularity and awareness and soon, a constant base of cooperation and interest is created to generate further synergies. Public Express is already working very well as they are present throughout the cities and advertise efficiently. To acquire new contacts is not the problem! Targeted marketing and communication are important. The Netherlands or Germany respectively need to be defined more as target groups.

Cooperation is getting more common! The great potential of border regions will benefit from both sides of the border and does not stop there. The radius increased, also the reach of marketing. 'Use the disadvantage border land.'

*** The author states: No transcripts will be given to other interviewees with respect to protecting personal opinion of the interviewee and to not support institutional misunderstandings and resentment.***

Appendix M 1: Major Stakeholders and Events

Oldenburg

Oldenburg Tourismus und Marketing GmbH - OTM

(source: OTM 2007)

DMO – official tourism authority of OL and subsequently named OTM. Founded in 2001, OTM is carried and financed by the city of Oldenburg and the 'Verkehrsverein Oldenburg'.

Major tasks include:

- advancement of tourism and marketing for OL
- development and promotion of tourism services and products
- increase of level of awareness, image building and elaboration of OL strengths and benefits
- representation of the city at institutions and interest groups
- acquisition of sponsorships to realize marketing strategies
- general tourism services: guest information, city tours, accommodation service, souvenirs, travel offers and packages
- marketing tools: advertisements and announcements, guidebooks, accommodation lists, posters; press information, press trips and conferences; information stands in the city, region and supraregional; fairs (in B or HH); Internet page www.oldenburg-tourist.de ; an online-based information and booking system; active distribution of info in city and region; CRM with regular guests
- advertisement campaigns and annual marketing plan; PR; evaluation; market research
- new tasks: City Marketing Oldenburg including continuous position in city competition; Quality Management; Event Management
- focus on project based cooperations; e.g. CMO

Department of Economic Affairs – Oldenburger Wirtschaftsförderung & Büro für Internationale Beziehungen

(source: Stadt Oldenburg 2009)

A sub-department of the city of Oldenburg hereafter referred to as OL **WFIB**. The Office for International Relations was formerly named Office for Communal Partnerships. Since 2006, a new focus is on internationality to further strategic development. Promotion of economics and development of cooperation with partner cities and communes run parallel as both are interrelated. An international direction and improvement of partnerships is the aim. There are various aspects of cooperation, e.g. in economic and in tourism, some are more formal while others are less formal to be eventually finished easier. Major tasks include:

- promotion of innovation
- regional cooperations and projects (also in the Metropolis region Oldenburg – Bremen)
- international relations especially also with the partner cities and China
- EU matters such as application for subsidies and EU projects
- cooperation of universities and academic institutions
- support of business set-ups and spin-offs directly from university
- technology transfer
- cluster management in energy, IT and fields of media
- presentations and trade fairs

The city of Oldenburg works on the planning and realization of tourism projects and then major marketing tasks pass over to OTM as an integrated institution of the city.

Mrs Lehnert-Jenisch and Mr Hentschel have been interview partners in this thesis.

Groningen

Marketing Groningen VVV – MG / VVV

(source: Marketing Groningen 2009)

DMO - official tourism authority of GR and financed mainly by the city of Groningen. Marketing Groningen was established 1 April 2003 and is the bureau for the city of Groningen's tourist marketing. Marketing Groningen's most important task is to develop and communicate the tourist profile of the city of Groningen in a proactive manner. The slogan "Er gaat niets boven Groningen" (There is no place like Groningen), one of the most famous in the Netherlands, is just one promotional tool used for the city and province of Groningen. The VVV - Groningen Tourist Information Office and the Groningen Uitburo (special for nightlife and events bureau) are both part of Marketing Groningen. This organisation's goal is to generate more visitors to Groningen: visitors who may return and spend more money in the city and province. Major tasks include:

- provide tourist information about the city and province of Groningen and rest of NL
- selling of souvenirs with the slogan "*Er gaat niets boven Groningen*"
- ticketing to large events, pop concerts, etc.
- overnight accommodation in hotels, packages, city tours with a Tourist Information Office guide
- Special for cultural events: The recently launched Groningen Uitburo, at www.groningeruitburo.nl is a website which covers entertainment activities in the city and its surroundings, such as exhibitions, theatre and dance, and sports events and fairs.
- Marketing Groningen works closely with the tourist trade and industry, as well as with various umbrella organisations such as the **GCC** (Groningen City Club) and the Groningen Congress Bureau, the objective being to put "There is no place like Groningen" on the map as recognisably and univocally as possible.

Department for Urban Planning and Economic Affairs – City of Groningen

Policy Development Section

(source: Interview)

The 'Groninger Wirtschaftsförderung' will hereafter be named **DUPEA**. In short, the major tasks are the preparation of information about the site city of Groningen for business development, support for business start-ups, or application for EU subsidies, networking for EU projects, as well as regional and international affairs in terms of economy. The tasks are similar to the 'Oldenburger Wirtschaftsförderung'. However, no integrated 'Office for International Relations' exists for Groningen.

Close cooperation with all partner cities is aimed for. And for particular projects, different groups of people with specific expertise gather to work on this project. The assignment of tasks depends therefore on the project itself and on its intensity. Special focus towards Germany is on Oldenburg (as a partner city), Bremen and Hamburg. In general, the economic focus for development and networking is on northern Europe, across Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Poland Russia, and the three Baltic states.

Mr Tolner and Mr Torenbosch have been interview partners in this thesis.

No interview partners, however considered important are two further institutions:

CMO

City Management Oldenburg is a voluntary association of numerous institutions of Oldenburg. Retail shops, banks but also private people are members. Their overall aim is to improve the attractiveness of the inner city of Oldenburg by realising diverse promotional events like shopping guides and open Sundays for shopping, city decoration. Pleasurable experiences shall be motivations to come to the city.

The **GCC** Groningen City Club is the equivalent in Groningen as has similar ambitions.

Independent private businesses are described next as independent stakeholders:

Public Express – Private Bus

(source: Interview)

This is in the following called PX. This private (and therewith independent of political influence) bus enterprise has been founded in 2004 by Dipl. Ing. Mr Christoph Marquardt. It is the only transport company operating busses on the route from Groningen to Oldenburg to Bremen and its airport. Diverse marketing and promotional campaigns, also in cooperation, have been realised within both cities. Every day also on holidays, they offer rides on four times a day driving continuously between the three cities. On special occasions like the Flower Market more busses are accommodating the increased demand. An expansion is planned and also realized at the moment. One way and return tickets can be bought online, at numerous subsidiaries like travel agencies or the tourist info, or directly at the bus. Students of the Oldenburg University enjoy a discount on all fairs. Children up to 16 years just pay € 1. It has already a good reputation and is famous. Good word of mouth communication spread the benefits of Public Express across the cities. Next to the own car, it is seen as the best means of transportation and many prefer it to car or train, as it offers the fastest connection for a fair price without the need for parking lot search.

DENIES

(source: DENIES 2009)

This stands for ‚Deutsch-Niederländisches Servicecenter für Sprache und Kommunikation‘. DENIES has been founded in 2000 by Dipl. pedagogue Mrs Bettina Fabich. It is situated in Oldenburg in the ‚Technologie und Gründerzentrum‘. It is specialized in the German – Dutch dialogue and operates on both sides of the border. DENIES offers a unique mixture of qualified trainings and specialized services. The aim is to support cooperation between Dutch and German institutions and to strengthen their business successes in the long terms. Own experience led to the establishment of this concept to work on avoidance of misunderstandings based on cultural differences. Many cooperation efforts have been ended after such misunderstandings between the Dutch and German colleagues. Cultural training in workshops and language lessons aim at bringing both sides closer together. This business idea is one of the top 15 within the ‚Gründungswettbewerbs PROMotion‘ in the region of Weser-Ems in 2000.

Events in Oldenburg**Lambertmarkt**

Annual Christmas Market in Oldenburg. It usually runs from 25 November to 22 December each year. The inner city is decorated with lights and Christmas accessories. Typical booths with hot spiced wine and other liqueurs, gingerbread and other dishes as well as handicrafts, horse-riding and rollercoaster attract people from the region and the Dutch who do not have comparable Christmas markets. This is the major occasion for residents from Groningen to visit Oldenburg.

Events in Groningen**Promotiedagen**

This is one of the largest business and economic trade fair events in north NL and takes place in Groningen every year (4 and 5 November 2008). It is mainly a B2B trade fair with 700 exhibitors of all branches and more than 30,000 visitors. It is a platform to promote OL in NL. Also the city of OL with OTM and ‚Oldenburger Wirtschaftsförderung‘ has been present with 14 businesses and institutions from OL to be present as an entity to the Dutch business world. They shared a 100 sqm booth and created the ‚Oldenburg Mile-Oldenburg Plein‘. Public Express organized shuttle transfer for business people on both days.

Flower Market

Every year on Good Friday, Groningen welcomes more than 150, 000 visitors to the ‚bloemenjaarmarkt‘. In the inner city, on the market places and around the churches, numerous stands sell an uncountable amount of different, local and exotic flowers. While in Germany all shops are closed as it is a public holiday, all shops in Groningen are open as on a regular day. Thus, shopping, dining and the experience of a new diversity of flowers can be combined and enjoyed.

Appendix M: Cultural Analysis after Hofstede

Working with others is determined by communication and also the city partnership and cooperation is realized through exchanging information via communication. Based on Hofstede's dimensions, important aspects for doing business between NL and D were elaborated to show possible problems.

Germany 35	Power Distance Index	Netherlands 38
Both countries score similar. There is a relatively great equality of power and wealth between societal levels and organizations. This orientation reinforces a cooperative interaction across power levels and creates a more stable cultural environment. For business, this is beneficial as decisions can be made not only by the highest authority, but creative marketers can influence change and advancement on various levels. Various stakeholders have the possibility to influence e.g. the image significantly.		
67	Individualism Index	80
NL is on 4 th position worldwide. They are very individualistic, have rather loose bonds with others and mainly look after themselves and their closest family. In both countries, people stress on individual achievement and personal rights. Group work is considered very important, however the individual, free thinking and independent opinions are expected and are positive for creativity and for gaining new perspectives in terms of tourism development.		
66	Masculinity	14
This dimension reflects the greatest difference. NL is more 'feminine' than Germany indicating a low level of differentiation and discrimination between genders. Females and males are treated equally in all aspects of society. Also 'female values' such as modesty and caring dominate in NL whilst D is more masculine with rather masculine traits like competition, assertiveness, power, strength, individual achievements and materialism. There is a greater difference between males and females in society in Germany.		
65	Uncertainty Avoidance	53
The moderate UAI score of both countries indicates cultural tenancy to minimize or reduce the level of uncertainty by enacting rules, laws, policies and regulations to cover most circumstances. In terms of business, there is enough room to be open to new, innovative input but there are also guidelines for doing business. Thus, market research and thoughtful planning to reduce the risk are common for both. Change may occur slower in D than in NL and new structures may be implemented after a longer time of preparation, as D is still more in need for certainty.		
31	Long-Term Orientation	44
Both countries share a societal belief in meeting their obligations. The scores reflect an appreciation for cultural traditions. Planning is based upon rational decisions with beneficial impact for the next generations and with care of cultural, traditional values.		

(IBC: 2004; for detailed information on the dimensions please refer to Hofstede 2009a or 2009b)

In terms of this cultural comparison one can say that the Netherlands and Germany are fairly similar. Four of five dimensions are scored similar, with major differences in the Individualism and the Masculinity dimensions. Both countries' characteristics encourage individual thinking and are open to new developments and innovations, with an appreciation for tradition and values and thus with the ideal of sustainable advancement in mind. Discussions may be dominated by the Germans as they pursue to assert their ideas. The Netherlands may easier accommodate to agree upon a compromise while Germany might appear more like 'tough business.' As both are 'individualists' team members are more self-reliant and independent, NL might appear more considerate, relating to their 'feminine traits'. Independence and freedom of expression are highly valued in the two countries.

Appendix N: Public Express Advertisements

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 in der Innenstadt
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2. Wie oft am Tag
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 Groningen?

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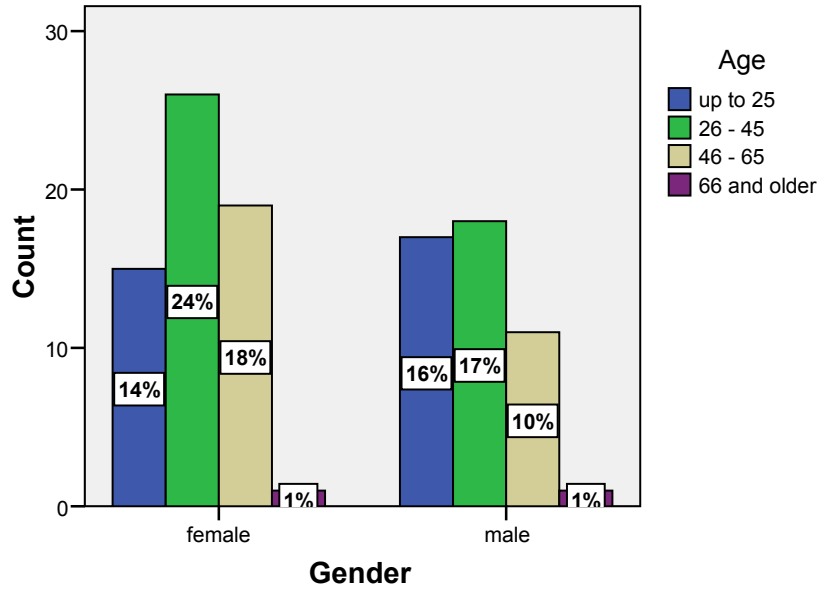
Mit Publicexpress naar
 KIBUM in Oldenburg

Oldenburg

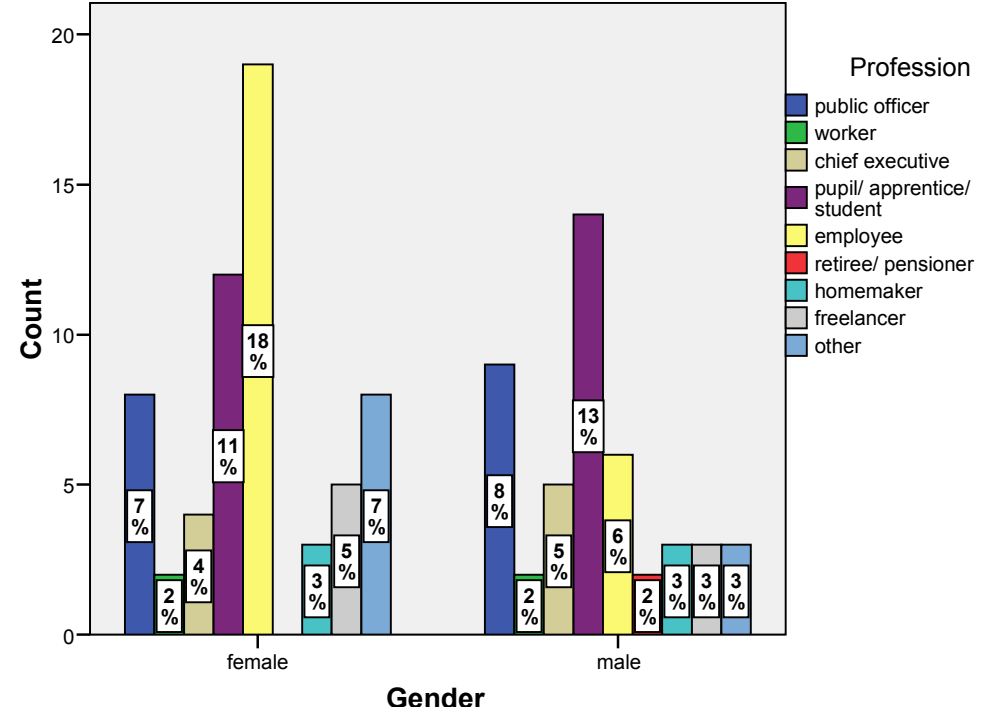
www.publicexpress.nl
 Infotelefoon: 0640 (0) 180 500 85 58

Appendix O: Image of Groningen by OL residents who have been there

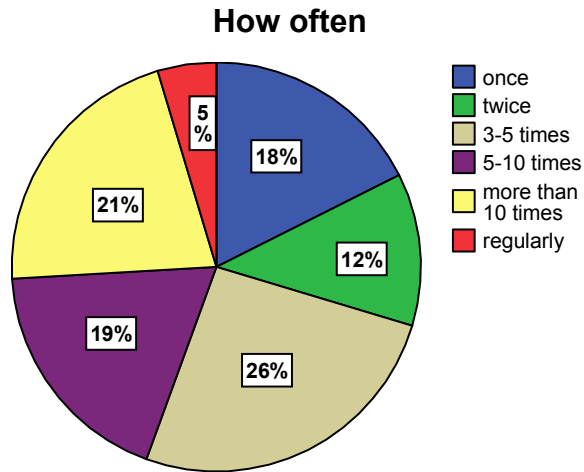
(A) Age * Gender



(B) Profession * Gender



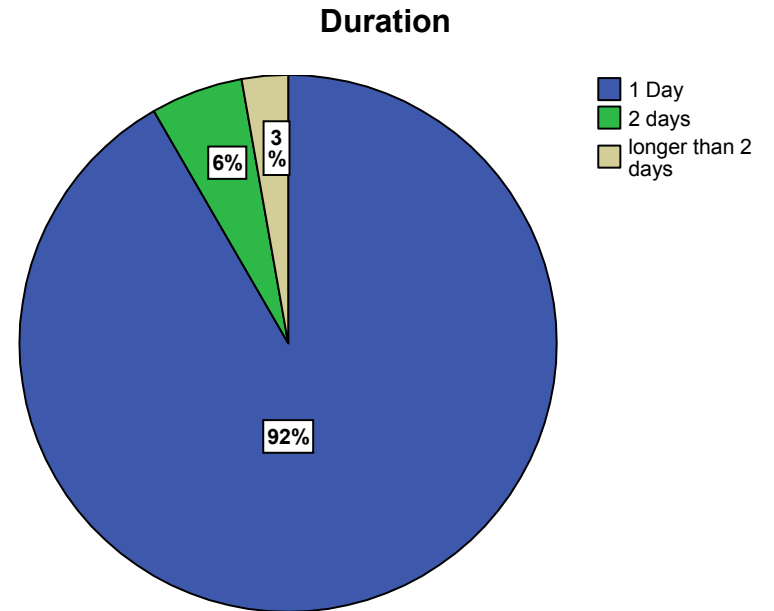
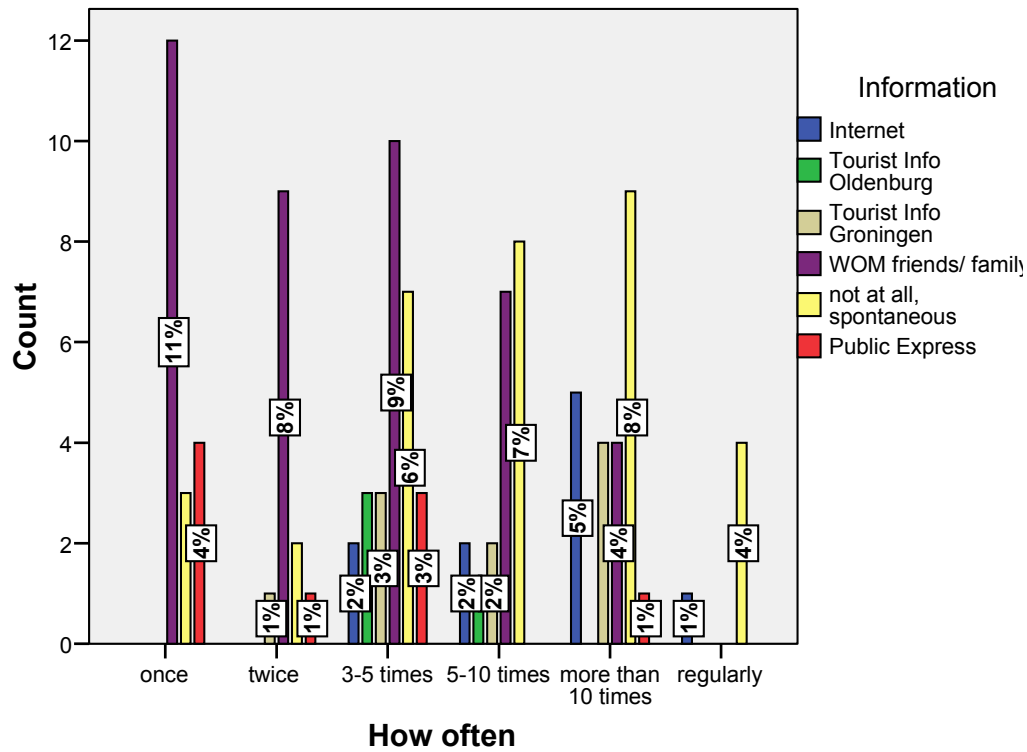
(C) Number of times been to Groningen



Appendix O: Image of Groningen by OL residents who have been there (con't)

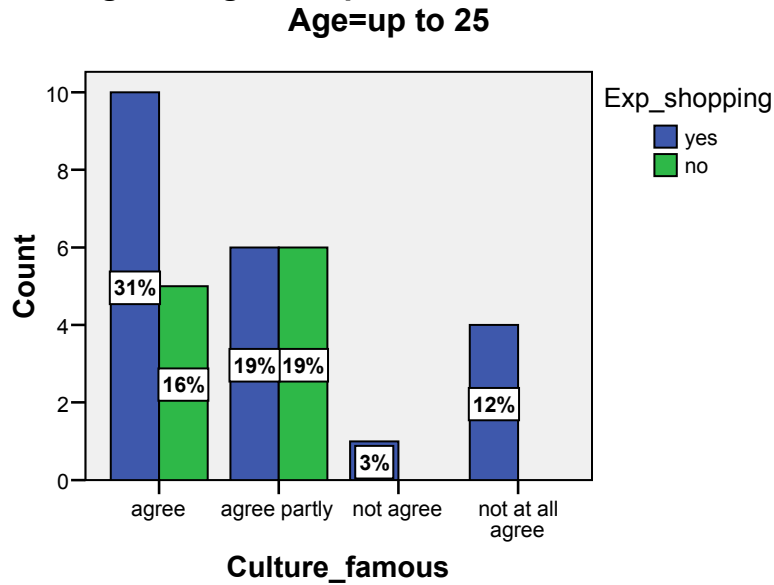
(D) Information Sources * Number of Times to Groningen

(E) Length of Stay in %

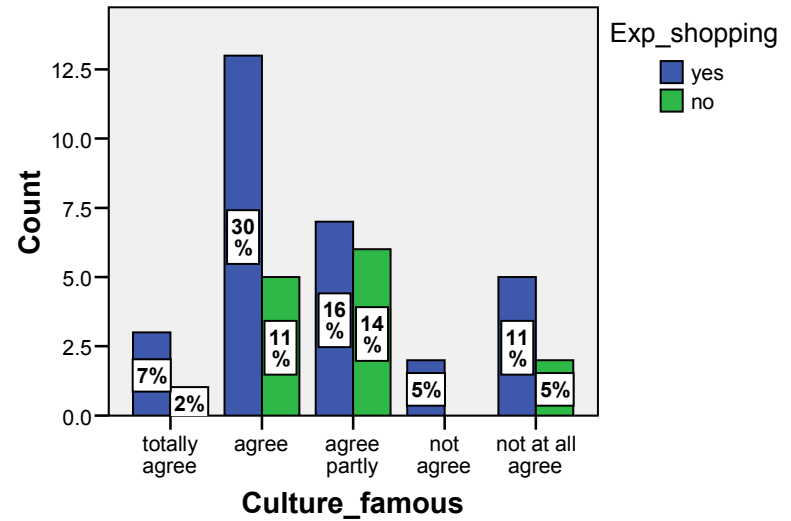


Appendix O: The image of Groningen by OL citizen who have been there (con't)

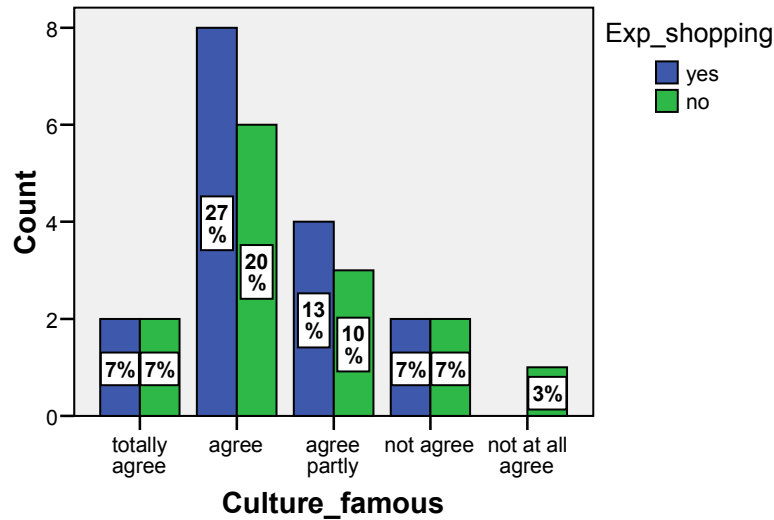
(F) Correlation between interest in shopping and culture Findings for Age Group 1 Age=up to 25



(G) Findings for Age Group 2 Age=26 - 45

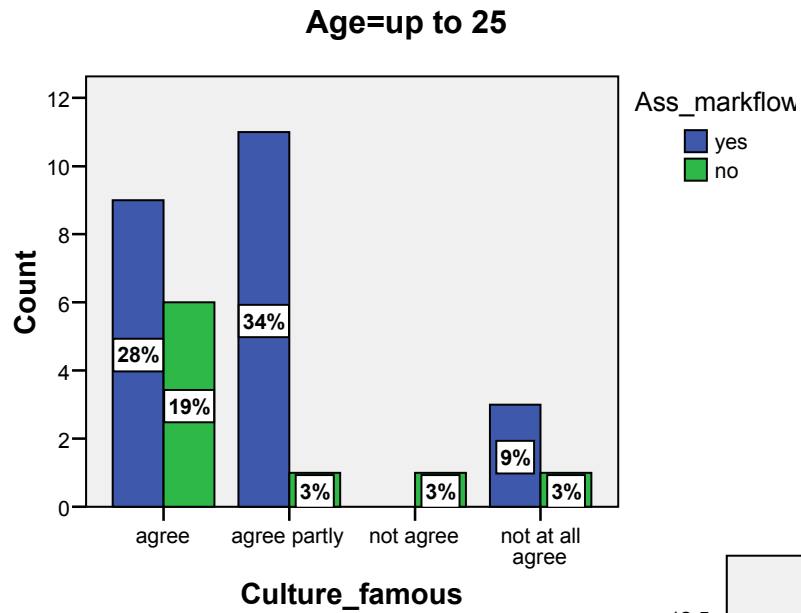


(H) Findings for Age Group 3 Age 46 – 65 years

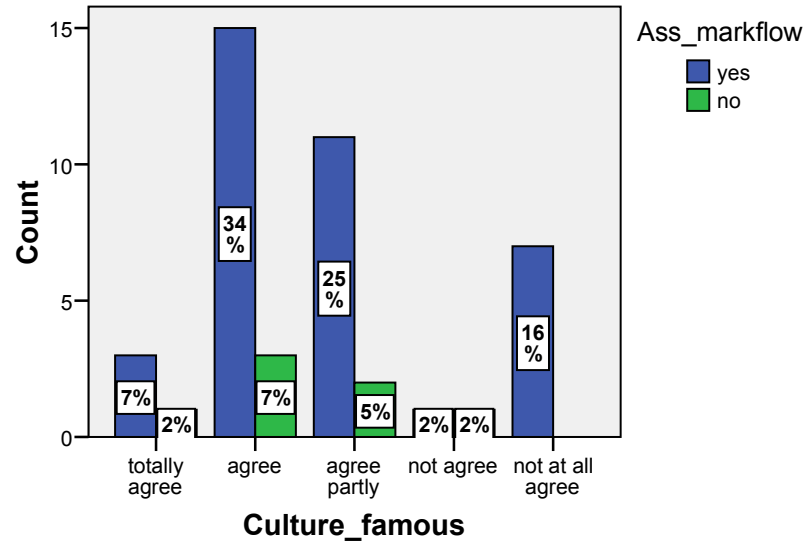


Appendix O: Image of Groningen by OL residents who have been there (con't)

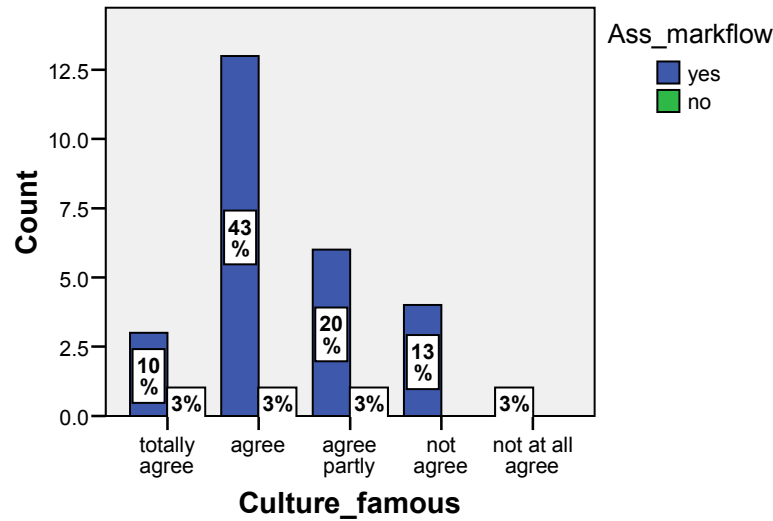
**(I) Correlation between culture and associations with markets and flowers
Findings for Age Group 1
Age=up to 25**



**(K) Findings for Age Group 2
Age=26 - 45**



**(L) Findings for Age Group 3
46 to 65 years**

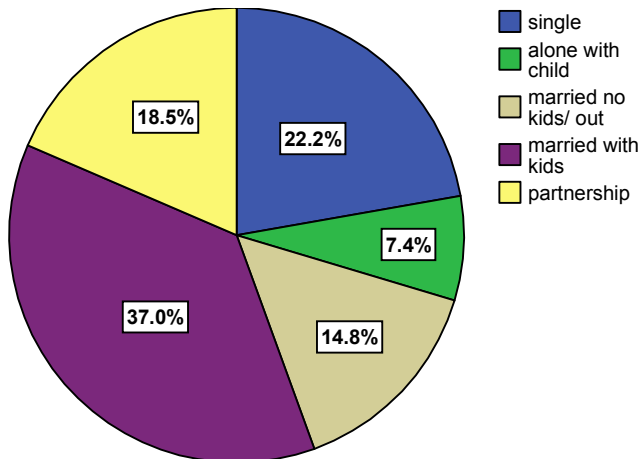
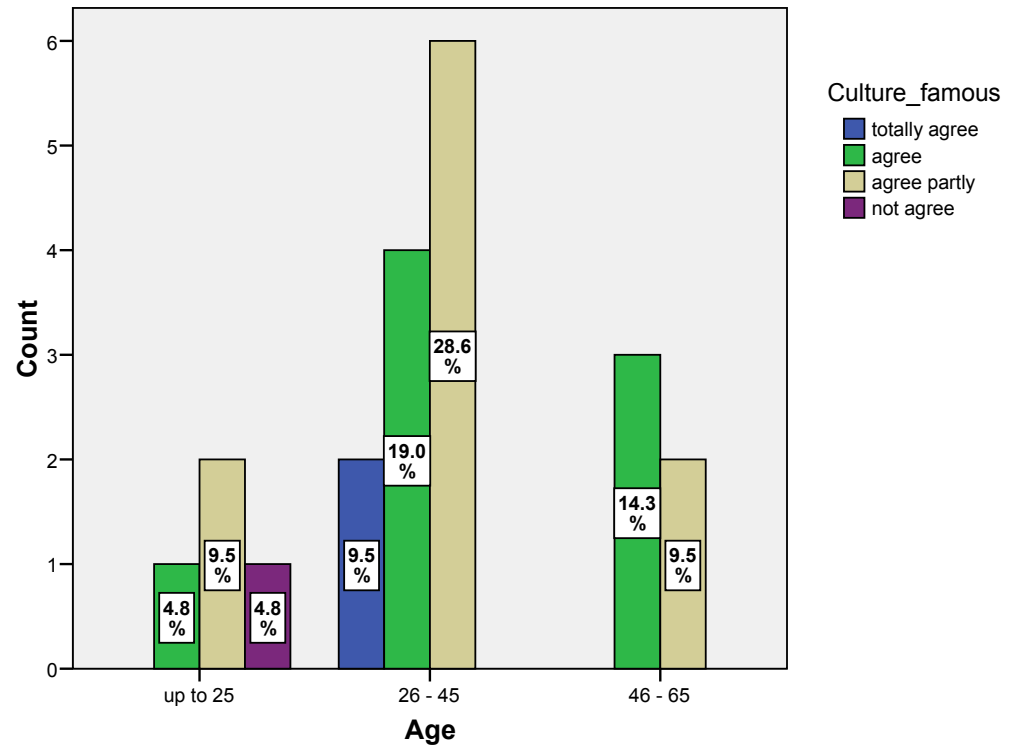


Appendix P: Image of Groningen by residents of OL who have not been there

(A) Combined attractions of shopping with markets and flowers (by gender)



(B) Combined attractions of shopping and culture (by age groups) Association with shopping=yes



(C) Status of all Respondents

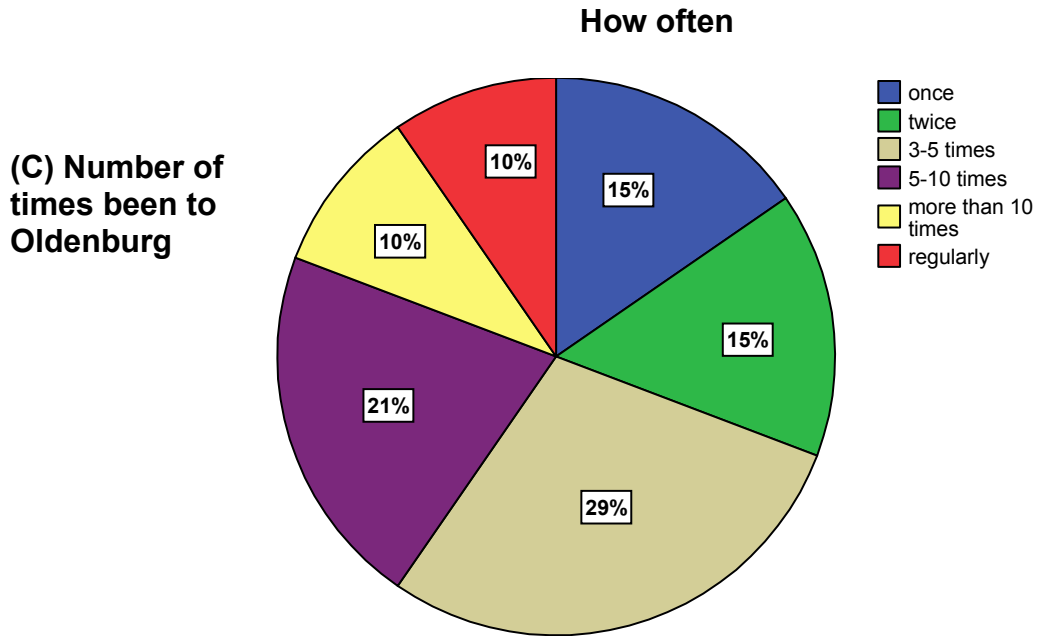
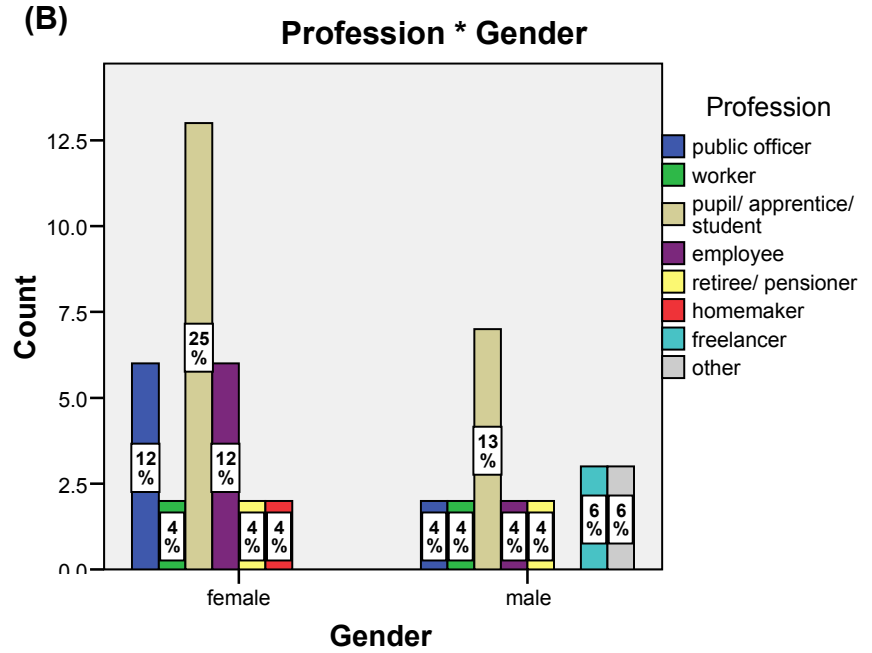
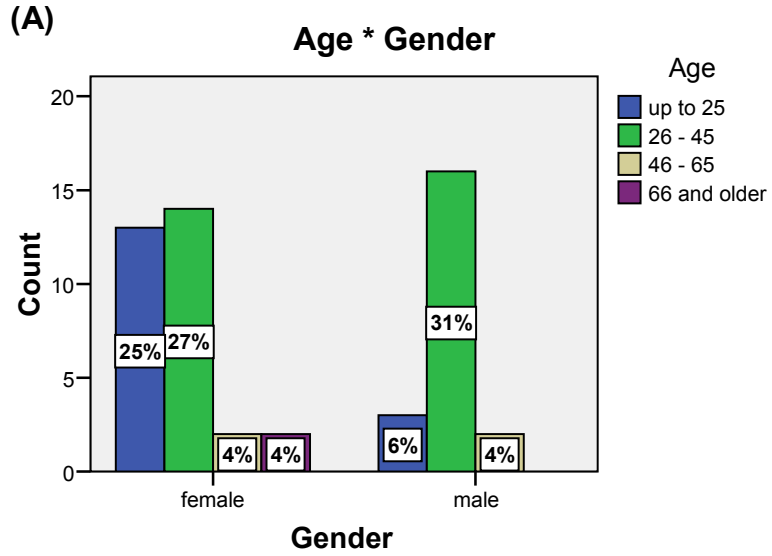
Appendix Q: Image Analysis of GRONINGEN in Numbers

Comparison of Perceived and Promoted Image:

- 1) Yes, been to Groningen
- 2) No, not been to Groningen
- 3) MG/ VVV (DMO in Groningen)

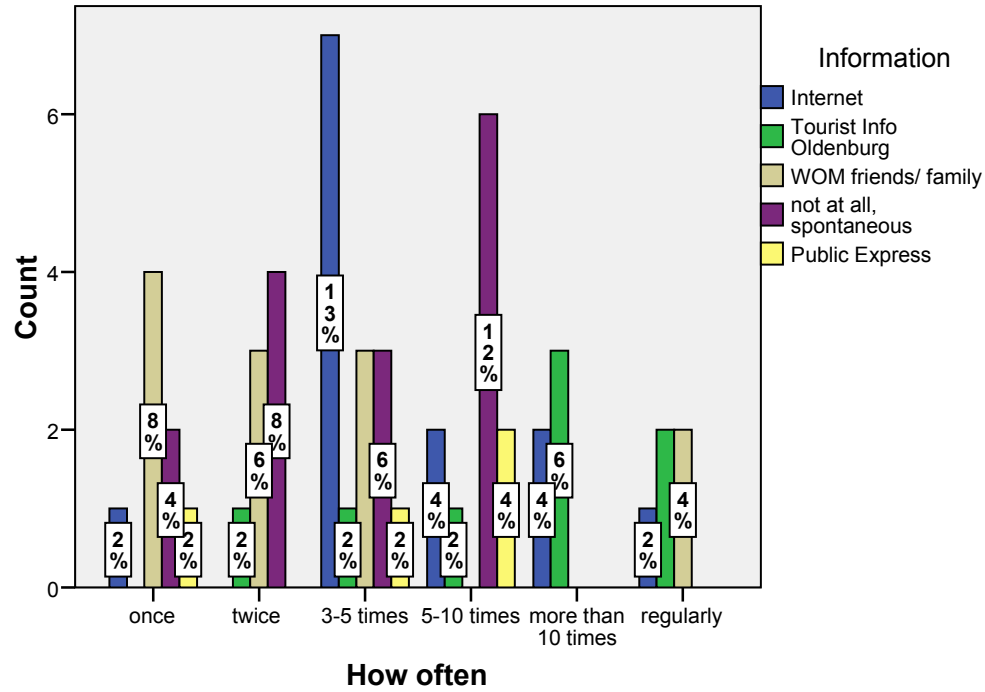
In %, rounded up or down	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	Trifft zu +	Keine Aussage/ keine Ahnung 0	Trifft zu +	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	
Großstadtflair	6 7 7	40 27	13 60	35 10	6 3	Kleinstadtflair, provinziell
Schmutzig	4 0	9 10	25 77	54 10	8 3	Sauber
Bekannt	43 43	49 23	11 27	6 10	0 3	Unbekannt
Ausgestorben, langweilig	0 0	3 7	16 40	45 40	36 10	Lebendig
Familienfreundlich, gastfreundlich	25 14 7	53 70	12 37	7 0	3 0	Unfreundlich, wenig servicebereit
Beeindruckende Stadt, Sehenswürdigkeiten	11 7 7	51 40	31 47	3 7	0 0	Nicht interessant, enttäuschend
Unattraktiv	0 0	6 3	15 47	53 47	25 7	Attraktiv
Schöne Atmosphäre	41 7 7	48 40	7 47	3 7	1 0	Keine Atmosphäre, langweilig
Abwechslungsreich: Markt/ Wochenmärkte	40 23 7	49 40	10 37	1 3	0 0	Fehlende bzw. kleine Marktszene, eintönig
Moderne Museen	12 0 7	31 30	56 66	0 3	0 0	Konventionelle Museen
Eintöniges, wenig ansprechendes Freizeitangebot	1 0	4 7	60 53	26 37	9 3	Weltoffene Kulturveranstaltungen
Vielfältige und regionale Restaurants	7 3 7	53 23	37 63	3 13	0 0	Unattraktive Restaurants
Gutes Preis-Leistungs-Verhältnis, preiswert	6 7	31 23	45 57	10 0	3 0	Zu teuer, teurer als in der Heimat
Gute Erreichbarkeit, Parken, Tagesausflug	44 20	51 40	3 37	2 0	0 0	Zu große Entfernung von OL, relativ weit
Überlaufen, Touristenort	6 10	55 17	34 70	8 7	0 0	Einsam, Geheimtip

Appendix R: Image of Oldenburg by GR residents who have been there

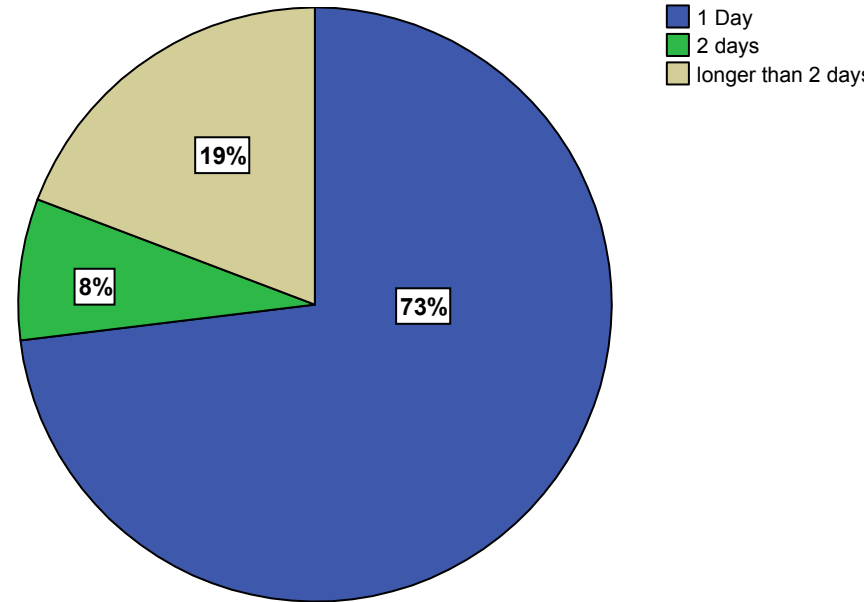


Appendix R: Image of Oldenburg by GR residents who have been there con't

(D) Information Sources * Number of Times been to Oldenburg

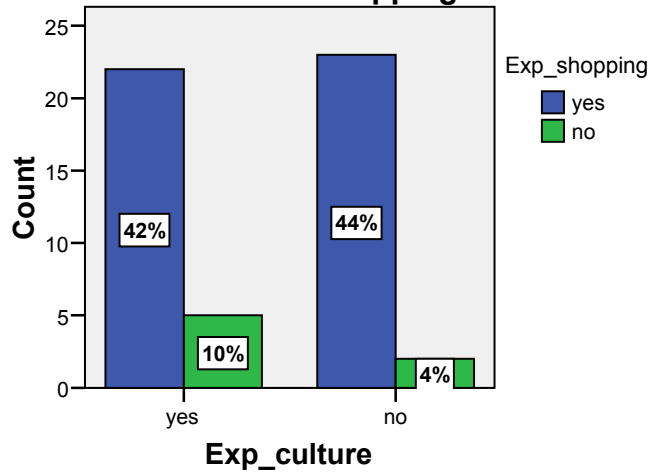


(E) Length of Stay

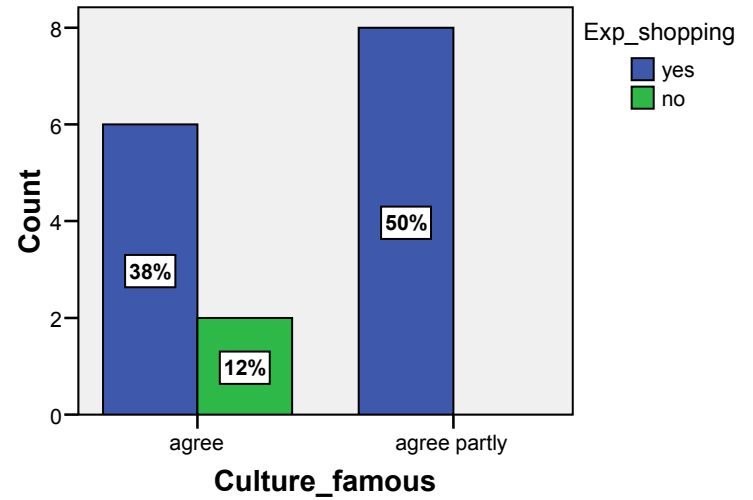


Appendix R: Image of Oldenburg by GR residents who have been there con't

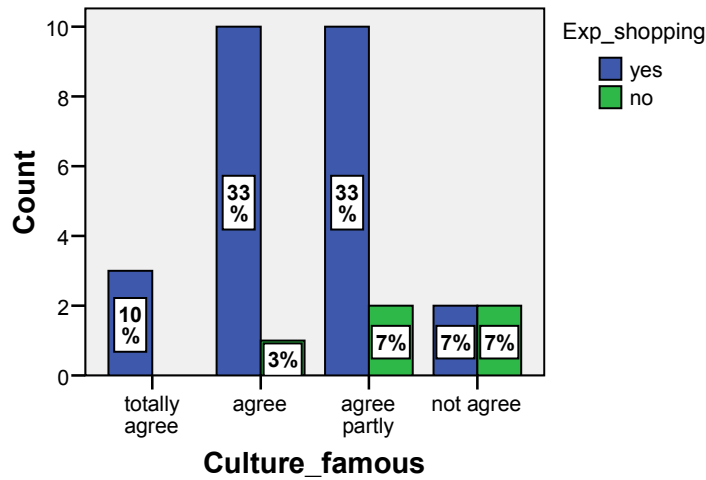
(F) Shared Interest in Shopping & Culture



(G) Correlation between interest in shopping and culture Findings for Age Group 1 Age=up to 25



(H) Findings for Age Group 2 Age=26 - 45

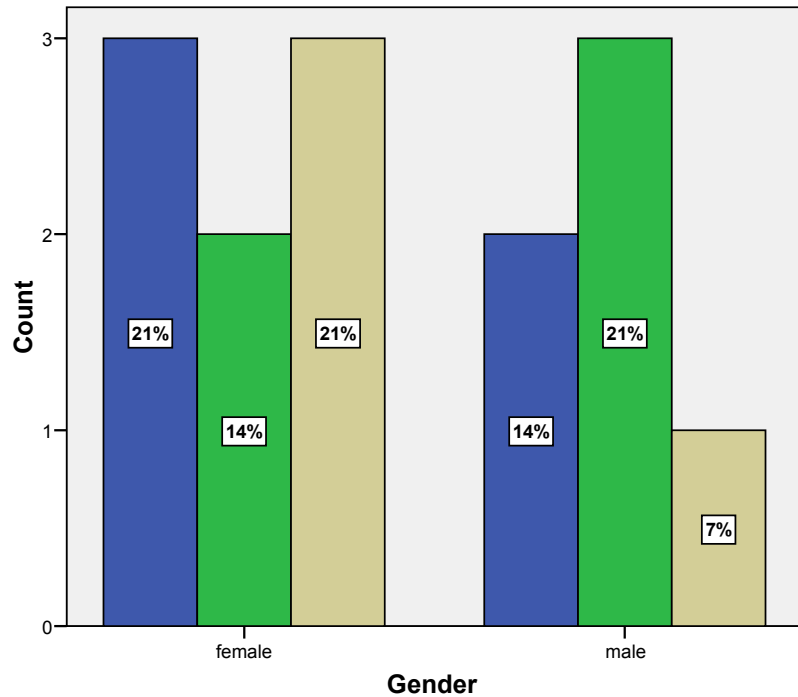


Appendix S: Image of Oldenburg by residents of Groningen who have not been there

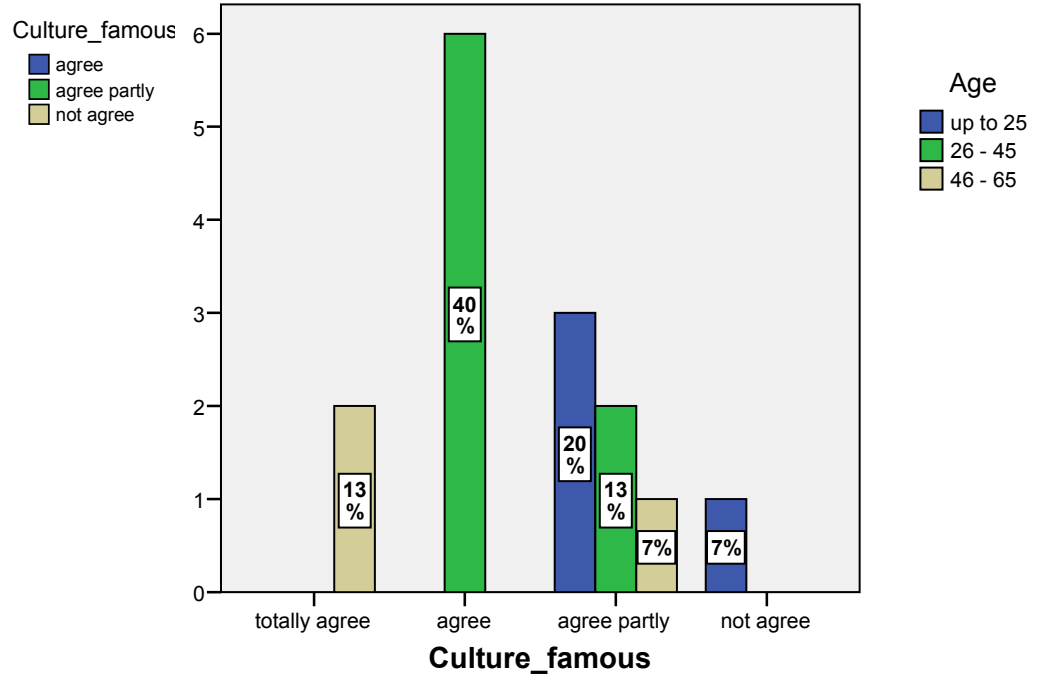
(A) Respondents planning to go to Oldenburg and their assessment of culture Presented by gender

(B) Assessment of culture by respondents in age groups with association of shopping

Plan Oldenburg=yes



Association with shopping=yes



Appendix T: Image Analysis of OLDENBURG in Numbers

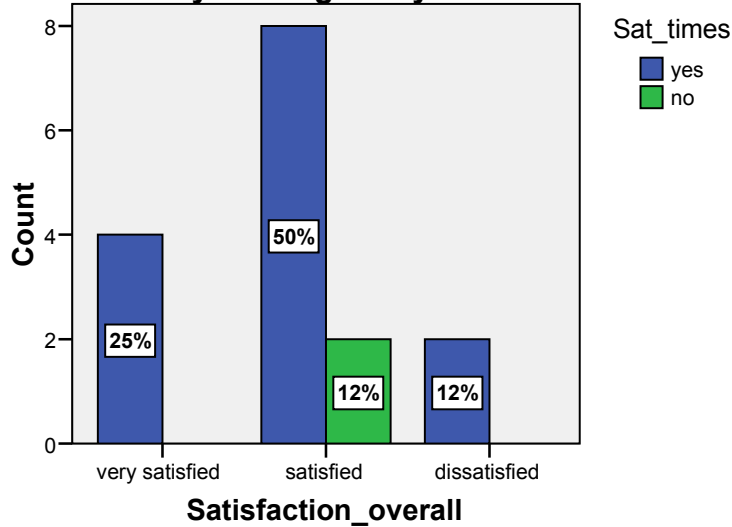
Comparison of Perceived and Promoted Image:

- 1) Yes, been to Oldenburg
- 2) No, not been to Oldenburg
- 3) OTM (DMO in Oldenburg)

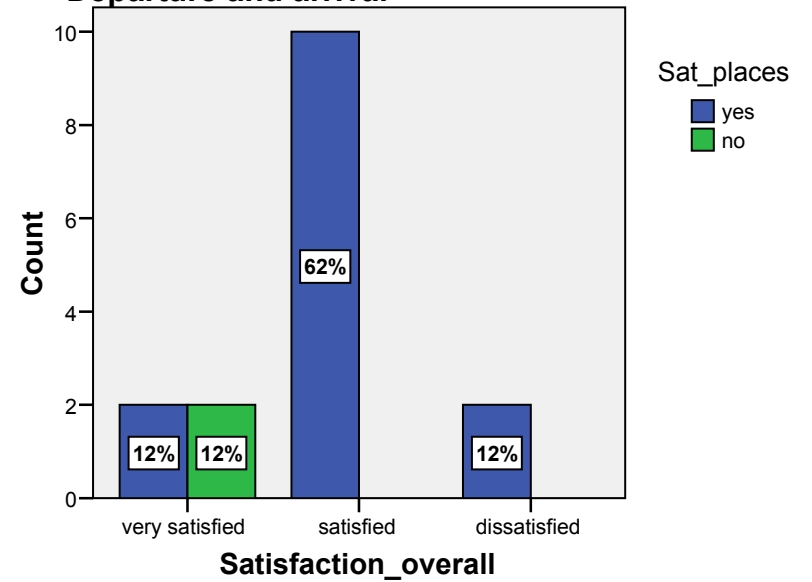
In % rounded up or down	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	Trifft zu +	Keine Aussage/ keine Ahnung 0	Trifft zu +	Trifft vollkommen zu ++	
Großstadtflair	4 4	50 20	15 48	31 24	0 4	Kleinstadtflair, provinziell
Schmutzig	0 0	4 8	15 44	35 40	46 8	Sauber
Bekannt	15 4	38 40	23 32	19 20	4 4	Unbekannt
Ausgestorben, langweilig	0 0	0 0	27 64	58 28	15 8	Lebendig
Familienfreundlich, gastfreundlich	31 4	46 60	8 36	15 4	0 0	Unfreundlich, wenig servicebereit
Beeindruckende Stadt, Sehenswürdigkeiten	15 4	52 52	31 28	8 8	0 4	Nicht interessant, enttäuschend
Unattraktiv	0 4	0 16	12 36	62 36	23 8	Attraktiv
Schöne Atmosphäre	31 0	46 56	0 36	23 8	0 0	Keine Atmosphäre, langweilig
Abwechslungsreich: Markt/ Wochenmärkte	19 4	42 40	35 56	4 0	0 0	Fehlende bzw. kleine Marktszene, eintönig
Moderne Museen	4 0	15 16	73 72	8 8	0 4	Konventionelle Museen
Eintöniges, wenig ansprechendes Freizeitangebot	4 4	4 12	65 68	16 27	0 0	Weltoffene Kulturveranstaltungen
Vielfältige und regionale Restaurants	12 0	50 36	23 60	15 0	0 4	Unattraktive Restaurants
Gutes Preis-Leistungs-Verhältnis, preiswert	15 0	54 44	27 48	4 8	0 0	Zu teuer, teurer als in der Heimat
Gute Erreichbarkeit, Parken, Tagesausflug	35 16	50 60	4 20	12 8	0 0	Zu große Entfernung von OL, relativ weit
Überlaufen, Touristenort	0 0	23 12	54 72	23 16	0 0	Einsam, Geheimtip

Appendix U1: Public Express Guest Satisfaction Survey
Repeat Public Express Users from Groningen

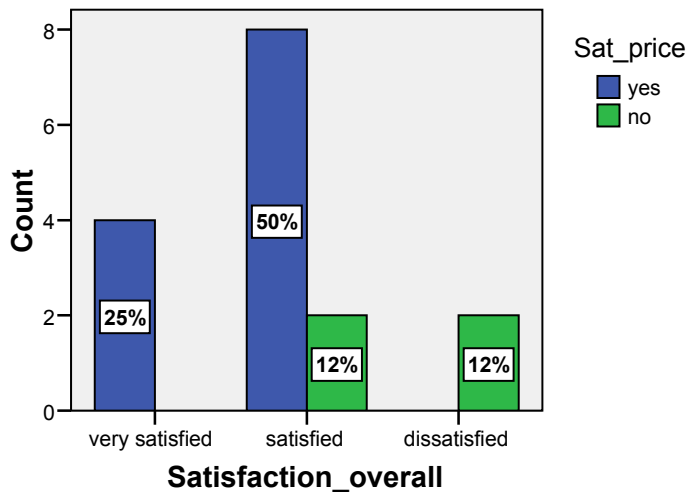
(A) Overall satisfaction and satisfaction with travel times - Punctuality and regularity



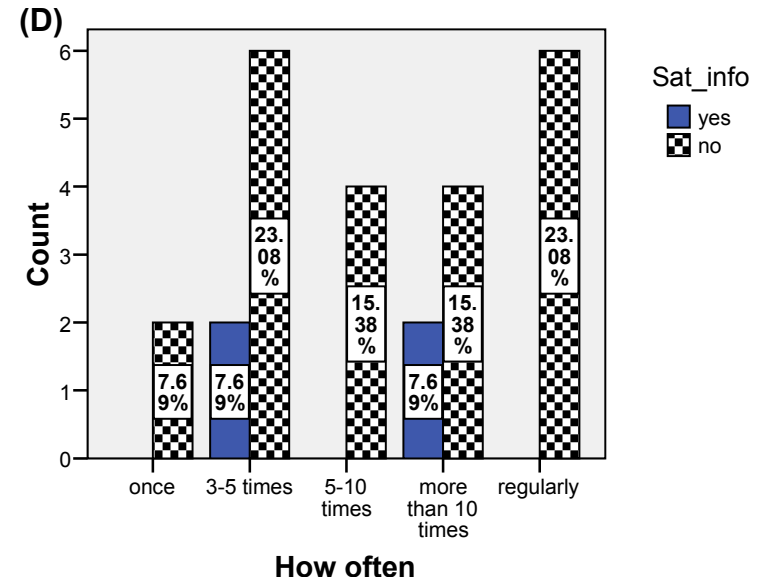
(B) Overall sat. and satisfaction with places - Departure and arrival



(C) Overall satisfaction and satisfaction with prices

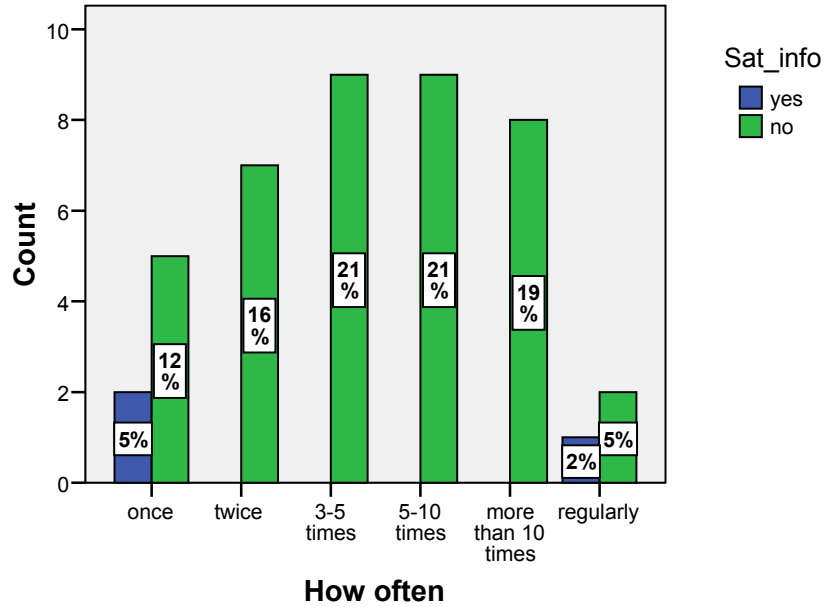


No Satisfaction with Information

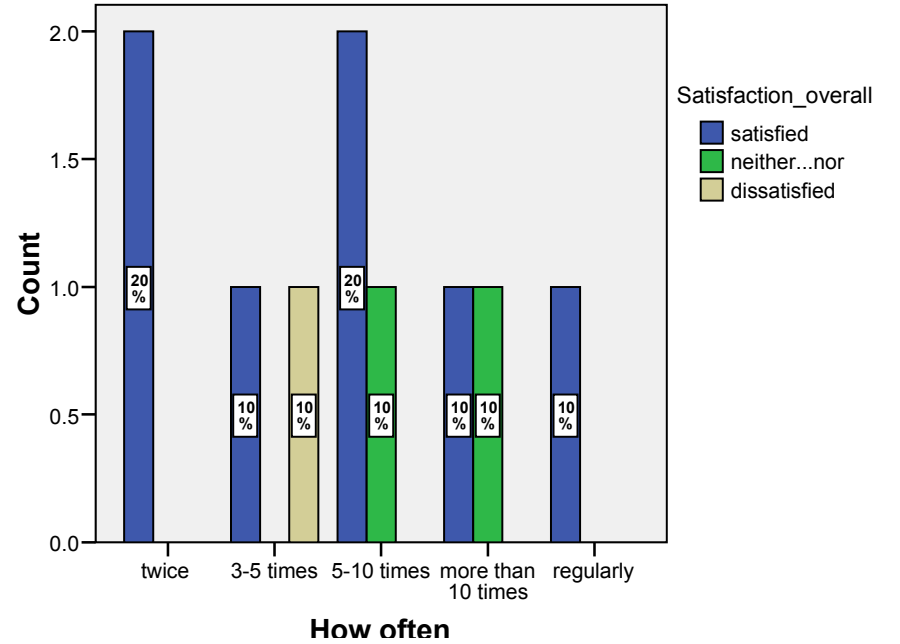


Appendix U2: Public Express Guest Satisfaction Survey (Passengers from OL)

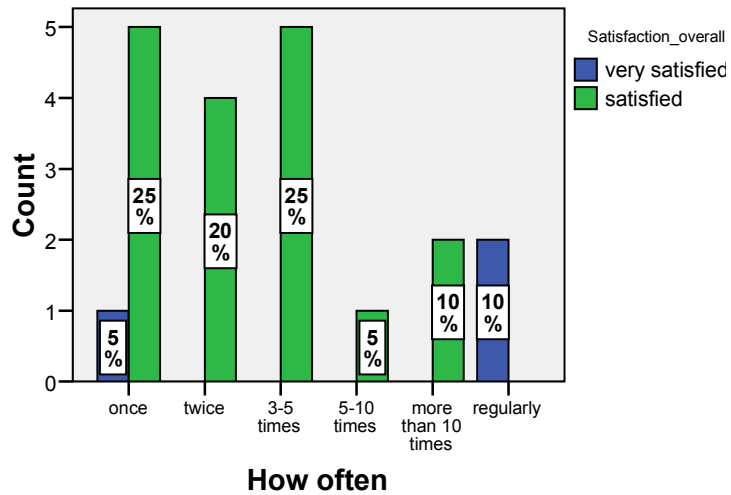
(A) No Satisfaction with Information



(C) Satisfaction * Number of Times in Groningen Age Group 26 to 45 yrs



(B) Satisfaction * Number of Times in Groningen Age Group up to 25 yrs





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Herewith I confirm

that this thesis is my own work, which was written without unauthorized assistance and that all references used are marked appropriately.

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