How to Implant an Intended Destination Image into the Tourists Mind
– the Case of Östersund, Sweden–

Bachelor Thesis
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Abstract

Each tourist has a unique mind. Every single tourist has different needs which need to be satisfied. When travelling, the needs of the customer have to be satisfied by the destination and its institutions. The destination’s governmental institutions and the tourist departments itself should therefore recognize and work with the needs of the tourists.

From this perspective the destination is the supplier of and the respective tourists demands the service provided by the destination. To focus now the supplier position, each destinations purpose should be to meet the tourists satisfaction and to create the will to return and to make the customer spread a good word-of-mouth.

Therefore the destination needs to work towards the understanding of the mind of the
tourists. This can be achieved by orientation towards a certain image. This image aims to make the destination unique and should simplify the recognition process of the destination in the market by the tourist. Each destination needs to distinguish itself from others.

The purpose of this paper is to explain the way destination marketing works and what needs to be done to implant a destination image into the tourists mind. The marketing claims that the occurrence of recognition and recall makes an image become actively recognized in the mind of customers. To visualize this case, the Swedish city Östersund, is examined to show how the responsible tourist information office succeeded with the implementation of their image into the tourists mind. To clarify this, a comparison is made from questionnaires hold in the summer and winter 2010 as well as an qualitative interview with the managing director of the tourist office in Östersund Camilla Olsson.
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Appendix
1 Introduction

In the first chapter the reader is told about the background of the thesis and its topic, the purpose of the thesis and its research questions are displayed, important terms are defined to ensure an overall understanding and some necessary delimitations as well as the scope of the thesis are presented.

1.1 Background

Destinations are the centrepiece of tourism. A destination is one product of the tourism industry, whose benefits and advantages need to be sold to the tourist. As far as the tourism industry does not consist of tangible products as produced and consumed in the traditional way, the difficulty of selling service products originates. Therefore knowledge about the characteristics of service products needs to be spread and used. Here appears the intangibility, which means that a service can not be seen nor touched before its consumption. Another characteristic is the simultaneous production and consumption of a service, which can not be separated. An additional detail are the different shapes a service can assume, no standardization of the service is possible. One last fact is the perishability, this makes the service product not storable for another point in time in the future. Furthermore one characteristic of the service sector is the importance of the customer, who intends to buy and exploit the service product. The tourism industry need to focus on the needs and wants of the tourist. Those needs and wants have to be satisfied for the success of the provided service. Thus an important task for a tourism supplier should be to focus on every single customer.

As Porter (1985) displays in his product value chain “marketing is one part of the primary activities in the production process”, which makes it an important part in creating a products value for the customer. To create a customer’s value with services means, to satisfy the customer and meet its needs. This leads to the focusing on the customer and therefore the purpose of service marketing is to create a good image of the product which is sold.
Now to promote the destination as a tourism and service product, marketing needs to be conducted. The marketing of a destination is able to be done in much the same way as the marketing of a non-service product. Its aim is to create a value of the destination for the customer.

The speciality of destination marketing is the focus on responding to consumer demands and to establish a position in the competitive market.

The relevance to merchandise a destination in the most effective way, is that this leads to satisfied customers and thereby to an increased sale of the products a destination offers.

1.2 Problem Formulation

The difficulty of destination marketing lies in the characteristics of destinations and the included service characteristics. The tourism destination is a package of tourism facilities and services. For Ashworth and Voogt (1990) the destination product is a bundle of services and experiences. A destination is a sum of provided services such as accommodation, transport, entertainment, culture and many more service products which are provided to the tourist. Additionally the existing attractions and facilities are characterizing the destination. The combination of those two components, attractions and facilities, are essential for the destination’s proposal. In order to attract customers those characteristics need to be promoted in a way that creates an image of a destination and makes it impressive.

This image of a destination is undoubtedly one of the most important motivations to travel, as Tuohino and Pitkänen (2004) stated. For Mossberg (2000) a destination image is a concept to understand the destination selection process of tourists.

The importance of an image is clear. It helps the tourist to decide where to spend the holidays, besides the costs of the stay. If the destination can satisfy the tourists during their stay, this might be essential in creating a positive image of the destination by revisiting the destination and spreading a good word-of-mouth to others.

The creation of a good image requires collaboration between the destination management and the suppliers of the services which are provided in the destination. Every party needs to be aware of the image which should be created to
guarantee appropriate work to focus on this. Hence this enables good service performance in terms of the image and results in satisfaction of the customer’s needs. A satisfied tourist has the tendency of revisiting the destination and is a source of personal marketing with the spread of a good word-of-mouth.

A destination image is essential for a destination’s uniqueness on comparison to competitors and its success on the market. Therefore the purpose of the study is to examine the image of the destination Östersund and how it is perceived by the tourist.

1.3 Research Question and Aim

As the author had the condition to write the thesis about a marketing topic in the broader sense and is studying tourism at her home university in Germany, she decided to write this thesis fulfilling both scopes. Then after a few research processes she decided to focus on the marketing of the quintessence of tourism: the destination. And as the university host city is Östersund and represents a holiday destination for a lot of tourists, the choice was made to focus on the destination marketing of Östersund. Furthermore a central request for marketing itself is to sell the product and to outline its benefits to potential customers. In this case the creation of an image for the destination is essential to lure tourists by making it a relevant holiday destination.

After this decision was made, the author started to do research for sources from where information and data could be collected and found. The choice fell primarily onto the local tourist office.

With this background mentioned above the author of this thesis decided to compare the theoretical functionality with the practical outworking and impacts in the real daily routine of a winter destination like Östersund. Furthermore the results and effects of the used marketing to promote Östersund on the tourist’s mind and how the tourists experience their stay and their destination choice is considered. With this purpose in mind the author interviewed the Managing Director of the tourist office in Östersund Camilla Olsson. The interview contained questions about
the business or marketing concept used by the tourist office, what marketing tools are used and which role the above mentioned events play for the destination Östersund.

To get an overview about what image reaches the tourists and how they assess Östersund as a destination, the author asked tourists personally by questionnaires. They were asked in different locations and situations during the winter season. A previous questionnaire which was done in the summer period of 2010, done by the Östersund Turist & Kongress staff, serves as a source to enable a comparison of winter and summer tourists, as well as to give a characteristic insight to the typical Östersund- tourist.

The research for this thesis includes both qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires. This thesis aims to answer three main questions according to the marketing of destinations:
- How and in which ways is the destination image of Östersund created?
- What existing image has Östersund from the tourist’s point of view?
- Are there image differences between summer and winter tourism?

As a shape of this study the author decided to keep this structure throughout the thesis. As this is to start with the destination image intention by the supplier and marketer which then is followed by its evaluation and effect on the tourist in reality.

1.4 Definitions

1.4.1 Tourism

In the literature a huge amount of tourism definitions exists. Ryan (1991, p.102) states that “tourism is not simply about places, it is about the experience of a place, about meeting people, the interaction between host and visitor and with fellow tourists. Off all the service industries it is perhaps the most intangible of all. People save their money and their weeks of escape from work to buy what becomes a memory.” Another explicit
definition was made by Mill & Morrison (1992, p.9) as they formulated “tourism is the term given to the activity that occurs when people travel. This encompasses everything from the planning of the trip, the travel to the destination area, the stay itself, the return and the reminiscences about it afterwards. It includes the activities the traveller undertakes as part of the trip, the purchase made and the interactions that occur between host and guest in the destination area. In sum it is all of the activities and impacts that occur when a visitor travels.” In this definition every process is involved in tourism and its scope.

A way shorter definition says that “it is, in short, a social phenomenon which involves the movement of people to various destinations and their (temporary) stay there” which was made by Sharpley (2002, p. 22). In this paper the author decided to use the definition made by the World Tourism Organization (1995, p.12): “... the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, businesses and other purposes”.

1.4.2 Destination

As stated before destinations are the centrepiece of tourism. To give a general understanding of a destination, following definition is of relevance for this thesis. Pike (2008, p.24) states that “...destinations are places that attract visitors for a temporary stay and range from continents to countries, to states and provinces, to cities to villages, to purpose-built resort areas, to uninhabited islands.”

1.4.3 Destination-Marketing

As this thesis does not handle the position of enterprises in a destination, the author decided to take the definition made by the World Tourism Destination (2004; 10) for understanding destination marketing. It states that
“...destination marketing covers all the activities and processes to bring buyers and sellers together; focuses on responding to consumer demands and competitive positioning; is a continuous coordinated set of activities associated with efficient distribution of products to high potential markets; and involves making decisions about the product, branding, price, market segmentation, promotion and distribution”.

1.4.4 Destination-Image

The definition of a destination’s image is very manifold. The author limits them in this definition-part of the thesis to two main points of view. Crompton (1979, p.18) for example defined image as the “sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination”. Pike (2008) states in addition that “destination image is a repertoire of brand associations held in the mind of the consumer” and those associations in the mind are consisting of cognitive, affective and conative elements. As it will be displayed later on, the image of destinations is a vital component of the destination choice process each tourist has to meet.

1.5 Delimitation

For the limitations of this study it has to be stated that the conclusion and results of this study are based on the research which was done by the author and are formed out of the answers given be the respondent. Hence the results are limited to the research results and are generalized on the basement of the research time and surrounding and influencing factors. Exceptions can occur every time and are not consulted in this thesis.

1.6 Outline of the Thesis

In the first chapter, the introduction part, the reader will learn about the
background of the thesis, its problem formulation, the thesis’ purpose and its research questions. This chapter launches into the topic; the destination characteristics, - marketing and - image. Moreover this is followed by relevant definitions and the delimitations according the research done by the author.

The theoretical framework part, the second chapter, gives the research outline of the relevant research scope on the topic. The reader gets to know the theories about destination marketing, destination images, the effect on tourists and the destination Östersund.

In the third chapter, the methodology part, the author presents the research performance. It is stated how the research was done, the data was collected and the interviews and questionnaires were done. This chapter is important to bridge into the next chapters, because it allows the assessment of the results.

Empirical data, which was collected by the author then is represented in the fourth chapter. The data is displayed and shown. The data from the interviews, questionnaires and other data are presented. It includes data about the destination Östersund and its characteristics as well as its touristical characteristics.

In the next chapter, the fifth and analysing part. The research results of the interview are analysed and compared with the theoretical knowledge presented before. Moreover the comparison of winter and summer tourists is placed in this chapter as well.

The discussion part, the sixth part, the results of the research are evaluated and the research questions are answered. The results show how tourists perceive a destination and its image in real terms according to the questionnaire. Later on the purpose of the survey is to show how a destination image is implanted into the tourists mind.
2 Theoretical Framework

To give the reader knowledge and information about the subject of the thesis, relevant literature is introduced and presented in this chapter. Later on in the thesis a line between the theories and the practical research results is drawn.

2.1 Destination

A destination is a place that attracts visitors for a temporary stay. A destination's scope can vary from continents and countries as destinations over states and cities and furthermore villages and resort areas. For all this places where a vacation or visit can take place, the term of a destination can be used. Here the visitor can spend holidays or just time, when talking about day-trips.

“The destination offers a mixture of all products, services and experiences, which are provided locally”, as Buhalis (2000) states.

“That a destination as a product is a bundle of services and experiences” is also shared by Ashworth and Voogt (1990).

Crouch and Ritchie (1999) mentioned that “the core attractiveness of a location is characterized by its natural environment, its history and its culture.” Those characteristics can be summarized as the initially offer of a destination. In most cases the derived offer is built upon the initial one which means that for example infrastructure, tourist attraction and tourist businesses are developed to enable tourism in general or more tourism than before. “A destination without attractiveness will lure no tourists” explained Gunn (1972).

Voase (1999) talks of “destinations as largely physical and symbolic”.

To ensure the creation and consumption of a destination it is essential to create unique selling points. Urry (1990) furthermore states that “this is because tourism consumption involves gazing for the unfamiliar”.

The tourist’s aim is to get out of its daily life, to see something different and do
something different. Tourists are for instance searching for recovering and recreation during their vacation or even visits at the destination.

A bundle of authors stated that “a place is a product of combinations of the place´s macro environments and the products and services offered by the infrastructure sector. It creates the tourist´s experience of the destination” which is additionally stated by Murphy, Pritchard and Smith (2000) and Kotler, Bowen and Masken´s (1996).

Pike (2008) argues that “a destination is a geographical space in which a cluster of tourism resources exists, rather than a political boundary.” He adds that “destinations are places that attract visitors for a temporary stay. They can range from continents to countries, to states and provinces, to cities, to villages, to purpose-built areas and to uninhabited islands.” Furthermore he says that “they are essential communities based on local government boundaries.” He states that “nowadays destinations are emerging as the world´s biggest brands.”

As this thesis handles the case of Östersund. The destination Östersund is examined. The task for the destination of Östersund is the recognition of the needs and wants of the tourists as well as their purpose of doing vacation or visiting Österusnd. The singularities of Östersund have to be recognized and the triggers which attract the tourists have to be found and worked with. The service providers in Östersund, longing from accommodation, food, and transport to attractions and activities which are offered. The destination is based on the municipality of Östersund and its surrounding. Östersund is as will be seen later on promoted as “the Winter City”, which can be seen as the brand of the destination Östersund.

2.2 Destination-Marketing

To give first an understanding about the term marketing, an explanation from Briggs (2000) will introduce it. She states that “marketing is basically about selling the right product at the right price to carefully targeted people, using the best possible and most appropriate promotional methods”.

“The marketing of a destination is therefore special as a destination is a product which consists of services. It is characterized by the typical service characteristics,
such as intangibility, variability, perishability” (Jobber, 2009, pp.894-898) and it is not storable.

In his book Pike stated that “marketing is seen as an exchange process between the demand and supply side, in a way that matches organization resources with environment opportunities” and in addition he argues for a market orientation as a “philosophy which should pervade the entire organization that is based on making all decisions with the consumer in mind”.

Referring to the marketing orientation, moreover Kotler (2003) continues it as a “philosophy that recognises the achievement of organisational goals, it requires an understanding of the needs and wants of the target market and then delivering satisfaction more effectively than rivals.”

Here it is visible that in this case the target market are tourists. Therefore the marketing of a destination needs to handle the satisfaction of their tourists.

But still the impact of the service characteristics on the marketing of a destination as a mixture of different service products is in a minimum or even towards zero.

Many authors argue that “a destination product should be marketed in much the same way than a physical product” (Howie, 2003) or as Matso formulates it “places can market themselves just as normal products are marketed”. On this account some typical methods and characteristics need to be considered while promoting a destination to potential tourists.

For example Kotler (1999) distinguishes place marketing as a “place planning procedure concerning the satisfaction of the needs of target markets. It is successful when it satisfies two main parameters, which are a) the enterprises and residents satisfaction and b) the satisfaction of the expectations of potential target markets”.

The World Tourism Organisation (WTO, 2004;10) defines destination marketing as follows “it covers all activities and processes to bring buyer and seller together. It focuses on responding to consumer demands and competitive positioning. It deals with making decisions about the product, its branding, its price, about its market segmentation, its promotion and its distribution.” Readers with deeper knowledge about the theories of marketing recognize that here it deals with the classical and traditional marketing mix and marketing decision in general. No separation
between service or non-service products has been made.

According to the marketing mix Fyall and Garrod for example have reformulated the four P’s of the traditional marketing mix. They replaced the four P’s with four C’s which are displaying the focus on customer satisfaction and orientation. The “Product” is renamed into “Customer value” which handles the perceived benefits provided to meet needs and wants as well as with the quality of service received and the value for money delivered assessed against the competition. The “Price” is translated into “Cost”, because price is a supply-side decision, cost is then the consumer focused equivalent also assessed against the competition. “Place” is now performed by “Convenience”, which means in terms for the consumer, their access to the products they demand and buy. And finally “Promotion” is replaced by “Communication”, this includes embracing all forms of producer and customer dialogue including information and two-way interactive relationship marketing and not just sales persuasion as it is the case in the traditional marketing mix. They formulated the theory that “tourism marketing is the managerial process of anticipating and satisfying existing and potential visitor wants more effectively than competitive suppliers or destinations.”

![Figure 1: 4P Marketing Mix](http://www.sales-and-marketing-for-you.com/marketing-mix.html)

![Figure 2: 4C Marketing Mix](http://www.sales-and-marketing-for-you.com/images/define-marketing-mix.jpg)

Earlier research shows that destination marketing works by understanding the needs of the local community, appreciation of the destinations history and heritage
as well as concerning the sustainability of the natural environment.” Moreover research resulted in the formulation that “marketing should place tourism destinations within socio-cultural contexts and put the human experience back into the production of places.” They state furthermore that “destination marketers and their consumer are both co-creating the relevant place”. Other research came to the results that “the normal procedure for marketing a destination is to inventory the destinations attractions, such as available activities and to promote them.” To position a destination in the target market and tighten this position previous research stated that “the best way a tourism destination can position itself is to offer something unique to target the intended market segments”. Other previous research said that it is “vital for marketing and communication processes to choose and apply appropriate media” which is used to promote the destination. As an example they state that the internet as a media facilitated an “induced information revolution which has brought unprecedented opportunities and challenges for organisations to communicate with consumers and successfully deliver marketing messages”.

Beyond this Horner and Swarbrooke (1996) formulated the tasks of destination marketing as “improving the image of an area and increasing the range of facilities, amenities available, giving local residents more pride and furthermore trying to make the destination politically more acceptable.”

The marketing of the destination of Östersund has to get to know their own tourists, how they are characterized and what they are searching for when spending their vacation in Östersund. Furthermore the singularities of Östersund have to be recognized and furthermore promoted and improved to create a unique position on the target market. Which will or should lead the relevant tourist to the decision to visit Östersund. The concept of the 4 P’s is as stated later on is used by the tourist office in Östersund which markets Östersund to the tourists as well as to resident visitors and locals.

2.2.1 Destination-Image

For a destination it is vital to create an image by which the visitor can identify the destination and which helps to create a tourist’s image of the destination
after the visit. The best success an image can reach, is the match between intended image on the supplier side and the created image on the visitors side. This match is in most cases in line with the satisfaction of the visitor, which is the purpose of a destination to enable revisit intention. As Tuohino and Pitkänen (2004) formulated it “the image of a destination is undoubtedly one of the most important motivations for travel”. This shows that a destination image has an important role in deciding about which destination to visit as well as the decision about revisiting.

A destination image is comprised of many different factors, which in combination are characterizing the image. Such were for instance attractions, climates, cultures, host populations, recreation and scenery. Goodall (1992) suggested that “when prices are comparable, image is the vital factor in the decision of the holiday destination choice”. O’Leary and Deegan (2005) also mentioned that “tourism images are important because they affected potential tourist’s decision making process”. The researchers further believed that image affects the level of satisfaction with the tourist experience, which is critical in terms of encouraging positive word-of-mouth recommendations and return visits to the destination. Recommendations via the word-of-mouth can be seen as an indicator for the degree of satisfaction a tourist has. The visitor has the motivation to talk about experienced products and services. The intention to revisit is similar to the intention to return, both intentions are created by past experiences and existing impressions.

The task for destination marketers is to find an image that emphasizes unique attributes and benefits that make their place stand out among others. Moreover previous research stated “the difference between the identity, the profile and the image of a destination should be known. The definition of identity is that it shows what the destination actually is, the profile is what marketers want to show to the visitor and the image is how the destination is perceived. They explain in addition that “the image of a destination is likely built around the activities, facilities, the cultural and historical heritage of a destination”. When destinations are hosting any kind of events this will also have an effect
on the destination’s image. As Kotler argues “an important aspect of a place’s image is the use of events. Events can brand a place and its image permanently”. Hence it should be understood that the destination image works together with events, as they might be used to influence and create an image. Both events and destination images are influencing each other. An event is experienced as good as its location and the destination is benefiting from an event in positive and negative ways.

The success of an image can be measured with its link between motivation, goals and preferences of potential tourists and the destination itself. To understand the way a image is working, it needs to be explained that it consists of cognitive, affective and conative elements, which are elements of attitude constructs.

Pike (2008) states that images can be distinguished in the organic image, which is developed by an individual’s everyday assimilation of information, and the induced image. The latter one is formed through the influence of tourism promotions directed by marketers, such as advertising. This can occur when an individual starts sourcing information for a holiday and hence this is the image which marketers should try to modify. He separates the holiday decision process into cognition, affect and conation. Cognition is the sum of what is known or believed about a destination and it denotes awareness of the destination. The affect represents an individual’s feeling about an object, which may be favourable, unfavourable or neutral. The last part is the conation, which is considered as the likelihood of visiting a destination within a given time period. Those three steps lead to the choice of a holiday destination. Once a tourist is aware of the need to travel, he or she starts developing alternatives and evaluates them, before he decides which alternative is most likely to satisfy his or her needs. Hence Pike summarizes “a destinations image is a repertoire of brand associations held in the mind of the consumer”. He says that “the images held by consumers, play a critical role in their decision-making. In the connection to marketing, the role of advertising is to stimulate the desired images of the brand in the mind of the consumer in such a way that leads to action”. Positioning is the interface between the desired destination image and the actual image held by the consumer, in this special case the tourist.
And as images are illustrating the uniqueness of a destination and its advantages to competitive destinations, images are the only way on which tourism services can compete.

The image of Östersund emphasises the love of the winter and its importance for this destination. The marketing if based on the image of Östersund. The tourist office of Östersund has recognized the singularities and is selling them throughout promoting the image of Östersund all through their marketing program and concept. All those statements will be proved later on throughout the development of this thesis.

2.3 Östersund

2.3.1 Characteristics

Östersund promotes itself for example on the website of visitsweden.com as the following “The Swedish mountains provide the backdrop to the city of Östersund that lies on the eastern shore of Storsjön lake (‘the Big Lake’). And yes, the locals will tell you tales of the monster in the lake.”

The website further more characterizes furthermore that Östersund’s real claim to fame however is that it is a regular venue for the Biathlon World Cup, hosting the IBU World Biathlon Championships in 2008 that put this small, action-packed city deservedly on the world map. Östersund is the only city in the northerly county of Jämtland and top class ski resorts are within a couple of hours’ drive. Östersund is known as ‘the Winter City’ because it caters for just about any activity on snow or ice. Downhill and cross-country skiing, trip skating, ice-fishing, horse and dog sleds, snowmobile safaris and many other winter sports activities are all on offer in and around the city. In fact they are a way of life of here. The spectacular ‘Medvinden’ is a 50-km long, long-distance skating track out on Storsjön that is ploughed and preened daily for your enjoyment. If you don’t bring your own skates you can rent a pair at the Winter Park – a lake-shore winter paradise, especially for the kids, with ice castles, ice sculptures, a huge skating rink, restaurants, cafés and deck chairs to lounge in.
when the heat of the sun returns in springtime. The activity arena, events, shopping etc. are within comfortable walking distance and there is accommodation across all prices classes. Don’t miss out on the local restaurants and eateries’ specialities, particularly the moose and salmon. The airport is just 15 minutes from the city centre.

![Figure 3: Crystal Heart Östersund](http://www.turist.ostersund.se/app/projects/turistbyranny/images/Owinter_1011_eng_del1.pdf)

The logo and image of Östersund can be seen all over the city. The image is visible and recognizable for the visitors, residents and locals. The crystal heart accompanies the visit of Östersund through all occasions.

This gives a good image of Östersund as a city and a destination. As Östersund is the only city in Jämtland there are also a lot of locals visiting the city to handle their shopping and arrange other businesses. Östersund is therefore a city of tourists and visitors as well as for locals to attend in attractions and events and be part of the “little-big city” life of Östersund.
2.3.2 Tourist Office Concept

The tourist office of Östersund works with the marketing and promotion of Östersund as a destination and with it, it tries to sell tourism services to potential customers and visitors. The task of the tourism office is split in three parts and illustrated in the shape of a triangle.

On top the marketing is situated, which includes destination development, press processing, the coordination of marketing and campaigns for the hospitality industry and analysis and statistics. The marketing “roof” is required to facilitate the subsidiary segments, as they were the “visitor & information service” and “conferences and congresses”. The first part includes the Tourist Office of Östersund and Jämtland, Sweden Tourist, distribution, group- and school trips, technical visits, the Östersund booklet, commission sales and souvenir sales. The latter part, “conferences and congresses” consists of conferences and congress services and project management.

In addition to this concept a mission is formulated, which says that Östersund Tourist and Convention helps to generate more and more satisfied customers to Östersund and Jämtland. This is done via good host, objective information and dedicated marketing and sales. Moreover they actively contribute to tourism development in the region.
2.3.3 Östersund’s Tourist

Looking at the composition of the tourists visiting Östersund a wide range of different people can be seen. There are young families, searching for an active holiday with fun for their kids and leisure time for themselves. Second there come middle-aged couples and groups having a nice leisure time in Östersund, both in winter and summer. Furthermore there are the people coming to attend on events such as the Biathlon World Cup and the Jamtli Christmas market in the winter and the “Strosjöyran” music festival in summer. Moreover there are the ones, who are coming home, visiting family and friends. Additionally many tourists are coming over from Norway, especially in the summer season as the border is quite close and holidays in Sweden are cheaper than in Norway. Sporty tourists are coming to enjoy skiing and skating in and around Östersund in order to be close to ski destinations such as Åre for instance.

Figure 4: Tourist Office Concept Triangle
The tourists are coming from Sweden and as mentioned above Norway but since a few years Östersund has attracted more and more tourists from abroad. Quite big markets are the Netherlands and Germany, France and Russia. A huge factor for attracting foreign tourists is the Biathlon World Cup which takes place in Östersund every year. This started after the World Championship in Biathlon took place in 2008. Now Östersund’s number of foreign tourists is increasing nearly annually, especially during the time of Biathlon in the winter.

![Chart showing the distribution of guests by country of residence in 2009](http://www.turist.ostersund.se/app/projects/turistbyranny/images/arsredovisning_otk_2009.pdf)

Figure 5: Guests Country of residence 2009

The tourism concept and its success in the real daily life of the destination Östersund was not examined before. This thesis is searching for the factors of success and failure which appear when working with customers and their satisfaction while spending holidays and afterwards with creating a revisiting intention and the intention to spread a good word-of-mouth to other people. This aim of marketing a destination is examined of its success in the case of the destination Östersund.
3 Methodology

In this part of the thesis, the author displays her data collection process, the necessary mentioned possible sources of error as well as the analysing process.

3.1 Data Collection

To get primary data from the supplier’s point of view, as a destination which provides tourism products to the customer, the author interviewed the managing director of the tourist office Camilla Olsson in Östersund. This was made to collect data about the way Östersund is marketed and promoted and what shape the image formation and implementation assumes. The author recorded this interview which took place in the tourist office of Östersund. Questions were answered, which dealt with the marketing and business concept of the tourist office, the background of Östersund and the events which are located in Östersund. The Biathlon World Cup is an attraction during the winter time and makes Östersund as a winter city internationally known. The “Storsjöyran-Festival” is happening in the summer time and in Sweden well known.

Out of this interview the author got some data, which proved to be very useful for the thesis research. A small brochure stating annual report 2009 provided statistics and concepts about Östersund in 2009. Unfortunately it was made just in a Swedish version, what hampered the usage of this material. A translation needed to be done. Furthermore the summer and winter brochure of 2010 were given to the author, both in the English version. This data helped to form an idea about the image which Östersund wants to be recognized by customers. In addition the summer questionnaire of 2010 was made, which addressed tourists in Östersund during three months in summer. The questionnaire as well as the results were given to the author in Swedish. The questionnaire for the winter of 2010 has been created by converting some questions from the summer questionnaire to the winter questionnaire. This facilitates a comparison of the image and the respondents between summer and winter.
Here the decision was made that the author is addressing respondents during five days in a row, namely while the Biathlon World Cup 2010 took place in Östersund. The tourists were asked while visiting the tourist office, during their visit of the local Christmas market “Julmarknad” and the competitions of the Biathlon World Cup. As the limitations given earlier, the success of this survey was limited. But still enough respondents were found to answer the questions to ensure usable data. Then as a next step after the data collection process, the author evaluated the survey and transcribed the interview into a written form.

3.2 Data Limitation

As above mentioned, the water contamination issue during the time of writing this thesis, devaluated some data while influencing the respondents. Furthermore the fact that the author is not able to speak the national language, because she is an international student from Germany, reduced the number of respondents further. While many locals have the ability to communicate very well in English, most of the older people are not able to communicate in English. Another limitation has to be made as a lot of local people where visiting the tourist office and the Christmas market “Julmarknad” and which were either in a hurry or not willing to answer questions during their visit. And as the aim of this thesis is to examine the tourists of a destination, the better location for addressing international tourists was the Biathlon World Cup.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data from the interview, the questionnaire and the relevant brochures then were digitalized. The author then started comparing the summer questionnaire results to the results she got from the winter questionnaire, the latter one was done on her own as a quantitative research source. The interview results with the managing director of the tourist office in Östersund were transcribed and summarized.
In addition more data was given to the author. As the annual report from 2009 and the tourist brochures from summer and winter 2010. They were used to get an idea about the characteristics of Östersund, its tourists and which destination image has to be implanted and spread.

In the appendix of this thesis the reader can find the interview leading questions and the tourists questionnaire.
4 Empirical Data

To refer to the shape of this thesis, in this chapter the researched and collected data are presented. First to give an overview about the destination image which is intended to be delivered to the tourist by the interview with the managing director of the tourist office Camilla Olsson. Secondly followed by the tourists point of view, where the results of the questionnaires done in the summer and winter of 2010 are presented. A third part handles other data which was achieved from the tourist office and is relevant for the understanding of the concept and the image Östersund has.

4.1 Interview Results

In this chapter there are the answers from the interview with the managing director of the tourist office Camilla Olsson. The questions asked can be seen in the appendix of this thesis, the answers and statements she gave will be mentioned in the following.

The first question part dealt with general information about the characterisation of Östersund and its tourists as well as the possible access to relevant data. Camilla Olsson mentioned the Östersund brochure “where you can find what is really typical for Östersund, what activities and culture we offer and a lot of information”. The brochure is published twice a year, one for the summer and one for the winter season.
Both brochures will be compared with the purpose to display the differences in Östersund in the summer and the winter time as well as to see how similar Östersund is promoted in both seasons.
The characteristics of Östersund are stated as in the following statements. The managing director mentioned that “Östersund really is a winter city and that this is the way the tourist office tries to market it. The strong and really good winter is what differs Östersund from other cities in the south of Sweden and this is what we, the tourist office tries to focus on.”
“Even if the main season for Östersund is the summer, they offer a lot of good things in summer time as well.”

Out of this facts the managing director explains that “the concentration on marketing is inevitable. Therefore even if the summer season attracts more tourists, Östersund´s speciality is the winter season and that makes it unique as a winter destination. This results in the focus of its marketing in the winter, even if it is a smaller part in number of tourists than in the summer.”

The purpose of holiday in Östersund is to be active. As stated, “we try to focus on activities and showing what can be done in the city of Östersund.” For the tourists the destination Östersund is meant to be an active holiday, with a lot of things to do, to see and to explore Östersund and its surrounding as a whole in the scope of visit.

To refer to a classical and traditional marketing the managing director was asked about how the four P’s (product, price, promotion, place) of the marketing mix are used and developed.

Östersund as a destination embodies the product which has to be sold and promoted. But furthermore the products, such as souvenirs and brochures, which are sold in the tourists office can be seen as subordinated products.

The price for which a holiday in Östersund is available is said “to be different from skiing destinations like Åre for example. As they have their peak season in February, March and in April when the prices are really high, in comparison to that Östersund is quite cheap in the winter. It has its peak season in the summer time, when Östersund is fully booked and the prices are on top, this happens even if Östersund is called the winter city.”

The third p, the promotion of the product, is characterized by the distribution channels which are used to promote the product by aiming at the customer. In the case of Östersund, the local tourist office uses such media as “the internet, with their web site and brochures for example with www.visitsweden.com, as well as they try to work with campaigns and cooperations. This is a website which provides information about destinations in Sweden and and it states itself on the website as following: “www.visitsweden.com is part of www.sweden.se - the official portal for general information about Sweden. VisitSweden is one of five Swedish
organizations with overall responsibility for providing information about Sweden to other countries. The other organisations are Invest in Sweden Agency, the Swedish Government Offices including the Foreign Ministry, the Swedish Institute and the Swedish Trade Council. Visitsweden.com is providing information about Sweden in following languages: Danish, Norwegian, Finnish, German, English, French, Italian, Dutch, and Russian. The sections Meeting Planner and Press are presented in English.” and furthermore “VisitSweden’s assignment, which focuses on marketing the country Sweden as well as the destination Sweden, combines in conveying a clear image of Sweden. When we build brand Sweden, our activities for marketing Swedish experiences abroad are just as important for the results as our image-building efforts for the country...”

The managing director describes this cooperation process as “the selection of a target market, a country, for example the Netherlands, Germany or Russia. Then together with www.visitsweden.com and other destinations in Sweden they try to find out what is most relevant for the chosen target market and then they visit this country and promote Sweden locally. Visitsweden.com is used as a cooperation partner as it has many offices in a lot of countries. Promoting a destination on foreign markets is cheaper in cooperation with www.visitsweden.com as their offices are already situated in the relevant country.”

Another type of cooperation is done to address Business to Business partners. An example for this is given by the managing director as “Östersund has cooperated last year (2009) with travel agents, in this case “Beautiful Scandinavia”. As they then acquired together an adventure week which is offered to tourists in Östersund, this aimed into Östersund being displayed in the brochure with the offer of the adventure week. The brochure then was published in 2009.” And with projects like this “we try not just to be limited to the own products, instead we try to promote Östersund into other businesses as well” argued the managing director.

As Östersund is a quite small destination “other distribution channels like the television or radio are too expensive. Moreover Östersund is promoted in social media, such as www.facebook.com, www.youtube.com and so on.”

To complete the four p’s, the placement of Östersund has to be introduced. Östersund is situated in the very middle of Sweden. It belongs to the county of
Jämtland and is the only city in the surrounding, being organized as a municipality. From a tourist’s point of view it is necessary to have quite good and comfortable access to the holiday destination.

Asking about the accessibility of Östersund, the managing director answered that “Östersund’s accessibility is good, as it has an really good airport situated nearby, which can also handle international flights. For example direct flights are starting and departing from and to St.Petersburg and from spring on Amsterdam as well. Flights are also supplying Åre, which is a closely situated, very popular skiing destination in Sweden. If tourists are coming to Östersund, their flight mostly has a stop in Stockholm. But a benefit is, that it is possible to leave the luggage in the plane. There is no need to check the luggage in, then check it out in Stockholm before checking it in again for the flight to Östersund. It is possible to check in the luggage once in the home airport and pick it finally up at the destination airport. This possibility should not be taken for granted. It is not given if the tourists are travelling to Sundsvall or Göteborg for instance, it is a very special thing, which makes the journey to Östersund more easy, comfortable and enjoyable for the tourists.”

As a next step Camilla Olsson was asked about the destination image of Östersund. What image the tourist office wants to communicate and in which ways this implementation is done. As already mentioned earlier in the interview she stated that “we try to focus on the “winter city”-Östersund. Since the Biathlon World Championship in 2008 has taken place in Östersund the promotion of Östersund had its really start up. But as there are more tourists in the summer, they keep on trying to show what is special for Östersund even in the summertime. Thus it is visual that during wintertime Östersund is promoted as a summer-destination and vice versa, in summertime winter attractions and events are trying to attract winter tourists for the following winter season. “We try to combine the promotion of Östersund as a winter and a summer destination.”

As an image of Östersund, the winter heart or snow-crystal heart embodies the love of the winter by the local people in Östersund.
Östersund has two main events which both are attracting tourists to Östersund. One event starting to become increasingly popular is the Biathlon World Cup in the winter time.

This annual event started to become popular with the success of the Swedish biathlete Magdalena Forsberg. “Biathlon in Östersund has been taken place for many years. In the first years there were only the competitors and their teams, no spectators at all. The interest then was rising with the success and the increasing name recognition of Magdalena Forsberg. With her popularity many people started watching the competitions in the television and visiting the races. After this Östersund as a host tries to beat for the World Championship for 2008 and since this the Biathlon World Cup has been taken place every year. Of course we are proud to stage this winter sports event and we try to be one of the best places for the tourists, competitors and the International Biathlon Union (IBU). At the moment it is discussed to get the Biathlon World Championship again.” says managing director Camilla Olsson. Furthermore she mentioned that “while the Biathlon World Cup was just starting to become a real tourist attraction after the World Championship had been hosted. The World Cup now increases the effect on international tourists to visit Östersund and watch the Biathlon World Cup.

The other event is taken place in the summer time. Its the music festival “Storsjöyran”, where over three days a lot of musicians and band are playing in Östersund. This event attracts many national tourists which are from all over Sweden, which for instance are coming home or visiting Östersund, Norway and maybe from more abroad as well. But “Storsjöyran” is more a tourist attraction on a national basis. This event started already over 23 or 25 years ago and has been hold since then every year. Even if there are many local musicians, there are also really famous and popular bands and artists attending, last year for instance “Lady Gaga” was performing in Östersund.”

In the future more events will be taking place in the destination Östersund. As Camilla Olsson stated that “we want to have more events, the municipalities choice would be to focus on events in Östersund. To make events as big as the Biathlon World Cup or “Storsjöyran” it requires developing time, but even though there are new and other events coming up.”
4.2 Questionnaire

As mentioned previously the author had access to data from a questionnaire done in the summer of 2010 by the tourist office itself. Those results from summer will be illustrated here and compared with the results of the questionnaire which the author did herself in the wintertime. As the author has limited time to write her thesis, her time for realising the survey was limited as well. The choice was made to interview the tourists during days when quite many tourists were staying in Östersund. In the wintertime these were the days during the Biathlon World Cup and the Christmas market “Julmarknad” which was organised in Östersund. The survey took place over 5 days with differing locations such as the tourist office, the Jamtli Museum, where the Christmas market took place and the ski stadium, where the Biathlon World Cup races were realised. The start will be made by the survey from the wintertime.

The time limit enabled only a few number of respondents compared to the summer questionnaire, but still the amount of respondents is representative. With a response of 33 questionnaires a tendency of answers can be created. As a total 33 respondents were found during the survey. The first questions were handling about the characteristics of the respondent.

The Biathlon is a very popular winter sport in Germany, which justifies the majority of German tourists in Östersund. Those are followed by “Swedes” and then more tourists from the Netherlands, France and Russia. The average age of the respondents is about 33 years.

The main motives to visit Östersund are in particular the Biathlon World Cup 2010, followed by studying in Östersund which is further followed by motives such as sightseeing, skiing and visiting the Christmas market “Julmarknad”, of which all three answers show similar significance.

The visitor’s contentment with Östersund is high, as most respondents are willing to return to Östersund in the winter, are expecting to recommend Östersund to others and most of the tourists have no ideas about facilities and activities which were missing in Östersund during their stay. Furthermore the majority of tourists is
willing to see Östersund also in the summertime. Moreover the information channel which was mostly used to get information to their stay was the internet. Another question asked for the first thing that comes into mind, when the respondents hear or read about Östersund. The answers which were given are the Biathlon World Cup, the beautiful scenery and the winter.

The questionnaire which was done in the summer period of June the 28th to August the 20th 2010 dealt with 1500 respondents. A similar survey was done in 2007, with which it can be compared. Asking for the country the tourists come from, the majority came from Norway. Only 10 percent of the Östersund tourists are coming from abroad. The most common countries of residence are Germany and the Netherlands. The age of the visitors in summer is in average higher than in the winter, but at the same time many young families with children are visiting Östersund was well. As the main tourist attractions in Östersund the Storsjöcupen, Storsjöbadet, Frösö Zoo and Church and the Moose Garden are mentioned. It is recognizable that the majority motive for visitors to come to Östersund is to visit relatives and friends. Most of the visitors are coming as families with kids. Moreover the city of Östersund achieves a good rating from the tourists. In comparison to 2007 the opinion of tourists about Östersund has improved as well as the attractions, which can be seen by an increased market. Another important information is the revisiting intention of the tourists. Compared to 2007 the number of tourists who want to visit Östersund another time has significantly increased.

As a suggestion for further development to attract more tourists advice is given to for instance develop or expand activities and events with the main focus on families with children who are the largest visitor group during the summer. In addition investment could be done for the middle aged visitors in culture or other facilities such as for example swimming in the Storsjö harbour, as they have less attractions and activities to choose from in comparison to what choice the younger visitors have. Another challenge is to become better at marketing events and attractions. As such, only 50% of the respondents knew for instance about Moose Garden.
4.3 Other Data

4.3.1 Annual Report 2009

Here Östersund Tourist & Convention states its mission as to generate more
and more satisfied visitors to Östersund and Jämtland. Doing this through
good hospitality, objective information and dedicated marketing and sales.
They actively contribute to tourism development in the region.

Their business concept and their working area is displayed in the shape of a
triangle. It illustrates the marketing on top, which includes destination
development, press processing, the coordination of marketing and
campaigns for the hospitality industry and furthermore analysis and statistics.
On the left side of the triangle the visitor information and service is displayed.
This part consists of the Tourist Office of Östersund and Jämtland, Sweden
Tourist, distribution, group and school trips, technical visits, the Östersund
booklet, commission sales as well as the selling of souvenirs. This part was
funded by the public. On the right side of the triangle the conferences &
congresses takes part. This includes conference and congress services as
well as project management and is commercial funded.

Östersund is a popular city for visiting. The dominant season is summer, but
an improvement of activities and experiences in the winter makes the winter
season growing. By profiling the Winter, the city of Östersund is hoping to
create a stronger pull for winter tourism and to increase the number of nights
spent in the city outside the summer season.
In the statistics from 2009 38% of the overall commercial overnight stays
were foreigners, here the majority was embodied by Norwegian visitors.
The most visitors counted by guest nights are aimed in the summer, which is
further followed by winter and autumn. While autumn and spring are seasons
which are dominated by business tourists.
While the number of visitors increased for events such as the music festival
Storsjöyran and the Christmas market “Julmarknad”, the number of visitors of the Biathlon World Cup has declined as there was the Biathlon Championship 2008, where way more visitors came to view the spectacle. The most visited attraction in 2009 was the Jamtli museum, which was followed by the Storsjöbadet which just has been renovated and Frösö Zoo. The task of the tourist information is to provide knowledge and information of Östersund and the county Jämtland for both visitors and residents of the county.

The marketing of Östersund is said to be characterized as Östersund Tourist & Convention coordinates and performs strategic tourism marketing with the tourism industry. A role that becomes particularly important as it is often too expensive for individual companies to achieve a larger market. As the vital criteria for the assessment of the market six criteria are mentioned. The first criterion are the financial returns, in the forms of outlays per party and stay. Moreover the high proportion of Östersund as the main destination and the high propensity to aim the goals are stated as criteria. The fourth criterion is the question about what experiences attract our audiences. This is followed by the question what message the audiences listen to and this is completed by the last criterion, the question about by what channels the audience can be achieved.

4.3.2 Östersund Brochure Comparison

For the summer and the winter season in Östersund the tourist office publishes a brochure for the tourists every 6 months. Here the reader can get an overview about what to do and see in Östersund in the summer or the winter. As the author stayed in Östersund for 5 month, she got access to both brochures and resulting out of this she was able to compare the brochures. Both brochures will be described in look and content to illustrate their differences and similarities.
In the introduction Östersund is stated as the largest city in Norrland, which embodies the northern part of Sweden. A lot of activities are mentioned, which can be experienced outside and in the nature as well as to enjoy the evening sun in Östersund as a “little big city”.

The brochure is then structured into eight chapters. Each chapter fills 2 pages, according to the title and corresponding activities. In the “Happening City”-chapter the midsummer in the Jamtli museum, the “Storsjöyran” festival, the Viking play “Arnljot” and the sport which can be done and seen, like the cycling race, a walking-jogging-running event, the “Ecco Östersund Marathon”, the “Storsjöcup” and the Summer-Biathlon, are listed. The next chapter, “City for children” tells about activities to attract children and families. Here Östersund offers the Multichallenge, the Djungelhuset, the Jamtli farm, Moose Garden and the mystery of the sea monster, which is living in the big lake “Storsjö”. While the kids are playing, Östersund can be explored by the parents as the “city of commerce”. Here you can find shopping facilities among others a few retail outlet stores, Cafés and Restaurants. For cultural focused tourists, the “city of culture” offers art in the shape of museums, galleries and composers. Moreover the popular music festival “Storsjöyran” and Östersunds Opera and Theatre program. As Östersund is surrounded by the 5th largest lake in Sweden, the “Storsjö”, it can also be called the “City by the water”. Here are listed such attractions as the Lake Storsjö, the big lake monster, bathing, the steamboat “SS Thomeé” and the surrounding islands, which can be visited. There are a lot of possibilities to compete with other tourists or even oneself. Östersund as a “City of challenges” offers indoor challenges in the Multi Challenge Building, Golf, the Ski Stadium where you can do skating and cycling and some action in the water. To dispute with history and culture the “City of history” gives possibilities to learn more about the rune stone on Frösön, the Vikings at Jamtli, where the tourists can experience a travel through the time furthermore a technology land offers information for technical interested tourists. The last alternative is the “City of animals”, as there are many places to get in contact with them. In Östersund
itself tourists can visit the Frösö Zoo, the farm in Jamtli, see Icelandic horses and a little bit outside visit moose in the Moose Garden. In addition the Spa-clinics and cart-hire are promoted for relaxing and even more fun moments in Östersund.

As a summary the summer brochure introduces Östersund as a city close to the nature, where the tourist can do a lot of activities, feel good, go outside, have both fun and leisure time, where the children feel comfortable and where good events are taking place. As the brochures front is all green, the closeness to nature and outdoor activities is visible by the coloration.

4.3.2.2 The Winter City 2010/2011

The winter brochure which was published in the first week of December, introduces Östersund as the “Food capital of Sweden” where the tourist can find an icebound lake, ski slopes, the Ski stadium, shopping facilities, major sport events, cultural offerings and it states that the winter is a good time to visit Östersund.

As already done in the summer brochure, the different variations of the city Östersund are presented in the following pages. The start is made by the “City of events”, where the first event is the Biathlon World Cup. It is followed by markets, which take place, the Snowmobile Race Event and the Dog Sled Race. As the “City of Ice” introduces winter activities such as skating on the lake Storsjön, the “Snow Playa”, ski tracks, snowmobile safari and dog sledding. In the “City of challenges” the tourists can compete inside and outside. There is the world class cross-country skiing slope in Frösön and the bowling hall and the Multichallenge for inside competition. But not just adult tourists have their fun, in the “City for children” the kids can find a large playground in the Jamtli museum, real ski plays, the Storsjöbadet and the Multichallenge to have fun inside or outside as well. In the “City of commerce” money can be spend by shopping, visiting the Cafés and as Östersund is named the “Food Capital of Sweden 2011” the variety of
choosing a good place to eat is wide. Also in wintertime Östersund´s cultural attractions are good. The “City of Culture” presents drums, ballet, the collectors joy in Jamtli, Icelandic art and galleries. Even in the winter the “City of Animals” offers activities such as attending Icelandic horses, sled dogs and moose. Additional winter activities are the Spa-clinics, winter bathing, the tourists can try Biathlon themselves and hire a snowmobile to explore the amazing surroundings of Östersund.

In summation the clear focus of this brochure are activities which deal with snow and the love of the winter. Skiing, challenges, children and events are the main activities in the wintertime. As this brochure is coloured in blue and white, is displays the winter, the cold and of course the snow.

Both brochures are sharing one side to promote the the following season, where they give an overview about events and activities which are planned and taking place.

The snow-heart image is displayed on both brochures as the one symbol which represents Östersund.

Figure 6: Summer 2010 Brochure

Figure 7: The Winter City 2010/2011 Brochure
5 Analysis

In this part of the thesis the author starts to bring the theoretical knowledge with the received research data out of the interviews and the questionnaires together. In addition the respondents of the summer and winter questionnaire are compared with each other. This comparison is made with the research questions in mind, as they will be answered in the following chapter of the thesis.

5.1 Destination Image Supplier- Interview

As the theoretical part introduced for example that the creation of a destination image is vital for a destination. The aim of a destination should be to address as many tourists as possible and create their feeling to visit the destination. Another purpose should be the satisfaction of visitors who already decided to stay at the destination and create their desire of revisiting.

In the case of Östersund as a destination the concerned tourism office aims at creating the image of a “winter city” for Östersund. Crucial requirements were the strong winter, the residents’ love of the winter, the various possibilities of activities in the winter as well as the closeness to popular skiing destinations such as Åre. It is stated above for example that a destination needs to have at least one unique feature to distinguish itself from competitors on the relevant market. Camilla Olsson stated that this is for Östersund, the strong winter which differs Östersund from cities of the same size in the south of Sweden. It could be labelled the competitive advantage of Östersund.

The image of Östersund as a winter city is already strong as it is promoted in the period of summer as well. As the managing director Camilla Olsson stated “a destination has to focus on a concept or finally an image which they want to be perceived by the customer. So far Östersund focused on the winter city-image, even if there are more tourists during summer time and the popular music festival “Storsjöyran”.
The logo or symbol of the snow heart illustrates the winter with its frostiness and as it has the shape of a heart, the love to the winter and in the same time it emphasises the comeliness and warmth of the residents. This is also visible on the brochures which are printed for summer and winter periods. Both of them are displaying the logo "the snow/ crystal heart" on the frontpage. There is no difference in displaying the logo either in summer or winter time. The difference of the brochures front are the main colors and the pictures displayed.

The logo and image of Östersund can be seen all over the city. This helps to implant the image into the mind of the visitors and even more into the mind of the residents and locals.

Besides the destination image, some other Östersund characteristics and possible advantages are the variety of activities which are provided in Östersund. As they are promoted to the visitor as well, this shows that the Östersund tourist and congress knows what a destination needs to succeed in perceiving visitors and to create a imprinting image.

The marketing of Östersund is based on the traditional marketing mix. The tourist office works with the product Östersund. The price in winter is lower than the one of the nearby skiing destination Åre and higher in summer, as this outlines the peak season of Östersund.

Östersund as a place is located in the middle of Sweden, its accessibility is better than it is for other Swedish cities and furthermore it is promoted through web sites, brochures, campaigns and coorperations with for example visitsweden.com. Moreover other medias which are used to promote Östersund are the social media such as facebook.com and youtube.com. Media such as the television or the radio are exceeding the budgetary limits of Östersund.

Furthermore there are two main annual events, the "Storsjöyran" and the Biathlon World Cup taking place in Östersund. As mentioned in the theoretical chapter “an important aspect of a place’s image is the use of events. Events can brand a place and its image permanently.”

This branding of a destination by an event happened in 2008 as the World Championship of Biathlon took place in Östersund and with it the popularity of
Östersund as a destination which hosts Biathlon grew remarkable. Only since 2008 the impact of hosting the Biathlon World Cup is increasing by the growing number of tourists. Hence it is visible that the destination image works together with events. Östersund is working with the Biathlon event as it is one main attraction the winter period. For the summer time the mentioned festival "Strosjöyran" is vital and it creates the part of the year when most tourists are visiting Östersund. This proves that both events are influencing destinations and the creation of images and in a wider scope the creation of a business and marketing concept.

5.2 Comparison Winter and Summer Tourists

The types of tourists visiting Östersund vary from winter to summer season. In the winter period many tourists are coming from Sweden itself or foreign countries, such as Germany, the Netherlands or France. The event of the Biathlon World Cup in December is the main tourist attraction, as well as the Christmas market "Julmarknad". But furthermore many tourists are coming to enjoy a skiing or active winter holiday in Östersund.

As in the summer time there is a majority of camping tourists from Norway and Sweden and people coming home to visit family and friends as well as to participate in the music festival “Strosjöyran”. Most tourists are young families with children or middle-aged couples and groups. The variety of activities for children and parents are widely spread, as the ones for middle-aged people are limited. Another result is that most tourists are satisfied about their stay in Östersund. This is visible as the majority of the tourists, both summer and winter, are willing to revisit Östersund and most of the tourists are as well prepared to recommend Östersund to family, friends or acquaintances.

As seen in the results about the awareness of activities which are offered in Östersund in both seasons, a lot of activities are barely or not known by the tourists. Out of this further conclusion can be drawn. The tourists of the winter questionnaire connected Biathlon, the winter and its beautiful scenery with Östersund. This gives hints about the image of Östersund as it is explored by its visitors.
To summarize the comparison of summer and winter tourists of Östersund it can be said, that the characteristics of both seasonal visitors are differing for instance in their country of residence, ages, their companions or their holiday purpose. But otherwise the satisfaction with the destination Östersund and therefore the experience of the stay are both achieving good grades and satisfied customers are obtained. Both of the seasonal visitors used the internet as the most utilised information channel previous to the destination visit.

Moreover it can be said that the intention of revisiting and recommending is created by the majority of tourists all over the year.
6 Discussion

This part of the thesis is dealing with the analysis of the empirical data done previously. This will lead to the answering of the research questions of this thesis. First the destination image suppliers view is evaluated, which then is followed by the destination image recipients view.

Hence the achieved success of the marketing of the destination Östersund becomes obvious.

6.1 How and in which way is the destination image of Östersund created?

The tourist office of Östersund has done a good start with formulating a mission about their work and purpose. As displayed in the various data which was collected, the image of Östersund as a winter city is created and conveyed by the employees as well as by the residents.

The competitive advantage of Östersund is the strong winter, this advantage is recognized and processed in the marketing of Östersund. The winter is obviously promoted through the logo of Östersund as it displays the snow or crystal heart. In addition the marketing focus lies on the winter season of Östersund, even if there are more tourists in the summer time. Hence this focus should result in an increasing number of tourist in the winter. This shows moreover that the tourists office has recognized the weaker season of winter and wants it to become stronger.

To give a summary about the message which should be transmitted through the image of Östersund and its logo, it should be seen as the strong winter city, where a lot of activities can be experienced, where international athletes compete in Biathlon, where the residents are loving the cold and the winter and where it is the a pleasure to go skiing, ice skating, to walk in the snow and enjoy the nature as well as to experience the frozen lake “Storsjö”.
For the summer season the marketing of Östersund is not that strong as it already has its peak season during this time. But the activities and possibilities in the summer time have a huge variety as well.

The channels which are used to promote Östersund and its image are chosen to aim the visitors and residents as well. The Östersund brochure promotes Östersund in the summer- and wintertime. It summarizes all activities which can be experienced and the events which are taking place in Östersund. It tries to address every visitor with their individual interests and needs.

Furthermore Östersund works together with organisations with the purpose to promote Östersund to a wider target market, to other countries and new visitors. Not to be limited to the individual traveller, Östersund works also with attracting businesses to visit Östersund. An example for this target market are the cooperation with other destinations or tourism providers.

All this shows that Östersund tourist and congress has understood that the creation of an image is vital for a destination. It has recognized its strengths and weaknesses and works with them, in the scope or minimizing the weaknesses and boost their strengths. As they formulated a mission and concept, they are also aware that the employees, who are working to promote Östersund have to be motivated to do this.

With the hosting of two main events and the development of more events, it can be stated that the tourist office and Östersund municipality are also aware of the importance of hosting events for a destination and the way how events and destinations are influencing each other.

6.2 What existing image has Östersund from the tourists point of view?

To answer this research question the results from the questionnaire need to be considered. Out of this it can be summarized that the tourists who are visiting Östersund are more or less aware of the “winter city”- image. Especially the winter
tourists choose Östersund with the purpose of skiing, Biathlon or just the winter feeling.

The image which the tourists have of Östersund is a positive one. The majority of visitors are satisfied with their stay. This can lead to the intention of returning and revisiting Östersund, which furthermore is as mentioned previously one central success factor of a destination and its destination image. If tourists who visited Östersund are willing to visit it again, the tourist office and the tourism service providers have done everything right, as this ensures further demand of their service supply.

Moreover a lot of respondents have the intention to recommend Östersund to others, such as family and friends, acquaintances and colleagues. As this is mostly done via word-of-mouth, another distribution channel for Östersund as a destination is achieved as well as another vital factor for the success of it. The word-of-mouth is an important information channel for new visitors, hence usually a service cannot be tested or experienced in advance and therefore the purchase of a service comes often in line with a certain grade of risk. If people who know each other and trust each other are telling their experience of a service experience, in this case of tourism service such as accommodation or transport, this will minimize the grade of risk for the potential visitor and can create the intention to travel.

As the revisiting and recommendation intention of the Östersund tourist is created, Östersund as a destination has understood the way how a destination needs to be marketed.

But on the other hand the questionnaire results show that an amount of respondents was not aware of the activities which are offered. When they were asked about the activities what can be done in each other season, just a small number of activities were known by the respondents. This unawareness should be minimized by a better marketing of the different activities.

Additionally there could be an improvement of activities for the middle-aged tourists. The variety of activities for children and young families is wide, but the
number of activities for middle-aged people is limited. There are a lot of activities given for middle-aged people, but most of them for residents and Swedish-speaking people. Those activities could be developed further to aim international middle-aged visitors as well and thereby broaden the target group.

To give a conclusion about the perceived destination image by the tourist it can be said that, the image which the tourist office formulated to be implanted has succeeded. The majority of Östersund tourists are satisfied with their stay and their holiday, their complaints are limited and most of them have no feelings about missing facilities in Östersund. The image of a winter city, its neat appearance and friendly residents all work together to create the relevant image.
As the focus on winter tourism had its real startup in the year 2008 when the Biathlon World Championship was hosted, the development of the “winter city”-focus and its concept is still in progress.

6.3 Are there image differences between summer and winter tourism?

In the characteristics of the tourists who are visiting Östersund, there are differences in their country of residences, their age, their accompany and their travel purpose. But both, summer and winter tourist are really satisfied with the destination Östersund and the tourism service provided. The appearance of the intention of revisiting and recommending Östersund is created in both seasons.

Hence the image of Östersund as a destination for summer or winter holidays, for visiting family and friends or just to participate in events and activities is similar for both seasons.

The logo of Östersund is appropriate for the winter as well as for the summer season. The logo of the snow or crystal heart is present in both seasons and is promoting especially for Östersund in the winter as its image is having the shape of a snowflake. The connection to the winter can’t be denied. The reason for this is the already mentioned focus of merchandising Östersund in the wintertime in a way to attract more tourists by approaching the number of tourists in the summer
season.

The image of Östersund in summer and winter is not differentiated in both, the destination image which addresses the visitors and the in real terms achieved image by the tourists. Both types of images are the same in summer and winter. Tourists are satisfied visitors in both season with in most cases the intention of revisiting and recommending Östersund.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Östersund is a destination whose marketing is conducted in a good way. The destination is formulated and shaped by the mission of the Östersund tourist and congress and furthermore it matches the image which is achieved by the tourists mind. The implementation, starting in 2008, has so far aimed the mind of tourists as to make Östersund a satisfying place for spending time and experience a lot.

The awareness about the marketing of a destination in much the same way as a product is marketed has not been found in the data results of the research. The collaboration with the local service and tourism providers can be improved. This can lead to a coordinated image creation process and help to implant the image even more into the mind of the visitor. The provided services can work together, creating new packages and activities for tourists, for instance to improve the promotion of the different activities or to create more activities for the middle-aged visitors. As the development of the image of Östersund has just started two years ago, this gives possibilities for further research and improvement of how to tighten the image of Östersund or to create an image for the summer time which fits its target market or for instance to examine the accurate effect of the events which are hosted.
7 List of References

7.1 Printed Resources


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7.2 Electronic Resources


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7.3 Figures

Figure 1: 4P Marketing Mix; Page 10; Retrieved January 17, 2011, from Sales and Marketing for “You” Website:
http://www.sales-and-marketing-for-you.com/marketing-mix.html

Figure 2: 4C Marketing Mix; Page 10; Retrieved January 17, 2011 from Sales and Marketing for “You” Website:
http://www.sales-and-marketing-for-you.com/images/define-marketing-mix.jpg

Figure 3: Crystal Heart Östersund; Page 15; Retrieved January 3, 2011, from Suedkurier Website:

Figure 4: Tourist Office Concept Triangle; Page 17; Retrieved January 17, 2011, from Östersund Tourist & Congresses Website:

Figure 5: Guests Country of residence 2009; Page 18; Retrieved January 17, 2011, from Östersund Tourist & Congresses Website:

Figure 6: Summer 2010 Brochure; Page 33; Retrieved January 3, 2011, from Östersund Tourist & Congresses Website:
Figure 7: The Winter City 2010/2011 Brochure; Page 33; Retrieved January 3, 2011, from Östersund Tourist Congress Website:

7.4 Personal Communication

Östersund Tourist & Congress
Camilla Olsson, Managing Director 2010-11-24, 11:00-11:45.
Appendix

1) Questionnaire Interview Camilla Olsson:

Östersund Tourist Information
Wednesday, 24.11.10
11:00- 12/12:30

Interview with Camilla Olsson:

Main tourism information:
- available data/ statistics?
- Characteristics of Östersund tourists
- characteristics destination Östersund

Marketing of Östersund: marketing-/ business concept?

Marketing-Mix used:
- Place
- Product
- Price+ costs
- Promotion

Destination Image of Östersund

Events in Östersund:
- Biathlon World Cup: since when, why Östersund, effect
- Storsjöyan Festival/ Great Lake Festival: since when, local, regional, national awareness

New events planned/ necessary?
Questionnaire

I am a bachelor student studying at the Mid Sweden University here in Östersund. I am writing my Bachelor Thesis about the destination Östersund and its marketing impact on the tourists mind. Therefore some of your preferences and opinions about Östersund are essential for my study. Of course they will be handled in an anonymous way.

It would be very kind of you to spare some time to read the following questions and answer each of them according to the issue. Please tick the boxes where they are given and fill out the lines.

Thank you for your time and participation!

Visitor/ Guest profile

1) Gender: □ Female □ Male
2) What is your age? □_________ Years
3) Home country:
4) Have you visited Östersund before? □ No, never □ Yes, number of visits

Östersund in the winter

5) What do you connect with Östersund spontaneously?

__________________________

6) What is the main reason to visit Östersund?
1. □ Biathlon World Cup 2. □ sightseeing 3. □ skiing
4. □ do/participate in activities 5. □ studying
6. □ shopping 7. □ the Christmas market “Julmarknad”
8. □ staying at home 9. □ visit family/friends 10. □ travel through
11. □ other entertainment/ events

7) For how many nights will you stay in Östersund?
□________ Nights/ □ One-Day Trip

8) Did you visit Östersund in winter prior to this visit or is it for the first time?
1. □ Yes, in the winter of ______ 2. □ Another season 3. □ No, never

9) Did you search for information about Östersund for this trip?
Give 2 information channels
1. □ Broschure 2. □ Internet 3. □ Tourist Office
4. □ Articles in newspapers 5. □ Travelguide/ -book
6. □ Acquaintances who were here 7. □ Acquaintances in the area
8. □ own past experiences 9. □ searched no information before the visit
10.  

10) Do you think that you will return to Östersund in the winter in the next three years?

☐ Yes, for sure  ☐ Yes, probably  ☐ uncertain  ☐ No, probably not  
☐ No, surely not

10a) If yes, for which purpose?

1. ☐ Biathlon World Cup  2. ☐ sightseeing  3. ☐ skiing
4. ☐ do/ participate in activities  5. ☐ shopping
6. ☐ other entertainment/ events
7. ☐ the Christmas market „Julmarknad“  8. ☐ visit family/ friends
9. ☐ staying at home

10b) Why are you not sure or why don’t you want to be back here in the winter?

1. ☐ not planning so far in advance  2. ☐ there are better options
3. ☐ economic reasons  4. ☐ too long to get here
5. ☐ want to experience new areas
6. ☐ unsatisfied/ dissapointed with the visit
7. ☐ others ____________________________

11) Do you think that you will recommend Östersund as a destination to friends or acquaintances?

☐ Yes, for sure  ☐ Yes, probably  ☐ uncertain  ☐ No, probably not  
☐ No, surely not

Östersund in the summer

12) Have you visited Östersund in summer in the last three years?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

13) Would you be willing to visit Östersund in the summer?

☐ Yes, for sure  ☐ Yes, probably  ☐ uncertain  ☐ No, probably not  
☐ No, surely not

13a) Do you know what varieties of activities to do in the summer in Östersund?

1. ☐ swimming  2. ☐ wellness  3. ☐ golf  4. ☐ the zoo
5. ☐ museums/ tours  6. ☐ walking  7. ☐ riding  8. ☐ others______________

14) Why are you less or not interested in Östersund in the summer?

____________________________________

15) Have you been in contact with the tourist office in Östersund in connection to this visit?

1. ☐ visited the office  2. ☐ telephone  3. ☐ E-mail  4. ☐ Website
5. ☐ No, no contact
16) Are you missing something in the range of activities/attractions in Östersund?

☐ Yes, ________________________________________________

☐ No

Thank you very much for your Participation! Enjoy your stay!