Brand Identity; Improving event tourism in Helsinki

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Abstract

The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Destination competitiveness emphasizes the need to link competitiveness to a destination’s ability to deliver goods and services better than other destinations on those parts of the tourism experience regarded as being important by tourists. The phenomenon of using events to strategically build and strengthen a destination’s brand identity has received very little attention.

This study aims to investigate how the Destination Management Organisations in Helsinki are building a brand identity, and how events may be used strategically in this process. Interviews have been undertaken with few organisations of various sizes and characteristics. Two distinct divisions formed the base of the thesis; the first with a clear focus on how the DMO is working to create a brand identity, while the latter concentrated on the same topic from a focused perspective; how the brand identity may be created with the use of events. After this, the research phase is entered, which involves gathering the necessary data required for determining the current identity of the destination. Once the research phase was completed, the process moved into a phase of shaping the brand identity. Through the interviews the writer was able to get better perceptions of how the city is merged with views and objectives of where the city wants to be, or where they desire to be in the future.

Key Words: Destination Branding, Brand Identity, Destination Brand Identity, Events.
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1. INTRODUCTION

The aim with the first chapter is to introduce the thesis by providing an overview of the topic chosen. It begins with an introduction, which is followed by the problem and its purpose are defined, including the proposed research question.

The phenomenon of using events to strategically build and strengthen a destination’s brand identity has received very little attention. The brand identity is referred to as the “heart of the brand”; it represents what the brand stands for, what gives its meaning and what makes it unique (Kapferer, 2004). This study aims to investigate how different Destination Management Organisations in Helsinki are building a brand identity, and how events may be used strategically in this process. One event organisation also participated in the research.

Destinations are places that attract visitors for temporary stay (Pike, 2004). Destination competitiveness emphasizes the need to link competitiveness to a destination’s ability to deliver goods and services better than other destinations on those parts of the tourism experience regarded as being important by tourists (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007).

Regions and cities have accordingly started to apply certain marketing techniques that were previously developed for consumer goods only. One of those techniques is branding. A brand can be considered as representing an identity for the producer and an image for the consumer. The brand identity refers to what a brand stands for, what gives it meaning, and what makes it unique (Melin, 1999).

Events may act as a stimulus to tourism and may indirectly affect local businesses, services, and infrastructure (Shone & Parry, 2004). In cities were few attractions exist, the tourist season is sometimes focused exclusively around built attractions or events (Shone & Parry, 2004; Kotler & Gertner, 2002). The term event tourism is, according to Getz (2005), used to illustrate a destination development and marketing strategy to recognize all the potential economic benefits of events. The scale of event tourism is increasing and events may perform several economic and tourism roles for a destination (Getz, 2005).

At every destination, regional or city, there is generally an organisation responsible for the management and marketing of the destination, and in addition to preserve and support a cooperative relationship with organisations at other levels (Kelly & Nankervis, 2001). These organisations are called Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs). The overall role of DMOs is generally to enhance the long-term competitiveness of the destination (Pike, 2004). DMOs are working to promote the destination through, among other factors, creating a favourable image, distributing information, trade travel events, and partnership arrangements with other management and supplier organisations (Kelly & Nankervis, 2001). The DMOs for cities and towns are commonly evident in the shape of convention and visitor bureaus and members of the organisations may include hospitality-related entities such as hotels, restaurants and tour operators. The knowledge and coordination of marketing and sales efforts make the organisation a valuable resource for its members (Blain, Levy, and Ritchie, 2005). Many DMOs are dependent of government resources and would not be able to function without them (Pike, 2004). Governments normally interact with tourism by stimulating economic growth; provision of infrastructure; fiscal revenue; border controls; spatial redistribution; protection of resources; regulatory safeguards; managing of exogenous events; stimulating social benefits; and minimising market failure (Pike, 2004).
1.2 Problem discussion

There have been some studies regarding brand identity and its importance, but it is still a much unexplored field within the tourism field. (Kapferer 2005). Brand identity is referred to as the core of the brand; the heart from which the brand should be built. It is much argued that a strong brand identity is necessary in order to produce a successful and sustainable brand. It should be within the organisation’s interest and responsibility to strategically determine what the brand stands for, what gives it meaning and what makes it unique.

In this study I am leaning to a more contrasting approach by letting the producer/managerial perspective be the essence of the study. Another problem is that the concepts of brand image and brand identity often are intertwined and used synonymously. This is particularly obvious when it comes to branding in relation to the tourism field (Hosany 2006). Perhaps it is because destination branding still is a relatively new research topic. A small number of studies have focused on event tourism and its link to the destination brand. Thus, it is an interesting and rather unexplored area and gives the study an own perspective. While more and more destinations are using events to strengthen their brand, it seems surprising that so few studies have taken this specific approach.

1.3 Problem definition and purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine and present the phenomenon of how destination marketing organisations are working to create a destination brand identity and how and to what extent they are using events when creating and building this brand identity. This is done with a qualitative case study approach.

The intention of this study is to view the phenomenon from the organisation’s perspective and will therefore not focus on the consumer. The idea is to examine how the identity is formed in relation to the brand building process so the concept of image will be mentioned very briefly. How the destination is actually perceived will not be included in the study, the focus will be on the corporation and how they believe the destination identity is represented and developed. It will furthermore examine how the DMOs incorporate events in building the brand identity. This study focuses on two areas, destination brand identity and events.
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The aim of this chapter is to examine and discuss previous research that is of concern to this study. This will also be used as a framework for the analysis that is presented later in this study. The theory starts with a discussion about branding, and how a corporation may successfully build a brand. After this section, the concept of brand identity is examined, and provided are a few models that show the different facets of brand identity and the sources behind it. Lastly, the area of events is covered through a discussion of the notion of event tourism and subsequently how events may be linked to the brand of the destination.

2.1 Definition of a destination

“In discussing destinations, we must always bear in mind two important considerations. First they have both physical and psychological characteristics: that is to say, the image of a destination consists of a number of physical attributes, attractions and amenities, buildings, landscapes and so on together with perceptions allied to the locals, the atmosphere generated by being there, the sense of awe, alienation, or other emotions generated by the place. Second, destinations have very different appeals to different markets. Some people love crowds, others love isolation and find crowded beaches unbearable… It is fortunate that the appeal of destinations is so varied, allowing opportunities for tourism to be developed in almost any country, and to almost any region, providing that it is aimed at the appropriate market.” (Holloway & Taylor, 2006)

2.2 Branding

In today's highly competitive market, many destinations are adopting branding techniques similar to those used by 'Coca Cola', 'Nike' and 'Sony' in an effort to differentiate their identities and to emphasize the uniqueness of their product. Branding is usually being linked with branding a product. A brand can be defined as: “a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers” (American Marketing Association, 2007). A brand is what differentiates a product, service or destination, something that makes it special. A main reason behind the increased interest for branding, and the recognition of a brand’s importance of being a valuable asset, has been the power of the concept of brand equity, which refers to the added value a brand provides a product (Melin, 1999)
2.3 Destination branding

Destination branding is defined as the process used to develop a unique identity and personality that is different from all competitive destinations (Morrison & Anderson 2002). The concept of tourism destination is critical to understand the uniqueness of destination branding. A tourism destination can be characterized in many ways. One perspective on a tourism destination is the understanding of a physical space in which tourism takes place. From this point of view the tourist is an active participant in the production of tourism.

In building a brand for a destination, it has been discussed that the identity creation should not be restricted to the visual but should create an emotional relationship between the destination and the potential visitors. Both how the destination views itself and how others perceive it needs to be taken into consideration (Morgan et al, 2002). Destination brand winners appear as those places that are rich in emotional meaning, have great conversational value and hold high anticipation for potential tourists (Morgan et al, 2002).

Building a brand for a destination presents many challenges and requires several different steps and components. Melin (1999) presents a model, which illustrates the brand building process from the brand owner’s perspective. This strategic brand platform is formed around six concepts, all of which are closely related to each other: product attributes, brand identity, positioning, marketing communication and internal brand loyalty. Melin (1999) implies that all of these concepts should cooperate and by that contribute to the brand building process. Thus, one can say that this is an illustration of the brand building competence a corporation needs to be able to build, develop and sustain a strong brand, something that may result in future competitive advantage.

![Figure 1 The strategic brand platform (Melin)](image)
Product Attributes refer to the certain features of a product, which intermediates a functional value to the consumers. A consistent product quality is an important indicator of a brand’s success, as well as logotype, packaging and colour signals. These attributes assist in characterising and visualising the brand product (Melin, 1999).

Brand Identity refers, according to Melin (1999), to what a brand stands for, what gives it meaning and what makes it unique. Product attributes are commonly easy to duplicate, why corporations attempt new, more complex approaches to gain competitive advantage, such as a strong brand identity. The primary objective is to offer an emotional value. Factors that are associated with the development of a strong identity is the brand name; origin; personality; and distribution.

Core Value is representing the brands primary advantage (Merlin 1999). Accordingly, much thought should be given to the identification of unique core values, as this should be the foundation of a brand’s positioning and marketing communication.

Marketing Communication involves the transmission of the brand from the company to the consumer – individualised advertising and promotion for a sustainable brand building.

Positioning refers to the process of which a company tries to attain a specific position within consumers’ awareness.

Internal Brand Loyalty may be viewed as an expression for the undertakings a brand owner has towards a single brand. In order for consumers to become brand loyal, it is vital that the brand owner is so too (Melin, 1999).

All of these factors are believed to contribute in building the brand. Among the six concepts and areas that make up a brand, this study focuses on one of them-the brand identity. The above model was included in order to obtain a whole picture of what a brand is, where the brand identity fits in, and the role it encompasses. The further discussion will evolve around brand identity and the different facets of the concept.

2.4 Brand Identity

2.4.1 The Identity concept

According to Aaker (1996) brand identity provides strategic direction, purpose and meaning for a brand. Aaker defines brand identity as: “a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain”. These associations represent what the brand stands for and imply a promise to customers from the organization members. Brand identity should help establish a relationship between the brand and the customer by generating a value proposition involving functional, emotional, or self-expressive benefits.” (Aaker, 1996)

Brand identity represents how the brand wants to be perceived, it leads brand image and is situated on the sender's side. The way a brand is perceived by its customers is key to its success. To drive positive brand association that customers know and trust requires recognizable brand associations in
the mind of customers, without a discrepancy in the brand elements. The brand perception, or in other words the brand image, is therefore always on the receiver's side (Kapferer, 2007).

![Figure 2 Identity and Image (Kapferer)](image)

It is necessary to have a clear and objective self-image of the brand identity in order to influence the desired set of brand awareness. According to Van Gelder brand identity declares; its background, its principles, its purpose and its ambitions. For that reason brands need to be managed for consistency and vitality (Gelder, 2005). Thus the identity concept, the promise to a customer, plays a crucial role within the brand management process as a brand needs to be durable. The brand must deliver consistent signs and products and it needs to be realistic (Kapferer, 2007). Brand image can easily change over time where brand identity represents long lasting values of the brand. From that perspective brand image is more a tactical asset, whereas brand identity fulfils a strategic asset role (Kotler & Pfoertsch, 2006)

Kapferer has developed a brand identity prism where he distinguishes a sender and recipient side, plus an externalisation and internalisation side. The 6 identity facets express the tangible and intangible characteristics of the brand and give it a unique authority and legitimacy of values and benefits (Kapferer, 2007)

![Figure 3Brand identity and three-tier pyramid (Kapferer)](image)
Kapferer (2004) has developed the first conceptual model regarding brand identity building. The identity prism consists of six identity facets: physique, personality, relationship, culture, reflection, and self-image. These six facets together form the brand identity. These facets will be described below. The model will be used as a guide for the rest of this chapter where each individual facet is discussed; first in relation to brands in general, and then related to destination brands and relevant research within that field.

The six facets of the identity prism define the brand identity from different perspectives and set the boundaries within it. (Kapferer, 2007). The six facets of the identity prism can be described as:

1. **Physique**
   An exterior tangible facet communicating physical specificities, colour, form and brand qualities. Physique is the starting point of branding and therefore it forms the brands backbone.

2. **Personality**
   An internal intangible facet which forms the character, soul and brand personality which are relevant for brands.

3. **Culture**
   An internal intangible facet to integrate the brand into the organization which is essential in differentiating brands.

4. **Relationship**
   An exterior facet with tangible and intangible areas, and defines the behaviour that indentifies the brand - the way the brand connect to its customers.

5. **Reflection**
   An external intangible facet reflecting the customer as he or she wishes to be seen as a result of using a brand. So called: the target outward's mirror.

6. **Self-image**
   An external intangible facet reflecting the customer attitude towards the brand. These inner thoughts connect personal inner relationship with the brand, so called: the target internal mirror.

To manage and balance identity changes across the facets in a guided and preferred direction, organizations need to understand the key brand drivers. Kapferer has captured this in a three-tier pyramid where he positioned the identity prism is the pyramid. The pyramid counts 3 layers of freedom and flexibility; (1) the brand kernel, (2) the brand style, (3) the brand themes, acts and products. The flexibility and freedom of change decrease from the bottom to the top. The pyramid concept enables differentiated change management across identity facets by grouping them in a pyramid layer (Kapferer, 2007)
2.5 The importance of understanding Brand Identity

It has become more and more important to understand brand identity for a number of reasons. Firstly, the modern world suffers from over-communication in the sense that everyone wants to communicate, and it is hard to make oneself heard (Kapferer, 1997). It has become difficult to survive and succeed in this environment and, not to mention, to effectively convey one’s identity. Secondly, there is a consistent pressure put on brands in terms of similarity marketing. If one brand presents something innovative, others will follow. An identity is harder to copy and diversification and differentiation from the competition requires knowing ones brand identity (Kapferer, 2004).

A brand can be considered as representing an identity for the producer and an image for the consumer. The brand identity characterises the self-image and desired market image, while the brand image signifies the actual image held by consumers (Pike, 2004). There is an evident confusion between the two concepts, which, makes it more difficult to comprehend. One may say that identity is what one is, profile is what one wants to be, and image is the picture the surrounding world has of an organisation or destination (Lagergren, 1998). In order to become a successful and sustainable brand, a brand needs to be loyal to its identity. Brand image is an unstable and shifting notion and it is too much concerned with the appearance of the brand, rather than with its real self (Kapferer, 2004).

In terms of brand management, the brand identity states the image, and before communicating an image to the public, the organisation must be certain of exactly what they want to communicate. Before the message is received, it is vital to know what to send and how to send it. Thus, the identity concept serves to highlight the fact that, with time, brands do ultimately gain their independence and their own meaning, even despite the fact that they may start out as mere product names. Brands characterize their own area of competence, potential and authenticity but they are also aware of when to stay out of other areas. One cannot expect a brand to be anything other than itself (Kapferer, 2004).
2.6 Sources of identity

In order to analyse a brand’s identity, one can examine the sources of it, meaning the factors that characterise the brand. Kapferer (2004) lists four sources that are recommended to look at: the brand’s products, the brand characters and symbols, geographical and historical roots, and brand essence. These are, similarly as to the previous section, discussed below, first in relation to brands in general, and then related to destinations.

2.6.1 Products

In regards to consumer brands, the product source naturally comprises the products that the organisation sells (Kapferer, 2004). In terms of destinations, the products comprise the tourist attractions that are offered. This may include built attractions, historical icons, events, natural environment and so on.

2.6.2 Brand characters and symbols (slogans and logos)

Brand managers use several tools upon establishing the destination identity. It could be a captivating slogan or logo (Stockholm the Capital of Scandinavia); visual images or symbols (Big Ben, the Eiffel Tower, the Statue of Liberty); and hosting events and deeds, such as the Oktoberfest in Germany or the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament in England (Kotler & Gertner, 2002).

2.6.3 Logos

Logos are regarded as graphic designs (with or without taglines) and are used by companies to identify the firm and/or products that they create. Logos perform several functions in creating and enhancing corporate brands, and they are one of the main tools for communicating the brand identity, cutting through clutter to obtain awareness, and increasing recognition of the company or its products (Blain et al, 2005; Kapferer, 1997). Due to globalization and increased standardization, logos nowadays play an important role in creating an easily identifiable, distinctive identity and succeeding image for differentiating the product or company. Within the tourism context, a destination logo is a graphic design used to identify a destination and may assist many DMO:s marketing activities to establish brand identity that is predominantly relevant before the actual visitor experience. The logos should reflect the identity and wished for image that in order to express the overall idea of the experience a visitor could anticipate at the destination (Blain et al, 2005). Since there are numerous destinations for visitors to choose from, logos can successfully stimulate awareness and communicate desired characteristics and attributes to visitors. This may accordingly reduce search costs and influence visitor choice behaviour, particularly if the logo bonds with the target markets that the DMO is endeavoured to attract by positively symbolizing the anticipated visitor experience (Kapferer, 1997; Blain et al, 2005; Hem and Iversen, 2004).

Furthermore, a logo could also be a tool used to internally develop a unifying destination culture and destination identity (Kapferer, 1997; Hem & Iversen, 2004). It is however possible that the
desired response to the selected destination logo will not be achieved since it has been inappropriately designed in some way. Improper logos are difficult to store or access in memory, they are not likeable, and they fail to create a sense of meaning that corresponds with the destination that it provides for. Hence, it is predominantly important to create a destination logo, which induces positive feelings to internal and external audiences (Hem and Iversen, 2004).

When developing a destination logo, the core essence of the destination should be used as the brief for involved designers. The appropriateness of the colour or the type of font can be measured against how these will assist the destination achieve its goals. Most destinations periodically update their logos to maintain a fresh, contemporary look. In doing so, it is imperative to make gradual changes that do not lose sight of the inherent advantages of the logo (Hem and Iversen, 2004).

2.6.4 Slogans

Slogans are another identity element that may serve to differentiate the brand. When observing the world, there are several successful destination brand slogans evident. For example, I ♥ New York or Amazing Thailand. The production of destination slogans has increased drastically during recent years and is now a local trend in branding (Dugan, 2007).

Effective slogans have been defined as: “short phrases that, in a memorable way, describe or hint at core benefits of the destination brand” (Supphellen & Nygaardsvik 2002). It is difficult to classify effective destination slogans, as destination brands are much more complex than consumer brands (Supphellen & Nygaardsvik, 2002; Pike, 2005). Pike (2004) states that the slogan should be a short statement limited to approximately seven words and be expressed in simple terms, clearly focused on one value proposition of interest to the target. It is vital to mention that one identity element may take the main role. Hence; if a destination uses logos as their major element, then the slogan would carry the purpose of functioning as a “fastener” for core brand associations (Supphellen & Nygaardsvik, 2002).

2.6.5 Geographical and Historical roots

Some brands evolve their identity and their uniqueness from their geographical and historical roots. This is often a deliberate choice (Kapfere, 2004). For destinations, the geographical and historical roots are always used in one way or another; however this source can be enhanced or restricted. Research argues that a destination’s history is its destination identity and that it is impossible to separate tourism and country or place and product (Yeoman et al, 2005, Anholt, 2002). Hence, the history and culture often becomes the foundation of destination marketing and branding. History provides material for tourism to utilize, and is positively recreated for present and future consumption (Yeoman et al, 2005).
2.6.6 Brand Essence

Many organisations use the word brand essence, which often develops from the desire of summarising the identity (Kapferer, 2004). Similarly as to organisations do the brand essences represent the destination’s identity. The brand essence should be time-less or at least expected to be relevant for a long period of time. The brand essence is thus a representation of the brand identity and an encapsulation of the brand values. These values outline the core of the brand’s identity and what the organisation believes in. They are inherent of the organisation and direct the external and internal work. These values also functions as a framework for communications, culture and the outward facing personality (Lagergren, 1998; Melin, 1999) Companies commonly highlight a few of the values as core values. These core values represent a brands primary competitive advantage (Melin, 1999).

It has been argued that the first step in the process of establishing a destination brand is to ascertain a number of core values that represents the essence of the destination brand identity. These values should be durable, relevant, and communicable, and hold saliency for potential visitors. Furthermore, the process should reflect on how contemporary or relevant the brand is to the tourism consumers of today, and how it compares with its key competitors (Morgan, et al, 2002). The core values may be complemented with and supported of secondary values or assets. Kapferer (2004) argues that the brand essence concept is valuable in that it tries to summarise the richness of an identity and as such it makes the communication process easier. The inconvenience is that the meaning of words is highly specific to culture, why the values may be misinterpreted. Kapferer (2004) accordingly suggests that, in order to fully understand a brand, the full identity prism is needed, where words obtain their meaning in relationship with others. The brand essence may practically be placed in the middle of the brand identity prism or on the top of the brand pyramid, relating to values, essence, personality and attributes (Kapferer, 2004).
2.7 Event Tourism

2.7.1 Typology of Events

When discussing event tourism, it is rational to start by determining how the concept of an event is defined and how events may be categorized into different sectors. The fundamental criterion characterizing all types of events is that they are temporary. This study focuses on planned events, those that involve professional managers and which Getz defines as: “temporary occurrences with a predetermined beginning and end.” (Getz, 2005) Getz classifies planned events into seven categories divided between those in the public sector and those being of main interest to individuals and small, private groups. All seven categories can be found in practically any culture and community.

There are several terms and concepts that are related to event tourism, management and destination branding that will appear throughout this paper. The main ones will therefore be defined here. Hallmark events are defined as: major one-time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long term. Such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention. It refers to events that carry so much quality, attractiveness or publicity that the event provides the destination with a competitive advantage. The event and the destination may subsequently be linked to each other, so that consumers immediately think of this event when thinking about the destination (Getz, 2005).

Mega events are, in an urban context, defined as: “large events of world importance and high profile, which have a major impact on the image of the host city” (Bramwell, 1997). One of the main reasons for hosting a mega-event is the profile and publicity it can give to the host destination. It is also an important tourist asset with participants and visitors being attracted to the destination both directly and indirectly (Bramwell, 1997). Seasonality is common within the tourism industry, with demand being concentrated to one or more peak seasons instead of evenly distributed over the year. There are benefits related to both on and off-peak events and events encompass the unique benefit of overcoming seasonality and by that spreading the tourism flow over the year (Getz, 2005).

Media management refers to the process of DMO’s seeking to acquire specific image building and promotional benefits from media coverage of events. This process demands understanding and knowledge of consumer decision making, how a destination image is created, and knowledge of how to manage media to make certain that they communicate desired messages and images to consumers (Getz, 2005).
2.7.2 Tourism and Economic roles of Events

The term event tourism is, according to Getz (2005), used to illustrate a destination development and marketing strategy to recognize all the potential economic benefits of events. Getz (2005) highlights five main tourism and economic roles of events that can prove positive for destinations and communities.

Events can function as attractions that motivate both local and non-local travel and may increase tourism spending and length of stay. It may also assist in keeping residents and their money at the home destination, rather than travelling somewhere else. Events can furthermore act as animators by structuring programs of special events at already existing facilities in order to make extra use of theme parks, museums and resorts. This has the advantage of attracting people who may otherwise not visit the premises and can as well encourage people to make repeat visits. Major events may act as image-makers through its role of forming the image of a destination, much due to the media attention and publicity it attracts in relation to the event.

Events may furthermore be important in terms of place marketing by enhancing the image of communities and in attracting tourists. This may lead to improvements in quality of life, and in attracting new residents and industries. Finally, events may function as catalysts through mega events’ tendencies of attracting investments and leading to improvements in infrastructure and facilities. Sport events generally result in new or improved facilities that can be used to attract events in the future (Getz, 2005).

Without a clear vision and objectives, event tourism initiatives are probable to become ad hoc and ineffective. Getz (2005) indicates that a major question, in terms of event tourism, is the importance of centrality of events – are they one of the main platforms of tourism development and marketing or are they merely a supporting element? Destinations should thus be clear what they want the events and the destination to achieve and in which direction they are heading. However, surprisingly few destinations have event tourism strategies or policies (Getz, 2005).

2.8 Event Tourism Portfolio

Every community has an existing portfolio of events. This can be categorized according to type, season, size, and impacts. Event tourism planning should be concerned with developing and sustaining the ideal portfolio to achieve its vision (Getz, 2005). It is unusual for a single event to have a clear effect on a destination’s brand; rather the entire event portfolio needs to be considered in order to build the brand (Jago et al, 2003). The event portfolio model is a valuable tool for assessing a destination’s current event portfolio and can function as a basis for analysing its connection to the destinations identity and goals. It is also useful for determining the amount of events that are controlled by the DMO’s and which events are not.
Events within a destination can be divided according to two criteria: demand (measured by trends in the number of tourists attracted) and value in meeting other tourism goals. Possible measures of value include growth potential, market share, quality, image enhancement and economic benefits. Some factors that are generally of importance for creating an appropriate event portfolio are: substantial event venues, one or more hallmark events, and media-oriented events (Getz, 2005). The notion of the event portfolio is also discussed in Morgan et al (2001), who in addition provide valuable research related to the relation between events and branding and how to use events strategically in terms of destination image and branding.

### 2.9 Events contribution to the destination brand identity

Jago (2003) provides a model for planning and evaluating an event’s contribution to a destination brand identity. Their research came to the conclusions that in determining the success of an event in branding a destination, the following factors are important: Community Support: The success of events is often much dependent upon local communities since event patronage is generally dominated by local residents. Local community support and community involvement at every stage of the planning process was considered the most significant factor and imperative when attempting to generate a sense of ownership and pride in the event among the community. Both a sense of excitement among the locals and strong financial results for the destination’s business community was considered crucial issues in terms of obtaining desired results. Local residents need to be advocates for the event and the branding of the destination. If local people perceive themselves as an essential part of the event and are interested in the event, their support will carry a positive effect on the way that visitors perceive the event and the destination (Jago et al, 2003).

Cultural and Strategic Fit with the Destination: The second most significant factor in determining the success of an event in branding a destination was that an event should boast a good strategic and
cultural fit with a destination and its community. If the branding is to be constructive, the fit needs to be acquired across a number of dimensions such as values, the culture of the event (and its participants), and the physical and communications infrastructure at the destination. It was put forward that the values, culture, and infrastructure of the event need to be in congruence with those that the community wants to communicate through its brand (Jago et al., 2003).

Furthermore, the cultural and strategic fit need to be established in regards to how a community views itself and wants to be perceived by others, rather than with the way that others currently sees it. Several events have successfully reshaped a destination’s brand specifically since they express images and values that are different from those associated with the destination, but that are consistent with how the destination would like to be perceived. It has as well been suggested that recurring events normally depend profoundly on the host community, accordingly they may need to have an even closer fit with the community and destination than is necessary for larger events that may take place only once at the destination. However, it has also been noticed that event owners confer events to destinations for which there is a good fit between the event and the attributes of the destination (Jago et al., 2003).

![Figure 5 Derived model for planning and evaluating an event’s contribution to destination brand (Jago)](image)

The other four themes that were regarded important are:

**Differentiation:** For events to be particularly successful in terms of destination branding the event should assist in differentiating the destination from others. By this, the destination can offer a product mix with related benefits that are different from those of other destinations. This could happen through the specific and unique benefits presented to event visitors, which may include a range of different aspects such as financial, cultural, experiential, entertainment, or social.

**Longevity/Tradition of the Event:** An on-going event is said to deliver branding benefits due to the fact that longevity and tradition has been perceived to support the branding effect by contributing saliency and profile. However, this factor has not been regarded a crucial factor and depend largely upon the characteristics of the destination and type of event. Hence, while an event might take place only once at a destination it may still present benefits to the destination’s brand through the profile and tradition it conveys. Furthermore, for an event to become synonymous with its destination longevity is an important factor. For an event to deliver a valuable contribution to a destination’s brand it has been argued that it should be hosted to the same destination for 5-10 years. This could also result in an event becoming the hallmark event of a destination. It has further been noticed that for an event to carry on long enough to contribute effectively to a destination’s brand, the event has
to be financially sustainable. Accordingly, for an event to establish itself in a manner that contributes to the destination’s brand, each event must first be sufficiently attractive to the adherents who are the event’s primary market (Jago et al, 2003).

**Stakeholders:** Regardless of the size of the host community, integration between event management and destination marketing is necessary for events to make the best possible contribution to a destination’s brand. Cooperative planning and coordination among key players such as destination marketers, event managers, and the government event organisation has been considered vital in regards to successful use of events in destination branding. It should furthermore be necessary in making sure that facilities and access to destinations are adequate and that cooperative marketing is achieved (Jago et al, 2003).

**Media Coverage:** Positive support from the media can impact significantly on the extent to which an event contributes to a destination’s brand (Chalip & Costa, 2005). Obviously, a large event generates a much greater amount of media coverage than a small event, which may capture only some or even none media exposure outside the host community. However, except for event publicity, event images and mentions can also be included in media that the destination produces itself, such as advertising. Accordingly, the media value of an event should be realised in regards to the reach and frequency of event publicity, as well as in regards to the prospective value of event images and mentions in advertising and associated media that the destination creates itself (Jago et al, 2003; Chalip & McGuirty, 2004).
3. CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed concepts and theory related to 1) branding and brand identity, and 2) event tourism and brand identity. These concepts have been applied relation to tourism destinations by using relevant previous research. A brand is what differentiates a product, service or destination, and in today’s competitive environment it is regarded vital for organisations and products to have a brand if the desire is to succeed and sustain in the marketplace (Aaker, 1991). At the core of the brand lies the identity, which refers to the meaning of the brand and what makes it unique (Kapferer, 2004). Due to the increase in similarity marketing, the importance of having a brand identity should not be neglected, since this is believed to be harder to copy and provides the organisation differentiation (Aaker, 1996; Kapferer, 2004). Kapferer (1995) has developed the first conceptual model regarding brand identity building. This is called the identity prism and consists of six facets - physique, personality, relationship, culture, reflection, and self-image - which are believed to form the brand identity. This model has in this study been used and applied to destinations. So have Kapferer’s (2004) sources of identity. Similarly to product brands, may destination brand identities be analysed by examining the sources of it, i.e. the factors that characterises the brand. Products, symbols, geographical and historical roots, as well as the brand essence are all determinants of the destination brand’s identity (Kapferer, 2004; Morgan et al, 2002; Hem & Iversen, 2004; Pike, 2004; Yeoman et al, 2005).

Events are temporary happenings with a fixed beginning and end (Getz, 2005). Events can perform several economic and tourism roles for destinations and one of them is as an image maker and branding tool. Every destination has an existing portfolio of events and it is vital for success to consider the whole portfolio and develop the ideal portfolio to achieve visions and objectives (Getz, 2005; Morgan et al, 2001). Events have been said to contribute to the destination brand identity in several ways; by boasting a cultural and strategic fit with the destination, through positive media support, and by assisting in differentiating the destination from others. It has also been regarded important to have a strong community support and effective stakeholder cooperation.
4. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this chapter is to present the methods and approaches used when collecting the data for this study. It starts with a description of the chosen research method and research design. This section is followed by an explanation of how the data was collected and the method and case study selection procedure related to this. Hereafter the interview method is presented, as well as how the data was processed and analysed. The methodology chapter ends with a discussion of possible research errors.

4.1 Research Method

Research methods can have an either quantitative or qualitative approach, both having advantages and disadvantages, and either being appropriate depending on the situation and the purpose of the study (Berg, 2007). While quantity generally refers to an amount of something, quality refers to the: “what, how when, and where of something - its essence and ambience” (Berg, 2007). Qualitative research is thus employed to examine the meaning, concepts, definitions, characteristics, symbols and description of issues. It allows for in-depth data collection regarding attitudes, beliefs and perceptions, and assists in examining actual behaviour, not merely reported behaviours (Hair, Bush and Ortinau, 2006). Since this is a study concerning how the DMO is working with destination branding, and since the main objective with the study is to examine how the DMO is working, the author found it appropriate to use a qualitative research approach. The objective is not to acquire findings of how the DMO in general work with these issues and draw conclusions from the sample used. It is rather desired to go deeper into a few cases within a few distinctive areas. The aim is to acquire an in-depth understanding of this situation, and the study is concerned with what actually occurs in the studied organisations. The focus of the study will be on the views and opinions of two people that work for the DMO, and will not analyse how DMO in general work. A qualitative method is central in studies of managerial performance and marketing activities within organisations since it cannot be adequately studied in isolated and artificial settings. Hence, it seems appropriate for this study to employ this specific approach (Carson, Gilmore, Perry, and Gronhaug, 2001).
**4.2 Research Design**

The research design functions as a basis for the methods used to collect and analyze the data. Most research objectives can be met by using one of three types of research design: exploratory, descriptive, and causal (Hair et al, 2006). This study employs an exploratory research design, which refers to: “collecting either secondary or primary data and using an unstructured format to interpret them” (Hair et al, 2006).

The intention of this study is not to present conclusive information with the purpose of generalizing the results; rather is it aiming at examining and describing how a few entities work around the same issue of destination branding.

**4.3 Data collection**

**4.3.1 Primary and Secondary data sources**

The sources of data structures and information needed to solve information research problems can be classified as either primary or secondary, based on three fundamental dimensions: 1) whether the data already exist in some type of recognizable format; 2) the degree to which the data has been interpreted by someone; and 3) the extent to which the researcher or decision maker understand the reason(s) why the data were collected and assembled (Hair et al, 2006). Primary data refers to first hand raw data and data structures that have not yet had any form of meaningful interpretation (Hair et al, 2006). The most common exploratory qualitative methods to collect primary data include focus-group interviews, in-depth interviews, observations and surveys (Carson et al, 2001).

In order to collect data for this study, the primary data collection method used was in-depth interviews. The interviews were undertaken at the destination, and include key people in the destination tourism planning and marketing. General refers to the fact that actual behaviours were not observed, but is included to bring awareness to the fact that the author travelled to the destination.

Secondary data refers to historical information composed in the past for a previous research problem other than the current one (Hair, et al., 2003). Secondary data has been collected and has contributed greatly when structuring the basis of the theoretical framework. It is necessary to collect data from many different sources to gain background knowledge, as well as for structuring a frame for the study. Academic journals have been utilized and form the main part of the literature review and reference list, and in addition books, newspaper articles and web pages has provided supportive information. Company information, either handed out by the interviewed organisation or found on the Internet, adds to the findings.
4.3.2 Participants in the study

Three interviews were executed, among which all done face to face in April-May 2011. The respondents in this study were selected due to their positions within the companies. The preference was to interview employees that are involved in the destination branding, or that would have information regarding events and the overall tourism strategy. The interviewed were the Managing Director Timo Orilähde of Helsinki Expert, the City of Helsinki Tourist and Convention Bureau Marketing Director Kari Halonen and the Production Manager Jan Lindholm of Eastway event promoters.

4.3.3 Interview Method

Yin (2003) argues that, in regards to case studies, the interview is one of the most important sources of information. He means that during the interview, the interviewer need to concentrate on two things: 1) to follow ones own line of inquiry, as reflected by the case study protocol; and 2) to ask the questions in an unbiased manner that also achieves the needs of ones line of inquiry. Interviews may be standardized, semi-standardized or un-standardized (Berg, 2006; Trost, 2005). In this situation, the semi-standardized interview structure has been chosen, based on a number of factors. Although the questions were written out on beforehand, there was the possibility, to a certain degree, of being flexible once conducting the interview. Furthermore, the questions may be reordered, the level of language adjusted, the wording of questions is flexible, and the interviewer may add or delete probes between subsequent subjects (Berg, 2006). Several factors were taken into consideration upon formulating the questions for the interview. It is a fact that problems may arise if the questions are overly complex, if the questions are double-barrelled, or if they are affectively worded (Berg, 2006). Many of the questions were therefore open-ended and rather broad in its structure, since it was desired that the interviewees would expand on the topics and issues. The interviews lasted between 1.5 to 2.5 hours. The participants initially obtained the same question format. However, during the interviews the order of the questions changed according to how the conversation turned out, and due the interviewee’s position and the knowledge the person had.

4.3.4 Data processing

After conducting an interview, the recoded copy was transcribed almost immediately. In order to make certain that reliability would be as high as possible; all interviews were transcribed in an exact manner, including pauses and overlaps. Field notes were taken as a guarantee to if something would go wrong with the tape recorder and to further highlight the important parts of the interviews.

Once the interviews were transcribed, they were structured into the empirical data section according to destination and to decided themes. The themes were decided on after writing the theoretical framework but did not follow the sequence of the interview. A large amount of the transcript material was not used in the thesis but was saved in a separate document if the author desired to go back and use some of it later on in the writing process.
4.3.5 Errors

There is always the possibility of errors in the process of collecting qualitative data. In terms of this study, the cases that have been selected could affect the findings and the results. Since several potential interviewees did not reply to the email sent out, or answered but were not able to participate, could affect the end result. The author's inexperience with conducting interviews may result in bias of both the interviewee and the author. Lastly, the interpretation of the data is much dependent upon the interviewer, since she is part of the data collection process. This may also lead to bias in the results (Carson et al, 2001).
4.4 Validity and Reliability

In qualitative research, the reader often has to depend on the researcher’s description of what is being researched. Arguably, this leads to firm preciousness regarding the validity and reliability of the author’s own interpretation of their interview respondents (Silverman, 2005). Some researchers argue that reliability and validity are concerns only within the quantitative research tradition (Hair et al, 2006). However, although the concepts of validity and reliability are used more extensively in quantitative research, they may also be applied to qualitative research (Silverman, 2005).

Yin (2003) mentions four tests that are commonly used to establish the quality of any empirical social research and that are vital to consider when conducting case studies: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. Out of these four, all except the internal validity are relevant for this study. Construct validity is particularly problematic in case study research. Critics of the case study approach often indicate that subjective measures are used to collect the data. In order to increase construct validity when doing case studies, one may use three tactics: use multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having the draft case study report reviewed by key informants. External validity refers to the problem of knowing whether a study’s findings are generalizable beyond the actual case study. This study does, as mentioned previously, not intend to generalize beyond the included case studies. If it is nevertheless done in some occasions, it has been recommended to use relevant theory to back up the results, or test the result on a second or third case. Reliability translates to the view that a measurement at one point in time should produce the same results as a measurement at a new occasion (Yin, 2003; Silverman, 2005). The objective of reliability is to diminish the errors and biases in a study. Silverman (2005) and Yin (2003) presents two ways of strengthening the reliability of field research, namely field note conventions (case study protocol and inter-coder agreement). In studies with tape-recorded interaction, the reliability of the interpretation of transcripts can be seriously weakened if the researcher fails to transcribe pauses and overlaps, trivial but often crucial details. As mentioned before, these factors have been taken into consideration, both in terms of keeping a protocol and being careful in the transcription process.
5. EMPIRICAL DATA

This section presents all the empirical findings from this study. It mainly includes the findings from the interviews but in the cases where further information was needed, this was derived from printed material handed out from the organisation, such as strategy documents and annual reports. The chapter is divided according to main themes and the destinations. It begins with an introduction of the case included in the study. After this the brand identity of the destinations are explored, followed by an examination of brand models used. Hereafter the core values, personalities and slogans are presented as well as the affecters of the process. Next, the area of events is discussed, including event portfolios, strategies and objectives, and the link between the event and the brand. The chapter ends with a section on future considerations.

5.1 HELSINKI

The city of Helsinki is the capital of Finland and is located in the South of Finland by the Baltic sea. The city was founded by King Gustav Vasa of Sweden in 1550 and has been the capital since 1812. Helsinki has a population of 588,941 people and in the Greater Helsinki area that includes surrounding cities of Vantaa, Espoo and Kauniainen; 1,3 million inhabitants. (January 2011) The total area of the city is 715 square kilometres including 315 islands. The city offers visitors 50 hotels, 1,200 restaurants and 80 museums. (The City of Helsinki 2011.)

Helsinki is unique among Northern European cities. The lifestyle in the second-most northern capital city in the world is full of contrast and activities in the form of hundreds of events. Over 460 years of history, several architectural layers and the impact of different periods can be clearly seen in Helsinki. Finnish design has also made the country’s capital city world famous. The beauty of the surrounding nature blends seamlessly together with high-tech achievements, while old traditions mix with the latest contemporary trends. The city centre has many beautiful parks, and the nearby forests offer an ideal setting for peaceful and quiet walks. The city is also “The World Design Capital” of 2012.
5.2 Helsinki City Tourist and Convention Bureau

Helsinki City Tourist and Convention Bureau were founded in 1940 (Helsinki Tourism Foundation). According to the Helsinki’s tourism strategy stated by the Tourist and Convention Bureau the main objectives of the bureau is to act as a leading promoter of the city by marketing Helsinki in various ways. This includes providing information, networking, measuring, promoting and managing the tourist field both in Finland and abroad. The main tasks are stated to be the following:

1. "Market Helsinki as a tourist and congress destination
2. Provide information about the region’s travel services
3. Promote the development of the travel trade
4. Strengthen the appeal of the city.” (Visit Helsinki 2011.)

This tourism strategy includes the vision for Helsinki that states that the city is” One of the most competitive city destinations in the global tourism market and possesses a strong and unique brand. Helsinki is a year-round and attractive destination for leisure travel and the leading congress city in the Nordic region and highest quality congress city in Europe as well as an essential cruise destination in the Baltic sea.” (Visit Helsinki 2011.) The Tourist and Convention bureau is shared in four units: Marketing Unit, Convention Unit, Communications Unit and the Tourist information Unit. Altogether in these units work 30 people and in high season time 38 more. (Tourist information officers and Helsinki helps). (Visit Helsinki 2011). There are stakeholders that are a part of the marketing measures of the bureau. These include the travel trade such as hotels, ferry companies, tour guides, event organizers and also the local people, Helsinki City personnel, Finnish Tourist Board, abroad tourist companies, airline companies, tourism media and entrepreneurs. (Halonen 2011.)
5.3 **Eastway**

Picture 5 Logo of event promoter Eastway

Was founded in 1986 and is one of the biggest event promoters in Finland. They organize over 2000 events every year. They have been responsible for concerts like Rihanna, Madonna, U2 and Jon Bon Jovi.

5.4 **Helsinki Expert**

Picture 6 Logo of Helsinki Expert

Helsinki Expert provides comprehensive travel services for business and individual travellers. Their customers are domestic and foreign companies, travel agencies, conference organisers and individual travellers. They are owned by Helsinki City Tourist and Convention Bureau. Their best know products are the Helsinki card and Helsinki This week magazine. The office is located in the centre of Helsinki.

Picture 7 Helsinki This Week- magazine

5.5 **The process of building a brand identity**

5.5.1 **Destination Brand Identity**

The interview with Kari Halonen opened an insight on the destination branding process and the importance of it in the Helsinki City Tourism Bureau. Halonen told that the present Helsinki brand has been in development since the beginning of the 2000. The development to shape the brand to what it is now started with image marketing in 2002 with collecting information yearly and doing image research establishing how other countries see Helsinki. This research led to understand that the image of Helsinki is good and it is considered to be a safe, relaxed, easy to manage and offered good service with language skills.(Halonen 2011.)
In 2002 Helsinki City Tourism Bureau made a survey to measure their profile and image. The purpose was to determine the exact parts of the identity so that there could be no discussion in regards to what the brand identity was. When the creation of the current brand pyramid was complete, the next challenge was to see where Helsinki should be in the year 2020, the year the city turns 470 years. Halonen says that when changing a brand, many parts must remain and one must be careful as to which parts to keep and which ones that may be changed. Tone of voice and values may only be changed to fifty percent; the other ones must remain. Helsinki City Tourism Bureau has, in terms of personality, kept “emphatic”, since they believe that even in the long term will this be a strong competitive factor, much due to the fact that it progressively disappears at other destinations. The brand essence must remain, since this is the core of the brand. In the process of developing the ”new” brand pyramid, seven actors of the city, which largely contribute to the brand, were asked to apply the brand pyramid to their operations. After this, a workshop was held with external specialists such as market organisers, architects and industry designers. The aim was to acquire an external perspective on the brand and where to strive, by twisting and turning the brand around. This was also done to minimise the risk of being home blind and to build a brand that no one else believes in (Halonen).
5.5.3 Core values and brand identity

Finnish tourism brand includes the four C:s: Cool, Contrasting, Credible and Creative (Halonen 2011). The first dimension is about the characteristics that highlight the unique qualities and products of Helsinki as the Capital of Finland, its location between East (exotica) and West (Skandinavian chic) and the Baltic sea and features that represent those such as:

- “Archipelago and Baltic Sea, Suomenlinna, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Design, especially the Design District as an ideal destination for visitors interested in design
- Architecture, especially the Neoclassical city centre, Jugend/Art Nouveau districts and buildings by legendary Finnish designer and architect Alvar Aalto
- Green, park-like city, cleanliness, public transportation
- Events (thousands of different cultural and sport events throughout the year)

The second dimension consists of emotional elements that Helsinki has to offer the tourist: safety, good and effective service with a wide range of language skills. The residents of the city are considered to offer a good and friendly environment and service. (Visit Helsinki 2011). The third brand equity is about the social structure of Helsinki. The people are considered to be approachable and the structure is equal. As an example given is the flat hierarchy and companies that are doing quality programmes, both national and international. (Visit Helsinki 2011.)

5.5.4 Slogans, Logos and Pictures

In the interview with Orilähde, it was stated that the new process for destination branding strategy meant establishing a new graphic design, logo and developed a brand differentiation with new slogans like: ”The gate between east and west” and ”Eastern exotica meets Skandinavian Chic”. To do the process of creating the strategy for the destination brand of Helsinki the organisation became more aware of the theory of destination branding, studying the theory of it and hired an outside consultant to help with the process that took one year. During this time there were several meetings...
with brainstorming about the mentality, cultural heritage and viewing points that should be taken into account while creating the brand. (Orilähde). The Helsinki brand equity was established with three main points; Product, Social and Promotional value. Orilähde described that these were the base for the new view of the destination branding for Helsinki and in 2005 the new strategy became public and started shaping to be what it is now. All points considered logo changed and the logo "Helsinki” got some new aspects with the word: "Helsinki Finland” to clear the message. Differentiation was the next step and the glue for the strategic process. Because of the slogans "Helsinki is culturally blended from east and west” or "Helsinki is Eastern exotica meets Scandinavian Chic” give and strategic advantage in differentiating from the other competitive capitals. No other Scandinavian capital has a possibility to use this message. The only competitor that has the similar geographical status is Istanbul as it is a city by the sea and between Europe and Asia. (Orilähde 2011.)

5.5.5 Influential factors

In terms of what influences the brand identity and how this affects the DMOs process of building the brand, several factors may be evident. The most common ones that came up during the interviews were culture and competition. Visit Helsinki identity building process and marketing are to a large extend consumer driven, and substantial research has been done to find out what the customer wants, since this is what underpins everything they do (Halonen). For Helsinki, culture is the main influence of the city’s brand identity: Culture is very, very important. Not just in rural tourism but also in the cities…it is the culture that differentiates any destination. Obviously when you are going to a city you have got the built heritage as well, but it is the culture that differentiates it from somewhere else (Halonen, 2011). Competition also influences the work. Halonen state that Helsinki is a relatively expensive destination in comparison with other European destinations. Visit Helsinki has accordingly adopted a value and quality target rather than a volume one: “You have to make sure that it is good value for money. It is never going to be cheap but it has to be good value” (Halonen 2011).

5.6 EVENTS AS PART OF THE BRAND IDENTITY

5.6.1 Event portfolio

Helsinki : Sports, meetings, and culture.

Helsinki is the leading event city in Finland and has been hosting many kinds of events. They are big actors in terms of sport events, meetings and conventions, and music related events. An event portfolio that includes following levels:

Picture 10 Logo of World Championships in Helsinki 2005
Level 1 represents the activities presented by the local associations and organisations. The broad range of local events within culture, sports, and entertainment build the necessary base for events in Helsinki and are believed to be a platform from which professional practitioners will develop.

Level 2 constitutes teams and players, artists, singers and dancers that provide the residents with experiences, and who functions as role models for young practitioners to look up to and who stimulates them to actively participate themselves.

Level 3 includes international games, Finnish championship competitions, and larger Cups. It also includes larger festivals, larger profiled exhibitions and guest appearances, concerts at Hartwall Arena (the largest stadium in the city), and shows and musicals. A large proportion of fairs and congresses are also represented at this level.

Level 4 includes European- and World Championships within several sports, some other sport arrangements, and the biggest yearly returning culture and sport events. Also included are large congresses, exhibitions, concerts and productions.

Level 5 is the top of the pyramid and comprises the internationally largest sport events. Also included at this level are world exhibitions and other large and unique international projects. These events are, according to Helsinki Tourist and Convention Bureau important for the destination in that they show the city’s and Finland’s unique possibilities; it strengthens the city’s brand and has the ability of giving the city a quality stamp as an event city internationally. It further creates growth and employment opportunities, it offers the residents quality of life and stimulates and inspires youth to actively participate in culture- and sport activities (Orilähde)

5.7 The strategies and objectives behind hosting events

Helsinki as a city has been the host of many events. The Herring Market (“Silakkamarkkinat” in Finnish), which is the oldest and one of the most popular events to be held every year (over 10,000 visitors) has now been running for 190 years annually. The World Athletic Championships that were held in 2005 gave the city the confidence and trust to be the host of world events.

Events create new experiences for the region’s residents and result in a larger amount of visitors, increased tourism revenue and more employment opportunities. Moreover are the events creating natural meeting places and fellowship over both ages as cultural boundaries (Lindholm 2011). He explains that they are using events as a communication platform to strengthen the brand through an event perspective: “…we know that even if we work tremendously strong with meetings and with the private travellers is it still the events that acquires a penetrating power on both the European and international basis where the brand is brought out”. Lindholm points out is that the city hosts many large events that are happening “behind the scene” and that the regular visitor or
resident will not notice. Helsinki has always been a popular city to host business meetings but the meeting industry really reached its growth after Helsinki held the ASEM-meeting in 2006.

![Image](image1.png)

**Picture 12 Eurovision Song contest in Helsinki 2007**

After years of unsuccessful attempts, Finland’s first ever Eurovision victory in 2006 raised phenomenal media attention to the country and the host city. International journalists and travel writers visited Helsinki in order to cover the ESC and to give their reports on its culture and tourists attractions. Many famous concerts has also been held in Helsinki. Lindholm explained the huge fame that the city has gained in ten years regarding international artists. In previous times well known artist only found their way to cities like Stockholm, Gothenburg and Copenhagen but now Helsinki has also found its way into their hearts. The biggest concert ever held in Helsinki was Madonna in 2009 with 90 000 participants.

### 5.8 Linking events to the destination brand identity

As mentioned, Helsinki is strategically using events as a platform to build and strengthen the brand locally, internationally and globally. Halonen explains that they are working in a similar manner by trying to find events that can carry the Helsinki brand. They did so with the World Athletics Championships 2005, where the owner was the city of Helsinki. This guaranteed that they could put “Helsinki” 2005 on top of all signs, instead of “European Athletics Championship”. In order to find suitable “carriers” they are first and foremost looking at medial values, such as how many will be exposed to the brand.

![Image](image2.png)

**Picture 13 Ice hockey World Championship logo 2012**
An example is the upcoming World Championships in ice hockey 2012 which will give approximately 700 million TV-viewers. Halonen argues that the city needs regular events like this in order to convey the brand outwards. Another perspective of linking the brand of the event to the destination is how well the event fits with the identity of the destination brand. When Helsinki is choosing which events to host, they have a criteria for evaluation against which they assess the potential event. This includes the economical aspect, such as how many guest nights the event will produce and how much it will benefit the city, and how well the event fits with the brand identity of Helsinki. (Lindholm)
Orilähde agrees that competition is intense and that it will increase. Helsinki has been in the leading edge and are working hard to remain there. In order to keep up with competition they regard it as important to have good quality arenas, communications, and overall efficient infrastructure, in the region and outside. It is vital that the budget flights and other direct flights continue to fly to Helsinki as a result of good business.

The destination brand of Helsinki has been developed and planned with a good strategy. The Tourist and Convention Bureau has taken time and put thought in the process, studied the field of destination branding and worked with an outside consultant. This has been a well considered process inside the organisation that has lead to a successful development of a destination brand of Helsinki. The differentiation from the competitors is the base that makes the brand special and so gives it a competitive angle that makes it special. Through the careful consideration of the emotional and cultural value and stories as well as the aspects that make Helsinki special in both geographical and social way has led the brand today to be true, creative, inviting and emphasizing the strengths and values of the city. The effort to make the brand a known guideline also inside the organisation and the trade will give in the future even more value to the brand.

The challenges Helsinki faces according to the data collected in the interview are the resources and public and social understanding towards the importance of the Helsinki brand. The objective would be to have the resources and emotional strength to support and speak "in one voice", this is one of the challenges of destination branding. In this factor includes the mentality, social and economical systems and their involvement in the process in a positive or negative way. Also one challenge was considered to be the fact that with thousands of events in Helsinki, tourists don’t attend them.

As for the measures taken by the Tourist and Convention bureau, the brand is out in the open, established, able to be read in the webpage and so in a good way to become a "one voice". Established themes with promotional, social and product value represent the main aspects of the city and they are researched and evaluated as facts of the city, so establishing a truth based brand that can highline the story, products, assets and attractions of the city. The brand is truthful; Helsinki is modern, trendy, safe, clean and green with a seafront. Important would be to bring together the fields of culture and tourism. The products are there, but how to bring it all together if there is no unite action of co-operations and these fields are separate from each other. This I hope will be a part of the strategy in the future. The "One voice" of the brand is a great challenge and offers a possibility of consideration. Helsinki is going in the right direction by education of the brand inside the trade, but hopefully it will be a creative process that will motivate the trade to speak and act together in the benefit of the brand. This development might happen through the co-operation measures also easier.
6 CONCLUSION

This chapter aims to summarize the findings and results that have been obtained during the process of writing this thesis. First, an overview of the objective of the study is presented. A section discussing the results obtained from the first part of the study; the process of creating a destination brand identity follows this. Results from second part of the study are presented, i.e. the process of creating a brand identity with the use of events. The chapter ends with a section on implications for practitioners and suggestions of future research within the studied field.

The tourism industry is considered to be one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. The development of transport and technology increasingly allows access to more markets, resulting in progressive competition between tourism destinations. Brand management in relation to destinations is thus receiving greater attention and there is now a universal agreement among professionals that destinations can be branded similarly as consumer goods. While many researchers within the field of product brands have highlighted the concept of brand identity, it has been largely unexplored within the tourism context. Most previous studies related to destination branding have so focused on the demand-driven, perceived tourism destination brand image. This study has taken a contrasting approach by letting the producer/managerial perspective be the essence of the study. In this study the topic of how the destination marketing organisation (DMO) is working when creating a destination brand identity, meaning the core of the brand; what it stands for, what gives it meaning and what makes it unique. It has further examined how events may be used in the process of building or enhancing this identity. The choice was made to use a qualitative approach, and to derive the empirical data from in-depth interviews with the DMO at the destination of Helsinki. Since the objective has been to observe the DMOs distinct operational procedures, the aim has not been to generalize the answers; rather the purpose has been to gather an understanding of the issues and analyse the DMOs against existing research.

The study has sensibly used models and literature from the area of product brands and appropriately applied to the destination. Two distinct divisions formed the base of the thesis; the first with a clear focus on how the DMO is working to create a brand identity, while the latter concentrated on the same topic from a focused perspective; how the brand identity may be created with the use of events.

After this, the research phase is entered, which involves gathering the necessary data required for determining the current identity of the destination. Once the research phase was completed, the process moved into a phase of shaping the brand identity. Through the interviews I was able to get better perceptions of how the city is merged with views and objectives of where the city wants to be, or where they desire to be in the future. It is however vital to be aware of the fact that the current identity should not be altered to much, there are certain recommendations as to what may be changed and to what degree. If changing too much, the destination may increase the risk of excessive constrain of their communication, since it may differ too much from the fundamental meaning of the brand. One can thus not expect a brand to be anything other than itself, and a brand needs to stay loyal to its identity in order to become a sustainable and successful brand. The phase of establishing the brand identity takes over from the previous phase. At this stage the essence, core values, and the personality traits of the destination are listed. The last phase brings the identity to life with a verbal (slogans and tone of voice) and visual (logos and photos) identity. Also included in the last phase is the phenomenon of using events as a brand carrier. By this, the DMO
strategically lets events be what carries the brand, as a way of transferring the brand identity. It was discovered that there are a number of influencers or affecters that impact the perspective of the process. These constitute geographical roots, destination products, culture, the community and competition.

The branding tools that were mostly utilized for when the event functions as brand carrier were logos and other positive media support. It was common to incorporate the destination brand into the event logo. The DMO was also, as much as possible, trying to get external media to show the destination as much as possible when hosting the event.

An aim with this thesis has been to emphasize the influence the brand owner has over the structuring of the destination brand identity, which precedes the perceived image. It is hoped for that the acquired knowledge will result in a deeper understanding for DMOs as to how they can work with brand building in practice. It has also, in relation to the tourism field, attempted to clarify the distinction between the related concepts of destination brand identity, brand image and branding.

Since there overall has been little research performed in the field of destination branding from the DMOs perspective, more extensive studies are indeed welcomed on the topic. While this study took a wider approach, it is suggested that future studies focus on specific issues within the context of destination brand identity building. Further studies on how events are linked to the destination brand and its identity are also recommended.
References

Books


Academic Journals


Web pages


Other

Helsinki This Week- magazine (April 2011)

Interviews

Kari Halonen (20110427) the City of Helsinki Tourist and Convention Bureau
Jan Lindholm (20110405) Eastway event promoters
Timo Orilähde (20110429) Helsinki Expert
Appendix

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FORMAT

The Organisation

1. When was the organisation founded?
2. What are the organisation’s main responsibilities?

Destination Development

3. What is your main priority when it comes to its destination development?
4. Do you have an official vision?

The brand and brand identity

5. What do you think is the first thing that comes to mind when hearing the name of your destination?
6. What is the city famous for?
7. What do you personally believe is the best thing about the city?
8. Please describe the process of how you have created the destination’s brand identity?
9. What is, according to you, the identity of your destination?
10. How are you from this creating a brand?
11. What affects/influences the identity creating process? (Cultural and competition)
12. What values represent the destination’s brand identity? Core values?
13. How and why have you decided to use these values? Do you have examples of how you are communicating this to the public?
14. Do you have a slogan? Who influences the choice of slogan and can you explain the process of developing the slogan?
15. What does your slogan say about the destination?
16. Have you experienced something negative in the process of creating the brand identity?
17. How extensive is the competition? Can you feel that it is increasing? Who are your main competitors?
18. Are you working according to a certain model or theoretical framework?

Event coordination

19. Approximately how many events are you hosting per year?
20. What category (ies) of events are you prioritising?
21. What factors make an event attractive?
22. Local events versus events that attract people from further away? What is your main priority?
23. How have you built your event portfolio?
24. What is your view of a successful event portfolio?
25. How are you thinking in regards to what events the destination should host?
26. What factors do you believe are key factors in terms of how events add something positive to the brand identity?
27. How are you linking the event brand to that of the destination?
28. What is your view on returning events versus one-time events in regards to brand building?
29. How much does publicity mean in regards to destination brand building?
30. Are you positioning your destination as an event city?
31. What do you think will be required, in regards to events, in the future to face the increasing competition?