

## **Bachelor Thesis**

Tourism course

### Marketing plan for the touristic product: The Samadai Dolphin House



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Submitted, on: July, 8<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Sierre

[www.hevs.ch](http://www.hevs.ch)

## **Abstract**

The Samadai Dolphin House is a reef in the region of Marsa Alam in Egypt declared as a nature preserve. As its name suggests, the main activities at the site are snorkeling and diving with wild dolphins. In January 2013, an Egyptian non-governmental organization named the Hurghada Environmental Protection and Conservation Association (HEPCA) took over the management of this touristic site and has the obligation to sell 200 tickets per month.

Documents received by HEPCA and surveys conducted with some diving centers show that most of the visitors who come to see the Samadai Dolphin House are of Italian and German nationalities. They tend to prefer the snorkeling excursions and enjoy the quality of information provided by the guides.

HEPCA is working closely with the numerous diving centers that offer this excursion as they are the service providers and at the same time the competitors (by proposing other similar excursions). By implementing a better communication and promotional strategy, the purpose of this thesis is to increase sales for the Samadai Dolphin House in order to generate revenues for the protection and the conservation of this site.

*Keywords: marketing plan, Marsa Alam, communication, The Samadai Dolphin House*

## **Foreword and Acknowledgements**

Between January and May 2013, I had the opportunity to do an internship in the marketing department from HEPCA in Egypt. Exactly at this moment, the organization became the responsible entity for the Samadai Dolphin House. As I could notice, there was no marketing analysis done for this touristic site. This is why I decided for my Bachelor Thesis to write a marketing plan about this subject.

I would like to thank HEPCA for providing me with the necessary information and documents for the realization of my thesis.

I also would like to thank my Thesis Advisor, M. Zumstein, for her time and advices throughout the redaction of this thesis.

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## **Introduction**

The Samadai Dolphin House has an important touristic potential that is still not exploited enough. This is why the aim of this marketing plan is to show how to best promote and distribute the Samadai Dolphin House to the customers in order to generate more revenue for the region and the protection of this reef.

The first part of this report presents the region of Marsa Alam (where the Samadai Dolphin House is located), the non-governmental organization HEPCA and the Samadai Dolphin House. These descriptions will give an overview of the context and will be used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the site.

The marketing plan itself begins in chapter four with the market definition. This part defines the origins of bookings and the possible activities at the site. Then, an analysis about the different products, the customers, the various stakeholders involved and HEPCA will lead to last two chapters that are the marketing strategy and the marketing mix. In these two parts, the communication actions to best promote the Samadai Dolphin House will be discussed.

# 1. Presentation of the region of Marsa Alam

## 1.1 Situation

### 1.1.1 Presentation of Marsa Alam

Marsa Alam is an Egyptian city on the coastline of the Red Sea and belongs to the Red Sea governorate. Around twenty years ago, Marsa Alam was a small fishing village. However, in the early 1990s, its unspoilt beaches and reefs began to attract tourism investors as well as tourists. Today, the city's main sources of revenue come from tourism and gold mining. (Red Sea Governorate, n.d.) This rapid development has appealed to workers from all around Egypt and increased the population of Marsa Alam to approximately 10'000 inhabitants (GeoNames, n.d.).

From the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. until the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the region of Marsa Alam was an important place for trade routes. Historians confirmed that several ports from the Red Sea coastline, like for example the one of Berenice, were connection points between the Roman Empire and the Far East for trade. From the ports on the southern Red Sea, this trade was brought to the Mediterranean ports by terrestrial routes along the Nile. The road crossing the desert between Marsa Alam and Edfu was one of these trade routes. Remains from this period like fortresses, villages and wells can still be seen. But the history of the southern Red Sea region is even older: rock paintings from the prehistoric era can also be found. (Marsa-alam Heritage, 2013a)

Concerning its environment and tourism, the official website of Marsa Alam describes the region in the following terms:

The regions natural attractions are not limited to the sea and include cultural tourism, mountains and landscapes, terrestrial wildlife and historical & archeological sites. There are a number of reefs, islands and coastal regions, which are protected areas and national parks. National parks such as Wadi el Gemal are featuring islands and coastal mangroves, which sustain a diverse array of species from birds, turtles, terrestrial plants and mammals, and indigenous "Bedouin" tribes. The Bedouin tribes' cohabitating the regions and an abundance of wildlife offers immense potential for cultural & wildlife tourism. (Marsa-Alam Heritage, 2013b)

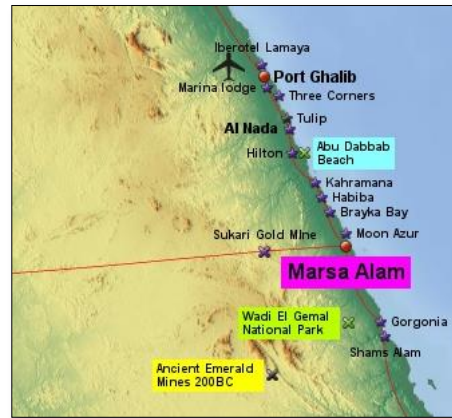
## 1.1.2 Geographic location and accessibility

Figure 2 : Map of Egypt



Source : Google Maps (2013)

Figure 1 : Map of Marsa Alam region



Source: Marsaalam (2013b)

Marsa Alam is located on the south coast of the Egyptian Red Sea and is near the tropic of cancer. By car, it is accessible by three roads: the one coming from Hurghada in the North, the one coming from Sudan in the South and the parallel road from the Nile.

The following table presents the distances and the different travel times to access Marsa Alam by road.

Table 1 : Travel time and distance to Marsa Alam by road

City	Distance	Time
Alexandria	953 km	10 hours
Berenice	115 km	1 hour and 10 minutes
Cairo	732 km	7 hours and 40 minutes
Hamata	130 km	1 hour and 20 minutes
Hurghada	283 km	3 hours
Luxor	349 km	3 hours and 30 minutes
El Quseir	137 km	1 hour and 20 minutes
Safaga	219 km	2 hours and 15 minutes
Sharm El Sheik	1019 km	10 hours and 30 minutes
Suez	653 km	6 hours and 30 minutes
Aswan	351 km	3 hours and 30 minutes

Source: Adapted from Marsaalam (2013a)

The table above shows that the city of Marsa Alam is quite isolated from the rest of Egypt and takes a lot of time to arrive there by car from Egypt’s major cities. This is surely the reason why, in 2001, the Al-Kharafi Group (through its affiliate the EMAK Marsa Alam for Management & Operation of Airports SAE) opened an airport in Marsa Alam (Marsa Alam International Airport, n.d.). Since then, the city has become accessible on an international level. For 2013, there are direct flights departing from the following European countries: United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Austria and Belgium. Other countries can reach Marsa Alam by flying first to Cairo and taking then a domestic flight with Egyptair. (Marsaalam, 2013c)

### 1.1.3 Touristic attractions in the region of Marsa Alam

The table below presents the main attractions in the region of Marsa Alam mentioned by Egypt Travel (Egypt’s official tourism website). A detailed explanation of these attractions is provided in the Appendix I.

Table 2 : Presentation of Marsa Alam’s main touristic attractions

<b>Touristic attractions</b>		
<b>Diving &amp; Snorkeling</b>		
Reef Diving	Sataya/Dolphin Reef	Marsa Abu-Dabbab
	Elphinstone Reef	Samadai Reef
	St John’s Reef	
Deep Diving	Daedalus Reef	
Wreck Diving	Hamada Shipwreck	
<b>Desert and Oases</b>		
Safaris	Quad Biking	Camel Riding
	Jeep Safari	
<b>Modern Egypt</b>		
	The International Convention Center	
<b>Nature Exploration</b>		
Egypt’s National Parks	The Elba Protected Area	Wadi el-Gemal Protected Area

Source: Adapted from Egypt Travel (2013d)

This table shows that the region of Marsa Alam offers a lot of watersport activities, especially diving and snorkeling. In 2009, statistics from the administration of the Red Sea Governorate indicated that the number of diving excursions sold in the region of Marsa Alam was 125’056. The number for snorkeling activities was lower with 102’334 trips sold in the

same year (A.Ali, Deputy Managing Director of HEPCA, personal communication, 7<sup>th</sup> April 2013). Statistics for 2010, 2011 and 2012 are not available. However, it is likely that these numbers would have been lower in 2011 and 2012 due to the Egyptian Revolution which occurred on the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 which strongly impacted tourism to the region.

## **1.2 Touristic infrastructure**

### **1.2.1 Hotel industry, supplementary accommodation, transportation and restoration**

The touristic accommodations in the region of Marsa Alam are well developed with a total of 63 establishments. Appendix II shows a detailed list of the establishments.

The hotel industry is the most common form of accommodation. In fact, from Port Ghalib to the beginning of Wadi el-Gemal National Park there are 56 hotels. Among these, there are 18 five stars, 27 four stars and six three stars hotels. The guest can choose between independent hotels or renowned hotel chains like Sentido, Hilton or Swiss Inn. The number of rooms in most hotels ranges from 100 to 300 and can therefore accommodate big groups.

Another less expensive form of accommodation is available: the lodges. There are five lodges in the region of Marsa Alam; one is located in Port Ghalib and is a four star, two others are eco-lodges and three stars. Eco-lodges propose two types of accommodations: bungalows and tents. For the last two, Awlad Baraka and Emy Camp, there were no specific details. There are guesthouses which are considered one star establishments. There are no camp sites in the region.

Regarding transportation, the hotels and lodges arrange the trips to and from the airport of Marsa Alam for their guests. There are no public buses or taxis and that makes travelling complicated.

Concerning restaurants, it is the same system; most of the restaurants belong to the hotels and are located within them. In fact, they offer half board or full board service for customers and this is the reason why there are only a few restaurants in the region of Marsa Alam. Even in *Le guide du routard 2009*, there is no advice for restaurants. On the internet, the trip advisor website identifies six restaurants (Trip advisor, 2013).

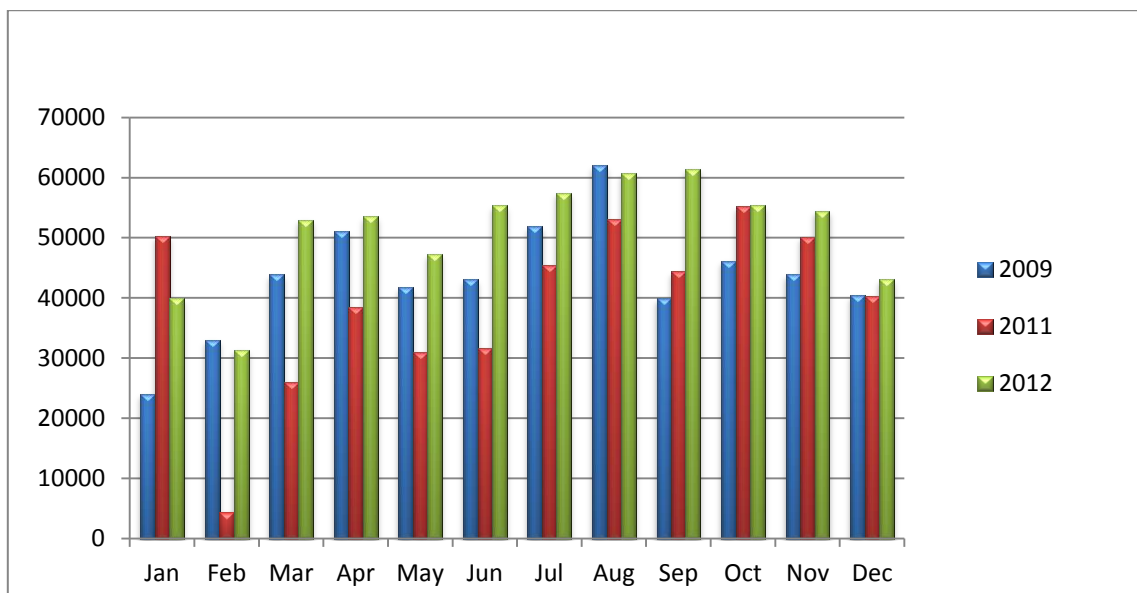
### 1.2.2 Arrivals and overnights in the region of Marsa Alam

Statistics received from the administration of the Red Sea Governorate (A.Ali, PC, 7<sup>th</sup> April 2013) show that the total number of overnights in 2011 in the region of Marsa Alam stood at 2'706'964. The number of guests in the same year was 338'371 and they spent an average of eight nights.

Another survey, concerning tourist's expenditures in Egypt as a whole, reveals that foreign visitors travelling individually spend an average 101 dollars per night as opposed to those who bought package deals who spend on average 82 dollars. (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2011, p.8)

The graph below presents the evolution of arrivals at the Marsa Alam airport in the years 2009, 2011 and 2012.

Figure 3 : Evolution of arrivals at Marsa Alam airport in 2009, 2011 and 2012



Source: Adapted from A.Ali, PC (7<sup>th</sup> April 2013)

This graph indicates that there are no strong seasonal activities in the region of Marsa Alam. This is certainly due to the fact that the activities attracting tourists are possible all year long because the weather is stable. However, it is possible to observe a slight increase in the number of arrivals between July and October. This period corresponds to summer vacation in Europe.

By comparing the three years, 2011 definitely stands out as the worst one. The Egyptian Revolution in late January caused a decrease of more than 20'000 arrivals in February. The following months also show a decline. However, it is less pronounced than in February. Despite the events in 2011, tourism in Marsa Alam even increased in 2012.

It should be noted that the year 2010 is missing. As there were no exceptional events in this year, arrivals were certainly similar to those of 2009.

### **1.2.3 Tourism providers**

There are 31 diving centers in the region of Marsa Alam. A list with the names and the websites for those is provided in Appendix III. All the diving centers are located within the hotels and offer the same services:

- diving lessons
- diving excursions
- snorkeling excursions

There are also aqua centers but there are not as many of them as diving centers. The difference between aqua centers and diving centers is that aqua centers don't propose scuba diving. They only offer activities like snorkeling, aquagym activities and boat excursions. There are two aqua centers in the region of Marsa Alam.

The tourism providers for desert excursions belong to tour operators and are also located within the hotels. Their main excursions are:

- Camel riding
- Jeep or quad safaris
- Hiking
- Visiting a Bedouin tribe

There is one independent company for desert excursions called Red Sea Desert Adventures and it offers, in addition to what others already offer, sailing in the desert, camel trekking and visits of Wadi el-Gimal National Park. (Red Sea Desert Adventures, n.d.)

There is no tourism office in the region of Marsa Alam.

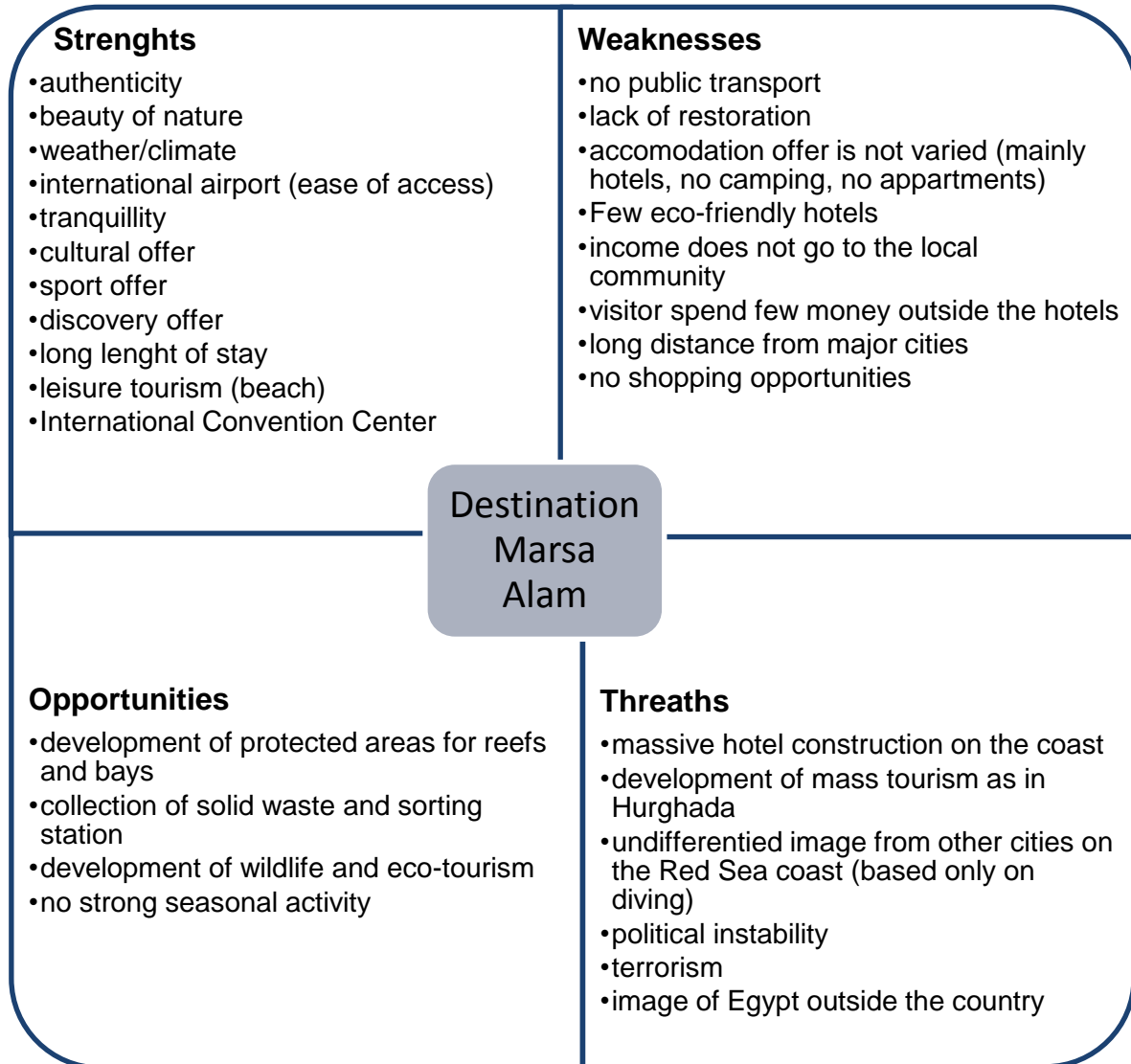
HEPCA collaborates mainly with the different diving centers for the Samadai project.



## 1.3 Strengths and weaknesses of the region

### 1.3.1 SWOT analysis

Figure 4 : SWOT analysis of the destination of Marsa Alam



Source: Author's data

In brief, what attracts tourists in the destination of Marsa Alam is the authenticity of the location; preserved reefs for divers and snorkelers, the calm of the desert, the national parks and cultural activities. The warm weather throughout the year is also an important factor for the visitors so that they can enjoy the beach.

Improvements could be made in the development of a public transport network, so that the tourists could move more freely. Since the main attraction is the nature, guests would also enjoy a more simple form of accommodation like campsites or bungalows.

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When coming to Marsa Alam, visitors seek proximity to untouched nature and this is a current trend in western societies. This is why the destination should build on sustainable forms of tourism.

## 2. Presentation of HEPCA

### 2.1 General presentation

#### 2.1.1 Description of HEPCA

HEPCA is an Egyptian Non-Governmental Organization specialized in the protection and conservation of marine life in the Red Sea. Its office is located in the city of Hurghada on the new Marina and it also has an office (mainly for the Samadai project) in the city of Marsa Alam. HEPCA was created in 1992 by twelve members of the diving community. At this time, the biggest threat to the Red Sea was the increase of diving boats and their anchoring on the reefs. This is why the first action of HEPCA was the installation of 100 mooring buoys. Today, HEPCA's mooring system is the largest in the world with more than 1'200 moorings. (Hurghada Environmental Protection and Conservation Association [HEPCA], 2010, pp. 1-6)

In order to promote responsible and sustainable tourism, the NGO collaborates with diving centers and hotels on the Red Sea coast as well as with different departments of the government.

Figure 5 : Diver with HEPCA mooring buoy



Source: HEPCA internal document

#### 2.1.2 Achievements and Projects

During the last 21 years, HEPCA implemented and worked on a lot of different projects and campaigns which can be allocated to different themes such as: conservation, research, community development, activism and education.

Below, a description of some of HEPCA's achievements and projects is given.

Table 3 : Overview of some of HEPCA's project

<b>Year</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1992</b>	HEPCA's foundation	Installation of the first 100 mooring buoys in the Red Sea.
<b>2001</b>	Samadai Project	HEPCA, the Egyptian ministry of State for Environmental Affairs and the National Parks of Egypt collaborated to establish a new protected area, the Samadai Reef
<b>2004</b>	The fight for Giftun	The Egyptian government wanted to sell Giftun island which is a nature reserve to Italian investors. They planned to build hotels on the Island. Thousands of people gathered on the Island to protest and a petition collected 10'000 signatures. After two weeks, the president declared that Giftun Island would not be sold.
<b>2006</b>	The Shark Project	HEPCA campaigned against shark fishing. A decree was issued banning sharks fishing in the Red Sea as well as serving shark meat in restaurants. For these actions, Egypt was honored as Shark Guardian of the year 2006.
<b>2008</b>	Hayah Project	HEPCA initiates "Hayah," meaning life in Arabic which consists of a multi-phase project to raise awareness and encourage the community to participate in conservation.
<b>2007</b>	The Madrasty Project	HEPCA and Vodafone worked together to renovate and reform primary schools in Egypt.
<b>2009-2010</b>	Solid Waste Management	HEPCA has been designated by the government as being responsible for the collection and sorting of waste in Hurghada and Marsa Alam.

Source: Adapted from HEPCA (2010, pp. 6-59)

2013 is also a very busy year for HEPCA. In fact, there are three major projects going on. The first one is the Research Center in Port Ghalib. This center will host students and scientists from all over the world and they will work on projects like species regeneration and eco-system regeneration. It will also be an educational place for the local community and

visitors as they will have the opportunity to learn through presentations and interactive hands-on-learning. (HEPCA Website, 2013d)

The second project is called the Bio-Boat. It is a floating classroom for students in the southern Red Sea region. An educator will be on board to teach classes to the kids about environmental conservation. The boat should be ready by the end of the year. (HEPCA Website, 2013a)

The third and most important project is the Samadai Dolphin House. Details will be given in the next chapter, as it is the subject of this thesis.

### **2.1.3 Team and work deployment procedures**

The HEPCA team consists of motivated people who have a passion for the marine environment. Mr. A. Ali, the Managing Director, represents the NGO in front of the board members and takes the decisions about funding and projects implementation. He also supervises the six departments of the organization. These departments are: marketing and communication, mooring, accounting, solid waste management, office and administration and research.

Two people are working in the marketing and communication department. They are based in the Marsa Alam office. The work in this department is varied and the employees manage multiple tasks simultaneously. There is a marketing manager and a creative director that handles all the designs. Three other positions are shared among them; the communication administrator, the sales coordinator and the sales assistant.

The office and administration department is overseen by Ms. H. Shawky, the Deputy Managing Director. She handles human resources and logistics for the different departments. There are four other employees: her secretary, two office boys (they clean the office and prepare drinks) and one driver.

The mooring team is composed by five divers. Most of the time, they are out at sea to install new moorings and to replace the broken ones. They are also responsible for patrolling and reporting violations.

The research department is directed by Prof. Dr. M. Hanafy. He is supervising the research of the three other scientists and takes decisions about the areas and species that should be protected. The three other scientists are specialized in marine turtles and dolphins.

The solid waste management team is composed by approximately 600 employees. They collect the garbage from the streets, hotels and diving centers in Marsa Alam and Hurghada. The sorting station in Marsa Alam redistributes the organic waste to the Bedouins.

Most employees at HEPCA work six days a week, with eight hours per day. Compared to Swiss standards, this corresponds to a work rate of 120%.

The board members of HEPCA belong to different industries and are consulted for the important decisions. Generally, they meet once a year.

### 3. Presentation of the Samadai Dolphin House

#### 3.1 General presentation

##### 3.1.1 Description and geographic location

The Samadai Dolphin House (from now on, it will be referred to as only "Samadai") is a reef in the southern Red Sea which was declared as a nature preserve. It is used by a population of spinner dolphins as a resting place during the day. HEPCA's scientists confirmed that there are at least 200 dolphins that frequent this place. According to their statistics, the possibility to see spinner dolphins is about 75 percent. (Fumagalli, Costa & Cesario, n.d., p.37)

Diving centers in the region of Marsa Alam organize snorkeling and diving excursions to Samadai. The main attraction is obviously to swim or dive with the dolphins. However, the place also has three dive sites with underwater cave systems, a sea grass bed, an eel garden, soft corals, hard corals and reef fish. Sometimes, divers and snorkelers also have the chance to see sharks, manta and barracudas. (Fumagalli et al., n.d., p.5)

Samadai is located about six nautical miles from the city of Marsa Alam and is easily accessible. It takes only one hour to reach by boat. The various diving centers in Marsa Alam offer excursions to Samadai during the week. The number of days which they operate depends on the specific company but it is important to note that the excursions are not provided seven days a week. It is not possible for tourists to rent a boat unless they have a license (which is very rare). The reef has the shape of a horseshoe and its opening is directed towards the South. It is quite big as its length is 1.4 km and its width one km. The inner lagoon is shallow, sandy and well protected from the wind and the waves both of which usually come from the North. The South side of the lagoon is composed of several pinnacles while the north side is the main reef. (Fumagalli et al., n.d., pp. 5-7)

Figure 6 : Topography of the Samadai Dolphin House Reef



Source: Dolphin House (2013c)

### **3.1.2 History**

More or less 20 years ago, tourism began slowly to develop in Marsa Alam. Because of its beauty, biological diversity, proximity to the shore and the dolphin presence, tourists were quickly attracted to Samadai. It became an important source of revenue for the region. That is why, in 2002, local stakeholders in cooperation with the government managed the site by installing moorings and establishing rules. It was decided that no more than 10 boats would be allowed to enter the site per day. This corresponds to 100-150 visitors. However, this regulation was not sufficient. Tourists knew that they could see and encounter dolphins in a short navigation time. In addition, the shallow water in the lagoon permits snorkelers, as well as divers to meet the mammals. Because of the increase of tourism, a large number of visitors were brought to the site with no dolphin encounter experience. Even tourism operators from Hurghada sent their guest to Marsa Alam by bus to enjoy the site. (Hanafy, Fouda & Sarhan, n.d., pp. 2-3)

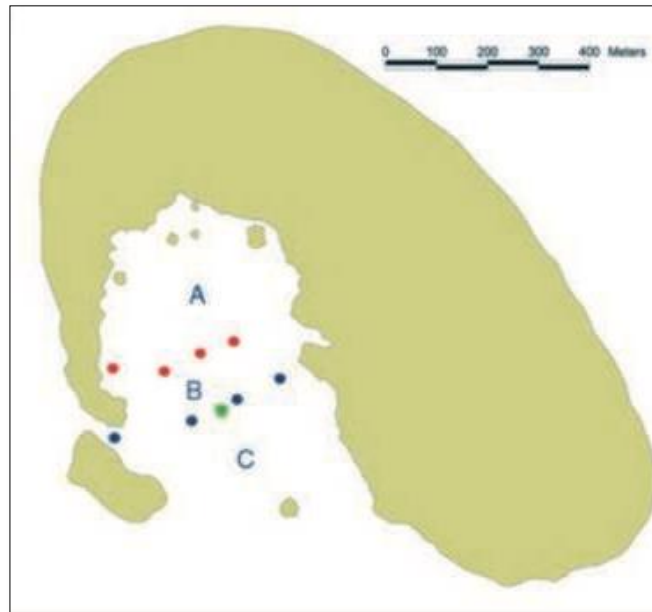
At the beginning of the year 2003, the situation at Samadai became uncontrollable. The rules were not respected and every day, there were around 30 boats with 500 to 800 people at the site. The boats were anchoring directly on the reef destroying the corals, visitors were sent to the water without any security measures and the resting dolphins were constantly harassed. In order to make sure that the dolphins would continue to frequent the lagoon, a solution between conservation and economy had to be found. The summer of 2003, the government decided to stop all activities at the site until a management plan was established. Various stakeholders such as marine biologists, HEPCA, the government and the community were consulted for the realization of this plan. In January of 2004 it was finished and implemented. (Hanafy et al., n.d., pp. 3-7)

### **3.1.3 The management plan in 2004**

The first measure of the management plan was to cut the lagoon into four different zones: zone A, B, C and D. Zone A is the favorite place of the dolphins and is therefore prohibited to access. Zone B is accessible for the snorkelers, zone C is a mooring place for boats and Zone D is reserved for divers. On the water surface, these three zones are identifiable by colored buoys. The drawing below shows the different zones. Zone D is not represented but would be on the sea side (outside the lagoon) along the main reef and the pinnacles. (Abu Salama Society, n.d.)



Figure 7 : Samadai with the zoning scheme



Source: Dolphin House (2013a)

The second measure was to establish guidelines and best practices. One of those was the wearing of lifejackets for all snorkelers. This was meant to prevent the swimmers from free diving with the dolphins and to ensure their safety in the water (the swimming distance between zone C and B is relatively long). Another one was that the boats, dive guides and visitors had to follow a code of conduct. (Abu Salama Society, n.d.)

The third measure was to limit the number of visitors on the site, like in 2002. The number of tickets was fixed to a maximum of 200, distributed as follows: 100 for snorkelers and 100 for divers. The tickets were sold with the following motto: first come, first serve. The management plan also foresees a set schedule for visits (from 10:00am to 2:00pm). In order to control these regulations, rangers were assigned to monitor the reef at all times. (Abu Salama Society, n.d.)

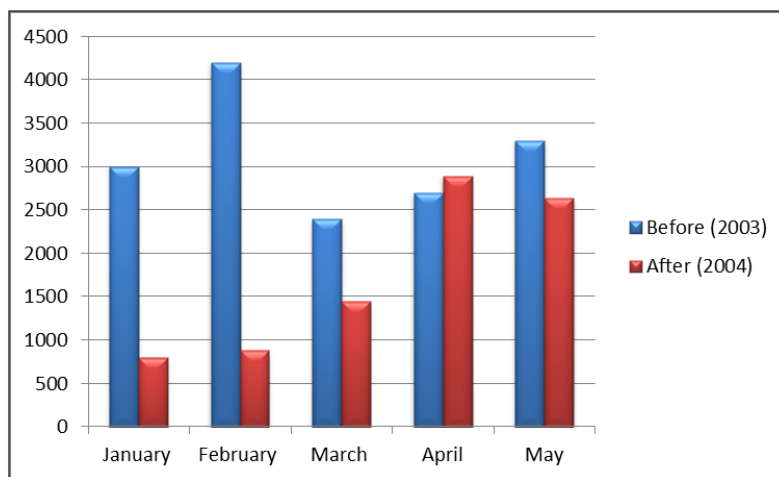
In order to follow the evolution of the reef as well as the dolphin population, a research program was put together. This program was directed by an Italian marine biologist named Dr. Guiseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara and the rangers from the Nature Conservation Sector (NCS) of Egypt. (Abu Salama Society, n.d.)

An awareness program was conducted with diving/snorkeling guides, boats captains/crews, schools, rangers and tourists. The content of the program was about the behaviors of dolphins and the new regulations of Samadai. All in all, eight sessions took place in Marsa Alam and Hurgada. (Abu Salama Society, n.d.)

Finally, the management plan also established an entrance fee. Visitors coming by motor boats had to pay 15 U.S. dollars per person and those coming with sailing boats seven U.S. dollars per person. This money goes to a governmental fund and has to be reinvested into environmental conservation. More precisely, the money is first used to cover the Samadai management costs and then, it is allocated as follows: 40 percent to the Red Sea Governorate for environmental protection, 30 percent to the Red Sea Marine Parks to support its management and 30 percent to HEPCA for installing and maintaining moorings at the site. From January to March 2004, the money generated through the entrance fee reached 150'000 U.S. dollars. (Hanafy et al., n.d., p. 10)

Of course, charging an entry fee and limiting the number of guest to 200 per day has affected the total number of guests per month. Figure 8 presents the number of guests before and after the establishment of the management plan.

Figure 8 : Number of guests before and after the establishment of the management plan

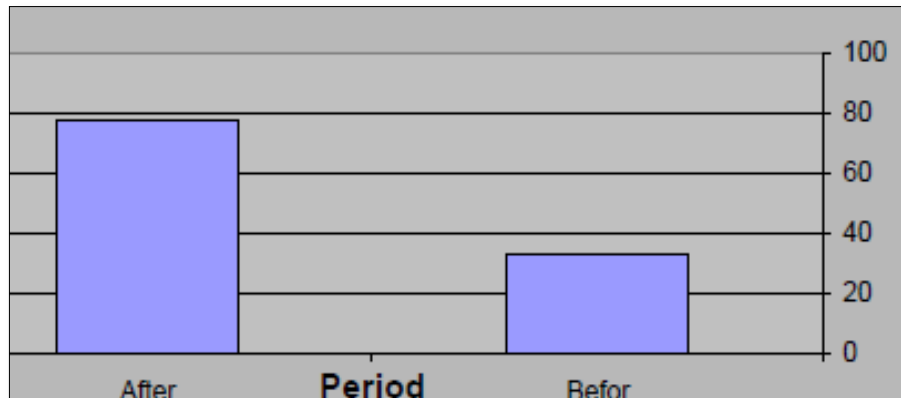


Source: Adapted from Hanafy et al. (n.d., p.11)

The graph shows that there was a significant drop in the number of visitors after the implementation of the management plan, particularly in January and February of 2004. According to Hanafy et al. (n.d., p. 11) since the introduction of the entrance fee, the tourists who come to Samadai are more educated and respectful towards the dolphins.

The restriction of the number of visitors has definitely also influenced the behavior of the dolphins. The figure below shows the number of dolphins seen per day in Samadai before (from January to March 2003) and after (from January to March 2004) the implementation of the management plan.

Figure 9 : Number of dolphins before and after the management plan



Source: Hanafy et al. (n.d.,p.12)

In 2003 around 30 dolphins were sighted at Samadai daily. One year later, at the same period, the number of dolphins seen per day almost doubled. This increase can be the result of various factors and one of them could be the implementation of the management plan. Restricting the number of visitors at the site reduces the income of the related tourist activities in the short term but it insures the long term frequentation of the dolphins as well as a sustainable form of tourism.

### 3.1.4 Taking over from HEPCA in 2013

Despite the efforts given in 2004, it was evident that Samadai was mismanaged. During the last nine years, HEPCA received several complaints from the diving centers about violations. For example, tourists were entering zone A and were not wearing their lifejackets, people on zodiacs were chasing the dolphins while sleeping and there were also rumors that the rangers were not properly charging the people entering. In addition, there was no information or education provided for the tourists about the reef and its spinner dolphins. In an article published on 15 January 2013 on its website, HEPCA says « Educational media and awareness raising tools have been lacking and the monitoring program was not sustained. Many visitors have expressed dissatisfaction with the experience due to the lack of information or presence of qualified personal » (HEPCA Website, 2013e).

That's why in January 2013, the governor of the Red Sea, Mohamed Kamel, issued a decree handing over the management of Samadai to HEPCA. By taking charge of this site, HEPCA has the obligation to sell the 200 tickets per day. Since then, the repartition of the revenues also changed: 30 percent goes to HEPCA, 30 percent goes to the Red Sea Protectorates and 40 percent goes to the Marsa Alam city council. (Dolphin House, 2013a)

### 3.1.5 Logo and slogan

The logo of Samadai uses the Arabic word for Samadai for its symbol. Its slogan “*The World’s Premier Dolphin Retreat*” marks the uniqueness of the site.

Figure 10 : Samadai logo and slogan

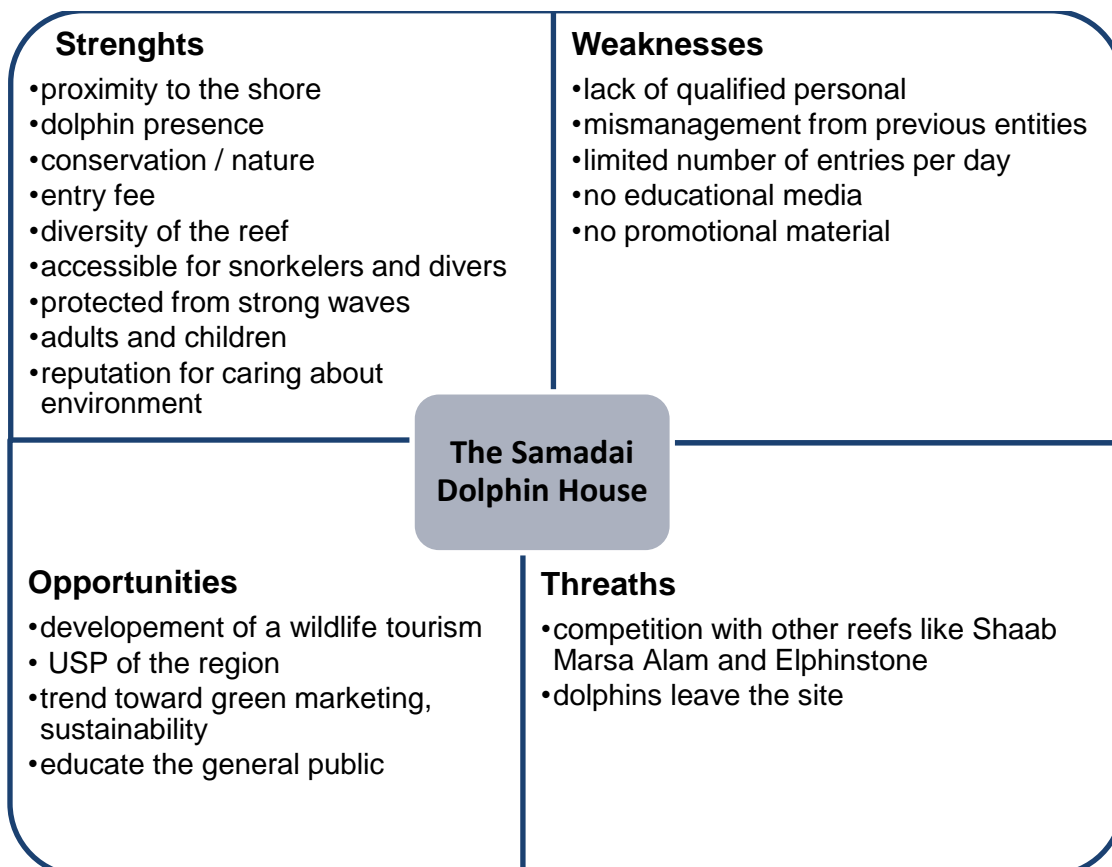


Source: HEPCA internal document

## 3.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the Samadai Dolphin House Reef

### 3.2.1 SWOT analysis

Figure 11 : SWOT analysis of the Samadai Dolphin House Reef



Source: Author's data

The Samadai Dolphin House is an attractive site for tourists mainly because snorkelers and divers can have personal encounters with wild dolphins at a very close distance from the coast. In addition, the lagoon is protected from waves and therefore makes swimming possible for all ages and levels. The introduction of an entrance fee permits HEPCA to manage the site, helps fund conservation in Egypt and reduces the number of visitors at the site. The experience becomes more personal and pleasant away from the masses. In case dolphins are not present, the reef has other assets which make the experience worth the trip.

However, due to a lack of available information about the reef and the dolphins some people get discouraged. This lack of efficient marketing is most likely the reason why Samadai is so much less popular than other reefs in the region.

The conservation measures set in place in Samadai could be the first steps toward a network of nature preserves in the South and therefore the development of a wildlife tourism that could become the Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of the region.

## 4. Market definition

### 4.1 Activity

#### 4.1.1 Products and services

As a non-governmental organization, HEPCA does not sell the actual trips to Samadai. It is only selling the entrance ticket to the nature preserve. The product is, therefore, divided between HEPCA and the various dive operators of the region.

Table 4 : Presentation of the different products and services

<p><b>1. Products and services of HEPCA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Entrance to the nature preserve of Samadai</b></li><li>• Sell the entrance tickets to visitors through diving centers</li><li>• <b>Provide diving centers with educational and promotional material</b></li><li>• Distribute the material to the diving centers</li><li>• Teach dive guides and boat crew about the reef and the dolphins</li></ul>
<p><b>2. Products and services of dive operators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Snorkeling trip</b></li><li>• Boat excursion to Samadai, snorkeling guide and detailed briefing about the dolphins and the reef, lunch and drinks, snorkeling on the reef</li><li>• <b>Diving trip</b></li><li>• Boat excursion to Samadai, renting the diving equipment, dive guide and detailed briefing about the dolphins and the reef, lunch and drinks, diving on the reef</li></ul>

Source: Author's data

HEPCA as the responsible entity for Samadai sells one product and offers various services mainly on the educational level. On the other hand, the dive operators propose two products that are mix between sport, discovery and educational activities. The figure above shows that for selling Samadai as a product, a cooperation between the companies is absolutely necessary.

#### 4.1.2 Market needs

The region of Marsa Alam, in contrast to Hurghada, is a well-known destination which has managed to preserve its environment. Furthermore, there are not many protected marine nature preserves which include regulations, information and a monitoring program in place. Samadai therefore strengthens the reputation of the region as a destination that cares about its environment.

Tourists have the opportunity to encounter wild dolphins for a day at Samadai. An article from Gore (2013) shows that for British people, swimming with dolphins is listed as number 19 of the 50 things that they wish to do before dying. These mammals have always attracted people. Samadai also offers tourists the possibility to relax, to be away from the daily stresses of life and to enjoy close contact with nature. People today, while traveling, are also looking for information and education.

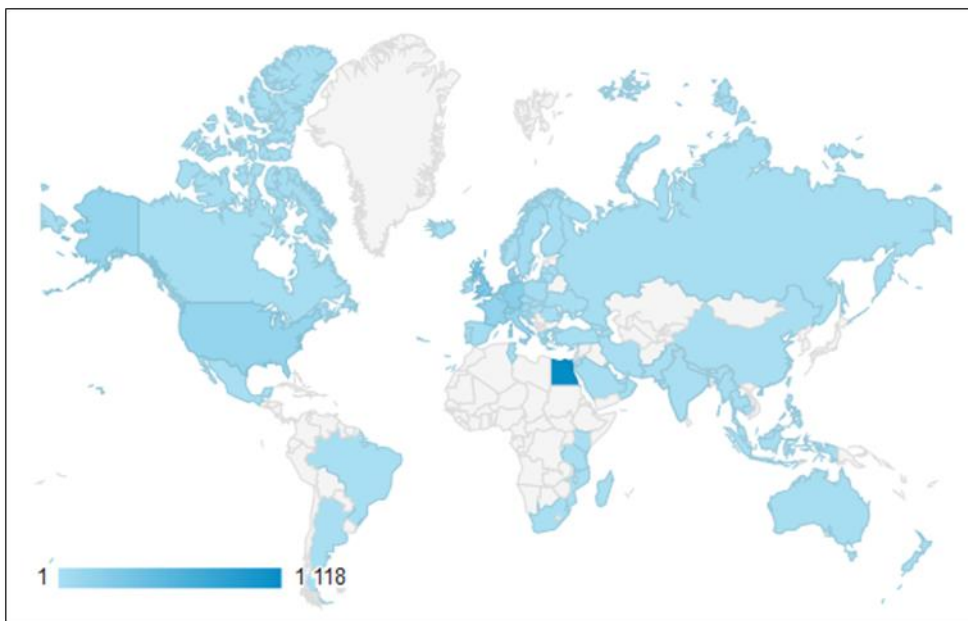
For the local population, the management of Samadai also requires new employees. The current patrolling team is the mooring team in Hurghada but it will be replaced by new employees from the region of Marsa Alam. By involving the local population in the management of Samadai, it gives them also a sense of ownership of Samadai.

## 4.2 Geographical areas

### 4.2.1 Geographic markets affected

Samadai affects different geographic markets that are mainly located in Europe. It is possible to note that Egyptian tourists are a minority. This could be because the marketing efforts by diving centers and tour operators are generally done in foreign languages and not in Arabic. However, it would also surely be beneficial to try to attract also the domestic market.

Figure 12 : Geographic origins of visitors from the Samadai website



Source: Google Analytics (period of observation: 01.01.2013-25.05.2013a)

Statistics from the internet website of Samadai point out that most of its virtual visitors are from Egypt. This can be explained by the fact that news concerning Samadai is sent out by HEPCA’s newsletter and they all had an English and Arabic version. These statistics definitely show that Egyptians are interested in Samadai. The country with the second highest representation is England. As the website is in English, when keywords are entered in Google, the search engine finds the website easier. The other eight countries that visit the website the most are the following (from most visits to fewest visits): Germany, France, Holland, United States, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland and Belgium.

Table 5 : Geographic origins of the Samadai Facebook website

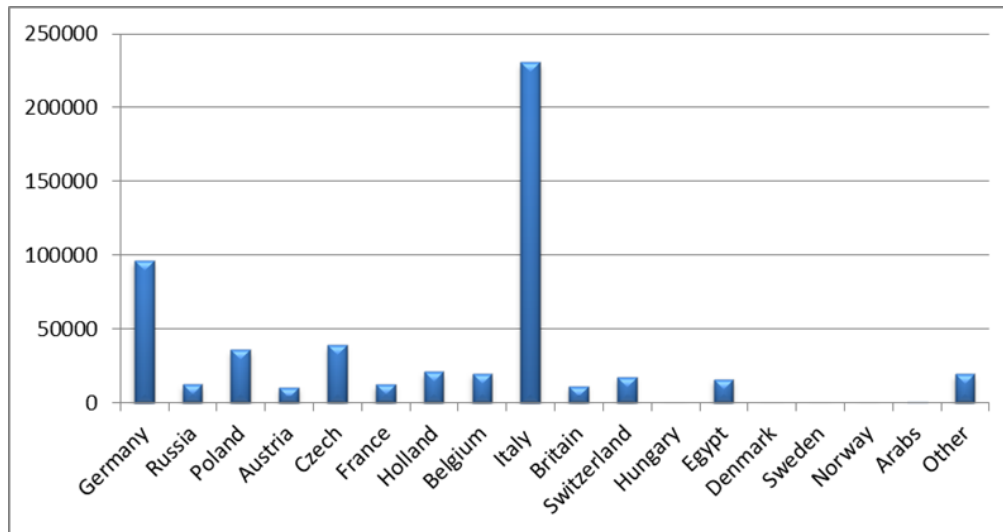
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of visits from this country</b>
<b>1</b>	Egypte	1042
<b>2</b>	Holland	560
<b>3</b>	Germany	399
<b>4</b>	England	254
<b>5</b>	Switzerland	190
<b>6</b>	France	172
<b>7</b>	United States	132
<b>8</b>	Greece	110
<b>9</b>	Italy	98
<b>10</b>	Czech Republic	83

Source: Adapted from Samadai Facebook website (period of observation 25.02.2013-25.05.2013)

The result is the same when looking at figures coming from the Facebook website of Samadai. Most of the visits are generated by Egyptians and the other countries listed are more or less the same as the data provided by previously.



Figure 13 : Arrivals per nationality at Marsa Alam Airport in 2012



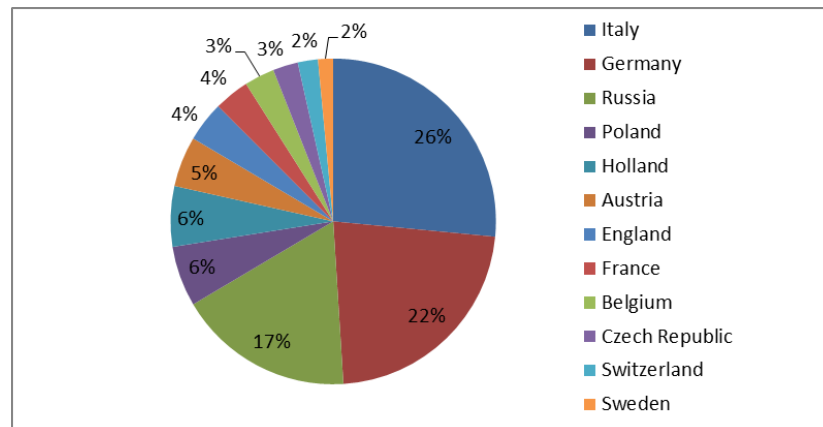
Source: Adapted from A.Ali, PC (7<sup>th</sup> April 2013)

By looking at arrivals in 2012 from the Marsa Alam Airport, it is clear that Egyptians are not the majority anymore. With more than 225'000 arrivals, Italians represented by far the highest percentage of tourists in the region of Marsa Alam followed by Germans, Poles and Czechs.

#### 4.2.2 Origin of the bookings

Since the handover from the rangers of Samadai to HEPCA, statistics about the bookings have been collected only since beginning of March of this year. It would have been interesting and more precise to have figures from the previous two years and the beginning of the year 2013. However, statistics for the bookings to and from Samadai are only available since HEPCA took over. The pie chart below shows the different nationalities that booked a trip to Samadai between March and April 2013.

Figure 14 : Origins of the bookings for Samadai



Source: Adapted from Dolphin House Website – booking records (Period of observation 01.03.2013-24.05.2013)

Even though two months do not give us nearly as much data as a whole year, by comparing these figures with the others above, it is possible to notice that there are similarities. On this one, Italians are the nationality that made the most bookings to Samadai. It is followed by Germany. These two countries also represented the highest percentage of arrivals at the Marsa Alam Airport in 2012. Except for the case of the Egyptians, it is possible to say that there is a correlation between the number of visits on the two internet websites, the arrivals at the airport and the effective number of bookings per nationality. Although the figures are less significant, Russia, Holland and Poland are also among the nationalities that most often go to Samadai.

**4.2.3 Priority geographic markets**

Based on these findings, the priority geographic markets are the following:

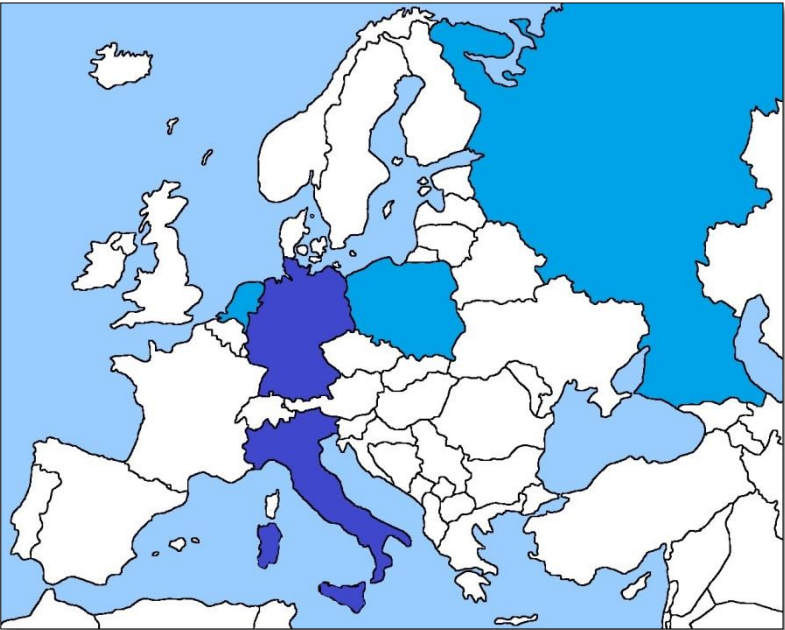
Table 6 : Most important geographic markets

<b>Primary geographic markets</b>	<b>1. Italy</b>
	<b>2. Germany</b>
<b>Secondary geographic markets</b>	<b>1. Russia</b>
	<b>2. Holland</b>
	<b>3. Poland</b>

Source: Author’s data

Europe is, therefore, the most important market for Samadai.

Figure 15 : Priority of geographical markets



Source: Adapted from Mapseek (2012)

#### 4.2.4 Global market volume

It is possible to say that the Samadai excursion is accessible to people aged between 9 and 64 years. According to this, the table below shows the number of persons (rounded to the nearest hundred thousand), from the priority geographical markets, that could visit Samadai.

Table 7 : Number of persons per country aged between 9 and 64 years

<b>Primary geographic markets</b>	1. Italy	43'000'000
	2. Germany	57'000'000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100'000'000</b>
<b>Secondary geographic markets</b>	1. Russia	109'000'000
	2. Holland	12'000'000
	3. Poland	29'000'000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>150'000'000</b>

Source: Adapted from Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] (2013a)

By adding the two totals, 250'000'000 persons could be potential customers for Samadai.

### 4.3 Development of indigenous market

#### 4.3.1 Egyptians

Although the Egyptian population represents only one percent of the Samadai bookings, it is one of the main targets for HEPCA. Indeed, the natural resources of Egypt should be accessible primarily to its inhabitants and then to foreigners. Concerning transportation, it would also be more environmentally friendly to bring Egyptians to Samadai. The number of persons in Egypt that could undertake a trip to Samadai, (same group age as in Europe) stands at 63'000'000 (CIA, 2013a). However, considering that it is a developing country and that 20 percent (CIA, 2013b) of the population is living under the poverty line and cannot afford the trip, the total number of potential customers is probably closer to 50'400'00.

#### 4.3.2 Schools

Private and international schools in Egypt are another important market for Samadai. During vacations, they organize camps for their students. Some of them also go to Marsa Alam. Samadai could be a one day excursion for them and would provide them at the same

time with fun and educational experience. There are approximately 213 private and international schools in Egypt. (Egyptian Schools, n.d.).

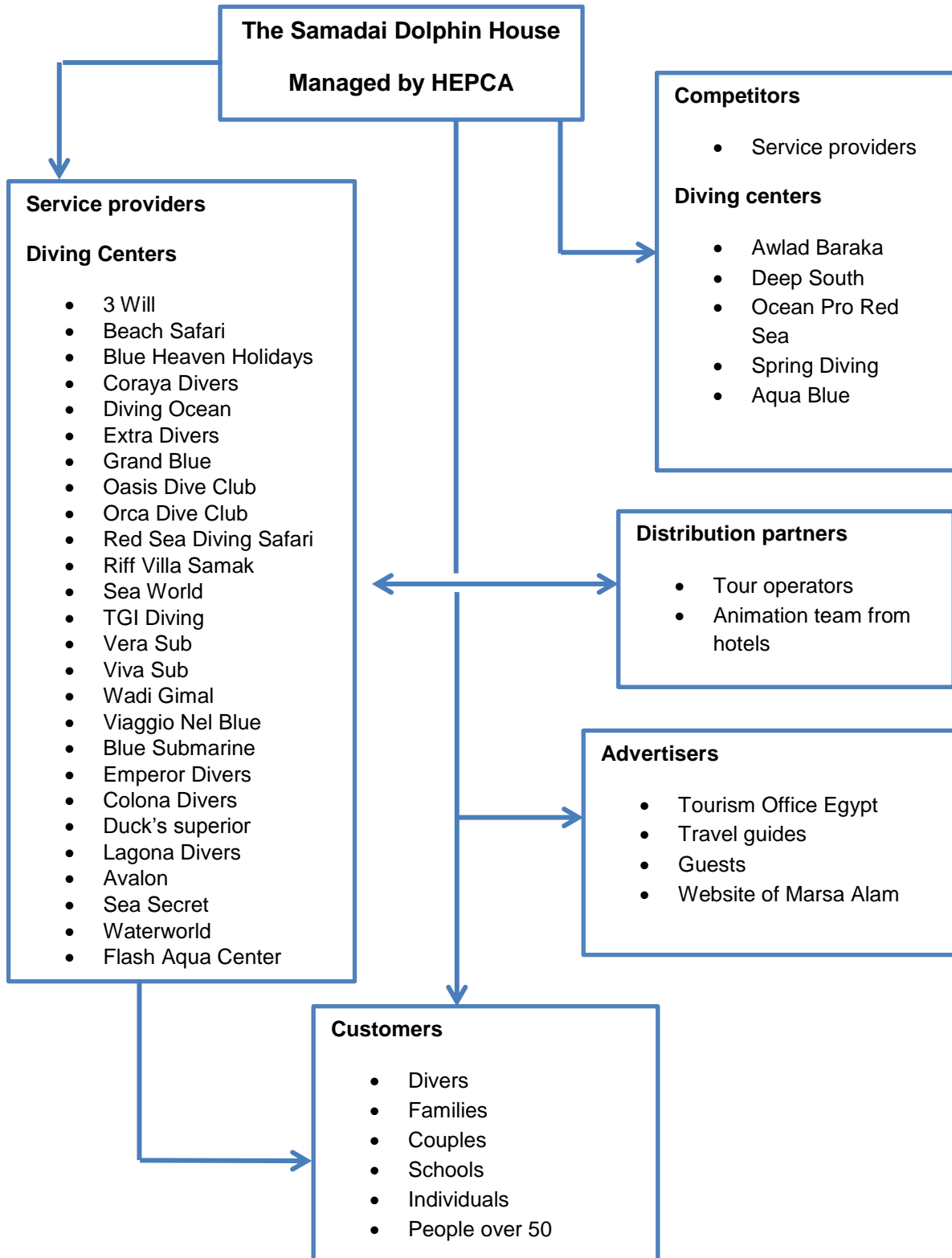
### **4.3.3 Hotels**

Every year, some of the hotels on the Red Sea coast organize an excursion day for each department. Those located in the region of Marsa Alam could be open to organizing a snorkeling excursion as that is something the most people are capable of doing. Generally, only the five and four stars hotels organize these trips. So, there would be a total of 45 hotels.

## 5. Marketing Analysis

### 5.1 Analysis of the market structure

#### 5.1.1 Scheme of the market structure



### **5.1.2 Functioning of the market and its stakeholders**

The market concerning the Samadai product is quite wide. Since HEPCA is only responsible for the distribution of the entrance ticket to the nature preserve, it is leaning on a large number of service providers for the sales and the realization of the excursion.

The service providers are the diving centers in the region of Marsa Alam that attended a certification course given by HEPCA. From February until May 2013, HEPCA gave six training sessions to around 300 dive and snorkeling guides about Samadai and the behavior of the dolphins. The training sessions were for free and material was distributed to the guides in order to help them give out the proper information to guests about Samadai and the wildlife within. From August 2013 only certified guides will have the right to enter Samadai. The diving centers can pick up their tickets at the Samadai office in Marsa Alam or on the spot with the patrolling team. HEPCA also provides the certified diving centers with promotional material.

The distribution partners are the travel agencies and tour operators. Generally, these entities have a stand in the hotels with which they cooperate and reserve the excursion for their guests. Then they forward the bookings to the diving centers. The diving centers pay them a commission.

The advertisers are the Tourism Office of Egypt, travel guides, the guests and the website of Marsa Alam. They all advise the excursion to Samadai in different ways.

The current situation right now is that HEPCA has some competition from non-certified diving companies that operate at Samadai and other locations. This competition will be wiped out in August however unless they get certified. Indeed, they also propose excursions to other reefs for snorkeling and diving with wild animals.

Finally, the last stakeholders of the market are the guests. These are mainly divers, families, couples, groups, schools, people over 50 and individuals.

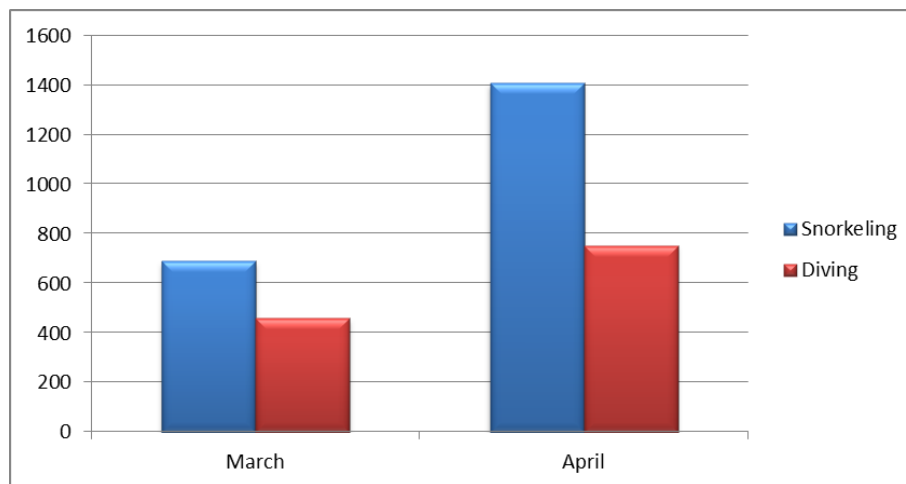
## 5.2 Product analysis

As explained previously, HEPCA is only selling one product that is the entry ticket to Samadai.

The following section will show the number of guests that booked an excursion to Samadai between March and April 2013 for one of the two major excursions, snorkeling or diving. Then, a figure will present the bookings per diving centers for the same months. Advantages and disadvantages will also be presented for these two categories.

### 5.2.1 Number of bookings for snorkeling and diving activities

Figure 16 : Number of guests in March and April 2013 by activities



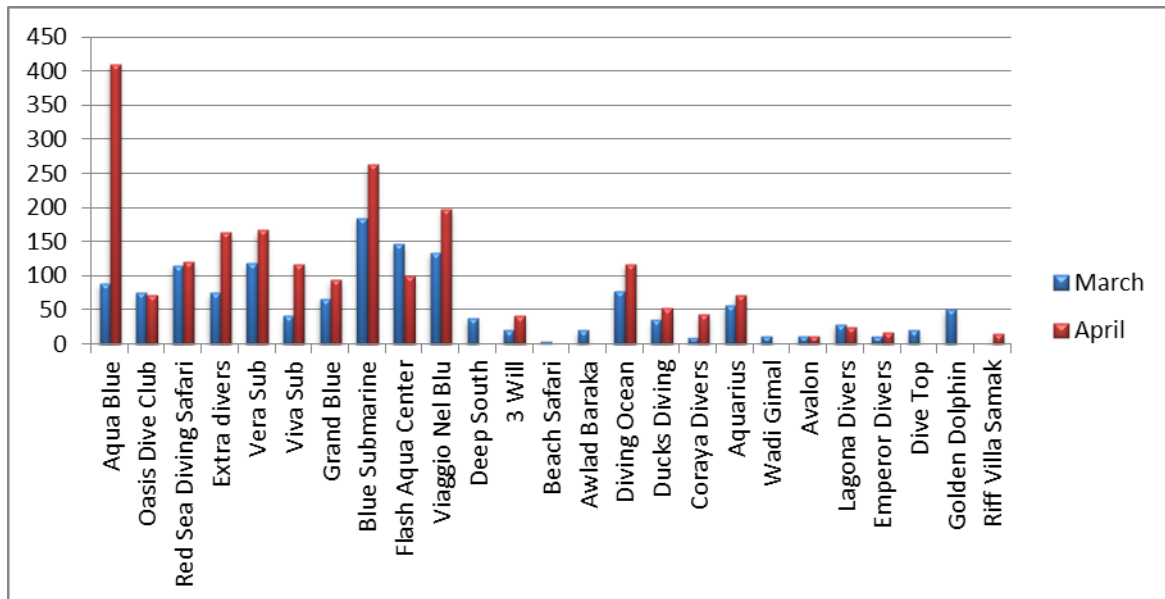
Source: Adapted from N. Osman, Secretary at HEPCA, personal communication (20<sup>th</sup> May 2013)

This graph clearly shows that snorkeling is the most common activity at Samadai. It is at the top for the two analyzed months. It is also possible to observe that there is a significant increase in the number of guests from March to April. This is due to the fact that April, May, June and July are the high season months.

As explained previously, every day 200 tickets may be sold by HEPCA. For a month with 31 days, this corresponds to 6'200 tickets. However, the number of sold tickets in April reaches 2'162. Only a third of tickets is sold.

## 5.2.2 Bookings for Samadai at diving centers

Figure 17 : Bookings per diving center in March and April



Source: Adapted from N. Osman, PC (20<sup>th</sup> May 2013)

In March 2013, the diving center Blue Submarine sold the most trips to Samadai. It is followed by the aqua center Flash and the diving center Viaggio Nel Blu. These two diving centers are managed by Italians.

In April, the numbers look different. It is the aqua center Aqua Blue that is clearly positioned at the head of sales. This aqua center didn't participate in the training course. When HEPCA will authorize only certified guides to access Samadai, Aqua Blue will no longer be allowed to send guests to Samadai despite the fact that it is one of the top sellers. The same situation applies to Golden Dolphin, a liveaboard company that sells diving safaris. The two other diving centers that most booked Samadai in April are again Blue Submarine and Viaggio Nel Blu.

## 5.2.3 Advantages and disadvantages for snorkeling and diving activities

The advantages for diving at Samadai are the following:

- The sites are outside the lagoon, so there is more chance of seeing other species of animals.
- When dolphins are not present, the reefs for diving are more diversified with corals.

The disadvantages for diving at Samadai are the following:



- The trip is more expensive because of the price of renting of the diving equipment.
- It is only accessible to certified divers.
- The diving sites are far away from the dolphins.

The advantages for snorkeling at Samadai are the following:

- The trip is less expensive because it requires less equipment.
- It is accessible to anyone that can swim.
- The snorkeling area is closer to where the dolphins are.

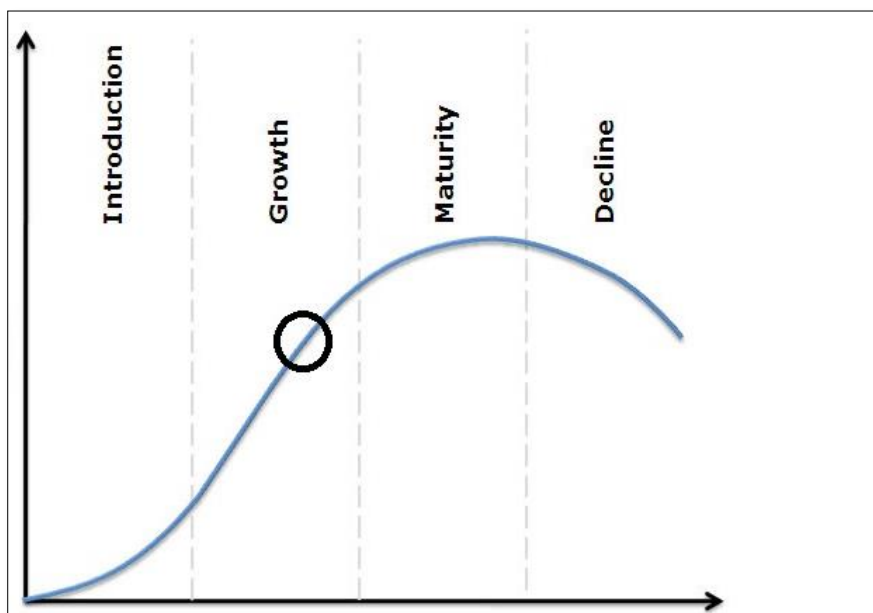
The disadvantages for snorkeling at Samadai are the following:

- The obligation to wear a lifejacket reduces comfort.
- There is a long distance from the drop site to the nearest dolphin zone.

## 5.2.4 Life cycle analysis

The following figure shows in which stage of the life cycle the Samadai product is.

Figure 18 : Life cycle Samadai



Source: Adapted from Note Desk (2009)

Samadai is a product that has been running for several years already and that has a lot of competitors. However, all of the potential markets have still not been reached and the way HEPCA is selling it (by providing education for tourists) is a new approach. This explains why the product is still considered to be in the growth phase of the lifecycle curve.

### 5.3 Customer segmentation

#### 5.3.1 Market segmentation

Table 8 : The different customer types for Samadai

Customer types	Description	Needs	Booking behavior	Contribution of product
<b>Divers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a passion for marine life</li> <li>• Mainly coming from the middle class</li> <li>• Often repeat guests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing sport in an intact natural environment</li> <li>• Encounter rare marine species</li> <li>• Take new diving courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book either an entire week for diving or individual days</li> <li>• Book mainly once per year a diving vacation in the Red Sea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity of reef topography</li> <li>• Possibility to see dolphins as well as other species</li> </ul>
<b>Families</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want to do activities that are also accessible to children</li> <li>• Are mainly interested in snorkeling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Want to please children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book during the school holidays</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nice place to practice snorkeling with few waves</li> <li>• Lifejacket requirement provides safety</li> </ul>
<b>Couples</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have no children</li> <li>• Want to have an active holiday</li> <li>• Have a higher income (both are working)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport</li> <li>• Discoveries</li> <li>• Change to daily life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can book during the whole year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idyllic location</li> </ul>
<b>Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice the same activity</li> <li>• Is not happening every year</li> <li>• Can be groups of friends, clubs or associations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Want to have fun</li> <li>• Discoveries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book usually in advance to be sure of having a place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boats can host 30 persons</li> <li>• Diving and snorkeling excursions are possible for big groups</li> </ul>
<b>People over 50</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interested in nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comfort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can book during the whole year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guides that provide them with quality</li> </ul>

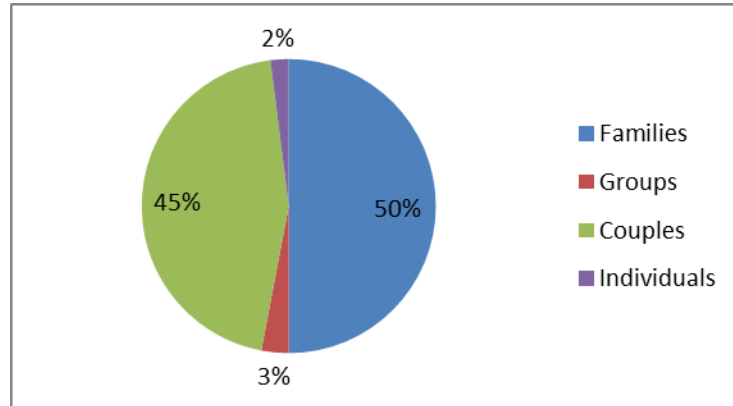
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active</li> <li>• Interested mainly in snorkeling</li> <li>• Educated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information</li> </ul>		<p>information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility to practice sport in an intact environment</li> </ul>
<b>Individuals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek contact with other people</li> <li>• Interested in exploring the region</li> <li>• Break the loneliness by participating in excursions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social relations</li> <li>• Information</li> <li>• curious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can book during the whole year</li> <li>• Last minute bookings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited space of the boat is ideal for meeting people</li> <li>• Guides that provide quality information</li> <li>• New experience by snorkeling with dolphins</li> </ul>

Source: Author's data

It should be noted that all members of each of the groups listed above must spend at least one night in the region of Marsa Alam in order to take the trip to Samadai. As most of the customers come from Europe, they spend at least one week on site. This means that guests coming to Samadai are usually in the middle or higher classes concerning revenue. Families book the trip to Samadai during school vacations while all other customer types may come at any time during the year. Therefore, there is no big risk to have slack periods.

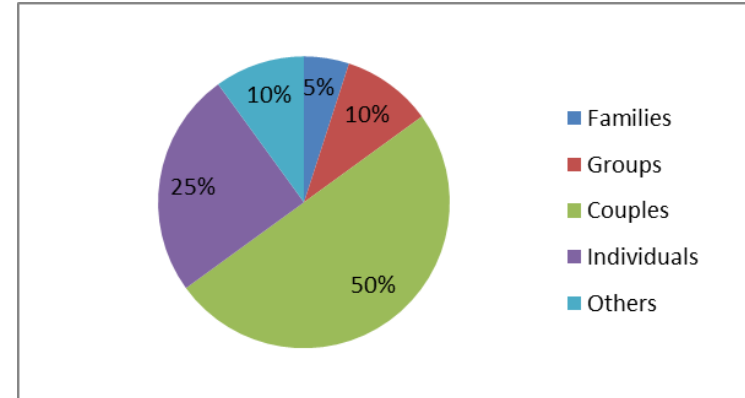
The two following figures present the percentage of bookings in 2012 per customer types from two different diving centers.

Figure 19 : Percentage of bookings per customer types at Blue Submarine



Source: B. Fortunati, Manager of Blue Submarine, personal communication (29<sup>th</sup> May 2013)

Figure 20 : Percentage of bookings per customer types at Riff Villa Samak



Source: C. Leuppi, Manager of Riff Villa Samak, personal communication ((28<sup>th</sup> May 2013)

By looking at both diving centers, it is possible to see that they don't have the same customers. Couples are the only group that have the same proportions in both figures (around 50 percent). These differences can be explained by the location of the diving centers. The Blue Submarine is located inside Kahramana Beach Resort that is a five stars hotel. Usually, comfort and safety offered by hotels attract families. On the other hand, Riff Villa Samak is a one star guesthouse. This establishment is more attractive to backpackers. These persons travel mainly alone or by two. It is possible to say that the location of the diving center has an impact on the type of customer that will undertake a trip to Samadai. However, as most accommodations in Marsa Alam are five or four star establishments, the data in figure 19 is surely more representative of the general trend than the data of figure 20. There was no school group booking in either of the two data sets.

### 5.3.2 New customer types

Table 9 : Potential new customer types for Samadai

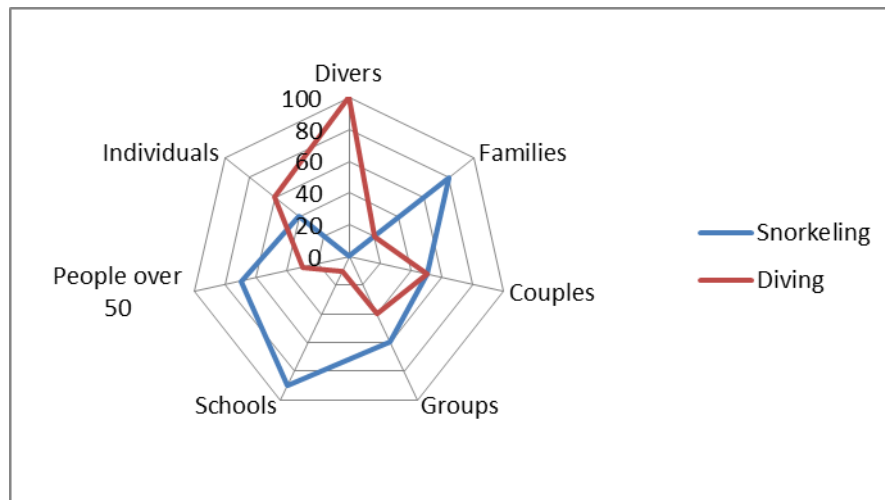
Customer types	Description	Needs	Booking behavior	Contribution of product
<b>Hotels</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five and four stars hotels</li> <li>• Excursions paid by the hotel for its employees</li> <li>• Satisfy and motivate employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daily change</li> <li>• Discover the region</li> <li>• Better work atmosphere</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bookings during the low season when there are not too many guests at the hotel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide employees with more knowledge about the region</li> <li>• Entertainment for one day</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Samadai is a one day trip during a summer camp</li> <li>• From 15 to 30 children</li> <li>• Mainly international or private schools located in Cairo</li> <li>• Big budget per student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Sport</li> <li>• Outdoor activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book during school vacation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nice place to practice snorkeling with few waves</li> <li>• Education about the resources of their country</li> <li>• Lifejacket requirement provides safety.</li> </ul>

Source: Author's data

Two new customer types could be targeted, the employees from the hotels in the region of Marsa Alam and the private and international schools in Egypt. For the first, it would allow them to discover one of the assets of their region while at the same time providing them with a change from their daily routine. It would also motivate them more at work and strengthen the entrepreneurial culture. For the second group, it would allow them to have a week-end or vacation in their country that is less expensive than going abroad. The discovery of this site could also enhance their desire to protect the natural resources of their country. For both of these groups, arrangements could be made possible to offer the excursion at a lower price in order to make it more accessible for them.

### 5.3.3 Activities by customer types

Figure 21: Correlation between snorkeling and diving activities and the customer types



Source: Author's data

Families, schools, groups and people over 50 are mainly interested in snorkeling. This can be explained by the fact that snorkeling doesn't require any specific qualifications.

People over 50, especially those with health problems may typically prefer snorkeling because it is generally less dangerous than diving.

Families often want to do activities together and most of the time, not all the family members are divers, so snorkeling is more appropriated for them. It is the same situation with groups.

Because diving is only authorized for children from 10 years of age and up, schools would rather go for snorkeling. It is also less expensive for them. The diver's certification requirement is also another important factor.

Individuals that book a trip to Samadai however are often more interested in diving. People that travel alone and choose specifically Marsa Alam as a holiday destination are often into diving. Logically, divers will book the diving excursion.

Couples can be interested in snorkeling or diving

## **5.4 Distribution partners**

### **5.4.1 Tour operators**

The diving centers are collaborating with one or more tour operators. These are primarily responsible for selling the transportation from the departure country of the guest to Marsa Alam and back and for the accommodation on site. Then, each customer that booked through a tour operator meets the same day or the day after arrival a representative of the company: the tour leader. This one is responsible for the well-being of the guest during their whole stay. He gives them information about the country, the hotel and presents them the various excursions they could undertake. The guests can either reserve a trip to Samadai through their tour leader or directly at a diving center. The diving centers pay a commission to the tour leaders. However, the amount of this commission is unknown.

### **5.4.2 Animation teams**

Another distribution partner of the diving center is the animation team. Most hotels have an animation team for their guest. As the name suggests it, they propose activities to animate the guests. During the day, they propose beach volleyball, aqua gym, dance lessons and activities for children. In the evening, they generally make a show. Animation teams have close contacts with guests and influence them easily. Animation teams make advertisement for the excursions of the diving centers and when some of the customers book a trip, they receive a commission. The percentage of the commission is not known. It would require a lot of time and meetings with the members of the animation teams individually.

## **5.5 Service providers and competition analysis**

As previously stated, what is special about the market structure of Samadai is that the service providers are also the direct competitors. Indeed, next to Samadai, they also sell other snorkeling and diving excursions. Some of these excursions are also very famous in the South and are based on observing wild animals.

The following section is an analysis of three diving centers that are located near the city of Marsa Alam. The first one, Blue Submarine is an Italian diving center that is located inside a five stars hotel named Kahramana Beach Resort. The second one, Lagona Divers, is a German diving center that is located in a four stars hotel named Happy Life Resort and the last one, Riff Villa Samak, is a Swiss diving center located in a one star guesthouse named Riff Villa.

Three of the excursions they offer can be considered competition for Samadai. These are Shaab Marsa Alam, Elphinstone and Marsa Abu Dabbab. They are described in Appendix I.

### 5.5.1 Analysis of diving centers by excursions

Table 10 : Analysis of three diving centers

Excursions	Price	Percentage of sales in 2012	Nationality	Market
<b>BLUE SUBMARINE</b>				
<b>Shaab Marsa Alam</b>	30 euros for snorkeling	19%	Italian	Couples, families
	77 euros for two dives			
<b>Elphinstone</b>	95 euros for two dives	6%		
<b>Marsa Abu Dabbab</b>	20 euros for snorkeling	12%		
	52 euros for two dives			
<b>Samadai</b>	58 euros for snorkeling 105 euros for two dives	63%		
<b>LAGONA DIVERS</b>				
<b>Shaab Marsa Alam</b>	Not offered	-	German	Couples, individuals
<b>Elphinstone</b>	84 euros for two dives	30%		
<b>Marsa Abu Dabbab</b>	25 euros for snorkeling	20%		
	48 euros for two dives			
<b>Samadai</b>	51 euros for snorkeling 99 euros for two dives	50%		
<b>RIF VILLA SAMAK</b>				
<b>Shaab Marsa Alam</b>	35 euros for snorkeling	35%	German, Swiss, Austrian	Couples, individuals
	35 euros for diving			
<b>Elphinstone</b>	35 euros one dive	20%		
<b>Marsa Abu Dabbab</b>	10 euros for snorkeling	40%		
	10 euros for one dive			
<b>Samadai</b>	50 euros for snorkeling 50 euros for one dive	5%		

Source: Adapted from B. Fortunati, PC (29<sup>th</sup> May 2013) & C. Pfeifer, Manager of Lagona Divers, personal communication (1<sup>st</sup> June 2013) & C. Leuppi, PC (28<sup>th</sup> May 2013)



By looking at the information coming from the above table, it is possible to notice that for the three diving centers, Samadai is the most expensive excursion for diving as well as for snorkeling. The entry fee collected by HEPCA is included in these prices. Elphinstone is the second most expensive excursion.

For the percentage of sales in 2012 by Blue Submarine and Lagona Divers, Samadai is the reef that had most success. On the other hand, Riff Villa Samak sold more trips to Marsa Abu Dababb.

It would have been expected that the Sataya Dolphin Reef (also described in Appendix I) would be the biggest competitor for Samadai. However, the surveys for the three diving centers show that they are not selling any excursions to this reef.

Table 11 : Strengths and weaknesses of the excursions

	<b>Shaab Marsa Alam</b>	<b>Elphinstone</b>	<b>Marsa Abu Dabbab</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safari boat wreck</li> <li>• Proximity to the coast</li> <li>• For divers and snorkelers</li> <li>• Possibility to see sharks</li> <li>• No entry fees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High probability to see sharks</li> <li>• World renowned site</li> <li>• No entry fees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibility to see turtles and dugong</li> <li>• Direct access as it is a bay</li> <li>• No entry fees</li> <li>• For divers and snorkelers</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low probability to see dolphins</li> <li>• No regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only accessible to experienced divers</li> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Farther away</li> <li>• No regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violations against dugongs</li> <li>• No regulations</li> </ul>

Source: Author's data

All three sites have strengths concerning marine diversity. Elphinstone especially as sharks are a one of the top attractions for divers. Concerning another site where it is possible to see sharks, HEPCA's website says (2012b) « It has been estimated that the tourism industry has an annual income of EGP 1,250,000 from a single shark at Brothers Islands ».

In general, the weaknesses of the sites are that there are no regulations. Wild animals can be harassed by divers and snorkelers and the amount of boats is not controlled. When a site gets overcrowded the experience loses its appeal.

Table 12 : Strengths and weaknesses of the three diving centers

	<b>Blue Submarine</b>	<b>Lagona Divers</b>	<b>Riff Villa Samak</b>
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many diving courses available</li> <li>• For some excursions biologists make the briefing</li> <li>• Booking through tour operator or diving center</li> <li>• Located inside hotel</li> <li>• Big diving center</li> <li>• Targets the most widespread nationality in Marsa Alam</li> <li>• E-learning for diving courses</li> <li>• Website in Italian, French, English and German</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many diving courses available</li> <li>• Booking through tour operator or diving center</li> <li>• Located inside hotel</li> <li>• Targets the second most widespread nationality in Marsa Alam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small diving center</li> <li>• Friendly atmosphere</li> <li>• Located in Marsa Alam city</li> </ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expensive prices</li> <li>• Located outside Marsa Alam city</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located outside Marsa Alam city</li> <li>• Website only in German</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few diving courses available</li> <li>• Booking only through diving center</li> <li>• Website only in German</li> </ul>

Source: Author's data

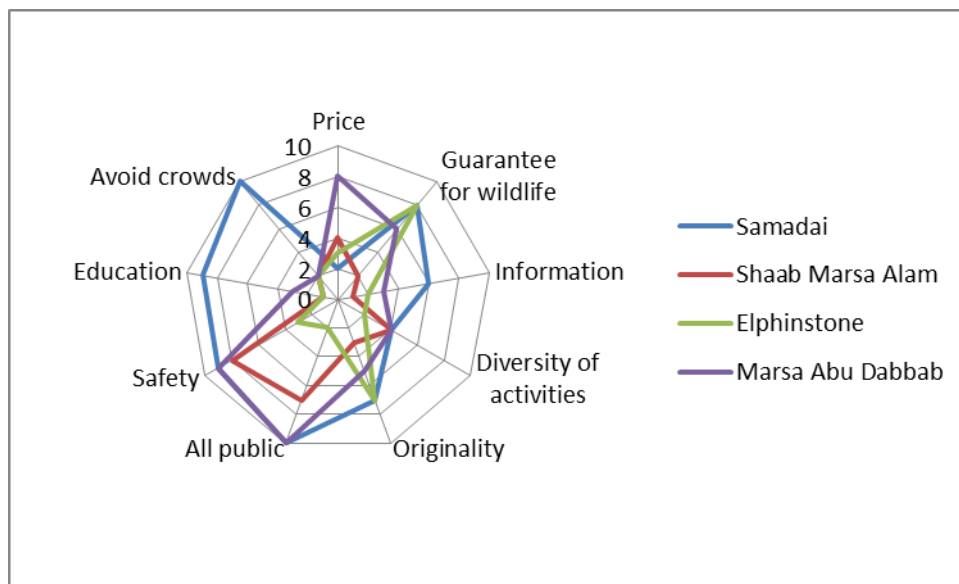
The diving center Blue Submarine provides the widest range of services to its customers. Its services can be booked through tour operators or directly on site. The biggest advantage is that guests can study the diving courses on an e-learning platform at home before going on vacation. This gives them more time for diving and enjoying the vacation. Blue Submarine with its 24 employees is also the diving center that can have the most guests. Another advantage is that for some excursions biologists are making the briefing. This gives the guest unique information about marine fauna and flora. (B.Fortunati, PC, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2013)

Lagona Divers has 14 employees and offers the typical services of a diving center. It has no special advantages. (C.Pfeifer, PC, 1st June 2013)

Riff Villa Samak has 15 employees and proposes very few diving courses. On the other hand, the atmosphere is friendly because the guesthouse can only host a limited number of customers. (C.Leuppi, PC, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013)

### 5.5.2 Positioning in relation to the competition

Figure 22 : Comparison between competing excursions



Source: Author's data

The cheapest excursion is the one to Marsa Abu Dabbab because the bay can be accessed by road. The most expensive one is the one to Samadai because it includes the entry fee for the nature preserve.

In Samadai and Marsa Abu Dabbab security is best assured. Samadai is well protected from the waves, there is the obligation for snorkelers to wear a lifejacket and dolphins are not predators. Marsa Abu Dabbab is on the coastline and turtles and dugong are also not dangerous animals. Even if shark attacks are very rare and sharks are not aggressive animals, it is still more dangerous to dive with them than with dolphins or turtles. Elphinstone is also a more difficult dive site because of its currents. It is also important to note that Elphinstone is not accessible to everyone.

For all the sites, except Elphinstone, it is possible to enjoy diving and snorkeling.

To see dolphins or sharks while diving or snorkeling is definitely a lifetime experience. Turtles can also be seen at other sites. The dugong that was in Marsa Abu Dabbab has not been seen for some time. It probably moved to another bay where there are fewer tourists.

Samadai is the site that provides guests with the most information and education. The snorkeling and diving guides were trained about the reef and dolphins and they received a lot of material to present to the guests.

Finally, Samadai is nicer to visit because the number of tourist is limited to 200 a day. There are no such regulations at the other sites and so they can become very crowded.

## 5.6 Advertisers

Advertisers are companies, organizations or persons that influence the purchasing decisions of consumers and promote the excursion to Samadai.

Table 13 : Description of advertisers

Advertisers	Impact	Part	Interest
<b>Guests</b>	strong	Good word of mouth if they are satisfied	Give travel advice to relatives
<b>Website of Tourism office Egypt</b>	strong	Awareness of the destination	Make the destination attractive by proposing several offers
<b>Travel Guides</b>	Medium strong	Give good tips about destinations	Personal benefit
<b>Website of Marsa Alam</b>	strong	Description of the destination with useful links	Give a representative image of the destination

Source: Author's data

There are a few prescribers for Samadai. The guests, the website of Marsa Alam and the website of the Tourism office in Egypt have the most influence. Travel guides are mainly used by backpackers. However, these kinds of travelers are a minority in the region of Marsa Alam.

It is possible to say that the advertisers are mainly the websites of the companies.

## 5.7 Market trends and environmental factors

### 5.7.1 Definition of market trends

Table 14 : Markets trends affecting Samadai

<p><b>Sustainable tourism</b></p>	<p>The continued growth of tourism is leading to new demands in tourism. Tourists are becoming more interested in nature-related tourism. They want to have experiences that make sense. Visits to national parks and nature preserves are particularly popular. Discovering ecosystems, the biodiversity of marine life and the conservation of these resources are important to them. (Eagles, McCool &amp; Haynes, 2002, p.24)</p>
<p><b>Whale watching</b></p>	<p>Since 1980, the whale watching industry is increasing. In 1998, there were nine million tourists that undertook a trip to watch dolphins or whales and they reached 13 million in 2008 in 119 countries. The income per year is about two billion U.S. dollars and the market grows has an annual rate of 3.7 percent. (Tisdell &amp; Wilson, 2012, p.472)</p>
<p><b>Tourists in Egypt</b></p>	<p>Since the Egyptian Revolution that occurred on 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2011, the number of tourists and revenues for the country decreased significantly. Information coming from the online newspaper The Guardian says that the number of visitors dropped from 50 percent in 2011. (Shenker, 2012) Tourists are afraid to travel to Egypt because protests still take place in some cities. The recent falling of an air balloon in Luxor did not help the tourism industry to straighten.</p> <p>All these events affect the arrival of tourists in Egypt and therefore also the revenues in Samadai.</p>
<p><b>New touristic territories</b></p>	<p>Initially, tourists were attracted to the Nile region for cultural tourism. Now, the coastline of the Red Sea is considered as a new touristic territory and is in a development phase. Constructions of hotels are increasing. (Vignal, 2010) In the next years, these new territories will be able to host more tourists. It could also increase the number of visitors to Samadai.</p>

## 5.7.2 Opportunities or threats related to environmental factors

Table 15 : Opportunities or threats related to environmental factors

Environmental factors	Opportunities or threats
<b>Economical</b>	<p>Positive exchange rate for tourists</p> <p>Decrease in the number of tourist arrivals and thus income. (Shenker, 2012)</p>
<b>Technological</b>	<p>Construction of a research and educational center in Port Ghalib.</p> <p>Construction of a Bio Boat that will be deployed in Samadai.</p>
<b>Environmental</b>	<p>Laws concerning national parks and general conservation issues are not respected. On May 2013, more than 20 fishing boats were fishing in Ras Mohamed National Park and earlier in the year whale sharks were fished near the city of Suez.</p> <p>Inexperienced snorkelers and divers are a threat to highly frequented coral reefs. They may walk on the reef or swim too near to it and break it with their fins. (Hilmi, Safa, Reynaud &amp; Allemand, 2012)</p>
<b>Political</b>	<p>Tour operators are worried because of the new government that is composed mainly of members of the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafists. Restrictions concerning alcohol and the wearing of bikinis could be a threat to the tourism industry. (Shenker, 2012)</p> <p>Protests are still taking place in different cities in Egypt. A study from Croutsche and Roux (2005) shows that tourists when travelling are particularly aware of risks concerning war.</p> <p>High risk of attacks. The last one occurred against a church in Alexandria in 2011. (Département fédéral des affaires étrangères [DFAE], 2013)</p> <p>Risk of kidnapping near the border with Sudan. (DFAE, 2013)</p>
<b>Social</b>	<p>Domestic tourism is growing. Egyptians from the middle and high social classes start to travel to the touristic resorts on the Red Sea coastline. (Pagès-El-Karoui, 2012)</p>

## 5.8 Analysis of current marketing activities

### 5.8.1 Definition of positioning, image and reputation in the market

HEPCA is positioned as a very active non-governmental organization in Egypt that cares about the natural resources of the Red Sea. Its product the Samadai Dolphin House presents a unique opportunity to meet with wild dolphins, learn more about them and help with conservation in Egypt. The Samadai Dolphin House shows that tourism and conservation are possible at the same time.

The Samadai Dolphin House is a reef that is well known in the international diving community but less so in the other groups.

### 5.8.2 Inventory of used tools

HEPCA took over the management of Samadai in the beginning of the year 2013. The table below shows the different tools that were used since then.

Table 16 : Used tools since January 2013

Tools	Description	Impact	Costs
<b>Website</b> <b>www.dolphinhouse.org</b>	The website was created in mid-February 2013.	Website analysis in Appendix IV	250 euros
<b>Flyers</b>	Flyers in English with the description of the reef, information about the dolphins and rules for the encounter. 10'000 copies. They will be distributed to the diving centers.	Still not distributed	325 euros
<b>Roll up banners</b>	Roll up banner for the diving centers and hotels. 40 roll up banners.	Still not distributed	1'234 euros
<b>Presentation at a press trip</b>	Presentation of Samadai to German journalist on a press trip.	low	No costs

Source: Author's data

Beside the marketing tools documented in table above, HEPCA also organized six training sessions for the dive and snorkeling guides in Marsa Alam. At these training sessions, A.

Ziltener, a biologist specialized in dolphins, gave the training course. At the end HEPCA also provided the dive and snorkeling guides with the following material:

- Booklet "A guide to Samadai", 1000 copies, costs 920 euros
- Plastic slides that they can use for the briefing, 1500 copies, costs 1299 euros
- Certification card that they have to wear when going to Samadai, costs 2'165 euros

## **5.9 HEPCA analysis**

### **5.9.1 Policy**

HEPCA's policy is to protect the natural resources of the Red Sea by finding compromises between the different stakeholders and in particular with the tourism sector.

### **5.9.2 Strategy**

As a non-governmental organization, HEPCA's strategy for Samadai is not to make large volume of sales and benefits but to sell the 200 tickets per day (according to the carrying capacity of the site) in order to reinvest this money in conservation and assure a sustainable development for the site.

### **5.9.3 Mission**

On its website, HEPCA describes its mission with the following terms: « HEPCA's mandate is the protection and conservation of the terrestrial and marine ecology of the Red Sea. This includes the underwater bio-network of coral reefs and the sensitive land ecosystems of the Red Sea coastline » (HEPCA Website, 2013c).



## 5.9.4 Financial resources

Table 17 : Expenditures and revenues in 2012

Revenues	Euros	Expenses	Euros
Income from Membership	2'600	Mooring Install. & Maintenance Expenses	50'912
Cash Donations	1'831	South Factory Expenses	79'374
Samadai	80'101	Hurghada Solid waste Management Expenses	956'819
Sales	17'177	Port Ghalib Project Expenses	4'397
Installation Revenue	3'688	Madrasty Expenses	13'583
Solid Waste Collection Service Revenue	93'223	Beach & Islands Cleaning Expenses	3'060
Hurghada Solid waste Management Revenue	1'575'483	Subsidies Expenses	5'412
Other Revenues	452'573	Exp. on Public Awareness	9'621
Other Revenues	18'543	Research Expenses	4'488
		Fixed Assets Purchase	114'402
		Wages	71'864
		Payables	19'495
		General & Admin Expenses	83'789
		Italian Project	186'067
		Expenses for hotel rooms	324'753
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2'246'219</b>		<b>1'928'036</b>
<b>Difference between expenditures and revenues</b>	<b>318'183</b>		

Source: H. Shawky, Deputy managing Director of HEPCA, personal communication (6<sup>th</sup> June 2013)

It is possible to see that most of the expenditures and revenues are coming from the same project, the solid waste management. Concerning Samadai, the 30 percent of income that goes to HEPCA stood at 80'101 euros. This means that the total for the year 2012 reached 267'00 euros. That year, only 3.5 percent of the tickets were sold. If all tickets would have been sold, HEPCA would have received a total profit of 2'343'600 euros.

As it is a sustainable project, HEPCA has 80'101 euros available for Samadai for the year 2013.

### **5.9.5 Technological resources**

The following points are the main technological resources of HEPCA:

- Research center in Port Ghalib (under construction)
- Bio Boat (under construction)
- Fiber glass boat
- Aluminum boat
- Two offices ( in Hurghada and Marsa Alam city)
- One recycling station in Marsa Alam

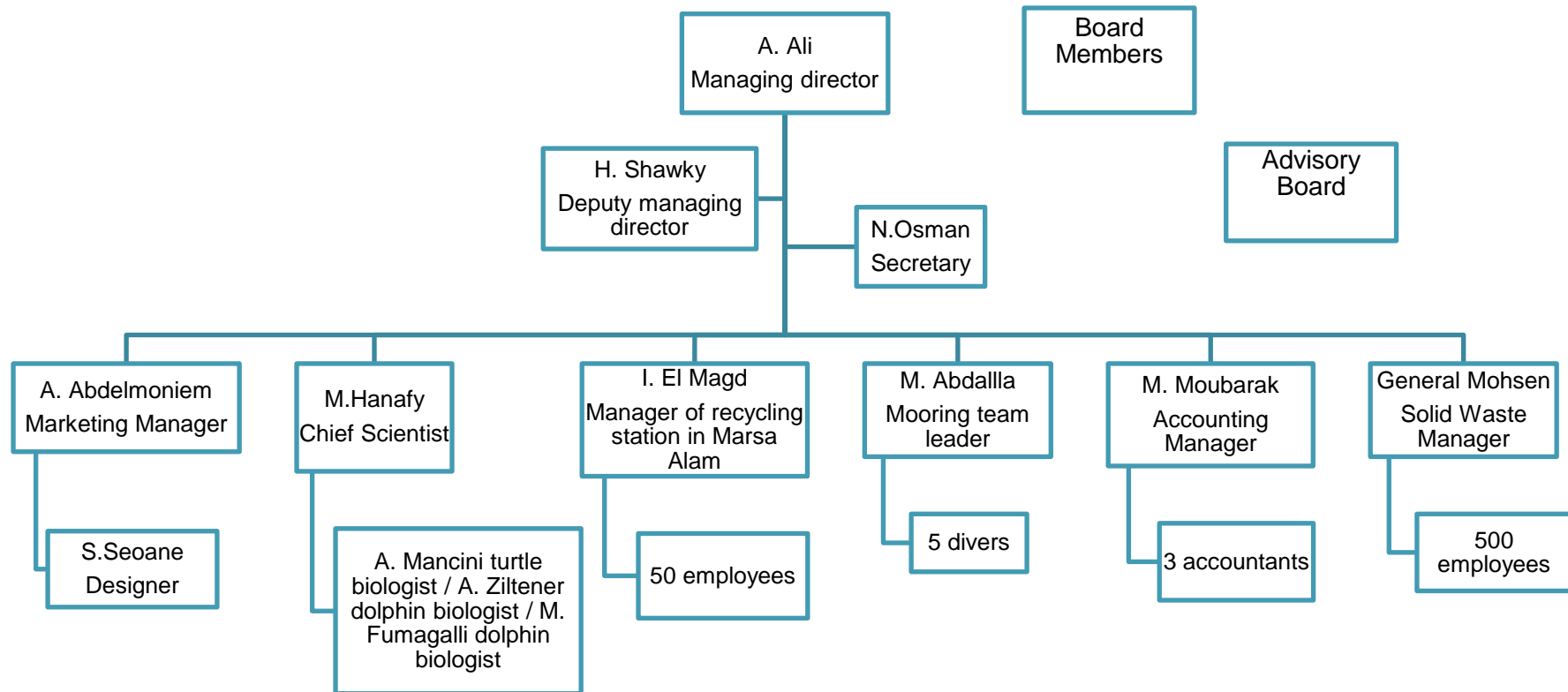
### **5.9.6 Core competences**

The core competences at HEPCA are the employees. Before to be the Managing Director of HEPCA, A. Ali was the owner of a live-aboard company in the Red Sea. This position gave him an extensive knowledge about the tourism sector in Egypt. Over the years, he has established many contacts in the tourism sector but also in politics. Concerning marketing, A. Abdelmoneim studied marketing in America and was responsible for four years for the marketing department for Red Sea diving Safari (eco-lodges and diving center in the region of Marsa Alam).

What also makes HEPCA competent is that most of its employees (except the scientists) are Egyptian and have held relevant positions prior to working at HEPCA.

### 5.9.7 Organigramm

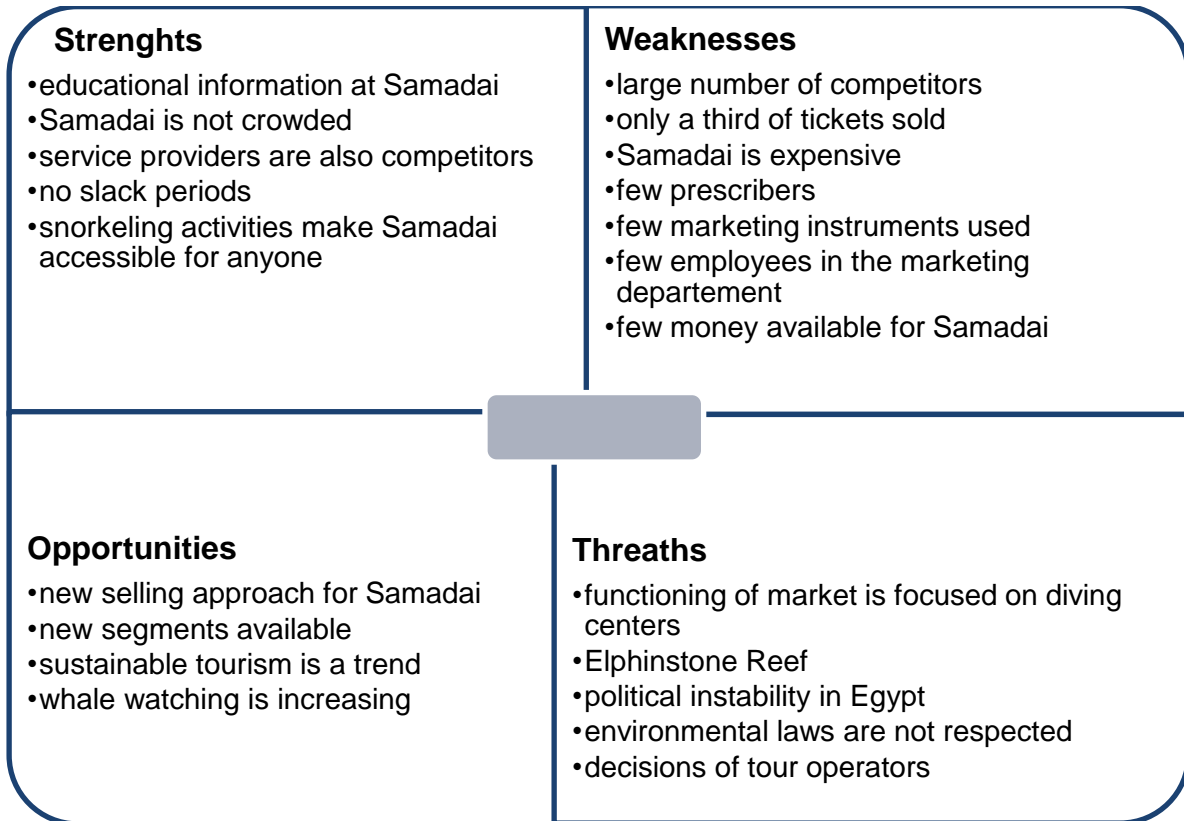
Figure 23 : Organigramm of HEPCA in 2013



Source: Author's data

## 5.10 SWOT analysis

Figure 24 : SWOT of the marketing analysis



Source: Author's data

Samadai differs from other sites because quality information is provided by the dive and snorkeling guides and the website and the flyers that will be distributed. This is clearly a new approach for selling Samadai. A patrolling team is responsible for enforcing the laws and controls the flow of visitors. The site can therefore not be over crowded. As service providers are also competitors, it is easier to approach and interact with them.

Even if competitors are accessible, it is difficult to get a good overview about their activities because of their large number. Another negative point is that Samadai is the most expensive excursion. Despite international customers, there are very few advertisers on the market. HEPCA's marketing team is also very small and until now only a few marketing tools were used. The biggest weakness is surely that the revenues in 2012 from Samadai were very low. This means that there is not much money available for the project in 2013.

In the past years, Samadai attracted mainly foreign visitors but there are new potential types of customers in Egypt as well. Another important point is that Samadai corresponds to actual trends in tourism such as sustainability and whale watching.

HEPCA has a little actual control over the market because the main stakeholders are the diving centers and if they want they can stop providing excursions to Samadai or push other excursions like the Elphinstone Reef. Another risk is the instability of the country. Any unusual events can render things difficult in encouraging people to visit the region and naturally this would negatively affect sales to Samadai.

## 6. Marketing strategy

### 6.1 Marketing objectives

This is the first time that HEPCA has entered into sales. It is for this reason that it is important to set up specific marketing objectives.

#### 6.1.1 Quantitative objectives

- Increase ticket sales by 65 percent

#### 6.1.2 Qualitative objectives

- Provide other educational products to visitors
- Provide diving centers with unique tools
- Increase the notoriety of Samadai to customers that do not dive
- Improve the promotion of Samadai

### 6.2 Definition of priority markets and activity

#### 6.2.1 Priority consumer markets

As noted in the marketing analysis, families and couples are the most popular foreign visitors. That's why they are considered as a priority segment. Although there are no figures about the private and international schools in Egypt, they are also considered as a priority market. They match with HEPCA's philosophy that is to raise awareness about the natural resources among the Egyptian youth.

Table 18 : Priority markets for Samadai

<b>International markets</b>
Families
Couples
<b>Domestic market</b>
International and private schools

Source: Author's data

## **6.2.2 Priority activities**

Emphasis should be placed on snorkeling as it is the activity accessible to everyone and more related to the dolphins. Moreover, the priority markets mentioned above are more interested in this activity. There were also more snorkeling activities sold in the two analyzed months than diving.

## **6.3 Market strategy**

The chosen market strategy is that of the market development. Indeed, the best way to increase sales is to exploit a new potential market: the schools. However, as families and couples have been a consistent source of revenue, HEPCA will also continue to make promotions for these markets.

## **6.4 Positioning**

### **6.4.1 Identification**

The Samadai Dolphin House can be identified as a nature preserve that offers its guests on an excursion a unique encounter with wild dolphins while helping conservation in the Red Sea.

### **6.4.2 Differentiation**

What differentiates Samadai from other excursions offered in the region is that dive and snorkeling guides have extensive knowledge of the site and the dolphins. If dolphins are absent, the beauty of the reef was still worth the trip. Another important point is that the implemented laws allow the guests to enjoy the experience undisturbed by huge crowds of snorkelers or divers.

### **6.4.3 Customer expectation**

What leads customers to buy the excursion to Samadai is clearly the high probability to swim with dolphins. Therefore it is very important to have guides that can provide as much information as possible when the dolphins are absent in order to give disappointed customers an added value.

### **6.4.4 USP**

Samadai is the only nature preserve in the Red Sea where it is possible to swim with wild dolphins.

### 6.4.5 Positioning of the competition

For other excursions available in the region of Marsa Alam, the diving centers are briefing divers and snorkelers about the topography of the reef, the way they will take, the depths and explain them what species can be seen. There is, for example, no specific information about behavior and gender identification. However, as explained previously, Blue Submarine has one biologist that gives information for the excursion to Marsa Abu Dabbab. There is a growing trend for education. The diving centers surely feel that the customers want more specific information.

### 6.4.6 Potential benefits of the product

Activities in Samadai can be done in a preserved natural environment where it is still possible to observe animals as if they had never been in contact with humans.

### 6.4.7 Market exploitation strategy

HEPCA cannot sell Samadai without using intermediaries (the diving centers). This means that the distribution of the product is done in an indirect way.

Concerning the marketing efforts, as HEPCA is doing all the marketing, it will be a pull strategy. Focus will be on consumers in order to generate an active demand from them.

## 6.5 Definition of specific objectives

Table 19 : Specific objectives for Samadai

<b>Sales</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase ticket sales for snorkeling activities by 30% by June 2014</li> <li>• Increase ticket sales for diving activities by 20% by June 2014</li> <li>• Increase ticket sales at Egyptian schools by 15% by September 2014</li> </ul>
<b>Satisfaction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that 80% of customers are satisfied at the end of the year</li> <li>• Ensure that 90% of the diving centers are satisfied with the management of Samadai at the end of the year</li> </ul>
<b>Customer loyalty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have 15% of repeat guests at the end of the year 2014</li> </ul>
<b>Reputation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double the number of visitors on the Samadai website by the end of the year 2014</li> </ul>

Source: Author's data



## **7. Marketing mix**

### **7.1 Product policy**

The excursion to Samadai is designed to be as simple and practical as possible for the customers. The snorkeling excursion includes lunch and drinks and the snorkeling material. It is a little different for diving. The lunch and drinks are also included but divers have to pay for the equipment if they didn't bring it by themselves. Concerning the booking procedures, it can be done easily at the diving center one day before the excursion.

### **7.2 Price policy**

The prices for the excursion to Samadai are between 50 and 110 euros. It depends of the number of dives and the diving center. The entry fee for the nature preserve (15 euros) is not flexible and cannot be changed.

The booking and payment procedure were significantly improved by HEPCA. When the rangers were managing the site, diving centers had to send someone the day of the excursion to the city council to buy entry tickets for the nature preserve and to enter the booking details on a governmental carbonate sheet. Since HEPCA took over, all the certified diving centers have a login name and password for the website. They can enter their bookings details minimum one day before on an excel sheet. This avoids unnecessary displacements and allows diving centers to control the number of persons still allowed to enter the nature preserve. The entry fee can be paid directly on site to the patrolling team.

Before HEPCA, there was no refunding system. Now, for severe weather conditions or unforeseen guest illness, excursions can be cancelled and refunded or deferred to another day. However, HEPCA should be contacted by e-mail or phone call the day before.

Some diving centers offer every 10<sup>th</sup> dive one dive for free. But this system only applies to divers. For snorkelers, a preferential rate could be applied for groups (10 persons or more) that book at least one month earlier. This would be particularly attractive to schools.

### **7.3 Communication policy**

As HEPCA has a limited budget for marketing and a few employees in the department, the use of communication tools should be economical. Some marketing tools like flyers and roll up banners were already planned. The table below will show new marketing tools that HEPCA could use to improve bookings for the different priority markets.

### 7.3.1 New marketing tools

Table 20 : Description of new marketing tools

Tools	Category	Target group	Description
<b>Newsletter</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Egyptians, foreigners</b>	<p>From August 2013, a newsletter could be sent out every two months directly from the website of Samadai. The first step would be to set up a layout that will be reused the next time. There could be interviews with visitors with a description of their experiences at the site and stories about particular dolphins. The biologist M. Fumagalli is writing her thesis about Samadai so it could be interesting to add some scientific information coming from her.</p> <p>The newsletter will be sent to about 2'500 subscribers.</p>
<b>Stickers</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Foreigners</b>	<p>A3 stickers could be distributed to be adhered on the diving boats from the diving centers that are certified. There would be the logo of Samadai with its slogan, a short description of the site and the website address. The benefit of this instrument is that guests going to other snorkeling and diving sites would automatically see the advertisement. It would also direct more traffic to the website. The disadvantage is that stickers are quite expensive.</p>
<b>Posters</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Egyptians, foreigners</b>	<p>From January 2014, A2 posters could be displayed on the main road in the region of Marsa Alam (the road along the coast). They will be visible for tourists at the beginning of their stay when they are brought from the airport to their hotels. Egyptians travelling to Marsa Alam by bus or car would also see them. The logo of Samadai should be on the</p>

			poster with a slogan for example to the likes of, "Samadai, a unique opportunity to meet dolphins in the wild". In addition to the slogan it would also be beneficial to display information on how to book an excursion. A possible addition could be, "Book your excursion at your local diving center". Of course, the website address should also be displayed.
<b>Contest</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Families</b>	To increase sales for families, every month the marketing team of HEPCA could organize a drawing contest for children in the hotels. Before the drawing contest there could be a short presentation about Samadai and the dolphins and then children would have to draw a dolphin in Samadai. The most accurate drawing would win. The family of the child would get 20% discount on their excursion. The discount would be shared by HEPCA and the diving center. The difficulty with this event is to get permission from the hotels to organize the event.
<b>Article in Egyptian press</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Egyptians</b>	HEPCA should contact local Egyptian newspapers to publish articles about Samadai. First, they should establish a list of newspapers that could be interested. Then they should contact them first by phone call to ask about prices. The idea would be to publish every month one article in black and white in the format 1/16.
<b>Article in diving magazines</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Divers</b>	The same as mentioned above for the Egyptian Press should also be applied to diving magazines in Europe as well. However, one article in color per diving magazine would be enough.
<b>Videos for airlines</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Foreigners</b>	HEPCA is planning to make a one minute promotional video that will be displayed on a German and Italian airline for one year.

<b>Exhibition stand at Al-Ganoob Festival in Marsa Alam</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Egyptian youth</b>	HEPCA could participate at Al-Ganoob festival (South festival) that takes place every year in April in Marsa Alam. On site, it is possible for the participants to book an excursion to Samadai. However, it would be useful also to have a stand with flyers and roll up banners and employees of HEPCA to give more specific information. This would increase considerably the visibility of Samadai among the Egyptian youth.
<b>Posters &amp; flyers</b>	<b>Advertisement</b>	<b>Private and international schools</b>	To target schools, A2 posters and flyers should be distributed in these establishments. In addition, the school management should be contacted individually in order to explain properly the advantages (fun and educational) of the Samadai excursion. The flyers should be more educational than promotional. There should also be information about safety in it.

Source: Author's data

### 7.3.2 Website improvement

Table 21 : Ideas for improving the Samadai website

<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Booking section</b>	In the booking section of the website, there is a list of the certified diving centers. By clicking on each diving center, the name of the certified guide appears and a picture of each guide is displayed. HEPCA built up this section to give the certified diving centers more visibility. However, it would be more useful for them if there would be a link to their website. Guests that would be interested in booking an excursion would not have to search again on Google. This can also explain why so many visitors leave the website between zero and 10 seconds.

<p><b>Sponsor a dolphin section</b></p>	<p>The section “Sponsor a dolphin” should be updated as soon as possible. This project was established in order to continue to get revenues for Samadai in case the tourism industry in Egypt collapses.</p>
<p><b>About HEPCA section</b></p>	<p>In this section there is a description of HEPCA and what the NGO did in the past 20 years. However, it is not clearly indicated that HEPCA is the responsible entity for Samadai. There should be a paragraph about it on the beginning of the page in order to allow visitors to understand the situation.</p>
<p><b>Languages</b></p>	<p>For the moment, the website is available only in English. To target Egyptians and foreigners it would be important to translate it to Arabic, Italian and German.</p>
<p><b>Newsletter</b></p>	<p>As already explained before, it would be important to begin to send a newsletter. This would direct more traffic to the website.</p>
<p><b>Interactivity</b></p>	<p>There is a guestbook and a forum for the website. However, no one is using these instruments. The only comments are from HEPCA’s employees when the website was built up. After the sending out of the newsletter, when there will be a lot of traffic on the website, articles should be uploaded with different questions for the virtual visitors. This would allow them to give their opinion. There could be, for example, articles about the differences in swimming with captive dolphins in a dolphinarium and with wild dolphins in the sea.</p>
<p><b>Jobs section</b></p>	<p>As HEPCA is going to hire new staff for the patrolling team, there should be a section for job offers.</p>
<p><b>Links</b></p>	<p>To direct more traffic to the website, HEPCA could ask other NGOs to publish its link on their website and in exchange HEPCA will publish their links.</p>

Source: Author’s data

### 7.3.3 Communication plan

Table 22 : Communication plan for Samadai

			2013						2014						
Instruments	Proceeding	Costs euros	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.
<b>Newsletter</b>	Info. collection	-													
	Redaction	-													
	Sending	-													
<b>Stickers</b>	Design	-													
	Impression & Distribution	1000													
<b>Posters for roads</b>	Design	-													
	Impression	600													
	Distribution	-													
<b>Contest</b>	Contact with hotels	-													
	Events	-													

<b>Egyptian press</b>	Egypt Independent	250													
	Daily News	250													
	Al-Ahram	250													
<b>Diving mag.</b>	Tauchen	500													
	Sport Diver	500													
	Subacqueo	500													
<b>Airline Video</b>	Realization	-													
	Air Berlin	15'000													
	Air Italy	15'000													
<b>Al-Ganoob Fest.</b>	Attendance	200													
<b>Poster &amp; Flyers Schools</b>	Design	-													
	Impression	2000													
	Distribution	-													

Source: Author's data

### 7.3.4 Communication budget

The amount available for 2013 is the 30 percent of revenues generated in Samadai in 2012. This amount is 80'101 euros. Since HEPCA invests in Samadai only through the revenues generated by Samadai, the communication budget is fixed.

Table 23 : Samadai spending since January 2013

Already spent		Expenses according to communication plan	
Website	250 euros	Stickers for boats	1'000 euros
Flyers	325 euros	Posters	600 euros
Roll up banners	1'234 euros	Articles in Egyptian press	750 euros
Booklet "A guide to Samadai"	920 euros	Articles in diving magazines	1'500 euros
Plastic slides for guides	1'299 euros	Airline videos	30'000 euros
Certification cards	2'165 euros	Al-Ganoob festival	200 euros
-	-	Posters and flyers for schools	2'000 euros
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6'193 euros</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>36'050 euros</b>

Source: Author's data

Already 6'193 euros were spent at the beginning of the year 2013. By the end of July 2014, other 36'050 euros will be spent on communication tools. This means that there are still 37'858 euros available. However, some of this money will also be used for salaries, moorings and fuel for the patrolling boat.

HEPCA receives the money for Samadai every six months. The money from January 2013 through July 2013 will be available soon and could be used for more communication instruments if needed.



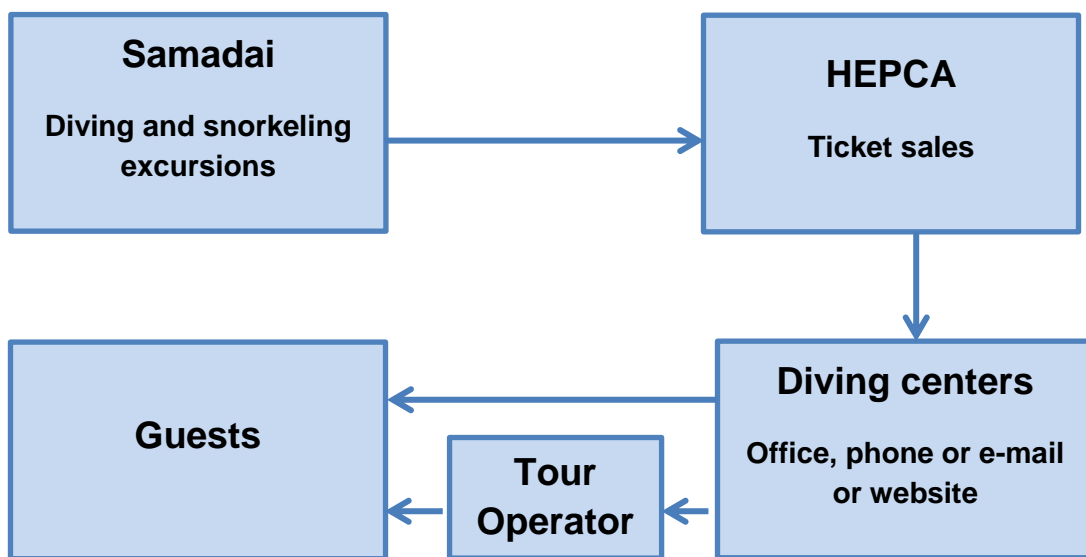
### 7.3.5 Sales instruments

As already explained before, HEPCA is not responsible for sales. Most of the sales are done directly at the diving centers or through tour operators. For the diving centers, it is also possible to book through a phone call, the website or an e-mail.

### 7.4 Distribution

Samadai is distributed through the following channels:

Figure 25 : Distribution channels for Samadai



Source: Author's data

As it is possible to see on the figure above, Samadai is distributed in an indirect way. Primarily, HEPCA sells the entry ticket to the diving centers. Then, there are two ways to continue. The diving centers sell the excursions to Samadai either directly to guests (directly at the office, by phone call, e-mail or through the booking form on their website) or through tour operators.

## 8. New products

Table 24 : Development of new products

Product	Description	Target group
<b>Research center in Port Ghalib</b>	HEPCA is currently building a research center in Port Ghalib. Beside scientific researches, there will also be a visitor and educational support center. Visitors will have the possibility to learn more about the Red Sea through various exhibition rooms and activities. Encounters with marine biologists will provide them with information about the importance of conservation. No entry ticket will be charged. (HEPCA, 2013d)	Families, children, students
<b>Bio Boat</b>	The Bio Boat is a mobile classroom that will be deployed in Samadai and will offer mainly students and children in Marsa Alam the opportunity to discover aspects of conservation in a practical setting. It will also serve as a platform to observe the dolphins and will have a green roof to observe birds. The construction of the boat is environmentally friendly since energy will be supplied by a wind turbine and solar panels. (HEPCA, 2013a)	Children, students
<b>Hydrophone</b>	A hydrophone will be installed at Samadai. The diving centers and the tourists will be able to hear the dolphins in Samadai on a radio channel from their boats.	Tourists and diving centers
<b>Underwater camera</b>	An underwater camera will be placed in the lagoon in zone A. From the Samadai website, it will be possible to observe the dolphins live.	Tourists and diving centers

## 9. Control measures

Table 25 : Description of control measures

Type	Objectives	Control measures
<b>Sales</b>	Increase ticket sales for snorkeling activities by 30% by June 2014.	In December 2013, control the sales. If the bookings don't increase, boost promotion.
	Increase ticket sales for diving activities by 20% by June 2014.	In December 2013, control the sales. If the bookings don't increase, boost promotion.
	Increase ticket sales at Egyptian schools by 15% by September 2014.	In February 2014, control sales. If the bookings don't increase boost sales focusing on combined attractions with the research center and the Bio Boat.
<b>Satisfaction</b>	Ensure that 80% of customers are satisfied at the end of the year.	Distribute diving centers questionnaires to measure guest satisfaction and evaluate them at the end of the year.
	Ensure that 90% of the diving centers are satisfied with the management of Samadai at the end of the year.	Distribute diving centers questionnaires to evaluate their satisfaction.
<b>Customer loyalty</b>	Have 15% of repeat guests at the end of year 2014.	Improve the booking forms in order to get the guest's name.
<b>Reputation</b>	Double the number of visitors on the Samadai website by the end of the year 2014.	Check statistics on Google analytics.

Source: Author's data

## **Conclusion**

The main results for the marketing plan about the Samadai Dolphin House are the following:

Most of the visitors going on an excursion to Samadai are foreigners, from Italian and German nationalities. However, as the geographic origins of the visitors of the website show, there is also a big interest coming from the domestic market. This one is not yet sufficiently exploited.

Since the competitors are also the service providers, the success of Samadai depends strongly on a good collaboration between HEPCA and the diving centers. Concerning the activities, snorkeling excursions outnumber diving excursions because they are adapted to everyone. Although Samadai is more expensive than other similar excursions, it is one of the most visited excursions from the diving centers because quality information is provided. Until now, few marketing tools have been used by HEPCA as the primary goal was to educate first the dive and snorkeling guides.

This is why the proposed communication strategy focuses on tools that will improve the visibility of Samadai among the priority markets that are the families, the couples and the private and international Egyptian schools. However, the marketing budget for the year 2013 is limited due to the few revenues generated by Samadai in the previous year.

Currently, the Egyptian parliament is considering a new law that would allow the government to control the activities and funding of NGO's in Egypt. Foreign funding shall be prohibited. Recently five foreign NGO's closed and 43 employees were condemned to prison sentences because of illegal financing. (Amnesty International, 2013) If the law is accepted, HEPCA could also be limited in its actions.

The Samadai Dolphin House shows that protection of natural resources and tourism goes hand in hand. The reef cannot be conserved without the revenues generated through tourism. This is why the political situation in Egypt will be decisive for the future of Samadai.

### **Limitation of the thesis**

As HEPCA took over the management of the Samadai Dolphin House Reef at the beginning of the year 2013, there was only very limited data available to me to use in my thesis. This also prevents me from making comparisons with the activities from the previous few years which would have been very beneficial for the report.

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## **Appendix I: Touristic attraction in the region of Marsa Alam**

### **Sataya Dolphin Reef**

As its name suggests Sataya Dolphin Reef is a reef South East of Marsa Alam where it is possible to snorkel and dive with dolphins. (Egypt Travel, 2013e)

### **Marsa Abu-Dabbab**

Marsa Abu-Dabbab is also a spot for divers and snorkelers. The reef is known as a place where it is possible to see turtles, dugongs and dolphins. (Egypt Travel, 2013a)

### **Elphinstone Reef**

Elphinstone is a reef located 20 kilometers from the the coast of Marsa Alam and is accessible by boat. Its particularities are:

- walls that reach 100 meters of depth
- encounters with white tip sharks, grey reef sharks and hammerheads sharks
- drift diving (Egypt Travel, 2013h)

### **Samadai Reef**

Samadai, also called Dolphin House is a horseshoe shaped reef and serves as a resting place for around 200 spinner dolphins. It is accessible by boat from Marsa Alam and offers diving and snorkeling opportunities. This has been a dolphin sanctuary, protected by the government, since 2004. (Egypt Travel, 2013f)

### **St John's Reef**

St John's is a group of small reefs with a wide diversity of marine flora and fauna. It has for example giant gorgonians and black corals. As for Elphinstone, there is the possibility to see hammerhead and grey reef sharks. This dive site is mainly frequented by liveabords. (Egypt Travel, 2013g)

### **Hamada Shipwreck**

This shipwreck is located south of Marsa Alam and can be accessed by boat. It sank in the year 1993 because of a fire and is situated at a depth of 14 meters. The ship was transporting plastic granules and all of its rooms can be visited. As it lies in shallow waters, it is an attraction for divers and snorkelers. (Egypt Travel, 2013c)



## **Shaab Marsa Alam**

Shaab Marsa Alam, also called Allah's Garden is a reef that can be reached in 20 minutes from the city of Marsa Alam. The reef has a safari boat wreck that can be visited from inside. It is also possible to see there from time to time spinner dolphins and whitetip reef sharks. (Blue Submarine, n.d.)

## **Quad-biking, horse or camel riding and jeep excursions**

Excursions to the desert with different transportations are available. The excursions can include visits to goldmines, Bedouin tribes, oases, mines and rock drawings from the prehistoric era . (Egypt Travel, 2013b)

## **The International Convention Center**

The convention center is located on the marina in the resort of Port Ghalib. It can host up to 2000 participants and provides companies with Meetings Incentives Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) services. The conference rooms cover a surface of 1950 square meters including VIP lounges. (Egypt Travel, 2013i)

## **The Elba Protected Area**

The Elba National Park is located along the Red Sea coast in the deep south of Egypt and the Sudanese Government Administration Area. It has the widest range of fauna and flora in the whole of Egypt. The mountain Gebel Elba in the park reaches 1437 meters and creates a mist oasis by catching the clouds (full of condensation) coming from the Red Sea. (Desert of Egypt, n.d.)

## **Wadi el-Gemal Protected Area**

Wadi el-Gemal or Valley of the Camels in English is a national park located 50 kilometers south of Marsa Alam. The park extends over 60 kilometers along the coast and also includes islands. It is possible to visit the park on foot, by riding camels or by jeep. The following fauna and flora can be seen: dugongs, turtles, various species of birds, mangroves and reptiles. (United States Agency for International Development, n.d.)

## Appendix II: Accommodation in the region of Marsa Alam

Table 26 : List of accommodation in the region of Marsa Alam

Hotel & Resort				
Name	Number of stars	Number of rooms	Restaurant	Price for one night in a double room
Iberhotel Coraya beach Resort	*****	364	Yes	105 CHF
Sol y Mar Solaya	*****	209	Yes	118 CHF
Iberhotel Lamaya resort	*****	389	Yes	133 CHF
Concorde Moreen Beach Resort & Spa	*****		Yes	60 CHF
Gorgonia Beach	*****	352	Yes	190 CHF
Crowne Plaza Sahara Sands Port Ghalib	*****	345	Yes	70 CHF
Crowne Plaza Sahara Oasis Port Ghalib	*****	292	Yes	70 CHF
InterContinental the Palace Port Ghalib	*****	308	Yes	90 CHF
The Three Corner Fayrouz Plaza Resort	*****	300	Yes	180 CHF
Kahramana Beach Resort	*****	300	Yes	160 CHF
Sentido Oriental Dream Resort	*****	Not indicated	Yes	140 CHF
Paradise Resort	*****	Not indicated	Yes	105 CHF
Oriental Bay	*****	Not indicated	Yes	95 CHF
Royal Brayka Bay Beach Resort	*****	Not indicated	Yes	142 CHF
Calimera Habiba Beach	*****	Not indicated	Yes	46 CHF
Brayka Bay Reef Resort	*****	Not indicated	Yes	124 CHF
Fantazia Resort	*****	Not indicated	Yes	189 CHF
Floriana Dream Lagoon	*****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Shams Alam Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	83 CHF
El Malikia Swiss Inn resort Abu Dabbab	****	358	Yes	-
Amaraya club	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Iberhotel Samaya Resort	****	143	Yes	-
Nada Marsa Alam Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	71 CHF
Badawia Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Ann Nakary Bay Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	113 CHF

Dima Beach Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Beach Albatros Resort Hotel	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Cupidon Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Tulip Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	94 CHF
Brayka Bay Reef Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	124 CHF
Cataract Marsa Alam	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Hilton Marsa Alam Nubian Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	119 CHF
Sol y Mar Dar El Medina	****	140	Yes	-
Best Western Solitaire Resort	****	151	Yes	-
The Oasis Hotel	****	49	Yes	188 CHF
Zen Moon	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Eden Village Gemma beach Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	377 CHF
Utopia Beach Club	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Moonrise Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Dreams Beach	****	Not indicated	Yes	93 CHF
Floriana Emerald Lagoon	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Resta Reef Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	66 CHF
Abo Nawas Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	74 CHF
Janna Beach	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Dima Beach	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Elphinstone Resort	***	272	Yes	-
The Three Corner Sea beach Resort	***	228	Yes	137 CHF
Blue Reef Red Sea Resort	***	Not indicated	Yes	-
Flora Resort	***	Not indicated	Yes	-
Samadai Hotel	***	Not indicated	Yes	-
Carnelia Beach Resort	***	Not indicated	Yes	-
Hotel Equinox el-Nabaa	Not indicated	Not indicated	Yes	-
Resta Grand Resort	Not indicated	Not indicated	Yes	66 CHF
Blue Lagoon	Not indicated	Not indicated	Yes	-
Happy Life Resort	****	Not indicated	Yes	-
Sunrise Oriental Dream	Not indicated	Not indicated	Yes	-
<b>Lodges</b>				
Marina Lodge Port Ghalib	****	201	Yes	73 CHF
Ecolodge Shagra	***	Not indicated	Yes	60 CHF

Village				
Ecolodge Nakari Village	***	Not indicated	Yes	60 CHF
Guesthouse Rihana	*	3	No	24 CHF
Riff Villa Samak	*	Not indicated	Yes	-
Emy Camp	Not indicated	Not indicated	Yes	-
Awlad Baraka	Not indicated	Not indicated	Yes	-

Source: Adapted from Easybook (n.d.) ; Le guide du routard (2009, pp. 436-438) ; Hotelium (2009)

## Appendix III: Diving centers in the region of Marsa Alam

Table 27 : List of diving centers in the region of Marsa Alam

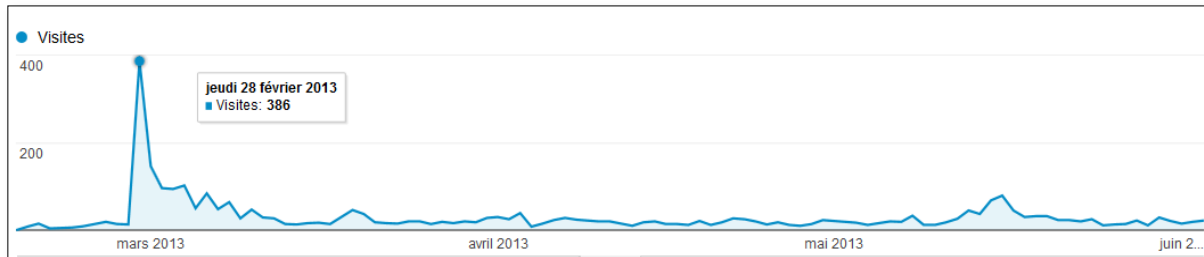
Diving Centers	
1. 3 Will	<a href="http://www.3will.eu">http://www.3will.eu</a>
2. Awlad Baraka	<a href="http://www.aquariusredsea.com">http://www.aquariusredsea.com</a>
3. Beach Safari	<a href="http://www.beachsafari.de">http://www.beachsafari.de</a>
4. Blue Heaven Holidays	<a href="http://www.blueheavenholidays.com/">http://www.blueheavenholidays.com/</a>
5. Coraya Divers Fantazia Resort	<a href="http://www.coraya-divers.com">http://www.coraya-divers.com</a>
6. Coraya Divers Port Ghalib	<a href="http://www.coraya-divers.com">http://www.coraya-divers.com</a>
7. Deep South Diving	<a href="http://www.deep-south-diving.com/">http://www.deep-south-diving.com/</a>
8. Diving Ocean New project	<a href="http://www.divingocean.com/">http://www.divingocean.com/</a>
9. Extra Divers Brayka Bay	<a href="http://www.extradivers-worldwide.com">http://www.extradivers-worldwide.com</a>
10. Extra Divers Fayrouz	<a href="http://www.extradivers-worldwide.com">http://www.extradivers-worldwide.com</a>
11. Grand Blue	<a href="http://www.grandblue.net/">http://www.grandblue.net/</a>
12. Oasis Dive Club	<a href="http://www.wernerlau.com">http://www.wernerlau.com</a>
13. Ocean Pro Red Sea	<a href="http://www.barakuda-diving.com">http://www.barakuda-diving.com</a>
14. Orca Dive Club	<a href="http://www.orca-diveclub-tulip.com/">http://www.orca-diveclub-tulip.com/</a>
15. Red Sea Diving Safari	<a href="http://www.redsea-divingsafari.com">http://www.redsea-divingsafari.com</a>
16. Riff Villa Samak	<a href="http://www.riff-villa.ch/">http://www.riff-villa.ch/</a>
17. Sea World	<a href="http://www.seaworld-diving.it/">http://www.seaworld-diving.it/</a>
18. Spring Diving	<a href="http://www.sprindiving.it">http://www.sprindiving.it</a>
19. TGI Diving	<a href="http://www.tgidiving.com">http://www.tgidiving.com</a>
20. Vera Sub	none
21. Viva Sub	<a href="http://www.vivasub.com">http://www.vivasub.com</a>
22. Wadi Gimal (Shams Alam)	<a href="http://www.shamshotels.com">http://www.shamshotels.com</a>
23. Viaggio Nel Blu	<a href="http://www.viaggionelblu.com/">http://www.viaggionelblu.com/</a>
24. Blue Submarine	<a href="http://www.bluesubmarine.it/en/">http://www.bluesubmarine.it/en/</a>
25. Emperor Divers	<a href="http://www.emperordivers.com/marsa-alam-diving.php">http://www.emperordivers.com/marsa-alam-diving.php</a>
26. Colona Divers	<a href="http://www.colona.com/marsa.lasso">http://www.colona.com/marsa.lasso</a>
27. Duck's Superior	none
28. Lagona Divers	<a href="http://www.lagona-divers.com/">http://www.lagona-divers.com/</a>
29. Avalon	<a href="http://www.avalondivers.com/">http://www.avalondivers.com/</a>
30. Sea Secret	none
31. Waterworld / Oriental Divers	none
Aqua Centers	
1. Flash Aqua Center	none
2. Aqua Blue	none

Source: HEPCA internal document

## Appendix IV: Analysis of the Samadai Dolphin House website

### Visits

Figure 26 : Overview of visitors



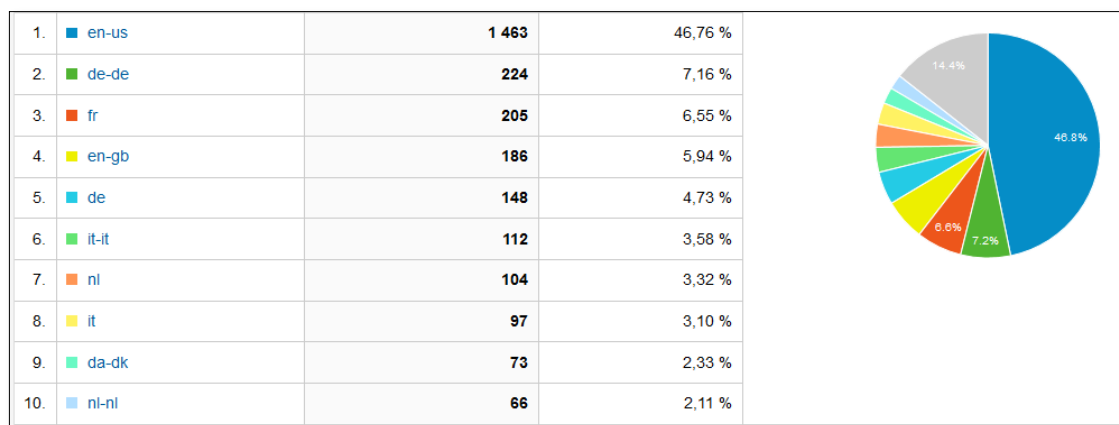
Source: Google Analytics (2013b)

The website was set up in mid-February 2013. The period of observation runs from the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2013 to the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2013 (about two and half months). During this period, there was a total of 3'129 visits with 2'149 unique visits. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, there is a peak with 386 visits. It corresponds to the sending out of HEPCA's monthly newsletter. On this newsletter, one article talks about Samadai (A New Vision for Samadai) and its new website. Visits are spread uniformly throughout the week. There are no differences between weekdays and week-ends.

The most visited pages are the home page, the archives for the news and the booking page for the dive operators.

### Spoken language

Figure 27 : Native languages of people visiting the Samadai website



Source: Google Analytics (2013c)

45% of the visitors are American English speakers. This is not surprising as the website is entirely in English. It is followed by the German speakers with 7%, French speakers with 6.6% and British English speakers with 5.9%.

## Interest and interaction

Figure 28 : Length of the visit

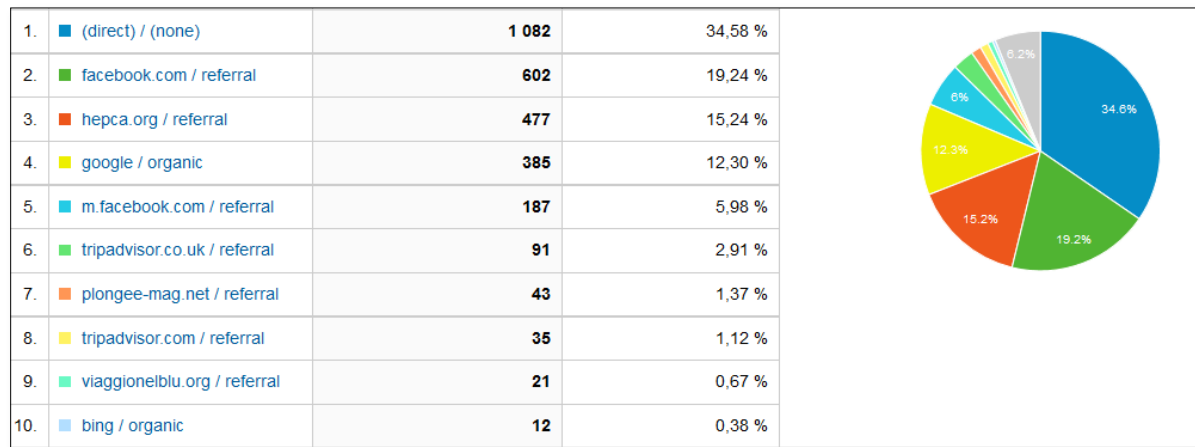
Durée de la visite	Visites	Pages vues
0-10 secondes	1 633	1 724
11-30 secondes	148	340
31-60 secondes	200	585
61-180 secondes	432	1 964
181-600 secondes	398	3 086
601-1800 secondes	227	2 187
1801+ secondes	91	3 264

Source: Google Analytics (2013d)

Most of the visitors stay on the website between zero and 10 seconds. They probably didn't find the information they were searching for. It would be beneficial to add documents to download as well as more links to related website. This would perhaps make them stay longer.

## Origins of traffic

Figure 29 : Origins of traffic



Source: Google Analytics (2013e)

35% of the visits are direct. This means that the visitors already know the Uniform Resource Locator (URL). 19% are coming from from the Samadai Facebook page and 15% from HEPCA's website. Others found it through Google, TripAdvisor, diving magazines and diving center websites like the one from Viaggio Nel Blu.

Table 28 : Website evaluation

<b>WEBSITE REVIEW CHECKLIST</b>				
<p>This checklist invites you to consider a website under eight different sets of criteria. Not all these criteria may be relevant to your website and some of the issues mentioned within the criteria groups may also not be directly applicable to your particular website.</p>				
<p>Score your Website issue out of 10 where 0 is not available at all, 1 is extremely poorly represented and 10 is extremely well represented. The issues with an asterisk are generally considered to be detrimental to most websites and thus if they are applicable to the sites you are reviewing you might decide to allocate a negative score where -1 acknowledges that the feature is a minor distraction/irritant and -10 indicates a major distraction/irritant.</p>				
	<b>Your site</b>			
<b>1. FIRST IMPRESSIONS</b>				
URL	<b>10</b>			
Download time - size of home page	<b>9</b>			
Look and feel - readability	<b>9</b>			
Need to download software *				
Home page on one screen (above the fold)	<b>7</b>			
Unique Selling Point (USP) or Value Proposition	<b>7</b>			
Ability to take action (Key action point – KAP)	<b>7</b>			
Feeling of wanting more - depth of site	<b>6</b>			
Contact details	<b>5</b>			
Credential validation - certifications, associations etc.	<b>7</b>			
Statement from management	<b>2</b>			
Use of attractors	<b>5</b>			
Are you made to register to get into site? *				
Total score for section	<b>74</b>			



<b>2. NAVIGATION</b>				
Ease of use	<b>8</b>			
Site map	<b>7</b>			
Return to Home Page from any page	<b>10</b>			
Internal search engine	<b>10</b>			
Internal links	<b>4</b>			
Broken links	<b>9</b>			
Text as well as graphic links (ALT tags)	<b>8</b>			
Navigational links visible	<b>10</b>			
Opens multiple windows	<b>6</b>			
Total score for section	<b>72</b>			
<b>3. CONTENT</b>				
Useful information	<b>8</b>			
Degree of substantiated information	<b>8</b>			
Level of interaction	<b>5</b>			
Use of valuable graphics	<b>8</b>			
Use of valuable animation	<b>4</b>			
Use of valuable sound				
Reviews, testimonials and certifications	<b>4</b>			
Content in digestible quantity	<b>7</b>			
Up-to-dateness	<b>9</b>			
Available in multiple languages				
Accessibility for the disabled				
Terms and conditions				
FAQ's	<b>9</b>			
Availability of follow up discussion	<b>2</b>			
Total score for section	<b>64</b>			
<b>4. ATTRACTORS</b>				
Competitions	<b>5</b>			
Special offers				

Freebies	10			
Breaking news	8			
Ease of access by External links	5			
Newsletter	4			
Other (Specify)	8	TripAdvisor Facebook Youtube		
Total score for section	40			
<b>5. FINDABILITY</b>				
Intuitive URL	4			
Designed for search engine performance	5			
Intuitive keywords	7			
Use of metatags	7			
Use of frames	5			
Advertising	2			
On-line advertising	2			
Off-line advertising	2			
On-line recommend a friend	2			
Partner and affiliate sites	2			
Total score for section	38			
<b>6. MAKING CONTACT</b>				
Email and other details visible	9			
Response time to enquiries	8			
Automatic email response				
Personal email response	8			
Use of online forms	9			
Telephone contact number provided	10			
Telephone call back offered				

Total score for section	<b>44</b>			
<b>7. BROWSER COMPATIBILITY</b>				
Internet Explorer (1-5)	<b>10</b>			
Netscape Navigator (1-4)				
Mac	<b>10</b>			
Resizeability	<b>8</b>			
Total score for section	<b>28</b>			
<b>8. KNOWLEDGE OF USERS</b>				
Availability of utilisation statistics	<b>7</b>			
Adaptive website	<b>5</b>			
Offers based on buying history				
Total score for section	<b>12</b>			
<b>9. USER SATISFACTION</b>				
Robustness/reliability of the site	<b>9</b>			
Clicks to completion	<b>8</b>			
Acknowledge order/request	<b>4</b>			
Order/request tracking online	<b>4</b>			
Recognising a pre-inclusion	<b>2</b>			
Total score for section	<b>27</b>			
<b>10. OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION</b>				
Supplier terms and conditions				
List of products bought by your company				
Contact details for person in charge of suppliers				
List of career opportunities				
Contact details for HR department				
Financial results				
Up-to-date financial news				
The company stock price performance				

History of the company	5			
Management and geographical structure of company				
Mission statement	7			
Up-to-date press coverage				
Total score for section	12			
<b>OVERALL TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>406</b>			

Source: Adapted from Management Centre International Limited [MCIL] (n.d.)

The total amount of points possible is 840. The Samadai website received a score of 411. The difficulty with this and many other evaluation forms for websites is that they are designed for commercial websites. The Samadai website is for educational use and so some of the criteria in the evaluation form above is not relevant to this sort of website. These criteria received zero points.

In general, it is possible to say that Samadai website is well structured with clear information and convenient for navigation. However, the biggest critique could be that the information about dolphins is specific and not always easy to understand. It should also be noted that the section about the dolphin sponsoring is not ready.

### Appendix V: Pictures from Samadai

Figure 30 : Spinner dolphins at Samadai



Source: HEPCA internal document


Figure 31: Tourist boat at the Samadai reef



Source: Dolphin House (2013b)

## **Author's declaration**

I hereby declare that I have carried out this final research project on my own without any help other than the references listed in the list of references and that I have only used the sources mentioned. I will not provide a copy of this paper to a third party without the permission of the department head and of my advisor, including the partner company with which I collaborated on this project, with the exception of those who provided me with information needed to write this paper and whose names follow: A.Ali, H. Shawky and A.Abdelmoneim.



Madeleine Pfäffli