ISCTE Business School
Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

BRAND REDEFINITION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR GRÂNDOLA

Miguel Jesus Rito Calado

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Supervisor:

Hélia Gonçalves Pereira, Assistant Professor, ISCTE - Lisbon University Institute

DMOGG - Marketing, Operations and General Management Department

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"The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page."
– St. Augustine

I. Abstract

I.I. In English

This project was elaborated with the intention to build a communication plan for Grândola, and its wide offer, in order to draw more tourists to the municipality. Grândola is located in South-west Portugal, being mostly known for an offer of Sun and Sea, with beaches that extend for 45 Km, but it also has rural tourism component, with green and calm landscapes, making it a close to nature destination. It also has the excitement of several events and a Casino.

By analyzing the market and the current communication strategy, some points needing improvement were found, not only regarding this operational marketing vertex , but also in what concerns brand identity. With this in mind, this project is a proposal for: the redefinition of the brand Grândola, with the creation of a new image allows its affirmation, in order to be better recognized in the market; a communication plan that follows the constructed identity, where multiple marketing communication tools are used, being all aligned.

This municipality has been able to grow in the tourist industry in the last few years, but still falls behind some other national offers that have more notoriety. However, it has the best performance in the region it is inserted, *Alentejo Litoral*. Knowing that, this project is based on the need to grow even more.

Keywords: Brand Management, Destination Branding, Place Marketing, Communication Strategy.

I.II. In Portuguese

Este projeto foi elaborado com a intenção de criar um plano de comunicação para Grândola e a sua larga oferta, de modo a atrair mais turistas ao município. Grândola está localizada no Sudoeste de Portugal, sendo principalmente conhecida pela sua oferta em Sol e Mar, com praias que se estendem por 45 Km, mas também por uma componente de turismo rural, com planícies calmas e verdes, sendo assim um destino próximo da natureza. Também tem ainda a diversão de diversos eventos e um Casino.

Ao analisar o mercado e a atual estratégia de comunicação, foram descobertos alguns pontos que necessitam de melhoria, não apenas neste vértice do marketing operacional, mas também no que diz respeito à identidade da marca. Com isto em mente, este projeto apresenta uma proposta para: a redefinição da marca de Grândola, com a criação de uma nova imagem que permita a sua afirmação, de modo a ser mais facilmente reconhecida no mercado; um plano de comunicação que segue a identidade construída, onde múltiplas ferramentas de marketing são utilizadas de forma alinhada.

Este município tem conseguido crescer no sector do turismo nos últimos anos, mas continua atrás de outras ofertas nacionais que têm maior notoriedade. Contudo, tem o melhor desempenho da região do Litoral Alentejano. Sabendo isto, este projeto é baseado na necessidade de continuar a crescer.

Palavras-Chave: Gestão de Marca, *Destination Branding*, Marketing de Locais e Estratégia de Comunicação.

II. Acknowledgments

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III. Index

1.

1. Executive Summary

Grândola is a small municipality with big characteristics and touristic offer, located in *Alentejo Litoral,* a coastal region that is part of *Alentejo,* in southern Portugal. It has been growing in the last few years, having had close to 60 thousand guests in 2011, 10 thousand more than in 2010 and the total of nights spent also grew by 26%. Yet, this growth has been slowing down since 2009. It is also important to mention that it is ahead of the other municipalities of Alentejo Litoral in what concerns income from accommodation, showing a result that is 40% of this region. These numbers only comprehend staying visitors, being that it should be added the number of visitors attending events and other determined experiences, that also get to see and feel Grândola, which also contribute to the municipality's economy. As data showed, 90% of the current demand for Grândola is Portuguese. With this information, this proposal has this target as its main focus. For the foreign market, communication should be made through Turismo do Alentejo, which has more notoriety oversees. When and if these external markets start to better know this offer, Grândola can try to communicate more directly.

The whole tourism industry is on the rise, growing currently and with expectations to grow (at least) for the next 30 years. In the end of 2012, the number of tourist travelling around the globe hit the 1 billion mark and it is expected that (if predictions stay true) in the decade of 2030 it will be almost 2 billion. This industry is of great value to the economy and, if destinations are able to keep up with the demand, they will be able to accompany this promising growth. With this need to adapt and grow, this project has the intent to develop a communication plan proposition for the destination of Grândola.

This project has consideration for the remarks made by Dr. Pedro Beato from the Municipal Council of Grândola and Mr. Carlos Silva from Costa Alentejana, thus trying to also follow other needs and good strategic options that were observed already by these entities. Also, market players were listened to (Barradas da Serra, Hotel D. Jorge Lencastre and Tróia Design Hotel) to better understand the offer and how it can be aggregated in a neat package.

With the internal analysis of this destination and brand, there were made conclusions that pointed to a re-design and redefinition of the brand identity, has the existing had disperse values and attributes, and a diffuse way to present them, existing a point in time where the brand had two distinct images. Hence, this project is more than a communication proposal, having also a proposition of a new brand, with a new image that is more direct in translating what the offer is and with a set of brand elements that come together to form a consistent brand, "*Grândola, Um Paraíso no Alentejo*".

The resulting communication plan follows the new brand identity (assuming that its presentation was prior to the beginning of the plan) and is a multi-means plan, ranging from the traditional brochures and transitioning to digital communication with the usage of a website and social media marketing platforms such as Facebook and YouTube. The investment in the short to medium term is of € 51.340, incrementing to € 83.340 in the long term (value influenced mainly due to the investment in the new website. Content like facebook posts, photography and short videos should be made in-house in order to not increase exponentially the value of the investment.

It is important to foment the destination of Grândola, unifying the brand strategy and the communication (aligned with the offer). It is important to start a more active plan like the presented to strive in this market when its growing, and to set an example for this region, being Grândola the main player of Alentejo Litoral and in the pole position of Alentejo.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

As regions, cities and municipalities are recurring to techniques to get themselves on the map, a set of terms have risen, such as “Place Branding”, “Place Marketing”, “City Branding”, “City Marketing” and “Destination Branding”. These play a major role in the effectiveness and cohesiveness of a communication and are, therefore, important to understand.

2.2. Place Marketing

Place Marketing (or Place Promotion) is a notion that exists since colonial times, when, without the notion of what marketing were, the governments who had “acquired” new territories would persuade people in order to move to those (Avraham, 2004), but its popularity in literature came in the 1980s. Defining the concept, Place Marketing is the “re-evaluation and re-presentation of place to create and market a new image for localities to enhance their competitive position in attracting or retaining resources” (Short, *et al*., 2004: 318 in Avrham, 2004: 472), which means that it portrays the efforts taken in order to set the place in the map and to draw attention to it. Another definition by the American Marketing Association (AMA, n.d.) is that it is a field that is used to “influence audiences to behave in some positive manner with respect to the products or services associated with a specific place” which conveys a meaning that it is not only the place, but everything that is associated with it. This is also indicative that place marketing is relatively close to “regular” products marketing, in a conceptual way.

Promoting and Marketing places is something that actively started in the 1990s and has been contributed ever since to the competitiveness and economic development of those places (Kotler, 2002).

2.2.1. Tourism Marketing

As defined by the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 1995) in the ’91 WTO Ottawa Conference on Travel and Tourism Statistics, tourism comprehends “the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment

(…) for leisure, business and other purposes". So, tourism is more than traveling to a place, but all the things that you do during that are done during that journey (either if it is related to work or a vacation trip). If we are marketing the place in a touristic sense, there is a need to look up to Tourism Marketing, which is the need to attract visitors which translates in a creative and effective effort to transmit to travelers (and let them acknowledge) what is the existing offer (Kolb, 2006) go beyond what the destination is and means by showing all the possibilities that exist for the visitors to enjoy.

2.2.2. Place Branding

As stated by the European Institute for Brand Management (EURIB, n.d.), "(City) Branding refers to the application of branding techniques to geographical locations" which means that "regular" Branding is applied. In order to understand how this is applied, it is important to understand what a brand really is.

2.3. What is a Brand?

According to the AMA (n.d.) a brand is a "name, term design, symbol, or any feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers" which means that it is an identifier of what the product is (and from where it comes) and in what ways it is seen as different from the competition.

Seth Godin goes a little further in his definition of brand, as it is a "set of expectations, memories, stories and relations that, taken together, account for a consumer's decision to choose one product or service over another" (Godin, 2009) which is more complete in the sense that it is not only about the product but also the relation with it. In this sense, a brand is more than an identity, it is a full personality. Godin still adds that a brand only exists for a given consumer if he willing to pay a premium for it, if he makes a selection and if he is eager to spread the word on it.

In a Study made by de Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2003) the three most important aspects for successful (service) brand management are: Focused position, Brand Consistency and Values. Focused Position means that brands know what their position is and that they can clearly transmit with it. It is strongly linked with communication, in order to assure that said transmission is fully comprehended by the consumer. Brand Consistency is the glue the keeps all the elements coherent for asserting common perceptions for all the stakeholders. Staff is an important part of this subject in the matter that they are the first who need to understand the nature of the brand through the organization. Finally, Values are part of the personality and these will create trust and commitment between the stakeholders, being that the organization will portray the core values in its behavior (i.e. it is not enough to say what the values are, being needed to show that the organization is committed to them).

2.3.1. Destination Branding

Destination Branding is the application of branding to places and it is translated in "the totality of perceptions, thoughts and feelings that customers hold about a place", being that Destination Branding is "an organizing principle that involves orchestrating the messages and experiences associated with the place to ensure that they are distinctive, compelling, memorable, and rewarding as possible" (Baker, 2007: 26) meaning that it acts as a personality that should be well thought and consistent, that represents what we are known for, what makes it different (yet better) and the thoughts that are exposed to the remembrance of the place's name. In a short way, destination branding is a way of improved tourism marketing, as a whole identity is created around a place instead of randomly promoting it with inconsistent messages.

2.3.2. Place Brand Management

The place, as a product, is managed by a "complex organization of public and private sector stakeholders, making it difficult to present a consistent brand proposition" (Hankinson, 2004 a: 112), therefore it is more a process of coordination than management. With this in mind, managing a region or municipality like Grândola is coordinating the entire offer, that may be presented by several dispersed entities but, at an ultimate level, are part of a representative whole of the brand identity. The same author still defends that the coordination of the place is usually on the hand of local authorities, like the city council, being subjective to political control, or other related authorities (which in this case can be the *Tourism of Alentejo* and *Tourism of Portugal* entities). Also the budget may run low, meaning that the available capital for marketing, and following promotion, is indeed scarce, so everything needs an extra planning care.

There still lies a question: How different is working on a Place Brand from a regular product Brand? “We can think of the running of countries as being no different from the running of a large company and therefore apply brand thinking to countries” (Gilmore, 2002: 283) which makes it possible to use already known methodologies in the field of Branding and Brand management. This author refers to countries, but, as indicated in the next topic, Place Brands can exist for different types of places.

2.3.3. Geographical Application

Place Branding is a concept that can be applied to a palette of geographic designations. It is applicable to cities, regions, countries, and even small scale ones like shopping destinations and leisure parks (Hankinson, 2005) which means that Grândola can be branded as a Municipality, Village, and also the inner areas like the beaches, for example.

2.4. The importance of “selling” the Place

Knowing the importance of this industry it is easier to understand why this type of brand is so important. “Branding [a Destination] can make an effective contribution to the economic development of places” (Hankinson, 2004 b: 6) meaning that by branding a place it is easier to “sell” it and further foment its evolution. Given that, it is obvious that destinations are taking an active step in marketing instead of relying passively on their attributes.

2.4.1. Place as a Product

Places are marketing themselves actively (they can be countries, regions and cities, meaning that it can be made in different scales) and the strategies are to achieve a certain degree of consideration and recognition through their own characteristics (showing and improving on the offer) and/or by being associated with major events (being the case of European Capital of Culture or host of the Olympic Games, for example) (Hankinson, 2007). So, the two main strategies are to promote what we have and do, and refreshing the offer, and to “bring” events to the region that have, at least national, importance and that may be covered by the media. These two strategies are not mutually exclusive, as both can be procured.

There could be the problem that branding a place could be different from a regular product or company. In that sense (Leissen, 2001) considers that the image rather than the product itself determines the consideration of that brand in the consumer's choice process, being a result of a set of external influencers (media, political, historical, etc.) that can go beyond the control of marketers. This is why the management of this product is more a process of coordination (as also mentioned in the Place Brand Management topic – 2.3.2.). The same author observed that destinations are perceived differently by different segments. Also “strategic image management is the ongoing process of researching a place’s image amongst its audiences, segmenting and targeting its specific audiences” and that the positioning helps to “support its desired image” and should be used to communicate “those attractions to target groups” (Gertner & Kotler, 2004: 51). We can even add that it should also be matched with lifestyle variables, experiences and usage occasions (Balakrishnan, 2009). As it is seen, places are marketed using the same basic marketing tools as classical product.

2.4.2. Targeting the Consumer

In order to successfully “persuade” our customer we need to understand to whom we are marketing it. There are four main target markets for place marketers which are the Visitors, Residents and Workers, Business and industry, and Export markets (Gertner & Kotler, 2004). The first group comprehends Business visitors (who the main visit purpose is business related like meetings, conventions, congresses, etc.) and the Non-business visitors (who are the tourists and travelers that have leisure as a visit reason). The second group can be divided in Professionals, Workers (skilled and unskilled), Wealthy Individuals, Investors and Entrepreneurs. The third group mainly consists of Heavy and “Clean” Industry and Entrepreneurs. As a final target market, the Export Markets are other possible localities in the domestic markets and international markets.

By using segmentation instead of a broad approach (having multiple offers vs. having a single undifferentiated offer) the destination marketer can "target these segments and further enhance their image, so that the destination becomes favorable over other areas at the point these people make their travel decisions" (Leissen, 2001). From this, there is a conclusion, that branding a place is not so different from a day-to-day product, in the matter that a Segmentation, Target and Positioning analysis is needed in both cases, if we are to create a clear and delightful image of what we are "selling" and to, in fact, "sell" it.

2.5. Product (Place) Life Cycle

In the same way that some products dye out a little, the same happens in the tourism industry with destinations, becoming "fatally fatigued, having failed to maintain long-term marketing and advertising effort, or have been affected by external change" (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride, 2004: 68). The same author also defends that "no destination brand can ever remain static" as development and refreshment are needed, which would be one of the main concerns of the marketers as the brand is established in the market or else we are doomed to stagnation loss of brand power. If and when their image becomes fading away the strategies would pass by "repositioning, reinventing, or doing nothing and maintaining the status quo (and possibly the downward spiral)" because, not like consumer brands, it is not possible "sell the city or kill it off " (Baker, 2007: 50).

2.6. Communication Strategy

As this element of the Marketing-Mix is the main focus for this study there is also needed to understand the tools and underlying "rules" of the communication. It is important also to mention what Integrated Marketing Communication is, being the process of "planning, creation, integration, and implementation of diverse forms of marcom [marketing communication] (…) that are delivered over time to a brand's targeting customers and prospects" (Schimp, 2010: 10), meaning that we no longer talk to the customers in a single platform and that the story is told through different means, having each other its own level of importance. The integration of all the elements will then provide a more efficient result, considering that the message remains consistent through the different means, and that what is communicated is aligned with the overall strategy (thus accenting its positioning) (Argenti, Howell, & Beck, 2005).

In order to define the communication strategy there are some steps which should be taken into account to have a structured plan. Different authors point to an identical set of steps, having slight differences in the conceptualization of each steps (and sometimes in the occultation of others). A rough aggregation from different authors points to the following steps (Bennet & Strydom, 2001; Lindon, *et al.*, 2008):

1. **Understand Positioning/Opportunity:** how the organization stands on this field, what is being done and how, and who is/should be the clients (or what the current opportunity that is relevant to communicate is);
2. **Define/comprehend the global communication policy:** the guiding scheme of the image and the role of communication in the organization;
3. **Creation of communication objectives:** the goal(s) that should the new communication campaign needs to (realistically) attain to;
4. **Message definition:** characterization of what needs to be communicated, what is the tone of said communication (which should be aligned with the identity and tone of voice of the organization);
5. **Conception of the communication-mix:** the means that are used and how they are connected to transmit a coherent message;
6. **Budgeting:** define how much can be invested in the plan and understand if the investment worth making, i.e. will it help to generate profit? Given the current economy, cheaper (but still efficient) means ought to be pursued;
7. **Implementation**;
8. **Results Analysis/measurement:** verify the effectiveness and efficiency of the plan and learn about what works best to be used in future campaigns.

2.6.1. Communication Objectives

To understand and have an effective and efficient usage of the communication tools there is first the necessity of setting the objectives of the communication plan. These objectives need to be quantifiable, with an accurate deadline, precise, clear, attainable and measurable. These objectives will provide guidance for everybody allocated with the conception of the plan, giving decision criteria and, in a final step, evaluation of the communication results. There are three main types of objectives: Get Known, Create Likeness and Create Action, as seen in table 1 (Brochard, *et al*, 2010).

Table 1 Communication Objectives

Get Known	Create Likeness	Create Action
• Notoriety • Inform • Promote Experimentation • Spread the Product • Demonstrate • Stimulate Purchase • Positioning • Present to Audience	• Promote Loyalty • Blur Seasonality • Create Credibility • Promote the Image • Sell • Product Drain • Transmit Trust • Create Envolvement	• Visit the Website • Share Experiences • Mobilize • Invigorate • Generate Leads • Generate Web Conversion • Generate Buzz • Create Engagement

Source: Publicitor (2010)

2.6.2. Communication Tools

There are a number of communication tools that a marketer has at his disposal to create a communication plan. The tool that generally stands out the most is advertising, being that it is the tool by which most tourists get access to information. Also brochures have a big importance in tourism as they function as an informational piece to both show the destination and promote it (call to action). With the evolution of technology (see X[Contextualization part] Technology – Every Information, Everywhere), there have been created (and exploited) new means and ways to show/promote the touristic offer, such as 3d mapping and interactive animations, being readily accessible from the Smartphone in the pocket (Almeida, *et al.*, 2012). In table 2, the main communication tools are characterized with also the indication of what communication objectives they suit best.

Table 2 Communication Tools and their Objectives

Tool	Characteristics	Objectives
Advertising	Variable that is adaptable to targets of big dimensions and that has an effect to the medium/long term. It is product oriented. The Means were it can exist are: Television, Radio, Press, Cinema, Outdoors, and Internet.	• Notoriety • Stimulate Purchase • Inform • Spread of new products
Sales Force	Considered the most complete variable as the communication agent adapts to the target. It has the particularity that besides transmitting information, there can also be reception of information.	• Loyalty • Demonstration • Inform • Credibility • Transmit Trust

Direct Marketing	Similar to the Sales force as there exists bilateral communication. It is used for precise and well defined targets, having an effect of short/medium term.	• Loyalty • Inform • Spread of new products • Stimulate client action
Sponsorship and Patronage	Variables of short/medium term effect that, even though they can be used for product/brand communication, are more adequate to institutional communication. Sponsorship has commercial intent while Patronage is more directed to social valorization. The target is linked to the event or entity sponsored. In the case of patronage it is for a broader audience.	• Notoriety • Positioning • Credibility • Transmit Trust
Public Relations	Adaptable to the generality of audiences. It is more used internally and specific social groups.	• Image Improvement • Credibility • Involvement • Inform • Present to audience • Improve Notoriety
Promotions	Exclusive for product communications, with an impact in the short-term, happening in the specific moment of purchase.	• Spread of new products • Stimulate Purchase • Promote Experimentation • Blur Seasonality

Merchandising	It is the collocation, in a persuading way, of product in the "way of the clients". It is the way the products are displayed to the audience, creating visibility.	• Sell • Create Involvement

Source: Publicitor (2010) and Mercator XXI (2008) (adapted)

2.6.3. Digital Communication

The internet has allowed a bidirectional transmission of information, an almost instantaneous **interaction,** between companies and their stakeholders (other companies/entities that cooperate with us, potential and current customers and local groups) with low costs and in any part of the world. This interaction is held mainly through web-sites and social media. The usage popularity of this mean has been rising in tourism (both for destinations and businesses).

Web-sites can be characterized as a storefront (and can also be developed in to a full store) of a company, being important to look sharp, easy to access and, as mentioned before for the digital means, to be interactive (as it is important to have someone to attend our needs/questions in a physical store, the same may be applied to a digital one). In the case of Greece, they created a completely functioning and informational web-site but have failed in the point of interaction by not offering the transition from information to reservation and to develop customer interfaces (Buhalis & Deimezi, 2004).

Besides the interaction, there are some important factors to take in account. The tourists need free information and so, the destination's website should provide photos (and videos/animations), directions, lodging and activities to do. Also the design is very important, which should allow an easy perception of what's being presented, by being user-friendly, graphically balanced, and having clearly organized information. The well organized content and structure is a must for the ease of use, but it is also important for the usage of search engines to get to the site – Search Engine Optimization. Also in this topic, usage of clear domain names, Meta descriptions and captions will help to fairly rank the web-site in the organic search results (not associated to cost). Finally, the promotion of the website should be both online (social media marketing and web-display) and offline (brochures, print advertisements, etc.) (Rita, 2000; Google, 2010).

A study realized in the United States of America by Youcheng Wang (2008) pointed that the most popular web-sites applications are Information of Activities/attractions and Accommodation, the Events calendar, Restaurant information, Shopping information, links to regional pages, maps and travel guides/brochures (their availability of the capability to request them). In what concerns the promotion of the website, the preferred means are in the organization's print materials, search engines and magazine ads. Finally, the most used measurement techniques are the number of hits, page views, and unique users.

Apart from the web-site there are a couple of ways to use the Digital platform as a mean of communication. Firstly, Web display (mostly known for banner ads) is a form of digital advertisement, which is a graphical element (static, dynamic and/or interactive) that allows bringing a prospect to the website in a single click. There are also sponsored links that are advertisements usually associated with search engines, having a cost associated to each keyword, but paying only per click. These are text links that will direct the user to the desired landing page. The costs of these are usually "cost-per-click", depending from sizes and place of application. Finally, in the set of most used digital tools, there is social marketing that as a big importance, as it is a mean of interaction using platforms that are used in a social manner by many users like facebook, twitter, foursquare and other user-generated content websites.(Brochard, *et al.* 2010).

3. Methods and techniques of data collection and analysis

The research methodology for data collection comprehends the qualitative method of semi-structured interviews with Dr. Pedro Beato, Chief of the Personal Support Office of the Presidency (representing the of the Municipality Council of Grândola) and the Executive Vice-President of *Costa Alentejana* (coordinating entity and brand of the littoral Alentejo Tourism) Mr. Carlos Silva in order to know the current touristic strategy for this destination and how these brands have been evolving. Also to better understand the hospitality offer it was decided also to realize semi-structured interviews to 3 different types of accommodation services: *Herdade Barradas da Serra* (Rural Tourism facility in the periphery of Grândola's village), 3 star *Hotel D. Jorge de Lencastre* (average service hotel located in the middle of the village) and 5 star Blue&Green Tróia Design Hotel (high profile and quality hotel located in Tróia) (see interview guides in Annex 1).

As far as obtaining quantitative data, search was done upon documents, such as reports elaborated by tourism and statistics entities (e.g. Statistics Portugal, World Travel Organization and World Travel & Tourism Council), journals, magazines and websites, i.e. secondary research that allowed the development of literature review as well as contextualization.

4. Contextualization

4.1. Tourism Industry – Macro to micro

4.1.1. Tourism in the World – general overview

The tourism industry is moving masses every year, and it has been growing every year. The total international arrivals have more than doubled in the last couple of decades, being that in 1990 there were 435 million arrivals and that in 2010 there were 940 million (United Nations World Travel Organization – UNWTO, 2012). The industry grew by 3% in 2011, with a (direct) contribution of 2,8% to the world GDP, and with total contribution of 9,1%, which means that the industry of tourism accounts for almost a tenth of the market value of the entire world's production, therefore being a driver of economies and development. Estimations for 2012 look for a growth of 2.8% and, in long-term (to 2022) there is an expected annual growth of 4.2% which shows the still growing and future importance of this sector. Besides the high contribution to the GDP, this market represented 3,3% of the world's employment in 2011, growing to 3,4% in 2012 (and speaking only in matter of direct contribution; total contribution results in 8,7% of employment) (World Travel and Tourism Council - WTTC, 2012 a; Central of Intelligence Agency - CIA, 2012).

In matter of arrivals, the UNWTO (2012) expects a growth that will lead to around 1.4 billion arrivals for 2020 and 1.8 billion for 2030, if the positive pace is to continue. The reality of these numbers can be real and close to achieve because as of the (13th) December 2012, the number of tourist travelling around the globe hit the 1 billion mark, incrementing the economic importance of this sector, despite times of socio-economical crisis (WTTC, 2012 b).

Even though this industry is in growth, seasonality plays a major role in the arrivals distribution during the whole year. From 2008 to 2011, the month of July has been the peak for this industry, with August taking the second. This seasonality may be hard to overcome, but it is easy to explain: The countries (regions) with the highest number of tourist arrivals are mainly in the northern hemisphere and the months of July and August (plus June) are the hottest months in the mentioned hemisphere. This warmer weather is ideal for Leisure, recreation and holidays, being the major purpose of visit with 51% of all inbound tourism. Even though that in a whole world sense the seasonality is still rather strong, alternatives have been sought and developed in order for the industry to thrive during the lower season (Business tourism has been growing, achieving, in 2011, 15% of the purpose of visit) (UNWTO, 2012). It is in this season where competition is more notable, mainly based on price, but also in the creation of new solutions, thus diversifying the offer. But, independently of the season, and with the high economical value of the sector, competition is ranked strong through the whole year, fighting for the tourist's shrinking wallet.

Apart from the seasonality there are factors that change drastically the industry, leaving regions drastically weakened, being unattractive such as:

- Natural catastrophes: such as the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami (that left naturally beautiful countries like Thailand, Indonesia, the Maldives and Seychelles decimated, not prone for tourism due to the destruction of the landscape and fear of it happening again) and the 2010 eruptions of *Eyjafjallajökull* in Iceland (which caused a commotion in the air travel across northern and western Europe, closing 20 countries' airspace, retaining hundreds of thousands on the ground (UNEP, 2011));
- Diseases: the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) (affected heavily the tourism in western Asia, concerning tourist arrivals dropping from 10% to 50% (Wilks & Moore, 2004)).
- Terrorism: happenings such as the drastic attacks of 9/11 in the USA (which raised the fear of flying) and the 2011 Norway attacks (which were directed targeted at a summer camp).
- Politics: the protests since 2010 in Greece took a quick turn of events, resulting in riots, transforming a destination found of culture into urban destruction and the 2011 Egyptian revolution created highly instability, thus creating the sense of insecurity.

Finally, trying to define the likes and preferences of the tourists, besides the likeness of warmth, they seek mainly Leisure (51%) as referred before, then visiting friends and relatives, health and religion (27%), then business (15%). The most visited region in 2011 was Europe (504M), followed by Asia and the Pacific (204,4M), Americas (156,6M) and at the bottom Middle East and Africa (55,4M and 50,2M, respectively). France is at the top of the worlds visit list, with almost 80 million visits in 2011) (UNWTO, 2012). On a final note, domestic spending is at 70.5%, which means a wide majority opts for discovering its own country/region, growing at a wider rate (4.6% to 2022) than foreign visitor spending (3.6%) (WTTC, 2012 c). On an important note about the tourist: they are increasingly more informed (information technology plays a major role in this part.

4.1.2. Tourism in Europe

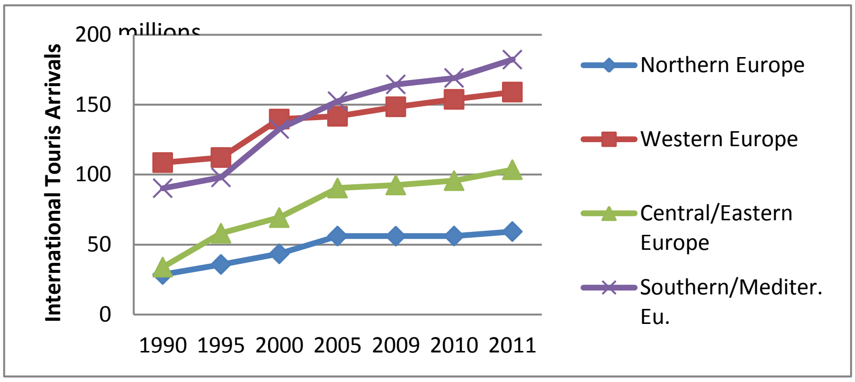
Europe stretches from the cold northern climates to the warmth of the southern regions, stretching also in cultural levels as the diversity from region to region and country to country is immense, thus offering a wide variety of touristic products.

According to the Eurostat (2012), there was a total of 2.233 million nights spent in Europe in the year 2010, which means that very day, on average, there are at least 6 million tourists in Europe (only including the ones who spend the night in hotels, campsites and other accommodation facilities, thus excluding friends, family and others). Also, from these nights, 40,4% (902M) are of non-residents.

As referred in the previous section, Europe is the region with the highest share of arrivals (504M). Fortunately, this continent has a great sense of culture and diversity and, in the same way that foreign visitors from other continents look up to Europe for such strength, so do the Europeans and visit various countries within the region, instead of going to visit some country in a different continent.

Europe itself is then divided in a set of regions that show different levels of international tourist arrivals and variations shown in the graphic 1.

Graphic 1 Evolution of International Tourist Arrivals to Europe.



Source: UNWTO Tourism highlights 2012 Edition

Between 2000 and 2005 the Southern/Mediterranean region took the leading in the group, with 10 million more arrivals then Western Europe (which was having a lagging growth), by 2005. Southern/Mediter.Europe has a tremendous market share of 18.5 %, being the sub-region more visited in the world. In 2011 the receipts in Europe were of 332.9 Billion Euros (with an increase of 5% comparing to 2010), achieving a share of 45%, and being also at the top of the world in this category, which translates in an average of 660 Euros per arrival, falling behind Asia and the Pacific (960 Euros per arrival) and the Americas (910 Euros per Arrival). By 2011 the region of Southern/Mediterranean Europe was also ranked at the top with 126.9 Billion Euros of receipts, with only other one European region above the 100 line, Western Europe (and only two other sub-regions in the world: North America and North East Asia). Comparing to 2010, the real growth was of 5% for this region. The most visited country in this sub-region is Spain, with almost 57 million arrivals. Here, in the neighborhood, Portugal is close to 50 million arrivals short, with a count of 7.4 million arrivals. Still there is yet France with almost 80 million arrivals, leading Europe and the World. But if we are to look at receipts, Portugal wins over Spain and France, with close to 1530 Euros per arrival (UNWTO, 2012).

4.1.3. Tourism in Portugal

The Travel and Tourism Industry in Portugal as a direct contribution in 2011 to the GDP of 5.3% (9.2 Billion Euros) and the total (direct + indirect + induced) contribution to the national GDP is 15.2% (26.2 Billion Euros), showing the importance of the sector. Given the forecast of a growth of 1.7% of the direct GDP contribution till 2022 and a growth of 1.8% of the total contribution (surpassing the 30 Billion Euro mark), this is an industry suitable for investment (WTTC, 2012 d).

The year of 2012 was a record year for the industry in Portugal, as foreign arrivals achieved the biggest number yet recorded but also, with the economic crisis sinking in, less money was made by hotels (proportionally), as margins were reduced in an attempt to attract customers, which seemed to work (Khalip, 2013).

As mentioned before, Portugal is part of the most visited region of Europe and it can be found in the westernmost part of continental Europe, bathed by the Atlantic Ocean and the warmness of the Gulf Stream, “Europe’s Central Heating”, which renders an interesting mild climate for tourism. Besides the regular warmness, it heats up in the summer, contributing significantly to the effect of seasonality, being that, in 2011, 39.5% of total nights spent in Portugal were between July and September (and this effect has been growing since 2006) (Instituto Nacional de Estatística - INE, 2012 a). This season serves as an economic pillow for tourism, helping to support businesses from the cripple effects of the economical crisis. However, José Manuel Esteves, General Secretary of AHRESP (*Associação de Hotelaria, Restaurantes e similares de Portugal*) warned that this season is not continuing to be the salvation of touristic businesses, because this touristic audience is consuming and spending less. He even added that taxation, (VAT with Restaurants at a maximum of 23%) is pushing businesses down as consumption decreases and drawing tourists away (Económico, 2012). With the maintenance of this VAT through 2013, the volume of the restaurants sector will decrease € 1.750 millions (a contrary decision would create a benefit of € 854 millions), with a significant impact to the tourism sector (AHRESP, 2012). Mário Pereira, President of AHRESP, considers that this is destroying the offer of the touristic sector (AHRESP, 2012). Even David Scowsill, President and CEO of WTTC, warned Portugal, in the annual (2012) conference of APAVT (*Associação Portuguesa das Agências de Viagem e Turismo*) in Coimbra, to "Stop taxing Tourism", because even though taxation is "an easy way to raise funds", it represents "measures that will damage tourism" (David Scowsill in Nicol, 2012). With this being referred, there is a need to rethink the taxation model and its implementation.

Despite the small size of the country and current economical fragility, it still offers huge variety of experiences and products that are based in the "raw materials" presented: weather conditions, natural and cultural resources. In an effort to synthesize this offer, 10 strategic tourism products were consolidated in the national touristic plan (PENT, 2007) and developed being: **Sun and Sea, Cultural and Landscape Touring, City Break, Business Tourism, Nature Tourism, Nautical Tourism, Health and Well-being, Golf, Resorts and Residential tourism, and Gastronomy and Wines**. This array of product is distributed throughout the whole country, being possible to have different experiences around the same product category.

In order to easily define strategies, there were also created 3 groups of markets, based on their potential and knowledge about Portugal, shown in table 3 on the next page. **Strategic markets** are the ones were Portugal is already a somewhat established destination, and where there the main share of revenue is coming from – potential revenue above the € 400M. These could be target to stimulate the low season, thus diminishing the effects of seasonality. **Development markets** are represented by the countries where there is intent of meaningful growth, showing good results – potential revenue between € 100M and € 250M. **Diversification markets** are the ones that, despite the minor share, are deemed as attractive (for their dimension and/or growth) – potential revenue below € 100M (Turismo de Portugal, ip, 2007).

Table 3 Groups of markets with potential for Portugal.

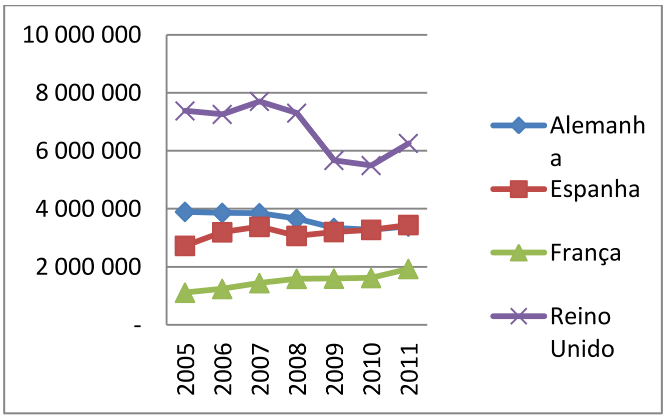
Strategic Markets	Development Markets	Diversification Markets
• Portugal (Domesic Tourism) • United Kingdom • Spain • Germany • France	• Scandinavian Countries • Italy • U.S.A. • Japan • Brazil • Netherlands • Ireland • Belgium	• Austria • Switzerland • Russia • Canada • Poland • Czech Republic • Hungary • China

Source: PENT (2007)

In the matter of tourism numbers, international tourist arrivals have been growing. In two years time, from 2009 to 2011, the growth was of 1 million arrivals of foreign to our country, showing that the investment in the foreign markets is showing results (6.479M in 2009, 6.832 in 2010 and 7.432M in 2011). Unfortunately, Portugal is far away from the European market leaders, having a small market share of 3.4% (UNWTO, 2012).

From the Strategic Markets groups, the U.K. is at the top in nights spent (recovering in 2011 from a downfall of 28% from 2007 to 2010, growing back 13% to 2011), with almost 5,5 million nights, followed by Spain taking over Germany in 2011 and then France, as seen in graphic 2. (Instituto Nacional de Estatística - INE, 2012 a)

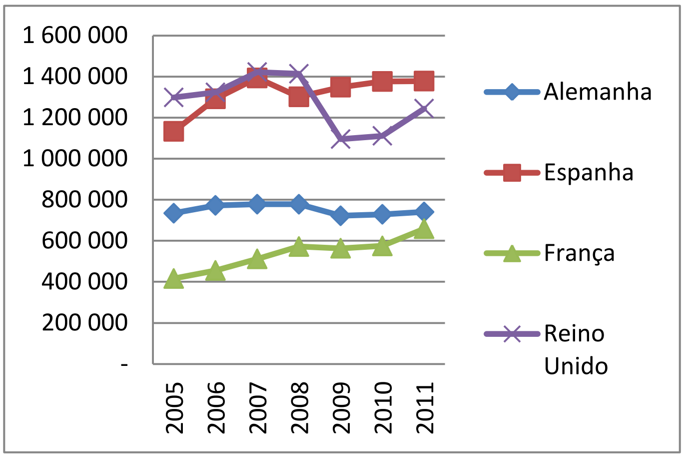
Graphic 2 Number of nights spent by visitors from the strategic markets.



Source: Statistical Yearbook of Portugal 2011

The biggest part of guests comes from Spain, despite being 2nd in the number of nights spent, with close to 1,4 million visitors, contrasting to almost 1.25M from the U.K.. Germany and France follow, being equally ranked as in terms of nights spent, 3rd and 4th place for the number of visitors, as seen on the next graphic 3. (Instituto Nacional de Estatística - INE, 2012 a)

Graphic 3 Number of visitors from the strategic markets.



Source Statistical Yearbook of Portugal 2011 p. 563

These numbers priory shown, adding up the remainder foreign visitors, are only 52 % of the total of hotel guests and comprehend 66% of the total nights spent (as they come from further away, the stay is longer). The remainder is constituted by the Domestic Tourism, i.e. the Portuguese tourists that roam inside Portugal. This shows the importance of Portugal being a strategic market for itself. Unfortunately, the domestic tourism was growing to 2010 but the number of nights spent declined by 2,5% in 2011 and guests also declined, by almost 2% (from 6.705.460 guests in 2010 to 6.580.537 in 2011) (Instituto Nacional de Estatística - INE, 2012 a).

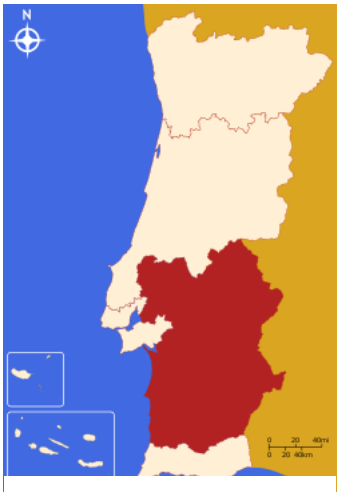
Despite the growth shown priory, Revenues per Available Room (RevPAR) dropped from € 27,8 to € 26,8 from 2010 to 2012, as the prices are lowered to foment demand and also due to price competition (IMPACTUR Portugal, 2013).

Portugal is yet divided in several **regions** that are divided geographically and culturally, thus creating different regional offers: North, Center, Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve and the Autonomous Regions of Madeira and Azores. The **main touristic regions** are the **Algarve** (stays grew by 5.5% from 2010 to 2011, being almost 14 million), **Lisbon** (grew 4.7%, surpassing the 9 millions in 2011) and **Autonomous Region of Madeira** (grew 11.5%, with over 5.6 million nights spent). Notably, in these regions the foreign tourists have a much higher number of spent nights than the national tourists. The Algarve is an already established brand outside Portugal and looked mainly for its Sun and Sea (Beaches) and nightlife. Lisbon, being the capital of Portugal, and where the main Portuguese airport is, is a congregator of international arrivals. The regions with the **lowest demand** are **Alentejo** (even with a growth of 6% to 1.243.652 nights spent) and the **A.R. of Azores** (with a slight decrease of 0.15%) (Instituto Nacional de Estatística - INE, 2012 a).

4.1.4. Tourism in Alentejo

Grândola is located in the Alentejo region (to be more specific, in the ***Alentejo Litoral***, so it is important to understand the characteristics of this region. Alentejo has an extension that accounts for 30% of Continental Portugal, comprehending a variety of touristic offer over its extension.

Image 1 Alentejo's location (in red)



Source: Wikipedia.pt

As stated before, Alentejo is the Portuguese region with the second lowest level of demand in the matter of nights spent and guests but it is also the 2nd lowest in terms of **lodging income - € 43M in 2011** (Instituto Nacional de Estatística - INE, 2012 a), but it is still growing, as of 2011. Despite the huge area it represents there are several square kilometers free of any kind of urbanization, thus having a low density of population. This is one of the aspects that tourists look for, the **peacefulness and direct contact with nature in contrast with the overcrowded urban areas**.

The RevPAR of the whole region of Alentejo is lower than the national indicator, being € 18.6 in 2012 (decreased from € 20.9 in 2011) (IMPACTUR Portugal, 2013).

Alentejo is itself divided in a smaller set of regions: ***Alentejo Litoral, Alto Alentejo, Alentejo Central, Baixo Alentejo*** **and** ***Leziria do Alentejo. Alentejo Litoral*** leads in growth the hospitality, being able to overcome *Alentejo Central* from 2010 to 2011 in a matter of the income from accommodation, still behind in the number of nights spent and number of guests (INE, 2012 b), as it is observed in the table 4.

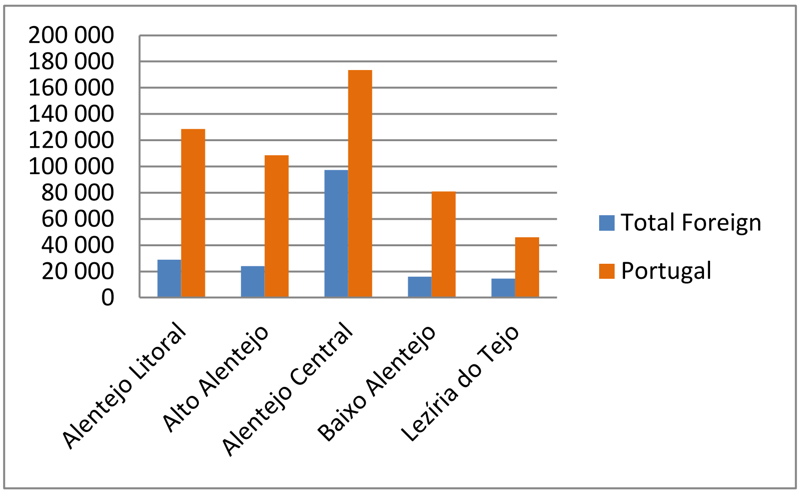
Table 4 Data of number of nights spent, guests and lodging for the regions inside *Alentejo*.

	Nights Spent			Guests			Lodging Income		
	2010	2011	Δ	2010	2011	Δ	2010	2011	Δ
Alentejo Litoral	307195	376595	22,6%	137564	157569	14,5%	11276	14841	31,6%
Alto Alentejo	183086	189742	3,6%	125729	132505	5,4%	5487	6305	14,9%
Alentejo Central	403992	411336	1,8%	266401	270659	1,6%	13989	14070	0,6%
Baixo Alentejo	179060	167212	-6,6%	104731	96961	-7,4%	4992	4766	-4,5%
Lezíria do Alentejo	99225	98767	-0,5%	63070	60676	-3,8%	3338	3133	-6,1%

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Alentejo Region 2011 p. 423 and 425

In this region the proportion of foreign guests is smaller than the country’s average of 52%, being only 25%. As seen on the graphic 4, *Alentejo Central* is the region’s champion, both for the domestic market and foreign visitors, having more of the latter than the total number of guests of *Baixo Alentejo* and *Lezíria do Tejo*. (INE, 2012 b)

Graphic 4 Foreign guests vs. Portuguese Guests in Alentejo



Source: Statistical Yearbook of Alentejo Region 2011 (2012)

4.1.5. Tourism in Alentejo Litoral - Costa Alentejana

In a Touristic sense, Grândola does not have big notoriety on its own in Portugal, despite the quality of its offer (and is more hardly known from the other side of the frontier). Grândola is part of ***Litoral Alentejano*** which contains, apart from **Grândola**, **Alcácer do Sal**, **Santiago do Cacém**, **Sines** and **Odemira**. All of this is promoted through the entity and (more notorious) brand **"Costa Alentejana"**, by showing these distinct offers in an aggregated "package", i.e. it promotes the offers of the region as a whole, in an attempt to have a greater effect than the sum of the individual promotion of each municipality.

Image 2 Location of Costa Alentejana in Portugal.

Source: Own elaboration

The Executive Vice-President of this entity, Mr. Carlos Silva, considered that the best this region has to offer is "its natural serenity, the sea (beach and landscape), good Gastronomy and Wine production, diversity in accommodation and the constant touristic animation". **Each**

municipality included here may have its own communication, but they are all aligned with the one of "Costa Alentejana" (as it was noted from the interviews).

Unfortunately, ***Costa Alentejana* will seize to exist** as an entity in a short period of time, being still unsure if it will still be kept as a brand, or if it will return to be "just another part" of *Alentejo*. This entity has been making a good job, improving notoriety of the region, with **suiting branding** and **well coordinated communication**. Mr. Carlos Silva opined that this region is sufficiently different from the rest of Alentejo (the coastal landscape confers a different set of offers from the interior plains) for the region to have its own definition and characterization.

In terms of demand, as seen before in Table 2, **this region is the one that most grew in Alentejo**, showing the effectiveness of late promotion campaigns (which translates in notoriety) and assertiveness of a quality offer. It is expected for demand to continue its growth as long as quality is promoted and offered.

In what concerns **seasonality**, in 2011, *Alentejo Litoral* is the region of Alentejo where it is more serious, being 49% of nights spent from July to September (was 50% in 2010), the high season (being a coastal region may have this effect, as beaches in the summer are most wanted). Seasonality is surely high, as almost 50% of the accommodation demand takes place in a quarter of the year. This indicates the need to counter seasonality, to smooth the yearly demand curve, thus having a more stable income of tourists. Also, *Alentejo Litoral* is the only region above Alentejo's average of 38.5% (INE, 2012).

In a study ordered by this entity (Bloom Consulting, 2011), it was concluded that part of the brand strategy should focus on the attraction of winter tourists to reduce seasonality. In the 9 months that it is **low season**, when the temperature rounds the 11ºC, it can be considered as a **warm destination for a tourist from the northern Europe** (where winters are severe with several degrees Celsius below zero). This study comprehended surveys, where the main winter preference of the inquired was the warm climate (44%), showing that there is an opportunity for the "winter market". In this matter, Mr. Carlos Silva still added that, another important market would be the seniors because, as they are retired, they have the availability to travel (and stay) in the winter (and rest of the low season), in opposition to the students/workers that have, mainly, holidays in the summer. So, retired northern Europeans are an important market to bet on to ease seasonality.

4.1.6. Tourism in Grândola – a part of *Costa Alentejana*

Data from the Statistics Portugal (INE, 2012) shows that, despite the low notoriety of Grândola by itself, it achieved more than **40% of the income brought by accommodation, in 2011, in this region**, making it a major player (making for only 30% in 2009). The number of guests increased in 2011 by 19% (achieving a total of 58.340 guests), and the total of nights spent grew by 26%, being 139.762 in 2011. This growth is smaller to the one that occurred from 2008 (after an inflection) to 2009 and 2009 to 2012. The capacity of accommodation in Grândola is 2.065 guests (at a given moment), as of 2011.

The biggest majority (90% in 2011) of the guests are Portuguese (portraying 87% of stays), which could be attributed to 2 main characteristics: Grândola has the biggest coastline, with fully accessible beaches, in Portugal, bringing tourists solely for the beach; the association with the Carnation Revolution of 1974, which brings many Portuguese to know where an important part of the Revolution began – the music "*Grândola Vila Morena*" is symbolic for freedom and it is known through the whole country. The remaining of stays are constituted by mainly by Spain (6%), United Kingdom (1.5%) and France (1.1%), being the rest countries of provenience below 1% each. The number of nights spent follows the same pattern, with Portugal being the main "client", followed by Spain, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, as seen in table 5 (INE, 2012).

Table 5 Evolution of number of nights spent in Grândola according to the country of provenience.

Country of Provenience	2008	2009	2010	2011
Portugal	21228	78030	101021	121251
Germany	670	320	1119	1009
Spain	698	2531	4892	8280
France	688	685	710	1540
Italy	161	207	382	402
Netherlands	364	109	283	634
United Kingdom	573	726	634	2141
United States of America	229	194	199	129
Others	3547	2215	1617	4376

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Alentejo Region 2011 (2012)

Based in these numbers, the **main strategic market is the Portuguese**, without disdaining the foreign tourists. As Mr. Carlos Silva considers, we should still invest in the foreign markets, mainly Northern Europe (plus France). This group could be targeted for the lower season because the autumn and winter in Grândola (and Costa Alentejana) may still be warmer and more sunny than summer in those countries. The winter in this region isn't so agitated concerning the national tourists, as the biggest hook of the region is the beach, in the mid-spring and summer.

Most of the numbers have been growing up because, as Dr. Pedro Beato said, **"the tourist that comes to Grândola once, comes back and brings a friend",** showing that delight about the offer transforms into good word-of-mouth, "one of the most powerful promotion tools" as Dr. Pedro Beato indicated. Mr. Carlos Silva is also certain that the **experience exceeds the expectations**.

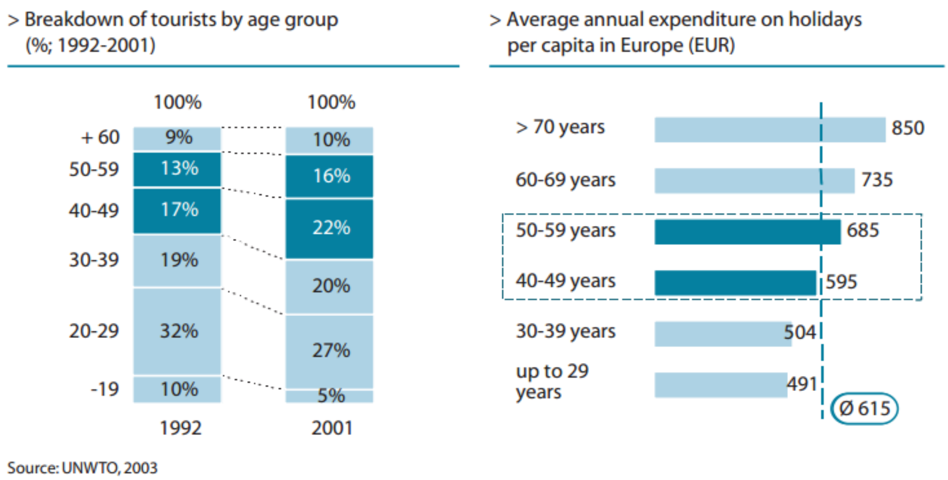
4.2. Marketing Trends – What has Tourism to understand?

4.2.1. Demographic Trends

Tourism is a growing market that, as any successful market, follows the main consumer trends about an array of products. It is (or should be) the consumer who dictates where something goes as a product, resulting of their needs in accordance to the evolution of the surrounding environment. Some trends, like next, have been redefining who the tourist is, how he behaves and what he seeks.

The National Strategic Plan for Tourism (mostly known by the acronym *PENT* in Portugal – *Plano Estratégico Nacional para o Turismo*) was based in tourist demographic data from 2001, which showed a big increase of the well-established segment (40 to 59), constituting 38% of tourists and a small increase in the senior segment (10% in 2001), in contrary to youth/young adults, which decreased. So, the number of tourists grows mainly in the middle/middle top of the age scale. Also data showed that older tourists have bigger expenditure, as seen in graphic 6. Nowadays, data points to different trends (Turismo de Portugal, ip, 2007).

Graphic 5 Breakdown of European tourists by age and expenditure.



Source: UNWTO (2013) in PENT (2007)

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and European Travel Commission (ETC) report on "Demographic Change and Tourism" from 2010, has the world population increases (with almost 7.1 Billion now, it is expected to grow to 7.7 by 2020 and 8.3 by 2030 (Worldometers, 2012)) it is expected that tourism also grows. This **growth** is going to be more accentuated in the **ends of the age spectrum** (instead of the middle): Developed countries are more aged and developing countries keeps a more youthful population. Also, **richness still accompanies age**, being that senior tourists have more money to spent, contrary to the youth who have smaller wallets.

Nowadays the **global age pyramid** is wider at the top than it was several years ago (United States Census Bureau, 2006), in terms of developed countries. This is due mainly to the post-World War II baby boom and the evolution of general medical treatments that were able to extend the lives of the elderly (and general population), being able to live more and with better life quality. So the ***KaBoomers*** (Moutinho, 2012) represent a market opportunity of 60 year-olds that can be sometimes healthier than 35 year olds. Also this group has more **travel availability** as they've reached the years of retirement, meaning that with all this time in their hands, they search for new activities. All of this has been pushing the senior tourism market with offers targeted directly at this group. Furthermore, this age group is scaling up their technology knowledge, keeping up with some of the latest technologies, such as computers, video game consoles, tablets and smartphones. There is then a need to pay attention to what this age spectrum wants and what they use as information mean.

In the **developing countries**, the **tourists are younger** (WTO and ETC, 2010) and have different sets of needs from the older tourists. This younger audience, may have lower incomes than the well established (40 to 59 years old), which translates in lower purchase power, which means that they look for cheaper options. Another implication for this age group is that they are studying or working, not having the freedom of traveling whenever they want as the retired have, thus being a more time-precise group, which further foments seasonality. As this group spends most of the year working and/or studying, they look mainly for relaxation.

With these different set of tourists, with distinct needs, tourism destinations must opt to either develop their strategy around one of this groups or both. Either way, there is an important notion that destinations “must address the needs of younger less experienced tourists in developing markets and the needs of experienced tourists in developed markets” (WTO and ETC, 2010: 58).

4.2.2. Environmental and Healthy trends

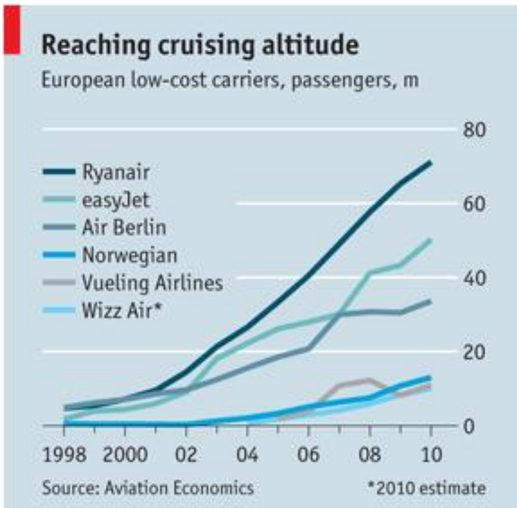
The rising of the environmentally conscious subject translated in the need for **closer-to-nature holidays**, where the “Touch of Man” is minimized, offering (almost) unaltered and clean landscapes. This also plays with the **Healthy trend** as consumers look for healthy and active offers, pursuing a better and cleaner and lifestyle (in contrast to the stressed out life with junk fast food meals – even fast food is turning to healthier options nowadays) (Moutinho, 2012)

4.2.3. Economic Crisis – the Low Budget Trend

Another trend that has been more notable lately is that the current economy potentiated the **rationalization of consumer’s own money**, looking for **cheaper alternatives to satisfy their needs**, still evaluating if the smaller price isn’t synonym to lack of quality, having a well informed and defined value-for-money to a wide range of products. This also applies to tourism, as **domestic tourism increases** (domestic spending accounts for 70.5% of direct Travel and Tourism GDP in 2011, with and estimated growth of 3.5% to 2012 and growth of 4.6% p.a. to 2022) (WTTC, 2012 c), meaning that tourists go out-inside, visiting other regions in the own country, therefore spending less money, but still being able to enjoy quality vacations with new experiences. Another implications for tourism is that with the demand for cheaper products has been pushing down prices (also a result of price competition in this market) and that, as a result, tourism businesses try to innovate in their offer by creating differentiated products, being still able to attain pleasant profit margins with cheap, but quality and meaningful products.

This trend does not only affect destinations *per se,* but it also has implications in the transport matter. Tourists, specially the younger ones, have adhered to **low-cost flights** which, despite having a lower degree of commodities, are cheaper. In graphic 6, it is clearly observable that great increase of passengers on this type of flight through the last years. In the future it is expected for this growth to slow down, but will still be growing (The Economist, 2011). Also, and mainly for the youth, they tend to travel in groups which can also be used to acquire discounts, being it on transportation, accommodation or activities.

Graphic 6 Evolution of the number of passengers (in millions) in European low-cost carriers.



Source: Aviation Economics (2011) in The Economist (2011)

4.2.4. Technology – Every information, everywhere

Also in the department of technology, in the last couple of years it has been given the opportunity for the consumers have all the information available in their hands, with **ready-to-go internet** on their **smartphones**. **Data traffic surpassed voice traffic** in the last quarter of 2009, and by the beginning of 2012 with was almost 3.5 times bigger (Ericsson, 2012)). This has two main implications for nowadays' markets: the consumers are more informed (or with easily accessible information) and the brands have a new communication platform. Also, the crescent usage and comfortability with web social networks also moved to the mobile, thus having more communication options wherever and whenever the consumer wants. For the tourism market the consequences are that brands need to be in these means, being it as an in-holiday application/service (a smartphone is more easily carried during a trip than a laptop, for example) and/or a general communication point. For example, Expedia has an application that allows any user to book an hotel from anywhere with just four taps. It should be noted that strategy for mobile should also be adapted (may differ from computer-based (fixed) internet strategies), which can be translated in the need to create mobile sites and/or smartphone applications and a different type of communication.

Social media is a growing platform that aggregate people's digital life in one or several pages, being a place to present ourselves, brands, organizations and other entities, and to better know others. Facebook has a penetration of population in Portugal of almost 45%, being used by 88% of the online population, which is close to 51% of the Portuguese population. (SocialBakers, n.d. and Internet World Stats, 2012).

Also to mention, Geolocation is now also in the hands of every Smartphone user that ones to go on an adventure as these have built-in maps and GPS (which was already available before mobile phones turned smart, just not at a large scale as it is now). Also standalone GPS systems are cheaper and more available in the market than a couple of years ago. With this, tourists no longer have the hassle of bringing a full paper map with them to know the route, being fast and simple to use, and can easily share were they are or where they want to meet with other fellow tourist.

4.2.5. Competition and Coopetition – United in Battle

A crescent sense of **diversification** and **differentiation** is setting competition apart as destinations promote their uniqueness, showing offers that others can't present. As mentioned before, **destinations fight with creativity** to accommodate the needs of their guests, to exceed expectations in order for them to come back. This creativity can go as far as creating/acquiring events (that either are fitting with the place's culture and history or that bring something distinctively new), construction of touristic attractions (or adaptation of non-tourism infrastructures), preservation and emancipation of local landmarks, and where imagination goes. This creativity comprehends the creation of a valued, meaningful and desired offer.

Besides the “rivalry” between destinations, there is also competition inside, has Tourism players compete for their product. For example, hospitality services are now more than bed and breakfast, adding options that go towards the demand, trying to either accommodate a vast number of guests, by attending the various needs (diversification), or to satisfy the specific needs of a specific group (differentiation). But despite this inner-destination/region competition, the several touristic businesses can (and should) **cooperate and line up with the destination’s strategy**, in order to foment the region, being a plus for every entity involved. This is the result of **Coopetition**, where common objectives and strategic (and with importance for tourism, communication) guidelines are set and followed to achieve better results than the ones that could be attained if pursued alone (Wang & Krakover, 2008). For example, if the common communication strategy of several businesses is aligned with the destination’s brand, it is easier for grand awareness to grow and solidify.

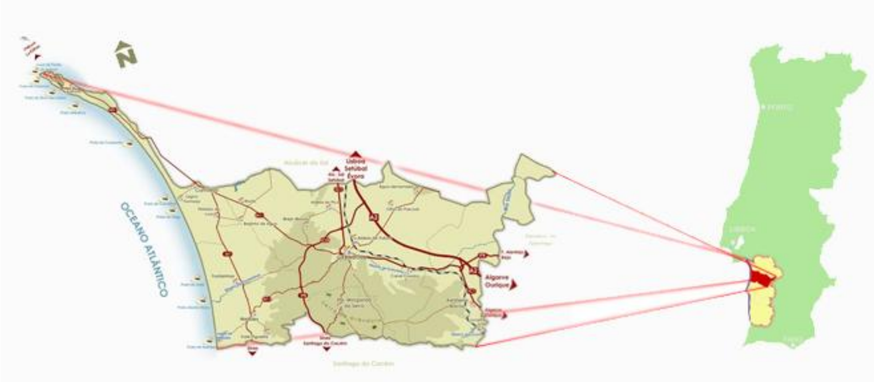
4.3. The Product “Grândola” – current Product and Communication Strategy

4.3.1. Grândola’s Geography – Territory Definition

Grândola is located in the coastal District of Setubal, in the Southwest Portugal, Alentejo, as seen in Image 3. This municipality has a total area of 805 km^2, containing 5 parishes: ***Grândola, Carvalhal, Melides, Santa Margarida da Serra, and Azinheira de Barros e S. Mamede de Sádão***. Also to mention, a part of *Carvalhal*, ***Tróia*** is heavily known for tourism (being the greater part of Grândola’s accommodation in there), being a beacon in the municipality and in *Costa Alentejana*.

One of the highlights is a **coastline of continuous beaches for 45 Km**, making Grândola the municipality with the **biggest coast in the country** and the **3rd biggest beach extension in Europe**. In this coastline, nine beaches can be found and one marina, all with Blue Flag, synonym to environment quality and cleanliness. Grândola’s geographical diversity also comprehends the big southern plains (*Planicies Alentejanas)*, which portrays the more rural aspect of the region, and the **mountain range** (***Serra de Grândola***) that is 326 meters high (with a 15 Km pedestrian route) and extends to the neighbour municipalities. This natural diversity brings with it the obligation of offering an assortment of touristic products, which what is happening.

Image 3 Insertion of Grândola in Costa Alentejana and Portugal.



Source: C.M.Grândola

4.3.1.1. Accessibility

Grândola is **close to the country's capital**, Lisbon, being approximately a **1 hour drive** (110 Km), using the highway of the south, A2 (entering directly in Grândola's council). To get to the farther north part of the municipality, Tróia (*Carvalhal*), it can also be accessible by ferryboat from *Setúbal* (20-30 minutes drive from Lisbon to *Setúbal* + 30 minutes by ferry), or by exiting the A2 in *Alcácer do Sal* (1h 30min). As the highway A2 is from Lisbon to *Albufeira* (Algarve), Grândola is easily accessible from the center to the south. This highway also crosses with the ones that go/come to the interior (and also Spain) and north, being promptly easy to get to. It is also possible to take the National Road (*Estrada Nacional*), getting a more scenic view of the municipality (and neighbors).

4.3.2. Characterization of the offer

Grândola is a mix of different offers that are intertwined in a big and unique offer, from the rural, tranquil and untouched (or almost untouched) plains, to the paradisiacal beaches, bathed by the Atlantic Ocean, that stretch for 45 Km, as mentioned before, and to the excitement of the Casino and Events. Grândola has the ability to present itself has and European example of a slightly Man touched landscape in the littoral, staying true to its nature, but with a sustainable urban twist.

4.3.2.1. Hospitality

The **lodging facilities are diverse**, ranging from **big resorts** with luxurious hotels to **small scale rural tourism** facilities, as it is observable in main hospitality facilities table 6. These facilities serve different needs of different customers/tourists. It is possible to **relax** with friends and family in "**the middle of nowhere**", but with several different activities to experience (like hiking, bird watching, animal care, and planting) in the homesteads and farmsteads that are in the rural/agro tourism category (well distributed in the municipality). It is also possible to **indulge in the luxurious treatments** in the 5* Hotel and 4* Hotel, with total refinement of experiences, from sailing to golfing (more concentrated in *Tróia*. Then there is also the apartments and camping where tourists are more "by themselves", but always close to landmarks and activities.

Table 6 Main hospitality offer in Grândola

Location	Name	Type	Number of rooms
Azinheira dos Barros	Herdade das Sesmarias dos Nobres	Agro Tourism	8
Grândola	***Hotel D. Jorge de Lencastre***	**3* Hotel**	**36**
Grândola	*Residencial Vila Morena*	3* Residential	23
Grândola	***Herdade das Barradas da Serra***	**Rural Tourism**	**10**
Grândola	*Monte Cabeço do Ouro*	Rural Tourism	11

Grândola	*Monte das Faias*	Rural Tourism	10
Grândola	*Quinta da Fonte* (includes canine hotel)	Rural Tourism	6 (+T2)
Grândola	*Bwala Monte*	Rural Tourism	na
Grândola	*Brejo da Amada*	Rural Tourism	na
Herdade do pinheirinho (Grândola)	*Pinheiro*, a Hyatt Golf & beach Resort (opening 2013) - Luxury Housing, Residency, 5* Hotel and Golf Championship field (27 holes)	Resort	300+
Lousal	*Santa Bárbara dos Mineiros Hotel Rural*	Rural tourism	11
Melides	*Moinho Velho*	Rural Tourism	9
Melides	*Parque de Campismo da Galé*	Camping	na
Melides	*Parque de Campismo de Melides*	Camping	na
Tróia (Carvalhal)	**Blue&Green Tróia Design Hotel - Includes Conference Center, Casino and Entertainment Center**	**5* Hotel**	**205**
Tróia (Carvalhal)	Aqualuz Suite Hotel (+ Apartamentos TróiaLagoa, TróiaMar e TróiaRio)	Suite Hotel Apartments 4*	300+
Tróia (Carvalhal)	Tróia Resort (Apartamentos Turísticos Ácala, Praia e da Marina) - Includes Golf (18 holes) and Marina	Resort	200+

Source: www.cm-grândola.pt and www.costaalentejana.com.pt

4.3.2.1.1. Opinion of the hospitality service providers

It is important to **listen to who is in the market** in close contact with the tourists to better understand their clients preferences and to hear about their suggestions for an aligned strategy and, consequently communication plan.

From the perspective of Dra. Elsa Dias, Directing Manager of *Herdade Barradas da Serra*, says that when the tourists come to Grândola they are **mainly**

looking for the beach and relaxation (or not sure for what they are looking for) but eventually found something more than that. During this acknowledgment for more they end up satisfying and surpassing several touristic needs (even some they did not knew that existed), which will make them revisit. Dra. Elsa Dias yet points for the problem of seasonality and in the need to grow to sooth it, by recurring to a more diverse (and quality) offer. In what concerns the **communication** of Grândola, there needs to exist **stricter guidelines** that will provide brand consistency and destination awareness. Finally, Dra. Dias adds that Grândola's strategy should bet in **quality**, **friendliness and proximity** with the client, as *Herdade Barradas da Serra* does.

As Dra. Ana Paula Chainho, Manager of *Hotel D. Jorge de Lencastre (3*)*, considers, **the beach is what brings more tourists**, has the village of Grândola itself has not a big offer (comparing to big tourism destinations). The tourists that come to the village, come mainly to know it better, for the **history revolving *Zeca Afonso* and the Carnation Revolution**, **Sports** (many great competitions pass in Grândola) and **natural beauty**. The plus is that inside each parish, everything is at walking distance, being easy to roam freely and get know many things in little time. Regarding promotion, Dra. Chainho points towards an **aggregated communication** of the players and parishes of Grândola in order to bring consistency to the brand and destination. Yet, she adds that the insertion of Grândola in *Costa Alentejana* is a plus, as it means to reach a wider audience through this brand/entity.

Finally, Dr. Miguel de Andrade, General Manager of *Blue&Green Tróia Design Hotel (5*)*, points out that **Grândola is no longer a mono-product**, but it is a **multitude of products**. Dr. Andrade considers that tourists come, principally to Tróia, mainly for the **comfort and equilibrium**, **quality** of the offer (nature, entertainment and hospitality facilities). He also believes that there is a need to better define this destination and to be more close to the client. In what concerns communication, there are several names overlapping (Macro Alentejo to micro Tróia), being necessary to clearly define **and clarify levels of communication**, leaving room for smaller brands to grow awareness inside the bigger brands.

4.3.2.2. Events – Entertainment, Culture and Sports

Grândola is an active municipality with several events and activities ranging from small artisan markets to the big county fair, as mentioned in table 7. But even though these events are scattered around the year, the ones that usually draw more visitors are during or close to the summer months. Yet, this has being taken in account and more events are being created in the rest with the year, that suit the respective time. The current events are as follows in the table below.

Table 7 Main Events that take place in the Municipality of Grândola

Name	Dates (current	Description
Geocaching	March (10th)	Geocaching activity through Grândola's mountain range (24 Km) in close contact with nature.
25th of April Commemorations	April	Commemorations of the Carnation Revolution and significance of Grândola for it with Portuguese music concerts, exhibits, fireworks and popular party.
Grândola Aventura	May (17th to 19th)	Touristic challenge of all-terrain navigation through the municipality with all the patrimony as a scenery.
***Rota das Tabernas* (Taverns' Route) - 19th edition)**	June and July (6 weekends)	Route through the best and most genuine flavors of Alentejo (local snacks and locally produced wine) with a "cultural menu" (poetry, fado and popular music).
***Festa Nossa Senhora Rosário Tróia* (Religious Pilgrimage)**	August (15th)	Thousands come to Tróia every year to ask for protection in the sea. Devotion and party by the beach.
***Feira de Agosto, Turismo e Ambiente* (August Fair, Tourism and Environment)**	August (22nd to 26th)	County Fair for 5 days, with over 400 exhibitors offering regional products, handcrafted goods, gastronomy and several carousel rides. Also includes a Bullfighting show and Equestrian Festival.

***Feira do Chocolate* (Chocolate fair)**	November (7th to 10th)	Fair dedicated to a gastronomy based on chocolate, with demonstrations, tastings, chocolate sculptures, lectures and a wide offer of products.
***Fórum da Juventude* (Youth Fórum)**	March (8th) to April (6th)	Month dedicated for the young and young adults with DJ contest, concerts, theater, sports classes, exhibits, etc.
***Festa da Nossa Senhora da Penha de França* (Religious Pilgrimage)**	May (2 weekends)	Party in the honor of Grândola's Patroness with one day (roses) and one night (candles) procession, music and fireworks.
Summer Animation	July	Cultural activities in the main garden of Grândola (Jardim 1º de Maio) with street theater, kids theater and concerts (many variations).
Metal GDL	September	Three days dedicated to heavy metal music.
***Ultra Maratona Atlântica Melides Tróia* (Marathon)**	July (28th)	Unique type of competition in Portugal and in Europe, a 43 Km marathon in the beaches' sand, patronized by the Portuguese Olympic Gold Medalist in marathon, Carlos Lopes.

Source: Tourism Department of Grândola and www.cm-grandola.pt

4.3.2.3. Places to visit and enjoy

4.3.2.3.1. Beaches

Going from the sea to the interior, the first places to mention are the beaches and the marina. This municipality has **9 beaches with Blue Flag and 10 *Quercus*** (National Assotiation of Nature's Conservation) **Gold Quality Beaches**, being *Melides* (the beach), *Comporta, Aberta Nova and Galé-Fontainhas, Carvalhal, Pego, Atlântica, Bico das Lulas, Tróia-Galé and Tróia-Mar*; **Tróia's Marine also has a Blue Flag**. Also to mention *Comporta*'s Beach won the "**Most Accessible Beach**" in Portugal award (as of 2011), which rewards practices developed to make beaches more accessible to people with conditioned mobility. These beaches have a reduced man-built interference, being at the fullest of their natural state. Besides the natural wonder of these beaches, several events can be attended and there are many activities to participate.

4.3.2.3.2. Entertainment

Still close to the sea there are 3 facilities in Tróia (in Blue&Green Tróia Design Hotel) that can provide entertainment and space to organize events. The recent **Casino** (opened in 01/01/2011) is a bold and dynamic space with a welcoming atmosphere to place your bets, hang out with the friends, loved ones and listen to live music. The **Entertainment Center** holds several concerts (some with free entrance) that are available all year round. Finally there is the **Conference Center**, which is targeted for businesses, being possible to hold conferences, parties, exhibits and company meetings in a special setting. Also in Grândola there are the Fairs and Exhibits Park (*Parque de Feiras e Exposições*, with 2 pavilions and grand concert stage that house many entertainment events), *Cine Granadeiro* (which is used as a cinema room and as a smaller concert and theater venue) and *Cine-Teatro Grândolense*.

4.3.2.3.3. Museums

The municipality has two museums. The **Mining Museum of *Lousal***, showing the spoils of the mining era of this parish. This museum also comprehends the **Science Mine** (***Centro Ciência Viva do Lousal***) which is a modern center with interactive content and spaces dedicated to geology, biology, physic, chemistry and mathematics, being more targeted towards kids (school trips) and families. There is also the **Sacred Art Museum** (free entrance), center of Grândola, which presents a permanent collection of paintings, sculptures and decorative arts, being close to a hundred works of sacred art, and also displaying a virtual visit to sacred monuments and places. Also in the works (still on paper) is the **Observatory for Intervention Music**, type music that is taking Grândola through the whole country and oversees.

4.3.2.3.4. Architectonic Patrimony

Grândola has a couple of monuments dedicated to its history and its contribution to the history of this country. There is the **25th of April Memorial** (north entrance of

Grândola) that is a representation for the Carnation Revolution, including the lyrics and melody sheet for "*Grândola Vila Morena*", the music used as the second signaling of the revolution, written and sang by José "Zeca" Afonso. There is also the **Freedom Monument** (anthropomorphic sculpture), **Monument to José Afonso** (perpetuation of his visit to the county and importance) and the **Monument of Popular Poets**, in *Carvalhal*.

4.3.2.3.5. Archeological Patrimony

There are a set of edifications from older times being the most important and promoted the **Roman Ruins of Tróia**, which were occupied from the 1st to the 6th century. As part of Tróia Resort these ruins can be visited and there are a couple more activities surrounding it: Roman Dinner, Roman Games and the "Be an archeologist for a day". There is also the **Roman Dam of *Pego da Moura*** in Grândola, **Megalithic Monument** in Lousal and **Old Houses Necropolis** in Melides.

4.3.2.3.6. Tourism Posts

For more information about the offer, there are **4 tourism posts** in the municipality (*Grândola*, *Carvalhal, Melides* and *Tróia*) that will receive visitors with a welcome smile and knowledge about there is to be seen and experienced.

4.3.3. The Brand "Grândola"

For the communication of this product to be consistent with its essence, there is a need to look at the brand "Grândola", understanding how well defined it is (if it is or isn't clearly defined), how it behaves, and how it transpires to the customers, i.e. tourists. As mentioned in the Literature Review (1.3.3 Place Brand Management), even with the offer being presented by different entities, this offer is coordinated by the brand identity, which is at the hands of the municipality council making it sturdy and solid. Also, in the Geographical Application topic (1.3.4) is mentioned that place branding can be applied to the whole municipality, which is being done now.

Understanding what the current brand position is is truly important to the preparation of a communication plan, being necessary to have **brand consistency** and a well defined **set of values**. This can be seen trough the brand's basic elements, which will provide a guideline to the communication (if there is in fact consistency).

- **Name**: (*Município*/Municipality) Grândola. This is the name being used in platforms such as the facebook and promotions means such as brochures;
- **Tone of voice**: Direct and informative. Adjusted to the target, being less formal for the younger audience;
- **Logotype**: Currently there are 2 different logotypes (one of them – Image 5– was shown in the beginning of April, 2013) that according the Tourism Department of Grândola will be both be used during a period of transaction. The first logo (Image 4) contains the brand name and some elements that resemble the sun, sunset/sunrise and/or mountain range and the sea (beaches), even if not in a so direct manner. Yet it contains a grey element that could stand for urbanization, which may collide with the defined positioning (which may also be unclear). This logo is still seen in a variety of supports that contain the brand. The logotype contains an hand written typeface, which transpires an informal feel, relaxed and spontaneous. The new and 2nd logo (Image 5) is graphically lighter (in color and elements) but is even more confusing on the message to transmit. The symbol could be associated with the sea and beaches, but it also resembles wind or water vapor (spa). The typeface is easier to read than the first, with a wavy feel. This logotype was presented in the municipality's facebook page with no context of its usage and/or meaning, which does not help to understand the reason behind its creation, being used there and in some communication that is being created now.

Image 4 Municipality of Grândola's Logotype.

Source: www.cm-grandola.pt

Image 5 Municipality of Grândola new and 2nd Logotype

Source: Grândola's facebook page

- **Color**: the most used colors with this brand are (light) blue, (light) orange and red, yellow and green, which are basic colors that are gathered from the involving nature simplicity. The usage is then moderated according to the theme (e.g. blue and orange are more used to promote beaches and green and yellow towards the rural plains side;
- **Typefaces**: The body text typefaces used are generally sans serif, due to the informative tone of voice;
- **Imagery:** photography is the more common option, as the scenic beautifulness sometimes speaks for itself;
- **Strapline**: *"Um novo destino"*/"A New Destination". Grândola may be an old council (almost 500 years) but it keeps on reinventing itself, keeping up with times (and in some points, ahead of it), hence the "New Destination". This also shows its directness towards the tourism market through the use of the word "destination".

As seen in this small analysis, there are some points that don't match with each other clearly and should be tuned, and also some aspects are not clearly defined in what concerns the porpoise of its being, thus needing some minor, yet important, adjustments (which will be covered in the implementation topic).

4.3.4. Strategy

In order to better understand the current strategy, interviews were conducted to the entities that define the strategy and/or coordinate it, as mentioned priory. These entities are the Costa Alentejana and Municipal Council of Grândola, having the first a broader strategy planning (as it comprehends the whole littoral region) and the second a more precise one.

In the first case, Dr. Carlos Silva initially explained that **Costa Alentejana** works on the **continuous improvement and creation of the touristic product**, creation of **actions to generate attractiveness**, the promotion of the southwest region of Portugal as a destination, and is the bridge between *Turismo do Alentejo* and Municipal Councils and touristic service providers. In the matter of the strengths of Grândola, Dr. Silva considers that the **sea (beach and landscape)** is one of the **main factors of attractiveness**, but also points to the diversity of activities, **capacity of accommodation** (biggest in this region), **calm and tranquil lifestyle,** wine production (being the Council with the second most number of producers in the region) and the **Golf in Tróia** (32^{nd} best golf course in Europe – magazine Golf World, 2011). Concerning the needs of tourists it is evaluated that there is a **shift from mass tourism to niche tourism**, looking for specialties and certain experiences from gastronomy and golf (it is a unique setting playing golf between a river and the Atlantic Ocean) to bird watching and fishing. These "small" experiences are gaining track, but still, the biggest part of the tourists are firstly attracted by the coastal scene, the connection to the sea and rural land. The strategy is mainly divided by national and foreign tourists, as the summer is more directed at the domestic market (sea related activities and summer events) and the foreign (mainly northern Europe and France) can be "used" in the winter as a seasonality smoothing, as our cold/mild temperatures are considered mild/warm. Finally, regarding the communication strategy, the **Municipality of Grândola**, as the others under this entity, has its **own communication**, but **aligned** with the one of **Costa Alentejana** (being itself aligned with Turismo do Alentejo). The distinctive products/activities that Grândola can/should promote in order to differentiate itself from the offer is the Ultra Atlantic Marathon, Air Festival, Golf and valorization of its heritage.

Representing the Municipal's Council of Grândola Dr. Pedro Beato explained that the role of the **Tourism department** of this identity is to **promote Grândola** through several means, **managing the communication contents** and platforms and direct contact with the tourists through the Tourism post. He considers that the **strengths** of the offer are the **environmental sustainability** that provides nature in its full, **the sea, beach and sun**, the **mountain range** (which is hosting MTB Orienting World Cup this year), **gastronomy** and finally, **the people**. The friendliness of the latter is what makes the tourists come back. Dr. Pedro Beato pointed that the tourist are mainly groups (families) and the well established segment. They look for, mainly, beach but the whole activities that can surround a trip to the beach and some more, because when they try this destination (mainly first through beach), as expectations are exceeded, they come back, with a friend and looking for more. The underlying strategy is to preserve the fixed markets by complementing the offer and going after markets such as the north of Europe (for the same reasons that Dr. Carlos Silva pointed), mainly senior, and for residential tourism. Regarding communication, it should be tailored to the customer, as the offer should be (specific product packages). The line of order is to promote the quality of the offer (even though the main demand is constituted by the well established segment, the offer is not based on luxury, but on quality), and the several activities through the best means.

4.3.5. Communicating Grândola – current state

Grândola promotes itself in a couple of means and also has presence in communication from other entities such as Costa Alentejana and Turismo do Alentejo. This promotion is **mainly informational** for activities and events, not being based in creating brand/destination and connection with the customer/tourist.

The most active platform that it uses is the **Facebook page** which is not a fan page, but a friend page which limits the “followers” by 5.000, being at **4.999 fans** currently there is an immediate must to change (the problem is that it is not possible to switch, being necessary to create a new page). The down size of the fan page is that it can’t send an invitation to connect (but current followers can suggest it), the person needs to like the page for him/herself, challenging the fans gathering project, with several posts per day. Yet, the page is v**ery active with posts** that are mainly informative about the activities and events happening in the County and also information to the population (acting as a tourism/event page and Municipal Council page). Also, there are shares of posts from some businesses and tourism operators. Unfortunately it is more active on the side of the owner of the page, as **likes, shares and comments are rather scarce**. Still online there is the **Municipal Council's website**, which is a mix of information to the population and to visitors, not being clear, simple and direct for whom is seeking only touristic and events information.

Secondly, **brochures** are used as aggregators of events and activities contents and as touristic guides (containing maps, routes and suggestions). Some of these are made by *Turismo de Portugal*, granting a bigger dispersion and availability of these materials more than the local tourism posts.

In more rare occasions, but more suggestible in terms of attractiveness, **TV advertisements** are used (at a National level). The last time this mean was used, it was for promoting the County fair, which aired a couple of days priory and during the fair. As it is one of the biggest fairs of the region, thousands are drawn to go). Also, **outdoor advertisements** have also been used, being in the highway close to the Grândola exits (A2 that connects Lisbon to the Algarve and passes on the side of Grândola) and in the close regions, being always selected spots of high count of passage.. Also there was one used to promote the said fair on the capital's busiest bridge (on the entrance/exit), being scene by thousands.

Another initiative was the creation of a **micro-site** for the county fair with the program of the concerts and videos from previous years. There is also a **mobile version** that gives the fair's visitors information about the agenda (thus realizing the necessity of being available in multiple devices).

Image 6 Micro-site and mobile site for the county fair (http://feiradeagosto.blogspot.pt/)

Even though there is presence in some means, this presence needs to be tweaked in order to improve its efficiency.

In the matter of budget, it is allocated to the department of communication (having a broader intervention than tourism and events) and then it is allocated to this specificity if it economically viable, if the investment is reasonable and if the estimated success rate has high levels.

4.4. Market Perspective

4.4.1. Grândola's Competition

Destinations like Costa Alentejana, and successively Grândola, have such a **distinct offer** that Mr. Carlos Silva and Dr. Pedro Beato believe that there is **no direct competition** for Grândola, as they moved from a destination of masses thinking model to a niche model. They also mentioned that if the offer is based on the unique assets of the region and the quality adjacent to them, it is hard to find direct competition. Obviously, that this isn't a full truth. **Costa Alentejana** may find itself **competing nationally** (domestic market) against the **region of Algarve**, **but for Grândola any municipality in there can be a competitor** as it is not competing with a whole region. Grândola competes with destinations that are similar in offer, being it ones that offer Sun & Sea, where the region of Algarve has several municipalities with a more appealing offer (as seen priory this region has much more visitors than Alentejo) or Rural Tourism, where the Center and North of Portugal have an established and greater offer (having far more establishments, in the case of the North, than the region of Alentejo (INE, 2012)). In what concerns **competition inside the region**, in Costa Alentejana, the **municipalities cooperat**e firstly to bring tourists to the region but also fight to provide the better offer.

4.4.2. Benchmarking

To keep up with the market and its best practices, there is a need to look up to **who stands out** (successful cases, that is), for what they stand out and what were the actions taken to achieve this. So, benchmarking competition (direct and non-direct) will result in a couple of points of reference to achieve and, depending on the strategy, surpass. As one reference point in terms of destination management and digital promotion**, *Foz do Iguaçu*, the most visited municipality in south Brazil** that conjugates urbanization with natural beauty and ***Costa Alentejana***, for its management in being part of a bigger entity but also coordinating small entities and its online presence.

4.4.2.1. Foz do Iguaçu

Image 7 Foz do Iguaço location in Brazil

Source: Wikipedia.pt

This Brazilian municipality located in the state of Paraná has only 617,7 Km2 is a case study of Best Practices acknowledged by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism. It is mostly known for its of “natural monuments” such as the Iguaçu Falls (one of the world’s 7 Wonders of Nature) and modern architecture as the *Itaipu* Dam (the Dam that generates the most energy in the world), thus combining the natural beauty with modern sustainability. It is the second-most visited destination in Brazil by foreigners. Even though its market share decreased in 2011 from 23,4% to 19,8%, so did the share of the most visited Brazilian destination, Rio de Janeiro (Ministry of Tourism of Brazil, 2012).

Despite the share decrease, it grew steadily before for a couple of years, thanks to actions directed towards putting this destination in the maps, both for the domestic market and the foreign market. It started in 2007, when it was positioned as "*Foz do Iguaço – Destino do Mundo*" ("World Destination") that both national and international promotion gained strength. Some of the more notorious and important actions made were (Gonzalez, 2010):

- Election of a Municipal Secretary of Tourism with no politic attachments (Public and Private consensus): by having a non-political management, it is assured that the projects have continuity beyond political terms, thus having a consistent brand and product through time;
- Creation of a fund that allows investment in marketing and promotion by both public and private entities, being less unbiased and seeking a benefit for all;
- Definition of the new brand and presentation of it through several means, online and offline, from web-display to outdoor ads;
- Creation of an interactive website in 3 languages (and purchase of 3 domains, according to the language, in order to be easier to find for foreigners), with touristic information, creation of a customized route plan, video, audio, animations and photos, always with focus on the natural beauty and sense of ecotourism;
- Creation of and integrated agenda with the internal players (lodging and other service businesses): with this, every entity stays aligned with a plan, cooperating to bring more tourists to the destination;

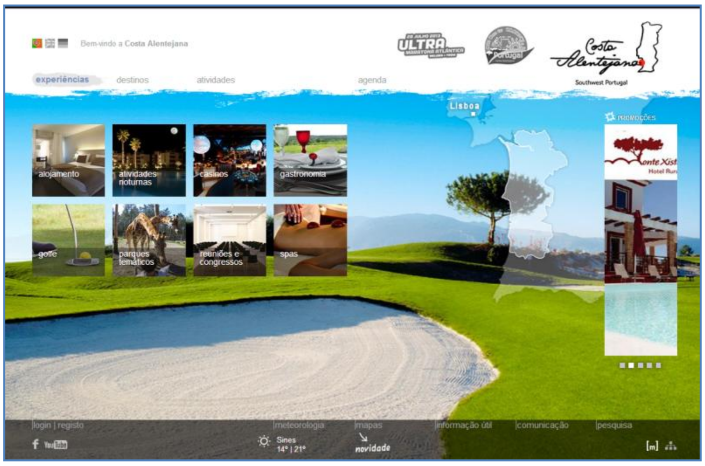
These actions helped in the projection of this destination and, as pointed by the Brazilian Ministry of Tourism, its actions constitute the Best Practices in Destination Marketing and Promotion, being of significant value for this project.

4.4.2.2. Costa Alentejana

As mentioned before, Costa Alentejana is the existing brand for the tourism of *Alentejo Litoral*. Its objectives are the monitorization and promotion of the regional touristic offer and the implementation of a marketing strategy. It is a good example of an entity that exists under a first one, *Turismo do Alentejo*, but that also coordinates the promotion of the municipalities inside of it. With Grândola being part of this entity and region, this benchmarking serves as an indication to follow the quality of communication of it, thus being at a similar level (better if possible) of quality, interaction and design. The main points to follow are a remarkably good website and an active facebook fan page (currently with almost 8.000 fans) with multiple posts per day that are shared, liked, commented and talked by around 1.800 people. The web-site was born after an analysis that showed difficulties in promoting the products of Alentejo Litoral and a necessity to have an interactive platform to show to the audience (Metatheke, n.d.). Hence, it was created a web-site that:

- Is available in 3 languages;
- Contains multimedia content: photos, videos and interactive maps are provided through organized sets;
- Shows the offer categorized by experiences, destinations and activities: more user-friendly;
- Has product-based design: the natural landscapes are the predominant background image through the whole visiting experience, being integrated with the page layout and design;
- Offers the possibility for the tourist to save favorites and to leave comments: which creates a point of interaction;
- Promotes special offers from hospitality and other touristic businesses (Costa Alentejana, 2013 a).

Image 8 Screen-capture of Costa Alentejana's Web-site



Source: www.costaalenteja,a.com.pt

The facebook page varies from inspiring photography of the regional landscape (along with a fitting small text or phrase, a greeting, and location shown in the photo). It is also used to promote (mainly through the share feature) several events that take place in its municipalities and lodging offers. The tone used in the posted is always inviting, informal and relaxed, suiting the characteristics of the offer (Costa Alentejana, 2013 b).

Finally, there is only left to mention that this promotional effort is done by a workforce of two people that are able to keep both platforms up-to-date and dynamic.

5. Implementation Proposition

5.1. Definition of the strategy

This communication plan follows the need to **manage** and **promote** this destination **consistently** and in an aggregated fashion with **the main objective of drawing more tourists to this destination**. With the gathered and analyzed information seen previously, this plan should follow these factors:

- Define **strict guidelines** of what the brand is, how it behaves and how it communicates: this will keep brand and also communication consistency ;
- Promote the **quality of the offer**: more concern in what the product is and why it is a great destination;
- Show the **diversity of options**: the offer is complex, but it should be clear in the eyes of the tourist (segment preferences and define priorities according to each segment);
- Promote what makes this destination different from the rest: **standing out in the market**, not blending in;
- Allow the inner market **players** to **propose** and integrate actions;
- Follow the existing **trends**: in order to be **up-to-date** in what communication platforms are used, to know what the tourists want and who they are.
- Adopt a communication strategy that has a good **blend of means**: both online and offline integration should be achieved.

With this in mind, it is proposed firstly the **redefinition of the brand**, thus having a new identity that is **true to the offer and is self-explanatory** (being easily understood), but also that conveys emotion and is easily adapted to the message (there can be different messages that are born in the same core). With the new brand there should arise a **guiding principle** that will act as the glue that will **keep coherence** in its offer, message and players strategy. This is done as it was observed that the current brand identity lacks its expression, personality and consistency. Also, the Strapline “Um Novo Destino” will also be proposed to change to one that is more emotional, that offers a mental visualization of the offer, one that does not erase heritage (the term *Novo*/New may give the appearance that everything has been reformulated and that may not offer the quality that it is known for) and that is hard to replicate (any destination can be a new destination). Therefore, this project goes beyond the communication plan, containing also the definition of the brand strategy, which is defined for the long term.

In what concerns the **communication plan** it is constructed for the **short to medium term**, being proposed a year of scheduled communications that can then be repeated (not necessarily the exact same messages, but the same type of media usage) for a couple more years (if the current facts and assumptions are still applied).

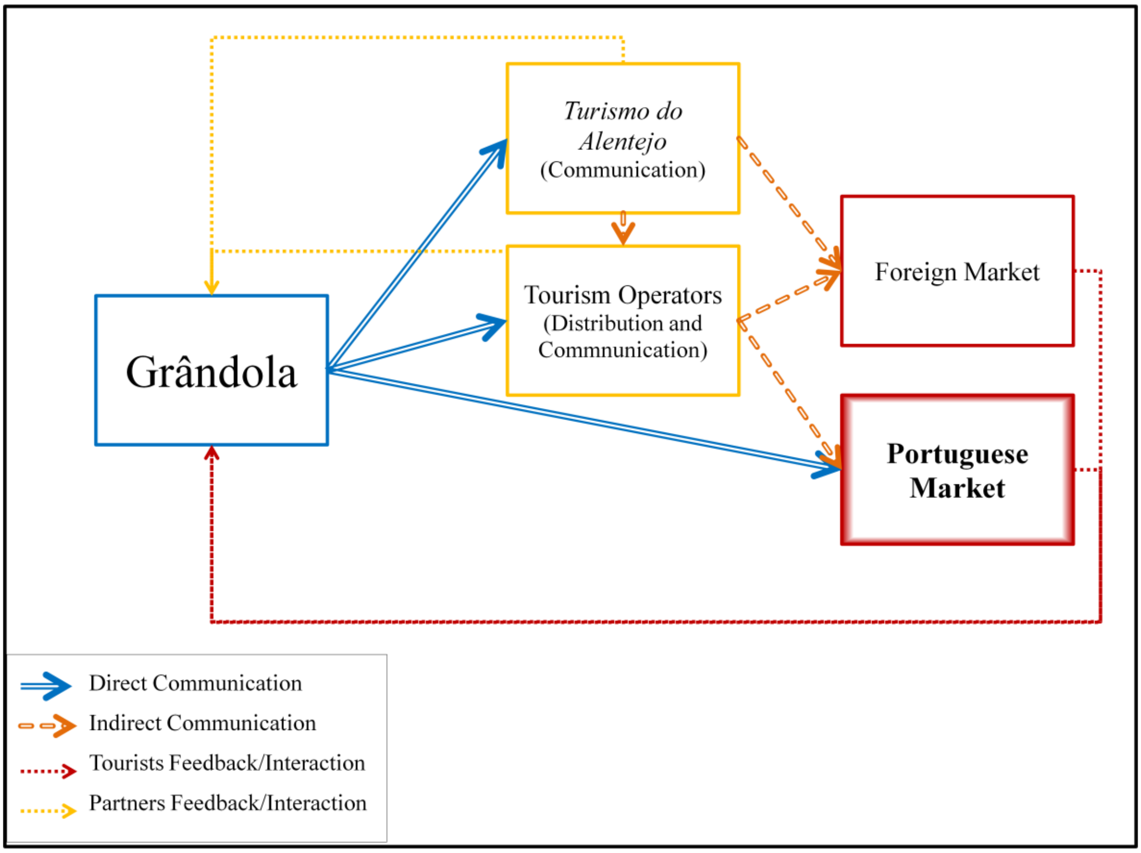
As the offer of a destination is a **complex aggregation** of several products, it needs to be **simplified and clarified** for the tourists, which can be done in the way the information is provided. A **well organized touristic web-site** is a beginning towards that clarification, where the information is arranged by what the tourists are looking for, being it an experience, where to sleep, where to eat or the possibility to combine these options. With the current trends, the online is a good platform to develop as the **access to information anywhere** is a growing need, which also points to having a mobile adaptation of the website. Also, it has lower investment and is easily changeable (updated) than most offline media. Also with low investment there is Social Media Marketing, where the cost is only the one of having a team working in the platform, which should be the same team that handles the remainder communication (this is true if there are not purchased social media banners).

The more **traditional platforms** (offline) should still be used, knowing that part of the population is not online or fully uses online platforms and that traditional platforms can have an higher degree of relevance/pertinence. For example, if there is a need to address a certain group of drivers while they are going to work, the existence of an outdoor advertisement in their commute may be more relevant than a banner advertisement. These platforms can have an higher reach, as some of them are considered **mass media**, resulting in an **higher exposition** of the brand and the offer promoted. Some other platforms in this set are more directed to a given target, being more precise to who there is a need to communicate to, being possible a bigger success rate (being success the number of clients that follow the suggested communication).

With the uncertainty of the future of the brand and entity Costa Alentejana, this project will rule out this entity and be under the assumption that the only **regional coordinator is *Turismo do Alentejo***. This entity defines the regional strategy, and Grândola needs to be able to follow it but, at the same time, distinguish itself from the remainder municipalities of the region. The communication should be endorsed with this brand, being used as a support of credibility and the standards that it stands for. It is then up to Grândola to add what it stands for, promoting its uniqueness.

The main **focus** of this communication plan will be mainly on the **Portuguese market** (Direct Communication), as they constitute around 90% of the visitors, as mentioned before. The communication to the **external markets** should be done as part of or **through Alentejo's communication** and **tourism operators** (Indirect Communication) as their external experience and influence is bigger as Mr. Carlos Silva pointed out. In order to gradually gain external notoriety (thus bringing more foreign tourists), Grândola can cooperate with these entities by being present in international tourism fairs and being part of press trips. As influence over these markets grows, other type of (more direct) actions can occur. This communication strategy is summarized in image 9. On an important note, the communication should not be one-sided, as it is important to listen to feedback from the tourists, tourism operators and *Turismo do Alentejo* (and also receive orientations from the latter).

Image 9 Grândola's communication strategy proposal



Source: Own elaboration

5.2. Brand Reformulation

Grândola needs to have a **brand** that is more **relevant**, stands out and is easier to understand. It is proposed to abandon quickly the 2 logotypes scheme as it is unwise to gradually transit between images, being uncertain in the eyes of the tourist what it is trying to be transmitted through the logo. This can cause brand dilution, which can than cause disbelieve in which the "real" brand is, being that one can be understood as part of something non-official or of a different entity. That being said, it is important to quickly **change** for one **logotype** that is neither one of the existing ones for the following reasons: the initial logotype is harder to perceive for the audience, being too abstract and indirect; the new one contains a symbol that hardly resembles the offer (even though the typeface used is easier to read). Also, both logotypes contain the "Município" (Municipality) indication, which should be removed, as it that adds clutter to the logotype and is not necessary to explain/show in the logo. Other brand elements need changes and or to be given more importance, to follow the new image. Also there is a problem with the existing Slogan/Strapline, being that it somewhat erases the heritage (by the use of “new”) and does not convey any image of what the touristic offer may be like. Therefore it’s necessary to also change the main message.

5.2.1. Name and Symbol - Logotype

The **new brand** will simply be known for **“Grândola”,** which defines its geography, its culture and history (heritage) and its known quality. The logotype, as seen in image 10 (conception process in Annex 2), is the junction of the name, in an handwritten typeface with the symbol. This symbol is **easier to assimilate**, even to the untrained eyes, showing three quarter circles that contain the **Sun, Sea and Rural Landscapes**, which are the natural resources that Grândola is known for (aligned as being environmentally sustainable and true to all that is natural). It also contains a **capital “G”**, which is the initial of the brand’s name that, in a more indirect way, can also be an **arrow rotating through the whole offer**, showing a balanced **aggregation** of a **multi-offer** where everyone can experience everything. Also, the missing quarter circle means that, only the tourist is missing to make Grândola whole. These 2 later characteristics can be better explained through communication in a more explicit way, when the brand is presented. In multimedia like video and web-site animations, the three quarter circles can contain real images, animations or videos of what each quarter represents.

The logotype was developed in a way that it is hard to replicate, being that only a destination with this characteristics and name can make it work. It should be used in its full (Name+Symbol) in the all of its applications, being always centered, as its own alignment is centered (the only exceptions to this rule are the application in social media, e.g. Facebook cover, and TV-ear – see Annex 3, image 14 and image 16, respectively).

Image 10 New Logotype for Grândola

Source: Own elaboration

5.2.2. Color

The colors used are **bright**, conferring a more **dynamic and powerful presentation**. The colors are separated by thin black lines to be cleared to perceive (the blue and green colors, being both from the cold colors, are harder to visually separate). This aesthetic separation is then visually brought back together by the capital “G”. The **bright orange** symbolizes the sun, energy, happiness and socialization. The **green** color symbolizes nature, as well as harmony, peace, freshness and is, most importantly, the most restful color to the human eye. Finally, **blue** is the color of the sea (and sky), symbolizing stability, confidence, calmness, peace of mind.

5.2.3. Typography

The typeface chosen for the logotype (named “The Great Escape”) is a font that simulates **hand written** letters, which helps to provide an association of a **relaxed and calm way of being**. Headlines and text can have a more regular font (not handwritten and sans serif), to be easier to read. Headlines should always be Italic and be, at least, two times bigger than the text, which should be regular

5.2.4. Slogan and Straplines

The proposition for the new **slogan** is "***Um Paraíso no Alentejo***" (A Paradise in Alentejo). This new general message has the objective to portray a **mental image of tranquility, calmness, paradisiacal beaches and landscapes**. It can then be combined with a set of **straplines** that present a given characteristic as part of the mentioned paradise, for example: "A Paradise of Tranquility", "A Paradise of Fun" (events and casino), "Holidays in Paradise" and "A Paradise for you".

5.2.5. Tone of Voice (TOV)

The TOV should be **direct** (as in clear) but **informal, relaxed and emotional**, following the essence of the brand and bringing itself closer to the tourists, speaking in a way that they clearly understand the message and feel themselves involved. This applies from the print ads to the facebook comment replies, having the need to be consistent.

5.2.6. Imagery

The images used in the communication should be, whenever possible, **photographic**, being photos **taken in *Grândola***, of its offer. These images can have people, from tourists to staff (image bank or also local photos), but only a couple of them, in order to maintain the calm and peaceful personality. The exceptions to this rule are when events (culture, sports, etc.) and entertainment places like *Tróia*'s Casino are being promoted.

5.3. Communication Objectives

Creating communication objectives will set the plan under the **need to attain a group of goals**, by always having the eyes in the **target**. Also, the clear definition of objectives, helps to define what will be the tools used, as each one is more suitable for some objectives than others. These should be somehow measurable, relevant and realistically attainable in an identified period of time. Knowing this, the objectives created were:

1. **Show the (new) face** – **raise notoriety** for the new and clearer brand presentation;
2. **Encourage visits and Stays** – with a bigger focus on the low season, to **Blur Seasonality**;
3. **Create Engagement** – create a bond with clients/prospects (and even the residents) with the new “more emotional” brand.

After the plan is applied, the objectives can be used to **understand the success** of the campaign, by observing what tools better served their purpose and if all the objectives are met (or not). In the case of the first objective, success is evaluated directly with the tourists, asking for their **opinion and perception** of the new face (surveys) and by the reach of the communications (for example, how many people are talking about Grândola on facebook). For the second objective, its achievement is evaluated through the **increase in number of nights spent and visitors**, especially in the low season. The proportion of nights spent from July to September is 49% (2011 in Alentejo Litoral; was 49% in 2010 and 47,3% in 2009), as mentioned before, being that the remainder 3 quarters of the year (75% of the year) has the other half of nights spent. Success for this objective would be that in the next year the summer proportion goes down by 5%, and 7,5% over two years. These values are proportional, being that the demand from July to September (as well as the rest of the year) should also increase. Finally, success for the last objective would be the **increase of interactions** with the audience, mainly through the digital platforms, such as the web-site and facebook as well as getting close to partners and other influential entities such as journalists and bloggers.

5.4. The Plan

In the table8, the actions for this communication plan are presented, organized by communication tools. In each action it is mentioned what objectives it can fulfill, what tools are transversal to it, what is the investment, schedule and evaluation criteria. Proposed examples of communication can be found in Annex 3, the detailed calculus of the investment in Annex 4 and the calendar aggregation in Annex 5.

Table 8 Communication Plan Proposal

Com. Tool	Action	Description
Promotion	*Price Reduction*	• For the first 400 tourists (20% of the available accommodation) that book a stay for their Easter vacations in Grândola, the **toll payments are offered** by Grândola. These tourists are asked to send proof of the toll payment and then Grândola will return its value. • **Message:** *"Não custa nada ir até ao Paraíso"* - "It costs nothing to go the Paradise" • **Schedule:** Easter week • Promoted through press, radio and facebook (see example of facebook post in Annex 4, image 16). • **Comunication Objectives**: Blur Seasonality • **Investment:** € 12.760 (Annex 5) • **Evaluation criteria**: Increase of visits by at least 20% in the Easter period; number of proofs sent.

	Contest	• Every tourist that stays in Grândola in Easter has the opportunity to win two free nights (couple) in the Summer (July to September). In the check-in, the tourist is (re-)informed of this contest, being invited to write a phrase with the words "*Grândola*", "*Paraíso*" and "*Férias*" (Holidays). From these sentences, 30 will be selected by a jury (Tourism Department and Municipal Council) and then those will be voted in the facebook page. For the votes to count, it is needed to like the page, thus increasing the number of fans, through the voting friends of the participants. The 10 most voted phrases will win 2 nights in an establishment of their choice (according to availability).
		• **Message:** *"Ganhe a oportunidade de voltar ao Paraíso"* - "Win the opportunity to return to Paradise"
		• **Schedule:**
		  o Evaluation of the 30 best phrases: 2 weeks after Easter;
		  o Facebook Voting: From May to June.
		  o Results: Last week of June
		• Promoted through press, radio and facebook (See Annex 4, Image 17 for an example)
		• **Com. Objectives**: Blur Seasonality and Create engagement
		• **Investment:** € 1.800 (Assumption that the cost is shared with the Hotels, and that the customers can and will choose the most expensive option) (Annex 5)
		• **Evaluation Criteria:** Increase of visits by at least 20% in the Easter period, number of tourists willing to participate, number of new likes to the facebook page brought by the voting, number of people talking about the contest

Advertising	TV	• Creation of a MEO Kanal channel containing: Agenda, footage from the natural touristic product (beaches, plains, mountains), from the hospitality facilities, events, promotion communication and testimonials. It can be playing in the TVs of local businesses, being another mean to show what more Grândola has to offer. • **Schedule:** All year management • Promoted through Facebook, web-site and merchandising (as seen on Annex 3, image 15) • **Com. Objectives:** Show the new face and create engagement. • **Investment:** € 2.000 (assuming that the content is produced in-house; non-term license) • **Evaluation Criteria:** number of channel and video visualizations

	Press	• Institutional and Promotional ads in a national monthly magazine of Travel & Tourism (*Evasões*).
		• **Messages:**
		  ○ Institutional: *"Grândola, um Paraíso no Alentejo"* (See Annex 3, Image 18)
		  ○ Chocolate Fair: *"O Paraíso mais doce do Alentejo"* – "The sweetest Paradise of Alentejo"
		  ○ Easter/Summer Promotion and Contest: As mentioned before
		• **Schedule:** April, August and November
		• **Com. Objectives**: Show the new face and encourage visits
		• **Investment**: € 5.850 (Annex 5)
		• **Evaluation Criteria**: number of visits drawn to the web-site/facebook page; increase in visits during the month of the publication.

	Radio	• Promotional and Event Ads in the most heard radio in the country, *Rádio Comercial* (with more detailed information in the website). Used to promote the Easter promotion and the County Fair.
		• **Message:**
		    ○ **Easter Promotion:** *"Começa o dia já preso no trânsito? Há alguma coisa no trabalho a stressá-lo? Então tire uns dias para vir até Grândola, um Paraíso do Alentejo. Aproveite a ir agora na Páscoa e não se preocupe com as portagens. Informe-se melhor em www.Grandola.pt . Não custa nada ir ao Paraíso"* – "Starting the day stuck in traffic? Is there anything in your work stressing you out? Take some days to come to Grândola, a paradise in Alentejo. Come in the Easterand don't worry about toll payments. Get informed in www.Grandola.pt. Itcosts nothing to go to the Paradise";
		    ○ **County Fair:** *"Venha visitar uma das grandes Feiras do Alentejo. Cultura e diversão, com actuações de ...,... e ..., entre outros. Mais informações em www.Grandola.pt. Venha conhecer Grândola, um Paraíso no Alentejo."* – "Come visit one of the great fairs of Alentejo. Culture and fun, with performances by …,… e …, among Others. More information in www.Grandola.pt. Come to see Grândola, a Paradise in Alentejo"
		• **Schedule:** March and/or April (accordingly to the Easter day) and August
		• **Com. Objectives**: Encourage visits
		• **Investment**: € 5.648 (Annex 5)
		• **Evaluation Criteria**: in the first case, ask in the act of reservation/check-in how the clients have learnt about the offer. In the second case, the significant increase in visits to the web-page may be

		considered success.
	Outdoor	• Outdoor Advertisements will be divided in two different types: ○ **Welcome:** Outdoor ads right before Grândola's exit in the South Highway (*A2*) ▪ Message: institutional ▪ Schedule: Permanent ○ **Divulgation**: at the entrance of Lisbon (Annex 4, image 19): ▪ Message: *"Troque o Stress da cidade pelo Paraíso do Alentejo"* – "Change the city stress for the Paradise in Alentejo" ▪ Schedule: June • **Com. Objectives:** Show the new face and encourage visits • **Investment: € 16.299**(Annex 5)
Digital Marketing	Website	• Creation of web-site for tourism and events of Grândola, thus being separated from the internal communication displayed in the council's webpage. It should contain an agenda, presentation of the offer (by categories: experiences, events, hospitality and restaurants) and contacts. The website must have a simple design and layout with images (can be interactive and/or panoramic), videos and animations. There should also exist a point of interaction, were tourists are allowed to ask questions and leave comments. This website needs to also have a mobile version, being easily adaptable to the majority of smartphones and tablet screens. • The website needs to be managed all year round, being constantly updated. There's also the need to use SEO tools, in order to be easier to be found in search engines.

		• **Com. Objectives:** Create engagement and show the new face • **Investment: € 35.000** (budget by Metatheke – who made Costa Alentejana's Website) • **Evaluation Criteria:** number of visits, number of likes, number of comments/interactions

	Facebook	• Creation of a fanpage (the current one is a friend page, and is already at the limit number of friends)
		• Invite the friends of the old profile to become fans of the new page
		• This page should like other tourism brands (like Turismo do Alentejo and inner players) as also as known personalities, journalists, TV channels, journals and magazines (hoping that they will like the page in return, through the quality of the content an interest it may provide) showing a need for connectivity.
		• **Page dinamization/engagement (see post examples in Annex 4, images 20 to 25):**
		  ○ Emotional/Inspiring Content: mainly photographic content with an inviting/greeting message
		  ○ Contests that require fans to answer questions and riddles (for free nights, free meals, free events and special participations)
		  ○ Promotion of events, hospitality and other service businesses
		  ○ Promotion of main website
		  ○ Win Fans through contests (e.g. post voting that requires a like to the page to be valid,
		• This page needs a tight management, needing to be quick to respond to comments and/or questions and to be constantly updated
		• **Com. Objectives:** Create engagement and Show the (new) face.

		• **Evaluation Criteria:** number of fan pages, number of comments, likes and shares per post, number of people talking about Grândola
	YouTube	• A channel should be created, being an easy way to share video content. Its usage should be incremented through posts in facebook and vice-versa. • Subscribe to the same type of channels as the pages mentioned priory for facebook, showing that the page is active and the brand wants to connect. • **Com. Objectives:** Create engagement and show the (new) face • **Criteria Evaluation:** number of subscribers, of channel and video views, and video likes.
Merchandising	"TV-ear"	• This merchandising should be displayed in every television (that have MEO service) of every businesses in the municipality, displaying the MEO Kanal number, facebook and website URL. (See also annex 2) • **Com. Objectives:** Create Engagement (Internal and External) • **Investment: € 150** (Annex 3, image 15)
Public Relations	Press Releases	• Creation of Press Releases to draw bloggers, journalists and TV shows to some events and/or other products, which will create exposure with no monetary investment • Create an access area in the website for journalists and bloggers to retrieve further information, photos and to have a more customized point of interaction.

		• **Com. Objectives**: Create engagement and encourage visits • **Evaluation criteria:** number of non-paid exposures (articles, news, tv clips, etc.)
	Invitation	• Invite journalists to be present in the Chocolate Fair with a chocolate scented invitation letter. • **Com. Objectives**: Create Engagement • **Investment:** € 132 (Annex 4) • **Evaluation Criteria:** number of non-paid exposures
Direct Mail	E-mail	• Sent to gymnasiums an invitational e-mail for their clients to form a team to participate in the Ultra Maratona Atlântica and to bring others to watch the competition • **Message:** "*Venha corer no Paraíso*" – "Come to run in Paradise" • **Schedule:** between May, June and July • **Com. Objectives**: Encourage visits • **Evaluation Criteria**: include a "where have you known UMA from" category in the inscription formulary, with the option "from E-mail sent to my gymnasium". The number of inscriptions with this option (in proportion to total) will determine its success
Others	Brochures	• Have a physical brochure in the hospitality facilities and other touristic businesses, containing a summarized description of the offer and agenda. Reinforce that the same information can be found online, educating the tourists/prospects to see the digital version, going towards paperless communication; • **Schedule:** Monthly edition

	• **Com. Objectives**: Create engagement and show (the new) face. • **Investment:** € 4.380 (Annex 4)

Total Investment: € 79.019

Investment Specialized for a year (previous value less Meo Kanal and website): **€ 57.019**

Communication Budget available for 2013: € 64.650

Note: Facebook post content, Web-site content and other material creation costs are considered in-house.

Considering the magnitude of the presented values, this investment should be sought to be partially shared by Turismo do Alentejo, and, in specific cases that have a direct impact in a certain type of business, negotiations should happen to have players participate (should only happen with knowing that they also have something to gain, and not only as a form to help the investment). Considering the budget allocated for 2013 of € 64.650, the investment for one year of € 57.019 follows the available capital resources. The value of € 32.000, that have is a more permanent investment, can fit in the “Software acquisition” category (which for 2013 is evaluated in € 110.000) (Municipal Council of Grândola, 2013).

Also, for the foreign market, Turismo do Alentejo should be the main partner and Standard-bearer of Grândola outside borders, by distributing flyers/brochures (shared costs), promoting the website and Social Media pages in their network. When notoriety arises and this market improves it share, Grândola may start to communicate more directly.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

This project underlines the necessity to have more consistency in the brand and communication of Grândola. This plan contains specific guidelines for both themes, being that the relevance of the second should be evaluated overtime and changed if needed (being it change in trends, in actions efficiency and/or available budget). The brand is recommended to remain as consistent over time as possible, in order to avoid brand dilution (by not making drastic alterations that collide with what it means). The creation of these guidelines is made so that there is definitive and coherent personality, not just communicating because it is seemed as important, but also because it is needed to make it in unison, always aligned with the offer and who we are.

The new identity follows the idea of a Paradise, a place that is synonym to all that is good, calm, rest and nature in its most untouched form. The identity of "Um Paraíso no Alentejo" also gives a sense of location. With these four words it is easy to understand what can be found and where it can be found. It is essential that the brand is presented with "pomp and circumstance", not just a single facebook post like was done priory. This presentation should pass equally by several means and should be done in a way that the image is altered in every application as close to the presentation as possible. The presentation should be done in a major event like the August Fair, that also has a strong Tourism feel, and that draws many visitants and media.

A multi-means communication plan is then proposed (under the assumption that the brand has already been presented), being that an integrated communication program is able to affect a bigger audience and is also able prosper with the strengths of every different mean. The main objectives are to Encourage Visits in the whole year (but specialy in the low season – blur seasonality), to Show the (new) face (raise in notoriety in the new image and existing offer) and to create engagement, bringing the audience closer to the brand. The total investment is € 79.019, a high value, even considering that the construction (and related processes) of the web-site accounts for more than a third of the mentioned value, which fits the budget constructed for 2013. If investment can't be allocated for the construction of a state-of-art web-site, it is recommended a more basic page, which would then lose important aspects like interaction and completeness. These aspects could then be covered through the usage of the Facebook fan page and YouTube channel, needing an even stricter management. Also, content like facebook posts, photography and short videos (non high productions) should be made in-house in order to not increase exponentially the value of the investment.

In this plan, the main market focus, goes to the domestic market, has it comprehends 90% of the demand, has data showed previously. It is important to show to the Portuguese, especially in these times of economic weakness as it is more complicated to travel abroad, that Grândola has an offer that can satiate those same needs that destinations of international projection can offer (with similar characteristics). The external markets are boarded by Turismo do Alentejo, as it has more notoriety beyond borders, going along with this entity's communication has this quota increases and Grândola has more notoriety in the foreign market.

It is important to foment the destination of Grândola, unifying the brand strategy and the communication (aligned with the offer, being certainly a challenge to gather such variety of services). It is important to start a more active plan like the presented to strive in this market when it's growing, and to set an example for this region, being Grândola the main player of Alentejo Litoral and in the pole position of Alentejo.

In the (close) future, Grândola should also take in account the creation of new products, alone or in partnership with the surrounding municipalities. Some existing products may still be under development, needing to be fine-tuned to the better offer possible, and creating new as demand grows for the region.

It may be a small destination, but Grândola has a big offer and personality (a little hide in sight currently) that are certainly promising, needing to be well managed, by offering and showing relevance and being close to the tourists.

"We must go beyond textbooks, go out into the bypaths and untrodden depths of the wilderness and travel and explore and tell the world the glories of our journey." –
John Hope Franklin

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8. Annexes

8.1. Annex 1 - Interview Guides

Image 11 Interview Guide for the grândola Tourism and Costa Alentejana

ISCTE Business School
Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

MSc. in Marketing

Communication Plan for Grândola

Interview Guide –Grândola Tourism and Costa Alentejana

This interview has the objective to know the reality of the touristic market (as well as the insertion of Grândola in it) from the point of view of the entities that intervene in the strategy and promotion, understanding also how Grândola is being communicated currently. This information will then be used to the realization of a communication plan for the brand "Grândola", being the project for the Msc. in Marketing. This plan comes with the intent to communicate and position this brand in order to foment its growth as a destination, bringing more people to the municipality.

Questions:

1. In which way the "*Município de Grândola*", as an entity and brand, influences the product strategy of "*Grândola*"?
   a. What is the strategy and defined objectives?
   b. What kinds of actions have been promoted?
2. Which are the strengths in the offer of *Grândola*?
   a. What are the main touristic products?
3. What does a tourist look for when he visits *Alentejo Litoral*? And what about *Grândola*?
   a. Do you consider that they are satisfied (Perceived experience > Expected experience)?
4. Which do you consider to be the strategic markets for *Grândola*?
5. Who do you consider to be the direct competition for *Grândola*?
   a. Do you consider that they have strategies that *Grândola* could adopt?
6. How do you evaluate Grândola's communication strategy?
   a. Should *Grândola* be communicated as a unique Destination, fractioned or as part of a bigger whole?
   b. Which actions could Grândola use to differentiate itself from competition?
7. Do you believe that Grândola has the potential to be an international Destination of high notoriety?

Image 12 Interview Guide for Hospitality

ISCTE Business School
Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

MSc. in Marketing

Communication Plan for Grândola

Interview Guide –Hospitality

This interview has the objective to know the reality of the touristic market (as well as the insertion of Grândola in it) from the point of view of the entities that are provide services in this industry, understanding also how Grândola is being communicated currently. This information will then be used to the realization of a communication plan for the brand "Grândola", being the project for the Msc. in Marketing. This plan comes with the intent to communicate and position this brand in order to foment its growth as a destination, bringing more people to the municipality.

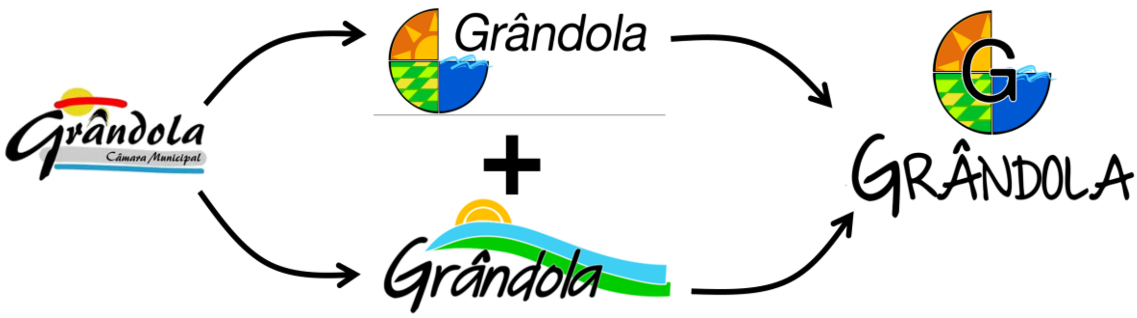
Questions:

1. Given your insertion in the tourism market, do you consider that, in the current socioeconomic situation, this is a market with growth potential?
2. What does a tourist look for when he visits *Alentejo Litoral*? And what about *Grândola*?
   a. Do you consider that they are satisfied (Perceived experience > Expected experience)?
   b. In Which way does your service enriches the experience?
3. Which are the strengths in the offer of *Grândola*?
   a. Is it possible to Grândola to differentiate itself from the other national offers with similar factors?
4. Who do you consider to be the direct competition for *Grândola*?
   b. Do you consider that they have strategies that *Grândola* could adopt?
5. How do you evaluate Grândola's communication strategy?
   a. Do you consider that your service is directly influenced by it?
   b. Should *Grândola* be communicated as a unique Destination, fractioned or as part of a bigger whole?
   c. Which actions could Grândola use to differentiate itself from competition?
   d. Given the current context, which actions would be the most relevant?
6. Do you believe that Grândola has the potential to be an international Destination of high notoriety?

8.2. Annex 2: Conception process of the new logotype

Taking the elements that in the old logotype, it was diverged to 2 different solutions. The logotype in the middle-down is a more direct transition and less risky. The problem with this option is that it is easily replicable (having “standard” tourism elements in a “standard” disposition) and the colors are harder to coexist (due to minimal visual separation). The option middle-up is a step out of the common tourism logo. Positively, the elements are easily perceived, but on the down-side, it does not have a broader sense of the offer and relaxed feel. The combination of these two resulted in the final proposition, on the right, explained in 8.2.1. Name and Symbol – Logotype.

Image 13 Conception process of the new logotype



Source: Own elaboration

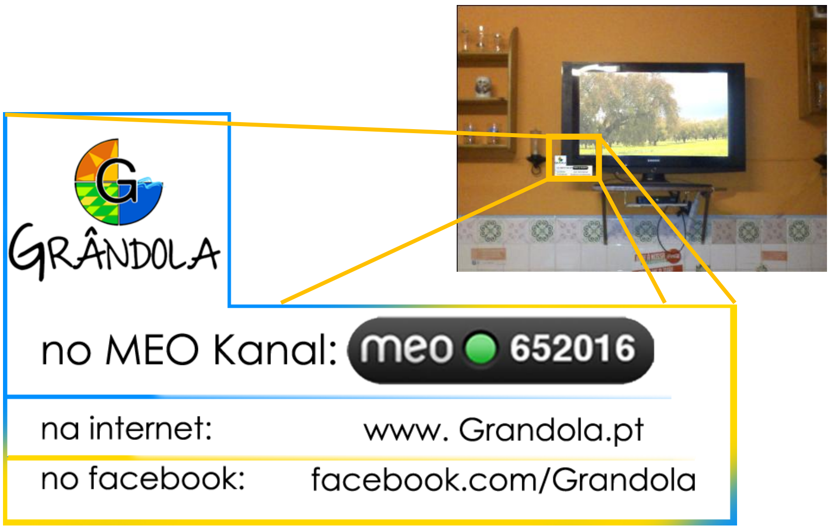
8.3. Annex 3 – Exceptions to the logotype usage rules

In Facebook, the logotype must be used as the profile picture, thus playing with the cover.

Image 14 Logotype used as profile picture

Due to the configuration of the TV-ear piece, the position of the logois changed to the top left side.

Image 15 Position of the logo in the TV-ear



8.4. Annex 4 – Proposition of Facebook communication

In image 16, it can be seen an example of what could like the image post for the Easter promotion. The rules of the promotion can be presented in the text of the post.

Image 16 Facebook post example for the Easter promotion

Source: Own elaboration

For the contest to win a double stay for 2 in the summer, image 17 shows what a call to action post would look like. In this case was added a footer (which existence can depend on the post) with the hotel where the photo was taken.

Image 17 Proposition for a facebook post for the contest

Source: Own elaboration

Below, in image 18, is shown a proposition for a magazine advertisement, which constitutes a 1/3 of a page.

Image 18 Proposition for a 1/3 page magazine advertisment

Source: Own elaboration

In image 19 is proposed the design and message of the Outdoor that would figurate in the entrance of Lisbon.

Image 19 Proposal for Outdoor Ad

Source: Own elaboration

In images 20 to 25, there can be seen various examples of facebook posts, that have both the intent to create interaction and a call to action.

Image 21 Example of facebook post (casino)

Source: Own elaboration

Image 20 Example of facebook post (beach - interaction)

Source: Own elaboration

Image 23 Example of facebook post (Rural Tourism - humor)

Source: Own elaboration

Image 22 Example of facebook post (beach

Source: Own elaboration

Image 24 Example of facebook post where the photo is untouched (main objective is to show it) and the written content is in the text box

Source: Own elaboration

Image 25 Example of facebook post (beach-temperature)

Source: Own elaboration

8.5. *Annex 4 – Detailed Investment Calculations*

For the Easter promotion, the total cost was created by calculating the average cost of a trip from, Oporto, Lisbon, Center, South and Interior of Portugal to Grândola. These values were supplied by *Brisa*.

Table 9 Calculation of the Easter promotion cost

Tolls	Oporto-Grândola	Center- G.	Lisbon-G.	South-G.	Interior/Spain-G.
One way cost	28,60 €	13,45 €	7,95 €	12,55 €	17,20 €
Total Trip Cost	57,20 €	26,90 €	15,90 €	25,10 €	34,40 €
Average	31,90 €				
Number of trips	400				
Total Cost	12.760,00 €				

Source : Brisa (2013)

For the contest to win 2 couple nights in an hotel at choice, the cost was calculated using the value of a Deluxe Room in Hotel Tróia Design, being the most expensive choice that the winners can choose. It was assumed that the cost for the hotels is 50% of the price, and that the cost would be shared equally with *Grândola*,

Table 10 Calculation of the contest cost

Contest	
Sell-Price for 1 couple night (most expensive)	360,00 €
Number of Nights	2
Number of winners	10
Assumption of cost %	0,5
Assumption of shared cost with the hospitality unit	0,5
Total	1.800,00 €

Source : Tróia Design Hotel Website (2013)

Magazine advertisements will be made in the form of two 1/3 page ads (odd page) and one insert, in the magazine “Evasões”, which has a monthly circulation of around 8.000 units.

Table 11 Calculation for Press Cost

Press-Magazines	2 page Insert	1/3 Odd Page
Monthly Cost	1.330,00 €	2.260,00 €
Quantity	1	2
Sub-Total	1.330,00 €	4.520,00 €
Total	5.850,00 €	

Source: *Evasões* Magazine (2013)

In Radio, there will be advertisements in *Rádio Comercial* (the most heard radio in the country) for two different occasions: Easter promotion and County fair.

Table 12 Calculation of the costs for radio advertisment

Radio	Easter Promotion	County Fair
Unit Cost (based on insertion in time)	420,00 €	370,00 €
Time Discount (factorized for 15")	0,8	0,8
Times per day	2	2
Number of days	4	5
Sub-Total	2.688,00 €	2.960,00 €
Total	5.648,00 €	

Source: *Média Capital Rádios*(2013)

The calculation for the cost of outdoor advertisements was made using the value in Grândola's 2013 budget (for the identification) and for a similar outdoor (*2ª Circular*) in Lisbon, due to the lack of information available.

Table 13 Calculation of the costs for outdoor advertisment

Outdoor	Identification	Divulgation
Monthly Cost		6.299,00 €
Number of months	12	1
Sub-total	10.000,00 €	6.299,00 €
Total	16.299,00 €	

Source: Municipal Council of Grândola (2013) and MOP (Multimédia Outdoors Portugal, S.A.) (2013)

The budget for the TV-ear piece was asked to a graphic company, and is as follows in the next table.

Table 14 Cost of the Tv-ear

TV-Ear	
Unit Cost	€ 1,5
Number of units	100
Total cost	€ 150

Source : *2002 Estúdio Gráfico Lda.*(2013)

The cost of the Invitations is presented below, being added the shipping costs of *CTT – Correios de Portugal*.

Table 15 Calculation of the cost of producing and sending the invitations

Direct Mail - Invitations	
Unit Cost	0,30 €
Send cost	0,36
Invitation Cost	0,66 €
Number of invitations	200
Total	132,00 €

Source : *2002 Estúdio Gráfico Lda.*(2013) and CTT (2013)

Finally, it is presented the cost of producing the monthly brochures that are distributed through the players in *Grândola*.

Table 16 Cost of producing the monthly brochures

Brochures	
Unit cost (16 pages)	0,73
Average number of units per month	500
Number of editions (1 each month)	12
Total	4380
Total	132,00 €

Source : 2002 Estúdio Gráfico Lda.(2013)

8.6. Annex 5 – Calendar summary

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Promotion													
TV	Meo Kanal												
Press													
Radio													
Outdoor	Welcome												
	Divulgation												
SMM	Facebook												
Merchandising													
Public Relations													
Direct mail	Gyms												
	Brochures												