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Place Marketing, Governance
and Tourism Development.
Or How to Design the
Perfect Regional Tourist Board?



Place Marketing, Governance and Tourism Development. Or How to Design the Perfect Regional Tourist Board?

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Abstract The principal scope of this paper is to reconstruct the *chain-of-command* that regards the implementation of a regional tourism development strategy, in particular the tourism marketing policy. Starting point of the analysis was the assumption that the quality of the governance of these organisations is one of the factors that may explain the success of a tourist destination. Thereto, an international comparative study into the role of the organizational structure, of organizing capacity and of governance on the effectiveness of tourism promotion and territorial marketing was organised. By comparing four different case studies, Catalunya (E), Rhone-Alpes (F), Scotland (UK) and Trentino (I), worst and best practices have been identified, and an answer to the question whether there exists such a thing as an ideally structured organisation that deals with territorial and tourism marketing at the regional level has been sought.

Keywords

Tourism Marketing, Governance, Regional Tourist Organisations, Tourism Policy

JEL Codes

L83, L88, M31, M48, R11, R28, R58

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1. Introduction

The principal scope of the research¹ on which this paper is based is to reconstruct the *chain-of-command* that concerns all the (public) territorial marketing organisations that are supposed to help to implement a regional tourism development strategy. Obvious starting point is the assumption that the quality of the governance of these organisations is one of the factors that may explain the success of a tourist destination.

There to, an international comparative study into the role of the organizational structure, of organizing capacity and of governance on the effectiveness of tourism promotion and territorial marketing was organised. Its central research question was: is there an 'ideal' structure of the government for reaching sustainable tourism development? Several relating sub-questions emerged, such as: what relationship exists between the regional development strategy, the strategy of integrated territorial marketing and the tourism development and promotion strategy? what institutions are responsible for the formulation of these strategies? how are the different institutions and, therefore, development and marketing strategies coordinated? how is the private sector involved in defining and implementing the tourism development strategy; by whom and how are the marketing strategies implemented and how are the different institutions financed? how is the regional territorial and tourism promotion agency managed and structured?

Central element in the research is the concept of territorial marketing, which is complemented with other literature, such as organising capacity. An overview of some the relevant theory forms the second chapter of the research and has been performed by, on one hand, utilizing already matured experiences and, on the other, through desk research. Notice that not only the stakeholders belonging to the public sector are analysed, but also the private stakeholders. It deals with the concept of 'governance'. The relevant spatial scale for the analysis is the regional level.

The paper is structured therefore as follows. In the second section an overview is given of the literature regarding the

¹ Christian Berger, Laura Capel-Tatjer, Antonio Paolo Russo and Erwin van Tuijl have in various stages been contributing to the research.

governance of complex functions and organisations, dealing with -among others- the different criteria to assess the effectiveness of an organisation. Moreover, the concept of organising capacity is explained in detail. The third section introduces the concept of place marketing and explains the nature of place marketing, as well as the reasons for investing in territorial marketing and image. Furthermore this chapter seeks to identify the customers and the stakeholders of place marketing. At the end of this section, the integration of place marketing in the general management of a place and the possible success factors for place marketing are discussed. Before going into the case studies, an attempt is made to integrate organisation literature with place marketing, adapting these two fields specifically to regional tourism organisations. In the fourth and last section of the paper the comparative analysis of the case studies is presented, identifying worst and best practices, and dealing with the question whether there is such a thing as an ideally structured organisation that deals with territorial and tourism marketing at the regional level.

2. Governance and Tourist Organisations. A Theoretical Framework

In this section, the principal literature regarding place marketing, tourism development and governance will be reviewed. The most relevant concepts and theories regarding the organisation of the regional tourism marketing function will be discussed and the section will thus provide a solid framework for the cases studies that are presented in the following chapters.

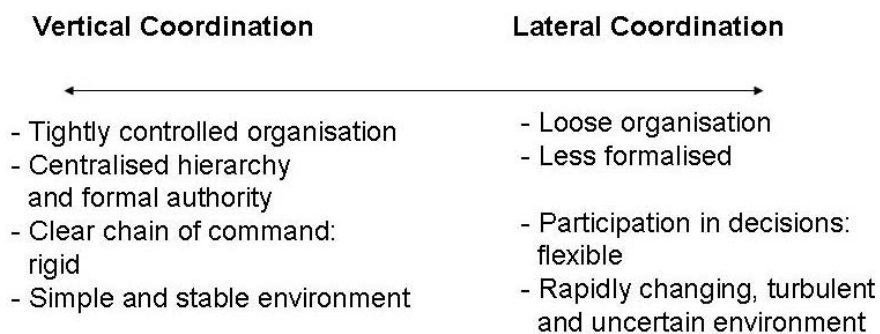
ORGANISATION THEORY AND ORGANISING CAPACITY

Much has been written about organisations and organisation structures. The organisation structure defines how the interaction between organisation members is regulated; how tasks, responsibilities and authority are allocated within an organisation (Robbins & Barnwell 2002). It concerns thus the design of roles and relationships in an organisation, as well as the relationships to actors in the environment (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

A common used model for organisation structures is the classification of Minzberg (1983; among others in Robbins and Bernell, 2002). In general Minzberg distinguishes five main sorts of organisation structures, or organisational 'configurations', which can be seen as "ideal" structures. The first configuration is the simple structure which is

characterised by a low complexity, a low formalisation and the authority is centralised in one person. The machine bureaucracy, the second configuration, is an organisation with very routine and operating tasks, rules and regulations and a highly centralised authority. The third configuration, the divisional structure, is characterised by a number of autonomous units which are coordinated by a central headquarter. The professional bureaucracy is an organisation with highly skilled professionals, a high complexity and decentralisation. It uses internalised professionals instead of external formalisation. The last configuration is the adhocracy. The adhocracy is characterised by high horizontal differentiation, a low vertical differentiation, decentralisation and a great flexibility and responsiveness (Robbins and Barnell, 2002). In time configurations change from one ideal structure to another, with mixed forms between these ideal types (Schieman et al., 2000). A critique on the model of Minzberg is that in reality a trully ideal structure does not exist, so there will always be some kind of mixed form. Another critique is that the model is based on industrial organisations and therefore can be used only to a limited extent for organisations in the service sector. This is why it was decided not to use the configurations of Minzberg in this research.

Figure 1: Two extreme organisation structures, based on Bolman and Deal (2003)



Two extreme organisation structures are given by Bolman and Deal (2003): vertical coordination and lateral coordination. The vertical coordination is a tightly controlled organisation with a centralised hierarchy and a clear chain of command. It is featured by a formal authority, rules and policies, planning and control systems. It is employed by organisations in a simple and stable environment. The lateral coordination is a loose organisation with a wide participation in decision

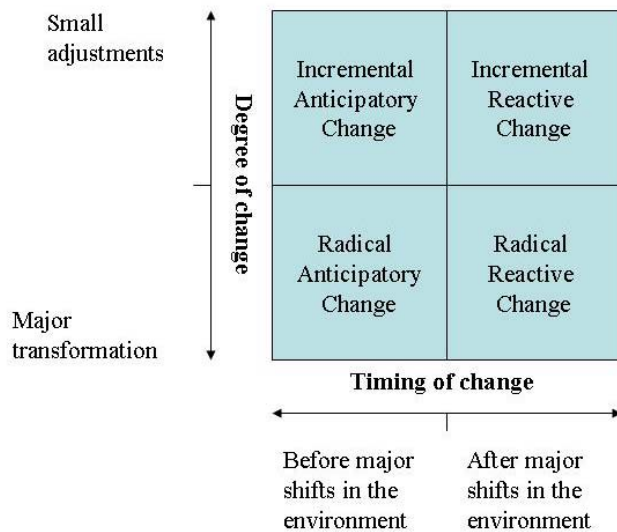
making. Its features are: less formalisation, flexibility and complexity. The environment of the lateral coordination is rapidly changing, turbulent and uncertain. The two extreme structures are shown schematically in figure 1 above.

Just like Minzbergs concept, this concept represents extreme positions. In reality, the organisation will always be in the middle of the two extremes, containing elements and features of both vertical and lateral coordination (Bolman and Deal, 2003). However, the features of the organisation structure can be used as criteria for assessing where -between the two extremes- an organisation is approximately placed and how the organisation structure will change as the features of the organisation are changing.

Organisations and change

In time, every organisation has to change as a result of internal and external changes. Usually organisations start restructuring when they feel forced to act due to major problems or major opportunities (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Robbins and Barnwell (2002) put the emphasis on the goals of an organisation as main factors of change; according to them the main reason for changing and redesigning the structure of an organisation is a strive towards a better achievement of the objectives of an organisation.

Figure 2: Types of organisation change. Source: Hellriegel et al. (2002)



According to Bolman and Deal (2003) there are four 'momentums of change': environmental shifts, technology changes, the growth of organisations and changes in leadership. Besides the different momentums of change there are different types of organisational change. Hellriegel et al. (2002) give four types of organisation change, based on a combination of two dimensions. The first dimension is the degree of change: Is it a small adjustment (incremental change) or a major transformation (radical change)? The second dimension is the timing: Does the change take place before major shifts in the environment occur (anticipatory change) or does it take place after these major shifts (reactive change)?

Organisational effectiveness

There are different ways to make organisations more effective, one main point for increasing effectiveness is to find a proper organisation structure. There is, however no single criterion for effectiveness: different organizational functions have to be evaluated and effectiveness has to consider both processes and outcomes. The success of organizations depends moreover on their performance in various areas. Additionally, there is no commonly accepted definition of effectiveness, in other words it means different things to different people (Robbins and Barnwell, 2002).

It is thus necessary for every single case/every different type of organisation to choose its own criteria to measure effectiveness. A list of criteria for measuring the effectiveness is given by Campell (1977), which is included as appendix (appendix A). However, there are many different theories that indicate where to put the emphasis when measuring organisational effectiveness. While one theory (the goal-attainment approach) sees goal achievement most important, another one (the systems approach) puts the emphasis on the processes and on the ability of an organisation to acquire inputs, while yet a third theory (the strategic-constituencies approach) states that organisational effectiveness is determined by how successfully an organisation satisfies the demands of those actors in its environment from which it requires support for its continued existence (Robbins and Barnwell, 2002).

Organising capacity

Organising capacity is a model that may help to analyse (urban) governance. According to Van den Berg and Braun (1999) place marketing is a challenge in terms of creativity and ideas and also an organisational challenge. According to the authors organising capacity is a suitable model for analysing this challenge. It can be defined as 'the ability to enlist all

actors involved and, with their help, to generate new ideas and to implement a policy designed to respond to fundamental developments and create conditions for sustainable development.'

The model exists of six elements: the administrative organisation (the formal institutional framework), strategic networks (or 'partnerships', including partnerships between public organisations and between public organisations and private organisations), leadership, spatial economic conditions, vision and strategy, and support (including both political support as well as societal support). Together, these elements form a dynamic system and coherence between the elements is a requisite. The key elements of the system are vision and strategy, leadership, strategic networks and support (Van den Berg et al., 1996; Van den Berg and Braun, 1999).

Of interest for this research are the structures and changes of tourist organisations. However, before presenting the various issues that are of interest in the analysis of structure and the dynamism that can be found in tourist organisation, a few words will be spend on the concept of place marketing in general.

3. Place Marketing and Regional Tourist Organisations

This section explains what place marketing is, why it is used and identifies the main customers, stakeholders and the main organisations of place marketing.

3.1. What is Place Marketing?

The aspect of place marketing exists of two parts: 'place' and 'marketing'. Place covers all kind of places, varying from historical sites to nation-states (Kotler et al., 2002; in: Rainisto, 2003). Other authors are using specific terms which refer to a specific spatial scale level. A common used term is 'city marketing', referring to the marketing of cities. However, also other terms are possible: Van den Berg et al. (1999) for instance are using the term 'urban place marketing' to indicate that it concerns a city or an urban region. Corsico (1994) speaks only about cities and uses the term 'urban marketing'. Van het Verlaat (1997) on contrary is speaking about 'region marketing' for his analysis of the marketing of the Rotterdam region. A term which is often used specifically for tourism is 'destination marketing', referring to the place where visitors

are going to. Just like place marketing destination marketing can refer to all spatial levels (Kastenholz, 2004).

Marketing is a term from the business literature referring to the identification of the wants and needs of the customers and is meant for enterprises to adapt their products to these wants and needs. Currently, marketing for places is gaining more interest and there is consensus that marketing can be used for places (Rainisto, 2003). However, place marketing activities are not new: Ward (1998) gives a description of place marketing and place promotion from 1850 until 2000. He gives examples of place promotion in US cities in the 1850s. In Europe, British and French beach resorts were promoted intensively in the beginning of the 1900s. Place promotion is sometimes referred to as place marketing (for instance Gold and Ward, 1994, in Van den Berg et al., 2005). Place promotion is nevertheless only one part of place marketing. Kotler et al. (1999) even notice that place promotion is ironically enough one of the least important aspects of place marketing.

Another related issue that is often raised regards 'selling cities' or 'selling places' (among others Ashworth et al., 1990; Ward, 1998; Bradley et al., 2002). Holcomb (1999) explains that 'selling is an attempt to persuade the consumer to buy what one has available, whereas marketing means the production of what the consumer wants.' Marketing means to adapt the product according to the wishes and the needs of the customer. A place manager (for instance a city manager) can adapt the place product (for instance the city) only to a limited extent. A lot of factors such as climate, geography, history, culture, etc. are given and can not be adapted. So in this way 'selling' is actually meant, because the seller has limited control over the character and the quality of the product. Nevertheless almost all literature refers to the term 'marketing' and therefore the term is also used in this study.

Different definitions for place marketing (or synonyms) can be found in the literature. A definition of place marketing is given by Van den Berg et al. (1999): 'the set of activities intended to optimise the tuning of supply of urban functions to the demand for them from inhabitants, companies, tourists and other visitors.' Kotler et al. (2002, in Rainisto, 2003) speak about 'designing a place to satisfy the needs of its target markets. To succeed in this issue, citizens and business have to be pleased with their community and the expectations of visitors and investors have to be met.' According to Van het Verlaat (1997) there are two elements which occur in most of the definitions: the tuning of demand and supply of urban functions and the

reasoning from the perspective of the customer. Especially this second feature demands specific knowledge of - and sensibility towards - the market from the organisation.

Reasons for place marketing and the role of the image

There are different reasons for territories to engage in place marketing. According to Van den Berg et al. (1999) place marketing is both a management principle as well as a toolbox with applicable insights and techniques. Kotler et al. (1999) distinguish four key activities for place marketing: (1) the supply of products and services of a place in an efficient way, (2) to put incentives for current and potential customers of products and/or services, (3) the promotion of the attractiveness and advantages of a place, in such a way that the potential user knows the distinctive characteristics of a place and (4) the development of a strong and attractive position and image for a community.

For the latter, the development of a strong and attractive position and image for a community, the related terms 'image' and 'identity' are of interest. Image is the perception of a brand (a place) in the mind of people and identity is how the owners want the place to be perceived (Rainisto, 2003). In the literature much has been written about image, which is a complex word with multiple meanings, for instance image as 'copy what is real', image as 'way of presenting reality', etc. (Corsico, 1994). Image is important for place marketing because it can help to distinguish places from each other – a fundamental asset when competition is intensive - and it is a part of the decision process of the potential customer. (Baloglu et al., 1996).

Cities can have different images such as a weak image, an attractive image, no distinctive image, etc. (Kotler et al., 1999; Bradley et al., 2002). Of interest for place marketing is that image can change in time, depending on local circumstances (such as infrastructure and facilities) and the effectiveness of place marketing (Holcomb, 1999). Some authors even argue that a distinct image can be created from scratch. Meethan (1996) for instance notices "...symbolic value, meaning and image are not simply given but are contested, actively involving processes and strategies of inclusion and exclusion.' There are different strategies for improving the image of tourist destinations: the construction of distinguishing landmarks, the organisation of (mega) events (Holcomb, 1999) and the use of slogans and themes (Kotler et al., 1999).

Customers of place marketing

As can be seen in the definitions of place marketing above, there are different customers, or target markets, for place marketing. Kotler et al. (1999) are using four categories of customers: (1) visitors, (2) residents and employees, (3) business and industry and (4) exports markets. Export markets are places which produce more or better goods and/or services than other places and therefore those other places want to buy these goods and/or services. But it is not clear when exactly a place is an export market and when it is distinctive from 'normal' business and industry. The customers according to Van den Berg et al. (2005) are inhabitants, companies, visitors and investors. Investors are separated from normal business, because they are often located in other places. Every customer can be split up in smaller parts or niches and both current customers and potential customers are of interest for place marketing.

Every customer has its own wishes and interests in a place. For instance, an inhabitant wants a niche place to live with a high quality of life, a manufacturing company wants a place for its production plant close to its suppliers, a visitor wants attractions to visit and an investor wants places to invest in. It is important to notice that the interests of the customers can both oppose and reinforce each other. In general an inhabitant does not wish to live next to a chemical plant. On the contrary, an inhabitant who works at an office may prefer to live close to the office location because of a low commuting time. When the goals of customers reinforce each other we speak about "cross marketing", which means 'continuously marketing between and among place players.' In cross marketing all actors involved can benefit from each other's possibilities. For example: when a visitor is coming to a certain place, he/she can link firms and investors in his/her home area with local firms in that place (Rainisto, 2003).

Nevertheless major customers in this study are the visitors and the tourist industry. According to the World Tourism Organisation the goals for visitors are very diverse (WTO, 1995): leisure, recreation and holidays, visiting friends and relatives, business and professional, health treatment, religion/pilgrimages and other purposes. The major subgroups of visitors are business visitors and non business visitors. The market for business visitors is also known as the market for "meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions (MICE)" and are among the fastest growing segments within the tourist industry (Weber, 2001). More and more places want to attract business visitors and there is rising competition between cities

to attract business visitors. The MICE market is especially of interest for former industrial cities which are in transition towards a service industry. Business visitors spend two to three times as much as non-business visitors and form the major users of entertainment and accommodation facilities in the places they are visiting (Bradley al., 2002).

Despite the fact that the major customers in this report are visitors and tourist businesses, the government should also take into account the other customers in order to reach a more sustainable development. In other words: the government should integrate the wishes of different customers as much as possible in the policy of a place.

Stakeholders and the organisation of place marketing

Many stakeholders, or actors, can be involved in place marketing, from both the public sector as well as the private sector. Also cooperation is possible by public-private partnerships. Partnerships and cooperation in tourism will be discussed hereafter in more detail.

In theory two extreme organisation forms for place marketing exist. On the one hand there is a comprehensive place marketing organisation for all customers. On the other hand there is a loose network existing of more or less independent stakeholders, without special place marketing organisations. The effectiveness of the different organisation forms depends on two factors. The first is whether the main organisation for place marketing is a public or a private party. The advantage of a public party is that the members of the organisation can influence other public organisations in a better way while the advantage of private parties is that private companies are prepared to participate sooner. The second factor is the 'culture' of the main place marketing organisation. For achieving the best results the place marketing organisation should act as a network organisation, with characteristics of 'open', 'externally aimed' and 'building networks'(Van den Berg et al. 2005).

Place marketing and governance

Place marketing should be integrated in the management of a place. Van den Berg et al. (2005) give a model for 'integrated city marketing management', in which city marketing (read: 'place marketing') is integrated in four ways: spatial integration, integration with respect to the strategic marketing instruments, integration through organisation and adjustment and integration with the urban policy.

Pearce (1992) sees the promotion and marketing of places as the third major component of the four main components relevant for the organisation of tourism in cities. The other three components are: planning, development, and the provision of visitor services. In this way place marketing follows from the tourist strategy, which is part of the planning component. The tourist strategy itself should be part of the general strategy of a place. In general, tourism policy forms an integral part of the general policy of a place. The major objective of a place should be 'to promote and safeguard the interrelated interests of the families and firms living or working there', which also should be reflected in the tourist policy. Tourism development should contribute to the well-being for the local population as well as to those directly involved, the visitors and the tourist industry. Translating this back to place marketing, the government of a place should take care of the interests of all customers involved. For this, tourism policy should be embedded in the broader context of the policy of a place (Van der Borg, 2002).

Rainisto (2003) notices that place marketing is a prominent aspect of the economic development strategy of a place, or place development. Place development 'means to develop for a place a systematic and long run marketing strategy directed towards nurturing and developing the natural and potential attributes of an area or region.' (Kotler et al., 2002, in Rainisto, 2003). This is related with sustainable development. Sustainability means according the Brundtland Report (1987, in Kastenholz, 2004) 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

However, in practice the integration of place marketing (especially place promotion) and place development seems to be a problem. According to Getz et al. (1998) there exists a gap between the marketing of a place (which is often done by local industry, destination marketing organisations (DMOs) and marketing partnerships) and the development of a place (which is done by local industry, investors and the government). The current investigation will try to answer the question how a tourism development strategy can be best implemented and translated in an integrated territorial marketing strategy.

Place marketing's success factors

Rainisto (2003) set up a framework which analyses place marketing from the perspective of place marketing practices and success factors. The place marketing practices are analysed

on three different levels: events in the organisations' place marketing practices, events in the network and events in the macro environment. The success of place marketing depends on a mix of the success factors. In total the framework distinguishes nine success factors, of which four are environmental challenges and five 'self-action' factors. The four environmental challenges are: global market place, local development, political unity, and process coincidences. These factors can not be influenced by a place and are therefore not discussed in more detail.

The self-action factors, on the contrary, can be influenced actively by a place. These factors represent implementation ability and organising capacity of a place. The self interest factors are: planning group², vision and strategic analysis, place identity and place image, public-private partnerships and leadership. Most of the elements are related with the elements of organising capacity: planning group relates to the administrative organisation, vision and strategic analysis relates to vision and strategy, public-private partnerships relates to networks, and leadership is equal in both models. Only place identity and place image do not overlap in one of the elements of organising capacity. In a similar way support from the model of organising capacity occurs not in the framework of Rainisto.

In this research the main elements of both models (model of Rainisto and model of organising capacity) will be used as success factors for place marketing. These factors are: planning group, vision and strategy, networks (both public-public as well as public-private partnerships), leadership, place identity and place image and support.

3.2. Place Marketing, Tourist Organisations, Governance

In this section place marketing and tourism will be discussed after the peculiarities of tourism development in general have been described; these peculiarities have consequences for the organisation of the tourism function. Moreover, the major stakeholders, their roles and their relationships will be described, as well as the governance of tourism and partnerships. The emphasis is laid on different forms of tourist organisations.

² In the framework of Rainisto a planning group is *an organ responsible for the process of planning and executing the place marketing practices of a location*' (Rainisto, 2003, p69).

Tourism development and governance

The tourism product has two distinct characteristics that have consequences for the way the tourism function in general and the marketing strategy in particular have to be organised: it is first of all a composite and, hence, transversal product and secondly it is a place product.

The composite character of the tourism product implies that the macro tourism product, the vacation or the excursion, is a gathering of numerous different micro tourism products, such as transportation, accommodation, shopping, attractions, events, drinks, and so on. These micro products are delivered by different suppliers, some of them private tourism firms, some others local, regional or national public authorities.

The quality of the macro tourism product and therefore the quality of the visitor's experience not only depends on the quality of the single micro tourism products, but also on the way they have been assembled together. In other words, coordination between the different private and public stakeholders is of the utmost importance for the success of any tourism development strategy. These coordination efforts, an important ingredient of the governance of the tourism function and a crucial input for any marketing strategy, are often left to an organisation belonging to the public sector, and may very well be the responsibility of the regional tourism development agency that is the subject of this research.

The second characteristic, the tourism product being a place product, implies that the core of the macro tourism product is explicitly and uniquely linked to the environment it is located in. This immediately raises the question of how organisations that are involved in tourism management and marketing have to be organised territorially, or what spatial configurations have to be designed to serve that part of the tourism product and those stakeholders that are dispersed in space and bound to specific locations that may be physically distant from where the centre of the tourism system can be found.

The marketing organisation that stems from this research responds to the needs of the different stakeholders has to possess an organisational and a spatial configuration that allows the organisation to perform the necessary coordination between the stakeholders and to deliver its services at the relevant territorial level, for example planning at the central level and information provision to visitors at the attraction level. To understand the issue even better, an analysis of the

stakeholders of a tourism management and marketing organisation will follow.

Stakeholders and tourist organisations

Just like in place marketing in general there are a lot of stakeholders involved in tourism. Jenkins (2000) gives four main groups of stakeholders for tourist offices: private operators (such as hoteliers, retailers and restaurants); industry associations (for instance tourism councils); government, public sector and quasi autonomous government organisations and other stakeholders.

According to Law (1993) the principal stakeholders for tourism development in cities can be drawn from either the public sector or the private sector. Besides the local government, or municipality, the public sector can involve regional and national governments, development corporations, national and regional tourist boards, national museums and other semi-autonomous public organisations. Also Fesenmaier and Wang (2006) notice that tourism organisations at all levels and local tourism related organisations and business can be involved in place marketing. Finally, Holcomb (1999) remarks that place marketing and promotion are carried out by - and serve the interests of - both public and private stakeholders.

Major stakeholders for tourism in general are tourist organisations. There are many sorts of tourist organisations and they vary widely in among others organisation structure, tasks, spatial level, etc. In the rest of the section some major tourist and marketing organisations - on each possible spatial level - will be discussed.

National level

The major organisations for tourism and marketing on the national level are the National Tourist Offices (NTOs), which are the officially recognized bodies on tourism matters in any country. The general goal of NTOs is the expansion of a country's incoming tourism. To achieve this goal, NTOs must promote the destination country in international markets (Moutinho and Rita, 1994). Also Braunlich et al. (1995) see promotion as one of the roles of the NTOs. The other general roles of NTOs are, according to Braunlich et al. (1995): package and tour development role, image creation and enhancement role, partnership development role, travel trade marketing role and literature distribution/fulfilment role. All these roles are directly or indirectly related to place marketing.

Regional level

Tourist organisations on the regional level are for example organisations that correspond spatially to the borders of an administrative region, but also organisations that just cover a part of an administrative region -or more than one administrative region- belong to this level. Between different countries, place marketing on the regional level can differ widely. This depends on a lot of factors, such as the power and size of administrative regions for example. According to Jenkins (2002) there exists much confusion and conjecture about the structure and the tasks of regional tourist organisations and subsequently their relationships with other tourist organisations and the wider organisational environment.

Local level

According to Fesenmaier and Wang (2006), the principal tasks for marketing a place on the local level are done by convention and visitor bureaus (CVBs). Fesenmaier and Wang demonstrate in their case study about collaborative place marketing of Elkhart County (Indiana, USA) that the CVB is expected to take the lead in initiating, managing and maintaining destination marketing networks. Furthermore the CVB is expected to be skilful in coordinating partnerships between the private and the public sector, between normally competitive actors such as hotels, restaurants and attractions and other actors in the community.

Also Law (1993, in Ward 1998) notices that tourist marketing usually is done by the city's conventions and visitors' bureau. Getz et al. (1998) remark that CVBs 'are primarily destination organisations established at the community level for the purpose of fostering meetings and leisure travel.' Their prime concern is marketing and sales, while their influence on other place management functions - especially planning and product development - is limited. Just like other tourist organisations CVB's can be public, private (such as York Visitor and Conference Bureau, which is an organisation that 260 fee-paying organisations; see Meethan, 1997) or public-private partnerships. The latter, public-private partnerships, are gaining more interest in place promotion and tourism (in both practice and theory). Therefore partnerships and governance will be discussed in more detail at the end of the section. However, first the different organisation forms of regional tourist organisations, changes in it, success factors and barriers will be described.

Different organisation forms for regional tourist bureaus

There is a variety of manners how a regional tourist bureau can be organised – according to Pearce (1996) the reason for this

lies in the different conditions in each region, which make it necessary to develop organisations which fit into the distinctive regional environments and reflect the given characteristics. Also the goals of an organisation influence its organisational form. Economic goals are the ones pursued commonly by tourist organisations, for example to increase the absolute number of visitors, the number of bed nights and the expenditure per visitor. Other goals include for example social and environmental issues as well as the regional distribution of demand. Pearce distinguishes tourist organisations by the following dimensions: functions, structure, funding, spatial scale and relationships towards other organisations (Pearce, 1992).

Functions

There are mono-functional and multi-functional tourism organisations. Mono-functional regional tourist organisations usually focus on visitor servicing or marketing, whereas a multi-functional organisation exercises various functions, for example marketing, development, planning, research, visitor servicing, lobbying, etc. According to Pechlaner and Sauerwein (2002) tourist organisations have two main functions: On the one hand they serve as a connection to link the demand and the supply of tourism and on the other hand they guarantee the integration of the tourist planning on the level of destinations. Within the tourist organisations it is of great importance that different functions or tasks are carried out on the right level. On the central level, or top level, strategy development and policy formulation should take place. The marketing function on the central level is targeted to national and international markets. The functions on the intermediate level are: product development, market development, marketing, reservation of vacations (arrangement of 'holiday packages' or development of macro tourist products based on combinations of various micro tourist products) and providing tourist services. Finally, the functions which should be carried out on the bottom level are: provision of information, welcoming of arriving visitors, reservation of local tourist services 'on the spot' and local product development.

Structure

A tourist organisation can be structured as a government department, a semi-state agency, a corporation, a foundation or a company. The different structures of tourist organisations reflect the degree of public sector control and influence.

Funding

The difference in funding concerns the source of the funding – whether an organisation is financed by the public, by the private sector, or by a combination of both. Most tourist organizations are funded either 100% by the public or are financed by both the public and the private side, whereby in most cases the public side stays dominant. The participation of the private sector in the funding of regional tourist bureaus is not without tensions – Pearce (1996) views the effectiveness of private funding to be dependent on the degree of professionalism of small tourist companies. There is, however, also the possibility that additional funding is self-generated by the tourist organisation - for example through commissions, publications, advertising, merchandising, etc.

Spatial scale

The spatial scale concerns the spatial level on which a tourist organisation operates. This can either be local, regional, national or even international. We refer to all the tourist organisations between the national and the local level as “regional”. Tourist organisations do not always operate within the given political boundaries of a region, sometimes they can cover more than one administrative region, for example in the case that a particular geographic feature should be highlighted - a mountain range or a coastal region for example (Jenkins, 2000) or if it concerns a “historical region” composed of various administrative regions. If an administrative region is very big it is on the other hand likely that tourist organisations are established on a sub-regional level. However, the political boundaries of a country and the political system do have crucial influence on tourist organisations on the regional scale.

Relationships towards other organisations

A fifth dimension concerns Relationships towards other organisations. Certain functions may need a specific spatial scale in order to be carried out effectively - this explains why a single organisation cannot carry out the full array of functions and roles concerning the tourism sector. Hence, network relations to organisations with different functions at different scales (national, local) are needed to complement the functions performed by the single organisation. Concerning these relationships, Pearce distinguishes two characteristic features: on the one hand the “Nature” of relationships indicates whether the relationship between organisations is on a voluntary or on a mandatory basis. The “Direction” of relationships on the other hand, concerns the fact whether the relationships between organisations are characterised by a top down, bottom up or horizontal approach (Pearce 1996).

Organisational change, success factors, and handicaps of regional tourist organisations

Tourist organizations are not immune to change – also here significant changes in organisation structure are occurring. For example in the 1990's countries like Sweden and the Netherlands displayed a trend towards more private sector funding and towards monofunctional marketing organisations. For tourist bureaus the reason for change often lies in external factors, for example in political changes or changes in the economic situation. However, internal changes, such as changing functions or goals may also make a change in structure necessary (Pearce 1996). Looking at regional tourist organisations, it seems that changes in one of the elements mentioned in 'Different organisation forms for regional tourist bureaus' (functions, structure, funding, spatial scale, relationships) thus can influence the other elements and may induce the need for further change. To give an example: the introduction of private funding tends to alter the way marketing is carried out (Pearce 1996).

Success factors and handicaps for regional tourist organisations

Research in the areas of the effectiveness of tourist organisations is very scarce, so only general statements can be made. More detailed conclusions about the success factors will be the outcome of the case studies. Pearce (1992) considers a successful tourist organization "to be soundly established, well resourced, highly regarded and meeting its goals". To find an appropriate measure for effectiveness seems even more difficult – however, the goal achievement of an organization can be taken as a measure for effectiveness. One main goal of tourist organisations is to increase the number of visitor arrivals. But it is difficult to ascribe e.g. an increase in visitor numbers to the actions taken in a tourism bureau, as there are numerous exogenous factors that can influence this outcome - changing market conditions, exchange rates, etc. (Pearce, 1992).

Jenkins (2000) identified several barriers for the establishment and operation of regional tourist organizations:

- Local conflicts and competition, impeding the stakeholders to work together;
- "Free riders": stakeholders that do not contribute to the regional tourist bureau, but nevertheless receive benefits;

- Stakeholders that want to maintain sovereignty and independence over particular initiatives, such as marketing;
- Confusion and fragmentation of public and private responsibilities;
- Lack of stakeholder awareness of the benefits and costs;
- Differing opinions of stakeholders about the degree of government intervention.

When trying to establish an integrated tourism agency that should include a wide number of stakeholders, success depends on the ability to neutralize or alleviate these barriers.

Governance and partnerships

The mix of stakeholders from the public- and private sector in place marketing organisations and tourist organisations varies over time and in space (Holcomb, 1999). Law (1993; in Ward, 1998) notices that CVBs in the United States are often a form of a public-private partnership. The largest part of the funding comes from local hotel tax, while the rest comes from a mix of private and sometimes public contributions. In Britain place promotion is much more a municipal role. In the larger cities, authorities deal with tourism promotion through their leisure services department, alongside swimming pools, sport centers and parks. In smaller towns municipal involvement has led to a close integration of tourist and economic development marketing in one department. In recent years the American model is gaining more interest and is adapted more widely, especially in the biggest cities in the UK, such as Glasgow, Birmingham and Manchester. However, the main source of funding remains overwhelming reliant on government revenues. In literature much has been written about partnerships and relationships between public and private parties. There are different activities partnerships can engage in. Yinnakou (2003) has done eight case studies on partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism³ (SUT), which she divides in four categories: community image (public relations and tourism marketing), urban planning (urban renewal, city regeneration), sustainable urban management (resource efficiency, public transport development) and economic revival (quality growth of tourism).

It is important to notice that the private sector and public sector each have their own interests in tourism. In general, the private sector is largely driven by profit, while the government

³ More about the case studies in SUT can be read in Innakou (2003).

is interested in tourism for different reasons. The most important reasons are: economic (help economies develop, diversify the economy, increase employment and generate new employment, increase tax revenue), social and cultural (ensure well being and health of individuals, promote cultural awareness of an area and its people, preserve local traditions and moral), environmental issues (undertake the stewardship of the environment and tourism resources that the agents of development do not destroy the future basis for sustainable tourism development) and political reasons (further political goals, and broaden political acceptance of the local administration) (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2006).

Among others because of these different interests in tourism, a key factor in the formation of successful partnerships is a strong political leadership (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2006). Different actors within the policy can take the lead. For instance in Bradford in 1998, it was the city council which took the lead in the development of a new tourism strategy and the formation of a new public-private partnership (Bradford Tourism Partnership) to lead the development of tourism (Hope and Klemm, 2001). In the new development plan for tourism in London (“Visit London”) a major role is played by the mayor. He has a leadership role in bringing together the major actors in the formation of partnerships. Furthermore, the mayor is statutory responsible to promote tourism in a proactive way. His roles are among others: promoting tourism, stimulate the provision and improvement of tourist facilities and helping to promote the economic and social development of London (Greater London Authority, 2002).

Finally it should be noticed that the interests of all stakeholders should be kept into account. According to Paskaleva-Shapira (2006) the input of all stakeholders should be incorporated in the tourist strategy in order to maximise the equitable distribution of tourism benefits in the interest of local, regional and national sustainability and to ensure the effectiveness of an activity and industry development. As said before, the tourist strategy and place marketing should be integrated in the general policy of a place.

3.3 Towards a Theoretical Framework

This section uses three ‘building blocks’ for analysing tourist organisations and governance of tourism: organisation theory, place marketing and tourism, tourist offices and governance.

The main point from the first building block (section 2), the organisation theory, is that there are two extreme organisation structures (vertical coordination and lateral coordination). In time, organisations change as a consequence of internal and external changes. Criteria for assessing in which direction an organisation is placed and how the organisation structure will change are: control (tightly or loose), authority (centralised or informal), commands/decisions (rigid or flexible) and environment (stable or dynamic).

The second building block is the concept of place marketing (section 3.1), which concerns the fine-tuning between the demand and the supply of functions of a place, seen through the perspective of the customers of a place. There are different customers (inhabitants and employees, visitors, business and investors), which all should be kept in account by formulating the strategy of a place. Furthermore it is of interest that place marketing is integrated in the tourist strategy and in the general strategy of place.

There are two extreme forms in which the place marketing can be organised: as a comprehensive place marketing organisation for all customers or as loose network existing of more or less independent stakeholders. A range of different (success) factors -taken from the model of organising capacity (and the model of Rainisto)- can be used for analysing place marketing and tourism management: vision and strategy, networks (both public-public as well as public-private partnerships), leadership, place identity and place image and support.

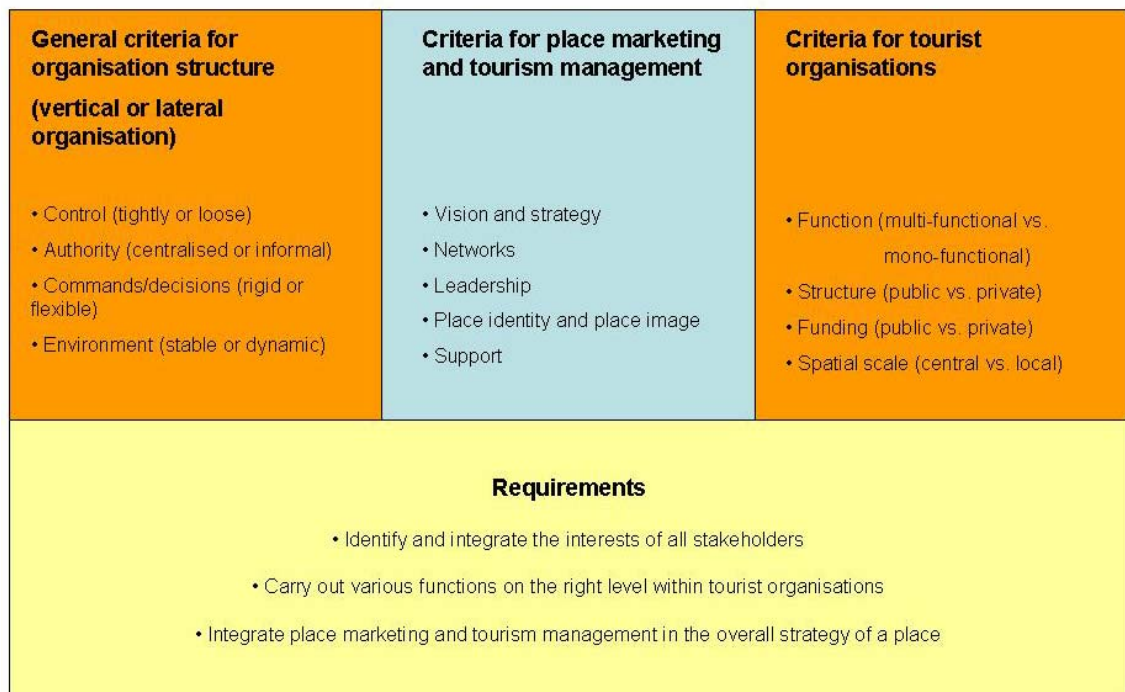
For the last building block, two characteristics of the tourist product are of interest: The first aspect is the composition of the tourist product -the macro tourism product consists of multiple micro tourism products- this requires coordination efforts between different stakeholders. There are many stakeholders involved in tourism, from both the private sector and the public sector, and of course each group also has its own interests in a place. Partnerships between the public and private sector are gaining a lot of interest. However, the public sector should take the lead in the formation of partnerships and the formulation of the strategy, because the public sector can take into account the wishes of all stakeholders.

The second aspect has to do with the fact that the tourist product is a place product, which means that the core of the macro product is linked to the environment it is located in. Therefore it is of interest which stakeholders are involved and how tourism management and marketing are organised

territorially. Major stakeholders are tourist organisations which can exist on different spatial levels (national, provincial, regional and local). Tourist organisations can be analysed by the following criteria: functions (mono-functional or multi-functional), structure (government department, semi-state agency, corporation/foundation or company), funding (public or private), and spatial scale (national, regional, or local). For the establishment and the operation of a tourist office it is important to know that a number of barriers exist that are all related with the interests and the behaviour of different stakeholders.

Three major requirements as well as the main criteria for analysing tourist organisations and governance in a place are summarised schematically in figure 3. These criteria will be used in the case studies in the next chapter.

Figure 3: Criteria for analysing tourist organisations responsible for territorial marketing and its governance



Besides the already mentioned requirements (identifying and integrating the interest of the stakeholders, carrying out various functions on the right level within tourist organisations, integrating tourism management and place promotion in the overall strategy of a place) it is of the utmost importance to keep in mind another factor: the goals of the

tourist organisation (which must fit the overall goal of a region). They must be made clear beforehand, as they will also influence the organisational form to a big extent. This element differs from the others, as it is not an externally given element and can thus be directly influenced. So there are some major “forces” that will determine the form of a tourist organisation to a certain extent – in order to set up the ideal organisation type for a specific regional situation it is thus necessary to know the exact characteristics of these forces.

4. A Comparative Analysis of the Regional Tourist Boards of Catalunya (E), Rhone-Alpes (F), Scotland (UK) and Trentino (I). Synthesis, Benchmarks and Best Practices

MARKETING OF REGIONAL TOURISM BRANDS

The four European regions of which Tourist Offices have been involved in this study have much in common. They all possess a strong regional tourism brand, that is based on both their characteristic geo-morphological structure (hills, lakes, mountains, rivers) as well as on a number of typical local (agricultural) products. In some cases the regional brand is even stronger than the brands of the single tourism destinations. Only in the case of Catalunya, a Spanish region that offers a variety of tourist products, Barcelona and the Costa Brava are two top brands that may overshadow the brand of the region they belong to. The brands of Rhone-Alpes (France), Scotland (UK) and Trentino (Italy) are either stronger or not perceived as intensively linked to the brands of the single destination areas they possess.

All four regions are bestsellers in terms of (international) tourism. As such, tourism forms a spearhead in their regional development strategy. Brand management and marketing are, in their turn, top priorities in their regional tourism strategies. This is illustrated by the fact that all four regions have recently undergone or are currently undergoing a major overhaul of the regional tourism organisations, revisions that are all aimed at enforcing mechanisms that are supposed to strengthen the regional tourism image and to valorise synergies between tourism promotion in particular and territorial promotion in general. They are, hence, cases worth studying for regions that themselves are in the process of reviewing their tourism organisations, like the Piemonte region in Italy, the organisation that committed this research.

In Spain, France, the United Kingdom and in Italy, the national government plays an important role. In Spain, the UK and Italy, most of the national tasks regarding tourism management and promotion have been transferred to the regions and (in Italy's case) to the autonomous Provinces. In France, by contrast, most of the matters regarding tourism development and the promotion of France's image as a tourist destination abroad are still in the hands of the national government, respectively Maison de la France. In all four countries, however, the regional tourism offices are working closely together with the national government and the national tourist office.

The tasks and the functioning of the regional tourist organisations are embedded in the regional legislations of the regions in question. The most explicit and recent legislation is that of Trentino. It explicitly seeks to separate the different tasks of the organisations involved in territorial marketing, without in practice succeeding very much. In all four cases, the regional government is the hub of the promotion network, which is providing not only the tourism development and marketing strategy but also the funds to realise it.

What also became evident from the study is the fact that, although territorial marketing at large apparently has become the mission of the four organisations, all four regional marketing organisations are focussing -more or less exclusively and independently- on regional tourism marketing, confirming our hypothesis that territorial marketing can only be effective if the organisation engaged in it possesses enough knowledge and know-how regarding the targets they intend to reach. Hence, it has become evident that specialisation and focus make more sense than the synergies that stem from an approach that locates the responsibilities for different (territorial) marketing typologies in one and the same organisation.

This is confirmed in the comparative case study of regional tourism bureaus that follows below.

THE FOUR REGIONAL TOURISM BUREAUS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In **Catalunya**, tourism is dealt with by the Regional Government through a Directorate General within the Department of Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Tourism. Since 1980s the Directorate General of Tourism (DGT) has undergone various changes, but was always linked to the

before mentioned department, highlighting the need to insert Tourism into the department that deals directly with the economic development of the Region. Currently the Directorate General of Tourism holds a budget of almost 23 million Euros, representing 20% of the total budget of the Department of Commerce, Consumer Affairs and Tourism. The DGT has 98 employees, 2 of which are the General Director and the Sub-director. The other employees work in the four operative sections (Training and Inter-administrative Relations; Studies and Consulting; Information, Diffusion and Publication; Enterprises and Tourist Activities).

The main responsibilities of the DGT are the improvement, promotion and commercialisation of Catalonia's tourist product – tasks which are undertaken by two sections, one for business development and tourist activity, and one for planning, programming and incentives. In addition, the Agència Catalana de Tecnologia Turística provides technical advice and expertise. The Catalonia Tourist Board (CTB) was established in 1986 and is a separate agency for Tourism Marketing. A top-down relationship has prevailed so far between the DGT and the lower-order organisations.

The Catalonia Tourist Board is a platform of the sector organisations, including as members the Autonomous Community, representatives of the private sector and key local actors. Lower levels of tourism government include the Municipal Tourist Offices (Oficines Municipals de Turisme), Centres d'Iniciatives Turístiques, and Patronats de Turisme. Local tourist offices may associate in larger entities, or at the county level. Turisme de Barcelona is an example of Patronat, with a private company status (but participated by the public sector), responsible for tourism promotion and operations in the Catalan capital and the surrounding municipalities (approximately covering the metropolitan territory). The above mentioned tourist organisations can offer their input into tourism policy through the Catalonian Tourist Board - they can contribute particularly to the development of the tourism image of Catalonia. The CTB also collaborates with distribution channels such as air carriers, tour operators and wholesalers that control large segments of the market.

The coordination between DGT and CTB proved to be difficult in the past. The lack of a clear division of responsibilities could be one reason for these problems. In 1996 the CTB was redesigned into Turisme de Catalunya – this was meant to be a step towards more coordination between the most important actors in the Catalan system of tourism government. The aim

was to facilitate the marketing activities and the commercialization of tourist products in a more efficient framework, and with a higher share of private capital. Turisme de Catalunya promotes tourism in Catalonia, abroad and in the rest of Spain. Its activity is divided in two main areas, promotion and marketing. The marketing division has been active in the elaboration of new products, like green tourism, active tourism, golf tourism, festivals and cultural tourism themes. Turisme de Catalunya functions, for the rest, in the same way as the former CTB, as a consortium and umbrella to the rest sector organizations.

In the **Rhone-Alpes** Region, the Comité Regional du Tourisme (CRT), that bears the name Rhône-Alpes Tourism, is the main organisation for tourism marketing and coordination of regional tourism actors in the Rhône-Alpes region. This organisation was created in 1993, as a merger of three regional tourism organisations which before carried out similar tasks, each for a respective part of the Rhône-Alpes territory. The reason for this merger was a lack of cooperation and coordination among the most important tourism actors. What actually happened was the aggregation of several sub-regional tourism organisations into one regional CRT that matches the scale of the administrative area.

The CRT Rhône-Alpes does not receive any direct commands by the government or by public administration, but rather than that has the status of an independent association. Nevertheless, public actors do have a great deal of influence: The board of Rhône-Alpes Tourisme ('conseil d'administration') is composed of 33 representatives of elected officials from the 'Conseil Régional Rhône-Alpes' (regional government of the administrative region Rhône-Alpes) and another 33 representatives of other stakeholders – 8 representatives of the CDT's (comité départemental du tourisme), 8 representatives of thematic tourism organisations, 8 representatives of the tourism industry, 3 representatives of the regional chamber of commerce, 3 representatives of municipalities and 3 independent experts. Thus, the regional government is strongly represented on the board of CRT Rhône-Alpes. Also almost all the budget of the CRT comes from this stakeholder. The link to the 8 tourist organisations on the county-level (the CDT's) is a lot weaker. Our interviews confirmed that there is no special involvement of the CDT's, they are only involved in certain projects that allow for the enforcement of mutual interests. The link to other important tourist organisations on different scales (local and national) is missing completely – there are no representatives on the board. In the first place, the lack of

involvement of these actors is restricting the scope of coordination.

Rhône-Alpes Tourisme (CRT) is divided into three departments: Promotion, R&D and Communication. While promotion is a classical function of regional tourism organisations it is quite remarkable that the other two areas are as well integrated in this organisation. The research and development department (Ingénierie) performs basically two functions – firstly, it is responsible to create and provide statistics and reports about tourism in Rhône-Alpes; secondly this department offers consulting services to tourism companies in the region, by granting them assistance for certain projects. These projects have been designed by the department to meet the mutual interests of various actors. The CRT helps companies with product development and provides them with the means they need to facilitate international marketing. Remarkably, the R&D department of Rhône Alpes Tourisme also takes the lead in initiating product innovations and product developments. The communication department is something like the interface of demand and supply for the international markets, responsible for information and communication, with the aim to increase the visibility of the region. Its activities encompass tasks like running the website, editing the e-newsletters, running the Web-TV but also organising trips for journalists and tour operators.

Due to the size of only 50 employees the organisation retains a high level of flexibility, though the internal organisation of the CRT can be described as bureaucratic to a certain extent. Especially project based activities are characterized by a high flexibility – these are typically carried out with external actors in the form of partnerships. The inclination to involve other actors for the exploitation of mutual interests illustrates that Rhône-Alpes Tourism is well aware of its restricted ‘elbowroom’. Related to that, the CRT Rhône-Alpes tries to establish contacts with relevant partners throughout the region. The main target group for these networking activities are actors that have an interest in international activities, but do not have the abilities or means to carry them out alone.

Visitor servicing is not a responsibility of the CRT Rhône-Alpes. The main job of the CRT is to attract people to Rhône-Alpes, so the role of the CRT ends when it comes to the reception and information of visitors that are already there - this task is left completely to the local tourist organisations. When it comes to supporting other tourism actors, the CRT is

restricted to advising and networking – no financial support is granted to development projects of any kind.

The regional government of Rhône-Alpes (Conseil Regional), provides a bit more than 90 % of the CRT's budget. Subsidies from the state amount to almost 2 % of the total budget of the CRT; the other 8 % are provided by tourism companies and public organisations that are working together with the CRT on certain projects and bring in their share. The CRT Rhône-Alpes holds a total budget of around €10 million; about 40 % of this budget is spent on administrative issues (personnel, education, etc.), 60 % goes into the 3 main functions Research and Development, Promotion, and Communication.

CRT Rhône-Alpes has only one office in the surroundings of Lyon, there are no branch offices within the region, nor any international offices. Nevertheless, certain forms of representation within Rhône-Alpes and internationally do exist: Rhône-Alpes Tourisme pays a financial contribution to two Tourism Information Offices (BIT, bureau d'information touristique) in the region to distribute its information. Interestingly, there are no formal agreements with other local tourism information centres to display information from the CRT Rhône-Alpes. These two offices are located on two important "gateways" to the Rhône-Alpes region – the first BIT is located in Porte de Bourgogne along the Highway A6, the second one at the Airport Genève Coitrin in Switzerland. Though the second Tourism information office is actually located abroad, it is not a real "international presence", as the airport of Geneva is right across the border and thus a facility used by many tourists to travel to Rhône-Alpes.

International representations do exist, but always on a flexible and temporary basis (for certain projects). In these cases Rhône-Alpes Tourisme is represented by people from other organisations that already have a network of international offices, such as Maison de la France (National French tourist organisation) or the international offices of Entreprise Rhône Alpes International (ERAI, the organisation for the regional economic promotion of Rhône Alpes abroad). Such temporary representatives on behalf of CRT Rhône-Alpes are usually deployed when promotional activities of Rhône-Alpes are launched in a new country.

In **Scotland**, VisitScotland is the major actor in the field of tourism marketing in Scotland. The organisation's area of action matches the scale of the administrative region of Scotland. Decisions of the Executive have influenced the

operative scale of tourism actors in a very decisive way – in the past VisitScotland was exclusively active on the regional scale and the so called Area Tourists boards performed the tourism marketing on the local level independently. An act of parliament from 2006 changed this situation - it was decided to merge these area tourist boards with VisitScotland. Today, this new, amplified organisation operates on the regional and on the local scale simultaneously – therefore the organisation runs 14 network offices as representations on the local level. The range of action of these 14 network offices does not correspond to the lower administrative entities of Scotland (32 Local Authorities).

VisitScotland is not a direct government department but an operational arm of government, with a high degree of independence – a so called “non-departmental public body. Surely, the executive retains some degree of influence in the organisation - the board of VisitScotland consists of 1 chairman and 6 board members, all of which are appointed by the Scottish Minister (or Executive) for Tourism. The appointment of the members follows the rules of the usual public appointment process in Scotland. Some important stakeholders (the local authorities and the Industry) are not represented on the board. In order to involve these stakeholders, two Sub-Committees were established voluntarily by VisitScotland. These two committees only perform an advisory function and are not legally entitled to take part in the management.

VisitScotland is structured in six main departments:

- *Department of Network Operations*: This department coordinates the 14 network offices (the former ATB's) – each of these offices is led by an area director. An interesting feature is the emphasis on multi-functional teams in these network offices – the collaboration with other functional departments is a distinguishing feature of these offices. This leads to a situation in which the employees in the constituent network offices report on the one hand to their area director and on the other hand to the concerned functional department (second reporting line). This indicates that VisitScotland is actually characterized by a complicated matrix management system.
- *Department of Marketing*: this department focuses on tourism promotion, whereby the department is split in the subgroups International Marketing, UK&Ireland Marketing, Business Tourism and e-business;

- *Department of Industry Engagement*: The existence of this department highlights the importance of tourism businesses as partners and customers of the organisation. The role of this department is to build relationships with businesses across Scotland. Responsibilities are sensitising Scotland's businesses for local priorities and needs, managing the relationships with business customers and stakeholders and encouraging them to take part in VisitScotland's initiatives. Moreover, marketing initiatives with a focus on business tourism are carried out. The department also has a role in ensuring the involvement of the local industry in events and exhibitions;
- *Department of Strategy, Partnerships and Communications*: The communication division of this department is responsible for the relationship with the press, for internal and industry communication. Some of VisitScotland's research activities are located in the divisions for Scenario Planning and Corporate Research. There is also the Strategy division, dealing with strategic issues concerning VisitScotland and its partnerships;
- *Department of Visitor Service and Quality*: Assuring the quality of tourism businesses in Scotland is one of the main functions of this department. Tourism businesses (accommodation, restaurants, attractions and green tourism sites) are rated by the recently launched Quality assurance scheme. The participation in this Quality Assurance programme takes place voluntarily and in return for payment - nevertheless around 80–85 % of the Scottish hotels participate, and around 90 % of the attractions. This Quality Assurance scheme is meant not only to assess standards, but also to raise the quality – e.g. by encouraging skills training, identifying product opportunities and supplying information and advice. So also the stimulation of innovative products and services is one task of this department;
- *Department of Corporate Services*: This department is charged with administrative issues, such as Facilities and Procurement, Human Resources, Information Technology and Finance.

Research is also an important role performed by VisitScotland, although its transversal character makes it difficult to grasp from the organisational chart – actually, the specific departments have sub-groups that deal with research. The departments where most research activity takes place are: Marketing, Visitor Services and Quality, and Corporate Services. The consumer research team is highly important and

is the driver of all whole marketing activity. This research team is rather focused on qualitative research and does for example studies on tourist behaviour or the like; VisitScotland does not produce its own statistics on tourism.

VisitScotland is a non-profit organisation and is mostly financed by the Scottish executive. The estimated budget for the year 2006 amounts to about £ 63 million, equivalent to around € 96 million. Of these € 96 million, 60.4 % are subsidies from the Scottish executive, 11.1 % come from local authorities and a further 3.4 % from the European Union. This means that 75 % of the budget comes from public sources. The remaining 25 % are generated by the commercial activities of the organisation. Sources of commercial income are: Tourism Information Centres (TICs), fees that are paid by companies to participate in the VisitScotland campaigns, advertisements on the VisitScotland website or in the Brochures, and the Quality Assurance Scheme. Concerning the expenditures of VisitScotland it can be noted that the departments of Marketing and Network Operations together account for about 73 % of the total expenditure.

The reorganisation in 2006 brought about a new commercial approach – in former times businesses paid one standard fee for membership and were entitled to a certain amount of advertisements on the VisitScotland website and in the brochures (same fee & same services for everyone). In 2006 a more customer-orientated approach was introduced - businesses are no longer members of VisitScotland but only pay for the number of advertisements they really commission. The main aim for this change was not to raise the income for VisitScotland, but to abandon the paternalistic relationship that existed between VisitScotland and the industry before – thus the industry should be encouraged to take the initiative and become more competitive, rather than being patronised by VisitScotland.

VisitScotland is a highly decentralised organisation. The head office is located in Edinburgh; furthermore, there are 14 network offices in different parts of Scotland. Around 1000 people are employed at VisitScotland, including personnel at the Tourist Information Centres (TICs), the network offices and seasonal workers. 150 of these employees work in the head office, the other 850 employees work in other parts of Scotland. The TICs employ around 500 people in their 124 offices in Scotland. At the moment VisitScotland is also running one Visitor Centre in London - the only office outside Scotland. This office will be closed shortly, due to a severe

drop in the number of visitors (attributed to changes in the information behaviour of people); VisitScotland is represented in many foreign markets by the overseas offices of VisitBritain, and does not operate any international offices itself.

The Province of **Trento** plays a central role in tourism development and marketing in Trentino. In Italy, many of the competencies regarding tourism have been correspondingly transferred to the Regions and the Autonomous Provinces of Bolzano and Trento. The national promotion remains largely the responsibility of the ENIT, the Italian national tourism board. This agency is engaged in enhancing the image of Italy as a tourist destination abroad. ENIT cooperates with the Regions and the two autonomous Provinces, and operates a number of peripheral offices in the principal market countries. The Tourism Promotion Organisations on the different scales are: Central State Level (ENIT, National Italian Agency for Tourism), Regional Level (Trentino SpA), 'County Level' (ambiti territoriali omogenei: 15 APT's (Azienda di Promozione Turistica)), Local Level (Pro Locos & Consorzi (11 Consortiums of various Pro Locos)).

Although this study has put the emphasis on the regional tourism organisation Trentino SpA, also the APT's and the Pro Locos were explained in detail, since they have proved to be extremely important to the functioning of tourism promotion in Trento.

Generally speaking, the PAT (Autonomous Province of Trento) and the Municipalities are responsible for the investments that are needed to create new infrastructure or renovate existing infrastructure (such as ski lifts, roads, cultural attractions, events). On the other hand Trentino SpA, the APTs and the Pro Locos are responsible (using money the PAT is providing) for the brand management (Trentino and of the ambiti), and the enhancement of the image of the Province. It is the Province in general and the Tourism Department in particular that is responsible for the formulation of the tourism strategy. In effect, the Tourism Department formulates a three year plan that identifies strategic objectives and the financial means to achieve them. The most recent plan for the 2005-2008 period is the so-called 'Linee Guida per la Politica Turistica in Trento'. This plan is created in coordination with the Coordinamento Provinciale per il Turismo and the Commissione Tecnica per il Turismo on the basis of the indications provided by the Osservatorio.

An independent public company (Trentino SpA) in which the Province plays an important role was assigned with the task to promote tourism and the territorial image of Trentino in Italy and abroad. The Provincial Law 8 of 2002 foresees a number of tasks for the company: Trentino SpA is supposed, in strict collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce and the other organisations involved in tourism development, to be engaged in the following activities: the promotion, information provision, propaganda, publicity and assistance with respect to the Province of Trento and its natural, cultural, historical and productive resources; surprisingly not only the promotion of tourism resources is mentioned explicitly, but also the promotion of productive resources. Further tasks are managing, promoting and defending of the brand “Trentino” and the management of events of tourism interest. Also some other characteristics of the company were defined by the law: the participation of the Province in the capital of the company has to reach at least 50%; the president of the board of administration is nominated by the Province; local authorities and tourist boards are represented in the board of administration. This Law also regulates the relationship between Trentino Spa and the Province, by stipulating the establishment of a so-called contratto di servizio, a contract that precisely defines the actions that are foreseen to achieve the general objectives and the means that the Province will render available, both in financial terms as well as in terms of personnel. The Law reserves the Province the possibility to intervene directly in tourism promotion.

Trentino SpA was established in 2002, in accordance with the law. The capital of the company is owned by the Province of Trento (60%) and by the Chamber of Commerce (40%). The Province, possesses the controlling stake and expresses therefore both the presidency of the board of administration and the majority of administrators on the board. But the Province also has to provide the financial means to the company and covers the risks the company is running. In 2005, Trentino SpA had a total budget of 22.5 million Euros. Almost 21 million (92.2%) of this budget was provided by the Province in the form of services delivered according to the above mentioned service contract. The remaining 7.8% of the annual budget comes from collaboration with other organisations, in particular APTs, and most of it is in fact provincial money too. 59 people are currently employed by Trentino SpA, 3 of which are employed as directors. The organisation spends 2.9 million Euro (or 13% of the annual budget) to pay for their salaries. A further, relatively small, amount covers the compensation of the members of the company’s administrative organs and of

other fixed costs. The rest of the budget is spent on the annual programme of activities.

Two partnerships that are of special interest:

1. *Partnership with Chamber of Commerce*: the Chamber of Commerce is the appropriate vehicle to involve in the promotion of typical products, everything that is 'Made in Trentino'. The presence of synergies between tourism promotion and the promotion of typical products, whether they are industrial, handicraft or agricultural is obvious. This aspect of the Trentino case may be of particular interest for the Piemonte region. The enlargement of tourism promotion towards a broader form of territorial marketing is confined to typical products, however. All other forms of territorial promotion are developed by Trento's development agency, with which Trentino SpA collaborates whenever necessary;
2. *Club di Prodotto*: These clubs of products are not only powerful marketing instruments that allow the tourism industry's single firms to organise themselves, but also creates explicit opportunities for product development. Demand and supply are therefore connected and Trentino SpA functions as a facilitator of the clubs. On order to join the club, entrepreneurs are supposed to follow a specific course offered by the Trento Business School of the University of Trento. This allows the Province to generate incentives for entrepreneurs and their employees to re-qualify themselves and to invest in the tourism industry's human capital. The initiative of the Product Clubs is very successful and may be of interest as a case of best-practice for the other Tourism Boards involved in the research.

Another important characteristic of tourism in Trentino is the multitude of 'ambiti', distinct territories that play a distinct role in producing and promoting provincial tourism through the Azienda di Promozione Turistica (APT) they possess. Each ambito is supposed to identify or create a specific organism that promotes its tourist image. These organisms, that take the place of the previously constituted tourism promotion agencies are completely independent from Spa Trentino, and may perform the following activities: provision of information and assistance to visitors; tourism marketing; valorisation of the natural and cultural heritage; intermediation and reservation of tourism products and packages that are offered in Trentino.

At an even lower territorial level, the law confirms the presence of the Pro Loco, voluntary membership organisations that usually perform at a municipal level and that are supposed to cover the following fields of activity: valorisation of natural, cultural and historical heritage; realisation of local initiatives with a historical, recreational, cultural or sportive character. In order to be eligible for Provincial funding (up to 90% of the expenses), the Pro Loco associations ought to inscribe themselves in a Provincial register and thus seek for official recognition. Local administrations and the private sector may participate in the Pro Loco. The Pro Loco may take on various forms and may be engaged in consortiums with other Pro Locos.

The Province finances the activities proposed by the fifteen APTs and the eleven Consorzi Pro Loco and other local authorities and private partners (with an additional contribution of more than 12 million Euro in 2004 dedicated to promotion of the ambiti). The APTs were transformed in private or public-private organisations. On paper, the APTs have, similarly to Trentino SpA, both responsibilities for tourism promotion as well as territorial promotion in general. An aim of the re-organisation was a more intense involvement of the private sector in the decisions taken by the local tourist boards – this was also meant to lead to a higher share of private means in the financing of the APTs activities.

BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice in Tourism Development Strategy in Catalunya: “Turisme Total”

Turisme Total is a department of the Province (Diputació) of Barcelona. This department deals with the social and economic development of a wider territory than that normally touched by tourist activity in Barcelona - it is in charge of developing and promoting tourism products in the provincial territory. Its strategy is founded on the pursuit of a harmonic equilibrium between this development and the socio-cultural and natural context where this takes place. The tourist policies of the town councils and other territorial entities get support from Turisme Total; furthermore the organisation tries to rationalise and boost the actions of these protagonists by providing a “platform” for the coordination and promotion of different tourist products. Turisme Total carried out an evaluation and identified some strengths in the backyard territory, such as the industrial heritage of some minor centres and comarcas of Central Catalonia; something “specific” of this territory, offering an “integration” to what could be visited in Barcelona

and a “route” which can start in the city. New congress centres are springing up in the outer ring of Barcelona’s metropolitan region, as the congestion of inner-city facilities was starting to downplay quality. Turisme Total can offer high-standing facilities in a rustic environment (for instance, old castles and cloisters), including the possibility to offer “after the meeting” activities or to entertain accompanying persons and therefore boosting the integration of business and cultural tourism, creating a link for potentially returning travellers, and prolonging average stays.

Parallel to this “thematic” action, a number of territorial units to promote a homogeneous territory for product characteristics were identified, the “Consortios de Promocion Turistica”. 90% of the funds of the consortios are supplied by the Diputació of Barcelona. The consortios publish “area guides” and the whole offer in different territories is catalogued in a booklet, with the possibility to browse by area or by theme.

Best Practice in Product Development & Innovation in Rhone-Alpes: Tourism Engineering

The most striking feature of Rhône-Alpes Tourisme is the embracement of product development and innovation in the research and development department. Within this department there are important efforts to disseminate own research findings by encouraging tourism companies to innovate and introduce new products. The CRT advises companies on these issues and thereby exercises a certain degree of influence on the tourism businesses in Rhône-Alpes. Thus, the CRT plays a leading role in product development. The integration of the R&D and consulting services is an innovative step, which allows the organisation to be close to the developments on the market.

Best Practice in the Creation of Strategic Partnership in Rhone-Alpes: The Detection of Mutual Interests

The way co-operations are handled can be very well seen as a best practice. It gives the agile CRT office a natural leadership with respect to its stakeholders that is based on competence and usefulness with respect to its potential partners rather than institutional or formal power as is for example the case in Scotland or Trentino. In reality, CRT Rhône-Alpes does not have any formal power to ensure that others act in a coordinated way. The CRT Rhône-Alpes is focusing on partnerships which serve mutual interests and therefore don’t need any ‘extra enforcement’; the benefit the partners get is considered to be sufficient to lead to cooperation. The R&D department plays an important role hereby, as it concentrates a

lot of knowledge and allows the tourist organisation to model its initiatives in a way to meet mutual interests. Also other regions could employ partnerships wherever the exploitation of mutual interests is possible, but rather than just relying on voluntary cooperation a tourist bureau needs power to enforce its strategy and its interests also in situations where no synergies can be detected. Concentrating just on partnerships thus also restricts the scope of action of a regional tourist organisation.

Best Practice in the Tourism Development Strategy in Scotland: Coordination of Strategies

The coordination of strategies as such represents something like an ideal situation in the case of Scotland – the tourism framework of the executive is both in line with the executive's economic strategy, and with the strategies of the most important public protagonists in tourism promotion. Furthermore, it has to be highlighted that the strategy was developed with the involvement of the most important stakeholders. If the strategy would have been imposed in a top-down approach, the willingness of the actors to accept the strategy would also be a lot lower.

Best Practice in the Devolution of Tasks to Peripheral Offices in Scotland: Networking and Visitor Information on the Local Level

The perhaps most remarkable feature of VisitScotland is its duality: on the one hand it is active on a regional level, on the other hand it runs local network offices and local tourism information centres which are the points of contact for the local industry, the local authorities and the visitors. The activities that require certain closeness to the customers (industry & visitors) are carried out on a local level, other activities on a more central level. Networking is thus a lot more 'personal' as it would be in the case of one central networking department.

Best Practice in the Involvement of the Private Sector in Scotland I: Quality Assurance Scheme

The Quality Assurance Scheme is an innovative way to obtain funding from the industry. Apart from commercial income the scheme also brings about some additional advantages: an increase in quality and a guideline for the customer to identify qualitative facilities. What is particularly striking is that this quality scheme covers the whole of Scotland and reaches (voluntary) participation rates of around 85 %. The large scale of the quality assurance scheme is probably an extra incentive

to participate, as also the visibility of the single business increase.

Best Practice in the Involvement of the Private Sector in Scotland II: Delegation of Tasks to e-Tourism Ltd

VisitScotland manages to combine the advantages of a public organisation without some of the disadvantages this brings about normally. Namely, it was decided to delegate a number of operative tasks from VisitScotland to a private company - VisitScotland managed to secure a certain degree of influence on this private company, by founding a joint venture (e-tourism Ltd) with a private partner. This approach brings about several advantages: on the one hand activities that require a very commercial approach may be represented in a better way by a private company than by an arm of government; on the other hand the partners for the joint venture are experts in their field and bring in their specific expertise.

Best Practice in the Product Development & Innovation in Trentino: Club di Prodotto and Patti Territoriali.

Trentino Spa acts as a facilitator for the Club di Prodotto (or Clubs of Products), which connect demand and supply in a formal way and offer explicit opportunities of product development. The initiative of the Product Clubs is very successful and may be of interest as a case of best-practice for the other Tourism Boards involved in the research. A good example may be the club that carries the name Vita Nuova Trentino Wellness - referring to the strategic action "Health Holiday" and currently involving 36 hotels, 2 campings, the Observatory of the PAT, the Department of Tourism of the PAT (that established the product club in 1998), the associations representing the local tourism industry and external consultants. The club has its own offices and a website, but markets itself consistently with Trentino SpA.

Apart from the partnership that was illustrated above, from the year 1999 onwards the Province of Trento has been making frequent use of the so called 'Patti Territoriali', an innovative and flexible instrument based on the involvement of different public actors in partnerships (in order to enhance common interests). Many of the current Patti Territoriali in Trentino involve tourism.

Best Practice in the Organisation of the Tourism Function in Trentino: Explicitly Embracing the Concept of Destination Management

The reorganisation of the tourism function of Trentino has been based on the explicit adoption of the concept of

destination management. This concept implies that the role of the public sector is to help the firms and territories to improve their products and to intensify collaboration, coordinating initiatives and facilitating collaboration and that the public sector should manage and strengthen the brand of the destination. A sound foundation for reorganisations is a guarantee for their success.

Best Practice in the Involvement of the Private Sector in Trentino: A New Tourist Tax Scheme

In 2007, the Province of Trento will implement a brand new and innovative tax scheme that is supposed to integrate the financial means made available for tourism development and promotion. This initiative is particularly important when we consider that financial resources for tourism development are decreasing and the expected contribution of private parties in the co-financing of the activities brought forward by the public-private local tourism bodies in which they participate did not arrive. To explain this more in detail: a tax is raised as a small percentage on the turn-over of the firms belonging to the branches that benefit from tourism. In first instance, only the directly interested branches will be involved. However, an extension to the other branches is also a future possibility. By doing so, the Province tries to create an integrative fund that is going to be spent exclusively on tourism development and promotion, involving approximately 10 million Euro. This tax scheme is based on an extensive analysis of the economic impact of tourism on the local economy, identifying the economic activities that are directly and indirectly touched by tourism expenditure.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The analysis of the cases allows us to answer the questions that were formulated in the introductory chapter.

With respect to the (1) relationship that exists between the regional development strategy, the strategy of integrated territorial marketing and the tourism development and promotion strategy and (2) the identification of the institution(s) that are responsible for the formulation of these strategies it has become clear that only in words the four regions seem to have an integrated territorial marketing policy. In practice, tourism marketing and brand management are the responsibility of independent and dedicated organisations, perfectly in line with the theoretical considerations with respect to place marketing presented in chapter 2. The tourism marketing and brand management policies are formulated on

the basis of the overall regional tourism development strategy, but developed by the regional tourism marketing organisations. The overall tourism development strategy is the responsibility of the tourism department of the regional government.

The coordination between the different institutions and, therefore, the development and marketing strategies takes place either in a formal or in an informal (or a mixture of the two) manner. In all four cases there is a formal presence of the political body in the management or controlling organs of the regional tourism marketing organisation. Moreover, often private parties have been involved in the boards of the regional tourism marketing organisation, either as single representatives (Scotland) or through the presence of the Chamber of Commerce (Trentino).

This allows the private sector to be involved in defining and implementing the tourism development strategy. What remains a delicate point is the financing of the activities of the regional tourism marketing organisation. Only in Scotland, the contribution of the private sector in the budget is significant. A negative aspect of the Scottish approach is the partiality of the representation of the industry by VisitScotland; only those who pay get visibility. A more promising scheme is that of Trentino: a tax of scope on income earned by the sectors of the economy that gain from tourism, which integrates the provincial contribution to Trentino SpA, APTs and Pro Locos. A second delicate point is the relationship between the regional tourism marketing organisations and the peripheral offices. Only Scotland has found a way to involve the peripheral offices actively in their policies. In Catalunya and Trentino the coordination between the different territorial levels of brand management and tourism marketing is still scarce and are the messages to the tourism market not always consistent. In Rhone-Alpes the regional tourism marketing organisation has decided not to interfere with the peripheral marketing organisations.

All four regional tourism marketing agencies are managed and structured in a flexible and entrepreneurial way. However, as the following figures illustrate, resources and its sources and staff numbers differ considerably.

	Overall Budget	Public Funding	Staff
Catalunya	23 million Euros	100% public	98 ftes
Rhone Alpes	10 million Euros	90% public	50 ftes
Scotland	96 million Euros	75% public	150 ftes
Trentino	23 million Euros	100% public	59 ftes

Overall, **VisitScotland** has the most advanced management structure and possesses the highest share of private revenues. On the other hand, **CRT Rhone-Alpes** is a splendid example of a modern informal, network organisation. These two examples reflect the two extremes of the model of organisation structures that was proposed by Bolman and Deal and discussed in section 2. Its core is very agile and flexible and, by scanning continuously for mutual interests and for potential partnerships, its leadership in the regional tourism system is natural rather than formal: partners come to CRT Rhone-Alpes only because they recognise its competence and its utility for pursuing their own goals. Some of the (formal) instruments VisitScotland has to enforce may still be needed their where co-ordination and consistency of policy are needed. This underlines once more the necessity to find a good balance between formal and informal means to control the processes that are involved in the management of a regional tourism brand and in territorial marketing.

With a continuous intensification of the competition on the global tourism market, the competitiveness of the regional tourism system has become a basic condition for its further development. An increasingly important ingredient of the competitiveness of the tourism system is the quality of its government and its governance. The reorganisation of the regional tourism function, following the recipe that can be found in this report, is a unique opportunity for any tourist region to further improve and strengthen the government and the governance of the tourism system. And since a flourishing regional tourism system is increasingly a guarantee for a healthy regional economy and society, this opportunity should be taken with both hands.

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