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CELEBRATING THE PAST
Marketing and Development Plan for Rosenlund

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ABSTRACT

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<p>Rosenlund is an area constructed in the 1700s and situated in the town of Pietarsaari. The area consists of the Rosenlund vicarage, a large garden area as well as other smaller buildings. The purpose of the study was to formulate a marketing and development plan for the vicarage in particular. The theoretical framework of the study consisted of two main topics, which were cultural tourism and tourism marketing.</p> <p>The research method consisted of benchmarking analysis on the one hand and content analysis on the other hand. Benchmarking analysis included choosing nine different vicarages and mansions in Finland as comparison points and by way of content analysis studying their web pages. Content analysis was used to look into what services the other companies offered, how they marketed their activities and services and what Rosenlund could learn from this. The research focused on three main themes, which were meeting services, banquet services as well as additional services.</p> <p>The benchmarking analysis resulted in a development plan and marketing strategy for Rosenlund. Regarding the development of services, the study showed that Rosenlund could compile different meeting packages for customers and also design a brochure specifically about meeting services. Considering especially banquet services, a variety of different menus should be planned. Regarding the promotion of services, it was found that co-operation with another service provider could provide opportunities for conference packages together with accommodation, as well as joint marketing possibilities. It was also found that there should be a variety of both indoor and outdoor activity programs for customers. A future development possibility could also be to open a webshop on Rosenlund's webpage where items produced at Rosenlund could be sold.</p>		
Key words Aspegren gardens, benchmarking, content analysis, cultural tourism, mansion, marketing, qualitative research, Rosenlund, vicarage		

SAMMANDRAG

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<p>Rosenlund är ett område som bebyggdes på 1700-talet och som finns beläget i Jakobstad. Området består av Rosenlunds prästgård, ett stort trädgårdsområde samt andra mindre byggnader. Syftet med denna studie var att formulera en marknadsförings- och utvecklingsplan för prästgården. Den teoretiska delen av studien bestod av två huvudämnen, som var kulturell turism och marknadsföring av turism.</p> <p>Undersökningsmetoden bestod delvis av en benchmarking/konkurrens analys och delvis av en innehållsanalys. Benchmarking analysen bestod av nio olika prästgårdar och herrgårdar i Finland som valdes ut som jämförelseobjekt och med hjälp av innehållsanalys analyserades deras hemsidor. Innehållsanalysen användes för att studera hurdana tjänster de andra företagen erbjöd och hur de marknadsförde sina aktiviteter och tjänster samt vad Rosenlund kunde lära sig av detta. Undersökningen fokuserade på tre huvudteman som var konferenstjänster, festtjänster och tilläggstjänster.</p> <p>Benchmarking analysen resulterade i en utvecklingsplan och marknadsföringsstrategi för Rosenlund. Gällande utvecklandet av tjänster visade studien att Rosenlund kunde sammanställa olika konferenspaket åt kunderna, samt utforma en broschyr speciellt om konferenstjänster. Ett sortiment av olika menyer kunde också planeras speciellt beträffande på festtjänster. När det gäller främjandet av tjänster, visade det sig att ett samarbete med ett annat tjänsteföretag kunde ge möjlighet att sälja konferenspaket med övernattning samt möjligheter för gemensam marknadsföring. Det borde också finnas ett sortiment av utomhus- och inomhus aktiviteter för kunderna. En framtidsplan kunde också vara att öppna en webbbaffär på Rosenlunds hemsida där artiklar tillverkade i Rosenlund kunde säljas.</p>		

Nyckelord

Aspegrens trädgård, benchmarking, herrgård, innehållsanalys, kulturell turism, kvalitativ undersökning, marknadsföring, prästgård, Rosenlund

ABSTRACT
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1 INTRODUCTION

Cultural tourism and preservation of heritage objects is of current interest in a time where more attention is turned to sustainability in tourism. Cultural tourism implies travelling for the purpose of learning about other cultures, and heritage refers more specifically to cultural artifacts from a past time. Travelling to visit heritage objects is thus a part of cultural tourism and the topic of this thesis relates to both subjects. The name of this thesis, ‘Celebrating the past’, is derived from David Lowenthal’s idea of heritage being ‘a celebration of the past’ (in Misiura 2006, 10). This idea also connects to one of the topics in this study which concerns the organizing of various celebrations and banquets in the premises of the historical Rosenlund vicarage.

Marketing of tourism products and services also has its own special characteristics that differentiate it from marketing of other products. Since tourism products tend to be intangible in nature as opposed to physical products, marketing these as experiences that create memories becomes central. Tourism marketing thus revolves around the idea of constructing ideas about the experience that the visit will provide, which will attract customers to a particular tourism service. Marketing of cultural and heritage products brings in another dimension, since visitors come with certain expectations about the heritage object they wish to visit. The service provider is thus balancing between on the one hand constructing a heritage experience for the tourists to satisfy their expectation, and on the other hand aiming at retaining the heritage site in its original state.

Rosenlund is an area built in the 1700s and situated in the town of Pietarsaari. The area consists of the Rosenlund vicarage, a large garden area as well as other smaller buildings all of which are marketed under the common name Rosenlund. The Rosenlund area provides a multitude of activities all year round, such as events, guided tours, exhibitions, courses, gardening and club activities. The main focus of this study is on the historic vicarage building in the area.

A need for a study about the Rosenlund vicarage arose in connection with a plan to renovate the old vicarage. At the same time with the qualitative study at hand another

quantitative study in the form of a questionnaire survey was done by Centria, a research and development centre at the Central Ostrobothnia University of Applied Sciences. The purpose of this questionnaire was to find out if and what kind of interest there was among the local companies, organizations and representatives of official organizations to the services offered at the Rosenlund vicarage.

There was also a need for a qualitative study, which would provide concrete ideas for activities and services. In other words, a marketing and development plan was needed for Rosenlund. The qualitative research was completed by using the method of benchmarking together with content analysis. Benchmarking analysis included choosing nine different vicarages and mansions in Finland as comparison points and by way of content analysis studying their web pages. The research task is by way of content analysis to explore patterns and themes found on the websites of similar vicarages and mansions in Finland. Content analysis was used to look into what services other companies and organizations offer, how they market their activities and services and what Rosenlund could learn from this. The results of both the quantitative and the qualitative study will assist in the planning of the renovation of the vicarage and provide ideas as to how to develop and market the area.

There has also been previous research about Rosenlund, namely a study made by Annmaj Rönning in 2003 named “Rosenlund and Aspegren’s garden. Activity concept and Management model”. The purpose of this study was to develop a long-term plan for conserving the cultural heritage of Rosenlund as well as a sustainable economic development plan for the area. Rönning’s study also briefly touched on the subject of developing the vicarage into a place where meeting services can be provided, but the idea or marketing thereof was not fully developed in the study. The study at hand can be seen as a continuation and further development of the above study, with regards to the Rosenlund vicarage.

There are also some limitations to the study at hand that affect the results and final outcome of the research. The most important of these is the limited number of vicarages and mansions included in the study. The number of these had to be narrowed down since the study is qualitative in nature, and the aim is not to make generalizing conclusions of the subject. The web pages that served as research material for the study were also studied in a detailed way using a qualitative research method, and consequently too large a research

sample would have been impractical for the purposes of the study. The selection of merely the websites themselves as material also formed a limitation to the study, since it meant that all the other possible marketing means were excluded from the research.

In the theoretical framework the two major topics are cultural and heritage tourism on the one hand, and marketing of tourism products on the other hand. Heritage tourism is a relevant topic since the area and building that form the research subject of this work are of historic value. Marketing forms the other important topic since the main purpose of the study is to formulate a marketing strategy for the location in question. After the theoretical framework, the research material and methods that were used will be discussed. Lastly, the research findings will be presented, recommendations made and conclusions drawn from the study.

2 TRAVELLING FOR CULTURE

While most sellable commodities come in a physical or tangible form, in that they can be seen, touched and stored, tourism products are different in this sense. The most characteristic aspect of tourism is that it can only be consumed as an experience. While all travelling and tourism relies on this notion of intangibility, cultural tourism is entirely constructed around the concept of experience. The attraction and thrill to experience something that is beyond the ordinary makes cultural tourism popular among contemporary tourists (George, Mair & Reid 2009, 5). This chapter will thus explore the concepts of cultural and heritage tourism and how these are applied in the case of Rosenlund.

2.1 Cultural tourism

Cultural tourism belongs to one of the oldest forms of tourism, and it continues to be the basis for much of the tourism industry in many parts of the world (Richards & Munsters 2010, 1). Cultural tourism can be defined as travelling with the primary motivation to experience, to learn about and understand another culture (Craik 2001, 114). Typical cultural tourism destinations are museums, galleries, performing arts and historic sites and buildings. For instance, Rosenlund is a cultural tourism destination in the form of a historical site. Historical culture sites are thus the traditional cultural tourism destinations, but also visiting living cultures, popular culture sites and subcultures, such as the suburbs in New York, can be defined as cultural tourism. (cf Craik 2001, 115.)

Researchers have noted that tourists of today have grown bored with the traditional tourism forms and are now looking for more genuine travel experiences. Alternatively, tourists have grown to be more “mature, demanding and discriminating” in choosing their travel destinations. (Misiura 2006, 137.) Cultural tourism is the type of tourism that provides these types of more genuine experiences for the more demanding tourists. For instance, Rosenlund is an authentic cultural site whose origins stem from a historic period. Thus, it has something else to offer than an artificially constructed tourist attraction.

However, also negative views have been expressed about cultural tourism and the ways in which it displays culture. Since tourism service providers often provide travel packages where pre-decided sites are visited and only selected instances of culture are displayed, it has been argued that cultural tourism can reinforce social stereotypes and justify “social hierarchies and past injustices” (Craik 2001, 115). This can be seen in that it is the old historical mansions and vicarages that are made into high-class meeting venues, rather than the historically equally significant, but on a lower level in social hierarchy, farmhouses. As has been noted, Rosenlund vicarage has been the residence building for the parish’ priests, and priests have been high on the social ladder throughout times.

In terms of cultural tourism research, it can be noted that as travelling to different destinations to experience a new culture has increased in popularity, also research into cultural tourism has increased in the recent decades (Richards & Munsters 2010, 2). There was a tourism study completed by the Finnish Tourist Board in 2010, which aimed at finding out if tourists from certain countries considered Finland as an interesting destination for cultural tourism. A relevant question in the context of the study at hand about Rosenlund, was a question about what were considered to be the most interesting cultural tourism destinations and activities in Finland. The study revealed that the most popular activity was considered to be tasting Finnish food and kitchen products with 70%. The fourth and fifth most popular options, both with 56% of respondent replies, were to participate in a guided cultural tour or to visit a traditional countryside environment. Furthermore, 43% were interested in visiting a historical building or monument. (TNS Gallup OY 2010, 42.)

The above stated options were thus among the most popular cultural tourism activities in Finland. This makes Rosenlund a very suitable cultural tourism destination in Finland with great potential to attract visitors. The study also explored why cultural tourism destinations do not interest tourists, and it was found that most respondents, 37%, stated that they do not know enough about what Finland has to offer in this regard (TNS Gallup OY 2010, 47). The reason for this lack of information is probably the lack of enough and effective marketing. This in turn strongly supports a marketing-oriented study for Rosenlund that aims at developing the promotion of a destination for cultural tourism.

2.2 Heritage tourism

The topic of heritage tourism discussed in this chapter is closely related to the topic of cultural tourism. It has been noted that in terms of typology, heritage tourism is a subset of cultural tourism (Trotter 2001, 146). For this reason, cultural tourism is sometimes mistakenly used interchangeably with heritage tourism (Misiura 2006, 137). To differentiate between the two terms and explain their distinct characteristics, the study at hand separates the terms and discusses them in two chapters.

It was discussed in the previous chapter that tourists have grown tired of the traditional forms of mass tourism and are now looking for new and more genuine travel experiences, which cultural tourism among others provides. However, contrary to the idea that it is a new and innovative form of tourism, heritage tourism is a legacy from the 17th- and 18th-centuries. It is from this initial form of travelling for the purposes of education and social achievement, that tourism evolved into mass tourism and travelling for leisure purposes. (Trotter 2001, 147.) In other words, heritage tourism, on the contrary to being something new, is in fact a very old form of travel that has now experienced revitalization.

Heritage tourism can thus briefly be defined as “that which is inherited from the past” (Misiura 2006, 9). The major parts of heritage tourism are museums, galleries, historic buildings and heritage sites, in other words these are “[c]ultural venues that hold and display objects of heritage value” (Trotter 2001, 143, 147, 152). These qualify as tangible heritage, but heritage can also be intangible, in which case the heritage is in the form of music, dance, drama and unwritten languages. Rosenlund qualifies as built and tangible heritage since the area consists of different historical buildings. It is furthermore a religious heritage (cf. Misiura 2001, 151), since the building has religious connections by being the former residence of parish priests.

Similarly to cultural tourism, and indeed tourism in general, heritage tourism also tends to become commodified as it is made into a tourism product. Since heritage by its nature is intimately linked to personal or national identity, this commodification is not always accepted by people. In addition to this, heritage is a non-renewable resource that is in a state of deterioration. For this reason, any changes made to heritage sites or their transformation into commercial tourism destinations is not accepted without tension by

people. (Trotter 2001, 141.) Related to the issue of commodification is the question of authenticity, that is, to what extent a heritage object is in its original form from the past or how much it has been modified (Trotter 2001, 152).

The questions of commodification and authenticity also apply in the case of Rosenlund. This is because Rosenlund is a place of historic heritage and has to a large extent already been commodified when it was developed into a visitor attraction. Although the area and its buildings are in their original place, changes have been made to these, e.g. when making the orangery into a café that can cater for tourists and updating the vicarage for new residents. Authenticity is important for tourists who visit a specific site with the purpose of experiencing an authentic environment from another time period. Thus, if too much and too drastic changes have been made to the original environment, its authenticity inevitably decreases.

Heritage sites that aim to attract tourists need to adhere to and balance between two different demands. On the one hand, heritage sites are maintained and developed in order to satisfy the customer's wishes and create a successful business environment and market. On the other hand, heritage site management aims at conserving the historical site in question, informing about and familiarizing the audience to the past traditions and to generally introduce the heritage for "educational, aesthetic and cultural purposes" (Trotter 2001, 157). In order to satisfy the demands by both sides, heritage sites need to consider among others sustainability in their activities, practice responsible marketing, develop partnerships, invest in the people, place and settings as well as offer excellent quality service.

3 TOURISM MARKETING

Tourism as a field has continued its growth over the decades, which has made it “one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world” (UNWTO 2011). This is testified by for instance that “the business volume of tourism equals or even surpasses that of oil exports, food products or automobiles”, which makes tourism a major player in international commerce (UNWTO 2011). One of the main reasons as to why tourism is such a fast growing economy that brings in significant income is that it is a vast and diverse subject area. Thus, tourism “encompasses a number of diverse industrial sectors and academic subjects” (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert & Wanhill 2008, 7, 8.)

Tourism organizations and companies belong to the service industry, as opposed to the goods industry where the prime sales items are physical products (Middleton, Fyall & Morgan 2009, 39). Typical characteristics of the service industry are intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability. The most important of these characteristics is the intangibility of services, which means that they cannot be “seen, tasted, felt, heard, or smelled” before purchase (Kotler, & Armstrong 2010, 268). The customer can thus only evaluate the promises given by the service provider about the quality of the service before making a decision about purchase. The service provider must therefore present to the customer information and evidence about what kind of service it is capable of providing. The second most important characteristics can be said to be the service imperishability, which means that services cannot be stored like goods to be used later. If a service cannot be sold at a time reserved for it, the opportunity to sell it cannot be retrieved. Service inseparability implies that the service itself cannot be separated from the service provider. Variability refers to that the quality of the service varies depending on who provides it. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 268.)

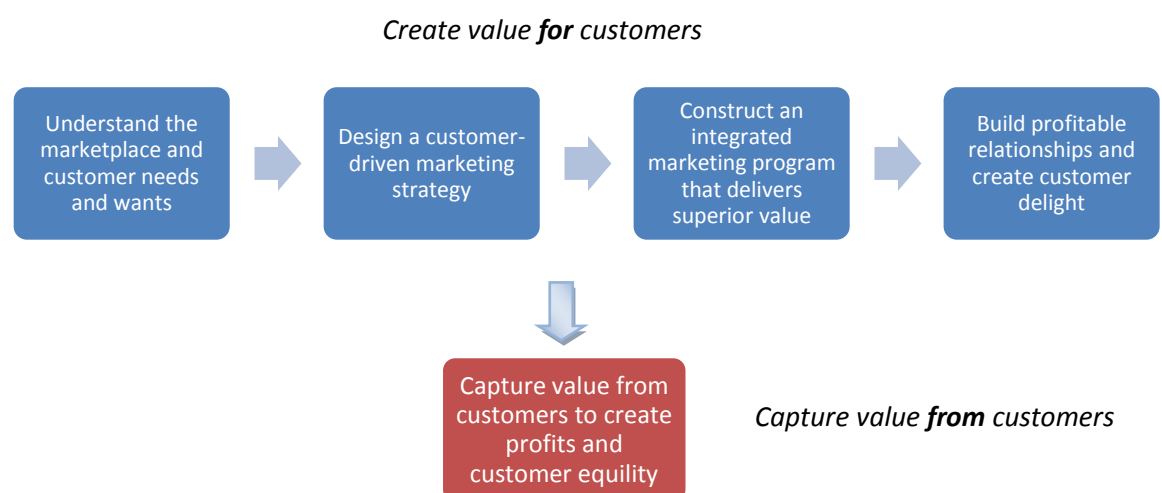
All of the above characteristics of the tourism industry must be taken into account when marketing the intangible products. The following chapters will discuss these various aspects of marketing, starting by describing the steps in a marketing process, moving on to marketing mix and SWOT analysis, both of which are the basic elements of marketing strategy planning. After this, the marketing of heritage is discussed, heritage tourism being

the prime subject of the study. Finally benchmarking analysis as a tool in marketing planning is presented.

3.1 Marketing process

Marketing is a wide and complex subject area, but it is often misinterpreted as only including the practice of advertising. It has been noted, however, that “[s]elling and advertising is only a tip of the marketing iceberg” (Kotler, Bowen & Makens 2010a, 11). The idea of marketing as simply a means of making profitable sale is outdated. Today, marketing must be seen more in the way of satisfying customer needs. If a company succeeds in finding out and matching these needs, the products can be sold easily. For this reason, marketing deals above all with customers and managing customer relationships. This is evident in that even non-profit organizations, such as museums, colleges and even churches use strategies of marketing in order to gather support, members and visitors. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 28, 29, 52.) Rosenlund partly falls into this category, since its area also includes a museum and other free-of-charge activities, while it also offers payable services.

In order to understand the concept of satisfying customer needs, marketing can be illustrated as a linear process. Kotler and Armstrong (2010) have developed a five-step model to describe this process, as illustrated in graph 1.



GRAPH 1. Marketing process (adapted from Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 29)

As can be seen in graph 1, the central focus in the marketing process is on customers and customer needs, as customers are mentioned in nearly every step of the process. This is because the market today contains a broad and bewildering range of products and services, and so the customer makes their choice based on expectations about the value and satisfaction that the market offering will bring. Thus, in the first step of the marketing process model the goal is to understand the marketplace and customer needs and wants. The main point here is on the one hand to understand where the company stands in the marketplace, and on the other hand what the perceived needs of these customers are. To find out what the customer needs are, companies conduct consumer research and analyze customer data. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 30-31.) This is what Rosenlund also did when it conducted a survey to potential customers in order to find out the customers' needs.

The second step in the marketing process is to design a customer driven marketing strategy. The main aim here is to find out which customers on the marketplace are the target customers of the company. Contrary to the common belief that the main aim of marketing is to find as many customers as possible, a more efficient strategy is to narrow down the target group of customers and aim at serving these target customers fully and well. It is through market segmentation that the company will arrive at target marketing. In this step the company must also differentiate themselves from other companies in the market that offer similar products. The company must decide what set of values it promises to deliver to the customers, and this will help in forming a brand for the company. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 32-33.) With regards to Rosenlund, it already narrowed down and identified its main customers when customer surveys were sent out to the local companies.

In the second step the company should also start building profitable relationships with target consumers. There are many philosophies that a company can follow in how to build these relationships – from production concept to product and selling concept. All these philosophies hold that the company must first and foremost focus on one of the above subjects – either the production, the product or the selling. Apart from these, there is also the societal marketing concept, according to which a company must take into account not only the customer's well-being, but also that of society. This can be a demanding task to

fulfill, since there can be discrepancy between a consumer's short term wants and their long term welfare. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 33-35.)

In the case of Rosenlund, it must also take into consideration societal marketing concerning for example the renovation and modernization of the heritage buildings and its surroundings. For instance, customers may wish to have a larger space available in the old vicarage, which could be actualized by tearing down some walls inside the building. However, in doing this, the original historical state of the vicarage would be destroyed. Therefore, Rosenlund should consider the historical value before considering satisfying customers' wants.

In the third step of the marketing process, companies have to construct an integrated marketing program that delivers superior value. In this step a marketing mix is developed for the company. The theory of marketing mix and how it applies to Rosenlund will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.2. The purpose of the marketing mix is to outline a plan regarding how to deliver value for customers. All the elements in the marketing mix combined form the integrated marketing program (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 36.)

The fourth step in the marketing process is to build profitable relationships and create customer delight. Customer relationship management is considered to be the most important part of marketing today. This management deals with "acquiring, keeping, and growing customers" (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 37). The customer relationship building blocks are customer value and customer satisfaction. Rosenlund should thus aim at creating a customer value that will assist in creating customer satisfaction.

Regarding customer value, rather than judging values and costs accurately or 'objectively', customers tend to act on the perceived value of an item. For instance, it can be difficult to measure the exact difference between two products or services that are roughly in the same price class. Therefore, the deciding difference that will make the customer choose one item over another, is what s/he sees as the perceived value of it. Customer satisfaction, on the

other hand, is connected with the customers' expectations on a certain item or service, and how it measures against it in reality. If they match the expectations, the customer is satisfied, but if they do not measure up against the expectations, the customer will obviously be dissatisfied. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 37.)

In the final step of the marketing process, the company reaps the fruits of its work, in other words, it captures the value in return. This comes in the form of sales, market share and profits, but also as customer loyalty. In other words, satisfied customers that experience that they have captured real value from the products or services of a company are likely to become loyal customers that will buy more. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 45.) As graph 1 thus illustrates, all the marketing work aims at creating value *for* customers, and it is not until this has been done successfully that the company can capture value *from* customers.

3.2 Marketing mix

When developing a marketing plan for a company, marketing mix is of central importance. Marketing mix consists of what are known as the four P's, which stand for product, price, promotion, and place (Middleton et al. 2009, 138). In the following, each element is in discussed in more detail and explored specifically from the point of view of tourism and cultural tourism.

The first P of the marketing mix elements is that of product. Product refers to the actual object that is sold to the customer, although in the case of tourism the product is often a service. For instance, in the case of Rosenlund, the product that is offered are the services provided at the vicarage and the Rosenlund area as a whole. Today it has also become of vital importance to brand a product, in other words to construct an image around the offered product so that it will be identified "with a particular set of values, a unique name, image and expectation of the experience to be delivered" (Middleton et al. 2009, 139). Currently travel products are also to a large extent planned and designed to meet the needs of customers. This explains clearly the need by Rosenlund to conduct a questionnaire survey among potential customers to find out what their wishes are with regards to the

services that will be offered. In this way Rosenlund can tailor-make its services to match exactly the wishes of the customers.

The second P of marketing mix refers to the price of the offered product. Determining the suitable price for a tourism product requires consideration on the one hand about what is the customers' purchase power, and on the other hand what is the required price level that will produce a profit for the company. There are mainly two types of price categories utilized in the tourism industry. One of these is the regular fixed price for a certain product, and the other one the promotional price. Regular prices are used when customer flow is even, while promotional prices are used to deal with seasonality. In practice this means either lowering the prices and providing special offers to attract customers during low seasons, or to do the opposite and increase prices to maximize profits during high season and when the customer flow is high. (Middleton et al. 2009, 140.) With regards to Rosenlund, they can make use of the price element by offering conference or banquet packages for a fixed price during normal season, provide a special offer during the low winter season and increase the package price during the high summer season. In this way they can ensure a steady flow of customers and benefit from both high and low seasons.

The third P in the marketing mix refers to promotion. Promotion is the actual practice of producing various types of advertising material to market the offered product or service. It can be said that promotion is the heart of marketing, and it is sometimes used as a synonym for marketing. However, simply promotion without the inclusion of the other four P's will not be enough to make a successful product and a profitable business. The obvious goal of promotional activities is to make potential customers aware of the products or services that one is offering. Promotion is also meant to create positive images about the product to the customers and thus encourage them to buy the product. Promotional techniques include making brochures, producing sales merchandise directly related to the offered product, direct mailing, PR activity and promotion through various channels on the Internet. (Middleton et al. 2009, 140.) Rosenlund has already made use of many of these techniques, as they have for example a brochure and a website about the area. They also promote the area on the Internet through pages on social media sites and by offering the possibility to sign up for newsletters to be sent to one's e-mail. Since Rosenlund aims at starting to offer new services at the renovated vicarage, it is clear that the questionnaire survey about its

future services sent out to the local companies, also serves as promotion and marketing material.

The fourth and last of the four P's refers to place. Place in marketing context can also be described with the term accessibility, since it refers to where and how customers can access the place where they can purchase the offered product. In the case of tourism industry, in addition to the actual tourism destination, the tourism product can also be purchased at for example travel agencies. In order to make maximum use of the place element, the tourism company should thus have a number of places where the product can be purchased. Also the Internet with its many possibilities can be counted as one purchase place. (Middleton et al. 2009, 140.)

In this regard, Rosenlund has many options considering how to make more use of the place element. They could, for example, develop an online booking system on their webpage, which at this point only provides partial accessibility for the customer in terms of making a booking. They could also reconsider how to make more use of social media sites that are highly popular at the moment.

Rosenlund is currently co-operating mostly with the local tourist info office, but this is only one place from where tourists gather their information. Thus Rosenlund could co-operate with other local companies, such as restaurants, hotels and museums, where they could also display their brochures and who could recommend their services. It could be possible to develop a conference or banquet package together with a local hotel, in that the hotel would provide the accommodation service and Rosenlund could provide the premises and part of the meals for the conference or banquet.

3.3 SWOT analysis

A part of developing a marketing strategy for a company is the implementation of a marketing analysis. For this purpose, a SWOT analysis provides the needed tools. The letters in the abbreviation SWOT stand for: strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O) and threats (T). The purpose of a SWOT analysis is to analyze the aforementioned four aspects in relation to a specific company. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 77.) Since a full

SWOT analysis of Rosenlund complete with examples is presented at the end of this study in chapter 6.6, a brief overview of the theory will be presented in the following.

Strengths are internal and positive factors of the company and include its unique characteristics, such as its products, location and history. Strengths are thus connected to those facilities and services that correspond to the customer's wishes. Weaknesses are also internal but negative factors of the company and include aspects that are lacking from the company and its products/services, and thus impact the company in a negative way. Opportunities are positive factors that represent the future development possibilities of the company. Threats are negative factors that represent different types of risks to the business, which can be both internal as well as external. On a larger scale threats can occur in the form of political unrest, economic corruption and mass tourism. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 77; Kozak and Baloglu 2011, 147.)

Examining these aspects from the point of view of marketing helps a company in forming an appropriate marketing strategy. A company can examine for example the marketing environment in order to find new business opportunities or possible threats. Also the company's strengths and weaknesses can be examined by analyzing the current marketing strategy deployed by the company. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 77.) As was established earlier, since marketing is such an extensive subject area, a SWOT analysis contains analysis of nearly all parts of a company's business – not for instance only advertising channels per se.

3.4 Marketing of heritage

As the main title of this thesis highlights, the essence of heritage marketing is that it aims at “celebrating one or more aspects of the past” (Smith 2010, 14). This distinguishes heritage marketing from history, which aims at recalling and explaining aspects of the past and give a factual account of it.

Marketing of heritage does not differ significantly from marketing of other products and services, and general terms and concepts of marketing are also applied in heritage marketing. This applies to, for instance, market segmentation, where all the customers on the marketplace are classified into groups and the company identifies and picks out the customers that it sees as the most suitable target group for its products and services.

Heritage is an industry that has grown exponentially and continues to do so presently. In the midst of this development, there is another trend emerging, in which companies aim at distinguishing themselves from their competitors by way of capturing their heritage and using that in marketing. Incorporating elements of heritage into a company image helps to build its reputation and trust, which creates a positive image of quality in the minds of the customers. (Misiura 2006, 238.)

What type of an image and impression a customer has about a company is of course of vital importance, since that will either encourage to or deter the customer from using the company's services. Consumers of today are also making an assessment of a company based on what ethical values and stances they display (Misiura 2006, 239.) In other words, consumers take a more critical look at companies and their behavior as a part of society. Therefore, applying a notion of heritage in a company image creates an idea of a company that cares about heritage and its roots, as opposed to simply being a capitalist profit oriented company. A company that incorporates heritage in its image transfers this idea on its products, which then appear as more trustworthy, since they come with a history.

As was noted in the earlier discussion about cultural and heritage sites, a company that wants to integrate heritage into its company brand cannot rely solely on the heritage aspect in the image. In a modern world, this company has to balance its traditional values and notions of quality, with the individualism and modernization of the surrounding world. (Misiura 2006, 240.)

Those sites that have an authentic heritage or historical origin can also be called heritage venues. These venues are very popular for the hosting of events and the most significant consumers of these are to be found in the business to business (B2B) market. They are interested in using the heritage venues for corporate events, which include exhibitions, banquets and conferences. The reason for the popularity of heritage venues is the

“immediate existence of a **WOW factor**, which is offered by the **uniqueness** of the interior and exterior of their heritage buildings and landscapes” (Misiura 2006, 101). It may be very difficult to create a similar effect in other settings. Rosenlund is thus a heritage venue and the prospects of using it as a venue specifically for the B2B market look very promising.

There are clearly many benefits for a destination to market its heritage attractions. Karmowska (2004, 139) has noted four main benefits that such marketing brings. The first of these is the attraction of tourists. A well-maintained heritage site that is open and welcoming for tourists will guarantee a steady tourist flow to the destination. Provided that the destination also has other attractions to offer for tourists, the heritage site will not become over-crowded by influx of mass tourism.

The second benefit of marketing is the attraction of investment and development of industry and entrepreneurship. This is connected with the fact that destinations that are rich in history and tradition, and that consequently take care of their heritage, usually attract well-educated and well-off residents. These residents are likely to be motivated to invest in their place of residence, by way of starting businesses for example. Also the third benefit, the attraction of new residents, functions on the same idea of a rich cultural environment attracting a specific kind of new residents. (Karmowska 2004, 140.)

The fourth benefit of marketing heritage is the influence on the local community – internal marketing. Internal marketing is beneficial since it is the local community that makes the decisions about how the destination should be developed. The cultural and heritage sites developed for tourists can be enjoyed by the local residents alike, and will have a positive effect on the community cohesion by highlighting the existence of a common cultural heritage. (Karmowska 2004, 141.)

3.5 Benchmarking

A very basic and simple definition of benchmarking is that it is “first and foremost a tool for improvement, achieved through comparison with other organizations recognized as the best within the area” (Andersen & Pettersen 1996, 3). The aim of benchmarking is thus

“improved performance”, in this case, of a tourist facility (Kozak & Baloglu 2011, 112). In other words, the aim is to study the practices of other companies – to learn from the best, and to apply this knowledge to one’s own company. Benchmarking was originally implemented in the business of manufacturing. Because of its generic nature it can easily be applied in other business environments, including the tourism business.

Other terms that are used to mean benchmarking are terms such as *best practices* and *competitive analysis* (Wireman 2004, 27). However, it should be noted that competitive analysis focuses merely on the outputs of a company, whereas benchmarking is applied on the aspects and processes within a company (Codling 1992, 7-8). The term “best practice” also describes the concept well since the main purpose is to analyze the practices by “the strongest competitors or those renowned as world leaders in their field” (Zairi & Leonard 1994, 26). Therefore, the study at hand uses the term benchmarking as well as best practice.

In the study at hand, benchmarking will be used so that a selected number of vicarages and mansions will be chosen, and the marketing practices on their websites will be analyzed. The findings from this analysis will be compared to Rosenlund and its marketing. Finally, recommendations will be made about what Rosenlund could learn from these other companies in order to develop its business. Similarly to marketing, benchmarking also focuses on satisfying customers, as well as improving procedures within a company and gradually acquiring a reputation of excellence (Wöber 2002, 11).

Several types of benchmarking can be employed when conducting a benchmarking project. For instance, internal benchmarking, similar industry/competitive benchmarking and best practice benchmarking. Internal benchmarking is done within a company so that comparison is made between different departments. The advantage of this type of benchmarking is the ease of data collection which is readily available. A great disadvantage of internal benchmarking is that because the company culture is similar in all departments, it is difficult to produce completely new solutions and improvements by this method. However, also small improvements that are produced can be highly useful for a company. (Wireman 2004, 34-35.)

Similar industry/competitive benchmarking implies, as the name indicates, an analysis of companies in the same industry, some of which may be one's competitors. The difficulty here may be data collection, if competitors do not want to disclose sensitive business information to its competitors. It is mostly small improvements that this method produces. In best practice benchmarking the task is to find the "unarguable leader" in the industry. Since this process will cross industry sectors and geographical locations, the method can produce great progress and new innovations within a company. (Wireman 2004, 34-35.) Competitive benchmarking is also applied in the study at hand.

Within product development in tourism, mutual company visits are a type of benchmarking activity. Thus it can be said that Rosenlund has already practiced a type of benchmarking, when it visited a selected number of vicarages and mansions in the south of Finland in 2011. However, these types of visits are often not organized enough in order to be useful for benchmarking purposes. Company visits also function as networking opportunities, and that combined with benchmarking can solve many issues related to co-operation among tourism businesses and quality development. (Komppula 2000, 124.)

A benchmarking study is done in a successive process, and the steps involved in a benchmarking study are as follows: study and understand one's own process, find benchmarking partners, study the partner's process, analyse the differences between own and partner's process and finally implement improvements based on what is learned from the benchmarking partner (Andersen & Pettersen 1996, 13).

The first step is thus to understand the processes in one's own company, in other words by critical analysis examine the existing functions in a company as well as lay out their pros and cons. In the study at hand this implied finding out and describing Rosenlund's current services, facilities and marketing practices. These are described in detail in the following chapter 4. The next step in a benchmarking study is to find benchmarking partners. This implies finding the companies that will function as points of comparison in ones analysis. These benchmarking partners can be selected in different ways depending on the aim of the benchmarking study. In the study at hand, the aim was to find mansions and vicarages whose type, size and operation basis are as similar to Rosenlund as possible, but more developed.

The following step is to study the partner's process, in other words, studying their services and business ideas – as was done in the study at hand about Rosenlund. The next vital step consists of analyzing the differences that can be found when comparing one's own company to that of the benchmarking partner. This is a crucial step in the study, since this analysis brings forth the possible successful details in the benchmarking partner's processes, and, conversely, negative or lacking corresponding details in one's own company. The benchmarking study should thus lead to a logical conclusion whereby the improvements found in the benchmarking study are implemented in practice in one's own company.

Benchmarking also has a role to play in the marketing of a company. This is because a benchmarking analysis done in the field of tourism aims at maintaining tourist satisfaction by offering facilities and services that are of high quality and that meet the expectations of the customers. When customers are satisfied with the service they receive and the intangible tourism product they have consumed, this can be "expected to lead to an increased intention of word-of-mouth recommendation" (Kozak & Baloglu 2011, 125-126). This type of communication between consumers also functions as an unofficial marketing channel for a company, and may be as effective as an official marketing campaign.

4 THE ROSENLUND AREA

The Rosenlund area was built by a priest named Gabriel Aspegren in the 1700s. Aspegren obtained the right to cultivate the lands of Rosenlund in 1755, after being named the priest of Pedersöre and Jakobstad in 1754. Gabriel Aspegren was an eager follower of the new ideas to develop agriculture and gardening. In the beginning, Rosenlund was a stony forest hill consisting of barren and swampy land. The forest and stones were removed and gradually buildings were raised and the garden took shape. (Aspegren Gardens 2006, Rosenlund 2008.) In other words, the Rosenlund area, including the vicarage, should be treated as a whole entity including all the different parts since it was built in a way so as to include all the individual parts. In the following, the history and present state of the area will be discussed in more detail.

4.1 Rosenlund's vicarage

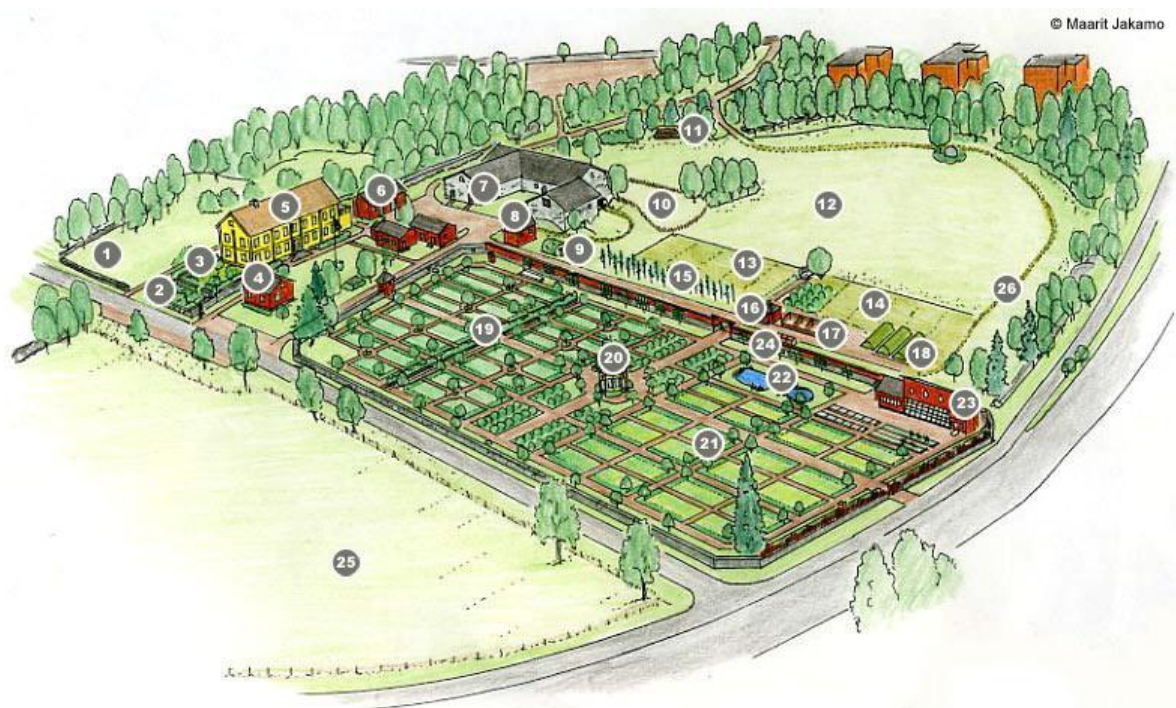
The Rosenlund vicarage was built between the years 1757-1758. Gabriel Aspegren planned the building of the vicarage in two stages, and half of the building was built in 1757-1758 and the other half during the 1960s. The house reminded of the upper class residences of the time, both in size and in room division. Below the house were three cellars made of stone and brick. Already in 1798 Aspegren's successor dean Brunnius started the building of a new residence building on top of the old cellar floor, which is still intact after 250 years. The vicarage has been inhabited by the priests of Pedersöre parish up until the 1990s. Today the building contains a chapel, a party hall, a study room and the parish office for the Pedersöre parish. (Aspegren Gardens 2006; Rosenlund 2008.)

4.2 Aspegren gardens

During the lifetime of Gabriel Aspegren, Aspegren gardens was a kitchen garden. It was terraced and symmetrically divided into blocks. There was a gazebo in the middle of the garden, and two carp ponds and a greenhouse in the other parts. Aspegren grew mostly kitchen plants and herbs. He was interested in fruit trees, especially apple trees, which he introduced into the region together with potatoes. Other plants grown in the garden were

for example currant bushes, lilac, bird cherry, small-leaved lime, rowan and tobacco, as well as common hop garden and cabbage garden. (Aspegren Gardens 2006.)

After Aspegren's time the vegetation in the garden has changed and the scope of the cultivation decreased, but on a broad scale the garden and its surroundings have been preserved. The stone walls, the gate building and the ponds are still retained. In the 1960s the garden was cleared, but in the 1980s a discussion about reconstructing the garden again started. In 2001, such a project started, the aim of which was to restore the entire Rosenlund vicarage area together with the Aspegren gardens to their original state. The project was successfully completed, resulting in a living garden together with restored original buildings. Graph 2 shows an overview of Rosenlund and its different parts as they are today.



1. Sheep barn	9. Root cellar	18. Compost
2. Biblical garden	10. Goats	19. Garden plots
3. Rosegarden	11. Outdoor stage	20. Gazebo
4. Janitor residence	12. Meadow	21. Farming plots
5. Vicarage	13. Farmland	22. Carp pond
6. Carpenrty	14. Farmland	23. Greenhouse
7. Stone barn	15. Hop vines	24. Rabbits
8. Loft	16. Toilet for disabled	25. Paddock
	17. Chicken house	26. Bridle path

GRAPH 2. Map over Rosenlund (adapted from Aspegren Gardens 2006)

As can be seen in graph 2, the Rosenlund area is considerable in size and contains many different parts. Apart from the historical buildings, the majority of the grounds are occupied by the large garden area, the meadow and the paddock. Due to its considerable size, it is not surprising that Rosenlund is in fact originally more known by the name of its garden, as the Aspegren gardens. The possibility of using for instance the meadow as a venue for different events has already been realized. For instance the Ostrobothnian Food Festival was organized there in 2011, and it is the annual venue for the Christmas market.

As can be seen at point 11 on graph 2, there is also an outdoor stage in the area near the open meadow. This provides further possibilities for outdoor events and should be utilized more as such and possibly emphasized more in the marketing of Rosenlund as a venue for events. Point 23 on graph 2 shows the location of the orangery or greenhouse in the area, which is where the Örtagården café can be found. Although the orangery is quite far from the rest of the buildings in the area, it has the view over the gardens to its benefit. Also, its distance from for instance the vicarage makes it possible to book both buildings at the same time for different events, without one disturbing the other. It should be noted that the gazebo, point 20 in graph 3, is also used as a place where small groups can gather for a meeting. The stone barn, point 7 on graph 2, currently functions as the local history museum and contains collections of, among others, agriculture and fishing equipment as well as textiles. (Aspegren Gardens 2006.)

4.3 Marketing of Rosenlund

Currently, Rosenlund focuses on three external marketing channels: The Seven Bridges Archipelago, the city of Pietarsaari and Pietarsaari Citygroup – a group that helps to promote the local companies through different events. Rosenlund is also promoted in various small tourism booklets and guides and even had a ten-page article in a Finnish gardening magazine (Wikman 2011).

Rosenlund also has its own brochure completed in 2008 that contains historical and current information about the gardens, the vicarage, the museum and the Aspegren garden foundation in Finnish, Swedish and English. Rosenlund has furthermore created a website

that also functions as a marketing channel. A completely updated version of the website will be launched in 2012. (Wikman 2011.) A capture from the new homepage can be seen in graph 3.



GRAPH 3. Capture from the Rosenlund homepage

As can be seen in graph 3, the navigation panel of the website has been categorized according to the main page named Home, general information about Rosenlund, activities and events at Rosenlund, the Aspegren garden area, the local history museum and the foundation that manages Rosenlund. From the point of view of attracting customers to the location, the most important headline is the one that reads “See and do”. This headline functions as an umbrella term that gathers under it all the activities that tourists and visitors can engage in when visiting the area – including the café services, conferences and banquets, guided tours, events and activities for children and schools.

From the point of view of marketing, and particularly the marketing of Rosenlund vicarage and its new services, more visibility should be provided to, for instance, the organizing of conferences and banquets. The navigation panel could thus contain the headings ‘conferences’ and ‘banquets’, similarly to the websites of other mansions and vicarages, as will be seen and discussed in chapter 6 of this thesis.

An important part of marketing today is creating a brand out of the product or service that is being offered. A brand can be defined as “a specific name, term, sign, symbol, design or a combination of these characteristics applied to a product or organization” (Bowie 2011, 127). Brands are important in that they make it easier for the customers to recognize and separate one specific product or company from a multitude of others. A brand image positions a company in comparison to its competitors. Particularly in the tourism industry, where the majority of products are intangible services, a powerful brand becomes very important in helping to create positive perceptions in the minds of the customers (Middleton et al. 2009, 198).



GRAPH 4. Rosenlund logo (adapted from Rosenlund 2012)

Graph 4 shows the new logo of Rosenlund which will be taken into use on the new website. The central concept around which the logo is designed is a decoration detail found on a lock in one of the Rosenlund buildings, which conveniently forms the letter O in the name (Wikman 2011). This logo will form the basis for the Rosenlund brand based on which present and future customers can immediately recognize and connect it with the Rosenlund area. The logo also communicates heritage value by virtue of the old-fashioned lock detail it depicts.

5 RESEARCH IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter will present the research as it was carried out. This includes the research material, the selection thereof and the criteria set to narrow it down. Also the research method used to examine the material will be introduced in detail. The final section of the chapter includes a discussion of the reliability and validity of the research.

5.1 Research material

The research material in the study consists of the websites and marketing material of a number of selected historic vicarages and mansions in Finland that provide commercial services. Since there is a large number of such historic vicarages and mansions in Finland, pre-criteria were set to narrow down the research material. The main pre-criterion was that the selected vicarages and mansions should be as similar to Rosenlund as possible, in terms of their type and the services they provide.

Since the aim of the research was to conduct a benchmark analysis, those vicarages and mansions that in some way distinguished themselves from the others, by way of receiving national awards for their activities, were also included in the research material. A total of nine vicarages and mansions served as research material, out of which three were vicarages and five were mansions. These were as follows: Haikko Manor, Hirvihaara Manor, Keuruu Old Vicarage, Marttinen Old Vicarage, Svartå Manor, Söderkulla Manor, Vuojoki Mansion, Väärni Vicarage and Tertti Manor.

In addition to the webpages of the mansions and vicarages, the results from a questionnaire survey that was carried out by the Centria research centre among 106 local companies in Pietarsaari will also be utilized. The purpose of the survey was to find out what type of services the companies would be interested in receiving from the Rosenlund vicarage. The results from this survey will add further information to the study at hand and aid in forming a more complete picture of the company's future activities.

5.2 Research method

The method that was used to analyze the research material was qualitative method in the form of content analysis. Content analysis is used to analyze both text and pictures, with the aim to find out what is being said, how it is said and who is saying it (Smith 2010, 201). The research material in content analysis can consist for example of postcards sent home by tourists during their trip, guidebooks, brochures, blogs and destination websites. In the research at hand, the research material is as mentioned the websites of vicarages and mansions in Finland.

Content analysis can answer various questions and in the study at hand the following are the most relevant:

- What is the content, meaning or form of communication?
- What may be the intent of the communication?
- Who is the intended audience of the communication?
- How are words, assumptions, definitions, concepts, arguments or images used or articulated to shape the communication?

(Smith 2010, 206).

By applying methods of content analysis when studying the research material, it is possible to explain and analyze what information is communicated, for example on a mansion's website. It furthermore shows what the message that is being conveyed is and why the company aims at communicating specifically this message. For instance, if a website contains photos of a high class restaurant, a wine cellar and stylishly dressed people, it can be discussed what is the intended message that is communicated. This can be interpreted for instance so that the company aims at communicating a sense of high quality and expensiveness. If the whole website is built up in this way, with text supporting the imagery, it is likely that this is the image of the company that it aims at forwarding to the audience. Based on this, it can also be inferred that the target audience of the communication is wealthy individuals. This is relevant information for the study at hand, since with the help of this the marketing ideology of the company can be revealed.

In content analysis it is possible to inspect both manifest content and latent content, the latter is also called semantic analysis. Manifest content implies the actual text and images that can be observed. Latent content, on the other hand, refers to information that is not explicitly expressed, but that is implicitly meant. Latent content is difficult to analyze objectively, since it relies heavily on subjective interpretation by the researcher. This may result in the researcher interpreting the material based on preconceived notions, in which case the interpretation can become skewed and misleading. (Smith 2010, 206.) The study at hand will therefore not include analysis of latent content, since latent information does not contribute much to the research task, which is concerned with marketing strategy.

In order to analyze the research material by content analysis, it is necessary to lay out a coding scheme. A coding scheme specifies what features in the material are studied, as well how they are studied. The coding scheme for the research at hand is as follows.

- variety of services provided
 - main services (meetings, banquets)
 - subsidiary services (programs, activities)
- classification and description of the services

The overall aim of the content analysis according to the above described coding scheme is to find out any general patterns in the material and the systematic similarities and differences on the websites. As all the material on the website will be treated as possible marketing material for the mansion or vicarage in question, the results of this analysis will be used to draw conclusions about what the content is communicating in terms of marketing. In content analysis it is also necessary to develop a sampling frame, which refers to how the research material is narrowed down in order to develop a representative sample. The sampling frame of this study was discussed and explained in the previous section about research material.

Concerning the questionnaire survey, it has been noted that “[q]uestionnaires are arguably the most important tool for gathering data for tourism research” (Smith 2010, 61). The questionnaire was planned, designed and distributed by the Centria research centre. The question format used by Centria in designing the questionnaire survey was the basic format

of closed-ended questions. In this format, the respondents are given pre-decided or fixed set of options from where they choose their answer. From the point of view of research, this question format ensures a “consistent set of answers from respondents”, which in turn simplifies data coding and input. (Smith 2010, 63.) A disadvantage with closed-end questions is that it does not allow for spontaneous or individual expressive answers (Smith 2010, 64). In this study only some selected the results of the questionnaire are presented and discussed where they are deemed as contributing valuable information to the study.

5.3 Validity and reliability

When conducting a research plan, it is of importance to also consider the degree of validity and reliability in the research. Validity is defined as “the extent to which the information collected by the researcher truly reflects the phenomenon being studied” (Veal 2006, 41). In the study at hand, high degree of validity is assured by the fact that the research material, the websites of mansions and vicarages, is directly connected with the location for which the benchmarking study is done, which is a vicarage. This means that the chosen research material corresponded with the historical building for which the study was done. The validity of the research could have been increased by including more and other marketing material in the study as well, as this would have added breadth of information to the study. However, the study needed to be narrowed down so as to be manageable and to provide enough detailed analysis of the material.

Reliability is defined as “the extent to which research findings would be the same if the research were to be repeated at a later date or with a different sample of subjects” (Veal 2006, 41). The latter part of this definition is difficult to repeat in social sciences, which tourism studies also belong to. In other words, a different sample of subjects would in all likelihood produce a different study with slightly different results. Repeating the exact same study at a later time, however, can be expected to produce same results of this study. This is because in the content analysis employed in this study, only manifest content is studied, leaving out latent content. Latent content would require subjective interpretation by the researcher, which is likely to reduce the reliability and objectivity of the research.

Also the chosen research method, qualitative research, affects the reliability and validity of the study. Despite its merits, there are also some limitations to qualitative research. For instance, unlike quantitative research, qualitative research cannot provide large research samples that could represent the whole target group of the research (Proctor 2005, 222). This may lead to that material that is significant for the research must be left out, which in turn decreases the validity of the study. Similarly, due to the size of the material, qualitative research may not identify small differences in the sample in the same way as quantitative research can (Proctor 2005, 222). This is because it is somewhat easier to detect small differences in a bigger sample, whereas they may be lost in the detailed information in a smaller sample. In summary terms, however, the validity and reliability of this study is assured when the material available is studied in a detailed and as impartial way as possible.

6 RESEARCH RESULTS

This section presents the results of the study, starting with a presentation of some of the results from the questionnaire survey conducted by the Centria research centre. These results provide the customer point of view to the study at hand and thereby add valuable information to the research. As the results from this survey were obtained after the benchmarking study was conducted, the survey results did not affect or direct the study at hand in any way.

After discussing the questionnaire survey results, the results of the benchmarking analysis will be presented. The websites of the selected vicarages and mansions were analyzed and categorized according to a pre-determined coding scheme. The focus was placed on three main service areas – meetings (discussed in the subdivisions of packages and equipment), banquets (discussed in the subdivisions of types of banquets and catering), and additional services (discussed in the subdivisions of activities and specialties). In each chapter the vicarages and mansions are inspected from the point of view of what type of services they provide and how these are marketed.

The results of the benchmarking study will be concluded and summarized in the final chapter with a SWOT analysis of Rosenlund. The reason to include a SWOT analysis into the final section of the work was that it provides a way to summarize the multitude of ideas and information obtained from the benchmarking study.

6.1 Questionnaire survey results

This chapter will present the results obtained from the questionnaire survey conducted by Centria. The aim of the survey was to find out what kind of services by Rosenlund the potential customers would be interested in. The survey was sent out to 351 respondents which included companies, organizations and representatives of official organizations. Answers were obtained from 106 respondents, which gives a reply percentage of 30,2.

In the following, four questions from the questionnaire survey will be discussed that were seen as most relevant to the study at hand. The first of these concerned what type of

services the respondents would be interested in during banquets. Not surprisingly, the need for coffee, snacks and good quality food services received a high percentage of strong agreement from the respondents, with 47,8% for coffee and snacks, and 73,6% for food service.

Although there was clear interest for entertainment/program to be offered during banquets, this interest was not overwhelming. Only 6,6% agreed strongly with the statement and the highest percentage of 39,6 agreed. The percentages for disagreeing and disagreeing strongly with the statement were quite evenly divided with 29,7% and 24,2% respectively. This is an interesting result since banquets could be seen as the most suitable occasions for entertainment or program. An explanation to the result could be culture connected and that Finnish respondents see the idea of entertainment on official banquets as strange. Alternatively, the respondents do not have previous experience of this and it would thus be the role of Rosenlund to use marketing to offer the customers something that they did not know that they needed.

It was also an interesting result that only 2,2% reported it as very important that accommodation can be arranged during banquets, and the majority, 51,1%, disagreed strongly that accommodation would be needed. This is a somewhat surprising result since banquets can be attended by guests who are not local residents and who are thus in a need of accommodation. This can be explained by the fact that the customers may wish to arrange their own accommodation, or, alternatively, that the customers did not consider accommodation as part of banquet service. However, although customers may not see this as a subsidiary service they may wish to purchase, if Rosenlund would make a package that would include accommodation, they may still purchase it. Thus, Rosenlund could provide this service in a package similarly to many other mansions and vicarages that will be discussed later in the benchmarking analysis.

The second question concerned what type of services the respondents would be interested in during smaller meetings. The importance of technical equipment and availability of coffee and snacks was emphasized, with 69,9% and 72,9% respectively agreeing strongly with the options, as these are clearly important during meetings. The environment where the meeting takes place was also seen as important since 43,2% agreed with the statement that it is important that the surrounding environment is pleasant and beautiful. There were

again aspects that the respondents strongly disagreed with. For instance, the majority of 58,8% disagreed that it is important that some type of entertainment/program is offered. Also regarding accommodation, 72,3% strongly disagreed that such would be needed. This can again be explained by that customers do not see entertainment/program or accommodation as something that could be included into a conference package. However, as will be seen in the results of the benchmarking study hereafter, most other mansions provide a large variety of these subsidiary services to their customers.

One of the survey questions asked the respondents to give an overall assessment as to what type of services they wished there to be available at Rosenlund. The most interesting results here indicated that there was indeed interest for different types of activities. For instance, 51,1% agreed with being interested in getting guided tours and more information about Rosenlund. The interest to participate in physical activities was low, with the lowest percentage of 6,6 being very interested in this option. Cultural experiences received the highest interest percentage with 46,2% opting for the agree option and 39,1% agreeing with being interested to participate in creative activities. These results contradict with the earlier results where the respondents indicated very low interest for subsidiary program during banquets and conferences. It is possible that the respondents did not consider guided tours as possible entertainment/program during an occasion. Therefore, the earlier results indicating low interest towards such activities should not be taken as unchangeable opinions by customers.

Finally, the respondents were asked if they would be interested in using Rosenlund's services. The response to this question was interesting in that while the majority of respondents, 74,5%, answered that they had not used Rosenlund's/Aspegrens Gardens' services earlier, the majority of 79,2% answered yes to the question as to if they would be interested in organizing a banquet/meeting in a vicarage/mansion milieu from the 18th century. This gives good prospects for Rosenlund to succeed in its planned services.

The results obtained from the questionnaire survey were manifold and interesting and provided a valuable insight into the future client's wishes. However, as the discussion showed, there were some contradictions in the responses given by the respondents. Whereas there was low interest for activity programs during meetings and banquets per se, in the overall assessment respondents did state interest for cultural experiences and

activities as well as guided tours. In other words this means that if Rosenlund was to include a selection of activities into its services and plan and market these well, the customers would very likely be interested in using these services.

The following chapters will present the results from the benchmarking analysis. The discussion will start with meeting services, followed by banquet services and finally additional services.

6.2 Meetings

Initially it should be discussed why companies wish to organize their meeting in other premises than those of their own company. In other words, the customer's needs should be identified, as was discussed in chapter three about marketing. More often than not, companies have their own conference rooms in their office premises, which are more convenient to use on an everyday basis. One potential reason why meetings have to be moved outside the office is when the meetings become larger and begin to involve more people. (Fenich 2008, 89-99.) In other words, a company may not have enough space to accommodate all meeting participants. However, there are large companies that have their own auditoriums in their office building. Therefore, another reason for companies to use an external venue for a meeting is because of the different setting it provides, as well as the additional services. This means that conference service providers should focus either on premises of good size, or, if that is not possible, characteristics and pleasant premises. The following subchapter will discuss meeting-related packages and equipment.

6.2.1 Packages

A meeting package is a readymade collection of services that in addition to the actual conference includes other, smaller or bigger, services. A good selection and variety of conference packages is to the benefit of both the company and the customers. While it

provides options for the customers to choose from, it gives the company the freedom of fixing the price.

Keuruu Old Vicarage provides meeting packages for short-, half-day, and full day meetings. A short meeting package only includes a salty and sweet snack with coffee or tea. A half-day meeting package includes full lunch with afternoon coffee/tea serving. A full day meeting package includes breakfast, full lunch and afternoon coffee/tea. The packages include the chosen menu, setting, premise rent, use of meeting facilities, and water and juice carafes in the meeting premises. Rosenlund could design similar conference packages for meetings of different length. Specifying the length of a meeting is beneficial since companies may have different types of meetings and in this way Rosenlund could arrive at a higher booking rate for the premises per single day. (Keuruu Old Vicarage 2011.)

Väärni Vicarage has an interesting offer for ‘mini-meetings’ that last up to 2 hours, which are free of charge if the customer also orders coffee or a food serving. For longer meetings there are fees for renting the premises that vary depending on which premise is being rented. There is also the possibility to book a sauna that can fit a small group of people. (Väärni Vicarage 2011.)

Marttinen Old Vicarage has three different meeting packages available ranging from short meetings to meetings lasting several days. The packages are named with different names, such as *Amalian kokous* (Amalia’s meeting) and *Karoliinan kokous* (Karoliina’s meeting). The packages include coffee/tea and meals or snacks depending on the length of the meeting. Longer meetings also include accommodation in the premises. This is noteworthy for Rosenlund also, in that it could offer a meeting package together with accommodation for longer meetings. Although the interest for accommodation in connection with meetings was low in Centria’s questionnaire survey, the survey question did not specify the possibility for e.g. multiple day meetings. Such an option could increase the interest for a meeting package with accommodation. (Marttinen Old Vicarage 2011.)

Marttinen Old Vicarage has also specified the minimum number of persons that the meetings must include, and so the meetings are arranged to a group of minimum 15 people. As a small extra service the meetings include a block of paper and pen for the participants.

They have also composed a separate brochure about meeting services that is available for downloading on their webpage. This type of brochure could also be designed by Rosenlund and included on their website for easy access. (Marttinen Old Vicarage 2011.)

Haikko Manor has been selected for the 10th time as Finland's best conference and meeting hotel of 2011. The manor does not provide specific conference packages with fixed prices. Instead, the customers can combine the services according to their own wishes and make an enquiry to the manor. On their webpage Haikko Manor lists the options available in terms of the conference and meeting premises, conference menus and coffee breaks, after meeting and evening activities. The simple but stylish layout of their webpage introducing conference services can be seen in graph 5. Emphasis is laid on presenting the conference premises and menus together with illustrating photos, which are placed in the middle of the webpage. (Haikko Manor 2011.)



GRAPH 5. Capture from Haikko Manor's website

Hirvihaaran Manor was the conference hotel of the year 2003 chosen by Mercury International, and the best Finnish conference hotel chosen by Taloustutkimus in 2003 (Hirvihaaran kartano 2011). Furthermore, Hirvihaara Mansion has been chosen as the best mansion-hotel in terms of wine selection in 2011 (Viini & Ruoka 2011). These awards indicate that Hirvihaara Manor is above the average in terms of the services it provides. One of the reasons for its popularity is probably its close distance to Helsinki downtown, which is only a 40-minute drive away. This manor, similarly to Haikko Manor, does not

provide readymade conference packages or even price lists, and the customers are instead allowed to make enquiries. (Hirvihaara Manor 2011.)

Vuojoki Mansion offers four different types of conference packages – whole day, half day, coffee service, as well as a two-day package with accommodation. These packages include meals, coffee and tea and use of conference equipment and breakfast in the case of full day or two day conference. A notable similarity between Rosenlund and Vuojoki is that both have an orangerie, which is rented out for meetings. (Vuojoki Mansion 2011.)

6.2.2 Equipment

Possessing a good selection of, or at the very least sufficient, meeting equipment is also of importance for a company that aims at providing conference services.

Keuruu Old Vicarage provides the most comprehensive list of available conference equipment – ranging from audio system and wireless Internet to copying machines and video cameras. They provide the following list of equipment on their website: audio-video amplifoyer with dolby processor, dvd-player, vhs-player, documentation film camera, video projector, table microphone and wireless microphone system, computer, printer, copymachine, wireless Internet (WiFi). (Keuruu Old Vicarage 2011.)

The equipment available at Keuruu Old Vicarage includes the most commonly available equipment in the mansions and vicarages. It was also common to have flip charts, silver screens, TV's and CD-players. The most important equipment, that was mentioned by nearly everyone, was the availability and free use of wireless Internet. Some mansions, such as Marttinen and Vuojoki, also provided paper and pencils for the conference participants as a small compliment from the company. (Marttinen Old Vicarage 2011; Vuojoki Mansion 2011.)

It is also interesting to note that some companies, although they market their premises as suitable for meetings, do not provide any further detailed information about the available

equipment. For instance Väärni Vicarage does not provide any such information, and Hirvihaara Manor only briefly mentions that modern AV-equipment is available. From the point of view of the customer, more detailed information should be provided. This serves both the customer, who gets all the necessary information before making a possible booking decision, as well as the company that will display and market a more professional image as a conference organizer. Rosenlund should thus make a decision about which equipment to obtain and also provide detailed information about this equipment on their website. (Väärni Vicarage 2011; Hirvihaara Manor 2011.)

6.3 Banquets

Similarly to meetings, different kinds of banquets can also be organized in companies' or private peoples' own premises. Today people have a multitude of options when organizing even relatively large banquets with many participants. The available options range from setting up a large tent outdoors, or using banquet halls in apartment buildings that are usually free of charge for the residents. The companies providing banquet organizing services must in other words provide attractive services that the customers are prepared to pay for, rather than using their own premises for free. In the following the different banquet service options are presented and discussed.

6.3.1 Types of banquets

Keuruu Old Vicarage clearly focuses on banquets as its main business activity, since it advertises itself with the name 'Pappilan Pidot', which in English translates into Vicarage Party. They also have a slogan; *You give the reason, we organize*. On their website they state that they organize company parties, family celebrations, weddings, memorials and group trips. They have separate menus for each occasion, and thus the menu selection is considerable. Their specialty is that they also organize full service company parties in the customer's own premises. (Keuruu Old Vicarage 2011.)

[illegible]

GRAPH 6. Banquet brochure by Marttinen Old Vicarage

Söderkulla Manor also has banqueting as one of its main services. A specialty, which is not mentioned by any of the other mansions or vicarages, is *karonkka*, which is a party held after a doctoral defence. Vuojoki Mansion introduces its banqueting services by way of presenting the premises where banquets can be held. In other words it does not specify or limit what types of banquets can be arranged at the mansion. (Söderkulla Manor 2011; Vuojoki Mansion 2011.)

6.3.2 Catering

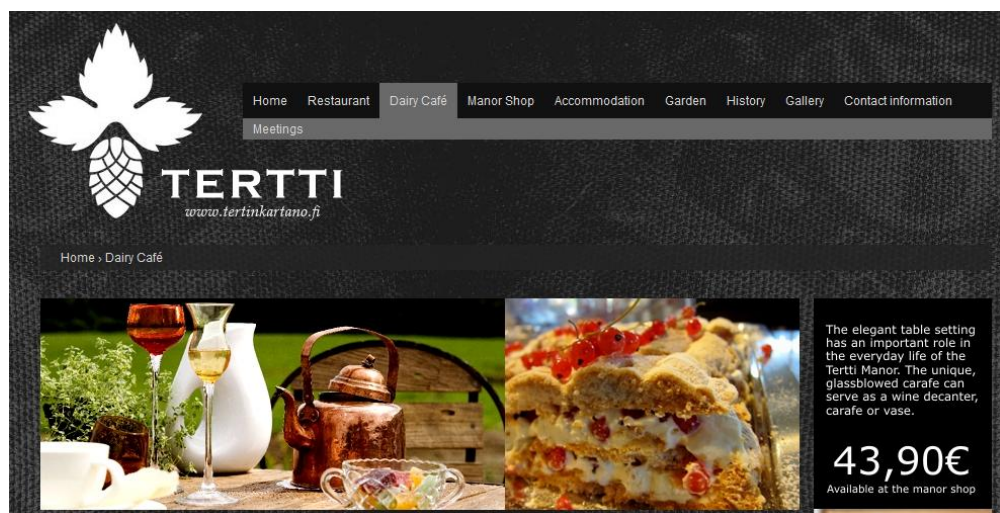
Catering is one of the most important services provided by a mansion or vicarage that practices commercial activities. This is because both in the case of conferences and banquets, customers are bound to need some type of food service. This will have to be provided at the venue, or the customers will have to find it at another service provider. Since it is more convenient for the customers, and more beneficial for the company, some type of catering services should be found at the venue. In the following, the different catering options found at the studied mansions and vicarages, will be discussed.

Keuruu Old Vicarage has different menus for conference meetings, weddings, family celebrations, memorials and group trips. The catering service also includes upon request the catering staff, tablecloths, dishes, candles, flowers, decorations and clean-up afterwards. They also prepare cakes, sandwich cakes and other pastries as well as food as take-away. (Keuruu Old Vicarage 2011.)

The specialty of Marttinen Old Vicarage when it comes to catering is that it promotes environmental aspects of its food production. This means that it uses whenever possible Finnish raw materials such as meat and dairy products. Fish products are selected according to the fish species recommended by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and overfished species are entirely excluded. Local fish such as vendace and northern pike are served especially on conference menus. Certain conference package menus are planned specifically considering the environmental aspect. Furthermore, attention is paid to using vegetables according to their season. (Marttinen Old Vicarage 2011.)

Marttinen is also participating in the Steps to Organic program for professional kitchens, which is a training program that helps the kitchens to increase the use of organic products. There are five steps in this program and currently Marttinen is on the 4th step in the program which means that their kitchen uses eight organic raw materials on a daily basis. The chef in the kitchen is also an organic farmer who can provide fresh salads and herbs in the summertime as well as raspberries for winter storage. Marttinen lists a variety of meat, dairy and grain products as well as berries and mushrooms that are either organically or locally produced. They also use some products with Fairtrade certification, and their kitchen staff is to obtain the Finnish Environmental Passport for Catering Services which gives the holder competency within environmental issues relating to food services. In summary terms, Marttinen places great emphasis on environmental aspects in its catering services. (Marttinen Old Vicarage 2011.)

Söderkulla Manor has classified its menus into theme menus, spring, summer, autumn and winter menus, all-year-round menus and special occasion menus. Theme menus include for instance Meditarrenian menu, Russian menu, 1920s and 1970s menu, Middle Ages menu, heritage menu and archipelago menu. Autumn menu includes harvest menu, crab menu and Oktoberfest menu. Special occasion menus include wedding menu, memorial service menu, mother's day menu and first of May menu and Christmas dinner. It can be said that Söderkulla Manor's specialty is on various theme menus and it provides a wide selection of those compared to the other mansions and vicarages. (Söderkulla Manor 2011.)



GRAPH 7. Capture from Tertti Manor's webpage

Tertti Manor also has its own restaurant and Dairy café. The manor relies on specific visual means in communicating its catering services as can be seen in graph 7. One of the pictures presents a rustic table setting with vintage tableware, and the other one a picture of what appears to be self-made berry cake. It can be said that these visual representations communicate a certain rustic, vintage atmosphere, which fits well when the setting is a manor house. The restaurant serves high-quality Finnish cuisine and the grain, vegetables, herbs, berries and mushrooms used in the food coming from the manor's own farm. Tertti Manor restaurant has also been rewarded with the international gastronomic association Chaîne des Rôtisseurs plate. In terms of restaurant menus, Tertti Manor provides in addition to the ordinary menus also special menus on important public holidays such as Easter Buffet, May Day celebration lunch and Finland's Independence Day celebration lunch. The Dairy Café offers home-made pastries and seasonal dishes. (Tertti Manor 2011.)

6.4 Additional services

As was noted earlier, one of the main reasons for companies and private people alike to use an external venue for the organizing of meetings and banquets, is the selection of additional services that are provided. In this analysis, activities and specialties are classified as additional services and will be discussed in the following.

6.4.1 Activities

The availability of subsidiary activities at a conference or banquet venue is of high importance, since that will also function as customer attraction. Activities are programs that are meant to provide variety in the routine meeting day or during a banquet occasion. Such type of program is important since conferences do not only consist of meeting sessions as there is also a social side to meeting gatherings, which is why conference organizers tend to look for interesting locations (Karmowska 2004, 140). The importance of activities could also be seen in that all the mansions and vicarages studied provided some type of activity programs.

Haikko Manor provides activities from musical entertainment evenings, theme events, cruises, art exhibitions at the manor house, to use of fitness gym and spa and treatments. One of the benefits of Haikko Manor is that it has its own spa center, where the customers can make use of wellness pools, saunas and various spa treatments, such as massage and baths. Since there are few mansions that have their own spa center, Haikko Manor has a cutting edge in the competition with the other manors. (Haikko Manor 2011.)

The activities at Keuruu Old Vicarage are small-scale compared to Haikko Manor, as the program selection consists of, for instance, traditional children's games in the vicarage garden area, 12 vicar stories told by the vicarage maid, snack and drinks enjoyed in candlelight in the vicarage cellar, winter program such as horse-sledge, bonfire, sledding as well as sight-seeing around the town of Keuruu. (Keuruu Old Vicarage 2011.)

The program offered at Väärni Vicarage has artistic or musical emphasis. The program includes for instance, concerts, theatre plays, literary happenings and parish activities, as well as vicarage sightseeing tours with a guide and a special singing workshop for those interested in singing. (Väärni Vicarage 2011.)

Marttinen Old Vicarage has separate program for children and for adults. For children it organizes programs with animals, riding, climbing, hiking, handicraft, children's birthdays, fishing and bird watching. For adults there are various kinds of programs related to health and wellbeing, such as a health and wellness theme day with seminars and light exercise, climbing, massage and culture, adventure and environment related programs. In addition to these, they organize family camps, dog camps and activities and exercise evenings for indoors as well as outdoors sports. (Marttinen Old Vicarage 2011.)

Hirvihaaran Mansion offer activities that range from wine tasting in the wine cellar, chimneyless sauna, infrared sauna, a car museum, which is said to be the smallest car museum in the world, to various outdoor sports such as tennis, golf and snow shoes. They also organize wellbeing treatments and other special programme according to the customer's wishes. In co-operation with local business partners, Hirvihaara Mansion also offers possibilities for canoeing, nature walks, team games, wilderness skills and moped trips. Hirvihaara Mansion also co-operates with the tour operator *Kartanomatkat* (eng. Manor Tours). (Hirvihaara Manor 2011.) *Kartanomatkat* has specialized in organizing

cultural and manor house tours for groups and other tailor-made programmes in Southern Finland (Kartanomatkat 2007).

Svartå Manor offers possibilities for groups to participate in ‘team building games and activities’. These activities are provided in collaboration with another company that is specialized in arranging different types of group activities, from paddling in the summer to tour skating in the winter, as well as indoor quiz competitions and team games with different themes. This is a development possibility for Rosenlund alike, in that it could also start a co-operation together with a local company that provides activities for groups. In Jakobstad one such co-partner could be, for example, FantaSea, that rents out its premises together with needed equipment. This type of co-operation would also provide possibilities for joint marketing that can catch a larger customer base. (Svartå Manor 2011.)

Another specialty of Svartå Manor is its Culinary Academy, which implies that there is a demo kitchen in one of the lofts of the manor where cooking courses, wine seminars and special tastings are held. The cooking sessions are held under the guidance of a professional chef. Example courses include; Sushi course, venison and game course and luxury dinner. (Svartå Manor 2011.)

The specialty of Söderkulla Manor is its wide selection of theme parties. These include for instance choir competition which is meant for large groups of about 120-250 persons, team challenges where the setting is 1920s Finland, a moped safari, fishing in the nearby archipelago, canoeing trip on the nearby river, archipelago cruising, humorous Olympic games competition where the theme is the former East-Germany, a Roman Empire day, mushroom picking, gnome path, night time hiking, and a mountain biking trip. In other words, Söderkulla Manor has invested in developing a large variety of inventive programs that the clients can participate in. The availability of these programs will attract customers who are not looking for conference or banqueting services, but are instead in want of an activity day. (Söderkulla Manor 2011.)

Vuojoki Mansion has an equally impressive selection of free time program at the mansion. They have for instance themed tours around the mansion where the tour guides are dressed in clothing from the 19th century, short historical plays combined with mansion tours, nature tours in the surroundings of the mansion, sauna wellness treatments at the orangery,

and cooking classes at the mansion. They also have team activities following a theme, these are for instance finding the Da Vinci code, making a team movie and travelling around the world in one day. They also have a murder mystery dinner, where the customers get to enjoy a dinner while a murder mystery play is performed for them, and the audience participates in solving the mystery. (Vuojoki Mansion 2011.)

6.4.2 Specialties

In this chapter, specialties are discussed as aspects of a mansion or vicarage that sets it apart from the other service providers. These specialties include everything from special services available on the company website, to company policies and actual services on site. The creative ideas by other companies will serve as sources of future development ideas for Rosenlund.

Haikko Manor offers Haikko gift cards whereby the customer chooses one or several services, pays for them and receives a card in return which can be given as a gift. Haikko Manor furthermore collaborates with the Stockman department store and provides special accommodation, restaurant and spa offers for Stockmann Loyal Customer-card holders. There is also a specified environmental program for the manor, which covers energy consumption, waste management, purchases and cleaning. For instance, they use sea water thermal energy for heating, the air conditioning is set according to the CO² level in a room, long lasting light bulbs are used, all waste is sorted and recycled, disposable packages are avoided and water-soluble and biodegradable detergents are preferred. (Haikko Manor 2011.)

The speciality of Keuruu Old Vicarage is food related, as they have their own food product named Vicarage Rolls, which is a cabbage roll developed in the kitchen of the vicarage. The rolls are sold not only at the vicarage but also in certain grocery shops in Finland. Naturally this food item also serves as marketing for the vicarage. (Keuruu Old Vicarage 2011.)

Väärni Vicarage has its publishing activities as its specialty. It publishes books about art, cultural history and religion. In addition to books, it also sells other items such as postcards, t-shirts and CD's. The items can be ordered by email and will be delivered by mail. Väärni Vicarage also has an environmental program, according to which the whole building is heated with wood pellet which is an environmentally neutral energy source. They also use electricity that has been produced from renewable energy. The guests of the vicarage are offered coffee with fair-trade certification, the food offered is largely locally produced, and the household waste is made into compost. (Väärni Vicarage 2011.)

The specialty of Marttinen Old Vicarage is a heritage village annexed to the manor, which is situated in a cultural environment and which displays Finnish farming- and forestry traditions. It contains historical buildings dating from the mid 19th century. This museum and tourist destination is open all year round, and summertime it hosts many events and exhibitions. There are also restaurants and small souvenir shops in the area. (Marttinen Old Vicarage 2011.)

Svartå Manor has a garden annexed to it and is surrounded by what is one of Finland's largest private parks. In addition to ordinary guided tours, it is also possible to use a mobile guide, whereby the customer calls to a designated number and is able to listen to a short recorded guiding. So far the mobile guide project includes a limited number of sites, including churches, mansions, ironworks and certain towns in the south of Finland. (Svartå Manor 2011.)

One of the special services provided by the Söderkulla Manor is that it offers to plan the occasion according to a given budget. In other words, the transport, premises, program, food and drinks would be assembled into a package that would fit the customer's pre-set budget. (Söderkulla Manor 2011.)

Tertti Manor has an online shop on their website where they sell various food items as well as gift items that are somehow connected with the manor – such as bread, jam, coffee, tea, sweets, vases, candles, soap and ornaments. There is also a garden that belongs to the mansion, which is called The Garden of Secrets, and to where guided tours are arranged. (Tertti Manor 2011.)

6.5 SWOT analysis of Rosenlund

In the following chapter, all the idea gathered from the benchmarking analysis will be presented in the form of a SWOT analysis of Rosenlund and the services it provides. The abbreviation SWOT stands for: strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O) and threats (T). These aspects will be discussed in four separate chapters, specifically examining them from the point of view of marketing. The main purpose is to find out how these aspects could be utilized in forming a marketing strategy for Rosenlund. Table 1 shows the SWOT analysis in its entirety.

TABLE 1. SWOT analysis of Rosenlund

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unique environment in Pietarsaari/Finland • heritage value • good central location in the town • well-known from before • renovation of vicarage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new services provided in the vicarage unknown • new Rosenlund brand unknown • financing • lack of accommodation on site
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vicarage an original and interesting venue • two gardens • developing a strong & original Rosenlund brand • developing a slogan • new website • new & widened services of the vicarage • new services & utilization of Aspegren's garden • new customer groups • continuous development • expanding catering services • developing conference / banquet packages • developing activities • webshop • co-operation with local service companeis • open all-year-round 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of co-operation with local companies • too local marketing • too narrow services • too high/low price level • only Swedish-speaking image

6.5.1 Strengths

Rosenlund has a number of strengths which it can use to its advantage in marketing. The most important of its strengths is its heritage value and its unique environment. It is its historic value that sets Rosenlund apart from many other service providers in the area and gives it an advantage in the competition for customers. Another strength of Rosenlund is that it is centrally located in the town of Pietarsaari. This means that for instance local companies that have their offices in the centre of the town will have easy access to the meeting or banquet venue.

Rosenlund also has the benefit that it does not have to start from a scratch in terms of image building, since a part of Rosenlund, namely the Aspegren gardens, is already well-known in the town. Changing the brand focus and name from the well-known Aspegren, to the less known Rosenlund, will be a challenge and will take time. However, since the services that are provided also change and expand, customers will connect the new name with the new services and new image. Once the renovation of the vicarage is done, and the interiors have been restored to their original state and modern conference equipment has been incorporated to the building, this will further enhance its attractiveness as a meeting and banquet venue.

6.5.2 Weaknesses

Rosenlund also has its weaknesses that also need to be highlighted in order to be improved upon. The overall weakness of Rosenlund currently is that its brand is not enough known, and even the Aspegren brand is not widely enough known – especially as a venue for meetings and banquets. If Rosenlund would wish to expand its services and transform into an all-year open and active venue, its brand should be more widely known also outside Pietarsaari.

The lack of awareness is due to lack of enough advertising, which in turn is due to lack of sufficient financing and limited resources. However, when resources are scarce, it is also possible to find marketing channels that are free of charge. Such marketing channels are social media services and advertising on the Internet and by email. For instance, a brochure could be designed on computer and sent out to the local companies by email. This will

consume work hours by the staff, but will on the other hand save in printing and posting costs. Alternatively, the already available channels can be used more effectively, such as making the company webpage more effective and concentrating as many services as possible on the website. This can mean including, for example, online booking possibility on the website, as well as including the brochure on the website, which can then be viewed online or downloaded by customers.

Comparing to other mansions, one weakness of Rosenlund is its lack of accommodation on site. From the point of view of the customers, accommodation available on site would be convenient and especially banquet service users would benefit from this. On the other hand, if there is a very small number of accommodation available, that may also not bring in expected profit. A solution would be to co-operate with one of the accommodation service providers in the town, together with whom for instance a conference package is planned which would include accommodation. This would benefit both the companies as well as the client.

6.5.3 Opportunities

The list of opportunities in the SWOT-analysis of Rosenlund is clearly the most extensive. As already mentioned in the strengths discussion, once it is renovated, the vicarage will be an interesting and original venue for meetings and banquets. As Rosenlund is in the process of updating the image, brand and name of an already known local place, it has all the opportunities to develop a strong new brand. Rosenlund also has the option of developing a slogan to market itself, similarly to the Keuruu Old Vicarage whose slogan was *You give the reason, we organize* (Keuruu Old Vicarage 2011). A slogan functions as part of branding and image building of Rosenlund. The updated website with new content also presents new opportunities.

The best future opportunities of Rosenlund lie with the new and widened services of the vicarage, such as the organizing of meetings and banquets. At the same time that these new services are planned, the rest of the services at Rosenlund should also be reviewed in order to be updated and expanded. The new use of the vicarage will also bring new customer groups to Rosenlund, mainly local companies for the meeting services and private persons for banquets.

Continuous development implies that Rosenlund keeps reviewing and updating its services at regular intervals. This will give it the opportunity of being in better competition with its competitors, as it continues being current and up-to-date. Continuous development can concern for instance development of new conference and banquet packages and adding more activity programs for customer's free time. Currently, the available activities are all mostly related to gardening, vegetables, plants and flowers. This can, however, be too narrow selection of activities, which may not suit or be of interest to all customer groups.

Therefore, in order for there to be more variety in the program, different types of activities should be planned. The gardening related activities per se should be maintained as they are, since part of the idea of Rosenlund and Aspegren gardens is to promote and inform about gardening, cultivation and the importance of outdoors environment to ones wellbeing (Aspegrens Garden 2006). To compliment this, other activities should also be provided. Catering services can be developed by for instance updating the weekly menu, planning menus according to season and also making the café an all-year-round open place.

Another future opportunity for Rosenlund is to open a webshop on their website, where customers can buy merchandise made at Rosenlund. There is currently a garden shop at the orangery where items related to gardening and items designed specifically for the Aspegren gardens, as well as vegetables from the garden can be bought. Some of these items could easily be sold at a webshop also.

Co-operation with local service providing companies, such as hotels, catering companies, and restaurants would also provide Rosenlund with many opportunities that benefit the company. Co-operation with a local hotel would for instance make it possible for Rosenlund to provide a conference package with accommodation. Another future opportunity for Rosenlund would be to make it an all-year-round open facility. Wintertime would exclude gardening activities, but meeting and banquet services indoors could be provided as in the summertime. In this way Rosenlund could function as a profitable business throughout all seasons.

6.5.4 Threats

There are also threats to Rosenlund's enterprise that need to be taken into consideration when developing and planning business activities. For instance, just as co-operation with other local companies can be an opportunity, it can also be a threat when the co-operation is lacking. Although such co-operation may also require some investment from the company, and a decision about withdrawal from any form of co-operation may be made based on this, all the benefits from the co-operation in the long run will also be lost.

Marketing that focuses too narrowly only on the local community may also be a threat, if there is lack of enough interest locally. Although there is also the threat of not coping when the demand grows, it is more beneficial for a company when there is more demand than supply, rather than when there is more supply than demand. This applies especially for service providers, due to the perishable nature of services that cannot be stored for later use.

The type and number of activities available at Rosenlund was also discussed in the previous section as an opportunity. Comparing to the other mansions and vicarages, Rosenlund's current selection of activities is relatively narrow. More diverse activities will function as an additional attraction for customers, some of who may wish for more than just a space for a meeting with catering.

Regarding the price level, that must also be carefully adjusted so as not to be too high from the point of view of the clients, and not too low from the point of view of the company. Lastly, since Pietarsaari is a bilingual town with both Finnish- and Swedish-speaking inhabitants, it is beneficial for Rosenlund to also have a bilingual image. This would mean that service should be provided in both languages and also the webpage should contain the same information in both languages.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter will provide the recommendations and conclusions derived from the study. The recommendations consist of the main development and marketing ideas that Rosenlund can utilize in its activities. The conclusions will examine the theories discussed in the study in the light of the results obtained from the research.

7.1 Recommendations

When it comes to meeting services, these could include different meeting packages for meetings of different length, from those lasting a few hours to those lasting several days. Additionally, different conference menus could be designed in order to provide a wider choice for clients. Co-operation with a local accommodation service provider could offer an opportunity to provide conference packages together with accommodation. Although the interest for accommodation was low in the questionnaire survey conducted by Centria, it may be that customers have not even thought about the possibility for several day meetings. Such an option could thus be offered for the customers.

During the meetings, it could be considered to add small extra compliments for the conference participants, such as pens, notebooks and refreshments. Concerning the conference equipment, a list of these could be compiled and made available for the customers on the company website. Lastly, a brochure could be designed about the available meeting services, which could be made available online on the company's webpage.

Banquet services can be a major source of income for a service providing company. In order to provide ideas to customers, different types of banquets that the company is capable of arranging could be listed on the company website. Similarly to meeting services, different menus could be designed for different occasions. In the future it would also be possible to co-operate with a local catering company if the available resources are not sufficient. Such co-operation enables the organizing of bigger and more demanding

occasions that would otherwise have to be rejected by the company. It is also possible to expand the activities available for children and start organizing children's birthday parties.

Catering services are of central importance, since they are needed both for meetings as well as banquets. Therefore, there are many options as to how to plan menus. These could be planned according to for instance the season or according to a theme, such as a Mediterranean menu. It is also possible to promote environmental awareness in connection with food and catering, by using locally produced and organic food products. In addition to the actual food served, the catering service should include the catering staff, as well as all the necessary items of decoration and cutlery. Different pricing could, however, be applied for customers who wish for an all-inclusive catering service and for those who have their own decorations and cutlery.

There should also be a variety of choice in terms of additional services offered for the customers. When it comes to activities, there should be both indoor and outdoor activities available. There should be program that is more active, such as horseback riding, team games, outdoor sports and guided tours on the premises. There should also be programs with lighter activities, such as music concerts, literary happenings, cooking courses and seminars. In case the need and interest for activity programs increases, it is possible to co-operate with local service providing companies.

When it comes to the specialties of a company, there are many options as to how a company can create added value for the customers. For instance, it is possible to develop an environmental program for the company, whether it concerns waste management or recycling of products, which is then promoted in the marketing material. There could also be more promotion of the self-grown food products. In the case of Rosenlund, it can be said that the Aspegren Garden is the main specialty of Rosenlund. It would also be worthwhile to open a webshop on the homepage, where products that are produced at Rosenlund are sold.

7.2 Conclusion

This study set out by exploring the concepts of cultural and heritage tourism and the marketing of these. The theoretical discussions served as a framework for the conducted benchmarking study where the business concepts and marketing material of selected vicarages and mansions served as foundation upon which to build a marketing plan for Rosenlund.

Cultural and heritage tourism were defined and explored by way of studying how the concepts apply in the case of Rosenlund. It was noted that Rosenlund is by way of its historical background a cultural-heritage destination. Such a destination attracts a specific segment of tourists who prefer to travel with the aim of learning about cultures and history. Also a study by the Finnish Tourism Board was mentioned, the results of which indicated that the marketing and promotion of cultural tourism destinations in Finland, such as Rosenlund, must be improved upon. In terms of heritage tourism, both the pros and cons were discussed. This included a discussion of authenticity of heritage sites and what effects renovations have on such tourism objects. It was noted that in the case of Rosenlund authenticity must be taken into account in the renovation of the vicarage so as not to destroy its historical value.

It was noted in this study that marketing is a complex subject, as it contains much more than selling of goods and services and promoting the sellable goods. Instead, marketing of today focuses increasingly on satisfying customer needs and delivering value to customers through products and services. Based on the benchmarking analysis done in this study, it could be seen that the mansions and vicarages studied were aiming at creating this value for their customers. For instance, mansions emphasized the high-class premises that were available, a comprehensive list of conference equipment, versatile and modifiable menus as well as a wide variety of activities available on site. All these services were made available for the customers to increase the options from where to choose and to satisfy a variety of needs. Some of the mansions were clearly successful in creating and capturing value from customers, by for instance being chosen as the best conference hotel in Finland.

The marketing mix applied in this study also brought interesting and valuable results to the study. It provided for instance ideas as to how to manage the pricing during high and low seasons, as well as how to make use of the place element in terms of promotion. As the main research subject of the study, the Rosenlund vicarage, has heritage value, also marketing of heritage was discussed. It was noted that Rosenlund should utilize its best asset, which is the unique and original historical heritage of the site. As this is something that cannot be copied by other companies, it can only be updated to meet modern customers' needs, maintained well and promoted appropriately.

The method used in this study to analyze the material was on the one hand benchmarking method, and on the other hand content analysis. Both were needed in order to provide a multifaceted analysis of the material and to arrive at results that would be useful for a marketing plan. These two methods were thus interwoven, as benchmarking added the element of comparison to the study, which would not have got so much emphasis in content analysis alone. Content analysis also provided a way of classifying and framing the research material.

Prior to presenting the results of the benchmarking analysis, the results from a questionnaire survey conducted by the Centria research centre were also discussed. This customer survey was included into the research as it provided a valuable customer point of view to the discussion, which would otherwise have been missing from the study. The survey results gave insight into the customer's expectations of the services from Rosenlund. They showed that presented in the right context, or marketed appropriately, customers would also be interested in services that they at first sight rejected – such as accommodation and entertainment/program activities.

Benchmarking was defined as a method whereby other companies' practices are studied in order to learn from these and to apply them in one's own company. Based on this study it can be said that benchmarking analysis suits well for tourism research. When benchmarking partners are carefully chosen and well focused, the analysis works well in providing new and innovative ideas to one's own company. Based on this study, it is also recommendable that more than one benchmarking partner is chosen. This is because only one partner may not include as many comparable features, and thus more could be gained

from the research when there is a broad material base for comparison. This was a clear advantage in the case of this study about Rosenlund, since the nine different benchmarking partners were not comparable to Rosenlund in all aspects. Thus their best features could be highlighted and selected for comparison, which resulted in a higher number of practically usable ideas. Thus, benchmarking research could be applied in many different types of tourism research and should be applied more in the future.

The study also included a SWOT analysis, the aim of which was to study the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Rosenlund as a service provider. The analysis was conducted after the benchmarking study and provided a way to summarize all the results. The SWOT analysis proved to be a clear and informative way to map out the pros and cons of Rosenlund and its services. The benchmarking study and the results obtained thereof formed the foundation for the analysis and provided the viewpoint in the SWOT analysis. In other words, based on what was lacking from or existing in Rosenlund in comparison to the other studied mansions and vicarages, points and ideas could be added to the SWOT analysis. For instance, if a mansion promoted its co-operation with another local service provider, this was added as an opportunity and future development idea for Rosenlund.

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