



LAHDEN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU
Lahti University of Applied Sciences

Snæfellsnes as a brand

A Study in regional brand identity

LAHTI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED
SCIENCES
Degree programme in Business Studies
Marketing
Bachelor's Thesis
Autumn 2013
Eero Leppänen

Lahti University of Applied Sciences
Degree Programme in Business Studies

LEPPÄNEN, EERO: Snæfellsnes as a brand
A Study in regional brand identity

Bachelor's Thesis in Marketing 56 pages, 4 pages of appendices
Autumn 2013

ABSTRACT

This B.A thesis studies the creation of a regional brand. The case subject is the county of Snæfellsnes. The thesis is done with the acceptance and co-operation of Alta, an Icelandic consulting company, which is currently managing a regional development project in the Snæfellsnes region. The goal of the thesis is to form a suggestion over the region's brand identity through David Aaker's brand identity model using data collected by Alta and the thesis author as basis for the analysis.

The theoretical part of the thesis contrasts the differences between commercial and regional brands and defines how a model made for defining a commercial brand functions in context with a regional brand.

The practical part of the thesis looks into the Snæfellsnes regional brand, and offers a suggestion for a regional brand identity which focuses on two differing target groups.

Research material focuses on the brand identity model created by David Aaker. Supporting material focuses on branding in general or regional branding in particular. Supporting data is based on surveys done by Alta on both natives and visitors about their views on the region's image. Interviews were held with Alta project leadership and people living in Snæfellsnes during the course of the creation of this thesis.

Key words: Brand identity, regional branding, Aaker's brand identity model

Lahden ammattikorkeakoulu
Liiketalouden koulutusohjelma

LEPPÄNEN, EERO:

Snæfellsnes as a brand
A Study in regional brand identity

Markkinoinnin suuntautumisvaihtoehdon opinnäytetyö, 56 sivua, 4 liitesivua

Syksy 2013

TIIVISTELMÄ

Opinnäytetyö käsittelee maakuntabrändin rakentamista ja tutkii asiaa case – kohteen, Snæfellsnessin maakunnan näkökulmasta. Työ toteutetaan tukemaan islantilaisen konsulttiyrityksen, Altan, johtamaa aluekehitysprojektia. Työn tavoitteena on muodostaa ehdotelma Snæfellsnessin brändin ohjaavista arvoista David Aakerin brändi-identiteettimallia käyttäen. Tukimateriaalina toimii Altan keräämä kysely koskien sekä paikallisten että vierailijoiden näkemystä ja kokemusta maakunnan tämänhetkisestä imagosta sekä opinnäytetyön tekijän toteuttamat haastattelut.

Työn teoreettinen osuus selvittää miten alueellinen ja kaupallinen brändi eroaa toisistaan ja miten kaupallisten brändien identiteetin hallintaan luotu malli toimii alueellisen brändin määrittämisessä.

Työn käytännön osuudessa käsitellään Snæfellsnessin maakuntabrändiä. Esiteltyä identiteettimallia hyödynnetään kahdelle kohderyhmälle kohdennetun brändin mallintamisessa. Tämän lisäksi keskustelen lyhyesti brändin jalkauttamisesta mediavalintoihin.

Tutkimusaineisto koostuu brändin arvoa, identiteettiä ja johtamista käsittelevistä teoksista ja artikkeleista. Brändiä käsittelevän materiaalin keskiössä on Aakerin malli brändin identiteetin kehittämistä. Lisäksi lähdeaineistona toimii alueellisia brändejä käsitteleviä teoksia ja artikkeleita. Brändin määrittelemisessä käytettävä tieto muodostuu kohdeyrityksen johdon sekä paikallisten ihmisten haastatteluista, sekä Altan keräämästä kyselystä.

Asiasanat: Alueellinen brändi, brändi-identiteetti, brändi-identiteetin mallinnus

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Snæfellsnes	2
1.2	Svæðisgarður – regional park	3
1.3	Alta	4
2	BRAND BASICS	6
2.1	Brand basics	6
2.2	Brand anatomy	7
2.3	Brand leadership cycle chronologically	8
2.3.1	Brand equity	10
2.4	Regional vs. corporate brand	10
2.5	Aaker's brand identity model	11
2.5.1	Strategic brand analysis	14
2.5.2	Brand identity – essence, core and extension	14
2.5.3	Brand identity motivators	15
2.5.4	Value proposition, credibility and relationship	16
2.6	Multiple brand identities	17
2.6.1	Overlapping brand identities	17
2.6.2	Sub-branding	18
3	MODELLING A REGIONAL IDENTITY	19
3.1	Aaker's brand identity model in regional context	19
3.1.1	Regional brand as a geographic entity	21
3.1.2	Regional brand as a sociocultural structure	22
3.1.3	Regional brand as a person	24
3.1.4	Regional brand as a symbol	26
4	SNÆFELLSNESS BRAND IDENTITY	28
4.1	Current brand image	28
4.1.1	Competition and forerunners	29
4.2	Regional main brand identity	31
4.2.1	Main brand identity goal	31
4.2.2	Main brand identity proposal	32
4.2.3	Main brand value proposition	36

4.2.4	Main brand credibility and relationship	37
4.2.5	Main brand position	38
4.3	Regional sub-brand identity	39
4.3.1	Sub-brand identity goal	39
4.3.2	Sub-brand identity proposal	39
4.3.3	Sub-brand value proposition	42
4.3.4	Sub-brand credibility and relationship	43
4.3.5	Sub-brand identity position	43
5	PRACTICAL APPLICATION	45
5.1	Visual and rhetorical brand	45
5.2	Regional web portal	47
5.3	Print	49
5.4	Social media	49
6	IN CLOSURE	51
	SOURCES	53
	APPENDICES	57

1 INTRODUCTION

This B.A-thesis is done as a part of the Snæfellsnes – Svæðisgarður (regional park) project managed by Alta, an Icelandic consulting company. The two year regional park project, started in 2011, aims to establish a regional park in the rural Snæfellsnes peninsula. The aim of this thesis is to complement the project by Alta in providing a study of the anatomy of a regional brand, including a practical look into the brand of Snæfellsnes.

The project lead by Alta aims to synergise the region's people, nature, businesses and local government into an entity that is recognized as a regional park by the European Landscape Convention. The product of Alta's multi-discipline project studies the social, economic, ecological assets of the area and aims for a functional policy, managed by the end-client, Snæfellsnes' municipalities.

The ground level goals of the regional park project are to answer problems caused by recent changes in the region's socio-economic landscape. In the long term, the successful establishment of the regional park aims to create more business opportunities, employment and interest towards the region through increased regional versatility, possibly generating new avenues in tourism, services and export.

Amongst the projected goals for the park is the establishment of a mutual policy for regional communication which generates the necessity to look closer into the regional brand itself. Thus the goal of this thesis is to provide both Alta and the municipality with a comprehensive study of the birth process of a regional brand identity.

The thesis opens with a look into the semantics of a regional brand, and how it differs in form and function from a corporate brand. The work of David Aaker provides the theoretical framework concerning brand identity creation.

From brand identity basics the study looks into Aaker's brand identity model in context of regional brand identities. Aaker's brand identity model, made for the creation and definition of corporate brands, is then modified to suit the needs of regional brand creation.

From theory the thesis turns the discussed topics into practical application; Aaker's brand identity model is used to define the Snæfellsnes brand. Suggestions of the Snæfellsnes' brand identity are formed and directed at two different target groups. The chapter's work is based on data collected by Alta via surveys and regional meetings, complemented by interviews conducted by the thesis author.

The final part of the work offers a general discussion over the application of a regional brand into choice medias.

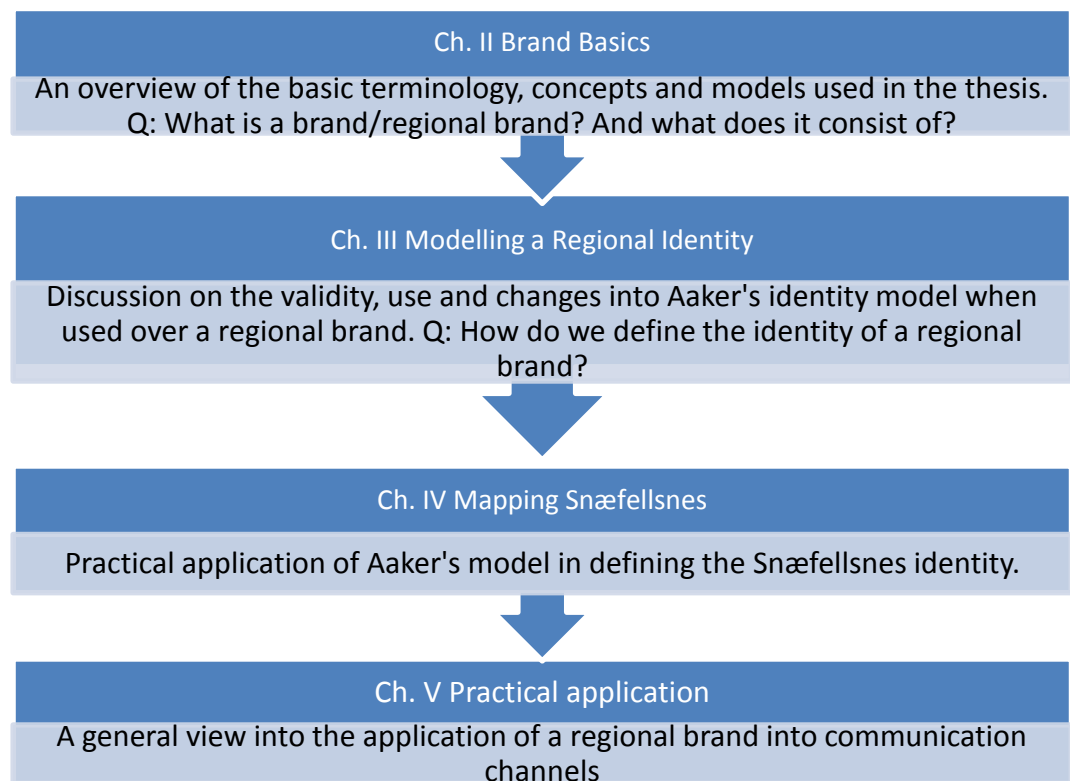


FIGURE 1. Thesis composition.

1.1 SNÆFELLSNES

Snæfellsnes is a peninsula in western Iceland, reaching 100 km in latitude and 25 km in longitude. The peninsula has diverse natural beauty, with long beaches along the coastline, followed by green meadows and black lava fields. The

mountain range that splits the peninsula ends with the icy crown of Snæfellsjökull in the west.

The regional population of 3900 is spread into five municipalities, consisting of five towns and surrounding farms.

The southern side is less sparsely populated with farms dotting the landscape, whereas the northern side has a number of villages along the seaside.

The main livelihood in the region comes from agriculture, fishing and farming the prominent sources of livelihood.



FIGURE 2. A map of Snæfellsnes.

(Wikimedia Commons, Map of Snæfellsnes peninsula)

1.2 SVÆÐISGARÐUR – REGIONAL PARK

The goal of a regional park (Svæðisgarður in Icelandic) in general is to “pool local resources to identify and register the local assets in order to create synergies and define the message with which the area is portrayed.” (Svæðisgarður.is, 2012) A regional park is an economical strategy which uses the strong assets of a region’s natural and cultural assets to stimulate economic growth. (Svæðisgarður.is, 2012)

The regional park in Snæfellsnes aims to address following issues:

- Loss of young people to urban areas due to lack of employment opportunities.
- Lack of service diversity and loss of interest toward local services due to the ease of access to the capital region after a recent restoration of transportation infrastructure.
- Untapped potential in a rapidly growing tourism industry.

The goals the regional park aims to establish are:

- Formulation of an agreement
- Study of foreign precedents
- Landscape character assessment
- Sense of Place studies
- Regional plan
- Toolkit / logo / website
- Management and marketing plans
- Establishment of daily operations (Staff/HQ/charter)
- Funding applications

(Svæðisgarður.is, 2012)

A part of Alta's goals revolve around creating and defining a message through which to express the region's assets.

1.3 ALTA

Alta is an Icelandic consultant firm which focuses on regional planning and development. The internationally recognized team has achieved renown in both ecologically sustainable solutions and place development.

As a signee of the UN Global Compact, an initiative that promotes sustainability, Alta is dedicated to uphold decrees of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption in their projects.

During the creation of this thesis I've had the privilege of working with the capable and professional people of Alta.

2 BRAND BASICS

Central to the thesis topic is the definition and function of a brand. As all latter work in this thesis will derive from definition of the term and its dimensions, the definition of a brand and accessory terminology is a fair starting point.

This chapter will begin with a look at the anatomy of a brand and continues with an overview into the process of managing one. From there the thesis will focus toward the central topic, the creation of a brand.

The contemporary theoretical framework comes from David A. Aaker, whose brand identity model will be used throughout this thesis. The choice of Aaker's model as a basis for regional branding is supported by Moilanen and Rainisto. (2009, 14)

2.1 BRAND BASICS

A brand is an identifiable, recognizable entity that communicates the ownership and craftsmanship of a product and its producer. A brand is an envoy of corporate expression, signifying and at best, empowering its owners expertise, products, services, values and way of life. As summed by Kotler and Armstrong, a brand is:

A name, term, sign, symbol, design or a combination of these, that identifies the products or services of one seller or group of sellers and differentiates them from those of competitors. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 255)

Another comprehensive summary is given by Aaker.

...to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors. (Aaker 1991, 7)

In their study, published in 1998, de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo-Riley went through a hundred academic sources that asserted on the definition of a brand. They identified twelve general definitions, of which four most commonly used were:

- legal instrument – a trademark

- logo - visual identification and differentiation
- company – brand as the extension of the company it represents
- shorthand – a compact version of the company’s offerings and value.

Additionally Chernatony’s and Dall’Olmo-Riley’s list identifies personality, consumer-brand relationship and added value as characteristic of brand functionality. Successful brands understand and complement their users’ lifestyle and philosophy while simultaneously providing value and expressing the brand’s own message.

The benefits of a functional brand are manifold. It provides emotional benefits for the customer, it effects the customer’s decisions and increases the efficiency of marketing. A brand is a guarantee of quality, it differentiates itself from competition and increases turnover. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 8) In short, a brand is the mainstay of successful marketing.

2.2 BRAND ANATOMY

Creation of a brand revolves around three interconnected definitions that will be relevant in latter parts of this work. Brand image is the current perceived image of a brand. It is the view of customers, partners and general public. Chronologically it represents the current view as it has been shaped into by the company itself through action and marketing. (Aaker 2010, 70) Brand image describes the brand as it is currently seen.

Brand identity is a construct that provides direction and purpose in the active development of a brand. Chronologically brand identity looks into the future. It draws from current brand image but simultaneously aspires to develop the brand. (Aaker 2010, 68) Brand identity defines the character of a brand as it should be. In the latter parts of the thesis, we will focus on the process of brand identity creation.

Brand position is the stance taken towards communicating a brand. Brand position is the “visible” part of a brand, the characteristics that are voiced publicly to the target audience. Brand position communicates values and differentiates the brand

identity from other brands. A successful brand position strives to enforce the positive, competitive advantages a brand has in a competitive market. (Aaker 2010, 176-178)

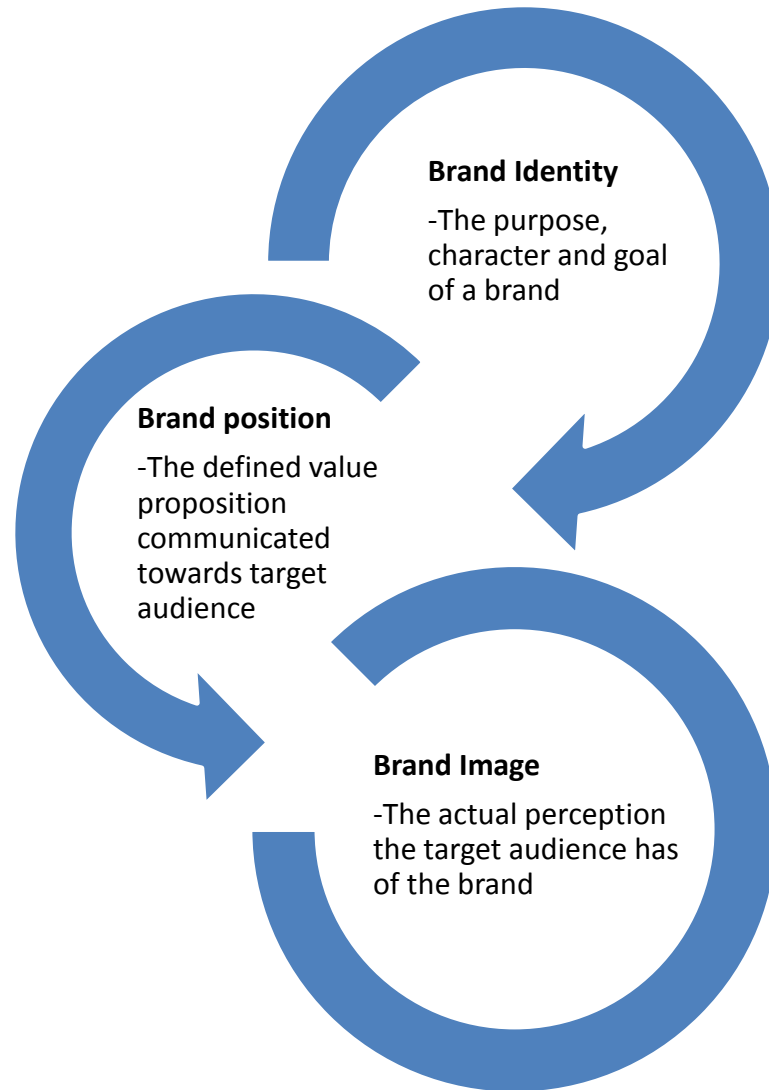


FIGURE 3. The relation of terminology

2.3 BRAND LEADERSHIP CYCLE CHRONOLOGICALLY

Brand leadership is the continued task of maintaining, developing and strengthening a brand. Definition of brand leadership as a whole is necessary to

understand the place of brand identity creation in the larger picture of brand management.

In broad strokes, the process of brand leadership begins with the assessment of current brand image. From there a brand manager can begin to define the brand identity. From a formed brand identity a brand position can then be projected outwards.

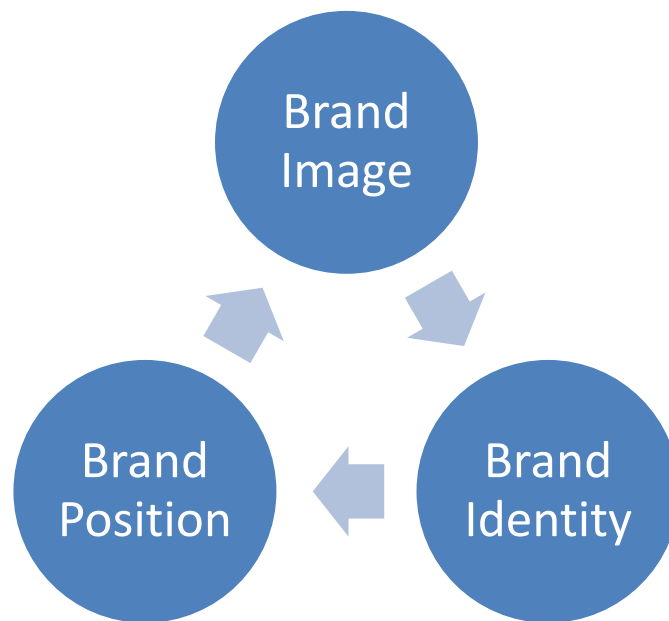


FIGURE 4. Simplified brand leadership cycle.

In this simplified view the process of brand management is a continuous process, a cycle, where reassessment of brand image is followed by possible changes in brand identity. Brand position then is changed to address the shifts in brand identity.

The simplified cycle of brand management in figure 4 sums up the general outlook of brand management. The cyclical nature of the process requires an active, capable presence that can follow, react and even proactively manage a brand, to keep it available, expressive and relevant.

The details of brand management are left intentionally vague in the thesis as the detailed discussion of brand management in a regional environment would warrant a detailed study, outside the scope of this thesis.

2.3.1 Brand equity

One central requirement for successful brand management is the measurement of brand equity. Brand equity measures the added value a brand gives over a service, product or concept it endorses. While this thesis will focus hereon on the process of brand identity creation for a regional brand, the concept brand equity is nevertheless a necessary concept to understand in the larger whole of successful brand management. I have provided a short summary of Aaker's thoughts on brand equity measures and their usage over regional branding in the appendix I.

2.4 REGIONAL VS. CORPORATE BRAND

Differentiation between commercial and regional brands is necessary. Much of the work in latter chapters revolves around modifying an existing brand tool into a functional model for developing a regional identity. The central difficulties in defining regional brands stems from their size and scope in relation to corporate brands and the general lack of readily available models for regional brand creation.

The vagueness of a regional brand's scope and size is a consequence of both the quantity of possible contexts a regional brand can be used in and in the vast amount of background a regional brand can draw from for its brand identity. As marketable entities, crude similarities can be drawn between a geographical region and a corporation; they are both entities with a distinct history and culture with a range of social and economic associations. But where a corporate brand stands for commercial products and services a regional brand stands for culture, geography, history, people, events – while simultaneously representing possible regional services and products. A regional brand is by definition a brand, a vessel of communication, but by definition requires a larger scope than a corporate brand.

Similarly the vagueness and size of a regional brands market size and target segments are issues that this thesis will return to when we look more closely into the functional tools that will be used in creating identities, measures and leadership. Depending on the target segment (i.e. natives vs. tourists) the target groups can have varying parameters of size, origin and motivation.

The study of the benefits of regional brands has seen a rising interest in recent years. The existence and necessity for brands in national and regional context has been identified necessary in differentiating regional assets and bolstering regional communication. Messely, Dessein and Lauwers (2009, 4) recognize the necessity of regional branding as a part of “territorial competing”. While national regions can share similar governmental bodies, landscape and infrastructure, there is a need to compete for “investments, tourism, residents and political power, often on a global scale.”

2.5 AAKER’S BRAND IDENTITY MODEL

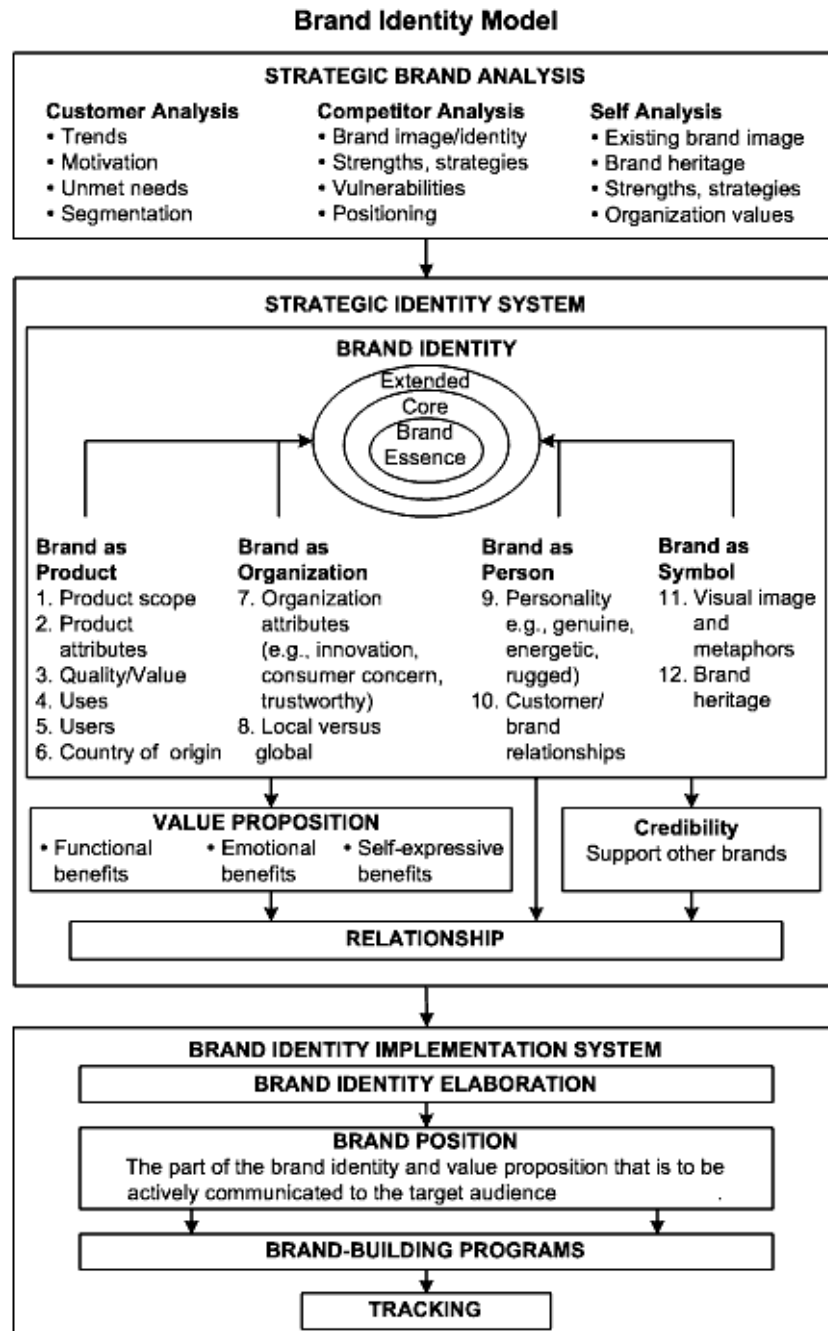
David Aaker’s concept of defining and building a brand identity is used throughout this work as a basis for creating a functional regional brand. The base model will first be presented and explained as it is used to define brand identities for commercial brands. In latter chapters, this work returns to Aaker’s model, first to review its functionality over regional entity, then to use it to define the regional brand identity of Snæfellsnes.

In Aaker’s model the creation of a brand identity consists of three processes. Strategic brand analysis consists of the preliminary analytical work, where customers, competition are defined and the assets and opinions that form the current brand image are collected. (Aaker 2000, 43-45)

A strategic identity system is the key toolset that is used to open and apply the results of brand analysis. The final part of the model is the identity implementation system in which the formed identity is honed into a brand position which communicates and differentiates the brand outward.

The focus of this chapter centres on the use and function of the strategic identity system. While the thesis recognizes the importance of strategic brand analysis the methodology of surveys and data analysis will not be discussed. The evaluation of marketing analysis methodology is an academic topic beyond the scope of this work. In regards of the brand identity work over Snæfellsnes, the used data about regional assets has been collected by Alta at the time of the creation of this thesis.

The aspect of brand identity implementation will be assessed during this thesis to the point of brand position. The creation of a brand implementation program is assessed to the extent of providing suggestive choices of communication channels and a general view of their function in chapter 5.



Kilde: Aaker, David A. & Hoachimsthaler: Brand Leadership. The Free Press. 2000.

FIGURE 5. Aaker's brand identity model.

The following subtopics each define the function and purpose of the components in Aaker's model.

2.5.1 Strategic brand analysis

The first step in creating in defining a brand identity begins from discovering the current brand image. Aaker notes that aspiring brand builders must identify and understand both their customers and competition. (Aaker, Joachimstaler 2000, 40-41)

Brand identity construction begins with the recognition of target groups; their needs and motivation. Successful differentiation requires the identification of the competition, their brands - strengths and weaknesses. Finally a sharp analysis of self is necessary. Study of a brand's self-image, brand heritage, strengths and organizational values must be assessed. Strategic brand analysis -understanding of the current brand image- is the basis for brand identity work. (Aaker, Joachimstaler 2000, 40-41)

2.5.2 Brand identity – essence, core and extension

The actual brand identity consists of three layers. Innermost layer of the brand identity construct is a brand essence. In Aaker's words, a brand essence is a single thought that captivates the soul of a brand. It is not a slogan or a tagline, or a string of phrases, but rather a perspective – a view- into the brand that holds the structure together and drives it forward. The requirements for a good brand essence are summed in following fashion:

[Brand essence] should resonate with customer and drive the value proposition. It should be ownable, providing differentiation from competition... it should be compelling enough to energize and inspire the employees and partners. (Aaker, Joachimstaler 2000, 45)

In latter versions of his brand identity model, Aaker has omitted brand essence, as some brands lack the need or defy the analysis for a singular, unifying brand essence.

Core identity is composed of two to four dimensions that define and summarize brand vision. Core identity reflects the strategy and values of the brand owner,

with at least one association that should differentiate the brand and resonate with the customer. (Aaker, Joachimsthaler 2000, 43-45)

Extended identity contains elements of a brand that do not fit comfortably into the core; elements that define the brand but are neither of brand strategy or core values. (Aaker, Joachimsthaler 2000, 43-45)

The layered shape ranks the identity definitions by importance. The source from whence the brand identity definers –essence, core, extension- come from are the identity motivators which in turn are based on existing qualitative or quantitative, analytical data.

2.5.3 Brand identity motivators

Motivators are associations that provide the actual content for an identity. They originate from current brand image or describe a brand's aspirations for development. In Aaker's model motivators are categorized into four distinct groups.

“Brand as a Product” looks for product based associations. It answers the question of how a brand is defined by the products it endorses. The goal of successfully linking brand identity to a product is to create brand association with a type or range of product – not necessarily to make a brand synonymous and locked into a certain, clearly defined product. This category extends to view a product's userbase, value, use and origins to provide motivators for brand identity. (Aaker 2010, 78-82)

“Brand as an Organization” draws inspiration from the organizations strengths. Charismatic figureheads, driving communal presence, organizational strength, presence and scope can all provide opportunity to define a brand. At best implemented organizational motivators provide brand identity with associations of quality and reliability. (Aaker 2010, 118-128)

“Brand as a Person” studies a brand's personality. Brand defined through human personality can at best provide very tangible, easily understood metaphors.

Jennifer L. Aaker notes that brand personality allows users to identify with the brand, drive preference in choosing process and differentiate a brand within a market. (Jennifer Aaker 1997, 347) (Aaker 2010, 150-152)

“Brand as a Symbol” views the symbolic extension of a brand. Here a brand’s identity can be defined by famous visual imagery, metaphors and cultural and historical heritage. (Aaker 2010, 84-85)

Regardless of the source, a good motivator provides positive, differentiating association for brand identity. A fact is that no single brand can draw meaningful content from all twelve motivators of the four categories. For the aspiring brand builder, Aaker’s categorization provides a functional tool for targeting relevant sources for building a brand identity. (Aaker, Joachimsthaler 2000, 43-44)

2.5.4 Value proposition, credibility and relationship

Value proposition signifies the beneficial components of a brand. Value proposition can consist of three general types of benefits: functional, emotional and self-expressive.

Functional benefits focus on the utility value of associated physical products or services. Emotional benefits come from sensations and feelings that come from customer’s owning and using a brand. Self-expressive benefits are those expressive associations that come to define a customer’s self-image as a result for using a brand. (Aaker 2010, 95-101) Best value propositions combine functionality with self-expression and emotion.

A brand’s credibility describes the brand’s possible extension to an endorsing role. A brand is in a position to provide credibility when its identity extends to associated sub-brands.

Finally, a brand identity needs to define the type of relationship it strives to accomplish and maintain with its customers. I.e brand is integral to a way of life vs. brand represents a daily consumer’s item.

2.6 MULTIPLE BRAND IDENTITIES

Overlapping brand identities exist when a brand needs to adapt to different market or product concepts simultaneously. In general, for a regional brand, at least two major target groups have to be appealed to; regional inhabitants, who encounter and define the regional brand in their daily life, and visitors who are there to experience and sample the regional brand as outsiders.

Further target groups towards which a regional brand should focus on are: local businesses, whom in their own part define and communicate the regional brand, national and international visitors – the latter which can be split further into numerous sub-groups.

For the implementation of multiple brand identities two different models are presented; overlapping identities and the creation of a sub-brand.

2.6.1 Overlapping brand identities

A brand identity can have overlapping identities to show differentiating facets of the brand for different markets. Need for differentiation is dependent on market level –different market levels equal different target groups and competition- and is achieved by maintaining a unified core brand identity while offering different values, personality and benefits etc. depending on the needs of the target segment.

For national visitors the competition is national, whereas with foreign visitors the brand will have to stand out and offer a brand position which garners interest and differentiate globally. In this scenario a brand is placed in a position where the value proposition of a brand needs to offer a similar thing with differing value propositions to two parallel target groups on two, different market levels.

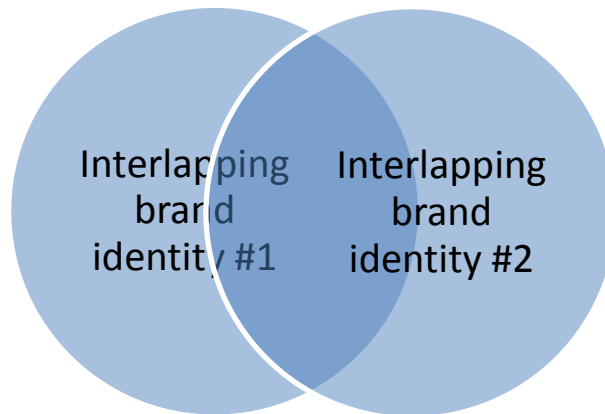


FIGURE 6. Overlapping brand identities.

2.6.2 Sub-branding

A sub-brand separates a radically different position of the main brand to a target group that has drastically different needs and requirements in comparison to the main brand's target group. To avoid alienating the main target group and creating confusion, a sub-brand can be formed of the main brand. The sub-brand can communicate a brand position differently from the main brand to a different target group without diluting the identity of neither main or sub-brand.

In the case of regionals vs. visitors; a tourist who seeks to sample the highlights of a region has different set needs in comparison to a person who is committed in a region through home, work and family.

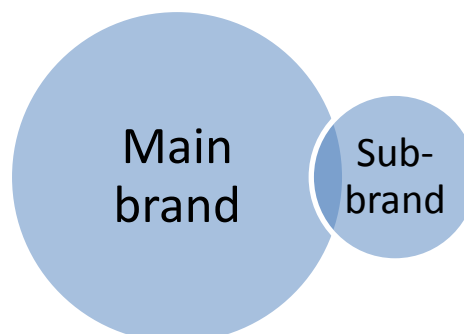


FIGURE 7. Relation of a main brand and a sub-brand.

3 MODELLING A REGIONAL IDENTITY

A brand identity is the definition of the elements a brand strives to be. It is a deconstruction of the elements that create the brand's personality, a definition of relationship and benefits towards customers. David Aaker's definition of brand identity is as follows:

Brand identity is a set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain. These associations imply a promise to customers. (Aaker 2000, 43)

Aaker provides further details on the function of a brand identity:

The brand identity should help establish a relationship between the brand and the customer by generating a value proposition potentially involving functional, emotional, or self-expressive benefits or by providing credibility. (Aaker 2000, 43)

Furthermore, when discussing a regional brand, Blaine, Levy & Ritchie (2005, 329) emphasize the importance of the concept of the visitor experience when implementing a regional brand. While this adheres foremost to the second intended target group, visitors (discussed in further detail in chapter 4), the concept of experiences as a source for a brand identity motivates some of the changes made to Aaker's model in this chapter.

3.1 AAKER'S BRAND IDENTITY MODEL IN REGIONAL CONTEXT

The basic anatomy of Aaker's model does not change when using it in defining a regional identity. A regional brand needs to be formed into a semantically meaningful layered structure formed from motivators that crystallize the defining, positive characteristics of a region.

However the definition and content of the identity motivators create the essential difference between commercial and regional brands. To use Aaker's model over a regional brand, we have to redefine the motivators to suit the target purpose.

Application in regional context requires the deconstruction of the central elements of Aaker's model. A region, in contrast to a brand, is a geographical whole represented by its inhabitants vs. a corporate body represented by paid workers

and commercial products. The scope and quantity of characteristic associations available for a regional brand are generally larger in comparison to a corporate brand. At best a regional brand is backed by a thousand years of history and customs, colourful lifestyles and a range of natural landmarks among many other potential motivators to choose from.

This thesis will propose the following contextual changes into Aaker's motivator groups to allow for the transition of Aaker's model into use over a regional entity. The proposed groups aim to include the major possible motivational associations a regional brand can build an identity from.

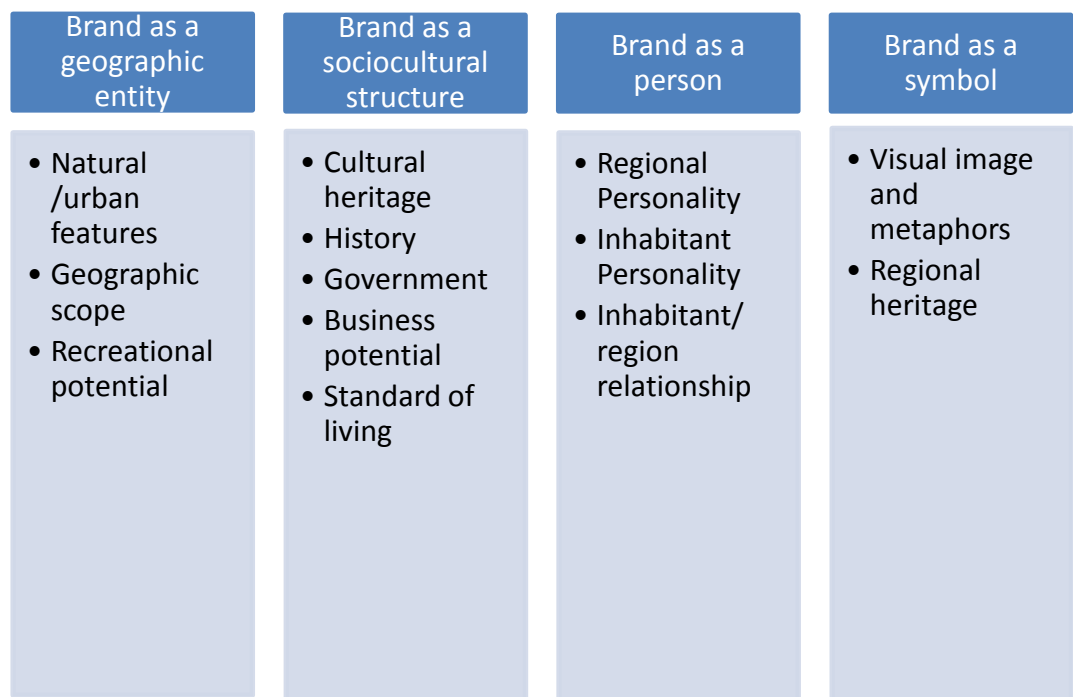


FIGURE 8. Regional brand identity motivators.

The following subtopics will discuss and explain the contents of each group of regional brand identity motivators. Each singular motivator will be explained, following a live-world example of how said motivator has been formed into a spearhead of a regional brand's position. The examples given range from nations to city districts.

3.1.1 Regional brand as a geographic entity

This category aims to find positive motivators for the brand from a region's physical features. This category realizes the region as a functional, physical entity, that provides brand identity associations from both actual physical characteristics as well as from the possibilities the region's physical landscape can offer. The category can draw from both natural and urban features characteristic of the region.

"Natural/urban features" looks into the concrete, central physical manifestation of the region's lay of the land. This motivator can provide a strong, characteristic undertone into a brand's identity. As an identity motivator, in particularly when discussing identity application towards the tourist segment, natural features can be a driving identity motivator.

For example the Canary Islands have elevated the natural feature motivator to reach for the fun-loving tourist segment. In one of their central tourism sites for the region, <http://www.turismodecanarias.com>, the climate is repeatedly praised for being "ideal" as well as "fun and great". The general position here is that the nature as such is made for recreation, leisure and enjoyment.

"Geographic scope" discusses whether the regional brand is limited to a town, a city, or consists of a region, a nation or a larger geographical area. Scope and size is a simple and defining dimension of regional brand identity.

The brilliant, metaphoric nick name, "The Big Apple" coined originally by John J. Fitz Gerald over New York City is a brilliant example of how the geographic scope of an area can become a standing stone of the brand of New York City.

(Cross, www.about.com) The location and dimensions of New York City have in part driven forth the regional brand's success.

“Recreational potential” draws motivation directly from the functional possibilities the region offers. Recreational potential signifies an important genre of motivators in terms of defining a region's characteristics and potential for offering activities and entertainment for inhabitancy and visitors alike. A region specialized and known for certain kind of activities can become distinctly characterized by its recreational potential.

Holmenkollen in Vestre Aker district in Oslo, Norway, characterizes itself as a verified mecca of Nordic Skiing. Holmenkollen offers world class cross-country skiing tracks, sky jumping hills and slopes for telemark and slalom. A host for world-cup event, Holmenkollen attracts both winter sport enthusiast, tourists and amateur skiing activists alike. (www.visitnorway.com, 2013)

3.1.2 Regional brand as a sociocultural structure

This motivational group looks into a region's cultural, historical and social assets for motivators. Sociocultural assets can at best provide very distinct, unique and differentiating assets for a regional brand.

“Cultural heritage” looks into habits, customs -even taboos- to form functional brand identity assets. Such motivators the brand look into prominent lifestyles and traditions in search of regional character. Literature, music and art all provide ample opportunities for cultural identity motivators.

Reykjavík 101 area has a sense of youthful energy, art, a sense of decadence, mixed into vibrant nightlife with its selection of characteristic bars. Sense of Icelandic, stoic hardness of the traditional life is in contrast of the fashionable if rugged feeling the 101 area offers. Made popular by films as “Reykjavík 101”, “Svartur á leik” and “Reykjavík – Amsterdam”, the urban lifestyle is communicated in blogsites like www.icelandreview.com, where writers open the curtains into the social and cultural life of Reykjavík.

Historical events shape the character of a region, leaving trace echoes in many facets of daily life, resonating in culture, politics and regional character. History is a horn of plenty for regional branding, and while not all history can be seen or marketed in positive light it nonetheless can provide very defining, characteristic motivators.

Dachau in Lower Bavaria, Germany, is a location that resonates heavily with the gravity of historical significance. It serves as memorial site for the atrocities of the Second World War and garners to visitors who wish to experience the physical remnants of a dark period in recent history. (<http://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/index-e.html>)

“Government” is a motivator that has to be considered when looking at a regional identity. Political structure provides much of the undercurrent that drives the daily life in a region’s society. Policies, law and their enforcement and the political environment have much to do with the stability, safety and individual freedom in a region.

Finland maintains and is recognized as a country that has democracy run by a relatively corruption free government. While by no means untarnished, Finland can, on a global scale be seen as a place where tenets of democracy are upheld and maintained by a governmental body that is uncorrupted and fair. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2005) Society functions and remains safe for an individual regardless of gender, social status, sexual orientation or political background.

“Business potential” looks into the region’s strengths as a provider of jobs and business opportunities. Prominent regional business possibilities can draw entrepreneurship and investments. Business potential is a broad category and can be based i.e. on potential natural resources, lenient tax law and growth estimates. Business potential mustn’t look merely into the possibilities offered for businesses but for those looking to work in the region. For a regional brand, a good “business potential” motivator touches both potential businesses as well as those looking for employment potential.

Silicon Valley in Northern California drives its brand with the promise of being a technology capital. The assertion of being the “tech capital” of the world is backed by history, presence of industrial giants and educational technological facilities. (Saxenian & Hsu 1, 2001) A number of technology based industrial giants have headquarters in Silicon Valley; Intel, Apple Inc, Xerox and Adobe to name a few.

“Standard of living” looks for positive motivators from such things as GDP per capita, high HDI - functional social services, regional stability, equality, human rights. High standard of living is a powerful motivator, especially for those looking to inhabit a region endorsed by the brand.

Halsua, a small county in central Ostrobothnia, Finland, markets itself as a peaceful, naturally beautiful place, where services are good. Halsua seeks to target young families in particular in hopes of turning the tide of movement that currently flows from Halsua towards south. As an incentive, Halsua currently offers 1000 euros paid for every family with newborn in addition to offering lots of land for as low as 1 euro. (Halsua, 2013)

3.1.3 Regional brand as a person

Personification of a brand is an extension that suits the purpose of discovering a region’s identity very well. Stereotypes of inhabitants according to nation, or region, are as old as written history. We can find nations and their inhabitants branded in biblical texts with King David warring with Philistines, in the historic annals of Julius Ceasar we find depiction of wild lands and the barbaric Goths, or from Plato’s dialogues we know Spartans for their military prowess and laconic wit.

Personification of a regional brand draws from a unity of culture, history and the people that inhabit a region. Regional personality is by no means always a positive stereotype –regional stereotypes provide the punch line for many a joke, but for the purposes of regional branding the unique characteristic of a region’s personality must be turned into strengths of character.

“Regional personality” looks into the geographical region’s personality for motivators. Personality is less concrete than many of the other proposed regional motivators. A regional personality draws heavily from the natural flora of the region. For many a desert is synonymous with a hostile if beautiful land, savannahs’ rich with wild life can be seen untamed etc. Strong sources for looking into a regional identity is in literature, environment and the inhabitant’s self-image on the land they live in.

Greenland’s slogan for travellers is “be a pioneer” (<http://www.greenland.com/en/>). A play on a frontier theme, the slogan fits well into the general sense of the wild, untamed vastness of the arctic island. The region reflects its rough personality on the potential visitor, extending a sense of discovery and exploration into the journey.

“Inhabitant personality” looks into the character of the people. A subjective motivator, the perceived personality of the region’s people provides a strong emotional asset to draw on. Locals’ character is a point of interest for both travellers and those looking stay for a longer period. Sources for inhabitant personality come from literature, culture, history, regional self-image and neighbours.

Thailand’s main tourism site labels the country the “land of smiles” due to the friendly character of its inhabitants. The open, friendly stance of the country’s identity is well known and as a result Thailand continues to be a popular destination for travelers looking to enjoy a care-free pastime. The image has manifested successfully in attracting travelers, with the country continuing to be amongst the top popular holiday destinations. (Tourism Thailand, 2013)

“Inhabitant-region relationship” is a valuable measure of a region’s character as a place of living. A tumultuous society is not a selling point for any regional brand, whereas regional hegemony is a thing worth strengthening in a regional identity. People happy with their land, services and neighbours reflect well on a regional brand.

Norway, placing #1 in Forbes' 2013 list for the happiest countries in the world, is generally known for its peaceful society. Regardless of the tragic events in 2011 Utøya, Norway continues and prospers as a country where life is peaceful and standard of living is high. (Forbes; Helman, 2013)

3.1.4 Regional brand as a symbol

This group of motivators looks for symbolic entities of significance. Regions can possess iconic features; i.e. people, landscape, songs. Sometimes the symbol is better known than its place of origin.

Association of a regional brand to a powerful symbol can provide an anchor for the identity to attach itself with. The power of a symbol comes from association. A good regional brand symbol, even if removed from its direct context of marketing a region, can still produce association towards the original regional brand.

“Visual images and metaphors” draws from landmarks and architecture, nature or history to find strong symbols that can represent the brand identity. Often visual in nature, the range of possible sources is broad. The strength of this motivator is in its capacity to extent into the visual regional brand image. On a global scale this is clear when looking at flags; on national level regional heralds usually display central symbolic features.

Outside of the official flags and heralds, regional projects, tourism websites etc. geographically located projects with a need for communication will benefit from the identification of the central regional symbols.

The Sydney Opera House is a central landmark synonymous with Sydney and often associated as symbolic with the whole nation. In visual media, when something needs to be associated with Australia the viewer will likely see the liquid curves of Sydney's Opera House. (Colbert, 2003)

“Regional icons” looks for motivators in regional culture and society. In essence, regional icon tries to look for a symbolic entity that can drive the regional identity

and embody it. It walks a thin line between the previously mentioned motivator of visual metaphors

John the Bull is a metaphor of Great Britain. It is not only a personification of the ideal Briton; tenacious and steadfast, but also a symbol, a representative of the nation itself. John the Bull is an amalgam personification of both the inhabitants and the region, made originally during the time of the French revolution. (Day-Hickman 13, 2005)

4 SNÆFELLSNESS BRAND IDENTITY

This chapter will analyse and offer a proposition for a concise brand identity for the Snæfellsnes region. The brand identity proposed herein will use Aaker's identity model, using motivators modified to fit the construction of a regional brand identity.

This work will propose a brand identity construct consisting of the main brand and its sub-brand. Each focuses on one of the two previously discussed main target groups present in regional branding; natives and visitors. The regional inhabitants, both present and future, who live and breathe the regional brand receive the focus of the main branch, whereas the sub-brand targets those who visit the region for recreation and holidays.

In short, the main brand looks at a home whereas the sub-brand looks at a travelling destination.

4.1 CURRENT BRAND IMAGE

The first step in creating a brand identity is strategic brand analysis. However, for the purposes of this work, the resources for producing an excessive brand image study with associated surveys and an accompanying marketing team is not available. However, there is a source of good information available to work on starting with a survey conducted by Alta, done during July and August 2012, aimed to discover how both visitors and regional natives viewed Snæfellsnes. The survey is complemented by interviews done by the thesis author.

Concerning the current presentation of the region, it appears as a part of a general web portal which encompasses the whole of the Icelandic nation. The country is split into eight districts, Snæfellsnes being a part of the larger Vesturlands section where it is one of four districts of Vesturland, others being Akranes, Borgarfjörður and Dalir.

This is somewhat problematic for the Snæfellsnes region, as in the website it stands next to such larger entities as Borgarnes and Akranes, each with their own

character, history and assets. Vesturlands logo depicts the Snæfellsjökull glacier, found at the western peak of the Snæfellsnes peninsula.

The Snæfellsnes municipality has little in the way of individual communication channels. The Vesturland portal (www.vesturland.is / www.west.is) has generic information on the region, many local businesses are missing as are societies and lesser local sights. Furthermore, the generic portal platform has lacking content where links to videos and English texts are concerned.

The regional brand proposition given here looks at Snæfellsnes as a separate entity of the larger whole of Vesturland.

The lack of previous, distinct brand study is not to say the region is without character. The starting point is a brand image, unchanged by pre-existing management, seen as it is viewed by those who live and who have previously visited the area, conceptualized in a popular web portal merely as a part of a larger whole.

4.1.1 Competition and forerunners

Snæfellsnes is by no means the only area of Iceland strong with regional character and beautiful landscape. Before entering the stage of forming the actual regional brand identity mapping, a look into the potential competition is in order.

Latter in the list come some of the locales considered as examples of successful regional parks by Alta, which as beautiful, natural resorts, can also be seen as potential competition for garnering visitor's interest.

The list given is not all-inclusive, but aims to look at some of similar or directly competing locales within the northern hemisphere within a reasonable distance from the Snæfellsnes peninsula.

Westfjords, Iceland

The Westfjords is an area situated north-west in Iceland, directly north from Snæfellsnes itself. A rural region whose northern part extends into the arctic

circle. Chosen by Time as one of the 24 best kept secrets in the world, Westfjords is not so secretive of its status as a place for beautiful, bare northern landscape, rough climate and peaceful retreat. Proximity and relative similarity as a rural place with a rough, natural beauty makes Westfjords a competitor for Snæfellsnes. (<http://www.westfjords.is/>)

Reykjavík, Iceland

The capital of Iceland is the most popular destination for foreign travellers, a hub from where rest of the country is sampled, if at all. Concerning national travellers, it is likely Reykjavík is their home rather than travelling destination as over half of the country's populace lives in the capital area. Contrast to Snæfellsnes is drastic, and differentiation comes from the division of urban vs. rural. (<http://www.visitreykjavik.is/>)

Vesturland, Iceland

Snæfellsnes is a region that is a part of the larger district of Vesturland. It is necessary for Snæfellsnes to differentiate itself from the larger district, comprised of two larger towns in the east with their surrounding farmlands and hamlets. The landscape and lifestyle is in general similar across the region, but to stand out individually the distinct character of Snæfellsnes' culture, community and history should be emphasized.

Nærøyfjord, Norway

A UNESCO world heritage locale, this fjord from western Norway titles itself as one the most beautiful fjords in the world. The region asserts itself foremost as a place of unparalleled, northern natural beauty. National Geography has listed Nærøyfjord as number one amongst UNESCO world heritage locales, an impressive title to compete against. (<http://www.naeroyfjord.com/>)

Forest of Bowland, UK

A pastoral area England, Forest of Bowland is a region which asserts itself as a stable, interesting and vivid countryside community that lives in sustainable

balance with the surrounding nature. Forest of Bowland drives its brand in particular with its recognition as a place with sustainable tourism.

(<http://www.forestofbowland.com/>)

4.2 REGIONAL MAIN BRAND IDENTITY

The brand identity proposition herein seeks to enforce and elaborate on the positive assets of the region as seen by those who inhabit the region. It is a selection of motivators chosen with the goal of providing a distinct, characteristic brand identity for the region that is truthful, positive and acceptable by those who currently live in the region.

The viewpoint was deduced from Alta's surveys, which aimed to find out both Icelandic and foreign traveller's views of the region's best assets and from regional park's board discussions comprised of locals, discussing the natural and cultural assets of the region. Alta's work is complemented by ten interviews done by the thesis author with local inhabitants between the age of 22 and 81.

Additionally the proposition looks into contemporary and historical material, nature and culture.

4.2.1 Main brand identity goal

The goal of the brand identity proposed here is to provide an accessible starting point for further marketing work done by the municipalities. The brand identity aims for a position that projects an image of a place that positively asserts itself as an attractive travelling destination and a functional home for settling in.

The realization of the local brand is not only to be reflected on potential new settlers, but begins with its acceptance by the existing populace.

One of the long-term goals of Alta's regional project is to make the region more hospitable for young families to settle. Successful marketing has its part in the successful projection of the area as a good place for settling down. As the goals of the project materialize in the economic setting of the region in close future, marketing of Snæfellsnes as a functional place for living and settling must follow.

4.2.2 Main brand identity proposal

Snæfellsnes main brand identity

Target group: *regional natives*

Brand core identity:

Beautiful, pure nature. For the Snæfellsnes native, nature is a defining, potent ever-present source of livelihood and recreation. The changing of seasons define much of the daily rhythm in the region.

Free-spirited. Independence and capacity for self-sustenance is a major point for many who live in the region. Freedom of spirit can be seen in the people and extends to characterize the wilderness itself.

Community spirit, companionship. The geographically large region is sparsely populated yet has a strong sense of community. Local festivities, activities and societies across the region's municipalities provide a strong basis for social unity and belonging.

Safe and peaceful. The remote, stable region, where people tend to know their neighbors is a safe, worry-free haven for inhabitants to live, love and work.

Extended brand identity

Ecologically aware. The region remains consciously free of the heavy industry typical for Iceland; aluminum processing. Furthermore, several locations; schools, swimming pools, are ratified by the Earth Check certificate for their sustainable, ecological conduct.

Exclusive. Amongst the impressive landscapes of Iceland, the Snæfellsnes peninsula stands characteristic of an essential rural countryside. For many, living in the region is viewed as a blessing.

Symbol: Snæfellsjökull. The glacier, though a part of natural landscape, is a dominant feature standing tall above the region. The glacier has both cultural and spiritual significance for the region.

Continuity. For many, their family roots are in the region. Even in modern times, the seasons and the land dictate the pace of life as it has since the settling era.

4.2.2.1 Chosen identity motivators viewed in depth

For Icelanders beauty and nature came foremost in Alta's survey when asked about the strengths and characteristics of the region. It comes unsurprising as untamed Icelandic wild is but a step away from the front door for many; in the small villages the ocean on one side and the mountain range on the other is the first thing to greet a person come morning.

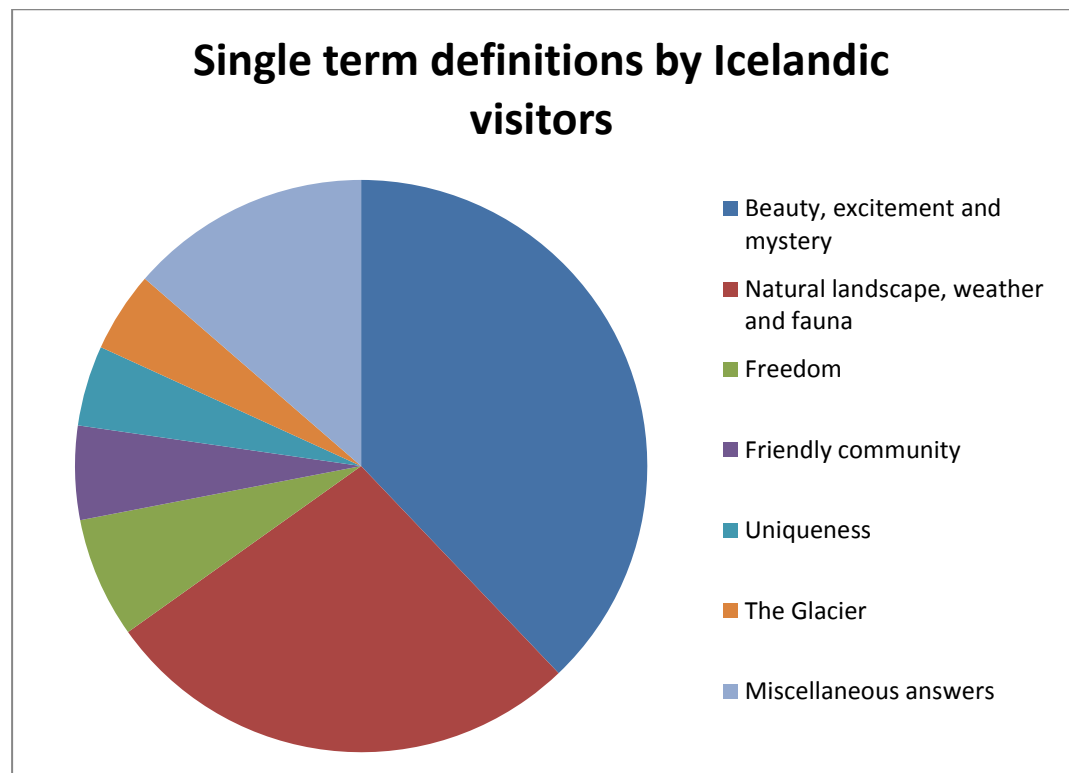


FIGURE 9. Single term definitions by Icelandic responsees.

(Alta, Punktar úr spurningakönnun meðal ferðamanna á svæðinu í júlí og ágúst 2012)

The choice of nature as a central motif is supported by interviews conducted with local inhabitants. A young male interviewed over regional assets summarizes his opinion on the region's greatest draw as follows:

“Nature. So many beautiful places to look at and see. You always have the fresh mountain air when you are breathing. Quietness. You know, you can hear the birds sing and the wind blow. You can’t hear any city noises.”

Many an inhabitant’s livelihood is entwined with the surrounding landscape, whether fishing, farming or tourism, the seasons, natural resources and weather dictate the daily routines and successes. To an extent, transportation, management and even public services are tied to seasonal changes. Weather extremities will cause delays or even outright unavailability of services with roads and seas unavailable for transportation.

The surrounding landscape provides a rich avenue for recreation and retreat for regional inhabitation. Snæfellsnes is first and foremost a rural region, where nature entwines with settled areas.

The glacier, Snæfellsjökull, rising from the western point of the peninsula, is a dominant feature of the region. Culturally it bears significance as a spiritual anchor for many. It is viewed as a nexus of energy, a source of strength and pride for the inhabitants. It is a dominating piece of landscape, visible for the western inhabitants of the peninsula from their backyards. The imposing mountain is featured in Jules Verne’s “Journey to the Centre of the World” and in Halldór Laxness’ “Under the Glacier”.

Free-spirited is a term that applies to both the weather and the people. It is a characteristic that realizes itself in the lack of rigid schedules and rules in the countryside. Furthermore the characteristic is semantically synonymous with independence, a definition of Icelanders that has both historical and cultural significance. The independence of a rural man was a central theme in Halldór Laxness’ masterful novel, *Sjálfstætt fólk* (Independent people).

A 50 –year old male, who has lived in the region for 26 years sums up his opinion on the best asset of the region as follows:

“Freedom. No schedules, no rules. Rhythm comes from living with the environment.”

Great community spirit was chosen as a central perk due to its importance for wellbeing. The scarcely populated region is drawn together through friendship; mutual gathering, social relations etc. provide necessary content for life.

Furthermore social gatherings enforce local identity, which in turn reflects the regional character strongly towards potential visitors.

The importance of the community rose in many of the interviews concerning regional assets, one man (59) expressed his relationship towards the community:

“The people who live here make me proud to be here. And being able to do things other people can’t do. I feel important in a small community where my work matters.”

Safety as a brand identity motivator comes from regional stability, low crime rate and general sense of living safely in the region. The aspect of safety is a major upside for those who either live or are thinking of the prospect of settling in Snæfellsnes. Functional government and the upkeep of local services and laws reflect on daily life positively.

Ecological awareness reflects in the wellbeing of the physical living environment and in the outlook of business life. The lack of heavy industry marks the landscape free of vast industrial complexes and the hydro and geothermal powerplants required to operate aforementioned factories. The prominence of aluminium smelteries in Iceland is a causal effect from the ample possibilities in tapping into low-cost renewable natural energy. A downside of the decision to bar heavy industry into the region is in losing immigrating workforce and revenue.

Several regional establishments, ranging from schools to swimming pools have received an Earth Check certificate for their ecologically sustainable management.

Continuity is an important, multi-faceted motivator that draws from historical, social and cultural significance. Historically, continuity of inhabitation can be seen as a historical link into the settling period. While the discussion on the direct historical accuracy of the Icelandic sagas are not up to observation in this thesis, the importance of events and characters that appeared in the region gives both an air of historical and cultural gravity for the regional brand.

One lady of 49 years expressed her thoughts on people being linked to their place of birth by quoting Hávamal (a collection of Viking-era wisdom in poetic form, from the poem Edda):

“Strong is the rope that drives men to their father’s fields.”

The region has a number of families that have lived and prospered in the area for generations. The sense of having "roots" is an asset that can be turned into brand strength by tying the current inhabitants into the longer chain of hardy, resourceful settlers dating back to the saga-period. Furthermore regional continuity, if intuitively expressed, can work as encouragement to motivate younger generations to look for a way to maintain their roots in the region.

Exclusivity of living in the scarcely populated Icelandic countryside is an asset that draws from the idea that it is a privilege to live there. People of Snæfellsnes live in a peaceful, picture-perfect, wild Icelandic landscape while maintaining the benefits of living in a democratic, technologically advanced western society.

4.2.3 Main brand value proposition

The value proposition for the main brand assumes the point of view of a regional inhabitant, looking at the fundamental value enticing motivators of the brand. Good value propositions sum up positive aspects that, according to Aaker combine functionality with self-expression and emotion. (Aaker 2010, 95-101)

Main brand value propositions

Snæfellsnes offers peaceful, individual life in a close-knit community.

A contrasting statement that is nevertheless true for many. People of the region live in a remote, wild area of the northern hemisphere, where capacity and ability for surviving in rough conditions is expected, yet when at the moment of emergency the help of the community is never far.

Snæfellsnes is a safe place to raise a family.

Children brought up in the region are brought up in a society where people know each other's comings and goings. There's lots of useful, physical activities available for children, a nature brim with the promise of adventure and good schooling up to upper elementary level. Snæfellsnes is a good place for children, and by extension a good place for a family to raise children in a natural environment without the fear of "bad crowds" as sometimes is associated with cities.

4.2.4 Main brand credibility and relationship

Snæfellsnes in general has a good reputation as quintessential rural, Icelandic countryside. As such when extended into use with associated business brands for example it conveys the simple honesty of the hard-working, pure countryside into extended associations. The brand of Snæfellsnes can be said to have a solid, reliable brand in Iceland.

The relationship the brand of Snæfellsnes should aim to achieve with the inhabitation should be one of respect and mutual benefaction. Respect in the sense that the most common way the region manifests itself in daily is from weather, at times fickle yet at times picturesquely beautiful. There is little to be done for this except to accept and enjoy to best of one's ability.

A relationship based on mutual benefaction comes for many from the fact that the rural region offers much in the way of recreation and beauty, even in natural resources, hey, fish, berries. Respect of the surroundings extends to action in this case, to take care, know and respect your surroundings in Snæfellsnes is to entice oneself into the "spoils of the land". A respectful, mutually beneficial relationship can be found on governmental level with the municipality's choice bar entrance of heavy industry into the region and the fact several regional institutions from schools to businesses carry the Green Check certificate.

4.2.5 Main brand position

Position is the end message that the brand communicates towards the target audience. Brand position is the viewpoint where differentiation is to be made against competition (listed earlier in the chapter). The significance of competing non-Icelandic locales is lesser for the positional propositions here, as the main target group consists of both present and future inhabitants.

Independent people living in harmony with Icelandic nature and seasons.

Independent people rings true for the free-spirited, capable farmers and fishermen of the region. Independence is a strong word for Icelanders, with a deep cultural resonance hailing from Halldór Laxness' novel *Sjálfstætt fólk*. It might not be truthful to say that the free-folk of Snæfellsnes are more able and hardy than their northern, regional neighbours in Westfjords, but nevertheless, the position differentiates, draws interest and maintains the truth.

For the people of Snæfellsnes, the position seeks to entice a sense of pride and upkeep a sense of acceptance of the way of life which is and must be in harmony with the surrounding, temperamental landscape.

Small population united by strong communal spirit.

A close-knit community is the basis for good-living in a remote region and for Snæfellsnes this rings particularly true. Without the luxury of city-grade consumer goods selections or services, people must -and in Snæfellsnes, can- rely on their neighbours. This stance is true for the northern Westfjords as well, but provides contrast to the eastern part of Vesturland and the capital region.

Essential Icelandic landscape crowned by Snæfellsjökull glacier.

The final position draws strength from the picturesque landscape amplified with the unique presence of the Snæfellsjökull glacier. There's but one Snæfellsjökull in Iceland, and only one gorgeous landscape in which one can marvel the radiant glacier.

4.3 REGIONAL SUB-BRAND IDENTITY

The regional sub-brand proposes a brand identity that aims to influence visitors. The sub-brand identity proposition does not separate the target group of visitors by nation, or even provide a further division into national and international visitors. What is discussed here sums a general look into a regional sub-brand from the point of view of a person looking to enjoy and experience a region temporarily.

4.3.1 Sub-brand identity goal

The goal of the sub-brand is to identify and analyze the central motivators that show the region's identity in a positive, attractive light in the eyes of one looking to sample the region for experiences and sensations.

4.3.2 Sub-brand identity proposal

Snæfellsnes sub-brand identity

Target group: *visitors*

Core identity

A landscape of possibilities. The natural facets of Snæfellsnes are a sight in themselves and a source for adventure and recreation. From hiking to fishing, whale watching to horseback riding, the region has both the resources and organized services for a visitor to indulge in a myriad of interesting options – all linked into the wilderness and nature and the possibilities it offers.

Symbol: Snæfellsjökull. The prime element of the region, the glacier, is a sight that draws viewers and functions as a symbol for Snæfellsnes' natural beauty. It is recognizable, physically accessible and certainly unforgettable as a majestic, natural monument.

Personality: Free-spirited. The vast, wild Icelandic outdoors are found in their purest sense in Snæfellsnes. Towns are small and population is scarce. The lack of

excessive bureaucracy, with tight schedules replaced by seasons, the rhythm of the region provides a positive contrast for many whose daily life is dictated by the office clock.

Extended brand identity

Genuinity. Life in Snæfellsnes is driven by agriculture and the changing seasons. The landscape is unspoiled and the people there weather the nature in their daily life.

Safe. Snæfellsnes is a Scandinavian destination and as such, should a visitor encounter any trouble in his journey's, he can rely on a functional, responsible Nordic society.

4.3.2.1 Sub-brand identity motivators explained in depth

For the sub-brand the thesis looks into the sub-brand motivators through the eyes of a visitor – a tourist. For a tourist the requirements of a pleasant stay in the region are more temporal. Visitors will want to sample the highlights of the region, explore, experience and sense adventure during their stay in Snæfellsnes. What the sub-brand identity should reflect then becomes a more evident, more immediate highlight of the region's character and possibilities.

Nature becomes foremost amongst the core-identity motivators. For a visitor, Snæfellsnes' nature provides a broad spectrum of the Icelandic nature experience with a strong regional flavor. From peaking the Snæfellsnes glacier to exploring the landscape the possibilities are vast from visitors ranging hikers to sightseers.

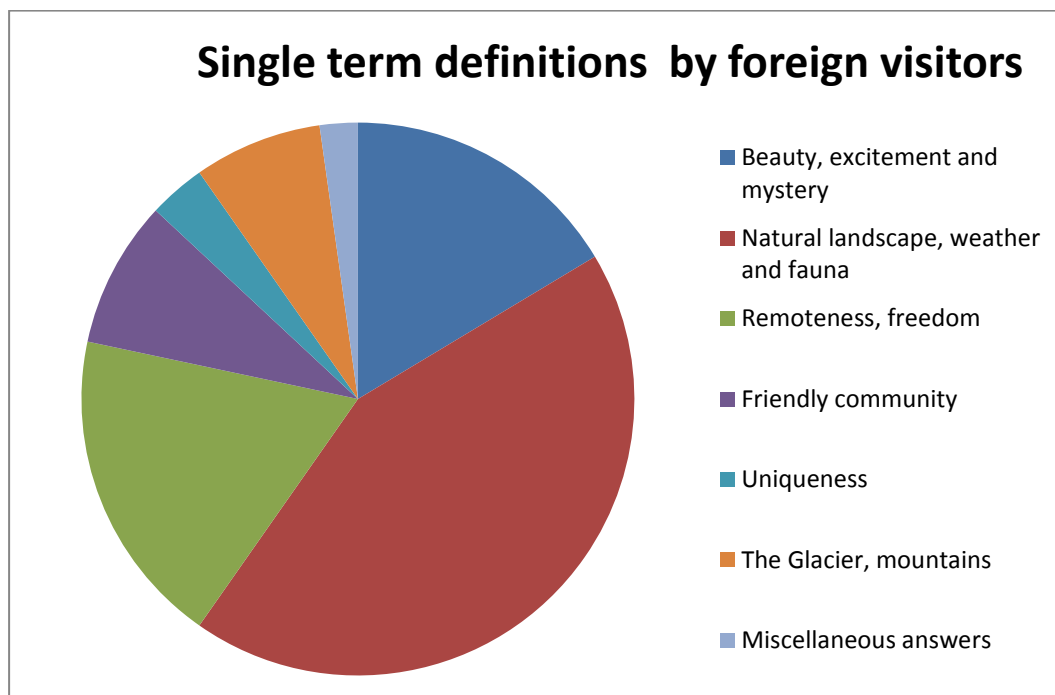


FIGURE 10. Single term definitions by foreign responsees.

(Alta, Punktar úr spurningakönnun meðal ferðamanna á svæðinu í júlí og ágúst 2012)

Foreign visitors in particular stressed the prominence of nature as the highlight of the region in their answers concerning single term definitions of the region.

The symbolic glacier is a unique sight which can be experienced both from afar and physically. A visitor can appreciate both the mountain's cultural extension and the pure experience of physically climbing on top of the regional monument to view over the peninsula.

Personal freedom, privacy and peace are guaranteed for the regional visitor. Iceland has the Scandinavian every man's rights and the locals are used to travellers visiting local lands and estates. Natural peace and quiet is characteristic of the region thus solace can be found for the visitor leaving behind a scheduled daily life without fear of encountering hostile, suspicious gazes on the out-of-place wanderers. The contrast between a busy urban life to the flowing, natural lifestyle and surrounding landscape of the region provides a perfect retreat for relaxation.

A local woman (49) on personality:

“It is better not to be terribly social. You have to like solitude to an extent. You have to like quiet life. You can’t drop into pubs or cafes.”

Genuinity comes from the fact that a traveller will see the original rural Icelandic lifestyle. Many people make their living through agriculture; farming, cattle raising and fishing. All of which are tied into the changing of seasons and the fickle, tumultuous weather. This can be physically experienced by seeing (and avoiding) the multitude of sheep wandering the fields and meadows, occasionally the roads and roadsides. Tractors tend to fields of hay and trawlers frequent the seas for catch.

Lastly, Snæfellsnes is a safe place for visitors. The region is politically stable, friendly towards visitors and generally safe. In the case of mishaps or injury, he can rely on a functional and responsible Nordic infrastructure.

4.3.3 Sub-brand value proposition

The value propositions take the point of view of a potential visitor, focusing on the value of the experience and excitement a potential tourist seeks.

In Snæfellsnes one can experience essential Icelandic countryside in a picturesque, rural setting.

A region driven by agriculture, a visitor will see Icelandic farmers and fishermen in action amidst a Snæfellsnessian landscape. Particularly for foreign visitors, seeing the way of life in combination with the minimalistic, charming landscape, unique to Iceland, can be a very essential, unique experience.

Snæfellsnes offers a genuine, non-commercial experience.

Snæfellsnes is not a tourist trap in any sense of word. The wording of the proposition can by no means be directly used as a slogan, as the term “non-commercial” can convey a sense of absence of all central functionalities necessary

for tourism. Nevertheless, while the region has a decent range of services available for a visitor it is by no means a refined, ready-made tourist destination. Those who look for a genuine travelling destination and are ready to get their hands and feet dirty exploring are ready for Snæfellsnes – those looking for a polished, commercial experience must look elsewhere.

Snæfellsnes is different from your home.

In all likelihood the region is likely to be elementally different from the place the potential visitor comes from. Be it Reykjavík capital area or western Europe, the pace of time, landscape and seasons will be drastically different. Snæfellsnes is a contrast to most people's daily life and surroundings.

4.3.4 Sub-brand credibility and relationship

As a remote and exotic travelling destination, Snæfellsnes fulfills the characterization to its fullest. Promises of a beautiful if a fickle landscape are delivered. The sense of a rural character true to the bone of the region's economical anatomy.

The relationship the region should assume over visitors is one of a roughly mannered, but friendly host. Snæfellsnes is not a beach resort the people are not metropolitan, instead a visitor will discover essential Icelandic nature and fishermen and farmers seasoned by toil. Both, however friendly to those who come in the role of a respectful visitor.

4.3.5 Sub-brand identity position

Essential Icelandic landscape crowned by Snæfellsjökull glacier.

Visitor interested in an essential rural view of Iceland, Snæfellsnes delivers. Farmland and towns overlooked by the iconic Snæfellsjökull, the crown which separates the views from similar rural vistas as could be found in the Westfjords.

Recreation tied to experiencing the Icelandic nature.

For the active and capable traveller, Snæfellsnes offers ample possibilities for recreation, organized activities and a wide open range for those who want to find their own adventure.

A peaceful retreat.

Sparsely populated yet homely in its friendly approach towards travellers, Snæfellsnes is rural, remote, even wild, yet safe and approachable for visitors looking for a sense of otherness, a retreat from strict schedules and urban confines.

5 PRACTICAL APPLICATION

The brand identity needs to materialize its brand position, projecting itself in various marketing applications. The purpose of this chapter is to initiate discussion on what media choices should be utilized by the end-client and to provide a general outline on how to utilize chosen media channels. The chapter focuses on the benefits and content of individual media channels on a strategic level.

The suggestion offered herein keeps in mind the resources and possibilities of the end-client of Svæðisgarður project, the municipalities of Snæfellsness. In general the thesis proposes such methods and channels that are both functional and cost-effective.

At the present moment, regional companies, schools, facilities, and societies do not have a Snæfellsnes-inclusive channel through which to communicate outward.

5.1 VISUAL AND RHETORICAL BRAND

After the brand identity has been formed, the topic of how the brand should look like and how it communicates to the target audience should be discussed.

Reflecting on Aaker's definition, the visual and rhetoric extension of the brand needs to "identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors." (1991, 7)

Hankinson (2004) visualizes the connection the relationships between the brand identity and its extension into practice as follows:

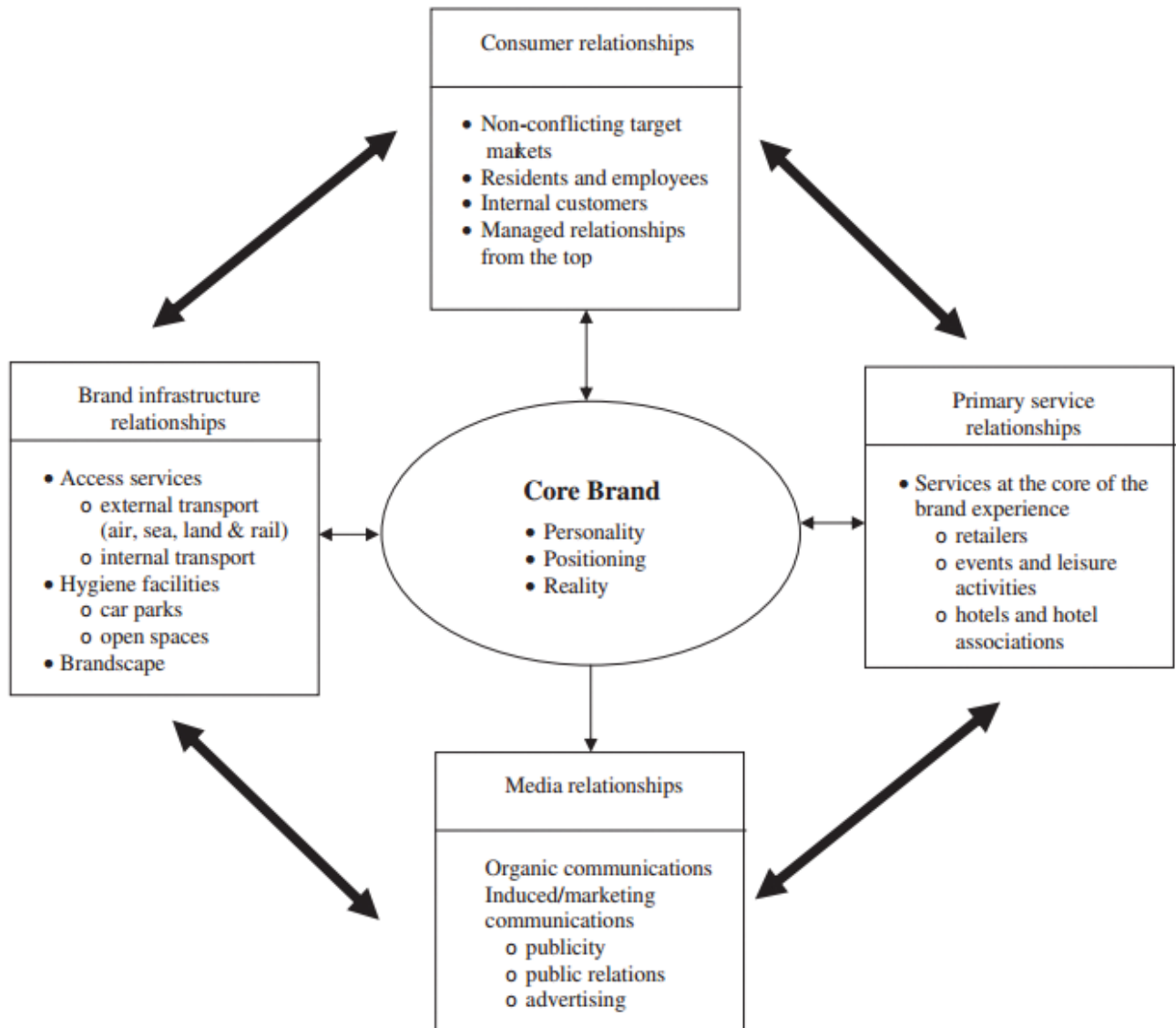


FIGURE 11. The relational network brand

(Hankinson, Graham 2004, *the relational network brand*, 155)

The brand identity should be present in all levels of interaction.

Visual brand identity covers the brand logo, colour and typography. Furthermore the visual brand identity discusses visual composition; outlines on how, why and where photography and different types of typography is used. The visual outlook of the brand is the first stage where the brand identity materializes into reality.

The design of the visual brand should be addressed with a capable graphics designer after the regional brand identity has been agreed on.

Before textually content-heavy applications are launched, the guidelines on what message, tone-of-voice and perspective the text material has needs to be established. In practice this means the written message needs to convey the brand and personality of the region.

The extensive analysis of the potential marketing tone of voice for the region goes into the field of linguistics, where vocabulary, grammar and textual structures come under closer scrutiny (Henriksen, Jongejan & Maegard 2004, 10). Linguistic brand analysis is beyond the scope of this thesis and possibly for the end client as well; lengthy study of linguistics in terms of finding the optimal voice for the Snæfellsnes brand might not be the best use of limited time and resources of a small municipality. Nevertheless, some thought should be projected in how to reflect verbally the free-spirited, natural region.

For example, if discussing the historical continuance of the region from the settling era to the current establishment or when describing the natural features of the landscape, a neutral, informative tone of voice should be used. Whereas the descriptions for recreational possibilities, events or the offerings of local restaurants a more personal, experience-oriented tone of voice should be used.

To an extent, the regional toolkit currently being composed by Alta aims to create the groundwork for brand usage for regional marketing applications both visually and rhetorically. The Sense-of-Place toolkit offers regional societies and companies the necessary guidance and resources to implement the regional brand into their activities.

5.2 REGIONAL WEB PORTAL

To drive its own regional brand forward, Snæfellsnes needs a web portal separate from the generic portal which currently lumps Snæfellsnes together with the larger regional entity of Vesturlands.

A regional internet portal offers a host of possibilities to inform about the region and impress and initiate visitors into the regional culture. Ease-of-access for those

interested in the region along with the high visibility to cost ratio makes the internet portal a suitable candidate as a marketing channel.

Adrian Palmer and Patrick McCole note that for a visitor, the decision for choosing a particular destination is highly dependent on the quality of information about the local companies and available experiences on the web. (Palmer & McCole 2000, 198). Central to the success of a functional regional site is the presence and co-operation of regional businesses and the inter-connectivity of individual business sites to the larger regional web portal. (Palmer & McCole 2000, 199-200)

In the visual and an informative media of web, the foremost regional brand assets, nature and the recreational possibilities it offers can be both displayed and described extensively. Further possibilities are in giving voice to both regional companies and people who closely work with nature to broaden the view into regional nature.

The cultural aspect, in terms of regional history is another angle to consider in terms of the web portal. As Alta has collected and archived much of the folklore, stories and historical events and locations, the needed material is ready and available as a source. An interactive saga map could be a good way to present the information in the choice media.

Genuinity of the rural lifestyle can be communicated by both seasonal newsfeeds reporting of the seasonal fish catch, harvests, gathering of lambs. Regional lifestyle can materialize in blogs held by actual fishermen and farmers, written from a strongly personal point of view. The life and happenings of the region and its society should be noted with active newsfeed linking to news of interests by local newspaper and a calendar for regional events.

Informative section for both people and businesses looking towards the region for a more permanent residence should be available. In particular open jobs should be made visible and updated.

5.3 PRINT

The print application discussed here is a consumer and visitor oriented guide for the region. With central bits of information, a good, functional regional guidebook should excite and guide the traveller towards regional service, recreation, culture and sights.

A visitor's guide is a key and a starter from where a visitor can decide to which direction he wishes to orient himself in discovering more about what the region can offer.

Availability is another central aspect when looking at the functionality of the guide. Regional hotels, guesthouses, swimming pools and gas stations should be armed with a quota of guide books for distribution.

Financially, printing a sufficient amount of high quality design and material booklets can be taxing for the municipality. However the cost can be alleviated by featured companies paying a part of the printing costs. A broadly distributed, well-made and well-composed guide book provides positive visibility for both the region and the companies presented in the booklet.

5.4 SOCIAL MEDIA

An actively maintained Facebook account is an excellent channel for drawing interest towards the region. The media in itself has exponential potential to spread a positive image of the region with relatively minimal cost. A touching, interesting piece of information has the potential to reproduce itself vastly via the use of social media applications. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2011, 255).

The primary choice of social media for the region should be Facebook. In his thesis, Jarrar Jaffrey summarizes Facebook as a media for its capacity to "address many different aspects of life in a very appealing way" (Jaffrey 2011, 3), perfect for the purposes of endorsing a region with its myriad of landscape, possibilities and lifestyles.

An excellent primer for sparking interest and allowing inhabitants and visitors to voice their opinions, the region should present interesting up-to-date news, regional highlights and events in social media. Whatever be the message, it is important to give it a rough, unedited voice – if the brand wishes to extend itself as a rural, free-spirited character, the voice of the social media must be adhered to. Kaplan & Haenlein summarize the tenets of successful, credible communication in social media; be unprofessional. The other requirements are: be active, be interesting, be humble and be truthful. (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010, 66-67).

6 IN CLOSURE

The theoretical part of this thesis ran through the general theory of brand identity creation, ending with an approach into Aaker's brand identity model modified in context with regional brand identity creation. While the functional application of brand identity in reality is always dependant on the resources and capacity of the brand owner, the underlying methodology is universal.

A successful brand needs to convey the positive character and assets of a brand, at best becoming a universally identifiable presence that positively reflects on a product, service or in this case the place it endorses.

From Aaker's model the thesis puts the model into practical use by offering a suggestion on how to compose Snæfellsnes' regional brand identity. While the composition is subjective to the view of the thesis author, it relies on factual data, surveys, interviews and a colourful background of culture and history. The decision for choosing two general groups towards which to direct two different identity proposals is a necessity. Given time and resources, the regional brand should be branched further. In particular the division between international and national visitors should be addressed and further on, nationalities with a particularly dominating presence amongst regional visitors should be addressed further.

In terms of brand identity proposals the thesis offers a general look into channelling the brand identity into reality. The chapter following the identity proposition has a heavily hands-on approach to provide a suggestion concerning media choices and their requirements and content.

The strategic choices of how many people to assign to marketing management and how to implement the marketing tools are subject to the available resources of the end client, the regional municipality.

After the approaching launch of Alta's regional park project for Snæfellsnes, the municipality has the task of implementing not only regional branding but the greater regional strategy into reality of which marketing is but a part of a larger whole. Nevertheless, it is the opinion of the thesis author that a strong regional

brand is at the heart of all action and a well-defined regional brand can empower communication and action outside the direct sphere of marketing.

A regional brand is formed not only of marketing choices but of regional policies, social welfare, food, weather and a thousand small things to which little can be done from the confines of a marketing office. The creation and management of a regional brand is a daunting task, to which I hope this thesis can give guidance on its part.

SOURCES

- Aaker, D. Joachimsthaler, E. 2000. *Brand Leadership*. New York: The Free Press.
- Aaker, D. 2010. *Building Stronger Brands*. London: Simon & Schuster UK Ltd.
- Aaker, J. 1997. Dimensions of Brand Personality. *Journal of Marketing Research* vol. XXXIV.
- Aaker, D. 1991. *Managing Brand Equity*. New York: The Free Press.
- Aaker, D. 1996. Measuring Brand Equity Across Markets. *California Management Review* vol. 38 no. 3.
- Ailawadi, K. Lehmann, D. & Neslin, S. 2003. Revenue Premium as an Outcome Measure of Brand Equity. *Journal of Marketing* vol. 16.
- Anholt, S. 2005. Anholt Nation Brands Index: How Does the World See America? *Journal of Advertising Research*.
- Colbert, Francis. 2003. The Sydney Opera House, An Australian Icon. *International Journal of Arts Management*. Vol 5, n:o 2.
- de Chernatony, L. & Dall'Olmo Riley, F. 1998. Defining a "Brand", Beyond the Literature with Experts Interpretations. *Journal of Marketing Management* vol 14.
- Hankinson, Graham. 2004. Relational Network Brands: Towards a Conceptual Model of Place Brands. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 10.
- Henriksen, Lina. Bongejan, Bart. & Maegaard, Bente. 2004. *Tone of Voice*. Center for Sprogteknologi, University of Copenhagen, December 2004, VID report n:o 4.
- Jaffrey, Jarrar, 2011. *Social Media and Marketing, Based on a Study for HP Sweden AB*. School of Information and Communication Technology, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Kaplan, Andreas M. & Haenlain Michael, 2010. Users of the World, Unite! The Challenges and Opportunities of Social Media. *Business Horizons* (52).

Kaplan, Andreas M. & Haenlein, Michael. 2011. Two Hearts in Three Quarter Time: How to Waltz the Social Media/Viral Marketing Dance. Kelley School of Business, Indiana University.

Kotler, P. Keller, K. Brady, M. Goodman, M. & Hansen, T. 2009. Marketing Management. Pearson Education Limited.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. 2005. Combating Corruption, the Finnish Experience. Erweko Painotuote Oy.

Moilanen, T. & Rainisto, S. 2009. How to Brand Nations, Cities and Destinations. Palgrave Macmillan.

Palmer, Adrian & McCole, Patrick. 2000. The role of electronic commerce in creating virtual tourism destination marketing organisations, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 12 Iss: 3 pp. 198 - 204

Saxenian, Annalee & Hsu, Jinn-Yuh. 2001. The Silicon Valley – Hsinchu Connection: Technological Communities and Industrial Upgrading. Oxford Univ Press.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES:

Amazing Thailand – Always surprises you. Official tourism website. 2013.

<http://www.tourismthailand.org/index.php>

Alta. 2012. Punktar úr spurningakönnun meðal ferðamanna á svæðinu í júlí og ágúst 2012. <http://Svæðisgarður.is/images/pdf/spurningakonnun-f-vef.pdf> (last updated 16.10.2012)

Alta. 2012. Young inhabitants board meetings summary.

http://Svæðisgarður.is/images/pdf/skyrsla_ungmenni_4feb.pdf

Canary Islands – Latitude of Life, official tourism website. 2013.

<http://turismodecanarias.com/canary-islands-spain/index.html>

Cross, Heather. 2013. <http://gonyc.about.com/cs/atozindel/a/bigapple.htm>

Day-Hickman, Barbara. 2005. An Interpretive Study of Prints on the French Revolution. <https://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/imaging/essays/hickman.pdf>

Forest of Bowland. 2013. <http://www.forestofbowland.com/>

Halsuan kunta, 2013. www.halsua.fi (last updated 5.7.2013)

Helman, Christopher. 2013. The Happiest (and Saddest) Countries in the World. Forbes. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/christopherhelman/2013/01/09/the-worlds-happiest-and-saddest-countries-2/>

Iceland Review_Online. 2013. <http://www.icelandreview.com/>

KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau. <http://www.kz-gedenkstaette-dachau.de/index-e.html>

Nærøyfjord. <http://www.naeroyfjord.com/>

Svæðisgarður Snæfellinga. 2013. <http://Svæðisgarður.is/english>

The Official Tourism Site of Greenland. 2013. <http://www.greenland.com/en/>

Visit West Iceland – Official Tourist Website. www.vesturlands.is / www.west.is

Visit Norway. 2013. Holmenkollen Skijump.

<http://www.visitnorway.com/en/Where-to-go/East/Oslo/What-to-do-in-Oslo/Attractions-in-Oslo/Holmenkollen/> (last updated 24.7.2013)

Visit Reykjavík. <http://www.visitreykjavik.is/>

Wetsfjords Official Travelguide. <http://www.westfjords.is/>

Wikimedia Commons. Map of the Snæfellsnes Peninsula.

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_the_Sn%C3%A6fellsnes_peninsula.png

APPENDIX

Appendix I

Brand equity by Aaker

Brand equity means the measurement of the value and benefits of an established brand. Simplified, the measure of a brand's equity is the financial value given by a brand over the service or product it covers. The introduction and understanding of of brand equity measurement is a part of successful regional branding. (Rainisto & Moilanen 2009, 23)

Brand, as an immaterial asset, is a challenging subject for measurements. Brand equity tries to measure such challenging indicators as brand-customer relationship, in market environments that are often multileveled and difficult measure. (Ailawadi, Lehmann & Neslin 2003, 2-3)

Aaker (1996, 105) notes that successful brand equity measurements are composed of a mix of qualitative and statistical studies. However, for the subject matter, regional brand, some measurements used over commercial, product based brand equity measures will inevitably fall short.

Generally, Aaker states, functional measurements for brand equity need to fulfill the following criterion. First, the measures have to suit and reflect the construct that is assessed. Namely, the brand and its dimensions – associations, brand loyalty, value. The focus is to be on discovering the value of the brand's capacity for differentiation in the market. Second, the measures should be chosen so they can analyze brand future sales and profit. Thirdly the measures have to be sensitive to change. In case there is a change in brand equity, the measures have to be tuned enough to notice said change. Fourth, the measures should be general enough they can be used across market levels, on a variety of products, categories and brands. (Aaker 1996, 104)

Aaker provides a comprehensive baseline of what are the exact dimensions of a brand that should be measured. The clarity and usability of Aaker's measurements are the reason they will be looked into in detail in this work. Furthermore Aaker's

measurement's universality, accessibility and malleability are suitable to be used in the context of regional brands.

The Brand equity ten

In Aaker's view a brand's equity consists of ten sets of measurement divided into five categories that will be looked into in detail. Aaker's construct "The Brand Equity Ten" is a selection of ten measurement angles that are used for the measurement of corporate brand equity. Each section introduces a measurement and discusses its application of using the defined measurements in an environment where the equity of a regional brand is measured.

The central problem with regional brand equity is the reach and non-commercial nature of the brand. Where a commercial brand will at best be a single product in a clearly defined regional market, a regional brand extends internationally into a multileveled market, and at best can endorse a vast range of products and services.

Loyalty

Loyalty is the core measure of a brand's value. Loyalty is an essential core value that attempts to measure the value of the relationship between the brand and the customer. It is composed of two values, price premium and customer satisfaction/loyalty.

Price premium is the difference that a customer is willing to pay for the brand in comparison to another brand. Price premium is a numerically definable measure, a comparative measurement that at its simplest consists of questionnaire where a customer is asked how much more he is willing to pay for a brand endorsed entity A in comparison to entity B. Price premium does not reveal why a customer would choose A over B, but how much financial value a customer places on the brand.

The issues with price premium stem from the circumstances of usually having a varying set of comparative price premium values from several contesting brands. (Aaker 1996, 107). For a price premium measure to work, clearly definable products/services are needed along with a set of testers against which

comparisons can be drawn. The requirements for functional price premium values can prove problematic in defining price premiums for regional brands.

In a regional context, price premium finds functions when used over products that are sold directly under the regional brand. Extended uses for price premium in a regional context can be found in pricing local services vs. national services, estates and commodities for example. Furthermore, another problem is in setting the comparative boundaries; is the competition regional, national or international?

Customer satisfaction and loyalty is the second measure in the “loyalty” category. Customer loyalty is collected from existing customers and is based on existing user experience. At best this measure gives valuable insight into how successfully the brand identity – the promises of value and quality – has been assimilated by the customers. Dissatisfaction can dictate failure in living up to expectations or an inflated promise in the brand’s identity itself.

Aaker notes that customer satisfaction can be discovered via qualitative questionnaire that aims to discover the reasons why a customer chooses and uses the product or service in question. Again, comparisons to competing brands and their offerings are required. The central question is, why the customer would choose and use brand A over brand B?

In measuring the Snæfellsnes brand, the customer satisfaction/loyalty is a more manageable measure than price premium. Depending on the segment questioned, the central question can be extended to revolve the regional brand being represented by the visitation experience. Alternatively the scope of the question can narrow the experience down to smaller divisions, such as services, food, recreation etc.

As a crude example, a local can be questioned why he would choose to live in region A over areas B,C and D. A tourist can be asked why he chose region A for recreational time over areas B, C and D. The scope and range of the questionnaire can be then toned to focus on individual businesses, services, experiences and products.

Perceived Quality and Leadership

Perceived quality is a value tied with price premium that does not directly measure monetary value, but rather the customer's perception of the fulfilment of the expected brand quality promise. Perceived quality is a comparative measure that requires comparison against contending brands. (Aaker 1996, 109) In short, the question is whether brand A superior, similar or worse than brands B, C or D.

Perceived quality, as a qualitative measure, can be extended to measure a regional brand.

Aaker (1996, 110) notes that the measurement of perceived quality is affected particularly by the existence of strictly differing loyalty segments in the customer base. For the purpose of perceived quality of a regional brand, division between visitors and inhabitants is significant as they will answer the question of loyalty from a very different point of view.

Leadership is measurement which asks the question where a brand stands in terms of leading; does brand A lead brands B, C or D in terms of innovation, technology, comfort, ecological awareness and other similar comparable areas.

The measurement of leadership is dependent on the brand manager's view on the most important aspects that the brand hopes to establish leadership in. Brand leadership can be tied to driving identity position.

Associations and differentiation

Measurements of association evaluate brand identity's success in driving the aspired values towards a goal image. Measuring association consists of measuring a brand's strength of personality and the associations it extends over the entity it represents.

Aaker's (1996, 113) view is that the questions to determine the strength of a brand's personality are; does the brand have a strong personality and if the brand is interesting? Organizational associations can be inquired as follows: is the organization behind the brand seen as trustworthy and does it have credibility?

Association is a measurement that functions well in context of regional brand equity. It is an abstract quality and is not dependent on clearly defined comparative competition.

Differentiation is said by Aaker (1996, 114) to be a cornerstone of a brand. Measuring differentiation requires comparative contrasts against perceived competition.

In Snæfellsnes' case, the comparison must be done against brands from competing municipalities and regions. How does the Snæfellsnes brand identity and perceived image stand out against the completion?

Brand awareness

Brand awareness measures perceptions, attitudes and recognition. High brand awareness signifies that a brand is well known, available and identified. Aaker notes that at its best positive awareness is a driver for brand choice and loyalty.

The questions imposed by awareness measures seek answers to the following: is the brand known, is it known what the brand stands for and what opinions the brand gathers? In effect, awareness measures the space a brand occupies inside a consumer's brand hierarchy.

Measuring the awareness of the Snæfellsnes brand could be done via a quantitative survey, not unlike the survey done by Alta in 2012.

Market behaviour

Market behaviour measurements appraise equity by looking at statistical information about market share, market price and distribution. Unlike the previous four categories, market behaviour measurements do not require surveys.

Market behaviour measurement –a simple concept for a product driven consumer brand- becomes challenging to implement as a measurement over the success of a regional brand.

The successful implementation of market specific measurements over a regional brand requires successful recognition of the key statistics a regional brand is designed to drive in the context of the regional area it is used to bolster.

Possible choices for functional market behaviour statistics for Snæfellsnes, keeping in mind the goals of the regional park, could be the annual ratio of migration against emigration, and population as a tourism destination. The choice of key statistics depends on the goals and is subject to comparison against competing regions.