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Coping with Overtourism:

*Redirecting tourism consumption through social
media and the Internet*

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Abstract

With tourism being the largest industry in Europe and one of the fastest growing sectors, the importance of sustainable tourism consumption from an economic, social, cultural and environmental aspect is vital. A problem related to growing tourism is overcrowding, also known as overtourism; a relatively new phenomenon describing destinations where hosts or guests, residents or visitors are having the perception of there being too many tourists in one place. With overtourism comes many challenges, for example it negatively affects the residents' quality of life as well as the complete visitor experience. When tourism consumption reaches its limits, it needs to be controlled and strategies need to be implemented. A literature review, a netnographic case study of two overcrowded destinations and an interview were used to get an understanding of which challenges comes with overtourism from the perspective of different stakeholders such as residents, tourists, authorities, destination marketing organisations (DMOs), and which strategies are used to control and redirect tourism consumption.

Based on the findings of this study, social media and the Internet are considered a useful channel where DMOs, tourist boards and municipalities can find information on what stakeholders consider makes better places to live in and to visit. Social media can work as a link between the stakeholders and the authorities that facilitate the place branding process and involving the stakeholders in the tourism discussion will facilitate an authentic place brand. Stakeholders should be involved and engaged in the development and implementation of strategies to mitigate overtourism challenges in a destination. Strategies to cope with overtourism taken on social media and the Internet by stakeholders include targeting sustainable segments, informational place demarketing, social capacity building by involving stakeholders in tourism development and the community and redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices for example by promoting less well-known areas and attractions. The qualitative case study helped finding recommendations to a small destination, which is not yet facing the problems to such degree, to prepare for future challenges related to overtourism. These recommendations include to target repeat visitors, involve stakeholders in the place branding process by listening to their concerns and proposed actions, redirect tourism consumption throughout the year, providing information in tourists' different languages, linking social media and traditional media, and use informational place demarketing to inform about the current situation at sites.

Key words: overtourism, overcrowding, challenges, social media, place demarketing, place branding, place marketing, sustainability marketing

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1. Introduction

The first chapter of the thesis provides the reader with an introduction of the area of study and a background of the problem, along with the research purpose and research questions. Delimitations and a disposition of the thesis are presented.

In the world today place branding has become increasingly important because places are perceived as being in competition with each other for limited hyper-mobile financial, human and cultural resources (Kavaratzis et al., 2015), resulting in a need to develop a sustainable competitive advantage (Medway & Warnaby, 2008). Place marketing is used as a tool for ensuring viable destinations, which provide a valuable contribution to economic development and growth from a short to medium perspective (Font & McCabe, 2017). Boisen et al (2017) claim that place marketing is mainly about balancing supply (the offerings of the place) and demand (of target groups in specific market segments). However, the focus on markets, balancing supply and demand resulting in a competition, and ensuring economic growth, is not considered sustainable in the long run. Tourism within a marketing perspective is massively responsible for contributing to irresponsible levels and types of consumption (Font & McCabe, 2017). For a destination, this may cause the place suffering from too many tourists. Beeton & Benfield (2002) mention over-popularity as one of the major issues in the tourism industry. In recent years, there has been an increase of media reporting on destinations that are experiencing challenges related to high tourism intensities, referring to this phenomenon as “overtourism” (e.g. Goodwin, 2016; Jordan 2016; Clampet 2017; Byers 2016) (Weber et al. 2017). Overtourism occurs when hosts or guests, local or visitors of destinations, have the feeling that there are too many visitors and that the quality of life in the destination or the quality of the experiences has deteriorated in an unacceptable way (Goodwin, 2016). Overtourism affects many people: the residents feel alienated, the tourists get a degraded tourist experience due to long queues, the infrastructure gets overloaded, and the natural environment suffer damage in the form of pollution, overuse of natural resources and harm to wildlife and threats to culture and heritage (World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), 2017). Faced with these challenges of overtourism the residents, who exist at the same place and have to share the same infrastructure as the tourists, are complaining about rising rents and noisy tourists taking over the city (Becker, 2017; Skift, 2017).

Thus, there is a need for strategies to manage demand and redirect tourists away from the hot spots in the destination. Research by Beeton (2001, 2003), Beeton and Benfield (2002), Groff (1998) and Wearing & Archer (2001, 2005) suggest demarketing as a proactive tool for managing visitor demand by influencing, redistributing and reducing demand. Font and McCabe (p. 871, 2017) take another perspective of redirecting tourists by presenting the term “sustainability marketing”: “the application of marketing functions, processes and techniques to a destination, resource or offering, which serves the needs of the visitor and stakeholder community today and ensures the opportunities of future visitors and stakeholders to meet their needs in the future.” They argue that marketing skills and techniques can be helpful, by

understanding market needs, designing more sustainable products and identifying more persuasive methods of communication to bring behavioural change. A more holistic perspective is needed taking in all aspects of sustainability; the environment, economical and societal consequences of actions, and the aspect of present and future stakeholders (Font & McCabe, 2017). Place branding should be the focus in this instance because it is viewed as a holistic concept wherein the whole place matters (Boisen et al, 2017) enabling the opportunity for multiple stakeholders to cooperate when setting and working towards achieving collective goals (Kavaratzis et al., 2015).

Research has shown that social media is effectively used as a place marketing tool (Cleave et al., 2017; Ketter and Avraham, 2012). Social media has the ability to promote a brand through visuals, pictures or videos, which is easier than through text. The Internet is also the place where tourists go to communicate their travel patterns in pursuit of social connectedness and social capital (Germann Molz, 2012; Gössling & Stavrinidi, 2015) and also to evaluate and to be advised (e.g. Ayeh, 2015; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014; Sparks & Browning, 2011). For that reason, it is of great interest to explore if destinations' various stakeholders implement strategies by using social media and the Internet to reduce and redirect tourism consumption in the destination.

1.1 Background

Some destinations have implemented strategies to cope with overtourism. Thailand being one of them, they have closed the popular secluded cove Maya Bay to allow it a brief respite and when it reopens it will have a new daily limit of 2000 tourists. Another destination is the brightly coloured cliffside town Cinque Terre in Italy, which is damaged from erosion and overuse. They have tried technology to reduce the two million people visiting each year, by trialling an app that shows the area in real time and warns when a path is overcrowded, to leave the tourists with the decision of whether to join the crowd or not. (Baker, 2018) Peru is another destination that has implemented a strategy to cope with overtourism. The Peruvian government set up a limit of 2,500 visitors per day at Machu Picchu, partly because of UNESCO concerns about landslides, erosion, and pollution. In 2015, they launched a new master plan aiming to improve crowd control through facility improvements, use of certified guards, time limits, and set routes (WTTC, 2017). Implementing strategies is a big challenge for destinations. Municipalities, destinations marketing organisations (DMOs) and tourist boards have a significant responsibility to control tourism consumption by implementing strategies and decide who benefits from tourism.

Barcelona in Spain is one of the most popular and overcrowded travel destinations in the world (Goodwin, 2017; Milano, 2017). According to the Barcelona Barometer, residents considered tourism the most important problem in the city by its residents in June 2017. In December 2017, tourism was considered the fourth biggest problem due to the unstable political situation caused by the conflict concerning the independence of Catalonia (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017 c; 2017d). Barcelona is both in the middle of an unstable political situation and under the tourism explosion, with rising rental prices of housing generally blamed on Airbnb (Goldstein,

2018). With an increasing number of tourists, the residents have developed a negative perception of tourism (Milano, 2017) and there have been many anti-tourist protests and demonstrations blaming the city's tourism management (Hunt, 2017; Skift, 2017; Goldstein 2018). Barcelona has taken action against overtourism and is one of the first cities to elect a mayor who runs on a platform of managing overcrowding (Becker, 2017). Amsterdam has also been suffering with overtourism and recently many news articles have been covering how the city is tackling overtourism in a creative way (Coffey, 2017; Ellwood, 2017).

With an increasing amount of tourism all over the world (Weber et al., 2017), the problem of overtourism is growing and it is vital for tourist destinations to prepare for the future. For instance, in the area of west Sweden, which is a region with several small destinations along the west coast, many visitors gather for a short period of the summer. This might cause the locality a risk of overcrowding the place and therefore planning ahead for this issue is of great importance.

1.2 Purpose

The aim of this study is to explore how different stakeholders of a destination (authorities, organisations, residents and tourists) use social media to discuss challenges related to overtourism and which strategies they take by using social media and the Internet as a channel to reduce and redirect tourism consumption. Further, it aims to explore if and how stakeholders use place branding, with social media as a channel, to overcome overtourism. This is done by studying three European destinations' social media channels and websites; two cities that are overcrowded all year round and have taken action against overtourism and one seasonally overcrowded coastal region with several small destinations. The two overcrowded destinations are studied in order to see how small destinations can prepare for the increasing tourism consumption during summer season.

Research Questions

- How do different stakeholders discuss the challenges of overtourism on social media and the Internet?
- Which strategies and actions do stakeholders use online to cope with the challenges of overtourism?
- Which strategies can be recommended to authorities and DMOs of small destinations, not yet meeting the major challenges of overtourism, in order to prepare for increasing tourism?

1.3 Delimitations

This study is limited to studying how three destinations are using strategies on social media and the Internet to redirect and control tourism consumption, and not whether the strategies actually work. For example, whether people decided to visit an outlying area or not. Further, this netnographic study is limited to exploring strategies taken only online on social media and the Internet, which does not give the full picture of how the destinations work with reducing

and redirecting tourism consumption, since there are strategies that cannot be implemented online. In addition, using a netnography as methodology means that the authors face the challenge of data overload, which affects the result of this study because there are more challenges and strategies on the Internet that cannot be covered in this study.

Another limitation is that the study describes challenges and strategies of overtourism in only three destinations (Amsterdam, Barcelona and west Sweden). The use of a multiple case study has given the opportunity to compare and contrast findings between the three destinations, however using only three cases does not allow to make causal inferences since the authors cannot rule out alternative explanations (Marilyn, Simon & Goes, 2018). Therefore, additional research of more case studies is needed to verify whether findings from one study would generalize elsewhere (Ibid.). In relation to west Sweden, the study was limited to one expert interview with a researcher, because it was not feasible to gather online data from stakeholders since they do not use social media to talk about challenges in relation to overtourism.

The analysed comments are mainly in English, Spanish, Catalan and Swedish since the authors know those languages. In the case of comments in Dutch, the use of Google's translating tool made it possible to understand the content. The limitation of using such tool is the risk of the translation not being a true representation of the actual meaning.

1.4 Disposition

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. The first part will present a theoretical framework explaining overtourism and its challenges, responsible tourism, why place branding is more appropriate than place marketing with regard to places, the approaches and strategies to cope with overtourism and social media as a communication channel. The second part shows which research methods were used in the empirical multiple case studies. The third part presents the results on that study, where the findings are combined with the analysis. In the final part of this paper, recommendations and conclusions are given. Finally, theoretical contributions of research, managerial implications and limitations and further research are addressed.

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter describes overtourism and its challenges, responsible tourism and why place branding is more appropriate than place marketing with regard to places. Thereafter, the chapter discusses research on the approaches to cope with overtourism, and then strategies and actions to cope with overtourism and how social media is considered a communication channel are presented.

2.1 Overcrowding / Overtourism

A major indicator of sustainable tourism is assessing and maintaining the crowd at the destination (Lee & Hsieh, 2016). According to Shelby and Heberlein (1984), crowding is defined as “the individual’s perceived evaluation of density levels in a specific physical environment”. In a crowding situation, tourists identify a cognitive, which means to perceive a situation as being crowded, and an affective, which is to value a particular level of crowding as unacceptable (Neuts & Nijkamp, 2012). Visitors might try to predict the crowding in the destination and even consider it as a negative feature (Eugenio-Martin, 2011). Since overcrowding is more a matter of sensibility than data, not everyone will agree when popularity tips into overcrowding (WTTC, 2017).

According to Weber et al. (2017), in order to prevent overtourism, it is helpful to know the carrying capacity of a tourism system because if the carrying capacity is reached, an excess of visitors might cause critical problems for the place. The World Tourism Organization refers to carrying capacity as “the maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic, and sociocultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors’ satisfaction” (UNWTO, 1981). Assessing carrying capacities is one of the main developments for sustainable tourism because it is of great importance for keeping ecological conservation and satisfying visitor expectations (Lee & Hsieh, 2016).

With increasing tourism growth and other drivers, the overcrowding problems have been intensified in several destinations (Weber et al., 2017). In recent years, a plethora of media has reported on destinations facing challenges with high tourism intensities, which have resulted in the new term “overtourism” being created for this phenomenon (e.g. Goodwin, 2016; Jordan 2016; Clampet 2017; Byers 2016). Weber et al. (2017) explain overtourism as a function of the numbers of tourist as well as of the carrying capacity of the tourism system, and when carrying capacity is exceeded major challenges arise. For that reason, solution approaches can proactively aim at increasing carrying capacity and influencing the drivers of tourism growth along with managing the challenges better (Ibid.). According to Goodwin (2017, p. 1), the phenomenon of overtourism describes “*destinations where hosts or guests, locals or visitors feel that there are too many visitors and that the quality of life and experiences in the area has deteriorated in an unacceptable way. In these circumstances, visitors and guests experience the deterioration at the same time as they rebel against it*”.

2.2 The Challenges of Overtourism

There are several challenges related to overtourism/overcrowding identified by Weber et al. (2017) and WTTC (2017) and Goodwin (2016) in several destinations suffering from overtourism. Many of the challenges of overtourism, for example degraded tourist experience, can result in a reduction of the destination's attractiveness, which possibly relieves it of overcrowding in the short term, but it would not be a preferable long-term development for the destination (Weber et al, 2017). The challenges of overtourism identified by the previous authors are the following:

Degraded tourist experience is a challenge associated with tourism overcrowding (WTTC, 2017). In many destinations, the tourist experience has become more and more deteriorated due to queues, crowding or annoyance. The long queues in the Eiffel Tower or the massive crowds around the Mona Lisa masterpiece are examples of this problem (Ibid.). The challenge has also been described by Weber et al (2017) who argue that *low visitor satisfaction* is caused by people's perception of overcrowding, the infrastructure being overused, if the service quality is poor, if there is a lack of safety or if there are hygiene problems, this low visitor satisfaction might result in negative word-of-mouth.

Bad governance. Weber et al. (2017) identify that in relation to policies and regulations, unqualified management, corruption or repression are some aspects that can result in negative effects on residents, visitors and tourism development. *Inadequate implementation of strategies* is related to the challenge of bad governance since tourism is prevented from developing correctly if there are no measures implemented, inadequately applied tourism strategies or plans, or if there are none at all. It is a challenge for the entire destination if the tourism management is insufficient (Ibid.)

Environmental impacts. WTTC (2017) and Weber et al. (2017) argue that there are many potential negative environmental impacts, such as littering, noise, pollution of air and water, lack of fresh water, land degradation and emissions, overuse of natural resources (e.g. water and forests, poor waste management and harm to wildlife), these are depending on the ecological situation and on the type of tourism and visitor behaviour. WTTC (2017) points out that the damage to nature is a challenge associated with overcrowding since the natural environment of a destination suffers wear and tear from visitors.

Concentration of benefits. Weber et al. (2017) point out that in destinations that have monopolistic economy and the capital is greatly concentrated, commonly with many foreign owned corporations, issues arise such as financial leakages, unilateral benefits and lack of jobs on managerial level for residents. Similarly, WTTC (2017) mentions that local economies do not always retain the full spending of tourists and therefore do not give economic benefits to the destinations; provoking the dissatisfaction of the residents.

Reduced quality of life. According to Weber et al. (2017) local communities can be affected by restrictions and they sometimes have little involvement concerning tourism development. The

local community might also have a low level of tourism awareness, meaning that they do not understand it. If the local community have no experience with visitors and they have religious and intercultural concerns, it can result in social conflicts and intolerance towards visitors. Overtourism can generate overworking along with unemployment during the off-season, shortage of high paying jobs for locals and immigrants dominating the labour market. The costs of living are higher, and increased rents can lead to residents having to move or end up homeless. Too many tourists, unwanted behaviour and intercultural misunderstandings can result in the community or even visitors having a negatively perception of tourism. Crime and prostitution affects the feeling of safety and well-being of people in the place (Ibid.) In Goodwin's (2016, p.3) research on overtourism in Barcelona, he mentions that the city is faced with the challenge of "drunken tourists often from stag parties, drug dealing on the famous street La Rambla, and tourists using the street as a toilet and having sex in public". These problems are an example of the inappropriate visitor behaviour, which provoke a reduced quality of life of the residents. This view is supported by WTTC (2017) who states that alienated local residents is one of the main challenges associated with overcrowding. According to the global authority in the Travel & Tourism sector, local residents are highly concerned about tourism especially on issues noise, displacement of local retail and changing neighbourhood nature.

Capacity problems. According to Weber et al. (2017), most tourist attractions have a limited capacity; thus, concentrated masses can cause congestions, long queues and a degraded tourist experience. Emergent competitors (e.g. Airbnb) might be a challenge for tourism development. Furthermore, natural and cultural attractions might get damaged when there the landscape alters, and the aesthetic deteriorates (e.g. through illegal constructions or destruction of old buildings) (Weber et al, 2017).

Overuse of infrastructure. Weber et al. (2017) point out that infrastructure must be dimensioned for peak-periods. The high demand of utilities can cause demolition. Lack of parking spaces and congestion is another challenge associated with transport (Ibid.). Similarly, The WTTC (2017) identifies that overloaded infrastructure is one of the major challenges in relation to overcrowding since it is used for both tourist and non-tourist activities, such as commerce and commuting. The visitors increase the deterioration of the places and create challenges associated to energy consumption and waste management (Ibid.).

Threats to culture and heritage. WTTC (2017) point out that overcrowding can threaten a destination's spiritual and physical integrity. Even if the majority of visitors act respectfully, the mere existence of crowds can make security of the culture and heritage more difficult. Misbehaviour by a few is scarring some of the world's great monuments, e.g. the Great Wall and Cambodia's Angkor Wat, which have been ruined by graffiti. In other cases, rapid tourism growth overtaxes local systems.

Loss of place identity, bad reputation and image. Overtourism presents many challenges for the stakeholders of a destination, which in turn negatively affects the place identity, reputation and authenticity of places. Govers explains to "The Place Brand Observer" (2017) that the

cities that struggle with overtourism are cities that have through time let their reputation be based only on tourism. Overtourism decreases the quality of a destination, damages the place product and therefore worsens its reputation. Overtourism might eliminate the authenticity of a place because it has a distinct effect on its identity. The bad reputation of a destination will likely have negative effects on its attractiveness and competitiveness. (The Place Brand Observer, 2017)

2.3 Responsible Tourism

Tourism is the largest industry in Europe with 60% of all tourism in the world; it is also one of the fastest growing sectors (Sörensson, 2010). Since the 1990s, the tourism industry, politicians, tourist producers and researchers have aimed attention to sustainable tourism, including not only economic but social, environmental and cultural aspects (Sörensson, 2010). According to Goodwin (2017), there is a broad spectrum of negative impacts that tourism has on local communities, ranging across the economic, social and environmental challenges of sustainability. Overtourism affects the social disparity, economic stability and the environment of a destination. There are cultural conflicts because of the different social norms among locals and visitors. The challenge is to make all destinations sustainable and to prevent the expansion of the problem of overtourism. (Ibid.)

According to Goodwin (2017), overtourism occurs when tourism's priorities invalidate the interests of the local community. In contrast to overtourism, responsible tourism requires that the destination and its citizens use tourism to make better places for people to live and to visit, because it contributes to sustainable development. (Goodwin, 2017) The Cape Town Declaration in 2002 define Responsible Tourism as having the following characteristics:

- “Minimizing negative economic, environmental, and social impacts;
- Generating greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities, improves working conditions and access to the industry;
- Involving local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances;
- Making positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world's diversity;
- Providing more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues;
- Providing access for physically challenged people; and
- is culturally sensitive, engenders respect between tourists and hosts, and builds local pride and confidence”.

(Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2018a)

Tour operators, hotel owners, governments, residents and tourists have to take responsibility to achieve responsible tourism (Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2018b). According to Goodwin (2016; 2018) responsible tourism and sustainable tourism are separate. Sustainable tourism is what people, corporations and the authorities do to maximise the positive economic, social and

environmental effects of tourism. This differs from responsible tourism, which focuses on what individuals and groups do to identify the sustainability issues at local level and to address those issues, transparently reporting progress towards using tourism for sustainable development. The goal for responsible tourism is sustainability, which can be accomplished if all the stakeholders work together and take responsibility for making tourism sustainable by addressing the many challenges that they face (Goodwin, 2016, 2018). The dialogue, partnerships and multi stakeholder processes, taking into account the government, business and local communities, are needed to “make better places for hosts and guests can only be realised at the local level, and that all stakeholders have different, albeit interdependent, responsibilities; tourism can only be managed for sustainability at the destination level” (Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2018 a).

Responsible tourism should be taken into account in the development of strategies for coping with overtourism because as Goodwin (2016, 2018) point out, it requires that all the stakeholders of the destination work together and take responsibility for achieving more sustainable tourism.

2.4 The shift from place marketing to place branding to cope with overtourism

Place marketing has been the focus of many researchers from various disciplines (e.g. Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Kotler et al, 1999). The traditional way of marketing is concerned with markets and targeting the customer’s needs and wants (Govers, 2011). Accordingly, for place marketing, the objective is to manage supply (the offerings of the place) and demand (of target groups in specific market segments) (Boisen et al, 2017). According to Lichrou et al. (2010) the marketing concept may not always be the best orientation in the case of places. Haywood (1990) explains a paradox in tourism marketing; destinations that try to adapt their resources merely for the satisfaction of the tourists’ needs, and neglecting the needs of the community, might sacrifice what made them attractive and unique in the beginning. Gromark and Melin (2013) highlighted in their study on public sector companies that a market orientation is problematic since it focuses too much on customers, it is short-sighted, it lacks true interaction between stakeholders and it puts too much focus on economic values which downplays the other aspects of sustainability.

New developments within the place marketing literature suggest a shift from place marketing to place branding (Lichrou et al, 2010). Regarding places, a brand orientation is more appropriate because places have a complex, fragmented and intangible nature and brands are characterised by intangibility and their understanding requires several dimensions, including the perceptions of both organisations and consumers (de Chernatony & Dall Olmo Riley, 1998). Places are thus increasingly being conceptualised as brands (Hankinson, 2004; Kavaratzis, 2004, 2005; Kerr, 2006), because the concept of brand better addresses the complex nature of the place-product. Zenker & Braun (2017; p. 275) define place brands as “a network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and behavioural expression of a place and its stakeholders. These associations differ in their influence within the network and in importance for the place consumers' attitude and behaviour”. Place brands are a useful

tool that places can use as they compete with each other for limited hyper-mobile financial, human and cultural resources (Kavaratzis et al., 2015). Place branding is supply driven (what the place is and what it can offer) while place marketing is demand driven (target groups and their needs) (Gover, 2011; Vuignier, 2016). In city marketing, Kavaratzis (2004) propose that the shift from city marketing to city branding offers a change of perspective on the entire marketing effort. This concerns achieving not only competitive advantage, but also “community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens with their city and activating all social forces to avoid social exclusion and unrest” (2004, p. 70).

Overtourism presents many challenges for the stakeholders of a destination (see 2.2), which in turn negatively affects the place identity, the reputation and authenticity of places. The marketing professor Freire explains to The Place Brand Observer (2017) “What a place gains with tourism, it might be losing in other industries, which may be a threat to the competitiveness of a place”. Since overtourism affects the reputation, competitiveness, attractiveness, and identity of destinations (The Place Brand Observer, 2017), a place branding approach should be taken into consideration instead of place marketing. This is because a branding strategy is a long-term initiative with activities aimed to improve the image and reputation of a place, while marketing activities are aimed at serving market demand (Gover, 2011; Vuignier, 2016). Important to emphasize is that a brand is not the same as a logo or a visual identity, essential to place branding are the concepts of *identity* and *image* (Boisen et al, 2017). As Govers and Go (p. 23, 2009) put it, what is essential in place branding is “the link between identity, experience and image”. According to Govers (2011), identity refers to local people, culture, heritage, symbolism, leadership, a cooperative sense of belonging and heterogeneity. The general perception is that if the brand is not based on identity then the branding effort result in a brand that is alien to the place, especially to its internal audiences (e.g. Houghton and Stevens, 2010; Therkelsen et al., 2010). Place branding is viewed as a holistic concept, wherein the whole place matters (Boisen et al, 2017), and it has to be able to influence everything that has a meaningful impact on how the place is perceived (Govers and Go, 2009). This is more complicated to facilitate for places than for corporations, mainly considering the political dimension. The definition of the identity of a place is often contested by both public and private stakeholders, which often end in a political debate (Terlouw, 2017). Boisen et al. (2017) also argue that the goal of place branding is reached when people, in general, and over longer periods of time, hold a favourable reputation of the place.

Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) argue that place identity is a complex process of dialogue between stakeholders and place branding should be thought of as a similar process where stakeholders as groups collectively produce the place brand with the facilitation of place brand managers. Kavaratzis et al. (2015) agrees that the role of stakeholders should be considered in the development of place branding. Understanding who they are and their opinions about the place must be key factors of any place branding strategy. Different stakeholders’ groups including residents, politicians, governmental organisations, promotional agencies, infrastructure and transport providers, cultural and sport organisations, businesses, academic organisations and schools should be involved and engaged in the development and implementation of place branding activities (Ibid.).

2.5 Approaches to strategies to cope with overtourism

An approach to coping with overtourism is place demarketing. The term demarketing was first introduced in 1971 by Kotler and Levy, who defined it as “the aspect of marketing that deals with discouraging customers in general or certain class of customer in particular on either a temporary or a permanent basis” (p. 75, 1971). The place demarketing approach, according to Medway and Warnaby (2008), involves activities that are aimed at deflecting interest, visitors and/or investment from a specific place. The main scenario motivating a demarketing activity is where a place is overcrowded and the demand exceeds the level the place is able to supply it (Koschnick, 1995). Medway et al. (2010) explain further reasons to implement demarketing strategies in places. One reason is to make the place product more sustainable; it means that places manage the quantity of visitors in order to control the supply of the visitors. Another reason is market segmentation and targeting, places use demarketing strategies to target a particular type of place consumer that they want to attract while demarketing the place to other segments. Another reason is to reduce the effect of seasonality: places are demarketed to spread the quantity of visitors over time and thus reduce the negative impacts of seasonality. Locations are demarketed with the aim of not only be seen as a summer destination but as a destination that can be visited all year round. Finally, the last reason is to use demarketing as a powerful tool for managing and preventing crisis.

Another approach to making tourist destinations more sustainable places to live in and to visit, is according to Font and McCabe (2017) sustainability marketing, which involves the use of marketing skills and techniques and applying them to a destination, resource or offerings. Sustainability marketing attends the needs of the visitors and other stakeholders today and ensures the opportunities of future visitors and stakeholders to fulfil their needs in the future. They argue that understanding market needs, designing more sustainable products and finding persuasive methods of communicating can change consumers’ behaviour. Sustainability marketing takes two approaches; the market development approach and the product development approach. (Ibid.)

The purpose of *the market development approach* is to increase sustainability-driven consumerism by offering products that are highly sustainable to a small but growing market, and the attempts have been to change consumers’ behaviour so they intentionally buy more sustainable products. On the other hand, *the product development approach* strives to design and market products that are incrementally more sustainable to the entire market. It emphasises marketers and companies’ responsibility to design more sustainable products and making it the norm to consume them. This shifts the responsibility for sustainable tourism to the producer rather than the market. The focus is to find methods that make sustainable products more desirable to the marketplace, or to present sustainability features on the products currently purchased by the market, without negatively affecting demand. Contrary to the market development approach, where a segment is targeted, in this approach the opportunity is for all consumers to behave in a more sustainable way, regardless of their attitude (Font and McCabe, 2017). To conclude, Font and McCabe (2017) suggest that the tourism marketing and sustainability fields should work together towards a prosperous and environmentally

responsible industry and marketplace, that considers the needs of all stakeholders such as tourists, residents, the tourism industry and other destination services. Weber et al (2017) take a similar approach by involving different stakeholders in the development of strategies, for example raising awareness and educating visitors and tourist operators, giving the community an opportunity to participate by addressing their social demands and supporting local entrepreneurship.

The place demarketing approach and the sustainability marketing approach demonstrate the shift from place marketing to place branding. The reasons for place demarketing are to manage the quantity of visitors in order to control the supply of the visitors and to manage demand by targeting particular segments (Medway et al., 2010). These reasons go in line with the traditional view of place marketing which according to Boisen et al (2017) is about managing supply (the offerings of the place) and demand (targeting the customer's needs). Haywood (1990) explains, the contradiction of place marketing in destinations is that they try to adapt their resources merely for the satisfaction of the tourists' needs, and neglecting the needs of the community, which might sacrifice what made them attractive and unique in the beginning.

More recent approaches are presented by Font and McCabe (2017) and Weber et al. (2017), who argue that tourism marketing and sustainability fields should work together towards a responsible industry and attend the needs of the visitors and other stakeholders today and ensure the opportunities of future visitors and stakeholders to fulfil their needs in the future. This differs from the place demarketing approach, which is more aimed at deflecting interest, visitors and/or investment from a specific place (Medway and Warnaby, 2008), neglecting the community needs. The sustainability marketing approaches of Font and McCabe and Weber et al.'s involving approach can be connected to place branding since according to Kavaratzis et al. (2015) the role of stakeholders should be considered in the development of place branding. Understanding who the stakeholders are and their opinions about the place must be key factors of any place branding strategy. Different stakeholder groups should be involved and engaged in the development and implementation of place branding activities (Ibid.).

The traditional way of place marketing and the connected place demarketing approach can be appropriate for only a short to medium perspective as a tool for providing a contribution to economic development and growth (Font & McCabe, 2017). However, in this thesis the place branding perspective is more appropriate since it is more sustainable in the long run because of its more holistic and integrated approach to the place.

2.5.1 Overall Strategies to Cope with Overtourism

Targeting sustainable tourism segments: Babakhani, Ritchie and Dolnicar (2017) show that there are market segments that are willing to buy more sustainable products or behave in an environmentally friendly way when on holiday. Dolnicar, Crouch and Long (2008) claim that there are tourists who are willing to pay a higher price for a sustainable tourism experience. For that reason, tourism operators and destinations should target "sustainable tourism segments" (Font & McCabe, 2017), and using marketing communications can be effective in

targeting the segments and evoking more sustainable consumption behaviour (Mair and Bergin-Seers, 2010).

With the problem of tourist destinations suffering from overcrowding, Font and McCabe (2017) argue that visitors that behave more like residents are more likely to visit a broader range of locations in the destination rather than the key spots that suffer from overcrowding. These visitors are also likely to have a lower demonstration effect, a reduced conflict risk between hosts and guests and they are more prone to spreading their economic impact by purchasing more local products. Font and McCabe (2017) claim that marketing can be a means of attracting tourists who behave like residents, one method might be to target repeat visitors. Although tourist boards might be unwilling to do this since they exist by opening new markets, also because repeat markets often spend less each day.

Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices: Research show that it is important to offer alternative desirable experiences that deflect consumers' attention from purchasing the more unsustainable products by making them less attractive, especially in situations where sustainability arguments are viewed as a threat to someone's freedom as consumer (Bögel, 2015; Font & Hindley, 2016; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Font and McCabe (2017) suggest redirecting tourists away from unsustainable choices. An action the municipality of Amsterdam has taken to redirect tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices is redirecting tourism to legal accommodations. The residents have the opportunity to raise concerns about a property and to report illegal accommodation. Goodwin (2017) mentions the introduction of a 24hr hotline for residents to raise concerns about Airbnb properties. Airbnb has introduced a mechanism that makes it impossible for users in Amsterdam to rent out their properties for longer than 60 days per year. Another thing they have done is to implement an online tool for people living near its properties, giving them an opportunity to raise concerns about a property e.g. noise complaints. (Haines, 2016)

Font and McCabe (2017) also claim that tourist boards and businesses can make tourism more sustainable by reducing geographical and seasonal pressures. Tourists tend to focus on specific times and places, which result in congestion and negative social and environmental impacts, which can be avoided if they were distributed more evenly. Araña and León (2016) and Hall (2014) give examples of utilizing attract and dispersal strategies and marketing the personality of complimentary destinations that can serve different markets. The dispersion of tourism should also be diverting tourists away from peak demand periods to distribute demand to create a balanced flow of tourists, which can then be optimally accommodated (Font & McCabe, 2017). In the same way, Medway et al. (2010) propose the strategy of *redirection to alternative places* also called "diversion marketing". This strategy refers to places that are demarketed by the promotion and marketing - or redirection - of visitors to an alternative place offer. (Ibid.)

Weber et al. (2017, p. 195) identify measures to better geographically distribute visitor flow are "enlarging the site, opening up new areas, expanding tourism products or creating new ones". Goodwin (2016) has found an example in Barcelona that involves developing and promoting places beyond the city centre and the most overcrowded areas. The Plaça de les

Glòries and the Modernista Sant Pau art nouveau complex have been redeveloped to make them more attractive and by doing so spreading the tourists. Goodwin (2017) also found an action that the DMO Amsterdam has taken to redirect tourism consumption by encouraging visitors to travel to outlying areas. For example, by extending the range of the City Card so that public transport to these outlying areas (most attractions within one hour of the centre) was included in the fee. In addition, when buying the card online the visitor will get different recommendations e.g. avoiding crowds by taking a boat trip in the morning.

Destinations need to change the way they advertise themselves and stop counting on iconic attractions that are already saturated, and design packages so that iconic attractions can only be accessed as part of a longer stay (Font & McCabe, 2017). Nevertheless, it is complicated for destinations to demarket since private companies do not perceive a benefit in not showing the most popular attractions in their marketing, but they can propose innovative ways of experiencing iconic locations that gives a better experience with a more acceptable impact (Ibid.). An action to implement this strategy is to make outlying attractions more reachable. Goodwin (2017) provides an example that can be found in Amsterdam, the DMO Amsterdam began to package outlying districts more openly as standalone destination in 2015. One of them being Zandvoort, a strip of sand located 18 miles from the city centre, which got renamed to Amsterdam Beach to remind tourists of how quickly and easily it can be reached from downtown (Ellwood, 2017).

From a tourism perspective it is essential to diversify products and markets, Font and McCabe (2017) find it interesting how destinations often market their summer season, which is usually already full, instead of aiming attention to their low season. This is something that ski resorts have been better at, they often market summer hiking and other attractions such as museums being open at night. Still, summer destinations have not embraced how to diversify their offer (Ibid). Considering that many destinations are confronted with high seasonality, Weber et al. (2017, p. 195) identify measures for temporal distribution including “extending the tourist season, seasonal distribution, strengthening the off-season by developing new products, events and markets in the off-season”. Weber et al. (2017) further mention measures in relation to *attraction management and product development* including developing new attractions and events, promoting local products and culture and creating alternative forms of tourism (e.g. travelling with a mission, volunteering etc.). Regarding new traveller experiences, there is promising new approaches such as co-creation and new technologies such as digital experiences like virtual reality or augmented reality.

Social capacity building:

Community Engagement. According to Weber et al. (2017) community engagement involves addressing the social demands of locals and establishing community capacity must be an ambition to reduce vulnerability of a system. Important actions are new organisational structures, institutions and networks, promoting local entrepreneurship and empowering women.

Participation and involvement. Weber et al. (2017) argue that in order to develop community capacity participation programmes, it is important to involve local institutions and companies, and integrate civil society, the public, NGOs and traditional leaders. Interesting actions include coordination and information measures, opportunities for loyal visitors to participate; special permits for residents and to include local volunteers. (Ibid.)

Informational place demarketing: Informational place demarketing, developed by (Medway et al., 2010), is a strategy related to social capacity building, which according to Weber et al. (2017) involves raising awareness among locals, tourists and other stakeholders, educating and training service providers and developing guidelines for tourists and tour operators to help strengthen resilience of a destination. The informational place demarketing strategy is used by locations and authorities to prevent crisis and discourage any forms of public disorder, but can also be useful to educate potential visitors, organisations, action groups and the public by spreading information through the media and authorities' websites about places and to keep sustainable tourism in environmentally sensitive sites and locations such as National Parks (Medway et al., 2010). Similarly, Weber et al. (2017), explain that visitor management is a strategy that involves visitor guidance, which is the process of giving visitor information on websites to better guide and distribute guests.

For instance, informational place demarketing might share information in the form of a “code of good practice”, which aims to warn visitors that they have an obligation to act responsibly if they are to visit specific areas (Medway et al., 2010). This might result in some reconsideration whether they are to frequent a specific place, which result in demarketing the destination to prospective users (Ibid.). Similarly, researchers such as Villarino and Font (2015) and Wehrli et al. (2014) have researched the effectiveness of *social marketing*. Font and McCabe (2017) claim that sustainability messages that are excessively moralising or based on fear, e.g. illustrating possible consequences of climate change, are discouraging to consumers because they do not relate to the messages personally and it is hard to envisage future scenarios.

Goodwin (2016, 2017) has found actions that involve informational place demarketing by using technology to inform about current sites and iconic attractions. Amsterdam is video streaming the queues outside the major sites and attractions. From April to July in 2017 a live video stream showed the entrances of major attractions such as the Van Gogh Museum. Iamsterdam's post-trial research showed positive results; if the live stream showed that the waiting time was e.g. around three hours, 50% of tourists who checked the site would self-select to try again later before venturing that way, while 20% of users said the live stream convinced them rather to visit a completely different attraction (Ellwood, 2017). Another example includes using the app “Discover The City”, which updates residents on crowding. The app, first limited to phones registered in the Netherlands, sends notifications to warn users that a certain attraction is busier than normal that day and gives suggestions of less well-known alternatives (Ibid.). Barcelona has also taken action by informing about the current situation at sites and iconic attractions. The city is now able to forecast tourism activity based on data from the airport, the port, municipal services and the police. This information is available on the council website where

it warns people about the peak days and locations (Goodwin, 2016; Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2016a).

Policies and regulations: good management and correct implementation of policies are essential in reacting to challenges caused by overtourism. Actions that can be taken to regulate tourist flows are restrictions (e.g. control the number of visitors, restrict access, close sites and sensitive areas), also to implement laws and guidelines, and to introduce special permits (Weber et al, 2017). Goodwin (2017) has found an action in Amsterdam that involves a policy to ban unsustainable products. In 2016, the city banned beer bikes, often used for celebrating group events such as stag parties (BBC, 2017). The bikes were prohibited in the city centre because there have been complaints about rowdy tourists being drunk and disorderly (Ibid.).

Medway et al. (2010) also mention *restricting access* as a demarketing strategy where the tourists are forced to follow the predetermined restriction guidelines. For instance, places can use ticket systems both to avoid overcrowding and the negative effects of the visitor experience since this measure controls and restricts the number of visitors. However, this measure creates a conflict of interest among the stakeholders since there are independent businesses that depend on visitors for revenue and profits. Every stakeholder looks for their benefits and can agree or disagree with this measure. An example of access restriction can be found in Barcelona (Goodwin, 2016), where the access to the “Monument Area” in Park Güell was regulated in 2013, limiting 400 people to visit the area at any given time. In addition, heritage-friendly regulations were implemented and a mobility plan was carried out in the areas around the park to handle the flow of visitors through multiple entry and exit spots. The aim of this regulation is to reclaim the area for its day-to-day purposes and diminish the bad impacts of overcrowding, guaranteeing good quality of the visitors’ experience and the recreation possibilities for residents. Another example of access restriction was when big tour parties were disallowed from entering La Boqueria, which is a well-known food market on La Rambla. (Ibid.)

Pricing mechanisms is a demarketing strategy developed by (Medway et al., 2010), which may be by means of simply increasing the price, or not offer discounts on attractions to limit the demand. Furthermore, places use price as a strategy for demarketing their place product to lower-income groups (Medway et al., 2010). An example of pricing mechanisms can be found in the regulation of the access to the “Monument Area” in Park Güell, which meant that an 8€ entry fee was imposed. Exceptions are for local residents who have unrestricted and free access, as long as they register to get a permit (Goodwin, 2016). Another example is the regional government of Catalonia’s implementation of a “tourist tax”, which is a tax on overnight stays at tourist accommodation (Ajuntament de Barcelona & Barcelona Activa, 2014). The tourist tax implies that tourists over the age of 17 are charged a fee when spending the night in a hotel or renting a flat in Catalonia, the tax is only relevant for the first week of their visit (O’Marah, 2017). The goal of the tax is to correct the impact of tourism in the city, by improving the quality of life for its citizens and apply a better sustainable model that brings social benefits from tourism. The tax revenues collected is used to improve the management of the most visited and used public places, compensate neighbourhoods who suffer of high visitation and finally diversify tourist attractions across the city (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2018b).

No marketing: Medway et al. (2010) have identified no marketing as strategy for demarketing places; it is a strategy where the location does not implement any marketing activities during specific times of the year to manage the quantity of visitors.

Economic incentives: Weber et al (2017) suggest actions to accomplish a balanced distribution of benefits and a diverse economy including funding projects for start-ups, subsidies or market support

Environmental measures: Weber et al (2017, p. 195) suggest “water and energy saving measures, using renewable energy, waste management, visitor information, eco-taxes and certifications”, to be crucial actions.

Infrastructure facilities: Weber et al. (2017, p. 195) claim that “the expansion and improvement of infrastructure facilities is an essential strategy to increase carrying capacity and to absorb visitor flows better”. An action to improve infrastructure facilities can be found in Sagrada Família, the most visited site in Barcelona with over 3 million visitors in 2013 (Ajuntament de Barcelona & Barcelona Activa, 2014). The action was to reorganise tourism by moving the queues of visitors inside the temple grounds, rather than in the street. This was to free up pedestrian space along the pavement in the Sagrada Família area, to prevent overcrowding and allowing local residents to get around freely (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2018a). In addition, the municipality aims to reduce the effects of overcrowding by adding ticket offices, extra access-point control staff, and improving the system for parking buses (Goodwin, 2016)

Tourism management:

Strategic planning is essential, destination managers are vital for building up resilience of a place. Master plans and zoning plans regarding tourism and ecotourism strategies are potential measures that have been used (Weber et al., 2017).

Monitoring and evaluation. According to Weber et al. (2017, p. 195) “it is important to monitor and evaluate situations constantly to detect possible challenges early and to be able to respond proactively”. These might include collecting data and supporting research, to measure impacts and effectiveness of implemented strategies and actions and to report truthfully about them (Ibid.). Amsterdam has taken action to cope with overtourism by using technology to gather data to analyse tourist behaviour (Goodwin, 2017). The City Card is used for exploring how to use data and technology to encourage tourists to change how, where and when they visit Amsterdam (Ellwood, 2017). Amsterdam’s team put a Radio Frequency Identification chip in The City Card, which gives access to attractions and free public transport, to analyse the tourist behaviour and devise ways of changing it to ease congestion (Coffey, 2017). Another action taken by Amsterdam is collecting user information. The service AI-power for Facebook messenger creates a profile by looking at the user’s posts, likes and comments, and recommends unexpected things to do in and around Amsterdam based on the profile. Currently it is only in Dutch, but it is expected to be available in English by late 2018 (Ellwood, 2017). Barcelona has also taken action by using technology to improve the flow of visitors. Agustí

Colom who is the Councillor for Employment, Enterprise and Tourism has presented the first results of a pilot scheme to control the flow of visitors to the Sagrada Família and its surroundings. Technology is used to gather data on tourist behaviour by using sensors, 3D cameras and the GSM telephone system. The scheme is monitoring pedestrian movements to find out profiles and behaviour patterns of people visiting the area and thus be able to plan services better in the zone (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017a).

Certifications. According to Weber et al. (2017, p. 195) “destinations with more sustainable businesses are presumably better prepared and more resilient towards potentially negative impacts”. It is beneficial to start and aid eco-certifications, standards for sustainable development, guidelines and programmes for responsible tourism development and code of conducts for tourists.

In the following table, the authors of this thesis show the connection between challenges of overtourism and overall strategies with actions that can be implemented to mitigate the challenges.

Challenges	Overall strategies	Examples of actions
Reduced quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies and regulations - Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices - Social capacity building - Informational place demarketing - Targeting sustainable tourism segments - Economic incentives - Infrastructure facilities - Tourism management - No marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pricing mechanisms (e.g. Park Guell) - Community engagement - Participation and involvement - Awareness raising and training to educate stakeholders - Social marketing - Financial assistant programs for local start-ups to distribute benefits equally - Expansion and improvement of infrastructure facilities - Strategic planning by implementing tourism and zoning plans, and ecotourism strategies - Monitoring and evaluation of the situation to detect possible challenges - Start and aid eco-certifications, standards for sustainable development, guidelines and programmes for responsible tourism development

<p>Degraded tourist experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies and regulations ■ Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices ■ Informational place demarketing ■ Targeting sustainable tourism segments ■ Infrastructure facilities ■ Tourism management - Environmental measures ■ Visitor management - No marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Restricting access ■ Pricing mechanisms ■ Redirection to outlying areas and alternative places ■ Geographical and seasonal distribution ■ Using technology to inform about current sites and iconic attractions ■ Expansion and improvement of infrastructure facilities ■ Strategic planning by implementing tourism and zoning plans, and eco-tourism strategies ■ Monitoring and evaluation ■ Start and aid eco-certifications, standards for sustainable development, guidelines and programmes for responsible tourism development ■ Visitor guiding, visitor information (using website, brochures, screens, signs, etc) and new ticketing processes
<p>Bad governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies and regulations ■ Tourism management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good management and correct implementation of policies ■ Strategic planning by implementing tourism and zoning plans, and ecotourism strategies ■ Monitoring and evaluation of the situation to detect possible challenges ■ Start and aid eco-certifications, standards for sustainable development, guidelines and programmes for responsible tourism development
<p>Environmental impacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies and regulations ■ Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices ■ Informational place demarketing ■ Targeting sustainable tourism segments ■ Tourism management - Environmental measures - No marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Restricting access ■ Pricing mechanisms ■ Awareness raising and training to educate stakeholders ■ Using technology to inform about current sites and iconic attractions ■ Social marketing ■ Strategic planning by implementing tourism and zoning plans, and ecotourism strategies ■ Monitoring and evaluation of the situation to detect possible challenges ■ Start and aid eco-certifications, standards for sustainable development, guidelines and programmes for responsible tourism development ■ Certifications

Concentration of benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies and regulations - Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices - Social capacity building - Informational place demarketing - Economic incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good management and correct implementation of policies - Community engagement - Participation and involvement - Awareness raising and training to educate stakeholders - Financial assistant programs for local start-ups to distribute benefits equally
Capacity problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices - Informational demarketing - Infrastructure facilities - Visitor management - No marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using technology to inform about current sites and iconic attractions - Awareness raising and training to educate stakeholders - Expansion and improvement of infrastructure facilities - Visitor guiding, visitor information (signs)
Overuse of infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices - Infrastructure facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion and improvement of infrastructure facilities
Threats to culture and heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies and regulations - Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices - Informational place demarketing - Targeting sustainable tourism segments - No marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of policies to control the number of visitors, access restriction, closing of sites and protected areas - Awareness raising and training to educate stakeholders - Using technology to inform about current sites and iconic attractions - Social marketing
Loss of place identity, bad reputation and image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices - Social capacity building - Informational place demarketing - Targeting sustainable tourism segments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community engagement - Participation and involvement - Awareness raising and training to educate stakeholders

Table 1 – Strategies to mitigate challenges of overtourism

2.6 Social media as a communication channel

The traditional model of brand promotion, which separates the forms of communication with a target audience into three categories; the physical and political environment, direct communication and word-of-mouth communication (Kavaratzis, 2004, 2009), is unidirectional in nature with the communication dominated by the brand producer - the municipality. This creates a direct producer to consumer relationship between the municipality and the target audience (Cleave et al, 2017). However, the proliferation of communications technology over the past years has had important implications for the self-promotion of municipalities. Now, there are intricate networks of content producers and consumers dominated by two-way conversations (Ketter and Avraham, 2012). Social media has enabled increased interaction with the audience and also allows for user-generated content (Cleave et al, 2017), giving anyone a chance to participate and voice an opinion by adding and editing content (Del Giudice, Peruta and Carayannis 2013; Kaplan and Haenlein 2010; Paradiso, 2013). The Internet is the place where tourists go to communicate their travel patterns in pursuit of social connectedness and social capital (Germann Molz, 2012; Gössling & Stavrinidi, 2015) and also to evaluate and to be advised (e.g. Ayeh, 2015; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014; Sparks & Browning, 2011). These interactive, open-source and user-controlled online applications expand the experience, knowledge and market power of the users as participants in business and social processes (Constantinides and Fountain, 2008). Ketter and Avraham (2012) and Parise and Guinan (2008) have identified four key elements for social media based communications: the first one is to encourage the creation of user-generated content, the second to leverage the online interaction into continuous relationships, the third to create virtual communities around a place to enhance conversation and interaction, and the fourth to learn from the customers by utilizing the two-way interaction for feedback and market research. Cleave et al. (2017) argue that this new relationship between the producer and consumer means a restructuring of power; now every participant can be a producer of information. This means that the traditional holders of power such as municipalities risk losing control of the messages they produce through their branding and marketing, as they are unable to control the creation of information and discussion about their place (Ibid.)

To conclude, places should use social media to put out content that promotes conversation among all stakeholders and engage with target audiences for the survival of a strong place brand (Ketter and Avraham, 2012; Sevin, 2013) since municipalities are able to interact directly with their audience and help influence word-of-mouth reputation. Also, the presence or lack of social media content influence perceptions of the place. If a municipality does not engage, it limits its ability to self-promote and foster positive discussion. (Cleave et al, 2017)

3. Methodology

This chapter presents the research methods that were used to achieve the purpose of the study. It contains the research approach, data collection methods and process, and a discussion related to the quality of qualitative research and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Approach

According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) most social research involves both inductive and deductive reasoning processes at some point in the same project. Inductive reasoning is based on observed cases, more general statements, or general claims about cases of the same type. On the other hand, deductive reasoning is related to the formulation of hypotheses and theories from which particular phenomena can then be explained. The combination of both of them is referred to as abduction. Eriksson and Kovalainen define abduction as “the process of moving from the everyday descriptions and meanings given by people, to categories and concepts that create the basis of an understanding or an explanation to the phenomenon described” (2008, p. 23). The process of this research applies an abductive approach to perform the study. When analysing people’s descriptive comments on social media they were connected to concepts from theory to increase an understanding of the phenomenon of overtourism. A qualitative research method was suitably used to get an understanding of what challenges comes with overtourism and what strategies are used to cope with overtourism, because qualitative data are characterised by their richness and fullness (Robson, 2002).

3.2 Multiple case studies

This paper used a qualitative multiple case study method to answer the research questions and fulfil the purpose of the study. A qualitative case study is appropriate for this paper because it is a way of investigating a contemporary phenomenon such as an organisation, a location, or a person within its real-life context (Yin, 2002). Using multiple case studies enables a comparison between the cases, and the researcher can take a stand at what the different cases have in common and what is unique, which often promotes theoretical reflections on the results (Bryman & Bell, 2013).

Case Selection

The reasoning for choosing the case destination Barcelona was because it is one of the most overcrowded travel destinations in the world (Goodwin, 2017) and has a negative perception towards tourism (Milano, 2017). Therefore, it is interesting to explore what the different stakeholders have done to manage overtourism. The second case destination Amsterdam was chosen because the city was frequently mentioned alongside Barcelona as an overcrowded city that has acted against overtourism (Coffey, 2017; Ellwood, 2017). It is interesting to see if DMOs and authorities of both cities differ in the way they redirect and reduce tourism consumption.

To represent a small destination, the coastal region of west Sweden was chosen because it is affected by overtourism every summer season when tourists gather in a small space. The place

is affected but to a lesser extent than Barcelona or Amsterdam. The term “overtourism” is a new concept and the region is just in the beginning of figuring out how to deal with it. Therefore, it is interesting for small destinations to know what places, that have experienced overtourism for a longer period of time, have done to actively manage it and learn from them when planning for the overcrowded summer.

Case: Barcelona

Barcelona in Spain is a small city geographically. Its dimensions (101.3 km²) and population (1 620 809), result in a high population density of 15 992 residents per km², which is high in comparison with other European cities (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017 b; Idescat, 2017). In 2016, Barcelona had more than 19 million tourists overnight stays in hotels, 10.5 million in holiday houses, 1.5 million in hostels and 0.7 million in tourist apartments (Statista, 2018). Since the 2000s, Barcelona has had a constant growth in tourist arrivals and overnight stays (Milano, 2017). In addition, in 2016 it was estimated to be more than 30 million visitors who did not stay the night such as hikers, cruise passengers, among others (Milano, 2017), which adds to the high density of visitors and residents that work and move around the city (Ajuntament de Barcelona & Barcelona Activa, 2014). There are high intensities of tourists in some areas and low in others, which generates problems of saturation and over-exploitation of space. For example, the well-known and iconic areas Ciutat Vella district, around Sagrada Familia, Park Guell and Barcelona's beaches and sea front are highly used spaces by tourists, residents and visitors (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017b). The decongestion of tourism activities is one of the main municipal lines of action, implemented to redistribute and balance the weight of tourism throughout the entire territory in order to ensure that the benefits generated by tourism are shared by as many inhabitants as possible (Ajuntament de Barcelona & Barcelona Activa, 2014). In spite of Barcelona City Council’s management efforts over the past years, the phenomenon of overtourism and concentration have increased, and it has extended to include further areas of the city (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017b). Figure 1 shows that many of the top 10 most visited places in Barcelona had an increased number of visitors from 2015 to 2016.

	2016	2015
1 Basílica de la Sagrada Família	4.561.848	3.722.540
2 Park Güell (Zona Regulada)	2.958.901	2.761.436
3 Museu FC Barcelona	1.947.014	1.785.903
4 L'Aquàrium de Barcelona	1.587.828	1.549.480
5 El Born Centre Cultural	1.306.230	1.486.228
6 Poble Espanyol de Barcelona	1.299.376	1.221.647
7 La Pedrera	1.207.087	990.112
8 Parc Zoològic de Barcelona	965.292	1.004.069
9 Museu Picasso	954.895	1.008.125
10 Casa Batlló	SD	992.126

Figure 1: Top 10 most visited places in Barcelona with number of visitors 2015 and 2016. Source: Institut de Cultura de Barcelona. Ajuntament de Barcelona (2017)

The negative perception of tourism in Barcelona

Ever since 2011, there has been a negative perception towards tourism in Barcelona (Milano, 2017). A significant proportion (43%) of the residents surveyed by Barcelona City Council in 2017 considered that tourism is reaching its limits in relation to the city's capacity to provide services for tourists, especially in the city's central districts with heavy tourist pressure. In addition, 47% of the residents believed that the city does not need to keep attracting more tourists in the future (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017b). In 2016, Barcelona City Council conducted an opinion survey on the residents' perception about tourists' bad behaviour. The residents considered the uncivil and irresponsible behaviour, drunkenness, noise, dirtiness, parties, agglomeration, overcrowding, and the increase of crime and insecurity the main issues related to the tourists' bad behaviour. The residents feel that tourists disturb in general, destroy the city and spend little money. (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2016b) In addition, the negative perception may be related to the increased prices of purchasing and rental of housing, privatization and congestion of public spaces, among the diversity of factors that are articulated around the tourist phenomenon (Milano, 2017).

Barcelona's Tourism Authorities

Barcelona City Council is responsible of the tourism management in Barcelona and one of the two governing bodies of the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) Barcelona Turisme (Barcelona Turisme, 2018a, 2018b). Barcelona Turisme is a public private partnership organisation with objectives and strategic lines including boosting the financial impact of tourism and attracting tourists with high spending power, promoting its own identity as a tourist attraction, reconciling tourists/local community, ensuring the geographical and multisectoral distribution of tourism and strengthening the public-private promotional model (Barcelona Turisme, 2018c).

Case: Amsterdam

Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands, is an overcrowded city that has been credited for "creatively tackling the issue of too many tourists" (Coffey, 2017). With over 11 million overnight hotel stays by international visitors, Amsterdam ranks eighth among European cities, where Barcelona is ranked fourth (Iamsterdam.com, 2017). The number of hotel stays is high for a city of 850 000 residents. Several streets and alleyways are way too narrow to tolerate big crowds of people to pass. In 2030, the growth is expected to reach 23 million visitors. Sebastiaan Meijer who is the council's spokesperson for economic affairs says "We now realise we need to get a grip on this. Amsterdam wants to be a hospitable city, but mass tourism has too many drawbacks" (van der Zee, 2017). Gerritsma and Vork (2017) have studied residents in Amsterdam's attitude towards tourists and their conclusion is that they still have positive feelings and a sense of pride about tourism in their city. However, more than a quarter of the respondents are very or extremely annoyed by tourists in the city centre. It is mostly related to overcrowding, but also noise, littering and lack of safety plays a role. The tourism chief Geerte Udo told the travel magazine *Condé Nast Traveller*: "We're an open, tolerant city. How can you ever imagine us saying 'You're not welcome here!?'". She focused on practically undetectable ways to ease congestion at key sites, such as the cobblestoned red-light district

and the crowded Museum Quarter. Udo encourages places to think creatively on how to manage overcrowding, rather than turning to bans and taxes, she says that “You cannot close a city, it’s such a short-term solution” She added: “You have to make solutions for the future to cope with the local world” (Ellwood, 2017).

Case: West Sweden

The region of west Sweden is located on the coast and it is a popular place for visitors, mainly Swedes, but also for visitors who make a stop when travelling with sailing boat because it is in proximity to Norway, Denmark and Germany. The West Sweden Tourist Board is owned by the region Västra Götaland and is responsible for tourism in the region west Sweden. The DMO Göteborg & Co, which is owned by the city of Gothenburg, is also responsible for tourism and their area includes the southern archipelago in west Sweden.

To highlight the seasons that the region of Västra Götaland county experiences, the following figure (see figure 2) is presented to show the number of guest nights in hotels (hotell), cabins (stugbyar) and hostels (vandrarhem) during 2017. In May, the number of guests is starting to increase, but the busiest month is July, and in October the number of guest nights has declined.

	Antal											
	2017M01	2017M02	2017M03	2017M04	2017M05	2017M06	2017M07	2017M08	2017M09	2017M10	2017M11	2017M12
14 Västra Götalands län												
Hotell	353 989	355 649	395 833	445 528	509 278	575 653	888 356	678 068	528 787	470 616	467 695	382 107
Stugbyar	3 377	5 569	4 161	6 015	6 680	12 775	28 282	21 193	6 793	4 385	3 559	4 149
Vandrarhem	24 824	25 171	28 808	35 714	44 968	60 998	98 053	75 833	48 654	35 873	32 826	24 398

Figure 2: Västra Götaland county’s guest nights in 2017

Source: Tillväxtverket and SCB (2018)

The statistics on guest nights in west Sweden shows that the numbers were record high in 2017 with just over 6,7 million guest nights in hotels, cabins and hostels, which is an 2,9 % increase from 2016 (West Sweden Tourist Board, 2017; Tillväxtverket and SCB). The high visitation during summer has meant that west Sweden is facing a risk of overtourism. The residents who live in these areas have to share the place with many tourists provoking a conflict of coexistence between visitors and residents.

This thesis claims that a plan is needed on how to prepare for the possibility of overtourism in the future and what can be done proactively to deal with the overcrowded summers. More detailed recommendations of strategies to redirect tourism consumption will be presented in the conclusions, by learning from what strategies Barcelona and Amsterdam are implementing online and applying that to the context of a small destination.

3.3 Data Collection

Multiple methods of data collection are often used in theory-building research (Eisenhardt, 1989). To get a theoretical framework that can be connected to the cases in the analysis, secondary data sources were used, including academic articles, reports, books and digital newspapers. Due to the phenomena of overtourism being reasonably new (e.g. Goodwin, 2016;

Jordan 2016; Clampet 2017; Byers 2016) this study also turned to newly published digital newspapers to get information. Data from primary sources was collected from the social media platforms Twitter, Facebook Instagram, YouTube, the comment section from digital newspapers and the travel site Tripadvisor to get an understanding of which challenges of overtourism that stakeholders are discussing online. Primary data was also collected from tourist boards' and destination marketing organisations' websites and official reports to investigate if strategies to deal with overtourism have been implemented online. Furthermore, to get an insight in how a small destination like the ones along the coast of west Sweden is affected by overtourism, an interview with a researcher from the west Sweden Tourist Board was used to collect primary data.

3.4 Netnography

Over a billion people use social media to communicate, create and share information, opinions and insights. Online social spaces are more and more acknowledged as important fields for qualitative social scientific investigation due to the richness and openness of their diverse cultural sites. Netnography is a technique for the cultural analysis of social media and online community data. It shares many of the characteristics of ethnography, from which it has been adapted. Both are flexible approaches that allow researchers to explore and explain rich, diverse, cultural aspects and social interaction. (Kozinets et al., 2014)

Using social media to gather data gives advantages compared to an ethnography, for example the researcher has access to big amounts of data from around the world (Kozinets et al., 2014) and there are “member to member interactions”, which is hard and takes time to gather with another method (Kozinets, 2002). Another advantage is that online cultural research is considerably less intrusive than ethnography, since the researcher can collect data without making their presence visible to members (Beaulieu, 2004; Kozinets, 2010). This non-participant approach, which is also called “lurking” (Kozinets et al, 2014), was used in this paper. It was considered appropriate because the intention of the netnography was to get an understanding of how social media was used as a channel to discuss overtourism challenges and to see what strategies to cope with overtourism could be seen on online.

The easy access to large amount of data can also be a limitation, since researchers face the inherent challenge of data overload (Kozinets et al., 2014). In addition, the researcher has to rely on interpretive skills when doing a netnography (Kozinets, 2002). In this study, the authors faced the challenge of data overload since there were a large amount of social media comments and reviews describing challenges associated with overtourism. In order to confirm the challenge, the authors scroll through different social media channels and selected the most prominent comments to show the problem.

3.4.1 Social Media Data Collection

According to Kozinets et al (2014) there are multiple ways to record online data. The two most fundamental techniques are: (1) to copy and paste the content of a post, for example, into word processing software files such as a Microsoft Word document; and (2) to capture a screenshot

of data using a program such as Windows 7's snipping tool or the Apple Grab utility. This study recorded online data by copying and pasting tweets, comments from digital newspapers and reviews on social media channels and the Internet to a Word document, as well as taking screenshots with the Apple Grab utility of a map from the municipality's website, a webcam live stream and Instagram feeds.

This netnography was conducted by searching for posts and comments about challenges of overtourism on social media by using the English, Catalan and Spanish hashtags on Twitter: #Touristgohome #Guirisgohome #elturismemata #overtourism #AirbnbBarcelona #turismofobia #tourismphobia for Barcelona. On Facebook and Youtube the keywords overtourism, overcrowding, and issues of overtourism were searched for. In the case of Amsterdam, the keywords of challenges were searched on Twitter such as congestion + Amsterdam, but the main data collected for the case of Amsterdam was by reading comments from the comment section of the digital version of The Guardian. In the case of West Sweden Twitter was used by searching the keywords: overtourism + västsverige, överturism + västsverige and turister + västsverige and overtourism + west sweden. The tweets were collected and analysed with the programmes NVivo and Excel.

To find data on if and how the destinations have implemented strategies to redirect and reduce tourism consumption online, the cities' DMO's, tourist boards' and the municipalities' websites and Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube were scrolled through. Furthermore, to see if the destinations use social media to interact with stakeholders, the DMOs, tourist boards' and the municipalities' Facebook and Twitter were analysed during March and April 2018. Facebook and Twitter were decided to be appropriate to investigate because other social media channels such as Instagram and YouTube are mostly used to look at pictures and videos, whereas Twitter and Facebook are mainly used for interacting through text.

3.5 Interview

To best answer the research question of how a small destination can take action against overtourism, a qualitative interview was used as a data collection method. A semi-structured interview was chosen because it allows for preparation of topics, issues or themes but still has the possibility of asking follow-up questions to get more in-depth responses and to clarify answers (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Bryman & Bell, 2013). In this type of interview, the research has an interview guide with a list of questions on specific topics of interest that need to be covered (Bryman & Bell, 2013). In this paper, the interview guide was structured based on the previous literature on overtourism, responsible tourism, and strategies to cope with overtourism in order to find out more about the situation in west Sweden. The interview guide included open-ended questions, which gave the participant more control over what was talked about and produced more detailed responses (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

The interview was held with an independent researcher working with sustainability issues and tourism, employed by The West Sweden Tourist Board, who also works with Research & Development. The authors had the privilege of interviewing the researcher, who was

recommended to them by their supervisor Eva Maria Jernsand. Prior to the interview, a draft was sent to provide an insight in the focus of the thesis and thereby give an opportunity to prepare for the interview. The interview was conducted on the 23rd of March 2018 face-to-face in a private space of the University of Gothenburg and lasted for approximately 45 minutes; it was recorded with permission from the interviewee. Thereafter, the interview was transcribed to be able to recall the collected information and complete the notes taken during the interview. This procedure is essential for the complete analysis that is required in qualitative research and to guarantee that the interviewees' responses are fully captured (Bryman & Bell, 2013). The interviewee chose to be anonymous, which ensured the ethical considerations.

3.6 Data Analysis

In this study, coding and hermeneutic approaches were used to analyse the data as Kozinets et al. (2014) recommend. The coding process started by using open coding, which includes breaking down, analysing, comparing and categorizing the data (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The goal of this process is to reach a theoretically relevant understanding of the phenomena of interest. The "grounded theory" that arise from coding is tested as new data are collected and analysed, in this sense, data can be collected specifically for that goal. With netnography allowing easy access and large amount of to data, such crosschecking is facilitated in a rather unprecedented way (Kozinets et al., 2014). Hermeneutics is a methodological process for interpreting qualitative data; it requires very selective and good data collection skills. As Kozinets (2015) points out, the authors found common elements, the key and the core of the meaning structure of a YouTube video, posts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and comments on digital newspapers and Tripadvisor. The netnographers found the common elements between them and sought interpretations that made sense when viewed in context, supported with pertinent examples and clearly related to relevant literature (Kozinets, 2015).

The data analysis was divided in two phases. The first phase of the qualitative data analysis was coding the comments, reviews and posts of the stakeholders in relation to the *challenges* of overtourism found in the literature review. Subsequently, similar patterns in stakeholders' comments on Barcelona and Amsterdam were identified and grouped around the selected challenges for this analysis. Finally, the authors categorised all the codes into the following categories which they thought the comment fitted into, based on the theoretical framework: "reduced quality of life", "degraded tourist experience", "bad governance", "environmental impacts", "concentration of benefits", "capacity problems", "overuse of infrastructure" and "loss of place identity, bad reputation and image". The authors also found a challenge in relation to reduced quality of life that have not been identified in previous research but could be referred to as challenge related to overtourism based on the comments describing this concern, which is "immigrants viewed as impolite tourists". The comments of stakeholders in Barcelona and Amsterdam were then analysed in relation to the challenges of overtourism as mentioned by Weber et al (2017) and WTTC (2017) and an additional deeper analysis was done using a hermeneutic approach and relevant theory. Important to mention is that the comments from stakeholders were translated from Spanish and Catalan to English. There were also some comments in Dutch that were translated to English with the help of Google's

translating tool on Twitter, which can be risky since the tool cannot be trusted to give the exact correct translation.

The second phase involved the data analysis of *strategies* used online to cope with overtourism and then the authors clustered these strategies with the challenges found in the first phase of the data analysis. The analysis started from the theory describing strategies and actions to cope with overtourism, thereafter the authors visited the authorities responsible for tourism, DMOs and tourist boards' online channels and reports to see if they used these strategies online. The authors categorize the overall strategies into the following categories:

- Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices
- Informational place demarketing
- Targeting sustainable tourism segments
- Social capacity building

Regarding the interview, in order to analyse the data, the interview guide was sectioned into two parts; challenges of overtourism and strategies to cope with overtourism. This enabled the authors to categorise the transcription and highlight important parts connecting to the research questions. To fulfil the purpose of the study the findings of the interview were connected to the theoretical framework.

3.7 The quality of qualitative research

One of the main challenges that qualitative researchers face is how to assure the reader about the scientific nature of their research, its quality and trustworthiness (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). For those reasons, we adopted explicit evaluation criteria, as Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) recommend, to enrich the transparency of the study and provide the resources that lay stress on the strengths and limitations of the research. To ensure the quality of this research, it has been evaluated during the whole research process. To evaluate and assess this qualitative research, the criterion “adopting alternative but common criteria for qualitative research” (Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008, p.3.) was the most suitable. This criterion is based on the “trustworthiness” concept, which contains four aspects: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). These aspects are “ways to assess qualitative research that does not rely on the realist or critical realist conceptions of the social world” (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008, p. 6).

Dependability refers to the researcher's responsibility for giving the reader information so that the research process is logical, traceable and documented. These activities establish the trustworthiness of research (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). The dependability of this study was accomplished because the authors have provided the reader with information of all the phases of the research process. The used references, selection of the research participant, topics included in the interview guide, data analysis, and findings and results are accessible, traceable and documented.

Transferability is concerned with the researcher's responsibility to show to what extent their research is similar to others in the area of study, with the aim to find and establish a connection between their research and previous results (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). This research project has compared results to previous similar studies researching challenges related to overtourism and strategies to cope with them and a connection between them was demonstrated in the analysis. New challenges and strategies used online were found in this study. In addition, recommendations and future research suggestions have been given that could provide a deeper analysis on the topic concerned. Transferability refers to the degree to which the findings of a qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with another population (Bitsch, 2005; Tobin & Begley, 2004). Researchers facilitate the transferability by providing a “thick description” of the study (Bitsch, 2005). This paper provides a thick description of the data by giving rich and extensive details of the methodology section and context of the study, as well as in the empirical material. Regarding the interview, the authors explain in detail how the interview was made, the setting of the interview and its selection process. In the netnography research method, the authors have provided a detailed explanation about social media data collection. The thick description provided allows the readers to make judgements about the transferability of findings to other contexts with another population (Bryman and Bell, 2013).

Credibility refers to whether the researcher has familiarity with the topic and whether there are enough data to merit the researcher's claims (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). Both authors have visited overcrowded destinations and are master students in Marketing and Consumption, therefore they are familiar with the chosen area of study. According to Bryman and Bell (2013) the credibility of findings includes ensuring that the research project is achieved in accordance with the canons of good practice and to present the findings to the participants of the research to confirm that the researcher has correctly understood their perspectives and experiences. The authors found it difficult to search information about the subject of overtourism/overcrowding, since there were not many articles written about it. However, there were sufficient data collected about the overtourism phenomena by gathering data on social media channels and the Internet, by watching documentaries on YouTube and reading news articles about the topic. To increase credibility, data was presented by giving direct citations of comments from social media, which gives a picture of what is actually said. In addition, the participant was given the findings of the study to guarantee that it was correctly understood and interpreted. Therefore, the data collected is considered to be enough to support the research claims and ensure the credibility of this study.

Conformability is about connecting the findings and interpretations to the data in a way that it does not require effort to understand it (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008), that the interpretations of the research are not just the researcher's imagination but they are completely derived from the data (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Tobin & Begley, 2004). The conformability is achieved in a netnography, by offering a strong sense of members' language by liberally citing or quoting from online texts or documents (Kozinets, 2010). In this thesis, conformability was achieved since the authors included many quotes from social media and the interview. Furthermore, the conformability was ensured because even though the authors have experience

of overcrowded destinations they do not live in those conditions and could thereby maintain a high objectivity during the whole research process. Furthermore, the findings and interpretations derived from the data were connected in a proper manner so the readers can easily understand them.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

In the findings the authors decided to use the actual usernames that were found on social media, digital newspapers and on Tripadvisor, which can be interpreted as unethical since ethical netnographic practice is grounded in the principle of informed consent (Kozinets et al, 2014). The reason for using the actual usernames was because the authors wanted to ensure traceability by posting the sources of the tweets in the references. Also, because according to Kozinets et al (2014, p. 268) “a web user is responsible for the consequences of publicly posting information on the Internet (either with an original name or a pseudonym)”, and the data was not collected from a private and closed group, but from searching hashtags and keywords. To ensure that the interview was ethical, the interviewee was aware of possible quotes being taken from the interview because it was sent for approval, and was given the choice to be anonymous.

4. Results and analysis

The chapter begins by exploring if and how the three destinations use social media to engage and interact with stakeholders. Thereafter, the findings of challenges from social media comments of stakeholders from both Barcelona and Amsterdam, and the challenges identified from the interview with a researcher are presented and analysed with connection to the theoretical framework. Then, strategies to cope overtourism used on social media and the Internet in all destinations will be presented and analysed together with challenges and the theoretical framework.

4.1 Social media as a channel to implement strategies

To explore how the DMOs and authorities of Barcelona, Amsterdam and west Sweden use social media as a channel to engage with different stakeholders, their Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts were analysed. The DMO IAmsterdam (@Iamsterdam) posted a tweet about overtourism in 2017 when they said: “The city is thinking creatively to tackle the issue of too many tourists” and linked Coffey’s (2017) article published by The Independent. This tweet evoked reactions, one of them being the user @befrc who questions if they are sustainable solutions. Another user (@Amphybrach) thinks that the city mistakes brainless PR monstrosities for creativity, and that the city is destroying culture with putative creativity.

In the case of Barcelona, the DMO Barcelona Turisme has three Twitter accounts, one in English @BarcelonaInfoEn, one in Catalan @BarcelonaTurism and one in Spanish @BarcelonaInfoES. From the Catalan Twitter account, 3165 tweets were analysed and no data related to overtourism or overcrowding were found. However, tweets mentioning responsible tourism and sustainable tourism were found. Barcelona Turisme published the same tweet on all three accounts about how the city is working towards sustainable tourism, @BarcelonaTurism (2018): “Next goal of the programme #BarcelonaSustainableTourism: look for alliances to make the sustainable tourism project stronger”. @BarcelonaInfoEn tweets about how tourism is beneficial for the city, for instance they commented: “Tourism multiplier effect grows in the economy. Every euro spent in tourism produces 1.96€ in other sectors via #Tourism”. In addition, from Barcelona City Council’s Twitter account (@bcn_ajuntament) 2283 tweets were analysed and no data related to overtourism issues were found. However, tweets related to responsible tourism and sustainable tourism subjects were identified. They published tweets about their certification of Sustainable Tourism: “Barcelona validates the Biosphere World Class Destination certificate for the advances to make tourism an environmentally and socially sustainable activity” (@bcn_ajuntament, 2018). Barcelona City Council also published posts about how they work towards sustainability in different conferences and fairs by saying “FITUR tourism fair, the first meeting of the Biosphere Community in Barcelona, which works for the sustainability of destinations” (@bcn_ajuntament, 2018).

According to Cleave et al. (2017) municipalities interact directly with their audience on social media for self-promotion and to influence word-of-mouth reputation. The results of Barcelona Turisme and Barcelona City Council show that they promote the city as a sustainable tourism

destination and promote their work towards responsible while IAmsterdam promote that they are tackling overtourism issues. What is problematic in the case of Barcelona is that the authorities do not explain thoroughly the true meaning of responsible tourism; rather they only talk about the good things. For example, by posting about how tourism is beneficial for the economy of the city: “Every euro spent in tourism produces 1.96€ in other sectors”, which is connected to the challenge of concentration of benefits where the residents claim that the money from tourism goes to multinational corporations and they do not get any benefit from it. Further, it is problematic since the audience can perceive these tweets as not relating to them because the authorities are just promoting their work towards responsible tourism and do not state exactly where the 1.96€ goes to. In both cities, they do not address in detail the challenges of overtourism like reduced quality of life, high price of housing, safety and hygiene problems among others that the cities are facing or how they are coping with it. They merely talk in abstract and superficial terms. Therefore, they need to be more specific when explaining and not just claim that they handle the problem of overtourism.

The following information refers to the interview with the researcher working with sustainability issues and tourism, employed by The West Sweden Tourist Board, who explained that Swedish tourism has always been about welcoming tourists and never exploiting tourism. However, last summer there were rumours that residents, for example in the southern archipelago, had complained about overtourism. Even though, they might just be rumours, overtourism is still a problem that needs to be addressed. West Sweden is concerned about what the local community think about the tourists and what would happen if they start a storm on social media about overtourism. For that reason, it is of great interest to study whether or not The West Sweden Tourist Board interacts with stakeholders and engages in tourism issues on social media.

The West Sweden Tourist Board is very active engaging on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube) by posting photos and videos. However, they do not post anything regarding the term overtourism nor mention problems related to tourism. This is aligned with what the researcher at The West Sweden Tourist Board stated in the interview: “West Sweden Tourist Board has Instagram etc. but it is more for promotion, so they do not do anything to meet people’s disappointments”. The DMO Göteborg & Co shows awareness of cities suffering with overcrowding in its business plan for 2018-2020. Göteborg & Co claims that they do not have that issue today, but it is a must for them to address the issue preventively. Seeing that there is a risk of residents turning against tourism, Göteborg & Co has developed three points how they should pre-emptively take action: 1) map and identify potential attractions and areas that in the long-term can be affected by over tourism, 2) assure communication and activities that improves the opportunity for the resident to be an ambassador, and 3) continue to highlight attractive alternatives for sightseeing in your own city (Göteborg & Co, 2018). This shows an awareness that overtourism is a risk for the region of west Sweden. The authors consider this way of engaging and raising awareness on overtourism an ineffective way because the business plan is not available on west Sweden’s social media channels. Having the business plan on the authority’s website makes it difficult for local residents or other stakeholders to have easy and effective access to the information.

Therefore, the DMO should post more information about tourism issues on social media so stakeholders can take part in how west Sweden is working to prevent overtourism.

4.2 Interacting with the audience on social media channels

On Facebook, only Amsterdam's DMO Iamsterdam uses it to interact with users, for example answering a potential visitor who wanted tips on things to do for free by linking Iamsterdam's website with tips, answering questions about the weather, complimenting private pictures posted by users and welcoming people to the city (Facebook, 2018). Utilizing this type of two-way interaction is great for a place since they can learn from the customers for market research; they can form relationships and create virtual communities around a place (Ketter and Avraham, 2012; Parise and Guinan, 2008). Social media should be used by places to engage with target audiences for the survival of a strong place brand (Ketter and Avraham, 2012; Sevin, 2013)

On Twitter, The West Sweden Tourist Board only interacts on the English account (*@WestSwedenTB*) and not on the Swedish one (*@vastsvenska_tr*) with its users by retweeting and complimenting tourists' private photos. Similarly, in Amsterdam and Barcelona, neither of the DMOs nor the City Council interacts with users' comments on Twitter. A reason for the lack of interaction is that there are not many stakeholders leaving comments on the posts. A possible reason for not attracting users can be because the superficial promotion tweets are not relatable for residents and visitors who experience the challenges of overtourism on first hand. Not taking the opportunity to interact on their Twitter accounts with the audience will according to Cleave et al (2017) limit municipalities' ability to self-promote and foster positive discussions and perceptions of the place is influenced by the presence or lack of social media content. This is of great importance because the goal of place branding is reached when people, in general, and over longer periods of time, hold a favourable reputation of the place (Boisen et al., 2017).

Another scenario where social media is not utilized in a productive manner is when it is used to continue marketing and promoting the most popular and overcrowded places and attractions even though the city is suffering with overtourism. For example, the DMO Visit Barcelona tweeted on its English account (*@VisitBCN_EN*, 2018), a picture of Sagrada Familia saying "Spring has blossomed in a fantastic way at the #SagradaFamilia, and we love it!". They also posted a picture of Gaudi's building, La Pedrera, which is one of the most visited places in Barcelona (see figure 2), with the following text: "There's only one way to see the sunrise shining on *@LaPedrera_BCN* like this: get there really early in the morning!". Visit Barcelona also posts pictures on Instagram of the most iconic attractions and places the city has to offer. For instance, pictures of Casa Batllo, Sagrada Familia, Arenas shopping mall and the facade of the Cathedral are promoted (see figure 3). The Instagram comments are overall very positive and the following users express their desire to visit this iconic place by tagging their friends and commenting: "shall we go back? Tomorrow? I'll pre-book tickets *@exavi710*" (*chantal_hp*, 2018) and "*@victoriarc*s we definitely have to go back in the spring" (*viicto_or*, 2018). This further promotion of these places on social media is counterproductive since it

might lead to increased tourism consumption by encouraging tourists like *chantal_hp* and *viicto_or* to visit those overcrowded attractions.

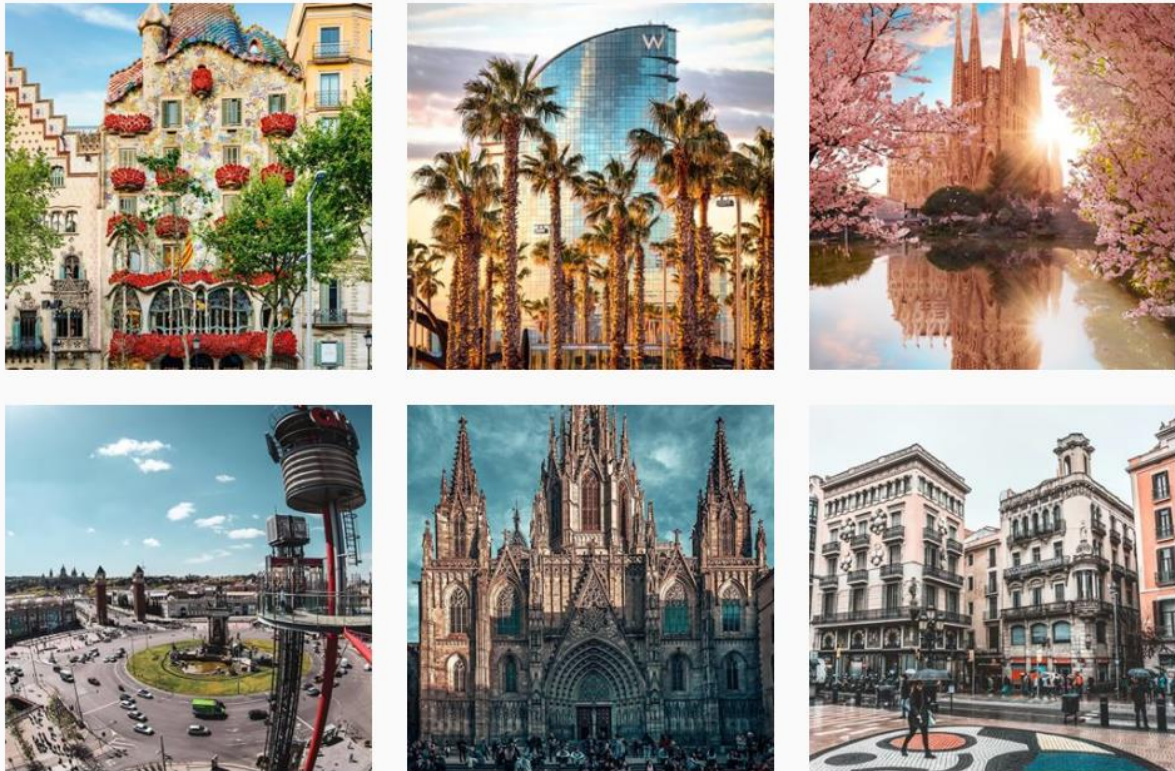


Figure 3 Instagram feed of Visit Barcelona

Sources: Instagram

It is evident that the DMO Visit Barcelona keeps marketing and promoting the most popular and overcrowded places and attractions even though the city is suffering with overtourism. Font and McCabe (2017) argue that destinations need to change the way they advertise themselves and stop counting on iconic attractions that are already saturated, and design packages in which iconic attractions can only be accessed as part of a longer stay.

Using social media to promote the already overcrowded tourist attractions and places in the city is an example of why traditional place marketing is not always the most appropriate to use in a place context (Lichrou et al., 2010). Traditional place marketing is driven by demand and the existing market and meeting target groups' needs (Govers, 2011). This is problematic in a place that suffers from overtourism since using marketing in tourism is massively responsible for contributing to irresponsible levels and types of consumption (Font & McCabe, 2017) making it unsustainable in the long run to keep attracting visitors. Font and McCabe (2017) argue that demarketing is complicated for destinations since private companies do not perceive a benefit in not showing the most popular attractions in their marketing, but they can propose innovative ways of experiencing iconic locations that gives a better experience with a more acceptable impact (Ibid.). Medway et al. (2010) propose using no marketing as a strategy for demarketing places, where the destination does not implement any marketing activities during specific times of the year to manage the quantity of visitors. However, with this strategy comes the risk of residents and tourist feeling like the city is losing its uniqueness and identity by not

marketing the iconic attractions and places. Therefore, it is important how the city is marketed on social media in order to cope with overtourism. What we consider a more appropriate way of tackling overtourism is using marketing to promote outlying, less well known and less crowded areas by redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices (Font & McCabe, 2017; Medway et al., 2010).

4.3 Strategies to cope with overtourism on social media and the Internet

This section contains the overall strategies that are used on social media channels and the Internet to cope with challenges of overtourism.

4.3.1 Overall strategy: Redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices

Challenges: concentration of benefits, reduced quality of life and capacity problems

Regarding the challenge *concentration of benefits*, which goes hand in hand with a *reduced quality of life*, in a way that Weber et al. (2017) explain that a reduced quality of life is provoked by the higher costs of living and the increase of rents, which can result in that the residents have to move or in worst cases homelessness. *Capacity problems* are also connected since housing is affected by the large number of visitors in the city, and according to Weber et al (2017) emergent competitors (e.g. Airbnb) might be a challenge for tourism development. Further, the challenge of concentration of benefits describe issues of financial leakages, unilateral benefits and lack of jobs on managerial level for residents in destinations that have a monopolistic economy and the capital is strongly concentrated, commonly with an accumulation of foreign owned corporations (Weber et al, 2017).

Residents on Twitter address the challenge of concentration of benefits, reduced quality of life and capacity problems. Airbnb (@AirbnbCitizen) launched the media campaign #LoveBarcelona starring real Airbnb hosts who show their guests why the city is so beloved and special (Castro, 2018; La Vanguardia, 2018a). The campaign evoked residents' negative views of the accommodation situation, @Meniel (2018) comments: "*Barcelona sold itself as an attractive product for millions of tourists. Due to the economic crisis and the conditions of low wages in Spain, everyone in this city has wanted to obtain direct or indirect benefits from tourists, either as professional rental services or as illegal rentals. Acting as a hostel in a neighbour's building generates conflicts of coexistence and a bad image of tourists*". Also, the resident Kitusky90 (2018) claim that residents are being pushed out of their neighbourhoods due to the inflated prices provoked by Airbnb. The resident @EmiliBatiste (2018) comments: "I am fed up with the wild Capitalism (now known as "collaborative economy") that promotes neoliberalism".

On the comment section of the documentary "Bye Bye Barcelona" posted on YouTube, which explores the difficult coexistence between citizens and mass tourism and the deterioration of the neighbourhoods. Local residents such as Antifona (2018) relates the challenge of reduced quality of life to services such as Airbnb and illegal tourist apartments: "in general they increase the cost of housing for residents, who already suffer from higher prices for services and products in general (higher demand, higher prices)." The resident Roverth (2017) comments: "In Barcelona, you cannot even live anymore, Airbnb and tourism prevents a normal life of the

citizens because they are not respecting our space, this is an invasion. The tourists are killing this city!”

Results from Barcelona further support the theory of Weber et al. (2017) who explain that a platform such as Airbnb has created a capacity problem and is a challenge for tourism development. Connected to capacity problems, the challenges of concentration of benefits and reduce quality of life arises. These results indicate that residents blame tourism, illegal accommodations and mainly the service provider Airbnb, which offers the opportunity to lease or rent short-term holiday accommodation, for causing the high costs of living and housing. Collaborative economy and sharing accommodation is usually referred to as a cheap and accessible alternative accommodation. However, that is often from the tourists’ perspective, benefitting only them by saving money. From the residents’ perspective it contributes to the increase of tourists in the city and creates unilateral benefits only for big corporations like Airbnb.

4.3.1.1 Action: Redirecting tourism consumption away from illegal tourist flats

To mitigate challenges of concentration of benefits, reduced quality of life and capacity problems, Barcelona City Council has taken action by redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices, more specifically, from illegal tourist flats. The City Council introduced the website *meet.barcelona.cat/habitatgesturistics*, giving stakeholders the opportunity to detect and report on illegal accommodations. On the website, visitors can put in their rented tourist flat address to make sure that they are living in a legal flat, and if they discover that they have rented an unlicensed tourist flat, they can contact the website to let them know about it. This service is also available for residents who can contact the website if they think there is an unlicensed tourist flat in their block or send in complaints if they are experiencing inconvenience by activities in tourist accommodations. This initiative was taken because *“Barcelona has a range of illegal accommodation which harms not just the people who rent it by depriving them of their right to complain about any incidents and denying them the supplementary services they are otherwise entitled to, but also Barcelona itself, as it creates speculation and illicit economies and its activities leave nothing positive for local neighbours, causing nuisance and complaints”*. Therefore, the City Council is searching for engagement and collaboration from stakeholders to stop the proliferation of Barcelona’s illegal economy and the careless, economically unsustainable and environmentally unfriendly tourism it results in. (Meet.barcelona.cat/habitatgesturistics, 2018)

Another example is in Amsterdam where the municipality and the service provider Airbnb have taken action together to redirect tourism consumption away from illegal accommodations by giving residents the opportunity to raise concerns about a property. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, Goodwin (2017) identified the introduction of a 24hr hotline for residents to raise concerns about Airbnb properties. Airbnb has also implemented a mechanism that makes it impossible for users in Amsterdam to rent out their properties for longer than 60 days per year. Another thing they have done is to implement an online tool for people living near its properties, giving them an opportunity to raise concerns about a property e.g. noise complaints (Haines, 2016).

The results of Barcelona and Amsterdam corroborate the ideas of Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) who suggest that place branding should be considered a complex process of dialogue between stakeholders where they as groups collectively produce the place brand with the facilitation of place brand managers. The action is also aligned with Weber et al. (2017) who propose social capacity building, which aims to involve the community and let them to participate in programmes to address social demands of locals. In the case of Barcelona, the municipality includes the residents and visitors and in Amsterdam, the government work together with Airbnb including residents and visitors to redirect tourism consumption away from illegal accommodations. Therefore, all the stakeholders are involved in this strategy since there is an active participation and dialogue between them about accommodation issues.

Challenges: overuse of infrastructure, capacity problems, degraded tourist experience and environmental impacts

The overuse of infrastructure is a challenge associated with overtourism. Infrastructure is used for both tourist and non-tourist activities, causing many negative effects such as congestions and lack of parking spaces (Weber et al., 2017; WTTC, 2017). Most tourist attractions have a limited capacity; therefore, concentrated masses can cause congestions, long queues and a reduced quality of the tourist experience. The challenges overuse of infrastructure and capacity problems contributes to a degraded tourist experience since, as Weber et al. (2017) and WTTC (2017) point out, a degraded tourist experience is provoked by the general perception of overcrowding, overused infrastructure, queues, irritation, low service quality, lack of safety and hygiene problems. In addition, the previous challenges lead to environmental impacts.

Barcelona is experiencing challenges of capacity problems, overuse of infrastructure and degraded tourist experience, which is evident on social media where stakeholders talk about this. The regulation of Park Guell, meaning that only 400 visitors are accepted at any given time, has evoked disappointed comments on Park Guell Barcelona's official Facebook page. The visitor *Maria DeLurdes* (2018) comments: "Too much people for this little area, not much to see for the price, long queue, it is extremely disappointing [...]". *Inga Bechara* (2018) also expresses disappointment by commenting "*The online ticketing wasn't functioning, so we had to stand in a queue for a while, then to wait for over 2 hours to be admitted to the park and not much to see for a price you pay*". On the travel site *Tripadvisor.com* (2018a) there are many negative reviews about Park Guell, the visitor *Gzaiats* (2014) mentions the waiting time; "*A beautiful park but I'm not sure it's worth the money (8 € per person) or the time you have to spend in line (30 min at the entrance to the park and 30 more minutes at the Casa Museu Gaudí entrance)*". Even when Barcelona regulated Park Guell, there long queues and waiting time to see this attraction still exist. This has resulted in the challenge of *bad governance*, which occurs when policies and regulations, incompetent management, corruption or repression may lead to negative effects on residents, tourists and tourism development. One aspect of this is when strategies are inadequately implemented (Weber et al., 2017), which is the case regarding the regulation of Park Guell in Barcelona.

In the comments of the online article "Amsterdammers v tourists: 'It's worst when they throw up in your plant box'" in which *Renate van der Zee* (2017) is writing about how Amsterdam

has been affected by the challenges of overtourism, *capacity problems* are highlighted by the user *TurretSyndrome* (2017) who comments: “...to me it's astounding that the city had nearly 18 million visitors last year. When they cite a population of 850,000 that means the greater Amsterdam area. I guarantee you that most of those 18 million are all concentrated in and around the canals. In an already densely-populated city in a densely-populated country I can't comprehend that nobody anticipated this [...]”.

Also in Amsterdam, the challenge *overuse of infrastructure* is occurring due to the large number of bikes taking over the streets. The user *@schlijper* (2018) is using Twitter to display the issue of congestion by posting a short video of many cyclists being forced to stop after a road work-truck blocked the road with the description “Bicycle congestion after the road was blocked for a minute”. *@car8lover* (2018) is another user who tweets about bike congestion in the city by saying that locals found a new culprit to blame: bike-sharing operators. However, the user *@lunaticllama* (2018) says that the bikes are better than the pollution, congestion and hours wasted in automobiles. Although people are affected by the congestion caused by bikes there are also people who are willing to deal with the congestion because the bikes are better for the environment.

The challenge of *environmental impacts* such as noise, littering, pollution of air and water, land degradation and emissions, overuse of natural resources (e.g. water and forests, poor waste management and harm to wildlife) (Weber et al., 2017; WTTC, 2017), is mentioned on social media by a former visitor *Lucy F* (2017) who comments on the dirtiness and feel disappointed “The worst beach I've Ever Visited. Absolutely filthy, dusty and gritty sand, cigarette butts everywhere. Far too busy, far too dirty, I wouldn't recommend it!”

4.3.1.2 Action: Redirecting tourism consumption to alternative places

The authors found an action to cope with the challenges of capacity problems, overuse of infrastructure, degraded tourist experience and environmental impacts, which is to use social media as a channel to redirect tourism consumption to alternative places that are less crowded. For example, the DMO Barcelona Turisme has taken action by using its website (barcelonaturisme.com) to promote places beyond the city centre and most overcrowded areas under the title “What To Visit”. The map below (Figure 4) shows the proximity from Barcelona to Girona, Lleida, and Tarragona, with the complementary text saying “*There's so much to see and do in Barcelona, but it can also be your base camp to discover the rest of Catalonia. Just a short distance away you can enjoy the astonishing rocky outcrops of the mountain of Montserrat, visit the monumental city of Girona, have a surrealist experience with Dalí in Figueres, soak up the Mediterranean in Sitges and the Costa Daurada... There are a lot of fascinating destinations and so many surprises waiting for you! Where would you head to?*”

Near Barcelona



Figure 4: Map of places near Barcelona

Source: Barcelona Turisme (2018)

The DMO Barcelona Turisme also takes action by promoting other less well-known districts of the city on their website, mentioning the different attractions, parks and museums that can be found in each district. The DMO states that “*Wherever you are in Barcelona, there's always something to see nearby around the neighbourhood or district: jewels of home-grown Catalan architecture, modernism, and contemporary architecture, markets that are a treat for the senses, treasures of the ancient Roman and medieval city, parks where you can unwind.*” (Barcelona Turisme, 2018). Similarly, in Amsterdam the DMO Iamsterdam uses its website to guide readers to discover different neighbourhoods of Amsterdam. 11 neighbourhoods are listed and what characterize them, for example Oostelijke Eilanden (Eastern Docklands) is the place where water and modern architecture meet and Oud-West is a popular, dynamic neighbourhood dotted by trendy design stores, cool cafe bars and some of the best restaurants in the city (Iamsterdam, 2018a). This shows that the strategy of redirecting visitors to travel to outlying areas, which Goodwin (2017) found that Amsterdam is doing by packaging outlying districts as standalone destinations and extending the range of the City Card so that public transport to outlying areas is included in the fee, can also be done online.

A further example by the DMO Iamsterdam is to use Twitter to highlight less well-known attractions and places in Amsterdam. For example, with the tweet posted in 2018 saying “*Visiting Amsterdam soon? Discover some of the city's best-kept secrets according to the @guardian*”, with the link to the article by *The Guardian* named “*10 of the best insider's tips to Amsterdam*”. This tweet is met with encouraging comments, such as “*someday, I hope I can go to Netherlands #mydream*” (@yazidismail11) and “*A great guide!*” (@checkintuneout). This shows that redirecting tourists can be done in a subtle way. There are positive reactions when the DMO highlights alternatives to the overcrowded attractions and places, which are

considered “insider secrets”. With the users and potential tourists appreciating these ways of recommending alternative places to visit, this would be the way to go when redirecting tourists.

4.3.1.3 Action: Redirecting tourism consumption geographically and seasonally

According to the researcher, The West Sweden Tourist Board are posting pictures of less well-known places implicitly but it can be a part of their strategy to redirect tourism consumption. Currently, they post pictures of both highly visited places and less well-known places because a part of the tourist board’s mission is to support all 49 municipalities in the region. With strategic intent or not, we found on social media that The West Sweden Tourist Board is using the strategy of redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices by promoting on their website (www.vastsverige.com/en/) and other social media channels including Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram, a variety of different attractions and areas of west Sweden during the whole year. For example, on Instagram (see figure 6) The West Sweden Tourist Board is marketing the off-season by posting pictures taken in a winter environment, which might inspire people to visit during the rest of the year.

Pictures and videos are also presenting less well-known areas and activities typically not marketed towards tourists such as skiing, which is different from the narrow wharf and beach huts usually marketed. By presenting different places and activities it can ease the pressure on some of the most popular places to other places that are more suited to host visitors.

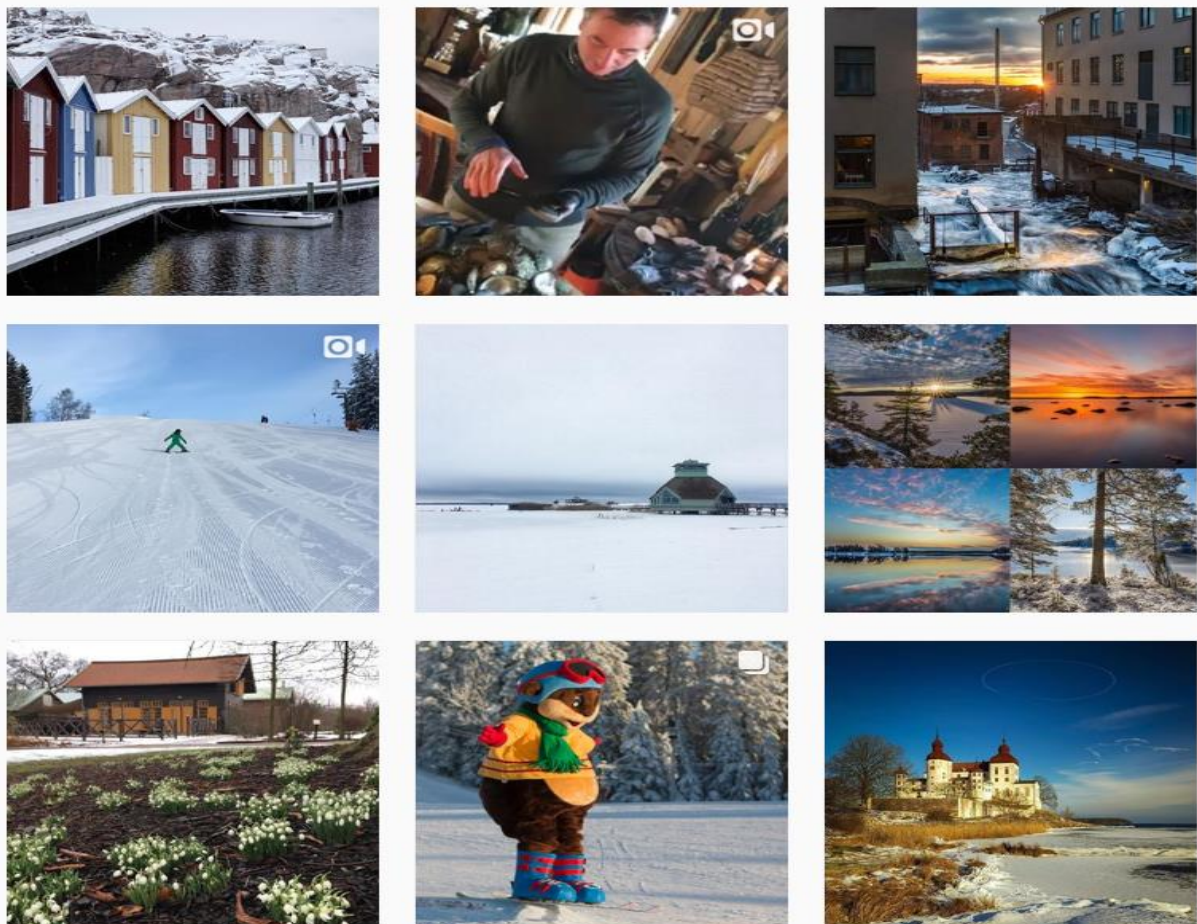


Figure 6: Instagram feed of West Sweden Tourist Board

Source: Instagram

Analysing the tourist board's and DMOs' social media in the three destinations, it is clear that their actions can be connected to the theories of Medway et al (2010) and Font and McCabe (2017), who propose a demarketing strategy where tourists are geographically and seasonally redirected to reduce tourism consumption. In Barcelona and Amsterdam, they are promoting outlying areas in order to redirect visitors to an alternative place, as Medway et al. (2010) suggest, spreading the tourists geographically. In west Sweden, social media is also used as a channel to promote the off-season, which spreads tourists during the whole year. This is something that Font and McCabe (2017) find interesting; how destinations often market their summer season, which is probably already full, instead of aiming attention to their low seasons. Font and McCabe (2017) argue that the dispersion of tourism should be diverting tourists away from peak demand periods to distribute demand to create a balanced flow of tourists, which can then be optimally accommodated. Tourist boards and businesses can make tourism more sustainable by redirecting tourists away from unsustainable choices, which reduces geographical and seasonal pressures (Ibid.). Therefore, we consider the Internet to be a good place for promoting and marketing because international tourists can easily see the pictures and might get influenced by them and book a destination that is more suitable to host visitors.

4.3.1.4 Action: Residents and tourists redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices

Overtourism affects residents and visitors by reducing the quality of life and causing a degraded tourist experience (Weber et al., 2017). We found on social media that stakeholders use the strategy redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices (Font & McCabe, 2017). On the travel site Tripadvisor regarding the beaches of Barcelona, the resident *VTJedi* (2016) has taken action by advising visitors to go to less overcrowded beaches, saying: "This is the most crowded beach. You get more privacy further away from the tourists when you check out the more local beaches." Other examples of stakeholders redirecting tourism consumption is from the online article "Amsterdammers v tourists: 'It's worse when they throw up in your plant box' published by TheGuardian.com, in which van der Zee (2017) writes about how Amsterdam has been affected by the challenges of overtourism. The resident *Johan1974* takes action by giving a piece of advice for tourists: "*there are many other lovely cities in the Netherlands. Utrecht has canals too, and Haarlem's 17th century architecture arguably is even nicer than Amsterdam's. Maastricht in the south is the oldest city in the country. Above all remember that when you're visiting Amsterdam, you're experiencing Holland, not the Netherlands. There's a lot more to the country than the capital*". In addition, the former visitor *Michel Renbarre* comments: "I used to travel to Amsterdam for business and I saw the city change to the point I would take a hotel on the outskirts of the city rather than fight through the noisy and not always pleasant crowd".

Social media has given anyone a chance to participate and voice an opinion by adding and editing content (Del Giudice, Peruta and Carayannis 2013; Kaplan and Haenlein 2010; Paradiso, 2013). The Internet is the place where tourists go to communicate their travel patterns in pursuit of social connectedness and social capital (Germann Molz, 2012; Gössling & Stavrini, 2015) and also to evaluate and to be advised (e.g. Ayeh, 2015; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014; Sparks & Browning, 2011). In this case, we can identify that social media has given

stakeholders an opportunity to form the place by influencing potential visitors to travel to places away from the overcrowded areas. Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) argue that place branding is a complex process of dialogue between stakeholders where stakeholders as groups collectively produce the place brand with the facilitation of place brand managers. In this case, place branding takes places, as a negotiation between stakeholders by using social media and Internet as a channel to redirect tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices.

4.3.2 Overall strategy: Informational place demarketing

Challenges: degraded tourist experience, capacity problems and reduced quality of life

Degraded tourist experience is a challenge that comes with overtourism (Weber et al., 2017; WTTC, 2017). On the comment section of the documentary “Bye Bye Barcelona”, the tourist *groovina* (2017) addresses her negative experience by commenting: “It is so sad! I just returned from a vacation in Barcelona and what bothered me was to see the same souvenir shops, queues and more queues. I hope your government manages to control this situation for the good of all”. On the travel site Tripadvisor (2018 b) also *capacity problems* are addressed, the tourist *SouvenirBrussels* (2017) comments: “Excellent location almost in the city but so crowded. I was there in August and people were packed like sardines” and *LJC265* (2017) who comments: “I Visited Barceloneta beach in August and the beach was very crowded and busy”. In Amsterdam, the long queues to attractions degraded the tourist experience. On Tripadvisor (2018c), the tourist *Travel1911* (2018) commented about the Van Gogh Museum: “Don’t Bother, I was very surprised with this museum. After all the hype when the museum was being built, I expected much more.” The comment continues with saying that it was crowded with tourists and had few of Vincent’s well-known works. The degraded tourist experience is also affected by factors such as temperature and smell. The tourist *GabrieleP* (2018), said that the museum was “overpriced, had long queues and was rather boring. Very stuffy atmosphere, I went there in February and felt really uncomfortable with hot, steamy and smelly air” (Tripadvisor, 2018c). The reduced quality of life is addressed on Twitter by residents of Barcelona who use hashtags such as #TuristGoHome, #GuirisGoHome and #ElTurismeMata to express how they are affected by overtourism and the inappropriate tourist behaviour. The resident *@Estrata_Gema* (2018) comments: “Not so long time ago, some tourists arrive to my building and they stayed 2 months. I am so tired of their parties at night and the noise”.

4.3.2.1 Action: Using YouTube to post informative and educational documentary

To implement the strategy of informational place demarketing the resident Eduardo Chibás Fernández, a Venezuelan filmmaker who has lived in Barcelona for more than 10 years, has taken action by posting the documentary “Bye Bye Barcelona” on YouTube in order to raise awareness among stakeholders of the problem of overtourism in Barcelona. The documentary explores the difficult coexistence between citizens and mass tourism and the deterioration of the neighbourhoods. Seven chapters tackle the main issues that the city is facing in the iconic areas La Rambla, Ciutat Vella-Raval, El Born and Barceloneta, Sagrada Família and Park Güell, along with the boom of tourism, the economy and tourist flats. The documentary describes feelings and thoughts of residents who see the loss of their physical space “in favour” of mass tourism and it exposes the severe effects that mass tourism has on the city. The

documentary was released in 2014 reaching more than 250,000 views, raising awareness and provoking intense debates among different stakeholders (Chibás Fernández, 2014). The following comments show that the video has influenced tourists, making them feel guilty and not wanting to visit the overcrowded place. For example, *Carolyn Coote* (2017) after watching the video feels empathy with the people in Barcelona, she comments: “*This documentary made me feel sad. I am coming to Barcelona with my niece in September and feel guilty now... Will seek out more authentic experiences and have a lot of empathy for the people who live out their lives there*”. Another user *Nat Brown* (2016) felt offended and said, “Your wish is my command Barcelona, I was there two years ago, I loved it, but now, since you don't like guests, it's okay with me, I will not come anymore.” *Ademar g* (2016) also say that the documentary took away his desire to go to Barcelona while *Raul Becerril* (2018) said that he would rather go to Madrid.

This documentary on YouTube is interpreted as a way of using an informational place demarketing strategy since it raises awareness and educates stakeholders of the overtourism problem by spreading information through the media about places and to keep sustainable tourism (Medway et al., 2010; Weber et al., 2017). In addition, the viewers’ comments give the impression of the action working to redirect and discourage tourists to visit Barcelona. This documentary can also be used as a tool to redirect tourist consumption away from unsustainable choices, as Font and McCabe (2017) mentioned.

4.3.2.2 Action: Showing forecasting data on the website to inform about tourism activity

An action the Barcelona City Council has taken to implement informational place demarketing is by using the Internet to show forecasting data on tourism activity monthly (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2016a). Goodwin claims “The city is now able to forecast tourism activity on a monthly basis, based on data from the airport, the port, municipal services and the police, warning anyone who cares to check on the council website about the peak days and locations” (Goodwin 2016, p. 13). In this case, the Barcelona City Council is providing forecasting information on tourism activity on peak days and locations on its website to people who visit the city. However, by having this information quite hidden on the website it needs to be more accessible for Internet users in order to make this strategy more effective.

4.3.2.3 Action: Informing and preparing visitors of overcrowding

To implement the strategy of informational place demarketing the DMO Amsterdam has taken action by using its website to inform and prepare visitors of overcrowding. They state that “many of Amsterdam’s most famous attractions get busy at peak times” and gives its “Top 5 tips to beat the crowds in Amsterdam”. The list includes tips such as planning and pre-booking tickets to avoid the queues at the ticket booths, visiting attractions at a different time than the common nine-to-five-time slot, and seeing Amsterdam by bike to experience iconic attractions and views while escaping unsafe traffic (Amsterdam, 2018b). Since people go to the Internet to find information about a destination (e.g. Aych, 2015; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014; Sparks & Browning, 2011), it is important for DMOs and authorities to use these channels to both raise awareness of problems related to overtourism and to educate visitors on what to do to prepare for a holiday in an overcrowded city.

4.3.2.4 Action: Using technology to inform about the current situation at sites

Using technology to inform about the current situation at sites is an action of the informational place demarketing strategy. Goodwin (2017) mentions that Amsterdam has taken action by video streaming major attractions such as the Van Gogh Museum. By Google searching the words Amsterdam + webcam we found the website Webcam.nl (webcam.nl/amsterdam/) and the YouTube channel WebCamNL (2018). Webcam.nl is live streaming places such as popular streets and other places popular by tourists and residents, the beach Zandvoort, the marina etc. According to Webcam.nl the service is mainly to show the current traffic situation and the weather in the Netherlands. Figure 5 shows an open-air café in Amsterdam at 22:37 on the 13/4 2018.

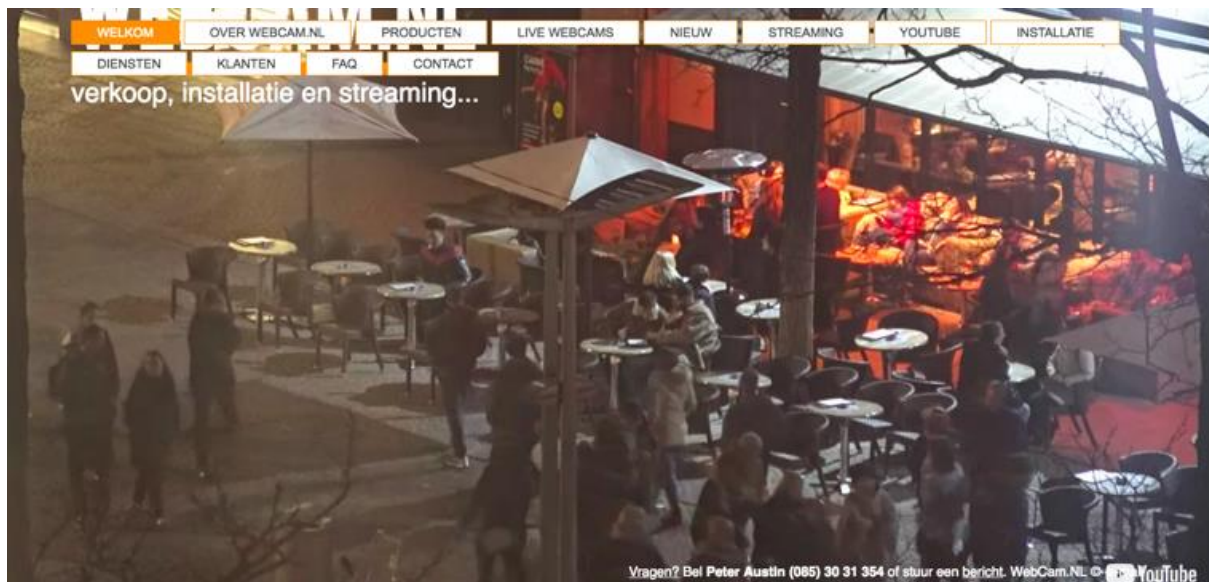


Figure 5: Webcam live streaming Amsterdam

Source: WebCam.nl

These three actions in Barcelona and Amsterdam are examples of an informational place demarketing strategy as mentioned by Medway et al. (2010). Informational demarketing is used by places to prevent crisis and discourage any form of public disorder. Furthermore, it is useful to educate potential visitors, organisations and the public by spreading information through the media and authorities' websites about places and to keep sustainable tourism in environmentally sensitive areas (Medway et al., 2010). This study found that technology can be used to inform about the current situation at sites, and websites can be used to show forecasting data to inform about tourism activity and to inform and prepare visitors of overcrowding.

This is interpreted as a way of indirectly redirecting tourism consumption. Even though the purpose of the webcams is to show the weather and traffic, it can implicitly work as a way of redirecting tourists because they can get influenced by the amount of people existing in the area, which they planned to visit, and thereafter choose another area or try again later (Ellwood, 2017). Similarly, the websites used in both cities to inform visitors and tourists, might redirect tourism consumption from the overcrowded areas when reading the estimated number of people there. According to Goodwin (2017, p.1) the phenomenon of overtourism occurs when “hosts or guests, locals or visitors feel that there are too many visitors and that the quality of

life and experiences in the area has deteriorated in an unacceptable way”. Tourists identify a cognitive, which means to perceive a situation as being crowded, and an affective, which is to value a particular level of crowding as unacceptable (Neuts and Nijkamp, 2012), meaning that not everyone will agree when popularity tips into overcrowding (WTTC, 2017). By watching video streams of the current situation people can be informed and make their own judgement whether a place is overcrowded or not.

Comparing Amsterdam’s action of using webcams to show tourism activity with Barcelona’s action of using a website to show forecast tourism activity, we believe using webcams is the best way because it is more real when people can watch the overcrowding than just read numbers and it is more reliable since it is real time and not just a forecast. However, Webcam.nl it is not an official website from authorities or DMO’s, hence video streaming is a good initiative they can adapt to implement an informational place demarketing strategy.

4.3.3 Overall strategy: Targeting sustainable tourism segments

Challenges: reduced quality of life, degraded tourist experience and environmental impacts

The challenge of *reduced quality of life* is related to overtourism since inappropriate tourist behaviour affects both the local population and other visitors in a negative way (Weber et al, 2017). In Barcelona, Goodwin (2016) found examples of *uncivil and irresponsible visitor behaviour*, such as intoxicated tourists, having sex in public, drug dealing on La Rambla and the street being used as a toilet. This challenge is confirmed in this study, for example in the comment section of the documentary “Bye Bye Barcelona” on YouTube, the resident *nu* (2016) comments: “We want high-quality tourism, we don't want tourists who urinate in the streets. We don't want drunk tourists who scream and party every day. That is very bad!” The resident wants responsible tourists and not tourists who behave in an inappropriate manner. The resident uses the term “high-quality tourism”, which can be interpreted as tourism that is beneficial for them as residents, such as tourists spending money, behaving like a resident and a positive cultural exchange. *Poor working conditions and lack of economic benefits* are factors that reduce the quality of life of residents (Weber et al., 2017). WTTC (2017) states that local economies do not always retain the total spending of tourists and therefore do not give economic benefits to the destinations; provoking the dissatisfaction of the residents. These problems are addressed by Barcelona’s residents in the comment section of the “Bye Bye Barcelona” documentary posted on YouTube. For instance, the user *Antifona* (2018) comments “The wealth is not shared; the tourism industry is always looking for a lower cost, which implies that the employment generated will be more and more precarious and getting worse paid”.

A major challenge of overtourism is *the degraded tourist experience*, and aspects leading to a degraded tourist experience include queues, crowding, irritation, infrastructure being overused, low service quality, lack of safety and hygiene problems (Weber et al., 2017; WTTC, 2017). This challenge is widely talked about on social media, for example in the comment section of the documentary “Bye Bye Barcelona” posted on YouTube. Many users describe how their tourist experience was degraded, for example the former tourist *MK Boy* (2018) states “The

Gothic quarter had a good atmosphere, but all I can see it being full of degenerate tourists shouting and vomiting all over the place. Overall, I loved Barcelona because of its vibe and its beautiful architecture but I don't think it's a tempting place during the peak periods". Also on Barcelona's beaches, the visitors' experience is deteriorating. Visitors, tourists and residents use the travel site Tripadvisor (2018b) to complain about the degraded tourist experience on the beach. The user *Katherine Z* (2017) mentions hygiene problems: "Too much people, the sea and beach are dirty. It's a party place, there are many bars". Another user, *Apurva G* (2017), commented about the overcrowding and lack of safety saying "Lovely but overcrowded beach! We went there on our honeymoon trip in July. Nice beach but beware of thieves and don't let your stuff unattended". Further, the vendors on the beach increase the annoyance of visitors and tourists, resulting a degraded tourist experience. For instance, the user *Amanda P* (2017) comments: "Every 3-5 minutes, you're getting asked if you want to buy beer, a mojito, a massage, or bracelets. Honestly, the vendors make the experience disgusting".

The challenge of *environmental impacts*, such as noise, littering, pollution of air and water, land degradation and emissions, overuse of natural resources (e.g. water and forests, poor waste management and harm to wildlife) (Weber et al., 2017; WTTC, 2017), might cause a degraded tourist experience. In Barcelona this challenge is highlighted by reviews relating to the beaches and seafront on the TripAdvisor website. The user *JoyinSutton* (2017) complains about the pollution of the beach saying "Dirty water and beach, walk further to avoid crowds! We were a little disappointed because this beach is packed every day. The beach was littered with cigarette ends, plastic bottles and snack wrappers".

4.3.3.1 Action: Targeting families

This study found that DMO's in Barcelona use social media to target sustainable tourism segments in order to evoke more sustainable consumption behaviour, as mentioned by Font and McCabe (2017). The DMO Barcelona Turisme is targeting families on Twitter by promoting activities and other parts of Catalonia to visit. They post tweets mentioning that Barcelona is a family destination, for instance "Barcelona, a destination to travel with the family #Barcelona #visitBarcelona" and "Several suggestions to enjoy the family tourism in Catalonia" with a link to an agenda of family activities (@BarcelonaInfoEN, 2018).

A programme called "Catalunya, hello family!" has been launched where 24 DMOs post tweets about this programme and its activities (La Vanguardia, 2018b). In this study the four towns Maresme, Vilanova i Geltru, Salou and Roses in Catalonia were analysed and findings show that their DMOs have used Twitter to promote different activities offered for families. For example, @CostaBcnMaresme (2018) commented "This weekend, four municipalities of Maresme participate in the 'Catalonia, Hello Family'. Know all the proposals we have prepared for you. Check them out here". Another DMO @VilanovaTurisme (2018) commented "Wonderful day of sunshine in Vilanova i la Geltru to enjoy the activities of Catalonia Hello Family. We await you here with all the information. <http://vilanovaturisme.cat>". The DMO @visitsalou (2018) posted "If you want to have a great time in family, look at everything that we offer you in Salou "Catalunya, Hello Family!" and the DMO of Roses town, @AjRoses (2018), commented "This Saturday, proposals for the whole family in the Ciutadella de Roses!

Have you already consulted the program of activities of "Catalonia, hello Family!" Do not miss it! More information here”.

Barcelona Turisme wants to attract families because according to La Vanguardia (2018b) 22% of the 19 million foreign tourists that visited Catalonia were families that contributed 4,000 million euros of profit in 2017. Babakhani, Ritchie and Dolnicar (2017) point out that there are market segments that are willing to buy more sustainable products or behave in an environmentally friendly way when on holiday. Therefore, we interpret that the economic benefits is one of the reasons why Turisme Barcelona targets families, additional reasons might be because they are more likely to behave as residents and not inappropriately, also they are less likely to litter.

4.3.3.2 Action: Targeting repeat visitors

In the case of west Sweden, the netnographic study shows no data on stakeholders posting about challenges of overtourism. However, the researcher at The West Sweden Tourist Board informed us that west Sweden has experienced problems related to tourism. For example, the increased number of buses coming with tourists, often from China, to make a quick stop in the destination just to get a picture of a typical picturesque west Swedish coastal community for Instagram. In addition, these tourists do not spend money because many of them are just on their way between Copenhagen and Oslo. How West Sweden Tourist Board can make tourists spend is something that they are working on right now. Weber et al (2017) explain this challenge as concentration of benefits involving financial leakages, which can be explained by the tourists not spending money in west Sweden.

Another problem related to overtourism is that there is a clash between cultures for the Chinese tourists. There is a lack of knowledge from the tourists’ side, which demands a new behaviour, for example entering private space etc. and part of the problem is that there is no information in Chinese. West Sweden’s challenges related to overtourism are aligned with Weber et al. (2017) who claim that inappropriate tourist behaviour causing the challenge of reduced quality of life. The undesired tourist behaviour and intercultural misunderstandings might affect the community in a negative way and can cause the perception of overcrowding.

We suggest that west Sweden should develop a strategy that mitigates intercultural misunderstandings, for example by targeting repeat visitors. Font and McCabe (2017) argue that tourists who behave more like residents are more likely to visit a broader range of locations in the tourist destination rather than the key spots that suffer from overcrowding. These tourists are also likely to have a lower demonstration effect, a reduced conflict risk between hosts and guests and they are more prone to spreading their economic impact by purchasing more local products. Font and McCabe (2017) claim that marketing can be a means of attracting tourists who behave like residents, one method might be to target repeat visitors. Although tourist boards might be unwilling to do this since they exist by opening new markets, and because repeat markets often spend less each day. By studying Barcelona’s social media, it is clear that using social media is an excellent source to target repeat visitors. For example, if the visitors

follow the DMO's social channels they get constant updates on what is happening in the place, which might influence them to visit the destination again.

4.3.4 Overall strategy: Social capacity building

Challenges: loss of place identity, image and bad reputation, reduced quality of life and bad governance

Overtourism presents many challenges for the stakeholders of a destination (see 2.4), which in turn negatively affects the reputation of the place and loss of place identity and authenticity (The Place Brand Observer, 2017). The stakeholders' feel the place losing identity, which is found on social media. For example, from the YouTube documentary "Bye Bye Barcelona" the tourist *MK Boy* (2018) comments "*I came back from Barcelona 6 days ago and although I love the city I never felt myself in Spain. La Rambla is a stretch of tourists with no identity. All I saw was gift shops after gifts shops, very expensive restaurants advertising Tapas and Paella but none of these places were unique to Spain*". The resident *Meniel* (2018) compare Barcelona to a theme park, by commenting "Barcelona is a party theme park for foreigners, similar to Las Vegas, where they can live their own version of the famous movie *The Hangover*". On Twitter Airbnb (@AirbnbCitizen) launched the media campaign #LoveBarcelona where the resident @Kitusky90 (2018) expressed "To love Barcelona is not to turn it into a theme park." Also in Amsterdam residents are comparing their city to a theme park. In the comments of the online article "Amsterdammers v tourists: 'It's worst when they throw up in your plant box'" (van der Zee, 2017), the user *Johan1974* (2017) comments: "*our once lovely capital has been turned into a Holland Experience™ amusement park. No-one who wants to lead a normal life wants to live in an amusement park. Five years ago, I had eight family members living in Amsterdam, now six of them have moved away.*" This shows an expression of *feeling alienated as a resident* which WTTC (2017) mention is a major challenge associated with overcrowding, and might lead to a reduced quality of life. Further, the following comment from van der Zee's (2017) article can be interpreted as Amsterdam has lost a part of its identity. The former tourist *Simother* comments that they used to go to Amsterdam very regularly, but now they never visit. The user mentions that there was a particular kind of people that used to live in Amsterdam: "independent, (head)strong, opinionated, gregarious, cultured with great taste, a sense of quality, character. They seem to be pushed out by housing prices, ageing and tourists [...]". The user *palosky777* (2017) is more aggressive and explicit saying "Tourists you are terrorists! You have destroyed neighbourhoods like Barceloneta, Raval, Gothic, Born and Gracia is the next! Then it will be Sants, Sant Andreu until everything becomes a great Disneyland". The analysis of these results show that residents feel that they have to defend the city and they blame the tourists for destroying Barcelona and its neighbourhoods.

These results indicate that local residents are dissatisfied with the changing environment due to overtourism. This challenge is so significant that it affects former tourists who show the disappointment that the place is losing its identity. For a destination this means that it is not unique anymore, which is a common problem when using marketing in a place context since destinations try to adapt their resources merely for the satisfaction of the tourists' needs and thereby neglecting the needs of the community, which might sacrifice what made them attractive and unique in the beginning (Haywood, 1990). As Govers and Go (p. 23, 2009)

suggest, place branding is ‘the link between identity, experience and image’, and when a brand is not based on identity then the branding effort result in a brand that is alien to the place (e.g. Houghton & Stevens, 2010; Therkelsen et al., 2010). In this case the brand of Barcelona and Amsterdam is alien to its stakeholders, which are the residents and tourists. Therefore, the municipalities and DMOs should take action and shift to place branding as proposed by Kavaratzis (2004) since it concerns achieving not only competitive advantage but also ‘community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens with their city and activating all social forces to avoid social exclusion and unrest’ (2004, p. 70).

Overtourism also affects *the reputation of a place*. Govers explains to “The Place Brand Observer” (2017) that the cities that struggle with overtourism are cities that have through time let their reputation be based only on tourism. Overtourism decreases the quality of a destination, damages the place product and therefore worsens its reputation. The bad reputation of a destination will likely have negative effects on its attractiveness and competitiveness. The marketing professor Freire explains “What a place gains with tourism, it might be losing in other industries, which may be a threat to the competitiveness of a place”. (Ibid.)

One interesting finding is that with social media enabling people to voice an opinion by adding content (Del Giudice, Peruta and Carayannis 2013; Kaplan and Haenlein 2010; Paradiso, 2013), the reputation and image of the destination can be damaged because stakeholders post reviews and comments on social media and the Internet about their negative experience on overcrowded destinations. Cleave et al. (2017) mention that municipalities are unable to control the creation of shared information and discussions about the destination. This is what is happening in the comment section of digital newspapers, social media channels and Tripadvisor, a travel site where many tourists go to get information before they travel and by having negative reviews from other users, it implies a risk to the reputation of the place. There are many negative reviews highlighting the major challenges of Barcelona and Amsterdam such as the beaches of Barcelona, illegal tourism accommodation, and iconic places such as Park Guell and Van Gogh museum in Amsterdam.

The challenge of *reduced quality of life* occurs when local communities are affected by restrictions and they sometimes have little involvement concerning tourism development. Overtourism can generate overworking along with unemployment during the off-season, shortage of high paying jobs for locals and immigrants dominating the labour market. The costs of living are higher, and increased rents can lead to having to move or homelessness. Too many tourists, unwanted behaviour and intercultural misunderstandings can lead to perception of overcrowding and might affect the community and even visitors negatively (Weber et al., 2017). This view is supported by WTTC (2017) who states that alienated local residents is one of the main challenges associated with overcrowding. According to the global authority in the Travel & Tourism sector, local residents are highly concerned about tourism especially on issues of rising rents, noise, displacement of local retail and changing neighbourhood nature (Ibid.). Furthermore, Suñé (2017) published an online article for the newspaper *La Vanguardia* about tourism being the main problem in Barcelona in 2017. For instance, the resident *Hasta cuando* (2017) comments: “We have a big problem in Barcelona if we do not control the uncivil

behaviour and drunkenness of the tourists”. On Twitter, the residents’ comments are more explicit since they are using hashtags referring to tourists not being welcome, that they should go back to their countries and that tourism has killed the city.

Reduced quality of life is also provoked by *poor working conditions and the lack of economic benefits*. WTTC (2017) states that local economies do not always retain the total spending of tourists and therefore do not give economic benefits to the destinations; provoking the dissatisfaction of the residents. This problem is found on social media, the user *MsFail89* (2016) comments: “tourism is not as beneficial as many people believe, who benefits from it are hotels, restaurants, multinationals, speculators and franchises in general. Which jobs do they create? Places full of waiters, street vendors, souvenirs shops and fast foods restaurants”. Also, the user *Antifona* (2018) comments that “The wealth is not shared; the tourism industry is always looking for a lower cost, which implies that the employment generated will be more and more precarious and getting worse paid”.

An interesting finding connected to reduced quality of life and residents feeling alienated is that even immigrants who live in the city feel that they can be viewed as impolite and rude tourists. On the YouTube documentary “Bye Bye Barcelona” the immigrant *Matt* (2016), who has been living and working in Barcelona for three years, feels that Catalans might think he has a bad behaviour like the tourists. He comments: “*The worst is the bachelor parties and all the drugs and prostitution that comes with it. I don't know how the compromise is going to be made but it makes me feel sad to think that Catalans might look at me on the street and think that I am the same as all the other tacky tourists*”. By being perceived as “one of the bad tourists” it creates a division between the immigrants and the locals which hinders them from feeling connected to the community.

The reduced quality of life is affected by *bad governance*, which is a challenge identified by Weber et al. (2017) which is in relation to policies and regulations, and aspects such as unqualified management, corruption or repression can result in negative effects on residents, visitors and tourism development. *Inadequate implementation of strategies* is related to the challenge of bad governance since tourism is prevented from developing correctly if tourism strategies and plans are lacking or inadequately applied and measures are not implemented. It is a challenge for the entire destination if the tourism management is insufficient. (Ibid.) Barcelona’s residents comment about this challenge, for example *Carina Lopez* (2018) who blames the government and proposes the city council to establish a plan so it does not become a theme park and the problem of housing should be regulated. She comments: “*...It is not the tourists’ fault, it is the government’s fault. As tourists come here with money, prices do not stop rising. The tourist brings money but few actually benefit from it. The city council should put a plan in place to maintain the charm of this city so it does not become a theme park and they must regulate the theme of housing. Tourism is important for any city but it has to be focused in the right way*”. The user *Meniel* (2018) comments “*...the lack and slowness of political response to the different changes in the city have accentuated this problem*”.

In Barcelona, the regulation of Park Güell seeks to improve the quality of life of the local residents, provide a better experience to the visitors and a more accessible area. Local residents from the adjacent districts to Park Güell have free entry to the place during all year using a personal card. (Barcelona.cat, 2018; Ajuntament de Barcelona & Barcelona Regional, 2017) However, from reading comments collected from TripAdvisor (2018a) and Park Guell Barcelona's official Facebook page (2018) it is clear that implementing the demarketing strategies of restricting access and pricing mechanisms have created discomfort among the visitors. The visitor *Lachessis2* (2014) do not agree with the fee charged by the municipality: "It is expensive! You have to pay to visit the park area, but most are visible from the outside and at the end they charge €7 or €8". These results support the idea of Weber et al. (2017) who claim that tourism in a destination cannot develop in a proper way due to the implementation of strategies being inadequate, which can be the case in Barcelona. The bad governance of the regulation of Park Guell have led to negative effects on tourists and can prevent tourism from developing properly.

Regarding *bad governance* this study found that residents blame the government since there is no political response and regulations for problems such as high prices, high costs of living and housing, and the lack of economic benefits since residents feel that they do not benefit from tourism. These results confirm the theory of Weber et al. (2017), since the residents express that there is a lack of regulations and there is an incompetent management by the government. The comments regarding the challenges of loss of place identity, reputation and image can be interpreted as destinations are changing to a place that is only based on tourism and tourists, which makes the residents feel like they are not a part of the city. This information is relevant for the municipality and tourism management organizations when they plan on how to cope with overtourism.

To conclude, these challenges engages people, who need a change therefore they use social media as a channel to propose ideas to tackle the main issues. Social media can be used as a tool when evaluating strategies implemented by authorities to guarantee that stakeholders feel like the strategies are contributing to an improved quality of life, a good visitor experience, a good reputation and image of the destination. Social media can also be used to get ideas of improvement when planning on how to cope with overtourism.

4.3.4.1 Action: Engaging stakeholders in tourism discussion and development

To mitigate the challenges of *loss of place identity, image and bad reputation, reduced quality of life* and *bad governance*, a social capacity building strategy needs to be implemented. According to Weber et al. (2017) *community engagement* is an action of social capacity building, which involves addressing the social demands of locals and establishing community capacity to reduce vulnerability of a system. *Participation and involvement* is also an action within social capacity building, measures include developing community capacity participation programs, involving local institutions and companies, along with integrating civil society, the public, NGOs and traditional leaders. As well as, coordination and information actions, opportunities for loyal visitors to participate; special permits for residents and including local volunteers.

Barcelona City Council has taken action by implementing a digital platform called *decidim.barcelona*, giving local residents the opportunity to engage in discussions, debates and consultations about issues of the city. The *decidim.barcelona* participatory process first started with the purpose of building the 2015-2019 Municipal Action Plan to tackle tourism issues and the platform is still available online. This process allows residents of the neighbourhoods to participate through face-to-face meetings, debates and proposal collection trolleys as well as digital participation through *decidim.barcelona* website and social media. The digital platform has collected the most-voted action proposals in regard to the sustainable tourism strategy such as Strategic Tourism Plan, Park Guell Master Plan, Special Urban-Development Plan for Tourist Accommodation (PEUAT), reclaiming La Rambla for Barcelona's residents, front-loading terraces throughout the Sagrada Família vicinity, among others. The Tourism and City Council evaluates and validates the citizens' proposed actions and initiatives regarding tourism issues. (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2017b)

As Weber et al. (2017) argues, an action that can be taken to reduce challenges related to overtourism is "participation and involvement". In order to develop community capacity participation programmes, all the stakeholders must be taken in consideration and must be involved (i.e. local institutions, business, civil society) (Ibid.). This digital platform is interpreted as a good initiative to giving stakeholders (e.g. local institutions, authorities and local residents) the opportunity to voice their opinions and openly debate about the issues of overtourism that are affecting their neighbourhoods and give proposals on how to deal with them. In addition, *decidim.barcelona* acts as a community engagement platform, an action that Weber et al (2017) recommend for overcrowded destinations. This digital platform work as a network that engages the whole community and it addresses the social needs of the residents by focusing on overtourism issues and conflicts with the aim to take action and reduce these conflicts.

Involving stakeholders in the process of managing tourism is important from a place branding perspective. Kavaratzis et al. (2015) claim that the role of stakeholders should be considered in the development of place branding, understanding who they are and their opinions about the place must be key factors of any place branding strategy. Govers and Go (2009) argue that the link between identity, experience and image is essential in place branding, and if the brand is not based on identity then the branding effort result in a brand that is alien to the place, especially to its internal audiences (e.g. Houghton and Stevens, 2010; Therkelsen et al., 2010). Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) argue that place identity is a complex process of dialogue between stakeholders and place branding should be thought of as a similar process where stakeholders as groups collectively produce the place brand under the facilitation by place brand managers. To conclude, by giving stakeholders the opportunity to make their voice heard and be a part of the place branding process, it helps to keep the real identity that is authentic to Barcelona, improving the stakeholders' quality of life and also reinforcing the reputation of the destination.

Challenges: Culture clashes, inappropriate tourist behaviour, concentration of benefits, lack of tourist information

West Sweden is experiencing problems related to overtourism, for example the culture clash for the Chinese tourists. There is a lack of knowledge from the tourists' side, which demands a new behaviour, for example entering private space etc. and part of the problem is that there is no information provided for tourists in Chinese. In addition, these tourists do not spend money because many of them are just on their way between Copenhagen and Oslo. These challenges are related to overtourism, for example Weber et al. (2017) present inappropriate tourist behaviour causing the challenge of reduced quality of life, the undesired tourist behaviour and intercultural misunderstandings might affect the community in a negative way and can cause the perception of overcrowding. Further challenge Weber et al (2017) explain as concentration of benefits involving financial leakages, which can be explained by the tourists not spending money in west Sweden. Regarding the lack of information in Chinese, Weber et al. (2017) argue that when tourism strategies are missing or inadequately applied, tourism is prevented from developing in a proper way.

4.3.4.2 Action: Integrating tourists in the community - Meet The Locals

To mitigate the challenge of inappropriate tourist behaviour and culture clashes, we found on The West Sweden Tourist Board's website an action to integrate tourists in the community that is *MeetTheLocals.se*. Meet The Locals is a platform where The West Sweden Tourist Board has gathered organisations, apps, Facebook groups and websites that all share a common goal: to make visitors and locals meet in various forms. According to the website the core of Meet the Locals is sharing and it can be done in different ways; people who want to share their hobbies or initiatives that minimise the use of resources by sharing or borrowing instead of buying. It can for example be a local who wants to offer tourists the experience of taking a ride in their rare American car around the area, a local who can offer taking the tourists on a forest walk with their dog, or someone who wants to share leftover fruit from their garden for someone else to enjoy. Visitors can also choose to stay at someone's house to see what a home can look like in this part of the world (Meet The Locals, 2018).

This form of interaction between locals and tourists can lead to relationships being established, where locals can teach tourists how to behave according to the local norms of the place. To mitigate the clash between cultures, west Sweden has implemented what Weber et al. (2017) suggest will help strengthen the resilience of a destination: *awareness raising and training* among locals, tourists and other stakeholders. This is connected to Medway et al.'s (2010) strategy of informational place demarketing, which aims to educate potential visitors, organisations, action groups and the public. The media and authorities' websites can be used to spread information about places to keep tourism sustainable, for example information in the form of a "code of good practice" which warns visitors that they have an obligation to act responsibly if they are to visit specific areas. This might result in some reconsideration whether they are to frequent a specific place, which result in demarketing the destination to prospective users. (Ibid.)

Further, Meet The Locals is an example of community engagement and participation and involvement, in a way that it integrates tourist and visitors with local residents. This goes in line with Kavartzis et al. (2015) who claim that the role of stakeholders should be considered in the development of place branding, understanding who they are and their opinions about the place must be key factors of any place branding strategy.

4.4 Strategies not use online to cope with overtourism

The information in this section is derived from the interview with the researcher from The West Sweden Tourist Board. West Sweden has not taken action when it comes to overtourism. They mention sustainability in their business plan but they are just in the initial phase when it comes to thinking about policies that deal with overcrowded tourism. The case of west Sweden is different from cities such as Barcelona and Amsterdam because the latter have been pushed to implement policies and use strategies to manage and redirect tourism consumption. The West Sweden Tourist Board has to plan how to cope with the upcoming summer. There are many practical issues that needs to be dealt with, but also, they need to think about appropriate strategies to deal with the situation overall. The West Sweden Tourist Board has discussed place demarketing strategies like pricing mechanisms such as asking for a fee to enter crowded places. However, it is problematic in Sweden because each municipality has a service obligation, for example to offer a specific number of toilets etc. In a way, Sweden is a good country for sustainable development and tourism, the researcher stated: *“Sweden has a lot of rules and regulations and it is a very planned country, but in another way, it is also a challenge because we have the right to public access [allemansträtten] and the service obligation of the municipality, so it is difficult to use fees as a way to regulate tourists. However, it is something that needs to be explored more, and it could be defined as the solution in the future”*.

After studying Barcelona, which has regulated iconic places like Park Guell, it is evident that long queues and waiting time for the attraction still exist. This regulation has affected the visitors and residents in Barcelona since both are dissatisfied because of the overcrowdedness and high prices. Pricing mechanisms can be beneficial in one way, since West Sweden can discourage lower-income visitors to visit a place. However, it has many disadvantages, for example certain group of tourists might feel that is not ethical (Medway et al., 2010), and tourism in Sweden has always been about welcoming tourists and never exploitive. Furthermore, it is difficult to impose a fee to enter a place because west Sweden cannot just change the rules and regulations for the destination and every person has the right to public access in Sweden.

5. Conclusions

This chapter will provide answers to the research questions, thereafter contributions to theory and practice will be stated and finally limitations and suggestions of further research will be addressed.

How do different stakeholders discuss the challenges of overtourism on social media and the Internet?

This netnographic case study concludes that stakeholders from Barcelona and Amsterdam, more specifically residents, tourists as well as former visitors are using social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, but also comment sections of digital newspaper and travel sites such as TripAdvisor, as a channel to express their opinions, concerns, feelings and experiences related to overtourism challenges. This study has shown that DMO's, tourist boards and the authorities from the three destinations do not use social media and their websites to state their views nor interact with the audience about the challenges of overtourism. Rather, they use social media and the Internet to promote their achievements in superficial terms.

This study has identified that social media is used by stakeholders as a channel to complain and give criticism, which implies a risk for the place brand, since having negative experiences posted online create a bad reputation and image of the place. Some stakeholders discuss on social media and the Internet by blaming other stakeholders for causing challenges of overtourism. For example, they blame the government for not taking action against overtourism, other tourists for creating the problem, the accommodation service Airbnb for high costs of living and housing and the tourism industry and multinational corporations for the lack of economic benefits and precarious jobs. Social media plays an important role since it gives the municipality, tourist boards, tourism management organisations, and DMOs the opportunity to find new challenges, involving different stakeholders and taking in consideration what they want the place to be about in the place branding process. Therefore, online information from stakeholders can be used to mitigate challenges and implement a strategy in order to overcome them.

In the case of the small destinations on the coast of west Sweden, not yet suffering with overtourism in the same scale as Barcelona or Amsterdam, we found that the residents, tourists and visitors do not use social media channels and the Internet to discuss and express their feelings and experiences about challenges related to tourism. However, this might be because they do not use hashtags that addresses tourism issues. Therefore, it is of great importance that municipalities, tourist boards, and DMOs take in consideration the stakeholders' concerns and find new ways of involving them in the discussions of challenges associated with tourism.

Which strategies and actions do stakeholders use online to cope with overtourism?

The purpose of this study was to explore and find the strategies and actions that stakeholders use online to cope with overtourism challenges. Barcelona City Council, the municipality of Amsterdam and the service provider Airbnb implement the overall strategy of *redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices* by taking action to redirect tourism

consumption away from illegal tourist flats. Another action to implement the overall strategy is taken by DMO's of Barcelona and Amsterdam by redirecting tourism consumption to alternative places on their websites. Further, The West Sweden Tourist Board has taken action by using its social media channels and website to redirect tourism consumption geographically and seasonally. Finally, this study has identified that residents and tourists in Barcelona and Amsterdam have taken action by redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices through social media and the Internet. The second overall strategy is *informational place demarketing*, an action taken by a resident of Barcelona is to use YouTube to post an informative and educational documentary called "Bye Bye Barcelona". Barcelona City Council has taken action by showing forecasting data on the website to inform about tourism activity. In Amsterdam, the DMO Iamsterdam has taken action by informing and preparing visitors of overcrowding through its website. Another action was found in Amsterdam that was taken by Webcam.nl, who is using technology to inform about the current situation at sites. The third overall strategy is *targeting sustainable tourism segments*. Within this strategy, this study has found that DMO's in Catalonia have taken action by targeting families. We suggest that west Sweden should take action by targeting repeat visitors. The fourth overall strategy is *social capacity building*, in which Barcelona City Council has taken action by engaging stakeholders in tourism discussion and development through the digital platform decidim.barcelona. An action that was taken in west Sweden included integrating tourists in the community through the website MeetTheLocals.se.

New developments within the place marketing literature suggest a shift from place marketing to place branding (Lichrou et al, 2010). Research suggests branding to be a more appropriate approach in a place context (de Chernatony & Dall Olmo Riley, 1998). Strategies and actions in Amsterdam and Barcelona provide good examples of involving the stakeholders in place branding development. Overtourism presents many challenges for the stakeholders in a destination, which in turn negatively affects the identity, reputation, competitiveness, and attractiveness of places. For that reason, a place branding approach where stakeholders are involved and engaged, should be taken in consideration in the development and implementation of strategies and they should work together towards more sustainable tourism (Kavaratzis et al., 2015; Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2018a). Social media can work as a link between the stakeholders and DMOs who facilitate the place branding process and involving the stakeholders in the tourism discussion will facilitate an authentic place brand.

Which strategies can be recommended to authorities and DMOs of small destinations, not yet meeting the major challenges of overtourism, in order to prepare for increasing tourism?

Learning from overcrowded destinations like Barcelona and Amsterdam, it can be concluded that destinations should not scare away tourists by imposing fees, which reading from comments and reviews makes them that they are not welcome there. Thus, it is important to use subtle methods rather than radical methods of trying to control and redirect tourists. That is why we think social media is an effective channel that can be used to redirect tourism consumption during the whole year by promoting places that are more suited to host tourists. The reason for using social media is because tourists go to the Internet to communicate their travel patterns in pursuit of social connectedness (Germann Molz, 2012; Gössling & Stavrinidi, 2015) and also to evaluate and to be advised (e.g. Aye, 2015; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014; Sparks

& Browning, 2011). Potential tourists can get influenced by other people's opinions on social media, as well as destinations' websites and then decide not to travel there during peak season. What west Sweden can learn from Barcelona and Amsterdam regarding engaging on social media, is that the municipality and DMOs must interact directly with their audience by going on different stakeholders' social media and starting discussions about tourism issues to raise awareness. This interaction helps influence word-of-mouth reputation as mentioned by Cleave et al. (2017) in order to develop a strong place brand (Ketter and Avraham, 2012; Sevin, 2013). Our recommendation is that west Sweden should link social media to traditional media such as local newspapers or radio and TV, to reach older citizens and to raise awareness.

In order to mitigate the challenge of inappropriate tourist behaviour, culture clashes and financial leakages we recommend implementing the strategy of targeting sustainable tourism segments, more specifically repeat visitors. Additionally, The West Sweden Tourist Board should keep working with Meet The Locals platform since it integrates tourists in the society. West Sweden should educate potential visitors, tour guides and operators, by implementing an informational place demarketing strategy as mentioned by Medway et al. (2010), for example providing information online through a code of conduct. Regarding the lack of information in Chinese we recommend providing information in several different languages. Sweden can learn from Amsterdam and use technology such as live streaming to inform how overcrowded a place is in real time. However, if it is too expensive to install just for a short period during summer, they can start with collecting data on tourism activity and show forecasts instead, such as in Barcelona, so people think twice before going there.

West Sweden needs to plan in advance for overtourism and to prevent conflicts related to tourism. We recommend the municipality to involve stakeholders in the place branding process, for example through face-to-face meetings or using a digital channel like *decicim.barcelona* to involve and integrate different stakeholders such as residents, tourists, visitors and businesses etc. in the tourism discussion by giving them the opportunity to address social needs, raise concerns, reduce conflicts and propose actions before they become major issues.

5.1 Theoretical Contributions of Research

There appears to be a gap in the literature regarding using strategies to reduce and redirect overtourism through the use of social media and the Internet. Previous studies have focused on strategies to place demarket, but none of them if and how redirecting tourism is done online. In addition, how social media can be used as a place marketing tool, but no studies on if and how social media can be used to demarket a place. This study has contributed to the theory on overtourism by showing that destinations (DMO's and tourist boards, and the municipality) use strategies online to control and redirect tourism consumption. The study also shows that social media and the Internet is used by stakeholders to express their opinions in relation to challenges of overtourism and propose actions to overcome overtourism. However, this study has shown that these challenges are not sufficiently addressed by DMOs, tourist boards or the municipality online.

5.2 Managerial implications

Using online tools in marketing is very important because tourists go to the Internet to evaluate and to be advised (e.g. Ayeh, 2015; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014; Sparks & Browning, 2011). Therefore, DMOs should utilize the Internet and social media as a channel where to get information when planning actions and strategies to cope with overtourism.

When DMOs, tourist boards and municipalities implement the strategy of redirecting away from unsustainable choices, this study shows that redirecting tourists can be done in a subtle way. There are positive reactions when alternatives to the overcrowded attractions and places, which are considered “insider secrets” are highlighted. With the users and potential tourists appreciating this way of recommending alternative places to visit, this would be the way to go when redirecting tourists. Furthermore, this study shows that social media and the Internet can be used as an effective channel by the authorities in the place branding process since it involves and engage all the stakeholders.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

The concept of overtourism is still new and there are many definitions and words that are being used to describe the feeling of a place having too many tourists. Examples of words we have found are overtourism, overcrowding, mass tourism, unsustainable tourism and overpopularity. This becomes a limitation to this study because there must be more information on the phenomenon, which has not been found.

Considering there is a lack of research on strategies used online to cope with tourism consumption. Future research might explore if strategies such as informational place demarketing and redirecting tourism consumption away from unsustainable choices on social media has worked, i.e. visitors choosing another area to visit and stay in. Another interesting field of research is whether the strategies used online, such as promoting places outside of the overcrowded areas, are intentionally implemented by the DMOs, tourist boards and municipalities to redirect tourism consumption. Since the purpose of this study was to give a recommendation for a small destination that faces the risk of overtourism, research can study in a more detailed manner, which strategies west Sweden can implement, and how they can do it.

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Social Media Data

Barcelona

@Estrata_Gema (2018): https://twitter.com/Estrata_Gema/status/962736862644375553

AirbnbCitizen Twitter official account

@AirbnbCitizen (2018): <https://twitter.com/AirbnbCitizen/status/950708691287904262>

@EmiliBatiste (2018): <https://twitter.com/EmiliBatiste/status/954474772808773632>

@Kitusky90 (2018): <https://twitter.com/kitusky90/status/952141873455484928>

Park Güell

Facebook (2018): https://www.facebook.com/pg/ParkGuellOficial/reviews/?ref=page_internal

Maria DeLurdes (2018): <https://www.facebook.com/chica74/activity/10155398796202291>

Inga Bechara (2018): <https://www.facebook.com/inga.bechara/activity/10213272421078247>

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Barcelona Turisme's Social Media:

Twitter (@BarcelonaTurism): <https://twitter.com/barcelonaturism?lang=en>

Tweets posted 2018: <https://twitter.com/BarcelonaTurism/status/976089046983290881>

<https://twitter.com/BarcelonaTurism/status/972804454490796032>

Twitter (@BarcelonaInfoEn): <https://twitter.com/BarcelonaInfoEN>

Tweets posted 2018:

<https://twitter.com/BarcelonaInfoEN/status/954352836980158464>

<https://twitter.com/BarcelonaInfoEN/status/971052906291048449>

<https://twitter.com/BarcelonaInfoEN/status/981924433978904576>

Ajuntament de Barcelona, Barcelona City Council Social Media:

Twitter (@bcn_ajuntament): https://twitter.com/bcn_ajuntament

Tweets posted 2018:

https://twitter.com/bcn_ajuntament/status/951025871745376256

https://twitter.com/bcn_ajuntament/status/953547314886578176

Visit Barcelona Social Media:

Twitter (@VisitBCN_EN): https://twitter.com/VisitBCN_EN

Tweets posted 2018:

https://twitter.com/VisitBCN_EN/status/987964305785094144

https://twitter.com/VisitBCN_EN/status/982528509426909184

https://twitter.com/VisitBCN_EN/status/980760833818025986

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/visitbarcelona/>

DMOs of Barcelona towns Tweets:

@CostaBcnMaresme(2018): <https://twitter.com/CostaBcnMaresme/status/987956704133419011>

@VilanovaTurisme (2018) : <https://twitter.com/VilanovaTurisme/status/987606995606933504>

@visitsalou (2018): <https://twitter.com/visitsalou/status/987599339831877634>

@AjRoses (2018): <https://twitter.com/AjRoses/status/987585236618838016>

Amsterdam

Challenges: @schlijper (2018): <https://twitter.com/schlijper/status/981969221138767873>

@car8lover (2018): <https://twitter.com/car8lover/status/968021117251158016>

@lunaticllama (2018): <https://twitter.com/lunaticllama/status/976464769111638016>

Iamsterdam's Social Media:

Twitter (@Iamsterdam): <https://twitter.com/iamsterdam?lang=sv>

Tweet posted on 7/11 2017: <https://twitter.com/Iamsterdam/status/927817921618960384>

Tweet posted on 22/3 2018: <https://twitter.com/Iamsterdam/status/976838458521149442>

Iamsterdam Facebook Photos (2018):

https://www.facebook.com/pg/iamsterdam/photos/?ref=page_internal

Websites:

Tripadvisor (2018c):

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g188590-d190554-Reviews-Van_Gogh_Museum-Amsterdam_North_Holland_Province.html

The West Sweden Tourist Board's Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/vastsverige/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/vastsverige/>

Twitter: Swedish: https://twitter.com/vastsvenska_tr

English: <https://twitter.com/WestSwedenTB>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_6vYoMxAtjduvoo-Ea0PGw

Website: www.vastsverige.com/en/