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Course: Marketing Case Analysis

Case 10 Österöd Woman - Concept Development

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Gothenburg, 2023



Introduction

In an age dominated by media consumption, our understanding of history and culture is more profoundly shaped than ever before. The discovery of the Österöd woman—a Mesolithic skeleton from Bohuslän, Sweden—presents an extraordinary opportunity to delve deep into ancient cultures and histories. Dating back to 10,200 BC, this skeleton serves as a living testament to our ancestral past (see Bergquist, 2023; Larsson, 2017; Ahlström & Sjögren, 2007).

Our mission is straightforward: We aim to create an engaging television series that brings the story of the Österöd woman to life, providing viewers insights into the Mesolithic era. This series seeks to become a catalyst, stirring widespread interest and offering a richer, more robust understanding of this pivotal time in human history. Furthermore, it holds the potential to transform Lysekil, predominantly a summer tourist destination, into a learning and cultural enrichment, attracting visitors year-round, boosting the local economy, and conserving its cultural heritage. This initiative — embedded in the creation of a “*sustainable cultural ecosystem*” (see Eliasson et al., 2018) — aims to meld the historical essence of the Österöd woman with innovative storytelling and sustainable tourism to enrich cultural understanding and appreciation. It aims to integrate local history and traditions into Lysekil’s cultural and economic landscape.

In this report, our goal is to outline a comprehensive strategy encompassing audience identification, innovative storytelling, strategic marketing, and sustainable tourism to deliver a series that resonates with viewers globally. It serves as a conduit for cultural understanding and appreciation, ultimately enriching our collective historical knowledge.

Navigating through Strategic Storytelling Techniques

Within the dynamic interplay of narratives and marketing, this focuses on the assessment of various storytelling strategies within the specialized domain of tourism marketing. Storytelling, deeply examined in disciplines like anthropology, psychology, and sociology, finds a novel intersection in this project, spotlighting its application and impact in tourism (Solomon et al., 2022). The importance of this exploration is underscored by the burgeoning interest in narratives within tourism research, revealing potentials and offering fresh perspectives (Moin et al., 2020; Moscardo, 2020b). Solutions such as historical festivals/events, and animated movies for children under 12 will be scrutinized to understand their capability to craft compelling narratives and enrich tourism experiences.

Animated movies for children under 12 — The municipality of Lysekil has the opportunity to collaborate with the animation studio and production company — Warner Bros — to develop an engaging and educational episode of “*The Flintstones*,” bringing the life of the Österöd Women to the screen in a manner suitable for children under the age of 12. The Flintstones is a renowned animated series that romanticizes the Stone Age, focusing on the daily lives of the Flintstone family and their neighbors, the Rubbles. The series was initially produced by Hanna-Barbera Productions, which is now owned by Warner Bros. In this conceptualized episode, the Flintstone family could travel to Bohuslän for a family vacation where they encounter the Österöd Woman. Her life and the adventures of her family/tribe could be portrayed in an entertaining and educational manner, making it easily understandable for kids. The episode aims to integrate the Österöd woman while maintaining the essence of “*The Flintstones*” series. It could be showcased on children's TV channels and utilized as an educational tool in Swedish schools and museums, aiding understanding of history and archaeology in an entertaining way.

This initiative has the potential to reach a global audience, drawing tourism from around the world and fostering cultural awareness. The episode will also promote archaeology and Swedish history among the younger generation. Effective storytelling within the project can act as a medium to preserve and promote the rich Stone Age heritage of Bohuslän, fostering a sense of pride among the locals and attracting tourists.

However, this project might necessitate substantial funding to establish the partnership with Warner Bros and ensure high production quality. Additionally, there is a possibility that the popularity of the episode could lead to an influx of tourists that surpasses the capacity of Bohuslän, posing challenges for the municipality and its residents. Campos and Almeida (2022)

have highlighted concerns about over-commercialization in destination marketing. An overemphasis on marketing may compromise the authenticity of the experience that tourists may have.

Historical festivals/events – Another innovative marketing strategy involves organizing historical festivals and events that transport participants back in time to the Österöd Woman's era. These Scandinavian events, centered around "cultural planning" (see above) combine cultural showcases, archaeological displays, and interactive experiences that reenact scenes from her time, providing attendees with historical experiences (Lindeborg & Lindkvist, 2013).

A key advantage of hosting historical festivals and events is the profound cultural connection they facilitate. By providing attendees with the opportunity to immerse themselves in the world of individuals who resided in the Österöd Woman's time, these gatherings establish a direct connection to the destination's historical roots. Furthermore, these occasions serve as a powerful tool for community building, attracting both locals and visitors to converge to celebrate history, culture, and heritage together. This shared experience fosters a sense of companionship and cross-cultural exchange, enriching the connection between individuals and the destination. The bibliography emphasizes the community stories in the heritage site narrative strengthens the community's sense of belonging and enhances tourists' perception of authenticity (Roque & Forte, 2017a, 2017b).

Although this community involvement is critical in solving emerging challenges in cultural tourism (Di Pietro et al., 2018), the attempt at accurate historical representation presents a crucial challenge: maintaining an engaging and entertaining atmosphere while striking the balance between authenticity and entertainment. This complexity involves historical elements and details that remain true and accurate to the specific period being depicted. Besides, turning historic sites into tourist attractions, even though it promotes cultural values, has sometimes pushed local communities further away. This shift is often driven by adapting sites like Lysekil to accommodate international visitors. Unfortunately, it has resulted in a few problems as well. One issue is what some call the "*admiration of ignorance*" (Lowenthal, 2015, p. 590), where consumers/customers in contemporary societies are marked by a limited understanding of geography and history (Lowenthal, 2015). Finally, when tourists are not well-informed or lack awareness, there is a risk of inadvertent harm to historic sites and their valuable artifacts. This damage can have a detrimental impact on this site's authenticity, potentially diminishing its attractiveness, particularly to those tourists who have witnessed the alterations made to these locations (Timothy, 1994).

Festival/Event Blueprint: A Nordic Approach through ICEPM

Having carefully considered all possible solutions, we have honed our focus on identifying and analyzing the key preferred solutions essential for effective festival and event management. We will subsequently analyze and implement the concept of cultural planning. The core objective of this endeavor is to examine how cultural planning impacts festival management within the Nordic region. To influence the direction and success of festivals and events, we will examine several crucial factors, including heritage-driven innovation, place branding strategies, segmentation, and targeting. These elements are indispensable for cultural planners striving to organize and orchestrate meaningful cultural events and festivals.

In enhancing our perspective, a detailed '*contextual analysis*' is conducted, incorporating insights from case studies centered on Sweden and enriching our approach by considering the broader Scandinavian academic context. This combination of insights provides a more balanced and informed view, allowing for a refined approach to implementing cultural planning strategies in the Nordic region. This methodology helps us uncover the specific challenges and the strategies to overcome them through focused risk management unique to the Nordic environment, providing adaptable insights for broader cultural planning initiatives.

Thus, our efforts culminate in the development of the Integrated Cultural Event Planning Model (ICEPM) (Fig. 1). This comprehensive model is designed to offer stakeholders a well-rounded tool for effective cultural planning. By encompassing three pillars with a variety of

themes and concerns related to festival and event management, ICEPM stands as a practical guide for cultural planners, policymakers, and community stakeholders.

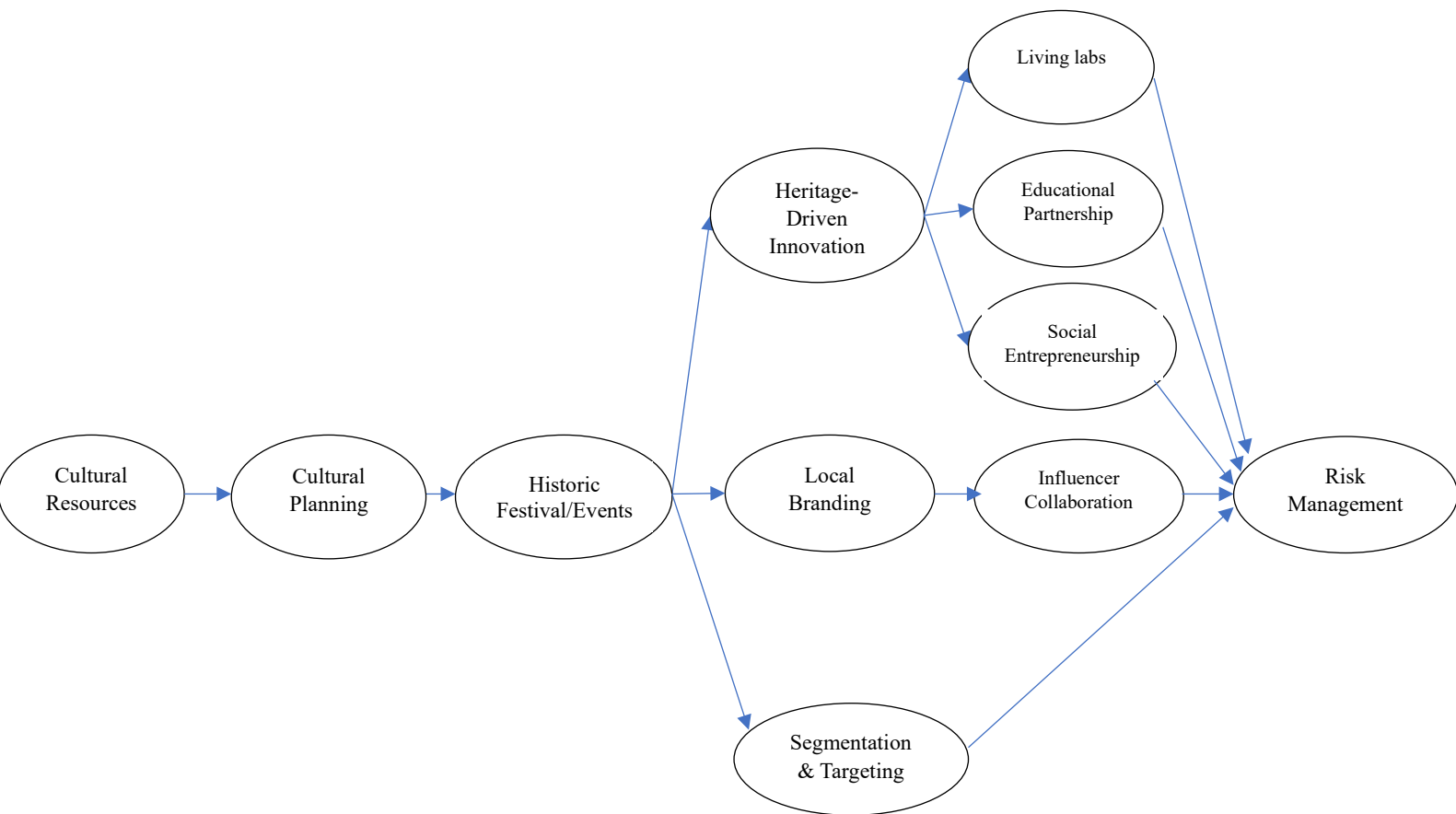


Fig. 1 Integrated Cultural Event Planning Model (ICEPM)

Cultural resources in the Nordic context

Previous research provides a comprehensive foundation for understanding the dynamics of the Nordic festivals and events at play. For instance, Getz et al. (2010) have delved into festival management in Sweden and Norway as part of a four-country review, offering a multifaceted view that considers factors such as vision, mandate, ownership, and stakeholder involvement. Further extending the geographical scope, Getz et al. (2007) and Andersson and Getz (2007a, b) provide in-depth evaluations of a range of Swedish festivals, contributing to a well-rounded understanding of the Swedish festival landscape.

Building on these studies, Armbrecht's (2021) comprehensive review spans over two decades of studies on Nordic festivals and events. This review uncovers additional layers of complexity by centering on the broader roles, societal impacts, and economic effects of these cultural happenings. It provides clear insights into the different challenges and larger effects connected with the variety of festivals and events in the Nordic region, thereby contributing to a more holistic understanding of cultural resource dynamics in this context.

To conclude, by using detailed insights from past studies on Nordic cultural resources, our storytelling strategy is designed to present narratives that are deeply connected with the Nordic region's cultural, economic, and societal realities. This approach is meant to create stories that are more meaningful and relatable to our audience, offering an authentic view of the region's cultural richness. By going beyond traditional storytelling, we aim to give a clear and comprehensive view of the region's diverse cultures. This method not only improves the quality of the narratives but also supports the sustainable cultural environment we wish to build, encouraging a wider and more informed appreciation of the cultural and societal aspects of the Nordic region.

Cultural planning

Cultural planning extends far beyond a monolithic idea confined to art or aesthetic indulgence; it is intrinsically linked to the Folk-Work-Place triad as originally articulated by Patrick Geddes (Meller, 1990). Echoing Geddes and subsequent scholars like Franco Bianchini (1989), cultural planning is recognized as being rooted in the lived experiences of communities, encompassing culture as a "way of life" and serving as a "difficult art" extending beyond mere artistic engagement (Bianchini, 1989; Meller, 1990).

"In urban planning, 'cultural planning' has become one of the main strategies of cities" (Baycan & Fusco Girard, 2013, p. 274), contributing significantly to not only the artistic and aesthetic realms but also to economic and social well-being. Scholars such as Markusen (2006) and Baycan and Fusco Girard (2013) have emphasized their role in rejuvenating declining urban areas and stimulating creative economies. Mercer (2002) defined "***cultural planning as the strategic and integral use of cultural resources in community development***" (p. 172), highlighting its participative and consultative nature, which aids local administration in distinguishing and leveraging cultural resources to achieve defined goals (Grogan et al., 1995).

In our case, this integrated approach seems particularly apt for Lysekil, a small-sized Swedish municipality on the Bohuslän coast, which is grappling with its status as a 'summer city.' The aim in Lysekil is to transcend seasonal allure and foster a sustainable year-round community by organizing the cultural planning process around three central pillars designed to enrich community life and invigorate local cultural offerings (Fig. 1). These themes serve as a model for identifying local assets, meeting community needs, and implementing effective cultural strategies. By focusing on these key areas, Lysekil aims to create what we refer to as a "sustainable cultural ecosystem," a term that closely aligns with, but is not directly borrowed from, broader research and discourse on community planning and cultural heritage. More specifically, in Sweden, Eliasson et al. (2018) supports the importance of a holistic approach to cultural planning. The research revealed that planners employed a comprehensive strategy that considered various facets of the landscape, including its historical layers, human interaction, place identity, aesthetic considerations, and the relationship between culture and nature. This aligns well with the goals set by Lysekil, which not only embraces a multi-faceted approach to planning but also incorporates important aspects of local history and heritage, particularly those tied to the Österöd Women. By integrating these diverse elements, Lysekil aims to create a robust, sustainable cultural ecosystem that is adaptable to both current and future community needs.

Consequently, cultural planning can serve as a dynamic tool for Lysekil, particularly when integrated within the broader community vision. As proposed by Ghilardi (2001) and Stevenson (2005), the alignment of cultural planning with economic and social development positions Lysekil to make the leap from being a seasonal attraction to a vibrant, year-round community. Culture is unequivocally a crucial asset in urban and regional development, and through its ambitious doctrine, cultural planning has positioned itself as an irreplaceable asset for sustainable development.

The practical application and the transformative potential of this approach are further delineated through the Integrated Cultural Event Planning Model (ICEPM), illustrated by three foundational pillars (i.e., heritage-driven innovation, place branding, segmentation and targeting). These pillars not only represent the core components of Lysekil's cultural planning but also encapsulate the associated risks and mitigation strategies (i.e., risk management), emphasizing the urgent and pragmatic need for a cultural approach in Lysekil's urban developmental endeavors.

Heritage-Driven Innovation — The pillar of Heritage-Driven Innovation forms the backbone of our strategic vision for historic festivals and events. Especially, it reflects the rich cultural and historical aspects of Lysekil to inspire a range of innovative strategies, each uniquely designed to enhance attendee experience, community engagement, and the educational value of the festival. Heritage-Driven Innovation is primarily manifested through three innovative themes: Living Labs, Educational Partnerships, and Social Entrepreneurship. Each theme is uniquely designed and deeply rooted in scholarly theories and practical applications, as

highlighted by Larson (2009) and Laing (2018), who underline the importance of complex networks, partnerships, management innovation, and social entrepreneurship in the festivals and events context.

Living labs - our first theme focuses on creating an interactive environment where attendees can immerse themselves in a Mesolithic archaeological dig through Virtual Reality (VR) headsets. In this interactive environment, participants will discover artifacts, categorize them, and gain insights from experts about their historical significance. This creates a vibrant, user-centric research environment that also makes for an engaging festival activity. In Denmark, Hjalager's (2009) study lends academic weight to this idea, showing how festivals can serve as "living labs" for innovation.

Educational partnership — To enhance both the educational and entertainment aspects of the festival, our second initiative focuses on forming partnerships with educational institutions. By forming alliances with universities specializing in archaeology and history, the festival's offerings are being targeted to lend academic depth. These institutions will participate in panel discussions, workshops, and provide artifact exhibits. With schools, universities or/and companies/organisations. Additionally, streaming services could be offered on exclusive previews of the upcoming TV series about the Österöd woman, available only to festival attendees. The power of such partnerships is echoed in a Swedish festival case, which argues for the collective effort and network dynamics in festival innovation reinforcing the importance of such partnership and emphasizing that innovation often emanates from dynamic networks involving various stakeholders (Larson, 2009).

Social entrepreneurship – Aligning with Lysekil's sustainability goals and broader community engagement aims, our strategy will introduce a social entrepreneurship initiative, allowing festival-goers to contribute to a fund dedicated to the preservation and digitalization of Mesolithic sites and artifacts. To broaden our impact, we will launch "crowdfunding campaigns" (Robiady et al., 2020) offering tiered rewards — Lower-tier rewards (e.g., a thank-you note or a mention on the festival's website), Mid-tier rewards (e.g., T-shirts or tote bags with designs inspired by Mesolithic artifacts), Upper tier rewards (e.g., have their names listed prominently as major donors in future exhibitions and publications) — and "sustainable merchandising strategies" to create eco-friendly festival-related merchandise (e.g., reusable water bottles, tote bags, or clothing made from sustainable materials) with a significant portion of the revenue being allocated directly to preservation and digitalization projects.

To optimize the impact of these efforts, strategic collaborations with NGOs specializing in cultural preservation are pivotal. Additionally, we intend to enrich the festival's content by integrating the 'Ancient life story-based tourism' model, from the Cyprus University of Technology, to offer service and products related to Sweden's Stone Age and Lysekil's artifacts. Inspired by 'Academica Touristica' (2023), our storytelling, while potentially fictional, will anchor in archaeological findings, providing an authentic glimpse into ancient lifestyles, and blending educational insights with engaging narratives. This comprehensive approach — supported by Laing's (2018) study — serves as a supporting pillar here, outlining how social entrepreneurship and participative leadership styles can significantly contribute to innovation in festival settings. This strategy, through its holistic approach to heritage preservation, becomes an essential component of heritage-driven innovation in festival settings.

To broaden the reach and deepen the impact of Lysekil's Culture Days – planned for October 6th-13th in the autumn of 2023 – an additional recommendation proposes the introduction of a dedicated 'Österöd Woman Day' in Spring 2024, Therefore, for Spring 2024⁴, we recommend considering the launch of a dedicated 'Österöd Woman Day'. This day would align with the theme of 'Past, Present, FUTURE,' specifically focusing on the 'Past' component. Designed to be more than just a day for historical reflection, this alternative event would engage a broader community of members, educational institutions, and cultural organizations in interactive learning and heritage preservation activities. It would also align well with educational cycles, offering an enriching experience for both students and educators alike.

Place Branding —In an era where community engagement and storytelling approach have an unparalleled impact, the municipality of Lysekil stands at the threshold of a transformative

opportunity. As the second pillar of our ICEPM (Fig. 1), place branding aims to seize this moment, not merely to enhance its image but also make significant strides toward Lysekil's sustainability goals by transforming its socio-cultural and economic landscapes in a meaningful way. This approach aligns with our goal to enrich the impact of historical festivals and events, thereby filling the gap identified by Mossberg and Getz (2006) concerning the lack of stakeholder participation in Swedish events. This idea was developed further by Åkerlund and Müller (2012), who delved into the transformational power of cultural designation using the case of Umeå, Sweden, which saw its image significantly enhanced when named the European Capital of Culture in 2014.

Our case argues that historical festivals and events, particularly those centered around Österöd Woman's era in Scandinavia, These events not only blend cultural storytelling and archaeological insights but also feature interactive experiences that engage the public. Unlike the limited stakeholder involvement found in the Swedish context by Mossberg and Getz (2006), our model actively encourages community participation, thus addressing a gap in the existing landscape. This multi-layered form of local branding, as our case demonstrates, serves to significantly bolster both the image and perception of Lysekil, potentially leading to transformative impacts for the community and various stakeholders.

Influencer collaboration - To achieve that, this strategy involves influencer mapping, where the objective is to identify influencers who specialize in travel, history, lifestyle, and archaeology. The criteria for selection will be based not merely on follower count, but also on the quality of audience engagement and content. By creating content, influencers can showcase eco-friendly practices, the area's natural beauty, and pertinent themes like historical preservation. Concurrently, a contextual analysis will be conducted, incorporating insights from Swedish-oriented studies (e.g., Richards & Marques, 2016; Åkerlund & Müller, 2012; Mossberg & Getz, 2006).

To enhance attendee engagement, influencers will engage in a series of pre-event activities, including but not limited to teasers and interactive polls centered around Lysekil's cultural offerings. During the event, live social media coverage will be provided, complete with real-time interactions to boost attendee participation. This will include influencers highlighting key activities and crowd interactions, making attendees feel seen and valued, thereby increasing their level of engagement. Furthermore, influencers will have a dual role, promoting both specific events and the broader branding of Lysekil. They will produce content to be disseminated according to an editorial calendar, coordinated with key cultural events such as the Österöd Woman Day. This content will undergo cross-promotion on Lysekil's proprietary social media channels, including, but not limited to, YouTube and Instagram. This comprehensive approach ensures a multifaceted promotional strategy, harnessing both the reach of the influencers and the official channels to maximize exposure and engagement.

Segmentation and Targeting^{2,3}

In the Nordic settings, festivals and events were on a trajectory of expansion and diversification until the early months of 2020. Just as the sector was establishing itself as a cornerstone of cultural, social, and economic life, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic marked a significant shift in those landscapes. This unforeseen interruption served as a reminder of the integral role that festivals and events play not just as entertainments or diversions, but as essential drivers of community cohesion, economic vitality, and individual well-being (Armbrecht et al., 2021).

In the aftermath of the pandemic, the concept of audience segmentation has become even more pivotal. As Getz et al. (2010) highlighted, understanding your audience is crucial for successful management. Therefore, insights from Kairos Future's (2017) analysis offer valuable perspective on the characteristics of the potential audience in Lysekil. The study revealed that the average age of visitors is 48 years, with 74% having visited Lysekil at least once before, and 66% of these visits occurring in the summer. The majority of these visitors travel with a partner (35.8%), alone (24.8%), or with family (18.8%), and 46% reside within 100km from Lysekil, emphasizing the significance of the local and neighboring communities as a primary market segment. Furthermore, the predominance of domestic visitors, with 90% coming from

within Sweden and 8% from abroad, mainly Norway (7%), Denmark (1%), and Germany (0.6%), underscores the importance of tailoring marketing strategies to cater to both domestic and neighboring international markets.

Given these demographic and behavioral insights, especially the prevailing demographic of individuals with an average age of 48 years, it is pivotal for the organization of the festival in Lysekil, particularly the Stone Age event, to also consider tailored approaches that appeal to this demographic, along with our primary target group of individuals aged 15 to 29. Acknowledging that market segments are often divided by geographic, demographic, behavioral, and psychographic factors, it is clear that demographic factors, being easily quantifiable, are often the most utilized (Kotler et al., 2014).

Moreover, the high repeat visitation rate, with 74% having visited at least once before, indicates a level of satisfaction and interest in the area, presenting an opportunity to capitalize on this existing affinity by offering enriched and diversified festival content and experiences. By targeting niche segments, especially those with a predisposition towards Lysekil, the festival can position itself as a unique and unmissable event, particularly considering the competition from numerous local and regional cultural events and historical reenactment gatherings in Sweden with established audiences.

Following the notion by Delgado (2017), small destinations like Lysekil, with limited carrying capacity and resources, need to focus on smaller yet more profitable market sectors, particularly considering the potential irritation of its inhabitants by a large influx of tourists. Therefore, targeting niche segments that face less competition is crucial, especially in Sweden, where numerous local and regional cultural events and historical reenactment gatherings with established audiences exist.

Moreover, Shen (2013) and Getz et al. (2010) expand the dialogue regarding the broader impact of festivals as motivators for tourism and their significance in destination development, serving to celebrate community values, ideologies, identity, and continuity. Therefore, the thoughtful segmentation and targeting approach in Lysekil is crucial to incorporate cultural celebrations and narratives essential for destination development and community values.

Risk Management

From a risk management perspective, Lysekil's cultural planning process along the Bohuslän coast represents a forward-thinking approach to safeguarding the community's well-being and preserving its cultural heritage. The strategy is organized around three central themes: enriching community life, enhancing local cultural offerings, and mitigating potential risks that could threaten the region's sustainability and resilience.

Cultural planning is not isolated; it's a pivotal aspect intertwined with broader urban and community development strategies. This holistic approach considers not just cultural objectives but also economic, industrial, and zoning considerations, transcending the traditional aesthetic focus predominant in Europe (Ghilardi, 2001; Mercer, 2002). The integration of a culturally sensitive perspective into urban development enriches the versatility and resilience of cultural planning, allowing it to adapt and evolve beyond rigid interpretations and limitations related to cultural heritage and institutions (Bianchini, 2013; Baycan & Fusco Girard, 2013).

It is crucial to keep various risk management strategies in mind to prevent potential risks from becoming reality. For the municipality, key considerations throughout the implementation of this solution and related events include contingency planning, communication, feedback, and training. Contingency planning is to develop a risk strategy for various scenarios, including technical failures, limited resources problems, whether conditions etc. It is important to find alternative activities and backup equipment that can help with disruption. Communication is another crucial component of risk management; maintaining open and transparent communication with attendees. This could involve clearly conveying times, safety instructions, and other general information consistently. Creating a festival app could serve as a practical solution for real-time updates. A feedback loop is equally important, enabling attendees to report issues or provide suggestions that can enhance the overall experience. Finally, training is necessary to ensure that staff members and those involved in the festival are well-prepared and capable of independent action.

There are some risks that may occur from this model. The first is technological issues related to VR technology, which can be complex and sensitive, potentially encountering glitches or bugs. To mitigate this risk, thorough testing and quality assurance should be conducted before the festival. It is also advisable to have a dedicated technical support team on-site to address any issues promptly (Hjalager, 2009).

Secondly, collaborating with multiple educational institutions, universities, and streaming services can be complex and may require extensive coordination. Scheduling panel discussions, workshops, artifact exhibits, and streaming schedules with multiple partners could lead to conflicts, miscommunication, or logistical hiccups. In order to cope with this problem, a festival app could be a solution, also to have a dedicated project manager and clear agreements is essential. The most important thing is to have one person dedicated having coordination responsibility for liaising with all partner organizations. Clear agreements are also important to outline the different partners roles, responsibilities, and specific commitments (Larson, 2009). The effectiveness of knowledge dissemination and outreach will also be assessed to understand the extent to which innovations are influencing and educating the community and visitors.

Thirdly, managing and sustaining a fund for the preservation and digitalization of archaeological sites and artifacts poses challenges. There may be uncertainty regarding the level of contributions from festival-goers, putting the fund's long-term financial sustainability at risk. The most substantial risk for this type of festival is the difficulty in securing adequate financial resources, especially before the event has proven its worth as an investment. Therefore, the greatest risk associated with this model is financial in nature. Comprehensive financial planning is imperative to mitigate this risk. A transparent and thorough financial plan should be developed, outlining the fund's budget, expected contributions, and projected expenses for preservation and digitalization initiatives. To ensure financial sustainability, consider diversifying revenue streams beyond contributions from festival attendees. This can include partnerships with corporate sponsors, seeking grants from cultural preservation foundations, or collaborating with other organizations that share a passion for heritage preservation (Mossberg & Getz, 2006). In mitigating these financial risks, embracing diversified event portfolios as suggested by Ziakas (2013) can be crucial. This involves a strategic diversification of events to address different audiences and fulfil varied objectives, ensuring the resilience and longevity of cultural events. Such a strategy, combined with comprehensive planning that involves diverse stakeholders (Lund & Turrís, 2017; Louw & Esterhuyzen, 2022), can cover festival safety and other critical aspects, contributing to the holistic well-being and sustainability of the cultural planning process. In light of the essential nature of effective planning, Nordvall (2016) brings attention to the repercussions of inadequate planning with the instance of a failed Christmas Market in Åre, Sweden. This real-world example underlines the importance for Lysekil to employ robust planning and clear objectives when promoting cultural events and festivals, to avoid the pitfalls experienced by others in similar situations.

Finally, influencer collaboration presents the risk of misalignment of values and messaging between the selected influencers and the municipality of Lysekil. If influencers do not genuinely embrace or understand the sustainability goals, cultural heritage, and historical significance of Lysekil, their content may come across as inauthentic. A rigorous selection and onboarding process, clear communication, and content guidelines can help ensure the authenticity and effectiveness of influencer partnerships. To monitor the efficacy and authenticity of influencer collaborations and branding initiatives continually, employing analytics tools for ongoing assessment is crucial. These tools will aid in tracking the performance, evaluating the reach, engagement, and effectiveness of influencer initiatives, while also allowing for real-time adjustments and optimizations. In general, it is important to prioritize authenticity over follower count for successful implementation of local branding and influencer collaborations.

To evaluate the effectiveness of segmentation and targeting, a demographic analysis and assessment of programming marketing and reach and effectiveness across different segments will be conducted regularly. This approach allows for effective addressing of both the young enthusiasts and the average visitor demographic, appealing to history enthusiasts, educational institutions and individuals interested in unique historical and cultural experiences.

In light of these challenges, cultural planning must be understood as a dynamic, ongoing process that adapts to changing conditions. It requires a critical, demanding, and innovative approach that seeks not only to discover but also to evaluate the often-hidden cultural wealth of communities, be it creativity, memories, or intangible heritage. This adaptability is crucial: the mapping of cultural assets should be unafraid to confront difficult issues, taboos, or *'skeletons in the closet,'* the process become paralyzed by fear of failure (Bianchini, 2013). By learning the challenges and risks faced by festival and event organizations, valuable insights can be gleaned for more effective cultural planning and event management (Getz et al., 2010).

Discussion

The present study shed a light on the strategic exploration of the Österöd woman in aligning history, culture, and sustainable development. Our objective was to outline a comprehensive strategy to tackle these challenges, focusing on audience identification, innovative storytelling, as well as media channels within the sustainable tourism sector. Drawn upon the ICEPM, we examined the dynamic of cultural resources and the role of cultural planning in integrating these following resources.

Initially, the exploration of the Österöd woman story started with a clear and organized identification of the problem, utilizing contextual analysis to inform our research design and subsequent work plan. This first phase was crucial as it provided a structured roadmap allowing us to explore and understand the depth and breadth of cultural heritage. Consequently, it laid the foundation for the development of innovative strategies and solutions in the next phases. Subsequently, we explored various possible solutions, including historical festivals/events and animated stories for children under 12 - each offering unique avenues for storytelling. The exploration of these alternatives was essential in pinpointing the ones with the utmost efficacy in creating compelling and enriching narratives. After examining the alternatives, we decided to focus on the development of historic festivals and events as the most suitable solution. Especially, the dynamic of heritage-driven innovation (i.e., manifested through living labs, educational partnerships, and social entrepreneurship), place branding (i.e., realized prominently through influencer collaboration), and segmentation & targeting was intricate, each revealing the aforementioned ramifications and insights.

Following the identification of a preferred solution, the emphasis shifted to the implementation phase. More specifically, an approach that was multi-disciplinary — suggested to orchestrate the interactive *'living labs'*, and state-of-the-art VR technology — was leveraged to create immersive Mesolithic experiences for attendees. This synergized with Lysekil's 2023 vision, reflecting its commitment to utilize innovative digital solutions to elevate region's appeal and offer transformative experiences to both locals and visitors. Concurrently, collaborations with various educational institutions and archaeological experts were initiated extensively to enrich the festival's offerings with in-depth insights and diverse educational materials. Consequently, organisations need to be aware of the risks associated with such implementation. Technical, financial, and communication risks, among others, must be addressed to mitigate any advance impacts that may arise.

In line with our focus on social entrepreneurship, strategic partnerships were established with NGOs specializing in cultural preservation. These partnerships played a pivotal role in launching sustainable crowdfunding campaigns and merchandising strategies, effectively mobilizing resources for the preservation and digitization of Mesolithic sites and artifacts. In the second pillar — place branding — extensive influencer mapping was employed to pinpoint individuals who align with its brand values and possess the capacity to amplify Lysekil's cultural offerings effectively. The influencers — identified based on their audience engagement — content quality, and followers, contributed to elevating Lysekil's narrative, engaging wider audiences, and enhancing the overall attendee experience through multi-platform content dissemination. This is in line with our strategy to employ digital storytelling significantly through influencers on various social media platforms, as part of our comprehensive marketing efforts. Current festival literature underscores the significance of festivals as transformative spaces facilitating performance, articulation, and the rediscovery of identity (Bennett & Woodward, 2016), a concept that aligns seamlessly with Lysekil's 2030 strategy to develop

venues that catalyze transformative experience. However, it is also important to keep in mind the risks associated with influencer marketing. Finding influencers who resonate with the municipality and its values can be challenging, and this consideration is crucial to ensure the authentic representation of what the municipality stands for.

Finally, the segmentation and targeting strategy in Lysekil was discussed, highlighting the role of Nordic festivals and events after the disruptive impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The importance of audience segmentation has grown, emphasizing the need for strategies tailored to both local and international visitors, given the dominance of domestic visitors in Lysekil. The analysis by Kairos Future (2017) was crucial, revealing that the average visitor is 48 years old. Given these insights, it is crucial for the organization of the festival, particularly the Stone Age event, to develop tailored approaches that appeal to this demographic along with the target group of individuals aged 15 to 29. The adaptation to these identified demographics is vital for the festival's successful management in Lysekil. Moreover, focusing on smaller, more profitable market sectors is emphasized, aligning with the high repeat visitation rate and the prevailing demographic, mitigating the potential irritations due to a large influx of tourists, and distinguishing the festival amid the competition from other regional events. Segmentation and targeting are hard in this case as it is not only the age that plays a role if you constitute the target audience. It is more a persona or the fact that you have certain interest that will make a person belong to the target group. A big risk with targeting and segmentation is the fact that you need to be authentic but in the same way you also need to talk about this event as funny. The festival needs to walk a fine line between keeping the festival to only proved facts and at the same time using more 'fiction' when presenting the idea and trying to promote the festival.

Therefore, implementing the ICEPM in Lysekil, not only will enhance the appeal and viability of Lysekil as a distinguished cultural hub but also contribute to its "*sustainable cultural ecosystem*" (see Eliasson et al., 2018). This ecosystem intertwines the historical essence of the Österöd woman with innovative storytelling and sustainable tourism to enrich cultural understanding and appreciation.

Future Research

Building upon the foundation laid by this study, several promising avenues for future research can be identified. The exploration of the Österöd woman story in Lysekil offers a valuable case study, allowing a deeper understanding of the intertwining of history, culture, and sustainable development.

Firstly, this study makes a notable contribution to the existing body of research by conceptualizing a new paradigm—sustainable cultural ecosystems. This concept, while resonating with the ideas presented by Eliasson et al. (2018), is distinct and paves the way for an expansive and holistic evolution in our understanding of the convergence of cultural sustainability and development. The introduction of this concept is pivotal as it opens up diverse domains for future exploration, each promising to add depth to our understanding of the multifaceted relationships between culture, history, sustainability, and development.

Secondly, the pursuit of methodological innovation is highlighted as crucial. The incorporation of transformative methodologies, such as autoethnography, can provide profound insights into the experiences of festival and event tourism (Laing, 2018). This approach can yield a more personalized and enriched understanding of the interaction's individuals have with cultural phenomena. The integration of such methodologies with the innovative framework introduced in this study can significantly enhance practical applications in cultural heritage preservation within the realms of sustainable tourism.

Thirdly, leveraging these innovative methodologies allows for a more detailed examination of the cultural and historical dimensions embedded within sustainable cultural ecosystems. Drawing insights from Rishbeth and Powell (2013), future research should investigate how these dimensions cultivate a sense of continuity and belonging within communities.

Lastly, our sense is that these types of approaches will start being recognized by other researchers as a means to progress studies in events and to construct its unique theoretical framework, with the expectation of witnessing other similar examples surfacing in the future (Laing, 2018).

Notes

¹The terms ‘festival’ and ‘event’ were used interchangeably in this study, without compromising their individual meanings.

² Visit Sweden operates at the national level, providing valuable insights into broader tourism trends, visitor demographics, and preferred activities.

³ The Tourist Board West Sweden, operating at a regional level, collects accommodation statistics that can offer insights into local visitor behavior and preferences.

⁴ In an effort to elevate Lysekil as a year-round cultural destination rather than merely a summer hotspot, we propose this season period – Spring 2024 – for seasonal diversification. Firstly, it encourages a steady flow of tourism and community engagement within the year. By complementing the existing autumn event of Lysekil’s Culture Days, the spring event would create a continuous narrative that enriches both residents and visitors alike. With regard to the educational involvement, this timing would enable schools to integrate the event into their curricular plans toward the end of the academic year.

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