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The coordination of cooperation in  
tourism business networks – the  
significance of networks in rural/coastal  
areas





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## AGENDA

- **Background theories**
  - Networks theoretical viewpoints
  - Change and dynamics in the networks
  - Destinations as networks
  - DMO/Coordinator's roles
  - Rural/coastal tourism
- **Destination Marketing Organizations facing the Challenges of Change – a study presented at the AIEST-conference in Savonlinna 2009 and published in the conference book 2010**
- **Cases**
  - DMOs: Åland, Roslagen and Turku
  - Mail Road, Yachting in the Archipelago, Cruise Baltic





## NETWORK THEORETICAL VIEWPOINTS

- Industrial Network Approach (INA) focusing on the **interactional relationships**
- Network is *defined as 'a structure where a number of nodes are related to each other by specific threads'* (Ford, Gadde, Håkansson, & Snehota, 2003)
- Håkansson and Johansson (1992, 129--135) present a model of industrial networks called **the ARA model**, which consists of the **actors, resources and the activities** in a network.
- A major challenge of co-operation for stakeholders **in a tourism business network is that it requires the coordination and execution of interactions** performed with the available resources.
- It also means that stakeholders must have **knowledge of such resources and be able to handle them and combine them** (Weick, 1993).



## CHANGE AND DYNAMICS IN THE NETWORKS

- Halinen and Törnroos (1998) Networks are commonly viewed as dynamic and constantly changing.
- Östhol, Svensson and Halkier (2002, 31) emphasized the common strategy coordination dynamics of a new kind.
- Sainaghi (2006)proposes a dynamic model of destination management aiming at an understanding of how **a relationship evolves over time** (Ravald and Grönroos, 1996).
- Actors must learn to **manage the interactions** that take place within their relationships, both internally and externally (Ritter, Wilkinson, and Johnston, 2004).
- A web of network relationships forms the foundation for the effective and efficient flow of information, experience, knowledge and ideas (Morton, Brookes, Smart, Backhouse, & Burns, 2004).





## DESTINATIONS AS NETWORKS

- Pavlovich (2003) focuses on the relationships and how they change.
- Schianetz, Kavanagh and Lockington (2007) present system dynamics modeling for both strategic planning and the promotion of organizational learning in tourism destinations.
- The relevant questions are
  - who is going to take the lead and the initiating role in this new situation,
  - who are the decision makers and
  - what kind of social innovation is needed in enhancing the competitiveness of the destination?
- DMO's role in enhancing the networking of actors





## Turun yliopisto DMO/COORDINATOR'S ROLES University of Turku

- Wang (2008) has studied the roles of DMOs in collaborative destination marketing and introduces the following general themes as interpretations of these roles:
  - funding agent, partner and team builder, network management organization, information provider, community brand builder, convener, facilitator and liaison of community tourism activities, catalyst of the collaborative initiative, advocate of the tourism industry and organizer of destination marketing campaigns.
- Lemmetyinen & Go (2009) found the key capabilities required for managing tourism business networks
  - The capability to develop and implement informational, interpersonal and/or decisional roles that require specific managerial talents
  - Network orchestration capability network in a way that strengthens the actors' commitment to the brand ideology
  - Joint knowledge creation capability which enables and guides dialog between the stakeholders
  - Deep partnering capability



## RURAL/COASTAL TOURISM

- Criteria for success in rural tourism (Page et al. 2001)
  - The commitment of the proprietor; the provision of additional facilities, which visitors are willing to pay a higher price for; generating visitor satisfaction and therefore recommendations and repeat visiting; ability to promote off-peak visits, thus reducing the effects of seasonality; understanding the needs and characteristics of customers and potential customers; existence of attractive natural environment and cultural/historic features of interest; suitability of branding.
- The attraction of the coast for tourism and recreation (Page et al. 2001)
  - Natural. The landscape of cliffs, beaches, open sea, estuaries and the sky
  - Structural. The townscape, architecture and tourist-related features (piers, promenades and gardens)
  - Psychological. The meanings and values attached to the natural and built environments which give a sense of place.





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# DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS FACING THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGE

Arja Lemmetyinen

24th August 2009

59th AIEST Conference, Savonlinna, Finland

Published in the conference book 2010 and part of Lemmetyinen 2010





## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- By comparing three DMOs the purpose of this paper is to study the change in the management systems including *the role of the DMOs in enhancing the networking amongst the actors and thus managing change in a destination context.*
- In order to clarify the main research question the following sub questions are posed:
  - How are the DMO able to orchestrate and vision the destination networks?
  - By which tools and instruments the DMOs are able to intensify communication in destination networks?
  - How are the DMOs creating value as the outcome of the coordinated cooperation?





## METHODOLOGY

- Comparative case studies and in-depth interviews are used in order to examine the organizational realities that come about as a product of the subjective enactments or social constructions of individual actors.
- The empirical procedure is necessary as a means of identifying the tools that are required for managing tourism business networks in conditions of change.
- In this study change processes are in the focus, this is why the researcher has chosen to use longitudinal methods and tools of process research, such as the critical incident technique.
- The interviews of the key actors in the respective destinations, the area of Turku in South West Finland, the island and county of Åland and the area of Roslagen, in Sweden, are presented.





## KEY ACTOR INTERVIEWS IN 2004-2009

- The DMO director in Turku February 2009, the DMO director in Åland in December 2007 and the DMO director in Norrtälje in November 2008
- DMO representatives in Turku in September 2007 and in March and August 2008. In Norrtälje the DMO representatives in November 2008.
- The interviews among entrepreneurs in tourism in South-West Finland in September 2004, in Åland in December 2006 and October and December 2007 and the Swedish entrepreneurs in August and December 2006
- The interviews of the representatives for the public sector/cultural sector in Åland as a group discussion in December 2008.





## CASE 1, TURKU TOURING IN SOUTH WEST FINLAND

- Turku Touring ([www.turkutouring.fi](http://www.turkutouring.fi)) is a marketing and sales organization that covers regional tourism for the entire province
- Organizational structure is that of a company as the major local tourist industry actors are amongst its principal shareholders.
- Acts as a local contact and coordinator for several EU-funded projects.
- An important partner of the DMO in Turku is the Centre of Expertise Program (OSKE), ([http://www.oske.net/en/competence\\_clusters/tourism\\_and\\_experience\\_management/](http://www.oske.net/en/competence_clusters/tourism_and_experience_management/))





- is a fixed term special government program aimed at focusing regional resources and activities on development areas of key national importance.
- The operations model of the program was reformed for the term 2007–2013 as a cluster-based model, the overriding objective of which is to increase regional specialization and to strengthen cooperation between centers of expertise.
- Turku Touring is responsible for the Tourism and Experience Management Competence Cluster, which aims at combining tourism with creative industries such as design, digital content production as well as entertainment and cultural production.





## CASE 2, ÅLAND TOURISM BOARD IN MARIEHAMN

- The Åland Tourism Board (ÅTF) – Destination Åland's own marketing department - is Åland's official tourism and member organization with over 300 members.  
[www.visitaland.com](http://www.visitaland.com)
- The main objectives are to market travel destination Åland and together with the local tourism industry develop Åland tourism.
- The local companies, for example, run important ferry routes between Finland, Sweden and Estonia. Tourism in total accounted for 34.8% of Åland's GDP in year 2003 (Ålands landskapsregering, 2004).





## IN ÅLAND SEVERAL EU AND OTHER NETWORKS

- Several tourism firms in Åland work in different EU-funded projects, such as
  - Scandinavian Islands (<http://www.scandinavianislands.com>),
  - Skärgårdsleden, The Archipelago Route (<http://www.skargardsleden.com>) and
  - Postvägen, The Mail Road ([www.postvagen.com](http://www.postvagen.com)).
  - Most of them have also joined the local Tourism Board, Ålands Turistförening (<http://www.visitaland.com/en>), which is promoting its online-presence under the logo visitaland (Visit Åland).
- Åland has also joined the Cruise Balticproject (<http://www.cruisebaltic.com>).





## CASE 3, ROSLAGEN TOURISM BOARD IN NORRTÄLJE

- Roslagen is an area covering the municipalities Vaxholm, Österåker, Norrtälje och Östhammar.
- In the web site of Roslagen ([www.roslagen.se](http://www.roslagen.se)) a picturesque image was painted (2009): *“In Roslagen you can find small town with typical Swedish wooden houses. Towns that draw tourists with art, design, museums, taverns, shops and cafés. Go and see Vaxholm, the capital of the archipelago and the gateway to Roslagen from Stockholm. Go shopping in Åkersberga, the southern Roslagens modern centre at Åkers kanal. Discover Norrtälje, Roslagens wellknown capital, with its idyllic little town with authentic houses with a medieval road network. Don't miss Öregrund and Östhammar, the picturesque summer towns in the northern part of Roslagen, each with its unique history and special charm.”*





## COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS IN ROSLAGEN

- The cooperation between the municipalities in Roslagen has continued for a long time.
- The goal is to strengthen, develop and market Roslagen as a destination.
- One example of the succeeded cooperation is that the surrounding archipelago with its 13 000 islands has been made easy to achieve for tourists.





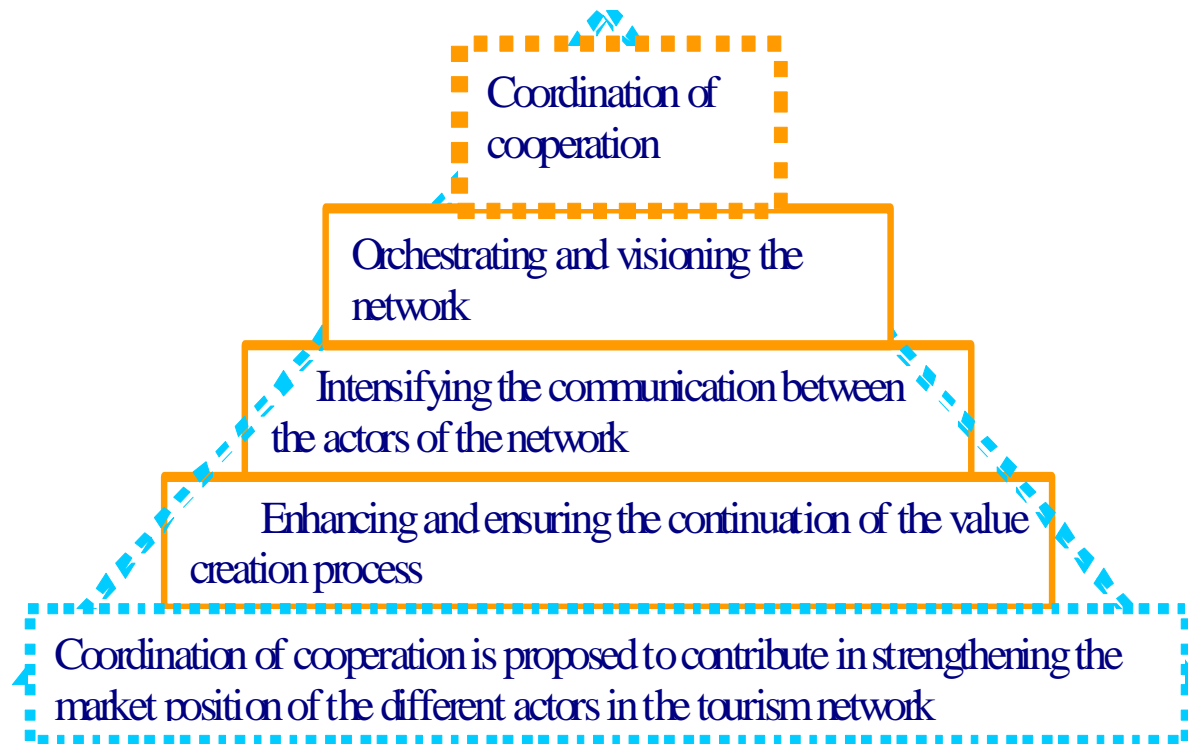
## THE ROLES OF THE DMO IN MANAGING THE CHANGE

- The typology of Wang (2008) is analyzed as a three phase framework derived from the discussion in the theoretical part of this paper (Lemmetyinen & Go, 2009).
- The analysis starts from the capability of orchestrating and visioning the activities in the tourism business networks.
- Thereafter the tools and instruments to intensify the communication in the destination networks are taken up.
- Finally the value creation as an outcome of the coordinated cooperation is studied.





## THE PHASES OF THE COORDINATED COOPERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF TOURISM BUSINESS NETWORKS





## ORCHESTRATING AND VISIONING THE DESTINATION NETWORKS

- The roles of the Funding agent and Partner and team builder in Wang's (2008) typology are relevant.
- Turku Touring in South West Finland takes an active role of as the Funding Agent; especially now than the national Expertise Program is organized as an integrated part of the TT. By taking this role the DMO is able to affect the future, major projects funded by EU and also able to plan the content and the goals of the projects.
- The relevant roles of the local tourism system (Wang 2008) have been analyzed as the dimensions of this capability.





## PARTNER AND TEAM BUILDER

- This role is taken by all of the three case DMOs.
- Turku Touring takes this role in the national Expertise Program as well as in several EU-funded projects (Cruise Baltic, Yachting in the Archipelago, Scandinavian Islands). Tourism Boards in Åland, Mariehamn and Roslagen, Sweden active in this role contrary to their role as Funding agent, where they do not take an active role.
- Visit Åland acts as a partner and team builder for example in cruise networks and gathers all the tourism sector entrepreneurs into one common web platform ([www.visitaland.com](http://www.visitaland.com)).
- In Roslagen the regional coordinator of the destination network acts as an active partner and team builder among the municipalities in the area. Also the cooperation with the entrepreneurs in the field is lively.





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## NETWORK MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

- Turku Touring takes this role of the network manager in the different EU-projects, as well as in the partnerships with the municipalities of the area.
- The Tourism Board in Åland takes this role as the manager of the network when organizing the communication in the common web site.
- In Roslagen all the participating municipalities in the destination network has committed to the cooperation by signing an official agreement.
- By applying this role the DMOs could take a key role in managing the change, because as Buhalis (2000) states, the enhancement of local cooperation, such as e.g. developing partnerships between the public and private sector, is a necessary step to achieve the strategic goals for all stakeholders in destination marketing.





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## INFORMATION PROVIDER

- The role of the Information provider as concerns the production and distribution of brochures and supplements is the one all of the case DMOs take.
- All of them also run the press cooperation and present the official tourism information at their web sites.





## CATALYST OF COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE

- The interests of various stakeholders may be balanced.
- By strategizing and coordinating their activities through a web of cooperative and competitive linkages (joint marketing, packaging), fashioned by the capabilities they possess, the actors in the tourism network will be able to supply customer-based services.
- This role is most evidently taken by the DMO in Roslagen, where the DMO takes this role by supporting the cooperation between the entrepreneurs in the field. In the area of Turku and Åland this role is relevant in the externally financed projects, such as the EU-funded projects. In these the DMO can take this role.





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## VALUE CREATION AS AN OUTCOME OF THE COORDINATED COOPERATION

- The role of the DMO in community brand builder is perhaps in the most developed, at least in the Web site of Roslagen, where the whole area is clearly marketed under the brand umbrella, the area of Roslagen as a whole.
- In Åland the island is perhaps more homogeneous and also smaller than the Turku area, which makes it easier to market and profile the destination of Åland by taking into consideration the member companies' interests.
- In the area of Turku, the common brand building is a more complex issue, because the area is vast and consists of heterogeneous tourism business sectors and enterprises.
- The work of building the brand identity is, though, under construct.
- The leading theme in brand building is the theme of archipelago in the close contact with the city culture.





## CONCLUSIONS

- Comparing the three DMOs shows the differences between them in enhancing the networking amongst the actors and thus managing the change most significantly in the capability of orchestrating and visioning the destination networks.
- Tools and instruments to intensify the communication in the destination networks seem to be on quite similar level.
- There are more significant differences in the value creation possibilities as an outcome of the coordinated cooperation.





## CONCLUSIONS CONTINUE (TURKU TOURING)

- Turku Touring is active in searching funding in different EU-funded projects.
- Keeping the same main partner, Turku Touring, in the projects assures that the knowledge is transforming from the experiences from one project to another.
- In the role of Partner and team builder Turku Touring's obvious strength is the connection to the Centre of Expertise program and especially the Tourism and Experience Management Competence Cluster, which is managed by a Turku Touring employee.





## CONCLUSIONS CONTINUE (ÅLAND)

- In Åland, the EU-funded projects can be characterized as intermediates in developing the cooperation and joint presence on a coordinated web site the Tourism Board (ÅTF) is developing.
- The EU projects are temporary and aim at independent cooperation amongst the actors in the long run in order to develop the competitive advantage of the destination on a more solid basis. The position of the 'big partners', the ferry companies has to be taken into consideration, f.eg. in planning the e-commerce platform. In Åland the tourism enterprises form a homogenous group, which makes it easier for them to cooperate compared to the more heterogeneous branch in the area of Turku. This enables value creation as the outcome of the coordinated cooperation.





## CONCLUSIONS CONTINUE (ROSLAGEN)

- In Roslagen the strong cooperation among the actors in the tourism business is the greatest strength compared to the other case destinations.
- Roslagen is marketed under the umbrella brand, which combines the local identities into the regional one and thus creates value to all of the members.
- The regional tourism board acts as team builder amongst the municipalities belonging to the area.
- The tourism board is also actively supporting the entrepreneurs and asking the newcomers in the business to take contact with them and to tell their ideas.
- The tourism board in Roslagen uses innovative ways of promoting the area.
- They emphasize the space, the nature and the authenticity of the area in their web site.



## LIMITATIONS AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- As a limitation for the study the problem with comparing the cases can be risen. Each network case is unique and therefore it is difficult to compare the cases with each other (Halinen and Törnroos, 2005).
- In future, the process of building the online brand identity would be of interest to report as way of enhancing the competitive advantage of a destination.



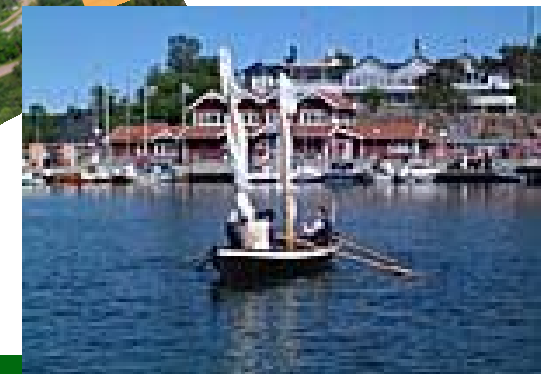
 <p>The role of the Turun yliopisto University of Turku Touring</p>	<p>Mail Road/ Postitie 2002-2004</p>	<p>Cruise Baltic 2004-2007 2007-</p>	<p>Yachting in the Archipelago 2005-2007</p>
<p>1.Funding agent</p>	<p>No role at the beginning of the project.</p>	<p>No active role at the stage of searching for funding.</p>	<p>The project manager of TT actively was actively searching for funding.</p>
<p>2.Partner and team builder</p>	<p>No active role as partner and team builder.</p>	<p>Turku Touring has actively combined partners and built teams in its local cruise network.</p>	<p>The project manager of TT contacted the partners and building partnerships among the actors.</p>
<p>3. Network management organization</p>	<p>The autonomous firms in the network were uncoordinated.</p>	<p>The local cruise network has been able to provide a joint production of marketing</p>	<p>The network management organization was the role of Turku Touring.</p>



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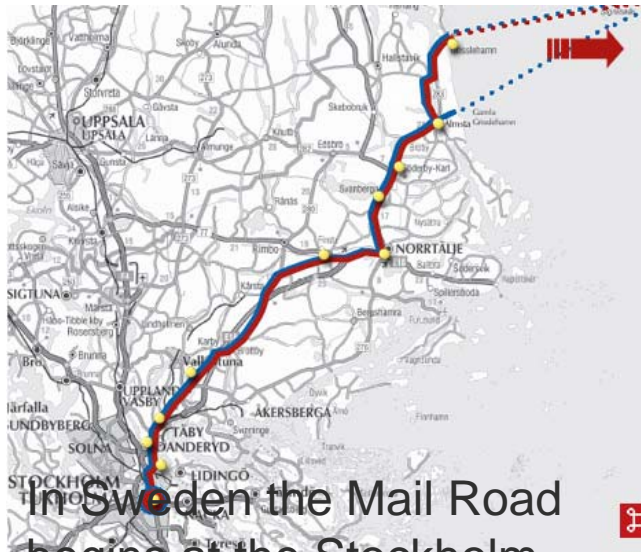
## THE HISTORY AND THE PRESENT OF THE MAIL ROAD

- The Mail Road dates back to Queen Kristina's days in the 17th century, when the Swedish postal service of that time was organized.
  - Today the Mail Road looks different but it is still very much alive.
  - Along the road you will find sights and attractions, hotels and restaurants, not to mention activities of various kinds.
- (<http://www.postvagen.com>)

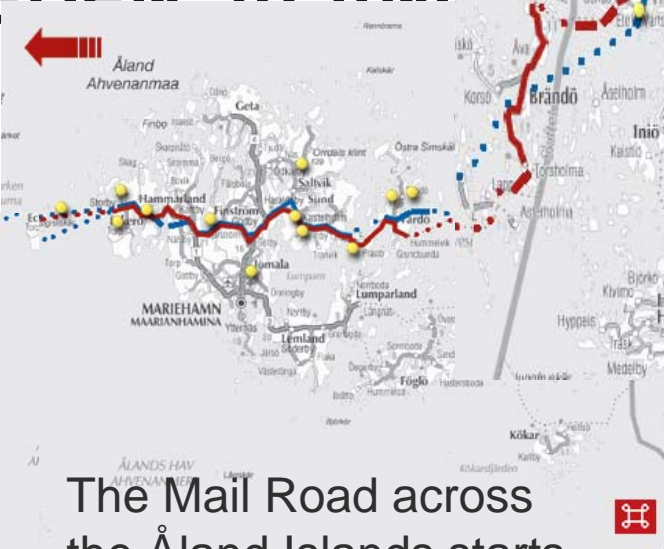




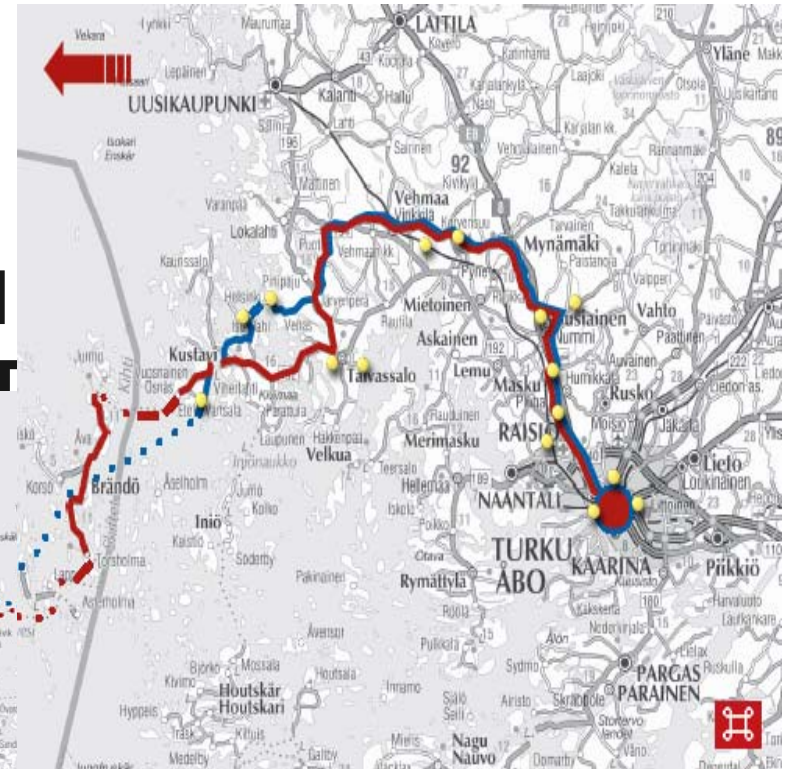
# SIGHTS IN SWEDEN ÅLAND



In Sweden the Mail Road begins at the Stockholm Post Museum, one of the world's foremost post museums.



The Mail Road across the Åland Islands starts on the island of Signilskär in the Åland Sea, a legendary location with traces of medieval settlement.



The Mail Road through south-western Finland starts in Gustavs and ends in Turku.





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## YACHTING IN THE ARCHIPELAGO

- [http://www.balticyachting.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=22&Itemid=53](http://www.balticyachting.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=22&Itemid=53)
- a part of the project “Yachting in Archipelago” partly financed with the European Union funds and aiming to help the guest harbors and enterprises in the archipelago of Finland and in the western Estonia to improve their service and marketing.
- The packages for tourists were developed by the project locally and between the partner countries and the scope for action of the entrepreneurs are improved through training and co-operation and marketing of the archipelago.





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## YACHTING IN THE ARCHIPELAGO

- Service forms based on the idea of sustainable development were created through the team work.
- Project ended 31.12.2007 but the development of tourism business in our Archipelago goes on!
- We hope that this site will galvanise your interest in the scenic archipelago around Turku, Hanko, Tammisaari and the western Estonia.





## WHAT IS CRUISE BALTIC?

- [www.cruisebaltic.com](http://www.cruisebaltic.com)
- A network of 27 destinations and 48 partners in 10 countries around the Baltic Sea was joined together to form the Cruise Baltic Project in order to face the challenge of growth
- The aim was to jointly improve the destinations' facilities and coordinate the international marketing of the Baltic cruise product.
- The three-year project began in September 2004 and was partly financed by EU with the goal of 20 % increase in cruise ship passengers coming to the region.
- Today the Cruise Baltic cooperation continues, whether the partners receive EU-funding or not
- From project to network





Baltic Sea Region



# One sea - oceans of adventures

## 10 countries on a string

Today the Baltic Sea is one of the world's most popular and fastest growing cruise destinations. And for good reasons too. Few other cruising regions offer such diversity and opportunities for an enriching cruise experience.

The Baltic Sea destinations feature exciting contrasts of ancient and modern, city sophistication and rural charm. The climate is pleasant with summer temperatures of 20-25°C / 70-80°F and English is widely spoken and understood.

The Cruise Baltic project is a close cooperation between 10 countries surrounding the Baltic Sea. Through a number of activities the participating destinations are able to offer common high service standards. The goal is a stronger position for the Baltic Sea Region on the international cruise market, combining the shared history of the past and interests of the future.

For more information, please visit [www.cruisebaltic.com](http://www.cruisebaltic.com)

- COPENHAGEN
- ELSDÖRE/HELSINGBORG
- GOYNA
- HELSINKI
- KALMAR
- KAUSSARONA
- KUUSPEDI
- MALMÖ
- OSLO
- RIGA
- ROSTOCK
- ST. PETERSBURG
- STOCKHOLM
- TALLINN
- TURKU
- VISBY



Commercial partners





# 10 COUNTRIES ON A STRING







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## WHICH ARE THE TANGIBLE AND MEASURABLE BENEFITS FOR ITS MEMBERS?

- Marketing efficiency
- Growth in the numbers of passengers and calls
  - From 2000-2010 the number of passengers increased by an average annual rate of 11.4% (from 1.1 mill. in 2000 to 3.1 mill. in 2010)
  - The number of passengers is expected to grow substantially in 2011 as in 2009 with a growth rate around 12% (an estimated increase of 380.000 passengers to almost 3.5 mill. in 2011)
- From 2000-2010 the number of calls increased by an average annual rate of 3.4% (from 1443 in 2000 to 2.010 in 2010)
- The Cruise Baltic ports expect a 10% increase in the number of calls to an expected 2.210 calls in 2011





## THE GROWTH IN DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF PORTS

- **Large segment (more than 200 calls)**
  - St. Petersburg and Copenhagen were the two largest ports regarding number of calls
  - Expectations for the future growth are positive
- **Medium segment (75-200 calls/year)**
  - Continued growth for 2011 of 16% is expected in the medium segment
- **Small segment (less than 75 calls/year)**
  - Overall the passenger growth in the small segment was 1% in 2010. However, there is great variation within the group.
  - In Mariehamn the number of passengers more than doubled and they went from 10 to 19 calls.





## WHAT DO THE STATISTICS NOT TELL US?

- Which are the factors that have caused the growth?
- What is the role of the *network effect* in the growth?
- What would the figures had been if the destinations had not formed the network?
- How satisfied the members are with the cooperation in the network?





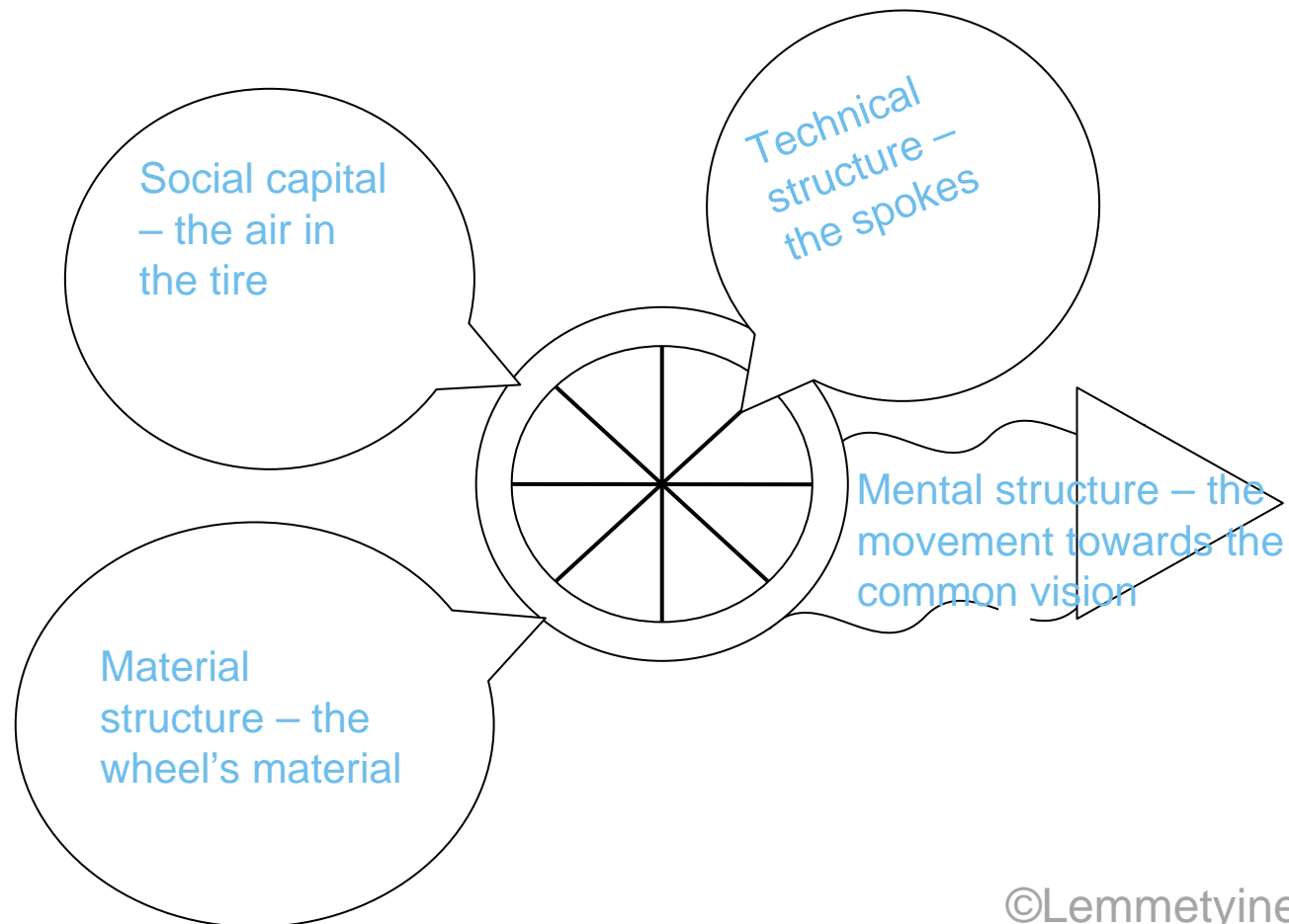
## WHAT MOTIVATES THE MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK - THE NETWORK BRAND EQUITY?

- Joint strategy, which contributes to the development of the local networks as well
- Strengthens the market position of individual destinations
- Joint director with one voice, who represents the whole region
- Joint marketing, sales and PR
- Services of the secretariat available
- Meetings, extranet, information letters, usable for all of the partners → more effective knowledge sharing and learning





## THE WHEEL OF THE COORDINATED COOPERATION MOVES ON...





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## MY DOCTORAL THESIS

Lemmetyinen, Arja: The coordination of cooperation in tourism business networks. Turun kauppakorkeakoulun julkaisuja, sarja A-4:2010.

Available at the link:

[http://info.tse.fi/julkaisut/vk/Ae4\\_2010.pdf](http://info.tse.fi/julkaisut/vk/Ae4_2010.pdf)





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**THANK YOU!**

