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José-Carlos García-Rosell

Lapland Institute for Tourism Research and Education

Phone +358 (0) 40 484 4190

jgarcia@ulapland.fi

General Comments on the Seminar and Baltic Sea story tree

My comments are based on the notes I made after the service design workshop in Herrankukkaro (15.09.2011). They should complement the story tree designed by Anne Kalliomäki, Tarinakone. The comments and ideas are supposed to provide ideas (or be a kind of trigger) for the further elaboration of the Baltic Sea story.

And here we go...

Once upon a time... There was this sea up north. It was called the Baltic Sea... as we live a life of ease, everyone of us has all we need, sky of blue and sea of green...

Yellow submarine is an interesting song. By listening to it, one is transferred into the submarine and able to feel the atmosphere and the spirit of the crew. The Baltic Sea story should just do the same. It should invite us to feel the spirit of the Baltic Sea and its people.

Nature– Sea– 4seasons–People – We are facing the sea – 9 nations similar but diverse. The combination of similarities and differences makes the Baltic Sea challenging but special. It provides ingredients for creating a multifaceted destination. By visiting a Baltic Sea country we are only seeing one aspect of the many aspects of the Baltic Sea... The first visit is only the first chapter of the book. There are more interesting stories to be told and to be experienced. It should be the beginning of a self-discovering journey. One has to come again. And **not because the prod-**



ucts and services, but because of *the meanings and meaningful significant experiences* we are able to create.

Let's define more creative markets. For example, could lighthouses and peace be positioned within the market of hope? Vikings, fishing, water a source of life within the market of adventure/surviving or surpassing/challenging oneself? Four seasons, modern mermaids within the market of change or dreaming? What does a visitor take with her/him? For example, after being in the lighthouse and experiencing the service space... Could it be that one can learn about patience, perseverance, hope and commitment, qualities that can help us to cope with life? Seeing the lighthouse is not the thing... the THING is the story surrounding it. It is related to nature and the bodies that have performed and are performing nowadays today within and around the premises of the lighthouse.

Somebody said during the seminar that the herring is important to the Baltic Sea. It's maybe one of the elements we have in common. The herring could be a connection. A herring that find its way through the waters of the Baltic Sea from season to season from shore to shore surviving as the people of the Baltic Sea have done since the Ice Age. I thought it could be a great metaphor for the whole destination. But I'm also sure that we can find other elements that connect the Baltic Sea countries. The Hansa is also a good element.

Sea is LIFE / ADVENTURE / TRANSFORMATION / FREEDON / DREAMS OF A BETTER FUTURE.

In the discussions we had during the workshop, participants tend to talk about the idea of a Baltic Sea in transformation. The sea was seen as a transforming element. By travelling through the sea, people engaged in a transformation process. After such an experience, they were not the same. The sea shaped the landscape of the Baltic... it shaped also its inhabitants. It was a source of recreation, work and food... It was a window to the future...containing hope and dreams...it was a communication channel. The lighthouses are a living proof of how important the sea was for the people of the Baltic Sea. Can the Baltic Sea region still transform its visitors? Can one transform oneself by spending a week travelling through the Archipelago?



Baltic Sea region tourism developers and entrepreneurs should ask themselves why somebody would like to come to the Baltic Sea. We can find nature, sea, 4 seasons and people somewhere else. For example, we can find them in the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, etc. What makes our destination special? How do we differentiate our destination? United in diversity could be a good point of departure and differentiation. It has a long story, it is part of the present and it seems that it will be part of the future. Sustainability can be seen as one of the themes that brings Baltic Sea countries together. The fight for a clean environment, a clean sea reflects the long struggle for surviving in such a harsh environment. Sustainable services could be built around the idea of fighting for a better world. The Baltic Sea could be a destination where one can feel and experience the struggle for a better world.

The Film “Archipelago Raid in the Scandinavian Islands” is a good example of the Baltic Sea as a destination where we get still the feeling of what it means to survive. The film has just the content and essence for creating a common story. Though the film focuses on the competition, it reflects the values, spirit, emotions and feelings of the archipelago.

You will find in the Tourism Product Developer’s Handbook some tools and interesting insights that can help to work towards the common story of the Baltic Sea. The Story Tree illustrates very well the elements we need to focus on. It can be seen as a rough diamond that is waiting to be polished.

