

Touristic Marketing

Communicating a brand named
Vila Real de Santo António

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2011/2012

Msc. Marketing project

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Acknowledgment

First of all, I would like to thank my parents who gave me the opportunity to attend this course, for always giving me an unconditional support, helping me when I needed and providing motivation to go forward, showing me that with effort everything is possible.

To my brother Igor, my best friend and companion, of whom I am so veryvery proud, because everyday he shows me that with courage and dedication the sky is the limit.

To José, my boyfriend, who is very special to me and always gave me support and strength in the most difficult times.

To all my friends that always wished me luck, specially to Daniela, Janete, Rita, Diana, Dinis and Laurent that were always available when I needed.

Also, I'd like to thank all my professors during the bachelor and the master course, for teaching me all I know, and specially to Professor Helia, my tutor, that was always kind and supportive during the time I've been doing the thesis.

FinlFinally, I'd like to express my appreciation to the City Hall of Vila Real de Santo António for their availability, specially to Mr. João Rodrigues and Ms. Maria Conceição Cabrita, by the time and availability to provide very useful information and to provide very useful information and to doubts, and to the rest of my family, specially my uncle that made possible these meetings.

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Abbreviations List

AIDA – Attention, Interest, Desire, Action

ERTA – Entidade Regional do Turismo do Algarve (Regional Entity of Tourism of Algarve)

INE – Instituto Nacional de Estatística (Institute for National Statistics)

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

PEM – Permission E-mail Marketing

PENT – Plano Estratégico Nacional de Turismo (Tourism National Strategic Plan) (Tourism National Strategic Plan)

PR – Public Relations

RevPar – Revenue per available room

TV – Television

VIC – Visitor Information Centers

VRSA – Vila Real de Santo António

UK – United Kingdom

USP – Unique Selling Position

WTO – World Tourism Organization

Abstract

In a world that everyday is becoming more and more globalized, and in which consumers have the ability to compare and consume in many different markets, the competition has also been greatly intensified. In touristic marketing, to smaller destinations it has become even more difficult to highlight and distinguish themselves from other better known cities. Destination branding has become a common practice to many cities in the context of intensified competition for resources, markets, opportunities and attention, this this being even more important to smaller destinations.

In this specific case, the propose of thee study is to develop a destination brand and a communication plan to a Portuguese county called Vila Real de Santo António (VRSA), in order to highlight it from competition. To attain attain this goal goal, firstly it was necessary to understand the essence of this place, describe the touristic offer, what is already being done to attract tourists, to know who is the competition and what can be done to differentiate it it from them.

Key words: Destination branding, touristic marketing, small city, communication plan

JEL: M31; L83

Resumo

Num mundo que tem vindo a vindo a tornar-se cada vez mais globalizado, e no qual os consumidores estão agora aptos a comparar e comprar noutros mercados, houve uma intensificação do contexto concorrencial. No caso do marketing turístico, tornou-se ainda mais difícil para as pequenas cidades distinguirem-se e sobressaírem de outras cidades mais conhecidas. Assim o conceito de *destination branding* mostrou-se uma solução que muitas outras cidades já adoptaram como meio de ultrapassar a intensa competição por recursos, mercados, oportunidades e atenção, sendo ainda mais importante para os destinos mais pequenos.

Neste caso específico, o propósito desta tese é desenvolver uma *destination branding* e um plano de comunicação para um município em Portugal chamado Vila Real de Santo António (VRSA), de modo a sobressair da concorrência. Para tal, primeiro é necessário entender a essência deste local, descrevendo a sua oferta turística, o que está já a ser feito para atrair turistas, compreender quem é a concorrência e o que pode ser feito para se diferenciar dela.

Palavras-chave: *destination branding*, marketing turístico, pequenos pequenos destinos, plano de comunicação

JEL: M31; L83

Summário Executivo

O tema desta tese prende-se com o desenvolvimento de uma marca e de um plano de comunicação a aplicar num município no sul de Portugal, Vila Real de Santo António (VRSA).

A fim de atingir o objectivo proposto, está organizada em três partes: revisão de literatura, enquadramento e sugestão de acções a implementar.

Primeiramente é feito o estudo da teoria desenvolvida por vários autores acerca deste tema, sendo iniciado com algumas definições relacionadas com o tema. Ficamos assim aptos a entender que marketing é o conjunto de procedimentos, técnicas e conceitos que têm o intuito de entender as necessidades do consumidor, satisfazendo-as de modo a que a empresa tenha uma boa imagem, e cumpra com os seus objectivos de forma lucrativa. Define-se turista como sendo o individuo que passa mais de 24h noutra país com o propósito de lazer ou trabalho. Define-se marketing turístico como a utilização das técnicas e ferramentas do marketing para promover/desenvolver um local, sendo o turismo considerado importante para diversificar as condições económicas.

Foram ainda estudadas diferentes teorias sobre como obter um *destination marketing* de sucesso, podendo ser concluído que os principais pontos a ter em conta são: ter em mente os objectivos estabelecidos para o dado destino, tentar construir uma identidade única para o destino de forma a distinguir-se dos concorrentes, não esquecendo que existem vários intervenientes envolvidos e o foco deve visar sempre o target estabelecido, devendo estabelecer-se uma relação com os consumidores para saber quais as suas necessidades e a melhor forma de as satisfazer.

Para criar um posicionamento único e consistente, distinto da concorrência, uma boa opção é a construção de uma marca, que aplicada ao turismo se designa *destination branding*. Esta marca irá conferir personalidade ao destino, sendo percebida pelos consumidores através das várias formas como comunica. Esta percepção (ou imagem de marca quando aplicada a uma marca) depende de pessoa para pessoa, consoante a sua interpretação da maneira como a marca se apresenta, que será influenciado pela personalidade de cada um.

Quanto ao plano de comunicação, que possibilita atrair, informar e manter contacto com o mercado, os consumidores e *stakeholders*, é uma parte importante do plano de marketing para as empresas já que influencia o comportamento dos consumidores em relação aos produtos, a boa imagem da empresa leva a que esta tenha uma maior segurança em tempos de

crise e porque as empresas comunicam sempre, seja de uma forma controlada (tendo uma política de comunicação) ou de forma não controlada (através dos seus empregados, passa-palavra, sites de guerrilha, etc. e até mesmo através dos produtos, preço, distribuição, entre outros). Para comunicar de uma forma controlada (ou planeada) a comunicação integrada de marketing tem à sua disposição um leque de ferramentas que inclui: publicidade (em televisão, radio, imprensa, cinema, exterior e na internet), relações públicas (através do contacto pessoal, eventos, publicações, patrocínios, mecenato, etc.), força de vendas, merchandising, promoções, e marketing relacional (que inclui *direct mail*, televisão interactiva, telemarketing, *mobile marketing*, e *internet marketing*). Mas porque hoje em dia estes meios, ditos “tradicionalis”, se encontram saturados e já não bastam para prender a atenção do consumidor, é necessário adaptar estas ferramentas de comunicação à era do digital, através da internet. Através destas há um poder muito maior de comunicar e estabelecer uma relação com os consumidores, pois torna possível uma interacção entre estes e a empresa, por exemplo, através das redes sociais.

Antes de aplicar toda esta teoria ao caso prático, foi estudado o mercado em que este se insere. É nesta parte que entendemos que o turismo é um mercado que se tem mantido, e tem previsão de continuar em expansão, sendo que as cidades mais visitadas em 2010 foram Paris, Londres e Nova Iorque, encontrando-se Portugal em décimo nono lugar. Os principais mercados emissores em 2007 foram Europa (51%) e Ásia (21%) e os principais motivos de viagem foram lazer (51%) e trabalho (16%). As principais tendências que se tem vindo a verificar são o crescimento de turistas sénior (a propósito do envelhecimento populacional), viagens *low cost* (a propósito da actual conjuntura económica), viagens *do it yourself* (dado que os consumidores têm hoje à sua disposição todas as ferramentas para organizar todos os pormenores das suas viagens), preocupações a nível ambiental e de segurança terrorista, e maior poder de compra das classes médias (dado os mercados emergentes da China, Índia e Rússia).

Acerca do mercado de turismo português, depende sobretudo dos mercados inglês, espanhol, alemão e francês, sendo que as regiões que mais turistas recebem são Lisboa e Algarve, e os que maior crescimento têm registado são o mercado italiano (+8,6%) e espanhol (+3,1%). Dentro do Algarve, Albufeira e Portimão são as cidades que mais turistas recebem.

Hoje em dia VRSA depende sobretudo do turismo e do desporto, naturalmente o target para este local são os turistas desportivos e de lazer. Os principais produtos turísticos que estes podem usufruir são o património histórico, praias, mata, e outros recursos naturais, e boas condições para práticas desportivas (dentro e fora do complexo desportivo).

As sugestões de implementação incluem uma *destination branding* mais completa para o município, no qual os elementos sugeridos são um nome (do município), um logotipo (adaptação do já existente), um símbolo (Marquês de Pombal), uma assinatura (“o dia a dia a seu ritmo”), cores (verde, vermelho, azul e amarelo), cheiros (a mar e pinheiro), tom de voz e layout.

Incluem ainda um plano de acções de comunicação que, tendo em conta o estudo desenvolvido anteriormente, visa a proximidade e interactividade com os consumidores, utilizando sobretudo as novas tecnologias (internet e desenvolvimento de uma aplicação para *tablets* e *smartphones*), relações públicas (para representação em feiras e conferências) e marketing relacional (para envio de *newsletters* e convites a consumidores e possíveis consumidores). De maneira a contornar a actual crise foram ainda pensadas algumas promoções e parcerias. Para os turistas desportivos que treinam no complexo desportivo foi ainda proposto um pequeno patrocínio aos que irão participar nos próximos jogos olímpicos, e ainda usar alguns destes atletas como embaixadores do município.

1. Introduction

This master thesis comes from the motivation of contributing to the development of the tourism of Vila Real de Santo António, a county of Algarve, in the south of Portugal. The tourism in this place is very important since the industry and commerce of tuna and sardines failed, being, together with the sporting conditions, the greater source of income.

To fulfill this goal, fulfill this goal, the study has been divided in three parts:

- The **literature review**; in which the theory and the perspectives of several authors about touristic marketing (such as the steps and ideas to have in account when developing a destination marketing) is studied, how a brand can provide a unique position and differentiate a place from competition, and finally the tools available to inform and attract the consumers that are included in the communication plan;
- The **framework**; in which it is studied the market where this destination is inserted, considering the major motivations for travelling, the destinations that receive more tourists, and some touristic trends. A study had to be made of the markets that Portugal receives the most and the least, the Portuguese regions that receives more tourists and the same studies were made for Algarve. Concerning the county of VRSA, there is a small overview of its history, the products that this place has to offer to its tourists, and a description of its demand and competition;
- Finally, there is a **suggestion** of what the author thinks that could be done to improve the brand and some actions to attract more tourists.

2. Literature review

The main goal of this part of the thesis is to provide the understanding of some concepts such as marketing, tourism, touristic marketing, the different kind of types of tourism and touristic offer. It also gives an understanding of how to construct a successful and unique destination marketing, explaining the importance of a brand image and a destination branding, and finally how to communicate that brand. This is important because it is the basis to understand what the author intends to do with the destination brand that he is going to develop and communicate.

2.1. Definition: marketing, tourism, touristic and touristic marketing

Before defining what touristic marketing is, it matters to explain what marketing, tourism and tourist are.

The definition of marketing is very complex, but according to Lindon (2004: 28), Chartered Institute of Marketing, UK (2011) and American Marketing Association (2012), it is the set of means and methods available to identify, anticipate and plan the best way to execute the perception, pricing, promotion and distribution of goods and services that will satisfy customer requirements, providing a favorable behavior, and accomplish the organization goals in a profitable way.

Taking this definitions in account, one may conclude that **marketing** may be characterized by five essential features: it is a philosophy of consumer orientation; a number of analytical procedures and concepts used to develop the philosophy; data-gathering techniques which acts as the tools for operationalizing the procedures and concepts; a sequence of strategic decision areas and planning functions; and an organizational structure for implementation of planning (Seaton, 2000).

According to the World Tourist Organization (WTO, 2005) the definition of **tourist** (or visitor), is someone who stays at least twenty-four hours visiting another country, with one of the following purposes: leisure (recreation, holiday, health, study, religion and sport); or business, family, mission and meeting. In other hand, someone who stays less than twenty-four hours in other country visited is denominated an excursionist (in this case visitors that do not enter a country such as air travelers who do not leave an airport's transit area are excluded).

About the product in tourism, it has to be “a satisfying activity in a desired destination. The two features must be presented together” (Jefferson A, 1989, p.4).

Finally, touristic/city marketing is the usage of the marketing tools adapted to strategically promote, develop and growth of cities, regions and countries.

2.2. Why tourism is important, types of tourism and touristic offer

Tourism is an important contributor to “diversify economic conditions in rural and regional areas by providing alternative sources of employment and income generation in times of downturn in traditional industries” (parliament of Victoria Rural and Regional Committee (2008) in Cox and Wray (2011): 524).

Also Kötler, Haider and Rein (1993) have recognized that business tourism is a “key target segment for those responsible for marketing places” (Byrne & Skinner, 2007: 55)

But there are several types of touristic destinations offer (Gonzales, 2007), listed below:

- Recreation tourism: Touring – itinerant tourism to travel by road or train; walking, horse riding, bicycle, fluvial and cruise trips
- Relaxation tourism – beach, field, mountain, city, lakes/rivers
- Cultural tourism – cities, archeological places, historical sets, monuments, buildings, museums, gastronomy, cultural manifestations, folklore, crafts, shows
- Health tourism – diet, therapeutic treatment, beauty, fitness, spa tourism
- Nature tourism, ecotourism
 - Tourism in nature observation – ornithology, biology of rare or unique species, photographic safari, visit to terrestrial landscapes, aquatic or marine, astronomy
 - Tourism in nature participation – scientific tourism in nature, ethnic tourism, archeological or paleontological tourism, working camps to clean the landscape, educational activities and environmental interpretation
 - Rural tourism or agrotourism

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- Scientific tourism – interested in natural sciences
- Adventure tourism – climbing, rafting, bungee jumping, hiking, parachuting, motor sports, paragliding, horse riding, cycling gear, etc.
- Sports tourism – sky, golf, fishing, hunting, sailing, diving, horseback riding, etc
- Events tourism – cultural, religious, musical, sports, festivals, etc
- Tourism of “almost business” – meetings, congresses, presentations, fairs, incentives
- Industrial tourism – company visits
- Urban tourism – visit to great cities with urbanistic interests, historical and monumental, museums, expositions and cultural and artistic manifestations, shopping
- Religious tourism – religious activities, withdrawals, pilgrimages
- Tourism of thematic parks – zoos, aquatic, marine, technological, amusement and recreation, natural, other specific thematic parks

About the touristic offer, the authors refer:

- Accommodation – hotels, hostels, apartments, apart hotels, motels, inns, pensions, camping, cottages, mountain refuges, holiday villages, etc.
- Restoration: gastronomy – culinary and enological culture, gastronomical routes
- Nature – flora, fauna, ecosystems, natural parks, unique geographic locations, availability of active tourism, availability of adventure tourism, availability of ecotourism
- Culture
 - Cultural heritage material – architecture, sculpture, painting, archeology, monumental sets, museum, natural, cultural and historical interpretation centers, etc.
 - Cultural immaterial heritage– traditions and oral expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festivities, knowledge and practices about nature and universe, techniques of traditional crafts
 - Cultural activities

- Sports – sports facilities, sporting activities, sports competitions
- Amusement parks and other themed parks
- Routes – touristic trains, cruises, routes on foot, horseback or bicycle, nature trails, pilgrimages, cultural itineraries (architecture, archeology, gastronomy, history, ...), etc.
- Other attractions (touristic entertainment activities) – nightclubs, casinos and game rooms, other recreational facilities, parties, commercial premises (stores)
- Infrastructures – water, energy, access, maritime, air or land communications, security

2.3. Steps to construct a successful destination marketing

This kind of marketing arises as a reaction of the cities, that, to survive, need to continue being a valid reference to its citizens and visitors, being capable to retain them and attract new ones. It is also a tool to effectively achieve the political objectives to the city, as in its main focus it is the segmented market. (Seisedos, 2004).

In Cox and Wray's article (2011) there are references to three theories on how to achieve a successful destination.

According to Laws (1995) there are five phases to plan a marketing destination (or touristic marketing). It begins with the "diagnosis phase" in which it is studied the current market's situation (such as identifying tourist's facilities, preferences, behaviors and who are the destinations competing with our destination). Next is the "prognosis phase", where the plans are designed for the destination's development, followed by the phase where the objectives and goals to the destination are set. The fourth step is where the implementation of the marketing strategy is made. And finally, is the phase of monitoring marketing performance.

To the World Tourism Organization (1999), firstly it should be inventoried what already exists as attraction and facilities in that destination, and clarified the objectives for the tourism. Then it is made the comparison between the existing capacity levels and the actual and future demand level, in order to know which support services and public facilities are needed to match the desired target markets. Finally it is the phase to develop the promotional program that adjusts to the existing facilities, needs of the targeted markets and settled goals.

Elbe, Hallen and Axelsson (2009) have proposed an integrated destination marketing process that must apply marketing activities and at the same time **focusing on** resource acquisition and development and promoting related alliances and networks.

Another very important factor contributing to a successful destination is to have in mind that there are multiple players involved (Prideaux and Cooper, 2002), meaning that different marketing activities must be developed to include all different producers, products and attributes. In order to do this applied to destination marketing, partnerships must be developed between public and private sector stakeholders in tourism (Blumberg, 2005; Buhalis, 2000; Elbe *et al.*, 2009; Pike, 2004).

Also, a destination must be able to present itself as having a unique identity to be desirable (Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggott, 2003), and to achieve this there, a unique set of experiences to potential visitors has to be provided (Blackman, Foster, Hyvonen, Kuilboer, & Moscardo, 2004), to establish “themed” promotions and brochures that provide the real sense of identity of the place (Blackman *et al.*, 2004); to establish a clear market position and strong destination image in the minds of tourists (Crockett & Wood, 1999; King, 2002) but it has to be authentic too, so that the visitors don’t get disappointed when arriving to the destination (Ahmed, 1991).

Another key element is to stay connected with our visitors, for instance, with Visitor Information Centers (VICs), in order to “promote the region’s tourist attractions and facilities and to take on the role of orientating visitors to the region and controlling the flow of tourists in the area” (Pearce, 2004; Deery, Jago, Daugherty, Carson and Ames, 2006 in Cox and Wray, 2011:529).

2.4. Brand, image and brand image

2.4.1. Brand

The history of branding begins with the need of artisans and farmers in Rome and Greece, that, to communicate their products, marked them before sending them to the market, so that the clients could distinguish them from others (Arandes, 2008).

It's just like Vanella (2002) said "A good that has no brand has no identity and can be replaced by any other similar product".¹

A brand comprises a unique position and personality, by its functional attributes and symbolic values, differentiating a product/service from the ones of the competition (Hankinson and Cowking, 1993 in Kawartzis and Ashworth, 2005), or, accordingly to Jones (1986) that defined brand as "a product that provides functional benefits plus added values that some consumers value enough to buy". A brand is more than an identifying name, a single catchy slogan, or a memorable logo, although these are "practical instruments in a place branding strategy, they are not the strategy itself" (Kawartzis and Ashworth, 2005:508), since these are considered efficient tools to build awareness and image of destinations (Hem and Ikersen, 2004), it "embodies a whole set of physical and socio-psychological attributes and beliefs which are associated with the product" (Simoes and Dibb, 2001).

In a global perspective, we define the brand as one element that provides to the product an added value and functional benefits, valued by consumers inducing them to purchase. The Italian investigator Semprini (1995) defined brand as a semiotic instance, a way of segmenting and giving order, structure and voluntary to goods, products, ideas or services.

Because a brand evokes warranty, it tends to build confidence, simplifying the process of consumer choice (Arandes, 2008).

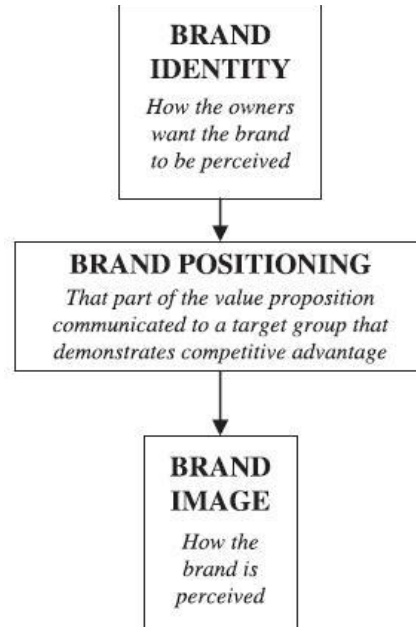
2.4.2. Image and brand image

Identity and image are terms that usually are misidentified, being the first one more about the stimulus that the brand transmits (name, personality, speech, style, etc), while the second one is more related with consumer's perception of the brand (Bill Baker, 2007).

¹ In Interview to "Classejexecutiva.tv"

Brand identity, brand positioning and brand image are related in the following figure 1:

Figure 1 Relation between brand identity, brand positioning and brand image



(source: Kawaratzis and Ashworth, 2005)

Arandes (2008: 7) in his article mentioned the definition of image referred by Verdura (1993) as “the image is the way we perceive things, firms, products, countries, regions and cities. It is a simple concept, but it includes factors such as credibility, consistency, coherency, uniformity, etc., which are what ultimately determine that perception of something real, stable and sufficiently solid to perform as a real distinguishing feature.”

In the same article there is also the interpretation of Kötler (1994: 658) about image, saying that it is: “the set of ideas, beliefs and impressions that someone has about an object, about something in his mind.”

So, it can be concluded that brand image is the opinion that people have from products and services of a firm or of a place. (Arandes (2008))

Thru the several ways a brand communicates (its name, publicity, quality-price relation, etc.) the public processes a set of perceptions, associations, memories and

prejudice, realizing its advantages. But because that perception is a process of selecting and interpreting the information that the brand provides, and that process is very personal (it depends on the personality of the consumer), the perception of the brand will be different for each person. (Teas (1993), Lambin (1995), Pinson (1978) in Arandes (2008).

To better understand the relation between identity, image and brand, Arandes (2008: 100) referred Villarejo (2002) “Identity is what the products or services are, image is the way they are shown to us. A brand has no value all by itself but as a binder of the values that it represents and reflects. These values are the components of the identity. The identity is the principal asset of the companies and the cities, that, when reflected on a brand, is the major differentiator facing competition”.

The brand image can also be applied in a determined geographic place such as a country, region or city, and it affects all the products made in that location in a positive or negative way, depending on the perceptions that people have about that place. It serves for a place to communicate what is done there (products, services and businesses), identifying them with the places’ brand, logotype and corporative identity, being related wisely by the society it is addressed to (Yaprak and Baughn (1991) in Arandes (2008).

Because a brand takes time to be built and to be an essential heritage of an organization or community, it has to be managed and developed in time and space with a long term strategic vision, focusing its positioning, trying to get profit out of the expenses made on the constant update of its image (Arandes, 2008).

2.5. Destination branding

Places also have had the need to design an identity and promote themselves differently from competition near the targeted markets, mainly because of the growth of globalization, and also to emphasize their individuality in pursuit of economic, political or socio-psychological goals. Given this, by the early 90’s, studies were initiated in order to create a distinctive marketing approach (e.g. Ashworth and Voogfb 1990; Berg *et al.* 1990; Kötler *et al.* 1993; Kavartzis and Ashworth, 2005).

City marketing (or place marketing) is composed of four activities (Kötler, Asplund, Rein and Haider, 1999): to develop the right mix between community characteristics and its services; to create incentives that attract actual and potential consumers to those goods and services of that place; to provide products and services of a place in an efficient and available way; to promote the identity and values of a place, in order to stand distinctive advantages to potential consumers.

There are three ways for individuals to construct a sense of a place in their minds: through planned interventions, by the usage of the place by them or by someone known, or through the appearance of the place (in a movie, novel, painting, news, etc.). This happens because people memorize places through perceptions and images (Crang 1998, Holloway and Hubbard 2001 in Kavaratis and Ashworth 2005).

So, in order to face competition, by promoting a touristic place image in a strong, distinctive and cohesive way, destination branding is a good way to respond, yet it is a perceived competitive advantage and it deals specifically with such “mental images”.

A definition of destination branding is “selecting a consistent brand element mix to identify and distinguish a destination through positive image building” (Hem and Ikersen, 2004: 86), or simply, “place branding is merely the application of product branding to places” (Kawartzis and Ashworth, 2005: 508), in other words, it is a process used to develop a unique identity and personality that differentiates a place from its competitive destinations.

As a brand, there are some basic elements that, when applied correctly and coherently, can project a clear and strong brand image. These elements are: name of the brand, logotype (name written in a special way), symbol (company’s symbol), signature (a written summary), ambassadors (other brand helping), lettering (off the self or costume made), colors (it could be one or a range), imagery, tone of voice (how the brand speeches to you), jingles (an audible summary), smells (something new), 5th element (product design style), layout style (brings consistency) (Olins, 2008).

Keller (2003) reinforces the idea that brand elements, when applied in a cohesive and consistent way, reinforce each other and “serve to unify the process of image formation and building which in turn contributes to the strength and uniqueness of brand identity” (Hem and Iksensen, 2004: 86)

But who are our audiences will influence the marketing plan, and consequently, the brand. Segmenting a market will identify and delimitate goals with greater precision, and it is a facilitator to identify and satisfy the needs of a target (Laws Eric, 1992), and because different tourists have different needs and motivations, it is necessary to segment them, in order to target. In Middleton's (1994) perspective, the main segmentation criteria are: the objectives with the travel; client's goals, motivations and needs; client's characteristics; demographic, economic and geographic criteria; psychographic criteria; prices. Every region needs to provide local products efficiently, promote their image and values, positioning themselves according to their competences, and so, potential consumers/visitors would know their differential advantages. These advantages will be better perceived if they are focused on the right target. If a city is willing to reach different targets, different brands for each one should be developed, having a city with a multitude of brands (a brand line), having products for each target (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005).

Successful examples:

Fig. 2– Spain's logo



Spain:

In Spain, branding has been used to communicate the country's unique identity for cultural diversity and sun. The branding involved the development of a logo (figure 2) designed by the Spanish painter Miró, in red and yellow (the Spanish colors) with the caption "Spain. Everything under the sun". The branding campaign ran for seven years and in 1992 was modified to "Spain – passion for life". Spain's excursion into branding has been summarized as providing values of creativity and dynamism of the country and variety of offer, requiring a repositioning in consumers perception. This campaign aimed at reflecting a country with a growing and intense development, with a wide offer range capable of appealing different touristic needs, communicating with personality and enthusiasm the country's great tradition, culture, history and natural resources (Camison, Bigne and Monfort (1994) in Seaton 2000: 367)

Fig. 3– Australia’s logo



Australia:

Thanks to branding efforts, today Australia enjoys a healthy influx of tourists, a rejuvenated business sector and the top spot in a recent ranking of country brands.

Zöe Shurgold, US PR manager for Tourism Australia explained how all this happened in an interview to the brandchannel website.

Australia wanted to show itself as a destination that is about experience, so in late 2003 and early 2004 it was decided to construct a new brand position, that would be different from competitors with the same target, and that would present an Australia’s image of diversity and cosmopolitan culture. The brand values that would be delivered are irreverence, optimism, mateship, integrity, originality and above all a country free of boundaries.

The Brand Australia logo, figure 3, used by Tourism Australia, and also by other government agencies that promote the country, features the kangaroo, that in a consumer testing was proved to be the most recognizable Australian symbol, and the colors chosen represent Australia’s diverse coastal and interior landscapes.

To advertise the brand, lucrative commercials were used, such as TV and print advertising, retail promotions, online ads, point-of-sales pursuits, and direct marketing; creative ventures, such as Outback Steakhouse and the Crocodile Dundee movie franchise; and used “tourism ambassadors”, Australians high-profile who spread the brand message through consumer promotions and events, including, for instance the model Megan Gale, swimmer Ian Thorpe, world champion surfer Layne Beachley.

2.6. Communication plan

In marketing, communication is the set of means that an enterprise has to exchange info with the market, so, the major difference between the “human communication” (the communication between people in the everyday routine) and the

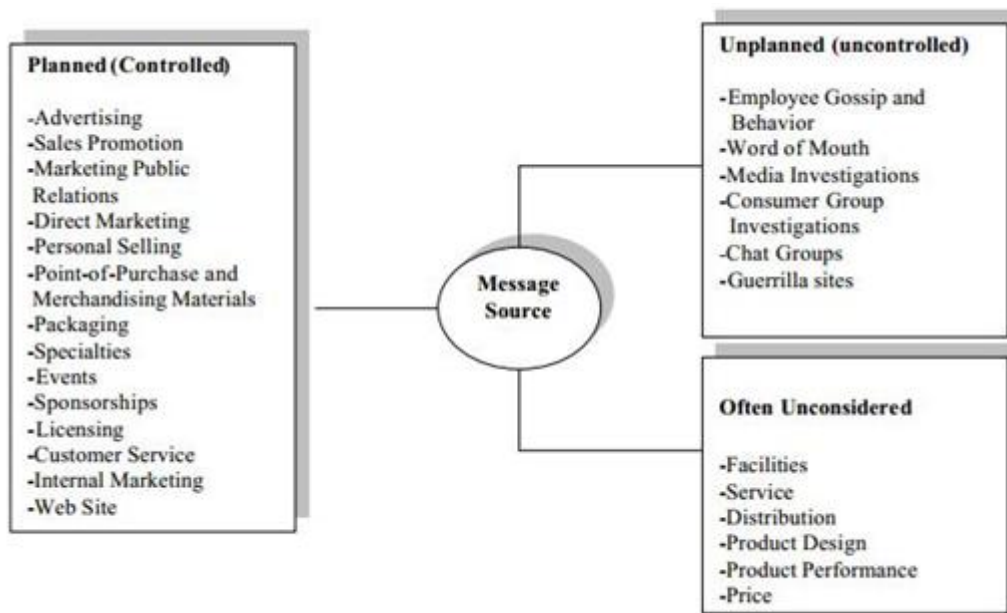
marketing communication is that the last one has a commercial purpose, exercising a suggestion power over its behavior towards the presented product (Castro, 2002).

In touristic marketing, communication exists to adequately inform tourists about a place and to attract them to it. The adaptation of the marketing field to the tourism sector has began in the early 1980s (Crompton, 1983; Rossman, 1989), despite the marketing communications have received limited discussion in the recreation and tourism literature, even with the great visibility that marketing communication has had (Lovelock and Weinberg, 1984).

There are four elements that make this **communication possible**: a source, a message, a receiver and a support that allows the flow of the message. “In communication marketing, the sources are the organizations and the brands, and the receivers are its publics” (Lindon, 1997). The company may choose between communicating thru the brand (personality and values) or thru the product (performance). If the communication goes only from the source to the receiver it is called a one way communication, but if there is feedback it turns to be a dynamic communication. Only in the last one it’s possible to understand if the message was well received, and so, to know if it is necessary to modify it.

The factors that make this kind of communication so **important** to enterprises are (Lindon, 2004): the consumer’s behavior depends on the image that people have of the products; to have a company with good image is safe haven to crisis situations; and a company always communicates, having or not a policy for it, so it’s important to understand if it’s effective to communicate in a involuntary manner (see figure 4).

Figure 4 Sources of messages



Source 1Wells, Burnett & Moriarty, 2001, p.506

If the public **doesn't receive the message as planned**, it might be for three reasons (Castro, 2002): selective attention (mental mechanisms that select the messages that people want to pay attention to – only the ones that are pleasant), selective perception (mental distortion to understand only what it is wanted to be heard or what the person is prepared to hear) and selective memorization (if the message is stored in the mind of the consumer or not, depends if the initial attitude of the receiver is positive).

The communication plan, since it is only one of the elements of the marketing-mix, it is a part of the marketing plan of the company, and that's why it can only be made after defining the marketing strategy. To clarify the role of the communication in the marketing plan it's necessary to understand the goals that were determined to the products, which new products will be launched, how the enterprise segmented the market, who is the target(s) market(s) and how the enterprise wants the positioning to be in each segment. Then it is necessary to understand the tools that will be used to achieve these objectives (Castro, 2002).

The stages in the design of communication strategies supporting the realization of promotional objectives are (Rowley, 1998 in Kulluvaara and Tornberg, 2003): Identifying target audience (it can be the complete market segment, or a specific

promotional strategy may be targeted more narrowly at a niche within a broader segment. It is important to understand the characteristics of the audience); To determine communication objectives (derived from the objectives of the promotional strategy. It can be based on how the communication should affect the mind of the target audience (generating awareness, attitudes, interests or trial) or in AIDA model (that includes the stages attention, interest, desire, action)); Design the message (must be consistent with the communication objectives and with the different campaigns, to promote a consistent image through all the separate campaigns, and should be based on Unique Selling Positioning (USP) (set of benefits which the producer believes are provided by their product)); Selecting communication channels (developed on the following pages); establishing promotional budget (can be set on the basis of seeking to achieve “share of voice” parity with competitors and set as the result of an analysis of the desired objectives and tasks required to achieve those objects); deciding on promotion-mix (selection of strategies from more than one of communication tools: to take in consideration issues like budget, complexity of the product, stage of life cycle and competition, etc.); measuring results (by looking at figures and any measures of reputation available).

2.6.1. Communication mix

Traditionally, the set of communication tools may be divided in two groups: the ones that deal with the media (such as TV, press, radio, outdoors, etc), called communication above the line, and the ones that don't deal with the media (such as relational marketing, sponsoring, PR, promotion, etc).

Lindon (1997) says that, in order for a company to build a good communication mix and choose the most effective communication tools, has to consider the following questions have to be considered: should privilege a pull strategy (consumers' attraction) or push strategy (stimulate the sales force and distribution); should give more importance to mass communication or differentiated; which should be the informative contents; and which should be the importance of the information sources image. The next step is to compose a clear briefing in order for the specialized suppliers to conceive the creative work as the company planned, and to follow its conception. After the

program is done, it follows the measurement of the results, comparing them with the initial objectives.

The above theory (pull and push strategy) when applied to the touristic marketing should aim at giving to the tour operator a general idea of the destination by providing visits, workshops, seminars, publicity in variety of magazines and newspapers, etc., when talking about push strategy; and to provide the public with clear information, whether through touristic literature, exhibitions, road show, or through disseminating the information via publicity campaigns when talking about pull strategy (Kosters, 1994 in Rita 2001).

The tools commonly used in communication are synthesized in the following table:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Advertising:</u></p> <p>It's the communication technique with the objective of advertising and valorizes a brand, contributing to its experimentation, consumption, adhesion, loyalty and utilization. Its targets are consumers and buyers, but it has also in account the influencer. The major goals are greater awareness, to encourage the purchase and to inform. The essential characteristics are: it allows to reach many audiences, the cost per contact is low, it works by the principle of repetition, its message is simple, strong and unique and the message is totally controlled by the advertiser.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ways:</p> <p>Tv (high audience and costs, strong saturation, variety of possible formats); Radio (repetition and speed of distribution of contact, few restrictions, poor quality of creation of the message); Press (heterogeneous formats, strong connection between readers and press, high segmentation); Cinema (limited audience, young and urban, slow distribution of contacts, seasonality, expensive, good geographical selection); Exterior (variety of media, low precision when measuring the audience, mean of masses); Internet (high growth, low costs, limited quality of creation, high level of audiences in general sites, possibility of interaction).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Public Relations:</u></p> <p>It's the set of procedures to manage the communication with the company's publics, internal and external, with the objective of advertising its good image.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ways:</p> <p>Personal contact (meetings and reunions, participation in congresses and seminars, clubs and associations, training); events (meetings, colloquies and seminars,</p>

<p>The major benefits are the cost effectiveness and the better credibility. The major goals (Odgen and Crescitelli, 2007) are reputation management, lobby, to manage special events, publications development, commercial benefits, effective communication, results at medium/long term (non immediate).</p>	<p>contests, press conferences, galas and parties, road shows); publications (annual report, brochures and flyers, articles and news in magazines, posters, audiovisuals); Sponsors and Patronage (financial (or fiscal, in the second) support to manifestations, with the counterpart to have visibility of the sponsor); public service activities (protection actions to the environment, ecology, animals, social causes, etc) and others (references to the company in movies and books, facilities visits, after-sales service).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sales Force:</u></p> <p>It's when a person or a group of people that has as a goal to sell the products or services of a company in a direct contact with the potential consumer. The major advantages of this kind of communication are: the message can be personalized to the client, it's more persuasive, greater involvement in the buying process and the client isn't distracted by other variables.</p>	<p>The responsibilities of a vendor are: Sales functions (plan vending activities, search for new clients, visit potential consumers, overcome objections), requests and orders (make sure the products requested are commissioned, control returns and problems with delivery), product (to be informed about the product, coach the client, supervise installation and possible repairs); to manage information (providing technical information, receiving feedback and communicating it to the superiors).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Merchandising:</u></p> <p>It's a technique of presenting the products in the point of sale, highlighting the product and bringing the attention of the potential consumer, raising its desire to buy it.</p>	<p>To the producer, the major goal is to maximize the sales volume of its products over the competitors, and have a greater visibility of its products in the point of sale.</p> <p>To the distributor, the major goal is to sell all the exposed products, but, because</p>

	<p>it matters to them to maximize the profitability of the investments, its actions give priority to products that provide greater gross profit or reducing financing costs by having a fast rotation of stocks.</p>
<p><u>Promotion:</u> It's the association of a product to a temporary advantage to facilitate or stimulate the use, buy and/or distribution of that product.</p>	<p><u>Ways:</u> The main techniques are: free testing (eg. distribution of samples, tasting, demonstration), temporary reduction of prices (directly in the price, reimbursement after presentation of "proof of purchase", discount by quantity, couponing), gifts (with the purchased product), contests/games/raffles and highlighting the product.</p>
<p><u>Sponsorship:</u> It's the communication tool where the sponsor has the right to communicate its name, the image, and the products/services of the enterprise, with the counterpart of providing logistical or financial compensation to the sponsor. It has a more commercial motivation, the main goal is to create a link between a brand and a media action, its targets are the potential consumers, with an exploration of commercial appreciation before, during, and after the event and its communication is made essentially with publicity</p>	<p><u>Patronage:</u> It's more related with social and aesthetic values, giving support to the culture and solidarity, with the intention of creating a relationship with the enterprise, personalities, opinion leaders, and public that is less sensitive to commercial appeals. It has a social motivation, with the objective of creating an identity to the enterprise as an institution, with an institutional, civic and social message. It aims at reaching the general community and its exploration is a spiritual appreciation, discrete and with light commercial intent. The communication way is almost exclusively P. R.</p>
<p><u>Relational Marketing:</u> It's the set of marketing activities aiming</p>	<p>Its tools are Direct Mail (personalized, effective and direct communication way,</p>

<p>at developing strong, lasting and relevant relationship with the brand's consumers, thru personalized, interactive and measurable actions.</p>	<p>thru mail), Interactive TV (several multimedia services, where the consumer chooses the contents that interests him; from this contents, the enterprises may drive personalized publicity to the consumer), telemarketing (direct marketing actions made thru telecommunication means), Mobile Marketing (direct marketing actions made thru mobile devices) and Internet Marketing (direct marketing actions made thru internet).</p>
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Source: Lindon, D. (2004). Mercator XXI Teoria e Prática do Marketing (10ª ed.). Lisboa: Editora Dom Quixote, and Castro (2007), Comunicação de Marketing (2ª ed.), Edições Silabo.

2.6.2. Digital communication

The diffusion of the internet has lead to a new market, where a merger between the traditional reality and the digital or online reality occurred, called the blended market. Because the consumers have also adopted a different purchase behavior facing these new technologies, the market had to adapt itself, and so, because of this new reality, the traditional marketing techniques weren't working as before, so it raised the **blended marketing**. This concept is the adaptation of the traditional marketing tools and activities to a digital world, that allows the enterprise to continue to distinguish itself from competition and still being competitive in a global world, continuing to have a positive evolution to the companies and to materialize its goals. (Dionísio *et al*, 2009)

One of these marketing tools is the digital or blended **communication**, which is integrated in the strategies of integrated communication of marketing. It allows escaping from saturated traditional communication tools by differentiating the approach and to come closer to the consumers thru the possibility of communicating directly with them, establishing and building a relationship. For the consumer, this relationship will mean the reduced risk of purchase, making the purchase decision easier, and to the marketers

it will allow them to study the behavior of consumers, and keep it in a profile database, customizing the offer (Database Marketing). (Hofacker, 2001)

Some software needed to make digital communication is: **e-mail**, the main tool to exchange information such as new releases, post messages, follow up material, and communicating with co-workers, suppliers and customers; **web browser**, that serves to search information and locate the targeted audience online; **word processor**, that serves as a spell-checker when a message is to be delivered to large audiences; other. (O'Keefe, 1997)

The selection of the digital ways depends on the initiative of the interaction beginning on consumer's initiative (pull ways) or by the brand (push ways).

In the first case, the available ways of communication are: the **Brand/institutional website**, in which the major goals are to attract visitors, to promote interaction and construct a lasting relationship; **Promotional Microsites**, such a raffle, a contest, highlighting a product, etc.; **Search Engine Marketing**, set of techniques that improve the website's position, listing it on the top results of the major search engines (SEO- Search Engine Optimization is the technical and qualitative improve of the website; and CPC – Cost Per Click is the purchase of sponsored links); **Widgets and Desktop Applications**, that are software developed by the companies such as games, instant messaging tools, etc and can also be included in social networks profiles; **e-RP**, that include blogging, a type of online journal in which the contents may be about one or several themes, and advertorial, that has a more journalistic tone, and it's published in a space paid by brands; **Virtual Worlds**, that consist in online games where the participants create their own character (avatar) and where brands can represent themselves in virtual dependencies of their activities; **Podcasting**, that are sets of digital contents that users are able to download; **Web 2.0**, in which users are able to produce and share contents with other users, such as the social networks.

In the second case, the available ways of communication are: **Display advertising**, that is a type of on-line publicity that may use textual hyperlinks and/or graphic and multimedia elements and in which are included, for instance, banners, that are graphic images that can be animated and take the user to another web page when clicking on them; **PEM** (Permission E-mail Marketing), in which, a data base of people who have previously authorized the reception of advertising messages is used, allowing to better

segment and direct on-line communication; **Product Placement**, that is when a brand is represented in on-line activities, such as in on-line games. (Dionísio *et al*, 2009; Strauss, 1999)

3. Methodology

The information collection was made through a **descriptive method**.

The investigation, since the author didn't have a depth previous knowledge, began with a randomly face-to-face **exploratory interview** (primary information), to tourists in the county during the month of August (2011), in order to get a better understanding of the tourists' perspective from the destination, their travel habits, what they most appreciate in destinations when travelling, their perception of Algarve and of the county, the ways of how they heard for the first time of the place and what they appreciate the most and the least in the county. (see attachment nr 1).

Next, the author built the literature review based on **research of scientific articles and books** (secondary information) to have a deeper knowledge of the investigations already developed in areas similar to his study' theme area.

Later on, **two meetings** took place with Mr. João Rodrigues, the city councilmen for tourism, and Ms. Maria da Conceição Cabrita, the city councilwoman for sports of Vila Real de Santo António (primary information), ~

To do directive interviews, in order to understand what was being done to attract tourists, and other information considered relevant (see attachments nr 1 and 2). Therefore, it was realized what the supply and demand thought was most important to be improved and the essence of the county. The website of the city hall was also consulted, in order to deepen the author's knowledge about the touristic and sporting products available, and statistical information was collected on internet about the county, its competitors, from Algarve, Portugal and also from abroad (secondary information).

Finally, the author's proposal is presented, on the set of actions whose aim is to attract more tourists and promote the repetition of visits.

Hereupon, it may be concluded that the methodology used for the data collection has a qualitative and a quantitative component, on one hand allowing to understand behaviors and perceptions, and on the other hand, understanding causes for the social phenomena with a more rigorous and controlled measurement, representing good

Communicating a brand named Vila Real de Santo António

instruments to frame the author's proposal to brand the destination and the communication plan.

4. Framework

4.1. World tourism:

4.1.1. The importance of tourism

The importance of tourism in every country, city and communities' economy is undeniably, because, as Francesco Fangialli, the general secretary of WTO (2011) said, "we think the high growth of the touristic industry will continue at a rhythm of four percent per year in the two first decades of the XXI century". In fact, this is such a profitable industry that, according to WTO (World Tourism Organization), in 2008-2009 the receipt increased by 5,8% (from 164 billion dollars to 852 billion dollars) but, although the world being facing an economic crisis, in 2010 it raised up to 919 billion dollars, representing 940 million of international tourists arrivals, being the European countries the ones who gained more with the international tourism. Nowadays the prediction is to reach 1.6 billion international tourists in 2020. This raising will be due to the increase in disposable income, the travel motivations, the exponential growth in emerging markets followed by the continued growth in traditional markets, the demographical, social and technological changes, the diversification of destinations and the increasing liberalization of the sector.

4.1.2. Evolution

According to the World Tourism Organization (2003), tourist is defined as someone who is "traveling to and staying in places outside his usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". According to this definition, it may be considered that the motivations to travel may be leisure and vacations, that according to WTO in 2008, represents only 51% of the international tourist arrivals, visiting family and friends, religion, health and others represents 6%, professional motivations represents 16%, and the other 6% is for other motivations.

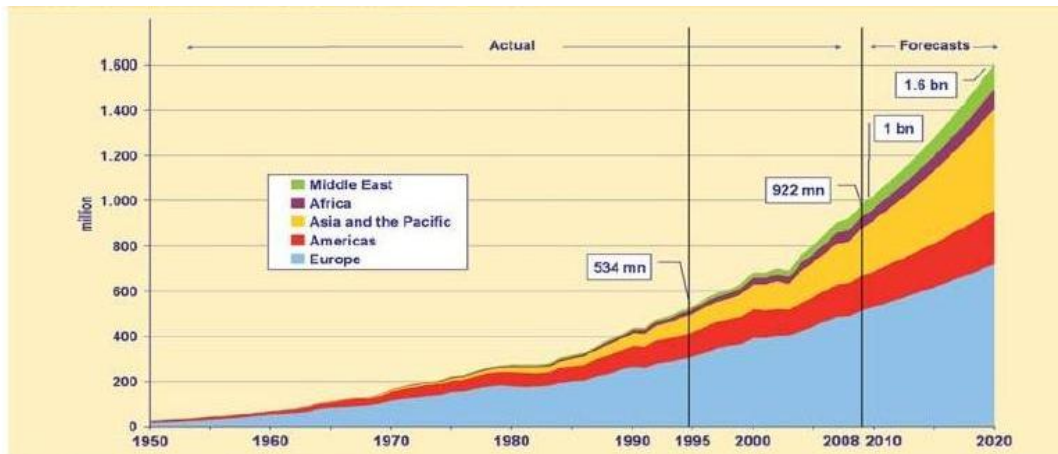
In what concerns the international touristic arrivals, (as seen in appendix figure 5), in 2007 the regional distribution was 54% to destinies in Europe, 21% to Asia and 15% to America. Regarding the origin of these tourists, the majority is coming from its own

continent, when referring to America, Asia and Europe. This is particularly high in Europe, where arrivals with origin in other European countries represent about 87% of the total arrivals (see graphic 1 in appendix).

The evolution of these arrivals, according to the graphic 2, increased from about 25 million to 922 million, from 1950 until 2008. This growth took place through the greater importance of Asian destinies and loss of market share by American and European markets.

The forecast for 2020, as it was said before, is to achieve 1.6 billion, what means a growth rate of 4%, being Africa, Asia and Middle East the ones with the major growth, while Europe and America, the more mature destinies have a smaller growth.

Graphic 2 - International Tourist arrivals 1950 - 2020



Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

About the most visited cities, in 2010 the top 3 begins with London (United Kingdom), with 15,6 million international tourists, followed by Paris (France), with 15.1 million international tourist arrivals, and finally New York City (USA) with 9.7 million tourists. About the most visited countries, the top 3 begins with France, with 76.8 million international tourist arrivals, followed by the United States of America with 59.75 million international tourist arrivals, and finally China with 55.67 million tourists, but it is expected that until 2020 this country to surpass France, being the most visited, with 130 million international tourist arrivals. Portugal appears in nineteenth place with 11.3 million international tourist arrivals.

4.1.3. Trends

With regard to demography, the trend is to having an aging population, and consequently an increase of senior tourists, to having a change in the composition of the families because there are more single parents, more singles, and households that include grandparents. Also, the increase of migratory flows associated with the increase of low cost companies, leads to more tourists motivated to visit family and friends.

Because there is a great expansion of information and communication technologies, nowadays people have access to new things such as the domain of the decision process.

About sustainability and security are gaining importance in the competitiveness of the product, the first one because there is a growing environmental awareness, and the second one due to the increasing number of threats such as terrorism and natural disasters.

Due to the emerging markets like India, China and Russia there is a growth of the middle class with purchase power, having disposable income to travel.

4.2. Tourism in Portugal

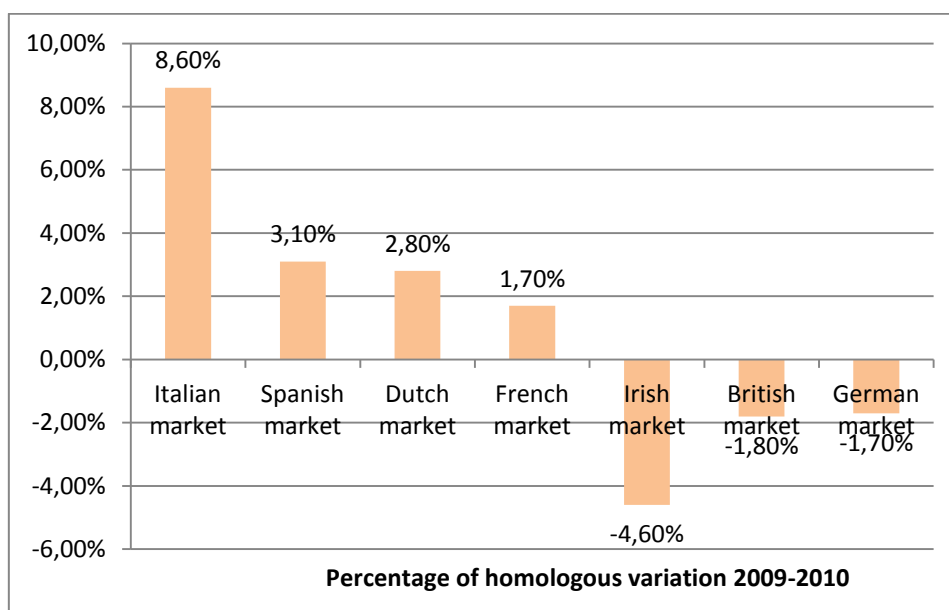
Portugal is best known by its hospitable and friendly people, its good weather conditions, beautiful landscapes, its historical and patrimonial heritage, good infrastructures to practice sports and an international well known gastronomy, which enables a diversified touristic offer.

According to PENT (2005) “the international tourism in Portugal depends mainly on four markets (United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and France) representing 60% of foreign guests and 67% of the revenue. The initial 15 EU countries represent 81% of the foreign guests and 82% of the revenue.”

In 2010 the National Statistical Institute, INE, found that “the hotel establishments recorded 13,6 million guests and 37,5 million overnight stands, values that represent similar growth of 5% and 2.9% respectively.”

Regarding the foreign guests, the origin market that recorded a higher performance was the Italian market (+8,6%), followed by the Spanish market (+3,1%), while the Irish market (-4,6%) was the one recording the most unfavorable evolution (see graphic 3).

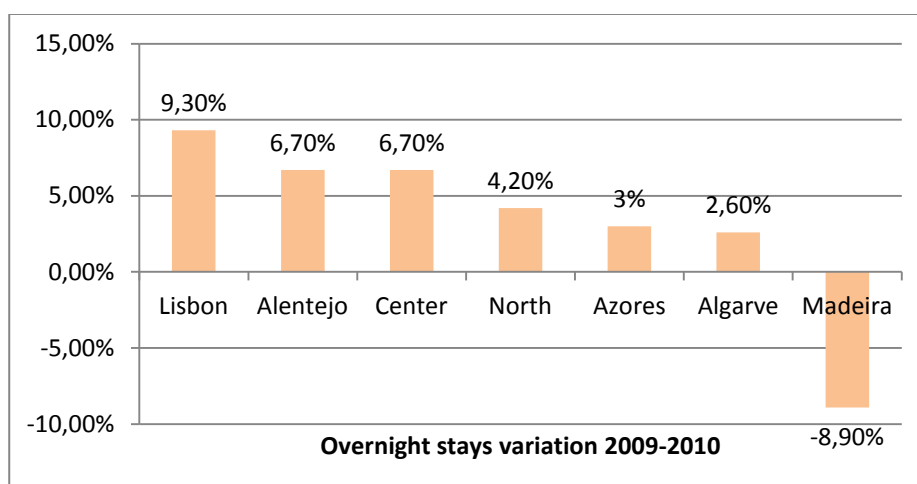
Graphic 3 - Foreign guests in Portugal



Source: INE, 2010

Regarding graphic 4, the region of Portugal that had a greater progress of overnight stays was Lisbon (+9,3%) followed by Alentejo and Center (+6,7%), being Madeira the only region that recorded a negative performance (-8,9%). Regarding Algarve, the overnight stays variation recorded a positive 2,6% rate.

Graphic 4 - Region of Portugal

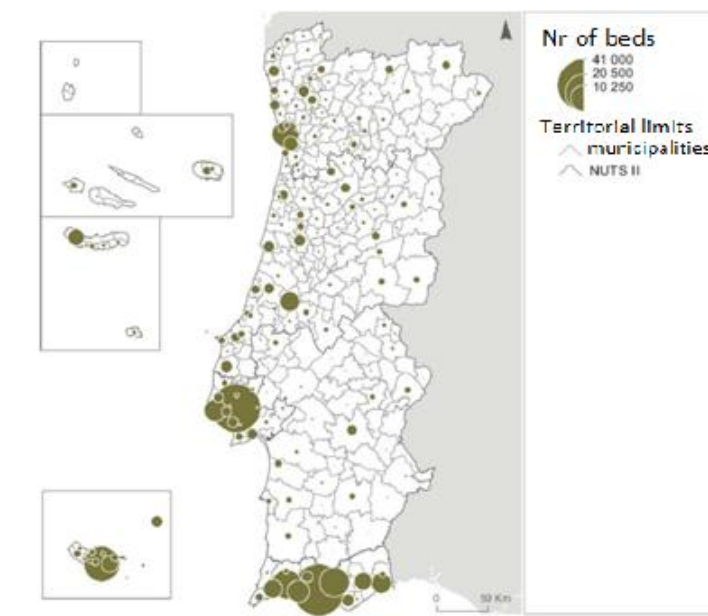


Source: INE, 2010

More recently, according to a study made also by INE in May 2011 (see appendix table 1), the number of overnight stays from may 2010 to an exact year later was from 3.332,2 million to 3.604,1 million what means a growth rate of 8,2%. Regarding the biggest homologous progresses, Madeira is the one who registered higher percentage of overnights from 2010 to 2011 (+31,9), followed by Algarve with a percentage of 8%, being Azores the only region with a negative variation tax (-7,4%). In terms of real numbers, Algarve is still the one receiving more people to overnight stand, having a number of 1188,6 thousands in 2011, followed by Lisbon, with 842,8 million overnight stands.

This may be explained by the greater accommodation capacity in these two regions, as we can see on the following image (figure 6):

Figure 6 - Accommodation capacity in hotels per municipality



Source: INE, I.P. (2009)

In terms of what it stands for the Portuguese economy, according to Boletim Estatístico (the Statistical Bulletin) of the Bank of Portugal (2008), “the revenues generated by the tourism in 2007 reached 7377 million” in exports, what means, “45,5% of the total of exportations of services (€16202 m), 20% of the exportations of goods (€37500 m) and 13,7% of total exports (goods and services)” in fact, tourism is so important for Portugal that its external revenues, “all by themselves, can cover 43% of the total of the deficit of the commercial balance (€17236m). Also, according to

Direcção-Geral de Turismo, also in 2007, tourism represents 8% of the GDP in this country and generates 10% of the Portuguese employment, due to the “workmanship that it generates, the revenues it provides and the multiplier effects it has in several areas”.

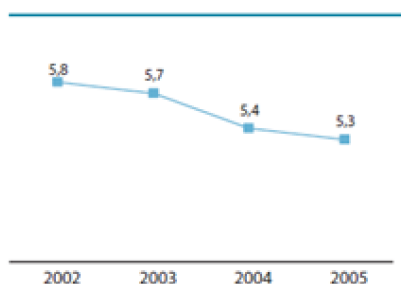
4.2.1. Tourism in Algarve

According to PENT (2005) the number of foreign visitors has been decreasing in Algarve at a rate of 1,6% per year, making 45% of the total of nightstands, but it still is the Portuguese region receiving a higher number of foreign tourists (10,7 million). In this document we can also see (graphic 5 in appendix) that the country that provides more people is the United Kingdom (47%), followed by Germany (17%), the Netherlands (11%) and Ireland (7%).

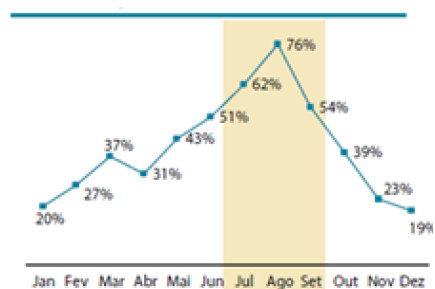
Due to the low occupancy rate of Algarve (47,5%) when facing comparable Spanish regions (see graphic 5 in appendix) such as the Valencian Community (63,3%), Andaluzia (56,8%) and Múrcia(47,8%), we’ll understand that this will result in a low RevPAR (Revenue Per Available Room) value, that is 23 euro in Algarve, when it is 27,2 in Portugal. One of the causes for this fact is that Algarve suffers from a high seasonality, for being a sun and sea destination. This way, as we can find in the graphic 7, the summer (from July until September) is the season when more people visit this region, being August the month with higher demand (76%).

Graphic 7 - Analysis of touristic performance in Algarve

**Average stay in hotel establishments
(overnight stays by bed; %; 2005)**



Sazonality of the demand



Source: INE

More recently, in 2010, INE registered in “Algarve a total of 13,3 million of touristic sleepover, what means a growth of 2,6 per cent against 2009” having been the region that more income has generated in Portugal (about 546 million euro, more 4,7% than in the homologous year).

4.2.2. Vila Real de Santo António

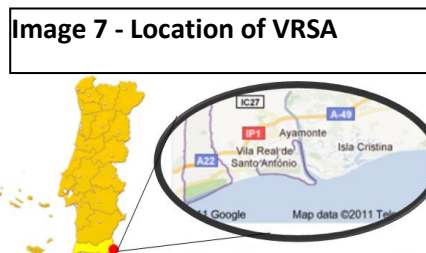
4.2.2.1. A small overview

Vila Real de Santo António is a county in eastern Algarve, in the south east of Portugal. This county was built in 1774 by Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo (1699-1782), also known as Marquês de Pombal. The structure of the historical part is the best example of the Illuminist tendency, due to its square shaped blocks and its symmetric front views (door, window, door, window ...). While he was secretary of State during the reign of King Joseph I (1750-1777), Marquês de Pombal knew that it was strategically important to control the commerce near the river mouth of Guadiana, and it was a great opportunity to develop the fishing commerce. Later, in the mid XX century, between 1943 and 1953, this place had one of the most developed industry and commerce of tuna and sardines, having 21 factories (being Ramirez the best known). Unfortunately in the 70's, this commerce entered in decline and in 2001 the last existing factory closed down its doors (Comalpe from Cofaco group) partially due to the wrong government politics concerning the fishing industry, namely when subsidies were given to dismantle the fishing boats.

Nowadays, this county is focused on commerce, tourism and its great linkages with sports.

4.2.2.2. Characterization of the territory

It has an area of 57,53 km² and its resident population has grown by 8,4% from 2001 (17.956 inhabitants) to 2011 (19.473 inhabitants), being VRSA the parish where there are more residents (see table 2). Being one of the few discontinuous



territories in Portugal, it is subdivided in three parishes, Vila Nova de Cacela in the occidental part, near Tavira, and Vila Real de Santo António and Monte Gordo in the oriental part, near to Castro Marim and Spain.

Table 2 - Number of inhabitants in Vila Real de Santo António, in 2001 and 2011, by gender and area of residence

	Total			Men			Women		
	2011	2001	%	2011	2001	%	2011	2001	%
Vila Real de Santo António	19 473	17 956	8,4	9 373	8 757	7	10 100	9 199	9,8
Vila Nova de Cacela	4 090	3 462	18,1	2 006	1 698	18,1	2 084	1 764	18,1
Vila Real de Santo António	12 0766	10 542	14,6	5 768	5 071	13,7	6 308	5 471	15,3
Monte Gordo	3 307	3 952	-16,3	1 599	1 988	-19,6	1 708	1 964	-13

Source: INE in Boletim Estatístico de VRSA, nr 17

Thanks to its proximity with the Mediterranean Sea, in this county, people are able to experience the warmest sea water in Portugal. This destination also benefits from a Mediterranean climate, meaning that the atmospheric temperatures are mild, being November and December the months with higher precipitation percentage, January and February the coldest months, and June and July being the warmer months (see table 3).

Table 3 - Average of air temperature and precipitation in Vila Real de Santo António

Month	Jan	Fev	Mar	Abr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max recorded temp.(°C)	22,4	27,2	31,0	31,3	37,0	38,0	41,2	42,0	39,0	34,0	29,4	23,0
Max. Average temp (°C)	16,0	17,0	19,3	21,0	23,2	27,0	30,0	31,0	28,0	24,0	19,4	17,0
Min. average temp.(°C)	6,2	8,0	9,0	10,4	13,0	16,0	18,5	18,5	17,0	14,0	10,2	8,0
Min. recorded temp.(°C)	-1,5	-1,2	0,5	1,0	4,0	6,0	9,5	10,5	8,2	4,5	1,4	-0,5
Precipitation (mm)	70,0	46,9	37,6	46,5	28,8	6,5	2,3	2,1	14,4	46,8	76,5	100,0

Source Instituto de Meteorologia, IP Portugal (2010)

4.2.2.3. Products:

In order for a city to be successful in tourism, according to several authors, it must offer some touristic services, like its hostelry offer (hotels, inns, camping sites, etc.), food services (restaurants, bars, pubs, etc.), entertainment (theaters, nightclubs, etc.), sports and recreation sites (parks, marines, clubs, etc), infrastructure for tourist assistance (basic city council information and transport information), hospital medical equipment, security system, and other services (tour operators, travel agencies, touristic commerce, exchange office, etc.) (Brites, 2009).

In VRSA we may consider the following products:

-Heritage

As it was said before, this place is one of the best examples of the Illuminism, and the very present pombaline layout is one of the major heritages that this county has.

Its history is present all over the county, and everyone visiting is able to know the meaning of the historical items because near them there are the descriptions about its context in the history of the county.

In the historical part of VRSA there are several places that one may visit, such as the Marquês de Pombal square, the heart of the county, where it is situated the main commercial area, the municipal council, and the parish church. In the middle of this square there is the obelisk, built to symbolize the king D. José I's power. This is a well organized broad place, good for the happening of some events, such as the handicraft fair in August.

Near this square, in one of the main commercial streets there is the Cultural Center António Aleixo, named after a famous poet countryman, it is where most of the cultural events happen, from art exhibitions to performances of all kind.

To the east, of Marquês de Pombal square in the called Avenida da República or Zona Ribeirinha (waterfront), we may find the Guadiana River's marginal with its marine, with a view to Spain, the custom house, where one can take a boat to Spain or to sail up the river, some of the most imposing builds, that were particular houses of opulent families, now adapted to public buildings, the ex-libris Guadiana Hotel, built in 1926, a "arte nova" building with a very attractive architecture, the Captaincy, that uses the same building where there used to be conserve factory Victoria, richly decorated with tile panels, finally in this part of the county we can find the Municipal Archive with great historical value, by having the same construction as in the original, and also by its well preserved documents, like the history of the county, and of course, also some stores and restaurants.

Near to the forest there is a lighthouse, built in 1923, this building pops out of all of the other buildings in the county that have a maximum of two floors, and offers a great view of all the county, beach and forest.

In what concerns to Monte Gordo, the promenade, the Casino, the antique hotels and the Nossa Senhora das Dores Church are the major heritage we can find. The

promenade, near the beach, is traffic free, what allows people to walk there peacefully, and also to enjoy all the bars, ice cream stores, the casino and fairs that take place there in summer time. Most of the hotels are in Monte Gordo, since this is the more touristic part of VRSA, some of them from the 60's, but at the same time very well preserved. About the Nossa Senhora das Dores church, is taught that its origin is as old as the village of Monte Gordo, and after the initial one being buried because of the movement of the sand, a new one was raised in the same place.

Regarding Vila Nova de Cacela, in its heritage are included a center of arts, the Nossa Senhora da Assunção Church, with gothic and renescentist influences, a little village called Santa Rita characterized by its single-storey houses, where one can visit a roman dam partially destroyed , the local church and the leisure park in the forest. 12 km away from the county seat is Cacela Velha. The old county seat, is characterized by its white historical houses, built on Algarve's style. It was important to the fishing and salting in the roman age, and during the Muslim occupation there were defensive walls, from which the fortress can still be visited in present times. From its front yard there is a good viewpoint to the ocean, to Ria Formosa, Manta Rota, Monte Gordo, and in Spain, Isla Canela and Isla Cristina.

-Beaches

There are three beaches that belong to VRSA: Santo António's beach, in VRSA, Monte Gordo beach, as the name says, in Monte Gordo, and Manta Rota beach, in Vila Nova de Cacela. What distinguish these beaches from the others in Algarve, is that they seem to never have an ending, with warm and secure water, with surveillance and beeing awarded as blue flag beaches year after year, what means that these are clean and safe beaches. The beach that has more visitors is the one in Monte Gordo, not only for beeing the one with the vaster sand space but also because of the restaurants and snack bars that are near the beach. Here, the beach is really for everyone, since disabled people have special accesses and facilities to go to the water in amphibious wheelchairs.

Monte Gordo beach and Santo António are linked, so you can go by the beach from one to each other.

This latest, as also happens with Manta Rota beach, is known for being less crowdy in summer time, comparing with Monte Gordo beach. They are also distinguished because of the nature surrounding, since in Santo António beach you are between the

sea and the forest, and in Manta Rota you are between open sea and the dunes and barrier-isles of Ria Formosa.

-Forest

Between VRSA and Monte Gordo there is a pine forest of about 3 km wide. In the south part of the forest you can go to the beach from VRSA in a path with terry floor by walk or in the touristic train, and there is a picnic area near Monte Gordo. In the north part of the forest there is also a path but in rough floor, very good to enjoy the fauna and flora. In the middle there is a roadway and a bicycle path that links to the one that was constructed from one side of Algarve to the other, i.e. from Vila Real de Santo António until Sagres, which is in the west side of Algarve.

-Natural resources

The natural resources in VRSA are Ria Formosa, a march protected by the Parque Natural status because of its sedimentar constitution, great to habitats of rare specimens like Chamaleo chamale and Larus melanocephalus, that goes from Loulé to VRSA, and has an area of 18.400 hectare and 60 Km, and the Guadiana river, that divides Portugal from Spain, has an extention of about 830 km, being navigable in its last 48 km, meaning that you can go by boat until Mértola, a portuguese medieval city in Alentejo, and it is ideal to practice sport fishing.

-Night life

Despite VRSA not being known by its night life like the rest of Algarve, there are some bars in the county, and also some well-known nightclubs nearby, like Manta Beach Club, in Manta Rota, known mainly because Maya, a Portuguese celebrity, being the RP.

There are also other festivities during the year, for instance, a Corsican twice in the Carnival, in VRSA and Monte Gordo; in July there are the “Noites da Moura Encantada” (nights of the enchanted Moresque) in Cacela Velha, during four days recreating the time when Algarve was Arabic, so you can feel the Arabic ambience, purchase arabic and Algarve’s items in a traditional market (Souk), to taste traditional gastronomy and attend to folklore and Moroccan spectacles; also in July, in Vila Real

the Santo António you may visit, every Thursday, a traditional fair with live performance of popular music, taste traditional confectionary and purchase handicraft.

Between the end of August and beginning of September, it is celebrated the (oldest) medieval days, in Castro Marim (5 km from VRSA), during 4 days where one may experience a rigorous recreation of Middle Age life.

If you want to spend your new year in this county, there is always a beautiful spectacle of firework, and about 30.000 people (2010/2011 data) celebrate this day in a giant tent with live music and guest dj's.

-Sporting Conditions

One of the strengths of this county is its great sport conditions that attract sports people from all over the world. One of the major events linked with sports is mundialito, which is a football competition for children with ages between 7 and 12 years old, where about 600 matches are played, with the participation of 3.500 players and 170 clubs from 30 different countries (in press Algarve).

In the municipal sports complex there are several equipments included, such as the municipal stadium, the ship sports, the tennis club fields, and the municipal pavilion.

In the municipal sports stadium people may enjoy the grass football field, two gymnasium with synthetic floor, an athletics track with eight tracks of 400 m, two sectors for high jump, two sectors to pole vault, four sectors for long jump and triple jump, sectors for shot put, discus and hammer and a ditch for steeplechase, two gymnasium, a bar and a clinic, and many others in the complementary infrastructure. In order to monetize the conditions offered in this complex, the ship sports was opened in 2004, so that people can accomplish their training plan even during rainy days, yet this is a covered space. Here, it is available a weight room, a training control/evaluation laboratory, a physiotherapy room, a medical office, an audiovisual room, a meeting room, and a bar and drawing room.

In the municipal pavilion, there is a 40x20m synthetic floor and three outdoor multi-sports.

In the tennis club fields there are nine tennis fields, in which five are with dirt floor and the others in synthetic floor, three paddle fields, two with synthetic turf and the other with synthetic floor, and also two mini tennis fields with synthetic floor.

The municipality also owns pools that people are able to use, where it is included a sports pool with 25 x 16,5 meters, a recreational pool with 20 x 12 meters, a jacuzzi, a sauna, stands, a bar, a training room, a technician room, a press office, a reception, changing rooms, a medical office, a laundry room and a rest room. These conditions are available all year, except in August.

Besides all these there are also two golf courses to the west, called Quinta da Ria and Quinta de Cima, near Cacela Velha, and another two, about 6 km to the north, and great conditions for people to run and ride bicycle in the forest, or just enjoying the gymnasium that almost every hotels have.

-Housing

As it was said before, there are many hotels in the county, being the biggest concentration in Monte Gordo, the part of the county that is more focused on tourism. There are also many rented apartments available (belonging to private owners) and apart hotels. To the most adventurous ones, there is a camping park, also in Monte Gordo, near the forest, allowing people to be more close to the nature, and it's a place that isn't very wet, it's in a non polluted place, it's sufficiently drained to facilitate the drainage of rainwater, it's sufficiently apart from the road, has internal thoroughfares to allow the circulation of the private automobiles, and provides water, energy, telephone and gas.

-Accessibilities

In order to reach this county, there are several accessibilities.

If people are coming by airplane there are two airports to land at: the International Airport in Faro, at 55Km coming from Via do Infante, and the International Airport in Sevilla, at 150Km coming from Via do V Centenario.

To come by personal/rented automobile, the accesses are the road EN122, that links Beja (in Alentejo) to VRSA, the road EN125, that comes from Lagos or by Via do Infante that comes from Portimão (in the west side of Algarve), and from Spain (Sevilla) the access is by Via V Centenario that goes to the International Bridge of Guadiana. There are also buses coming from Lisbon, Faro and Sevilla directly to VRSA.

By boat, there is a ferry boat linking Ayamonte (Spain) to VRSA and if people prefer to come by on a private boat, there is a recreation dock in VRSA.

There are also trains coming from Lagos, linking all Algarve, including Faro, where there are trains to the major train station of Portugal, the Gare do Oriente, in Lisbon, there are also buses coming from Lisbon, Faro and Sevilla.

4.2.2.4. The brand and the communication of the county

In VRSA there are two types of tourists: tourists for leisure and tourists for sports. Although both are present all year, the first type is more present in the summer months, and the second one during the rest of the year.

This fact means that there are two segments for communication marketing to reach, and that's why the author has tried to understand what is being done in each case to attract the attention of these two targets.

Both targets may be aimed in the website and Facebook page about the county, but in order for one to reach them, one has to know that this county exists, to know how to spell its name, and insert it in a search engine.

More specifically for the leisure tourist target, according to Dr. João Rodrigues, city councilmen of the tourism in this county, people can be aware of the touristic conditions and products in the touristic fairs (national and international), but, because it is integrated in ERTA (Entidade Regional do Turismo do Algarve – Regional Entity of Tourism of Algarve), this means that this promotion is more to the region of Algarve, and not the county itself, and there are also documents, newsletters and touristic guides that are sent to the specialized press.

To bring sporting tourists, there is also a specialized website for the complex (where it is also necessary to know its name in order to search it), there are agreements with the local sports enterprises that arrange trains for the athletes in this place, and in the federation meetings (in Portugal and abroad) there are great opportunities for the attraction of athletes and orientation groups.

Fig. 8 VRSA's logotype



There is also an attempt to brand the county, as we can see by their official website. , the name is obviously the name of the county, Vila Real de Santo António. The logotype, as shown in figure 8, is Vila Real Santo Antonio with a special lettering, and the symbol is the first letters of the name in four different colors (black, green, yellow and red). There are two types of letters, one in the texts and another on the menu, none of them with serifs. The colors that are used are the same as the ones used in the symbol. The layout is very simple, one can read the information bellow a picture, and the imagery used is always real photography. The tone of voice is always very formal. None of the other elements are present.

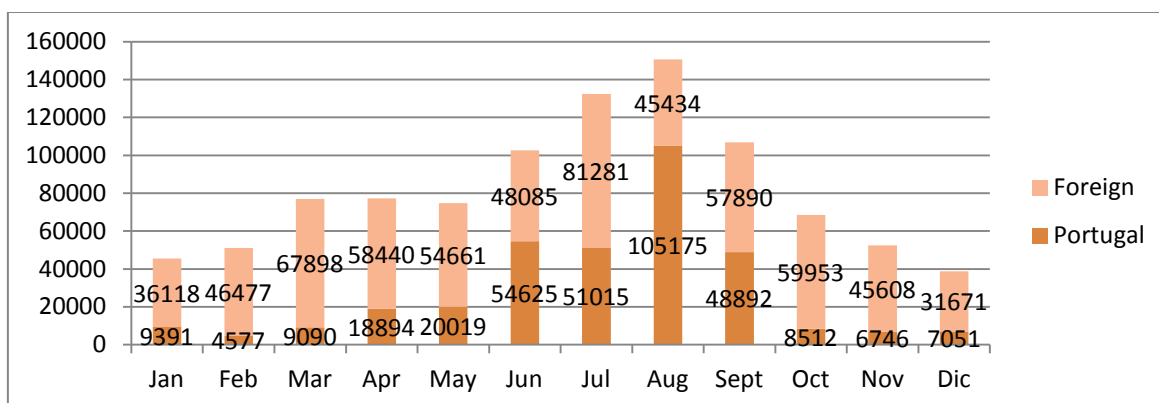
As it was said (Seaton and Bennett., 2000:369) “destination marketing primarily involves communication – linking tourists with the destination in order to achieve the target demand”, and in the author’s opinion, this is the most undeveloped marketing-mix variable of VRSA, and the brand must be improved.

4.2.2.5. Demand’s characterization

From graphic 8, one can see that there is a slight seasonality in terms of total of tourists visiting VRSA, being the Summer the period with more visitors, and specifically August the month with more visitors, and December the one with less visitors.

According to this graphic one can understand that the major cause of this gap are the Portuguese tourists.

Graphic 8 - Accumulated total of monthly Tourist nightstands in VRSA



Source: Adaptation of Boletim Estatístico de VRSA, nr 16 and 17

From table 4 (appendix) one may see that the total average of overnight stays from March 2010 to March 2011 was 82.729, and the major contributors were Portugal (30.756), Netherlands (22.175) and Germany (9.853).

On the contrary, August is when the county receives less sporting tourists, being April the month with higher number registered (because of the mega event Mundialito) as it can be seen by the description of the following table 5.

Table 5 - Number of users and usage of athletes in the complex

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Users	314	264	540	1176	841	56	7	0	53
Usage	2342	1446	4424	9028	6605	202	13	0	387

Source: Adaptation of Relatório ATC Vila Real de Santo António, 2011

According to Maria da Conceição Cabrita, tourism councilwoman VRSA, in April is when the county receives younger visitors, while December is when the county receives the competitive athletes (the older ones), and about the nationality, as one can see in appendix table 6, British are in first place (20,7%), followed by the Germans (13,3%), the Finish (13,1%) and the Dutch (11,3%).

After all, the average of sporting tourists visiting VRSA is 5000 per year, over a total of one million per year, average of the total overnight stays per year.

4.2.2.6. Competition's characterization

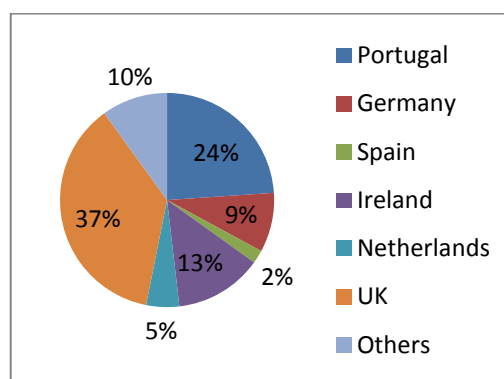
As described in page 40, Algarve is the region of Portugal with greater importance in tourism. In 2007, Albufeira was the city that contributed with a larger number of available beds (41,3%), followed by Portimão (14,6%) and Loulé (13,8%), Lagos (6,2%) and Tavira and Vila Real de Santo António (5,3%) (Source: Comissão de Coordenação e Desenvolvimento do Algarve).

To Dr. João Rodrigues, the city councilmen of the tourism in VRSA, the cities that are considered as the major competitors to VRSA in Portugal are Portimão and Albufeira, and in the foreign market, Andalucía, as a region, is the major competitor.

Portimão:

Since the 60/70's that Portimão has a relevant position in the tourism field, being the second most wanted destination in Algarve, right after Albufeira. Its touristic offers are its great extension of coast, good climate, accessible location, nightlife, sports conditions, 61 hospitality units (which means, approximately, 17.083 beds) and also three units of rural tourism. ("Portimão (Sinopse)", 2001). According to INE, the average of overnight stays in Portimão is two million per year, and the majority of the tourists are from the United Kingdom (37%), Portugal (24%) and Ireland (13%) (see graphic 9).

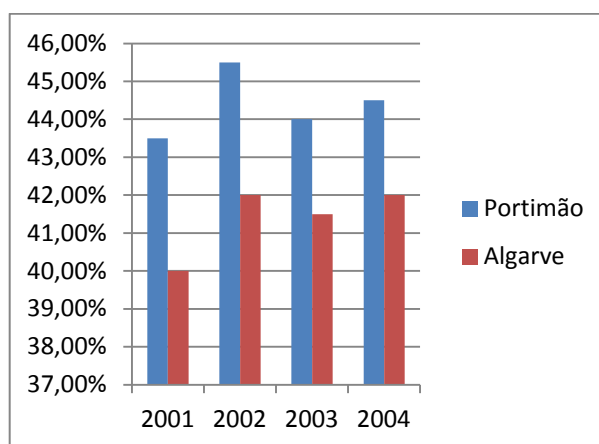
Graphic 9 - Percentage of tourists by origin market



Source: INE, 2004

It is during the summer months (July, August and September) when there is more seasonality, presenting an index of concentration per bed of 44%. (See graphic 10)

Graphic 10 - Percentage of overnight stays in the 3rd quarter (seasonality)



Source: INE, 2004

Albufeira:

Albufeira, has a Mediterranean weather, extensive beaches, historical patronage and sporting conditions, thematic parks, nightlife and good infrastructures. In terms of accesses, there is a highway that links Lisbon to Albufeira and another from Faro. In 2008 the accommodation capacity recorded was 417 unities (Turismo de Portugal, 2008) and 2009 recorded 5,8 million of overnight stays, representing 35,5% of the total overnight slepts of Portugal, in which about 72% is from foreign market origin (INE, 2010).

Andalusia:

Andalusia is the south western region of Spain, which has its borders with south eastern Portugal. It is the region of Spain with higher number of overnight stays (23.704.290 according to INE). It is constituted by the provinces Huelva, Seville, Cadiz, Córdoba, Malaga, Jaen, Granada and Almeria, covering an area of about 17% of the Spanish territory. Because it is plated by the Mediterranean sea, with about 900 km of coast, it is practiced tourism of sun and beach, aquatic sports, etc. Also Sierra Nevada, very well known by its winter sports conditions, belongs to Andalucía, such as another 22 natural parks (including Doñana park, Sierra de Grazalema, los Alcornocales, Sierra de las Nieves and Sierra Bermeja). There are many other sports conditions, including golf conditions, horse sports, sports in nature, etc. making this region a good place to promote sporting events. There are also conditions for beauty and health care, with the

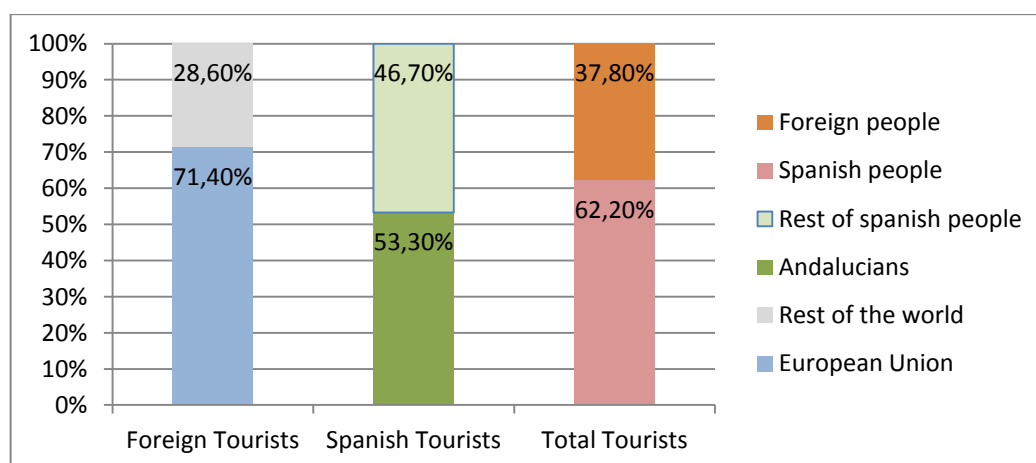
places in hotels and spas to enjoy hot springs, sludge, massages, therapeutic baths, etc. It also provides great cultural richness, with emblematic places, like Alhambra de Granada, la Mesquita de Córdoba and la Giralda de Seville that are monumental landmarks of Humanity that can be visited in Andalucía. (Source: Andalucía.org).

Regarding the tourists' profile (in 2010), there are more women (51,1%) than men visiting this region, the ages with more percentage (33%) is between 45 and 65 years old, followed by ages between 30 and 44 years old (31,2%), with a paid work (62,9%) or retired (20%). The activity that is most enjoyed is the going to the beach, visiting monuments and museums, and observing the nature. The principal reasons for knowing this destination are by experience and recommendations. The general valuation of this destination (from 1 to 10, being 10 the higher score) it's 7,1, with a degree of fidelity of 55,8%.

The provinces with higher occupation rate are Malaga (34%), followed by Granada (33%) and by Seville (31%).

About the difference between the Spanish versus Foreign tourists visiting Andalucía, the second ones spend more days (12,1 days) than the first ones (7,4 days), and the percentage of each one visiting the city can be seen in graphic 11.

Graphic 11 - Perceptual distribution of the tourists according to their origin



Source: Spanish Tourism Trade and Sports Institute in ECTA, IEA (2010)

The markets that traditionally sent more tourists to Andalucía are United Kingdom and Germany. United Kingdom, the most important market to this region, represented, in 2010, 19% of the foreign market and 7% of the total, having sent in 2010

1,52 million of tourists (-22,4% than in 2009), with an average of sojourn of 12,1 days (more 0,2 than the previous year) and having an average daily expenditure of €65,94 (more €1,56 than 2009). The main motivations to British people to visit Andalucía are the beach conditions (53,4%), visiting its monuments (32,6%) and observing nature (28,4%).

Germany, the second most important market to Andalucía, represented, in 2010, 11% of the foreign market and 4% of the total, meaning a total of 866 thousand tourists (-7,9% than in the previous year). German visitors have an average of sojourn of 13,2 days (+4,2 days than the average of the total sojourns in the region) and having an average daily expenditure of €63,2 (€-0,68 than the average of the total of tourists). The main motivations to German people to visit this region are the beach conditions 52,6%) and visiting monuments (25,4%) (Public Company for the management of tourism and sports from Andalusia, Tourism Trade and Sports Institute).

5. Implementation

5.1. Destination branding suggestion

Before thinking about communication it is important to firstly develop a consistent and strong brand, containing the elements that have been previously listed.

The author suggests that the elements of this brand should be:

- The **name** of the brand would be the name of the county “Vila Real de Santo António”, and the **logotype** the same that has been used (figure 8) but with the “V” in blue instead of black, (the reason of this choice is explained in the element “colors”) (see figure 9)

Figure 9 - New logotype of the county



- The **symbol** will also be one that has already been invented but it wasn't being used as such. It is a cartoon of Marquês de Pombal, that can appear in different ways varying with the frame in which it is inserted (see figure 10 and 11).

Figure 10 - Marquês de Pombal showing a new project for the city



Source: Website of Freguesia de VRSA

Figure 11 - Marquês de Pombal going to the beach



Source: Figure in an outdoor near the beach of VRSA

- The **signature (or slogan)** would be “O dia-a-dia a seu ritmo”, that means “Day by day at your own rhythm”, showing that in VRSA everything takes its time with no pressures and no rushes, but the word rhythm refers as well as to movement, remembering the sports conditions available. This slogan would be translated to the language of the country in which it is shown.
- The **colors** used would be green (because of VRSA’s forest), yellow (advert the sun and the sand), blue (the color of the ocean) and red (meaning vibration, action, etc).
- The **smell** of the ocean and the smell of pines (trees present in VRSA’s forest) are the smells that will be considered characteristic of this place.
- The **tone of voice** adopted will be serious and respectful but at the same time relaxed and calm.
- the **layout style** of the website, mupies, etc, would be with an image on the top (the image may vary) with the slogan on it and writing with what is being publicized on the bottom (as the example of the mupi in the figure 12)

Figure 12 - Example of a mupi where people are able to try the application and download it



Source: Own creation

5.2. Communication actions

When in 1994, Mira Amaral, at the time the minister of Energy and Industry, asked Michael Porter, professor at the Harvard Business School, a study pointing which were the major potentials of Portugal, it came out that tourism, wine, wood, clothing, shoe wearing and automobile were the national clusters considered priority to invest in order to develop the country. Nowadays tourism is still the sector that most specialists think that will help the Portuguese economy to grow. By tourism it can be understood more

than sun and beach, but also gastronomy, since Portugal has the best fish of the world, just to give an example among many others. (Marketeer nr 187, February 2012)

In order to communicate this specific county, to attract more tourists, it must be kept in mind that this is a small destination, and the chances for these destinations to leave a mark in people's mind and impress them are few. Usually the places that people keep in their memory are the ones that are most spoken about on media, or where they have some kind of link to. (Baker, 2007)

So, in order for people to remember this county, they must be exposed to various positive experiences and knowledge of the place, and above all this, being seen as more than a little (and sometimes more boring) part of Algarve. It is indeed a part of Algarve that is more relaxed, free minded, sporty, but this doesn't have necessarily to be boring and thought as less developed. It really is underused, although the locals know that the tourism here is a good source of income, and are respectful with the visitors, the potentials of the county haven't been instilled in local's mind, and it's all a question of positive attitude to demonstrate to the rest of Algarve and to all potential consumers that the type of tourism that is practiced in VRSA is different and also very appealing, mainly to those who want some "me-time", with tranquility instead of crazy nightlife as in the rest of the region.

In order to communicate this county, although still relying on ERTA (Entidade Regional do Turismo do Algarve – Regional Entity of Algarve's Tourism) to have more visibility, since this is already recognized as a Destination Management Organization (DMO), it is necessary to highlight itself from the other municipalities.

To João Rodrigues, it must be kept in mind that about 98% of the visitors come because of the mild temperatures, sun and beach, and that in the seasons other than the summer the average age is above the 50/60 years old (without counting with the sporting tourists). Maria da Conceição Cabrita thinks that it would be important to invest in touristic guides to cultural visits, bet more on tours and jaunts, packs, the ecovia and the nature, and communicate more the good conditions to Paralympics athletes and other to physically disabled people.

The targets that the communication may reach are segmented by the criteria in the table 7.

Table 7 - Important criteria to target the audience of VRSA

Criteria	Important variables
Demographics	Age
Geographics	Place of residence
Social and economics	Social Class
Psychographics	Lifestyle, motivation and personality
Behavioral	Benefits expectation, usage status (potential, first-time, regular, etc)

Source: Own creation

Since there are two kinds of tourists, leisure and sports tourists, the communication will have two targets, and so the actions will be different for each one.

For **leisure tourists** (Target type 1), the age will depend on the season, since on the months without school vacations the only target available to visit this place are retired people (>50 years old, according to João Rodrigues' logic), while the months with school vacations the target's age may lower to <30 years old, age when people settle down preferring a calmer and more secure destination for its family. The markets that are targeted as priority are England, Benelux, Spain, France and Germany. The social classes included are A and B, and to people with a relaxed and healthy lifestyle. Some of the influencers are the travel agencies, tourism magazines, etc., so these are also important targets (target type 1.1).

For **sports tourists** (Target type 2), all athletes (and also federations and clubs) are included, since they practice the sports that exist in the sporting complex. Some of the influencers are the magazines and websites about the various sports, so these are also targets that should be reached with the communication (target type 2.1).

Having settled the targets that should be reached, we are able to establish the goals and the actions to accomplish them.

In order to improve the service and experience of the tourists while visiting VRSA, it is necessary to implement an **internal communication** in which the local employees

(that have contact with the tourists at their work) are more involved. To do this, it is necessary to explain them the importance that the tourism has to the development of the county, how an improved service would bring more people, and retain them (and how they would also profit with this), and provide formation and workshops about the county, the brand, how to provide a good service, some basic marketing notions on how to sell more and better, and also provide linguistic formation, so that they could communicate better in other languages with foreign visitors (at least in English, the language that most people can speak, and Spanish, given the proximity with Spain). The municipal library would be a good place to make the sensitisation event about the importance of the tourism, and the UTL (Universidade dos Tempos Livres)² a good place to do the workshops and formations.

As **external communication**, besides the tools that normally are used, such as the traditional publicity in tv, press, etc., that begin to be saturated, it is important to embrace the potential consumer and making him interact with the product in order to be remembered. At the same time, it can't be forgotten the current economical situation all over Europe, and having in mind the financial straits that most of people are going thru, promotions are a good way to attract them. But in the next pages it will be described the communication actions, and what are the goals that each one are attending to satisfy. A point that already exists but could be improved, is that the websites and facebook are only available in Portuguese, and these should have also a version in other languages, such as Spanish and English.

² UTL it's meant to provide to the local people an occupation service during the off time, thru the availability of good pedagogical quality courses

Communication actions to potential consumers (target type 1 – leisure tourists)

Challenge	Make the destination (and activities) better known	Increase the number of visitors	Fight against seasonality
Solutions	<p><u>Publicity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise destination, brand and sporting conditions in press specialized in tourism (such as Publituris, <i>Rotas & Destinos</i>, Compass, GoNomad, etc) • Create an interactive mupi (see figure 12), in which people can explore and download the application described ahead. It will smell to beach and pine, have the sound of waves, and sand in the bottom. This mupie will be available in the principal airports of the targeted countries, and in Portugal it will also be placed in the busiest streets of Lisbon and Oporto <p><u>Public relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give some press conferences about the destination and the new brand • Communicate the destination in a Portuguese novel in a subtle way, where two or more characters talk about the county and the brand 	<p><u>Promotions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with discount companies (eg. “A vida é Bela”, “YUPIdeal”, “Groupon”) with discounts in VRSA’s products, such as in hotels and restaurants <p><u>Merchandising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merchandising in the travel agencies and in tourism fairs: offer of vouchers with discounts in hotels/bars/restaurants/souvenirs, anti-stress balls with the logo and slogan, fresheners for the car in shape of the symbol (Marquês de Pombal) with the smell of the ocean or of pine, with the logotype and the slogan <p><u>Public relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a personal space in tourism fairs, within the space of tourism Algarve, with merchandising, brochures, and also 	<p><u>Promotion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 hour sale of hotels up to 50% off (announced on radio and tv) to use during the low season (December/January) <p><u>Relational marketing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters to consumers to remember what they can usufruct in each month (planned activities, weather predictions to go to the beach, etc), and also news about the county and testimonials of people who have been there • Send invitations via post mail to spend the Christmas/new years holydays in VRSA • Invite companies to make team building and outdoor activities, outside the vacation period

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	<p>(soft sponsoring)</p> <p><u>Internet:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve website’s position in the major search engines (search engine optimization) and banners on travel agencies • Create a layer to use as wallpaper in tourism websites (such as lifecooler and travelplan) that, when clicking over it will link to the webpage of VRSA • Create a social like add on facebook linking to VRSA’s facebook page 	<p>some typical foods for tasting</p> <p><u>Digital Communication:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smartphone and tablet application in which people are able to consult the calendar of activities, search the nearest restaurants/bars/etc within the stipulated price/type of food/etc, reserve restaurants/hotel rooms/etc, and others that are relevant. This application will have the ability to be downloaded in the website, facebook, mupies, brochures, and also, when someone near the county is with Bluetooth on, receives a message to install it 	
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Communication actions to potential consumers (target type 2 – sporting tourists)

Challenge	Make the destination (and activities) better known	Increase the number of users	Make specialized magazines and websites promote our sporting conditions and surrounding to its clients
Solutions	<p><u>Publicity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise destination, brand and sporting conditions in specialized press • Articles in specialized magazines with testimonials of the athletes about the trainings and conditions • In the interactive mupie and application there is also an option to explore the sporting conditions, activities, news, events, etc, and also an option to schedule trainings <p><u>Sponsorship:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor athletes participating that are training in the complex of VRSA, and are going to participate in the Olympic Games <p><u>Public relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in sporting reunions and congresses • Use athletes that already train there as ambassadors of the complex in their own 	<p><u>Public Relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs and federations may visit the complex and all surrounding sporting conditions <p><u>Sales force:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit of sales force to clubs to invite them to practice also in VRSA’s complex <p><u>Promotions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loyalty card, in which athletes gain points by frequency of training, and which can be used as discounts in bars, restaurants, hotels, etc <p><u>Relational Marketing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRM platform, to receive feedback from athletes in order to improve the service • Send newsletter with sporting news, activities made, and also other touristic activities and news 	<p><u>Relational marketing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite specialized magazines and websites to visit and train one day in VRSA’s complex, and in return talk about the complex, the county and their experience there • Send merchandising, brochures and newsletters <p><u>Public Relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make follow up of specialized magazines and websites that are willing to highlight VRSA in Algarve’s destinations in sporting fairs <p><u>Internet:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships in which the sporting websites put a banner in their website that links to VRSA’s

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	<p>country</p> <p><u>Internet:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link the website of the complex to the website and facebook of the county 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending kits with local products, information brochures about the county, offer of boat travel up the Guadiana river to clubs and federations (charm operation) 	<p>website, and vice versa</p>
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<p>Who will do what</p>	<p><u>Publicity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive mupie and advertisement in specialized press – publicity agency <p><u>Public Relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracted agencies in each market • Conferences – city councilmen of tourism • Presence in fairs – ERTA • Visits in the complex – city councilwoman of sports <p><u>Internet and Digital Communication:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialized agency in web 2.0 	<p><u>Promotions:</u></p> <p>City council contacts places where the discounts can be made (restaurants/bars/...) and ERTA contacts the discount companies</p> <p><u>Merchandising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERTA will distribute the merchandising in fairs, and the products will be made in a publicity agency <p><u>Relational Marketing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County tourism with own and ERTA’s data base
<p>Specific Objectives</p>	<p><u>Publicity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher notoriety of the brand and destination, having a growth of overnight stays of about 20% in only 3 month • Thru the interactive mupi, increase WOM, and be more known as a cool, high-tech, distinctive destination <p><u>Public Relations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight from Algarve’s destinations • Generate buzz <p><u>Internet:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of visits to the website and facebook <p><u>Promotions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase experimentation 	<p><u>Merchandising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall the destination • Arouse curiosity for the destination • Reward the consumer <p><u>Relational Marketing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall the destination • Contradict seasonality • Attract different segments (companies) • Higher proximity with tourists <p><u>Digital Communication:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boost the destination and the brand • To make available activities being better known

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contradict seasonality• Promote repetition (with loyalty card)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase WOM
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Timetable and costs for tourists type 1

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Price	Observations
Advertise in press													€5.000x2monthx4marketsx1magazine=€40.000	
Interactive mupie													50.000	
Press conferences														
Novel reference														
Search engine opt													€550x2=€1.100	
layer online													€16.600x2=€33.200	
Social like ad													€1x100cpm x 2month=€200	
Discount companies														partnership
Merchandising													(€1,5 (anti-stress ball) + €1(car freshener) + €10 (vouchers)) x 10.000 (quant) = 215.000	
Space in fairs														when ERTA participates in fairs
Application													€ 3.000	avaliabile all year
24h sales off														
Newsletters														Monthly, via e-mail
Chirstmas invitation													€ 3.000	
Companie's invitaion														
													TOTAL= €345.500	

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Timetable and costs for tourists type 2

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Price	Observations
Advertise in press													€5.000x1monthx5marketsx2magazines=€50.000	
Press conferences														
Sponsor													€4.000x10athletes=€40.000	
Participate in congresses														
Visits to the complex														
Sales force														in the end of the journey, to begin trains of the next in the complex
CRM platform													€ 1.000	available all year
Newsletters														monthly, via e-mail
Kits to clubs													(€20 (local products) +€10 (brochure) + €1,5 (anti-stress balls)) x 2500 (quant) = 78.750	
Merchandising													(€10 (brochure) + €1,5 (anti-stress balls)) x 5 magazines = 57,5	
Banner													€16.600x2=€33.200	
													TOTAL= €203.007,5	

Other communication targets:

Communication target	Press	Touristic operators and travel websites
Goals	To make the destination, its conditions and its history known	To create partnerships, that will highlight the destination from Algarve
Specific Objectives	To be referred by the general and specialized press (in each market to be spoken in 5 general and 2 specialized)	To increase number of visitors, higher notoriety, lower promotion prices
Message	Tired of all stress and rush in your life? Make a pause where the day-by-day is at your own rhythm	The most relaxed destination in Algarve
Actions	<p>Press release talking about events, promotions, new products, and delivery of the municipal bulletin</p> <p>Event: Invitation to spend a day in the county, with a dinner in a mega tend with traditional food, guided visit to historical area and hostelry conditions</p>	<p>Promotion: Offer of free weekends to the director of the enterprises</p> <p>Event: Invitation to spend a day in the county, with a dinner in a mega tend with traditional food, guided visit to historical area and hostelry conditions. Reward to the operator that brings more people</p>
Costs	<p>Press release by e-mail (no costs)</p> <p>Event with partnership of ERTA</p>	<p>Free weekend with partnership of one of the hotels in VRSA</p> <p>Event with partnership of ERTA</p>

6. Conclusions and suggestions

Nowadays it's not enough to have good products, to have a webpage and a page in social networks. If you don't communicate your products properly no one will remember to search for you. It is necessary to go after potential consumers, and talk with them, construct a relationship, giving them countaint, otherwise they will quickly move their attention to the competition, who gives better attention to them, who listen to their needs and provides them with what they want. But above all, those who have the creativity to show up in an interesting and creative way, following trends, searching for what is new is the one who gets more attention. Ultimately, being proximate to clients and keep them satisfied will generate positive Word-of-Mouth, and consequently consumers will bring other consumers.

This is why the author's suggestion of communication plan for this county is so focused on being proximate to consumers (by public relations and relational marketing) and making easily available information about the touristic offer and activities (namely thru digital communication and applications to tablets that are what is trendy nowadays), that are the best ways to keep a communication with clients.

Another factor that was taken in account was the economical difficulties that have been installed all over Europe, both to consumers and companies. Nowadays to escape from routine it is almost considered luxury. This fact makes people more likely to value promotions, taking them as an opportunity to get their money's worth. From the company's side, the exchange of "favors", sponsorships and partnerships contribute to lower costs, having the opportunity to offer good prices versus good quality products to attract consumers with low budget.

It is also because it is considered luxury to escape from routine that nowadays people treasure every moment they have to rest in a quiet, peaceful place, where it is possible to align body and mind. And these are together in the concept of vacation in VRSA: tranquility in a healthy place, a place that is less crowded and has better conditions to exercise, with no hurries, in which the tourist only has to worry with enjoying his "me-time", in other words this means that the essence of the place is "day by day at your own rhythm".

This communication plan will depend and rely on ERTA, since this is a destination in Algarve, and this is already a well known entity by many markets. The targeted markets as priority are England (only market indicated by Mr. João Rodrigues), Spain (by its proximity), Benelux, France and Germany (by their economic power).

It will also depend on the development of partnerships with the press and agencies in the targeted markets, and also hotels, restaurants, bars, etc. in VRSA, since the tourism budget for this county is very limited.

The main goals with this communication plan are to improve the notoriety of the county, and its activities in the targeted markets, to be understood as a more dynamic destination, highlighting from its competition, and pass the message of the essence of the brand.

The author's suggestions to improve this destination would be:

- to enrich its contents, such as betting more in the events, for instance music festivals (of fado, Portuguese guitar, jazz, etc), gastronomical festivals (linking to the history of VRSA it could be a tuna festival), creating sporting activities to tourists, such as tournaments in the complex in the month of August (when there aren't athletes training), or even an event to assist football competitions (euro and world championship) in a big screen at the beach;
- to be aware of tendencies and trends by following consumer's blogs, comments of consumers in social networks, and other digital tools that have the possibility of tracking what is being said about you;
- to give the consumer power for planning every detail of his vacations in time, thru the tablet application for example.

And most important of all to remember that a destination has to be managed and developed in time and space with long term strategic vision.

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8. Appendix

Attachement nr 1 – Guideline for exploratory interviews

My name is Joana Ramalho and I'm a marketing master student, at Instituto das Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa (ISCTE). I am developing a thesis about touristic marketing in Vila Real de Santo António, and in order to develop this work **your help would be of great importance**, to understand what the tourists look for while traveling, what are the strengths of this city and how can they be improved. Every information you may give is only used to develop my thesis and it is strictly confidential so anonymity will be respected. This way, I gently ask you to answer this little questioner that **will last for only about 5 minutes**.

Gender ____ Age ____ Nationality _____

A. Traveling

- a. How often do you travel? More than once per year Once per year Once every two years
- b. When planning a vacation what are the three main factors that drive your choice when choosing a destination _____
- c. In a scale from 1 to 5, being 5 the highest score, which factors do you best value when you are traveling: History Nature Beach & sun Night life Spending costs
- d. Which were the two destinations you enjoyed the most until today?

- e. Why did you choose those destinations? _____
- f. Where are you usually hosted: Hotels Rented apartment Caravan
Others _____

B. Algarve

- a. When you think about Algarve, which ideas first pops up into your mind?

- b. Have you been in more cities in Algarve? Yes No
- c. If yes, which is your favorite? _____ And why? _____

C. Vila Real de Santo António

- a. Where from have you first heard about the city? _____
- a. What is your general opinion about the city? Good Medium Bad
 - i. Why? _____
- b. Do you consider repeating the experience? Yes No
 - i. If no, why? _____
- c. What has driven you to visit this city? _____
- d. In what kind of housing are you hosted? Hotel Apartment Camping
Other _____

e. Did you go/plan to go to a party or event during your stay? Which?

f. May you give an evaluation on the following elements (1-5) to develop the local tourism: Local gastronomy Handicraft Security Proximity to Spain
Close to other interesting cities Night life Proximity with nature Good conditions to practice sports

g. Which suggestions do you have in order to improve the city tourism?

Attachement nr 2 – Guideline for the interview to Mr. João Rodrigues

1. Brand

Why was this logotype chosen?

Which positioning is intended?

Which are the targeted markets?

Who is considered the main competition?

Which are considered the major differentiators from competition?

Which of the considered elements can be improved?

Which are the main products of VRSA?

Are there any partnerships with other brands/destinations/etc?

2. Communication

What is being done to communicate the destination?

Are you considering in having VRSA represented in tourism fairs?

What is being done to communicate the destination to touristic operators?

3. Tourists

Do you consider that the number of tourists have been satisfactory in relation to the investments made?

Has the evolution in the last 6 (your mandate) years been satisfactory?

Which are the main motivations of the tourists to visit the county?

How high is the repetition rate?

What is the average age of the tourists?

What is the average time of staying?

Which method is best used by visitors to plan their stay?

4. Other

Are there legal limitations?

How much is the budget limitation?

Attachement nr 3 – Guideline for the interview to Ms. Maria da Conceição Cabrita

What is the positioning of the destination?

Are there any partnerships?

What is being done to communicate the sports conditions?

What are the targeted markets to communicate? And what are the markets that bring more sporting tourists?

Who are considered the main competitors?

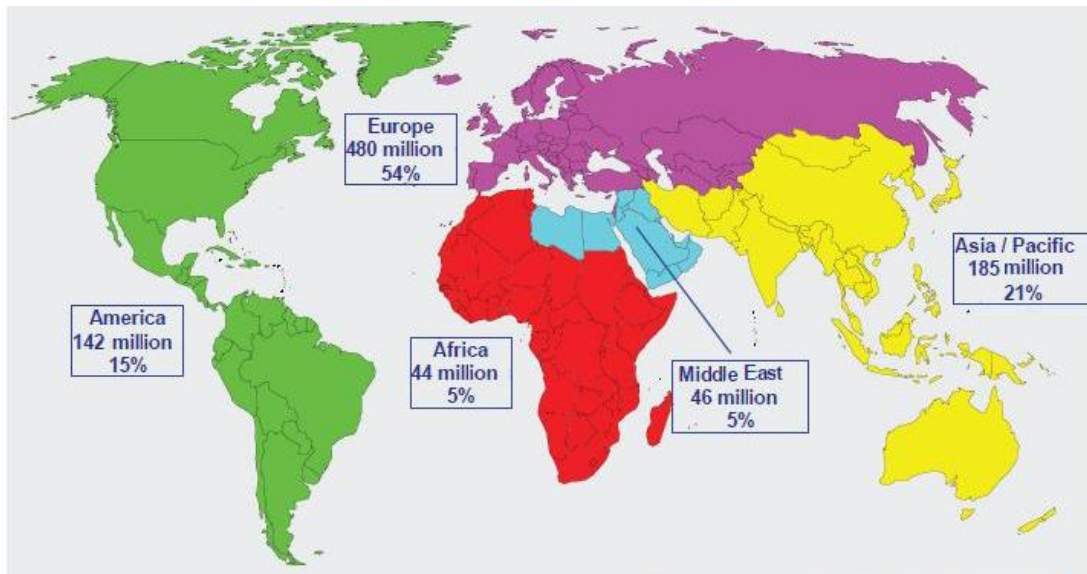
Which are the strengths and weaknesses against competition?

What has been done to improve the offer and what could still be improved?

Are there some activities in place designed to bring other tourists (leisure tourists) to practice some sports during their stay?

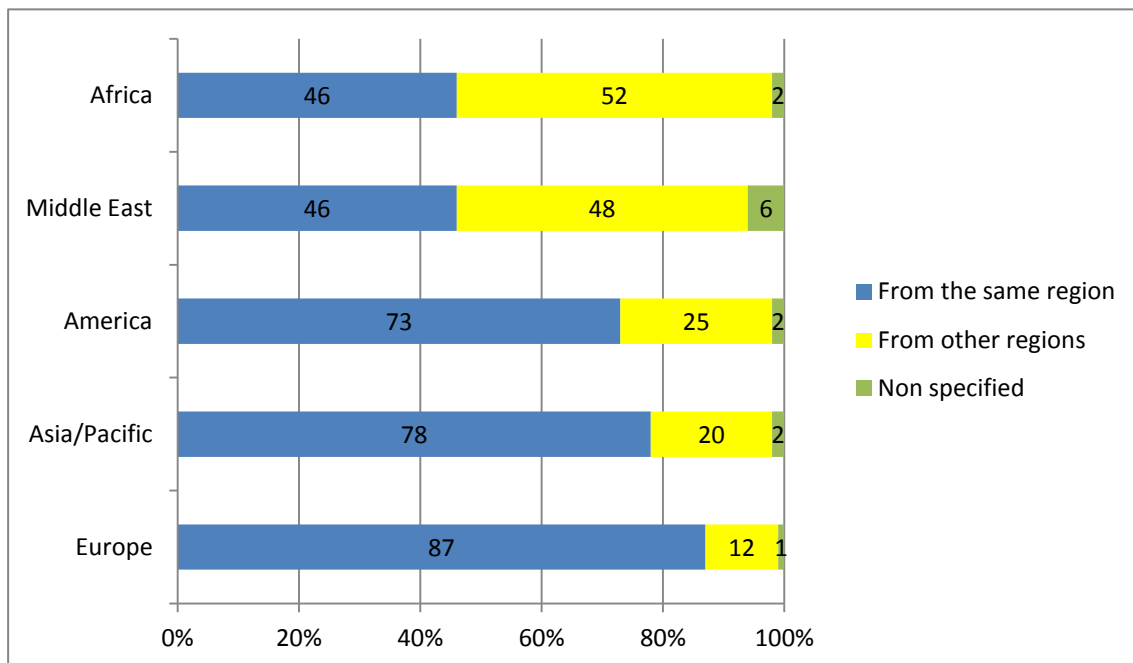
What legal and budget limitations do you have?

Figure 5 - Arrival of international tourists



Source: World Tourism Organization, 2008

Graphic 1 - Arrival of international tourists, according to their origin, in 2006



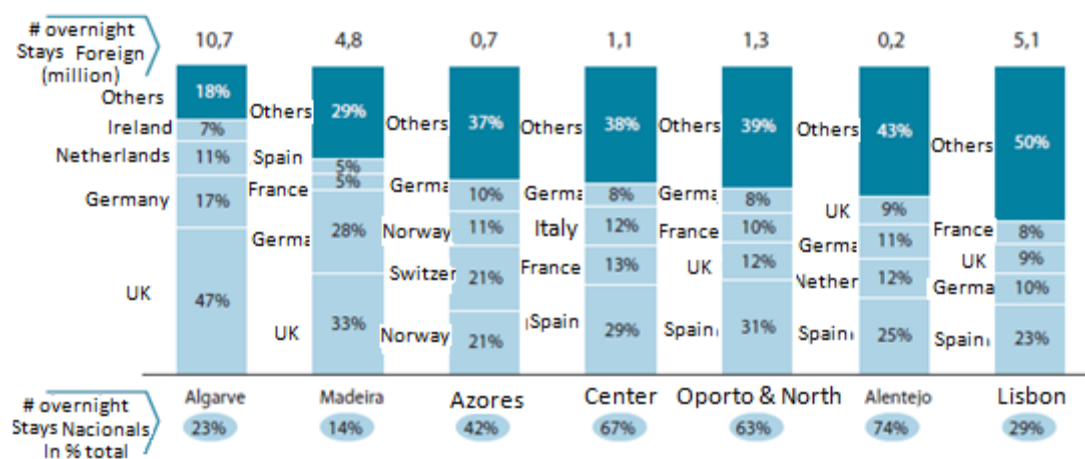
Source: World Tourism Organization, 2008

Table 1 - Overnight stays in Portugal, per region

Nuts II	Overnight Stays		Variation tax
	May '10	May '11	%
Portugal	3 333,2	3 604,1	8,2
North	408,0	421,3	3,3
Lisbon	805,2	842,8	4,7
Alentejo	102,1	104,5	2,2
Algarve	1 100,4	1 188,6	8,0
Azores	109,5	101,4	-7,4
Madeira	430,4	567,6	31,9

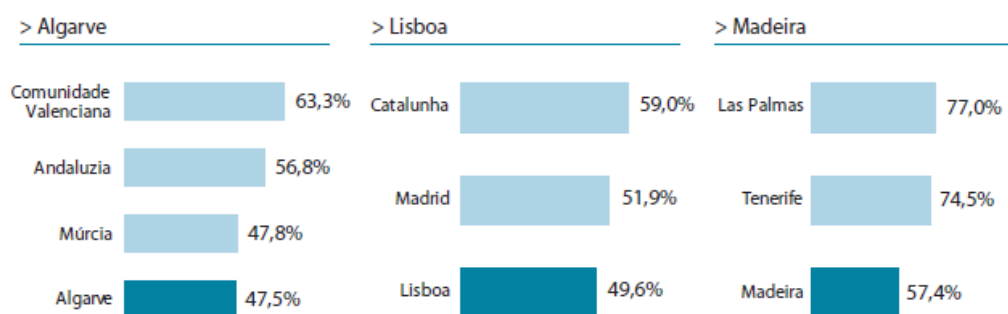
Source: INE, Actividade Turistica, 2011

Graphic 5 - Source Markets of the regions (percentage of overnight stays by tourists)



Source: INE, 2005

Graphic 6 - Occupancy rate of Portuguese regions facing comparable Spanish regions



Source: IET; DGT, Impactur; Roland Berger's Analysis in PENT, 2005

Table 4 - Overnight stays in VRSA according to country of residence

Country	Unity	Mar 2011	Mar 2010	Growth Rate (%)		Average last 12 months
				Monthly	Homologous	
Total overslept	nr	77 793	76988	27,3	1,3	82 729
Portugal	nr	7 921	9 090	72,3	-12,9	30 756
Netherlands	nr	35 234	34 844	2,2	1,1	22 175
Germany	nr	11 275	9 645	69,6	16,9	9 853
UK	nr	9 646	8 241	28,8	17	6 171
Spain	nr	975	2 183	-46,5	-55,3	2 485
Sweden	Nr	7 255	7 274	238,2	-0,3	4 000
Poland	Nr	289	164	8,6	76,2	1 306
Finland	Nr	907	1 080	1 142,5	-16	1 415
Denmark	Nr	44	74	-22,8	-40,5	697
Ireland	Nr	854	414	510	106,3	460
France	Nr	336	536	-18,8	-37,3	510
Austria	Nr	236	225	-57,2	4,9	200
Belgium	Nr	295	294	-57,2	4,9	294
Luxembourg	Nr	23	17	53,3	35,3	40

Source: INE in Boletim Estatístico nr 17, 2011

Table 6 - Users by origin country

2011	
Country	Users (%)
Algeria	0,1
Austria	0,1
Belgium	1,9
Estonia	1,2
Finland	13,1
France	6,8
Germany	13,3
Guernsey	0,3
Netherlands	11,3
Hungary	0,1
Ireland	6,1
Island	0,8
Liechtenstein	0,5
Lithuania	0,7
Norway	3,9
Poland	1,9
Portugal	4,3
Romania	0,3
Russia	0,3
Serbia	0,2
Switzerland	9,7
Slovenia	0,2
Spain	0,1
Swiss	1,7
UK	20,7
Ukraine	0,3

Source Adapted from Relatório ATC de VRSA 2011