Raquel Camprubí, Jaume Guia and Jordi Comas

Managing induced tourism image: Relational patterns and the life cycle

Abstract

The tourism image is an element that conditions the competitiveness of tourism destinations by making them stand out in the minds of tourists. In this context, marketers of tourism destinations endeavour to create an induced image based on their identity and distinctive characteristics. A number of authors have also recognized the complexity of tourism destinations and the need for coordination and cooperation among all tourism agents, in order to supply a satisfactory tourist product and be competitive in the tourism market. Therefore, tourism agents at the destination need to develop and integrate strategic marketing plans. The aim of this paper is to determine how cities of similar cultures use their resources with the purpose of developing a distinctive induced tourism image to attract tourists and the extent of coordination and cooperation among the various tourism agents of a destination in the process of induced image creation. In order to accomplish these aims, a comparative analysis of the induced image of two cultural cities is presented, Girona (Spain) and Perpignan (France). The induced image is assessed through the content analysis of promotional brochures and the extent of cooperation with in-depth interviews of the main tourism agents of these destinations. Despite the similarities of both cities in terms of tourism resources, results show the use of different attributes to configure the induced image of each destination, as well as a different configuration of the network of tourism agents that participate in the process of induced image creation.

Keywords:
induced tourism image; image analysis; marketing; tourism agents; Spain; France

Introduction

Tourism destinations increasingly need to generate tourism images, based on their distinctive attributes that singularize their tourism product in order to improve their capacity to compete in a globalized market. Nevertheless, tourism destinations are configured as a complex system where a great number of agents interact such as hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions, transportation, local institutions, etc. (Gunn, 1972; Butler, 1980; Pearce, 1989). According to Angella, and Go (2009, p. 429) "tourism destinations can be seen as an open-social system of interdependent and multiple stakeholders". In particular, the multiplicity of actors that intervene in the tourist

Raquel Camprubí, PhD, Faculty of Tourism, University of Girona, Spain; Email: raquel.camprubi@udg.es

Jaume Guia, PhD, Faculty of Tourism, University of Girona, Spain; Email: juame.guia@ udg.es

Jordi Comas, PhD, Faculty of Tourism, University of Girona, Spain; Email: jordi.comast@ udg.es

activity of a destination together with the interdependence of these various tourism agents, make the configuration of the tourism product more complicated, as well as the process of creating and emitting an adequate tourism image for the destination. In this context, the various stages of the destination´s life cycle also have a direct influence in the strategies that tourism managers have to adopt, as well as the level of co-operation and collaboration among the tourism agents.

Currently, a large number of tourism destinations have created Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) in order to promote tourism at the destination more efficiently. However, apart from carrying out the tasks related to marketing the destination, these organizations often assumed other kind of functions related to destination management. It is for this reason that the majority of DMOs can be understood as Destination *Management* Organizations, as Ritchie and Crouch (2003) pointed out.

Authors such as Minguzzi (2006) and Pike (2004) have detected that the main functions of a DMO are (a) to maximize the long-term strategy in cooperation with other local organizations; (b) to maximize the profitability of local enterprises and maximize the multiplier effect; (c) to develop an homogeneous tourism image, (d) to optimize tourism impacts by ensuring a sustainable balance between economic benefits and socio-cultural and environmental costs and (e) ensuring long term funding. Therefore DMOs have to implement a process of adapting alternative roles related to development, marketing, management and innovation, consistent with the destination's growth pattern (Choy, 1993). In this context, one of the most controversial points is the funding of DMOs, taking into consideration that "even the largest DMO budgets pale in comparison to those of the major corporate brands, with which they compete for discretionary consumer expenditure. Since DMOs have no direct financial stake in visitor expenditure, they must continually lobby for public and private funding." (Pike, 2005, p. 259).

By considering the competitive character of tourism markets, the managers of tourism destinations have to be imaginative and innovative at the time of creating and selling the tourism product. It is precisely in this situation that tourism images have the capacity to differentiate and singularize the tourism destination and thus influence the decision-making of potential tourists (Crompton, 1979; Etchner, & Ritchie, 1991; Jenkins, 1999; Larsen, & George, 2006; Mayo, 1973; Telisman-Kosuta, 1989). In view of this situation, the present paper focuses on examining how two similar destinations use their tourism resources differently in order to develop tourism images that allow them to be competitive in the tourism market, and consequently, influence the tourist's decision-making process. Obviously, the existence of multiple tourism agents who participate in the tourism system and intervene, directly or indirectly, in the process of product and image creation, can influence the emitted tourism image. With this background, our aim is to analyze to what extent there exists coordination and co-operation among the various tourism agents of a destination in the process of induced tourism image creation.

In order to accomplish this aim, a comparative analysis of the induced tourism image of two cultural cities is presented: Girona (Spanish Catalonia) and Perpignan (French Catalonia), allowing to compare how two Catalan cities on each side of the border use their distinctive resources and how tourism agents are involved in the creation of the induced tourism image in each case. The induced image is assessed through the content analysis of promotional brochures and the extent of cooperation, through in-depth interviews of the main tourism agents of these destinations.

Following this introduction, the second section of this paper focuses on a literature review around the key concepts of destination image and marketing management, giving the theoretical background to the development of the conceptual model in the third section. In section four the methodology is explained, particularly the two case studies as well as the process of collecting and analyzing the data. The fifth section is centred on analyzing the results. And finally, the last section presents the main conclusions of the study of the two cases, particularly focusing on the implications for destination managers. There are also some lines of future research in this field.

Literature review

A tourism image is, in an intuitive sense, a visual representation of a place. This is a common agreement that can be identified in the academic literature (Crompton, 1978; Dichter, 1985; Reynolds, 1965; Santos Arrebola, 1994). In particular, Kotler, Haider, and Rein (1994) determine that a tourism image is the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has about a place. Literature distinguishes between two types of tourism images: perceived and emitted images. Firstly, perceived images are those created in the mind of individuals with a strong component of subjectivity. It is for this reason that Gunn (1988) declares that tourism images are highly personal. Secondly, Galí, and Donaire (2005) remark that emitted images are a reproduction of signs with meaning, which have been socially constructed. Miossec (1977), in his seminal contribution, identified three types of emitted images: universal images, ephemeral images and induced images. Firstly, universal images are those that have evolved along the history of a place and have been socially accepted. Secondly, ephemeral images are those that have been created through a reinterpretation of the reality by the media, literature, art, music, etc. This kind of images are generally forgotten, but sometimes are turned into universal images. Finally, induced images are images created using the tools of marketing by tourism marketers and promoters (i.e. DMOs, hotels, tourist attractions, etc.), as well as travel agents or tour operators who have a particular interest to generate a tourism image of a place in order to sell it and influence the process of decision-making of tourists. All these agents who create induced images are called overt induced agents by Gartner (1993) in his main theoretical contribution titled "Image formation process".

Strategically, the tourism image is one of the most important elements to control and manage the marketing of a tourism destination. A large number of studies demonstrate the power of tourism images in influencing tourists' behaviour regarding destination selection (Crompton, 1979; Etchner, & Ritchie, 1991; Hong, Kim, Hochan,

& Lee, 2006; Jenkins, 1999; Larsen, & George, 2006; Mayo, 1973; Tasci, & Gartner, 2007; Telisman-Kosuta, 1989), and in the level of satisfaction of the tourist experience (Chon, 1992; Jenkins, 1999). In this context, destination managers in DMOs or Tourism Boards have to determine which are the most appropriate marketing strategies in terms of image mix, communication mix and branding. According to Gartner (1993), the image mix implies the determination of the characteristics of the desired target in order to select the most appropriate image formation agents, considering the level of credibility, market penetration and destination cost (Table 1) which is required in each situation.

Table 1
IMAGE FORMATION AGENTS

Image change agent	Credibility	Market penetration	Destination cost
Overt Induced I			
Traditional forms of advertising (e.g. Brochures, TV, Radio, print, etc.)	Low	High	High
Overt Induced II			
Information received from tour operators, wholesalers	Medium	Medium	Indirect
Covert Induced I			
Second party endorsement of products via traditional forms of advertising	Low/Medium	High	High
Covert Induced II			
Second party endorsement apparently unbiased reports (e.g. newspapers, travel section articles)	Medium	Medium	Medium
Autonomous			
News and popular culture: documentaries, reports, movies, news stories, movies, television programs	High	Medium/High	Indirect
Unsolicited Organic			
Unsolicited information received from friends and relatives	Medium	Low	Indirect
Solicited Organic			
Solicited information received from friends and relatives	High	Low	Indirect
Organic			
Actual visitation	High	--	Indirect

Source: Gartner (1993)

Another relevant element is the definition of the communication mix (advertising, public relations, personal selling, sales promotion and direct marketing), which is directly influenced by the geographical situation and characteristics (demographical, psychological and motivational) of each market segment (Kolb, 2006). Understanding market segmentation of the destination and its tourist products can be highly useful to determine the adequate message to project an induced image, as well as the most effective communication tools to be used.

Taking into consideration the growing competition in the tourist market and that a great number of destinations promote similar attributes such as landscapes, history and culture (Blain, Levy, & Ritchie, 2005) or focus their promotion on the excellence of their accommodation, services and infrastructures (Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggott, 2003), branding strategies are postulated as a way of differentiating identities (Morgan, & Pritchard, 1998) and becoming more competitive. Branding consists of constructing a distinctive and sustainable advantage (Rooney, 1995) of a product, through the use of a brand. And the brand is composed of a name, symbol, design or a combination of them that identifies the product with a particular organization, which differentiates the destination from its competitors (Kotler, Amstrong, Saunders, & Wong, 2002). Branding should not be mistaken with image emission, bearing in mind that Cai (2002, p. 722) points out that "image formation is not branding, albeit the former constitutes the core of latter." In this sense, to facilitate the creation or modification process of a brand, a strategic vision of the induced image formation process involving a definition of brand identity, the brand positioning and the generation of a brand image, is strongly needed. Branding benefits are related to brand equity, which allows the generation of high levels of consumer's conscientiousness and familiarity (Keller, 2003), as well as loyalty to the brand, perceived quality and associations to the brand (Aaker, 1991). It is important that all these associations are related to the targeted market segments.

As it can be seen, a good understanding and specific knowledge of market segmentation is relevant in order to establish the most appropriate marketing strategy in general terms, and in particular an adequate image and communication mix, as well as the right branding strategy.

Therefore, considering all these arguments, tourism image is a central and strategic element for tourism destinations, which can help them to be competitive in the tourism market, and can be managed and controlled by the DMO or Tourism Board, although the level of involvement of the rest of tourism agents in the destination can differ from one destination to another.

## Tourism image formation: A conceptual model

An academic literature review shows how several authors tried to understand and systematize the process of tourism image formation, with the aim of capturing the different factors that affect the selection of a destination by tourists (Gartner, 1993). Gunn's (1972) seven-stage tourist experience model, and Baloglu, and McCleary's (1999) image formation model are some of the most widely accepted models in the tourism image research literature. More recently, Govers, and Go (2004) have proposed another image formation model, which is constructed on the basis of the quality satisfaction model of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) concluding the possible existence of 3-gaps in the perceived image of a destination.

However, all these conceptualizations of the image formation process are only meant to show how perceived tourism images are constructed, without taking into conside-

ration the formation of images, as a previous stage of image perception by tourists. Taci, and Gartner (2007) assumed this gap in academic literature and have developed a conceptual model that reflects the interaction between supply (destination) and demand (tourists) during the image formation process; considering that image formation inputs are grouped as controllable, semi-controllable and uncontrollable.

Following this outline, and focusing on induced image in this section we propose a conceptual model (Figure 1), which explains the various factors that intervene in the induced image formation process.

Figure 1
**INDUCED IMAGE FORMATION MODEL**
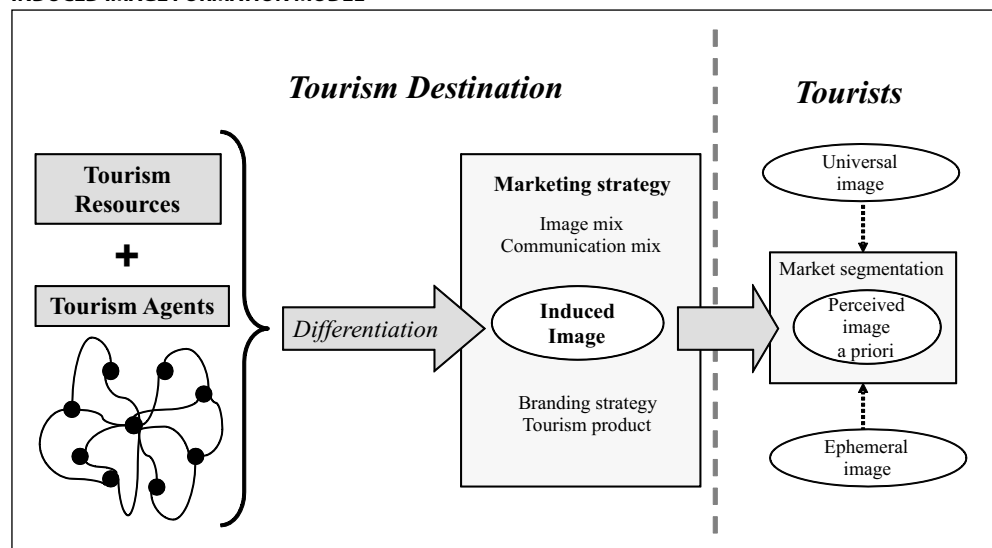
As we mentioned in the introduction, we assume the complexity of the tourism system where a large number of tourism agents interact and configure the tourism product. In fact, we can assert that a tourism destination is configured as a relational network where tourism agents are linked among them through collaborative ties (Bhat, & Milne, 2008; Dredge, 2006; Tinsley, & Lynch, 2001; Jackson, & Murphy, 2002; Novelli, Smith, & Spencer, 2006; Scott, Cooper, & Baggio, 2008; Sorensen, 2002; Camprubí, Guia, & Comas, 2008). Tinsley, and Lynch (2001) determine that the relationship among the various actors of the destination is a vital component of the tourism system.

In this context, Watkins, and Bell (2002) concluded that relationships in tourism can follow an evolutionary process composed of three stages: competence, cooperation and collaboration. These authors determine that "the shift from competitive to cooperative relationships and from cooperative to collaborative relationships, represents progressively more complex ways of conducting relationships based on the ascending qualitative values implicit in each successive relationship" (p. 23), with varying elements such as trust, commitment and so on. As can be asserted from Watkins, and Bell (2002) and Butler (1980), there is a narrow link between the various stages of the life cycle of a tourism destination and the evolution of relationships in tourism. In particular, as can

be seen in Figure 2, during the involvement, exploitation and development stages of a destination there is a situation of competition where the various tourism agents act individually. However, when the tourism destination is consolidated and particularly during the stagnation stage, tourism agents begin to co-operate. According to Watkins, and Bell (2002) the most frequent forms of co-operation are to form part of a local association, to participate in sport events and festivals, and initiatives of co-operative marketing promoted by local government. In the last stage of the life cycle, in order to achieve the rejuvenation or stabilization of the destination, tourism agents have to learn to collaborate through "formalized arrangements between two or more complementary players for the purpose of securing a longer term advantage" (Watkins, & Bell, 2002, p. 21).

Figure 2
STAGES OF RELATIONSHIPS IN TOURISM DESTINATIONS LINKED TO LIFE CYCLE MODEL
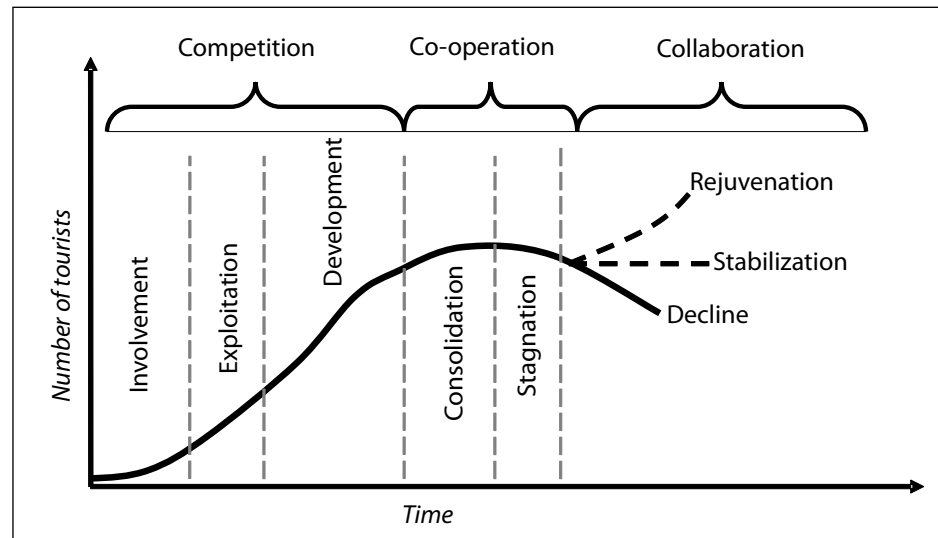
Source: Adapted from Butler (1980) and Watkins and Bell (2002)

Specifically, in the shift from cooperation to collaboration is where DMOs can play a leading role as they are key agents in the establishment of durable relationships with other tourism agents of the destination, in promoting new common projects and in co-ordinating tourism marketing in terms of image projection, as well as in the product configuration given the reality of the destination and its own identity. Management of tourism image is relevant in all the stages of the life cycle of a destination, but is especially critical in the stagnation stage when "the area will have a well-established image but it will no longer be in fashion" (Butler, 1980). It is precisely in this situation when DMOs need to make efforts to reposition the image of the destination, by seeking the complicity of the other tourism agents of the destination, establishing a new induced image projection strategy and renewing jointly (public and private sectors) the products supplied according to the new strategy adopted.

Following the contributions of Watkins, and Bell (2002), we can assert that the relational network of a tourism destination changes over time following its own evolutionary path, taking into account that each tourism destination is a particular case, based on different realities that can evolve in a different way (Haywood, 1986).

At the same time, each tourism destination has its own tourism resources. However, we have to distinguish between (a) tourism resources that are distinctive of a particular place, such as a specific monument, a natural landscape or a culture; and (b) tourism resources that are similar to other destinations. In this sense, if tourism agents of a destination are able to adequately use its singular tourism resources to configure the tourism product, as well as to generate its induced tourism image by reinforcing the distinctive characteristics of the destination, then the tourism destination will be more competitive in the tourist market. Obviously, as has been explained in the literature review, the design of an appropriate image mix (Gartner, 1993) and communication mix is considered decisive (Kolb, 2006); and in the cases where the DMO or tourism managers consider it necessary, a branding strategy that takes into account the relevance of market segmentation is also crucial.

Finally, from the perspective that a tourism destination is organized as a relational network and considering that historical, social and cultural patterns vary considerably from one place to another, we would expect that the configuration of destinations will vary in each case. It is quite logical then that the DMO or the Tourism Board in charge of promoting the destination plays a central position in the relational network of the destination and thus favours the coordination among the rest of tourism agents.

Methodology

Two case studies have been analyzed in order to better understand the phenomena described above, and to achieve the aims of this paper. In particular, two cultural cities, Girona (Spanish Catalonia) and Perpignan (French Catalonia), were chosen. Girona is situated in north-eastern Catalonia (Spain) and Perpignan is situated in south-eastern Eastern-Pyrenees (France). Both tourism destinations are very similar in terms of geographical situation, proximity to the mountains and coast, having a rich array of cultural and heritage resources; and common cultural roots linked to Catalan history and culture.

In order to accomplish the aims which have been proposed at the beginning of this paper, we had to gather two kinds of data: (a) data related to tourism image of the destinations, and (b) data related to the relational patterns of the tourism actors of the destinations.

The tourism image has been analyzed through tourism brochures, taking into consideration their relevance as a tool to promote tourism destinations and inform tourists (Molina and Esteban, 2006; Morgan and Pritchard, 1998), as well as to influence their decision-making process. All the brochures included in the sample have pictures related to Girona and Perpignan. The final sample is composed of 50 brochures in the case of Girona and 35 brochures in the case of Perpignan, which are edited by local, regional and national tourism agents.

As shown in Table 2, in the case of Girona a total of 3 068 pictures have been detected, and only 26.6% of these pictures were of the city of Girona. In the case of

Perpignan, this situation was similar, with a total of 1 022 pictures detected, of which 45.30% were pictures of Perpignan. 75,40% and 54,80% of pictures of Girona and Perpignan, respectively, were pictures of regional tourism resources from outside the administrative boundaries of these two city destinations. These pictures were therefore excluded in the final analysis.

Table 2

SAMPLE OF BROCHURES AND PICTURES OF CASE STUDIES

Sample	Girona	Perpignan
Nº of brochures	50	35
Nº of total pictures	3,068	1,022
Nº of destination pictures	819	463

A content analysis of the pictures was carried out, taking as a reference previous studies that have used this method to analyse tourism destination image (Dilley, 1986; Galí, & Donaire, 2005; Pritchard, & Morgan, 1995, 1996). According to the literature review, seven categories were created (destination icons, heritage, nature, entertainment, services, people and orientation) to classify the pictures (Table 3). In order to classify every picture in the right category, "eye catchers" were taken into consideration. Morgan (1995, p. 28) defines 'eye-catchers' "as an illustration where 50 per cent or more of the image is occupied by an eye-catching device designed to grab attention".

At the same time, other elements have also been taken into account such as the size of the pictures (small, medium and large), as well as whether pictures were promotional pictures or not. We consider a picture promotional when it is found on the cover of a brochure. According to Maas (1980) the cover establishes eye contact and initial interest and must do so successfully. Additionally, attention has also been paid to the main sights that are included in the pictures of each tourism destination brochure, as well as those which define the promotional image of the destinations.

Table 3

DEFINITION OF EACH CATEGORY

Category	Description
Destination icons	Focuses on cultural patterns and identity of tourism destination.
Heritage	Contains all forms of heritage: historical buildings, monuments, museums, sites, etc.
Nature	Includes scenic views of mountains, plains, beaches, countryside, urban, etc. as well as natural elements such as fauna and flora.
Entertainment	Refers to leisure activities for tourism such as cultural events, sportive events, active tourism, shopping, etc.
Services	Contains all tourism facilities and infrastructure such as accommodation, transportation, restoration, attractions, etc.
People	Refers to people appearing in photographs. It includes both local people and tourists.
Orientation	Contains maps aiming at situating the tourism destination.

In order to gather data related to the relational patterns of the tourism destination agents, in-depth interviews were carried out. Firstly we determined the number of interviews, taking into consideration an original list that included the main tourism agents of the public and private tourism sector of the two tourism destinations analysed. The final number was determined using the snow-ball technique, and amounted to a total of, respectively, 28 and 24 interviews for Girona and Perpignan. All the interviews were registered, transcribed and analysed.

Qualitative and quantitative methods were then used to analyse the data. On one hand, the analysis of brochures was first done using descriptive statistics in accordance with the categorization defined to gather the data, and later complemented with a qualitative analysis of text. On the other hand, in-depth interviews were analysed qualitatively using ATLAS.TI software specialized in the content analysis of texts.

Case studies

As we mentioned above, Girona and Perpignan are two similar cities in terms of dimensions as well as their cultural background. Historically, both cities belonged to the same country, but after the Pyrenees Treaty in 1640 they were separated by the French-Spanish border.

Despite the similarities between Girona and Perpignan it is interesting to consider their differences regarding tourism development. During the 1980s Girona suffered a profound urban transformation of the old quarter, based on the cleaning of Onyar River, a rehabilitation of Onyar house façades, placing some faculties of the University of Girona in the old quarter, and refurbishing buildings and streets in the old quarter. All these investments transformed the "grey and black" Girona (Aragó, Guillamet, Casero, & Pujades, 1972) into a coloured and lively new city, open to tourism.

The case of Perpignan is quite different if we consider that the main urban transformation is still taking place now, since the categorization of this city as a "Ville d'Art et d'Historie", which is an accreditation promoted by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication and the National Institute of Institutional Property, with the aim of valorising the heritage and the architecture of the city. This accreditation gives the Perpignan council the possibility to have access to funds to refurbish the heritage and promote it to the local community and tourists.

These two rhythms in tourism development and urban transformation, as well as their belonging to different states have inevitably influenced the relational dynamics and the way of conceiving the tourism product, as will be seen below.

RESULTS REGARDING TOURISM IMAGE ANALYSIS

Regarding the results (Table 4) concerning the categorization of pictures, we can observe that in both cases most of the pictures were classified into the heritage category, stressing the cultural character of these two cities. Other similarities are found in the relevance of the pictures designated to inform about the geographical position of the

destination and their main tourism attractions, which get classified in the category 'orientation'; as well as the lower number of pictures related to natural resources found in these two destinations. Another interesting result is the fact that there are no people in the pictures which act as eye-catchers; only in the case of Girona we have identified a small number of pictures where the relevance of people is stressed.

Table 4

CATEGORIES BY DESTINATION

Categories	Girona (%)	Perpignan (%)
Destination icons	3.66	12.10
Heritage	56.78	52.05
Nature	2.81	4.97
Recreation	4.76	11.88
Services	16.36	7.78
People	0.73	0.00
Orientation	14.90	11.23
Total	100.00	100.00

One of the main differences between the two cases is found in the results regarding the category 'destination icons'. Results show that Perpignan uses the resources related to cultural traditions, gastronomy, etc. to promote the tourism destination more intensively than does Girona. Examining the content of this category, we can observe in Table 5 that Perpignan includes in the pictures a larger variety of elements representative of this category than does Girona.

Table 5

DESTINATION ICONS CATEGORY BY DESTINATION

Destination icons sub-categories	Girona (%)	Perpignan (%)
Flags	3.33	10.53
Cultural traditions	53.33	35.09
Gastronomy	43.33	43.86
Symbols and emblems	0.00	5.26
Local artists	0.00	5.26
Total	100.00	100.00

In both cases, we can assert that the predominant size of pictures is small, meaning that pictures are smaller than one half of the brochure page. In general terms, larger pictures are related to maps that are categorized as orientation. In the case of Girona, it is interesting to emphasize that the categories 'services' and 'heritage' concentrate a higher percentage of large pictures than any other categories; and in the case of Perpignan, the categories 'destination icons, 'heritage' and 'nature' generally include pictures of a medium size, which occupy half of the brochure page.

From the total number of pictures analysed in both cases, just 9.94% of pictures in the case of Perpignan and 6.59% of pictures in the case of Girona are considered promotional images. This finding means that less than 10% of the pictures of each case study are present on the cover of the brochures. This result is very logical if we take

into consideration that the size of the picture on the cover is large, in most of the cases occupying the totality of the cover page. After examining the promotional pictures by category we observed that their distribution is balanced, but heritage is the predominant category on the cover of brochures of both destinations.

If we focus on the sights that are represented in the pictures, in both cases the main sights are placed in the historic city and, as a consequence, we conclude that both destinations do not pay much attention to their more contemporary sites and follow the same dynamic regarding promotional pictures. However, in the case of Girona, the Museum of Cinema situated in the modern city is postulated as a star product due to the singularity of its collection. In Table 6 there is a summary of the five places most promoted in the tourism brochures of these two destinations.

Table 6
MAIN SIGHTS OF ANALYSED DESTINATIONS

Sight	Number of pictures	Sight	Number of pictures
Cases de l'Onyar	42	Majorca Kings Palace	32
Cathedral	40	Castillet	19
Jewish museum	37	Historical Quarter	10
Cinema museum	35	Notre Dame des Anges	10
Jewish Quarter	34	Cathedral	9

Regarding the analysis of the text in the brochures the results show that Girona is particularly defined as a monumental city, where the Jewish heritage and the cathedral play a relevant key role as a tourist attraction. However, descriptions about Perpignan are mainly focused on identity, Catalan culture and traditions as a differentiating element. At the same time, both destinations stress that both cities have a privileged geographical position in order to access different regional tourist attractions and products.

In addition, another determinant element that has direct implications on the emitted tourism image by tourism promotion and, in particular, in brochures is the branding strategy of the destination. In the case of Perpignan, the branding strategy is very well defined, using a style guide where the particularities to use the brand are defined. In this style guide a logo is also defined, which represents the main monument (the Castillet) with the colours of the Catalan flag (red and yellow), and a slogan that reasserts that Perpignan is a Catalan city (Perpignan, the Catalan). Jointly, the logo and the slogan represent a way to underline the identity of the destination in what concerns Catalan culture. The use of this brand is extended to all the edited promotional material and other communication activities carried out by the Tourism Board.

However, the case of Girona is very different to Perpignan. The branding strategy is not very well defined and does not follow any specific criteria. Some years ago, a logo and a slogan were developed; the logo was a "G" and an "I" coloured in green, red and yellow; but some time later this logo was modernized with tones of green, blue and red. The logo has a direct relation with the name of the city but not with the charac-

teristics or distinctive elements of the city as a monumental tourism destination. At the same time, the slogan that has been designed to accompany this logo was intended to explain that the city of Girona is beautiful and something special (Girona captivates me). Although it was the City council who developed this brand, now it is not being used systematically or with any clear criteria. In this sense, Girona lacks a real branding strategy to support the promotion of this destination and the values of its tourism product.

Another result from the analysis of pictures and text is that both destinations, Girona and Perpignan, are presented as cultural cities but with substantial differences in the focus that they use. Specifically, Girona is presented as a monumental city where historical buildings and the old quarter are elements that make this destination singular. However, besides using heritage to reassert itself as a cultural city, Perpignan intensively uses identity, Catalan culture and traditions as elements to stress its differences from other cultural cites. As we have seen above the branding strategy of Perpignan supports the reinforcement of its cultural particularities and its own identity, while in the case of Girona we didn't find any real branding strategy.

RESULTS REGARDING THE RELATIONAL PATTERNS AMONG TOURISM AGENTS

From the in-depth interviews carried out in both destinations, we can determine some interesting dynamics that particularize each of these destinations and have a better understanding of the reasons that bring each destination to emit one kind of tourism image or another. In general terms, all the tourism actors of Girona agree that the main reason the city attracts tourists is its monumental heritage and its old quarter. Nevertheless, some of the tourism agents mention that the induced tourism image, which is projected, does not reflect all the essences of the city, such as the liveliness of its streets, as the pictures are particularly focused on the monumental heritage of the city and do not show people in the vast majority of the cases. We also found that in the case of Girona there are some discrepancies between the image projected and the real image of the city. In the case of Perpignan this situation is very different; tourism agents consider that the main attractiveness of the city lies in its Catalan culture as well as their monumental heritage. We do not find discrepancies in this aspect, although some actors pay special attention to the fact that in some way Catalan culture is only promoted in terms of its folkloric aspects, while in fact "Catalan culture is something more" as it is mentioned by one of the interviewees.

The level of involvement of the actors in the promotion of tourism is very different in one case and the other. In the case of Girona, the majority of the tourism agents are carrying out actions to promote the tourism destination (brochures, advertising, fairs, etc.). This is one of the elements that explain the larger sample of analyzed brochures in the case of Girona. The analysis of the interviews showed that this is a particular situation caused by the nature of the tourism sector in the city of Girona. The local tourism board was created some years ago, and the other tourism agents, such as the Hotels Association, have taken the role of promoting the city. In the case of Perpignan, how-

ever, there is the opposite situation. Tourism agents do not want to take the responsibility of promoting the city as a tourism destination, arguing that the Tourism Board is the agent who has to carry out this task. It is for this reason that promotional actions in Perpignan are mostly found to be taken by the Tourism Board as local DMO.

Regarding tourism agents' interactions we observed that they are quite different in each destination. In the case of Girona, there is a monthly meeting promoted by the local tourism board, which integrates several representative tourism subsectors (local and regional DMOs, Hotels Association, Commerce Association, etc.). This meeting offers an opportunity to discuss tourism needs and tourism development, as well as to give information about the actions carried out by each tourism agent of the city. In some cases, other tourism agents who are not members of this so-called Tourism Committee are also invited, with the aim of getting information regarding any actions and initiatives taken by local tourism stakeholders. However, one of the weaknesses that have been detected in these meetings is the lack of operating capacity of the Committee, as it is only a forum for discussion with no joint decisions taken or integral collaboration achieved.

In the case of Perpignan, there are no regular contacts between the tourism agents and the Tourism Board. From the interviews we deduced that the Tourism Board takes on all the responsibilities and leading role in the management and promotion of tourism in Perpignan, and only seeks those collaborations that are necessary to carry out any specific action or project. But actually, private tourism agents think this is not enough; they consider that the public sector does not take them into consideration enough in the design of the tourism development strategies of the city and would like to participate somehow.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Comparing the results obtained in these two case studies, it is interesting to stress how two similar cultural cities promote their tourism resources and products differently. While Girona emphasizes the monumental and heritage aspects and the Jewish heritage in its induced image, Perpignan highlights its Catalan culture and traditions as a way to differentiate the destination from other cultural cities, particularly French ones.

Additionally, in both cases there are some discrepancies concerning the induced tourism image emitted and the reality of the destination, which were mentioned by some interviewees. In the case of Girona this aspect is mainly concerned with the fact that pictures do not reflect the real life of the city because photographs used are focused on just showing the monuments. And in the case of Perpignan this situation is reflected in the opinion of some interviewees who think that the traditional Catalan culture that is promoted in the induced image does not reflect the modern aspects of the current Catalan culture. Intuitively, these elements can lead to a kind of gap between the reality of the destination and the induced image promoted and therefore, that they can have negative implications on tourist satisfaction if as a result they actually perceive the gap as an unsatisfactory element.

Finally, the relational patterns of both destinations are also different if we consider how these two cities have carried out their process of tourism development. According to the official data of both destinations, we can assert that these two city destinations are situated in an early consolidation stage of its tourism demand. In this context, we found two rhythms in the evolution of relationships among tourism agents. In the case of Girona we found that the co-operation between the local Tourism Board and the rest of the tourism agents is more effective because of the monthly meeting of the Tourism Committee, as well as because of the younger character of the local DMO; while in the case of Perpignan the local DMO takes all the responsibility in all aspects of tourism promotion, as well as tourism development, but without regularly involving the opinions of the rest of tourism agents of the destination. In the future, the current situation exposed can have implications on the evolution of relationships among tourism agents and the way of facing a post-stagnation situation in these two tourism destinations. While Girona is performing a co-operation strategy in the consolidation stage with a denser relational network; Perpignan is in front of a model of competition, where the search for individual performance predominates. In this sense, during the post-stagnation stage Girona will be better prepared to follow strategies of collaboration, which can imply a common agreement with long term relationships, high levels of trust and expecting shared outcomes. The challenges for the Tourism Board of Perpignan have to do with involving tourism agents in a collective strategy, in order to exceed the possible barriers of the post-stagnation stage.

Conclusions and future research

This paper aimed to analyze how two different cultural destinations use their tourism resources to develop their distinctive induced images in order to be competitive in the tourism market. And from the assumption that the tourism destination is a complex system, where tourism agents are interdependently linked among them through collaborative links, it also aims at understanding to what extent there is coordination and co-operation among the various tourism agents in the process of induced image creation.

This paper thus contributes to the academic literature fivefold. Firstly, as it has been explained above, the majority of the models that aim at explaining the image formation process are centred on a perspective that concerns the formation of perceived image. It is for this reason, that we have proposed a model that focuses on the induced image formation process, which is a prior stage of the image consumption and perception by tourists.

Secondly, it has been seen that these two cultural destinations have two different ways of differentiating their induced image and thus to compete in the tourism market: one focusing on monumental heritage (Girona), and the other underlining the destination's cultural patterns (Perpignan).

Thirdly, from the literature review and results from the analysis of the cases we can assert that a differentiation strategy by means of an adequate image mix and communication mix in order to emit the induced image of the destination, as well as the design

of a branding strategy are both key elements of the promotion of cultural destinations. But considering the implicit interdependence among the agents of any tourism destination some common agreement is needed regarding the attributes, which have to be projected through the induced image. This can only be achieved through collaboration among the tourism agents, which corresponds with the last stage of Watkins and Bell's (2002) model. Frequently this situation is forced by a stagnation of the demand or a clear decline of it, as we discussed above. In these circumstances, Oppermann (1995) concludes the need of tourism destinations to manage a change of the image and attract new clientele. Meaning a reposition of the image of the tourism destinations, this represents an association to the destination of new or remodelled concepts However, the two case studies are in a early consolidation stage an do not illustrate this situation, a clear example is Lloret de Mar in the Costa Brava (Catalonia, Spain), which has begun a strategy of image repositioning through a dense collaboration between public and private sectors, trying to change its mature tourism model based on sun and beach for young people, to new products based on a family and quality sun and beach tourism and also sport and business tourism, which allow it to maintain a certain tourism activity during the low season.

Fourthly, it has also been found that in both cases there is a gap in the projected induced image. This fact leads to the conclusion that during the process of induced image formation there can be found some kind of dysfunctions that can have important consequences on the satisfaction of tourists. Further research is needed to better understand the types of gaps, and the causes and consequences that they can produce.

Fifthly, taking into consideration that the research literature concerning collaboration and marketing is a field that needs more research, as Wang (2008) pointed out, the paper also contributes in this respect.

Lastly, we conclude that the destinations that use an accurate induced image strategy on the basis of a well developed marketing strategy should improve their competitiveness in the tourism market, particularly those destinations which have arrived at stagnation or decline stages of their life cycle; but also that in order to achieve these strategies an important effort regarding coordination and collaboration among the various tourism agents of the destination will be decisive. Obviously, future research needs to be focussed to further analyse this phenomena.

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