

To Conceptualize a Tourist Destination

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Destination Image

- “Tourism images are pervasive images which represent peoples, countries, cultures and genders, having important implications for the way in which we see global identities” (Morgan and Pritchard 1998, p. 241).
- Unifying image that represents the destination at the same time it differentiates it from other destinations
- Promotional material an important tool for manipulation
 - Coordination between different geographical levels
 - Strongest promotional power at the national level



Regional Destinations

- Regional image gives sense of locality and uniqueness
- Regional tourist organizations have proved to be important in creating and marketing an area or a destination through a co-ordination of marketing activities
- The definition of the term 'destination' is problematic
 - Business studies = geographical area & focus on supply and demand
 - Social science studies = destination as a social product



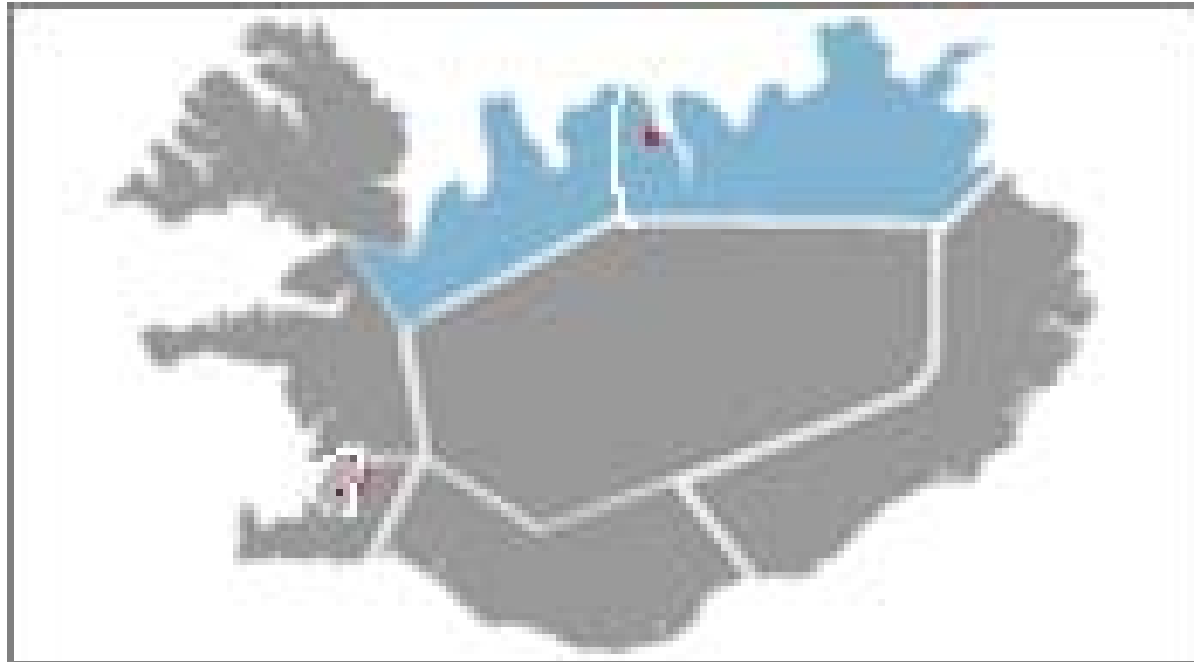
Pictures

- The pictorial content plays a big role in image making
- Pictures not only present the product (destination) but can also communicate attributes, characteristics, concepts, values, and ideas (MacKay and Fesenmaier, 1997, 538).
 - How tourists perceive the host community
 - How the host community sees itself



The Study Areas

- The regional tourism associations – 8 in total
- North Iceland
- Dalvik Community



Method

- Interviews
 - Key players in Icelandic tourism development and regional marketing (from all the 8 regions)
= 42
 - Tourism providers + municipality reps. in Dalvik community = 19
- Content analysis of brochures
 - The cover of the regional brochures
 - 2 brochures from Dalvik



Reykjanes Peninsula

Crossing continents



The South of Iceland

All you desire





The East of Iceland

World of enchantment



www.visitreykjavik.is

Capital Area of Iceland

Pure energy



ICELAND

Results

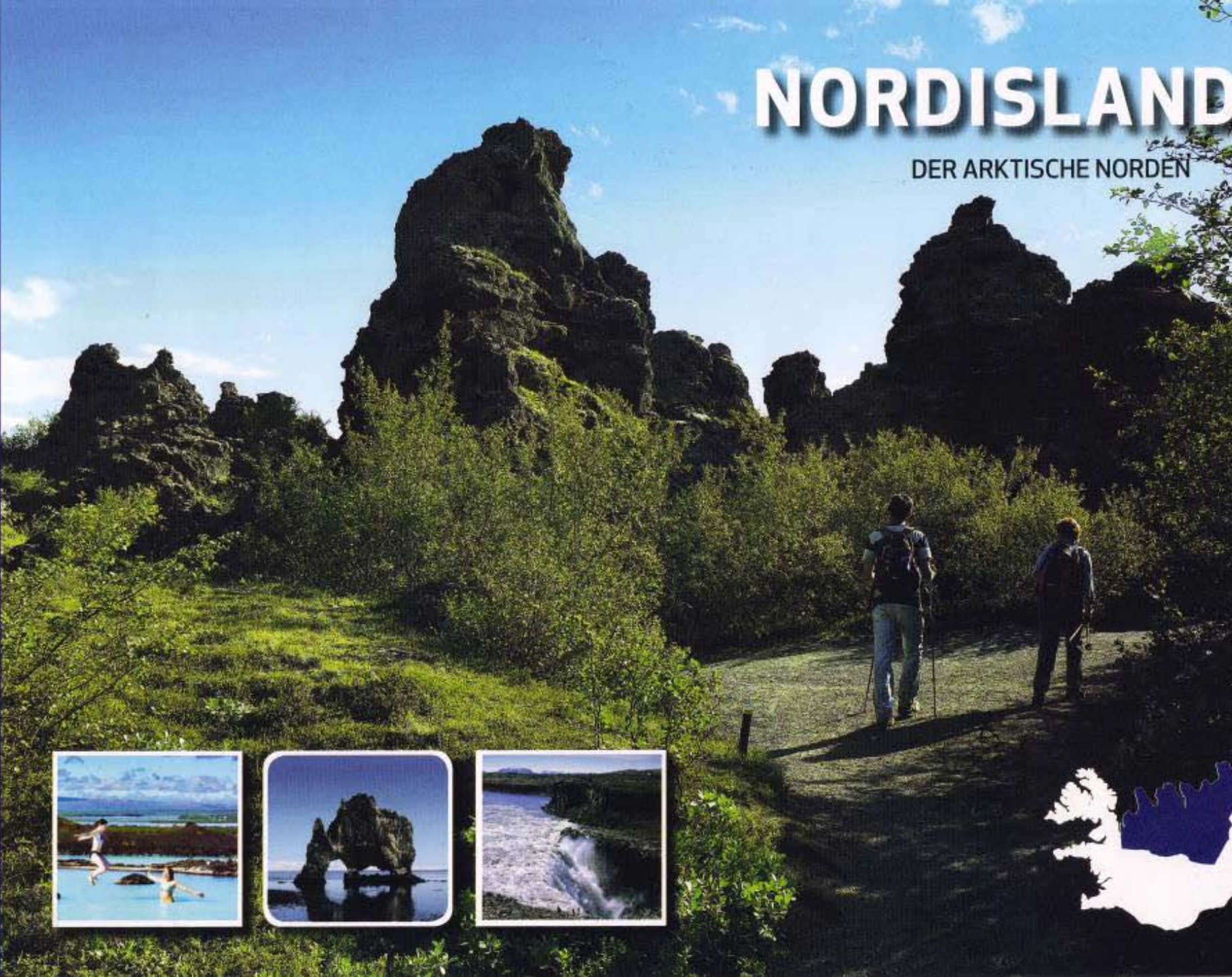
- Image making seldom based on systematic approach
- The diversity of nature is prominently on display on all the brochure's covers
- Limited efforts to establish a strong regional destination image
 - ‘*All you can desire*’, ‘Cross-section of *all* that is Iceland’, ‘Experience *everything*’, ‘*World of enchantment*’



www.northiceland.com

NORDISLAND

DER ARKTISCHE NORDEN



ISLAND

North Iceland

- Internal imaging seems to be of an importance
- Recent product development hardly reflected
- The content is primarily based on the listing of regions (counties) and activities



Viðburðadagatal Dalvíkurbyggðar



DALVÍKURBYGGÐ

Ferðarþjónusta í Dalvíkurbyggð Info about Dalvík area, 40 km north of Akureyri



Dalvik

- Common understanding regarding the core activities
- The brochures reflect the vision expressed in the interviews
- Consisted emphasis on the mountain landscape
- Nevertheless a wish for stronger destination image



Discussion

- Two Icelands
- Identity of regional destinations unclear and confusing
- Despite joint regional marketing efforts there is limited destination awareness
 - Representation governed by geographical and political boundaries



Next Steps

- How does the construction of the marketed destination affect the destination's performance and capacity to deliver a successful tourism product?
- How do images and symbols in tourism promotional material affect product development?
- How does the local population relate to the marketed destination and does that affect the success of the destination development?



Thank you!



Destinations sold at Vest Norden 2008

