



Joint Communication, Branding and Digital Strategy

A.1.6 Developing Joint Communication, branding and digital strategy

- D.1.6.1 Branding Guidelines
- D.1.6.2 Communication Tools and Materials

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1 Executive summary

The #RomansWineDanube project is a transnational initiative co-funded by the Interreg Funds of the European Union. The project's main objective is to support socio-economic development in the Danube Region by applying collaborative cultural tourism development concepts resulting in new transnational touristic products and improving the effectiveness of tourism destination management with innovative and inclusive solutions. The project focuses on an innovative social and community-led approach with special attention to disadvantaged groups like migrants, women and especially young people.

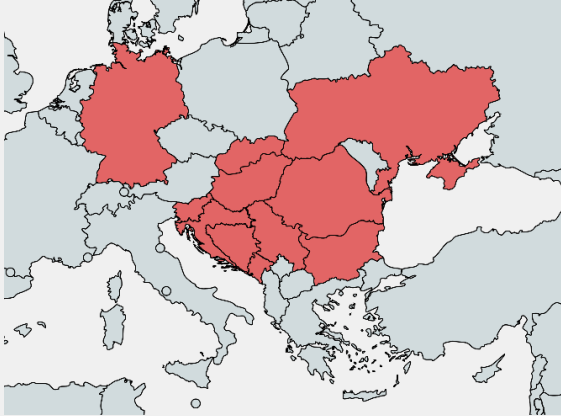












The present Communication, Branding and Digital Strategy (in short: CBDS) has been prepared as part of Activity 1.6 Developing Joint Communication, branding and digital strategy, Specific objective 1: Valorizing certified European Cultural Route "The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route". The CBDS provides a comprehensive framework for building a strong brand and provides guidelines for local communication actions. By outlining tailored tools, messages, and dissemination materials, the strategy ensures that communication efforts resonate with specific groups, including tourists, local communities, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

The CBDS serves as a tool for sub-destinations, providing a clear framework to identify their unique strengths and tailor their communication and branding efforts to effectively reach their target audiences. It equips local stakeholders (and members of the Local Product Clubs) with strategic guidance on creating impactful messaging, developing cohesive branding elements, and engaging their communities. At the Route level, the CBDS fosters unity by establishing consistent branding practices across all sub-destinations, enhancing the overall visibility and appeal of the #RomansWineDanube project. This dual approach strengthens the Route's identity as a cohesive destination while amplifying the value and success of its individual components.

The current document includes D1.6.1 Branding Guidelines (Chapter 5) and D1.6.2 Communication Tools and Materials (Chapter 6).

2 Introduction

2.1 What is the #RomansWineDanube project?

	Danube Competence Center	
	Scientific Research Center Bistra Ptuj	
	Technical University of Košice	
	media k GmbH	
	Rousse Regional Museum of History	
	Alba Iulia Municipality	
	Zsolnay Heritage Management Nonprofit Ltd.	
	National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro	
	Tourist Board of Osijek-Baranja County	
	Office for European Integration of the Government of West Herzegovina Canton	
	Network for Regional Development Foundation	
Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Sremska Mitrovica		

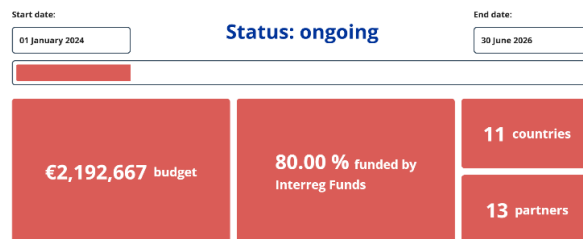
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

SO1 Valorizing certified European Cultural Route “The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route”

SO2 Implementing innovative collaborative models

SO3 Increasing market access and sustainable commercialization

Project overview



ASSOCIATED PARTNERS:

Tourism Organisation of Serbia	Serbia
Ministry of Tourism and Youth of the Republic of Serbia	Serbia
Robinson Travel	Serbia
The Homeland Museum of Knjaževac	Serbia
Regional Museum Ptuj-Ormož	Slovenia
Development Agency Rhineland-Palatinate	Germany
NGO Svishtov Council of Tourism	Bulgaria
Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Tourism	Romania
Hungarian National Museum	Hungary
Tourist Organisation Podgorica	Montenegro
Montenegro Adventures	Montenegro
Kulen Travel	Croatia
Narona Archaeological Museum	Croatia
Chamber of Economy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina

Association Tourism Cluster Herzegovina	Bosnia and Herzegovina
Visit Pécs Nonprofit Ltd.	Hungary
Institute for Culture, Tourism and Sport Murska Sobota	Slovenia
Ptuj Tourism Public Institute	Slovenia
Regional Development Association Römerland Carnuntum	Germany
ALPHERATZ IP	Germany
Odesa City Council Department of Culture, International Relations and European Integration	Ukraine
Odesa National University of Technology (Faculty of Wine and Tourism Business)	Ukraine
Košice Self-governing Region	Slovakia

The #RomansWineDanube (#RWD) project is a transnational initiative supported by the Interreg Danube Region Programme and co-funded by the European Union. The project's main objective is to support socio-economic development in the Danube Region by applying collaborative cultural tourism development concepts resulting in new transnational touristic products and improving the effectiveness of tourism destination management with innovative and inclusive solutions. The project focuses on an innovative social and community-led approach with special attention to disadvantaged groups like migrants, women and especially young people.

The project builds on the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route, a certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. The Route is a network of sub-destinations and wine regions extending through ten European countries, created around individual archaeological sites, locations, places and buildings, which are monuments to the leadership of the Roman emperors in the Late Antiquity and tell the story of the expansion and defence of the Roman Empire on its northern Danube frontier. Certified as a European Cultural Route by the European Institute for Cultural Routes (EICR) in 2015, and re-certified in 2019 and 2023, the route continues to promote the shared legacy of the Roman Empire and the Danube's winemaking heritage.

While it is important to see the Route as a cohesive whole, it is equally crucial to communicate the unique stories and significance of each sub-destination as well. Each archaeological site along the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route tells a unique and compelling story and varies significantly in its level of visibility. Tailored communication approaches are necessary to effectively showcase their individual stories and significance, creating a cohesive narrative that enhances the overall appeal of the Route.

2.2 What is this document?

The present Communication, Branding and Digital Strategy (in short: CBDS) has been prepared as part of Activity 1.6 Developing Joint Communication, branding and digital strategy, Specific objective 1: Valorizing certified European Cultural Route "The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route". The CBDS provides a comprehensive framework for local communication actions, enabling partners to identify and effectively reach their target audiences. By outlining tailored tools, messages, and dissemination materials, the strategy ensures that communication efforts resonate with specific groups, including tourists, local communities, policymakers, and other stakeholders.

From a methodology perspective, the development of the Communication, Branding and Digital Strategy was based on three main activities. The first involved a **review of existing documents**, including previous studies and outputs related to the Route and relevant projects. This provided a solid foundation of insights into the context and opportunities associated with the #RomansWineDanube initiative. The second was a **detailed partner questionnaire**, designed to gather critical inputs directly from sub-destinations. This questionnaire helped to map strengths, weaknesses, and potential areas for branding and communication development. Finally, **co-creation workshops** were conducted with project partners, offering an interactive platform for collaborative brainstorming and the generation of innovative ideas. The co-creation workshops were held during the first and second partner meetings, in Hungary in April 2024 and in Belgrade in November 2024.

To ensure the effectiveness of the Strategy, a robust structure has been established to support its purpose adequately.

- The main objective of the **competitor analysis** is to identify potential competitors and assess their activities. Additionally, it aims to define the unique features of the #RomansWineDanube project that set it apart from competitors and provide a long-term competitive advantage in the market. (Chapter 3)
- After the introduction, the document will present the **results of the sub-brand audit**, providing a summary of the self-assessment of each sub-destination. (Chapter 4)
- The branding strategy outlines the **#RWD Brand 2.0 framework**, encompassing the brand platform, brand architecture, and brand visibility, along with their detailed components. (Chapter 5)
- This will be followed by an overview of the **communication tools and materials** designed to effectively convey the #RomansWineDanube brand and promote the project's products. (Chapter 6)
- The **brand adoption** chapter highlights the role of product clubs and emphasizes raising awareness among local stakeholders and residents, whose active involvement is key to enhancing the authenticity and sustainability of the route. (Chapter 7)
- A well-defined **implementation framework** is essential, encompassing organizational and financial structures and an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system. (Chapter 8)

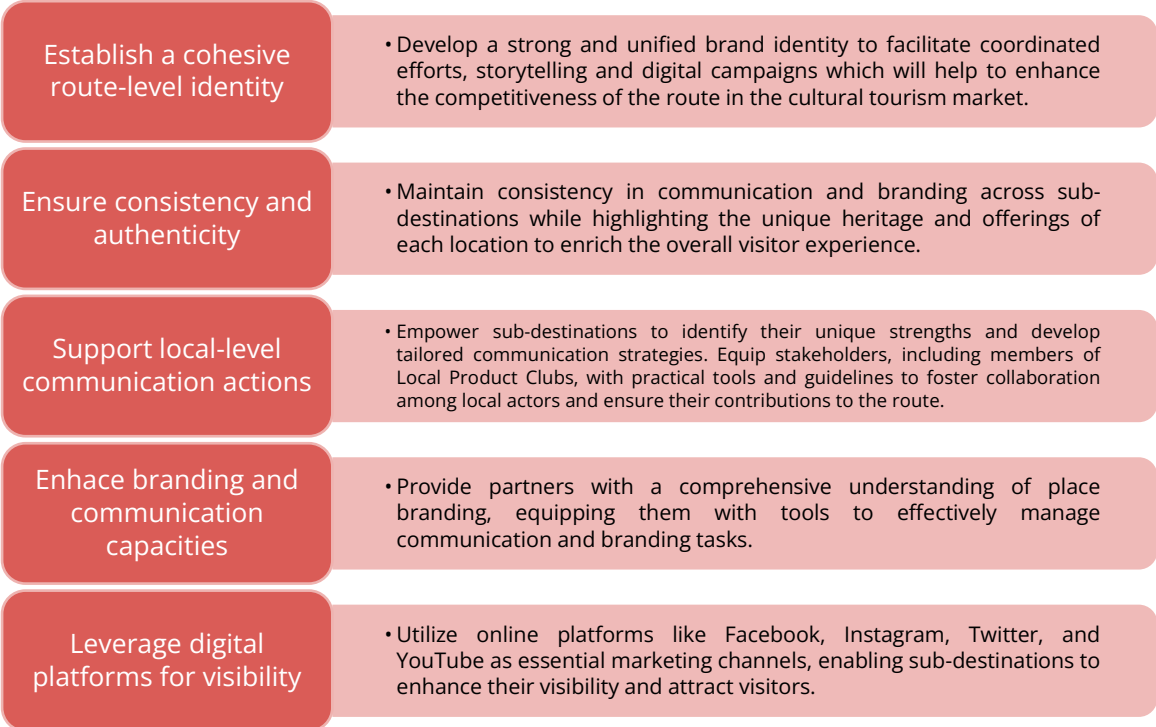
2.3 Goals and objectives of the CBDS

The strategy aims to transform isolated efforts into an integrated system, promoting cooperation over competition. The strategy aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of place branding while enhancing the capacity of partners to manage communication and branding tasks effectively, with a focus on digital activities. The rapid rise of the internet has transformed tourism, making information readily accessible and enabling travellers to make more informed decisions. In the 21st century, leveraging online platforms has become a critical aspect of marketing. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube now serve as essential sales channels for companies, institutions, and businesses.

At the local level, the CBDS enables sub-destinations to identify their unique strengths and align their communication strategies to enhance their visibility and attract visitors. By equipping

stakeholders (and members of the Local Product Clubs) with practical tools and guidelines, the strategy fosters collaboration among local actors and ensures that each sub-destination contributes meaningfully to the overall route. At the route level, the CBDS establishes a cohesive brand identity. It sets the stage for coordinated promotional efforts, storytelling, and digital campaigns, allowing the route to compete effectively in the cultural tourism market. Furthermore, the CBDS helps maintain consistency across sub-destinations while celebrating the diversity and authenticity of each location.

Figure 1: Purpose of creating the Joint Communication, Branding and Digital Strategy



Source: own editing

3 Competitor analysis

The primary goal of the competitor analysis is to identify potential competitors and evaluate their activities. In the highly competitive landscape of cultural tourism, understanding the strengths and products of other players is essential for the success of the #RomansWineDanube project. It is worth remembering that these actors do not have to be seen purely as competitors—they can also serve as examples of good practices. There is a lot to learn from their approaches and successes that could inspire and improve our own strategies.

In the context of #RomansWineDanube, this analysis focuses on comparing the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route – which our project builds on - to other cultural routes certified by the Council of Europe. The forty-eight certified routes represent a diverse network of transnational itineraries promoting shared European heritage, culture, and history. These initiatives cover themes ranging from ancient history and religious traditions to contemporary art and gastronomy. By evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, and unique features of these routes, the analysis aims to identify opportunities for differentiation and areas where #RWD can ensure its long-term competitive position in the market. Once we have assessed these resources, having a solid understanding of the market is key to setting clear and effective strategic directions.

Cultural routes certified by the Council of Europe share a common mission of fostering intercultural dialogue and promoting a deeper understanding of European history, but they approach this mission through diverse themes. Some routes focus on historical heritage, while others emphasize architecture, gastronomy, art, or natural treasures, offering varied perspectives and experiences. In identifying competitors for the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route, we considered several criteria. These included the relevance of themes such as heritage, culture, and wine tourism, as well as geographical proximity, specifically focusing on the Danube Region, to ensure a meaningful and targeted analysis.

Cultural Routes marked with an asterisk are particularly relevant as their participating countries are part of the Danube Region.

ITER VITIS ROUTE*	
Certification year	2009
Geographical coverage	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, United Kingdom, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lebanon, Ukraine
Brief introduction to Route's offerings	The route features historical vineyards and terroirs, offering alongside the different wines some culinary pairings. The experience is combined with the natural beauty of UNESCO Sites, while numerous wine museums and cultural events showcase wine-making traditions, tools and the history of viticulture.
Target audience	Wine enthusiast, culinary travellers, luxury and experience-oriented travellers

Strengths	Iter Vitis appeals to diverse audiences by merging wine heritage with cultural tourism and has an advantage of geographical reach including countries from the Mediterranean region, Western Europe, and the Caucasus.
Weaknesses	The Route has a limited focus on non-wine attractions and may not strongly attract travellers who are not specifically interested in wine culture.
Digital presence	While the route has a dedicated, well-structured website that provides comprehensive information about the route, its heritage, and activities including maps and event details, the social media presence of the route only focuses on Facebook (1,7k followers) and Instagram (240 followers).
Tasks/Identification of potential competitive advantages	Both routes emphasize wine tourism, but the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route uniquely combines this with Roman historical sites. Iter Vitis focuses more broadly on viticulture across various regions, without the specific historical narrative of the Roman Empire. It is recommended to exchange experiences regarding marketing tools, and event organization.

VIA FRANCIGENA	
Certification year	1994
Geographical coverage	France, Italy, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Holy See
Brief introduction to Route's offerings	The route follows the footsteps of medieval pilgrims, offering a spiritual journey through historically significant landscapes and cities, where travellers encounter UNESCO Sites, ancient cathedrals, abbeys, monasteries, and medieval villages that showcase Europe's religious and cultural evolution.
Target audience	Pilgrims and spiritual travellers, cultural tourists, eco-tourists and food and wine lovers
Strengths	Unlike more commercialized routes, the Via Francigena offers a quieter, less crowded journey in regions with cultural and historical significance. Via Francigena has also strengthened walking tourism, contributing to sustainable travel practices.
Weaknesses	Seasonal limitations such as weather conditions can restrict accessibility of the route and some areas lack adequate signage, rest stops, and accommodations tailored for pilgrims, potentially complicating travel plans.
Digital presence	The Via Francigena has a detailed website that includes route maps, accommodation options, and historical information. There is an official app available for both Android and iOS, which provides GPS navigation, accommodation details, and alerts for deviations from the

	path. The route has a robust social media presence with a large following on Facebook (75k followers) and Instagram (34,3k followers), while also being present on LinkedIn (4k followers), X (2,6k followers) and YouTube (937 followers).
Tasks/Identification of potential competitive advantages	Via Francigena is primarily a pilgrimage route with a strong religious and historical significance, attracting those interested in spiritual journeys. In contrast, the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route combines historical exploration with wine tourism, appealing to a broader audience interested in both history and gastronomy. It is recommended to exchange experiences regarding the sustainability of the road, challenges, marketing tools, and event organization.

TRANSROMANICA *	
Certification year	2007
Geographical coverage	Austria, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Spain
Brief introduction to Route's offerings	The route has notable Romanesque architecture and heritage sites, including locations recognized by UNESCO. The route incorporates local festivals, art exhibitions, and craft traditions connected to the Romanesque history.
Target audience	Cultural heritage enthusiasts, families and general tourists, regional and local travellers
Strengths	TRANSROMANICA showcases a variety of Romanesque monuments, including cathedrals, monasteries, and churches, many recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.
Weaknesses	Compared to more renowned cultural routes, TRANSROMANICA may have lower visibility, while also experiencing varying levels of infrastructure and accessibility of some sites along the route.
Digital presence	TRANSROMANICA has a dedicated website, where they offer information on the network, events, and member sites. They have also organized digital events, such as the European TRANSROMANICA Day, to engage with a broader audience online. They focus their social media activities on Facebook (1,4k followers) and Instagram (533 followers).
Tasks/Identification of potential competitive advantages	TRANSROMANICA highlights Romanesque architecture and medieval heritage, focusing on a specific architectural style and period. The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route, on the other hand, spans a broader historical period centered on the Roman Empire and includes diverse experiences such as wine tourism, historical reenactments and heritage sites.

THE PHOENICIANS' ROUTE	
Certification year	2003
Geographical coverage	Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Lebanon, Malta, Spain, Tunisia, Slovenia, Ukraine
Brief introduction to Route's offerings	The route highlights the significant maritime trade networks established by the Phoenicians, where travellers can explore ancient ports, harbours, and trade centers, such as Carthage, Tyre, and Cádiz along with temples, necropolises, and urban settlements, reflect the Phoenicians' architectural and cultural contributions.
Target audience	History and archaeology enthusiasts, academics, researchers, families, educators
Strengths	The route serves as a valuable resource for learning about ancient maritime trade, the spread of the alphabet, and the cultural practices of the Phoenicians.
Weaknesses	The quality of visitor facilities, signage, and accessibility can vary across different sites along the route, potentially affecting the overall visitor experience.
Digital presence	The Phoenicians' Route has a comprehensive website that details the historical significance of the route, member countries, and cultural activities through the route's Activity Calendar. The route is present on Facebook (7,5k followers) and Instagram (2,8k followers).
Tasks/Identification of potential competitive advantages	The Phoenicians' Route emphasizes the maritime trade routes and cultural exchanges of the ancient Phoenicians. Both routes appeal to those interested in ancient civilizations and their impact on modern Europe. It is recommended to exchange experiences regarding the sustainability of the road, challenges, marketing tools, and event organization.

EUROPEAN ROUTE OF JEWISH HERITAGE *	
Certification year	2004
Geographical coverage	Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czechia, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ukraine
Brief introduction to Route's offerings	The route highlights the rich history and culture of the Jewish communities across Europe, encompassing a diverse array of sites, such as historic synagogues and Jewish quarters, cemeteries, museums and cultural centers as well as festivals and events celebrating Jewish culture, art and music.

Target audience	Cultural and heritage tourists, Jewish communities and diaspora, researchers, general public
Strengths	The route showcases an educational value and aids the preservation of Jewish heritage, promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue.
Weaknesses	Certain heritage sites and the condition of the monuments may deteriorate due to the lack of resources for maintenance and restoration which effects the overall quality of the tourism infrastructure and the visitors' experiences.
Digital presence	The European Route of Jewish Heritage has a well-developed website that provides extensive information on Jewish heritage sites across Europe. The route is present on Facebook (5,4k followers), Instagram (2,5k followers) and X (2.2k followers).
Tasks/Identification of potential competitive advantages	This route highlights Jewish heritage and history across Europe, appealing to those interested in Jewish culture and history. The Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route provides a broader thematic focus of the Roman Empire integrated with wine tourism, offering a diverse cultural and historical experience.

4 Assessment and sub-brand audit

For the implementation of the sub-brand audit a questionnaire template was developed to better understand each destination's strengths, weaknesses, and unique offerings. The questionnaire included sections on branding, communication practices, and stakeholder engagement. By collecting this information, the CBDS process ensured that each partner could contribute meaningfully to the overall strategy, fostering collaboration in the framework of the project.

The template consisted of three main sections:

- Section 1 consisted of the sub-brand audit questions focusing on **understanding the strengths, weaknesses and assets of the sub-destinations** better and **assessing the sub-destinations' current communication and social media activities**.
- Section 2 focused on **co-creating the #RWD Brand 2.0** with creative, open-ended questions.
- Section 3 aimed to collect the **specific learning needs and possible contributions of the sub-destinations** in relation to the themes of the #RomansWineDanube project, specifically from a communication and branding point of view.

As part of the sub-brand audit process, after partner completed the questionnaire, HÁRFA processed the information and scheduled one-on-one online meetings with each sub-destination in October 2024. During these meetings, we addressed questions and discussed the sub-destination in detail, covering important information that may not have emerged from the questionnaire or required further clarification.

In the context of this document, the term sub-destinations is used interchangeably with sub-brands. Each sub-destination represents a distinct identity within the larger framework of the #RomansWineDanube project. By treating sub-destinations as sub-brands, we emphasize their unique characteristics, offerings, and narratives while reinforcing a connection to the #RWD partnership as a whole.

This chapter seeks to synthesize and summarize the inputs provided in the partner templates and the discussions held during the online meetings, organized by each sub-brand, represented by the following partners:

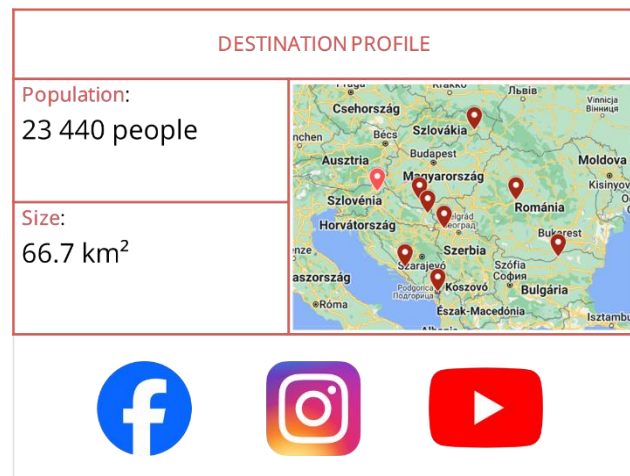
- **PP2** Scientific Research Centre Bistra Ptuj
- **PP3** Technical University of Kosice
- **PP5** Rouse Regional Museum of History
- **PP6** Alba Iulia Municipality
- **PP7** Zsolnay Heritage Management Nonprofit Ltd.
- **PP9** National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro
- **PP11** Tourist Board of Osijek-Baranja County
- **PP13** Office for European Integration of the Government of West Herzegovina Canton
- **PP15** Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments Sremska Mitrovica

4.1 Sub-brand audit

4.1.1 PP2 – Sub-brand: Ptuj

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

Ptuj offers a rich array of touristic products, including the Poetovio Archaeological Park, which showcases the heritage of ancient Ptuj with Roman archaeological remains, museum exhibits, guided tours, and interactive content. The city hosts several historical festivals such as the Roman Games and Ptuj Castle Games, as well as various other festivals like the Festival of the Specialities of Slovenian Farms, Art Stays, Arsana Festival, Days of Poetry and Wine, and Salon Sauvignon. Kurentovanje, one of the world's most interesting carnivals, features traditional costumes and cultural events. Sightseeing highlights include Ptuj Castle, Ptuj City Tower, Dominican Monastery, Orpheus Monument, Church of St. George, Town Hall, Minorite Monastery, Mithraeum I and III, and Povoden Museum. Additionally, the Ptuj Wine Cellar, the oldest Slovenian wine cellar dating back to 1239, offers guided tours and wine tastings.



TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

Ptuj's target audiences are segmented into four main groups. **The active segment:** green explorers include individuals aged 25-55, typically from neighbouring countries like Germany, France, and the Netherlands. They are well-educated, middle to upper-middle class, and motivated by a desire to explore nature and engage in outdoor activities. **The well-being segment:** seekers of health and well-being consists of individuals aged 30-65, also from neighbouring countries, who seek relaxation and stress relief. They are generally well-educated and willing to spend more on quality wellness experiences. **The lifestyle segment:** gourmets targets individuals aged 30-65, from countries with a strong culture of food appreciation such as France, Italy, and Germany. They are driven by a passion for high-quality food and drink, seeking unique dining experiences and wine tastings. **The special interest:** MICE & sport tourism group includes individuals aged 25-55, both domestic and international, who are frequent travellers with a focus on business, conferences, and sports tourism.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS

Ptuj has several strengths that make it an attractive destination. The city's rich cultural heritage and historic city center, which spans millennia and is concentrated in a small area, consistently exceed visitor expectations. The unique medieval view of the city is another significant draw. Additionally, Ptuj benefits from favourable natural conditions, including a pleasant climate with many sunny days, thermal water springs, and a varied landscape. The Drava River and Ptuj Lake, the largest water body in Slovenia, add to the city's natural appeal. Ptuj is also internationally recognized ethnographic carnival character Kurent. The city hosts a large number of festivals and events from spring to autumn, and it is known for its traditional food, ingredients, and culinary specialties in the rural surroundings, as well as its rich wine tradition linked to nearby wine-growing

regions. The strong food industry, with Perutnina Ptuj being a leading food company in Slovenia, and the well-developed infrastructure for numerous sports and recreational activities, including established and reputable wellness, recreational, and spa tourism offerings at Terme Ptuj, further enhance Ptuj's appeal.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Rich cultural heritage and a historical city centre + Pleasant climate, favorable natural conditions + Many historical figures and the ethnographic carnival character Kurent + Large number of festivals and events + Rich wine tradition and wine-growing regions + Well-developed sports infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of vibrant atmosphere, neglected building stock - Untapped natural potentials - Predominantly local and regional visitors of events - Lack of local partnerships - Limited entrepreneurial activity
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Despite being a well-known attraction, the city is not sufficiently valued for the needs of its local population or tourism. It lacks a vibrant atmosphere, with part of its building stock being neglected or gradually deteriorating. Ptuj is not sufficiently recognized as a destination for relaxation or vacation, and the natural potentials of the Drava River and Ptuj Lake for the development and marketing of tourism and recreational products remain untapped. Historical facts, legends, symbols, and personalities associated with Ptuj are not fully utilized for positioning the destination with attractive and

compelling stories. Summer festivals attract mostly local and surrounding residents. There is a lack of investment in improving quality and expanding culinary tourism capacities. Stakeholders and tourism providers do not connect or actively engage in making joint decisions and establishing value chains and short supply chains at the destination and regional level.

MAIN COMPETITORS

In the region, Maribor stands out as a significant competitor. Located close to Ptuj, Maribor is Slovenia's second-largest city, known for its wine culture, historical sites, and vibrant cultural scene, making it a strong rival due to its proximity and similar attractions. Within Slovenia, Ptuj competes with Piran, Ljubljana, and Bled. Piran, a coastal town on the Adriatic Sea, is renowned for its historical architecture, maritime heritage, and scenic views, offering a seaside appeal that rivals Ptuj's offerings. Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, also known for its Roman history (EMONA), presents another challenge with its rich cultural and historical attractions. Bled, famous for its picturesque lake and castle, attracts many international tourists with its natural beauty and well-developed tourism infrastructure, making it a strong competitor for leisure and nature tourism.

In neighbouring countries, Graz and Varaždin are notable competitors. Graz, Austria's second-largest city, is known for its well-preserved medieval center, vibrant cultural scene, and culinary experiences, making it an attractive cultural and historical destination. Varaždin, a significant cultural and economic center in northern Croatia, competes with Ptuj in areas such as tourism, local businesses, and regional investments, given its rich history and regional significance.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

The customer experience journey of Ptuj begins with potential visitors becoming aware of the archaeological site through marketing campaigns, social media posts, travel guides, articles, and

word-of-mouth recommendations. Customers gather detailed information, check the official site, view posts and reviews, and plan their visit, though they may encounter issues like missing information and unclear pricing. During the next stage, visitors finalize their plans by booking tickets and making reservations but may face challenges such as a complicated booking interface and limited payment options. When experiencing the destination on the actual visit, visitors interact with the site, receive assistance from staff, and enjoy amenities and interactive elements. After going home, visitors share their experiences on social platforms and are invited for repeat visits, though the lack of feedback requests may affect their likelihood of returning or recommending the destination.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Overall, the sub-brand has a strong presence on Facebook and Instagram but could improve its use of other social media platforms and increase the frequency of offline communications. Collaborations with national and regional associations enhance its visibility and promote sustainable tourism practices. The destination presents a good level of communication but could benefit from more consistent and diversified efforts across all platforms to reach a broader audience.

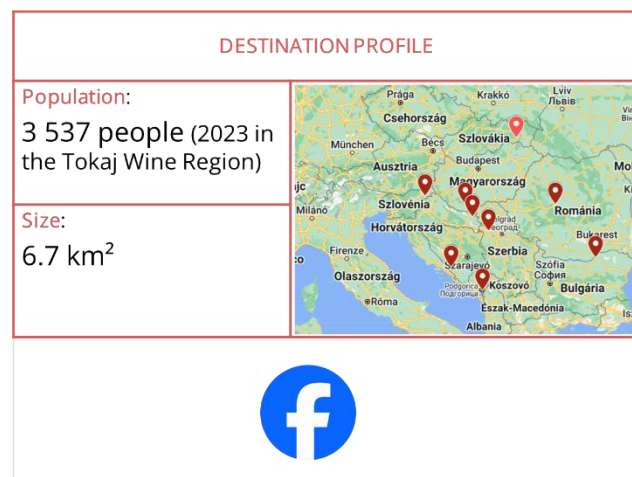
SUGGESTIONS

- **Enhance marketing and communication:** While the sub-brand has a strong presence on Facebook and Instagram, it could benefit from increasing its engagement on other social media platforms. More frequent updates through newsletters and PR messages could help maintain interest and engagement.
- **Leverage unique selling points:** Ptuj's rich cultural heritage, historical festivals, and unique attractions like the Poetovio Archaeological Park and Ptuj Wine Cellar should be prominently featured in marketing campaigns. Highlighting these unique selling points can help differentiate Ptuj from its competitors and attract more visitors.

4.1.2 PP3 - Sub-brand: Kosice

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

The sub-brand is centered around the unique traditional way of producing naturally sweet wines, which is a hallmark of the Tokaj wine region. This region is renowned for its historical wine cellars, cultural landscapes, and small family-owned wineries that offer a variety of products for visitors. These wineries produce wines using age-old methods, ensuring a rich and authentic taste that reflects the region's heritage. Visitors can explore these wineries through bike tourism, where they can ride along scenic paths that wind through the vineyards and small wineries, offering a unique and immersive experience.



The Slovakian Tokaj region, although less internationally known compared to its Hungarian counterpart, boasts a rich wine-making tradition that dates back centuries. The region is characterized by its beautiful natural surroundings, well-preserved vineyards, and unique wine cellars. The mild climate and fertile soil contribute to the production of high-quality wines, making it an ideal destination for wine enthusiasts.

TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The target audience for the sub-destination includes **wine enthusiasts** aged 35-60 from Slovakia, Czechia, and Poland, who have an interest in wine culture and prefer organized winery tours and fine dining. **Adventure travellers** aged 25-50 from urban areas in countries like Czechia and Poland, who enjoy outdoor activities and use mobile devices for planning. **Young city socializers** aged 20-35 from large cities in Slovakia and European cities like Vienna and Krakow, who seek fun and social experiences and are active on social media. **Corporate groups** aged 25-55 from major Slovak cities and nearby European countries, who seek team-building activities and socializing opportunities in a relaxed environment. Lastly, **romantic couples** aged 25-45 from nearby European countries, who seek romantic and relaxing experiences and prefer cozy accommodations and private wine tastings.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS

The sub-brand has several strengths, including unique, historic wine cellars (Tokajské pivnice) with centuries-old architecture and new modern wineries like Grand Bari. The scenic vineyards and rural landscapes, along with famous modern landmarks, add to its charm. The region is easily accessible from Slovakia’s major cities like Košice and Prešov, and the mild climate is ideal for wine tourism.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Scenic vineyards and rural landscapes with historic wine cellars. + Wine centered events and festivals. + Folklore, local legends, traditional wine making and historical figures. + High-quality, artisanal wine and wine products. + Connection to natural environment, potential for wellness tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media platforms - Smaller proportion of modern infrastructure. - Accessibility and mobility issues. - Seasonality of events, limited night life. - Visibility and promotion. - Limited production capacities and international trade connections.
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However, there are weaknesses such as limited modern infrastructure to accommodate a large number of tourists and limited public transport options. The region is relatively unknown internationally compared to Hungarian Tokaj, and there is a need for more targeted marketing and infrastructure investment. Additionally, the natural environment is vulnerable to climate change impacts, and there is a lack of storytelling or guided experiences that incorporate local myths and legends. The region faces challenges like limited year-round events, less variety of fine dining restaurants and

wine-tasting venues, and small-scale production limiting global market reach.

Despite these weaknesses, the sub-brand has assets like high-quality, artisanal wine products from family-owned wineries, potential for cycling tourism through vineyards, and wine-related souvenirs and products.

MAIN COMPETITORS

Within Slovakia, regions like Male Karpaty and Novohrad are notable competitors, offering their own unique wine experiences and attracting wine enthusiasts. These regions are known for their distinct wine varieties and well-established wine tourism infrastructure. In neighbouring countries, the Tokaj region in Hungary stands out as a significant competitor.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

Potential visitors are inspired by stunning visuals and influencer content on social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest to visit the Slovakian Tokaj region. They hear recommendations from friends or family who have visited the region. However, there is a lack of comprehensive, visually appealing online content and relatable testimonials, emerging as a friction point in the customer experience journey. In the next, planning phase, customers discover the region through wine tourism websites, social media, and travel blogs. They might face challenges such as limited international recognition, therefore lack of proper information and a lack of comprehensive English-language content online. During the booking phase, customers look for accommodation, wine tours, and activities through online platforms, winery websites, or local tourism agencies. However, they might encounter limited availability of structured wine tours and inconsistent online booking systems at smaller wineries. In the experiencing phase, customers enjoy guided wine tastings, explore historical wine cellars, take vineyard walks, and participate in local wine festivals. Finally, in the sharing phase, customers share their experiences on social media.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Although the destination does not have an official social media page, there is still promotion happening at a regional level. However, this creates competition among the regional destinations due to limited resources for marketing and communication specifically for the Tokaj region. Additionally, there are usually project-related communication efforts that help in promoting the region.

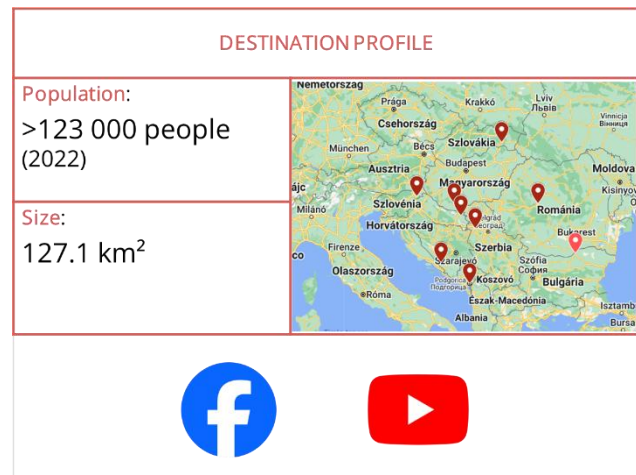
SUGGESTIONS

- **Enhance online presence:** Develop a comprehensive and visually appealing online presence, including an official social media page and a dedicated website with English-language content. This will help attract international tourists and provide relatable testimonials and stories that resonate with the target audience.
- **Targeted marketing:** Implement targeted marketing campaigns to increase international recognition of the Slovakian Tokaj region. Highlight the unique aspects of the region, such as its historic wine cellars, scenic vineyards, and traditional wine-making methods, to differentiate it from competitors.
- **Year-round events:** Introduce more year-round events and cultural festivals to attract visitors during the off-season. This could include themed wine tours focused on local myths and legends, as well as collaborations with local chefs and restaurants to create wine-pairing experiences.

4.1.3 PP5 - Sub-brand: Rousse

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

The sub-brand products of the Rousse region include a variety of unique assets, attractions, and experiences that are highly recommended for visitors and tourists. These encompass the architecture of Rousse from the end of the 19th century, the March Music Days International Festival featuring classical and jazz music, the Thracian treasure from Borovo, the Torta Garash Festival, the Rousse Carnival, and the Tourist Expo Weekend Tourism Rousse. Additionally, the region boasts intangible cultural heritage such as the Tambourine Orchestra of Ruse, the Masquerade Jamal, and the Yogurt Culture.



TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The target groups include **foreign groups** consisting of affluent individuals aged 45-80 from Western Europe, the USA, and Canada, who are interested in urban spaces and heritage, preferring organized trips with amenities and minimal spending due to all-inclusive packages. **Learners** are aged 7-25, primarily students with limited income, traveling in organized groups from nearby territories, attracted to cognitive tourism, museums, and budget accommodations. **Romanian citizens**, aged 30-65, are materially secured with a high budget for travel, experienced travellers from cities within 300-500 km, curious about cities and churches, and prefer restaurants and outdoor activities. **Individual tourists**, aged 25-55, are secured with no spending limits, interested in unique experiences, frequent travellers from both domestic and international locations, preferring diverse cultural places and nightlife. **Families**, aged 30-45, have moderate income, travel with children, prefer outdoor entertainment, festivals, and museums, and spend on food and attractions for children.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS

Among its strengths, the city features 19th-century neoclassical and neo baroque architecture, which contributes to its European appearance and is recognized as a cultural value by local citizens. Additionally, the region includes four UNESCO sites within a 100 km radius, enhancing its appeal. The strategic location along the Danube River, with transport corridors connecting to Bucharest, an airport, and a train entrance to Bulgaria, further supports the development of cultural tourism. The distinct continental climate with four seasons is also a significant advantage.



- + Neoclassical and neo baroque buildings from the 19th century
 - + 4 UNESCO sites in the Rousse region
 - + Closeness of Danube
 - + Rich cultural life and established calendar for weekend tourism
 - + Garash Cake Festival
 - + Notable people: Elias Canetti, Grandma Tonka
- Poor local policy to protect buildings
 - Lack of highways in the region
 - Irregular distribution of cultural events
 - Lack of wine festival and significant art event

The local policy for protecting some buildings is inadequate, and there is a recognizable lack of reception centers at some UNESCO sites. The absence of highways in the region can also hinder accessibility. The natural environment, including the Danube, Ruse River, and a natural park, has underdeveloped services, which could be enhanced to attract more visitors.

The assets of the sub-destination are diverse and rich. The region boasts a vibrant cultural scene with an established calendar for weekend tourism, festivals, theatre, opera, and museum expositions. The unique

Garash Cake Festival celebrates a chocolate cake from the 19th century, adding to the region's culinary appeal. Notable figures such as Nobel laureate Elias Canetti and Grandma Tonka, a mother of Bulgarian freedom add historical significance. The local industry is varied, with textile, automobile, and chemical industries. The sports scene is robust, featuring clubs, stadiums, successful teams in volleyball, soccer, and boxing, as well as Olympian champions in weightlifting.

MAIN COMPETITORS

Within the region, the town of Svishtov is a key competitor, known for the legion camp of the First Italian Legion and the well-established "Eagle on the Danube" festival. In the country, the city of Veliko Tarnovo, the old capital and a center of cultural tourism, and the city of Varna, with its Roman baths from Odessos and important archaeological museum, are significant competitors. In neighbouring countries, Bucharest, the capital of Romania, stands out with its important museums, numerous tourist attractions, and a variety of places to eat and stay.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

The customer experience journey begins with potential visitors discovering a clip related to the sub-brand (e.g., the Roman festival of Sexaginta Prista) and exploring additional photos of the event on the institution's Facebook page. During the planning stage, the customer visits the museum's website to gather more details about the site and find contact information, eventually reaching out to the managing institution. In the reservation phase, they book a visit to the site, including a personal tour guide, specific date, and time, along with making accommodation arrangements. However, a challenge arises as the sub-destination does not offer a comprehensive tourism package online, requiring the visitor to piece together individual elements on their own.

In the experience phase, the visitor arrives at the site and enjoys an immersive introduction to the Roman heritage, with activities such as dressing in military armor and posing with a helmet, shield, and sword. They also select cards featuring Roman forts along Limesa and authentic recipes. Finally, during the sharing phase, the visitor captures photos in costume and uploads them to Facebook. Upon returning home, they share additional pictures and videos, organically promoting the destination to their network.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

The marketing and communication activities of the sub-region utilize a variety of online and offline platforms to effectively reach their target audiences. Online communication platforms include Facebook, which has 10,000 followers, posts made daily to effectively reach the target audience. YouTube, with 391 subscribers, also has posts monthly, and is moderately effective. The museum has a wide range of partnerships with digital media, radio stations, television, and print media at local, regional, and national levels. These partnerships help promote the sub-destination and attract visitors by reflecting museum activities and events.



SUGGESTIONS

- **Enhance online presence:** While the sub-brand has a strong presence on Facebook, it could benefit from increasing its engagement on other social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and TikTok.
- **Strengthen partnerships:** Continue to build and leverage partnerships with digital media, radio stations, television, and print media at local, regional, and national levels. These partnerships are crucial for promoting the sub-destination and attracting visitors.
- **Monitor and evaluate:** Implement mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of communication campaigns and branding efforts. Track metrics such as engagement rates, reach, and brand recognition to continuously improve strategies.

4.1.4 PP6 – Sub-brand: Alba Iulia

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

Alba Iulia is a city with a rich millennia-old history, known as the "Other Capital of Romania." The city's main attraction is the Alba Carolina Fortress, the largest open-air cultural stage in Romania. This fortress hosts various cultural events such as festivals, film screenings, exhibitions, theater performances, and historical reenactments. The restoration and tourism valorization of the fortress have made it a prominent feature on the European tourism map. The city's cultural profile is further enriched by its exceptional cultural heritage, which includes the Coronation Cathedral and the Roman Catholic Cathedral, both significant religious and historical landmarks.

DESTINATION PROFILE	
Population: >64 000 people (2021)	
Size: 103.65 km ²	
	

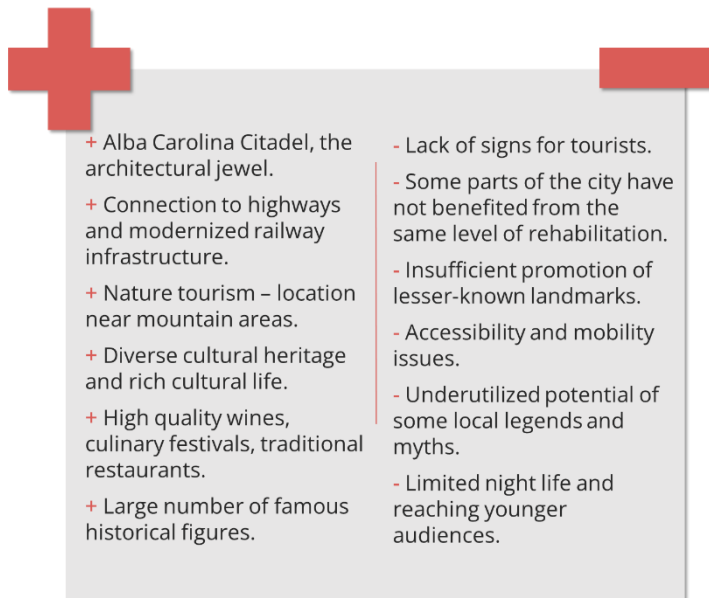
TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The target audiences for the sub-brand are diverse and well-defined, including **young adventurers**, aged 18-30, typically students and young professionals with moderate income, often budget-conscious but willing to spend on unique experiences. They are mostly tourists from major cities especially from Romania, Western and Central Europe, frequent travellers who prefer easily accessible destinations. **Families with children**, aged 30-45, have middle to high income and are university graduates. They are domestic tourists from Romania and neighbouring countries,

occasional travellers who prefer safe destinations suitable for children. Their motivations include recreation and education for children, with preferences for family accommodation, accessibility, and educational activities. **Senior explorers**, aged over 55 come from Western Europe and neighbouring countries, preferring long and relaxing trips and off-season stays. Motivated by cultural exploration and relaxation, they prefer guided tours and comfortable accommodation. **Professionals seeking city breaks**, aged 25-40, are high-income frequent travellers, typically business professionals. They come from major cities in Romania and Central and Western Europe, preferring city breaks and easily accessible destinations. Motivated by weekend relaxation and exploring major tourist attractions like the Alba Carolina Citadel and cultural events.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS

The city's greatest strengths include the Alba Carolina Citadel, an architectural jewel and the largest citadel in Romania, which attracts thousands of visitors annually due to its unique design and excellent restoration. The historical buildings within the Citadel and other tourist-frequented areas have been rehabilitated, creating a pleasant and coherent urban landscape. Recent major public space rehabilitation projects have transformed the city into an attractive destination, offering a modern atmosphere. However, some parts of the city still feature deteriorated or poorly maintained buildings, and there is a lack of unified design in certain neighbourhoods.



- + Alba Carolina Citadel, the architectural jewel.
- + Connection to highways and modernized railway infrastructure.
- + Nature tourism – location near mountain areas.
- + Diverse cultural heritage and rich cultural life.
- + High quality wines, culinary festivals, traditional restaurants.
- + Large number of famous historical figures.
- Lack of signs for tourists.
- Some parts of the city have not benefited from the same level of rehabilitation.
- Insufficient promotion of lesser-known landmarks.
- Accessibility and mobility issues.
- Underutilized potential of some local legends and myths.
- Limited night life and reaching younger audiences.

Tourist signage is also insufficient or poorly maintained in some places, making navigation difficult for tourists. Alba Iulia benefits from good road accessibility, a temperate climate, and a modernized train station with railway connections facilitating tourist transport. At the same time, local public transport needs improvements, the city lacks its own airport, limiting international access, and road signage to tourist points of interest can be deficient, especially in suburban areas.

Local wines and traditional dishes are high quality, and there are several traditional restaurants offering

authentic local dishes. Culinary festivals are excellent opportunities to promote local gastronomy. The city has limited nightlife, events are concentrated in certain periods creating seasonal fluctuations, and the cultural offering for younger tourist segments could be diversified. Local products and crafts have tourism potential, but there is no dedicated market for them, and promotion in souvenir shops is lacking.

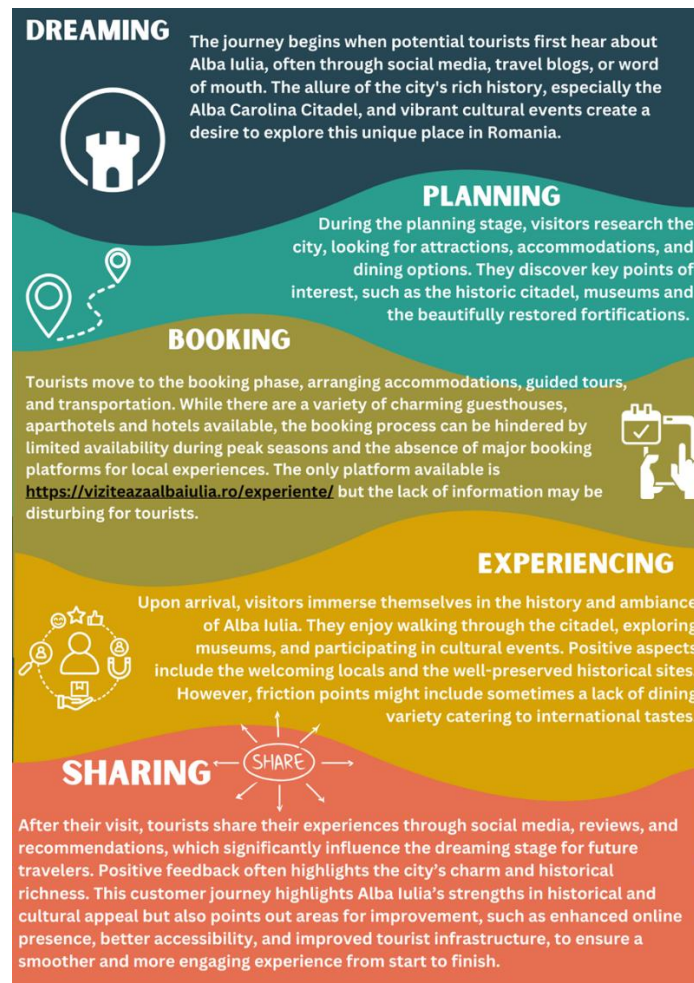
MAIN COMPETITORS

In the Central Region, the main competitors of the sub-destination are Cluj and Brasov, both of which have much larger tourism infrastructures and can accommodate a higher number of tourists. Within Romania, the Moldova Region, Danube Delta, and thermal spa resorts like Felix, Herculane, and Govora are significant competitors. These destinations offer modern spa facilities

and beautiful natural landscapes, making them ideal for relaxation and treatment. In neighbouring countries, Bulgaria is a major competitor due to its shared Black Sea coastline, which often attracts tourists away from Romania. Hungary is also a well-known competitor, renowned for its extensive network of thermal baths and wellness resorts in cities like Budapest, Hévíz, and Hajdúszoboszló. These facilities are highly popular and attract many tourists, including those from Romania, seeking relaxation and health treatments. Budapest, in particular, is also a significant draw due to its rich history, stunning architecture, vibrant nightlife, and unique attractions like the Danube River cruises, historic thermal baths, and cultural events.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

The customer experience journey for the Alba Iulia sub-brand is illustrated on the picture below.



MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Alba Iulia has a comprehensive marketing and communication strategy utilizing both online and offline platforms to reach its target audiences effectively. Online, the city leverages Facebook (37k followers), Instagram (410 followers), YouTube (234 subscribers), LinkedIn (183 followers), and its official website, with Facebook being the most effective due to its large follower base and consistent posting. Offline, the city uses newspapers, magazines, brochures, flyers, TV appearances, radio, and events to engage with the public. The effectiveness of these channels is regularly assessed through visibility analysis, impact monitoring, digital marketing campaign

evaluations, and feedback from surveys and stakeholders. Collaborations with local and transnational partners further enhance the city's promotional efforts, ensuring a broad and impactful reach.

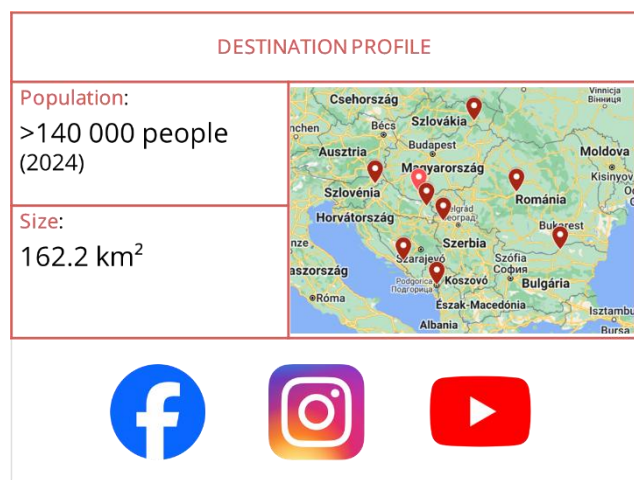
SUGGESTIONS

- **Promote local products and cuisine:** Establish a dedicated market for local products and crafts to boost tourism potential. Increase the promotion of local wines and traditional dishes through culinary festivals and partnerships with local restaurants.
- **Leverage historical and cultural heritage:** Utilize the rich history and legends of Alba Iulia in marketing campaigns. Develop interactive and modern narratives to showcase the city's history in a way that appeals to younger audiences.

4.1.5 PP7 – Sub-brand: Pécs

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

The main product of the sub-brand is the unique cultural and historical heritage of Pécs, particularly its Early Christian cemetery, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site. This includes the city's vibrant historical, religious, and cultural background, which is showcased through modern exhibition concepts featuring multimedia applications, 3D animations, and interactive panels. Special guided tours and interactive walks, such as the World Heritage Night Tour and the Underground Pécs tour, are also key components, offering visitors immersive experiences that highlight the city's rich history and multicultural diversity.



TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The sub-brand targets the following distinct groups: school trips, young couples, young families, and groups of retired people. **School trips** consist of primary and secondary students with a lower or medium budget, traveling domestically. They seek real, experience-oriented activities and rely on digital technology and online sources for information. **Young couples**, aged 20-30, have higher discretionary income and are busy but can find time for cultural experiences on long weekends. They prefer new, trendy experiences and use social media and search engines for information. **Young families**, with parents in their early 40s and 2-3 children, look for family-friendly venues and services. They prefer domestic tourism for family weekends, with mothers focusing on accommodation and fathers on extra services like children's programs. Lastly, **groups of retired people**, typically with medium or higher education and higher pensions, value quality cultural consumption and organized tours. They travel on weekdays, seek programs that broaden their horizons, and rely on friends, online sources, and tour operators for information.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS



- + Well-preserved cultural and architectural heritage
 - + Themed tours, interactive walks, immersive visitor experience
 - + Well designed, walkable spaces
 - + Close connection with the local community
 - + Large selection of souvenirs
 - + Use of multimedia applications, VR, and interactive panels at heritage sites
- The city center has limited parking options
 - Popular attractions have limitations for the number of participants
 - Some facilities have design limitations (e.g., only one restroom at certain sites)

The destination possesses several strengths, including its World Heritage Status, unique monuments such as special tombs, and high-quality additional services. The historical downtown location of Pécs is another significant strength, with the transport infrastructure supporting the concept of "slow living" and easy access to World Heritage sites on foot, by Segway, or bicycle. Continuous development of cycle lanes and paths further enhances connectivity within the city. The destination's rich history is highlighted through unique elements like the portraits from the vault of the Peter-Paul burial chamber and the Christogram symbol in

Sopianae. Cultural offerings such as night tours, interactive walks, concerts, and wine-tastings add to its allure, along with a large selection of souvenirs for visitors.

Still, there are some weaknesses that need addressing. Design flaws, such as having only one toilet, can be inconvenient for visitors. The limited number of parking spaces in downtown Pécs is another challenge, although there are opportunities to develop more parking spaces. Additionally, the number of participants for cultural events, wine-tastings, and special concerts is limited, which can restrict visitor engagement.

MAIN COMPETITORS

In the region, key competitors include the Spa of Harkány, known for its sub-Mediterranean climate and internationally recognized medicinal water, and the Villány and Szekszárd wine regions, which are highly regarded for their wine tourism and historical significance. The Siklós Castle, a well-preserved medieval fortification, and the Pilgrimage Shrine of Máriagyűd, a site of spiritual healing, also pose significant competition. Additionally, the Bikali Adventure Estate offers a unique interactive experience of medieval Hungary, while Szigetvár Castle and the Mohács Historical Memorial Site are important historical landmarks.

Within the country, UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as Budapest's Bank of the Danube, Buda Castle District, and Andrassy Avenue attract a large number of tourists. The Old Village of Hollókő, the Caves of the Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst, the Benedictine Archabbey of Pannonhalma, and the Tokaj wine region are also major competitors. The Fertő-Hanság National Park and various archaeological parks, including the Baláca Archaeological Park and Tác - Gorsium Archaeological Park, further enhance the competitive landscape.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

The customer experience journey of the sub-brand begins with the dreaming phase, where the customer sees a post or an advert about the Cultural Route and the World Heritage Sites of Pécs. This piques their interest, leading them to the planning phase, where they visit the official website to find more information about the Roman heritage, read reviews, and check travel itineraries.

Enthusiasm builds as they learn more about the historical sites and unique experiences offered by the destination. Upon arrival, the experiencing phase begins, where the customer is warmly welcomed by the staff and provided with a map and background information on the Roman heritage sites. They can participate in guided tours, discover the cemetery through VR, films, interactive walks, board games, try on Roman clothes, and virtually excavate graves. After returning home, the sharing phase occurs, where the customer shares photos and videos of their experiences on social media, tagging the official tourism page and using relevant hashtags. However, a friction point arises as the destination does not request feedback from the customer once they return home, which might affect their likelihood of returning or recommending the destination to friends and family.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Online, the destination is active on Facebook with 5187 followers, weekly. Instagram, with 995 followers, also sees consistent posts and is deemed effective. YouTube, with 35 subscribers, has monthly posts but is less effective. Platforms like X (Twitter), LinkedIn, and TikTok are not currently utilized. Offline, the institution uses newspapers and magazines weekly, brochures and flyers are always available, and the destination also has TV appearances, radio spots, and events and exhibitions with varying frequency. These channels are considered effective in reaching their audiences. The sub-destination collaborates with local and transnational partners, including the Local Government of Pécs, Baranya County Government, University of Pécs, and major local companies and media outlets, to promote the destination and attract visitors.

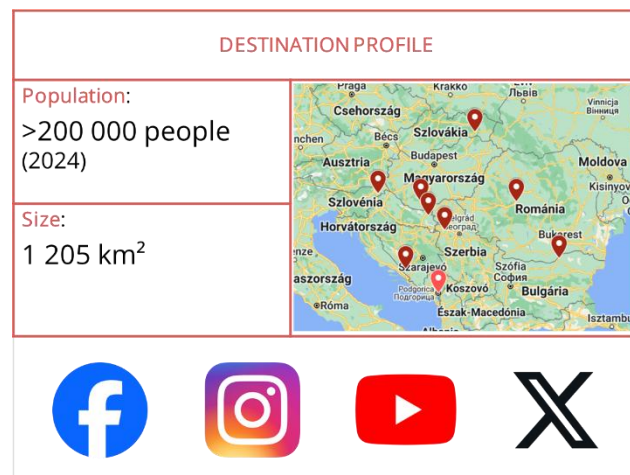
SUGGESTIONS

- **Increase event capacity:** Explore ways to increase the capacity for cultural events, wine-tastings, and special concerts. This could involve utilizing larger venues or organizing multiple sessions to accommodate more participants.
- **Feedback mechanism:** Implement a feedback mechanism to gather visitor feedback after their visit. This could involve sending follow-up emails or surveys to visitors, encouraging them to share their experiences and suggestions for improvement.
- **Enhance online presence:** Increase the frequency and consistency of posts on social media platforms. Consider utilizing platforms like TikTok and LinkedIn to reach a broader audience. Create engaging content that showcases the unique experiences offered by the destination.

4.1.6 PP9 – Sub-brand: Podgorica

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

The main products of the sub-destination include a diverse array of cultural, architectural, and natural experiences. Podgorica, the capital city, is emerging as a prominent MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) destination. The city offers high-quality hotels, private accommodations, and gourmet dining. Notable landmarks include the archaeological sites of Doclea and Medun, the ancient Clock Tower, and the Millennium Bridge. Podgorica's vibrant shopping scene, gastronomy, and wine offerings, along with various events and festivals, contribute significantly to its tourism value. The remains of the ancient city of Doclea, located near the confluence of the rivers Zeta and Morača, provide a picturesque backdrop for a tranquil yet educational experience, making it a must-see for visitors interested in archaeology, ancient civilizations, and cultural heritage.



TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The target audiences of the sub-brand include business/cultural tourists, excursion/study trip participants, wine tourists, stopover visitors/explorers, and groups in packaged tours. **Business/cultural tourists**, aged 50 and over, are well-educated with no budget constraints, interested in cultural heritage, and prefer direct booking. **Excursion/study trip participants**, aged 20 and above, are students and influencers with limited budgets, motivated by sightseeing and gastronomy experiences. **Wine tourists**, aged 50 and over, seek luxury and exclusivity, focusing on wine and dine experiences. **Stopover visitors/explorers**, of all ages, use the destination as a transit point, exploring briefly and preferring online booking. Groups in packaged tours include young, senior, and family travellers, investing in unique experiences and relying on tourist agencies for planning.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS

Podgorica and Doclea both have several strengths, including a fusion of traditional and modern architecture, significant attractions and landmarks, and a vibrant cultural scene. The rich Roman heritage of Doclea, well-preserved urban planning, and architectural elements offer valuable historical insights, while modern landmarks like the Millennium Bridge and the Clock Tower contribute to the city's unique character. The city's cultural offerings are enriched by numerous events and festivals throughout the year. The assets of the sub-brand include its convenient location, Mediterranean climate, green spaces, and proximity to natural attractions like Skadar Lake and the Morača River. Embracing eco-friendly and sustainable solutions, enhancing storytelling techniques, and developing a cohesive branding strategy for local products can further enhance the appeal and sustainability of the destination.



- + Fusion of traditional and modern architecture
 - + Iconic sites (i.e: Doclea, Millenium Bridge, Clock Tower)
 - + Appealing Mediterranean climate
 - + Proximity to natural attractions (Skadar Lake, Morača River)
 - + One of the most important archeological sites of the Roman period in the Balkans
 - + Vibrant cultural life and numerous events
- Lack of comprehensive urban planning and uncontrolled construction
 - Need for management and business models
 - Environmental challenges
 - *there is a need for sustainable and green solutions*
 - Lack of effective storytelling and comprehensive data collection

Some notable weaknesses include challenges related to urban space devastation, underdeveloped infrastructure, and inadequate protection of archaeological sites. There is a need for improved management and business models for attractions, as well as comprehensive data collection for cultural events.

MAIN COMPETITORS

In the region, Salona in Croatia, once a Roman colony near Split, offers significant archaeological insights with well-preserved remains of an amphitheatre, thermal baths, and temples, similar to Doclea. Another

key competitor is the Pula Amphitheatre in Croatia, one of the best-preserved Roman arenas in the world, attracting numerous tourists with its impressive structure from the 1st century AD. Within the country, the Risan Mosaics in Risan are known for their exceptional Roman mosaics, making it a similar destination for those interested in Roman civilization. In neighbouring countries, Butrint in Albania, a UNESCO World Heritage site, features well-preserved Roman structures such as an amphitheatre, basilica, and baths, making it a strong competitor due to its proximity and historical significance. Additionally, Mogorjelo in Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, is a Roman villa rustica near Čapljina, attracting visitors with its Roman history and relative proximity.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

Depending on the customer, the experience can vary significantly, offering everything from historical exploration to cultural immersion and outdoor adventures. This journey is often facilitated by local tour operators, ensuring that visitors have access to well-organized and enriching experiences. However, it is important to note that most people tend to spend only a short amount of time in Podgorica. This is because trips with multiple stops and destinations across Montenegro are more popular, allowing tourists to explore the country and its varied landscapes, historical sites, and cultural attractions in a comprehensive and engaging manner.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

The Tourist Organization of Podgorica utilizes various online communication platforms to reach its target audiences effectively. On Facebook, with 6.3K followers, posts are made daily, achieving a high level of effectiveness. Instagram, with 12.4K followers, follows a similar posting frequency and is also highly effective. YouTube, with 1.1K subscribers, posts monthly, while X (Twitter) has 7.1K followers with unspecified posting frequency. LinkedIn, TikTok, and newsletters are also used, though follower numbers and posting frequencies are not specified. Offline communication channels include newspapers and magazines, brochures, flyers, TV appearances, radio spots, and events and exhibitions (3-5 times a year). These channels are considered effective in reaching target audiences. The organization maintains strong partnerships with key stakeholders,

collaborating on promotional activities and participating in major tourism fairs and events, which significantly enhance the visibility and appeal of Podgorica.

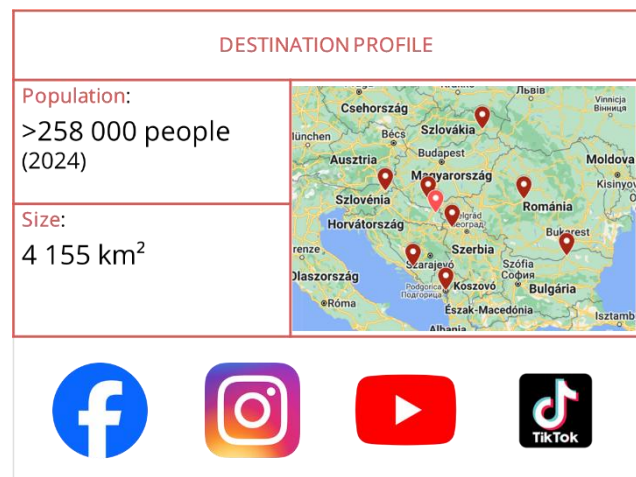
SUGGESTIONS

- **Improve management structure:** Develop strategic plans and effective operational frameworks for attractions to optimize visitor experiences and maximize economic potential. By developing a cohesive branding strategy, the sub-brand can create a strong and cohesive brand identity for local products to boost their visibility and attract more tourists.
- **Embrace eco-friendly solutions:** Integrate green design and architecture, promote eco-friendly transportation, and support green initiatives to minimize environmental impact and enhance sustainability.
- **Enhance storytelling techniques:** Develop compelling and engaging storytelling methods to enrich the visitor experience and highlight the region's rich cultural heritage. By leveraging local legends and myths the sub-brand can create a more engaging and memorable experience for visitors, highlighting its rich cultural heritage and unique stories.

4.1.7 PP11 – Sub-brand: Osijek

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

Osijek-Baranja County offers a diverse range of tourism products, including wine tourism with notable wine cellars and wine-tourist roads, cultural heritage attractions like the Baroque Fortress in Osijek and several castles, and a rich gastronomy influenced by multicultural traditions with dishes like fish stew and carp on forks. The region also boasts significant natural heritage with the Nature Park Kopački rit, known for its biodiversity, and active tourism opportunities such as kayaking, cycling, and hiking. Additionally, the county highlights its rural traditions through authentic architecture, cooking classes, and local music.



TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The main target audiences for the sub-destination are diverse and segmented into four groups, including **adults** (ages 25-44) mainly from Croatia and neighbouring countries, who seek a mix of experiences, including wine and food, and prefer online booking through platforms like TripAdvisor. Another group are **families** (ages 35-50) from similar regions look for family-driven activities and natural heritage sites, with average spending habits and a preference for online booking. **Empty nesters** (ages 50-65) also from Croatia and neighbouring countries, seek quality experiences and prefer direct booking through destination websites. Lastly, **school groups** (ages 13-18) are funded by parents and rely on travel agencies for organized trips within the domestic market.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Well-preserved cultural heritage sites+ Positioned near major cities and accessible through various transportation networks+ Extensive natural landscapes+ Renowned wine-growing regions with unique wine-tourism roads+ Diverse cultural offer+ Increasing cooperation between tourism sector and local producers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Limited diversity in attractions- Inadequate interpretation of attractions- Deficiencies in professional management of tourist sites- Limited shopping and souvenir opportunities in key areas, notably in the main cultural site, Tvrđa, in Osijek. |
|---|---|

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS

Osijek-Baranja County has several strengths, including well-preserved cultural heritage sites in urban areas and authentic rural architecture. The region's extensive natural resources, such as the Mura-Drava-Danube transboundary UNESCO biosphere reserve and Nature Park Kopački rit, are significant assets. Additionally, the area's traditional rural lifestyle, hospitality, and multicultural character enhance its appeal.

At the same time the region experiences some challenges, such as a low number of unique cultural

heritage sites, insufficient market-ready attractions, and a lack of professional management skills for attractions. The disparity in tourism development and inadequate interpretation of attractions also pose challenges.

MAIN COMPETITORS

The main competitors of the Osijek-Baranja County sub-brand within the region include Vukovar, Vinkovci, and the Papuk area. These destinations, while competitors, also serve as partners by offering complementary content for longer stays in the region. Within the country, the primary competitors are the Seaside (Adriatic area), Međimurje, and the Zagreb area, which attract significant tourist attention. In neighbouring countries, Novi Sad and Sombor in Serbia, as well as Pecs in Hungary, are considered competitors. Similar to regional competitors, these neighbouring destinations also collaborate to enhance the overall tourism experience in the area.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

In the dreaming phase, a visually captivating Instagram travel post and an interesting online promotional article about Slavonia and Baranja inspire the customer to visit the area with their family. After that, in the planning phase, the customer visits the official tourism website for more information and contacts the tourist board via email, receiving recommendations for the most attractive sites and necessary services. However, a friction point arises when there is no availability of accommodation for the preferred weekend due to short planning time. During the booking phase, the customer, based on research and recommendations from the tourist board and friends, makes a direct booking of accommodation or via booking.com, but again faces the same friction point of unavailability for the preferred weekend. In the experiencing phase, the customer arrives at the destination and is warmly welcomed by local hospitality service providers who offer additional recommendations on what to visit. They attend local events, experience the local cuisine, and participate in workshops that introduce them to the local lifestyle. However, weather conditions may lead to the cancellation of local events, resulting in a lower number of experiences than expected. Finally, in the sharing phase, the customer returns home and shares photos and

videos of their experiences on social media, tagging the official tourism page and using relevant hashtags.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Online, the county utilizes Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok. Facebook, with over 18,400 followers, and Instagram, with 6,600+ followers, are the most effective platforms, posting 2-3 times weekly. TikTok, with 1,225 followers and 20.2K likes, is also used weekly and monthly, showing moderate effectiveness. Offline, the county uses newspapers and magazines, brochures and TV appearances for their communication. The destination magazine is produced twice a year with 20,000-25,000 copies distributed regionally. Collaborations exist on a regional level with Slavonia, involving five regional tourism boards. Occasionally, project-driven collaborations occur on a cross-border level with the Land of Wine initiative and transnationally with the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine cultural route as well.

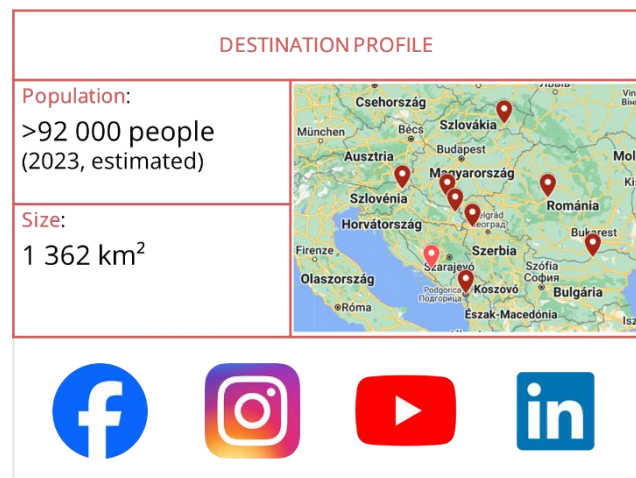
SUGGESTIONS

- **Strengthen collaborations:** Foster stronger collaborations with regional and cross-border partners to enhance the overall tourism experience. Leverage the strengths of each region involved to attract more visitors. Collaborate with social media influencers to promote the region and its attractions. Influencers can help reach a wider audience and create a buzz around the destination.

4.1.8 PP13 – Sub-brand: Herzegovina

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

The main products of the sub-destination, include a variety of unique experiences and attractions. These encompass hiking adventures to the highest peaks in Herzegovina, thematic cycling trails, horseback riding through picturesque landscapes, and exploring the rich cultural heritage through museums and festivals. Additionally, the sub-destination offers gastronomic delights with traditional dishes and fine wines, water activities such as canoeing and boat rides, exciting air adventures like paragliding and hot air balloon rides, and spiritual journeys to historic Franciscan monasteries and serene churches.



TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The target audiences are categorized into three groups: **activity-based tourists**, aged 18-40, typically students or individuals with middle to higher education levels, willing to spend on unique experiences. They are urban dwellers, experienced travellers, and heavy users of smartphones, relying on mobile apps for travel planning and social sharing. The **outdoor tourists** are aged 18 and above, with similar educational backgrounds and spending habits, seeking adventure and nature getaways. They also prefer online booking and are moderate users of smartphones. Lastly, the

rural tourists are families aged 35 and above, looking for peaceful vacations in harmony with nature. They are experienced travellers from urban environments, moderate smartphone users, and prefer online booking. All groups are motivated by adventure, exploration, and escaping the city hustle, with preferences for outdoor activities and high-quality yet affordable experiences.

- + Diverse and valuable natural environment
- + Advanced and varied sports opportunities
- + Unique, distinctive type of architecture and stone constructions
- + Rich cultural life, numerous events and festivals
- + Dynamic and strong manufacturing industry
- + Locally produced food and drinks

- Lack of local policies for the protection of stone constructions
- Quality of roads in rural areas
- Storytelling and promotional practices
- Lack of accommodation capacities
- Underdeveloped retail options for tourists

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS

When it comes to strengths the sub-brand boasts several of them, including its distinctive architecture with unique stone constructions and sacral buildings in the Neo-Romanesque style, the natural beauty and valuable sacred heritage of its attractions, and its favourable geostrategic location with a high number of sunshine hours annually. Additionally, the sub-brand's assets include the beauty, diversity, and preservation of its landscapes, numerous cultural festivals, and the high-quality Herzegovinian wines and rich food culture.

There are also areas for improvement, such as the lack of protection for mentioned unique stone constructions, the absence of interpretation for tourist attractions, and the poor quality and maintenance of roads in rural areas. Despite the mentioned assets, challenges remain, such as illegal dumpsites, limited integration of cultural content into the tourism offer, and underdeveloped awareness of promoting gastronomic offerings.

MAIN COMPETITORS

Within the region, the main competitor is the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, known for its natural beauty and cultural heritage. Nationally, competitors include the Entity of Republika Srpska, Una-Sana Canton, Sarajevo Canton, and Central Bosnia Canton, each offering unique attractions and experiences that appeal to tourists. In neighbouring countries, Split-Dalmatia County stands out as a significant competitor, attracting visitors with its stunning coastline, historical sites, and vibrant cultural scene.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

The customer experience journey of the sub-brand begins with the dreaming phase, where a customer, tired of the city hustle, explores rural getaways and comes across captivating images of waterfalls, rivers, and medieval towers on social media, gaining inspiration for a visit to West Herzegovina Canton (WHC). However, they face challenges in gathering information due to the lack of an active touristic organization. In the planning phase, the customer visits the West Herzegovina Adventures page for information on cultural landmarks, historical heritage, attractions, and gastronomic offerings, but finds that information about trip organization, activities, and accommodation is scattered across different websites. During the booking phase, the customer plans a weekend trip and books accommodation through local service providers linked to

Booking.com but encounters difficulties in booking excursions and hiking tours due to the lack of online booking platforms and slow communication with local providers. Upon experiencing the destination, the customer is warmly welcomed and settles in comfortably but struggles to gather information about places to visit and activities, as trails are poorly marked, and not all attractions have guides. Finally, in the sharing phase, the customer shares photos and videos of their experiences on social media, tagging the official tourism page and using relevant hashtags. However, since the destination does not request feedback, the customer might not consider returning or recommending the destination to friends and family.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

On Facebook, the EUI (Office) has 269 followers, while WHA (West Herzegovina Adventures) has 2,488 followers, with posts being made daily. Instagram has 149 followers for EUI and 1,237 for WHA, with similar posting frequencies. YouTube, with 16 followers for WHA, sees monthly posts. LinkedIn, with 318 followers for EUI, has daily posts. Despite not using X (Twitter), TikTok, or newsletters, the official web page OEI is updated regularly. Offline communication channels include newspapers and magazines with monthly appearances, brochures and flyers distributed annually, monthly TV appearances, monthly radio spots, and weekly and monthly events and exhibitions. Collaboration and cooperation at both local and transnational levels significantly help promote the sub-destination and attract visitors.

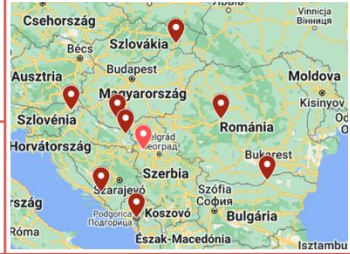

SUGGESTIONS

- **Enhance online presence and information accessibility:** Improve the online presence by consolidating information about trip organization, activities, and accommodation on a single, user-friendly website. This will help reduce the friction points customers face during the planning and booking phases.
- **Request and utilize customer feedback:** Implement a system to request feedback from customers after their visit. This will help in understanding their experiences, identifying areas for improvement, and encouraging them to return or recommend the destination to others.
- **Strengthen collaborations and partnerships:** Continue to collaborate with local and transnational partners to promote the sub-destination. Leverage these partnerships to enhance brand awareness and attract more visitors.

4.1.9 PP15 – Sub-brand: Sremska Mitrovica

DEFINITION OF PRODUCT(S)

The main products of Sremska Mitrovica are centered around its rich archaeological and cultural heritage. The city preserves and presents the archaeological remains of the Roman city of Sirmium, which existed from the 1st to the 6th century AD. Key attractions include the Imperial Palace, the Early Christian Basilica of Saint Demetrius, the Roman craft district, and the Imperial granary (horrea). These sites are accessible in various ways, with some being open-air sites and others having limited access. Additionally, the Museum of Srem houses and displays moveable finds from these archaeological sites, serving as a visitor center and offering ticket sales and guided services. The city's ancient heritage is also showcased through events such as the Oratory festival "Sirmium lux verbi" and the Wine Park.

DESTINATION PROFILE	
Population: 72 580 people (2023, estimated)	
Size: 762 km ²	
	

TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

The target audiences for the sub-brand include regional young adventurers and middle-aged tourists. **Regional young adventurers**, aged 18-30, are budget-conscious college students or recent graduates from the local region. They seek adventure and cultural experiences, preferring cheap accommodations and cultural programs. They are active on social media and prefer online booking. **Middle-aged tourists**, aged 35-50, are highly educated individuals from around the world, willing to spend on unique experiences. They often travel in groups for longer trips or thematic tours, seeking adventure and cultural sights. They prefer using travel agencies and guides for booking and information.



- + Well-preserved and accessible archaeological (and Roman) heritage
- + Unique architecture
- + Good accessibility and proximity of urban centers
- + Rich cultural life and presence of legends/myths
- + Cultural heritage of over 2000 years of the city's history
- + Closeness of natural attractions
- + Local workshops, producing souvenirs

- The level of tourist services are not uniform across all locations
- The management of locations is divided across different organizations
- Uneven levels of presentation at tourist sites and a lack of cohesive branding across locations
- There is a lack of branded products specific to the area

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND ASSETS

Sremska Mitrovica boasts a rich architectural and cultural heritage, with well-preserved archaeological sites and buildings dating from antiquity to modern times. The city's strengths include its accessible and diverse historical architecture, a mix of ancient and 20th-century landmarks, and its strategic location with good connectivity to major urban centers and transport networks. Additionally, the proximity to natural attractions like Fruška Gora National Park and the Zasavica Special Nature Reserve enhances its appeal.

At the same time, there are areas for improvement, such as the lack of interactive content at historical sites, uneven presentation levels, and insufficient visibility as a tourist destination. The management of locations is fragmented, and the storytelling of the city's rich history is underdeveloped. Despite these challenges, the city's cultural institutions, local and regional events, traditional cuisine, and local products offer significant assets that contribute to its unique identity and tourist offerings.

MAIN COMPETITORS

In terms of competitors, within the region, Croatia stands out due to its rich historical and cultural heritage, which attracts a significant number of tourists. Within the country, the Archaeological Park Viminacium and Stari Kostolac are notable competitors, offering well-preserved archaeological sites and historical attractions. In neighbouring countries, Croatia remains a strong competitor, leveraging its well-developed tourism infrastructure and diverse attractions to draw visitors.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE JOURNEY

The customer experience journey of the sub-brand begins with the customer discovering the Wine Park festival through Instagram posts, which piqued their interest in Sremska Mitrovica's rich ancient heritage. After researching the city online and finding information in various languages, the customer decided to visit. Despite the ease of booking accommodation through apps, the lack of an English version of the official tourism website and the absence of a comprehensive "Roman adventure" travel package posed challenges. The customer had to navigate the city's historical sites independently, with limited access to tourist guides and no audio guides and faced difficulties due to the scarcity of Wi-Fi zones. Interactive workshops were only available during local festivals, prompting the customer to explore nearby attractions like Zasavica and Fruška Gora. Despite these obstacles, the customer appreciated the city's potential and shared their positive experience on social media, highlighting the city's diverse activities and cultural richness.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

The marketing and communication activities of the sub-brand include a website that provides basic information and social media platforms where posts are created and administered by various individuals, as there is no specific person responsible for managing the accounts. Additionally, the sub-brand utilizes local and national TV and radio ads to reach a broader audience.

SUGGESTIONS

- **Improve online presence:** Ensure the official tourism website is available in multiple languages, including English, to cater to international visitors. Additionally, appoint a dedicated social media manager to create consistent and engaging content across various platforms. Explore the usage of different social media platforms to reach a broader audience.
- **Leverage local events:** Promote local and regional events, such as the Oratory festival "Sirmium lux verbi" and the Wine Park, to attract visitors and showcase the city's cultural heritage. Offer special packages and discounts during these events to encourage attendance.
- **Develop storytelling:** Invest in developing compelling storytelling around the city's history, legends, and myths to create a more immersive and memorable experience for visitors.

4.2 Sub-brand audit summary/conclusions

Sub-brands demonstrate a diverse range of marketing and communication activities and practices, to promote their unique cultural and historical attractions. Each sub-brand employs a combination of online and offline platforms to reach their target audiences, leveraging social media, official websites, and traditional media channels. One of the strengths of the sub-destinations is that all partners actively utilize social media platforms to varying degrees of reach. This demonstrates that, in terms of sub-brand communication, the partners are equipped to engage new audiences by incorporating digital approaches into their activities. Offline channels, including newspapers, magazines, TV appearances, and radio spots, are widely used to complement online efforts. When it comes to collaborations with local and transnational partners enhance visibility and promotional efforts. These collaborations foster community engagement, enhance authenticity, and create a unified approach to showcasing the destination, making promotional campaigns more impactful and credible. These collaborations with existing local actors also contribute to the operation and effectiveness of Local Product Clubs.

When identifying common challenges and areas for improvement across sub-destinations, we can draw the following conclusions:

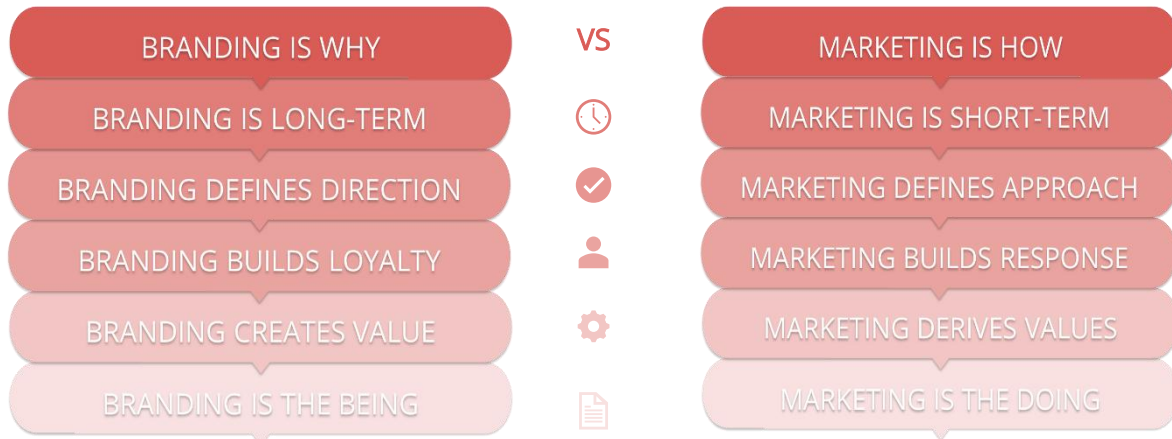
- Limited online presence: Several sub-brands face challenges in maintaining a comprehensive and visually appealing online presence or even have limited social media presence. Having several active social media platforms is essential as it allows for broader audience reach and engagement. Different platforms cater to varying demographics and user preferences, enabling the brand to connect with diverse groups and ensures consistent communication, promotes real-time interaction, while providing multiple channels to showcase attractions, events, and updates, ultimately enhancing brand visibility and appeal.
- Infrastructure and accessibility issues: Common challenges include inadequate infrastructure and accessibility, or even limited public transport options and the need for more modern tourism infrastructure some regions, especially in rural areas.
- Underutilized potential: Many sub-brands struggle to fully capitalize on their unique selling points and natural assets due to insufficient institutional capacities or even underdeveloped aspects of their brand and communication practices.
- Feedback and engagement: Several sub-brands lack mechanisms to gather and utilize visitor feedback, which can impact repeat visits and recommendations. Feedback mechanisms provide valuable insights into visitor experiences, helping to identify strengths and areas for improvement. It fosters trust and engagement by showing that the brand values customer opinions, while also enabling quick resolution of issues. Positive feedback serves as social proof to attract new visitors, enhancing the brand's reputation and credibility.

Overall, the sub-brands demonstrate a solid foundation, with varying degrees of communication and marketing activity evident across each one. However, the institutional, financial, and human resource capacities of the partners differ significantly, leading to sub-brands operating at varying levels of development despite sharing a common theme and niche. While some partners have years of experience and established best practices, others are at a more basic stage, with limited communication activities and an absence of a coherent strategy. This inconsistency highlights the need for collaboration and knowledge sharing among partners to ensure a more unified and effective approach to branding and marketing efforts.

5 The RWD Brand 2.0 – Branding Guidelines

Often when we talk about branding people tend to confuse it with marketing. There are many assumptions about branding that are not entirely – or even completely – accurate. Branding is not just how things look, not the same as logo making and it is not the same as marketing, although the duo of marketing and branding are interconnected.

Figure 3: Branding vs. Marketing



Source: own editing

Branding is the process of giving a meaning to specific organization, company, products or services by creating and shaping a brand in consumers' minds. It establishes how a target audience perceives and emotionally connects with the brand, building trust, recognition, and loyalty over time. A brand cannot be built overnight—it requires continuous development and evolution with no definitive endpoint. The key lies in consciously crafting and shaping the brand to authentically connect with customers, offering them experiences that resonate deeply in the first place.

It's important to mention that with the #RomansWineDanube partnership, we're focusing on **place branding**. Within this, we identify several categories, which we'll delve into further in subsection 5.2, along with brand architecture.

Place branding offers numerous benefits for both the location and its visitors. For the place itself, proactive management ensures that its image is not left to be shaped by competitors or the media, most likely to the destinations' disadvantage. A unified and strategic focus allows for consistent messaging and a cohesive visual identity, making marketing efforts more effective by highlighting competitive advantages. This approach, often referred to as the "Power of a Single Song Sheet," ensures that all communications are aligned and reinforce the same message. For visitors, place branding creates a distinctive, compelling, and attractive destination. It provides clarity on what to expect, making it easier for visitors to choose the place.

In this chapter, we aim to explore the elements of #RWD Brand 2.0, presenting the essential branding guidelines necessary for the successful market launch of #RWD and its products. We will draw on insights from the partner template and the workshops conducted with partners and associated partners in the Nyíregyháza meeting (April 2024) and the Belgrade meeting (November

2024), incorporating the lessons learned from these sessions. Each element of the brand will be approached generally, followed by the specific #RWD 'translation' of that element.

5.1 The Brand Platform: The Brand's Foundation

5.1.1 Brand vision

Brand vision is a cornerstone of a brand strategy and overall brand building. It clarifies the high-level role that the brand plays in assisting the overall destination in achieving long-term goals. A brand's vision defines its long-term purpose, direction, and goals. It paints a picture of where the brand wants to go and helps establish the core values and objectives that guide decision-making, product development, and communication with the target audience. This vision also influences policymaking and community development initiatives. It's crucial to address this from the start, as the vision is a key element of brand building.

When the brand vision aligns well, it supports the business strategy, sets the brand apart from competitors, connects with customers, and motivates employees and partners. It also sparks a lot of creative ideas for marketing and communication activities. Without a strong vision, the brand may lack direction, leading to inconsistent and ineffective marketing efforts.

When crafting the #RWD Brand 2.0 brand vision statement, we followed these key guidelines:

- Ensuring the vision fits into a single, concise statement.
- Centering the vision around the brand's core values.
- Keeping the statement relevant to our market and sector.
- Making the vision forward-looking and aspirational, addressing the brand's future.

The proposed brand vision statement is as follows, leaving room for further refinement and finalization as needed:

To become the leading cultural tourism destination in the Danube Region, celebrated for its rich **Roman heritage**, vibrant **wine culture**, and commitment to **sustainable** and **inclusive** tourism practices.

5.1.2 Tangible benefits the brand offers

Tangible benefits of a brand are concrete, measurable advantages that can be experienced by customers and directly impact stakeholders. They include physical products, functional assets or experiences that provide the customers value. Examples of tangible benefits are quality goods or souvenirs, convenient services, memorable experiences or cost savings. While it is important to define these tangible benefits, we need to note that these elements are the easiest to claim or match by competitors.

When discussing the #RomansWineDanube brand's tangible benefits, it's worth highlighting that many of these tangible benefits were outlined in the A1.1 Analysis of Framework Conditions for

resources, which are the foundation of tourism. Ultimately, it ensures that the cultural and natural heritage can be enjoyed by future generations while maintaining the integrity and beauty of the destination.

5.1.3 Brand Pillars – experience themes

Imagine your branding as a house. The brand pillars are the essential structures that support and stabilize this house. If you remove one, the entire structure becomes unstable. In our context, these brand pillars are synonymous with experience themes. They are not only the core principles of the brand but also the heart of any comprehensive brand strategy. These pillars provide your brand with a unified, recognizable identity that resonates with your target audience, ensuring your messaging is effective and your marketing succeeds. Additionally, brand pillars highlight the defining characteristics and unique qualities that set you apart from your competitors. These experiences represent the value proposition.

Brand pillars are crucial because they guide every aspect of the branding, ensuring that the brand messaging, marketing strategy, and customer interactions consistently reflect the #RWD brand's identity. Without these pillars, marketing efforts could be inconsistent, successful one day and failing the next. It's like trying to navigate without a map—you won't know if you're on the right path.

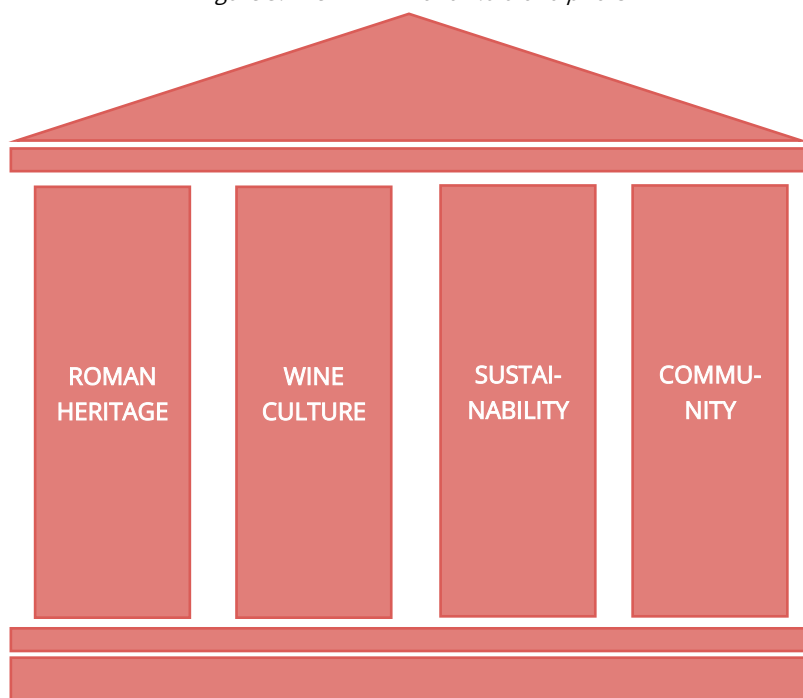
Some general examples may include: adventure, natural wonders, specific industrial heritage, specific historical heritage, unique cultural traditions, events, gastronomy, and more. It's best to define a few experience themes as precisely as possible, avoiding general statements.

When formulating the #RWD brand pillars, it was important to ensure that each one contributes to a comprehensive portrayal of the brand, making it purpose-driven, well-positioned in the market, relatable, positively perceived, and effectively promoted. The following key aspects helped to create a stable set of brand pillars:

1. Establishing unique strengths and selling points.
2. Defining the values we uphold.
3. Creating an original brand story.

The figure below shows the #RWD brand pillars.

Figure 5: The #RWD Brand 2.0 brand pillars



Source: own editing

5.1.4 Brand values/principles

Like people's personality, a brand's personality is deeply shaped by its values. Brand values (or brand principles) serve as guiding principles for an institution / sub-destination and are a subset of its broader brand pillars. These values act as an internal compass, steering decision-making and shaping the institution's purpose.

As fundamental beliefs, brand values motivate actions and help define the culture of the institution. People who choose your brand often do so because its values resonate with their own, allowing them to align with and reflect those principles in their choices.

These are the fundamental principles that characterize the destination and the communities – values people believe in and live by. It is very important that these are values that are rooted in the community, otherwise visitors experience disconnect between the stated values and the reality. These principles highlight not only what the destination supports but also what it consciously avoids, ensuring clarity and consistency in its identity. While they are broad in scope, they remain meaningful, offering authenticity and realism that resonate with both visitors and local stakeholders. By living up to these principles, the destination creates an authentic and realistic brand image. Defining brand values/principles early in the process is essential. These values should not be artificially imposed but should come naturally from the core purpose of the brand. They are tied to the brand's cause, vision, and mission, shaping its overall personality as well.

In the case of multiple sub-brands, like the #RWD partnership, it's crucial to identify the "common denominators" that apply universally to all destinations. (Examples of such values might include affordability, innovation, artistic expression, high quality, reliability, safety, customer focus,

hospitality, and environmental sustainability.) These shared values create a cohesive identity while allowing room for each destination's unique character.

Guiding questions, when identifying the brand principles can be:

- What sets your brand apart from competition?
- What do you believe in?
- How do you (as a destination) want to be perceived by your customers?

We initially established three overarching brand principles applicable to all destinations presented on the figure below.

Figure 6: Universal principles of #RWD



Source: own editing

Product Clubs offer an ideal platform for collaboratively defining additional brand principles. Since Product clubs bring together diverse local stakeholders, they create a space for shared dialogue and co-creation. By pooling local expertise, Product Clubs enable stakeholders to identify authentic and realistic principles that align with the shared vision of the destination and the overall brand as well. Engaging in collective efforts fosters a sense of ownership and shared purpose among participants, strengthening the foundation for successful implementation of any upcoming activity.

5.1.5 Value Proposition: The Brand Essence and Brand Promise

In the context of tourism destinations, the value proposition of a brand articulates the unique benefits and experiences it offers to its visitors. The brand essence is the heart and soul of the destination—a concise expression of its identity and the emotional connection it fosters with its audience. It is the brand DNA. It conveys what the destination ultimately represents, whether it's adventure, relaxation, heritage, or discovery. It is a simple statement, distilling in a relatively short sentence what the brand is about. It does not equal with a tagline, though it (or part of it) can also become a tagline. Concise encapsulation of what the brand is about. (Porto: "City for Everyone", Nashville: "America's Music City", Iceland: "Inspired by Iceland").

Meanwhile, the brand promise is the commitment made to visitors; it reflects the consistent experience they can expect. A carefully worded statement to guide everything associated with expressing and managing the brand. The Promise is the basis for future brand actions, influences

marketing, organizational, investment and development decisions. Every word needs to have a meaning, and the brand promise needs to be considered from the visitor's perspective, residents' perspective and stakeholder's perspective.

While the brand essence is about the brand's identity (who it is), the brand promise is about the experience it guarantees to its audience. The essence serves as the foundation of the brand, while the promise ensures alignment with visitor expectations and experiences.

ONE EXAMPLE IS THE TILLAMOOK COAST BRAND:

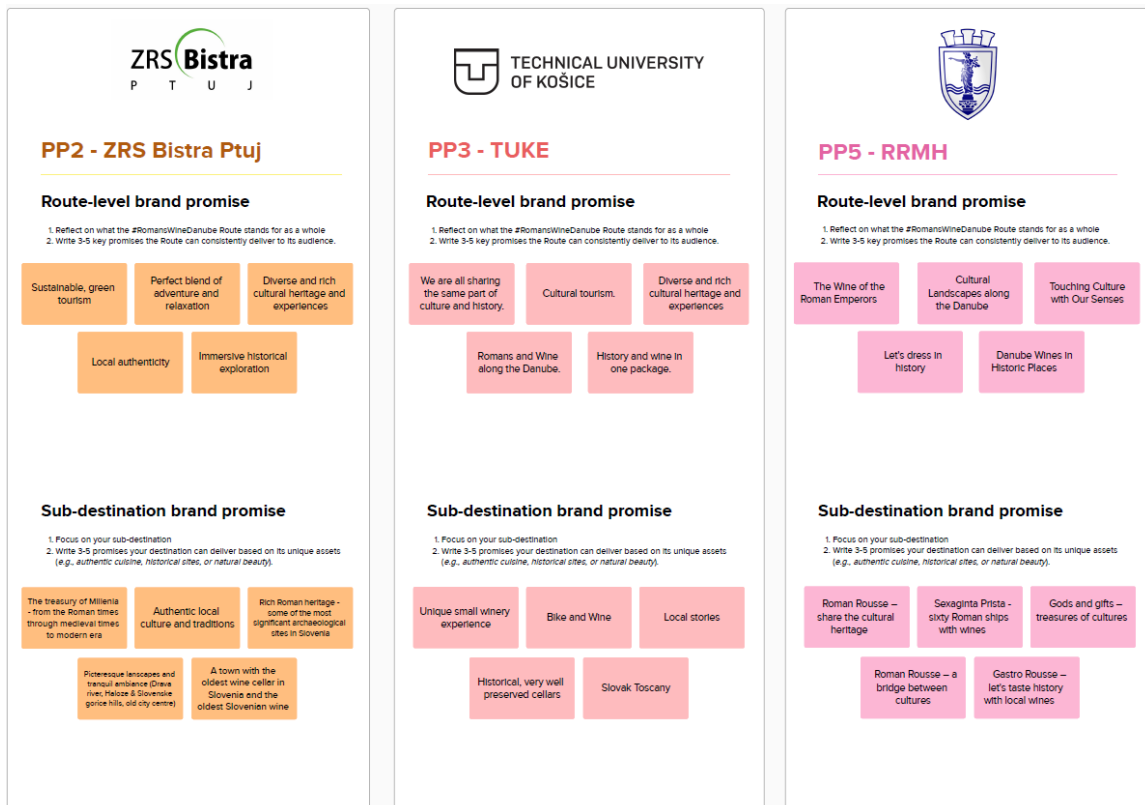
The brand is encapsulated in the tagline and experiential invitation: **"It's the natural choice."**

Our Promise: For those needing to escape the stresses of everyday life and seek the transformative power of nature, the untamed and unspoiled beauty of the Tillamook Coast's natural wonders is the perfect prescription for body and soul. Only here will they find the enriching, revitalizing, and adventure-filled encounters of Oregon's most diverse and varied marine and rainforest environments, all in close proximity to low-key beachfront villages that have not been overdeveloped –within 90 minutes of Portland.

Our Commitment: We are dedicated to preserving, enjoying, and sharing our unspoiled natural environments and keeping the small town and low-key character of our villages while generating a sustainable visitor economy for resident employment and small businesses. We present transformational experiences that enable residents and visitors to interact with nature in ways that are compelling, environmentally sensitive, and spiritually uplifting.

The #RWD sub-destinations have crafted meaningful brand promises at both the route level and sub-brand level, as illustrated in the Mural table shown below.

Figure 7: Results of the brand promise ideation



alBa
ALBA IULIA

PP6 - AIM

Route-level brand promise

1. Reflect on what the #RomansWineDanube Route stands for as a whole
2. Write 3-5 key promises the Route can consistently deliver to its audience.

- Travel through history and wines on the Roman Emperors' trail
- A journey through Roman culture and Danube's wine traditions
- Follow in the footsteps of Roman emperors while savoring Danube wines
- Discover Roman heritage and the flavors of the Danube
- Ancient history and fine wines along the Danube

Sub-destination brand promise

1. Focus on your sub-destination
2. Write 3-5 promises your destination can deliver based on its unique assets (e.g., authentic cuisine, historical sites, or natural beauty).

- Discover Alba Iulia: Roman legacy and wine traditions
- Alba Iulia: where Roman history meets Transylvanian wines
- Alba Iulia Fortress: Roman history and local flavors.
- Alba Iulia: gateway to Roman heritage and exceptional wines.
- Alba Iulia: the heart of Roman Daclia and Transylvanian wines

ZSOLNAY HERITAGE MANAGEMENT NONPROFIT LTD.

PP7 - ZSÖK

Route-level brand promise

1. Reflect on what the #RomansWineDanube Route stands for as a whole
2. Write 3-5 key promises the Route can consistently deliver to its audience.

- Time travel: Connecting present with the past
- Cultural experience through arts and heritage
- Mixture of Roman Architecture
- Experience local cuisine and wine
- Part of the European heritage

Sub-destination brand promise

1. Focus on your sub-destination
2. Write 3-5 promises your destination can deliver based on its unique assets (e.g., authentic cuisine, historical sites, or natural beauty).

- Outstanding early christian murals
- Mixture of late Roman burial architecture
- Discover nature through the Hills of Mecsek and the Lakes of Orfű
- Delicious wines from Pecs and Villány
- Multicultural experience from Sopronae to Pecs

MONTENEGRIC
Wild Beauty

PP9 - NTO MNE

Route-level brand promise

1. Reflect on what the #RomansWineDanube Route stands for as a whole
2. Write 3-5 key promises the Route can consistently deliver to its audience.

- An authentic journey through time where Roman history meets the wine heritage of the Danube region
- A unique blend of cultural heritage and natural beauty creating unforgettable experiences for visitors
- Sustainable tourism that connects local communities and preserves tradition for future generations
- An innovative approach to promoting cultural heritage through festivals and interactive experiences
- High-quality tourism products combining historical landmarks with authentic wine experiences

Sub-destination brand promise

1. Focus on your sub-destination
2. Write 3-5 promises your destination can deliver based on its unique assets (e.g., authentic cuisine, historical sites, or natural beauty).

- Diois - where ancient Roman grandeur meets Montenegro's untold stories, offering visitors a genuine glimpse into the past
- An archeological jewel that brings Roman civilization to life through immersive experiences and local storytelling
- A unique blend of Roman architecture and Mediterranean landscapes, creating a perfect setting for cultural exploration
- An ancient treasury of Roman heritage bridging past and present through authentic experiences
- Diois - a pearl of the Roman Empire in Montenegro, where ancient monuments reveal stories of glorious past.

DISCOVER SLAVONIA & BARANJA
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PP11 - TZ OBŽ

Route-level brand promise

1. Reflect on what the #RomansWineDanube Route stands for as a whole
2. Write 3-5 key promises the Route can consistently deliver to its audience.

- Preserved nature
- Local authenticity
- Hospitality
- Danube Wines
- Rich cultural heritage

Sub-destination brand promise

1. Focus on your sub-destination
2. Write 3-5 promises your destination can deliver based on its unique assets (e.g., authentic cuisine, historical sites, or natural beauty).

- Authentic multicuisine (rural restaurants, family restaurants on Drava and Danube rivers)
- Historic wineries (old wine cellars, biggest and oldest wine producers of Croatia)
- Natural beauty (Kopački rt, Amazon of Europe)
- Rich cultural heritage (castles, fortress, etc)
- Hospitality

Bosna i Hercegovina
Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine
ŽUPANIJA ZAPADNOHERCEGOVAČKA
UREĐ VLADE ZA EUROPSKE INTEGRACIJE

PP13 - OEI WHC

Route-level brand promise

1. Reflect on what the #RomansWineDanube Route stands for as a whole
2. Write 3-5 key promises the Route can consistently deliver to its audience.

- Historical exploration
- Immersive wine-tasting experience
- Breathtaking landscapes
- Cultural Immersion and local experiences
- Sustainability and responsible tourism

Sub-destination brand promise

1. Focus on your sub-destination
2. Write 3-5 promises your destination can deliver based on its unique assets (e.g., authentic cuisine, historical sites, or natural beauty).

- Rich historical and cultural heritage - The oldest museum in Bosnia and Herzegovina with rich Roman heritage
- West Herzegovina Adventures - Unforgettable adventures for nature lovers and thrill-seekers
- Herzegovina's Culinary Tradition - Unique Must-Bread Givens (fermented grape juice)
- Wine Adventure
- Warm hospitality and cultural connections

ЗАВОД ЗА ЗАШТИТУ СПОМЕНИКА КУЛТУРЕ СРПСКА ИМТРОБИЈА

PP15 - ZZZSKSM

Route-level brand promise

1. Reflect on what the #RomansWineDanube Route stands for as a whole
2. Write 3-5 key promises the Route can consistently deliver to its audience.

- Cultural heritage
- Ambient values
- Natural heritage
- Diverse tourist offer
- Sustainability tourism
- Improvement of the presentation of cultural and natural heritage

Sub-destination brand promise

1. Focus on your sub-destination
2. Write 3-5 promises your destination can deliver based on its unique assets (e.g., authentic cuisine, historical sites, or natural beauty).

- Rich cultural heritage (from prehistory to modern times)
- A rich intangible heritage, traditional way of life with many customs
- A diverse natural heritage preserved in a small area
- Simium-Roman imperial city
- Excellent local food, good wine

Source: own editing

Based on the partners' suggestions and the input gained in the project, we make the following proposal for the #RomansWineDanube brand promise and brand commitment.

OUR SUGGESTIONS FOR THE #ROMANSWINE DANUBE BRAND:

Our Promise: For those looking to step off the beaten path, the #RomansWineDanube route uncorks the lesser-known stories of the Roman Empire - told through wine, local flavours, and landscapes that still echo with ancient life. Discover a journey across borders, that feels as good as it tastes, to places where guests are welcomed not just as tourists, but as invaluable part of the story. Places, where culture flows like the Danube itself - calm, rich, and full of surprises.

Our Commitment: We commit to creating authentic, cross-border experiences that bring the hidden stories of the Roman Empire to life - through wine, culture, and heartfelt hospitality. Along the #RomansWineDanube route, travellers become part of the story, connecting with places and people in ways that are rich, personal, and unforgettable.

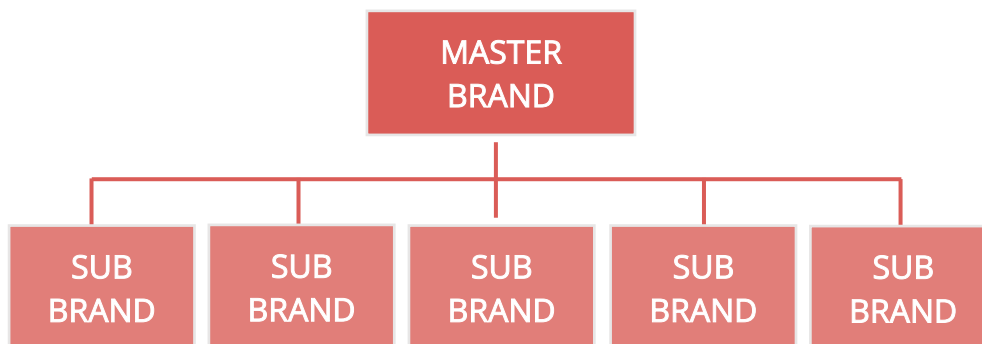
5.2 The Brand Architecture (or hierarchy)

Brand architecture, also known as brand hierarchy, is the structured organization of a company's brand portfolio. At its most basic level, brand architecture consists of a core brand and its extended brand. It defines the relationships between various brand elements and illustrates how they are positioned in the market. The primary goal of brand hierarchy is to provide clarity and alignment within an organization regarding how its brands are interconnected and how they collectively relate to the company. By employing brand hierarchy strategies, businesses shape the perception of their brands in the marketplace and influence how customers engage with them. It serves as a tool to establish distinct identities for each brand within the portfolio while communicating the company's broader brand strategy effectively.

Brand architecture typically falls into two main categories: the Branded House and the House of Brands.

A **Branded House** refers to a model where the company itself is the primary brand, and its products function as sub-brands. This approach allows the company to communicate with a unified voice and image, focusing its resources on building and maintaining the prestige of a single, overarching brand. Examples of a Branded House include Google (with sub-brands like Google Calendar, Gmail, Google Maps, Google Classroom etc.), Amazon (with Amazon Kindle, Amazon Prime, Amazon Alexa etc.) and Apple (with AppleTV, iMac, iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch etc.).

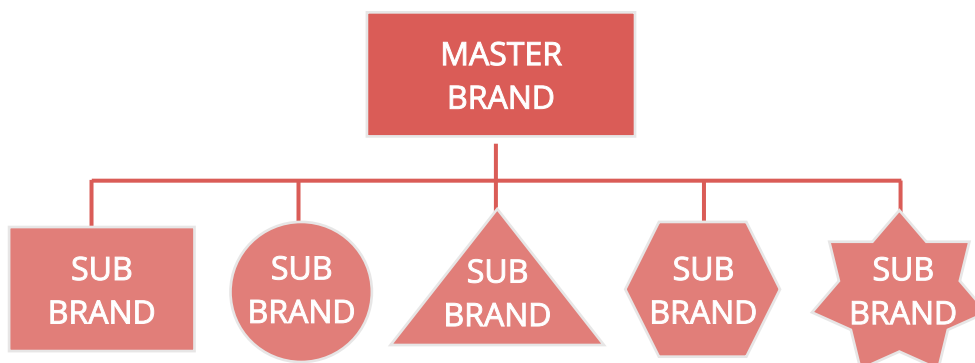
Figure 8: Structure of a Branded House



Source: own editing

In contrast, a **House of Brands** involves a portfolio of distinct brand names, each with its own identity, persona, and marketing strategy. In this model, each brand operates independently, appearing as separate entities to consumers. This strategy helps minimize the risk of transferring perceptions or preconceptions about the parent company to its individual brands. Examples of a House of Brands include Unilever (with Dove, AXE, Lipton and Ben & Jerry's etc.), P&G (with Pampers, Tide, Oral-B and Gillette etc.), Nestlé (with Nescafé, KitKat, Milo, Purina etc.).

Figure 9: Structure of a House of Brands

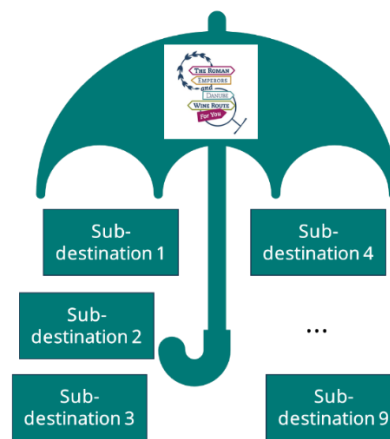


Source: own editing

It is important to clearly define the relationship between the main brand (RWD) and the “local brands” to fully leverage the benefits and synergies of shared branding. For #RWD, the approach aligns with a Branded House model, where multiple sub-destinations are unified under a single umbrella brand—or aim to be presented as such.

The umbrella brand serves as a high-level, overarching place brand that encapsulates a distinct character and sense of place while connecting the portfolio through a shared DNA. Beneath this umbrella are destination brands (Ptuj, Rousse, Alba Iulia), each representing a specific sub-destination within the Route. Additionally, there are thematic brands, which, in the case of #RWD, focus on wine (Kosice and Herzegovina). These thematic brands can exist within a single location or span multiple regions, connecting areas with shared strengths that appeal to specific market segments. There are also brands that encompass both a touristic destination and a thematic (wine) brand (Pécs, Osijek and Podgorica).

Figure 10: Brand architecture of #RWD



Source: own editing

This layered approach allows for flexibility while maintaining a cohesive brand identity. By aligning sub-destinations and thematic brands under a single umbrella, this model ensures that the broader brand benefits from shared visibility and recognition, while still allowing individual destinations to highlight their unique offerings. This approach maximizes the synergy between sub-destinations, enabling the pooling of resources for marketing, communication, and promotional efforts. It also reinforces the credibility of smaller or less-recognized destinations by associating them with a strong, overarching brand.

Brand architecture is not static and can evolve over time as market conditions, organizational goals, and customer expectations shift. In the case of #RWD, the brand architecture might adapt to accommodate new sub-destinations, thematic brands, or shifts in stakeholder priorities. Changes could also stem from the need to address challenges, such as inconsistencies in branding or evolving target audience preferences. Regular evaluation of the brand's structure ensures it remains relevant, sustainable, and aligned with the brand's overarching vision and goals.

5.3 Articulating the Brand

After exploring the foundational elements of a brand, it's equally important to examine how the brand is communicated and what tools are used to express its identity. This involves exploring the creation of both a visual and verbal identity system. In this chapter, we will focus on three key components: brand language, storytelling, and visual identity.

5.3.1 Brand Language

Brand language refers to the specific vocabulary, tone, and style a brand uses to communicate its values, identity, and message across various touchpoints. It serves as the verbal equivalent of a brand's visual identity, ensuring that every piece of communication—whether it's a website, brochure, or social media post—sounds consistent and recognizable. A well-defined brand language strengthens the emotional connection with the audience, making the brand more memorable and relatable.

Key components of brand language include key messages, talking points, and taglines. Together, these elements ensure clarity and coherence in all communications, helping the #RWD brand resonate with its target audience.

KEY MESSAGES

Key messages are concise statements that capture the essence of the brand, its value proposition, and what sets it apart from competitors. These messages are designed to address the core needs, values, and aspirations of the target audience while reinforcing the brand's identity and purpose.

Key messages are used across all communication channels, including marketing campaigns, press releases, and social media. They provide a foundation that ensures all stakeholders deliver a unified message about the brand.

TALKING POINTS

Talking points are an extension of key messages, offering more detailed and specific statements that can be used in discussions, interviews, or presentations. While key messages are broader and more strategic, talking points are tactical, providing clear responses to questions or addressing particular topics relevant to the audience.

For instance, a destination brand could have talking points highlighting its UNESCO World Heritage Sites, unique culinary traditions, or ongoing efforts in sustainable tourism. These points ensure consistency in how different representatives, from marketing teams to local stakeholders, communicate about the brand.

TAGLINE

A tagline is a short, memorable phrase that encapsulates the essence of the brand. Unlike key messages or talking points, which can be more detailed and functional, a tagline is designed to evoke emotion, create intrigue, and leave a lasting impression. It often serves as the public-facing statement of the brand's promise and vision. When used effectively, taglines become synonymous with the brand, acting as a rallying cry for its identity and purpose.

5.3.2 Storytelling: The Brand Story

Storytelling is an essential element of any branding strategy, as it connects people emotionally to a brand. A compelling brand story goes beyond the mere presentation of facts and figures, offering a narrative that captures the essence of what the brand stands for. By engaging audiences on a deeper level, storytelling transforms a brand into something relatable and memorable, creating emotional connection.

Effective storytelling should align with the brand's core values and purpose. It builds trust and credibility by showing authenticity, which is especially important for tourism destinations that seek to immerse visitors in local culture and heritage. A well-told story invites the audience to become a part of the narrative, making them feel like contributors rather than passive observers.

For #RomansWineDanube, the brand story could highlight the journey through time, bringing the Roman Empire's legacy to life alongside the rich winemaking traditions of the Danube region. The narrative might explore how modern communities preserve this heritage and share it with the world, inviting visitors to participate in festivals, tastings, and cultural events that bridge the past and present.

5.3.3 Visual Identity

Visual identity, meaning the combination of graphic elements are the cornerstone of a brand's recognition and memorability. It encompasses all the visual elements that represent the brand, making it easily identifiable across platforms and mediums. Creating a visual identity is an integral part of the brand-building process, often one of the most engaging and creative aspects. However, it's important to remember that the visual identity needs to be aligned seamlessly with all other components of the brand and supports the overall strategy.

The #RWD partnership is currently in the process of creating a cohesive visual identity that will play a vital role during the implementation of pilot actions and throughout the project's communication efforts. A well-defined visual identity ensures consistency and recognizability, helping to establish a strong and unified brand image across all sub-destinations. This alignment is critical for conveying the shared values and goals of the partnership, fostering both local and international recognition. The visual identity will be developed based on the following principles:

LOGO

The logo is often the most recognizable element of a brand's visual identity. The logo will serve as the cornerstone of the new brand's visual identity, encapsulating the essence of the region and its diverse sub-destinations. It will incorporate motifs and symbols that reflect the unique heritage, natural beauty, and cultural richness of each participating area, unified under the new brand identity. The design will be simple, memorable, and timeless, ensuring versatility across various applications such as websites, signage, promotional materials, and more. The logo will be scalable to maintain clarity and impact in both small and large formats.

COLOUR PALETTE

The colour palette for the new brand will be carefully selected to evoke emotions aligned with the region's identity. Earthy tones like deep greens, browns, and muted golds will be used to reflect the natural landscapes and historical richness. Vibrant accents in reds and blues will add energy and modernity, creating a dynamic balance. This consistent palette will be applied across all visual materials to ensure cohesion and strengthen brand recognition.

FONTS AND TYPOGRAPHY

Typography is more than just text; it's a design element that reflects the brand's tone and character. For the new brand a combination of serif and sans-serif fonts will be used to convey tradition and modernity. The primary font will be a classic serif for headers, evoking a sense of history and heritage, while a clean, sans-serif font will be used for body text, ensuring readability and a contemporary feel. The typography will be adaptable for various uses, from digital platforms to printed materials, maintaining legibility and style consistency.

TONE OF VOICE

The tone of voice is a vital aspect of a brand's verbal identity, defining how the brand communicates with its audience in a way that reflects its values, personality, and mission. It is not just about what is said but how it is said, shaping perceptions and creating an emotional connection. The tone of voice for the new brand will be warm, authentic, and rich in cultural storytelling. It will convey the depth of the region's history and traditions while remaining engaging and accessible. The communication will balance being informative with a storytelling approach that captivates diverse audiences. This tone will reflect the values and mission of the new brand, fostering an emotional

connection with tourists, local communities, and stakeholders, and highlighting the unique narratives of the region.

IMAGES AND VIDEO

Photography and imagery will serve as powerful tools for storytelling, bringing the new brand's narrative to life by highlighting its attractions, people, and experiences. High-quality, authentic images will immerse audiences in the destination, sparking anticipation and a desire to visit. For #RomansWineDanube, visuals of historical sites, local festivals, and scenic vineyards will play a key role in effectively communicating the brand's essence.

Video content will become an integral part of the visual identity, offering dynamic and engaging ways to connect with audiences. These videos will showcase the destination's highlights, capture events, and provide behind-the-scenes glimpses into the brand's unique offerings, further enhancing its appeal and resonance.

6 Communication tools and materials

The second phase of the Partner Template incorporated a **co-creation** element into the methodology, allowing partners to share their ideas and capabilities through creative and open-ended questions aimed at developing #RWD Brand 2.0. This chapter provides a summary of the responses gathered from the completed templates. This chapter also includes **templates**, which can be found in the **Annex** (subchapter 10.1).

6.1 Product(s)

Partners identified and made suggestions regarding what the product(s) should be in the framework of the #RomansWineDanube project. Inputs were gathered through the Partner Template and summed up in this sub-chapter.

6.1.1 Suggested joint products

The suggested joint initiatives align with the framework outlined in the AF and will be further developed in the projects upcoming stages.

FESTIVALS

Local festivities could be based on Roman times or wine or combined heritage, organized within hubs/sub-destinations along the Route, with collaboratively developed programme and joint calendar, targeting individual travellers. Cultural festivals could also include theatre performances, art exhibitions, and music, all organized in historical locations and linked to wine routes, involving local artists and craftsmen. Main topics of such festivals could be "living history". During the festivals participants can be encouraged to use materials that are recycled, natural, handmade or eco-friendly.

These events could feature themed activities celebrating history and tradition, with the community actively involved in producing and selling souvenirs made from recycled materials inspired by Roman motifs. In this way, the project would not only attract tourists but also contribute to the sustainable development and preservation of the region's unique cultural heritage.

TOURS

During the tours, sustainable modes of transportation are encouraged to be used.

a) Cultural Archeo Tourism

The aim is to interpret Roman-era archaeological heritage for various target audiences, raise local awareness about the significance of ancient Roman archaeological sites, and unify geographically dispersed archaeological remains, sites, and events under a cohesive "common" brand in terms of communication and content. This product must include a comprehensive range of offerings, such as outdoor archaeological site visits, museum exhibits, guided tours, tourism products and experiences (with a focus on Roman games), educational and interactive content, as well as events and exhibitions related to the Roman antiquity period or staged at locations around the archaeological remains from this era in the city.

b) Ecological Wine & History Trail

A thematic circuit connecting local wineries and Roman sites along the Danube, offering tourists experiences such as organic wine tastings and historical guided tours. The trail can be explored on electric bikes or on foot, promoting active and sustainable tourism.

c) Roman Eco-Gastronomy Tours

Culinary experiences organized in partner restaurants, using local and sustainable ingredients. The menus would be inspired by Roman cuisine, paired with organic wines from the region.

d) Electric Boat Tours on the Danube

Guided tours along the river on electric boats, combining natural landscapes, Roman history, and wine tastings. These tours would promote environmental protection and provide opportunities for ecological education.

e) Transnational itineraries

Routes could be based on 2-3 countries, depending on the cross-border profile of the destinations and the distances between main hubs. Itineraries need to combine different experiences – visits to the Roman sites or in case there are no such sites, cultural heritage sites, wine tasting or/and wine interpretation centres, tasting local products, participating in workshops that promote authentic heritage/value/food etc. of the (sub) destination and similar. Based on the existing resources of each sub-destination and two defined topics of the route, individual and group itineraries should be formed as initial product. The main target group could be organized groups of travellers.

6.1.2 Additional suggestions of products

The following sub-chapter presents additional suggestions contributed by the partners.

- **Fairs**

Danube Eco-Wine Fair: A periodic fair where local organic wine producers can showcase their products. The event would attract both tourists and wine-making experts, focusing on sustainable development and organic farming.

Fairs can also be themed as “Roman markets”, taking place at historic sites. Such markets could gather local exhibitors - artisans, producers of cheese, wine, honey, board game studios from Antiquity, art products from non-governmental and charitable associations. A historical re-enactment, performances, and a speech recital can also be presented.

- **Interactive Museums**

Interactive Wine & Roman Civilization Museum: Creating an interactive museum that combines Roman history with local wine-making traditions. The museum could offer virtual tours and augmented reality, promoting cultural education and responsible tourism.

- **Workshops**

Wine-Making Workshops for Tourists: Organizing workshops at partner wineries, where tourists can actively participate in the wine-making process, using traditional and ecological techniques. This product would involve locals and promote sustainable practices.

Similar workshops could be organised not only focusing on wines but also other items in relation to the Route theme or on ancient Roman customs.

- **Camps**

Eco Educational Camps for Youth: Organizing camps for children and young people with activities related to ecology, Roman history, and sustainable winemaking. The camps would also involve local educators, strengthening the connection between generations and nature.

- **Online platform**

Romans, Wine & Eco Travel Online Platform: A digital platform promoting ecological tourism products in the area, offering virtual tours, local stories, and eco-friendly vacation packages. The platform would encourage sustainable tourism and community involvement in promoting the region.

- **Wine samples**

There are small family-owned wineries with small amounts of production (5000 to 10,000 bottles per year), and they need better promotion for their predominantly naturally produced wines. There could be a sample of their portfolio with one big brand #RomansWineDanube. It is important to notice that those wines are unlikely from big wineries made predominantly with old methods which connects them with idea of #RomansWineDanube cultural heritage.

It is important to highlight that the products outlined in subsection 6.1.1 may incorporate additional elements detailed in subsection 6.1.2 for each sub-brand; however, these are optional features.

Besides the explicit product definitions, partners have also identified some general ideas that might be connected to more products of the above list.

1. The inclusion of smaller groups or individuals in local and regional events who have **costumes** and props made according to authentic Roman legion models. The goal is to empower groups that, through their activities, represent the city's cultural history and produce products inspired by ancient cultural heritage. The costumes, made from authentic materials and designs, will be used for thematic tourist tours and as stationed groups at various sites. Roman legion costumes can be created based on authentic models from museum collections. The costumed Roman military unit can perform demonstrations of Roman legionary exercises at sites, take photos with visitors, and participate in local events.
2. The project can take the European Green deal in consideration from some aspects, like the relevant recommendations and advice of international cultural and sustainability organizations. For example, selecting venues and accommodation integrated with the local infrastructure and community.
3. The constructed heritage sites convey an architectural, historical and religious fabric of information that is also related to the fine arts and the townscape. The primary customer value of this cultural complex is that it provides the encoded information of an interesting and valuable historical era. The conscious and versatile heritage management, as well as the creative sensibility towards novelty is closely coherent and mutually strengthening; it is one of the main appeals of the #RomansWineDanube project, both culturally and regarding tourism. A central element of the project can be to make historical values more attractive.

6.2 Markets /target groups

Partners shared thoughts on who the target audience could be. Understanding who our target audience is and what their needs and interests are crucial to create a successful strategy and action plan. Inputs were gathered through the Partner Template and summarised in the followings.

Depending on the defined products, markets and target groups can vary. Partners have identified several types which can be categorised from a number of aspects.

FROM GEOGRAPHICAL POINT OF VIEW: the product brand must be appealing for both visitors and tourists as well as the local population. Markets for the product include regional, EU, and global audiences.

1. Local population

Local residents represent a crucial target audience. The brand must engage locals to raise awareness about the rich archaeological heritage and help them view it as a development opportunity rather than a challenge. Promoting awareness of the past contributes to the development of local identity and pride, which should be strengthened and built upon with the new branding. The products can be appealing for different age groups and sexes, who are interested in historical re-enactments, original products, ecological farm products, unusual environments and elements of the exposition, tastings of Roman food and wine. This target group often travels for one day or a weekend.

2. Visitors and tourists from regional markets

This target group consists of people coming from neighbouring and regional countries, such as Serbia, Bulgaria, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Croatia, Slovenia, and Hungary. They are financially capable potential tourists, who are educated and interested in culture, history, gastronomy, wine tourism, cycling, and outdoor activities.

3. Visitors and tourists from EU and international markets

This global audience come from countries including Germany, the UK, France, Austria, the Benelux countries, Spain and the Scandinavian countries. This target group typically have medium or higher level of education, and higher incomes. Quality culture consumption is important to them, they closed themselves off a bit during the pandemic, but they are happy to travel again. They are happy to participate in programs that broaden their horizons and provide them with more information, e.g. guided tours in their own language. They are happy to travel on weekdays, too. They get their information from friends with similar interests, online and tour operators. They prefer guided tours, audio visual guide, films, interactive panels. Usually they travel to distant tourist destinations, arriving by plane or cruise ship. They require engaging short-term activities and comfortable accommodation.

REGARDING THE AGE CATEGORIES: target groups include school groups, young adults, families, and seniors, too.

4. School groups

School groups are also a significant target audience. The brand should engage them by presenting educational content about the ancient Roman period in an interesting and interactive manner. This includes primary, secondary, and tertiary education, as well as educational content for lifelong learning. Usually, they visit the sights in frames of organised trips, with an accompanying person.

They have a lower or medium budget. They want real experiences, so besides expanding knowledge, it is important to be experience oriented. Digital technology is important to them, they are eager to explore the destination and are interested in local events. They happy to travel on weekdays. They get their information from friends with similar interests and online.

5. Young adults

This group consists of people aged 18-30, who have a higher-than-average discretionary income. They are usually busy, who can find time for cultural experiences on long weekends; they are willing to extend their stay in case of a suitable range of experiences. They travel without children, with or without a partner. They love discovering new places and experiences. They are appealed by new, unmissable, trendy experiences, new approaches, and digital solutions. They are eager to explore the destination and are interested in local events. They get their information from friends and partners with similar interests, rely on search engines and social media platforms online. They are active on digital platforms and use travel apps, online reviews to plan their trips and share their experiences.

6. Families with children

Usually, parents aged 30-45 travel with 2-3 children. They like active, fun-packed programs; they look for family-friendly venues and services. They consider it important to go somewhere to relax together with the children, so that the children also have leisure opportunities. The type of accommodation and its possibilities are important, they are also interested in the extra services, e.g. children's programs, heritage pedagogy (cross-promotion). They are interested in destinations that provide educational and entertaining experiences for all family members. They value safety, convenience and a variety of activities suitable for children and adults. They appreciate cultural and educational experiences that are engaging for children, historical attractions, interactive museums and family-oriented events. They search for information on social media. They like organised trips with guided tour packages and comfortable services.

7. Seniors

They are elderly groups (aged 50+), typically with medium or higher education, and higher pension. They usually travel in groups. Quality culture consumption and sharing experiences are important to them, they closed themselves off a bit during the pandemic, but they are happy to travel again. They are happy to participate in programs that broaden their horizons, give them more information, e.g. guided tours. They love organized tours and experiences. They are happy to travel on weekdays, too. They get their information from friends with similar interests, online and tour operators.

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INTERESTS: the target audience can be categorised into culture enthusiasts and adventure-seekers.

8. Culture enthusiasts

In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in cultural and general tourism towards immersive experiences where visitors actively participate and co-create their experience. Instead of traditional cultural site visits, there is a growing emphasis on experiential cultural content that highlights elements of living and intangible culture, interpretation, learning, and active visitor engagement.

This target group has a keen interest in cultural heritage and history. They have higher education levels and consequently higher cultural capital; they have disposable income. They most frequently visit museums, historical and religious sites, followed by monuments, galleries, cultural events and traditional festivals. They deliberately seek interaction with local residents. They wish to understand and learn about local cultures, traditions, and customs. They are motivated by experiences that offer deep historical context and unique cultural insights. They are seeking immersive experiences that combine history with modern attractions. They value authenticity, in-depth cultural knowledge and historical significance in their travel choices. They appreciate well-organized events and festivals, vineyard tours and local traditions. These tourists stay longer than the average duration.

9. Adventure-seekers

This target group has moderate income. They are typically college graduates or working professionals, travelling without children. They are open to outdoor adventures in different weather conditions. They are characterised by high mobility, often using budget airlines or public transport. They are interested in exploring the natural beauty of the region, outdoor activities like hiking, biking, and discovering lesser-known wineries. Active vacationers enjoy outdoor and adventure activities mixed with cultural experiences. They like experiencing new adventures, exploring the charms of nature through a wine journey, exploring historical heritage, connecting with people of similar interests, and finding opportunities for collaboration. They are budget-conscious but willing to spend on unique experiences like guided wine-bike tours or local excursions. They are usually heavy users of mobile devices and apps for planning trips, navigation, and social media sharing. They can be engaged with travel blogs, YouTube channels focused on adventure tourism, and social media platforms like Instagram. They prefer online booking through adventure travel websites and apps. This target group tends to have a strong ecological conscience, interested in sustainable and eco-friendly practices (e.g. sustainable accommodations).

Additional target groups include:

- **Travel agencies;**
- **Influencers and media professionals:** they are interested in networking opportunities, content creation, and unique experiences;
- **Business tourists:** professionals attending conferences, meetings, or corporate events. They look for high-quality services, convenience, and efficient amenities;
- **Religious tourists.**

6.3 Messages

Partners formulated some interesting messages in line with the products defined. Inputs were gathered through the Partner Template.

According to partners, messages should be differently phrased based on the product or the target group. The following messages have been recommended.

TOURING

- Embark on a journey through time—explore ancient Roman sites, savour local wines, and indulge in gourmet delights.

- Discover the region like never before with curated tours that combine the best of history, wine, and gastronomy.

WINE TOURISM

- Raise your glass to history—taste the finest wines in unique vineyards.
- From ancient winemaking techniques to modern flavours—experience wine like the Romans did.
- Nature historical wines. Small wineries. Crazy men in love with what they do. Experiments.
- What this region offers, along with the flavour of grapes transformed into wine, leaves an unforgettable taste on the palate and a feeling in the heart that always brings you back to this region.

CULTURAL TOURISM

- Walk in the footsteps of emperors and uncover the secrets of ancient Rome’s legacy.
- Travel back in time with immersive tours that bring ancient Roman culture to life.
- Bridge to the past
- Bridge to the heritage
- Mystic adventures, history and sanctity – an excursion destination TIP!
- Descend underground, among early Christian burial chambers!
- Step into history!
- Discover fortresses, traditions, and timeless heritage—all in one destination.
- Uncover the legends!
- Your historical adventure awaits!
- Twenty Centuries of the City
- Discover the Divine Legacy: Explore the divine blend of ancient history and cultural richness. Experience the different layers of heritage that make *name of the place* a unique destination.
- Explore Distinctive Discoveries: Embrace the different experiences *name of the place* has to offer, from its divine archaeological treasures to its distinguishing cultural practices. Every visit promises unique and memorable insights into a storied past.

FESTIVALS

- Celebrate history with a modern flair at vibrant festivals that brings this ancient place to life.
- Join the festivities—where the unique culture meets today’s celebrations of food and wine.

GASTRONOMY

- Indulge in authentic dishes that tell the story of the region’s rich culinary heritage.
- Discover the heart of local culture through unforgettable food experiences.

FAMILY TRAVELLERS

- *Name of the place*: Where history comes alive for the whole family!
- Discover, explore, and make memories together!
- Wander through centuries of history and experience the magic.

6.4 Communication tools and materials

Partners gave suggestions to the creation of various communication tools and materials such as brochures, flyers, posters, infographics, videos, and articles. These materials will be designed to effectively communicate the cultural tourism offerings and attract target audiences. Inputs were gathered through the Partner Template.

Partners recommend communicating with a **marketing mix** in a target group-specific way, considering genre and geographical peculiarities. Moreover, any communication tools and materials should be adapted to the country specifics of the partners. There are no tools which fit all. Having said that, all partners need to have the flexibility of creating their own tools and materials.

Suggestions have also been phrased how communication can be more effective:

- involving partners and tourism organizations' own communication channels;
- integrating CRM Systems: Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems can be utilised to manage visitor interactions and data. This allows for personalized communication, targeted marketing campaigns, and tracking of visitor preferences and feedback. Integrating CRM with telephony systems can create a seamless experience for potential and current visitors.

Partners recommended using a diverse list of tools and materials that are grouped into the following categories.

TRADITIONAL MEDIA

A media kit can be created with key information, high-resolution photos, and professionally produced videos. Traditional media include off-line and online magazines specialized in traveling and lifestyle, newspapers, TV appearances, and spots in the radio.

PRINTED MATERIALS

Visually appealing brochures and flyers could be created that highlight key cultural attractions, events, and experiences. These materials should be distributed at tourist information centres, tourism offices, hotels, restaurants, events, airports and relevant local businesses to reach potential visitors. Information can also be provided in form of guides, maps, leaflets. Their content can be eye-catching images and brief, engaging text, including event timelines and must-see spots. These materials can also be made available in digital forms and distributed online. Also, they can be made more up to date with adding QR codes linking to videos, virtual tours or booking platforms.

OUTDOOR SURFACES

Posters and billboards can be used in the city to communicate the main messages of the project. Their eye-catching design can capture attention in high-traffic areas. Compelling visuals and concise messaging should be the focus to drive interest and curiosity.

WEBPAGE

Partners find it necessary improving the official websites. Articles and blog posts could be published on the website that delve into the history, culture, and unique aspects of the offerings. Collaboration can be established with travel bloggers and influencers to reach a wider audience.

SOCIAL MEDIA

According to partners, the best communication tool would certainly be social media, with a focus on Facebook, which has the widest reach. Alongside Facebook, Instagram and TikTok should be used to reach the younger population. Partners recommend creating short vertical videos, high-quality photos, behind-the-scenes content, planning activities to collect user-generated content, live streams, 360 VR content, educational and entertaining posts, promotional materials, and regular updates. Engaging posts could include highlights of local experiences, insider tips, polls, quizzes to encourage interaction. YouTube can be a focal point for culture enthusiasts, where short travel videos and documentaries could be shared.

NEWSLETTER

An online newsletter is filled with visually engaging content including photos, GIFs, and creative visuals in order to keep subscribers informed about upcoming events or tours.

APPLICATION

A mobile application can offer interactive features such as virtual tours, augmented reality (AR) experiences, and real-time event updates. This engages users and enhances their experience with cultural offerings. Applications can include detailed information about cultural sites, events, and activities, as well as maps, schedules, and ticketing options. Personalization features, such as customizable itineraries and recommendations based on user interests, can also be integrated. Push notifications can be used to keep users informed about upcoming events, special offers, and important updates, encouraging continuous engagement. The addition of AR and VR can further increase user experience. AR filters bring historical sites to life via smartphones; users could see historical figures, re-enactments or virtual guides offering tours in key locations.

PAID ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertisement spots can be bought in many media channels. Partners could buy media platforms at local and national level. Advertisements can be published on proven cultural and touristic surfaces, in major historical and scientific magazines operating in this field. Online campaigns can also be established as high reach can be achieved at a low unit price. Most notably, by displaying pay-per-click ads on social media and display ads searching on Google networks. Advertisement messages should be tailor-made to the platform used and target group concerned, accompanied by unique and specific creatives to make communication as effective as possible and achieve the highest return on investment. This requires the development of a user-friendly design on the arrivals side, products of interest and the right incentives.

WORD-OF-MOUTH

Positive reviews and testimonials from past visitors can be leveraged to build credibility and trust. Encourage satisfied visitors to share their experiences with friends and family and create referral programs to incentivize word-of-mouth promotion.

SLOGANS

Memorable and impactful slogans should be developed that encapsulate the essence of the cultural offerings. These slogans are recommended to be used consistently across all marketing materials to reinforce the brand identity and message.

Videos and infographics can be integrated in several tools that were mentioned above. Short videos (15-60 seconds) can also be created for social media or the project website. The suggested content is showcasing immersive experiences such as historical re-enactments, wine and food tastings and scenic nature trails. Family-friendly activities can also be highlighted with engaging visuals and easy-to-follow narratives. Furthermore, high-quality promotional videos can be produced that showcase cultural sites, events, and visitor experiences. Videos can include interviews with local guides, behind-the-scenes looks at cultural festivals, and scenic footage of attractions. Infographics can be used to present data and information in a clear and engaging manner, illustrating historical timelines, visitor statistics, and cultural highlights, making complex information easily digestible. They can be part of printed or digital materials alike.

6.5 Channels

Partners shared experiences about successful communication channels fitting the product, the target group and the messages. Inputs were gathered through the Partner Template, on the basis of which the following sub chapter has been elaborated.

According to the partners, various communication channels are needed to be tailored to the target audience's preferences and interests. In general, offline channels are effective for providing physical resources, immediate local information, and capturing attention in specific locations. While online channels are preferred for their convenience, real-time updates, and interactive content. They allow for targeted engagement and broad reach.

Recommended channels include the followings, ranging from traditional to modern solutions:

- **Radio**
- **TV** – Short documentary/travel movies on recommended EU TV channels (e.g. Travel TV, ARD, ORF1, ZDF; ARTE).
- **Events and Exhibitions**
- **Newspapers and Magazines** – They reach a local and regional audience who may be planning day trips or looking for new experiences. Possible types of contents: feature articles on events, cultural insights, and interviews with local experts.
- **Information centres** – Provide up-to-date and personalized information to visitors.
- **Billboards and Posters** – Capture attention in high-traffic areas with eye-catching designs.
- **Tourist Brochures, Catalogues and Flyers** – Available at hotels, tourist centres and events, these provide tangible information highlighting attractions that families and cultural

tourists can keep and refer back to. Possible types of contents: maps, itineraries, and highlights of must-see attractions.

- **Website** – Central hub for comprehensive information, interactive features, and user engagement.
- **Facebook** – It can be ideal for engaging financially capable individuals aged 25-54. Interest can be captured by posting a mix of photos, videos, and event announcements. Utilizing Facebook groups can foster community engagement, while targeted advertising can help in reaching the most relevant audience segments. It reaches a broad demographic, including families, cultural tourists and locals. Possible types of contents: event announcements, engaging posts, interactive content like polls and quizzes and user-generated content. It's ideal for sharing videos, event recaps and historical storytelling.
- **Instagram** – Instagram has proven effective for visual storytelling, appealing to a broad audience that includes younger adults and older demographics. Posting high-quality photos and engaging Reels, combined with influencer collaborations showcasing local experiences, beautiful scenery, and cultural activities can significantly expand the reach and attract new followers. Instagram's visual appeal attracts younger audiences and families looking for inspiration.
- **YouTube** – It can be an excellent platform for in-depth educational content. Creating travel guides and documentaries can engage a wider audience interested in the offerings. Encouraging subscriptions fosters a sense of community. It is perfect for immersive storytelling through video content, highlighting history, wine experiences and family-friendly activities. Possible types of contents: short documentaries, virtual tours, historical re-enactments and behind-the-scenes content.
- **TikTok**
- **Oculus** – By developing immersive VR experiences on Oculus, tech-savvy individuals interested in unique cultural experiences can be attracted effectively.
- **Google Arts & Culture** – Curating virtual exhibitions through Google Arts & Culture can engage educational institutions and history enthusiasts, enhancing cultural impact.

Partners were requested in the Partner Template to provide specific suggestions for platforms or channels that would be most effective to place the messages on in order to reach the target groups.

As they see it, maintaining a consistent presence across all suggested platforms will be crucial in building trust and keeping the audience engaged. It is recommended focusing on high-quality content production to enhance visual appeal, as well as partnering with influencers to broaden the audience reach. Additionally, implementing cross-promotional strategies across the channels can further increase visibility and engagement. For effective outreach, maintaining continuous visibility on travel operator networks and partnering with local tourism organizations to leverage their promotional channels can be of high importance. Channel management platforms can connect with tour and activity operators, enhancing the reach to potential visitors actively seeking experiences.

Regarding the offline channels, partners suggest creating short documentaries or travel movies for EU TV channels (Travel tv, ARD, ORF1, ZDF; and ARTE). The majority of suggestions concerned online channels of social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube. In partners'

opinion, Facebook is the most effective communication channel, as it typically has the most followers and can be better exploited (Facebook events, sharing live links, Facebook groups). Facebook pages can be created for regions, covering more cultural locations and all the cultural and tourist activities taking place at those locations. Instagram is more important for presence and image building. Reels can be added value, as a form of engaging content. It is also worth taking TikTok into consideration, because the video content created for this platform can be used simultaneously on other social media platforms as well. The content can be focused solely on promoting events through fun dances, photos, and videos aimed at engaging younger generations. Videos uploaded to the YouTube channel in form of travel blocks can be used embedded on the website and other surfaces.

Additionally, there are four webpages suggested to place messages in order to reach the target groups:

- European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN): EDEN is a platform of the European Commission that promotes sustainable tourist destinations, including those in the Danube region. It highlights lesser-known regions and emphasizes environmental protection and the preservation of cultural heritage.
- Danube.travel: This platform is exclusively dedicated to promoting tourism in the Danube region. It provides information about tourist attractions, events, and specific tourism packages in the area.
- Visit Europe (European Travel Commission): The platform promotes European destinations for tourists worldwide and includes important tourist areas along the Danube. It is ideal for promoting cultural and natural destinations in this region.
- European Cultural Routes (Council of Europe): This platform promotes cultural routes that cross various European regions, including the Danube, connecting places of cultural, historical, and natural interest. It is an excellent platform for promoting heritage tourism.

6.6 Digital

Partners leveraged various online platforms, such as websites, social media, and digital advertising, to reach and engage with target audiences. They provide concrete websites, blogs, bloggers, youtubers, social media groups etc. that would enhance the dissemination of #RomansWineDanube results. Inputs were gathered through the Partner Template.

Besides the concrete online platforms, partners phrased some general suggestions:

1. involving travel influencers, who can be different in each country;
2. using Google Ads and Facebook/Instagram Ads to target specific audiences with project-related content.

The following concrete suggestions were phrased for Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and websites. The table below lists specific social media channels and websites identified by partners. Some of these platforms are directly managed by partners, while others were recommended as potential collaboration opportunities to support the promotion of the #RomansWineDanube brand.

FACEBOOK:	
Visitptuj Facebook page	Travel in Romania/Călător în România Facebook group
Visit Alba Iulia Facebook page	Utazómajom Facebook page
INSTAGRAM:	
sophies_fitmom	anaavlad (gastronomy, events, nature, outdoor activities)
travelandhungary_official	irinaanedelcu (hiking, city breaks, adventure)
turistamagazin	putujuci_ranac (travel experience, culture, nature)
visitptuj	brana_antovic (culture, wine tasting, gastronomy)
doblife (nature, outdoor activities)	serbiatourism (National tourist organisation of Serbia)
globalcastaway (travel experiences, adventure, entertaining)	visitalbaiulia
YOUTUBE:	
Visitptuj	Kristijan Iličić
Zaiafet	Paul Bradbury
MIRCEA BRAVO	Project Youtube channel
Marka Žvaka	West Herzegovina Adventure
Putoholicari	
WEBPAGES AND BLOGS:	
www.romanpersonrute.org	www.www.visitruse.info
www.artsandculture.google.com	www.arenamedia.net
www.turizmus.com	www.visit-romania.eu
www.balazsutazik.blog.hu	www.romaniatourism.com
www.turizmusonline.hu	www.travelista.ro
www.szeretlekmagyarorszag.hu	www.www.mihaijurca.ro
www.hellohungary.hu	www.razvanpascu.ro
www.www.travelo.hu/index.html	www.zavodsm.rs
www.programturizmus.hu	www.carskapalata.rs
www.port.hu	www.muzejsrema.com
www.kultura.hu	www.tosmomi.rs
www.fidelio.hu	https://interreg-danube.eu/projects/romanswinedanube
www.femina.hu	

6.7 Traditional (offline)

Apart from the new communication tools partners also explored the usage of traditional tools like articles and newspapers, to engage and captivate the target audiences. Inputs were gathered through the Partner Template, and they are summarised and detailed in this sub chapter.

- **Printed Press** – Local and national newspapers and magazines can be used to publish articles, interviews, and reports about the cultural and historical events, offering details about tourist attractions and highlighting key achievements. Specific examples include Newspaper "Morning" (Rousse), Nedeljnik Magazine (Serbia), Fidelio (Hungary), Elevate magazine - distributed in airplanes (Serbia).
- **Brochures** – Printed materials distributed in tourist information centers, hotels, restaurants, or other public spaces in the country and abroad are effective for promoting the cultural heritage and events of the city. Brochures can also be valuable for providing detailed information and engaging with audiences at relevant events. They can provide information about itineraries and contacts.
- **Posters** – Street poster campaigns in high-visibility locations attract attention to festivals, exhibitions, and special events.
- **Flyers** – Distributed in transit areas such as train stations, airports, or tourist centers, flyers provide quick and concise information about the city's tourist and cultural attractions. Flyers can also be valuable for providing detailed information and engaging with audiences at relevant events.
- **Radio** – Local and national radio spots and programs dedicated to tourism and culture can reach a wide range of listeners, promoting events and points of interest. Specific examples include Bulgarian National Radio, RTS – Public Service Radio (Serbia), Kossuth Rádió (Hungary).
- **Television** – Reports and special programs on local and national channels can showcase spectacular images of cultural sights and events, capturing the public's attention. Specialized television programs on channels that promote tourist destinations are good solutions for promoting tourist routes. Specific examples include Bulgarian National Television, RTS – Public Service TV (Serbia), MTVA (Hungary).
- **Billboards** – Outdoor billboards strategically placed in tourist areas or along main roads can offer additional visibility to the city and events.
- **Tourist guides** – Publishing tourist guides in collaboration with specialized tourism publishers can be an excellent method to attract tourists interested in history and culture.
- **Postcards** – These represent attractive souvenirs for tourists and an indirect method of promotion, as they can be sent to friends and family, bringing visibility to the city.
- **Informational plaques and panels** – Installing explanatory plaques and informational panels in key points of cultural landmarks can educate and attract tourists visiting these sites.

- **Educational materials** – The development of supportive materials for interpreting archaeological heritage within educational programs should encompass both interactive and traditional resources. Educational Booklets and Guides offer historical context, detailed descriptions of artefacts, and information about the significance of the sites. Visually appealing posters and infographics summarize key facts and concepts related to Roman archaeology, suitable for display in classrooms and educational centres. Printed Maps and Diagrams of archaeological sites help students understand the layout and significance of various elements. Activity kits for hands-on activities, such as artefact handling sessions, model building, and role-playing exercises bring the Roman era to life. This approach will help make the learning experience more engaging and informative for students of all ages.

7 Brand Adoption

Walt Disney said, "You can dream and create the most wonderful place in the world, but it takes passionate people to make the dream a reality." Brand adoption is precisely about that—bringing strategy, decisions, designs, creativity, management, systems, and policies to life through the people connected to your brand. These include service providers, entrepreneurs, civic leaders, tour guides, retailers, front-line staff, taxi drivers, investors, political leaders and engaged citizens. Together, these actors play a vital role in building a compelling and sustainable brand. In this chapter, we'll explore the key components of #RWD brand adoption.

7.1 The Role of Product Clubs

According to the Guidelines for Establishing Product Clubs within Hubs (related to Activity 1.2 Developing Model for Community Involvement in Hubs – D.1.1.2 – Model for community involvement in hubs), a Product Club is:

"(...) a natural cluster of interrelated local business and public initiatives with the role to: (1) create, implement, maintain and improve local standards of visitors' management; (2) create common products and/or services; (3) coordinate other Route / Hub related efforts; (4) participate in collaborative promotional efforts; and (5) recruit new members.

A Product Club is typically composed of institutions and organizations directly or indirectly involved in tourism and interested service providers (local business), concentrated around a particular Hub or sub-destination."

Product Clubs play a crucial role in brand adoption by actively embodying and promoting the brand's values, principles, and vision with their services. Product Clubs are not only a structured platform for collaboration among stakeholders, all of whom contribute to shaping and delivering the brand experience, they also play an active role in embodying the brand and its values, ensuring every customer feels welcomed and that visitors receive the experience promised by the brand. It is a platform of aligning efforts and then ensuring consistency and authenticity in how the brand is represented and experienced.

To ensure the Product Club becomes a vital and impactful part of brand adoption, consider implementing the following steps during the operation of the Club:

- **Understand the brand identity**
Members of the product club should be familiar with the brand's vision, mission, values, and promises, as well as understand the brand benefits and rationale. Workshops can be conducted to ensure a shared understanding of the brand.
- **Adopt brand guidelines**
Implement the visual identity, messaging, and storytelling elements defined by the brand strategy in all communications, marketing, and service delivery. Stakeholders should understand how they can support and use the brand and how they can make on-brand behaviour easier.
- **Train and educate team members**
Equip local stakeholders, service providers, and staff with the tools and knowledge to embody the brand's values in their daily interactions with customers. Product Club

members should be aware of how supporting the brand affect their role and the everyday responsibilities of their organization.

- **Foster collaboration**

Sharing resources and ideas strengthens the collective effort, therefore promote teamwork among club members to create a unified approach to promoting and delivering the brand and #RWD products.

- **Monitor and evaluate**

Regularly assess how well the product club's activities align with the brand's goals. Gather feedback from customers and stakeholders to refine strategies and practices. Besides delivering outstanding experiences to support the brand, stakeholders should have the opportunity to adjust any activities based on feedback and evaluation of customers.

Some stakeholders will need more comprehensive brand education and training than others to ensure a consistent understanding and representation of the destination's brand. This can be achieved through **brand awareness training**. This training should equip stakeholders with the knowledge and tools to effectively communicate the brand's core values, vision, and promises, ensuring consistency across all touchpoints. It helps stakeholders understand the importance of their roles in shaping the visitor experience and the brand's reputation.

One way to ensure the brand awareness training content is appropriate is for partners to share knowledge on communication and branding topics among themselves. Part 3 of the Partner template focused on training needs and contributions, allowing partners to indicate their expertise in specific areas and identify how they could contribute to the capacity building. **The analysis of the Learning Needs and Contributions is detailed in the Annex, specifically in subchapter 10.2.**

7.2 Raising awareness of residents

Local residents are natural brand ambassadors of any touristic destination because they represent the heart and soul of the place. Their daily interactions with visitors, both direct and indirect, play an important role in shaping tourists' perceptions and experiences. Residents embody the destination's culture, values, and traditions, offering an authentic lens through which visitors can understand and connect with the local heritage. Their hospitality and willingness to share their stories can encourage positive word-of-mouth promotion and fostering repeat visits.

From the perspective of #RWD, local residents are indispensable in delivering the project's vision. Whether it's through welcoming visitors to the sub-destinations' communities, participating in events like reenactments or wine festivals, or simply sharing local legends and traditions, residents help bring the #RWD products to life in a way that no marketing campaign can replicate.

Raising residents' awareness of the project and its products is essential to align their efforts with the overarching brand goals. When residents understand the significance of the #RWD products and the role these play in cultural tourism, they are better equipped to communicate the brand's values and deliver on its promises. Engaging and educating residents about the project fosters a sense of ownership and pride in their local heritage. This not only enhances the sustainability of tourism but also encourages community involvement and collaboration. This alignment ensures that every touchpoint in the visitor journey reinforces the brand identity, from the moment a tourist arrives to their departure.

8 Operational framework

8.1 Brand leadership and management

Successful brands are driven by strong leadership at the top while being embraced at the grassroots level by their customers. This dual approach, known as brand leadership, ensures a strategic focus that aligns all efforts toward achieving long-term results, building meaningful partnerships, and maintaining a competitive edge. In #RWD, brand leadership unites sub-destinations under a cohesive vision while empowering local stakeholders and communities to actively represent and champion the brand.

The Guidelines for Establishing Product Clubs within Hubs provide detailed instructions on forming management frameworks for Product Clubs. Branding and communication efforts should be aligned with these structures, since local stakeholders participating in Products Clubs are the cornerstones of successful branding and communication actions, long with project partners.

In the context of the #RomansWineDanube project, brand management plays a crucial role in ensuring that both the Route and its sub-destinations consistently deliver on their brand promise. Given the diversity of sub-destinations, aligning perceptions, satisfaction, and opinions across the board requires intentional and cohesive efforts. The #RWD brand management framework must involve all stakeholders, from local businesses and tourism operators to cultural institutions and policymakers, to ensure that every interaction with the Route and #RWD products reflects its core values and promises.

For #RWD, brand management extends beyond conventional marketing to include placemaking (enhancing the attractiveness of sites), wayfinding (ensuring visitors can easily navigate destinations), infrastructure improvements, interpretation of Roman heritage, and partnerships within Local Product Clubs. Each of these elements is critical for creating a seamless and memorable experience, ensuring the Route's competitiveness and sustainability in the cultural tourism market.

Leadership and management frameworks should be developed based on the following guiding principles:



Participation: Effective implementation of the brand strategy requires forming a partnership that includes all relevant and committed organizations. This partnership should remain manageable in size, involving only those entities that are both willing and capable of contributing meaningfully to the shared vision.



Transparency: Establishing a clear framework ensures that decision-making processes and operational tasks are well-defined at both strategic and operational levels. Transparency also means that all information generated during implementation is accessible to involved organizations and, when appropriate, to the public.



Traceability: Clear assignment of responsibilities fosters accountability among stakeholders, supporting efficient monitoring and evaluation processes. The assignment process should be based on the Guidelines for Establishing Product Clubs within Hubs (specifically subchapter 3.4).



Coherence: Achieving the strategy's goals depends on stakeholders embracing a shared vision. This shared commitment ensures alignment among activities, building coherence and synergy across all efforts.



Efficiency: Clearly defining roles, tasks, and deadlines for all actors prevents information loss and ensures the planned interventions are carried out effectively and on schedule.

These principles help ensure that leadership and management efforts align with the overarching objectives of the #RWD brand strategy while supporting the collaborative spirit necessary for long-term success.

8.2 Monitoring and evaluation

With any brand, it is crucial to monitor its progress and make adjustments when necessary to ensure it remains relevant and impactful. Effective brand assessment doesn't have to be costly or time-consuming. While partners and Local Product Club members may already be tracking metrics like visitor numbers, web analytics, and social media performance, additional focus areas can enhance the evaluation process. Here are six key indicators to monitor to keep the #RWD brand relevant and meaningful over time:

1. **Understand your audience:** Continuously track the demographics, behaviour, and satisfaction of your target audiences to ensure your brand resonates with their needs and expectations.
2. **Evaluate brand promise:** Regularly assess whether your positioning and brand promise remain meaningful and aligned with evolving market demands.
3. **Maintain core experiences:** Ensure that the brand's core experiences are consistently relevant, engaging, and of the highest quality.
4. **Keep visual identity fresh:** Periodically refresh visual identity elements and communications to maintain creativity and appeal.
5. **Monitor market trends:** Stay attuned to trends influencing demand and visitor behaviour, such as travel preferences and cultural shifts.
6. **Leverage digital insights:** Utilize tools like Google Analytics, social media metrics, and user-generated content reviews to gather valuable feedback and insights.

For #RWD, Local Product Clubs play a critical role in this process by gathering and sharing these insights from the ground level, ensuring that the brand reflects the authentic and diverse offerings of the sub-destinations while remaining aligned with the overarching goals of the Route.

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10 Annexes

10.1 Communication tools and materials templates

10.1.1 Infographics templates



IDENTIFY INTERESTED STAKEHOLDERS

Identify group of 5-7 different people coming from important institutions that influence visitors' experience in your hub.



SET REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Discuss and jointly identify a realistic scope of work. When planning goals to achieve, try to set it so to be SMART goals - Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound.



DISCUSS AND PRIORITIZE JOINT ACTIVITIES

Evaluate and shortlist activities that you can jointly initiate within the Product Club



SET THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF JOINT ACTIVITIES

Identify key organizational elements: assign a task force, set a timeline, outline in-kind contributions, and specify the budget - if required.

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Interreg
Danube Region



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#RomansWineDanube

Discover the flavors of the Danube at 4 unique Wine Festivals

Immerse yourself in the rich winemaking traditions of the Danube region with festivals designed to present and promote the exclusive "Wines from the Danube Region" label.



KOŠICE, SLOVAKIA

Experience the elegance of local wines in a vibrant cultural setting.



OSIJEK, CROATIA

Celebrate the legacy of winemaking with tastings and festivities.



ODESA, UKRAINE

Explore a fusion of heritage and flavor at a unique wine event.



MOSTAR, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Enjoy the finest wines in a picturesque destination

Interreg
Danube Region



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Danube Region



Co-funded by
the European Union

#RomansWineDanube

Experience the Roman Empire in 5 Sub-destinations

Step back in time with immersive reenactments showcasing daily life in the provinces of the Roman Empire. Each performance, tailored to the unique characteristics of its location, offers a captivating glimpse into Roman history.

PTUJ, SLOVENIA

Witness the vibrancy of civilian life through interactive activities at the Roman Games.



PÉCS, HUNGARY

Explore ancient religious practices in the heart of historical heritage.



ROUSSE, BULGARIA

Indulge in authentic Roman gastronomy at the Roman Market.



ALBA IULIA, ROMANIA

Delve into the military traditions of the Roman Empire at the Apulum Roman Festival.



FELIX ROMULIANA, SERBIA

Discover the essence of everyday Roman life in this iconic setting.



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Danube Region



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#RomansWineDanube

10.1.3 Brochure template

WHO WE ARE



13

PARTNERS

11

COUNTRIES

30

MONTHS

Interreg
Danube Region

#RomansWineDanube



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2.192.667,00 €

Project Budget



1.754.133,60 €

Interreg Funds



1/2024-6/2026

Project duration













#RomansWineDanube

Marketing framework for sustainable
cultural tourism development

Interreg
Danube Region

#RomansWineDanube



Co-funded by
the European Union



This project is supported by the Interreg Danube Region Programme
co-funded by the European Union.

Results of the sub-brand audit

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10.2 Learning needs and Contributions Analysis

Topic	Possible contribution (format)								
	Ptuj	Kosice	Rousse	Alba Iulia	Pécs	Podgorica	Osijek	West Herzegovina	Sremska Mitrovica
Brand identity and messaging	Organising visit to relevant institution		Presentation on the topic	Presentation on the topic		Delivery of masterclass	Organising visit to relevant institution	Presentation of good practices	
	Presentation of good practices					Organising visit to relevant institution	Presentation of good practices		
Marketing and promotion	Organising visit to relevant institution	Organising visit to relevant institution	Organising visit to relevant institution			Presentation of good practices	Presentation on the topic		
	Presentation of good practices						Presentation of good practices		
Storytelling practices		Organising visit to relevant institution	Organising visit to relevant institution			Delivery of masterclass	Presentation of good practices		Organising visit to relevant institution
		Presentation on the topic							
Visitor engagement	Presentation of good practices		Presentation of good practices	Presentation of good practices		Presentation of good practices			Organising visit to relevant institution
Target audience analysis			Presentation of good practices						Organising visit to relevant institution
Content creation	Organising visit to relevant institution	Presentation on the topic				Presentation of good practices	Presentation of good practices	Organising visit to relevant institution	
	Presentation of good practices	Presentation of good practices							
Public relations and media management	Presentation on the topic					Organising visit to relevant institution	Presentation of good practices		
Sustainability	Presentation on the topic					Presentation of good practices			Organising visit to relevant institution
									Presentation of good practices
Community involvement	Presentation on the topic	Presentation on the topic		Organising visit to relevant institution		Presentation of good practices	Presentation of good practices		Presentation of good practices
		Organising visit to relevant institution		Presentation of good practices					
Metrics and evaluation									