

Running Head: ASSESSMENT OF BRAND DELIVERY

**Assessment of brand values delivery by employees to customers:
an internal perspective.**

**A qualitative case study on the example of
Norwegian Coastal Express “Hurtigruten ASA”**



Master's Thesis

by

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Abstract

This research paper explores an internal perspective on employee awareness of company's brand values and attempts to establish how employees that have direct customer contact deliver on these brand values to customers. A case study research strategy was applied to collect and analyze qualitative data. This research was conducted with participation of Norwegian Coastal Express Hurtigruten ASA. Participants of the study included Representatives of Management of on-land organization responsible for marketing and sales, product development, hotel operations, and internal branding as well as employees of sea-based organization taking different positions. The study was aimed at assessing employees' awareness of their company's brand values and exploring its reflection in the employees' delivery of company's brand promise to customers.

Table of contents

Introduction.....	8
The importance of the study.....	8
The research study.....	9
Research background and motivation	11
Literature review	12
The construct of brand.....	12
The concept of brand values.....	16
The customer perspective on brand values.....	16
The organizational perspective on brand values.....	17
Building the brand.....	19
Core values as a link between the internal and external brand components	19
The role of corporate culture in brand creation	21
Informing employees about the brand promise.....	23
Definition of internal branding.....	23
The main stages and mechanisms in internal branding	24
Conclusion.....	26
Methods.....	27
Research design.....	27
Sample.....	31
Data collection.....	32
Data Analysis	43
Results.....	47
Discussion	95
Employees' awareness of brand.....	95
Defining the concept of brand.....	95
Employee perspective on the company's brand.....	96
Employees' perspective on Hurtigruten's vision	98
Employees' perspective on Hurtigruten's core values.....	100
Employee perspective on internal branding practices	103
Channels of internal branding.....	104

Delivery of brand values embedded in the brand promise“Real experiences in unique waters”	105
Limitations	106
Conclusion	107
References	108
Appendices	118
Appendix A	118
Appendix B	119
Appendix C	120
Appendix D	122
Appendix E	124
Appendix F	125
Appendix J	170

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: Gender frequency.....	51
Table 2: Nationality frequency.....	52
Table 3: Frequency of years employed at the organization.....	53
Table 4: Frequency of current positions.....	55
Table 5: Categories and sub-categories derived from the interview data.....	59
Table 6: Kind of brand-related information available to employees of sea-based organization...	79
Table 7: Channels of communication brand-related information.....	80
Table 8: Management perspective on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”(land-based organization).....	90
Table 9: Perspectives of Hotel Managers and Front Desk Staff on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”.....	91
Table 10: Perspectives of Captain Frontier and Tour Leaders on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”.....	92
Table 11: Perspectives of Restaurant Managers and Restaurant Staff on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”.....	93
Figure 1: Gender Distribution.....	52
Figure 2: Nationality distribution.....	53
Figure 3: Distribution of years employed at the organization.....	54
Figure 4: Distribution of current positions.....	56
Figure 5: Organizational chart of the on-land part of Hurtigruten ASA.....	57
Figure 6: Organizational structure of the Sales and Marketing Department at Hurtigruten ASA.....	58
Figure 7: Organizational chart of the sea-based part of Hurtigruten ASA.....	59

Introduction

The importance of the study

A strong and well-recognized brand is a powerful strategic tool applied to improve business performance and to develop long-lasting relations with customers (de Chernatony & McDonald, 2005; Ellwood, 2002; Ind & Bjerke, 2007). In the era of commoditization, brands play an important role in a product and/or service differentiation what is achieved through creation of unique brand features (de Chernatony & McDonald, 2005).

The uniqueness of brands is extensively reflected through brand values defined as functional and emotional benefits embedded in the brand promise (de Chernatony, 2002)¹; which represent an important part of the product or service for the customers (de Chernatony & McDonald, 2005). Today, employees play a crucial role in the delivery of brand in the service industry and are typically called “brand ambassadors”. Therefore, employees’ awareness of their company’s brand promises is essential for the delivery brand values representing intangible and tangible brand properties, because this can provide grounds for a more cohesive brand experience by customers (Grace & King, 2007). However, not all organizations realize that consistent delivery of brand values is necessary for the success of a brand and depends on the extent, to which employees are able to communicate those to the customers (de Chernatony, 2006).

Despite of growing importance of the role of employees in communicating their company’s brand to the customers, there is still a lack of research of the phenomenon of brand values delivery (de Chernatony, MacDonald & Wallace, 2011). A number of research studies

¹ For the sake of convenience and clarity, the researcher will use the terms “brand promises” and “brand values” interchangeably as the concept of brand promises implies the benefits promised to the customers, which are defined in the frames of this study as brand “added” values, or in short as brand values.

have been conducted over the last two decades to explore the process of internal brand building (Grace & King, 2007; King, 2010; Punjaisri, Wilson & Evanschizky, 2008; de Chernatony & Vallaster, 2006), communication of corporate brand values (de Chernatony, Drury, & Segal-Horn, 2003; Urde, 2003) and the gap between the stated brand and its actual delivery (de Chernatony & Harris, 2001; Brodie, Whittome & Brush, 2008). Results of these research projects provide theoretical explanations of how the brand is being built “inside” of the organization. Nevertheless, most of these studies suggest more research to come. The present study gives an insight into employees’ brand values delivery to the customers on the example of an unique service organization providing tourists with an opportunity to experience coastal Norway.

The research study

This particular research project explored the employees’ performance of their company’s brand values embedded in the brand promises. The researcher examined the brand components necessary for ensuring the brand values delivery by the employees to the customers. The research participants, both the management, who creates and communicates the brand to the employees and the employees themselves, whose job duties assume direct contact with customers, were also encouraged to express their point of view on the existing problems in external and internal brand building in the company and thus provided ground for establishing the factors that may negatively influence the delivery of brand values to the customers.

Consequently, the aim of the study was to find out:

- How aware are employees of their company’s brand values, and how is this reflected in their delivery of brand promises;

The study was, therefore, developed in order to:

- (1) determine employees' awareness of the main elements of their company's brand;
- (2) assess how employees' awareness of their company's brand can influence brand values delivery to the customers;
- (3) find out how the delivery of brand values to the customers occurs setting in focus an employee perspective.

The research was conducted in the form of a single case study with participation of a Norwegian shipping company providing transport and freight services to the local population as well as taking passengers on board for the purposes of tourism. In order to suit best the purposes of the undertaken research, a qualitative case study research strategy was developed. The researcher applied two types of data in the present study: secondary and primary. The secondary data was represented by internal documentation about the company's brand, while the primary data was obtained through personal interviews with employees from different organizational levels of both on-land and sea-based parts of the company as well as observations on board two ships. The researcher collected primary data through telephone interviews with the employees from the land-based organization: the representatives of Management in Sales and Marketing Department, Product and Revenue Department and Department of International Marketing, Communication and PR Department and Hotel Operations Department. Employees having different positions on board three ships represented the sea-based organization. The researcher interviewed respondents personally on board two ships and partly over the telephone. The majority of the employees from the sea-based part of the organization represented Hotel Department, which traditionally has most direct contact with the customers in the examined organization (from personal communication with Hotel Operations, April, 20, 2012).

Research background and motivation

This research study is conducted with participation of Norwegian Coastal Express “Hurtigruten ASA” that seeks to become one of the top attractions in the world due to the uniqueness of its services and products offered to the tourist market (personal communication with the Representative of Management in the Communication and PR Department of Hurtigruten ASA, April 20). “Hurtigruten ASA” is perceived to be a part of the history of Norway and can provide tourists with the opportunity to experience the coast of Norway in an authentic way (personal communication with the Representative of Management in the Communication and PR Department of Hurtigruten ASA, April 20).

Traditionally, the company has been a coastal express, dealing with transportation of local inhabitants and freight (Hurtigruten, 2012). However, today Hurtigruten ASA seeks to win new markets and promote its services and products to the tourists interested in visiting Norway (Hurtigruten, 2012). This background makes the company an interesting example of a tourism-related organization, the participation of which in the present study can bring new insights into the phenomenon of employee brand values delivery, thus providing a better understanding of it within an unexplored context. The results of this study can be used by the Management to assess problematic areas in internal branding practices in the company and turn their attention to how employees relate themselves to brand values delivery. So that necessary improvements can be made to strengthen the brand and increase the delivery of its values.

The researcher has also deep interest in the development of the tourism industry in Norway and believes that the present study can serve this purpose. Employees working in the service organizations related to the tourism industry play an important role in promoting not only the organization they work for, but also the country as the destination itself. Therefore, the

researcher believes that the delivery of brand values embedded in brand promises is necessary for the success of Norwegian tourism-related organizations in their marketing attempts and brand development.

Literature review

The purpose of this literature review is to establish a theoretical framework for the investigated problem, define main concepts and key terms, and identify the existing research that can contribute to the development of the present study. In the given literature review the researcher will first give an outline of the existing knowledge on the concepts of a brand and brand values and then proceed with the investigation of brand components and existing practices that can positively influence the delivery of brand values by employees to customers.

The construct of brand

The numerous perspectives offer unique ways to define and explain the construct of brand. The origin of different approaches is determined by varying research philosophies and interests. A brand is traditionally defined as “a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors” (cited in de Chernatony, et al., p. 419).

This early definition of the brand emphasizes the main function of brands that is the differentiation of products and/or services provided by a company in the market (de Chernatony, 2002; Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). Although such a definition of the brand is relatively narrow, it fully reflects the understanding of the concept of brand, when its first term officially emerged in the science of marketing. The definition was later extended and a variety of new definitions developed to reflect constant changes in the product and/or service consumption over time (e.g. Aaker, 1991; Aaker, 1996; Kapferer, 1997; Keller, 1993; Keller, 2003; Kotler, 1984).

The literature review on contemporary brand theory shows that the use of the word “brand” itself often causes confusion as no consensus is achieved on how the nature of brand can be defined. This brings problems and affects how contemporary research is formulated and conducted (e.g. de Chernatoney & Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998; Franzen & Moriarty, 2009; Kapferer, 2004; Stern, 2006; Wood, 2000).

According to de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) a brand is a multifaceted construct with a variety of interpretations in different research contexts. The researchers applied the technique of content analysis to 100 articles and identified the main themes and perspectives in describing and explaining brand (de Chernatony et.al, 1998). The spectrum of interpretations of brand proved to include 13 main themes: logo, legal instrument, company, shorthand, risk reducer, positioning, personality, cluster of values, vision, adding value, identity, image, relationship, and evolving entity (de Chernatoney et al., 1998). It was concluded that brands represent complex unities, which can be explained through three main perspectives (de Chernatony et.al, 1998). The input perspective explains how company's managers strategically use brands and allocate resources to build relations with customers. The output perspective is about customers' experiences and interpretations of brands, and the time perspective refers to brands as dynamic phenomena constantly being changed in the environment (de Chernatony et.al, 1998).

De Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) adhered in their research the definition of brand which was offered by de Chernatony and McDonald (1998): “A successful brand is an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique, sustainable added values which match their needs most closely” (Cited in de Chernatony et.al, 1998, p.9). In this definition the focus is given to the creation of

values that match the needs of customers. In the later works of de Chernatony (2006) a new definition of a brand appears. The brand becomes described as “a cluster of functional and emotional values that promises a unique and welcome experience for its stakeholders” (de Chernatony, 2006). Thus, the focus shifts to the creation of value for both the company and the consumers.

Franzen and Moriarty (2009) express similar point of view and note that value creation for all stakeholders is crucial, without it brands cannot become successful in the market and serve their main function, the function of differentiation. The academicians highlight the lack of a systems approach in the brand theory and suggest to define a brand as “a system that consists of the physical reality of a brand; the social interpretation of this reality (as depicted by perceptions and attitudes and habits shared within a culture or subculture); and the representation of the mental reality in the form of a brand associative system” (Franzen and Moriarty, 2009, p.16).

The academicians support the view that although brands are created in the minds of individuals, their sources are based on perception of tangible objects that can be a part of a product or service (Franzen and Moriarty, 2009). The actions initially taken by marketers to influence how brands get represented in the customers’ memory will be eventually followed by an actual experience of a brand, which is based on physical stimuli, perceived and evaluated by the customers (Franzen and Moriarty, 2009). This assumes that a brand obtains meaning, when both its representation and perception align (Franzen and Moriarty, 2009).

Brands also have a symbolic function, for this reason the brand’s meaning can be influenced by both individual and social meanings that customers create in their minds and associate with the brand (Franzen and Moriarty, 2009). This means that customers determine a

brand's symbolic meaning by observing how brands represent themselves, how others respond to the brands, what kind of individuals utilize brands and how they do it (Franzen and Moriarty, 2009). Brands can comprise the following categories of symbolic meanings: brand values, brand personality, user image, lifestyles and brand emotions" (Franzen and Moriarty, 2009, p.84).

Goodyear (1996) expresses an idea that the future of branding is about finding and creating values appreciated by consumers and communication of such values through the symbols and appropriate designs. In case of successful communication, these values can shape the desired brand perceptions in the minds of consumers and with the help of frequent messages reflecting the brand's values they can turn into "respected" brand values (Goodyear, 1996). The researcher further notes that value-oriented branding requires taking into consideration long-term brand building activities, therefore the companies should concentrate on building stable values based on the organization's reality and that correspond to the consumers' needs and demands (Goodyear, 1996).

To sum up, the complexity of the nature of brand makes the research of this phenomenon relatively difficult and rare. Thus, there is still a lack of agreement achieved on how the concept of "brand" can be defined. Different practitioners define it in a variety of ways and have controversial views on the nature of brand. However, the recent trends in the brand theory indicate that the majority of scholars associate brands with certain values that can attract customers and motivate them to purchase products and services. Therefore, in the frames of the present study a brand is seen as a set of values that should be ideally based on the company's reality and answer the customers' needs and desires.

The aim of the next chapter is to examine the concept of brand values and attempt to introduce some clarity to its definition. The researcher will first examine the concept of brand

values from the customer perspective and will later discuss in detail how the concept of brand values is seen from the organizational perspective.

The concept of brand values

The customer perspective on brand values

From the customer perspective, brand values are associated with perceived values delivered through brand experience (Harris, 2007). According to a cost-benefit approach, a value is obtained, when customers' perceptions of benefits "what I get" exceed their perceptions of total cost "what I give" (Martin, 1996; Monroe, 1990; Netemeyer, Pullig, Wang, Yagci, & Dean, 2004; Whittaker, Ledde, & Kalafatis, 2007; Zeithaml, 1988). In other words, customers can perceive brand values as a trade-off between the purchase benefits and its total costs.

The benefits comprise consumer's desirable values: functional, experiential and/or symbolic values (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009; Netemeyer et. al., 2004); these values can depend on the kind of product or service purchased. The total cost is associated with price, transaction costs, effort and time spent on the process of purchase (Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000; Lemon, Rust, & Zeithaml, 2001; Lee & Cunningham, 2001; Monroe, 1971). However, the majority of researchers oppose a cost-benefit approach and stress the importance of non-economic benefits such as functional, emotional and symbolic benefits that can vary in their character depending on the kind of products or services offered to the customers (Curry & Menasco, 1983; de Chernatony, Cottam, & Segal-Horn, 2006; Ind & Bjerke, 2007; Goodyear, 1996).

According to O'Malley (1991), customers are attracted to brands due to the anticipation of brand values experience. The added brand values are expressed through the brand promise that helps to draw customers' attention and give them a feeling that the brand reflects their personal values (O'Malley, 1991). Therefore, it is assumed that the brand promise is deemed to

be fulfilled (O'Malley, 1991). However, the control of the process of brand delivery can turn out to be difficult, especially, in the service industry, where employees' behavior, which is not consistent with the brand promises, can negatively affect customers' experience with a brand and as a consequence weaken relations with customers (Clemes, Mollenkopf, & Burn, 2000). Schultz and Schultz (2002) believe that employees have to behave in a way that is congruent with the brand values reflected in the brand promise; in that manner customers can obtain both functional and emotional values of the brand.

The organizational perspective on brand values

From the organizational perspective, it is important to differentiate between *brand value* referred to a key business asset that brings significant economic gains to the organization and *brand added values* associated with benefits promised by a company to the customers. Both of these concepts are closely related to each other; however their use in the contemporary literature on branding often brings confusion. For the purposes of clarity the researcher will further introduce the definitions to both of these concepts.

The brand value is often included as a separate post in the balance sheet for evaluation of the company's equity capital for mergers and acquisitions (Gelb & Gregory, 2011; Kapferer, 1997), returns on stock (Barth, Clement, & Kasznik, 1998; Kerin & Sethuraman, 1998) and financial performance (Madden, Fehle, & Fournier, 2006). Brands are also of high value for organizations as a source of strong economic growth and competitive advantage in the market. For example, brands can positively affect price elasticity (Blattberg, Wisniewski, & Nielsen, 1989; Davey, Markowitz, & Jonnalagadda, 2006; Krishnamurthi, 1991), customer loyalty (Duffy, 2003; Dwayne, 1999; Ewing, 2000) and customer trust (Elliott, 2007; Sichtmann, 2007).

The economic value of a brand is created by organizations through building long-lasting relations with customers (Fournier, 1998; Ganesan, 1994), who are eager to purchase their products and services. Due to the fact that customers have become more sophisticated and expect to gain a variety of values from the purchase of branded products and services (Hatch & Schultz, 2003); the need for production of products and services with attached values becomes more evident (Franzen & Moriarty, 2009; de Chernatony, 2002). Therefore, organizations seeking to succeed in the market try to create additional values in their products and services to stay or become more attractive to the customers, and as a result improve their business performance (de Chernatony, 2002).

Nowadays, the establishment of relations with customers happens mostly through the emotional values attached to the brand (de Chernatony, 2006). Emotional values get experienced in the interactions with the organization's employees (de Chernatony, 2002), who play an important role in representing their organization as "brand ambassadors". The emotional values of a brand originate from the core values of the company, which establish an emotional connection between the organization and the customers, whereas the mediator of relation is employees representing the company (de Chernatony, 2002).

Until recently, the research on the employees' delivery of brand values has been notably absent from traditional and contemporary studies within branding. One exception is the research on the employees' delivery of added brand values performed by Grace & King (2007). The research undertaken by Grace & King (2007) demonstrates that most employees are not aware of what their companies promise to the customers. Employees defined the reason for such situation as "a very structured, systems and procedures-type" approach applied to brand knowledge building, which is just another formality, a standard procedure that in practice does not help

employees to learn about their company's brand Grace & King (2007). The findings from this research study indicate that despite the fact that organizations have established programs for informing employees about their brand promises, in most of cases such programs are not efficient. For this reason, more research is needed of the phenomenon of brand values delivery by the employees.

To conclude, brands are of high value for organizations as a source of competitive advantage and stable profits. It is important to distinguish between brand value seen as a financial tool and brand values regarded as benefits attached to a brand and offered to the market. From the customer perspective brand values refer to the perceived values (benefits) being delivered through the brand experience. The recent trends indicate that brand values are to great extent associated with the emotional values of a brand. This means that the delivery of brand values embedded in the brand promise is more often a direct responsibility of employees, whose performance significantly affects customers' brand experience. Our literature review suggests that there still a significant lack of research into the processes of brand values delivery by the employees. Therefore, more research is needed to fill in this research gap.

Due to the fact that brand values originate from the core values, the importance of the latter in building the brand both internally and externally will be discussed further.

Building the brand

Core values as a link between the internal and external brand components

Franzen and Moriarty (2009) claim that the ideology of a brand is created on the basis of core values, which are of consistent nature and serve to establish the main guiding principles for brand development and employee behavior. The management regards core values reflected in the

company's vision as the main components of its ideological platform and as the key qualities applied to design the brand's unique features (Franzen and Moriarty, 2009).

As stated by Nanus (1992), a vision is a mental model that helps organizations to shape a preferred state of existence in the future (Nanus, 1992). Ideally, visions should reflect "the soul of the organization" and motivate all employees to perform at their best at work (Collins & Porras, 1996). Barge (2005) believes that employees' attitudes, beliefs and values have a close connection with the company's vision, since by means of a vision employees acquire the meaning of their work, get inspired, motivated and eventually become committed to their company.

Chunawalla (2009) addresses core brand values as "brand's motivations and boundaries" that help companies to build relations with customers and gain an advantage over competitors. From a customer perspective it means that brand values can be associated with certain benefits and attractive experiences, while from an employee perspective brand values are the basis for building relations with customers, in other words guidelines for employee brand performance (Chunawalla, 2009) .

Moser offers a similar point of view: "Core brand values reflect internal identity, which in turn serves to build external brand" (Moser, 2003, p. 34). The essence of the brand is expressed through core brand values, which function as a basis for building a strong cohesive brand and helping employees to grow into "brand advocates" (Moser, 2003).

This view is supported by Urde (2003, p. 1036) who believes that core values provoke "continuity, consistency and credibility" in brand creation. The author underlines the need to use core values as a set of standards for internal and external communication. In his in-depth study of core value-based corporate brand building, Urde (2003) concludes that core values unite mission,

vision and cultural values in the internal process of brand development and influence the way how the brand is constructed, positioned, strategically communicated and embedded in the products. The scholar considers core values to be “a bridge” between a corporate brand and product brands and claims that added values express core values in the external process of brand building (Urde, 2003).

In the frames of the present study the approach introduced by Urde (2003) is supported. The researcher regards core brand values as the basis for building the brand both internally and externally. Ideally, organizations should achieve cohesion between the added brand values and the “organizational reality” both reflecting similar core brand values. The organizational reality refers to the actual corporate culture that will be discussed in the following chapter.

The role of corporate culture in brand creation

The corporate culture plays an important role in shaping the brand (de Chernatony, 2002). This is especially evident in the service industry, where the entire company reflects the brand (M’Zungu, Merrilees, & Miller, 2010; Wallace, de Chernatony, & Buil, 2011). The corporate culture consists of basic assumptions (taken-for-granted, implicit beliefs and thoughts), corporate values (explicit reflections of strategies and goals) and artefacts (physical, material justifications of culture) (Schein, 1968). It is important to note that in the frames of the present study the researcher defines corporate values (also “organizational values”) as less central values that serve to explain the core corporate values in more detail to the employees and provide them with information about what the organization expects from their performance (Urde, 2003). Corporate values are central in the company’s culture as they shape employees’ perceptions and attitude towards their company’s brand and serve as guiding principles for desired behaviour in the interactions with customers (de Chernatony, 2002).

The formation of corporate culture is influenced by the employees' background, personalities and prejudices (Clampitt, 2005). It is employees, who create and carry corporate culture, but employees are also the result of corporate culture as they get influenced by it (Clampitt, 2005). Managers are typically the representatives of corporate culture, who teach their subordinates about its elements (Clampitt, 2005).

The recent research indicated that very few employees are aware of their company's values. For example, the study conducted by Paarlberg & Perry (2007) showed that only a few employees can recall any values of their organization, even though employees confirm they are aware of their company's strategic plan, which the company has been communicating to its employees for four years. The findings suggested that, in general, employees showed no interest in their company's values, unless their company's values aligned with their personal values (Paarlberg & Perry, 2007). For this reason, it is highly important for organizations to develop special training, practices and/or programs for the employees in order to increase their awareness of the company's values, in other words improve employees' knowledge about the corporate culture and thus motivate them for a better brand performance.

According to Clampitt (2005), the organization that wants its employees to get aware of its corporate culture should make corporate slogans, philosophy, purpose and value statements align and clearly stated, so that a consistent message can be easily communicated to all employees. It is important to ensure that employees are aware of their company's vision and mission, expressed in a short and precise way to avoid any misinterpretations (Clampitt, 2005). However, public display of the corporate culture elements that provides access to both internal and external audiences can always cause tensions as actual organizational reality lived by the employees may differ from the stated organizational reality (Clampitt, 2005).

It is important to differentiate between the stated corporate culture that refers to how the organization sees itself ideally and strives to be and the actual corporate culture that refers to the organizational reality that reflects the way employees understand core corporate values and how they behave (Clampitt, 2005). The stated culture needs to be consistent with organizational strategy and the demands of the market, while the actual culture should fit the employees' beliefs and values (Clampitt, 2005). The stated culture and the actual culture are almost always dissimilar, and the establishment of the nature of this gap is the main challenge for any organization (Clampitt, 2005).

In summary, the awareness of employees about the elements of corporate culture is crucial for successful building of a brand. Corporate/organizational values reflecting the core values play an important role in motivating employees to live up the brand added values. In the next chapter the focus will be given to the mechanisms of internal branding, a better understanding of which is required to help organizations to develop more effective practices related to the employees' delivery of brand added values embedded in the brand promise.

Informing employees about the brand promise

Definition of internal branding

Internal branding is associated with the activities that organizations utilize to ensure the employees' emotional and intellectual involvement in the delivery of a brand promise (Punjaisri, Wilson & Evanschizky, 2008). According to (Mahnert & Torres, 2007), internal branding comprises three core elements: (1) employees' reflection of brand values in interactions with customers; (2) brand promise realization to both internal and external audiences; (3) application of multi-direction perspective to achieve congruence in behaviors and values of employees at all organizational levels. The internal branding process aims to motivate and encourage employees

to perform in accordance with the brand, so that the expectations of customers about their brand experience will be met (Gapp & Merrilees, 2006).

The main stages and mechanisms in internal branding

According to Punjaisri, Wilson & Evanschizky (2008) employees' perception of their company's brand directly affects customer perception of the corresponding brand (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008). For this reason, it is important to ensure that employees understand the requirements to the brand promise delivery and realize how their performance can influence customers' brand experience (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008).

de Chernatony (1999) associates the first phase of internal branding with the cooperation of Marketing Department and HR Department. It is important to ensure that internal branding activities are congruent with the company's marketing strategy and engage employees to enhance their knowledge about the brand (Terry, 2003). Marketers possess a deep understanding of their company's brand, individuals' motivations, needs and desires (Terry, 2003). Therefore, they can influence significantly brand communication to the internal public and form their perceptions (Terry, 2003). Internal branding also requires recruiting and hiring of the employees and management with the proper qualities to create and lead the brand (de Chernatony, Drury, & Segal-Horn, 2003; M'zungu, et.al, 2010).

The next stage in internal branding refers to staff training to enhance their understanding of the brand (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008) and ensure they have the required skills for brand promise delivery (M'zungu, et.al, 2010). Internal branding is considered to be most effective, when employees participate in the creation of the program for internal branding practices (Davis, 2001; Jacobs, 2003; Mahnert & Torres, 2007; Thomson, de Chernatony, Arganbright & Khan, 1999). Thus, a two-way communication between the employees and the management is encouraged

(Punjaisri, et. al., 2008). Internal branding activities should be supported by the communication strategy reflecting both external and internal messages (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008). It is necessary to provide all members in the organization with an easy access to the information required to enhance employees' awareness of the brand (de Chernatony, 2006). The effectiveness of the communication will depend on constant reinforcement of the brand (Ind, 2004). In addition, the organization that seeks to maintain brand standards should remunerate and reward employees accordingly (Hoffman & Mehra, 1999) and enhance their motivation (M'zungu, et.al, 2010).

In the research undertaken by Punjaisri, Wilson & Evanschizky (2008) on employees' perceptions of the process of internal branding, it was established that both internal communication and training programs are believed to be the main mechanisms of internal branding influenced by personal and situational variables. The researchers identified a number of the key tools in internal branding: "mass methods" of communicating information to the employees in a written form (e.g. newsletters, notice boards and memos), and face-to-face communication (e.g. briefings and group meetings) (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008). The staff preferred face-to-face communication as it gave an opportunity to "clarify things" (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008). Employees also expressed an idea that training as a part of internal branding program helped them to improve their understanding of the brand (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008). The utilization of internal branding was considered to be relevant as employees expressed an idea that it was important for them to be aware of customers' expectations (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008). Employees' positive attitude towards their company's brand as well as positive internal relations between employees proved to provoke brand supporting behavior (Punjaisri, et. al., 2008).

However, the research findings obtained by Grace & King (2007) in the study "Internal branding: Exploring the employee's perspective" (mentioned earlier in the present study)

demonstrate a controversial view. The data from this research indicated that employees did not perceive the internal branding programs to be effective in informing them about the main elements of their organization's brand. Therefore, the internal branding practices were not considered to enhance employees' understanding of the brand components and its importance in their daily work.

In conclusion, the application of internal branding is required for every organization that strives to build a strong cohesive brand. The research in the area of internal branding is still in its infancy and much of the existing research is largely of explorative nature. However, the findings obtained through a few existing research studies indicate that successful implementation of internal branding practices providing a basis for effective brand values delivery can be achieved, when employees are made aware of the company's brand, can demonstrate understanding of the main brand elements and have positive attitude to the brand.

Conclusion

This literature review presented the already existing brand theory and research on the problem of brand values delivery. The concepts of brand and brand values were examined from different perspectives and given working definitions necessary for conducting the present study. The importance of core values and the main elements of the corporate culture in building the brand was highlighted. The main stages, mechanisms and factors in internal branding that can influence the delivery of brand values by the employees to the customers were presented and briefly discussed.

Methods

In this section the researcher will elaborate on how the research project was conducted. The subsections will present the description of research design, sample, data collection techniques, and data analysis. The researcher finds it to be important to start the “Research design” subsection by presenting the initial research method design expected to be applied in the project as it significantly influenced the further development of the research strategy.

Research design

The research design of the original project

The researcher originally planned to conduct this research project using a case-study method design combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches to data collection. The aim of the initial project was to investigate *whether employees in the cruise industry manage to communicate their company’s brand values promised to the customers on the example of a particular organization*. The intent was to give the Senior Management of the reviewed company an insight into not just whether the brand values are delivered, but determine specific areas, where the delivery of the brand is successful and not so successful.

On the 10th of April, 2012, the representative at Management at the Communication and PR Department at Hurtigruten ASA was contacted over the phone and offered to participate in the research project. The follow-up email with the description of the project was sent after the phone conversation to the representative of the Communication and PR Department (See Appendix A). The positive feedback on the company’s participation in the project was received on the 12th of April. The representative of Management at the Communication and PR-Department expressed genuine interest in the research study and recommended to take contact with the representatives of Management from the land-based organization to obtain the data necessary for conducting the project.

The researcher initially planned to interview only one manager from the Marketing Department, one manager from the HR-Department and eight employees from different organizational levels representing the sea-based organization that have direct contact with the customers. However, the researcher was advised to contact five valuable respondents representing the Management from the land-based part of the organization. For this reason, the researcher chose to take an advantage of snowball sampling technique and interview all five respondents to strengthen the research project.

The obtained data from the interviews with the Management from the land-based part of the organization proved that the studied organization represents an extreme, rare exemplar of a shipping company that does not regard itself as a part of the cruise industry, due to its unique historic character. In addition, the researcher discovered that the fleet of the company consists of ships varying to great extent in size, age, amenities and number of employees and guests on board.

Therefore, the researcher proposed to interview seven employees from three different ships to obtain a better understanding of how employees relate themselves to the delivery of their company's brand values, thus the employees' perspective on the examined phenomenon was set in focus. The researcher further developed a new research strategy with focus on qualitative data collection techniques in order to explore the investigated phenomenon in detail and be able to give explanations of *how* the brand values delivery by the employees is achieved.

The researcher also reduced the scope of the study by concentrating on the implementation of a qualitative case-study research strategy, so that the requirements of the existing timeframe limitations for writing the Master Thesis project could be met.

The researcher made aware the Management of the Communication and PR Department of Hurlgruten ASA of the changes in the project and got support to proceed with conducting the research.

Research approach and design of present study

During the entire research project the researcher utilized the framework of a constructivist approach (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). Constructivism as a paradigm “recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning, but doesn’t reject outright some notion of objectivity. Pluralism, not relativism, is stressed with focus on the circular dynamic tension of subject and object” (Miller & Crabtree, 1999, p.10). In other words, the constructivist researchers of believe that truth is of relative nature and can be influenced by an individual’s perspective of seeing it. This approach is based on the assumption of a social construction of reality (Searle, 1995); and serves to uncover different perspectives on the examined phenomenon through the obtained research data (Stake, 1995).

The process of conducting a case-study research within a constructivism paradigm can be described as “placing an interpreter in the field to observe the workings of the case, one who records objectively what is happening but simultaneously examines its meaning and redirects observation to refine or substantiate those meanings” (Stake, 1995, p.8-9). The aim of the researcher is to understand the examined phenomenon. Consequently, in the situations when new issues are brought into surface and the initial research design does not produce the intended results, the original research questions can undergo modifications and even be replaced in the middle of the research study (Stake, 1995). This process is called “progressive focusing” (Parlett & Hamilton, 1976).

Advantages of qualitative case-study design

The author chose to set in focus a qualitative approach as opposed to quantitative in this particular study, because of a number of reasons. Firstly, the research question should reflect the goals and purposes of the study and provide the researcher with an opportunity to choose an appropriate approach to the type of data necessary to be collected (Neuman, 2009). The goal of exploratory type of research is exploration of a new issue, idea or topic, where the application of a qualitative approach to collecting data is preferable as it can serve best the research purposes (Neuman, 2009).

The eventual research question of this study after being subjected to a number of modifications became broadly scoped to give the researcher flexibility to explore (and additionally describe) the examined phenomenon: to suite best the purposes of the exploratory type of research emphasizing the benefits of qualitative data application within its frame.

As stated by Yin (1994, p. 13), a case study is “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. This definition clearly reflects the main function of a case-study that is an opportunity to explore a phenomenon through investigating it in depth within its settings. The case-researchers utilizing a qualitative approach to collecting data benefit most, as they place themselves within the case context and actively participate in the learning process evolving advanced understanding of the examined phenomenon (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Consequently, the proximity to the “case” reality provides an opportunity to take an advantage of studying the context rather than particular variables and the dynamics rather than static qualities (Merriam, 2002). By contrast, the quantitative or structural researchers conduct their research “on distance” as close contact with the study objects is not achieved, and there is a lack of opportunity to get their feedback (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

In the present study the phenomenon of brand values delivery, the knowledge about which is inadequate and incomplete (Grace & King, 2007; de Chernatony & Harris, 2001); is strongly influenced by its context that is the examined organization. Consequently, the need for a qualitative approach in this study arises, as the studied phenomenon can be hardly separated from its natural settings with the purpose of in-depth investigation.

Sample

According to Flyvbjerg (2011), in the frames of a qualitative case-study strategy the application of a representative or random sample is not sufficient to achieve a significant amount of information on the studied problem or phenomenon. For this reason, the information-oriented selection of sample and cases is more appropriate, as it entails the selection of sample and cases on the grounds of content expectations, so that the use of data obtained from small samples and single cases can be maximized.

In this study the above-discussed principle was applied. The researcher chose to conduct a single case-study comprising several sub-units of analysis in order to examine in depth a particular phenomenon under unusual and extreme circumstances (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). The study investigated the phenomenon of brand values delivery by the employees on the unique example of a shipping company “Hurtigruten ASA” that has long historic traditions and is perceived as a national icon in Norway (Hurtigruten blogspot, 2011). The company does not relate itself to the cruise industry, but strives to attract more customers from the national and international cruise markets (personal communication with the Representative of Management at the Communication and PR Department of Hurtigruten ASA, April 20).

The goal of this particular research project was to obtain an access to the respondents providing rich sources of information as well as different perspectives on the investigated

phenomenon. The sample of this single case-study comprised two sample groups. The first sample group was chosen on the grounds of the fact that these respondents could provide the researcher with information on the existing branding practices in the organization, and their relation to the brand values delivery by the employees working at the sea-based part of the organization. The selection of the second sample group was determined by the informativeness of its representatives on the process of brand values delivery to the customers. The researcher gained interest in accessing the employees, whose work responsibilities are directly related to the delivery of their company's brand promises, and finding out how, and why they manage or do not manage to deliver on those.

The researcher got an access to the informants by using a snowball sampling strategy. The process of snowball sampling for primary data collection through interviews is demonstrated in Figure B1 (See Appendix B). The snowball sampling technique was applied, because of its clear practical advantages for this explorative, qualitative case-study with a small sample: realigning and extension of the research opportunities by providing the researcher with an effective access to information and valuable informants (Frank, 1979). However, one limitation of snowball sampling in the research context can be defined: the respondents representing the sample are not randomly chosen and, as a consequence, are influenced by the subjective choices made by the previously selected respondents (Black & Champion, 1976).

Data collection

The process of data collection in this research project comprised two stages: 1) obtaining the secondary data, and 2) accessing the primary data.

Secondary data

Prior to the negotiations with Hurtigruten ASA about its participation in the present study, the researcher examined company's webpage to acquire information on its brand and components. The information available on the company's brand was represented in the section on company's vision, values and management principles at www.hurtigruten.com/no. After the negotiations being done, the representative from the Communication and PR Department provided the researcher with an identical brochure on the company's vision, values and management principles, which was used internally to inform the employees about the company's brand. The researcher was also provided with the organizational structure of the land-based part of the organization as well as the information on the company's brand fundamentals applied internally by the Management of diverse departments responsible for marketing communications, brand development and web-organization.

During the interviews with the Tour Leaders from the first and the second ship, the researcher also obtained a brochure presenting the Hurtigruten's daily coastal route with descriptions of local attractions, a catalogue with seasonal programs, offers and rates for the customers in year 2012 and a catalogue with programs of on-land excursions.

Primary data

The primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews and observations on board two ships. The researcher first contacted the Communication and PR Department at Hurtigruten ASA and was next provided with an access to the first sample group representing the on-land organization to conduct interviews with. This group of informants was contacted by email to negotiate the time appropriate for telephone interviews.

During the interview with the representative from the Hotel Operations Department the researcher asked for assistance with arrangement of interviews with the employees from the

Hotel Department at the sea-based organization. The researcher was provided with support and recommendations on the possible valuable informants. Although the preference was initially given for interviewing the employees from the Hotel Department, the researcher considered the proposed recommendations and generated a new list of respondents to be accessed for interviewing. The employees working in the position of Captain and Tour Leader were added to the list of informants in order to obtain their perspectives and knowledge on the studied phenomenon, and thus strengthen the research project.

Two of three ships requested by the researcher to take part in the project agreed to give interviews in the port of Bergen. The Management of the third ship suggested conducting interviews with its employees over the phone. The representative of Management at the Hotel Operations Department provided the researcher with contact information to the Hotel Managers from the first two ships. The list of informants necessary to be interviewed was sent by email in advance to those Hotel Managers. When the researcher arrived at the ships, the Hotel Managers were contacted and the interviews were conducted with the employees available on board and suggested by the Hotel Managers. Two employees from the first ship were later interviewed over the phone. Due to their job duties it was not possible to interview them on board the ship. The employees from the third ship were interviewed over the phone.

Designing the interview guide

The researcher decides on the interview design on the grounds of existing knowledge on the study topic, the methodological options, and their empirical implications for the research project (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In the frames of this research project, the semi-structured type of interviews was applied in order to take the advantages of both unstructured interviews, which provide an opportunity to a broad investigation, and structured interviews with their

structured, explanatory and/or descriptive approach to the research study topic (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). The application of semi-structured interviews provides the researcher with an opportunity to extend understanding of the examined phenomenon through new and unexpected aspects that the interview subjects may bring forth (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The researcher creates a list of topics with questions in advance and during the interview can modify these, change their sequence to some extent and even omit certain questions in case of their irrelevance (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). A number of themes and details can also be explored through probing by sub-questions (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). However, it is important to note that during the interview the researcher attempts to follow the interview guide questions, what helps to collect consistent data that can be compared to a number of respondents and make the future data analysis easier.

The interview guide utilized in the present study (See Appendix C and D) was developed on the grounds of the key themes originated from the literature review and a number of questions from the validated interview guide created by Grace and King (2007) in their study “Internal branding: Exploring the employee perspective” (See Appendix E). The borrowed questions were modified to serve best the purpose of the interview.

During the design of the interview questions, the priority was given to the open-ended “how” and “what” questions accessing “spontaneous descriptions” from the informants rather than their “overreflected views” on the reasons why certain events happened (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). However, the “why” questions were also important for this exploratory study and were utilized, but to a lesser extent. The researcher also used probing questions or sub-questions to provide a deeper investigation of the investigated phenomenon.

In designing the interview guide, long questions were excluded to illuminate difficulties that respondents face when they answer long questions: forgetting the second part of the question and responding only on the first part (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). Instead, the long questions were broken into parts. The use of complicated theoretical concepts or terms was excluded. However, the word “brand” (“varemerke” in Norwegian) was kept in the interview questions, as it was not practically possible to replace it by any other words without considerable distortions in meaning. The questions were also developed both in English and Norwegian to provide the interviewees with freedom to choose the language they feel most comfortable with, and thus boost their confidence and interest in providing extended answers.

The interview guide included an introduction with a briefing about the purpose of the study, participants’ confidentiality and permission to use an audio recorder in order to take notes of the interview later. The next section included a number of general questions about the interviewee’s job position, responsibilities and years spent working at the examined organization. The main body of the interview guide comprised questions to structure the researcher’s knowledge on the study topic on the basis of the answers obtained from the interviewee. In the final part of the interview guide the researcher thanked the participant for his/her time and contribution as well as inquired whether there were any questions about the project or recommendations to the researcher.

The length of the interview

During the interviews some respondents appeared to be more informative than others and could grant the researcher a longer/shorter amount of time. The estimated length of the interviews taken with the Management from the land-based organization was originally 40-45 minutes. However, the average length of the interviews made up 41.45 minutes with the longest

interview 56.54 minutes and with the shortest interview 34.27 minutes. It is important to mention that during the interviews taken with the Management of the land-based organization the researcher used some extra questions to access additional information about existing practices and documents on the brand implementation and development both internally and externally, as the result these interviews were longer than those taken with the employees from the sea-based organization.

The length of the interviews taken with the employees from the sea-based organization was originally estimated to be 30-35 minutes. The average length of the interviews achieved 33.67 minutes with the longest interview 50.10 minutes and with the shortest interview 21.35 minutes. Such a significant difference between the longest and the shortest interview can be explained by the fact that a number of employees from the third ship gave an interview over the phone in their spare time, when they were not on duty on board the ship.

Transcribing the interview

When the collection of taped interviews is finished, researchers need to document the obtained material in a written form, which entails the creation of transcripts. The process of transcribing is a challenging task as it is crucial for the research purpose not to distort the meanings of the interviewees' answers (Ezzy, 2002).

In the frames of the present study, the transcriptions were made for a further interview data analysis with focus on meaning. This was determined by the theoretical assumption of conducting the interviews – assessment of different views within the organization on the phenomenon of brand values delivery by the employees to the customers – and absence of direct personal communication with fifty percent of the interviewed respondents.

During the creation of transcripts the researcher tried to register the answers word by word, but excluded the repetitions of particles, words, phrases and parts of the sentences with meanings that were not directly or indirectly relevant for the research study. In addition, the researcher had to make some modifications of the oral discourse elements in order to increase readability and clarity of the interview texts, for example instead of a particle “yea” a more formal variant such as “yes” was used, etc.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Regardless of the approach applied in the study any qualitative researcher without exception faces issues of research ethics entailing confidentiality and anonymity (Creswell, 2009). Confidentiality in research refers to the non-disclosure of private data identifying informants (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Confidentiality, on the one hand, implies that the researcher seeks to apply anonymity to protect the participants, but on the other hand it can let the researcher interpret the acquired data that cannot be verified by the informants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

The researcher can ensure anonymity, when no names of the informants or other personal information identifying them is used (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). In case of publication of the study with sensitive information, the agreement of informants, who can become recognizable to the readers, should be obtained (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Conducting qualitative interview studies is challenging for the researchers, because such studies involve the analysis of private information that may later appear in various public reports (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Therefore, the researcher should take actions to protect the informants' privacy.

Ethical requirements for the participants' confidentiality are often in conflict with the scientific research principles: granting an access to specific information for inter-subjective control and for conducting repeatable studies, and ensuring the fulfillment of the criteria to the scientific quality of the findings published (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This means that the study findings, which are to be published, should be as accurate as possible, and provide adequate descriptions of how the researcher arrived at the conclusions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). However, it can be problematic to decide whether the fulfillment of ethical demand can be sacrificed because of scientific requirements (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). For this reason, researchers utilizing a qualitative approach in their research are recommended to apply the ethical principle of beneficence assuming that the research participants should be exposed least possible to the risk of harm (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

In this particular project no personal names of the participants were used. However, a number of employees working at the examined organization have unique positions and absence of referring to those could complicate the description of how the entire process of data collection occurred. Therefore, the researcher decided to increase the anonymity of these informants by changing the original title of their positions to "a representative of Management from "... Department".

The names of the ships or dates of the stay in Bergen were neither used in the project report, because this could result in making the employees working on board the examined ships potentially recognizable. The researcher also had to use an official variant of the Norwegian language, while transcribing the interviews with the Norwegian-speaking Danish respondents, the Norwegian-speaking Swedish respondents as well as the respondents using regional dialects of Norwegian in order to illuminate an opportunity of identifying these informants.

The researcher promised the informants confidentiality of the information collected during the interviews and discussed the project's confidentiality with the organization involved. The representatives of the organization wished to review the study findings first in order to determine whether these contain any sensitive information unacceptable for public release at the library database of the University of Stavanger. Publishing of the study will not occur until the official approval of the organization will be received.

Registering of observations

In addition to interviewing the researcher applied a non-participant type of observation as a primary data collection technique. Non-participant observation takes place, when the researcher has a passive role of observing the group: the researcher watches and listens to the activities of the group, but does not participate in those (Kumar, 2005). The non-participant type of observation was employed due to the limited time that the researcher could spend on board two ships. The researcher could stay on board for 5, 30 hours, when each examined ship was in the port of Bergen from 14.30 p.m. to 20.00 p.m. In addition, the researcher had to conduct interviews with the employees during that short period of time, what significantly restricted the researcher's opportunities for observing.

It is also important to mention that Bergen is the last port of call for Hurtigruten's ships (Hurtigruten, 2012), where all the passengers embark and disembark, the freight is unloaded, and the new freight, supply and provision are loaded on board the ships. Therefore, the crew members typically have a busy schedule, when the ships arrive in Bergen. This fact created certain limitations for the researcher in observing the employees in their interactions with customers.

The researcher managed to observe the employees only at distance, when a few interactions with customers occurred, mainly at the restaurant/cafe areas, where the researcher was offered to conduct interviews; at the reception areas, where the researcher spent time waiting for the next interviewees to come; and at the Tour Leader desk, while an interview was conducted with one of the Tour Leaders. The encountered limitations for observing the employees in their natural work environment resulted in the application of a non-participant type of observation as a secondary method for collecting primary data.

The process of observation typically entails registering of information in a variety of forms: observation notes, interview write-ups, documents, mapping, sound recording, census taking and photographing (Creswell, 2007). These forms of gathering information are extensively applied in case studies (Creswell, 2007). Neuman (2009) advocates five main forms of observation notes (also called field notes): jotted notes, direct observation notes, researcher inference notes, analytic notes, and personal notes. The definition of the enumerated forms of field notes is beyond the scope of this paper. The researcher chose to apply direct observation notes and will further define only this form of registering observational data and present its relevance for conducting this particular project.

Direct observation notes refer to the core of data collected during the researcher's visit to the place, where the investigated phenomenon can be observed and registered right away after leaving the place (Neuman, 2009). These notes are ordered chronologically with an indication of date, time and location and include detailed information of everything the researcher can see and hear at the visited place, such as any words, phrases or actions, whereas writing summaries or generalizations is avoided (Neuman, 2009).

The application of direct observation notes provided the researcher with an opportunity to register significant additional information about the context of the examined phenomenon in a constructive way. The researcher acquired actual descriptions, but not subjective interpretations of the context in which the investigated phenomenon takes place and could get an easy access to the structured observational notes, when the process of categorizing the data occurred.

According to Neuman (2009), the observational data can become more accurate and rich in descriptions, when researchers register information about physical settings, people, their behavior, physical appearance and characteristics, as well as events and schedules. Therefore, the researcher tried to create as detailed descriptions as possible of these aspects in the process of writing the observation notes. The researcher recorded the information reflecting descriptions of the physical surroundings of the ships, their atmosphere, the physical appearance and physical characteristics (age, sex and race) of employees and customers, their interactions, and verbal and non-verbal features of the communication. The time of the day, the events happening and their schedules were also registered.

Criticism of observation method

Observing as any other research method has a number of advantages and disadvantages. One of the main disadvantages of the observation method is referred to its subjective nature. It is generally believed that researchers applying observations can employ their own perceptions and not be objective in the interpretations of data, what results in research bias and can negatively affect the study findings (Denzin, 1989; Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). Another issue, which arises because of the use of observation method, refers to the reliability of findings: the observed patterns developed through the analysis of observation data cannot be reliable, because it is not possible to confirm those without a statistical analysis (Adler & Adler, 1994).

However, observation provides insights that can be more accurate for a particular group, observed under the study and which can be later tested in relation to a larger population (Adler & Adler, 1994). In addition, when observation is combined with other data collection techniques and sources of data, it can result in research rigor (Adler & Adler, 1994; Dahlberg, Dahlberg, & Nystrom, 2008). For example, in contrast to the subject's statements from the interviews that may lack objectivism, the researcher's observations can provide "materialized" evidence, revealing the subject's actions in the natural settings, what can help to increase the reliability of findings.

Data Analysis

One of the main challenges in the analysis of a case study is working with a significant amount of diverse data, complicated by a lack of well-established and clearly defined data analysis strategies and techniques within a case study research (Yin, 1994). Therefore, the establishment of a general strategy for a case data analysis can be a reasonable solution for the researchers designing a case study (Yin, 1994); in order to adapt an approach and techniques necessary for conducting a proper analysis of the acquired empirical evidence.

Considering that different types of case studies can serve various purposes and entail different levels of analysis, it is important to precise that in the frames of this research project the researcher has developed the data analysis strategy for the design of a single case study. According to Baxter & Jack (2008), a single case study is determined as a type of research that involves an exploration of the phenomenon through sub-units, which comprise a larger case. This creates unique opportunities for enhancing the analysis of data, which becomes possible, for example: within diverse subunits separately (within case analysis) or within various subunits (between case analysis), as well as across all subunits (cross-case analysis) (Yin, 2003). An

ability to conduct such an ample analysis within one case assists the researcher in a more effective illumination of the case (Flyvbjerg, 2011) and can result in “theoretical” generalizations (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Creswell (2007, p.197) defines a single case study as “a narrative about the case, its themes, and its interpretation” and categorizes a case study research as a separate approach to a qualitative study. Relying on the existing theory on the case study research design, the academician develops a strategy for a case data analysis and its representation, which includes the following stages: 1) creating and organizing the files for analysis; 2) analytical reading, making notes and developing codes; 3) describing the case and its settings; 4) categorizing the text to detect themes or patterns; 5) producing direct interpretations; 6) making naturalistic generalizations; and 7) displaying the case in detail utilizing narrative, tables and figures (Creswell, 2007).

In the frames of this particular single-case study the researcher followed the guidelines for the design of a case data analysis strategy introduced by Creswell (2007). However, the general data analysis strategy acquired some modifications and extensions within the data analysis techniques, originating from other academic sources providing descriptions of beneficial techniques for qualitative data analysis (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008; King, 1988; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), and for case data analysis (Stake,1995).

Following the guidelines proposed by Creswell (2007), the researcher first developed a system for classifying and organizing the collected data in files for analysis. The data included audio files and transcripts of the conducted interviews, observation notes, power point presentation slides of the company’s brand platform, pieces of texts representing the company’s

brand, obtained from its official webpage and the brochure on vision, values and principles for the employees.

The researcher next began to register comments and thoughts originated from reading the collected verbal material. The notes were continuously updated during the analysis providing an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and thus create new knowledge (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). The process of initial coding began concurrently with analytical reading and making notes, and was followed by the preparation of a summary describing the case and its settings as well as assessing the categories in the data collected.

As stated by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), the terms “coding” and “categorization” are often used interchangeably. However, it is necessary to differentiate between those, as coding entails “attaching one or more keywords to a text segment in order to permit later identification of a statement, whereas categorization involves a more systematic conceptualization of a statement, opening it for quantification (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.202). A code can be also defined as “a label attached to a section of text to index it as relating to a theme or issue in the data, which the researcher has identified as important to the interpretation” (King, 1988, p.119). Codes are applied to analyze diverse qualitative data collected during the research study and can include interview transcripts, observation notes, documentation and other types of verbal information (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008).

When the initial stage of data coding is finished and the researcher proceeds to data categorization that serves to reduce long textual data by structuring its various meanings into a number of well-defined categories (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The derived categories acquire a fixed character, reflecting the occurrence or nonoccurrence of the examined phenomenon, and can be graphically presented (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

In this study the data was also extensively reduced as various graphs, tables and figures were developed to display the data obtained. In addition, narratives were used to present the main themes that emerged from the data analysis. During the process of data interpretation the researcher looked at single occurrences of the examined phenomenon and registered meaning of these single occurrences without looking for their further multiple instances (Stake, 1995). The researcher also observed and developed “theoretical” (also called by Stake (1995) “naturalistic”) generalizations on the grounds of data analysis. The application of a single case study with multiple levels of sub-units served this purpose and provided rich sources of information for the cross-pattern examination.

Reliability and validity

In a qualitative study, the researcher is the “instrument of data collection”: instead of operating with a standardized measuring instrument, the qualitative researcher applies questions, observations, collects information and makes interpretations of it (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). This creates certain challenges for ensuring the reliability and validity in the undertaken research.

In the frames of the present project the researcher took the following actions to ensure the research reliability and validity. The interview guide was presented to the researcher’s supervisor for content approval and evaluation, in this way content validity was assessed. Two pilot tests of the interview questions were performed to assess their accuracy, clarity and internal consistency. When the respondents’ feedback was received, it was studied and the necessary improvements were made to increase the reliability and validity of the interview questions.

The interview data was transcribed with as many details as possible to obtain accuracy, and thus reliability of data. However, the transcripts of interviews with five representatives from the land-based organization were limited in details to a certain extent. The quality of phone line

connection in combination with the language varieties and accents of the respondents made it difficult for the researcher to register comprehensive information. Therefore, the accuracy of transcripts was increased with the help of respondents' proofreading.

To increase the research objectivity, which is defined as "the simaltenious realization of reliability and validity" in a qualititive study research (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p.9); no answers on the interview questions either personal opinions were given by the researcher during the process of interviewing. In addition, the researcher referred to the factual information from the data collected, but not her personal opinions during the interpretation of data. The case-research strategy based on the principle of triangulation also assisted the researcher in assessing the validity and reliability of the interview findings by setting those in the context of other types of data collected during the entire research project (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Results

This section demonstrates the data obtained during the entire research project setting in focus the primary data collected through interviewing and partly observation method. The section first presents the description of the examined phenomenon and its context. The results from personal interviews as well as from observations are displayed next. This data provides foundation for further discussion.

Hurtigruten's brand platform

As stated on the company's webpage the DNA of Hurtigruten's brand is associated with the history of coastal Norway. Hurtigruten was founded in 1893 by Richard With as a coastal express to connect local communities living along the coast of Norway (Hurtigruten, 2012) and has been in public service since then. The introduction of a coastal express was revolutionary at

that time as traveling by other means of transport was complicated because of mountainous landscape (Hurtigruten's Brand Platform, 2012). Therefore, Hurtigruten became the best and most reliable way to travel and everyone was welcome on board (Hurtigruten's Brand Platform, 2012).

Nowadays, Hurtigruten is the major Norwegian shipping company that brings freight and passengers along the coast. The organization has working-class ships that operate between 34 ports of call in Norway and a number of ships that are used for explorer tourism in Greenland, Antarctica and Spitsbergen (personal communication with Representative of Management of International Marketing Department, Respondent 2, April, 2012).

Hurtigruten ASA is a considerably new name of the company. The original name was changed to this variant in 2007, when several shipping companies were merged into one organization (personal communication with one of the company's Captains, Respondent 11, April, 2012). It is necessary to mention that at the same time significant changes happened in the development of company's brand, for example a new vision "Real experiences in unique waters" was established in 2008 (Personal communication with Representative of Management of Product and Revenue Department, Respondent 4, April 2012) (see Appendix J for an extended version of company's vision). From that time on the company started to be more proactive in building its brand and attracting more tourists. However, this entailed certain difficulties in positioning of the company's products in the cruise market due to the uniqueness of the company's products that were mostly addressed to customers interested in authentic experiences, but not mass cruise tourism.

For example, the American tourist market perceived the products offered by Hurtigruten as typical cruise products, what resulted in not meeting customer expectations: "...In some years

we tried in our marketing in the US to compete more or less with the cruise companies. So people from the USA thought they had bought the cruise, when they came to Norway, and then the people on board used the first two days to explain these customers that this is not a cruise, it is a coastal voyage and it is very different...” (personal communication with Representative of Management of Communication and PR Department, Respondent 5, April 20, 2012).

This example also illustrates that the company experienced difficulties in bringing further the message about the uniqueness of its products to the agencies and partner companies that promoted the company’s products: “So it was a kind of the mismatch, because the marketing organization in the USA did not really know our product: what is different from the cruise company” (personal communication with Representative of Management of Communication and PR Department, April 20, 2012).

Nowadays, the company strives as before to offer nature-based, authentic experiences to the tourist market, but sets in focus a sense of exclusivity in its products and aims at an experienced traveller (personal communication with Representative of Management of Sales and Marketing Department, Respondent 5, April 18, 2012). In this way the company attempts to keep its unique character and thus strengthen its brand.

The company creates value for customers through providing those with an authentic experience of an original coastal voyage (Hurtigruten’s Brand Platform, 2012). This assumes that customers can become a part of destination that is “the magnificent Norwegian coast”, get a chance to “enjoy a casual and friendly on-board atmosphere, be close not only to nature, local culture and history, but also to [their] fellow traveller” (Hurtigruten’s Brand Platform, 2012, p. 8). The company’s brand platform foundations also suggests that the tone-of-voice with customers should be clear and personal, informal, customer oriented and expert (Hurtigruten’s

Brand Platform, 2012) meaning that employees should ideally possess “local” knowledge about the route and its attractions.

The central part of the company’s brand is composed of the following core values: secure, generous and responsible (Hurtigruten, 2012). These core values are applied to support and strengthen the delivery of company’s brand essence that is “authentic” by employees (personal communication with Representative of Management of Hotel Operations, Respondent 3, April, 2012). “Secure” refers to ensuring safety in all kinds of weather conditions, especially when it comes to guests, as well as openness, cooperation and respect in employee interactions, which can eventually result in courage and commitment (Hurtigruten, 2012). “Generous” is mainly defined in terms of displaying openness and care to guests, but it should find its expression in communication with other co-workers as well. “Generous” is also about providing help to each other and being inclusive (Hurtigruten, 2012). Finally, “responsible” is mostly described in relation to being responsible for local environment (Hurtigruten, 2012).

Hurtigruten has also the following brand promise statements: “Real experiences in unique waters”, “Get acquainted with the local culture”, “Travel when you want, where you want, for as long as you want”, “Experience what you want” and “Safe under tough conditions” (Hurtigruten, 2012). The enumerated brand promise statements comprise and reflect the following benefits that are promised to customers: closeness to nature, local culture and history, observing “first class nature phenomena”, high flexibility in traveling options, service of experienced and knowledgeable Tour Leaders, options for choosing an activity level, casual and friendly atmosphere on board the ships as well as providing security and a warm welcome by crew (Hurtigruten’s Brand Platform, 2012).

The brand promise statement “Real experiences in unique waters” is regarded to be the first and foremost brand promise of the company, as it reflects the company’s vision: providing customers with authentic experiences. Therefore, the researcher decided to give a priority to assessing the delivery of this particular brand promise and set in focus how brand values supporting it are expressed by employees in interactions with customers. It is also necessary to mention that the researcher observed that the delivery of this brand promise creates certain challenges for the company which are closely discussed in the Discussion section. For this reason, investigation of employees’ awareness of this central brand promise and its actual delivery makes the present study even more valuable.

Demographic data from personal interviews

Table 1 and Figure 1 demonstrate that the majority of informants who participated in the interview study are males. The gender distribution does not demonstrate a large difference, but there is a slight overweight of males represented.

Table 1

Gender frequency

	Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	14	53.8	53.8	53.8
	Female	12	46.2	46.2	100.0
Total		26	100.0	100.0	

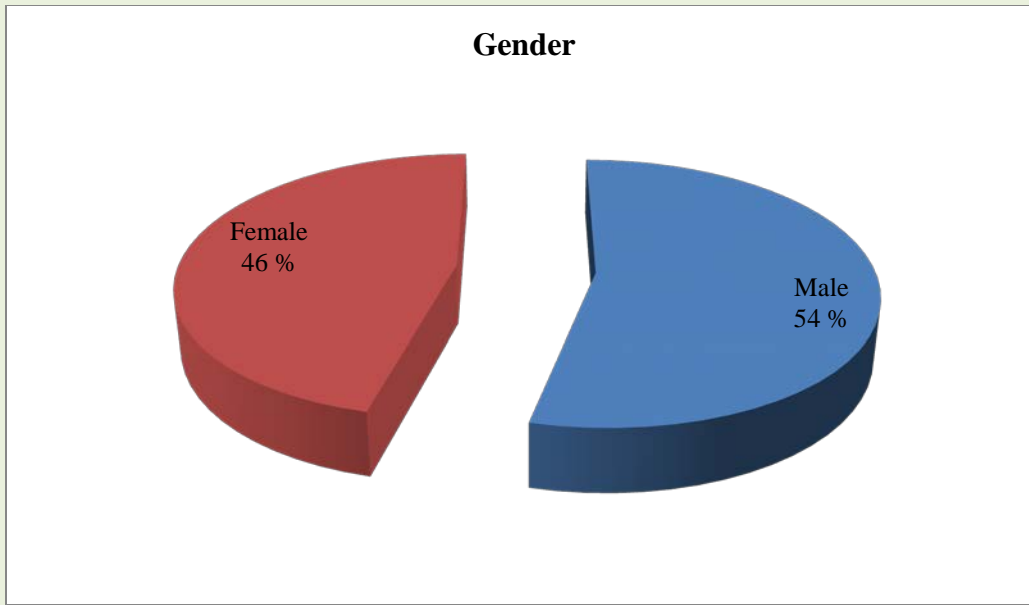


Figure 1: Gender Distribution

Figure 2 shows clearly that the majority of the subjects in the study are from Norway which represents 73%. In Table 2 you can see that the 73% is 19 persons. The only other country represented with more than one representative is Sweden. Table 2 demonstrates that the other countries are represented only with one person each.

Table 2

Nationality frequency

	Nationality	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Germany	1	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Holland	1	3.8	3.8	7.7
	New Zealand	1	3.8	3.8	11.5
	England	1	3.8	3.8	15.4
	Sweden	2	7.7	7.7	23.1
	Denmark	1	3.8	3.8	26.9
	Norway	19	73.1	73.1	100.0
	Total		26	100.0	100.0

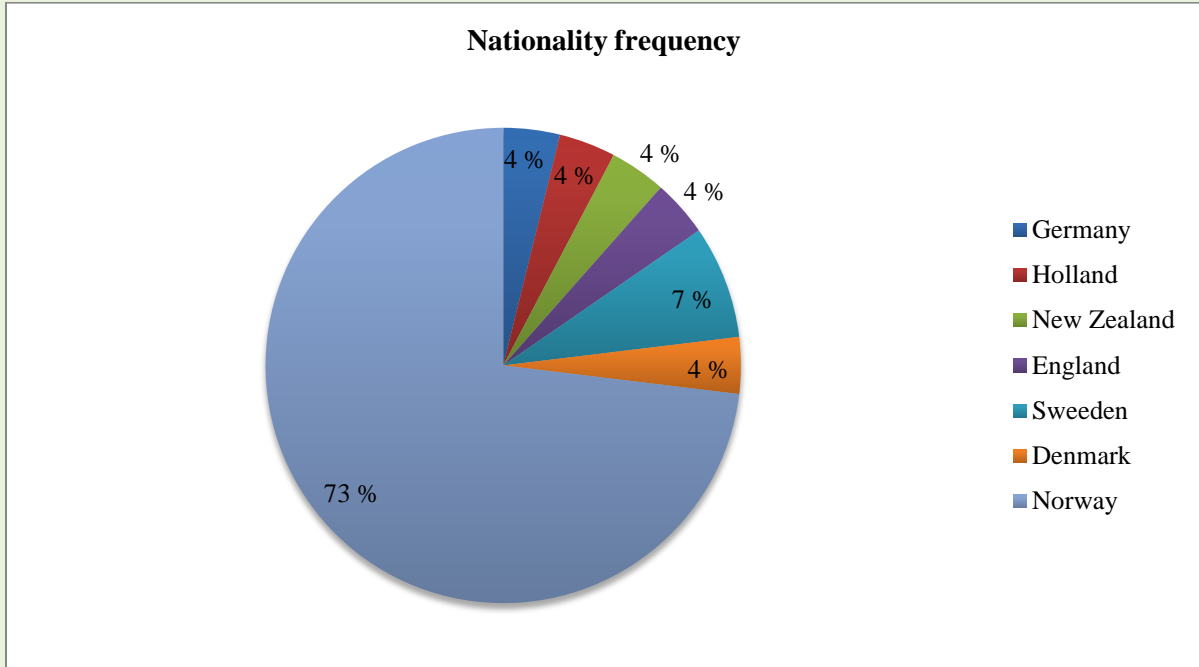


Figure 2: Nationality distribution

Table 3 and Figure 3 depict that the highest frequency of years that employees have been employed in the organization is between 10 and 12 years, but only 3 have been employed more than 13 years. The second largest group is employees, who have just started their career in Hurtigruten ASA and have only been working there for less than 4 years.

Table 3

Frequency of years employed at the organization

	Years employed	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	0-3 years	6	23.1	23.1	23.1
	4-6 years	4	15.4	15.4	38.5
	7-9 years	5	19.2	19.2	57.7
	10-12 years	8	30.8	30.8	88.5
	13-15 years	1	3.8	3.8	92.3
	16- years	2	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	26	100.0	100.0	

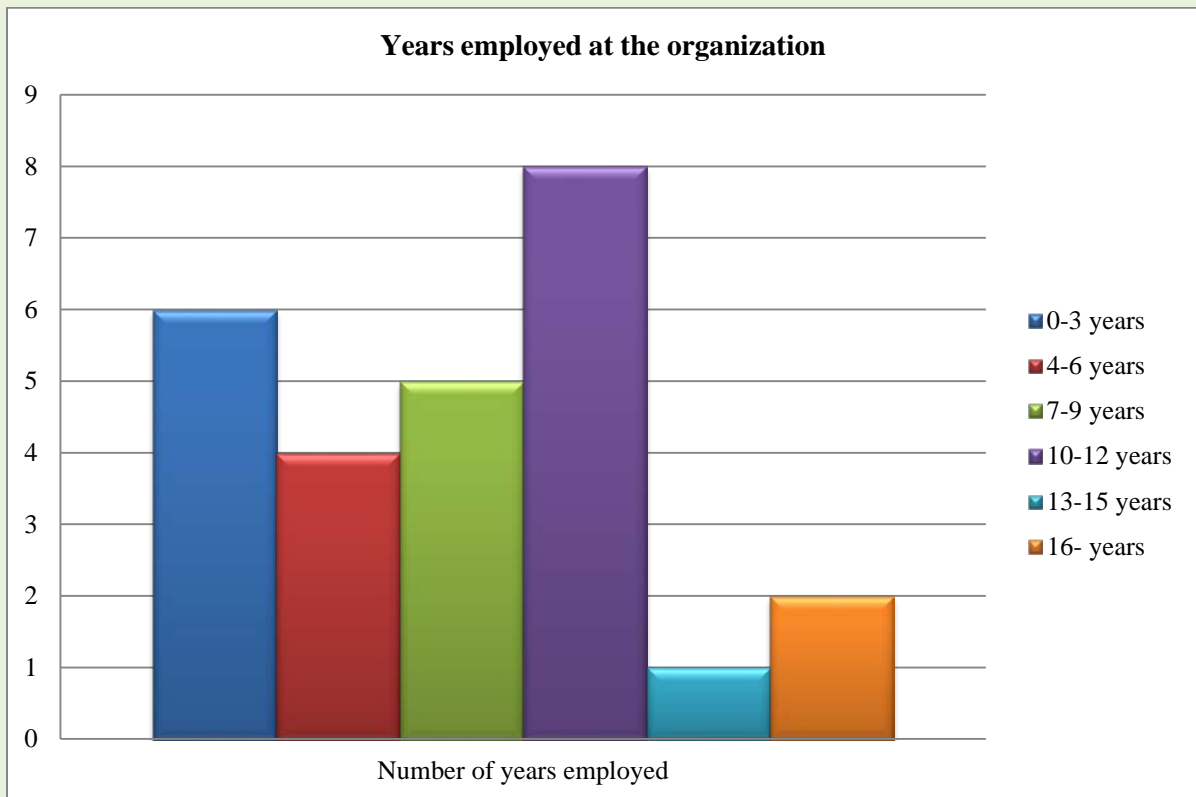
*Figure 3: Distribution of years employed at the organization*

Table 4

Frequency of current positions

Title	Subjects
Representative of Management. Sales & Marketing Department	1
Representative of Management. International Marketing Department	1
Representative of Management. Product & Revenue Department	1
Representative of Management. Communication & PR Department	1
Representative of Management. Hotel Operations Department	1
Captain	3
Hotel Manager	3
Tour Leader	3
Restaurant Manager	2
Substitute Restaurant Manager	1
Front Desk Trainee	2
Purser	1
Head Waiter	1
Waiter & Steward	5
Total	26

Table 4 shows that there is a good mix of employees that have been interviewed which helps in getting a best results from the interviews. Figure 4 demonstrates clearly that out of the broad range of informants Waiters and Stewards were most represented.

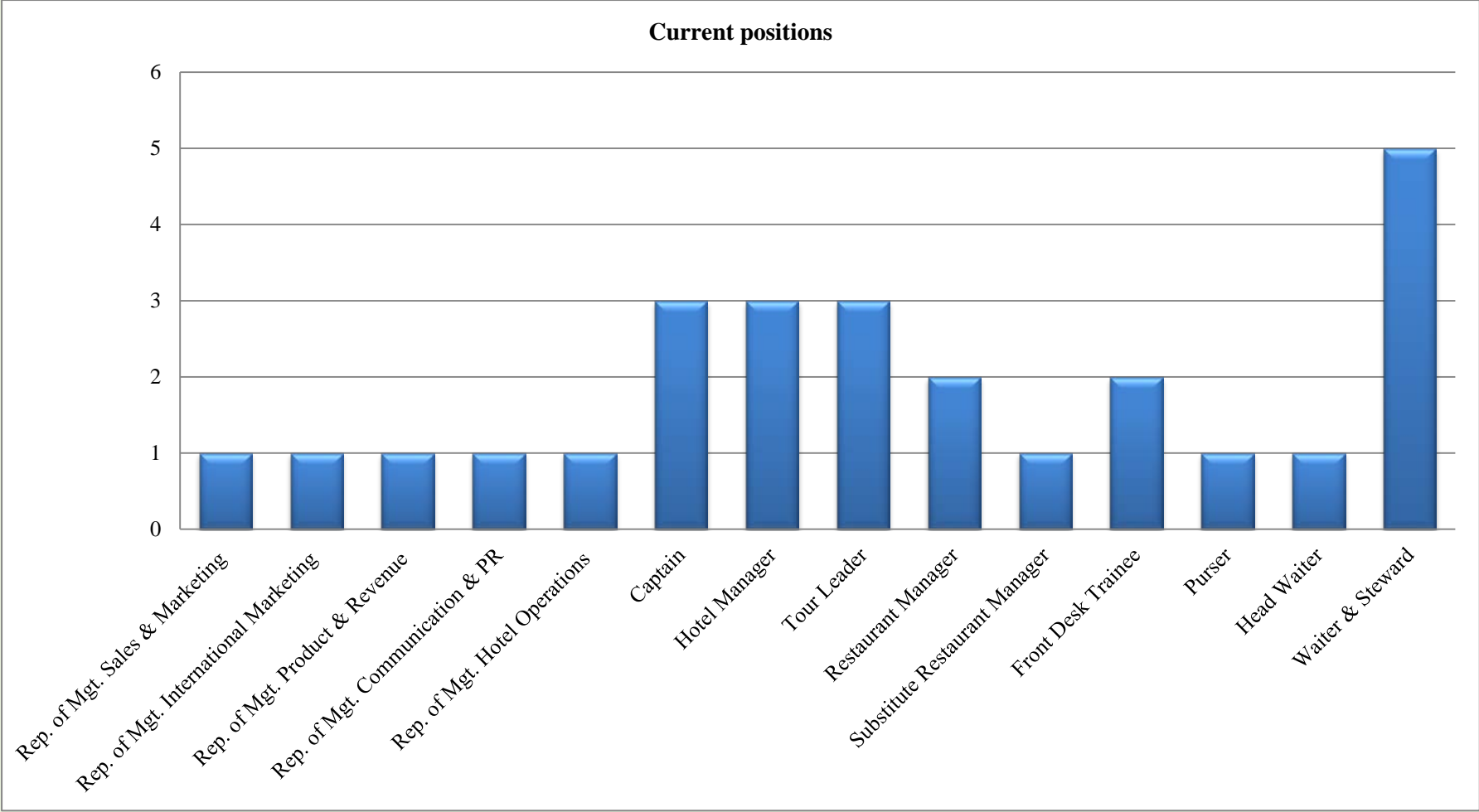


Figure 4: Distribution of current positions

Figure 5 represent the top level of the organizational structure with the CEO, Deputy CEO and CFO as the top leaders for the organization. Below these Chief Officers are located the different departments of Product, Pricing & Revenue, Sales & Marketing, Technical Maritime Operations and Support Functions.

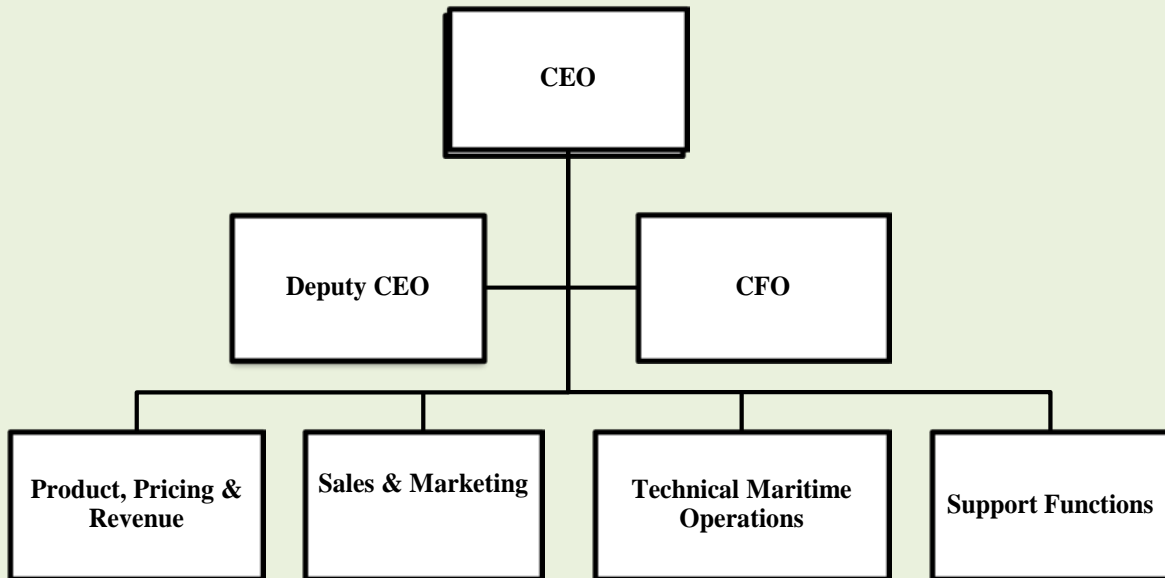


Figure 5: Organizational chart of the on-land part of Hurtigruten ASA

The Sales & Marketing department is structured with a leader on a top and supporting functions: a controller and a coordinator. It is also split up into three different sales areas which are UK/US/ROW, Continental Europe and Nordic. There are also a Customer Service department, a Marketing department and a CRC department, as shown in Figure 6.

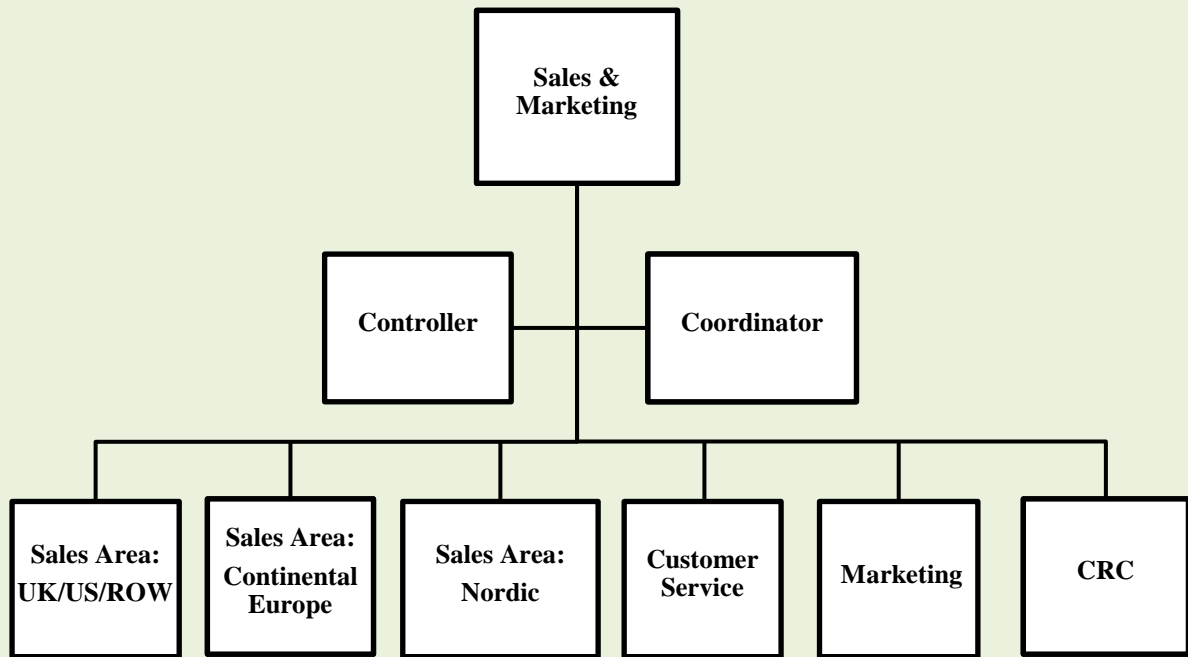


Figure 6: Organizational structure of the Sales and Marketing Department at Hurtigruten ASA

The organization of the sea-based organization is structured with the Captain as the leader for the ship. Different personnel is reporting to Captain: the Hotel Manager which is the leader for most of the personnel dealing with customer relations. In Figure 7 the organizational chart of sea-based organization is depicted.

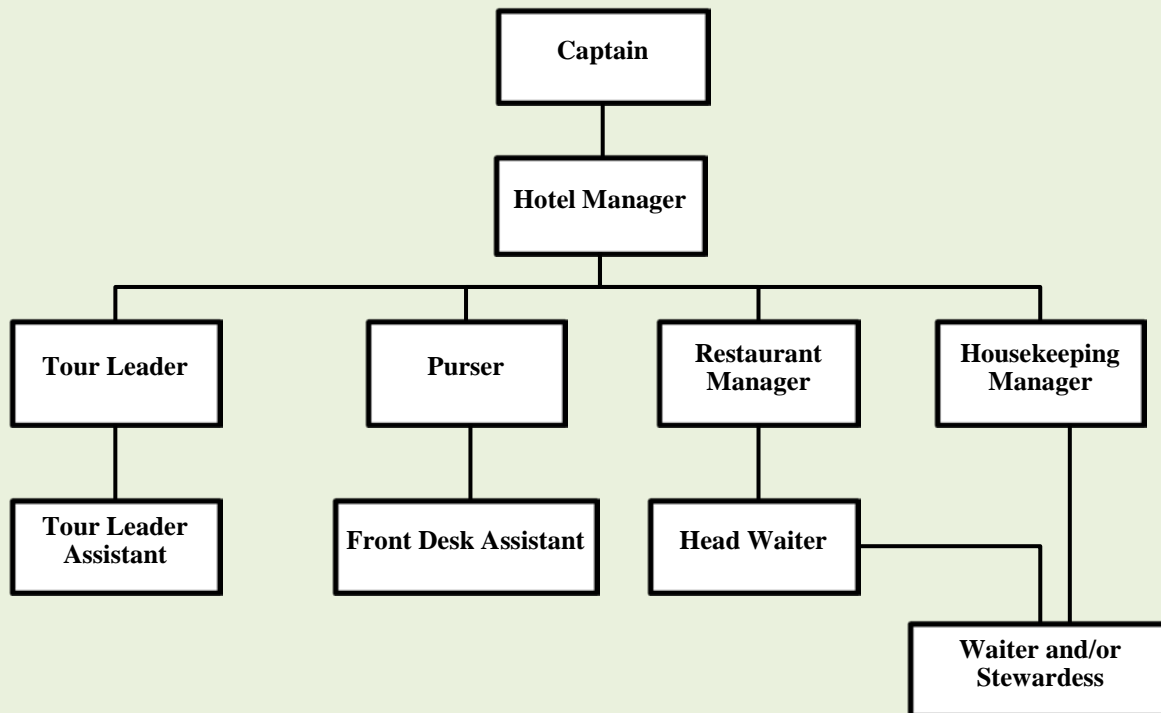


Figure 7: Organizational chart of the sea-based part of Hurtigruten ASA

Results from categorizing interview texts and observation notes

During the process of textual data analysis the researcher established three major semantic categories comprising a number of sub-categories (see Table 5). On the grounds those the researcher structured the information obtained from personal interviewing of employees representing different organizational levels. The derived categories were also supplemented with the data from observational notes, which was structured accordingly.

Table 5

Categories and sub-categories derived from the interview data

Organization	Brand awareness	Internal branding (IB):
1) employee characteristics	1) the concept of brand	1) kind of brand-related information
2) organizational structure	2) Hurtigruten's brand	2) IB channels
3) products	3) Hurtigruten's vision	3) Delivery of brand values embedded in the

		brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”
	4) Hurtigruten’s brand promises	

The first category “organization” was presented through the facts about the company’s employees, organizational structure, as well as information on products,. The data constituting this category provided the researcher with a significant source of empirical evidence necessary for understanding the organizational reality of the company, and thus extended the opportunities for the analysis of the contextual aspects that can influence the process of brand values delivery by the employees. The information from this category was extensively applied for the description of Hurtigruten ASA, represented in the beginning of this section.

The next three categories derived by the researcher, included “brand awareness”, “internal branding” and “brand values delivery”. The information comprising these categories, complemented with relevant explanations, is further represented in this section.

The category of brand awareness

The second category “brand awareness” embraced the information on how employees define a brand in general, what knowledge they have about their company’s brand, vision and brand values, as well as the employees thoughts about the reasons why informing them about their company’s brand promises is important.

Employees’ interpretations of a brand

The first sub-category generated, was employees’ interpretations of a word “brand”. The researcher included a question in the interview on a general definition of the concept of brand with the purpose of finding out how employees understand this concept and how they relate it to the delivery of brand values. The definitions of a brand by employees from different organizational levels are represented in Table F.1.

The data from these tables illustrates that the Representatives of Management from various departments define a brand as “*the essence and the basis of how the company positions itself* to the outside world... but also, of course, internally” (R2), as “something that makes a company *recognizable* to everybody out in the public domain. And that’s kind of stage one of the brand; stage two of a brand is what it is associated with” (R3). The brand is also described as “...the *overall reflection* both internally and externally of *our desired company’s position*”(R 4), and as “a set of values” related to a trademark/product that can serve to evaluate the latter (R5).

The majority of employees (sixteen respondents) from the sea-based part of the organization referred a brand to a product. Three employees (R10, R18, R24) believed that the brand is associated with the quality of a product, whereas others mainly described it as a name of a product (R 9, R13, R20, R26), also as a recognizable name (f.eg. R8, R14, R15, R19, R21), a logo and policy (R6), experience (R19, R23), value for money (R17), and eventually something what is developed over time (R11, R12). In addition, it is something unique, well-established and protected in the market, built via marketing in the people’s mind (R12).

The researcher also observed the fact that eight employees (R11, R17, R18, R19, R20, R22, R23, R25) experienced difficulties in explaining what a brand is. Some of these employees expressed an opinion that defining a brand without a context or using Hurlgruten as an example was rather complicated. One of the employees (R24) did not know how to answer the question, and even though additional probing questions were given, the respondent still did not wish to answer the question. The Representative of Marketing and Sales Department (R1) neither provided a general definition of brand; however, this respondent described a brand in relation to the examined organization as “a *number of values and directions* we search ourselves” (See R1 in Table F.3).

Employee perspective on their company's brand components

The next three sub-categories were built on the grounds of information originated from the employees' interview answers on the questions about their company's brand, vision and cultural values. When this information was categorized, it provided a better insight into employees' awareness of their company's brand components, and their relation to those. On the grounds of these sub-categories the researcher further made an attempt to determine how brand values are reflected in the company's definitions of brand, vision and cultural values.

Employees' descriptions of Hurtigruten's brand.

The information representing this category reflected the main tendencies in how employees from different departments and organizational levels interpret their company's brand (See Table F.3). The informants representing the Management from the on-land organization discussed their company's brand by referring to its essence, positioning practices, strategy, external orientation to the market and challenges.

According to Respondent 1, the company's brand is characterized as two-fold, because the company has to operate in two dimensions, which means that it functions as a supplier for the local communities and at the same time strives to become a destination for tourists: "...We clearly *focus on tourism*, where the brand needs to stand for destination orientation, and, of course, comfort and authenticity, while for *the local traffic*, where we take guests from/between ports, the brand needs to stand for convenience and ease of transport. And our *challenge* is to *combine those two brand attitudes* into one overall brand". The Respondent also noted that the Hurtigruten's brand stands for a set of values and directions and that one of the efforts that the company is undertaking at the moment is listing its brand profile: "while not forgetting our port support business,...list a brand profile to position us as truly *one of the top destinations in the world*. Our branding effort

will be more and more focused on that *sense of exclusivity* that you have to have seen and have been there in order to appreciate and be a traveler who is very experienced”.

Respondent 2 described the company’s brand in terms of its positioning statement emphasizing its external orientation: “*For people dreaming about nature-based experience* and about polar areas, we are the best way to experience it. We can provide you with local connections and cooperation, unique destination flexibility and knowledge as we do”. The Respondent also emphasized that the company’s ambition within its brand strategy is to become the best way to experience Norway and other explorer destinations offered to the market by Hurtigruten.

Respondent 4 stated that the company strives for the brand that is authentic: “The brand that we strive for is to be authentic, and that is to reflect the company vision and the reasons why we believe what we offer, is important and marketable”. Respondent 5 also referred to the company’s brand essence and defined it as a core brand value: “*The brand essence is authentic. “Ekte” in Norwegian. Our core brand value is authentic. We are the historical coastal route since 1893 and all we do is related to that...as we are a part of the communities on the coast... So a tourist that goes to Norway will take part in the Norwegian society and community, therefore we have the brand value that is essential to us, it is authentic. And everything we do, it should be authentic. It is all about the truth, the excursions we do, the music onboard and it should be a part of the Norwegian history...*”

Finally, Respondent 5 referred the brand to experiencing a proper adventure: “...My company I’d like to think, is associated with coziness, openness, and fresh air and adventure... when you come to Norway to travel with our company, you will actually experience a proper adventure, not just a holiday”.

The descriptions of the company’s brand by employees from the sea-based part of the organization varied in length and details. Some respondents (R11, R15 and R24)

provided comprehensive descriptions, while a few others could not give many details (f.eg R26).

Although employees' descriptions of their company's brand varied to great extent in their content, most of the employees typically related the company's brand to the experience of Norwegian nature. For example, three employees (R14, R 23, R24) described the company's brand as "the world's most beautiful voyage".

Five employees (R11, R14, R19, R23, R24) ascribed uniqueness to the company's brand in different ways. For example, Respondent R14 believed that the Hurtigruten's brand is about a unique way of exploring Norway: "I claim that Hurtigruten's brand is about *unique experiences on a world scale*, in other words, *you get a completely unique way to experience Norway*." Respondent 11 was of the opinion that Hurtigruten is unique (also special), because of its history and character: "...what makes Hurtigruten special is a route, *a regular route that has existed since 1893*. So it's a very old brand "Hurtigruten". It has a very long tradition, and this is one thing. The second thing, *is the unique way we operate* at...we transport freight and local passengers to many ports between Bergen and Kirkenes. In addition, we are in a way a cruise ship, [although] we would not call ourselves "a cruise ship", but we function as a cruise ship for those, who wish to use our services and take a full round trip ... We also emphasize in our brand that we operate in *extreme waters in extreme weather conditions*, but at the same time it is *very safe*...In addition... we cruise along *a very beautiful coast*, and primarily *it's nature and the experiences* that have to do with nature".

Respondent 23 associated the Hurtigruten's brand with a unique experience, because of the weather conditions that are always different: "I think it is *experience and then unique*, because it is really unique the experience you have, when you travel with us. Even if it is nice weather [or] ... not so nice, the experience you have is special, because

even if you have worked for 10 years, *it is different every time...*” The respondent also mentioned that travelling with Hurtigruten is very special, because of the atmosphere on board that is created by both the employees and the guests: “You can take a lot of cruises, but it is never the same as Hurtigruten. It is not like a normal cruise. You never know what to expect, because of the weather and the people and I think it is the people who actually, the guests and the people from the crew, who make the Hurtigruten”.

Respondent 19 referred uniqueness of the brand to the qualities of Norwegian people: “*We are unique*. I think we have got it in ourselves as Norwegians: we are *honest and real*, and we try to get it to the foreigners...” Respondent 21 described the Hurtigruten’s brand as well-known and typical Norwegian that is very recognizable in Norway: “... I would think it is *old and well-established* name. Everybody knows more or less what it is, yes. [It is] Norwegian, I would say “*typical Norwegian*” ...culture, nature and weather”.

Respondent 6 described Hurtigruten as an anonymous brand, but at the same time as a big brand: “...you see very little what Hurtigruten is about. It is *a big brand, but very anonymous* ... in relation to the brands of the same kind”. Respondent 7 associated the Hurtigruten’s brand with quality and security: “Being Hurtigruten [entails that] we should associate ourselves with quality. It should be *quality, security* and, yes”.

Some other respondents (R10 and R16) associated the company’s brand with tourism. For example, Respondent 16 stated: “Tours and experiences and all that there, because *we are about tourism* and we want to offer voyages full of various experiences, excursions”. Respondent 26 referred the Hurtigruten’s brand only to the transportation of people and goods. Respondent 25 described it as “the one that goes along the coast. ...that it has boats going along the Norwegian coast” and did not provide any other details either

explanations, whereas Respondents 11 and 12 perceived the brand to be two-fold, because of the way how the company operates.

Respondents 9, 10 and 19 noted that the brand is associated with cultural values. Respondents 17 and 18 defined the company's brand not only in relation to nature-based experiences, but also referred to service. For example, Respondent 18 was expressed the view that the brand is about helping the guests to get the best possible experience "...do the best I can for our passengers. Do the best I can so that they get the best possible trip".

Personal meaning of the company's brand

The researcher has also derived one under sub-category "personal meaning of the company's brand" within the sub-category "awareness of company's brand". The information comprising this under sub-category reflected how employees relate themselves to their company's brand.

Respondents 14, 15, 20 and 22 stated that they associate the Hurtigruten's brand with being proud of their workplace. Respondent 14 admitted: "it means a lot, actually. I am very proud to be one of those, who help [tourists] to experience Norway in a unique way. I am very proud of it". Respondent 15 claimed that: "it is first and foremost, my workplace, but it is a job I'm proud of, I can say that it [Hurtigruten] is a national tourist attraction here in Norway and I am very proud that I have been a part of it for eleven years. Hurtigruten's future prospects were rather bad five years ago, and I'm proud that I was one of many others, who have helped to build it up to what it is today, and we will become better as you will see the future".

Respondent 22 recognized: "I feel proud about it, because it is...it feels like, I do not know, fancy... people, who work in Hurtigruten. The cleaning lady is not very fancy, but it is an adventure to work here. I mean, my view from the window changes all the time and I meet a lot of new people... Respondent 20 also admitted that the company's brand is

of extreme personal importance for this respondent: “For me personally, it [Hurtigruten] is extremely important. I am very proud of my job”.

Respondent 17 stated that the company’s brand means meeting new people and develop language skills, whereas Respondent 26 declared that the Hurtigruten’s brand means: “...that I have a job to go to and that I can provide service when I am at work, and it is something what I like very much”.

Employees’ descriptions of Hurtigruten’s vision.

The present sub-category unites information obtained from the employees’ answers on the main question and probing questions about the company’s vision. The original data illustrating this particular sub-category, which is not cited in English in the text of this sub-section, is displayed Table F.5.

According to Respondent 1, the company’s vision is about being “*an attractive product, living our values for our guests, providing a destination-oriented product* as well as being an *attractive proposition for investors*”. The Respondent claimed that the customers would prefer traveling with Hurtigruten, because this company emphasizes exploring a destination, but not being a destination itself, in comparison to the cruise ships. In addition, it sets in focus a delivery of products of high quality: “I think this is exactly what this is about, because different than other cruise lines our focus is on the destination, while delivering *a very high standard of product*, while the cruise line product has the focus on the ship. Our focus is on seeing the destination and also the experience of the authentic environment, being an explorer product, being a Norwegian cost product”.

Respondent 2 also admitted that Hurtigruten provides customers with an authentic and very unique product comparing to the products of ordinary cruise lines and emphasized that the company does not call its main product for “a cruise”, but rather for “a voyage”: “...we are so authentic, we are unique ... Hurtigruten is a phenomenon in a

way, because you do not find this kind of product in any other part of the world. We have a mix between a ferry and we are a kind of cruise operator, but we do not call ourselves the cruise and in English we say a voyage, we never say a cruise”. The Respondent also added that another reason that makes travelling with Hurtigruten so special is the magnificent nature: “and of course, one of the main reasons is the fantastic Norwegian coast with the scenery changes and landscapes with the fjords, Lofoten, the real Arctic from Tromsø”.

Respondent 3 mentioned that the company’s vision is “Real experiences in unique waters” and recognized that the company’s competition is “what we call “the white ships” and the cruise industry”. The Respondent further supported this view by stating that the company provides a much more authentic experience of local culture and nature in a responsible way: “We are very, very different from the cruise industry: we are still a seaman ship, we still go along the coast, we still sail, but what *we try to do is to do it much more real, closer to the culture, the environment, also the nature, but also being responsible* in how we are doing that”. The Respondent also noted that it is not a correct way to say that customers cruise with Hurtigruten, by contrast they take a voyage: “OK, if I just can change the terminology. We try to say that people take a voyage with us. And I think that differential is quite important, because it is not a classic cruise where you sit and admire the scenery from the ship. I think the main difference between “the white ships” and Hurtigruten is that with Hurtigruten, if you come on a round trip north and south, then you can get off in many ports”.

The Respondent also gave interesting examples for the reason why traveling with Hurtigruten can be so special for tourists: “We also mix with local passengers, so people who want to travel from Hammerfest to Tromsø for a meeting – they are onboard, or if you have a football team, who want to travel from Finnsnes to Tromsø to play a local

match – they are onboard, businessmen, Norwegian tourists, who want to go from Tromsø to Bergen on holidays, or vice versa. They all come to travel with us. *So instead of being surrounded by tourists as you are on a “white ship”, you are actually being surrounded by the culture and the people from the country they live in...*” In addition, tourists can experience the coast of Norway by taking part in various excursions and activities: “... and *also our range of excursions and shore activities...* I think we have about 40 excursions and shore activities you can take part in. There are lots of different activities you can do, and I think it quite attractive to our tourist market as well”.

Respondent 4 expressed an opinion that the company’s vision “Real experiences in unique waters” is the recent version of vision and that it was introduced in 2008. The Respondent also stated that the company attempts to position itself not as cruise line, but customers might still call Hurtigruten for a cruise line: “We try to segment ourselves not as a cruise line, obviously the customers of Hurtigruten don’t know that, but they can call us a cruise line, if they want, but we always try to differentiate. We look at ourselves as a voyage”. The Respondent also described the difference between Hurtigruten and a cruise line in terms of the products and services those offer to the market: “If you look at the differences between Hurtigruten and a cruise line, the core differentiation is that *Hurtigruten* sees itself as *a window to magnificent nature and scenery, and authentic nature-based tourist experiences*, whereas a white ship as much as it is not about the ports, it is a destination in itself, so you have a very high difference in technology and services onboard...” This fact was further illustrated by the following example: “*The average white ship may spend six to eight hours in a port and they cruise overnight and then they are in the next port, and for a lot of people this is exactly what they want. What we do is much more like a train on the sea and we go everyday along the coastline. We go where*

large ships could never go to, because there are shallow and narrow fjords, for example...” (R1).

Respondent 5 was of the opinion that the company exists not only because of the tourists, but also because of the local population that lives along the Norwegian coast and this is what makes Hurtigruten attractive for the tourists, who want experience the “real” Norway: “We try to be very different from what we call “the white ship”. We are different, *we are here because of the own heritage* that we playing a role along the coast with the cargo, with the local passengers and tourists. So we are not here especially for the tourists, but because we are here for the local community, the local people travelling from A to B and for the cargo, that is why we also are interesting for tourists”.

The respondents representing different organizational levels from the sea-based part of the organization mainly related their company’s vision to unique experiences, the company’s orientation in selling its products and cultural values.

To specify, eight respondents (R16, R 17, R18, R20, R22, R 23, R25, R24) were of the view that their company’s vision is about providing tourists with an opportunity to experience Norway and its magnificent nature through different activities or just observing the coast line. For example, Respondent 22 stated: “... they want to show the beautiful environment of Norway and this, yes, the ocean, the beautiful Arctic climate, and the Norwegian culture. If you look at the excursions, there is a lot of Norwegian culture in them. If you go to the Sami places, you can see the reindeer, you can go on a Viking feast and you can go, how you call it, “rib”, you know you go with those “rib” boats and in the winter you can go with snowmobiles, so it is so much Norway in these excursions”.

Seven respondents (R 8, R11, R12, R13, R14, R15, R 25) associated their company vision with the company’s general business strategy and its profitability. For example, Respondent 13 claimed: “The vision is to grow and get a better profitability. It is

about developing the concepts that that we have now: in winter and summer, spring [interrupted by a phone call]”. Respondent 14 also added that apart from increasing the company’s business development, it is important that customers get satisfied with their experience, while traveling with Hurtigruten: “I would say that we are working to get bigger, get more visitors, get more satisfied guests, and my vision is that everyone should be happy”. Respondent 15 emphasized that the company should strive for delivering the products and services that correspond to what customers have been promised: “...be a company that customers can trust and do the best we can... deliver on what we sell”.

It should be also noted that one of the respondents - Respondent 21 believed that the company’s vision is about taking responsibility of one’s job duties and emphasized that the company wants to ensure that the customer gets an authentic experience: “Keep it clean. I mean the real thing, they are not going to give the guest this “kunstige opplevelse” [not an authentic experience]. They are just going to get what you can see outside the window, yes, clean and pure”.

A number of respondents (f.eg. R6, R7, R9, R11, R 19, R 26) expressed an opinion that their company’s vision is about core values. Respondent 6 associated vision with three core values: secure, generous and responsible. Respondent 7 could remember only two core values: secure and generous and meant that there should be four cultural values in total. Respondent 9 described his company’ vision in terms of security and safety for both the employees and the customers: “our vision is to be a safe workplace, provide employees with an opportunity for promotion and at the same time create an image/brand that is associated with safe traveling with us, so that customers/passengers can trust us...”. Respondent 19 got confused and could not differentiate between the cultural values of the company and the company’s brand essence: “I am not sure now whether it is safe,

generous and responsible, or whether it is real and stuff, I cannot really remember what the vision is about, no.”

Respondent 26 stated that the company has a vision that stands for safety, responsibility, quality and creativity: “*They have a vision* that is in short described as “THANKS” [TAKK in Norwegian]. It stands for Safety, Responsibility, Quality and Creativity. They have used it for many years. And it means that everyone should demonstrate confidence in what they do and should have a safe workplace...everyone should have responsibilities and should take responsibility....we should also ensure the quality of the work that we do and be creative at work”. Respondent 10 also associated the company’s vision with quality.

The researcher also observed that the majority of employees from the sea-based part of the organization claimed that the experiences provided by their company to the customers are very different from those that any cruise line can offer. The respondents believed that taking a voyage with their company entails a much more authentic experience of Norway, as the customers can explore the places that cruise ships due to their size limitations cannot visit. In addition, tourists can meet local people traveling along the coast on board Hurtigruten. This can be supported by the statement of Respondent 16: “... if you travel with big cruise lines, you will not be able to go into all the ports that we got to. They will choose some major ports such as Geiranger, Trondheim, Tromsø and Honningsvåg. [But] we go to small fjords and small harbors, for example along the coast of Finnmark and Nordland coast, where the big boats do not come. And they [tourists] will meet local residents in a completely different way, because we transport cargo and we have distance passengers. We get passengers at all ports; you cannot have it the same way on a cruise ship”.

Three employees (R15, R23, R24) also mentioned that traveling with Hurtigruten is completely different than on a cruise ship, because of the atmosphere created by the employees on board the ships. For example, Respondent 24 stated: “it is very unique for those, who are on board, at least on this boat, because it is a bit small. [it creates] a very good atmosphere. We get a very good contact with the guests and they can experience a lot of very special things. [We] become kind of a small family”.

Employees’ descriptions of Hurtigruten’s core values

The sub-category “employees’ descriptions of Hurtigruten’s core values” is comprised of the information on how the company’s core values are reflected in its products seen from the Management perspective from the on-land part of the organization, and the results acquired on how employees’ define their company’s core values.

According to Respondent 2, the “secure” is one of the most important the cultural values, as security is taken very seriously in the organization: “...especially when it comes to *secure*, the Maritime Department is taking this very serious, and I know that what they do that. This is one of the major ones in a way”. The “generous” was to some extent difficult to describe in terms of its relation to the company’s products, as it is referred to the way how employees relate to each other: “If it comes to *generous*, then I think generous is a bit vague in a way, it is more related to how we treat our people and how we treat ourselves. This is more related to the Human Recourse Management, it has to do not so much with the product”. The “responsible” was determined as a universal value that everybody should apply in their work: “...*responsibility* that is both when we are living from the morning until the night: being responsible for what you do. I think this must also reflect everybody’s work, not only within the products”.

Respondent 4 described the cultural value “secure” in terms of authenticity “...secure relates to ...the fact that we are authentic”. The Respondent referred the

“genuine” to openness in “employee-to-employee” and “employee-to-customer” communication: “I believe, we explain openness both in an employee level and at a guest level”. The Respondent also expressed an opinion that “generous” is to some extent difficult to achieve on the internal level, however, when it comes to the customer level it is expressed through employees’ service orientation and enthusiasm: “But are we actually truly achieving the openness that we want? And the reason for that, the company continues to have quite a few layers, where the relationship between those layers is not quite as open and trusting in its cooperative development cycle as it needs to be. So I think generous is a difficult one. To our customers, I think customers do find it genuine and I do think they find us very practical and in general that we are customer-focused and enthusiastic. So I think at a customer level most of the time we get it right and internal level might be a little more difficult”.

The Respondent further stated that “responsibility” is the most important cultural value that is extensively applied in the organization both internally and externally: “I think both customer and we internally feel that very strong, so our relationship to the coast of Norway, to the communities of the coast of Norway, to the environment, and to the history of Hurtigruten, what we stand for. I believe it is almost perfect internally and I believe that the customer also gets a very strong sense of the identity of Hurtigruten and that’s why then they are with us”.

The respondent next pointed out that it can be time-consuming and rather complicated to promote Hurtigruten as a brand with setting in focus “responsibility” as well as close relationship to the local communities along coastal Norway as “the potential customer maybe less clear about that...” The Respondent further added: “our brand is strongest in Norway and in Germany. But [when it comes to] the markets, for example

such as Denmark, UK and USA, where the brand is weaker [then] it is not quite so easy to get that responsibility thing in front of them and [get it] understood”.

The information about cultural values obtained from the employees representing the sea-based part of the organization was summed up for the purposes of convenience in Table F.6 (the original version not translated into English). The researcher also used a graphic presentation with symbols “+”, “-“ and “+/-“ to denote the extent to which employees could demonstrate their awareness of the company’s cultural values. The use of these conventional signs helped the researcher to determine how accurate the employees could state their company’s cultural values, and thus attempt to assess what they think their company’s cultural values are. Therefore, such designation should not be regarded in any case as an absolute measure of the employees’ awareness about their company’s cultural values.

The data gathered within this sub-category demonstrated that the Management level of the sea-based part of the organization represented by Captains, Hotel Managers, Purser (R19) and one Front Desk Trainee (R18) were most aware of their company’s cultural values.

Respondent 19 gave valuable explanations of how cultural values of the company can be performed by the employees, so that they can function as brand ambassadors: “We act in a way that reflects the brand: we show responsibility, we show that we are honest, real and warm. We surround ourselves with a sense of security, so that people feel safe near us. We show that we are generous with the people and take care of them in a warm manner. And that is something we strive for every day, but it’s not something we talk about”.

It is essential to mention that the above-mentioned respondents could answer the question on the cultural values of their company without any difficulties and the

researcher did not have to clarify what kind of values the question was about. Whereas the rest of employees had different interpretations of what their company's cultural values can stand for. The majority of these respondents associated cultural values with quality, uniqueness, authenticity, nature experience (f.eg. R16, R 26), good working environment (f.eg. R 20), a welcoming atmosphere for customers (f.eg. R24) and loyalty.

Four respondents (R 21, R22, R23, R24) were not sure how to describe their company's cultural values. Respondent 14 expressed an opinion that there is a lack of information on cultural values. This Respondent also noted that there is not enough time to learn about cultural values, because of growing amount of work on board. However, the Respondent recognized that making a customer happy is of high priority and expressed strong affection in relation to the organization: "My focus is really on getting people happy and it requires a lot of me, and I do it, because I love Hurtigruten".

Employee perspective on Hurtigruten's brand promises

The sub-category "employee perspective on Hurtigruten's brand promises" reflects different perspectives on brand promises by employees of the sea-based organization (See Table F.7 and Table F.8). The perspectives of Management of the sea-based organization are not presented in this sub-category. Due to the fact that the researcher had to keep the timeframes for interviewing these respondents, it was decided to give the priority to obtaining the interview data on communication channels and a type/form of the information that employees get about brand promises. Therefore, this data was included in the second category "internal branding".

In the frames of sub-category "employee perspective on Hurtigruten's brand promises" it was established that thirteen employees believe that the company promises customers to experience the coast of Norway. Three respondents emphasized that customers can experience Norway under safe conditions. For example, Respondent 11

stated: “We promise our customers, first and foremost, what to say, extreme conditions under safe conditions. By extreme conditions, I mean that we do not just stand in the storm and bad weather in winter, but it is also fantastic weather conditions with the Midnight Sun in the summer, and the nature that we sail through all the way from Bergen up to Kirkenes. This is what we promise to our customers and guests”.

Respondent 10 claimed that the product should be delivered in correspondence with what customers have been promised and underlined that Hotel Manager and Restaurant Manager are typically in charge of it: “The product shall deliver, what it has been marketed for. We follow the scheduled program that has been set up for us. We have a daily program with a setup of what we should do every day that we follow. It is a Hotel Manager and Restaurant Manager, who ensure that this will be followed...” Respondent 12 emphasized that customers are offered different activities to learn more about Norway “...an experience along the coast and various activities that we offer along the coast, and we can offer them excursions...” Respondent 17 noticed that apart from a nature experience the company offers good service: “...nice scenery and good service and an experience of a lifetime...”

Four respondents expressed doubt in their answers on what their company promises to customers. For example, Respondent 25 said: “Yes, Oh, no, I do not know... They try to deliver on a good brand, so that people will travel with Hurtigruten. Otherwise, I do not know, if they have anything in particular, they advertise Hurtigruten to get people to travel [with us]”. Respondent 22 acknowledged: “I do not know what they promise, but we can always offer good food and the view, and see the Norwegian environment”. Respondent 24 declared: “No, I do not really know what is promised, when it is sold, for example, but ... I think it is very hard to promise something that you can never promise [for example] you cannot promise the Northern Lights or that it will be nice weather, but I'm not quite

sure what is said to the customers then”. Respondent 14 believed that the company promises unique nature experiences, but expressed uncertainty: “..it is actually both “yes” and “no”. When I watch TV and see the commercials, then I start to think of what I said first: what it [Hurtigruten] means to me. And this is what they say: a unique experience. Spectacular experiences of the Norwegian coast in a very different way than you would have done it with a cruise ship...”

Respondent 6 claimed that as a rule there is a certain control over the information on what the customers are promised, however, there happen exceptions: “He or she [the seller] has promised a product or an item to a customer, but it’s not always that the seller tells me what is promised. Then it can start to get fun. We can control the general information, but it happens that the customer can be promised something different”.

Respondent 7 recognized that the company might promise a bit more than it can be delivered “actually, I think they probably promise a bit more than what we can deliver on board. For example, those, who stay at suites stand in the same line and eat at the same place as everyone else. I do not know whether he [the guest] is aware that he will pay 100.000NOK for just a larger room. Some think they should get a bit more than that, when they pay so much more”.

Respondent 21, on the contrary, was of the opinion that the company does not promise customers more than what it can deliver: “A good thing with Hurtigruten, we do not promise it [traveling on a cruise ship]. We do not give promise more than what we can give them and this is what we give them actually. It feels for me like that, and for the guests when they come on board they are sitting outside more or less 12 hours, 10 hours a day, if the weather is OK, because that’s what they have chosen...”.

The category of internal branding

The information reflecting the category of internal branding is represented in this section.

Kind of brand information provided to employees of sea-based organization

The researcher summarized the data reflecting kind of information employees of sea-based organization obtain within the table below. The original interview material representing this category is displayed in Table F.10.

Table 6

Kind of brand-related information available to employees of sea-based organization

Kind of brand-related information	Captain	Hotel Manager	Front Desk Assistant (&Purser)	Tour Leader	Restaurant Manager	Waiter & Steward
Brand essence, ambition & promises, vision, cultural values and management principles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Concepts: “Hunting the light”, “Arctic awakening”	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marketing materials for customers about the route & its attractions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Excursions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Daily onboard programs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 6 illustrates that employees from all organizational levels have free access to information about the brand essence, ambition and promises, as well as company’s vision, values and management principles. All employees also get informed about the seasonal programs “Hunting the light” and “Arctic awakening” that have been recently introduced

by the company to increase the number of travelers during the “low” seasons such as spring and winter. Marketing materials published for customers with information about the route and its attractions are freely available on board the ship to all employees as well. In addition, employees receive information on excursions and a daily program for onboard activities offered to customers.

Channels of internal branding

The next sub-category that was derived by the researcher is “channels of internal branding”. Table 7 portrays the information reflecting this sub-category (the original interview material comprising this category is represented in Table F.11).

As illustrated in Table 15, there are five main channels of communication utilized to inform employees of sea-based organization about the brand: management meetings, employees meetings, employee booklet on company’s brand, vision, values and management principles, Intranet and electronic mail.

Table 7

Channels of communication brand-related information

Channel of communication brand-related information	Organizational level of sea-based organization						
	Hotel Manager	Captain	Purser	Front Desk Trainee	Restaurant Manager	Tour Leader	Waiter/ Steward
Management meetings	✓	✓					
Employee meetings on board	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employee booklet on brand, vision, values & management principles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Intranet	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Electronic mail	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

According to Respondents 1 and 2, the Representatives of Management responsible for Marketing, meetings where information about the company's brand is represented, are mostly conducted on the Management level with participation of the Captain Frontier and Hotel Managers. Respondent 3, the Representative of Hotel Operations Management, underlined that meetings are regarded to be one of the main sources of providing the crew members working for Hotel Department with brand information: "It terms of communicating the brand we have meetings throughout the year; we have Hotel Managers' meeting twice a year, we have various meetings with other personnel, and there is always something related to the brand in those meetings, something about brand building".

Respondent 3 also noted that the information about the brand comes from the departments responsible for Marketing and it is performed in a form of power point presentations, which the company also tries to standardize for the employees working on ships: "The marketing people make a presentation about what the brand is, how to reinforce the brand, and it's always been on the small details, but it's always important... We try to standardize the power point presentation for the crew as well..."

Respondent 4 claimed that on-land part of organization takes part in workshops dedicated to brand building on a regular basis, however involving the crew members (apart from Senior Management) into the workshops activities is rather problematic: "At least on land we quite regularly involve a workshop strategy, where we always refer to the brand. We try to present brand in a consistent way and that what we are here for. Employees on the sea are a little more difficult to be approached, but at least the Management and the Senior Personnel are exposed and involved in what the brand is".

This fact was confirmed by Respondent 2, who underlined that: "...there are still a lot of improvements that could be made within the communication between the land and the ships...we do not have a direct communication line to the ships, that's not within the Marketing and not the Sales, this is more with the people from the Product Department. And we also have the operational manager, who is responsible for the onboard concept, the shops and everything, but this is just one person. So let's say I am not sure whether we get everything through..."

Respondents 2 and 4 pointed out that it is mainly Intranet and electronic mail which are applied to reach the sea-based organization and inform about the brand. This can be illustrated by the following statement of Respondent 4: "Intranet would be one of the main ways how we do this, email and other updates would be the other". The rest of Management Representatives of land-based organization also believed that Intranet and electronic mail are the main communication channels for informing and updating the employees about the brand.

All five informants (R1, R2, R3, R4 and R5) recognized that an employee personal handbook including information about company's vision, values and management principles is also one of the primary sources used to inform employees about the brand and its components.

Respondent 3 representing Hotel Operations Department claimed that employees of sea-based organization get informed about brand promises via an employee handbook and that brand values are being extensively communicated through the company's cultural values: "...we have got three main brand [cultural] values which are safe, generous and responsible...Every employee gets a booklet, which is about 15 pages long and it goes through what we are as a company. It's got our vision, our ambition, our cultural values, and so on". Respondent 3 next explained why it is important to make employees aware of

brand components via an employee handbook: “So even if it is a seasonal worker, maybe just for three or four round trips, we still want them to understand what our company is and what it isn’t and the importance of this...if people come from the cruise ship, from “the white ship”... they need to understand the difference between serving the local people... and understand that we are the “coastal bus”, supplying the tourist market as well”.

According to Respondent 5, the Representative of Management of Communication and PR-Department, Senior Management of sea-based organization are being taught and explained through workshops and the Leader Program about the content of an employee handbook. This helps to make the managers get aware of how they can apply cultural values in communication with subordinates. However, it was acknowledged by this Respondent that the information about brand promises from an employee handbook is not actively communicated to the employees to ensure the delivery of brand values to customers: “...I guess we have not been quite good in using these promises on educating our people in how to apply these promises. We have focused on the cultural values. It is a part of the fundamentals in our vision and values, yes, the focus has been on the cultural values” (R5).

Respondent 2 believed that employees of the sea-based part of the organization get informed about brand promises to a certain extent: “They can’t know all the details in a way about every campaign, but about the brand, the brand essence, the brand strategy, and also regarding the main material they should be all very informed about it, so I am hoping... [the Representative of Management of Hotel Operations] is delivering this to them”.

It is also necessary to mention that Respondent 4 expressed an opinion that there is “a difference between information and integration” and it is rather difficult to establish

whether the amount of effort put into communicating information about the brand through an employee handbook, results in building a more cohesive brand: "... the extent to which we are pushing out that information, compared to how well it is actually pulled back and turned into something cohesive and collective is hard to say". This Respondent also noted that the integration of information related to the brand essence and values might be stronger at the on-land organization, though employees from the sea-based organization may express more pride of their job: "the brand essence and values shared and incorporated into everyday work on the land is a little bit stronger, than on the sea, perhaps. But obviously there is a tremendous natural pride. This is probably where you find the real pride and the importance of the authenticity..."

To conclude, this is how the Management of land-based organization regards the process of internal branding practices in the examined organization. The researcher will next present the perspectives of employees of sea-based organization on how they get aware of their company's brand.

According to the interview data received, the majority of these employees claimed that they mainly get information about the brand via an employee handbook, Intranet, electronic mail and meetings. It should be also added that Respondents 19 (Purser) stated that when employees get hired, the Management usually considers their personal qualities in order to determine whether a candidate can become a brand ambassador of the company. According to Respondent 19, the selection of employees happens on the ground of their personal qualities that should ideally match Hurtigruten's cultural values. "I think that we look for such qualities when hiring employees. Some things one can learn, but other things we have in ourselves from nature".

Respondent 7 and 8 (Hotel Managers) expressed an idea that most of information about the brand comes via an employee handbook and that all new employees go through

the contents of it when they become an employee of Hurtigruten: “All new [employees] get a little booklet about our values and take a short course when they start to work on board... [Employees] go through it, but this is some just information and nothing else”.

Respondent 22 had a similar point of view: “You get the manual and that’s it: how to behave, how to..., but I think it is more common sense, if you are in the service industry, you should already have it in you, know how to act, how to approach the people”.

Hotel Managers next underlined that they mostly get information about the brand through Intranet and electronic mail. As an example, one of the statements by a Hotel Manager (R 8) can be provided here: “I get some information through oral communication, but it is not much. [I] get mainly information by email or through Intranet”. This view was supported by other employees working at the Front Desk area: Respondents 18 and 19.

Two Tour Leaders (R12, R14) also claimed that Intranet is the channel that is used most to inform and update employees about the brand. According to Respondent 12: “...it comes through the intra-communication which is, actually, the best channel to get information like that”. Meetings also take place, where the company’s values can be discussed: “Otherwise, it can be that the Hotel Manager calls us to a meeting, informs us, or it can be the Captain, who has received information from the on-land organization that should be communicated to all employees... we talk about what we work for, and what our values are, what our core values are, what we try to present and communicate further” (R12).

The information about the company’s products and sales techniques is also presented to the Tour Leaders by consultants, who come for this purpose on board: “Sometimes you may get some consultants on board and there will be more focus on sale.

[They] show us how to sell the product. It is perhaps not so much a “workshop”, because we are still at work, but sometimes brand-related information comes from the on-land organization” (R12).

The Captain Frontier emphasized that they are introduced to brand information mostly for orientation, whereas Hotel Department, for which customers are of top priority can get more information on brand. For example, Respondent 9 stated: “...a lot of information comes via email, email is a major source of information..., in addition [we have] a meeting twice a year, where the main concepts are presented. The Hotel gets a lot of it as they have most contact with customers...we as captains get typically information at the orientation level, while a Hotel Manager and Tour Leader get it at the operational level”.

However, one of Hotel Managers (R6) experienced lack of information on brand and argued that holding two meetings a year, where the brand is discussed, is not enough. The following statement illustrates the Respondent’s view: “But we have no meetings or “workshops” with the land [land-based part of organization], where we go through them [brand statements] and see what they stand for. Otherwise, very little, maximum two times a year you can say we have something similar to this and it is very little. We do not take part in the meetings so much or anything like that where this is discussed” (R6).

One of the Restaurant Managers (See R 16 in Table F.10) remarked that information about the brand does not typically include any explanations or instructions on how and what employees should do in order to carry out their job duties in accordance with the information received: “We could have had much more information about that. We are told to do something, but we could also have been told how to do it. [We need] a little more help on how we can get better. We only know that it should be like that...”

The Respondent next stated that involving more employees in various workshops and meetings about the brand (that are typically conducted with the Management team of the ship) can ensure accuracy in communicating the brand-related information to employees: “Most of top managers have meetings and workshops on how things should be, so that it can be communicated further [to other employees], but it can easily entail distorting of the information [because it goes through several employees before it reaches the final recipient], so it can sometimes result in a little mess. No offense, but that’s the way it is. Everyone should be involved in such workshops”.

The Respondent further recognized that involving employees into such meetings and workshops can be complicated: “...but it’s also a bit difficult, because we are all on board, so we will have to travel to the place, where the workshops take place, but it is not so cheap, since everyone lives in different parts of the country”. The other two Restaurant Managers (R16 and R17) expressed an idea that information about the brand was easily accessible via an employee handbook and was communicated during the orientation about various sales and campaigns, as well as during seminars about new seasonal concepts. Respondent 17 noted that working on board helps to learn about all necessary information. This Respondent did not express any personal involvement in learning more about the brand through participating in different activities.

Respondent 22 (performing the Restaurant and/or Housekeeping functions), on the contrary, expressed sincere interest in taking part in different meetings where the brand-related information is discussed and believed that these kind of meetings “unite” employees from the sea-based organization: “Yes, we had a meeting last summer on board, where was a man talking about our goals and how we as a company should work, like what kind of excursions we can offer... that was good, because we felt kind of connected with other ships, something, yes, it is not just... it is a big company, so, yes”.

Other Respondents performing the Restaurant and/or Housekeeping functions (R21, R23, R24, R25, R 26) expressed different points of view on they get informed about the company's brand. Respondent 21 denied participating in any activities related to the company's brand, but underlined that safety training was an essential part of preparing this employee to start working on board. Respondent 23 stated that there are typically few meetings with the land-based representatives about the brand and that the use of Intranet can help to learn about the company's brand.

Respondent 24 got brand-related information through the meetings and personal communication with the leader. Respondent 25 did not receive an employee handbook, but got a brochure with excursions and confirmed that some updates from the company about its products appear in common work areas. Respondent 26 confirmed that brand-related information was obtained through Intranet, email, meetings for all employees on board and notes and posts in the common work areas.

Delivery of brand values embedded in brand promises

The last and the most important sub-category of internal branding that the researcher developed on the grounds of collected data is "delivery of brand values embedded in brand promises". This particular category reflects and gives an insight into the process of actual delivery of brand values on board the ships.

The researcher included in this sub-category information on a brand promise statement: "Real experiences in unique waters", which was built on the basis of information reflecting how the Representatives of Management of the land-based organization and the employees' of the sea-based organization perceive the delivery of company's brand values happen. It is necessary to note that the crew member's perspective on their brand values delivery is supported by the examples from their actual work experience that they shared with the researcher.

The statement “Real experiences in unique waters” is applied not only as one of the brand promise statements, but also as the company’s vision, therefore within this sub-category the researcher collected rich semantic material that reveals not only what kind of brand values the employees can deliver to the customers, but also how employees perform their job duties in accordance with the company’s vision.

In order to assess more accurately what particular actions the employees undertake to ensure brand values delivery, the researcher summarized the information obtained from the respondents into a number of tables presenting various perspectives of employees from the entire organization.

Table 8 depicts that the majority of Representatives of Management of land-based organization believe that the delivery of brand values embedded in the company’s vision as well as one of its brand promises “Real experiences in unique waters” is realized through involvement of employees of sea-based organization into various activities organized for customers. The Representative of Management of Product and Revenue Department mentioned that onboard activities typically reflect the coast of Norway and that employees are actively encouraged “to tell stories”, so that customers can get a more authentic experience: “we frequently involve Hotel Management, all Captains, all Pursers into storytelling activities related to the culture and history of Norway, whether it is about the fish industry, the Northern Lights, arts and culture. We try to make sure that the people onboard make up a part of that. I believe we work pretty hard at all stages with customers’ expectations”.

Table 8

Management perspective on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters” (land-based organization)

Respondent 1 Rep. of Mng.	Respondent 2 Rep. of Mng.	Respondent 3 Rep. of Mng.	Respondent 4 Rep. of Mng.	Respondent 5 Rep. of Mng.
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Sales & Marketing	International Marketing	Hotel Operations	Product & Revenue	Communication & PR
Treat customers as individuals. Be personally involved, but find a balance. Participate in activities.	Talk to customers. Arrange lectures about Norwegian history, culture, experiences.	Be enthusiastic about activities for guests. Participate in activities with guests.	Provide local knowledge. Tell stories and relate themselves to these stories.	Give customers “authentic knowledge” Provide guests with books and brochures about attractions. Interact with guests.

The Representative of Management of Hotel Operations underlined that the experiences that are offered to the customers become “real” (also authentic), when the crew is enthusiastic about taking part in activities: “I think if they are engaged in the onboard activities and they are enthusiastic about them that really helps our guests feel that the experiences are real”.

The Representative of Management of Sales and Marketing Department also claimed that it is important that employees treat customers as individuals, but at the same time not forget to find the right balance: “Each of our employees needs to find a balance between volume and make sure that everyone experiences an individual touch”. The Respondent further emphasized that this is the way how authenticity, which is one of the company’s values, can be supported: “I think that our authenticity, one of our values, where we take certain responsibilities also should show that we want to make sure that our guests are seen as individuals, but not as in numbers”.

Table 9 illustrates the perspectives on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters” by employees from the Hotel Department represented by Senior Management and Front Desk Staff. The majority of these employees demonstrated that interacting with guests, talking to them, providing them with attention and a bit more service than the guests expect are among the most important

actions that can be taken to make an experience of traveling with Hurtigruten to be “real”, in other words more authentic. One of the Respondents (R19) also believed that it is important to greet guests, create a welcome atmosphere, so that they can feel like home.

Table 9

Perspectives of Hotel Managers and Front Desk Staff on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”

Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	Respondent 6 Hotel Manager
Participate in activities. Establish contact and talk to guests (it is possible because of a small size of the ship).	Establish contact and talk to the guests.	Participate in activities. Establish contact and talk to guests. Be an enthusiastic leader. Provide more service and attention than guests expect.
Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee	Respondent 19 Purser	Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee
Explain guests what happens. Be helpful and nice.	Do one’s best in taking care of guests. Greet guests. Provide guests with attention. Make them feel welcome and feel like home.	Recommend guest to take part in excursions. Tell guest about the route and its attractions.

According to the Captain Frontier (see Table 10), the delivery of company’s brand values reflecting the brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters” can be ensured through Captains’ appearance in the guest areas, making sure that guests feel safe on board, being calm and demonstrating that things are under control. In addition, some of the Captains try to talk to guest, when they are interested in it or inform guests about nature attractions. For example, wake up the guests who want to see the Northern Lights in the middle of the night. One of the Captains also said that helping guests is important

and that it is the entire crew who is in charge of a guest experience with Hurtigruten, but not a single crew member.

Tour Leaders as it is also illustrated in Table 10 try to provide customers with more service than the guests typically expect and be more personally involved in order to ensure the delivery of “Real experiences in unique waters”.

Table 10

Perspectives of Captain Frontier and Tour Leaders on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”

Respondent 9 Captain	Respondent 10 Captain	Respondent 11 Captain
Appear in the guest areas. Help guests. It is not just one person who creates an experience, but all crew members.	Make guests feel safe on board. Be calm. Demonstrate everything is structured and there are routines. Talk to guests, when they show interest in talking to crew members.	Inform guests about nature attractions (even in the middle of the night - f.e.g. the Northern lights).
Respondent 12 Tour Leader	Respondent 12 Tour Leader	Respondent 12 Tour Leader
Talk to guests. Provide information. Offer products of high quality. Be personally involved and provide guests with more service than they expect.	Inform about attractions, but also other events that happen during the trip. Provide guests with more information on attractions and events than what it stands in the instructions.	Provide guests with more service than they expect. Be more personal with guests. Be flexible and offer better solutions for customers.

Restaurant Managers (see Table 11) stated that providing guests with a bit more service than they expect and being flexible in accommodating guests’ needs for food is important to make their experience with Hurtigruten more special. Some of the employees provided the researcher with very interesting examples demonstrating this.

For example, Respondent 16 told a story about one guest, who had a severe allergy and could not eat any dessert, however he managed to have a dessert on board Hurtigruten for the first time in ten years: “I remember very well one patient, who was in a wheelchair and had an extreme food allergy. He had not eaten dessert for 10 years. But we managed to prepare a dessert that he could eat every day. This guest later said that it was the best experience he ever had: eating dessert that he was not allowed eating for 10 days”.

Table 11

Perspectives of Restaurant Managers and Restaurant Staff on brand values delivery embedded in brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”

Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager	Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager	Respondent 17 Subordinate Restaurant Manager
Provide as much help as possible (especially, in case of food allergies). Provide guests with a bit more service.	Tell the guests about the route, culture and stories. Be personally involved and be flexible with food, in case guests have allergies. Create positive atmosphere.	Take time to talk to guests. Tell about excursions and nature. Be personally involved. Take good care of guests. <i>*Try to find balance with showing attention to the guests and performing work duties – this depends on occupancy.</i>
Respondent 21 Waiter & Steward	Respondent 22 Waiter & Steward	Respondent 23 Waiter & Steward
Smile to guests. Take care of guest. Tell stories. Inform about attractions that are not presented in brochures. Be polite and greet guests.	Create positive atmosphere, so that guests can get enthused by it. Talk and listen to guests. Show that the crew likes guests.	Participate in activities. Involve guests in activities. Make guests feel like a family. Be personally involved. Talk to guests. The entire crew creates an experience.
Respondent 24 Waiter & Steward	Respondent 25 Waiter & Steward	Respondent 26 Waiter & Steward

<p>Always smile. Be nice and look happy. Create positive atmosphere and make guests get themselves in a good mood. Be personally involved and help guests. Take good care of guests.</p>	<p>Perform our job as good as possible. Establish contact with guests. Talk to guests. Provide top service and good food.</p>	<p>Inform guests. Send guests to Tour Leader or Front Desk, so that they can get help needed. Remind guests not to forget about the departure time.</p>
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Some of the Restaurant Managers as well as Waiters & Stewards emphasized that creation of a positive atmosphere and showing personal involvement is crucial to let the guests get the best possible experience on board the ship. For instance, Respondent 22 remarked: “Most of the time if there is a really good mood on the entire boat: it is when the crew has fun together. I think the guests see it and then everyone gets happy. So, yes, the atmosphere is so important”. This Respondent next stated that guests often give a very positive feedback after the trips, because the employees talk to them and listen to them: “Often, you get a good feedback after the trip, because you have been talking to them and listening to them. This is the thing that you can do: show them that this is not just the job that I am doing, but show them that I like the guests. So this is the most important”.

Storytelling was among the most frequently named activities as well. For instance, Respondent 22 believed that sharing knowledge about the local attractions and Norway in general can make the guests get a top experience of traveling with Hurtigruten: “I think it’s is really important that all the crew members know a little bit about the history, maybe, not just what is said in the brochure, but maybe a little bit extra from your hometown, just a little bit extra there, here, and there. So they get a little bit of the top experience. Stories like “Wow! That did not say the brochure, the booklet”.

One of the Restaurant employees (R23) also observed that the guests can get a really unique experience, when they participate in activities together with employees and that it is the entire boat, but not just one employee, who creates a guest experience: “I

think, [it is] not only me, but I think the whole crew is trying to do something every day. We have a waving contest in Finnmark, where we are waving to the other ship. And it is always important to win [laughing] and stuff like that. They feel like we are one family: the crew and the tourists. I think that is small stuff, but still a lot of people really like this...”

The findings represented in this sub-section demonstrated how the actual delivery of the company’s central brand promise occurs in practice. This research data will be further analyzed in relation to the findings obtained on employees’ awareness of their company’s brand, vision and cultural values. The researchers’ observations and conclusions developed on the grounds of this analysis will be presented in the next section.

Discussion

This part of the research paper presents a discussion of the findings described in the data analysis chapter. The findings obtained are discussed in relation to the existing research. The implications and recommendations for future research are provided. The limitations of the present research are demonstrated.

Employees’ awareness of brand

Defining the concept of brand

The findings obtained on the basis of employees’ definitions of the concept of brand demonstrated a significant difference in how employees of different organizational levels understand this concept. It was established that the majority of Representatives of Management believe that the nature of brand is characterized as two-fold: brand is originally built internally and its essence gets reflected to the general public externally. Some of these respondents also remarked that a brand is associated with values.

The majority of employees of sea-based organization taking different positions, on the contrary, related the concept of brand mostly to a product or a name of a product, also a recognizable name of a product. Consequently, these respondents emphasized the “marketing” perspective in their definitions that sets in focus the external, the promotional, side of a brand. The researcher also observed that considerably many (eight out of twenty-two) respondents experienced difficulties in defining a brand. Some of these employees (four respondents) representing Senior Management and Middle Management positions on board a ship noted that this concept can be understood in a variety of ways depending on the context, whereas the remaining four respondents not taking a managerial positions were not sure how to define this concept.

It is also necessary to mention that only two of the Representatives of Management understood a brand as a set of values, whereas none of the employees of the sea-based part of organization expressed such an opinion. However, some employees stated that brand can be related to quality of a product. The researcher supposes that the latter definition can be seen as ascribing of values to the concept of brand.

These findings are in concord with existing research within a brand theory that underlines the complexity of brand’s nature and a lack of agreement on how this concept can be universally defined (de Chernatony et. al., 1998; Franzen & Moriarty, 2009). The researcher also assumes that a variety of definitions that is observed in the respondents’ answers can be explained by the employees’ professional and educational background.

Employee perspective on the company’s brand

The researcher observed that the majority of Representatives of Management, whose work responsibilities are related to various extents to brand building, underlined the authentic character of their company’s products. Therefore, authenticity was considered to be the central component of the company’s brand. However, the researcher observed that

preserving the authentic character of the company, and thus its brand creates certain challenges: the company needs to operate and position itself as both a supplier of transportation services for the local communities along the coast and as a destination for the tourists.

The findings that reflect awareness about the company's brand by employees working at the sea-based part of organization, demonstrated that the majority of employees described the brand in relation to products that company can offer to market: observing nature phenomena. Some employees also ascribed uniqueness to their company and suggested the following reasons for it: 1) it provides customers with a unique way of experiencing Norway by sea, 2) the company's long history and/or that the company still preserves its authentic character, 3) unpredictable and various weather conditions, 4) atmosphere on board that is created by both the employees and the guests, 5) employees' unique (probably "authentic") features such as honest and real that are characteristic of Norwegian people, 6) "typical Norwegian" culture, nature and weather.

The company's brand was also related by one of the employees to quality and security. Two respondents explained that the company is about tourism, however they did not define the company's main product as a typical cruise, but rather as a voyage. Some of the respondents mentioned that Hurtigruten operates in a unique way because it takes both the local passengers and the tourist on board. One of the respondents assumed that the company's brand is about providing good service, while three other respondents associated the brand with core values.

On the grounds of these observations the researcher came to the conclusion that the majority of employees of sea-based organization were very well aware of their company's brand, as they could explain what makes their company so unique and authentic. Although employees' descriptions varied in length, it was obvious that these reflected the

components of the main brand promise that the company gives to customers: “Real experiences in unique waters”. The researcher defined these components as “authenticity” and “uniqueness” and assumed that they may also express the company’s core values that the customers may expect to obtain while traveling with this company. The researcher also supposed that authenticity and uniqueness can be related not only to the description of natural experiences, but can also be expressed and associated with other objects or phenomena that create a total brand experience.

The researcher next proposed that employee’s awareness of their company’s brand could be influenced by some positive factors and eventually observed that four employees when asked about how they personally relate themselves to their company’s brand stated that they were proud of being able to work at Hurtigruten and described their company as “a national tourist attraction”. These findings confirmed the research by Grace and King (2007) on the internal branding and how employees relate themselves to their company’s brand. In that particular study it was established that employees, who expressed commitment to their company were more motivated to deliver on their company’s brand promise, and thus strengthen the brand.

Employees’ perspective on Hurtigruten’s vision

The findings reflecting the employee’s awareness of their company’s vision demonstrated that the majority of respondents representing a land-based part of the organization associated the company’s vision with authenticity in experiencing the coast of Norway and underlined that traveling with their company cannot be compared to traveling with “a cruise ship”.

The Representative of Management of Marketing and Sales Department believed that the company’s vision is about providing guests with attractive products of high quality and living company’s values for the guests. The Representative of Management of

Hotel Operations also associated the company's vision with authenticity and one of its core values that is showing responsibility for the environment.

The majority of employees of sea-based part of organization confirmed the view of Management from the on-land organization: these employees made a strong differentiation between a voyage that their company can provide customers with and a cruise that can be bought at the tourist market. Seven respondents representing different organizational levels from the sea-based part of the organization mainly related their company's vision to the company's general business strategy and its profitability. Seven respondents mainly taking managerial positions expressed the view that their company's vision is about core values.

These observations indicate that the majority of employees of different organizational levels expressed an idea that the company's vision is built on its core values. This indicated that employees representing different organizational levels demonstrate a similar understanding of what their company's vision is about and thus know about the company's future ambition (Nanus, 1992). This also confirms that these employees could demonstrate awareness of what the "soul of their organization" is about and were provided with grounds for motivation on how to perform best at work (Collins & Porras, 1996).

However, one of these respondents got confused and did not manage to explain the difference between authenticity that the company describes as its brand's essence, and company's core values. This observation was of high value for the researcher as it indicated that some employees do not differentiate between those. The researcher got a confirmation that authenticity can serve as a core value of a company and can be also defined as "a core brand value" promised to the customers. It is essential to note here that the observation of this confusion in the respondent's answer confirms the existing research

in the brand theory: there is no adequate answer on how the nature of company's and brand values can be defined and differentiated (Urde, 2003).

Employees' perspective on Hurtigruten's core values

It was determined that the Representative of Management of International Marketing believed that the company is associated most with the core value "secure". This Respondent also believed that core value "generous" created difficulties in defining it in relation to how it can be expressed in the company's products, and explained this core value as a quality applied in communication between employees, whereas "responsibility" was described as a value of universal nature that everyone should have, for example when they go to work.

The Representative of Management of Product and Revenue Department defined "secure" in terms of authenticity, "genuine" was explained as openness in communication both internally and externally. However, it was noted that "generous" may not be easily to achieve within the organization, while "generous" on the employee level was related to customer-focus and enthusiasm.

The perspectives of employees representing the Management level of the sea-based part of the organization represented by Captains, Hotel Managers and Purser revealed that these employees were most aware of their company's core values. This was in correlation with the fact that these employees get training on the company's brand. The researcher found out that one of these employees stated that company's core values are universal in a way, no one really talks about them, and they just exist. The rest of the employees who were mostly taking Middle-Management and ordinary positions had difficulties in describing what values they associate with their company. However, the researcher managed to establish that these respondents mostly associated company's core values with quality, uniqueness, authenticity, nature experience, good working

environment, a welcoming atmosphere for customers and loyalty. Supposedly, these employees did not have training on company's core values.

The lack of awareness of some employees on the company's core values confirmed the existing findings of studies conducted in order to find out whether the employees are aware of values of their organization. For example, the study by Paarlberg & Perry (2007) revealed that only a few employees can recall any values of their organization, although the organization used four years on communicating its values to employees.

However, it should be also noted here that the researcher assumed that the question about company's core values was probably quite difficult to answer by some employees.

For example, one of the employees while describing the vision used company's core values and when was later asked a question about company's core values, got confused and became resistant. Even though the researcher applied a number of additional probing questions to obtain additional information from this respondent, no answer was still obtained. The researcher supposed that the respondent was not interested in participating in the interview as it was taken during the off-time from work.

It is also important to note that one of the respondents expressed wish to get more information about company's core values, but at the same time mentioned that the increasing scope of work did not allow reading such information while being at work. Therefore, the organization might need to take this into consideration: ensuring that employees are aware of their company's values is crucial for the delivery of company's brand.

Employee perspective on Hurtigruten's brand promise

A variety of different perspectives was obtained through the answers of employees on the question about what they think customers are promised by the company. However, the majority of employees (thirteen employees) believed that the company promises guests to experience Norwegian nature. Three employees mostly represented by the Captain Frontier emphasized that the company promises customers safety is of priority and this is something what the customers are promised. The researcher assumed that this is in accordance with these employees work responsibilities, for this reason providing safety is the most important aspect of a guest experience on board.

Other respondents claimed that providing a product that is promised by the company is the most important and this occurs through ensuring that the program with activities is followed. One of the respondents believed that the company promises and offers good service. Four respondents were in doubt what to answer, but suggested that it could be food and beautiful nature environment. Some of the employees noticed that it happens that they do not get enough information what might cause misunderstandings and highlighted that it is important that they get updates regularly.

The researcher also observed that some employees believed that the company promises a bit more than it can actually deliver. In such cases it was mostly related to the fact that guests would expect more amenities and services on board. The researcher supposed that it was related to the challenges that the company faces in positioning its products: some customers would still expect amenities of a cruise ship when they buy a tour, because they are not provided with the right information or they probably get it, but misinterpret. However, one respondent believed that the customer does not expect more than the company can promise, because what it promised is the view and not more than that.

To sum up, the findings discussed demonstrate that more than half of employees are aware of what their company promises to the customers, and this is nature-based experiences. However, a number of employees claimed that the company promises a bit more than the crew has a capacity to deliver: amenities and special service. For this reason, it is necessary to make an attempt to improve and provide a better training to the employees who are responsible for reservations. It is important to ensure that sales representatives understand the company's products and can clearly communicate what particular benefits the customers can expect and obtain when buying the company's products. In this way the organization can get a better control of the process of brand delivery and thus not provide guests with a negative brand experience (O'Malley, 1991).

Employee perspective on internal branding practices

It was established that employees are provided with free access to information about the company's brand and its components presented in an employee handbook. Employees have also recently been involved by the company to participate in the seasonal programs "Hunting the light" and "Arctic awakening" that are aimed at more interaction between the crew and the guests. All the marketing materials representing the route, attractions and excursions as well as a daily program with marketing materials are also freely available for the employees. However, the Representative of Management of Hotel Operations noted that employees from the Hotel Department get information on excursions and other activities, but are not explained how these should be implemented. The Representative of Management of Product and Revenue Department also mentioned that there is a difference between information and integration. This observation confirms the findings of Punjaisri and colleagues (2008). The results of their research established that providing employees only with information without face-to-face communication was not considered to be effective for communicating information about the brand.

Channels of internal branding

The researcher established that the most common source of information that was applied in the organization for informing employees about the company's brand was an employee handbook and Intranet. However, the researcher determined that these channels of internal branding could not be efficient enough for the sea-based part of the organization as the majority of employees only receive information, but do not get any training or explanations on how they are supposed to perform their duties in order to support the company's brand. This fact is supported by the findings of the research on investigating effectiveness of internal branding channels conducted by Punjaisri, and colleagues (2008). The study revealed that employees prefer face-to-face communication and that it is important for them to be able ask questions about the brand (Punjaisri, 2008).

Some of the employees taking a position of Hotel Manager or a Restaurant Manager mentioned that they do not get sufficient amount of information about the brand. One of the Hotel Managers claimed that two meetings per a year where the brand was discussed was not enough, whereas one of the Restaurant Managers underlined that other employees, but the Captain Frontier and Hotel Managers, should be more involved in different activities such as workshops about the brand. This Restaurant Manager also recognized that communication of information about the brand is not always efficient on board, because different employees have different perspectives of interpreting information and when the riffle effect is communicating the information about the brand is used it can affect its accuracy. This Respondent also noticed that employees need more explanations on how things should be done. In other words, providing employees only with information was not perceived to be an effective way of internal branding, this supports again the findings of Punjaisri (2008) and colleagues.

Delivery of brand values embedded in the brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”.

The findings generated on how employees relate themselves to the delivery of brand values embedded in brand promise “Real Experiences in unique waters” revealed that the majority of employees demonstrated that they are actually delivering the brand values of this particular brand promise. It was established that employees are being more and more actively involved by the Management in various activities on board the ships, so that more interaction between employees and guests can happen and thus the delivery of a real, authentic experience may occur. The majority of employees demonstrated enthusiasm about taking part in such activities.

It was also established that employees were actively involved in storytelling activities especially, Hotel Managers. The majority of employees also expressed the view that it was important to be personally involved, demonstrate care and attention to the guests, be flexible, create positive atmosphere, be polite, greet guests and make them feel like home.

The enumerated actions of the employees can be regarded as the actual delivery of the brand promise “Real experiences in unique waters”. The examples which employees provided of how they actually deliver the brand to the guests confirmed that employees awareness of the company’s brand, vision and brand promises is very high. Although some of the employees could not provide the researcher with explanations of what core values their company has, the assessment of their actions supported by the examples from their actual experience on how they deliver on the main brand promise of the company allowed to establish that employees apply the company’s core values in the interactions with customers and thus ensure the delivery of the company’s core brand values.

The researcher came to a conclusion that the core brand values of the examined organization can be defined as authenticity, uniqueness, security, generosity and responsibility. Thus, the company's main brand values comprise both: the elements of the brand promise "Real experiences in unique waters" represented by "authenticity" and "uniqueness" and core values of the organization (which the company calls for cultural values) "security", "responsibility" and "generosity".

Limitations

While the researcher conducted the present study a number of limitations were identified that supposedly reduced the richness and quality of the data collected:

- 1) The HR-manager of the examined company responsible for hiring the employees for the sea-based part of the organization was not willing to participate in the research project, therefore the researcher could not obtain information from the primary sources about hiring practices that exist in the organization and what kind of training and information about the company's brand employees are provided with. For this reason, the researcher had to rely on the information received through the personal interviews with the interviewed employees from both the land-based and sea-based parts of the organization.
- 2) Due to different locations of the offices of the Senior/General Management, the researcher did not have an opportunity to communicate with these respondents face-to-face, therefore, the interviews were conducted over the phone.
- 3) From the three ships that the researcher requested to conduct interviews with in the port of Bergen, only the Management from two ships managed to find time to participate in the research project. The employees from the third ship were interviewed over the phone (a number of employees from the first ship were also

interviewed over the phone, since they could not find time to participate in the interview, while the researcher was on board the ship).

- 4) During the interviews conducted on board two ships, a number of employees were exposed to stress as they were still on duty and could get distracted by the questions or requests from the side of the customers.
- 5) Not all employees from the interviewed ships were willing to participate in the interview voluntarily and share their experiences.

Conclusion

This research study was developed in order to assess how aware the employees, that have most direct contact with customers, of their company's brand values and determine how this is reflected in their delivery of brand promises. In order to answer this research question the researcher developed a qualitative case study research strategy. In the process of the study the researcher determined employees' awareness of the main elements of their company's brand, assessed how employees' awareness of their company's brand can influence brand values delivery to the customers, and finally find out how the delivery of brand values to the customers occurs setting in focus an employee perspective. The researcher also encountered the limitations of the present study.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Description of the project

Assessment of brand values delivery by the employees in the cruise industry.

The intent of this project is to assess the problematic areas that create obstacles in communication of brand values by the employees to the customers. To determine the extent to which employees communicate their company's brand values promised to the customers, a research strategy with mixed methods for collecting data will be applied.

The research will be conducted in a form of a case study with a participation of a cruise line. Hurtigruten ASA is of particular interest for the present project. Traditionally, the company has been a coastal express, dealing with transportation of local inhabitants and freight. Today Hurtigruten ASA seeks to win new both international and national market segments and become a cruise line with a variety of attractive travel products. This background enhances the company's need for brand promise delivery research.

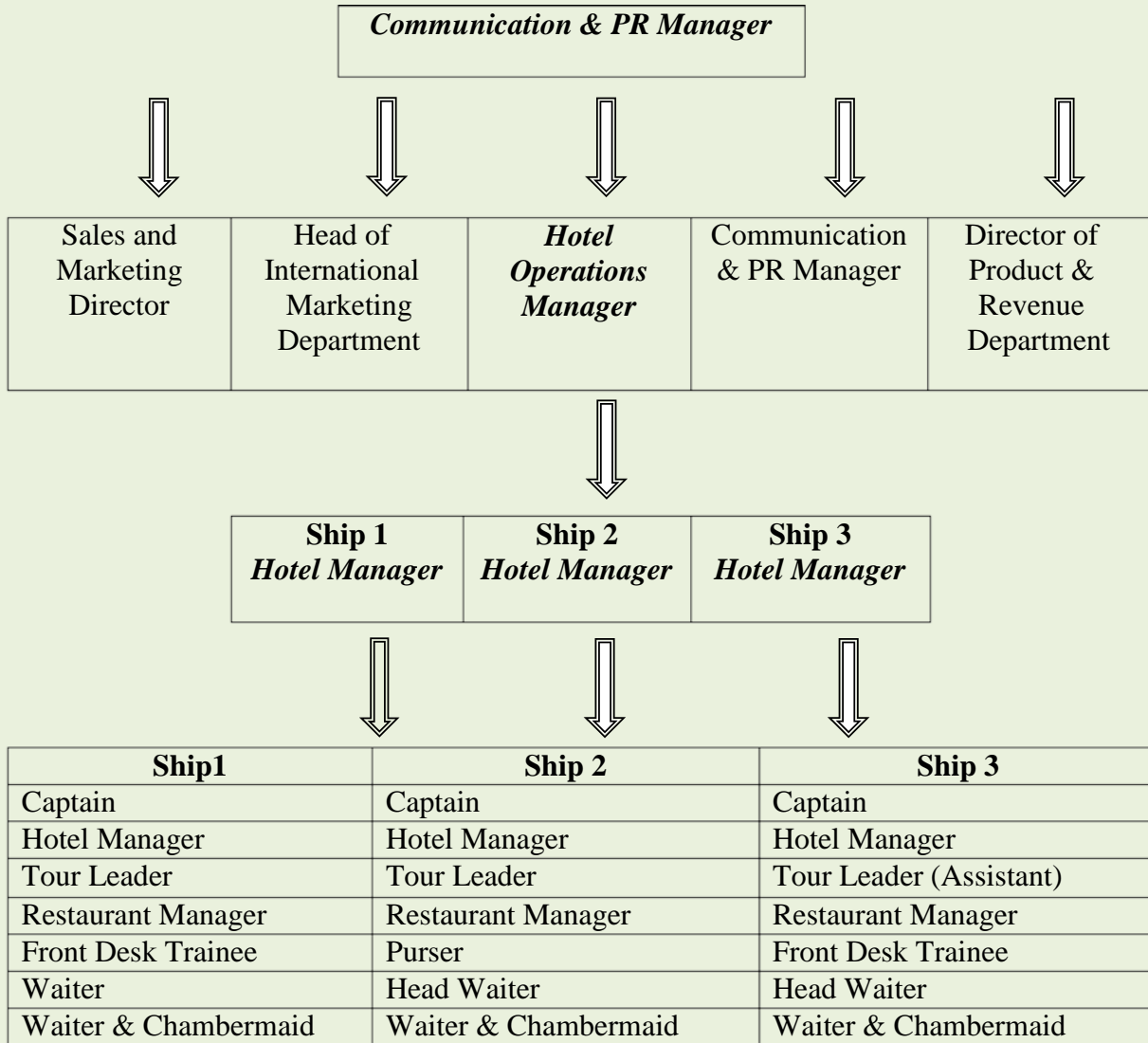
The results of this study can be used by management for better understanding of how efficient internal communication of brand values is and simultaneously see how customers and employees perceive the company's brand values. The results of this study can be used by management to get a better insight into its internal branding practices and determine areas where improvements are needed for building relations with customers. This is highly important for the company's ability to compete with other cruise lines offering attractive cruise products and services, especially since the cruise industry is expected to become more popular among vacationers in the nearest future.

The case study strategy will be designed on the ground of three main data collecting techniques: (1) content analysis of the company's webpage representing its brand promises, vision and cultural values, (2) interviews with a few key informants investigating their knowledge of their company brand promise, and (3) two survey questionnaires designed for both employees and customers to assess their experience with the company's brand promise. These will be correlated to determine how employees think they are bringing the values of corporate brand to the customers and how well the customers perceive the delivery of brand promises. The aim is to give the Senior Management of the reviewed company an insight into not just whether their values are delivered, but determine specific areas, where the delivery of the brand is successful and not so successful.

Appendix B

Figure 1

Snowball Sampling Stemma of the present study



Appendix C

Interview guide applied in the present project (English version)

Introduction

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in the research project about the internal brand building in your company. Your participation is highly important for this project. Your answers will be treated with confidentiality. No names will be used. If you do not want to answer any questions or proceed with the interview, let me know. I would like to ask you whether I can use a dictaphone. The use of it will help me not to misinterpret your answers. Once the transcription of the interview is finished, the recording will be deleted.

1. How long have you worked at this company?
2. What is your current position?
3. How long in your current position?
4. What responsibilities do you have?
5. Can you describe the organizational structure of your company and clarify where your post is within this structure?/ Whom do you report to and eventually who reports to you?

6. Can you explain to me what a “brand” is?

- 6.1 What associations do you have with a word “brand”?
- 6.2 What does a brand mean to you?

7. How would you describe your company’s brand?

- 7.1 What associations do you have with your company’s brand?
- 7.2 Can you explain what your company’s brand means to you?

8. What kind of information do you get about your company’s brand?

- 8.1 What kind of information do you usually get from your company?
- 8.2 Can you tell me what your company promises to the customers?
- 8.3 How do you learn about it?

9. What do you know about your company’s vision? Can you describe it to me?

- 9.1 Why would customers choose to travel with Hurtigruten, but not any other company?
- 9.2 What makes your company so special to travel with?
- 9.3 What organizational values do you think your company has?
- 9.4. What general work values/principles do you use when you are on duty?

10. How important is it for you to know what customers have been promised? Why?

- 10.1 How important is it for you to know about customers’ needs and expectations? Why?

10.2 How does this information help you to provide customers with the service they have been promised?

11. How do you help cruise passengers feel like their voyage with your company is something really unique?

11.1 Could you recall any situations, when you helped cruise passengers feel like their tour with your company was something really unique?

Thank you very much once again for taking the time to participate in the interview. It was a pleasure talking to you. Do you have any questions that I might answer?

Appendix D

Interview guide applied in the present project (Norwegian version)

Introduksjon

Tusen takk for at du har tatt tid til å delta i prosjektet som handler om intern varemerkebygging i ditt selskap. Din deltakelse er veldig viktig for prosjektet. Dine svar skal behandles konfidensielt. Ingen navn skal brukes. Hvis du ikke ønsker å svare på noen spørsmål eller fortsette intervjuet er det bare å si ifra. Jeg lurer på om det er greit at jeg bruker diktafon? Dette skal hjelpe meg med å ikke mistolke dine svar. Etter transkribering av intervjuet, blir filen med intervjuet slettet med en gang.

Informasjon om respondenter:

1. Hvor lenge har du jobbet i dette selskapet?
2. Hvilken stilling har du nå?
3. Hvor lenge har du jobbet i din nåværende stilling?
4. Hvilke ansvarsområder har du?
5. Kan du forklare hvor din stilling befinner seg i organisasjonstrukturen?/ Hvem er det som du rapporterer til? Hvem er det som du rapporterer til og hvem er det som rapporterer til deg?

6. Kan du forklare meg hva et varemerke er?

- 6.1 Hvilke assosiasjoner har du med ordet "varemerke"?
- 6.2 Hva betyr ordet "varemerke" for deg?

7. Hvordan vil du beskrive varemerket til selskapet du jobber i? Hva står det for?

- 7.1 Hvilke assosiasjoner har du til ditt selskaps varemerke?
- 7.2 Kan du forklare hva selskapets varemerke betyr for deg?

8. Hva slags informasjon får du om ditt selskaps varemerke?

- 8.1 Hva slags informasjon får du vanligvis av ditt selskap?
- 8.2 Kunne du fortelle meg hva ditt selskap lover sine kunder?
- 8.3 Hvordan får du vite om dette?

9. Hva vet du om ditt selskaps visjon?

- 9.1 Hvorfor bør kunder velge å reise med Hurtigruten og ikke et annet selskap?
- 9.2 Hva gjør at ditt selskap er så spesielt å reise med?
- 9.3 Hvilke organisasjonsverdier tror du ditt selskap har?
- 9.4 Hvilke arbeidsverdier/arbeidsprinsipper bruker du når du er på jobb?

10. Hvor viktig er det for deg at kunder får det de har blitt lovet? Hvorfor det?

- 10.1 Hvor viktig er det for deg å vite om kundens behov og forventninger? Hvorfor det?

10.2 Hvordan hjelper deg sånn informasjon i å levere den servicen de har blitt lovet av selskapet?

11. Hvordan hjelper du cruise passasjerer å føle at deres reise med ditt selskap er noe helt unikt?

11.1 Kunne du huske noen situasjoner da du hjalp cruise passasjerer føle at deres reise med ditt selskap var noe helt unikt?

Tusen takk en gang til for at du tok deg tid til å delta i dette intervjuet. Det var hyggelig å få snakke med deg. Har du eventuelt noen spørsmål du ønsker å spørre meg?

Appendix E

Table E.1.

Research questions and corresponding interview questions (umbrella only) from the study by "Internal branding: Exploring the employee's perspective" by Grace & King (2007)

<p>Research Question 1: To what extent do employees understand what their organisation's brand represents?</p>	<p>Umbrella questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you explain to me in your own words what a brand is? 2. What does your organization's brand stand for?
<p>Research Question 2: How do employees acquire organisational knowledge to help them carry out their roles and responsibilities in accordance with their organisation's brand promise?</p>	<p>Umbrella questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you give me an overview as to the type of information your organisation gives to its employees? How do you receive this information (e.g. memos, email, newsletter, meeting and training)? 2. Can you give me an overview as to the type of information (feedback) that employees in your organisation give back to the organisation? How does this happen (eg informal, survey, meetings, etc.)
<p>Research Question 3: What factors are considered by employees to be necessary for them to successfully deliver their organisation's brand promise?</p>	<p>Umbrella questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you explain to me how having knowledge about your customers' needs and expectations help you to know how to act in certain situations? 2. To what extent do you feel it is important for you as an employee to understand what has been promised/advertised in relation to the service you provide?
<p>Research Question 4: How does the organisation's internal market orientation impact employees' relationship with the brand?</p>	<p>Umbrella questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To what extent do you feel it is important for you as an employee to understand what has been promised/advertised in relation to the service you provide? 2. We have talked about what the organisation advertises versus what is actually delivered—is there anything else that your organisation could implement that would ensure there was consistency between the advertised promise and the delivery?

Appendix F

Table F.1

Definitions of the concept of brand by employees in English

Respondent	Definition of a brand
Respondent 1 (R1) Representative of Management Sales & Marketing	"... I am responsible for marketing, so I apparently know what the brand stands for".
Respondent 2 (R2) Representative of Management International Marketing	"...for me, in a way, the brand is somehow the essence and the basis of how the company positions itself to the outside world, when it comes to customers in a way, which is our most important target group, but also, of course, internally. Our brand positioning should also differentiate us from the competitor environment".
Respondent 3 (R3) Representative of Management Hotel Operations	"A brand for me is something that makes a company recognizable to everybody out in the public domain. And that's kind of stage one of the brand; stage two of a brand is what it is associated with. So if I give you an example: McDonalds restaurant, the burger people, their brand is very recognizable due to the "Golden Arches", but it is associated with the fast food".
Respondent 4 (R4) Representative of Management Product & Revenue	"I tend to think in terms of the marketing mix. I see the brand in general as the overall reflection both internally and externally of our desired company's position".
Respondent 5 (R5) Representative of Management Communication & PR	"A brand means to me a set of values I ascribe to a trademark or product that makes me give a higher or lower priority to this trademark or product".
Respondent 6 (R6) Hotel Manager	"It is a logo, it is a policy and it is something that emerges quite clearly as though it is a recognizable melody" and things like that".
Respondent 7 (R7) Hotel Manager	"It is Coca-Cola and other major brands. It is the result of a lot of marketing and the delivery of a good product that people want".
Respondent 8 (R8) Hotel Manager	"Coca-Cola and Colgate and SAS and [mumbling], it is well-known brands that have to do with almost every day of your life, you see it in commercials, you see it in print, you are somehow familiar with them. It's something that you relate yourself to almost every day, [it is something] you see in the newspapers and on television".
Respondent 9 (R9) Captain	"...brand is a product, not necessarily a product name, but a manufacturer name, which is actually related to the company that produces the product and it is something that creates trust or something that diminishes trust... A brand has something to do

	with what you as a person associate or relate to the name and not necessarily the product of the company”.
Respondent 10 (R10) Captain	“It is related to a particular quality of the product that is produced for example by SAS, Statoil”.
Respondent 11 (R11) Captain	“A brand for me, yes, it is a rather difficult question, it is clear that a brand is something that you try to develop over time and make consistent. In our case, a broad market, a brand means something that you try to make recognizable in a simple way, perhaps through several methods, but in any case it is, yes, what I shall say...”
Respondent 12 (R12) Tour Leader	“Brand is something that is well-established, it is only one of a kind, probably such as Coca-Cola. There is only one Coca-Cola and its brand is protected. I believe it is products, which are protected by licenses or something like that. So a brand is protected and well-established in the market, so that if I say: “Coca-cola”, so everyone knows that it is a soft drink. So it is something that becomes a part of people’s minds. A brand must be something that is established over a long period of time, I think. A new product cannot just enter the market and become a brand right away; it is something that comes over time. It is built with the help of marketing: creating awareness about this product, which you become familiar with”.
Respondent 13 (R13) Tour Leader	“Brand, as I see it, is a name that represents a thing, that gives an impression of some things, that evokes feelings for some things, that explains some things. And building a good brand, as I see it, is linking the name with something what is produced. For example, Hurtigruten -“the world's most beautiful voyage”, it is a definition of it. People, who live along the coast, associate this brand with a transport linking the coast. When someone sees the logo or hears the name “Hurtigruten” it should refer to what we want to sell and what we are good at”.
Respondent 14 (R14) Tour Leader	“...a brand actually means to me a product with a reputation, a product that has a meaning in some sort. A brand, not in relation to Hurtigruten, is a product that has meaning, a product with a reputation that people either know or do not know about.”
Respondent 15 (R15) Restaurant Manager	“It is a familiar product, when defined in short. It is a product that is very familiar, and the more familiar it is, the better the brand is”.
Respondent 16 (R16) Restaurant Manager	“Brand, then I look at what the company actually stands for and what it produces. For example, if we take a hotel, its brand stand for what it delivers”.
Respondent 17 (R17) Substitute Restaurant Manager	“I do not really know how to answer this. It is a product you get for the money paid, what a person gets for the product bought. It is what the product is about, the one you buy, so simple”.
Respondent18 (R18)	“It is to provide the best possible offer to passengers and the best

Front Desk Trainee	service possible”.
Respondent 19 (R19) Purser	“...look at a thing and define it. If I look at something I associate it with something positive or something negative in a way. [if] It is not linked to a brand, it is a bit difficult. If I look at a company then the experience I get, when I come in as a customer, will be [a part of] their brand. For example, if we take a hotel, then it is those I meet when I get to the reception who will represent the brand in a good or a bad way. The same goes for a car, when you get into it, it feels either good or bad”.
Respondent 20 (R20) Front Desk Trainee	“A brand means a name that describes the product, the product we deliver; it is difficult to give an example of it, when I cannot use Hurtigruten. I would say that, for example, Nora is a brand, they have jam and a lot of other things”.
Respondent 21 (R21) Waiter & Steward	“A brand? A recognizable name...”
Respondent 22 (R22) Waiter & Steward	“I think of “reklame” like you have to make people know it, the brand, and I do not know. I think about status, like if you have a brand [mumbling], but then it depends on if you think about clothes or if you think about, yes”.
Respondent 23 (R23) Waiter & Steward	“I am not sure. Well, in general, it is normally how people experience stuff, but also how you look on it when you see like the advertise. I do not know it is a difficult question”.
Respondent 24 (R24) Waiter & Steward	“Something that means quality, perhaps, that it is a good quality...”
Respondent 25 (R25) Waiter & Steward	“No, I do not know what it is”.
Respondent 26 (R26) Waiter & Steward	“A brand is something that tells what, yes, like Coca-Cola and stuff like that that says something about a product. Brand is probably the name of a service or product. The name of a product”.

Table F.2

Definitions of the concept of brand by crew members in Norwegian (the original version)

Respondent	Definition of a brand
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	“Det er en logo, det er en policy og det er noe som fremkommer ganske klart med en gjenkjennings melodi og litt sånt forskjellig”.
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	“Det er Coca-Cola og slike store merker. Det er resultat av veldig mye markedsføring og at de har levert et bra produkt som folk vil ha...”

<p>Respondent 8 Hotel Manager</p>	<p>“Coca-Cola og Colgate og SAS og [mumling], det er jo kjente merker en er borti nesten hver dag, du ser det på reklame du ser det på trykk, du er liksom familiær med dem. Det er noe du forholder deg til nesten hver dag, [det er det som] du ser i aviser og på TV”.</p>
<p>Respondent 9 Captain</p>	<p>“...varemerke er et produkt, ikke nødvendigvis et produktnavn, men er produsentnavn som egentlig relateres til firmaet som produserer varen og den betydning er noe som skaper tillit og noe skaper mindre tillit. Det er ikke så mye tillit til tobakk produsenter, de som produserer tobakk har et kjempe varemerke, men ikke tillit. De som produserer redningsvester har ikke så stort varemerke, men veldig mye tillit. Et varemerke har noe å gjøre med hva du som person forbinder eller relatere til navnet eller ikke nødvendigvis produktet med det firmaet”.</p>
<p>Respondent 10 Captain</p>	<p>“Det relatert til en bestemt kvalitet på produktet som du har i selskap som SAS, Statoil for eksempel”.</p>
<p>Respondent 11 Captain</p>	<p>“Et varemerke er for meg, ja det er et litt vanskelig spørsmål. Det er klart at et varemerke er noe som man prøver over tid å reindyrke og spisse mot et. I vår tilfelle, et bredt marked, et varemerke er en betingelse på noe som du prøver å gjøre kjent på en enkel måte, kanskje gjennom flere metoder...”</p>
<p>Respondent 12 Tour Leader</p>	<p>“Varemerke er da noe som er innarbeidet og ganske fast, det er kun kanskje en av dette merke som for eksempel Coca-cola. Det finnes bare en Coca-Cola, dette varemerket er beskyttet. Det er produkter som er beskyttet gjennom lisenser eller noe slikt vil jeg tro. Så varemerke er gjerne beskyttet ja og innarbeidet sånn at, sier jeg: “Coca-Cola”, så vet alle at det er en leskedrikk. Altså det er noe som er innarbeidet i bevisstheten til folk. Varemerket må da være noe som er innarbeidet over lenger tid tenker jeg. Et nytt produkt kan ikke bare komme på markedet og bli et varemerke, det er noe som kommer over tid. Det kommer av markedsføring: å skape bevissthet rundt dette produktet som man blir kjent med”.</p>
<p>Respondent 13 Tour Leader</p>	<p>“Varemerke slik som jeg ser det er et navn som representerer en ting, som gir et inntrykk av noen ting, som gir følelser for noen ting, som forklarer noen ting. Og bygge bra varemerke slik jeg ser det er å knytte navnet sammen med det en leverer. Slik som Hurtigruten for eksempel, «verdens vakreste sjøreise», det er et begrep på det. For kyst folket så er varemerket transport, knytte sammen kysten. Ved å se logoen eller høre navnet Hurtigruten så skal en få det som vi vil selge og det som vi er bra på”.</p>
<p>Respondent 14 Tour Leader</p>	<p>“... et varemerke for meg det betyr egentlig et produkt med omdømme, et produkt som har en betydningsforhold i en eller annen form. Et varemerke, ikke i sammenheng med Hurtigruten – et produkt som har betydning, et produkt med omdømme som folk</p>

	enten vet om eller ikke vet om”.
Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager	“ Det er en kjent vare, enkelt og greit. Det er en vare som er veldig kjent, og jo mer kjent det er dess bedre varemerke er det”.
Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager	“Varemerke, da ser jeg på hva det firmaet egentlig står for og hva dem produserer. For eksempel ved et hotell så blir varemerket det dem leverer”.
Respondent 17 Substitute Restaurant Manager	“Vet ikke helt hva jeg skal svare jeg. Det er vare en får igjen for pengene, hva en får for den varen en kjøper. Det er hvordan varen er, den du kjøper, helt enkelt”.
Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee	“Det er å gi best mulig tilbud til passasjerer og best mulig service”.
Respondent 19 Purser	“...se på en ting og definere det til noe. Hvis jeg ser på noe at jeg forbinder det med noe positivt eller noe negativt på en måte. Det er ikke merkefiksert, så det er litt vanskelig. Hvis jeg skal se på en bedrift så vil jo den opplevelsen jeg har, når jeg kommer inn som en kunde, være deres varemerke. For eksempel, et hotell, så er det dem jeg møter når jeg kommer i resepsjonen, vil definere varemerke for dem om det er bra eller dårlig. Samme gjelder for en bil, når du setter deg inn i den, føles det bra eller dårlig”.
Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee	“Et varemerke vil si det er et navn som beskriver produktet, produktet vi leverer, det var vanskelig å ta et eksempel på det når jeg ikke kunne bruke Hurtigruten. Jeg vil si at for eksempel Nora er et varemerke, de har jo både syltetøy og alt annet”.
Respondent 24 Waiter & Steward	“Noe som betyr kvalitet kanskje, at det er god kvalitet, at vi serverer ... at jeg kan stå for maten som blir servert at det er god kvalitet på den og at jeg kan stå for det som blir servert og folk har drikke og sanne ting. Og at det er god atmosfære, at det er godt miljø, det reflekterer igjen til gjestene at hvis folk er blide og glade så blir som regel gjestene og blide og glade, og det er jo litt sånn varemerke som de fleste Hurtigruter er kjent for å ha, veldig god atmosfære. - Disse her colour fantasy og de båtene, som danskebåten er på en måte det samme, men jeg vil si at Hurtigruten er mer jordnært enn de andre selskapene som er. Men det går jo i det samme varemerket der og på en måte, med å stå for det man gjør og serverer god mat og drikke og alt det der”.
Respondent 25 Waiter & Steward	“Nei, det vet jeg ikke altså”.
Respondent 26 Waiter & Steward	“Et varemerke er noe som forteller hva, ja, som for eksempel Coca-Cola og sanne ting som sier noe om en vare. Varemerke er vel navnet på en tjeneste eller et produkt.Navnet på en vare”.

Table F.3

Employees' descriptions of Hurtigruten's brand in English

Respondent	Description of Hurtigruten's brand
Respondent 1 Representative of Management Sales & Marketing	<p>“Our company’s brand is actually two-fold. The brand overall stands for a number of values and directions we search ourselves. You’ve probably read our brand statements. I am not going to go into that, particularly, because I am responsible for marketing, so I apparently know what the brand stands for... So our challenge for the brand is the combination of two types of businesses, we are doing. We clearly focus on tourism, where the brand needs to stand for destination orientation, and, of course, comfort and authenticity, while for the local traffic, where we take guests from/between ports, where the brand needs to stand also for convenience and ease of transport. And our challenge is to combine those two brand attitudes into one overall brand. One of the efforts we currently are undertaking is to list a brand profile, while not forgetting our port support business, but list a brand profile to position us as truly one of the top destinations in the world. While we are a supplier, we see ourselves very much of the backbone in the lifeline of Norway. So in such a way we are both the supplier and the destination. We’d like to be seen as one of the top destinations in the world. Our branding effort will be more and more focused on that sense of exclusivity that you have to have seen and have been there in order to appreciate and be a traveler who is very experienced”.</p>
Respondent 2 Representative of Management International Marketing	<p>“We have a brand positioning statement, which is called “For people dreaming about nature-based experience and about polar areas, we are the best way to experience it. We can provide you with local connections and cooperation, unique destination flexibility and knowledge as we do”. And our ambition within our brand strategy is to be the best way to experience Norway, but it is also Greenland, Antarctica and Spitsbergen, because these are our explorer destinations”.</p>
Respondent 3 Representative of Management Hotel Operations	<p>“...My company, I’d like to think, is associated with coziness, openness, and fresh air and adventure. However, how we communicate this through our brand is something of a long conversation”...“So with our brand we try to associate... when you come to Norway to travel with our company, you will actually experience a proper adventure, not just a holiday”.</p>
Respondent 4 Representative of Management Product & Revenue	<p>“The brand that we strive for is to be authentic, and that is to reflect the company vision and the reasons why we believe what we offer, is important and marketable”.</p>
Respondent 5 Representative of Management Communication & PR	<p>“The brand essence is authentic. “Ekte” in Norwegian. Our core brand value is authentic. We are the historical coastal route since 1893 and all we do is relating to that we want to do something as we are a part of the communities on the coast. We’d like to differ us</p>

	<p>from the cruise companies that are only here for the tourists. But we are also here for the communities that we have a role to play along the coast going from the 34 different ports. So a tourist that goes to Norway will take part in the Norwegian society and community, so therefore we have the brand value that is essential to us, it is authentic. And everything we do, it should be authentic. It is all about the truth, the excursions we do, the music onboard and it should be a part of the Norwegian history... We try to be very different from what we call "the white ship". We are different, we are here because of the own heritage that we playing a role along the coast with the cargo, with the local passengers and tourists. So we are not here especially for the tourists, but because we are here for the local community, the local people travelling from A to B and for the cargo, that is why we also are interesting for tourists".</p>
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	<p>"...Very anonymous in relation to that [brand]. I am indoctrinated into the brand of Hurtigruten now, but generally it's very anonymous. Hurtigruten is very anonymous as a brand. No, you see it [Hurtigruten's brand] very little; you see very little what Hurtigruten is about. It is a big brand, but very anonymous compared to other brands, [for example] to Tine. It's a very anonymous brand in relation to the brands of the same kind".</p>
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	<p>"Being Hurtigruten [entails that] we should associate ourselves with quality. It should be quality, security and, yes".</p>
Respondent 8 Hotel Manager	<p>"Hurtigruten stands for great experiences, safety, nice boats, the world's most beautiful voyage. This is how we call it, isn't it? Real "Norwegianness", I think that is covering".</p>
Respondent 9 Captain	<p>"There are two things. When you are an employee it is hard to give one answer, because being an employee [means that], you try to have the values that the brand offers and there is no guarantee that the customer perceives it in the same way as we do. We as employees attach great importance to the name [brand]. We try to live up the values, [and] there is no guarantee that the customer sees them. So we attach meaning to things in a different way in Hurtigruten than the customer does, because we have some organizational values, [and] the customer has expectations, they expect something, [and] that is a product that we present."</p>
Respondent 10 Captain	<p>"It is of great importance for tourism. We are nominated and represent an important brand. Hurtigruten stands for safe, generous and responsible. It means [to me] security and that there is a company that takes security seriously and gives it a high priority, and it is the quality of the products we provide our customers with".</p>
Respondent 11 Captain	<p>"Well, there are several things that make Hurtigruten very special, it is a few things, a few moments that should, perhaps, be more emphasized than others. But what makes Hurtigruten special, is a</p>

	<p>route, a regular route that has existed since 1893. So it's a very old brand "Hurtigruten". It has a very long tradition, and this is one thing. The second thing, is the unique way of how we operate. First and foremost, we transport freight and local passengers to many ports between Bergen and Kirkenes. In addition, we are also in a way a cruise ship, [although] we would not call ourselves "a cruise ship", but we function as a cruise ship for those, who wish to use our services and take a full round trip in eleven days or half of it. We also emphasize in our brand that we operate in extreme waters in extreme weather conditions, but at the same time it is very safe, so it has to do with security and the procedures to ensure it. I feel this is what, perhaps, we emphasize in our product". "...In addition... we cruise along a very beautiful coast, and primarily it's nature and the experiences that have to do with nature: winter with snow, storm, calm, Northern Lights; summer with the sun, Midnight Sun, and all this things that make it very special and it is also part of what I feel is our brand. But first and foremost, [it is] that we are sailing under weather conditions, but we do it in a safe way all year round".</p>
<p>Respondent 12 Tour Leader</p>	<p>"Hurtigruten's brand stands for coastal transportation of people and freight, this is Hurtigruten you can say, it is the core of what Hurtigruten operates with. But then you also have Hurtigruten's brand, in my opinion [that] is a journey along the coast for tourists. We do not only bring tourists from A to B, but we show them the Norwegian nature, and show them different cities, and tell them something about it. So a part of the Hurtigruten' brand has also been to develop facilities for a voyage, so that tourists can take a voyage along the coast to explore and observe it. So it is not necessarily freight shipping from A to B, but also experiencing the coast. We offer various activities along the coast. We can offer them [tourists] excursions, so that they can take a bus tour and see more of the country. We also offer activities on board related to what is typical Norwegian, "the real Norwegian". So it is foreigners, who come on board. [In this relation] it is the brand that we call and advertise as the world's most beautiful voyage. Consequently, it is to get to know Norway through different types of waters, become familiar with a long country via the coastline".</p>
<p>Respondent 13 Tour Leader</p>	<p>[From the general definition of a brand]: ... "Such as Hurtigruten, for example, the world's most beautiful voyage, this is a definition of it. For coastal people it is a brand standing for transport linking the coast. By looking at the logo or by hearing the name "Hurtigruten" you associate what we sell and what we are good at".</p> <p>"...not exactly, but if I search, it [a definition] certainly exists, certainly something including core elements and details that are written down. On the grounds of the information that I work with and the contact with guests, I am of the opinion...yes, much of the information that comes has to do with professionalism, quality and safety. Safety has become a major issue, as much of the information</p>

	<p>that goes out is all about safety. And then it is in the material [about what] we sell, there are signals about all this, fantastic experiences, and [mumbling], and in the spring we have now “The Artic awakening” and then they sort of theorized the whole product. It is a kind of industrialization. I think it has become too “dry” in a way. It becomes just “a paper product”, but what we sell is an experience, and the experience the guest gets has nothing to do with industrialization, but what becomes important is whether they are happy.”</p>
<p>Respondent 14 Tour Leader</p>	<p>“I claim that Hurtigruten’s brand is about unique experiences on a world scale, in other words, you get a completely unique way to experience Norway. Simple and easy. For me personally, it means a lot, actually. I am very proud to be one of those, who help [tourists] to experience Norway in a unique way. I am very proud of it.”</p>
<p>Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>“The world’s most beautiful voyage”. Beautiful scenery of nature in Norway, the Norwegian coast, but now we’ve also got “explorer” market in the Antarctic, Greenland and Svalbard. It is simply, the world’s most beautiful voyage. [For me] it is first and foremost, my workplace, but it is a job I’m proud of, I can say that it[Hurtigruten] is a national tourist attraction here in Norway and I am very proud that I have been a part of it for eleven years. Hurtigruten’s future prospects were rather bad five years ago, and I'm proud that I was one of many others, who have helped to build it up to what it is today, and we will become better as you will see the future”.</p>
<p>Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>“Tours and experiences and all that there, because we are about tourism and we want to offer voyages full of various experiences, excursions”.</p>
<p>Respondent 17 Substitute Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>“...to show Norway’s nature and service [mumbling]...no it is nature, to meet many people, develop language”.</p>
<p>Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee</p>	<p>“...do the best I can for our passengers. Do the best I can so that they get the best possible trip. It is real experiences in Norwegian waters, [traveling with Hurtigruten] is already an experience, also beautiful scenery. My job is to help the passengers, so that they get a good experience”.</p>
<p>Respondent 19 Purser</p>	<p>“Safe, generous and responsible, that’s what we want to be and that’s what we want to be recognized for by others. We are unique. I think we have got it in ourselves as Norwegians: we are honest and real, and we try to get it to the foreigners. And then you get [experience] the nature, but under safe conditions, and I believe we manage to convey this message to the people, who come [on board]”.</p>

<p>Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee</p>	<p>“Our business idea is “Real experiences in unique waters”. I would say this describes Hurtigruten very well, because we are presenting the Norwegian coast and it’s a “live” broadcast, 24 hours a day. We go, yes, the ship goes all year round, regardless of bad weather conditions or wind. For me personally, it [Hurtigruten] is extremely important. I am very proud of my job and I think it is very important [mumbling] and that the guest gets a maximum benefit of our company. So when they buy a trip, they typically want to see the Northern Lights. So we announce the Northern Lights. We have the concept “Hunting the light” in winter, that’s why we have guests in the winter. It’s what they come to see, and then you can almost call “our” selling the Northern Lights for a brand. So it is very important that for example the Tour Leader hangs up the weather forecast that says that this evening there will be the Northern Lights and etc., so in this way we show that we really want to give the guest the most of their trip”.</p>
<p>Respondent 21 Waiter & Steward</p>	<p>“Well-known, yes, I would think it is old and well-established name. Everybody knows more or less what it is, yes. [it is] Norwegian, I would say “typical Norwegian”...Culture, nature and weather; I know you just experience a lot of weather, when you are on board”.</p>
<p>Respondent 22 Waiter & Steward</p>	<p>“I think about fjords and the beautiful environment, and I think about the Arctic Circle, it is far north, so it is very special. And I think about old happy people...” “I feel proud about it; because it is...it feels like, I do not know, fancy... people, who work in Hurtigruten. The cleaning lady is not very fancy, but it is an adventure to work here. I mean my view from the window changes all the time and I meet a lot of new people... Sorry, what was the question? Oh, hm. What it means to me? That is a hard question. No, I feel proud about it. Is it enough?”</p>
<p>Respondent 23 Waiter & Steward</p>	<p>“OK, I think it is experience and then unique, because it is really unique the experience you have, when you travel with us, even if it is nice weather. If the weather is not so nice, the experience you have is special, because even if you have worked for 10 years, it is different every time, you get new guests and so on. I think it is like unique, it is important too for the guests and that’s I think the main reason why people take Hurtigruten. You can take a lot of cruises, but it is never the same as Hurtigruten. It is not like a normal cruise. You never know what to expect, because of the weather and the people and I think it is the people who actually, the guests and the people from the crew, who make the Hurtigruten”.</p>
<p>Respondent 24 Waiter & Steward</p>	<p>“It stands for unique experiences in free waters. They elaborate a lot on this experience before people come on board and begin sailing, so the sea and mountains are set in focus and also what makes up the Norwegian coast, [and] culture in the north, so this is a brand. That’s why people come, for example to travel to the North Cape and stuff like that. As far as I know it is a very good brand. There are many</p>

	people, who travel with Hurtigruten up to the North Cape. There are many such things that we, who are from Norway might not even think of as a brand, but it is very special, the entire coast, really, the nature and all that in Geiranger and ... this is what it [Hurtigruten] is advertised for, and all excursions that you can join: dogsledding in Tromsø and snowmobile safari in the evening, and the Northern Lights, and other big attractions. The Northern Lights are usually in the north. There are very many people from China, who are attracted by the Northern Lights, and they do not really know what it is, they have only been told that they will see the Northern Lights. And, yes, that is the brand that Hurtigruten has”.
Respondent 25 Waiter & Steward	“What Hurtigruten stands for? It’s the one that goes along the coast. ...that it has boats going along the Norwegian coast”.
Respondent 26 Waiter & Steward	“Hurtigruten’s brand is about transportation of people and goods. It means to me that I have a job to go to and that I can provide service when I am at work, and it is something what I like very much”.

Table F.4

Descriptions of Hurtigruten’s brand by crew members (the original version)

Respondent	Description of Hurtigruten’s brand
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	“Veldig anonymt i forhold til det [varemerke]. Nå er jo jeg indoktrinert med varemerket til Hurtigruten, men sånn generelt så er det veldig anonymt. Hurtigruten er veldig anonymt som varemerke. Nei, du ser det veldig lite, ser veldig lite hva Hurtigruten er. Det er et stort varemerke, men et veldig anonymt varemerke i forhold til andre varemerker, i forhold til tine. Det er et veldig anonymt varemerke i forhold til tilsvarende varemerker”.
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	“Som Hurtigruta, så skal vi assosiere oss med kvalitet. Det skal være kvalitet, skal være sikkert og ja”.
Respondent 8 Hotel Manager	“Hurtigruten står vel for flotte opplevelser, trygghet, fine båter, verden vakreste sjøreise. Er det ikke det vi kaller det? Ekte norskhet, det syns jeg er dekkende”.
Respondent 9 Captain	“ Det er to ting, fordi det kan du ikke som ansatt helt svare på det, fordi som ansatt prøver du jo å ha de verdier som varemerket gir og det er ikke gitt at kunden ser det på samme måte. Fordi vi legger som ansatt veldig mye i navnet [varemerket], vi prøver å etterleve de verdier, det er ikke gitt at kunden ser de. Så vi legger nok på en annen måte ting i Hurtigruten, enn kunden gjør, fordi vi har noen arbeidsverdier, kunden har noen forventninger, de forventer noen ting, at det er et produkt som vi presenterer”.

<p>Respondent 10 Captain</p>	<p>“ Det er veldig høyt innen reiseliv, vi er nominert og er veldig høyt varemerke. Hurtigruten står for trygg, raus og ansvarlig. [for meg] Det betyr tryggheten og at det er et selskap som tar sikkerheten på alvor og gir den en høy prioritet, og det er kvalitet på den varen vi leverer ut til kundene”.</p>
<p>Respondent 11 Captain</p>	<p>“ Ja, da kommer jeg å si at det er jo flere ting som gjør det at Hurtigruten ganske er spesiell, det er en del ting, en del momenter som må kanskje legges mer vekt på enn andre, men det man kan si er spesielt med Hurtigruten, det er på en måte en rute, en rutefart som har vært bestått siden i 1893. Så det er et veldig gammelt varemerke “Hurtigruten”. Det har jo en veldig lang tradisjon, det er en ting. Det andre er at det er veldig unikt i forhold til måten vi operer på. Først og fremst så transporterer vi last og lokal passasjerer mellom veldig mange havner mellom Bergen og Kirkenes. I tillegg så er vi også på en måte et cruiseship, vi vil gjerne ikke si at vi er et cruiseship, men vi fungerer som et cruiseship for de som ønsker å benytte oss enten på en hel rundtur på elleve dager eller en halv tur. Det som vi også vektlegger kanskje sterkt i det her med å bygge merkevare vårt, det er at vi operer i ekstremt farvann, i ekstreme væreforhold, samtidig så er det veldig trygt, så det har med sikkerhet og ivaretagelse av sikkerhet er jo det som jeg føler kanskje det som vi fremhever i vårt produkt”. [Personal meaning] Ja, da vil jeg på en måte nesten gjenta det som jeg nettopp sa.Hurtigruten for meg det er en gammel, nå er det jo, det har vært omstrukturert gjennom tider fra hvis man går 20 år tilbake, så var det fem rederier som samarbeidet om den her kystruten fra Bergen til Kirkenes og tilbake fra Kirkenes til Bergen. Fram til 2006-2007, så var det to rederier og nå er det et rederi. Men i alle fall så er det en gammel tradisjon og det er en viktig ting for meg, og at vi seiler i den her krevenes rute sommer og vinter, natt of dag gjennom hele året at og det gjøres under trygge forhold. Det er det egentlig Hurtigruten er for meg. Også det faktum at vi seiler langs fantastisk flott kyst, og primært så er det natur og de opplevelsene som har med natur å gjøre det kan være vinter med snø, storm, stille, Nordlys, sommer med sol, Midnattssol, og alle her tingene som gjør at det er veldig spesielt og det er også en del av det som jeg føler er varemerket vårt. Men først og fremst at vi seiler under disse her forskjellige værforhold og gjør det på en trygg måte året rundt”.</p>
<p>Respondent 12 Tour Leader</p>	<p>“Varemerket til Hurtigruten er jo å stå for kysttranssport av personer og last, det er Hurtigruten kan du si, det er kjernen av det Hurtigruten driver med. Men så har du jo varemerket Hurtigruten som etter mitt ståsted vil si en reise langs kysten i turistøyemed. Vi vil jo ikke bare frakte turister fra A til B, vi vil vise dem norsk natur og vise dem forskjellige byer og fortelle dem litt om det. Så litt av varemerket til Hurtigruten har vært å tilrettelegge reisen til å bli en reise langs kysten for turister slik at de kan få med seg og se kysten. At det ikke nødvendigvis er en frakt etappe fr A til B, men det skal være en opplevelse langs kysten. Og diverse aktiviteter vi tilbyr langs</p>

	<p>kyste, at vi kan tilby dem utflykter slik at de kan være med på en bussutflykt slik at de kan se mer av landet. Og vi tilbyr aktiviteter om bord som relatert til det som er typisk norsk, som er det ekte norske. Så i den grad det er utlendinger som kommer om bord. Så er varemerket som vi sier og reklamerer med at det er verdens vakreste sjøreise. Altså, det er å bli kjent med Norge gjennom forskjellige typer farvann, bli kjent med et langt land via kystlinjen”.</p>
<p>Respondent 13 Tour Leader</p>	<p>“...ikke direkte, hvis jeg søker, så finnes det sikkert, så er det sikkert skrevet ned noe kjernefullt og detaljert, men det er jo ut i fra den informasjonen jeg jobber med selv og og den kontakt jeg har med gjester så jeg er av den oppfatning..., ja, mye av informasjonen som kommer har å gjøre med profesjonalitet og kvalitet, og sikkerhet. Sikkerhet har blitt en stor sak, så mye av informasjonen, som går ut handler om sikkerhet. Og så er det jo i det materialet [om det] vi selger der er det innebygget signaler om alt dette, flotte opplevelser og [mumbling] og på vårparten nå, så har vi «the artic awakening» og da har de liksom teoretisert hele produktet som blir litt industrialisering og det blir alt for tørt synes jeg på et vis, det blir bare et papir produkt, for det vi selger er jo en opplevelse og den opplevelsen gjesten har, har ingenting med industrialisering å gjøre, det som gjelder er om de er fornøyde ”.</p> <p>[From the general definition of a brand]: Slik som Hurtigruten for eksempel, verdens vakreste sjøreise, det er et begrep på det. For kyst folket så er varemerket transport, knytte sammen kysten. Ved å se logoen eller høre navnet Hurtigruten så skal en få det som vi vil selge og det som vi er bra på”.</p>
<p>Respondent 14 Tour Leader</p>	<p>“Jeg påstår at varemerket til Hurtigruten er helt unike opplevelser i verdens sammenheng altså, du får en helt unik måte å oppleve Norge på. Enkelt og greit. For meg personlig betyr det veldig mye, faktisk. Jeg er veldig stolt av å kunne være en av dem som viser frem den her unike muligheten for å reise rundt i Norge på og jeg er veldig stolt av det”.</p>
<p>Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>“...verdens vakreste sjøreise. Fine flotte naturen vi har i Norge, norskekysten, men nå har vi jo og det eksplorerer markedet som vi har i Antarktis, Grønland og Svalbard. Det er rett og slett verdens vakreste sjøreise. [For meg er] det først og fremst min arbeidsplass, men det er en arbeidsplass jeg er stolt over, kan jo si det er en nasjonal turistattraksjon her i Norge som jeg er veldig stolt over å være med på nå i elleve år. For fem år siden så alt heller mørkt ut for Hurtigruten, så jeg er stolt over å være en av mange som har vært med på å bygge det opp til det det er per dags dato og bedre skal vi bli så man ser jo framover”.</p>
<p>Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>“...reiser og opplevelser og den biten der, for vi er turisme og vi vil gi opplevelsesreiser, excursions...”</p>
<p>Respondent 17 Substitute Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>“...å vise Norges natur fra sin beste side og service [mumbling], nei det er jo naturen, få møte mange mennesker, utvikle språk”.</p>

<p>Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee</p>	<p>“Gjøre det best mulig for våre passasjerer - Gøre alt for at de får en best mulig reise - Det er ekte opplevelser i norske farvann, [å reise med Hurtigruten] er en opplevelse i seg selv, også flott natur. Min oppgave er å hjelpe passasjerer slik at de får en bra opplevelse.”</p>
<p>Respondent 19 Purser</p>	<p>“Trygg, raus og ansvarlig blant annet som er det vi vil være og ønsker andre skal kjenne oss igjen på. Vi er unike. Jeg tror vi har det hos nordmenn: vi er ærlige og ekte og prøver å få det til til utlendanske. Og at du har naturen, villskapen, men under trygge forhold, og det tror jeg vi klarer å formidle til dem som kommer”.</p>
<p>Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee</p>	<p>“Forretningsideen våres er jo «Ekte opplevelser i unike farvann», og det vil jeg si beskriver Hurtigruten veldig godt, fordi vi presenterer norskekysten og det er jo «live» sending 24 timer i døgnet. Vi går jo, altså skipet er jo i fart hele året og uansett vær og vind. For meg personlig er det jo veldig viktig, jeg er veldig stolt av jobben min og jeg syntes det er veldig viktig [mumbling] og at gjesten får et størst mulig utbytte av selskapet våres. Altså når de kjøper seg en tur så kommer de som regel for å se Nordlyset. At vi annonserer Nordlyset, vi har jo konsept «Hunting the light» på vinterstid, det er jo derfor vi har gjester vinterstid det er jo for at de kommer for å se Nordlyset Og da kan en nesten kaller det merkevaren våres å selge Nordlyset. Så det er veldig viktig at reiseleder for eksempel henger opp værmelding som viser at i kveld blir det Nordlys og sånt, slik at vi viser at vi virkelige ønsker å gi gjesten størst mulig utbytte av turen sin”.</p>
<p>Respondent 21 Waiter & Steward</p>	<p>“Well-known, yes, I would think it is det er gammelt og det er opparbeidet navn. Everybody knows more or less what it is, yes. [it is] Norwegian, I would say “typical Norwegian”. “So, what do I think when I hear the word “Hurtigruten”? Culture, nature and weather, I know you just experience a lot of weather, when you are on board”.</p>
<p>Respondent 22 Waiter & Steward</p>	<p>“I think about fjords and the beautiful environment, and I think about the Arctic Circle, it is far north, so it is very special. And I think about old happy people. I feel proud about it, because it is...it feels like, I do not know, fancy... people, who work in Hurtigruten. The cleaning lady is not very fancy, but it is an adventure to work here. I mean, my view from the window changes all the time and I meet a lot of new people... Sorry, what was the question? Oh, hm. What it means to me? That is a hard question. No, I feel proud about it. Is it enough?”</p>
<p>Respondent 23 Waiter & Steward</p>	<p>“OK, I think it is experience and then unique, because it is really unique the experience you have, when you travel with us, even if it is nice weather. If the weather is not so nice, the experience you have is special, because even if you have worked for 10 years, it is different every time, you get new guests and so on. I think it is like unique, it is important too for the guests and that’s I think the main reason why people take Hurtigruten. You can take a lot of cruises,</p>

	but it is never the same as Hurtigruten. It is not like a normal cruise. You never know what to expect, because of the weather and the people and I think it is the people who actually, the guests and the people from the crew, who make the Hurtigruten”.
Respondent 24 Waiter & Steward	“Det står for unike opplevelser i fritt farvann. De spiller veldig på den opplevelsen folk har før de går om bord til vi begynner å seile ut over så det er veldig mye fokus på fjord og fjell og det vi har av norsk kyst, kultur oppover, så det er vel varemerket. Det er vel derfor folk kommer for eksempel reise til Nordkapp og slike ting. Som jeg vet er det et veldig bra varemerke. Det er mange folk som reiser med Hurtigruten kun for eksempel for å komme på Nordkapp. Det er mange slike ting som vi fra Norge kanskje ikke tenker over så veldig at det er varemerke, men det er veldig spesielt hele kysten egentlig, naturen og alt det der inn i Geiranger og ... for det er jo det det blir reklamert for, og alle utfluktene får en vært med på hundeslede i Tromsø og skutersafari på kveldstid og Nordlyset ikke minst, det er og stort trekkplaster. Nordlyset som som regel er nordpå. Det kommer veldig mange fra Kina som er opptatt av Nordlyset , og de vet ikke helt hva dette er. De har bare fått hørt at de skal få se Nordlyset og det er jo et varemerke Hurtigruta har”.
Respondent 25 Waiter & Steward	“Hva Hurtigruten står for? Det er jo den som går langs kysten, er det sånn du mener? At den har båter som går langs norskekysten, er det sånn du mener det? ”
Respondent 26 Waiter & Steward	“Varemerket til Hurtigruten er befraktning av folk og gods. Personlig så betyr det at jeg har en jobb å gå til og at jeg får lov å yte service i mitt arbeid som /er noe jeg liker veldig godt. ”

Table F.5

Employees' descriptions of Hurtigruten's vision (the original version).

Respondent	Description of Hurtigruten's vision
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	"Visjonen er trygg, raus og ansvarlig. (Differentiation) Men vi er ikke cruise! Dette er ikke cruise! Dette er som en buss. Vi jobber med passasjerer som reiser fra et sted til et annet sted og rundreise passasjerer, men det er ikke et cruise skip, Fram driver med cruise. Men det er flere utlendinger som reiser med oss og blir med på forskjellige aktiviteter her om bor og på land, noen må de betale for og noen må de ikke det. Det er ingen andre som går denne ruten da dette opprinnelig var en post rute, derfor kan det være turister foretrekker oss".
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	"Trygt, raus og husker ikke de andre, men tror det skal være 4 ting.

	<p>(Differentiation) Det er lokal kunnskap blant folket som jobber her, det er mye lokale matvarer og vi er jo et arbeidsskip som fanger opp mye mer om kystkulturen enn det som et cruiseskip kunne ha gjort, de må kjøpe seg tjenester fra lokalbefolkningen, mens her har vi lokalbefolkning om bord så får mye mer pulsen på lokalsamfunnet oppover langs kysten enn med et cruiseskip. Vi kommer så nært på de norske, både kystlinje og vi går i farvann der de ikke kommer til med store cruise skip i vert fall. Store cruise skip går ikke inn i trollfjorden, de går ute i havet og rett til nordkapp. Reisen her er mye mer opplevelse i reisen på selve skipet, det er ganske sparsommelig standard her i forhold til de store cruise skipene, så her er mye mer reisen opplevelsen som skal være produktet".</p>
<p>Respondent 8 Hotel Manager</p>	<p>"Ja det er godt spørsmål. Det må være den beste og tryggeste aktøren på cruise markedet på kysten, en unik leverandør av et sterkt varemerke, høy kvalitet og i tillegg ha verdens fineste eksplorerer skip som går utenriks.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Da får de en mye mer ekte opplevelse med stort sett lokal besetning og så går vi en rute som er helt inntil, oppå land nesten, og besøker storbyene oppover og unike småsteder og de får en helt annen opplevelse av kysten.</p> <p>Båtene er relativt sett små, og så er de veldig hyggelige, og så er det lange turer, så blir de godt kjent med produktet og besetning og når de avslutter en slik lang tur eller noen dagers tur så er kjente blitt godt kjente og en har fått en fantastisk tur".</p>
<p>Respondent 9 Captain</p>	<p>"Selskapet har en visjon om å være en god arbeidsplass med stor takhøyde med et image eller varemerke som gjør det trygt å reise med oss, som gjør at kundene/passasjerene er trygge i det de tror vi gjør eller det de mener vi gjør. Og det er jo egentlig visjonen at vi skal fremstå som trygg arbeidsplass med stor takhøyde og et trygt renommé.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Det er jo et PR spørsmål, det er «public relations» så det har jeg egentlig ikke et svar på, jo det har jeg fordi svaret ligger jo i det produktet vi tilbyr er forskjellig, vi er ikke et stor cruiseskip, vi har ingen bingo, vi har ingen karaoke, vi har mye annet, vi tilbyr egentlig naturen, men for all del vi er ikke cruiseskip. Vi er her for kystens befolkning, det er hovedmålet og det forsvinner iblant med turistene, det er en liten feil for vi er her for å tjene kystens befolkning. Turistene er et biprodukt passasjerene eller rundturspassasjerene er et biprodukt, det gir mye penger, men det er et biprodukt".</p>
<p>Respondent 10 Captain</p>	<p>"Det er kvalitet.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Det er kombinasjon av at vi driver en samfunnstjeneste med mange andre tjenester, tar med last, tar med turister og distanse reiser, opplever små plasser, lokal befolkning og natur opplevelser. Vi har mange små plasser innaskjærs som gjør at du opplever den norske natur på nært</p>

	hold".
Respondent 11 Captain	<p>"Spørsmålet er veldig klart. Jeg bare tenker. Det er slik at det her å drive Hurtigruten er på en måte todelt: det er den kommersielle driften som har med å utvikle produktet som retter seg mot det internasjonale markedet og de som reiser mer for å oppleve Norge og norsk natur under alle forhold, den andre delen gjeleder på en måte transport av «distanse passasjerer» som vi kaller dem fra havn til havn og befraktning av last. Når her vi inngått i en avtale med Den norske stat, som på en måte legger ganske klare føringer på hvordan det her skal drives slik at nå har vi en avtale som går i åtte år fra årsskiftet. Og det er jo klart at der har staten lagt ned en del føringer som vi på en måte må forholde oss til, slik at vi kan ikke gjøre så mye annet enn å seile i et gitt rutemønster med avgang hver dag fra Bergen til gitte tider og sånne ting. Så det er ingen fordyrende at vi utvikler et produkt. De siste årene så har vi jo forsøkt naturlig nok å få større oppmerksomhet og større innsesser rundt høst og vinter og det har vi lykkes veldig godt med. Hvis vi går tilbake til den tiden da jeg begynte på Hurtigruten, så var det veldig lite aktivitet om vinter, veldig lite passasjerer, og i det hele tatt det var ikke inntekt for å si det sånt. Gjennom et program hvor vi prøver å framheve de tingene som har med høst og vinter å gjøre, spesielt det her med det har lys, Nordlys i de mørke landsdelene, så har vi faktisk hatt en veldig økning i antall passasjerer på vinterstid. Så det er sånne ting man prøver å utvikle. I fjor så har vi forsøkt å utvikle et konsept som går på hva det er spesielt for vår og jeg ser for meg at det også blir utviklet helt spesielle skreddekydde konsept for høst, også for sommer. Sommeren er tradisjonelt den tiden når tingene går seg selv, vi har mye folk, til dels fullt. Jeg tror at det å utvikle produktet videre i forhold til de årstidene, det er en av visjonene til Hurtigruten.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Jeg tror at er et veldig spredt sammensatt svar på det. For det første så er Hurtigruten som jeg nevnt tidligere er ei rute som har vært oppretholdt nær sagt uendret i over et hundre år. Det er en veldig lang gammel tradisjon. Det er også slik at jeg tror jo det i litt senere tid, så har det her med å oppleve ekte opplevelser, ekte natur, ekte naturopplevelser er noe som folk på en måte setter større pris på enn det å for eksempel å reise til Syden eller reise på storbyferie eller hva det måtte være, det tror jeg bestemt. Samtidig så hører vi jo veldig ofte at de som reiser synes det er veldig spesielt nettopp på grunn av at vi er ikke et cruiseskip vi er et arbeidsskip som i tillegg til å ha turister om bord, så har vi da distanse passasjerer, vi har last som skal lastes og losses i alle havner. Og de her tingene er noe som fenger veldig blant turistene og selvfølgelig den unike naturen som vi har og de skiftende værforholdene alt etter årstid, skiftende lysforhold, de her ekstreme opplevelser, det er ofte de som vi får tilbakemeldinger om at folk ønsker å oppleve".</p>

<p>Respondent 12 Tour Leader</p>	<p>"Det må vel være å drive med trygg frakt av mennesker og gods som vi har gjort til nå, vi har jo lang historie og vil gjøre videre framover. Klarer å tilby det produktet vi har lyst å selge slik at kunder kommer tilbake og har lyst å fortelle at vi har vært med på verdens vakreste sjøreise. Visjon, hva skal jeg si, kan jo alltid si selge mer. Det er jo et produkt som er at slik at vi skal klare å overleve så er vi avhengig av kunder og for at kundne skal komme må det være et godt produkt. Det er viktig å bevare at det skal være norsk, det skal være ekte og det skal være autentisk. Det skal være basert på det vi har å tilby langs kysten, det skal ikke være som på et cruise skip med en armede banditter og bingo og underholdning litt sånn amerikansk, det skal være norsk, det skal være ekte og det skal være her langs kysten det vet jeg er viktige kjerneverdier. Om det går inn under deres visjon tørr jeg ikke si.</p> <p>(Differentiation) For det første er dette et produkt som er ekte, det har eksistert langs kysten siden 1893 og vi seiler 365 dager i året. Ikke slik som cruiseskipene som kommer opp her for å skumme fløten, de kommer i juni, juli og august og drar. Vi er her hele året og vi skal være pålitelige langs kysten noe vi må være for vi er innom 34 havner fra Bergen til Kirkenes. Og i alle disse havnene er det frakt som skal frem og det er mennesker som skal av og er avhengig av oss. Men for turistene sin del så får en en veldig god innføring til Norge med å reise med et skip som er en blanding av forskjellige ting, det er ikke bare den klassiske turisten her. Det kan være nordmenn som reiser fra A til B, kan være en gammel dame som sitter og strikker, små barn som leker. En får med seg den norske kulturen også. En ser hva som foregår i hver havn, det er lessing av varer og det er utflyker hvor vi legger opp til turer hvor det nesten bare nordmenn som jobber, vi vet hvor det er best å reise i motsetning til cruiseship som kanskje ikke har en eneste nordmann om bord som ikke vet noe om norge, men bare reiser der. Så klart vet de litt som reiselederne og slikt, men de fleste har ingen ting med norge å gjøre. Hos oss kan kundene spørre oss og med det hjelpe dem i å få en bedre reise. Jeg tror opplevelsen er en annen med å reise med Hurtigruten enn med å reise med et cruiseskip. Et cruiseskip har og færre stoppesteder og har gjerne lenger reiser mellom stoppestedene. Så det skal gå fort over færre dager, mens vi har et annet livsløp. Viss en skal oppleve norge så tror jeg du skal velge Hurtigruten".</p>
<p>Respondent 13 Tour Leader</p>	<p>"Visjonen er at vi skal vokse, at vi skal få bedre lønnsomhet. det er å utvikle det temaet som vi har: nå på vinterstid og sommerstid, vårtid [interrupted by a phone call]. Øke den trekk kraft som vi har i de forskjellige program, om vinteren har vi noe som heter «hunting the light» og om våren har vi «the arctic awakening», disse skal utvikles slik at vi får bedre belegning på utenom sessongen så jeg ser for meg at det vil komme et høst program.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Det er for vi er de eneste som farer opp ned langs kysten på denne måten. Det finnes jo cruiseskip som</p>

	<p>kommer opp og farer ned, men mange av våres passasjerer vil ikke ha de store cruiseskipene de vil heller ha en mer familiær og unik opplevelse. Fler parten av turistene er tyskere og de vil ha det genuine, de vil ikke ha turist fabrikk".</p>
<p>Respondent 14 Tour Leader</p>	<p>"Ja, jeg vil påstå at vi jobber for å bli større, få mer gjester, mer fornøyde gjester og min visjon er at alle skal være fornøyde. Det tror jeg nok de deler med meg. (Differentiation) Det er nettopp fordi at vi tilbyr noe helt unikt. Vi er et post ship skulle jeg si og vi har vært lenge, vi har en lang tradisjon som vi holder på, samtidig som de får være med til de forskjellige havner, for eksempel et cruiseship ikke kan gå eller går. Og de får være og se de tingene som de ikke har opplevd før eller kommer til å få på cruiseskip, samt at vi har norsk besetning. Det er veldig enkelt for kunder å få svar på spørsmålene sine, når jeg snakker norsk og jeg er 90% fra Norge, så de får en hjemme koselig følelse i stedet for et stort cruise, det blir litt mer personlig".</p>
<p>Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>"...å være en ordentlig bedrift og gi av oss selv, altså gi det vi selger, det vil jeg si er det beste i visjonen våres sett i mine øyner For det første får du sett norskekysten fra et helt annet perspektiv, cruiseskipene går innom Bergen, Geiranger, kanskje Trondheim og så går de rett opp til Nordkapp slipper av passasjerer og viser dem Nordkapp så reiser de hjem igjen. Hurtigruta går i elleve dager opp og ned, vi møter våre egne skip, vi møter våres egen lokalbefolkning, passasjerene får se en del av norskekysten og at vi har et norsk crew, vi har selvfølgelig noen svensker, men så norsk som det er. Så vi har informasjon om det som er på utsiden av arbeidsplassen våres. Jeg vil ikke tro at alle cruiseskipene som går her, de utenlandske cruiseskipa vet selvfølgelig om Bergen og Gerianger, men de kjenner ikke til historien bak alt det andre. Så derfor skal passasjerer velge Hurtigruten i forhold til andre cruiseskip selskaper".</p>
<p>Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>"Hurtigrutens visjon vil jo bli det samme som en har det der opplevelses reise, du vil oppleve ting, du vil få helt unike bilder av naturen, jeg vet ikke helt hvordan jeg skal formulere meg. At en skal møte menneskene langs kysten, at en skal møte båtene på en positiv måte, få en positiv opplevelse av en reise langs norskekysten og antarktisk for de som velger å reise med de båtene. Ja det vil være ganske enkelt for viss du reiser med store cruiseselskap så vil ikke få anledning til å gå inn i alle havner som vi gjør, dem vil plukke ut store havner som Geiranger, Trondheim, Tromsø, Honningsvåg. Vi tar alle små anløpene i mindre fjorder og små havner langs både finnmarkskysten, Nordlands kysten og hvor de store båtene ikke kommer inn. Og de får treffe lokal innbyggere på en helt annen måte i og med at vi har cargo, vi har distanse passasjerer, det kommer jo passasjerer</p>

	<p>på i alle havner, det kan du ikke gjøre på en cruisebåt. (Differentiation) Hva som er helt spesielt og unikt med å reise med Hurtigruten må være det at du kommer så nært alt, du får en helt annen opplevelse kontra det å reise med et stort et cruise med en stor båt, du vil oppleve menneskene på en helt egen måte, du vil oppleve livet ved kaien, du vil oppleve livet i byen, du vil oppleve livet i naturen helt anna enn viss du reiser med en cruisebåt".</p>
<p>Respondent 17 Substitute Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>"Det er naturen og opplevelsen, det vi viser fram, viser at Norge [mumbling] (Differentiation) Nei, det er fordi vi har en ganske spesiell natur her i Norge, masse forskjellig fra dag til dag, det er ikke en like ens opplevelse de får andre plasser, så det er slik det er. Får se Norge fra en helt spesiell side så det er veldig spesielt og ingen dager er lik så det er ... jeg ville absolutt anbefalt alle å reise med Hurtigruten selv om jeg jobber og er ganske lei å reise med Hurtigruten så er det noe annet når man reiser første gang med Hurtigruten, da er det ganske spesielt. Det har jo ganske mye å tilby alle sammen fra små til store ... nå er ikke vi så veldig forskjellige det er bare at naturen er annerledes så jeg tror ikke det er noe forskjell".</p>
<p>Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee</p>	<p>"Natur opplevelser. (Differentiation) Det er for det meste veldig komfortabelt. Kan sove og nyte turen i stedet for å kjøre i bil og streve av gårde. Vi tilbyr mat og treningsrom og avslapping. Personalet, har hørt mye skryt om bra personal, sier det er veldig trivelig og service innstilt folk".</p>
<p>Respondent 19 Purser</p>	<p>"...nå ble jeg usikker på om det er trygg, raus og ansvarlig eller om det er ekte og sånt, klarer ikke helt å ta igjen hva visjonen er, nei. (Differentiation) For en vil ha det som Hurtigruten representerer, det som er norsk, det som er ekte, vil ha det produktet som har vært lengst og du vil ha det som er ærlig og du er interessert i våres produkter, du får være innom alle de norske havnene som du ikke får være innom viss du reiser med et annet selskap, du får personer som behandler deg som person på godt og vondt. Vi som jobber her er ganske unike også syns jeg, i forhold til cruise. Vi får lov til å være oss selv til en viss grense selvfølgelig, men du får møte personer som kommer fra forskjellige plasser i Norge så en får en annen opplevelse med at en reiser med et skip hvor det er nesten bare nordmenn som jobber, fra hele kysten ikke bare ett området så en får kjenne nordmenn på en annen måte. Og de som er båten kjenner båten på en unik måte og landet i forhold til viss du reiser med et annet selskap. Vi kjenner nesten hver holme, du har i vert fall en om bord som kjenne det om ikke den personen gjør det. Så kjenner styrmennene godt området for de har gått her i alle år, dem kjenner dem på kaia, det er norsk så viss</p>

	du vil oppleve det norske må du reise med Hurtigruten".
Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee	<p>"Jeg synes nesten alt i forretningsideen våres da, som er ekte opplevelser i unike farvann, så visjonen er jo at gjestene skal få en best mulig opplevelse av norskekysten.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Vi i Hurtigruten har jo noe som ingen andre kan tilby, vi seiler fra Bergen til Kirkenes med 34 annløp og det er mulig å gå i land i alle 34 annløp. Hurtigruten begynte jo som fraktskip helt til vi skjønnte at den leia vi går i er jo helt fantastisk så begynte vi transportere passasjerer og syke mennesker og plutselig så vi at dette her er jo en fantastisk turist attraksjon. Så bare de tingene vi seiler gjennom som for eksempel stein sundet, stokk sundet, rast sundet, troll fjorden ikke minst det er jo bare helt fantastisk og alle de opplevelsene kan du få med å bare være om bord på ett skip, alle de utfluktene vi kan tilby i tillegg er jo bare helt suverent, havørn safari, ribb båt safari, tur til Nordkapp og alt dette her får du gjort om bord på Hurtigruten alt det her tilbyr Hurtigruten.</p> <p>Jeg har jo nesten svart på det, det er jo alle mulighetene du har om bord på skipet. Nå om bord på nyere skip så har du alle de natur attraksjoner, men samtidig så har jo skipene i dag blitt så nye at de har jo, i tillegg til at du er på ferie så har vi WIFI om bord så har vi boblebad, vi har sauna, vi har trimrom, så viss det skulle være dårlig vær en dag og det ikke passer å være ute på dekk så har du jo så mange andre muligheter å kunne benytte deg av samtidig som du kan, ja sitte i saunaen og se på naturen mens vi går gjennom rast sundet, ja det går ikke ann å beskrive det, det er bare helt fantastisk".</p>
Respondent 24 Waiter & Stewardess	<p>"Unike opplevelser i fri natur.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Det er ikke så veldig mange andre plasser i verden at folk har muligheten til å kanskje se det de ser om bord her, her kan en se alt i fra spekkhoggere og ørner og niser og reinsdyr og alt mulig, samer, ja alt har de oppover langs kysten, så det er veldig unikt for eksempel se mange ørner som spiser fra en fiskebåt og slikt, og nordlyset når det er på sitt beste er det og veldig unikt.</p> <p>Det er vel det jeg har sagt, at det er veldig unikt de som er om bord, i vert fall på denne båten her for den er litt liten så er det veldig god atmosfære, vi får veldig god kontakt med gjestene og de får oppleve veldig masse spesielt, man blir liksom som en liten familie etter hvert så en er på fornavn og hilser og det er veldig spennende, så jeg ville anbefalt alle å reise. I Norge er det jo mange som ikke vet hva Hurtigruten er fordi den går jo mest langs kysten og er ikke ned med Oslo og rundt der, så de går nok glipp av noe. Det er jo mest visst man er interessert da i natur og kultur og se fugl og fjell og fossefall".</p>
Respondent 25 Waiter &	"Dem jobber jo mot at det skal bli, at det skal reise mye folk og at dem legger opp nye, på turene så har dem mye sånn, sånn at

Stewardess	<p>gjestene reiser på turer under reisen slik at de ikke er om bord på båten heile dagen, de er på utflukter og dem er på alt mulig sånt. Det dukker stadig opp nytt sånt at en reise blir litt mer spennende for dem for å si det sånn, enn det var før.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Hurtigruta er jo et unikt sånn vare for å si det sånn, den er jo, norskekysten er jo, det er jo vert å reise for å si det sånn, norskekysten er jo like fin kanskje som om og mer opplevelse enn, ja ja du kan jo ikke sammenligne det med cruise båter, de er jo i den store verden. Men jeg mener nå at, ja hvordan skal jeg forklare det.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Det er den norske naturen tror jeg, norske langs kysten som gjør at de liker seg, den fine naturen og kysten i seg tror jeg som gjør at de trekkes til det, at de trekker folk fra andre deler av verden enn bare norske, tror jeg er at den norske naturen er så spesiell".</p>
Respondent 26 Waiter & Stewardess	<p>"De har en visjon som går under forkortelsen TAKK, som står for Trygghet, Ansvar, Kvalitet og Kreativitet har dem jo kommet med og det er mange år siden dem kom med den. Og den går jo på at alle skal ha trygghet i det dem gjør, være trygg i den jobben dem gjør og alle skal ha ansvar og ta ansvar. Og så skal det være kvalitet på den jobben vi gjør og så skal vi være kreativ i jobben.</p> <p>(Differentiation) Der er det jo det at Hurtigruten er en unik opplevelse i fra Bergen til Kirkenes og i løpet av den tiden du er om bord så kan du oppleve å få med deg alle fire årstider og norskekysten er jo helt unik når det gjelder opplevelse, du får ikke den opplevelsen som du får langs norskekysten når du reiser for eksempel på en tur til Syden, da er det strand og badeliv og det er det jo ikke med en tur med Hurtigruten. På vinteren så har du jo Nordlys og snøstorm og kan oppleve spektakulært vær, og om sommeren er det jo midnatt sola og at det er lyst hele natta, det er jo ikke mange andre land som har det".</p>

Table F.6

Descriptions of Hurtigruten's cultural values by crew members (the original version)

Respondent	Degree of awareness	Descriptions of cultural values
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	“+”	“It is also secure, generous and responsible”.
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	“+”	“...generous, yes, I do not remember all of them, we have a session on them. [we] try to be as real as possible, [we] try to be ourselves. We do not pretend to be a cruise, we are what we are”.
Respondent 8	“+”	“Our values are secure, generous and responsible ... and I

Hotel Manager		think this is what we are. It is safety and responsibility for everything, safety comes first and we are generous in providing service, we are generous with quality, we are always generous with the decisions we take”.
Respondent 9 Captain	“+”	“Again, confident, generous and responsible. It is our goal and also being a good workplace. The value is that everyone will have an opportunity to have an opinion and have equal possibilities, and that it should be safe to travel with us...the passenger must feel safe, and it must be the value...”
Respondent 10 Captain	“+”	“It’s secure, generous and responsible...”
Respondent 11 Captain	“+”	“I can say it very briefly in three words: secure, generous and responsible. These are three words, which in a way form the basic values of everything we stand for and for all we care. This how we want to be perceived by both the market and our colleagues”.
Respondent 12 Tour Leader	“+/-”	“I feel like I repeat myself, it should be authentic, it should be Norwegian, it should be real... with some enthusiasm. There should be joy in what we sell, we should be proud of it and I think most employees do it, because we can stand for what we sell”.
Respondent 13 Tour Leader	“+/-”	“We can look at different levels, but security, loyalty, quality, this is on the positive side, there are always things that can be improved, there are some things that make the organization slow in a way”.
Respondent 14 Tour Leader	“+/- ”	“I miss some information about it, because it is not everything that I personally have so much to do on board, so it is difficult to answer...it's a long time ago that I've heard anything about them...My focus is really on getting people happy and it requires a lot of me, and I do because I love Hurtigruten”.
Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager	“+/-”	“Quality”.
Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager	“-”	“The greatest value you can get is the experience of travelling with us, but not any other company. The most valuable thing you can give to a person is an experience. When it comes to the cultural [aspects]: most of the boats have some Norwegian art on board, so that you can learn something... about art and culture, plus we have trips to various museums and all that which has to do with culture, both coastal culture, on-land culture, the sami culture, fishery”.

Respondent 17 Substitute Restaurant Manager	“-”	“It is the nature and all that again, as I said, I do not know anything more [mumbling]”.
Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee	“+/-”	“Safety, responsibility. In general, it is called “a customer is always right”, but we say what we think, because it is not always t they are right and then we explain to them why they are probably not right”.
Respondent 19 Purser	“+”	“It’s secure, generous and responsible...”
Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee	“+/-”	“I feel like I have answered it: we have been here since 1893 and the company has existed since then. We have eleven ships, we have a ship at each port every day, both northbound and southbound. And we also offer a round trip “Bergen-Kirkenes” or “Bergen-Kirkenes-Bergen... It is fantastic here on board now. We have so favorable conditions, we are almost like a big family, because we work three weeks and then have three weeks off...”
Respondent 21 Waiter & Steward	“+/-”	“I do not know. Values. Oh, oh, oh. Working people and working environment, and also the environment in which guests feel welcome”.
Respondent 22 Waiter & Steward	“+/-”	“They value the Norwegian culture. I do not know what to say”.
Respondent 23 Waiter & Steward	“+/-”	“Quality, unique and what more I am not sure, that’s two though”.
Respondent 24 Waiter & Steward	“+/-”	"Perhaps, the value of getting to know new people and get to know new guests, communicate with them. In some cases we have become friends for life, even though we live across national borders. It often happens that people come back again and it’s such things that we appreciate most, as we have done such a good job that they come back”.
Respondent 25 Waiter & Steward	“+/-”	“Oh, does it have to do with the fact that we do a good job, as good as possible for the guests so that they can enjoy themselves and stuff like that”.
Respondent 26 Waiter & Steward	“+/-”	“The values in crowns and cents are the boats and the equipment we have on board, otherwise the values refer to the things we give to the guests that they get in a form of experiences during the trip. We are not a cruise boat. We do not have that much comfort when it comes to cabins and things like that. It is not a cruise ship, but I do not think is so important for those, who have decided to travel with Hurtigruten. It is experiences, nature-based experiences they are looking for... And then we have good food!”

Table F.7.

Crew members' perspective on Hurtigruten's brand promises in English

Respondent	Brand values awareness (extent)	Employee perspective on brand promises
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	“+/-“	<p>“He or she [the seller] has promised a product or an item to a customer, but it's not always that the seller tells me what is promised. Then it can start to get fun.</p> <p>We have control over general information, but it happens that the customer can be promised something different [than what we can deliver]. And it's not always that we get to know about it, as we do not have a system for that. We have “very little of it” it's mostly a manual system for things like that”.</p>
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	“+”	<p>“actually, I think they probably promise a bit more than what we can deliver on board. For example, those, who stay at suites stand in the same line and eat at the same place as everyone else. I do not know whether he [the guest] is aware that he will pay 100.000NOK for just a larger room. Some think they should get a bit more than that, when they pay so much more”.</p>
Respondent 8 Hotel Manager	“+”	<p>“Real experiences in unique waters and that we promise them a fantastic trip and good food, bla-bla-bla and all that. But it is the real experiences in unique waters that we promise them”.</p>
Respondent 9 Captain	“+”	<p>“Customer satisfaction is a high priority, but not a top priority for my position. It is different for the Hotel Manager and Tour Leader, because giving a top priority to the customer is a part of their work, but I have another kind of responsibilities. So it's not a top priority for me. If I decide whether I will disappoint a customer or risk the safety, I'd rather disappoint the customer, he might not get satisfied, but I will be satisfied”.</p>
Respondent 10 Captain	“+”	<p>“The product shall deliver what it has been marketed for. We follow the scheduled program that has been set up for us. We have a daily program with a setup of what we should do every day that we follow. It is a Hotel Manager and Restaurant Manager, who ensure that this will be followed...”</p>
Respondent 11	“+”	<p>“Yes, I know. We promise our customers, first and</p>

Captain		foremost, what to say, extreme conditions under safe conditions. By extreme conditions, I mean that we do not just stand in the storm and bad weather in winter, but it is also fantastic weather conditions with the Midnight Sun in the summer, and the nature that we sail through all the way from Bergen up to Kirkenes. It is what we promise to our customers and guests”.
Respondent 12 Tour Leader	“+”	“...an experience along the coast and various activities that we offer along the coast, and we can offer them excursions...”
Respondent 13 Tour Leader	“+”	“...what we sell is an experience...”
Respondent 14 Tour Leader	“+/- ”	“..it is actually both “yes” and “no”. When I watch TV and see the commercials, then I start to think of what I said first: what it [Hurtigruten] means to me. And this is what they say: a unique experience. Spectacular experiences of the Norwegian coast in a very different way than you would have done it with a cruise ship...”
Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager	“+”	“...experience Norwegian nature...”
Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager	“+”	“We promise a unique experience along the Norwegian coast... [we promise] to see the Norwegian coast both day and night, the life along the coast and nature”.
Respondent 17 Substitute Restaurant Manager	“+”	“...nice scenery and good service and an experience of a lifetime...”
Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee	“+/-”	“Real experiences, I learned about this through the exam assignment and during initial training ... It’s very good, if we, the employees on board, are told what the customer has been promised , but it’s not always that we’re told about it, though we are usually told... not everyone [in the company] is efficient in informing others” .”
Respondent 19 Purser	“+”	“the nature, wildness, but under safe conditions ... You must sell the product for what it is and not try to pretend that there is something else”.
Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee	“+”	“It's real experiences in unique waters”.
Respondent 21 Waiter & Steward	“+”	“A good thing with Hurtigruten, we do not promise it. We do not give promise more than what we can give them and this is what we give them actually. It feels for me like that and for the guests, when they come on board they are sitting

		outside more or less 12 hours, 10 hours a day, if the weather is OK, because that's what they have chosen, so I think so".
Respondent 22 Waiter & Steward	“+/-”	“I do not know what they promise, but we can always offer good food and the view, and see the Norwegian environment”.
Respondent 23 Waiter & Steward	“+”	“... unique experience along the coast...”
Respondent 24 Waiter & Steward	“-”	“No, I do not really know what is promised, when it is sold, for example, but ... I think it is very hard to promise something that you can never promise [for example] you cannot promise the Northern Lights or that it will be nice weather, but I'm not quite sure what is said to the customers then ”.
Respondent 25 Waiter & Steward	“-”	“Yes, Oh, no, I do not know... They try to deliver on a good brand, so that people will travel with Hurtigruten. Otherwise, I do not know, if they have anything in particular, they advertise Hurtigruten to get people to travel [with us]”.
Respondent 26 Waiter & Steward	“+”	“Yes, I think I know. We're a company that goes for the transportation of people and goods, and a number of them are people, who travel on vacation, so then it is the experience that they get during the trip [this is what] we promise them”.

Table F.8.

Crew members' perspective on Hurtigruten's brand promises (the original version)

Respondent	Employee perspective on brand promises
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	“Han eller hun har lovet en vare eller en artikkel til en kunde, men det er ikke bestandig at den selgeren forteller meg hva som er lovet. Da kan det begynne å bli moro. Den generelle informasjonen har vi kontroll på, men så har du de gangene kunden har blitt lovet noe annet. Men det er ikke bestandig vi får vite det for det har vi ikke noe system for. Vi har veldig lite av det, det er veldig manuelt system for slikt”.
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	“...egentlig så syns jeg dem kanskje lover litt mye i forhold til hva vi klarer å levere om bord. F.eks. de som bor på suiter står i samme kø og spiser samme plass som alle andre. Vet ikke om han er klar over det at han betaler 100.000kr for bare et større rom. Noen tror de skal få litt mer når de betaler så pass mye mer.

	<p>Det er ikke selskapet som får tilbakemelding det er vi som får det fra gjesten med en gang viss det er noe som ikke er bra. Selfølgelig kan selskapet få det i etterkant, men viss gjesten ikke er fornøyd så sier gjerne gjesten i fra der og da til oss. Og viss dem da er lovet noe som vi ikke klarer å få til så er det litt vanskelig for oss</p> <p>Det har hendt at gjester har en del høyere forventinger enn det vi kan levere. Har opplevd at noen ønsker å spise frokost, lunsj og middag på sin egen suite, og det har ikke vi kapasitet til siden vi har et begrenset antall crew. På et vanlig cruiseship så har de et mye større antall crew som gjør at de kan gjøre slikt".</p>
Respondent 8 Hotel Manager	<p>"Ekte opplevelser i unike farvann og så at vi lover dem en fantastisk tur og god mat, blabla og alt det der. Men ekte opplevelser i unike farvann lover vi dem.</p> <p>Når du kan produktet så føler en seg trygg og leverer det riktige, det er jo det viktigste. Når vi er skolert og kurset og kan produktet så leverer en i vert fall det som kan gjøres og ikke minst hvordan det skal gjøres. Det hender jo at en selger selger inn noe som ikke kan leveres, det hender, men selskapet som helhet som produkt levering, de gjør aldri noe som vi ikke kan levere. De setter aldri i gang noe som ikke er gjennomtenkt og uttestet på en ordentlig måte. De er veldig solide på det området synes jeg i vert fall.</p> <p>Produktavdelingen har opplevelser, de har alle utflukter, de har alle disse prosjektene «Hunting the light», «Artic awakening», de har underholdning. Det er produktavdelingen som har den biten.</p> <p>Jeg føler jeg vil levere på Trollfjord som ikke er best nå da, jeg føler og jeg vet at de får en god opplevelse da for det får vi så mange gode tilbakemeldinger på, at vi leverer god kvalitet".</p>
Respondent 9 Captain	<p>"Kunden tilfredshet har en høy prioritet, men ikke topp prioritet, for min stilling. Den er igjen forskjellig for hotellsjefen og reiselederen, fordi de prøver naturlig å gi kunden topp prioritet, men ansvaret mitt er forskjellig. Så det er ikke topp prioritet for min del. Har jeg valget av å skuffe en kunde eller risikere sikkerhet så skuffer jeg kunden, så blir kunden misfornøyd, men jeg blir fornøyd".</p>
Respondent 10 Captain	<p>"Produktet skal levere det som har blitt markedsført. Vi følger det oppsatte programmet som har blitt satt opp til oss. Vi har dagsprogram med oppsett på hva vi skal gjøre hver dag som vi følger, det er hotell sjef og restaurant sjef som påser at dette blir fulgt. Jobber sammen med samarbeidspartnere om utflukter, arrangementer og så videre som skal leveres".</p>
Respondent 11 Captain	<p>"Ja, det vet jeg. Vi lover våre kunder først og fremst, hva jeg skal si, ekstreme forhold under trygge forhold. Med ekstreme forhold så mener jeg at vi ikke bare står i storm og dårlig vær på vinteren, men det er også de fantastisk flotte forhold på sommertid med Midnattssol, og selv natur vi seiler gjennom, hele veien fra Bergen og hele veien opp til Kirkenes, Det er det vi lover til våre kunder og gjester. ...rederiet har en veldig fin måte å tilnærme seg de tingene her på, med</p>

	<p>at man forsøker det ut i praksis før de blir solgt ut i markedet. Det er hele tiden egentlig en prosess i endring. Det er klart det har vært satt i gang, som jeg nevnt tidligere, det har vært en del konsepter som her vært prøvd ut, noe av det har vært vanskelig å gjennomføre operasjonelt og andre ting har vært vellykket så det er på en måte en stadig prosess der man prøver nye ting. ...når vi igangsetter nye konsepter så gjøres det gjerne som et pilot prosjekt, der et skip prøver ut de her tingene og hvor sånne konsepter og prosjekter blir vurdert før at di blir virkelig solgt ut i markedet...her havnene og da kan det jo skje at det er gjester som har kjøpt denne her utflukten og som vi da ikke kan klare å levere nettopp fordi det ikke er praktisk mulig med at vi ikke anløper en av de havnene, kanskje vi ikke anløper noen av dem og da vil jo ikke gjestene få den opplevelsen og det produktet som de har kjøpt".</p>
Respondent 12 Tour Leader	<p>"...en opplevelse langs kysten og diverse aktiviteter vi tilbyr langs kysten, at vi kan tilby dem utflykter slik at de kan være med på en bussutflykt slik at de kan se mer av landet. Og vi tilbyr aktiviteter om bord som relatert til det som er typisk norsk, som er det ekte norske. ...det er verdens vakreste sjøreise, altså det er bli kjent med Norge. Gjennom forskjellige typer farvann bli kjent med et langt land via kystlinjen".</p>
Respondent 13 Tour Leader	<p>"Det vi selger er jo en opplevelse".</p>
Respondent 14 Tour Leader	<p>"Ja, [laughing] altså egentlig både ja og nei. Jeg ser jo på TV, så jeg ser reklamaen og da begynner jeg på det som jeg sa først med hva det betyr for meg og det er det de sier at det gjør unik opplevelse, spektakulære opplevelser av norske kysten på en helt anneledes måte enn om du ville ha reist med et cruiseship, for eksempel. Ja, det er både ja og nei egentlig. Jeg kan ikke gå på noen spesifikks, men jeg vet at våre gjester blir lovet unike opplevelser, en unik reise. Det kanskje kan gjelde litt generell informasjon om cruise, blir det lovet om at det er et working class ship eller blir de lovet at de skal på cruise, ja litt sånne ting, litt generelt. Hvis det er noe som gjestene ikke synes lever opp deres forventninger, så vet jeg i hvert fall hvorfor, fordi at det er blitt lovet. Og det er mange reisebyrå som booker til oss og vi vet ikke hva reisebyrå har lovet dem, kanskje litt sånne ting. Ja, det kunne jeg ha savnet, jeg må innrømme jeg ser ikke så mye på, jeg går ikke på hurtigruten.com, når jeg er hjemme og strengt tatt ikke når jeg er om bord heller, for da har vi så mye å gjøre, så det måtte i hvert fall være intern mail eller helst med en som kommer om bord for å fortelle oss om det i arbeidstiden".</p>
Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager	<p>"...oppleve norsk natur..."</p>

Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager	“Vi lover en helt unike opplevelse langs norskekysten, for å se norskekysten både dag og natt, og livet langs kysten, og naturen”.
Respondent 17. Substitute Restaurant Manager	“Fin natur og god service og en opplevelse for livet”.
Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee	“Ekte opplevelser, jeg lærte om dette gjennom eksamensoppgave og under utplassering. Det er veldig kjekt at vi ansatte får om bord får beskjed om hva kunden har blitt lovet, men det er ikke bestandig vi får beskjed om det. Men som regel gjør vi det... ikke alle er flinke å gi beskjed”.
Respondent 19 Purser	“...naturen, villskapen, men under trygge forhold...en må selge produktet for det det er og ikke prøve å late som det er noe annet”.
Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee	“Det er jo ekte opplevelser i unike farvann”.
Respondent 24 Waiter & Steward	“Nei, det vet jeg vel egentlig ikke, hva som blir lovet når det blir solgt for eksempel, men ... for jeg tror det er veldig vanskelig å love noe som helst, som man kan jo aldri love at det blir Nordlys, man kan ikke love at det blir fint vær, men jeg er ikke helt sikker på hva som blir sagt til kundene da”.
Respondent 25 Waiter & Steward	“Ja, åh, nei, jeg vet ikke hva de gjør. De prøver jo å levere et bra merke, slik at folk skal reise med Hurtigruta. Ellers så vet ikke jeg om de har noe annet spesielt, de reklamerer jo for Hurtigruten for å få folk til å reise”.
Respondent 26 Waiter & Steward	"Ja, det tror jeg jeg vet. Vi er jo et selskap som går for befraktning av mennesker og gods, og en god del av dem er mennesker som reiser på ferie så da er det jo den opplevelsen dem får på turen vi lover dem".

Table F.9

The importance of brand values awareness (the original version)

Respondent	Crew member's perspective
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	"Det er viktig, for viss jeg ikke vet hva som har blitt solgt kan jeg heller ikke levere varen".
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	"Det er veldig viktig Det er ikke selskapet som får tilbakemelding det er vi som får det fra gjesten med en gang viss det er noe som ikke er bra. Selfølgelig kan

	<p>selskapet få det i etterkant, men viss gjesten ikke er fornøyd så sier gjerne gjesten i fra der og da til oss. Og viss dem da er lovet noe som vi ikke klarer å få til så er det litt vanskelig for oss</p> <p>Det har hendt at gjester har en del høyere forventinger enn det vi kan levere. Har opplevd at noen ønsker å spise frokost, lunsj og middag på sin egen suite, og det har ikke vi kapasitet til siden vi har et begrenset antall crew. På et vanlig cruiseship så har de et mye større antall crew som gjør at de kan gjøre slikt".</p>
Respondent 8 Hotel Manager	<p>"Det er veldig viktig, når de har kjøpt seg en Hurtigrute tur så må vi gå den turen, det er veldig leit når vi må kansellere noe, det vekker sterke reaksjoner hver gang, selv når det er været som spiller inn så blir gjestene ikke nødvendigvis sinte, men leie seg for de får ikke sett det de skulle.</p> <p>Da må vi rett og slett snakke og informere godt, informere, informere og informere. Viss vi må kansellere pga. vær så må vi informere for det kan bli forandringer på hjemreise, det kan bli avbrudd og det som teller da er informasjon og ikke minst få de hjem på den beste og raskeste måten viss det går galt pga. vær eller teknisk. Men det blir informasjon, det er det som er viktig, store møter på forskjellige språk og det fungerer. Vi har vært i en slik situasjon mange ganger og det fungerer stort sett veldig bra. Andre juledag lå vi fire båter i Trondheim pga. uvær, så det hender, men da er det om å gjøre det beste for alle, hver enkelt, og så er det å løse det slik at de kommer dit de skal opprinnelig, det er punkt en".</p>
Respondent 9 Captein	<p>"For min del så går det bare på sikkerhet. Sikkerhet går foran kundens tilfredshet, sier jeg nei så er det nei. Sier vi at vi går ikke i Trollfjorden for det er fare for ras er det sikkert kunder som blir skuffet, men det er viktigere å ha sikkerhet. Kunden tilfredshet har en høy prioritet, men ikke topp prioritet, for min stilling. Den er igjen forskjellig for hotellsjefen og reiselederen fordi de prøver naturlig å gi kunden topp prioritet, men ansvaret mitt er forskjellig. Så det er ikke topp prioritet for min del. Har jeg valget av å skuffe en kunde eller risikere sikkerhet så skuffer jeg kunden, så blir kunden misfornøyd, men jeg blir fornøyd".</p>
Respondent 10 Captein	<p>"Veldig viktig, for vi gir det kundene har betalt for og gir det de har blitt lovet".</p>
Respondent 11 Captein	<p>"Det er klart, det er veldig viktig. Vi føler at det er veldig viktig. Det er hele tiden egentlig en prosess i endring. Det er klart det har vært satt i gang, som jeg nevnt tidligere,</p> <p>det har vært en del konsepter som her vært prøvd ut, noe av det har vært vanskelig å gjennomføre operasjonelt og andre ting har vært vellykket så det er på en måte en stadig prosess der man prøver nye ting. Det som fungerer fortsetter en med og det som ikke fungerer det kvitter en seg med, men det er klart det er veldig for oss om bord og på en måte prøve å levere det som rederiet har solgt, det er viktig. Derfor så er det også veldig viktig for oss og jeg synes det er en</p>

	<p>veldig bra prosess, når vi igangsetter nye konsepter så gjøres det gjerne som et pilot prosjekt, der et skip prøver ut de her tingene og hvor sånne konsepter og prosjekter blir vurdert før at di blir virkelig solgt ut i markedet. Fordi det er klart at hvis man har blitt lovet et produkt som vi ikke klarer å levere, så blir det veldig negativt for hele rederiet. Så jeg føler at det er veldig viktig, men samtidig rederiet har en veldig fin måte å tilnærme seg de tingene her på, med at man forsøker det ut i praksis før de blir solgt ut i markedet. Men det er veldig viktig for oss å levere det produktene som folk har kjøpt".</p>
<p>Respondent 12 Tour Leader</p>	<p>"Ja det er viktig, for viss kunden ikke får det han mener han har betalt for så kommer de å sier i fra viss de ikke føler dette er riktig. Å reise med hurtigruten er ikke billig, det er ganske kostbart, og da er det viktig at kunden får det han har betalt for. Noen gang er kommer jo folk hit og har blitt forespeilet noe helt annet fordi de som solgte dem turen kanskje ikke hadde så mye kunnskap til hurtigruten og de har rett og slett feilinformert, viss det er slik så prøver vi klart å rette opp eller tilby noe annet slik at kunden blir mer fornøyd. Jeg synes det er viktig for dette er et dyrt produkt også. Da er det viktig at vi strekker oss så langt vi kan innen for rimelighetens grense og sånt. Viss noen har gjort dårlig håndverk et sted er det ikke alltid vi kan gjøre det godt igjen, men vi prøver i vert fall å gå i dialog med kunden og etterkommer og kan gi tilbakemelding til der kunden kommer fra. Men det er veldig viktig.</p> <p>Det er klart jo bedre en kjenner et produkt jo bedre kan en selge det. Uten denne kunnskapet kan du heller ikke forstå kunden så godt tror jeg.</p> <p>Forstår kanskje ikke heller kundens behov</p> <p>Hvordan kan en da vite hva kunden forventer, hva vil gjøre han fornøyd, hva han har kjøpt</p> <p>Jo mer jeg vet hva de har betalt, hvilke utflykter de har meldt seg på, des bedre er det</p> <p>En lærer selv hele tiden og tillegner seg kunnskap</p> <p>Kunnskapen er veldig viktig for å være en god salgsrepresentant og forstå produktet en er en del av".</p>
<p>Respondent 13 Tour Leader</p>	<p>"Det er jo veldig viktig. Det jo våres kundebase, viss de ikke er fornøyde så forteller de noen andre at de ikke var fornøyde og så kommer de ikke tilbake og det er derfor vi har så høy belegning som vi har for det er mange tyskere som kommer igjen og igjen og hadde vi ikke levert så hadde de ikke kommet".</p>
<p>Respondent 14 Tour Leader</p>	<p>See Table F.11.</p>
<p>Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager</p>	<p>"Det er veldig viktig, prøver så godt vi kan og gi det de har lovet...og vi gir det aller aller beste av oss selv. jeg lærer jo hvis jeg gjør noe feil og mener en lærer noe nytt hver dag, så hvis noen kommer og spør hvorfor ikke gjøre det slik så prøver jeg å gjøre det slik, men det</p>

	er ikke bestandig like lett det heller. Men jeg tenker jo heletiden på hvordan en kan gjøre det bedre både for oss som jobber her og for gjestene sin del".
Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager	"Viss gjesten får det han har betalt for og får en god opplevelse som viser på hans væremåte så er det ikke noe som varmer mer enn det. Vi gjør det ytterste for å få oppleve sånne ting. Det er veldig viktig for viss ikke kan gjøre en oppgave som tilfredsstillter gjesten så er ikke det en hyggelig opplevelse".
Respondent 17 Substitute Restaurant Manager	"Det er veldig viktig. Det er jo ikke noe artig å ikke ha fornøyde kunder. Vi vil ha så fornøyde kunder som vi kan få. Jeg synes det er veldig viktig at de får det de har blitt lovet".
Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee	"Det er veldig viktig, for viss de ikke får det blir det mange klager og vi blir frustrert, det er veldig viktig at de blir fornøyd Viss de blir fornøyd med service og hele turen øker sjansen for at de blir fornøyd og kanskje kommer tilbake som igjen vil gi mersalg Det er enklere å hjelpe dem når jeg vet hvilke behov dem har. Det er veldig kjekt at vi ansatte får om bord får beskjed om hva kunden har blitt lovet, men det er ikke bestandig vi får beskjed om det. Men som regel gjør vi det. Ikke alle er flinke å gi beskjed. Får beskjed på e-post, mye informasjon går på e-post. For eksempel stod det i ei avis at de skulle en gratis middag om bord, men da måtte det bestilles på land. Det stod det ikke noe om så da ble det mange sure passasjerer".
Respondent 19 Purser	"Det er ganske viktig for det er ofte der vi kan få konfliktområder Dom for eksempel så er ikke vi et cruise skip og da må ikke folk få inntrykk av at vi er det Kan være at dem som selger Hurtigruten i alle land ikke er helt klar over hva Hurtigruten er og derfor kan kunder tro at de skal på et Cruise skip, mens vi er en båt for alle, vi har ikke klasseinndeling at noen er viktigere enn andre. Og dette er et arbeidsskip, det arbeides 24 timer i døgnet. Selvsagt tas det hensyn til at det er natt og slikt, men det arbeides hele døgnet. Ut over det så er det andre lyder og annet mønster enn det det kanskje vil være på et cruiseskip, men nå kjenner ikke jeg cruiseskip i den grad da. Og det er viktig at de har rett oppfattning av turen før dem kommer om bord. Og at dem vet at det er mørkt om vinteren i Nord-Norge og at dem vet at det kan ofte være storm og dårlig vær og at båten derfor beveger på seg så viss du ikke tåler det er det kanskje ikke det lureste å gjøre. At de har en reel informasjon om hva de begir seg ut på for det kan være tøft å reise med hurtigruten om vinteren og det tror jeg ikke alle vet så noen reiser hjem før Ålesund eller Trondheim etter å ha vært med rundt Stadt for det er alt for tøft, så da har de kanskje ikke fått den rette informasjon, en må selge produktet for det det er og ikke prøve å late som det er noe annet for det er nok av dem som er interessert i dette og heller henvise seg til dem. Det er viktig informasjon gjestene må få. At det er andre som reiser med og har andre ønsker og behov og at

	<p>alle likevel er velkommen og at det er et arbeidsskip ikke et cruiseskip.</p> <p>Veldig mye</p> <p>Nå skal det sies at det kommer jo ann på hvilke ønsker de har, det er ikke alle ønsker vi kan hjelpe dem med, men vi prøver å hjelpe dem så langt som vi kan. For eksempel viss du har en innvendig lugar og vi ikke har en utvendig eller du ikke er villig til å betale for en så kan en heller ikke få det. Men viss du har fått en dårlig lugar og vi er enig i det så prøver vi å hjelpe med å finne en bedre lugar til deg, men igjen viss det er fullt så kan vi ikke hjelpe deg med det heller. Så tror vi er ganske bevisste på hva vi kan og ikke kan gjør, jeg er i vert fall det. Men når en først har kommet hit så kan vi hjelpe deg med at opplevelsen blir bedre, men akkurat produktet som de har kjøpt, viss de har en annen innstilling til det så kan vi ikke gjøre så mye med det. For vi er det vi er og viss de ikke liker det så hjelper det ikke så mye".</p>
Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee	<p>"Det betyr jo alt, vi er her kun for gjesten, så vi vil jo bare det beste for gjesten. Nå er det jo dessverre sånt at vi kan ikke styre vær og vind, men så langt det går så strekker vi oss til det gjesten ønsker. Det er det aller viktigste at vi har fornøyde gjester når gjesten går på land".</p>
Respondent 24 Waiter & Stewardess	<p>"Det er veldig viktig, det er nesten det viktigste. Og det prøver vi hele tiden å oppnå, at de får den opplevelsen som de forventer at de blir mottatt slik som de forventer det.</p> <p>Vi tar imot dem og prater med dem og prøver å fortelle om Hurtigruten og opplevelser og gir dem råd og veiledning om hva de burde reise å se og når de burde gå ut på dekk og se og slike ting for å få mest ut av opplevelsen.</p> <p>Det tror jeg er veldig viktig å ha fokus hele tiden og vite hva man prater om sånn at når gjestene spør så gir de klare svar og helst skal man jo vite hva man prater om og, å gi dem full fokus viss de spør eller trenger hjelp til noe".</p>
Respondent 25 Waiter & Stewardess	<p>"Dem betaler så pass mye for reisen at jeg synes det er veldig viktig at dem opplever en fin reise alle sammen og at dem er godt fornøyd når dem er ferdig med turen. Det synes jeg er, for det er jo ganske dyre reiser dem har og det er mange som har det ønsket om å være med hurtigruten en gang, da syntes jeg det er veldig viktig at de får en fin reise og at vi gjør en så bra jobb at turistene blir fornøyde nok, det synes jeg er en viktig del av det vi gjør på jobb, at vi yter god service og at vi gjør en god jobb for dem".</p>
Respondent 26 Waiter & Stewardess	<p>"Jeg synes det er veldig viktig, men vi kan ikke love dem at de får se nordlys og vi kan ikke love dem at de får se midnatt sola fordi det er jo naturfenomener som vi ikke styrer over. Men vi prøver jo så langt det er mulig og blant annet å vise dem havørn og slike ting og få folk til Nordkapp, men enkelte ganger slår værgudene til og vi kan ikke gjøre noe med det".</p>

Table F.10

Internal perspective on communication of brand-related information

Respondent	Crew member's perspective
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	"Det er viktig, for viss jeg ikke vet hva som har blitt solgt kan jeg heller ikke levere varen".
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	"Det er veldig viktig Det er ikke selskapet som får tilbakemelding det er vi som får det fra gjesten med en gang viss det er noe som ikke er bra. Selfølgelig kan selskapet få det i etterkant, men viss gjesten ikke er fornøyd så sier gjerne gjesten i fra der og da til oss. Og viss dem da er lovet noe som vi ikke klarer å få til så er det litt vanskelig for oss Det har hendt at gjester har en del høyere forventinger enn det vi kan levere. Har opplevd at noen ønsker å spise frokost, lunsj og middag på sin egen suite, og det har ikke vi kapasitet til siden vi har et begrenset antall crew. På et vanlig cruiseship så har de et mye større antall crew som gjør at de kan gjøre slikt".
Respondent 8 Hotel Manager	"Det er veldig viktig, når de har kjøpt seg en Hurtigrute tur så må vi gå den turen, det er veldig leit når vi må kansellere noe, det vekker sterke reaksjoner hver gang, selv når det er været som spiller inn så blir gjestene ikke nødvendigvis sinte, men leie seg for de får ikke sett det de skulle. Da må vi rett og slett snakke og informere godt, informere, informere og informere. Viss vi må kansellere pga. vær så må vi informere for det kan bli forandringer på hjemreise, det kan bli avbrudd og det som teller da er informasjon og ikke minst få de hjem på den beste og raskeste måten viss det går galt pga. vær eller teknisk. Men det blir informasjon, det er det som er viktig, store møter på forskjellige språk og det fungerer. Vi har vært i en slik situasjon mange ganger og det fungerer stort sett veldig bra. Andre juledag lå vi fire båter i Trondheim pga. uvær, så det hender, men da er det om å gjøre det beste for alle, hver enkelt, og så er det å løse det slik at de kommer dit de skal opprinnelig, det er punkt en".
Respondent 9 Captein	"For min del så går det bare på sikkerhet. Sikkerhet går foran kundens tilfredshet, sier jeg nei så er det nei. Sier vi at vi går ikke i Trollfjorden for det er fare for ras er det sikkert kunder som blir skuffet, men det er viktigere å ha sikkerhet. Kunden tilfredshet har en høy prioritet, men ikke topp prioritet, for min stilling. Den er igjen forskjellig for hotellsjefen og reiselederen fordi de prøver naturlig å gi kunden topp prioritet, men ansvaret mitt er forskjellig. Så det er ikke topp prioritet for min del. Har jeg valget av å skuffe en kunde eller risikere sikkerhet så skuffer jeg kunden, så blir kunden misfornøyd, men jeg blir fornøyd".
Respondent 10	"Veldig viktig, for vi gir det kundene har betalt for og gir det de har

Captein	blitt lovet".
Respondent 11 Captein	<p>"Det er klart, det er veldig viktig. Vi føler at det er veldig viktig. Det er hele tiden egentlig en prosess i endring. Det er klart det har vært satt i gang, som jeg nevnt tidligere, det har vært en del konsepter som her vært prøvd ut, noe av det har vært vanskelig å gjennomføre operasjonelt og andre ting har vært vellykket så det er på en måte en stadig prosess der man prøver nye ting. Det som fungerer fortsetter en med og det som ikke fungerer det kvitter en seg med, men det er klart det er veldig for oss om bord og på en måte prøve å levere det som rederiet har solgt, det er viktig. Derfor så er det også veldig viktig for oss og jeg synes det er en veldig bra prosess, når vi igangsetter nye konsepter så gjøres det gjerne som et pilot prosjekt, der et skip prøver ut de her tingene og hvor sånne konsepter og prosjekter blir vurdert før at di blir virkelig solgt ut i markedet. Fordi det er klart at hvis man har blitt lovet et produkt som vi ikke klarer å levere, så blir det veldig negativt for hele rederiet. Så jeg føler at det er veldig viktig, men samtidig rederiet har en veldig fin måte å tilnærme seg de tingene her på, med at man forsøker det ut i praksis før de blir solgt ut i markedet. Men det er veldig viktig for oss å levere det produktene som folk har kjøpt".</p>
Respondent 12 Tour Leader	<p>"Ja det er viktig, for viss kunden ikke får det han mener han har betalt for så kommer de å sier i fra viss de ikke føler dette er riktig. Å reise med hurtigruten er ikke billig, det er ganske kostbart, og da er det viktig at kunden får det han har betalt for. Noen gang er kommer jo folk hit og har blitt forespeilet noe helt annet fordi de som solgte dem turen kanskje ikke hadde så mye kunnskap til hurtigruten og de har rett og slett feilinformert, viss det er slik så prøver vi klart å rette opp eller tilby noe annet slik at kunden blir mer fornøyd. Jeg synes det er viktig for dette er et dyrt produkt også. Da er det viktig at vi strekker oss så langt vi kan innen for rimelighetens grense og sånt. Viss noen har gjort dårlig håndverk et sted er det ikke alltid vi kan gjøre det godt igjen, men vi prøver i vert fall å gå i dialog med kunden og etterkommer og kan gi tilbakemelding til der kunden kommer fra. Men det er veldig viktig.</p> <p>Det er klart jo bedre en kjenner et produkt jo bedre kan en selge det. Uten denne kunnskapet kan du heller ikke forstå kunden så godt tror jeg.</p> <p>Forstår kanskje ikke heller kundens behov</p> <p>Hvordan kan en da vite hva kunden forventer, hva vil gjøre han fornøyd, hva han har kjøpt</p> <p>Jo mer jeg vet hva de har betalt, hvilke utflykter de har meldt seg på, des bedre er det</p> <p>En lærer selv hele tiden og tillegner seg kunnskap</p> <p>Kunnskapen er veldig viktig for å være en god salgsrepresentant og forstå produktet en er en del av".</p>
Respondent 13 Tour Leader	<p>"Det er jo veldig viktig. Det jo våres kundebase, viss de ikke er fornøyd så forteller de noen andre at de ikke var fornøyd og så</p>

	kommer de ikke tilbake og det er derfor vi har så høy belegning som vi har for det er mange tyskere som kommer igjen og igjen og hadde vi ikke levert så hadde de ikke kommet".
Respondent 14 Tour Leader	See Table F.11.
Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager	"Det er veldig viktig, prøver så godt vi kan og gi det de har lovet...og vi gir det aller aller beste av oss selv. jeg lærer jo hvis jeg gjør noe feil og mener en lærer noe nytt hver dag, så hvis noen kommer og spør hvorfor ikke gjøre det slik så prøver jeg å gjøre det slik, men det er ikke bestandig like lett det heller. Men jeg tenker jo heletiden på hvordan en kan gjøre det bedre både for oss som jobber her og for gjestene sin del".
Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager	"Viss gjesten får det han har betalt for og får en god opplevelse som viser på hans væremåte så er det ikke noe som varmer mer enn det. Vi gjør det ytterste for å få oppleve sånne ting. Det er veldig viktig for viss ikke kan gjøre en oppgave som tilfredsstillter gjesten så er ikke det en hyggelig opplevelse".
Respondent 17 Substitute Restaurant Manager	"Det er veldig viktig. Det er jo ikke noe artig å ikke ha fornøyde kunder. Vi vil ha så fornøyde kunder som vi kan få. Jeg synes det er veldig viktig at de får det de har blitt lovet".
Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee	"Det er veldig viktig, for viss de ikke får det blir det mange klager og vi blir frustrert, det er veldig viktig at de blir fornøyd Viss de blir fornøyd med service og hele turen øker sjansen for at de blir fornøyd og kanskje kommer tilbake som igjen vil gi mersalg Det er enklere å hjelpe dem når jeg vet hvilke behov dem har. Det er veldig kjekt at vi ansatte får om bord får beskjed om hva kunden har blitt lovet, men det er ikke bestandig vi får beskjed om det. Men som regel gjør vi det. Ikke alle er flinke å gi beskjed. Får beskjed på e-post, mye informasjon går på e-post. For eksempel stod det i ei avis at de skulle en gratis middag om bord, men da måtte det bestilles på land. Det stod det ikke noe om så da ble det mange sure passasjerer".
Respondent 19 Purser	"Det er ganske viktig for det er ofte der vi kan få konfliktområder Dom for eksempel så er ikke vi et cruise skip og da må ikke folk få inntrykk av at vi er det Kan være at dem som selger Hurtigruten i alle land ikke er helt klar over hva Hurtigruten er og derfor kan kunder tro at de skal på et Cruise skip, mens vi er en båt for alle, vi har ikke klasseinndeling at noen er viktigere enn andre. Og dette er et arbeidsskip, det arbeides 24 timer i døgnet. Selvsagt tas det hensyn til at det er natt og slikt, men det arbeides hele døgnet. Ut over det så er det andre lyder og annet mønster enn det det kanskje vil være på et cruiseskip, men nå kjenner

	<p>ikke jeg cruiseskip i den grad da. Og det er viktig at de har rett oppfatning av turen før dem kommer om bord. Og at dem vet at det er mørkt om vinteren i Nord-Norge og at dem vet at det kan ofte være storm og dårlig vær og at båten derfor beveger på seg så viss du ikke tåler det er det kanskje ikke det lureste å gjøre. At de har en reel informasjon om hva de begir seg ut på for det kan være tøft å reise med hurtigruten om vinteren og det tror jeg ikke alle vet så noen reiser hjem før Ålesund eller Trondheim etter å ha vært med rundt Stadt for det er alt for tøft, så da har de kanskje ikke fått den rette informasjon, en må selge produktet for det det er og ikke prøve å late som det er noe annet for det er nok av dem som er interessert i dette og heller henviser seg til dem. Det er viktig informasjon gjestene må få. At det er andre som reiser med og har andre ønsker og behov og at alle likevel er velkommen og at det er et arbeidsskip ikke et cruiseskip.</p> <p>Veldig mye</p> <p>Nå skal det sies at det kommer jo an på hvilke ønsker de har, det er ikke alle ønsker vi kan hjelpe dem med, men vi prøver å hjelpe dem så langt som vi kan. For eksempel viss du har en innvendig lugar og vi ikke har en utvendig eller du ikke er villig til å betale for en så kan en heller ikke få det. Men viss du har fått en dårlig lugar og vi er enig i det så prøver vi å hjelpe med å finne en bedre lugar til deg, men igjen viss det er fullt så kan vi ikke hjelpe deg med det heller. Så tror vi er ganske bevisste på hva vi kan og ikke kan gjøre, jeg er i vert fall det. Men når en først har kommet hit så kan vi hjelpe deg med at opplevelsen blir bedre, men akkurat produktet som de har kjøpt, viss de har en annen innstilling til det så kan vi ikke gjøre så mye med det. For vi er det vi er og viss de ikke liker det så hjelper det ikke så mye".</p>
<p>Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee</p>	<p>"Det betyr jo alt, vi er her kun for gjesten, så vi vil jo bare det beste for gjesten. Nå er det jo dessverre sånt at vi kan ikke styre vær og vind, men så langt det går så strekker vi oss til det gjesten ønsker. Det er det aller viktigste at vi har fornøyde gjester når gjesten går på land".</p>
<p>Respondent 24 Waiter & Stewardess</p>	<p>"Det er veldig viktig, det er nesten det viktigste. Og det prøver vi hele tiden å oppnå, at de får den opplevelsen som de forventer at de blir mottatt slik som de forventer det.</p> <p>Vi tar imot dem og prater med dem og prøver å fortelle om Hurtigruten og opplevelser og gir dem råd og veiledning om hva de burde reise å se og når de burde gå ut på dekk og se og slike ting for å få mest ut av opplevelsen.</p> <p>Det tror jeg er veldig viktig å ha fokus hele tiden og vite hva man prater om sånn at når gjestene spør så gir de klare svar og helst skal man jo vite hva man prater om og, å gi dem full fokus viss de spør eller trenger hjelp til noe".</p>
<p>Respondent 25 Waiter & Stewardess</p>	<p>"Dem betaler så pass mye for reisen at jeg synes det er veldig viktig at dem opplever en fin reise alle sammen og at dem er godt fornøyd når dem er ferdig med turen. Det synes jeg er, for det er jo ganske dyre reiser dem har og det er mange som har det ønsket om å være med hurtigruten en gang, da syntes jeg det er veldig viktig at de får en fin</p>

	reise og at vi gjør en så bra jobb at turistene blir fornøyde nok, det synes jeg er en viktig del av det vi gjør på jobb, at vi yter god service og at vi gjør en god jobb for dem".
Respondent 26 Waiter & Stewardess	"Jeg synes det er veldig viktig, men vi kan ikke love dem at de får se nordlys og vi kan ikke love dem at de får se midnatt sola fordi det er jo naturfenomener som vi ikke styrer over. Men vi prøver jo så langt det er mulig og blant annet å vise dem havørn og slike ting og få folk til Nordkapp, men enkelte ganger slår værgudene til og vi kan ikke gjøre noe med det".

Table F.11.

Internal perspective on communication channels of brand-related information

Respondent	Employee perspective on communication channels of brand-related information
Respondent 1 Representative of Management Sales & Marketing	<p>"Actually, we have communicated our brand as a part of the brand values and company's values. We do it in general more at the management format, but we clearly have provided each and every employee with our brand and values statements in a number of locations. Now, that does not mean that I feel that is good enough, but we have been communicating that. You can find it online. You can find it in little booklets we've printed out as well. Yes, so that's how we've been communicating that.</p> <p>We actually do it. We've just, for example, had a global sales meeting last week, which is, you know, where things like that come up with a lot of details, because then it is truly what the brand stands for and what the components are in the applied brand. But we do it... in other ways; we talk to the management, we talk to the captain frontier. It comes up in different formats.</p> <p>Yes, this includes certainly the reservations training as well as the management training. We have also been doing serious management sessions. Actually, the brand and values are an important part of these training sessions".</p>
Respondent 2 Representative of Management International Marketing	<p>"Then we have a frequent meeting routine on the director level. The next meeting is actually taking this week and one of the main topics will be the brand strategy and how we are going even to bring it further, so at the moment we are actually developing that. We also have an intranet called "InfoHurtigruten", where you can find everything about it. It is in a written form, it is in an oral form, it is also kind of executional, when it comes to organizing all the marketing materials. ... You know, we have a management meeting once a year for all managers from the land-based organization and the ships and the brand is also presented there several times... I think there are still a lot of improvements that could be made within the communication between the land and the ships. We have a challenge with the levels of management on land and with the double crew</p>

	<p>on ships. People are changing when they are on ships in the winter and then there are more people brought onboard the ships in summer. I am not 100% sure, there are regular hotel manager and two leader meetings a year and, (<i>of course, one from the marketing product tries to get an overview over what we are doing</i>), but we do not have a direct communication line to the ships, that's not within the Marketing and not the Sales, this is more with the people from the Product Department. And we also have the operational manager, who is responsible for the onboard concept, the shops and everything, but this is just one person. So let's say I am not sure whether we get everything through and of course we have the intranet, which everybody is using, but of course, there is a lot of other information".</p>
<p>Respondent 3 Representative of Management Hotel Operations</p>	<p>"It terms of communicating the brand we have meetings throughout the year; we have hotel managers' meeting twice a year, we have various meetings with other personnel, and there is always something related to the brand in those meetings, something about brand building. We have got the captains and the hotel managers living on the ships, captain is obviously in control. They have weekly staff meetings and there is focus on our brand promises. What we try to focus on is good customer service in the hotel department, but also local knowledge on where we are on the voyage".</p>
<p>Respondent 4 Representative of Management Product & Revenue</p>	<p>At least on land we quite regularly involve a workshop strategy, where we always refer to the brand. We try to present brand in a consistent way and that what we are here for. Employees on the sea are a little more difficult to be approached, but at least the management and the senior personnel are also exposed and involved in what the brand is. Intranet would be one of the main ways how we do this, email and other updates would be the other. We also have periodic updates of the company in relation to financial performance, or strategy or messages from the CEO or structured meetings with ship management.</p> <p>That's a good question. The employees get informed in the same sort of manner I've described about the brand in general. But there is a difference between information and integration and I would say a high level the ideas about being authentic or about "Real experiences in unique waters" in terms of brand I think that is a pretty collective understanding. But when we go to the next level about the reasons why you should be what the benefits of the brand are I would imagine that it is far more informed than actively integrated in how we work in the whole organization. So possibly any organization for example would be very focused on that, but the organization close to a customer may not have those brand benefits in mind or at top of mind every day, well they may be of a little bit more of stories real experiences, unique waters and probably most of the time they do relate to the benefits, but I am less sure that that is something that is actively worked with and follows".</p>
<p>Respondent 5 Representative of Management</p>	<p>Yes, it is also through this little booklet, but I guess we have not been quite good in using these promises on educating our people how to use these promises. We have focused on the cultural values. It is a part of the</p>

Communication & PR	fundamentals in our vision and values, yes, the focus has been on the cultural values".
Respondent 6 Hotel Manager	"Men vi har ikke noen møter eller «workshops» med land hvor vi går gjennom dem og ser på hva de står for. Eller i vert fall veldig lite, maks 2 ganger i året kan en si vi har noe tilsvarende som er veldig lite. Vi deltar veldig lite i møter eller noe slikt hvor dette diskuteres".
Respondent 7 Hotel Manager	"Alle nye får et lite hefte om våre verdier og har et lite kurs når de begynner om bord på jobben. Min avdeling er på møte 2 ganger i året. Møte nettopp for å prøve å få lik trykksaker på alle områder/båter".
Respondent 8 Hotel Manager	"Alt er etter boka etter den der profileringshåndboka. Jeg får noen bitter litt muntlig, men det er ikke mye, men hovedsakelig får skriftlig på mail eller på intranett. Ikke mye... Vi har vært på enkelte samlinger og at jeg har lest meg til det på nett og intranett og jeg har deltatt på enkelte ledersamlinger og leder utvikling og så har vi slik kaptein og hotellsjef seminar en gang i året. Der får vi vite i vert fall noe. Vi bruker lite oppslag, men vi har noen slike små hefter som de ansatte får og de snakker jo om det, verdiene våre trygg, raus og ansvarlig. De har vi i bitte små håndbøker som vi har i lomma som er definisjonen under vært ord råd trygg, raus og ansvarlig".
Respondent 9 Captain	"I informasjonssamfunnet så kommer veldig mye på mail, mail er en stor og viktig informasjon kilde, som spyr ut masse viktig og mindre viktig informasjon, men i tillegg så er det jo stort sett 2 ganger i året er det samling hvor en blir presentert for de store linjene. Igjen, departementssjefene, få andre: det tekniske departementet, overstyrmann og maskinsjefen får ikke så mange. Hotellet får veldig mange for det er de som har mest kundekontakt som har kundefokus. Styrmann og overstyrmann som driver vedlikehold har ikke samme kundefokus som de som er frontline, og vi som kapteiner får mesteparten servert, men veldig ofte på orienteringsnivå hvor du som hotellsjef, reiseleder får det på det operative nivå, det er en forskjell. [Samlingen foregår] to ganger per år... de som har butikksalg kommer inn til slike møter, salgsmøter og møter der de er presentert for produkt [mumbling] for det er en del av varemerket, det vi leverer til kunden".
Respondent 10 Captain	The respondent refused to discuss the aspects of brand communication within the organization.
Respondent 11 Captain	"...skriftlig informasjon en viktig kilde til slik informasjon...også offisielle samlinger, som vi har to ganger i året hvor det blir fokusert på dette her med varemerket til Hurtigruten. Ja, hva jeg skal si om det, det på en måte har vært gjennom en stadig rød tråd gjennom alt arbeidet vi gjør og siden jeg begynte i Hurtigruten siden 1999, så har jo det vært et fokusområde, man kanskje aller sterkest i

	<p>seinere 8 - 9 årene så har det her med merkevare blitt enda mer fokusert på og det som sagt gjennom skriftlig informasjon og møter med rederiledelsen og i sånne sammenhenger at man har tilegnet seg det her. Nå er det jo slik at å ivaretar sikkerhet, som er på en måte ikke unikt for Hurtigruten. I en slik stilling som jeg har som kapteinen så er jo det her med å ivareta sikkerhet er jo definitivt det viktigste enten man er kaptein for Hurtigruta eller man er kaptein om bord i et tankskip på alle sider av jorda, så det er ikke noe unikt, men likevel så er det noe som har vært veldig mye fokus på i Hurtigruta at vi skal seile trygt og at alle skal føle seg trygt i både storm eller det er stille.</p> <p>Du kan si at det er et ganske omfattende program som en ny ansatt skal gå gjennom før at vedkommende blir en del av Hurtigruten og det systemet der og blir en arbeidstaker. Det første møte med Hurtigruten er gjennom jobbsøknad, og videre for i det hele tatt å få en stilling om bord på skipet våres så skal jo vedkommende gjennom et web-basert program som gjelder grunnverdiene våre, videre så er det slik at vi har jo, det er litt spesielt for skip, vi har noe som kalles «sikkerhetsstyringsystem» som alle ansatte skal ha en viss kjennskap til, det er et lovpålagt system, samtidig så bruker vi det systemet, det er en elektronisk database og det brukes av ansatte å få ut informasjon om de verdiene som Hurtigruten skal representere, likeledes så er det slik at man har en del møtevirksomhet om bord i form av allmannamøter, departementsvisemøter og ikke minst det her med vern og miljøarbeid hvor det her med de grunnleggende verdiene våres er fokusområdet".</p>
<p>Respondent 12 Tour Leader</p>	<p>"Og det kommer gjennom den intra-kommunikasjonen som i grunnen er beste kanalen for å fange opp slik ting. Ellers så kan det være at hotellsjefen kaller inn til et møte, informerer oss, det kan være kapteinen som har fått informasjon fra landorganisasjonen vår som skal formidles ut til alle ansatte. Og det kan være ... vi går gjennom hva er det vi driver med og hva er våre verdier, hva er våre kjerneverdier, hva er det vi prøver å presentere og gi videre.</p> <p>Av og til kan det hende det kommer noen om bord hvor vi skal fokusere mer på salg. Viser oss hvordan vi skal selge det produktet. Det er kanskje ikke så mye «workshop» som vi driver med her om bord når vi først er på jobb, men innimellom kan det hende det kommer noe fra landsiden".</p>
<p>Respondent 13 Tour Leader</p>	<p><i>"There was no possibility to probe on this question as the interviewee was constantly being interrupted by the questions from customers".</i></p>
<p>Respondent 14 Tour Leader</p>	<p>"Ja, vi som jeg gjentok tidligere, så er målet vårt er å begeistre folk. Vi begeistrer med natur, de flotte skipene våre, flotte besetningen, utflukter, mat om bord. Alt sammenhengende, alt lagt til sammen, alt skal begeistre passasjerer og ønske å få dem tilbake samt, ja, gi dem en skikkelig fin norsk opplevelse.</p> <p>Ja, altså vi har jo av og til, skulle til å si når vi får diverse skriv. Ja, vi har intranet, som vi bruker aktivt og der er det ofte at vi oppdaterer på hva vi bør fokusere på, hva vi ønsker å formidle til gjester og nye ting. Det kunne kanskje ha vært litt bedre tid, men det jo mange det skal gjennom så det har jeg forståelse for.</p>

	<p>Ja, det er informasjon on nye programmer som vi har, på vinter har vi et program som heter "Hunting the light" og på våren, så har vi «Arctic awakening». Så det går mye på disse programmene som vi har. Så det går kanskje ikke så mye på generelt varemerket vårt. Det har jeg ikke sett i hvert fall, men det går mye på de forskjellige programmene vi har, årstidsprogrammene, ja".</p>
Respondent 15 Restaurant Manager	<p>"De aller øverste lederne har møter og workshops om hvordan ting skal være så skal det gå videre ned over, men det kan fort bli at ei fjær blir til ti høns da, så det kan av og til bli litt rot. Ikke vondt ment, men det er slik over hele linja, alle sammen burde vært med på slike workshops, men det er jo litt vanskelig også for vi er jo tross alt om bord, vi skal jo eventuelt tas dit det skal være workshops og det er jo ikke billig det når alle er spredd over hele landet".</p>
Respondent 16 Restaurant Manager	<p>"Det er ting jeg har blitt fortalt, ting en kan lese seg frem til via brosjyrer og høre på foredrag som har vært i forbindelse med salg som har vært, salgskampanjer og sånt. Jeg har vært med i den vingruppa vi har om bord hvor vi har diskutert forskjellige ting og hva vi bør gjøre, om vi bør ha noen drikkevarer inne klar til å drikke hvor vi kom opp med at vi burde ha våres egen vin. Så det ble som et vinforum denne gruppa. Jo du kunne jo gått inn som trainee for reisemiljø, men vi har ingenting slikt for min stilling nei, ikke som jeg har hørt om. Kan hende en deltar på noen kurs som blir arrangert en gang i blant".</p>
Respondent 17. Substitute Restaurant Manager	<p>"Gjennom jobben å bare jobbe, men ser det jo selv, man er jo på en måte turist selv når en jobber, vi får jo sett ganske mye også, så man lærer etter hvert. Det var det sikkert, men det var ikke jeg interessert i å være med på, jeg er bare interessert i å være på jobb".</p>
Respondent 18 Front Desk Trainee	<p>"...mye kommer på mail. Har ikke deltatt på noen kurs, møter eller workshops ang. dette. Vi snakker om jobb, hva kunden ønsker, men har ikke direkte møter".</p>
Respondent 19 Purser	<p>"Mye informasjon kommer på mail, viss det er mer personlig så prater vi om det på to-manns-hand Vi prater i lag daglig, men så har vi stort sett møter hver turnus hver 22 dag der vi diskuter ting som har hent, hvordan ting er, hvordan vi ønsker å ha det".</p>
Respondent 20 Front Desk Trainee	<p>" Fant informasjon som var tilgjengelig på nettet, historie og slikt, at det begynte som postrute. En av mine første lærling oppgaver er jo å skrive om Hurtigruten blant anna HMS og forretningside generelt og hva vi rett og slett tilbyr gjesten, hva som er konseptet våres. Det begynte på skolen så interesserte jeg meg for Hurtigruten fordi at der jeg bor så ser vi Hurtigruten fra kaia og jeg har bestandig hatt lyst å jobbe på Hurtigruten. Så jeg begynte å undersøke litt og leste om Hurtigruten og om konseptet deres og viste bare min interesse. Ja, når vi kommer som ny om bord i skipet så har vi noe som heter Hurtigruteskolen som er et datakurs som vi må gjennom og få bestått på før vi kan gå om bord i skipet, så det er noe</p>

	<p>man får sendt videre per mail at man får lov å komme om bord å jobbe, det får man tilsendt på mail at an må ta noe som heter hurtigruteskolen da. Er litt usikker på om det er alle ansatte [som tar tilsvarende kurs], men det er i vert fall restaurasjon altså hotell besetningen som er restauranten, lugar, resepsjon og reiseleder".</p>
Respondent 21 Waiter & Steward	<p>"We do not have practice like that, we just have safety courses, yes, simple thing, safety on board, and things like that, but training generally, nothing outside, than safety. You get the manual, that's it: how to behave, how to..., but I think it is more common sense, if you are in the service industry, you should already have it in you, know how to act, how to approach the people".</p> <p>All these thirty days I am on ship. I do not think, no. During 30 days of my stay I have not got any specific information, maybe like "Oh, we've got a new board member", but it does not concern us that much [mumbling] and maybe new products on board, events, that's it..."</p>
Respondent 22 Waiter & Steward	<p>"Yes, we had a meeting last summer on board, where was a man talking about our goals and how we as a company should work, like what kind of excursions we can offer... that was good, because we felt kind of connected with other ships, something, yes, it is not just... it is a big company, so, yes".</p>
Respondent 23 Waiter & Steward	<p>"We have some meetings, yes, but I think the main thing is the Internet Hurtigruten.com. We do not have so many people coming to the ship to explain what Hurtigruten stands for, or what is important for our vision to make the guests come back to Hurtigruten. ... on some boats we have like not a trainee, but it is almost like a trainee when people are new you show them around and they can read a little bit about the Hurtigruten and what is important for our vision and so on, so they know what to expect, so they can answer it. I think it is important to get to know the company, if you are new and going to sell and explain people. It is very important to know the coast and what Hurtigruten stands for.</p> <p>[when you start at work here] the first thing [to know] I think is how to get to know the ship, the security and staff like that, it is very important and also I think to get to know along the coast what is important, to get to know when we are, where we are and also about the places we stop, yes, really get to know the coast, it is something you need all the time. I think it is important to tell people, because that is some of the brand. If people ask, you should answer. It does not look so good, if you can't answer".</p>
Respondent 24 Waiter & Steward	<p>"Ja, vi får ... av og til så er det noen møter og slikt med hvordan vi skal fremstille oss eller hvordan vi skal selge diverse ting, selge utflukter eller selge de varemerkene som er på en måte, at vi prater om det i offentlighet, eller prater om det til gjestene få de til å bli interessert og gjerne få de til å fortelle om egne opplevelser viss de har vært på utfluktene som er trekkplasteret eller varemerket. Så vi får god informasjon om det. Det er sånn at vi får informasjon fra kontoret så blir det gitt til min leder som jeg henvender meg til så blir informasjonen gitt videre som at nå er det kjempefint å reise på forskjellige turer for eksempel og at vi da prøver</p>

	<p>å få gjestene til å snakke med andre gjester om dette for å få dem til å være med på forskjellige turer, få de interessert i og prate om Hurtigruta og [mumbling] det er masse historier, det er det.</p> <p>Ja vi har en gang i måneden har vi møte, eller vi skal i vert fall, men det er ikke alltid det lar seg gjøre for det er så mye å gjøre, men så har vi medarbeidersamtale der man prater om alt mulig egentlig, hva man kan gjøre bedre og hva som er nytt og slikt. Viss det er noen nye utflukter og slikt".</p>
Respondent 25 Waiter & Steward	<p>"Ja det er noen fellesoppslag greier på båten. Nei ikke så mye, men det kan vel forekomme ja. Ja, jeg tror jeg har fått brosjyre, det er jo sånt som en får og passasjerer får om reisa og Hurtigruten generelt da. Nei, tror ikke jeg har fått noe hefte eller noe slikt om Hurtigruten sine verdier og slikt nei. Gjennom erfaring og at jeg har jobbet om bord så lenge så har jeg fått det [kunnskapen om arbeidsoppgaver] inn sånn egentlig, ikke noe spesielt annen informasjon egentlig, bare fått det med meg siden jeg har jobbet så lenge... det er jo bare hva vi gjør på jobb hver dag, hvis det ikke er noe spesielt som skjer på Hurtigruta fra oppi ledelsen og sånt da".</p>
Respondent 26 Waiter & Steward	<p>"Det får vi da enten i form av mail eller brev fra ledelsen på land og når vi har allmann møte om bord på skipet. Informasjon får vi på allmann møter og på oppslag på tavler viss det er noe nytt og vi blir informert når det er noe som skjer, det blir vi.</p> <p>Vi har ei oppslagstavle som står nede på dekk tre hvor de er veldig flinke å henge opp informasjon.</p> <p>Alle ansatte har tilgang til den tavlen".</p>

Appendix J

Extended version of Hurtigruten's vision "Real experiences in unique waters"

"In a world where humans live to a great extent on the surface and have little time for reflection, the need arises to be part of the real and the natural. People want to escape from the stress and hassle of daily life to participate actively in the powerful experiences provided by closeness to dramatic landscapes and local culture. We in Hurtigruten will fulfil this need for both everyday travellers and for tourists.

When we go to work, it is to ensure that people have the opportunity to live where they want and that others can experience majestic scenery and local culture. Our guests will feel just as much at home whatever the product they have purchased, and we will be just as much at the service of local people as of tourists.

By constantly improving this experience, our long-term aim is to be regarded as one of the world's 10 most attractive tourist destinations. Quite simply, we go to work to create real experiences in unique waters."