



AALBORG UNIVERSITET

The role of a DMO

An exploratory study of the new tourism strategy 2020 of the
DMO Wonderful Copenhagen



LOCALHOOD

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Gerda Valentaite

Abstract

“With the launch of our 2020 strategy, we set our course towards a future beyond tourism” (visitcopenhagen.dk)

The aim of the present research is to explore the shifting role of the DMO Wonderful Copenhagen in terms of developing the destination with a focus on the tourism strategy ‘Localhood’ for 2020 upfront created and newly announced by the DMO earlier this year in 2017. Thesis explores the ‘Localhood’ strategy paradoxes such as “we leave behind the era of tourism” and seeks to identify and understand the strategic changes that Wonderful Copenhagen embarks on and the challenges that it encounters while refocusing its role and responsibilities in a destination development.

Following the constructivism scientific worldview, the research design of the present thesis utilizes the exploratory qualitative approach and makes use of the data collected from semi-structured interviews with the two DMO members and the strategist Frank Cuypers, as well as netnographic study and secondary material while the point of departure for this research is a discourse analysis of the new strategy document.

Employing the case study framework, the findings suggest that Wonderful Copenhagen embarks on the management role in terms of training the industry and enabling others (partners, visitors, locals) to promote the destination based on the shared branding framework. The promotional DMO’s responsibilities shift towards a more coordinating and curating role. This thesis recognizes that the new people-based vision of ‘Localhood’ contradicts with various destination development aspects, such as plans for the big data analysis, geographic segmentation approach or the ambition to expand air routes and cruise lines that might impact the destination’s livability. It was found that Wonderful Copenhagen faces several challenges in terms of prioritizing the destination stakeholders for the new projects and partnerships while on the other hand, the emergent strategy embarks on the learning and experimentation “era” for the whole destination network. Yet, the values of ‘Localhood’ should be integrated and holistically delivered by the industry, and that is the present concern of Wonderful Copenhagen. Lastly, the research indicates that the DMO waves off the old role and initiates

the new one, but at the same time continues doing ‘things’ the same way and maintains its traditional responsibilities. This questions the proclamation of the end of tourism and suggests that transformations in the tourism is not an easy task and is highly a business of the whole tourism industry.

Finally, this research aims to contribute to a better understanding and possibly provide a framework for the further research regarding the complex role of the DMOs and the challenges of transforming their responsibilities, while suggesting that Wonderful Copenhagen isn’t unique in the issues it encounters.

Key words: *tourism strategy, ‘Localhood’, Wonderful Copenhagen, DMO role, stakeholders*

Abbreviations

DMO(s)	Destination Marketing/Management Organization(s)
WoCo	DMO Wonderful Copenhagen
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
DAC	Danish Architecture Center
SMK	Statens Museum for Kunst (The National Gallery of Denmark)

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1. Introduction

Tourism as one of the fastest developing industry in the world forces the destination marketing/management organizations to seek ambitious strategies and solutions to attract even bigger share of tourism into their destination (Hankinson, 2010). With the increasing competition between the destinations worldwide, the greater knowledge of the trends underpinning the development of the tourism - the greater the capability of destination managers to formulate destination strategy to achieve the competitive advantage (Dwyer et al., 2009). DMOs, according to Corak and Zivoder (2017), today have a complex task “(...) *to ensure sustainable destination development through optimal use of resources and welfare of the local community and achieve competitiveness in a fast-changing social and economic climate*” (as cited in Dwyer et al., 2017, p.101).

The challenges that DMOs nowadays encounter call for decisions that make a smarter use of resources and that enhance the quality of life for both locals and visitors in a sustainable way (Beritelli et al., 2015). Taking into account the issue with the mass tourism that the cities such as Venice or Barcelona are presently facing and which is impacting the quality of life for their residents due to the increasing visitation, the destination Copenhagen overtakes the approach to create the tourism that brings the maximum value for both tourists and locals (destinationthink.com). In 2017 January the DMO of the capital region of Denmark – Wonderful Copenhagen (WoCo) launched the new 2020 and beyond strategy greeting a so called new era of the tourism by boldly proclaiming: “*The End of Tourism as We Know it*” (visitcopenhagen.dk). The new strategy is embracing a new vision and mission, values and strategic coordinates with the strong focus on the transforming the Copenhagen into a “*Localhood for everyone*”, where the pivotal value is a people-based growth. The plan encourages the destination to think of the visitors as temporary locals that seek authentic experiences, highlights the big data analysis and imagines that the destination future will be co-created by the industry, visitors and residents. Moreover, it is noteworthy that with the “end of tourism” WoCo bid farewell to the marketing role and embarks on the destination management responsibilities, adopting an expanded perspective of their role beyond destination promotion and marketing alone.

The 'Localhood' strategy has captured my interest by claiming a new beginning and setting the course beyond the tourism. Ambitious declaration about the new management responsibilities in comparison with a relatively limited position or resource constrained function within the destination management and development became a point to consider. Interestingly, provoking statements and paradoxical formulations of the strategic document such as "*We recognize the expiration of our role*" and "*We leave behind the era of tourism*" have sparked my curiosity to analyze the new DMO role in a destination development and to examine the complex and rather paradoxical aspects around its declaration and practice.

Not wandering far from the fact that the 'Localhood' tourism strategy is relatively newly released and yet in the process of development in practice, the study is done from the perspective of the DMO taking into consideration its strategy announcement and the actual handling of the role, while the data from the tourists will not be collected. The research will not investigate the perceptions of the partners (that are involved in the strategy implementation) regarding the new DMO role either, while this could be conducted subsequently as the role progresses.

1.1. Problem area and research question

As the official DMO of the capital region of Denmark, WoCo plays an important role in representing country's regional visitor growth and supporting the cross-national tourism strategies. It promotes and develops the tourism through four distinct business divisions – Convention, Cruise, Communication and Development, while many received nominations including Europe's Leading City Break destination 2017, Europe's Leading Meetings & Conference Destination 2017 and Europe's Leading Cruise destination 2017 thus demonstrate a significant DMO input into the destination recognition and growth (worldtravelawards.com). With the launch of a new tourism strategy 'Localhood', that boldly proclaims "*The End of Tourism as We Know it*" (visitcopenhagen.dk), one could potentially raise the question what will happen with the tourism in Copenhagen and what is the role of WoCo in the destination development from now on.

In today's world of DMOs - revolutionizing digitalization and changing visitor behavior make the destination management a complex task, while the DMOs must track the emerging changes and react to them accordingly. The role of the DMO is also complicated by its nature to coordinate numerous stakeholders, strengthen existing destination network and continually seek for innovative alliances to develop the destination further (Corak and Zivoder, as cited in Dwyer et al., 2017). According to the consultancy company that actively participated in the new tourism strategy formation process, WoCo is no exception to face the impacts of the turbulent tourism environment and the pressure to refocus the "M" in the DMOs (destinationthink.com).

What does the future of the DMO look like, if there is one? – is highly discussed topic among the world DMOs' leaders, who debate whether destination marketing/management organizations will continue playing a large part in developing their destinations, improving the life quality for locals and remaining a strong economic driver for years ahead (destinationthink.com). DMOs vary from each other according to many factors, yet the present study does not aim to compare the roles of them or anticipate the future of such organizations. This thesis investigates a case of the WoCo role in a destination development and seeks to acquire new knowledge about the complex environment the DMO has to adapt to, different interests it has to serve and the multiple collaborations it has to develop in a multifaceted destination.

As it was highlighted before, the new WoCo tourism strategy 'Localhood' stresses the transition from the marketing organization to the management organization. While academic theory suggests a wealth of opportunities for tourism practitioners and the existing literature speaks about the DMO transition from a sole marketing towards a destination management role already a decade ago (Dwyer et al., 2009; Ritchie and Crouch, 2003; Gretzel et al., 2006), there is a lack of DMOs successful destination management examples (Pike, 2016). According to Pike (2016): *"the destination management nomenclature is inappropriate and misleading, since management implies control and few if any DMOs have the mandate or resources to manage their locality"* (Pike, 2016, p. 4). There are no empirical conclusions about DMOs successful coordinating and managing role within a complex network of a destination (Beritelli et al.,

2015). Hence, realizing the destination management role is problematic and it could be prolific to explore how WoCo embarks on this ambitious task. As the consequence, this research could provide a further knowledge about the challenges and opportunities the DMO faces in this context.

Building on all the initial considerations, the aim of the present research is to explore and understand the changing role of the DMO in terms of developing the destination with the focus on the new tourism strategy 'Localhood'. From the recognition of the aim, this research addresses the following problem formulation: *What strategic changes for its role does the DMO Wonderful Copenhagen embark on and how are these changes being realized while developing the destination?* The following objectives have been conceived to reach the thesis aim:

- Examine the new tourism strategy and explore what is being declared for the DMO role and responsibilities; Study the push factors for the new role, as well as how it differs from the former WoCo role.
- Investigate the ways the role is being realized in the multiple destination development initiatives and activities, and study various stakeholders role in this context.
- Uncover the challenges as well as the paradoxes regarding the strategic changes for the DMO role and their implementation; Investigate the paradox of the "end of tourism" and thus how radical and novel the WoCo role is.

In order to answer the devised problem formulation, textual discourse analysis of the new strategy document was deployed and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two participants from WoCo and with the strategist who participated in the strategy formulation process. Netnographic study and secondary material complemented the findings.

The new WoCo strategy 2020 is a new unexplored phenomenon, meaning that no similar study has been undertaken investigating the strategic changes of the DMO role for the Copenhagen

destination development from the perspective of the tourism strategy. This thesis could be a relevant study to guide and inspire the future research regarding the DMO response to the changing market conditions and evolving trends. Furthermore, I hope that the present thesis contributes to the investigation of the new DMO roles in the digital era, since the topic of digitalization will be extensively discussed in this paper; and introduces various new concepts such as “enabler” (chapter 5.7) or “temporary local” (chapter 5.1) that could be a point of interest for other researchers. Lastly, the findings of the challenges and paradoxes in terms of transforming the responsibilities could be valuable for WoCo. They could help to identify the pitfalls or on the other hand the forte of the DMO in order to plan and realize the role further.

2. Methodology

This chapter will describe the methodological considerations and methods chosen for the study. First of all, the philosophical foundation will be outlined and discussed in relation to the research. The exploratory qualitative approach will be presented and arguments for its suitability will be given. The textual discourse analysis will be introduced to enlighten the reader of the principle used for deconstructing the strategic material. Importantly, primary data – the strategic document will be presented as the research was based on the analysis of the DMO’s new tourism strategy document. Here after the investigator will introduce the choice of an interview giving several examples of the questions posed to the participants. The limitations of the study will be considered and weaknesses of the methods chosen will be presented. Finally, the section of data analysis will explain the approach chosen for the analysis chapter of the theses and the quality criteria for the research will be discussed.

2.1. Philosophy of science

A paradigm, according to Bryman (2012), is *“(…) a cluster of beliefs and dictates which for scientists in a particular discipline influence what should be studied, how research should be*

done, (and) how results should be interpreted” (Bryman, 2012, p.630). It helps framing an understanding of acceptable knowledge to the researcher while making a research.

The thesis rest on the philosophical paradigm of constructivism, which views the world and perceives the reality understanding on a socially constructed perspective (Creswell, 2013). Fitting with the objective of the present research to comprehend the strategic changes for the DMOs role in the destination development, this philosophy notes that the researcher seeks to understand the complex meanings of the bigger picture rather than narrowing views into a few ideas or looking for one true answer; and that the researcher relies on the participants’ attitudes while studying the situation (Montello and Sutton, 2013). The ‘Localhood’ strategy’s initiators/creators will be the principal actors while investigating the phenomenon.

Moreover, the researcher plays an important role in the knowledge construction as she aims to make sense of the others’ position towards the world and their views about the matter being studied, while her own experiences shape the interpretation of the findings (Creswell, 2013). Thus, the generation of the meaning arises from the social interaction with participants. Yet, it is important to recognize that the thesis is not free from the subjective interpretations and I will aim to make my argumentation as transparent as possible. The process of the strategy message formation is socially constructed, as the previous experience (previous strategies), knowledge (different individuals) shall be taken into consideration.

Social constructivism suggests that the world is not external to us and is constituted as people write about it, talk about it and argue for it; and this tendency could be noticed in discourse analysis (Bryman, 2012). The discourse analysis of the strategy ‘Localhood’ brings the perceptions of the student and are filtered regarding her own beliefs and constructions. As the individual views, opinions and understandings differ from one another according to the social constructivism stance (Guba, 1990), the semi-structured interviews answers interlink with the discourse study in order to capture the complex meanings of the phenomenon. Combining the textual discourse analysis with the interviews from the strategy creators enables the comparisons between organizational messaging and the organizational beliefs or between strategy declaration and organizational practices.

2.2. Exploratory qualitative research

As initially decided, the research idea was to study the released new tourism strategy and follow the communication process and strategic actions of the DMO WoCo regarding that strategy on the social media. In order to perceive the clearer idea of the strategy aims and having a little knowledge about the topic beforehand, the exploratory approach was taken for the research purpose (Blaikie, 2009). Not only that exploratory study associates with the generation of the knowledge instead of theories' testing, it also ties with the unstructured research procedure (Bryman, 2012). According to Stebbins (2001), flexibility while looking for a data and open-mindedness of the researcher about where to look for it are the special orientations of the exploratory study.

The researcher argues, that the exploratory approach seems to be suitable for the present study also because it is based on inductively gathered information by the researcher (Montello and Sutton, 2013). First of all, the new strategy of WoCo is being investigated through the technique of discourse analysis, supplementing it with the interviews of the strategy initiators and then followed by the analysis and conclusions. Exploration is an ongoing process as the formation of the new DMO role is too.

According to Bryman (2012), qualitative research implies that *"(...) social properties are outcomes of the interactions between individuals, rather than phenomena 'out there' and separate from those involved in its construction"* (Bryman, 2012, p.380). Following the social constructivism paradigm, the researcher will focus on the emerging data while exploring the topic, and study the social contexts and constructed meanings (Creswell, 2013).

The qualitative approach will contribute in investigating the topic from the "what", "how" and "why" perspectives, while the discourse analysis notion chosen for the theses will embrace the qualitative methods such as text analysis, patterns interpretation (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research is characterized as helping to identify the perceptions, attitudes, opinions and opportunities of a target (Nykiel, 2007), while this type of research also ties with the exploratory unstructured approach and helps to reach verbal explanations and in terms of this paper it allows to have an in-depth discussion with the strategy initiators. I am not interested in

measuring or quantifying the patterns or attributes of the research phenomenon, but instead I seek to unfold strategic changes for the DMO's role and comprehend how it is being realized in practice and what challenges emerge along the way.

2.3. Case study

The paper is based on the case study of DMO WoCo and its new tourism strategy. This particular case was chosen first of all because of its location fit with the current allocation of the researcher making the data collection more accessible. Moreover, the strategy being newly announced and provoking ('The End of the Tourism as We Know It') by many means captured my interest and ambition to investigate the strategy's language of rupture, look at how the DMO realizes the new role and what obstacles emerge along the way. Thus the advantage of the case study is that *"it can "close-in" on real life situations and test views directly in relation to phenomena as they unfold in practice"* (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 235).

This research strategy of a case study is enabling the focus on one specific real-life event and making it easier to investigate the matter in the detailed way (Silverman, 2005). It puts emphasis upon the intensive examination of a particular setting. According to Bryman (2012), the case is an "object of interest in its own right, and the researcher aims to provide an in-depth elucidation of it" (Bryman, 2012, p.69). A unique strength of the case study method is its capacity to *"deal with a full variety of evidence – documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations"* (Yin, 2009, p.11).

But it is not enough to justify the choice of the specific case study only in terms of interest or social importance (Levy, 2008). By applying unique setting specific phenomenon, we explore the theoretical foundations obtained during the academic learning and become interested to challenge the applicability of certain research methods. According to Flyvbjerg (2006), *"(...) the case study produces the type of context-dependent that research on learning shows to be necessary to allow people to develop from rule-based beginners to virtuoso experts"* (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.221). Well selected case study can help the student in achieving the competence.

Yet, the case study is being evaluated as an inappropriate method for the study due to its applicability to only one single example along with the inability to generalize the findings to other cases and populations (Blaikie, 2009). It is important to emphasize that the purpose of the present study is not to generalize the findings into the theoretical foundation to be applied to other contexts, but instead to investigate the specific unique phenomenon to be read in its entirety as suggested by Flyvbjerg: *“Often it is not desirable to summarize and generalize the case studies. Good studies should be read as narratives in their entirety”* (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.241).

Interestingly, the rationale for a single case study (in this way ‘Localhood’ strategy) takes its point of departure at the very beginning of the strategy’s announcement. In this manner the longitudinal case takes shape, meaning that the case could be studied in a different point of time in order to capture the changes of the findings (Yin, 2009). The later study could compare the further practical implementation of the tourism strategy and realization of the new role with the initial intentions and objectives that this theses questions.



2.3.1. Case description

Being mentioned already, the present thesis employs the research design of a case study of Wonderful Copenhagen (WoCo). WoCo is a non-profit DMO (destination marketing organization) of the capital region of Denmark, tourism organization established in the year 1992 and focusing on the areas of conventional events, cruise network, communication and development of projects, strategies, markets and partnerships; WoCo is funded by a mix of contributions from private businesses, public institutions, organizations, including financial agreements with the capital region of Denmark (visitcopenhagen.dk). As illustrated in the organizational diagram below, the DMO operates within four areas undertaking distinctive destination projects (visitcopenhagen.dk):

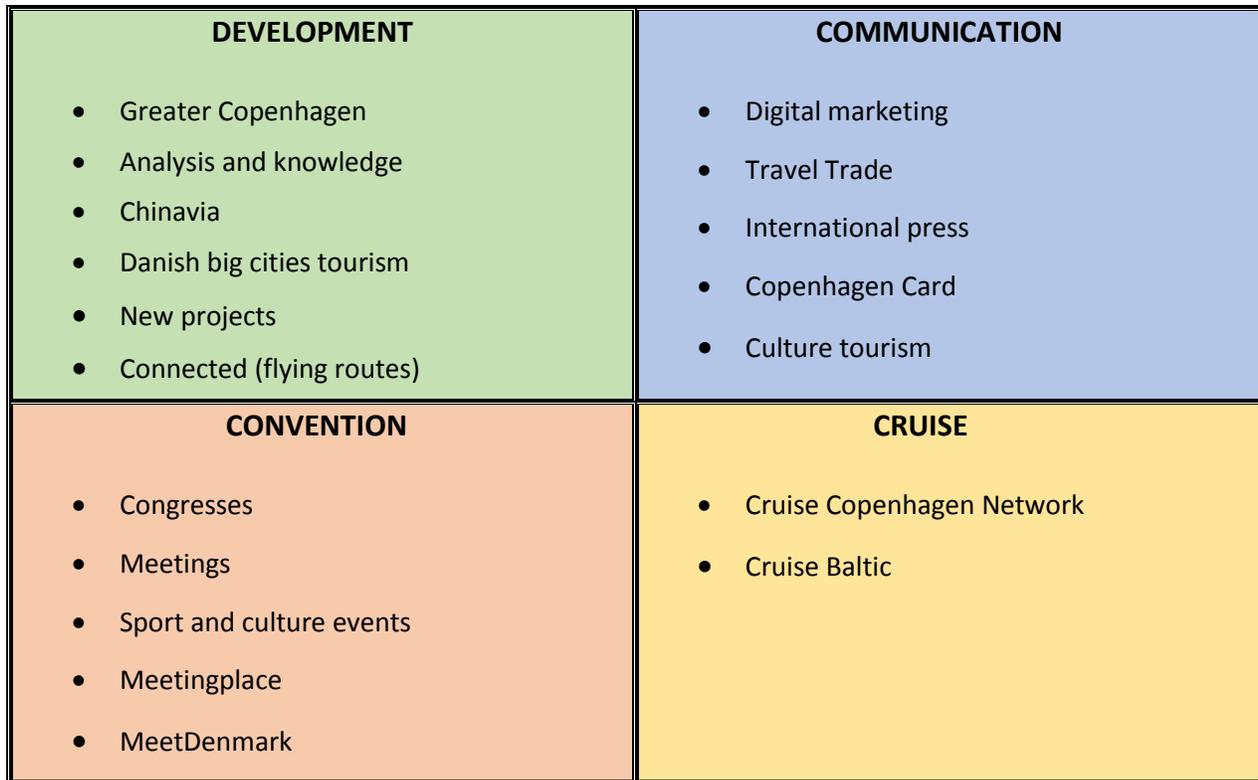


Figure 1. DMO Wonderful Copenhagen Organizational diagram (self-made)

The organization not only develops global-scale projects like Chinavia and City of Congresses, it is also entitled to manage cross-national entities of tourism development – Danish Urban Tourism and Danish Business Tourism (visitcopenhagen.dk). With the responsibility for the secretariat of international and national cruise networks and the secretariat of national route development program, WoCo has to satisfy the interests of multiple stakeholders. It acts as a neutral liaison between the traveler and the hotels, venues, agencies, congress organizers, etc. (visitdenmark.com). Furthermore, WoCo has a central role in the Greater Copenhagen project, where the DMO is responsible for ensuring a process of involvement and great tourism results in broader frames; where the aim is to strengthen the brand of Copenhagen and create more tourism in the metropolitan area, more jobs, bigger revenue, etc. (visitcopenhagen.dk).

WoCo organization consists of 102 employees, cooperates with more than 300 commercial partners to generate tourism businesses; the leadership is being delegated to the CEO of WoCo - Mikkel Aarø-Hansen, who has sat as a head of the organization since 2015 (visitcopenhagen.dk).

In January 2017 the DMO in collaboration with the consulting team DestinationThink! has declared the 4-year destination strategy focusing on the seismic shifts in the tourism that we knew until now (destinationthink.com). Within the strategy, WoCo declares eight principal strategic movements towards the new era of tourism which are: *“The experience of temporary localhood”, “Locals are the destination”, “Branding is all about relations”, “From marketing to enabling”, “A traveler is all kinds of human”, “Global urban travelers”, “Digital is yesterday’s question; new data is today’s”, “Agility to change and fail fast”* (visitcopenhagen.dk). These determined trends point the direction towards a shift in the tourism with the main focus on ensuring the competitiveness of the destination.

Further, the DMO identifies five strategic coordinates for a change in the tourism industry, transforming the roles of DMO, tourism, tourist and the concepts of authenticity (visitcopenhagen.dk):

- 1. SHAREABILITY IS KING** (shareable moments among all stakeholders included)
- 2. ONCE ATTRACTED, TWICE VALUED** (aim to reach repeat visitation)
- 3. TOMORROW’S BUSINESS TODAY** (attracting more businesses and more visitors)
- 4. CO-INNOVATION AT HEART** (innovative collaboration within the industry)
- 5. PEOPLE-BASED GROWTH** (win-win scenario for community and visitors)

These five strategic coordinates are outlined to keep the destination on track and have been reviewed by Frank Cuypers (DestinationThink! strategist), who has been interviewed during the present research. Frank Cuypers highlighted his collaboration regarding the presented 5 coordinates: *“(…) some thoughts that I have shared with them and then they changed it and there was a draft again and I criticized it again and so on. That’s the way they improved it. Honestly, I think they wanted a part of verification of some specialists on the planet to make their case stronger”* (3, 01:03).

The DMO of Copenhagen is being called the digital leader and introduces digital city marketing approach (thinkdigital.travel) thus today the ‘Localhood’ strategy document is explicitly published in the social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, official website of

the WoCo and are widely spread by the partners of the DMO. For instance, the media group of a website 'The Telegraph' uses the 'Localhood' term and emphasizes the importance of the traveler's engagement with the local community while promoting the Copenhagen city as a must-see destination in 2017 in their latest news (telegraph.co.uk). Whereas the Danish newspapers 'Politiken' and 'Børsen' disseminate the new tourism strategy by emphasizing the importance of the tourists' transformations into the temporal "*copenhageners*" and the engagement with the residents, which is the most important part when creating the travelers' experience (politiken.dk,borsen.dk).

2.4. Interviews

The researcher decided to conduct the semi-structured interviews. The flexible nature of this particular interview type allows the researcher to keep broader contours of what he aims to learn from the participants, while certain structuring of the questions applies (Bryman, 2012). In contrast, the interviews with the structured format of the prepared questions to be asked in the set order prohibits the deviations from the interview schedule (Montello and Sutton, 2013). While investigating the meanings of the 'Localhood' strategy the questions asked impromptu allows more profound explorations of the phenomenon to be realized. Additionally, the open-ended questions encourage the respondents to freely elaborate on the strategic changes for the DMO role and to express their point of view about the destination management and development in their own manner. In order to explore the research question 2 relevant participants were interviewed within the time frames of May – June, 2017 at the main office of WoCo and one video interview with the member of the consultancy agency DestinationThink! was taken due to the obstacle to meet in person. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in English taking into consideration that the strategy is released in English and therefor making it fluent to handle the discussion. The quiet rooms were chosen for the interviews with WoCo and no interferences were faced during the meetings, while mentioned video interview went smoothly too.

The design of the interviews consisted of mainly open-ended questions in order to provide the freedom for the participant to freely elaborate on the matter. In order to yield the understanding about the strategic change in the DMO's role and actual realization of it, the questions for the DMO, for example – *How would you evaluate the previous strategy for the destination; what worked well and what did not? How and in which activities do you enable the 'Localhood' idea to be shared? What are the strong and weak points of your destination? What are the challenges the organization faces today while implementing the five strategic plans?* were asked. Different approach was taken at the interview with the partner agency DestinationThink! who participated in the strategy establishment and formulation process. The questions such as - *How is the tourism role changing and what shifts in the destination development are needed for the DMO? Which tourism activities could benefit both locals and visitors in order to create the 'Localhood' for everyone? What are potential challenges Wonderful Copenhagen may face while implementing the new tourism strategy?* were posed.

Once recorded, the interviews were ready for the transcription. Interestingly, open-ended questioning resulted in the respondents continuing the conversation after the recorded interview and discussing unplanned topics or giving me some more recommendations for the further research. For instance, social media project manager shared the contact details of the person responsible for particular cultural projects as he thought it might be a relevant person to invite for the interview.

Furthermore, due to the social constructivism notion the interviewer is portrayed as a traveler himself engaged into the construction of anything that occurs in the conversation with the respondent (Brinkmann, 2013). His role is to be curious and patient, listen to what respondent has to say, doesn't want to say and can't say without help (Silverman, 2005). Moreover, Justesen and Mik-Meyer emphasize that "*(...) it may be interesting to study whether a given attitude to change within an organization is related to age, gender or position in the organizational hierarchy*" (Justesen and Mik-Meyer, 2012, p.56). It is important to bear in mind that certain attitudes and points of view could be more prevalent depending on the length of

employment or responsibilities in the organization. Regarding the selection of participants, I will shortly present the interviewees in the following section.

2.4.1. Bianca Mercier (appendix 1)

Bianca Mercier is a head of the projects, working at WoCo almost a year. This particular respondent was chosen first of all because of her responsibility to manage the development projects for the Greater Copenhagen, including the ones with museums, galleries, etc. Since this particular person is assigned to carry out the interviews for the DMO, the aim of this interview with a representative was to obtain the knowledge about the strategy formation, past activities and goals regarding the previous strategy and the push factors for the new role of DMO.

2.4.2. Nicolai Cohrt Mejlvang (appendix 2)

Nicolai Cohrt Mejlvang is a project manager within Social Media and PR at WoCo since 2014. The aim of this interview was to gain valuable information about the strategy message, its digital representation, DMO's role in the social media and inevitably social media's role within the new DMO's activities assigned. Since the 'Localhood' strategy emphasizes the social media, data and insights as essential aspects, an extensive knowledge within the communication field of the respondent informed me about various concrete strategy activities and helped to contrast the declared new role of WoCo with the practical realization of it.

2.4.3. Frank Cuypers (appendix 3)

Frank Cuypers is a senior strategic consultant at Destination Think! agency, which in partnership with WoCo created the new tourism strategy 'Localhood'. Besides being engaged into the consultancy activities, he also teaches marketing in the university of Antwerp, in Belgium. The interview was conducted via 'Google Hangout' platform, taking into consideration that the participant lives in Belgium and there was no possibility to meet in person. Taking into consideration his strategic advices and collaboration with the DMO regarding the development and marketing of a destination Copenhagen, the goal of this interview was to discuss the new

strategy meanings, challenges of implementation and to hear his criticism about the strategic changes for the new DMO role too.



2.5. Netnography

In order to capture any activities that WoCo realizes regarding the new strategy and the new role, it is important to look at the online environment occurrences and observe the online organization's behavior. Netnography is a technique of adapting ethnography for the online world in order to study the 'written-up' cultures and online communities (Kozinets, 2010). Hughes goes as far as explaining that *"It uses computer-mediated communications as a source of data to arrive at the ethnographic understanding and representation of a cultural and communal phenomenon"* (Hughes, 2012, p.2). Netnography entails retrieving data from different online sources such as chat forums, blogs and online communities (Mkono and Markwell, 2014).

Not only it is less-time consuming and unobtrusive method in comparison with the interviews; besides engaging in the online chats and dialogues, the researcher can approach a static-word netnography without interacting with those researched (Blichfeldt and Marabese, as cited in Meged et al., 2014). Since netnography research involves the direct or indirect participation of a researcher while observing and studying online members' emotions, reactions, language (Kozinets, 2010), this thesis studies the online language and behavior without self-immersion, but rather from the lurker's position. Lurker format assures that researcher's activities remain unnoticed by the research participants (Mkono and Markwell, 2014), as in the case of this thesis my active online participation is unexpected and unnecessary.

The netnographic approach in this research was applied to the data from Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, taking into consideration that WoCo is actively (daily) spreading the messages to the virtual users. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are argued to be relevant online

communities to gather posts and comments from in order to better understand the new role of the DMO.

The VisitCopenhagen profile was found on the mentioned social media arenas, “liked” and followed throughout the theses writing period, considering what information and how is being shared with the users. Besides, the Facebook, Twitter and Instagram profiles of DMO’s partners (like SMK and DAC) were observed too in order to understand their role while implementing the new tourism strategy.

I intended to capture the behavior from the DMO’s side - the engagement with the visitor and the society in order to identify and understand how the strategic shift of the DMO’s role reflects in the online actions. The aim was also to understand better how the concrete examples of the destination management activities that interview respondents emphasized are being realized in practice or to find contradictions between the interview answers and the online activities. Netnography was employed as a complementary technique, which enabled a more comprehensive perception of a strategy formation process, as the past online activities before the ‘Localhood’ strategy announcement were also taken into consideration in order to capture how the meanings of the new tourism strategy are being communicated now and what differences we draw in comparison with the online behavior before the new strategy. As emphasized by Kozinets (2010), the data was directly copied from the social media, making it easy tool employed to enrich the analysis.

Regarding the ethics, since explored social media platforms are public spaces available to everyone and the profiles of WoCo and partners are being accessible without any required memberships, I argue that the code of conduct was not neglected from the part of the researcher. The content of the findings was not edited or changed; during the interviews with the members of the DMO, I have mentioned about the potential social media observations and received no disagreements.

2.6. Strategic document and secondary material

The point of departure of the present theses is the WoCo new tourism strategy document consisting of 25 pages. Being publicly announced on the DMO's official website the mentioned source was read, examined and extensively used all the way throughout the research process. As long as it was not collected by the researcher, it could be categorized as the secondary data source (Silverman, 2005). However, Hansen goes as far as saying that the categorizing of the material as secondary or primary depends on the method of collecting them as well as *"According to their relationship to the researcher using them for a specific project"* (Hansen, as cited in Meged et al., 2014, p.28). I will obtain a central role in dealing and treating the data, which leads to the primary analysis of the sources. I can argue, that the material (strategic document) is not aimed to be reused and was not created for the purpose of research in the first place. I am using the original material of DMO for my research project associated with that original material. Since I collect the material directly from the DMO, Hansen describes this relationship with the material *"(...) only the reuse of other researchers' makes the material qualify as secondary"* (Hansen, as cited in Meged et al., 2014, p.30).

Besides the 'Localhood' strategic document, additionally other sources were utilized such as the official website of WoCo, the online articles about the DMO's strategic declaration and documents regarding the 2014-2016 tourism strategy in order to have a comparative look and better understand the new objectives by collating two strategies. The online interviews with the CEO of WoCo and the director of development presenting the strategy were found and used to supplement the investigation. The advantage of using such data is first of all the access to the clues and explanations of the phenomenon when the subject cannot be reached (Nykiel, 2007). Moreover, it also allows the investigator to link with the data sets for a tiny time fraction; while high-quality up-to-date data available online allows the investigator to dedicate more time and concerns for the analysis part (Bryman, 2012).

2.7. Discourse analysis

The aim of the research is to explore the new DMO role and to capture the paradoxes regarding the complexity of the role in a destination development. I have found that the textual discourse analysis is the suitable method for exploring the controversial roles for destination development. This type of analysis enables the critical qualitative investigation and makes a use of textual and visual forms of the data (Hannam and Knox, 2010). It allows the formation of a more reflective research approach. As mentioned before, 'Localhood' strategic document will be studied for this purpose. Yet, I shall explain the deployed way of discursive analysis.

Since the discourse technique is tied to the interpretations of the researcher, it is very important to become largely familiar with the content of the material which will be deconstructed (Hannam and Knox, 2010). Thus, it is crucial to not let the texts and visuals solely speak for themselves, but rather approach the text taking into account the complex systems of people's practices and knowledge. In other words, the discursive analysis provokes the researcher to investigate the social world and power-relations through the texts, through the language (Jorgenson and Phillips, 2002). Using discursive analysis implies an approach of constructivism because with the production of the discourse we construct the reality (Hannam and Knox, 2010). The new WoCo strategy is essentially a social practice – it is formulated by people, their beliefs and attitudes (Fairclough, 2004), the emphasis is placed on the social members' renditions about the reality.

The textual discursive analysis chosen for this research proceeds with thoroughly reading the material and attempting to think and analyze what meanings hide the words, sentences (Brown and Yule, 1983). The researcher opens the ways for the ideas to emerge and interesting relationships to spark, looks at the ways the language is organized and the meanings formulated. Inevitably, the textual analysis has a characteristic of selectiveness as we choose to question certain events and patterns, while other questions remain apart (Fairclough, 2004).

As for the purpose of this theses I apply *discourse as a process view*, which means that in terms of the approaching the text within the discursive manner the following work steps (preparations) will be applied to assure the systematic analysis:

- establishment of the context to understand how and by which circumstances the strategy was written, by whom and to who, maybe it is a response to any event or ties into the wider discussion;
- building on the theoretical foundation it is now that the coding takes place (also presented in the data processing section), marking the statements in the written speech that links to the new roles of DMO and other relevant themes;
- examination of the discourse fragments by grouping the specific statements together and exploring the categories of the text, such as word groups, grammar features, literary and rhetorical figures, modalities;
- interpretation of the data by combining the deconstructed knowledge with the context of the theses (Brown and Yule, 1983).

According to Levy (2008), the strategy is conceptualized as a body of knowledge, which should be treated as a cultural product of the wider system of knowledge. Regarding the discourse analysis perspective on the strategy, authors Vaara and Laine (2006) go as far as saying that we can investigate the discussions concerning specific strategies: “(...) *we can examine organization-specific strategy discourses, meaning analyzing the particular discursive and other social practices characterizing, for example, decision making in that organization*” (Vaara and Laine, 2006, p.305). This thesis deploys the discursive analysis of a strategic document in order to look at the vocabulary and form of the corporate rhetoric, while Vaara et al., (2010) also emphasize, that “*A full understanding of strategic plans requires that attention is focused on both the genre of strategy texts (conventional aspects of their form and language) and the specific discursive features (articulations of the intended discursive statements) of the text*” (Vaara et al., 2010, p.687).

Furthermore, it is argued that the strategy discipline and various practices, for example mission statements, have disconnected from the (other) reality and therefor the strategy may be conceptualized as rather fragmented into the autonomous discourses (Vaara and Laine, 2006).

The discursive analysis of a strategy requires certain kind of intertextual interpretation – reading between the lines and gaining a view about the problem from the ‘outside’ in order to recognize hidden practices and assumptions (Fairclough, 2004). For example, the ‘Localhood’ strategy appears to be quiet defensive, by bringing to light destinations such as Barcelona and Venice that struggle with increasing visitation and ineffective planning; WoCo defensively assures that they will not follow the same path but will create a sustainable tourism growth instead. This theme will be further discussed in the analysis part.

It is also vital to look at how the particular discourse is interpreted, how the meanings are being realized and what the text accomplishes socially (Vaara et al., 2010). Having mentioned that, I will also look at the public interpretations and reactions or responses to the strategy text on the social medias, for example other destinations’ sharing of the ‘Localhood’ strategy, and discuss them in the analysis chapter.

2.8. Limitations

Regarding the limitations of the research, first of all it is important to mark the ‘Localhood’ strategy being newly announced couple of months’ prior the theses writing. From one angle that would be tied to the limited data on the social medias that could have been largely used. The thematic of the study has been narrowed to the investigation of the strategic changes for the DMO’s role and the realization of the role in practice from the perspective of WoCo. The research could have involved travelers’ perceptions regarding the changing role of the DMO and reach even more credible or perhaps controversial conclusions.

One of the challenges I confronted during the research was the lack of received responses from the members of WoCo regarding the invitation for the interview. The employees of the DMO were contacted by email and on the LinkedIn platform. However, presumably because of the busy schedules, I did not get neither positive nor negative responses from the majority of the people contacted. The possibility to have a conversation with even more strategy initiators from WoCo as well as from the consultancy organization DestinationThink! could have brought

interesting and valuable insights and opinions about the challenges and opportunities for the shift in the DMO's role in the destination management. Since the interviewed respondents had a great knowledge of the present and past strategies, I could argue that collected answers built an argumentative and discerning research.

The arranged interviews were relatively short, depending on the agreement with the respondents, as they could dedicate 30 minutes for the meeting. Me, as the interviewer, could have extracted more versatile opinions and more elaborative insights with the broader time frames. Yet, I have intended to be as curious and perceptive also despite the fact that the strategy is very new and respondents tended to excuse themselves. They seemed to restrain the discussion on the practical realization or accomplishment of the strategic role, because the 'Localhood' is a completely new strategy and the activities for the new role are still being formed and determined.

Lastly, this research seems to only scratch the surface in terms of deconstructing the (new) role of the DMO in a destination development. Many important topics have not been discussed, such as the cultural aspect regarding the strategy implementation or the internal management of the role within the organization. Even so, this thesis provides critical insights about the WoCo responsibilities and benefits the understandings of the evolving DMOs role.

2.9. Data processing and referencing

Data processing began with organizing of collected data; after the interviews with the participants were recorded, I transcribed them in a careful manner. The answers were read line by line and prepared in the thematic order as the themes emerged, indicating important dimensions of the studied phenomenon (Hannam and Knox, 2011). The textual discursive analysis took place (presented in the 2.7 section) in order to investigate the new tourism strategy document, and the core themes/fragments from the strategy message were distinguished to be used to answer the research question.

For both, interview transcripts and strategic document I used the color coding method, which helped me to find the details in those divided categories. Yet, the selected images and comments from the netnographic study were organized in correspondence to the new DMO roles too in order to supplement the findings.

A thematic analysis was chosen, meaning that collected data was studied to identify core themes (Bryman, 2012). These themes related to the research question and the theory, while final division of analysis of two parts led to more fragmented and reasoned text. Besides the interview, strategic 'Localhood' document and netnography, collected secondary data like online articles, official WoCo website and various organization's strategic documents were analyzed to explore the new tourism strategy and the new DMO role.

Regarding the referencing in the analysis part, I have decided to address the DMO respondents by their title - head of the projects, social media manager, while the senior strategic consultant from the DestinationThink! consultancy organization will be referred as Frank Cuypers. The following coding will be applied in the analysis part: the references will be made by indicating the number of the appendix and the time of the quote in the interview, for instance, (1, 00:00) referring to the head of the projects, (2, 00:00) referring to the social media manager and (3, 00:00) indicating the interview with Frank Cuypers. The statements from the strategic document will be specified by the appendix number and the page number in the document, for example (7, p.1).

2.10. Quality criteria for the research

It is important to note, that the qualitative research requires an effective planning and in this section the criteria for the research will be evaluated. According to Jamal and Hollinshead (2001): "*Interpretative studies focus on experience and meaning – these cannot be judged on positivist criteria of 'truth', 'validity' and 'reliability'*" (Jamal and Hollinshead, 2001, p.76), while tourism must be considered in a more holistic manner. The critical issues of the evaluation of a good qualitative tourism research include 'messy' texts, interestedness, locality and

confirmability (Jamal and Hollinshead, 2001), while discussion on reflexivity and transparency matters implores the qualitative researchers to sense the field with 'a third ear' (Jamal and Hollinshead, 2007). In this section I will discuss the reflexivity and transparency dimensions of a qualitative research in relation to the study about the role and the tourism strategy of WoCo.

Reflexivity constitutes the understanding that is gained about the collected data in the investigation process in terms of what the researcher knows and how he came to know it (Jamal and Hollinshead, 2001). Therefore the research can't be entirely objective. I intended to choose the case and actively engage with the research along the way. As discussed in the section introducing the constructivism paradigm, the researcher is not a passive observer and the texts are shaped by his/her standpoint. Jamal and Hollinshead (2001) also argue, that the writer has to demonstrate the specific interest to engage with the topic. While interviewing the WoCo participants, I playfully reflected on my own interpretations about the evolving paradoxes regarding the new tourism strategy. This enabled deeper insights of the participants and stimulated interesting insights about the researched topic. Moreover, it is important to ensure that the voice of researcher is decentered, while acknowledging his/her influence on the conversation and embracing self-awareness of oneself in the research process. My interpretations, misinterpretations or reinterpretations lead to the knowledge creation together with the research participants. Having said that, present thesis aims to situate the researcher in the text and make the reader conscious about how selective, biased and incomplete are the materials presented.

Following more recent insights on reflexivity, Koning and Ooi (2013) call for more inclusive reflexivity, meaning that the research should open up the dimensions such as fear or alienation and embrace the emotions of researcher and research participants as a reflexive practice. The researcher becomes an important tool for data generation and shall position himself together with own values, assumptions and awkwardness, while the latter entails uncomfortable ethnographic encounters the researcher must include in his report to reach more accurate research (Koning and Ooi, 2013). During the investigation process, I acknowledged the

moments of awkwardness as a data that enrich my understanding and intended to document them in order to increase the scientific worth of the research.

While investigating the new tourism strategy of WoCo, I intended to be more transparent about my own positioning, about the research obstacles and to which decisions they led. Jamal and Hollinshead (2001) go as far as saying that it is important to gauge credible accounts of qualitative study in order to understand if certain objectives are accomplished. This leads to a more transparent lens of the knowledge construction. Therefore I aimed to continually acknowledge the limitations of my research and go back to my initial objectives in order to see how the research was developing. I tried to critically consider the methodological approach and evaluate the possible alternatives in this context, for instance, I took into consideration that the strategy is new and still is being refined, yet I employed the netnography to support my findings and fill the gaps of the interview data.

Having discussed the latter, I feel the importance to stress the 'messiness' of my research too. It is essential to highlight that the qualitative research can be frustrating and difficult to conduct, because the qualitative research scenarios tend to be messy as the variables in question may be measured and judged in a different manner from various vantage points; 'messiness' of the qualitative research could be also explained by the difficulty to capture the entire sought behavior set and instead capturing only a single frame (Jamal and Hollinshead, 2001). The new roles of DMO could also be seen as a dynamic, complex and 'messy' topic, while making sense of it is rather diffusing. For example, while interviewing the social media manager it was difficult to know whether I am about to analyze organizational perspective or departmental perspective on the problem; whether it was the new role or the old role we were discussing. Prior the interview, the two WoCo participants had discussed among themselves what each of them will present in the interview since the interviews at WoCo are highly pre-organized. I tried to extract the de-emphasized perspectives, yet I acknowledge the moments when I might have misinterpreted the meanings. According to Jamal and Hollinshead (2001), researcher has to be vigilant in deconstructing any talk because investigating meanings, beings and identities is a messy matter of infinite interpretation possibilities. While deconstructing the text and talk, I

intended to watchfully acknowledge different elements such as semantic moves, stereotypical traits, lexical styles, etc. (Jamal and Hollinshead, 2001).

3.Theoretical literature review

The following chapter presents the theoretical framework of the present theses and reviews the literature that I found relevant for this study. First of all, the terms of DMOs, their types and roles will be explained to the reader. The concepts of a strategy and a DMO strategy will be discussed, while presentation of the strategic change definition will continue the chapter in order to explain what insights are important when studying the new DMO's role formation. The importance of stakeholder networking will be introduced with the linkage to the DMO strategy implementation. Finally, the challenges of implementing the strategy in practice will be evaluated, bringing into consideration various insights from different authors about the challenging destination management environment.

3.1. DMOs and their roles

The academic literature suggests many definitions and descriptions of the DMO and its role in tourism. The very first designed DMOs were solely promotion and sales based agencies (Morrison, 2013), while today the concept becomes more sophisticated and professional – DMOs become more prominent as “destination developers” (Sheehan et al., 2016). Depending on the type of a destination there could be discerned three levels the DMO normally functions on: the country level known as National Tourism Organization, provincial or state level referred to as State Tourism Office, and the city or municipal level known as a Visitor Bureau or a Convention (Richie and Crouch, 2013). Organizations are characterized by having different structures, while the role remains mostly the same – to develop a tourism destination.

Many DMOs have been established relatively lately as the communities reached the need to organize the coordinated approach to the promotion of a destination (Pike, 2016). Morrison

also explains, that: “*Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) came into being because of the need to mount a coordinated effort for planning, developing and marketing tourism destinations*” (Morrison, 2013, p.5). According to the UNWTO (UN World Tourism Organization), the roles of the DMO could be presented in the following figure:

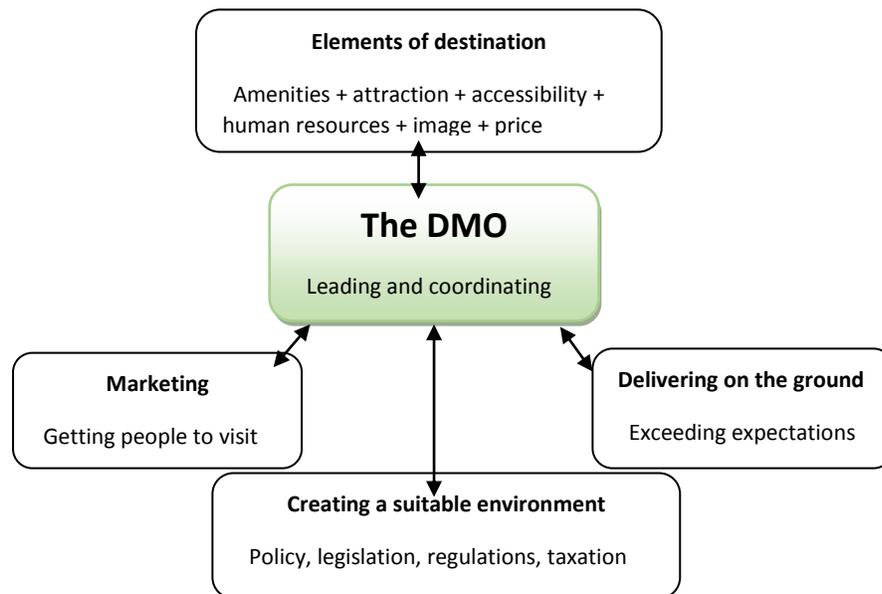


Figure 2. DMO roles (UNWTO, 2013)

DMO is being identified as an organization, which is held responsible for the “*marketing of an identifiable destination*” (Pike, 2004, p.14). Such organization relies on the governmental grants and usually has an eclectic amount of stakeholders with different expectations, experience and interests (Pike, 2016). It falls in the category of the indirect parties of the tourism value chain, meaning that it mainly does not provide the services to the tourists directly (Morrison, 2013), but rather ensures and coordinates the proper use of all the aspects of a destination, including the image, amenities and attractions (Gretzel et al., 2006). DMOs perform their roles as mediators and initiators in the destination network. That means that they coordinate particular activities, such as tourism policies’ implementation, strategic planning, product development (UNWTO, 2013). Hence, they strive to better connect the supply and demand dimensions of the tourism in order to utilize the resources of a destination (Pike and Page, 2014).

Originally stood by 'Destination Marketing Organization' today it is being referred to the 'Destination Management Organization' too and therefor transforming its responsibilities into a more complex perspective (Pike and Page, 2014). In order to avoid the frustrations regarding the concepts, the theses adopt the explanation that "(...) *destination marketing is one of the functions within the broader perspective of destination management*" (Morrison, 2013, p.5). Unlike the past focus on solely attracting the tourists to the destination by marketing and promoting the destination today DMOs have a more conscious role to deliver the experience to the tourists and reach the level of satisfaction so they can repeat their visit and spread the positive word-of mouth (Dwyer et al., 2009). The shift from marketing the destination to the management of it is noticeable in the DMOs activities' transition towards the increased collaboration, partnering with the stakeholders of a destination and the destination development promotion (Dwyer et al., 2009). Refocused view sees the management responsible for the well-being of all destination aspects, including the tourist, local community and the industry. Pike and Page go as far as saying that the distinction between destination marketing and destination management is needed as well to underline that the marketers have no or little control over the residents' acceptance and attitude towards travelers, repeat patronage, developments of the infrastructure, marketing communications besides the co-created promotions (Pike and Page, 2014). The DMO guards, develops and implements the brand of a destination together with the other tourism actors, stakeholders; the consistence of the brand therefor highly depends on the alignment of these stakeholders (Cox et al., 2014). As an industry coordinator, DMO provides a clear focus and encourages smaller industry fragmentation in order to share in the growing tourism benefits (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003). According to Volgger and Pechlaner (2014), DMOs promote self-organization, self-responsibility and self-regulations of their destination networks.

The mayor rationale of the DMO activities is to reinforce and strengthen the competitiveness of a destination (Pike and Page, 2014). As the tourists today are spoilt by the choice of various available destinations to visit, the DMO should enhance the competitiveness by embracing principal areas of a competitive destination, such as host community support, profitable industry, positive experience of the tourists (Pike and Page, 2014). It is important to compete

for attention of the contemporary busy consumer, who is being offered with substitutes. The DMOs have the role of enhancing uniqueness and authenticity of a destination, increasing liveliness of it (Richards and Palmer, 2010). However, Pike and Page address the issue of to what extent the DMOs are held responsible for the competitiveness of the destination; they do not have control over the actual creation of the visitor experience or the delivery of the brand promise (Pike and Page, 2014, p.211). That could be also discussed while looking at how the 'Localhood' brand identity is being shared within the destination network. The following section will further critically discuss the DMO role in the destination development.

3.2. DMO – instrument in a destination development

The tourism destination is very different from the most commercially rival products, as it is an experience that is being delivered by the destination and should be developed, maintained and strengthened (Ritchie and Crouch, as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011). This experience is being developed by various tourism enterprises, like hotels, tour operators, airlines, other supporting organizations and DMOs. Nonetheless, a successful destination development entails reinforcement of the competitiveness of the place and shall be addressed through competitive advantages and measured from the points of view of all tourism stakeholders involved in the tourism system (Bornhorst et al., 2010). As it was discussed already, the DMO merely acts as an initiator of the tourism projects, a supporter of the destination's promotion, while DMOs managing the networks and coordinating the actions of firms and industries are supposed and considered to build competitiveness and positively impact destination development (Volgger and Pechlaner, 2014).

The DMOs cannot decide the strategies such as those concerning formulation of products, distribution or pricing (Elbe et al., 2009). Because of the lack of resources to carry out desired marketing objectives, DMOs must mobilize others' resources. As DMOs do not have direct control over the tourism businesses, they are not held accountable to their stakeholders the same way commercial business would be; the effectiveness of the DMO therefore must be evaluated by looking at the factors such as coordinating the stakeholders of a destination and the external performance - marketing (Volgger and Pechlaner, 2014).

According to Pike, it is a challenge to measure the performance of marketing and managing the destination: “(...) *it has been difficult to actually quantify the contribution of DMO efforts to the overall success of the destination*” (Pike, 2004, p.36). Bornhorst et al. (2010) suggest the integrative perspective that the success of a DMO and the success of a destination interlinks and correlates in a harmony; and that success of a DMO depends on the capability to network, endowment of resources, professionalism in the operational work and the transparent evidence of its performance. Some of the DMO performance success indicators are: a proper funding, an organizational drive, an effective management and a quality staff (Bornhorst et al., 2010). According to Corak and Zivoder (2017), “(...) *the most effective DMO should deliver a productive marketing plan for the tourism industry, as well as welfare to community residents by enhancing the profit potential of tourism and importance of sustainability*” (as cited in Dwyer et al., 2017, p.103). And so, DMOs work towards maximizing the tourism economic contribution to the local population and towards preserving the well-being of the local community.

3.3. Strategy

The strategy has been investigated and studied by academics and scholars for decades now. The definition of it varies from author to author, while Porter explains, that strategy is a choice of competitive advantage the company aims to attain and the scope of actions how to attain that advantage (as cited in Hall, 2008). Similar view is suggested by Lewis and Kipley, who state that “(...) *strategy is a plan or course of action and a set of decision rules, forming a pattern or creating a common thread that is related to the organization’s activities which are derived from policies, objectives, and goals that move that organization from its current position to a desired future position*” (Lewis and Kipley, 2012, p.2). As strategy is a direction for the future so it is a result of past activities and decisions of an organization. According to Mintzberg et al. (1998), the strategy requires different definitions such as a plan and a pattern, meaning that strategy is a certain plan of actions for the future as well as the past behavior continuum. Strategy is both intended towards the upcoming years and realized taking into consideration the past patterns. As well according to Ulwick the strategy is “(...) *an executable plan of action that describes how*

an individual or organization will achieve a stated mission" (Ulwick, 1999, p.4). However not always the intended strategy is being realized and not always the realized strategy has been intended initially. While 'Localhood' strategy is the new intended strategy for 2020 and beyond, it also could be viewed as the realized strategy by looking at past activities, decisions and choices of the strategy initiators and other stakeholders.

Strategy can be both emergent and deliberate; deliberate strategies are those with realized intentions, predicted plan, but no learning, while the emergent strategy is about organic adaptation and learning from step by step decisions how to react to unexpected occurrences in a dynamically changing environment (Mintzberg, et al., 1998). With respect to that, a strategy provides a guidance of which activities to take and is shaped by activities taken. The author Jarzabkowski expresses her concerns that *"Strategy may indeed be a matter of emergence rather than managerial intention, but its overall outcomes in terms of strategy content and firm performance are a managerial responsibility"* (Jarzabkowski, 2005, p.16). The implementation of the strategy is being mainly delegated to the managerial actors, while changing environment events generate the need for that strategy.

Being widely used in the sector of tourism, a strategy can be identified as a cohesive plan of organization's goals, objectives and actions (Stokes, 2008). The strategy involves a number of decisions that are rather long-term, proactive and enhancing major change and in the tourism context is defined by Tribe as *"the planning of a desirable future and the design and testing of suitable ways of bringing it about"* (Tribe, 2010, p.7). Tourism providers develop growth strategies as they have the necessity to differentiate their destination in the minds of tourists and distinguish the tourism location from the completion (Kozak and Martin, 2011).

Its' crucial and essential role in the tourism industry is being mentioned by Tribe: *"Without strategy, tourism entities are susceptible to strategic drift, particularly in today's turbulent environments and fragmentation which might be likened to the headless chicken syndrome"* (Tribe, 2010, p.13). He underlines the importance of a tourism strategy in nowadays dynamic and competitive tourism environment, while Lyck emphasizes that the industrial competitiveness in the Danish tourism sector requires strategic changes in a management of

organizations in order to improve welfare and economic growth in Denmark (Lyck, 2002). It is also the case for the DMO WoCo, since the new tourism strategy and the new role in a destination development aims to strengthen competitive position of the Danish travel industry.

3.4. DMO strategy

Today the DMOs are expected to take an active management role and go beyond meeting the needs and expectations of the tourists (Fyall, 2011). The need to strengthen the competitive position in the marketplace directs the tourism destinations to develop strategies and organize their implementation (Wang and Pizam, 2011). According to Vanhove, the competition in tourism sector today is mainly between so called clusters or destinations, not anymore between the countries (as cited in Pechlaner et al., 2015). Thus, the tourism strategy for a particular destination development is one of the main activities that the DMO role involves (Pike, 2016).

Pike suggests the framework of the DMO strategy development in order to explain the process of strategy formation. By discussing the development of the strategy and its stages we will later be able to better understand the emerging strategic change that 'Localhood' strategy entails.

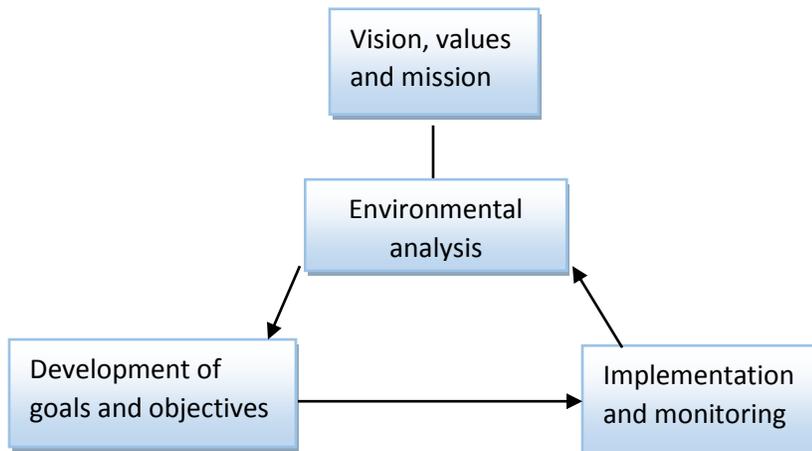


Figure 2. Framework of the DMO strategy (Pike, 2016)

The above framework suggests that tourism entities, such as DMO, hold the vision, mission and values that preface the strategic document (Tribe, 2010). DMO sets the vision of what it or the destination seeks to become, while the mission embraces the more concrete steps towards that vision. These recourses (vision, mission, values) are potential strong and weak points of an organization that compete with other places. Environmental analysis stands for macro and internal environment forces and include the threats and opportunities that potentially apply for the destination; however, the DMO has little or no control over macro-environmental factors, such as political or technological forces, while organization has certain control over the internal environment actors – customers, competitors and other stakeholders (Pike, 2016). Development of goals and objectives as a part of the strategy development are the focus steps towards the mission and usually capture stakeholder’s attention by explaining the manner to achieve that mission (Morrison, 2013). Implementation stage presents the practical activities of a strategy that includes stakeholders’ involvement.

In the dynamic external environment, an organization without a strategy view will be likely to open up the gap between its position and environment (Tribe, 2010). Today the tourism sector faces the dynamic pace of changes, internet developments, changing stakeholders’ interests and the strategy becomes a prerequisite to keep with the tourism sector dynamics. In increasingly competitive market the strategies of DMOs could be directed towards attracting more visitors to the localities, while more and more attention is being given to the strategic objectives such as tourists’ loyalty or community-wellbeing (Fyall, 2011). Jamal and Jamrozy go as far as saying that destination strategies “(...) *are not to design a product, price, place and promotion of a tourist destination, but to ensure quality of life and environments through tourism development*” (Jamal and Jamrozy, 2006, p.168). Thus, strategy points of attention can vary from destination to destination, while according to UNWTO (2013) the sustainable tourism principles should be the main focus of any tourism development strategy; thus sustainability becomes a fundamental requirement for any DMO to practice in their economic, social or any other activity.

Moreover, Morrison (2013) states that *“For destination marketing, the strategic dimension is defined as three to five years into the future (...)”* (Morrison, 2013, p.7). DMOs plan their strategies with the long-term perspective and are driven by the long-term goals. Vanhove (2015) also emphasizes that *“A good strategy implies knowing where we are, where we want to be in five or ten years and knowing how we get there”* (as cited in Pechlaner et al, 2015, p.98). Destination strategies can as well provide the coordination frameworks for upcoming events, be a part of the bigger scale strategies for the national tourism strategy (Tribe, 2010). In relation to that, the new ‘Localhood’ tourism strategy for 2020 and beyond may also contribute to the new Denmark’s national strategy towards 2025 (visitcopenhagen.dk). I will further elaborate on that in the analysis chapter.

Looking from the practical perspective, today most of the DMOs publish their destination development strategies online (Pike and Page, 2014). The strategy becomes explicit, accessible and transparent towards the tourism stakeholders – tourists, partners, host community. While using a discourse analysis method for the present theses I will make a use of the strategy document published in the official website of WoCo.

3.5. Strategic change

Change is a type of event or a state in terms of entity such as an organization, a product or a strategy (Van de Ven and Poole, 1995). It is a (new) way of thinking and acting towards the now and the future; the change encounters the new ways organization defines its activities and itself (Anderson and Anderson, 2010). Grieves emphasizes, that change, flux and conflict characterize the organizations; and in order to understand strategic change, it is necessary to comprehend who is participating in a choice making and how the change process arrives to a change (Grieves, 2010).

As mentioned before, strategy is both intended as a plan and realized as a pattern (Mintzberg, et al., 1998). Strategic changes are shaped by the past activities as well as they set the future activities, which naturally can be influenced by the past occurrences. Grieves states, that

“Indeed humans have the ability to construct a stream of new activity out of the old” (Grieves, 2010, p.30). Woodside and Martin in their work underline the questions as a sense-making tool to understand the strategic change in the organization’s strategic plan: what planned and not planned events occurred and what factors influenced their occurrence? what outcomes do we experience and what sense making conclusions do we reach? (Woodside and Martin, 2008). The answers to these questions could also help to unfold and understand what past activities and former values made an impact on the DMO’s strategic change for its role in the destination development. For example, by looking at the previous WoCo strategy and questioning what did not work well, it could become clearer what (and why) approach for the destination development is being taken with the new tourism strategy.

Strategic changes within the strategy can be seen from various perspectives: as a transitional change, that is planned to move from the old state to the new state in order to solve the inadequacies and the problem of the old state; as a transformational change, when the fundamental shift in the mind-set, culture and principles takes shape within the organization (Anderson and Anderson, 2010, p.53). The radical shift of the DMO WoCo towards the “new tourism era” could refer to the transformational strategic change. It is therefore important to take into account, that this type of strategic change can be messy, uncontrollable and bring damage if managed badly (Anderson and Anderson, 2010). There are many stakeholders to consider and their acceptance of the new direction towards the ‘Localhood’ is essential. The new vision should be effectively shared across the sector and this will be further discussed in the analysis part.

Since the DMO is considered as a web of interactions of various tourism actors, whose interests and goals are constantly changing, the strategic change therefor emerges as a consequence of a continuous negotiation on motivations and actions of different groups of people (Grieves, 2010). The shift in the DMO role may be studied as a decision of these various groups. Moreover, external environment influences may generate instabilities; these instabilities push the organization towards the new path of development (Van de Ven and Poole, 1995). External forces, such as social, economic, political, technological and legal environments drive and shape

the strategic change. It could be a governmental objective for a national tourism strategy targets in terms of revenue or growth in tourism bed-nights, technological advances that change the tourism trends, or increase in global urban travel from an expanding middle class. Thus, strategic change could be also forced by shifts in the tourists' needs and preferences, changes in the social trends and fashions in tourism destination consumption (Butler, 2006). All these factors could put a pressure on the cities, and DMOs in this regard will need to make strategic changes ensuring that external forces do not come at the expense of local quality of the destination.

3.6. Stakeholders

Evolving literature suggests various definitions of the concept stakeholder, while it is explained and used by different authors in very distinctive ways. Authors Donaldson and Preston identify the notion of stakeholder as *"persons or groups with legitimate interests in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity"* (Donaldson and Preston, 1995, p.67). According to Freeman (2010), a stakeholder is any individual or group, who affects and can be affected by the achievement of the organization's goals and objectives. He suggests, that *"One way to understand the definition is to think of the stakeholder concept as an umbrella for the problems in business strategy and corporate social responsiveness. To be an effective strategist you must deal with those groups that can affect you, while to be responsive (and effective in the long run) you must deal with those groups that you can affect"* (Freeman, 2010, p. 46). As much the stakeholders approach is about the individuals or groups that influence the organization, so it is about the managerial behavior directed in response to these individuals and groups.

Byrd (2007) emphasizes the normative aspect of the stakeholder participation by claiming that identification of a stakeholder is rather based on the stakeholder's concerns and interests in the organization, not on the organization's interest in the stakeholder. Based on this view, *"(...) all stakeholders need to participate in determining the direction of the organization in which they have a stake"* (Byrd, 2007, p. 7).

In the tourism context, stakeholders are coalescing into: industry, tourists, locals, government, educational institutions and special interest groups; these groups of stakeholders impact the tourism development in various ways, such as a tourism demand and supply, human resources, research, regulations (Waligo et al., 2013). Various DMO stakeholders such as cultural institutions, airlines, startups will be taken into closer evaluation while analyzing the new WoCo roles. Taking into consideration that the diagnosis of the destination stakeholders is an ongoing activity (Beritteli et al., 2015), stakeholders' interests, needs and capabilities shall be constantly assessed and the following section will further expand on this.

3.7. Stakeholders and DMO, importance of networking

Destinations entail the multiple stakeholders that have varying levels of influence and power over the decision making (Jamal and Jamrozy, 2006). While DMOs collaborate with many different stakeholders, they must coordinate the interests and efforts of those tourism actors in order to reach the strategic goals for the tourism destination (Morrison, 2013). Such DMO stakeholders could be, for example, the tourist, host community, partners, investors, government or organization's staff (Hall et al., 2009). Morrison also argues that the process of preparing the destination plans and strategies should be collaborative (Morrison, 2013). As today the tourism actors increasingly realize that working together in synergy brings positive results -not only the implementation, but the design or development of the DMO strategy requires collaborations and interdependent stakeholders' relationships too (Pike, 2004). DMOs are becoming more concerned with the co-creation and co-existence with their stakeholders; organizations shift their thinking towards the actors involved in the destination development as they become an important part of the synergetic effort (Pike and Page, 2014). Positive outcomes of such network could be a shared and increased expertise, when different stakeholders bring a complementary knowledge to the DMO awareness, or an improved market appeal, when DMO working along with the similar interests' stakeholders increase the appeal to a particular market (Morrison, 2013). An example would be the appeal to the Chinese market as WoCo together with various tourism sector players participates in the projects directed to

better market towards and serve the Chinese visitors, such as the project 'Chinavia' (visitcopenhagen.dk).

Taking into consideration the strong linkage between the tourism and other industries, DMOs adopt destination management strategies with the focus on forming the partnerships and cooperation in all areas to maintain and generate all special aspects of the place (Pearce, 2015). For example, the collaboration with the start-ups could generate cross-industry innovation, as retrieved from the interviews with WoCo, it can *"Help different business meet – something innovative not within tourism meets classical tourism industry and then something new happens! Helping people to meet and develop the new products and services"* (1, 21:00).

Fyall emphasizes that *"In the context of destinations, such networks bridge the gap between macro and micro systems, help to highlight the relative power of actors and organizations as they interact and come into conflict over policies, and bring together the local and the global"* (Fyall, 2011, p.341), explaining that taking into account that DMO has numerous different stakeholders, it is naturally important to maintain the strong relationships and strong level of collaboration in order to overcome the conflicts. Another benefit of having various stakeholders and maintaining relations is that limited financial resources' DMO can extend the impact of funding (Morrison, 2013), as generating the teamwork opens the funding potential from various tourism actors. In this way the organization is able to establish the adequate budget for destination development strategies. However, the destinations tend to be vulnerable to sudden events that may negatively influence the reputation of the place; the consensus-building activities create three types of shared capital: trust, exchange of ideas, flows of communication (social), mutual understanding (intellectual) and formal/informal agreements, implementation of projects (political) (d'Angella and Go, 2009).

The DMO strategy is seen as a direction over the long term, which intends to fulfill the expectations of stakeholders involved (Johnson et al., 2008). The performance of a DMO rests on the strengths and weaknesses of destination's stakeholders (d'Angella and Go, 2009). Yet, the focus of the various stakeholders participating in the destination development could be placed on the personal agendas and interests *"(...) some attributes of the destination are used because*

stakeholders want to have their own aspirations presented in a brand (and its associated campaigns), rather than marketers selecting attributes” (Hall et al., 2009, p.41). Stakeholders such as social media, governments, entrepreneurs or residents can create pressure on DMO and force the decisions not necessarily favorable for the visitor (Pike, 2004), while in the complex tourism perspective the tourist is the one to be understood, satisfied, and is the main actor shaping the industry (Lyck, 2002).

Today DMOs are showing the initiative in collaborating with their own community, creating partnership bonds with the residents of their destination. Local community, in many instances, is the critical actor to the success of an overall travelers’ experience; many local residents are integral to the success of various destination development initiatives, for example, through the hosting of events, festivals, etc. (Fyall, as cited in Wand and Pizam, 2011). More than anything else, the local residents are the attraction, as the tourists actively seek to experience the destination’s culture, engage with people, learn the peculiarities of the community while they travel there. According to Aas and Ladkin (2005), with the involvement of the locals into the shaping of the way the tourism develops one can reduce the potential conflict between the host community and visitors.

As it is important to consult with stakeholders and maintain a strong network, it is also crucial to find the ‘right’ partners for collaborations towards the destination goals; the DMO’s role is to be proactive and build a trustful network rather than let the network emerge for the purpose of achieving and implementing particular strategies (Morrison, 2013). To act by themselves and forgo important possibilities of knowledge exchanges with various stakeholders could be seen as a critical point for DMO (Gretzel et al., 2006). With the assistance of the tourism stakeholders the DMO is able to effectively accomplish all the destination management roles, pool the resources and achieve stronger competitive position of a destination.

3.8. Challenges and opportunities in the destination management and development

It is widely argued by many strategy practitioners that the destination is not an easy 'product' to control and manage (Fyall, 2011). The DMOs face the challenges of managing the destination as they become mature, complex and ever-changing in terms of structure and relationships (Richie and Crouch, 2011). The pressure in the social age on the tourism organizations requires an effective management activity for the destination: *"(...) while the tourist remains the single most important focal point that we seek to understand and satisfy with the complex phenomenon we call tourism, it is critical to recognize that the tourism destination is a primary unit of study and management action"* (Bornhorst et al., 2010, p.572). In order to shed the light on the challenging environment in which the strategy must be implemented, I decided to employ different insights (digitalization influence, conflicting values of the DMO, etc.) on the destination management and I aim to understand the challenging environment of strategy implementation that WoCo faces and may face once the strategy is being put in action through the complex networking with the stakeholders involved.

Woodside and Martin argue that *"Implemented strategy rarely matches planned strategy in all aspects. Environments and specific contexts always include events that were unforeseeable in prior written plans. Things happen – both glitches and unexpected opportunities that are best to address and act upon"* (Woodside and Martin, 2008, p.5). Tourism is not isolated from other sectors in the economy, therefore the destination management requires that the organization monitors the external environment and adapts to it (Tribe, 2010). Unstable economic environment issues for the destination management could cause unexpected need for shift in DMO's vision and goals: *"Destinations must form their strategic plans and development agendas around alternative economic scenarios, and must have contingency plans"* (Wang, 2011). Moreover, DMOs could be constrained to execute the destination strategies by bureaucracy and governmental regulations (d'Angella and Go, 2009), meaning that in collaboration with its stakeholders the organization may improve its ability to adapt to agile market forces. Yet, the DMOs move from benefiting only the tourism stakeholders towards

inspiring the other socio-economic sectors to achieve activities towards the sustainable future (UNWTO, 2017). With respect to that, Wang also agrees that DMO should advocate shared solutions in order to balance political, social, economic and ecologic profits to all involved in the destination management strategy (Wang, 2011).

The DMO faces the challenge to balance its complex nature and gain control over its multiple components, strategy meanings and visitor segments (Fyall, 2011). Tribe goes as far as emphasizing that the elements of the tourism strategy should be consistent and coherent: *“It is important that these elements are consistent so that there is no conflict between different parts of the strategy”* (Tribe, 2010, p.225). The strategy could bring unrealistic expectations of the tourism actors involved causing them the difficulty to endorse the collective goals (Wang, 2008). Sharma also discusses the complexity and control challenge by noting that *“(…) difficulties of co-ordination and control have a potential to undermine a strategic approach to marketing based on destination branding because campaigns can be undertaken by a variety of tourist businesses with no consultation or co-ordination on the prevailing message or the destination values being promoted”* (Sharma, 2004, p.202). Effective communications within the destination network could enhance the change management (Tribe, 2010). It is important therefore to assure that the strategy goals and objectives are clearly communicated and perceived and the consistency of comprehension and integration between tourism actors is achieved. It could be done through the training, workshops or projects, incorporating as many relevant stakeholders into the conversation.

The host community – residents are critical to the success of the touristic experience and Fyall accentuates the importance of considering the community-sensitive approach to the destination brand and the needs of the community for the destination development as they become crucial players in a co-creation of visitor experience (Fyall, 2011). To find the most effective way how the community can engage and work with the other tourism destination actors in order to reach the goals of the community becomes a challenge. According to Moscardo (2008), communities are not homogenous and there could emerge various conflicts constraining the tourism destination management; for instance, communities’ opposition

towards the tourism plans or limited involvement of the local residents to take part in the decisions could be the barriers to effective tourism destination development. Not only it is important to find the ways to encourage the residents to play an integral part while implementing strategy, but to make them ambassadors of the destination in order to successfully develop the destination (UNWTO, 2014).

According to Guglielmo and Palsule (2014), digital technology is the major force creating the change in the environment where we work and lead. Information is finding its ways to the social spaces and DMOs shall effectively move through ambiguity and focus on networked groups with shared interests and passions: *“Leaders today are expected to influence a wide range of constituencies, sometimes two or three steps removed from their “official” range of responsibility”* (Guglielmo and Palsule, 2014, p.9). Significant development of the internet revolution increases the social medias’ prevalence, enabling users to communicate, collaborate and publish different content like reviews, blogs or photos; DMOs are beginning to realize the potential of using the social media power (Hays et al., 2013). According to Hays et al., (2013), DMOs could benefit from recognizing the social media as a powerful tool in the marketing strategies and from becoming more creative and innovative when it comes to the differentiating from traditional methods of marketing.

In consequence to that, contemporary visitor becomes more knowledgeable, sophisticated and experienced, seeking the value for money and time (Buhalis and O’Connor, 2005). In a pace of digitalization revolution, it is crucial to find solutions how to use digital advancement to reach the customer, to understand him, as well as to keep him engaged and informed. Hence, virtual communication is no longer about connecting people with the information of their interest, but rather people, information of their interest and the others, who found the information of their interest. Fyall emphasizes, that tourism organizations should shift their roles from passive promotional ones towards the ongoing facilitating roles (as sited in Wang and Pizam, 2011, p.350), meaning that also DMOs official promotional websites could be no longer sought after by the traveler, or could restrain the networked conversation process. Instead, organizations shall build, strengthen and continually improve web-based resources, according to Wang: *“This*

includes implementing 'social technologies' such as social networking, community building and user generated content" (as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011, p.4). With respect to that, WoCo must maintain and improve their activity on their own social media channels, but very importantly also to support others' platforms and channels.

4. Analysis

In this chapter of the theses I will explore and analyze the changing role of the DMO WoCo in terms of developing the destination, while I apportion analysis into 2 parts that will cover multiple sub-sections, combining theoretical underpinnings introduced in the chapter 3 with the findings from the discourse analysis of the strategy document, semi-structured interviews, netnography study and the secondary material.

First of all, I will investigate the digitalization influence and changing visitor behavior, which can help to explain the shifting DMO role and understand what external environment WoCo has to adapt to. This section will also look at the source of inspiration for a new strategy and how it differs from the previous DMO tourism strategy while this will provide valuable insights about the formation of the new strategy and the new role for a destination development, and questions novelty and differentiation aspects in this context.

The second part of analysis (chapter 5) will look at different initiatives and activities that the DMO implements and plans on implementing in accordance with the new tourism strategy. Particularly, this part will explore what is being declared by WoCo regarding its role and responsibilities, and what is being done, thus discussing the paradoxes regarding the contradictory DMO's management role, the contradictory 'Localhood' vision in the destination development along with the other debates. Various stakeholders' (visitors, local community, partners) perspective will be taken into consideration to investigate what part they play in said activities, while this will add to the investigation of strategic changes for the role of WoCo and how the role is being realized.

Analysis chapter will also aim to investigate how the DMO does things anew and also in a quite the same way as usual. This will help to explore the “end of tourism” paradox.

4.1. Digitalization and changing visitor behavior

The traditional proclamation, used in many countries to mark the accession of the new monarch, “*The King is dead, long live The King*” (7, p.3) is being announced in the new strategy declaration. The social media manager explains, that the phrase is being used to appreciate the tourism industry, its benefit and growth in Denmark: “*We basically see the steady growth despite the decline in many other sectors and industries. It is also the recognition of all good that the tourism has done. Also in its traditional role. The time is right now to look ahead towards the new future and finding the term and how we talk about the destinations and tourism*” (2, 02:59). The respondent expresses his concern about looking at the tourism beyond its traditional role and seeks to start the conversation about the new role of the tourism destination too. It corresponds to Pike’s suggestion, that today “*DMOs are in the visitor industry, rather than the tourism industry*” (Pike, 2016, p.10), that the way the travel industry is being talked about is changing. Also, the DMO makes a proactive decision to introduce the future foreseeing strategy in order to change along with the traditional tourism role. In this context, the traditional role according to the strategic DMO document is “*official tourism recommendations, glossy advertising and the idea of the traditional tourist*” (7, p.3).

With the rise of social media, increasing variety of platforms, websites and channels through which the visitor is looking for inspiration and information before making a travel decision becomes a push factor for the DMO to create adequate strategy. Digital word of mouth recommendations become highly important. Strategic document illuminates the statement “*Dear friends, this is the last postcard you will ever get from us*” (7, p.2), playfully collating the traditional communication with the classic paper postcard. The DMO acknowledges the shifting trends in the digital solutions’ perspective, while on the other hand also states the following in the ‘Localhood’ strategic document: “*Digital or not is no longer a question. Whether for*

marketing, communication or data purposes, the Destination Management Organization of today and tomorrow is digital throughout all aspects of managing the destination and the organization behind it. As a consequence of digitalization, everyone and everything today generates new data” (7, p.6).

This textual discourse demonstrates that digitalization is not an issue per se. The DMO is conscious about today’s powerful information role and the threat of everything and everyone being able to create and spread the new data. The issue for WoCo might be to not adapt along with this exigent environment.

The head of the projects stresses the idea that *“The old role is dying, if you keep insisting on: we are the ones that know what’s going on in the city, we are the ones that have the official tourist bureau. They are closing down everywhere because people don’t go there anymore, they look at their phones instead. So I think in order to survive within tourism, we needed a new strategy. It was just old and the world is changing, its digital and it is changing so fast” (1, 06:04).* The statement corresponds to the view that strategic change for the DMO’s role could be also forced by shifts in the tourists’ needs and preferences, changes in the social trends and fashions in tourism destination consumption (Butler, 2006). Tourism, according to the respondent, puts the DMO into a test to adapt towards the dynamic digitalization, while the physical bureaus lose their significance and wane from the tourism practices conceding the way to the digital consumption, where all the focus should be placed. Thus, the new role for the organization is to develop the strategy that leads in a social age which has been reshaped by the digital media and increasing visual communications (Guglielmo and Palsule, 2014).

As highlighted by the social media manager: *“There is an increasing tendency for people now to find inspiration through more unofficial sources than let’s say DMO or even the official channel for the theme parks” (2, 04:52).* According to him, official channels are outdated, organization’s website is not being looked at while making a travel decision; the DMO and Copenhagen as a destination face the times of the need to cover more media platforms, spread the resources and story-telling around the destination more.

Since the visitors become more knowledgeable and sophisticated, it becomes more complicated to please them (Buhalis and O'Connor, 2005). Contemporary 'connected' consumer today requires not only value for money, but value for time. "The population in general is travelling more frequently, becoming more linguistically and technologically skilled and can function in multicultural and demanding environments overseas" (Buhalis & O'Connor, 2005, p. 11). Therefore as much as it is important to offer consumers experiences according to their changing habits, it is also crucial to use advancing digital solutions to reach the consumer and to understand continually changing travelling habits and trends.

In one of the interviews given representing the new strategy Mikkel Aarø-Hansen, the CEO of WoCo, expresses his opinion towards the revolutionizing social medias in the tourism industry and goes as far as saying that the new role of DMO shifts from being an official sender of the travel inspiration message to helping others to be that "transmitter" (kystognaturturisme.dk). In this context, Tribe (2010) argues, that tourism is not isolated from the external environment and its forces, and the DMO in this regard may change together with it accordingly. Advancing social technologies demand the organization to change its circle of responsibilities from solely promotional to network facilitating (Wang and Pizam, 2011). This is further discussed in section 5.7.

Earlier this year, EU Regional Development Fund has dedicated 10 million DKK for the digital innovation project, where WoCo together with 'Dansk Kyst og Naturturisme' and three universities develop the digital solutions to boost the productivity and competitiveness of the Danish tourism sector (em.dk). According to Bornhorst et al., (2010), funding is one of the key determinants for the DMO success. The ambitious course of destination development activities could be realized with the proper funding. The grant seems to be a promising commencement to develop new digital opportunities in order to create new innovative products and services.

It is crucial to introduce the digitalization aspect and changing visitor behavior regarding the digital consumption at this stage of the thesis because the following part (chapter 5) embraces these themes within almost every new initiative or activity.

4.2. Inspiration for the new strategy

Head of the projects brings into attention the inspiration for the strategy and the strategic change for the DMO role by explaining that the process of the strategy formation took approximately over a year and that the inspiration was drawn from the different other destinations' campaigns and strategies: *"Obviously we started looking at other destinations, very inspired by Australia doing really great, having some really cool initiatives. And we were also looking at how do different strategies present themselves and we noticed that all of them had a vision and a mission saying that we want to be the best, we are unique and all the visions were saying the same thing, but they were not capturing what was really unique in the destination. I have this presentation where we plucked out different quotations from different strategies and they all say the same. You cannot differentiate them"* (1, 06:53). This view corresponds to the point that it is not a simple process to construct the destination brand identity and to achieve differentiation (Anholt, 2010).

The interviewee not only informs us how WoCo has generated new ideas and inspiration for the strategy from, but also reveals that the profound investigation of others' strategies for destination development has triggered the strong motivation to capture the essence of Copenhagen and its uniqueness. This corresponds to the view of Wang and Pizam (2010), that the ability of tourism organization to capture the peculiarities and effectively use them to differentiate their destination can lead to the strong competitive position. DMOs have the responsibility of enhancing uniqueness and authenticity of a destination, increasing the livelihood of it (Richards and Palmer, 2010). I will further explore how the DMO aims to stand out, how it generates authentic stories in the second part of the analysis.

It is noteworthy to highlight, that while WoCo new tourism strategy formulation process has drawn inspiration from the Australian destinations' strategies, herewith the Australian Destination Melbourne takes a WoCo tourism approach into a discussion. In the recently organized tourism forum, where the director of development for Woco Signe Jungersted presented the key insights of the new strategic plan, Destination Melbourne raised the debate about what such daring tourism strategy could mean to their destination: *"Destination*

Melbourne believes it is imperative that our industry continues to push the boundaries in considering our future direction, the impact of visitor growth on our natural assets, local communities and people, and our industry's sustainability as a whole" (destination.melbourne).

In the interview with the social media manager, another inspiration source for the shift in the role of WoCo was presented: *"We are actually looking a lot at the New York City company, who is the DMO of the New York. Obviously, they are in a quiet different situation from us tourism wise, but they are in a quiet peculiar situation if you look at the city like New York, which is a destination that is basically on everyone's bucket list. So the key for them was to develop the story-telling elements and to develop the strategy to allow people to rediscover the city. Because people have to find the new New York each time they visit" (2, 06:33).* We learn, that Copenhagen is being compared in parallel with the famous New York City and that the organization in this way seeks to get some hints how to create the strategy allowing visitors to rediscover the destination. Even the respondent did not go much into details regarding this particular topic, New York as a destination and its repeat visit communication strategy seem to be the exemplary points of departure for the marketing team of WoCo.

It could be also discussed whether the authenticity and uniqueness of a destination could be captured by looking at other destinations and their strategies. Paradoxically, according to Ooi (2011), as the destinations develop, they become more familiar with each other too, especially when authorities embark on learning from other destinations on how to attract more tourists and investments (as cited in Dinnie, 2011). With similar goals and branding intentions, the examples of New York and Australia demonstrate that WoCo uses the ranking criteria of these destinations as benchmarks and in this way learn from one another. Consequently, destinations become *"equally special"* (Ooi, as cited in Dinnie, 2011, p.58), intend to be unique in the same way, leading to the similar way of branding.

Having noted that, in order to continue growing, several years ago New York DMO launched campaign called 'Neighborhood x Neighborhood' (similar word to Localhood), that targets repeat visitors as well as locals seeking new adventures in their home town (nycandcompany.org). With the aim to encourage exploration of diverse areas outside the most

visited locations and to generate the economic growth in the five featured boroughs, the DMO started the strategy that used digital tactics of bringing into attention the distanced gardens, uncrowded parks and beaches in order to manage the tourists' streams. The repeat visit communication strategy that captured attention of WoCo, as previously presented, is 'See Your City' campaign that *"originally targeted New Yorkers and has recently expanded to also entice domestic and international visitors to experience NYC like a local"* (nycandcompany.org) Locals and visitors are invited to share their must-see pictures with the hashtag #SeeYourCity (Instagram.com) so that local community could go beyond their borough and visitors could be inspired to live like locals. These strategic decisions, I argue, reflect the point of view of Ooi (2011) about the similar way of branding of the cities by learning from each another on attracting and managing the tourism. Even the cities like New York and Copenhagen are very different from each other in terms of size and various other factors, they also become more alike as they embrace the local facet of their city brands.

4.3. Different from the previous strategy

Regarding the previous strategy BIG TOURISM 2014-2016, the head of the projects noted that it is very different from the 'Localhood' strategy: *"The old strategy was about - this is what we have to get done, we have this target, this target and this target and by the end of the strategy we should have fulfilled all these goals. And the new as I was introducing is more showing the way but not the result"* (1, 08:17). From one point of view, the new strategy stresses the concrete activities and projects only for the 2017 and therefore it could be viewed as dynamic as the respondent suggests. Even the digital presentation of the strategy on the WoCo website will be updated in 2018 with the reflexive judgments in terms of new initiatives in the pipeline (thinkdigital.travel). On the other hand, 'Localhood' strategy at some point is measurement-based with the key performance indicators, focusing on the five strategic coordinates and on contributing to the achievement of the targets of the national tourism strategy towards 2025, for example, outlined shared growth target in tourism revenue by DKK 45,000,000,000 (visitcopenhagen.dk).

In the world of DMOs, money and the economic growth of an industry is nearly forevermore a predominant concern (Pike, 2016). WoCo works on realizing the regional growth and represents the key regional driver of a visitor growth (7, p.8). Entrusted with responsibilities to manage the Danish Business Tourism together with the Copenhagen Cruise Network (visitcopenhagen.dk), the DMO participates in the safe-guarding the economic performance of the destination (d'Angella and Go, 2009). While partaking the role in various tourism development projects, such as Meetingplace and Greater Copenhagen that have focused growth agendas and economic focal points, and depending on continuity of funding, the role of the DMO remains result oriented embracing traditional key performance indicators.

Textual discourse in the strategic document illuminates: *"In a time of change and transition, this strategy sets out an ambitious course, not a definitive solution"* (7, p.4). Through this statement, WoCo position themselves as an enthusiastic, eager and aspiring DMO, who created a tourism strategy that challenges their agility to adapt. The metaphor of an ambitious course is used to represent the shift towards experimentation in strategy implementation.

The social media manager, who worked at the company all along the realization of the former strategy, emphasizes, that very concrete initiatives set for 2 or 3 years ahead might have brought inaccurate assumptions: *"I think the main thing that sets the 'Localhood' strategy apart from basically every other strategy that we have done in the past, is this ability to scale the efforts and to dial back or backtrack on what we got actually planned and look at the reality of the context that we are in. That is why we specifically only mapped activities for 2017 alone"* (2, 12:59). References could be made to, for instance, the new 'Astronaut' initiative, where the DMO plans on creating small satellites in new environments to seek stronger idea-sharing between current and new partners, and where experimenting and failures are the focal points; or the 365-day brand strategy, enabling organization to capture and dial back on the milestones in 2017 (visitcopenhagen.dk).

By comparing 'Localhood' strategy with the former tourism strategy of WoCo we learn that it is important for the organization to maintain the flexible incremental approach to strategic change instead of the chasing the fixed target. This is not necessarily to be seen as the wrong

way to develop the strategy, but according to the DMO respondents, it is now important to have a dynamic direction and define the means of getting there on-the-go: *“The strategy has room for adjustments along the way, as nothing in the future is certain and we want to be agile as an organization to adjust certain points of the strategy in the future if needed”* (thinkdigital.travel).

The above quote goes in line with the discussion of Tribe, where he claims that emergent strategies highlight the interconnectedness of the strategy elements and under which *“aims and missions are not necessarily front-loaded, but develop in response to events”* (Tribe, 2010, p.18). It also corresponds to the view that the emergent nature of the strategy involves the challenging learning process and is about an organic adaptation and learning from step by step decisions how to react to unexpected occurrences in a dynamic environment (Mintzberg, et al., 1998). The emergent strategy also reflects in the development manager’s opinion, where she states that *“We do not have all the solutions yet but we need to say it out loud and then we need to find the solutions”* (kairosfuture.com). The interviews gave me an impression that all respondents see and appreciate the new strategy and its flexible and open nature to adapt to initially not anticipated events and market environments.

Unlike the former strategy, one can argue that ‘Localhood’ strategy and the new DMO role enhance *“the planning of a desirable future and the design and testing of suitable ways of bringing it about”* (Tribe, 2010, p.7). Frank Cuypers holds the opinion that it is indeed very wrong when the measurements become goals and the destination development or particularly the city marketing does not involve human relations and collective decision-making. He expresses his appreciation for the strategy by saying that it *“is very intentional. They use it to inspire people, to draw attention, to engage everybody, to align everybody”* (3, 22:16) and later on adds laughing: *“Oh, Signe, I don’t envy you, nobody dares to criticize your plan”* (3, 22:39). He mentions the WoCo development director Signe Jungersted and expresses his opinion that the strategy of the DMO cannot yet be judged and that now is the awaited moment to see how the plan will be implemented.

4.4. Sub-conclusion

Regarding the emerging trends, such as advancing travelers' usage of social medias and digitalization innovations are a big concern for WoCo. The official recommendations are no longer sought after and the DMO must find creative solutions to develop a destination and benefit to its growth, as well as to survive itself as an organization. Moreover, WoCo has gained inspiration for the new strategy from other destinations and herewith inspired others as discussed with the Melbourne example. Paradoxically, "equally special" destination branding perspective was captured while looking at WoCo and New York communication strategies, that demonstrates the challenge for destination to stay authentic and different. Finally, a new tourism strategy being emergent gives a space for experimentation, mistakes and decisions 'on-the-go' to evoke while realizing the new role. The new strategy could be seen as a different approach since the projects and plans for the future destination development are still being determined; on the other hand, traditional key performance indicators are still leading the way.

5. Activities and initiatives of the DMO

Strategic document of the new 'Localhood' tourism strategy depicts various change-embodying statements such as "*we bid farewell*", "*we leave behind*", "*no longer*", "*we shift towards*", which clearly frame the change and inform about the alterations from the past to the present or the future. From one point of view, it could be seen as a transformational change, meaning that a fundamental shift in the mind-set, culture and principles takes shape within the organization (Anderson and Anderson, 2010, p.53). Yet, the strategic document illustrates the paradoxical discourse: "*Rest assured, the End of Tourism does not mean we have to start all over*" (7, p.7), self-contradicting the meaning of the new tourism strategy. It is the tourism end and the tourism beginning simultaneously. Having noted that, in this chapter I will further explore the strategic changes for the role of WoCo and how the role is being realized by studying various DMO destination development initiatives and activities. The point of departure for this chapter will be the analysis of the new vision 'Localhood'.

5.1. Localhood and temporary locals

The consultancy group, that has been collaborating in the strategy formulation process states: *“What comes after the end of tourism? Localhood for everyone”* (destinationthink.com). This phrase might be the sign, that today tourism transforms into something more personal, human and involving. While the respondents from WoCo at the interviews express how proud they are about the unique name ‘Localhood’, the merger of two words of chosen name initially suggests that local community might be the center actor in the new tourism strategy. The strategic document emphasizes that locals are the destination, but also that Copenhagen wants its tourists to become locals, or in other words, wants to see the travelers and locals as one unity and to reach a maximum benefit for both. New vision of the DMO is illuminated in the textual discourse and it is about the creation of *“A future destination where human relations are the focal point, where the differentiation between destination and home of locals is one and the same”* (7, p.10). The destination is as much a home for the local community as it is a place for the travelers to visit, according to the strategy.

Hence, the new tourism strategy could be perceived as people-centric as the textual discourse illuminates: *“Copenhagen places people at the centre of its vision and imagines that the destination’s future will be co-created by residents, industry, and visitors”* (travel-advisor.eu). The DMO seems to actively turn its attention and efforts to the direction of three target groups - locals, partners and travelers’ inter-relationships by emphasizing collaboration and inclusive growth as the major aspects of the future destination development. According to Frank Cuypers about the right destination planning: *“(…) if you don’t have the support of your industry, your stakeholders and your citizens, things will go wrong”* (3, 09:05). Jamal and Jamrozny also suggest, that destination strategies *“(…) are not to design a product, price, place and promotion of a tourist destination, but to ensure quality of life and environments through tourism development”* (2006, p.168). Human experiences and relations are the qualities that make a destination special and authentic, while according to the social media manager: *“Everyone has to have their place in the city and has to be able to thrive in the city space”* (2, 09:23). This opinion is consistent with the widespread view that tourism destinations must define tourism

success by incorporating economic, environmental and social environments (Dwyer et al., 2009).

Strategic document portrays the contemporary visitor in a following way: *“We welcome the arrival of today’s traveller: the temporary local seeking not the perfect still picture to take home, but the emotional connection to an instantly shared experience based on interests, relations and authenticity. We pay our respects to the tourists of the past, the mass consumers and the passing days of disconnected tourist segmentation between business and leisure, city and countryside, culture and cycling”* (7, p.3). This quote embodies the dimensions that WoCo aims to connect – business travel with leisure travel, city trip with a trip to the countryside while also highlights that cycling is inseparable from experiencing the destination’s culture. The contemporary conscious traveler seeks for more meaning, self-reliance, deeply felt connections and purpose at the places they visit (Zivoder et al., 2015). The behavior of the traveler is changing and so the DMO WoCo refocus their marketing activity (will be explored in 5.4, 5.5, 5.6 sections). Increasing travelers’ demand for unique experience means that it is no longer enough to offer amenities and facilities, but unique and authentic experiences instead (Volgger and Pechlaner, 2014). WoCo targets the demand for authenticity, while also identifies that demand in every type of traveler, let it be a leisure or a business traveler.

Seeing myself as a traveler, I argue that today people are interested in discovering, participating and learning about and being intimately involved in the everyday life of the places they visit. Travelers are no longer satisfied with being processed through a non-interactive and rather impersonal ‘mass tourism’ system (Dwyer et al., 2009). With the new tourism strategy, the DMO embraces emotional benefits of the destination, such as a social skill confirmation or a status enhancement (Dwyer et al., 2009), addressing the better informed and active traveler, who seeks to be involved in the destination, meet and engage with the locals, and rediscover oneself.

This could be supported by the insights of the collaborative business initiative GDS-index, as in their 2016 Global Destination Sustainability analysis the new WoCo tourism strategy and trends are being discussed: *“Local is hot. Local food, local products, local craft and tours by locals.*

Today's discerning traveler seeks the authentic, seeks the original and seeks to experience the local" (gds-index.com). Thus, the principal shift in the DMO role entails encouraging the destination to think of its visitors as temporary locals instead of as tourists, meaning that the visitor becomes a part of a local community and contributes to it. Ritchie and Crouch (2011) go as far as saying that *"(...) concerns have been expressed in various destinations which are subject to large number of visitors that policies and systems are required for visitor management in order to exert some influence over visitor impacts"* (as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011, p.336).

However, one could question what leads to the experiences of 'becoming a local' and how to create the temporary local experience. Maybe marketed experiences such as jumping into the canal together with the Danes, experiencing the biking culture or visiting the locals in the outskirts villages (netnography findings from DMO posts) could be identified as 'Localhood' experiences and authentic experimentation of the destination. Earlier this year released video with the Danish actor Mads Mikkelsen 'The Danish way' musing on what makes Danes the happiest nation could reflect the local experience (cphpost.dk). This would embrace the outdoor swimming baths, long table dinner in the nature, drinking 'the best beer in the world', etc. Or it could mean experiencing a work-life balance while on the business travel and buying Danish design furniture while on the shopping trip as illustrated in the video. Recently tweeted tips from WoCo might also embody changing tourist concept: *"Don't be a tourist – do like the locals"* (twitter.com), where the insights of Copenhageners about what they like to do, eat, visit and explore in the city are being highlighted to the traveler.

It seems that the concept of the temporary local is an inspirational portrait, meaning that WoCo tries to get past the fragmented thinking and seeing of tourists as "different species" as according to WoCo development director Signe Jungersted: *"Fewer and fewer really identify themselves as tourists. It's not really a self-concept that a lot of us have. Instead when we travel, we are travelers, we are explorers"* (thinkdigital.travel). WoCo aims to make a shift in a tourism industry thinking and treating the tourist as a traveler and as a human in the first place. It teaches and preaches a visitor-centered doctrine to the community of a destination, which is continuous and responsible practice (Wang, as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011).

Paradoxically, one could question how the notion of the explorer seeking for authentic local experience resonates with the digital traveler who finds information and actively participates in the social platforms as discussed in the section 4.1. It seems that WoCo combines these concepts and the tourist should be viewed/served/accommodated as a digital explorer, who is ever connected with the digital world but wants to experience authentic side of a destination. Reflecting on the emergent nature of the strategy, it will be interesting to follow the strategy implementation and to learn what is being done to welcome the 'temporary locals' to the destination.

Moreover, it is also important to include the discussion of Frank Cuypers, where he shares his opinion about 'Chinavia', the project that focus on making Copenhagen more appealing to the Chinese travelers: *"Listen, there is a one point of criticism I still have about the plan of Copenhagen. It is still targeted on the Chinese market and they are mixing two things. On one hand they absolutely want to go for temporary local experience, attracting the passionate people, the right tourism. On the other hand, they say we have to increase the number of Chinese visitors. You mix psychographic thinking about the quality visitors with a blunt geographical thinking"* (3, 07:27). The respondent brings out the problem of the visitor management, emphasizing that WoCo plans the strategy around the experience, niches, passion groups and wants to build the connection with citizens, while at the same time it identifies and nurtures the profitable emerging market of Chinese visitors. The DMO reaches consumers based on geographic marketing strategy as a "one-size-fits-all" approach and with the launch of the new tourism strategy sets a focus on the traveler seeking for a local experience. Two different values are put at stake. It goes well in line with the view that it is a great challenge for the DMO to clarify its essential value proposition (Wang as sited in Wang and Pizam, 2011). WoCo faces the challenge to find themselves without a compelling 'story', which according to Wang (2011) is *"a credible concept of what they contribute to the constellation of intersects that make up the destinations they serve, and a convincing argument for their continued mission"* (as sited in Wang and Pizam, 2011, p. 18). On the other hand, certain attributes not necessarily lead to a particular behavior and WoCo does not aim to determine who can be a temporary local and who cannot. Chinese could also be viewed as a

“style groups” with many different types of a visitor – Chinese “foody”, “fashionista” or Chinese that want to meet the locals, go biking and get the authentic experience. It seems that it is crucial to determine the experiences that Chinese travelers seek, instead of approaching them as one large segment.

The ‘Localhood’ is a long-term vision supporting inclusive co-creation of the tourism growth across industries and geographies, involving the new and existing partners as well as the residents. I will explore the ‘Localhood’ approach further in the analysis with almost every activity or initiative that the DMO implements.

5.2. Shareability initiatives

Interesting discursive tendency in the new tourism strategy is the strong emphasis on the “share” and “shared” references, that are being stated in the strategy document more than 30 times. The new mission affirms that it will “*Enable our destination to be shared more*” (7, p.11) and it could be understood that the destination promotion and development now get the new name or title – destination sharing. Sharing of the destination could mean different things, as the interviews suggest – expertise sharing with partners, locals sharing their city with visitors, promoting the place and its stories on the social platforms, etc. It could also mean the presentations of a new strategy at international or national conventions, just like the event ‘Tomorrow’s Urban Travel 2017’ taking the place in October this year in Copenhagen to discuss the meaning of the ‘Localhood’ and explore the strategic future plans for tourism together with the industry players.

It is interesting to take this shareable destination notion into consideration, especially in relation to the social media sharing, as “*the organization plans to use social media as the primary means of communication, focusing on shareability and the insights provided by data analysis*” (cphnews.mediajungle.dk). Mariani (2016) also discusses, that today’s social-network revolution leads to the ‘socialnomics’ or in other words the economy that revolves around the social media. Various social media platforms, such as Instagram or Facebook enable tourism

organizations to leverage the virtual word-of-mouth, to market and promote the destinations. Even though the 'Localhood' strategy has been released at the beginning of this year and multiple projects about to be established and identified, it seems that the new role of WoCo is being realized through the active usage of the social media channels.

First of all, according to the social media manager, it is important to encourage the visitors to share the destination so that digitally the destination is presented in a shareable way. It is being done by launching new concepts such as 'Friday Favorites' as presented by the netnography study below, where WoCo introduces sharing initiative under the hashtag of #fridayfavoritescp. Visitors, (as well as the locals) are being encouraged to share their photos under the said hashtag, while WoCo features some of these photos "that made our week just a little bit better":



Image 1: Shareability initiative Friday Favorites (Instagram)

DMO uses visual content in the platforms like Instagram and by employing this trendy tool, it expands communication with the visitor and generates his/her engagement with the destination. Users actively interact by commenting the photos, tagging themselves or expressing their emotions relating the past or future visit, as one user commented *“The best city and Beautiful. See you soon kopenhagen”*.

Furthermore, this illustration reflects the locals’ engagement, since the DMO features the photo taken by the local “instagrammer” (@koebenhavnsk). As suggested by the strategic document: *“the pride of our locals is critical for the equation to balance: our locals need to be so proud of their hometown that they want to share it even more”* (7, p.7). Throughout the netnographic observation, I learn that WoCo proactively posts the photos of the city made by locals, encourages them to do so by interactively commenting their posts (“This lovely, rainy shot”). I argue that this creates a stronger sense of belonging-to-community, generates own appreciation of the city. The locals and the visitors, rather than a DMO, are encouraged to create brand stories about the Copenhagen; reflecting on the previous discussion about the temporary locals’ concept, I argue that the local residents and travelers may in the long-run co-create the meaning of the concept.

Another way to encourage destination sharing is illustrated in the image 2. DMO introduces the hashtag #cphpicks that seems to be an effective initiative of people (visitors and locals) tagging their best shots of the city to be later shared by WoCo on the Copenhagen map (cphpicks.com). As a result, the map helps to make a travel decision based on the captured moments in the photos. According to Hays et al., (2013), tourism marketers are able to find creative ways for developing loyalty, increasing awareness and generating interesting content. Image 2 is a great example of the view that communication is no longer limited to producer-consumer perspective, but rather expands to consumer-consumer or consumer-consumers’ perspectives (Hays et al., 2013).

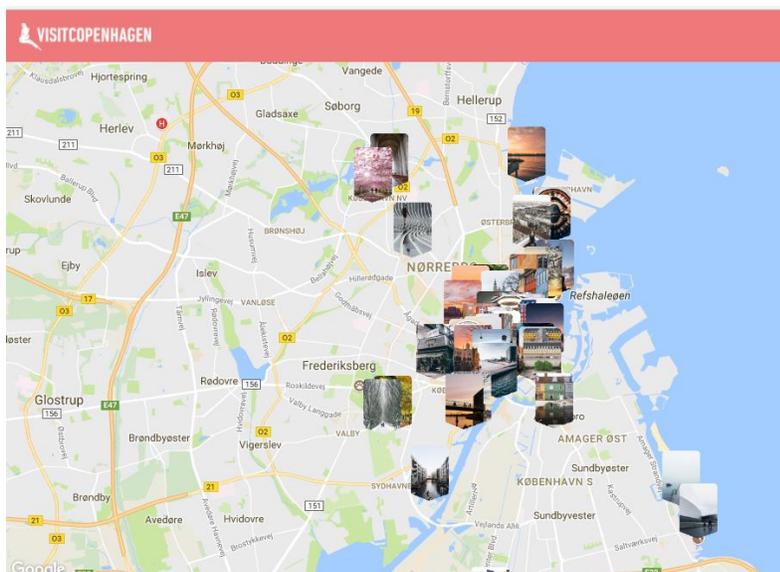


Image 2: Photo map #cphpicks on Instagram (cphpics.com)

Furthermore, destination sharing could be embodied in the following statements of the WoCo staff members, that highlight their “shareability” perspectives in the strategy document: *“I share personal content of local peculiarities, special spots of beauty and unknowns to promote Copenhagen through my Instagram followers”*; *“I share Copenhagen not only as a preferred destination for business meetings and professional purposes, but also as an ideal spot for a personal break – in between meetings and just for fun”*; *“I share new results co-created by our organization and partners to enhance the recognition of value added both to commercial stakeholders and to our society at large”* etc. (7, p.14;16;22;). The employees of WoCo express their opinions on how they are sharing the destination on their daily life. Following these quotes, we learn that “shareability” is an initiative that is actively realized by the members of the WoCo organization too, and that the internal momentum of the DMO is the incremental realization of the strategy. These quotes demonstrate the human element of the ‘Localhood’ strategy - how the new tourism strategy involves employees and that starting from the small activities, like sharing the organizational results or promoting the unknown spots of Copenhagen on Instagram is an important start. The role of WoCo is shifting towards developing the brand stories about the destination through the shared branding framework

and this section embodied how travelers and locals are enabled to spotlight the stories about Copenhagen.

5.3. Big Data plans

The topic of handling the big data is being widely discussed among the tourism players in Denmark, including WoCo, already for years. The strategy document suggests, that WoCo plans on using big data and updated visitor insights in order to improve satisfaction levels of the visitors and to increase the desire to return. It states, that *“Through passive measurement, the use of digital big data can provide accurate often real-time depictions of actual visitor behavior, tourism trends and new business potential”* (7, p.6). The data will be used to understand and strategically influence a destination consumption, while the social media manager holds the opinion that it is important to outline the potential of working with big data as it will help *“to tweak and optimize stories further, think about KPI’s differently and ensure we are building on the city’s brand”* (thinkdigital.travel).

According to Yuan and Ho (2015), technologies of big data describe a new information management strategy for DMOs to access the immense amount of data from tourists and stakeholders. The responsibility of today’s DMO goes beyond simply providing information and data to the benefit of the destination network towards the harnessing of the hidden knowledge within that information and data (Yuan and Ho, 2015). WoCo has just invested in the new social data tool ‘Talkwalker’ that will help in doing the social listening as the social media manager highlights: *“The idea is to listen extensively into our own channels and also into broader conversations and do quite extensive keyword searches on social media”* (thinkdigital.travel).

Frank Cuypers expressed rather skeptical opinion regarding the big data: *“I think the weakest part in the plan also is a big data thing, it is very fake. Everybody is talking about big data nowadays. I don’t think that the DMOs really have a clue what big data means. It is not really about harvesting, collecting, scrapping. It is about the application”* (3, 20:15), pointing out that the organization embarks on rather too complicated and beyond their competence methods to

work with. The statement suggests that it is a challenge for the DMO to orchestrate the technology to its benefit and that it is important to generate a better knowledge about the data usage and application. With the effective realization of the big data plans, the DMO could more accurately determine market segments and niches to communicate with them in an effective manner (Fyall as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011).

One could also debate on how the big data resonates with the 'Localhood' vision and the people-based growth. Paradoxically the data is being collected in order to better serve travelers by understanding their needs and preferences with travelers themselves being unaware of their personal information being collected. Therefore the human element of the new tourism strategy is being neglected. WoCo should be careful of not thinking of the big data only in terms of understanding the travelers and their needs, but use the big data analysis to measure how well the whole destination is in addressing the travel demands including forecasting the future tourism volumes in order to, for example, preserve the local community and livability of the destination. Since in the past it was quite difficult to quantify and measure the DMO performance and impact on the destination management and development (Pike and Page, 2014), the data analytics could help measuring return on investment of particular marketing campaigns. That could also explain the need of going beyond the bed-night measurements. With the effective application of data analytics WoCo could start transforming the measures of their own performance that reflect their contribution to the industry and to the society.

5.4. 'Bleisure' initiatives

Regarding the management of the visitors, the organization is in the process of developing a repeat-visit communication strategy in order to promote relevant experiences and products, and increase the number of repeat travelers. With the new tourism strategy, the DMO puts a strong focus on the strategic coordinate *"Once attracted, twice valued"* (7, p.15), where it introduces the initiatives to boost the loyalty of visitors by combining the business and the cultural travel. Head of the projects discusses, that: *"(...) I think that would be the link between the big conferences and the 'Localhood' experience. Because people are just people, they are*

not just businessmen. There could be a business man, who loves architecture, or a business man who loves food. So we could show the congress participants the different side of what they are maybe expecting. And once attracted twice valued also means that maybe that when they are at the conference you are super busy and you cannot go see that architecture that you would like. But maybe when you find out that it is there maybe you come back with your family as a tourist and not as the congress participant. So, I think it is getting more out of the activities that we are doing and thinking more about cross the segments” (1, 12:38). This opinion suggests, that the traveler is seen as all kinds of a human with different interests and motivations, and that it is important to go beyond solely demographic or geographic segmentation. She highlights, that one of the main 2017 activities is to develop ‘bleisure’ initiatives in order to convert attracted business visitors to leisure travelers, for example, to communicate “right stories” towards the congress and conference participants in order to make them repeat the visit. The new strategic task of the DMO is to attract existing visitors to come back to the destination, instead of creating the new ones alone. Netnographic study below embodies two examples of the Copenhagen Convention Bureau addressing the attendees of congresses on Twitter that could be viewed as a ‘bleisure’ initiative:



Image 3: Copenhagen CVB ‘Bleisure’ communication (Twitter)



Image 4: Copenhagen CVB 'Bleisure' communication (Twitter)

These illustrations demonstrate how the DMO communicates with the participants of different business events while suggesting them leisure activities such as sightseeing or food experiences. Business travelers are being encouraged to explore destination beyond the congress and immerse themselves in the cultural life; reflecting on the part where I have discussed the active social media user of today, it seems that this communication approach is inspiring and informative since the attached link gives a traveler access to the website of WoCo with multiple suggestions how to explore the destination after the convention. Unlike the past focus on solely attracting the tourists to the destination by promoting the destination, it corresponds to the view that today DMOs have a more conscious role to deliver the experience to the tourists and reach the level of satisfaction so they can repeat their visit and spread the positive word-of mouth (Dwyer et al., 2009). Whether the business travelers will get inspiration to repeat their visit to Copenhagen in order to experience the cultural side of the destination or whether they will explore it right after the business congress, both situations would greatly benefit the development of the destination.

Furthermore, 'Bleisure' initiatives reflect in the 'Meetingplace' strategy for 2017-2020, with the title '*Copenhagen means Business*' (icaworld.org). Here the organization focus on the integration of a delegate and leisure perspective with business event destination brand, and a commitment to empowering members to engage more with the brand of the destination (visitcopenhagen.dk). The loyalty of the visitors is being reinforced by integrating the business sector with the leisure sector. It is true that the DMO "(...) *have found themselves trying to 'ride two horses' – trying to attract the business of conference organizers and event managers, while*

also trying to reach out to leisure travelers” (Wang as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011, p.18). Thus the focus of the new DMO role is to align business and leisure sectors so that destination’s many business travelers could experience the culture and herewith the cultural institutions could gain more value from these travelers.

Business destination strategy ‘Meetingplace’ integrates renewed focus on the leisure perspective in order to combine business and cultural travel with the projects being unleashed at the end of the year 2017. The new vision of the ‘Meetingplace’ strategy states that *“Our vision is to deliver Copenhagen as a leading destination for professional events and inspiring breaks”* (visitcopenhagen.dk), while the plan outlines the strategic areas of stronger community engagement and increased business opportunities’ conversion. The idea behind this is to revitalize the destination brand by aligning all partners of the ‘Meetingplace’ strategy for ongoing branding assignment, which will be centered around the topics of an inspiring professional getaway, livability, programs of “stay & play”, etc. (visitcopenhagen.dk). ‘Meetingplace’ strategy is one of the great examples of how WoCo continues the existing projects regarding the for focus areas – development, communication, cruise and convention, and aims to make those distinctive areas of the DMO more interconnected and more aligned while integrating the new vision into the business activity.

5.5. Expanding the destination

Greater Copenhagen is envisioned to be a leading metropolis in Northern Europe aiming to attract and retain international companies, investments, talent and tourism (greatercph.com). Strategic document emphasizes the importance of the project: *“Greater Copenhagen aims to be the leading metropolis in northern Europe in terms of attracting and retaining international investment, tourism and talent”* (7, p.9). By 2020 the vision of Greater Copenhagen is to create significant growth and jobs across the metropolis, while Woco takes a leading role in the collaboration initiatives to develop the tourism in a wider geographical zone. Woco was perceived as legitimate official DMO to partake a strong role in the project.

The head of the projects at WoCo emphasizes: *“We are working with this Greater Copenhagen area now, before we were quiet centralized on Copenhagen and North Zealand, but now we are*

trying to look at it in a bigger perspective, because that would also help for the flow of tourists so they won't all be at the little mermaid or standing in the line in the museum" (1, 17:00). According to her, it is crucial to expand the destination and avoid the concentration of the tourists at the most visited places since it could be "annoying" for both residents and visitors.

In the below presented netnographic study I capture two examples of the DMO online behavior, which present the efforts to encourage the visitors to travel and experience the outskirts of the city. With these examples I want to demonstrate how the DMO nudges the travelers to explore broader geography and aims to make the destination Greater Copenhagen the perfect match between the countryside and the city (7, p.10):



Image 5: Wooden Sculptures (Facebook)



Image 6: Roskilde view (Facebook)

Since the launch of the new tourism strategy at the beginning of 2017, the DMO has actively communicated different suggestions, advices and recommendations accentuating various cultural events, escapes to nature, must-see places outside the city center. By emphasizing various culture related activities outside the Copenhagen, for instance visiting Viking museum and ships outside Copenhagen or experiencing the wooden giants' hunt in the forests and villages, the DMO seeks to show the travelers beyond the most visited spots in the city center

and embrace the area of the Greater Copenhagen. Expanding the destination could mean the expansion of the possibility to experience the 'Localhood', facilitate the meeting between locals and visitors.

Social media manager highlights the pilot project with the island Bornholm, where collaboratively the content production was made, the content that can be used by the DMO and the content that can be used by the Bornholm community. Further the respondent discusses how the DMO strives to inform and inspire the travelers on the social medias: *"Hey, if you are planning on extended stay or planning on seeing more of Denmark beyond of Copenhagen, there is a unique rocky island, pretty far to the east of the rest of Denmark, it is very different experience all together, but actually it is very accessible, only 30-35 minutes by plane from Copenhagen"* (2, 07:55). The island of Bornholm is being presented as an authentic place to visit, as the appreciation of the Danes for this particular part of Denmark is being highlighted:

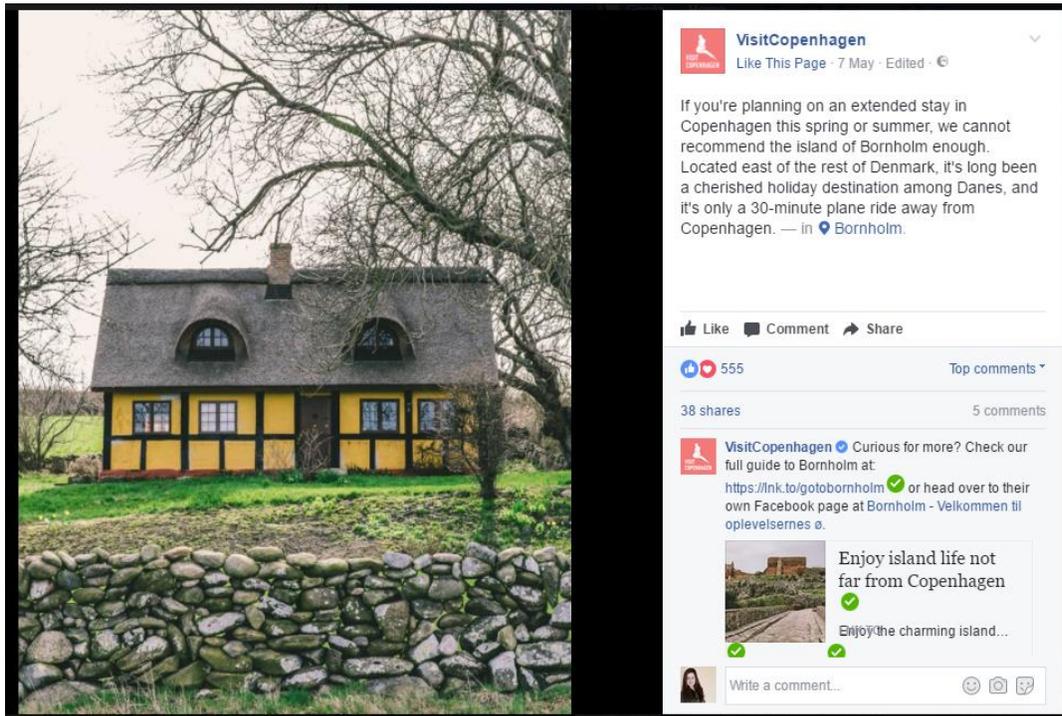


Image 7: Bornholm (Facebook)

Social media platforms of WoCo are being actively used as an instrument to tell the stories potentially leading to authentic experiences, as according to Fyall (2011), the travelers seek to create a sense of belonging and experience memorable encounters (as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011). Corresponding to the view, that today fewer and fewer want to be identified as tourists and rather seek to immerse in the destination (7, p.5), the DMO follows the shared ambition with other DMOs in Greater Copenhagen to expand their stories to the bigger perspective and move from being centralized solely on Copenhagen and North Zealand areas.

Project Greater Copenhagen closely ties with already introduced and discussed business destination strategy 'Meetingplace' (chapter 5.4.), where WoCo embarks on encouraging partnerships and creating larger, more unified competitive destination. As it was agreed earlier this year, meetings and congress will expand throughout Greater Copenhagen, so that stronger product and knowledge environment could strengthen destination against the global leaders (visitcopenhagen.dk). Reflecting on the emergent nature of the 'Localhood' strategy once again, various projects and partnerships embracing Greater Copenhagen will be determined over the time, according to the director of convention Kit Lykketoft (visitcopenhagen.dk).

Earlier this summer in 2017 a new project was announced "Greater Copenhagen – Job Generator for Tourism" that is being carried by WoCo and Tourism in Skåne (visitcopenhagen.dk). The project puts a focus on mapping the landscape for business promotion in a metropolitan tourism and examines the needs of smaller companies in the area. WoCo is seen as a reliable player to support tourism-related entrepreneurship and development of new tourism jobs. It seems corresponding to the view that in order for the DMO to come into alliances and be delegated with responsible and liable roles, the DMO must have a good reputation and should be perceived as a legitimate partner to pertain to (Wang and Xiang, 2007).

5.6. People-based growth initiative

Since the vision of people-based growth is being explored and analyzed in the sections 5.1 and 5.8, the following section will investigate the people-based growth focusing on the local community's role (local residents, local staff) in the 'Localhood' tourism strategy to better understand the new role of WoCo.

The new DMO role is framed within the mass tourism problem-related discourse in the strategic document by referring to other destinations and expressing the disapproving view towards their ignorance in the destination management: *"we will not ignore the urgent issues of visitor pressure in other European destinations! Though neither stakeholders nor citizens perceive the number of visitors to be an urgent problem in our destination today, we will not put ourselves in the same reactive positions as our friends and colleagues in Berlin, Amsterdam and Barcelona"* (7, p.).

By mentioning "we will not" a couple of times together with the exclamation mark, the strong, defensive and persistent posture of DMO towards the destination crisis is being created. Attention is being focused on avoiding the behavioral patterns of other destinations that do not establish an effective planning and management of a destination, and are driven by solely economic benefit. It corresponds to the view that the external environment influences generate instabilities and uncertainties, which push the organization towards the new path of development (Van de Van and Poole, 1995).

A great performance of travel flows is not always implying a positive balance of cost-benefit in terms of destination and local residents (Buhalis and Costa, 2016). This statement is supported by Frank Cuypers from the Destination Think! consultancy group too, who states that in order to overcome the mass-tourism problems and to manage the changes and challenges in the locals and visitors' cohabitation the destination management organization must be one big, creative, interconnected unity listening to the multiple voices. The strategic change for the role of DMO needs to be based on the purpose to make people's life better and not solely to make a profit, according to him. Since the DMO is considered as a web of interactions of various tourism actors, whose interests and goals are constantly changing, the strategic change

therefor emerges as a consequence of a continuous negotiation on motivations and actions of different groups of people (Grieves, 2010).

The 2017 plans of WoCo include advancing the corporate communication of the positive tourism contribution to local community. When asked how the organization aims to enable positive encounters between locals and visitors, the social media manager explained: *“For this we are actually working with the data to identify potential pressure points in the city where the tourism might overstretch the capacity either already now or in the long run, where it could become a bother for both the locals and tourists. Everyone has to have their place in the city and has to be able to thrive in the city space. The next step is to implement the solutions for that if we see a problem. So that’s one part of it. The other part is also that we actually are going to start creating surveys among the local citizens in order to measure the degree of support for the continuing tourism growth. We have made one which is like a base line or at least an indicator where we are now, which is around actually 95% support, just the example of it”* (2, 09:04).

With the quote above I want to demonstrate the concrete examples of the new responsibilities that the DMO begins to realize. The organization begins to work with big data analysis and carry out the citizen assessment research in order to stay updated on local sentiment towards the travelers and to be aware of adaptive measures. It is a new area to focus on for WoCo and it seemed like even though the DMO has the motivation and concern to collaborate with the residents in order to support the visitor growth and develop the destination, it did not ‘crack the code’ how to do it yet: *“We are kind of building the base to work with, right now we don’t know a lot about it”* (1, 18:53), meaning that the DMO is in the process of realizing how to engage the locals into the destination development process.

Frank Cuypers emphasizes the importance of educating the local community: *“I think you have to set up programs in your destination and that is the task for a DMO, to educate your locals, how to communicate in 2017, what is experience, how to build experience, how it is meaningful for myself, for the visitors”* (3, 11:52). He later gives various examples of the north Scotland villages where the local staff of grocery stores and bakeries is trained to tell anything about their hometown to the visitors (and highlights that staff is even very proud to do that). This

might well go in line with a point of view of Dwyer et al., (2009), that training, education and improved knowledge base can foster an innovative tourism workforce and lead to destination competitive advantage.

The local community represents the tourism players that are critical to the overall travelers' experience and they help delivering the brand promise to those visiting the destination (Fyall as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011). Not only it is important to find the ways to encourage the locals to play an integral part while implementing a strategy, but to make them ambassadors of the destination in order to successfully develop the destination (UNWTO, 2014). With the increasing travel growth, according to Butcher (2006), arises the dilemma to match the community's identity, cultural and natural resources with the touristic use of them (as cited in Buhalis and Costa, 2006).

Despite the great amount of considerations about the mass-tourism problems within the new tourism strategy, it is also important to highlight that according to the strategic document, neither community, nor citizens perceive the number of tourists to be an urgent issue for the destination (7, p.22). One may argue, that WoCo demonstrates the awareness of the tourism crisis in other destinations, while due to Fyall (2011), all destinations should incorporate certain form of crisis management in their development strategies, while reverse behavior "*would represent a gross dereliction of duty*" (as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011, p.346). According to Frank Cuypers, despite the fact that unsustainable visitation is not yet a struggle for the destination, "*Ignoring interdependency between destination promotion and destination development is like dancing with the devil, over the long term*" (destinationthink.com).

Bornhorst et al. (2010) argue, that processes how the locals could work most effectively together with other stakeholders to achieve the tourism destination development goals are not yet well perceived. If the later statement is true, WoCo has a considerable opportunity to be more proactive and genuine in starting the productive and positive collaboration with the local community. The surveys, citizen assessments and frequent studies to measure the sentiments of the locals towards the visitors might be the initial methods to understand their willingness to engage with the visitors and to create a tourism-friendly environment. However, the DMO has

little control over the residents' acceptance and attitude towards the travelers (Pike, 2016), and it places the greatest challenge for the organization to find ways to better educate local community as well as better educate visitors to raise concerns about preserving locations and people.

5.7. From marketing to enabling

WoCo declares: *"We recognize the expiration of our role as the destination's promotional superstar, the official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) with authoritative consumer influence, broadcasting superiority and an exclusive right to promote and shape a destination"* (7, p.3). This metaphorical statement positions WoCo as a promotional authoritarian superstar in regards to its past purpose and might. When asked whether the DMO has had an exclusive right to shape the destination before, the head of the projects commented that: *"I would say before we would do big campaigns about Copenhagen and come visit Copenhagen, we love it, you can see this and this, best regards, Wonderful Copenhagen. That was kind of the old model. Now we are cooperating with museums, for instance, to help them promote Copenhagen"* (1, 03:59) and further explains that from now on the museums, restaurants, hotels, etc. gain that authoritative influence to introduce, inform and communicate what's available in Copenhagen.

With regards to that, the social media manager expresses rather different opinion, saying that the increasing diversity of platforms, channels, websites and sources through which the traveler gets inspiration and information for the travel decision is too complex and difficult to handle all by the DMO alone: *"So for us its realization going back to our role before and the role looking ahead, but also the realization that as one organization or one DMO we cannot cover all these bases alone"* (2, 03:53). With this quote I want to demonstrate that the DMO needs collaborative efforts from the tourism partners to confront the external environment and share responsibilities of the destination management and development. Destination operates as an interdependent system, while the DMO performance depends on its stakeholders' capabilities too (Volgger and Pechlaner, 2014).

The role of “enabler” reflects in the cultural initiatives of the DMO. Even though the culture is a significant part of Copenhagen tourism product, Copenhagen is far below the list of European destinations with so-called cultural attractiveness (region.dk). In collaboration with its partners, WoCo starts developing the project ‘Tourism + Culture LAB’, which investigates how cultural institutions could make their communications stronger and more effective towards the international visitors. Several areas of action are being taken into consideration: networking, competence upgrading and innovation through experiments (region.dk). Different social media related workshops are being initiated by the DMO. For instance, WoCo develops the plans for the cultural institutions on how to communicate the destination stories to the travelers, how to create a context and how to engage visitors to experience the city, in the information channels, such as Facebook, Instagram and TripAdvisor (tourismculturelab.com). It corresponds to the view, that the DMO embarks on the stronger management role, which could be noticeable in the DMOs activities’ transition towards the increased collaboration, partnering with the stakeholders of a destination and towards the destination development promotion (Dwyer et al, 2009).

The project manager of the social media comments, that the DMO starts working with quite a large amount of the cultural institutions in and out of Copenhagen, including Danish design museum, Danish architecture center, ‘SMK’ in order to find the tune to their platforms to reach more international visitors, accommodate them better. Since the performance of a DMO rests on the strengths and weaknesses of destination’s stakeholders (d’Angella and Go, 2009), mentioned partners start improving their official websites and pages on the social media in order to become the ones actively creating the conversation with the visitors. The DMO establishes “*a platform which a knowledge-based marketing design that enables it to match the stakeholders’ capacity and specific competences to tourists’ needs*” (d’Angella and Go, 2009, p.431).

Knowledge and information sharing is considered a crucial part of the destination partnerships and Morrison (2013) is of an opinion that tourism entities working together pool their complementary expertise for a greater benefit. By introducing the following quote of social

media manager I capture how the DMO evaluates the necessity to build the strong partnerships as he elaborates on the lack of stakeholders' expertise: "(...) *might not have as deep knowledge about the international visitors as we have obviously, because we have been doing this for close to 20 years*" (2, 16:01). The statement highlights the importance of the co-creation of the knowledge needed to implement specific development plans and asserts the 20 years' international visitor experience of the organization WoCo. According to Blichfeldt et al., (2014), the DMO, that is seen as an expert regarding the activities it pursues (whatever it is just destination marketing or destination management as well), seems to be more likely accredited as a valuable partner. Stakeholders, according to the respondents from WoCo, seem to be positive about the future collaborations, while on the contrary "*To act as a stable, permanent coordinating institution is a considerable challenge if the other organizations and stakeholder groups involved do not see an urgent need to be coordinated at all*" (Beritelli et al., 2015, p. 25). Below I introduce 'SMK' and 'DAC' (both institutions are currently actively participating in the presented 'Tourism + Culture LAB' project) examples to illuminate the enabling role of WoCo.

DAC

The interview with the head of the projects pointed out that now the DMO concentrates attention to help and guide the ones that are branding Copenhagen and expressed her concern, that the new role is about stepping backwards regarding the responsibility to deliver the promise: "*I would say, that now we are more an adviser, than the actual doer, we are the helper. I try to think of it as we step a little bit into the background like an inner wheel that makes the other wheels go round. We are not in contact with the tourists directly, not all that much. We have obviously our own social media, but we are not the ones to be trusted, to brand Copenhagen and these experiences*" (1, 02:57). Further, she explains that the aim of WoCo is to be less visible to the tourists, but more visible within stakeholders, meaning the partners. When asked to give some concrete examples of the actual activities that the DMO implements in terms of its new role, the respondent emphasizes the project with the Danish architecture center 'DAC', where WoCo enables them to develop shareable moments and encourage 'DAC'

to implement the brand story-telling through their own channels. By implementing various seminars and training with its partners, the DMO empowers them to improve their social platforms in order to communicate effectively with the visitors and attract more travelers through their own channels.

In the netnographic depiction presented below on the left I want to show how the stakeholders of WoCo take control to develop and promote the destination brand stories, in this case one of the five stories (design and architecture; gastronomy; sustainability; a pocket-sized fairy tale; tolerance and diversity) that capture the unique cultural character of the destination Copenhagen – architecture and design (visitcopenhagen.dk). The example on the right illuminates one of the events for both locals and tourists organized by ‘DAC’:



Image 8: DAC actively promotes through its channel (Facebook) Image 9: Event for locals and tourists (Facebook)

After observations online and as illustrated by the netnographic study above, the Danish Architecture Center actively organizes and invites people through its own channel to learn more about architectural development in Copenhagen; it takes the initiative to engage the users to actively explore the city, local area’s architecture and build a closer relationship with community. Furthermore, as image 9 suggests, ‘DAC’ organizes ‘Localhood’ related events for

locals and tourists, inviting them to participate in the bicycle tours (sometimes a boat or even a kayak tours) to see and learn about the architecture in the city. It seems that 'DAC' becomes more active in communicating its offer on the social platforms and this corresponds to the view, that the DMO promotes self-organization and self-responsibility of the destination partners (Volgger and Pechlaner, 2014).

SMK

According to Pike and Page (2014), the DMO has no control over its stakeholders' marketing communications unless they undertake the joint promotions. By introducing the netnographic illustration below (Image 10), I seek to demonstrate how the museum 'SMK' promotes the brand stories about the Danish art history while participating in the WoCo project 'Tourism + Culture LAB'. The museum starts focusing on creating the visitors engagement with and informing them about various other museums by promoting them through its own information channel. 'SMK' promotes a culture trip that involves various other cultural institutions. This initiative in a long run could potentially induce the collaboration and engagement between these museums, they could actively promote each other and increase the number of visits.



Image 10: SMK promoting others (Facebook)

Another event for locals and tourists is being organized by 'SMK', where the museum starts the 'SMK Fridays' initiative inviting the people to explore art, music, performance and join the Friday's bar (facebook.com). Instagram post (image 11) illustrates happy people and the museum in the background, while hashtags like #sharingcph and #voreskbh adress both locals and tourists to engage and "got together on our front lawn":

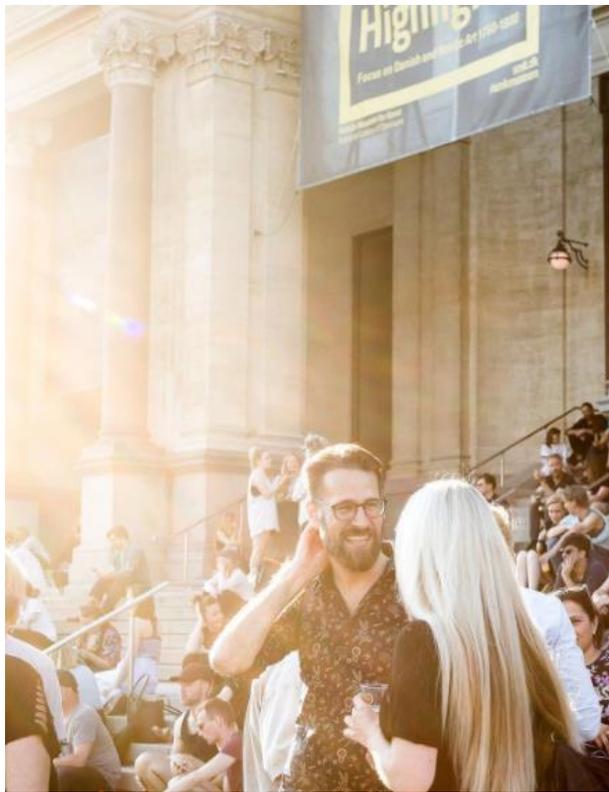


Image 11: SMK making 'Localhood' related event (Instagram)

One may argue, that these examples demonstrate the shifting role of the DMO WoCo from solely marketing towards enabling, that could potentially lead to a stronger cultural institutions' engagement and communication with the visitors and locals as well. It goes well in line with the view that the DMO must create a situation where the stakeholders can gain something for themselves from the collaborations (Elbe et al., 2009), potentially more visitors and bigger return on investment for the entire destination.

While the DMO positions itself as stepping backwards in terms of marketing and promotion and becoming so called "helpers" and "enablers", the following quote of head of the projects illustrates that WoCo seeks an important role in the destination development: *"I think obviously we would like to have a big role and with this new strategy we got quite a lot of attention. There are quite a lot of people who call us and who wants to cooperate, people looking at us and expecting us to know what to do. So I feel we have a quiet important role in being the visionary*

ones to say this is what we should do and this is no go, we should look this way instead" (1, 20:29). This opinion suggests, that the DMO aims for the leading position to be the "game changer" in the decision making, but at the same time it transmits much of a control to its stakeholders. The DMO has successfully established itself as a local expert or "go-to people" when it comes to agree on the development projects as more cultural institutions join the projects. WoCo declares a seismic shift from equating tourism marketing towards developing and managing the destination by enabling others to build experiences for visitors and expresses that *"We still have an obligation to our partners to be at least a leading voice in the conversation"* (7, p.18). It seems that now the DMO emphasizes that the biggest strength of its new role lies in the ability to manage, train and enable stakeholders to develop the destination as the netnographic study demonstrated.

Although there is a recognition that the role of DMO shifts beyond marketing towards incorporating other activities that are crucial to the success of a tourism destination from the competitive and sustainable perspective, marketing remains a major purview of the DMO (Wang and Pizam, 2011). WoCo does not stop its marketing activities, but rather refocus its management potential to guide, advice and enable destination stakeholders to promote the destination under the shared branding framework. Moreover, it continues its digital marketing activity even on the bigger scale, with more complex projects, more tourism players involved as presented in this section. While declaring the end of marketing, I could argue that the DMO trains the industry and enables others (partners, as well as visitors and locals) to brand the destination and strengthen its stories. With the respect to that, Frank Cuypers suggests not to mix the marketing with promotion and by giving the concrete example of a different destination he discusses that the DMO is not a promotional source number one anymore: *"Amsterdam stopped promoting the destination, the DMO is not making promotion but they are really into spreading tourism"* (3, 05:39). It will be interesting to see how the new management role is being realized and how the promotional activities of WoCo will transform.

5.8. Co-innovation and new business attraction

Brave statement of the tourism strategy *“Wonderful Copenhagen concludes the end of the era of tourism, as we know it”* (7, p.3) is being widely used in many online articles as the title proclamation where both the DMO and various tourism partners present the ‘Localhood’ strategy. It seems that *“As we know it”* in this statement reflects the wider audience, not only the DMO itself but rather all Danish tourism industry (perhaps other industries in Denmark too). This discursive statement can be also seen as a sign, that WoCo addresses ‘everyone’ and wants to encourage or inspire all tourism industries to begin a new tourism epoch. This might well go in line with the view, that tourism constantly pushes its frontier forward, involves more and more people globally and widens its importance (Buhalis and Costa, 2006). The idea behind the end of the tourism era is the beginning of co-innovation with the new and existing partners.

By entering the strategic relationship and focusing on the data analysis together with its partners, the DMO strives to find the ways how to co-create the long-term value. Taking the case-by-case approach, the organization embarks on collaborative experiments to inspire stakeholders to find new ideas for a stronger business model.

Having mentioned that, the DMO WoCo works on launching the platform for co-innovation, meaning that together with its current and new partners the aim is to develop a systematic way of innovating new solutions. In this regard, the social media manager discusses, that *“One part of showing value or adding the value to the partners would also be to work with them in data projects. For instance, one concrete thing we are looking at right now, we are working with the Copenhagen Jazz Festival, data project, where we are trying to measure what does the physical manifestation like festival that takes place in the city, what kind of impacts it has digitally on the conversation. Just it’s like the pilot project of how we can include the partner, in this case, cultural event, in some of the projects that we have already established”* (2, 11:26). In the period of writing this thesis, WoCo implements a data experiment regarding the Copenhagen Jazz Festival in order to test various methods and technologies that can be used across the city’s events in the future. The aim of this initiative is to, for example, better connect cruise tourists with the cultural events, make clearer guidelines on how to reach the event.

Besides collaborating with the current stakeholders and co-innovating the current projects, the new DMO role embraces the need for the new partners and new alliances in order to ensure more efficient knowledge sharing, encourage stronger idea-sharing, generate new business for partners and create value to the society in terms of jobs and growth. This could be illuminated by enthusiastic statement of the head of the projects regarding the cultivation of a cross sector innovation: *“Help different business meet – something innovative not within tourism meets classical tourism industry and then something new happens! Helping people to meet and develop the new products and services”* (1, 27:11).

Furthermore, the social media manager shares the partnering plans: *“Bringing new stakeholders, like start-ups or potentially a player like Airbnb, which we haven’t collaborated actively with, but which we might be looking into. And letting them to be a part of a broader conversation about the destination Copenhagen”* (2, 01:47). As it is important to consult with stakeholders and maintain a strong network, it is also crucial to find the ‘right’ partners for collaborations towards the destination goals (Morrison 2013). The respondent mentions the plan of starting the partnership with a tourism actor Airbnb and further also brings up the challenge of the new role by emphasizing limited resources and finances of the organization, that requires strategic decisions on which partnership to engage with and which project to participate in. The greatest challenge for realizing the new DMO role as innovation cultivator, according to the head of projects is that *“(…) it is difficult to choose where to cooperate, where does it make sense. The new role is still forming”* (1, 25:00) and this opinion aligns well with the view of Minghetti (2006), that because of a presence of multiple stakeholders with diverging interests and perceptions about the destination, it is hard to plan coherent destination management and development (as cited in Buhalis and Costa, 2006).

Besides, the challenge of prioritizing the stakeholders reflects in the opinion of Frank Cuypers, where he emphasizes that *“the number of money and the number of staff is not unlimited. Make choices, you might expect adversity from other communities ‘why are we not the priority?’”* (3, 29:31). Taking into consideration that *“DMOs are at the mercy of political masters*

and stakeholders for continuity of funding” (Pike, 2016, p.5), it becomes difficult for the DMO to choose the partners without weighting on the potential margins.

Furthermore, regarding the air route development projects, the DMO sets an activity for 2017 to strengthen international connectivity at both regional and national levels in cooperation with new and existing public and private partners (7, p.18). A new route Copenhagen – Delhi, starting to operate in September later this year demonstrates a great example of the air connectivity growth project between Copenhagen airport and Air India (visitcopenhagen.dk). Beneficial for the tourism, new route will add to the tourism growth and the job market.

WoCo plans on expanding the partnerships, while Fyall (2010) emphasizes that in the current economic climate the greater financial input of the private sector is likely; and that these actors consequently raise a particular interest in how their ‘input’ is being used or spent (as cited in Wang and Pizam, 2011), therefore the challenge could be for the stakeholders to endorse the collective ‘Localhood’ vision when the short term benefit might be the greater autonomous interest. The plan to increase the number of visitors to Greater Copenhagen and to attract more businesses like airlines and cruise lines can place a risk towards the local community in terms of visitor growth, as it was discussed earlier. One may argue, that the DMO has no control over the level of visitor arrivals relative to carrying capacity (Pike, 2016) and despite the proactive cooperation with more cruises and airlines to bring more visitors to experience so called ‘Localhood’, it seems that it is critical for the DMO to harmonize the variety of interests and perceptions with the destination identity to assure the sustainable co-development of visitor growth and integrated tourism supply (Buhalis and Costa, 2006). It is essential that the DMO puts activities in place allowing the stakeholders to become knowledgeable about the brand and its values, so that a consistent behavior can be reached.

It is important to agree on the focused and feasible direction with the multiple stakeholders regarding the brand identity (Pike and Page, 2014) in order to reach the consistent understanding of ‘Localhood’ message. Stakeholders within the destination network have their own business marketing activities and strategies that they implement independently. Hence, it

is important that they understand the DMO tourism strategy, accept it and be willing to work in a way that supports the brand values of a destination (Cox et al., 2014).

5.9. Sub-conclusion

The vision of 'Localhood' seems to be an inspirational direction to encourage tourism industry to refocus the brand essence and values of the destination while creating a stronger stakeholder cooperation for the shared branding framework. WoCo targets the demand for authenticity and focus on aligning business and leisure sectors, while the 'Localhood' and people-based values seem to contradict with, for example, the big data analysis plans and the ambitious partnerships that could lead to a booming destination visits. WoCo shifts its responsibilities towards enabling the destination partners to promote the brand stories, as embodied in the examples of the cultural institutions, while it also continues marketing activity in its own channels with more creative and complex initiatives involving the locals, visitors and partners to create the stories about Copenhagen. There are, however, some challenges in terms of managing the destination. One of them is to choose the partners and projects that could further deliver and foster the new values of 'Localhood', while the funding is also important for the DMO to realize its new responsibilities. While the new strategy indicates that the DMO waves off the old role and initiates the new one, at the same time it continues doing 'things' the same way and maintains its traditional responsibilities. This questions the proclamation of "the end of tourism" and suggests that transformations in the tourism is not an easy task and is highly a business of the whole tourism industry.

6. Conclusions

As a starting point, the aim of this thesis was to explore the changing role of the DMO WoCo in terms of developing the destination and the new tourism strategy 'Localhood' released in January 2017 was used as a framework to explore the formulated problem. By deconstructing the language of 'rupture' from the new strategy document and complementing it with the findings from interviews with WoCo and the strategist along with the netnographic study and a secondary material, this thesis has investigated the shifting responsibilities of the DMO and the challenges it faces while realizing them. The paradoxical meanings of "the end of tourism" were explored.

As the official tourism organization of the capital region of Denmark, the DMO WoCo is responsible to develop the tourism and contribute to the growth of it. Thus, the declaration of the end of tourism seemed to be an urgent phenomena to investigate in order to understand how the DMO will develop the destination from now on.

First of all, it was found that advancing digitalization plays a big part in the DMO decisions to change its responsibilities. In order to remain relevant for the tourism industry WoCo actively embrace the digital solutions while realizing its new role. More importantly, the big data analysis becomes a significant objective and the successful application of it could lead to a better understanding of the visitors and changing travelling habits. It could also lead to a different way of measuring the DMO performance and the value creation of the tourism industry. On the other hand, strategist Frank Cuypers expressed a very skeptical point of view about whether the DMO is really capable to employ the big data analysis in a fruitful way. Yet the new role follows the unexplored path as emergent strategy develops and WoCo aims to challenge the industry's agility to adapt or fail and learn from these mistakes.

It was found that with the new emergent tourism strategy WoCo aims to stimulate the industry, inspire the destination stakeholders to co-create the tourism growth and refocus the destination values. Shifting from marketing towards managing (or managing the marketing) of the destination means that WoCo embarks on training and guiding the industry players on how

to promote the destination based on the shared branding framework. The examples of 'SMK' and 'DAC' illustrate how the DMO coordinates and empowers others to implement the promotional part of the tourism business activity. Taking into consideration that the DMO does not have a direct control over the travelers' experience, it is therefore very important to strategically align the ones that do have it and make them ambassadors of the destination.

The findings show that WoCo continues various activities and starts new initiatives for the destination development with the new vision of 'Localhood' that is based on the people-centric growth and targets the visitor seeking authenticity and local experiences. WoCo starts a repeat-visit strategy with the focus on attracting the existing travelers to come back to the destination. Particularly, this is being marketed around business travelers to convert them into the leisure travelers and the new way of communication via Twitter seems to be the great start. Moreover, WoCo continues expanding the destination and being a strong and reliable member within the Greater Copenhagen project. By the means of social media communication initiative, WoCo aims to create a perfect match between the city and the countryside, encouraging travelers to see beyond the center and the most visited attractions. Even though the mass-tourism dilemma is not yet affecting the destination, the DMO demonstrates a proactive role to avoid the concentration of tourists and at the same time focuses on creating authentic experiences. Despite the discourses illuminating the crucial local residents' role for the sustainable destination growth, the way to engage the locals and make them participate in the destination development activities is still being investigated by the DMO.

Despite the aims to personalize the experience and target niches of the visitors seeking for authentic local experiences, WoCo still focus on the geographical segmentation (Chinese market). This might put some heavy pressure on the strategic planning in the long-run, while there is a possibility to reshape the way of approaching the segmentation. The DMO seeks to reshape the industry thinking of a tourist and makes many efforts to align the destination stakeholders to understand the brand values and reshape their strategies in order to approach and understand the today's "temporary local". Moreover, it was found that the new WoCo role embraces working with existing and new partners towards a stronger stakeholder relations'

structure and a shared innovation. According to the interview respondents it is a great challenge to choose the partners, to decide which project to begin developing and which not to. Another challenge is the lack of resources of the DMO that also places a need to look for the beneficial partnerships and alliances. The aim of increasing the air routes and cruise lines, for example discussed new non-stop air route between Delhi and Copenhagen, seems to require a careful strategic planning and the integration of a new vision and new values of preserving destination's people and livability.

The textual discourse analysis helped in deconstructing the bold declaration of the new tourism strategy. While discussing the activities of WoCo, such as enabling partners to promote the destination and create the brand stories or improving the communication with the traveler through own channels like Facebook and Instagram, it was revealed that provocative claims about ending the tourism and transforming the responsibilities beyond the destination marketing are not entirely correct. WoCo continues promoting the destination, introduces creative destination sharing initiatives on the social media and even during the interviews the participants from WoCo highlight how important the DMO role is in leading the conversation with the visitor. The negative results may evolve if the DMO stops its promotional marketing activity as the digital conversations with the visitor are very essential (4.1). The strategy embodies the radical change in the role of WoCo, but these brave proclaims of the new tourism era rather show an inspirational and visionary direction to the industry stakeholders and informs that the destination development is about collaboration in the destination branding and about finding the innovative solutions together.

With this research, the changing role of the DMO was explored while the future gives a possibility to investigate further how the destination management responsibilities are carried out and into what the tourism in the Greater Copenhagen may transform with an effort of WoCo. I hope that the findings of this thesis contribute and lead to the further discussion about the complex environment of the DMOs and the importance of rethinking their role in order to survive in the industry as well as to develop the destination in a more sustainable and inclusive manner.

7. Future research

In order to answer the posed problem formulation, I explored certain activities of the DMO in the analysis part; the ones that have been identified after the collected data from the interviews and the strategic document were carefully investigated and the themes emerged. Nevertheless, more initiatives and activities might be determined for the further research, as the strategy evolves and more projects are being established. Since the research was conducted at the beginning of the strategy announcement, the further study on how WoCo actually manages the role along with the obstacles confronted could prove beneficial in order to further discuss and elaborate on the emergent strategy.

In extension to this thesis, the future research could focus on emerging needs for collective DMOs well-being. According to the Frank Cuypers who was interviewed for the present paper, the future of the DMOs will demand the cooperation of different DMOs around the world. Thus, the discussion could expand on the searching for the new models and strategies to change the tourism industries and confront the challenges jointly.

Exploring of how the new WoCo role is being realized through the netnography study proved to be an effective and informative method. With the boom of the social media usage and increasing amount of different creative solutions to communicate with the traveler, it could be prolific to employ the online study more proactively and to use its potential to better understand the challenges and opportunities of managing the destination.

The sample included only the respondents from the DMO and the strategist from the consultancy company, while the future research could conduct the interviews with the multiple stakeholders involved in the strategy and destination development projects. This could embrace their perception of the new strategy and the new vision 'Localhood', while further investigating a shared branding framework could be relevant to the future research.

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Appendices

1. Interview transcription with Bianca Mercier (record attached)

Gerda: Could you shortly explain the main points of the new strategy LOCALHOOD?

Bianca: Yes, the main points of our new strategy called 'The end of the tourism as we know it' are – we have a vision and a mission and then we have 5 strategic coordinates that kind of show the way. It is not the strategy with the done recipe to follow and then at the end you will have obtained this and this and this... it is more a very visionary strategy to show the way for us but also for the partners that we cooperate with, maybe even further than 2020, which is the date for the strategy. The vision of the strategy is called the LOCALHOOD, what we mean by it, we actually invented this new word and we are quite proud of it. It's the essence of what we find unique and shareable in Copenhagen. So it is this livability brand and the fact that we like tourists not to be tourists, but to be temporary locals, so that they come and see the city as locals and get the same feeling and experience of what is really unique to Copenhagen as the locals. So that is our vision. And our mission is to enable our destination to be shared more, which is helping museums, restaurants and hotels, everybody that works with tourism to help Copenhagen to be a shared brand. We know now that the destination management organization the DMO that we are, we think we have a new role we are not the big broadcaster of the Copenhagen brand, we know that tourists look into social media, bloggers, friends and family recommendations... so in order to be visible and to have good stories about Copenhagen, we need to work with these kind of influencers instead of doing our own campaigns. So that's the part of our mission.

Gerda: so then the strategic change for the role of Wonderful Copenhagen, how would you describe that shortly?

Bianca: I would say, that now we are more an adviser, than the actual doer, we are the helper. I try to think of it as we step a little bit into the background like an inner wheel that makes the other wheels go round. We are not in contact with the tourists directly, not all that much. We have obviously our own social media, but we are not the ones to be trusted, to brand Copenhagen and these experiences.

Gerda: and as you say that you kind of step back, would you say that before you have been more authoritative in regards to that?

Bianca: I think obviously it does not change from one day to the other. But we were realizing that this is the way it goes. Consumers do trust their peers more than they trust the official organizations. And I think that goes for also outside of tourism. I would say before we would do big campaigns about Copenhagen and come visit Copenhagen, we love it, you can see this and this, best regards, Wonderful Copenhagen... That was kind of the old model. Now we are cooperating with museums, for instance, to help them promote Copenhagen. For instance, we are making the project with Danish architecture center DAC, because if you want to see architecture in Copenhagen you would probably go directly to DAC, you wouldn't look at our website first, you would google, find out what is interesting and you would go to the DAC homepage. So instead of us being the introducer of architecture in Copenhagen, we help the ones show the tourists what's more of architecture, if you are interested in architecture, maybe you are interested in design, then you can go to the design museums... So its them showing the tourists what's available in Copenhagen instead of us. But we are helping them in how to present it in the way that tourists can understand, because we have a lot of knowledge how tourists look for, how they search.

Gerda: All right, what are the main push factors for such strategy?

Bianca: Well, I think it is inevitable to survive. We call our strategy the end of tourism as we know it, which for some people thought that its provocative and quiet brave. Are you saying that you want to put yourselves out of the job? No, we are just saying that we think it's a new role now instead. The old role is dying, if you keep insisting on: we are the ones that know what's going on in the city, we are the ones that have the official tourist bureau... they are closing down everywhere, because people don't go there anymore, they look to their phones instead. So I think in order to survive within tourism, we needed a new strategy. It was just old and the world is changing, its digital and it is changing so fast.

Gerda: Yes, you have to adapt to the environment... And the strategy is not born in a one day. So when you would think it started to form?

Bianca: I think it was a process over a year or so. Obviously we started looking at other destinations, very inspired by Australia doing really great, having some really cool initiatives. And we were also looking at how do different strategies present themselves and we noticed that all of them had a vision and a mission saying that we want to be the best, we are unique and all the visions were saying the same thing, but they were not capturing what was really unique in the destination. I have this presentation where we plucked out different quotations from different strategies and they all say the same. You cannot differentiate them. So that was very important to us, we really wanted to capture the essence of what is Copenhagen's uniqueness. And we found out that it would be this LOCALHOOD theme that should be the leading part.

Gerda: And talking about the previous strategy BIG TOURISM, what are the main differences between these two strategies?

Bianca: They are quite different. The old strategy was about this is what we have to get done, we have this target, this target and this target and by the end of the strategy we should have fulfilled all these goals. And the new as I was introducing is more showing the way but not the result. So it's more open and we did that because we did not want the strategy to be just for us. We are opening up and we are saying the role is different and it's about you, it's the stakeholders. So we also wanted to be the strategy that they could relate to and could be inspired from. And it has worked, and it's very well received. It's not the recipe for us, it's the inspiration for the whole stakeholders.

Gerda: It is interesting. And I was reading your strategic document, that you call your performance 'isolated bubble', 'promotional superstar', maybe you could tell me about some activities that did not work well?

Bianca: Well, obviously maybe you have heard about the Eurovision scandal that didn't work for many different reasons. I think we learnt from that and also now we don't do big events. We advise, we help attract the events to Copenhagen, we advise the local stakeholders how to handle the bits if you need to bit for the big festival or big sport events. But we are not the ones organizing it, because it's not our main competence. Our main competence is branding, helping branding Copenhagen and advising on how to receive the tourists and make the best of it. But we shouldn't be the organizers of big events, so that's one of the mayor changes.

Gerda: And who you would say that has the role and right to promote and shape the destination now?

Bianca: I would say anybody that has a great product or a great experience, anybody has the right. What we would like to do is help those that have really unique LOCALHOOD experiences to be visible and get the right stories shared, so that's our role. But LOCALHOOD theme is not about that we are the ones to

say you are not local enough, you are local, that's the local experience. It really means that its LOCALHOOD for everyone, and we really mean that. We will not be picky about who has the right to brand Copenhagen, anybody should. We would like to help those that have most unique experience that we find supportive brand of Copenhagen and can be shared.

Gerda: And then I come across some paradoxes, this LOCALHOOD and then the concentration on cruise, congress and business travel. How to combine these things?

Bianca: That's the good question. In the strategy we have 5 coordinates, and one of them is called 'Once attracted, twice valued'. And I think that would be the link between the big conferences and the LOCALHOOD experience. Because people are just people, they are not just businessmen. There could be a business man, who loves architecture, or a business man who loves food. So we could show the congress participants the different side of what they are maybe expecting. And once attracted twice valued also means that maybe that when they are at the conference you are super busy and you cannot go see that architecture that you would like. But maybe when you find out that it is there maybe you come back with your family as a tourist and not as the congress participant. So, I think it is getting more out of the activities that we are doing and thinking more about cross the segments.

Gerda: And about this declaration that you go beyond the bed nights, and the National tourism strategy is anyway about profit and bed nights. How would you comment on that?

Bianca: Of course the bed nights it's very easy thing to measure and to be targeted by, but it does not tell the whole truth. We would like to in 2017 doing a lot of work to find out what we would like to measure and how to measure it. We already know that we of course will keep measuring the bed nights and tourism economic value of course. But we will also very importantly measure the satisfaction of the citizens, the locals. Because they are the ones that keep the LOCALHOOD alive, if they are not happy they will leave the city and in the worst case scenario start working against the tourism and that would not be the good experience for the tourists either.

Gerda: So you have already touched upon these five strategic coordinates, more about the practical side just for me to see it more clear. How do you work and will be working to build that loyalty of the visitor?

Bianca: Well, the strategy was launched the 30th January so that's not that long time ago and since it's a very visionary strategy we are still working on how to make it live and implement it. In 2017 we are doing a lot of knowledge based new analysis on these new focus areas and also how to measure it. I think we will have new projects of course a lot within data to be smarter and use our knowledge better when we do start new projects. But I think the idea is also to look at the projects that we already have and maybe adapt them a little bit and then we will have gained a lot. It's just new direction, for instance, we are working with this project called Tourism plus Culture lab, where we work with many different museums and help them be the story teller of Copenhagen within their specific area, as I was mentioning the example of DAC earlier. So this is the good example of our enabler role and how to help our destination to be shared more. And we also looking into doing this within the wider geography, to include more museums. We are working with this greater Copenhagen area now, before we were quiet centralized on Copenhagen and North Zealand, but now we are trying to look at it in a bigger perspective, because that would also help for the flow of tourists so they won't all be at the little mermaid or standing in the line in the museum. That's annoying for both locals and the tourists.

Gerda: All right, and about the host community, how to engage them?

Bianca: We are still planning the activities, because it is a quiet new area for us to work with. Before doing the strategy we kind of wanted to get a feeling if the locals are with us or against us, where do we start. The result that we got was that almost everyone we asked are positive about the tourism in Copenhagen. They say “yes, there is a room for more tourists in Copenhagen, except at the little mermaid in July or at this place in July, I would avoid these places”. So we got a little bit of an idea of how to approach this. But this coming year we will collect a lot of knowledge about the citizens, about what is already going on, where we can cooperate to engage with the citizens. We are kind of building the base to work with, right now we don't know a lot about it. Definitely once we know what locals are interested in participating in, where is it necessary and what's in it for them. If you need locals to engage, they need to have an interest.

Gerda: Yes, for me it is also very interesting the strategy is pretty complex, so many new goals and plans... and how much is it in the hands of DMO, how much you participate in the overall destination development?

Bianca: It is a big landscape of stakeholders, definitely. I think obviously we would like to have a big role and with this new strategy we got quite a lot of attention. There are quite a lot of people who call us and who wants to cooperate, people looking at us and expecting us to know what to do. So I feel we have a quiet important role in being the visionary ones to say this is what we should do and this is no go, we should look this way instead. I think besides the data and analysis we are looking at existing projects to adapt them to our new vision. Then once we have the data and knowledge we can start the new projects as well.

Gerda: What are the weak and strong points of your destination?

Bianca: Well, I think the strong point is that we have a quiet strong brand now, the design is world famous and the food is also now world famous. And we have this livability brand that's has been the world known, so I think we have some strong points to attract different kind of segments. The weak points are – the weather definitely, which is quiet hard to do something about it. And the pricing as well. It is a pricey destination comparing to other destinations and it is also hard to do something about it. People need their regulations and the price level is pretty much fixed. What we have to do is to make sure that the quality is what the tourists will expect and that it at least worth the money and that the uniqueness of the experience. Fewer and fewer tourists want to see what everyone else saw, everyone wants their own unique experience and if you get that, for most people it is ok to pay a little extra, because it was really just for me.

Gerda: And how is that the concept of the tourist disappears, now it is just the traveler or the temporary local?

Bianca: Definitely changing. Temporary locals and also looking at the segments that are crossing, like Chinese foody tourists. Chinese tourists are not only the Chinese tourists, there are so many niche interests within this market. We are trying to complicate the image actually. But to make it clear, what are the possibilities it is not that simple. People one day they want to be classical tourists and go to the museum, the next day they want to make underground activities. It is very dynamic now which makes it quiet complicated, but that's why we think we have the role as the adviser still.

Gerda: And the last question then would be what are the main challenges while implementing your role regarding the stakeholders, what you see as the obstacle now or for the future?

Bianca: That's a very good question. The obstacle I think obviously we now have these guidelines, but it still could be difficult to choose where to cooperate, where does it make sense. The new role is still forming; we still think a lot about should we go to this partnership or not, should we participate in this or not. It is also because our resources and finances are limited of course, so we have to be very strategic about where we put our efforts and I think that is probably the main challenge. I think it is not possible to get everyone aligned, I think what we would like to do is to help promoting what we call the brand story telling. For some people this would work, for some people something else will work. Whenever we make a successful cooperation – that's perfect. That's when it works. I think it is getting people to understand that we need to start working in a new way. We can't just go together and make a classical campaign for Copenhagen. It is not going to work. People need to get adjusted to this new way of thinking, of course.

Gerda: So you step back with your authority, but still your activities and management are now much bigger and stronger?

Bianca: I think they are less visible to the tourists but more visible within the stakeholders. That's what I am hoping for and that is what we are aiming for. Even more cooperations and helping people getting started and then they can work on this. Help different business meet – something innovative not within tourism meets classical tourism industry and then something new happens! Helping people to meet and develop the new products and services.

Gerda: All right, Thank you so much.

Bianca: You are welcome, I hope it make sense.

2. Interview transcription with Nicolai Cohrt Mejlvang (record attached)

Gerda: Thank you so much. So how long are you working in Wonderful Copenhagen?

Nicolai: I have been here for 3 years and changing roles. For the past 1,5 I have been in the content marketing team working as a project manager, but in practice I think I work more like a copy writer along with several visual content producers. We work pretty closely in both developing the concept and story-telling and executing them in across our platforms. I also work as a community manager, linking to the digital and social media.

Gerda: Perfect, so could you shortly explain the main points of the new strategy and the new role of DMO?

Nicolai: I think the one theme that would be encapsulated very well would be this transformation from being a destination marketing organization to a destination management organization. Going from us being in a position where we are the ones leading the charge and talking about our destination and promoting our destination towards the tourists or potential tourists, we are taking the role where we are leading from behind and align with more partners and stakeholders and not just within the tourism field, but also in a much broader perspective. Bringing new stakeholders, like start-ups or potentially a player like Airbnb, which we haven't collaborated actively with, but which we might be looking into. And letting them to be a part of a broader conversation about the destination Copenhagen. That's the main key change, I would say.

Gerda: KING IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE KING. How to understand this paradoxical expression?

Nicolai: Well, it is from, I think, Shakespeare, it is a celebration of what has been, the tourism from before. We recognize how the amount of growth the tourism has brought to society at large and the tourism industry, especially looking at the last 5 to 7 years, post financial crisis, where it has been at least for Denmark one of the fastest growing industries. We basically see the steady growth despite the decline in many other sectors and industries. It is also the recognition of all good that the tourism has done. Also in its traditional role. The time is right now to look ahead towards the new future and finding the term and how we talk about the destinations and tourism.

Gerda: Great. What are the main push factors for the new DMO role and for the new strategy?

Nicolai: Well, I would say from the marketing and digital perspective one large push factor for us is really the overall increasing diversity of platforms, channels, websites and sources through which travelers or even potential travelers search for inspiration and search for information before actually making the travel decision. So for us its realization going back to our role before and the role looking ahead, but also the realization that as one organization or one DMO we cannot cover all these bases alone. For us, that underscores the need to align ourselves with others, who share the destination DNA.

Gerda: As you call your previous performance “authoritative influence”, “promotional superstar”, “isolated bubble”, could you give me some examples what kind of activities you undertook that you call yourself this direction?

Nicolai: Well, it is not so much a question of the past activities having being unsuccessful as much as the fact that they are simply not adequate for us to succeed in this future context of the travel. There is increasing tendency for people now to find inspiration through more unofficial sources than let’s say the DMO or even official channel for the theme parks. So we see the need to spread out our resources and spread out the story-telling around the destination more. This is all going back to the point of increasing the need to cover more platforms, both content wise but also these changing habits among the consumers, where we simply don’t have the position as a tourism organization that we would have 10-15 years ago. So it is more about changing with the context rather than realizing that it was in the previous context something that didn’t work.

Gerda: And about these five strategic coordinates and more into the practical side, what are the activities and projects that you implement now towards, let’s say – visitor?

Nicolai: A lot of them are outlined specifically in the strategy. Touching upon some of them that are important to our team, this repeat visit communication strategy. We are actually looking a lot at the New York city company, who is the DMO of the New York. Obviously they are in a quiet different situation from us tourism wise, but they are in a quiet peculiar situation if you look at the city like New York, which is a destination that is basically on everyone’s bucket list. So the key for them was to develop the story telling elements and to develop the strategy to allow people to rediscover the city. Because people have to find the new New York each time they visit. I think we will look at some of the same dynamics of that strategy and work with more focused effort to convert business travelers into leisure travelers, or inspire visitors to return or extend their stay, to explore broader geography. This is something what we slowly started on. There is a project called the Greater Copenhagen project, which is a part of it, especially the geographical point and we just did the pilot project collaboration with the island Bornholm, where we both made the concrete content production for them, both the content that we could use and the content that they could use. We also did several workshops. And the way we used it when we getting towards visitors on our own channels, we use to say “Hej, if you are planning on

extended stay or planning on seeing more of Denmark beyond of Copenhagen, there is a unique rocky island, pretty far to the east of the rest of Denmark, it is very different experience all together, but actually it is very accessible, only 30-35 minutes by plane from Copenhagen". So this is just one concrete example of how we are looking towards developing the strategy, and really doing through the pilot efforts and not trying to build like the big strategy. Checking what works, what does not work, case by case approach.

Gerda: Very good example. What about the host community and locals' engagement?

Nicolai: One thing is to ensure that the visitor pressure does not become the problem, as we see it in other European capitals more and more, where the locals actually trying to kick the tourism out and I think there have been some pretty extreme developments in Amsterdam, Berlin, Barcelona. For this we are actually working with the data to identify potential pressure points in the city where the tourism might overstretch the capacity either already now or in the long run, where it could become a bother for both the locals and tourists. Everyone has to have their place in the city and has to be able to thrive in the city space. The next step is to implement the solutions for that if we see a problem. So that's one part of it. The other part is also that we actually are going to start creating surveys among the local citizens in order to measure the degree of support for the continuing tourism growth. We have made one which is like a base line or at least an indicator where we are now, which is around actually 95% support, just the example of it.

Gerda: Great, and the project with the partners, society stakeholders, maybe some examples of the activities?

Nicolai: Well, one think is to increase the focus on really the positive contribution in tourism and society. As I spoke earlier, this positive growth agenda which has been going for quiet a number of years. But now we are trying to move beyond just talking about the bed nights, which was like the big way of measuring tourism success in the past. We are now looking at the bigger growth perspective and actually trying to put the concrete amount of kroner on it and not talking about necessarily tourism related economic impact, but actually socially economic impact of tourism, because we recognize that it really goes beyond. One part of showing value or adding the value to the partners would also be to work with them in data projects. For instance, one concrete thing we are looking at right now, we are working with the Copenhagen Jazz festival, data project, where we are trying to measure what does the physical manifestation like festival that takes place in the city, what kind of impacts it has digitally on the conversation. Just it's like the pilot project of how we can include the partner in this case, cultural event, in some of the projects that we have already established.

Gerda: And as you say that you are already 3 years in the company, you are probably familiar with previous strategies of Wonderful Copenhagen. What would be the differences between the BIG TOURISM and the LOCALHOOD strategy?

Nicolai: I think the main difference between these two tourism strategies is that the BIG TOURISM was very much a master plan and it had actually some very concrete initiatives and it had concrete and maybe sometimes not so accurate assumptions looking 2 to 3 years ahead, it is very very difficult to make precise predictions about the reality we are looking at. So I think the main thing that sets the LOCALHOOD strategy apart from basically every other strategy that we have done in the past, is this ability to scale the efforts and to dial back or backtrack on what we got actually planned and look at the reality of the context that we are in. That is why we specifically only mapped only activities for 2017 alone, the strategy that is publicized now and the idea is also to make the living strategy, that we can actually return to in the 6 months' time and see what road maps and milestones we passed, what we

have to do differently. It is a constant learning process and also the ability to return to the strategy also within the time frame of 4 years that it is intended to last. To make sure that this is not just the strategy document that we pull out and forget about it essentially.

Gerda: All right. The next question would be how the DMO makes or will make the tourism more personal?

Nicolai: I would say the key here is to break down the barriers between locals and visitors and ensuring that the locals remain our ambassadors towards the visitors. And also encouraging and enabling our stakeholders to maybe work more than they already are with creating shareable moments and creating the content that is shareable. This is of course all talking from the content marketing perspective. And I think obviously of course indirectly encouraging visitors to do the same, by making sure that digitally the city and the destination is presented in a shareable way. I think obviously we cannot work with all the visitors on one on way basis, but we can work with central players who have more ground approach to these visitors in this new context. It is a learning process for us as well, we haven't exactly cracked the code on how to do it yet.

Gerda: Everything is ahead. How would you shortly explain this promoting through others, not to others?

Nicolai: One example is the work we do with influencers and we have been doing consistently for a while, but I think now with the new strategy elevating this effort to work with the social media storytellers and giving them the platform and formal framework and recourses obviously to do this. We have been working pretty consistently with the influencers for about I would say 2+ years actually, so it is just one example. Another, we are also working very closely right now with the project called Culture Lab. Actually working with a quiet a large amount of cultural institutions, in and out of Copenhagen – Design Museum Denmark, Danish Architecture center, SMK to basically find tune to their platforms to reaching more international visitors, accommodating them better, communicating better with their visitors. On their own terms and through their own channels. So it is a very concrete example of us letting go of control and really just sharing experiences and expertise to make others better, who might not have as deep knowledge about the international visitors as we have obviously, because we have been doing this for close to 20 years.

Gerda: So would you say that now you are more concentrated on others' channels, than your own? How much is your new role visible on the social media?

Nicolai: I would say it is a mix. We still have an obligation to our partners to be at least a leading voice in the conversation. Not necessarily to be the ones right there on the front lines, but still be a leading voice in still doing content and marketing about Copenhagen. So it is a really a matter of being able to do both. A sub strategy of the LOCALHOOD strategy is also to develop our own digital 365 days a year strategy and basically start thinking less like a promotional actor who does commercial and actually more like a media, who produces content and tell stories and publicizes on the running basis. And again this is something that we have been doing for few years in our team under the radar kind of fashion way. The LOCALHOOD is elevating, formalizing it and allows us to have more resources to do it. So it is the matter of doing both. Definitely our role as a communication consultant is assisting others, working with others and certainly becoming more clear than it was before and it takes a larger chunk of what we do than what we did before.

Gerda: And what are the challenges Wonderful Copenhagen faces or would face while implementing the strategy?

Nicolai: I would say for us, in the content team and marketing team, important challenge that we haven't quite cracked yet but we are getting there is how to work more systematically and informally in enabling the stakeholders and partners. As I have mentioned earlier, we are looking very much at case by case basis, where we haven't established the set framework that we can just put every partner into. Maybe that's not even the point. We have recently done this collaboration with Bornholm that proved quiet successful from our point of view. That approach might not necessarily be like a one size fit all kinds of solutions. The key is to invest a lot of time to make sure we get things right and we actually provide real value to our partners on their terms, so it doesn't just become us being able to put a check in the box in our strategy, but that we can document and see and hopefully hear from the partners that we create the value. I think that requires time to adjust to this new role, we are not just promoting on our own terms through our own channels but really assisting others to do better on theirs. The key here that there is no plan for enabling, there is an intention and a lot of different cases and projects going on right now where we are picking on different learnings. The challenge is to be patient and careful to get it right, also allow ourselves to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes. That's pretty new - the ability to fail and the fact that its ok to fail. I think it is like both for the whole organization and for an individual person quiet a mentality shift to go into that mode.

Gerda: Thank you very much for your opinion!

3. Interview transcription with Frank Cuypers (record attached)

Gerda: Thank you so much for your time. Shall I start with my questions? What was your input into the new tourism strategy LOCALHOOD of Wonderful Copenhagen?

Frank: Well, they sent me a draft and as an expert I had to shoot on it and improve it and that's what I did. It is the first time in my life that... You know, there are two things about writing the strategy. There is a final result, the delivery, which is most of the time the document or a presentation. But there is also a process how you make it. It is not happening often that the process is so well established as in Copenhagen, so what they do is taking the time to have focus groups with a lot of stakeholders including their citizens. One of my mantras is that there is no city marketing without citizens, so I was really pleased with that. My contribution was like changing things, there should be more focus on experience marketing, that product marketing is not enough you have to go one step forward and to try to educate your industry about experience marketing. We had some good discussions about the wordings, about the fact that they share... Sharing is ok, but the DMO is not a promotion source number one. It is more enabling, it is curating, because you are not a story teller number one of your destination. You are more a play maker and others have to recommend your destination. So these are some thoughts that I have shared with them and then they changed it and there was a draft again and I criticized it again and so on. That's the way they improved it. Honestly, I think they wanted a part of verification of some specialists on the planet to make their case stronger. But again, it was a very nice collaboration with Signe, I met her in Poland. I said to her that you drew a lot of attention because it is the most liked and shared article. The shocking title, but they are not alone, it is a trend. Take for instance Thailand. Thailand is the country of mass tourism and if you google it, they made it last year that they want to shift from mass tourism to locals meeting visitors and that they go only for that kind of quality tourism. They do that, they have to innovate and they have to change that because there is so much pressure of

tourism on locals, on sustainability and environment. It is not new. Amsterdam stopped promoting the destination, the DMO is not making promotion but they are really into spreading tourism. The one DMO that I know that is partnering with Airbnb and philosophy is people go to the center, so with Airbnb they go more to the outskirts. They created the plan that the places in the neighborhood like Zandvoort is now Amsterdam beach and castle of Alkmaar is now the castle of Amsterdam. It is all about having these visitors out of the center because it is too crowded. The fact that they say and that's the core that there are now tourists, only temporary locals it is something that is bubbling and percolating in the tourism space around the planet. We had a congress in New York a year ago and the big buzz about Caribbean Islands, is Hugh Riley, you can google him as well. He refuses to speak about consumers, he even refuses to speak about visitors. He speaks about the hosting guests. It is sustainable because in Caribbean it is all about the tourism, no tourism means that they will die, because it is their economic source number one. But even he understands, that, what feeds you, your main asset and main source of economic well, can also destroy you. I am now working on the island called Aruba, they have 100.000 residents and 1.3 million visitors. Now what is happening, these visitors do not come all together, it is a seasonal thing and the island is trembled by tourism. So the residents become angry, there is no vision in the politics and there are even zoning problems, meaning island planning problems. Locals should be involved in your marketing. Otherwise, you will have a big problem.

Gerda: So you agree that the community now is the core asset for the destination?

Frank: Absolutely. I am preaching it already a long time. Unfortunately, it happens now because there are problems. You have probably heard about the documentary Bye Bye Barcelona. That is what Copenhagen saw as well from other destinations. If you don't do your planning right, if you don't have the support of your industry, your stakeholders and your citizens, things will go wrong. And it went wrong in Barcelona because everything was driven by money. They attracted all cheap airlines, Ryanair, Vueling and so on, so there is a big volume of tourists that come, they come on Friday evening, they come from Great Britain, they come from Russia. They don't pay for the accommodation, they sleep on the beach, they only want as much as cheap beer and they are drunk going to Ramblas... That the poor management. So the shift what Copenhagen makes here is from marketing to management. Managing the streams, managing the visitors, educating your people, that kind of thinking.

Gerda: And more from the practical side, I was also speaking with Wonderful Copenhagen about how they are making the citizen assessments and surveys and so on, but how in your opinion which activities could increase that net benefit for locals and visitors?

Frank: Well, I think that there is a lot of visitors, me for instance, maybe you, want to meet locals, right? See what for instance Visit Scotland has done. They have a system in place now that they don't have tourism center as many as in the past. They use their locals, visitor goes somewhere in the north of Scotland in a village to the grocery store or a bakery or a butcher and they have that sign of tourism. They go inside, the locals are trained and they can tell everything about their village or town. They are even very proud of it. On the other hand, if you are there, you get your groceries and your information you feel like obliged to buy a bread or a newspaper. So it is a win-win situation that is created. I think you have to set up programs in your destination and that the task for a DMO, to educate your locals, how to communicate in 2017, what is experience, how to build experience, how it is meaningful for myself, for the visitors.

Gerda: And how to educate visitors?

Frank: That is happening. Island, Visit Island now – their promotion is educational. Go to their website and they have these videos how to survive Island and so on. It is typical for Islanders, sense of humor,

but it is a hard message inside. Because they are very worried, they are very successful and it is a vulnerable community because they are just 300.000 people. So what is happening they are afraid that they might have reached point they have enough tourists now if they come too many, they have to direct the right visitors. So they educate potential visitors by explaining how the Islandic people are, by explaining how to behave with them. One of the problems on an island in Island is the Chinese tourists coming, they rent a car, but for certain part you need a G part for a wheel wagon and they have these tourist cars so the Islandic rescue service has to pull them out of the ditch after some days that costs a lot of money. So they are into education. Another example is Prag. They have videos, there is a link to that - there is a guy and he simply talks about Prag like a local: "All tourists go there but I prefer to go there..." So this is a very cunning way to spread tourism so that not all tourists go the obvious places. That is the part of education of your visitors, try to learn them not to take too obvious roads always. And the last thing is - do we attract the right visitors? And that's the quality of your management and marketing. If you attract the right visitors with the right interests - it is the right tourists who spend a lot of money. The last example there is an island Palau in a Pacific. It is the same story like everywhere, 30.000 people living there, they have bunch of Chinese hotels now and are threatened by the mass-tourism. So they work now on the niche called bird watching because they have some very weird birds that are only live on Palau. The community of bird watchers is only worth in United States 40 billion dollars. Community of 22 million people, so passionate about birds and what they want to do it to travel all around the planet to have one bird in front of their zoom on their camera. That's the right tourist for Palau and every destination has to attract the right tourist. If you do a generic marketing that everyone is welcome, you will soon come in trouble. I think it is a trend for Copenhagen as well, reaching a tipping point it is a very popular brand in the world – Copenhagen. I think it is a clever move to bring these locals in the focus of everything they do. Listen, there is a one point of criticism I still have about the plan of Copenhagen. It is still targeted on the Chinese market and they are mixing two things. On one hand they absolutely want to go for temporary local experience, attracting the passionate people, the right tourism. On the other hand, they say we have to increase the number of Chinese visitors. You mix psychographic thinking about the quality visitors with blunt geographical thinking. Because the Chinese is 1.3 billion market, 'The Chinese' don't exist. It is a continent, you could say we want to increase the number of visitors from Africa, or America. That sounds very odd in my ears, I think we have passed that stage. Most DMOs are still in that geographical thinking, we have to attract more people from America, China, India is an emergent market...but you don't have to think like that. You have to think what is my product, what is the experience and where are the passion groups in the planet where we can draw attention. Not geography comes first, but the passion of the people comes first.

Gerda: For me is also contradicting these two concepts of the localhood and Copenhagen being a business destination.

Frank: Yes, that is the good start. That comes from the fact that the most DMOs get a lot of money from the government or the city counselor. They only have to produce to these dump politicians what is the worth of the DMO and then it is about economics, they want to see dollar signs or euro signs somewhere in the plan. That is why the DMO has to always repeat there is economic value, we are also there for the business community and so on. They have to compromise on that. I think the weakest part in the plan also is a big data thing, it is a very fake. Everybody is talking about big data nowadays. I don't think that the DMOs really have a clue what big data means. It is not really about harvesting, collecting, scrapping. It is about the application. I am a strategist. There are two kinds of strategy, sometimes it is just a plan, milestones, budget, deadlines, KPIs and metrics. But sometimes, as Wonderful Copenhagen is very intentional. They use it to inspire people, to draw attention, to engage everybody, to align

everybody. When I saw Signe in Poland, I said: “Oh Signe I don’t envy you, nobody dares to criticize your plan”. Now she has to plan, they have to think carefully the next steps what they are going to do.

Gerda: It is a very emergent strategy, as Signe says that they first announce it and afterwards they realize what to do about it.

Frank: But for me it is a very right order of doing things. I see cities that make a plan on a detail level, which is unbelievable. They even say we going to spend so much on that market, bla bla bla. And then they are going to present it to the stakeholders and community and they burn it down. Because everybody is human, right? What’s in it for me? So Copenhagen did it other way and I think it is the right one. First, make some noise, make feasible what you are doing, be open. What they have done now is to create the vision for Copenhagen. The next step will be to on how to achieve that vision. It is maybe encompassing too much. If you have interviewed them and you have the feeling that they don’t have the right idea about they have to do with big data – that’s significant. You cannot be expert in everything, right? The big data is popping up everywhere in the DMO but they don’t have the clue what to do about it. (explaining privacy by design, giving a short insight about the data being a currency and a challenge with the big data).

Gerda: What are the challenges in your opinion for the DMO Wonderful Copenhagen in the future while implementing the new tourism strategy?

Frank: Speaking about alignments, Copenhagen is already long time known for their multi-stakeholder management. I think it is a Danish thing that they are debate people, everybody has his own opinion, very opinionated. They have very democratic kind of process, they have created alignment about the vision. But the vision is not enough. You can’t do everything in the same pace, at the same moment. So now it a vision that serves a business community, that serves visitors and community. What are they going to prioritize? Because the number of money and the number of staff is not unlimited. Make choices, you might expect adversity from other communities “why are we not the priority?”. So I think that could be a challenge. There is an alignment now, but how you are going to keep that. I think the visitor management will be a challenge as well. I am still struggling with these Chinese, it is like a compromise: we think in experience, we think in passion groups, we think in niches and want to make connection with citizens, and then there are some Chinese or Indian that we are targeted on them. That has the most heavy weight in your planning. How to keep the balance. They have vision and now to make the choices. The part of the strategy that I like the most is that while the most of the DMOs are self-protecting, we are the brand, if you use the brand you have to ask it, you should mention our logo on the poster and the website. And they do exactly opposite, very open course of thinking in the DMO world.

Gerda: So thank you very much for your opinion, practical examples and your criticism about the strategy. I will make a valuable use of it. Thank you.

Frank: Ok. Success. Good luck with your thesis. Goodbye.

4. Interview design for Bianca Mercier

1. How long are you working at Wonderful Copenhagen?
2. Could you explain the main points of the new tourism strategy and the strategic changes for the role of DMO?
3. What are the main push factors for this strategy and when/how in your opinion has the strategy started to form?
4. How would you evaluate the previous tourism strategy and what are the main differences between BIG TOURISM and Localhood strategies?
5. Since you call your previous performance as an “isolated bubble”, “promotional superstar”, could you give me some examples of the past activities that did not work that well?
6. What is today’s role of Wonderful Copenhagen in a destination development and who has the authority and right to promote and shape the destination?
7. Speaking about the shifts in the DMO’s role and 5 strategic coordinates of the strategy, what are the activities/projects that you implement towards:
The visitor
The host community
The partners?
8. How the DMO makes/will make the tourism more personal and how to enhance locals, travelers and other stakeholders to co-create and share the new vision? Any examples?
9. What are the weak/strong points of your destination?
10. What are the main challenges that the DMO faces while implementing the Localhood strategy?

5. Interview design for Nikolai Cohrt Mejlvang

1. How long are you working at Wonderful Copenhagen?
2. Could you shortly explain the main points of the new strategy and the strategic changes for the DMO role?
3. Could you elaborate on the statement KING IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE KING?
4. What are the main push factors for the new tourism strategy and the new role?
5. Since you call your previous performance “isolated bubble”, “authoritative superstar”, could you give me some examples of the development activities that did not work to understand these statements?
6. Regarding the five strategic coordinates, could you give me examples of the activities and initiatives you undertake regarding visitor/locals/partners?
7. What are the differences between the 2014 tourism strategy of Wonderful Copenhagen and the ‘Localhood’ strategy for 2020?
8. How the DMO makes or will make the tourism more personal, and involving?

9. Could you explain the notion of promoting through others and not to others, could you give me some examples?
10. Could you give me some examples of how the role is being performed in terms of the social media?
11. Could you elaborate on any challenges that the DMO encounters or may encounter while realizing the (new) role?

6. Interview design for Frank Cuypers

1. How is the tourism changing and what changes are inevitable for the DMO?
2. What was your input into the new Localhood strategy?
3. Regarding the new strategy of Wonderful Copenhagen, what means Localhood, in your opinion?
4. What is the destination core asset for them?
5. In your opinion, which activities could the DMO (Wonderful Copenhagen) implement for the maximum benefit of locals and visitors?
6. How to make visitors participate and contribute to the local community?
7. On the other hand, how to involve residents, how to engage them?
8. What are the challenges for the DMO (Wonderful Copenhagen) in the future to realize its role in a destination development?

7. Strategic document 'Localhood' (25 pages) attached separately