



INTERNATIONELLA HANDELSHÖGSKOLAN
HÖGSKOLAN I JÖNKÖPING

Attracting Chinese tourism

How Sweden can gain a larger share of the Chinese outbound tourism

Master's thesis within marketing

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Jönköping June 2006

Master's Thesis in Marketing

Title:	Attracting Chinese Tourism
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Date:	2006-06-07
Subject terms:	Nation branding, nation brand, tourism marketing, destination branding, Chinese outbound tourism.

Abstract

The Chinese outbound tourism is expected to boost within a near future. Recently the market has been very closed due to legislation but as China develops and people are getting richer the demand for travelling abroad increases and the government has to let go of the regulations.

In order for the Swedish tourism industry to benefit from the growing market, Sweden has to increase the awareness of the nation as a destination among the Chinese.

Through qualitative research we aim investigate how Sweden through nation branding and marketing can increase its share of the Chinese outbound tourism.

Except for nation branding a variety of marketing and branding tools are available. Two significant concepts are tourism marketing and destination branding. By utilizing all these different tools or concepts Sweden can raise the awareness of the nation as a possible tourism destination for Chinese outbound tourism. In order to create a comprehensive picture of the market we have also researched the general background of China and the nature of Chinese tourism.

VisitSweden and the Swedish Institute are two organizations already working with these concepts and other similar strategies and are therefore a natural part of this study. Scandinavian Perspectives and Miki Travel are two major travel agencies bringing Chinese tourists to Sweden and therefore possess great knowledge of the areas of interest. Therefore representatives from these organisations are involved in the empirical findings.

In order to get the whole picture Chinese citizens and Chinese students are interviewed about their perception of Sweden and tourism preferences.

The main conclusion of the thesis is that the different actors need to cooperate more and promote certain aspects of Sweden, for example Culture. Even a few obstacles that should be alleviated are identified.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their innermost gratitude for all advice and support from every single person involved in the research process. Their guidance and knowledge have been valuable for us to accomplish our thesis.

Academic advisors

Helén Anderson for tutoring
*Professor Entrepreneurship Marketing Management,
Jönköping International Business School*

Jenny Balkow for guidance and feedback during the thesis work
*PhD Candidate Entrepreneurship Marketing Management,
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Marketing and Branding experts

Thomas Carlhed
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Representatives from the tourism industry

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The Ice Hotel, Jukkasjärvi*

Per Dong
*Manager,
Scandinavian Perspectives, Shanghai*

Tommy Hägg
*Sales and Marketing Manager, Northern
Europe & Russia
Miki Travel, Stockholm*

Anna Wihlborg
*Marketing Manager,
Scandinavian Perspectives, Stockholm*

Finally we would also like to thank all the respondents, including exchange students in Jönköping and Chinese citizens in China, for participating as well as Ulf Gyllenholm for helping us find respondents in China.



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1 Introduction

In the introduction chapter a background to the problem is given and problem statements as well as purpose of the thesis are presented.

1.1 Background

The World Tourism Organization estimates that in the year of 2020 China will be ranked as one of the world's top four countries counted on the total number of tourists going abroad. In the year 2000 China had approximately 10 million tourists going abroad, a figure that is estimated to increase up to 100 million per year, in the year of 2020 (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004). As Chinese tourism is expected to boost the market in a near future, it is of high relevance for Sweden to take part of the development, raise awareness about Sweden and market itself as an alternative destination.

In order to increase our knowledge about the tourism trade in Sweden we decided to attend *TUR 2006*, a travel and tourism trade fair held in Gothenburg march 23-26, 2006. At the fair we were lucky to meet several persons knowledgeable about Chinese outbound tourism, among others China National Tourist Office, Hong Kong Tourism Board and a few Swedish travel agencies operating in China. After talking to the representatives from the different organizations it was clear that the Chinese outbound tourism is more restricted than most of the literature describes it. There were also differences between what different people thought about the future of Chinese outbound tourism, while some people believed that a deregulation is close in time, others strongly believed that further regulations will be introduced in the near future. Business tourism is however less restricted than leisure tourism. Trips usually take the form of business trips or technical visits where the purpose is to study a certain phenomenon in the hosting country or countries. As it seem the business trips and technical visits works as a cover for leisure tourism in a rather large extent. Some small part of the trip is used for business purposes while most time actually is spent on sightseeing and other leisure activities. As of today this kind of tourism is limited to only a rather small and wealthy group of the Chinese people.

There are several different theories on how tourism can be increased through marketing activities. One of the more significant and currently popular theories is nation branding. Nation branding can be used in order to increase the awareness and the positive perceptions of Sweden. By using nation branding even other industries than tourism could gain as nation branding is concerned with many different aspects. Nation branding is a relatively new area within marketing, previously branding has primarily been applied on products, services and companies. However in an increasingly globalized world it becomes more and more important to use new ways to distinguish not only products, services and companies but also nations and destinations in order to attract investment and tourism as well as promote export. This has led to the emergence of nation branding. One of the most authoritarian scholars within nation branding is Simon Anholt. Anholt (2004) discusses the nation brand in terms of six different aspects; *Tourism, Exports, People, Governance, Culture & Heritage, and Investment & Immigration*. However, since every country and market is unique, countries should try to customize the branding and marketing efforts to the specific values of the markets.

Since the area of nation branding is relatively new concept for Swedish actors to work with, there has not been any extensive surveys or measurements on the marketing activities made towards China. Therefore it is difficult at the moment to know if the institutions and the

companies working with the most effective and appropriate activities in order to attract more tourism to Sweden and strengthen Sweden as a nation brand. However the main priority must be to increase the awareness of Sweden in China.

Currently the Swedish organizations VisitSweden and Swedish Institute (SI) seems to be working a lot with nation branding in order to promote Sweden internationally. We would however like to focus on the tourism part of nation branding, and this part is extended with tourism marketing and destination branding, since those are closely related with each other.

We believe that the findings have an academic value as well as a business value. Except for the research conducted by Swedish institutions and travel agencies there is not very much research on the topic. As far as we know there is no academic research on the specific topic Chinese outbound tourism in Sweden. Given that there are no academic papers available we hope that our research will raise interest and trigger off more research within this field. Our research will constitute a basis for further future research. In terms of business interest we believe that our research gives a clear indication about the current market situation as well as indication on how Sweden is performing in the market. This information would be useful for the Swedish travel agencies, Swedish institutions and certain attractions such as the Ice Hotel.

1.2 Problem statement

Given the background it is likely to believe that the Chinese tourism will increase within the near future, especially with regards to the leisure tourism as the market probably will be deregulated. In order to gain a decent share of this growing market it is important to market Sweden and facilitate for Chinese tourism.

Our main research question is

- *How can Sweden gain a larger share of the Chinese outbound tourism?*

Since marketing of an entire country is a rather large and complex task we have chosen to divide the research question into a few sub questions:

- *How should nation branding and marketing be used in order to promote Sweden?*
- *Are there any specific Swedish attributes that should be promoted?*
- *Are there any obstacles that should be alleviated in order to facilitate for the Chinese tourists?*

We have decided to treat business and leisure tourism as one unit instead of treating them as different kinds of tourism since the main motivations that triggers business and leisure tourism does not seem to differ. There are of course different prerequisites in order to go on business trips and leisure trips in terms of legal matters but the factors that creates the demand for travelling to Sweden seems to be the same, just that it is usually easier to go on a business trip. Nevertheless the leisure tourism is still of great importance because this part of the Chinese tourism is the one which probably will increase the most in the future. Investigating only business tourism would also leave out many interesting aspects of leisure travel while an investigation of only leisure tourism would leave out the major part of the today existing tourism. Therefore we have chosen to investigate the entire market for tourism instead of limiting the investigation to either of the parts.

Further we have chosen not to take a standpoint in only the travel agencies neither the institutions. Instead we have chosen to take a collective perspective including all the Swedish interested parties. Taking this perspective allows us to investigate how the different parties can cooperate in order to gain a larger share of the Chinese outbound tourism.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate from different perspectives how Sweden through nation branding and marketing can increase its share of the Chinese outbound tourism.

2 Methodology

Chapter two, methodology, includes our research setting, literature study and empirical research, describing the selection of respondents and interview design. Furthermore criticism of the sources is also discussed. At the end the outline of the analysis methodology is presented.

2.1 Research Setting

According to Hult (2003) the conceptions of quantitative and qualitative methodology refers to how the researcher chose to process and analyze the collected data. Hult (2003) asserts that when a *quantitative* research methodology is used, the conclusions are based on statistically processed data with an acknowledged instrument in order to create a broad picture that can be generalized. In contrast, *qualitative* research is usually based on data that is difficult to measure, for example attitudes, values or conceptions. Central to the qualitative research methodology is to in different ways collect information in order to create a deeper understanding of the problem that is being studied. Further Taylor and Bogdan (1984) describe qualitative methodology as “*research that produces descriptive data: people’s own written or spoken words and observable behaviour.*” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p. 5).

Given Hult’s as well as Taylor and Bogdan’s notes on qualitative research it is natural for us to chose a qualitative methodology since our research to a large extent deals with emotional aspects that are hard to measure, such as attitudes, values and conceptions. We also want to describe the complexity of the topic with reference to the different actors in the market rather than to create a uniform model such as a quantitative methodology aims at.

According to Rist (1977) qualitative research is inductive. Concepts, insights, and understandings are developed from patterns in the data rather than collected to be processed through a predetermined model. This allows the researcher to use a more flexible research design. Strauss (1987) discusses induction as a process leading to the discovery of a hypothesis while deduction is involved with drawing of implications in order to confirm data, which aligns well with the statements made by Rist (1977). Wallén (1996) mentions induction as one of two common methodology approaches; inductive and hypothetical-deductive. When using an inductive method the research begins with collection of data from which general and theoretical conclusions are drawn. When using a hypothetical-deductive method a hypothesis covering a previously unexplored area is tested empirically. This thesis naturally falls into the inductive category since our purpose is to investigate from different perspectives how Sweden through nation branding and marketing can increase its share of the Chinese outbound tourism.

2.2 Literature study

The research commenced by studying the most general theories in our field of study, these theories gave us basic knowledge of the specific topic as well as hints where to search for more specific research and literature on the topics. Jönköping University Library has been the starting point for the search of relevant literature. Literature not available in Jönköping has been acquired through interlibrary loans from other university libraries. Databases accessed through the University Library’s website have also been of great importance to broaden the perspective of the study and get up to date articles and research. ABI/Inform Global, Blackwell Synergy, Emerald Fulltext and SAGE Journals Online have been used frequently. Of course websites of the different actors on the market also have been of great

importance in order to gather knowledge and collect data. The Swedish and Chinese embassies as well as travel agencies websites are a few of many important websites used. Furthermore information from several Swedish associations such as SI, the Swedish Trade Council and VisitSweden has been gathered. In order to maintain a high standard and trustworthiness of the frame of reference we have strived to use published sources and sources that are acknowledged.

The World Tourism Organization has also been an important source of information through their publication *Chinese Outbound Tourism* from 2003. The publication is a very comprehensive survey of many aspects of the Chinese outbound tourism market, its legislation and trends.

Important to mention is that all sources have not been used to construct the thesis, many sources have only been used in order to increase our awareness and general knowledge in the area.

2.3 Empirical research

Due to the nature and purpose of the study we have chosen to conduct several interviews in order to collect the data we need. During TUR 2006 several contacts were made that later on resulted in interviews. SI and VisitSweden have also been very helpful finding respondents within their respective organizations. Respondents were also found through our extended personal networks as well as through Jönköping International Business School and the exchange students in Jönköping.

Esaiasson, Gilljam, Oscarsson and Wängnerud (2004) distinguish between informant and respondent inquiries. In informant inquiries the respondent has somewhat the same function as a witness. The respondent contributes with information in order to describe how the reality is constructed. For example, the marketing manager of a company can describe how a successful product introduction was performed. This kind of inquiry is used to get a good picture of a course of events.

In this study informant inquiry would not be appropriate since we do not deal with a course of events where an informant acting as a witness would be appropriate. Instead a respondent inquiry has been used. Esaiasson et al. (2004) means that when performing a respondent inquiry, the respondents and their thoughts are of primary interest.

As we are investigating the values and perceptions of Sweden in China and not an isolated course of event the respondent inquiry seems more appropriate. It should also be noted that almost no inquiry is either a clear-cut informant or respondent inquiry, most inquiries are somewhere in between the two types.

Esaiasson et al. (2004) distinguishes between two different inquiries with respondents; interactive discussions and surveys. Interactive discussions are basically a discussion between the interviewer and the respondent, a so called conversation interview. A survey on the other hand uses the same questions for all respondents. Naturally there are variations, the questions in a survey can for example be open ended or have prepared answers to choose from, there can even be dialogue to some extent by the use of follow-up questions. Further Esaiasson et al. (2004) means that the interactive interviews are suitable when the purpose is to investigate peoples perceptions or dig deeper and see how people are reasoning around a problem.

We have been using both the type survey and conversation interview. In order to interview Chinese citizens living in China about their conception about Sweden and their travelling preferences an e-mail survey was used. In the survey there were both open ended questions and questions where the respondent were able to chose from a few alternatives, the respondent were however always allowed or even asked to motivate the choices. The interactive interview method was used when interviewing people over telephone which was the case for most of our Swedish respondents. As prescribed this interview method allowed us to dig deeper and investigate the respondents reasoning by using follow-up questions. In order to get more exhaustive answers the interview guide were provided to a few respondents beforehand. To provide the questions beforehand could be said to decrease the value of the information as the respondent can prepare answers for sensitive questions, the surprise moment can in some cases be valuable as the respondent do not have possibility to think out a diplomatic answer. On the contrary the respondent also gets an opportunity to obtain and prepare answers for questions that he or she otherwise would not be sure about. Looking to our questions it is easy to see that there are few not to say any sensitive questions, therefore we considered it more important to get the questions answered thoroughly and therefore provided the questions upon request or when we considered it necessary. In a few cases a very brief preliminary study was performed about the respondents knowledge in order to customize and prepare additional questions for the interview. During the interactive interviews one person conducted the interview while at least one person was taking notes. A tape recorder was also used when possible.

The organizations who participated in interactive telephone interviews were SI, VisitSweden, the Ice Hotel as well as the travel agencies Scandinavian Perspectives and Miki Travel. The two former organizations could provide us with empirical data regarding marketing and branding of Sweden while the two latter organizations were interviewed about the Chinese market and marketing. Please refer to the appendices for details.

In one case a Swedish speaking respondent were interviewed by e-mail. Per Dong at Scandinavian Perspectives is working in Shanghai and therefore we considered it easier to perform an interview per e-mail.

In order to increase the accuracy of the interviews, the results were e-mailed to the respondents in order to provide a possibility to correct possible misunderstandings. Since we are obliged to publish the thesis it also felt important to let the respondents read through our interpretations of the interviews and give their consent for publication.

One focus group interview was also conducted. Williamson (2000) means that a focus group is particularly suitable when the aim is to explain how people regard an experience. As we wanted to create a picture of how Chinese experience Sweden after living in the country for a time the focus group suited the needs well. Due to the language barrier it was hard to get the discussion that we wished to have, however it was evident that the respondents were able to help each other out when the language was a too high barrier. The respondents were also able to discuss ideas with each other in a larger extent than discuss ideas with us. As we chose to include a few students from Hong Kong we also experienced that the language barrier were minimized as these students had a good command of both English and Chinese.

Below is a summarizing table of all the interviews. The respondents have been categorized into three clusters in order to facilitate for the analysis work. The respondent's different knowledge and competences have been taken into consideration when creating the clusters. The cluster *marketing and branding experts* consists of people knowledgeable about marketing

and branding of the entire country, *Representatives from the tourism industry* consists of people with knowledge and experience about dealing with Chinese tourists and finally the cluster *Chinese citizens and exchange students* are respondents who have contributed with their perceptions of Sweden and Chinese tourism.

Position/Characteristic		Method	Date
Branding and marketing experts			
Ylva Björnberg	Brand Development Manager at VisitSweden	Telephone	2006-05-08
Thomas Carlhed	Brand Manager at SI	Telephone	2006-05-12
Charlotte Juul	Project Manager coordinating Swedish cultural activities in connection to the port calls of the Swedish Ship Götheborg at SI in Stockholm	Telephone	2006-05-11
Gunilla Sjöberg	Market Coordinator at VisitSweden	Telephone	2006-05-02 2006-05-08
Representatives from the tourism industry			
Dan Björk	Sales and Marketing Manager at the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi	Telephone	2006-05-12
Per Dong	Manager of Scandinavian Perspectives' office in Shanghai	E-mail	2006-05-03
Tommy Hägg	Sales and Marketing Manager for Northern Europe & Russia at Miki Travels	Telephone	2006-05-04 2006-05-11
Anna Wihlberg	Marketing Manager at Scandinavian Perspectives	Telephone	2006-04-12
Chinese citizens and exchange students			
Chinese citizens	Five Chinese exchange students in Jönköping	Focus group	2006-04-10
Chinese citizens	Twelve Chinese citizens currently living in China	E-mail	Over time

Table 1 - Overview of interviews

2.3.1 Selection of respondents

The different respondents were all chosen for different reasons. The two travel agencies, Scandinavian Perspectives and Miki Travel were chosen due to their deep knowledge and practical experience of working with the specific market. At Scandinavian Perspectives Anna Wihlberg was chosen as respondent due to her central and comprehensive position in the organisation. In addition we also chose to contact Per Dong since we believe that he has a position closer to the market in China and therefore could contribute with valuable information on Chinese travellers. Tommy Hägg was chosen as a respondent for basically the same reasons as Wihlberg. Dan Björk at the Ice Hotel was chosen as a representative from the Swedish tourism trade in order to collect information on how Chinese tourism is perceived in Sweden. Thomas Carlhed was contacted with reference to his position as brand manager at VisitSweden and therefore expected knowledge in the various topics dealt with in the thesis. Charlotte Juul was interviewed with reference to the Swedish ship Götheborg, an important project promoting Sweden. Ylva Björnberg and Gunilla Sjöberg, both working at VisitSweden, were chosen as respondents due to their knowledge about promotion of Sweden as a tourist destination.

In order to broaden the perspective we performed a focus group with Chinese students in Sweden whose experience of Sweden were valuable in order to assess what Chinese actually like about Sweden. The e-mail survey was sent out to Chinese citizens in order to investigate what Chinese generally thinks about Sweden and how they perceive the legislation surrounding tourism.

2.3.2 General remarks regarding the interview design

Each interview was adapted to the expected knowledge of the respondent, for example theoretical questions about nation branding were excluded when Chinese students in Jönköping were interviewed. By excluding areas of which respondents were not knowledgeable about we allowed more time and focus to be put on the respondents actual knowledge. Moreover, we avoided to get unreliable answers when a respondent takes a guess on a question that he or she is not knowledgeable about.

Totally we had constructed five interview guides for our respondents. Appendix 2 referred to the Chinese citizens in Sweden, by other words the exchange students studying at Jönköping International Business School. Since three sections constituted their surveys the first part dealt with *experience of Sweden* both before and after. The second part included questions on the Swedish *culture* while the last section consisted of smaller questions on the *Chinese outbound tourism*. Appendix 3 included the three sections *tourism*, *Sweden as a destination* and *Chinese outbound tourism*. The questions which were aimed to the Chinese citizens in China was in some extent similar to Appendix 2, however the questions here were more focusing on how the Chinese citizens would like to travel. Appendix 4 constituting the two sections *Chinese outbound tourism* and *your agency's work* was given to the travel agencies Scandinavian Perspectives and Miki Travels. The questions here were more profound about the *Chinese outbound tourism* comparing to the same questions asked to our exchange students and Chinese citizens in China. The last part dealt with how Scandinavian Perspectives and Miki Travels worked in order to sell Sweden and Scandinavia for their Chinese clients. In appendix 5 and appendix 6, all the questions regarded on how SI and VisitSweden respectively the Ice Hotel operates to attract more Chinese tourists to Sweden.

2.4 Criticism of the sources

We have experienced a variety of problems with the interviews. One of the major problems since the thesis deals with the Chinese outbound tourism was the language barrier. Even though all the respondents who participated in the research were English speaking, the level of understanding and ability to express themselves varied greatly. Therefore some misunderstandings have been unavoidable during the focus group and in the mail survey.

There have also been problems finding respondents knowledgeable in the area of tourism as travelling are not as common in China as other parts of the world. The communication possibilities for Chinese people has also been a constraint to the research, early expectations to get in touch with a large number of Chinese citizens could soon be dismissed as the Chinese have relatively low accessibility to the internet and where people actually have access, it is usually at a rather high cost. According to Chinese people we have been in contact with in Sweden it would be hard to get a high response rate without use of incentives, which was hard for us to offer. Consequently we have only collected data from Chinese citizens in our extended personal networks which we knew had good accessibility to internet and did not require incentives.

In order to maintain a high standard a few rules regarding criticism of the sources has been taken into consideration during the thesis work. The four rules used are *authenticity*, *independ-*

ence, simultaneity and *tendency*¹. These four rules are according Esaiasson et al. (2004) useful in order to achieve a careful criticism of sources.

Esaiasson et al. (2004) means that *authenticity* deals with whether the material is authentic or not. Is the material produced at the time it is said to be? Is it produced in the right context and by the right persons?

By sticking to acknowledged and published sources we have maintained a high authenticity throughout the research work. Regarding the interviews we have strived to interview persons that are working with acknowledged organizations and therefore are truly knowledgeable about the areas of the interviews.

Independence is according to Esaiasson et al. (2004) concerned with the actual content of the material. In order to investigate whether the material is trustworthy or not we can question the independence of the source of the material. There are three different aspects of independence; *Possibility to confirm the stories*, *distance between narrators and story* and *the narrators' degree of independence*. *Possibility to confirm the source* means that for example a historical statement would be more trustworthy if two different sources independently state the same thing. *Distance between narrator and story* is concerned with however the story has been told by the primary source or if the source is secondary. Primary sources are always considered to be more trustworthy than secondary sources since the story have not had the possibility to be adjusted and misunderstood when a primary source tells it. *The narrators' degree of independence* is the third aspect. To be trustworthy a story should be told by an independent narrator and should not be influenced by other persons or external factors. Since barely nobody is entirely independent this aspect is primarily concerned with assessing to what extent the narrator is dependent.

The independence aspect has been secured through comparison and scrutinizing of the different sources. It was not uncommon that the different travel agencies and institutions as well as the printed sources were of different opinion or stated different facts. By comparing and scrutinizing the different sources we have strived to preserve a high independence of the thesis even though the different sources had different versions of their stories. However, in our case the authenticity aspect is not very relevant since we are using recognized sources and been performing the interviews ourselves, that is, primary data have been used. What regards the narrators' degree of independence this was primarily a concern conducting the focus group. It was evident that the five persons participating in the focus group influenced each others answers more than they inspired each other and discussed possible answers which is the aim conducting a focus group.

The longer time that passes by between an event and documentation the lower is the *Simultaneity* according to Esaiasson et al. (2004). As time passes by the risk for lower reminiscence increases and reconstruction as well as rationalizations might occur.

The simultaneity aspect was not a very big problem conducting the research. As the interviews were assessing an ongoing process and not an isolated course of events it was not a big risk that the respondents would state false information as a result of that time would have passed between event and interview. In order to secure that no information would be

¹ Authors translations; Authenticity = Äkthet, Independence = Oberoende, Simultaneity = Samtidighet, Tendency = Tendens.

lost or reconstructed by ourselves after the interview a tape recorder was used when possible as a complement to taking notes.

Tendency is the last aspect mentioned by Esaiasson et al. (2004). Tendency is used to evaluate whether the narrator intends to or has any interest of giving a biased picture of the reality. The narrator might want to give a biased picture in order to promote his or her own interests, this is common in for example politics and when criminals and their attorneys give comments.

Regarding tendency there has been several cases when the respondents' tendency can be questioned. The Chinese citizens interviewed per e-mail showed a tendency not to answer certain questions or answering avoiding, primarily questions about Chinese legislation and governmental obstacles to travel were avoided, in those cases when an answer was given it usually emphasized that there were no legislation preventing Chinese to travel, even though all printed sources and Swedish respondents claims that there are high barriers for Chinese to travel with regards to legislation. If this is a tendency problem, in other words, that the Chinese answers in a odd way in order to maintain a positive picture of China, alternatively in order not to criticize the government or if they were unaware of legislation (many of the Chinese had never been abroad) is hard to tell. The focus group interviewed in the thesis might have a tendency to have a biased picture of Sweden, caused of the time spent here. Since the respondents all had chosen to go to Sweden it is likely that they had pre and post perceptions of the country that influenced on their answers. Also the Swedish sources, printed as well as spoken can be questioned since all the organizations involved in the study have different motives and wants to accentuate the importance of their work.

Another point of criticism of the sources is that the research could have gained in trustworthiness if information about Chinese tourism could have been acquired direct from the Chinese institutions responsible for the administration of tourism. China National Tourist Office was contacted during the TUR 2006 fair where no opportunity for an interview was given, instead we were asked to contact China National Tourist Office responsible for northern Europe per e-mail. However no response was given even after several attempts. It is possible to speculate about however the absent answers were due to lack of time or interest or even due to political reasons.

Unfortunately we could not get hold of the probably most well known Swedish person in China, Jan-Ove Waldner, even though persistent attempts were made.

We have also encountered problem with the statistics on Chinese tourism in Sweden. Every source states different figures, ranging from 15 000 to 65 000 per year. To resolve this problem we have chosen to use statistics acquired from the Swedish Migration Board throughout the thesis. Figures for the years 2001-2005 can be found in appendix 1.

2.5 Analysis methodology

The analysis is a compound of the theory and the empirical data. In order to deliver a clear analysis we have strived to use somewhat the same outline for the analysis as for the theory.

Theories and empirical data have been compared and scrutinized in order to find similarities and connections. These findings have been used in order to find strategies for how Sweden can increase the Chinese tourism through branding and marketing techniques.

Partly the analysis deals with however the findings from the theory aligns with the empirical findings and partly it deals with the respondents opinions on improvements on the marketing that can be made in order to increase the Chinese tourism to Sweden.

During the analysis work a few questions were kept in mind:

- Is the research question being answered?
- Is the purpose being fulfilled?
- Do the findings align with our expectations?
- Does the analysis lead us to further questions?

These questions were kept in mind in order to ensure that the analysis and later on conclusion would align with the purpose and research questions of the thesis.

3 Previous studies on Chinese outbound tourism

Within previous studies, earlier research papers in the area of the Chinese outbound tourism are provided. Since the Chinese outbound tourism only has been considered interesting recently, there is lack of previous research. Only one research paper was considered as relevant and interesting.

There are not many previous studies on this specific topic. Especially studies specifically focusing on attracting Chinese tourism to Sweden was hard to find.

One thesis of interest was a research paper named *Strategies for entering the Chinese outbound travel market* from Victoria University, Australia. Even if this study's aim was to investigate how Australian travel agencies can enter the Chinese market and attract potential Chinese travellers, the authors indeed find the results useful from other countries perspective. The study was conducted by Guo in 2002 and involved huge research efforts. Guo selected three major Chinese cities that were central hubs for outbound tourism: Beijing, Shanghai and Qingdao. Further he conducted a survey for the travel agencies in the cities. Totally 350 surveys was distributed, where 210 was completely answered. Guo did not send the surveys by e-mail as he were aware that the possibility that the surveys was never going to be answered was higher than if the surveys was conducted through personal visits. Therefore he visited all the travelling agencies and handed out the surveys. Moreover Guo initially had problems in Australia struggling with access to find a list including all travelling agencies in Beijing, Shanghai and Qingdao. However as this list was not publicly offered he had to ask a friend that worked at China National Tourism Administration for the complete list. In conclusion Guo states that Australian firms can enter the Chinese market in several entry strategies depending on the firms' capabilities. Non-independent strategies require higher risks and strong financial backups, while independent entries in form of joint ventures or signed contracts reduce risks. The entry is possible since China has become a member of the World Trade Organization since 2003 (Guo, 2002).

As seen in this research of Australia, the authors believe that the case can also be implemented on Sweden. China's entry to the World Trade Organization literally means that they must abandon their legislations forbidden foreign agencies to operate within the country. Therefore China must allow international competition. Besides, China National Tourism Administration will no longer possess the power of controlling organ (Guo, 2002). Since the Swedish travel agencies do not have many offices in China due to the former restrictions, this would absolutely be an opportunity to have higher presence in China. By having higher visibility the chances would increase to sell more trips to Sweden.

Guo's framework and research findings have been put together in the table below.

Purpose of study	Method	Similarities	Differences	Conclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine the evolving Chinese outbound tourism and subsequently form strategies to Australia for entering the Chinese market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A quantitative research ▪ Personal attendance based on surveys with all travel agencies was performed in Beijing, Shanghai and Qingdao 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Form and implement adequate business actions after studying the Chinese outbound tourism ▪ Both business and leisure tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey based on information about the firm, firm capability, company performance, respondent, strategy and practice, outbound expansion, Australian industry connection and Australia bound demands ▪ Country comparisons to illustrate Australia's position ▪ Information from travel operators ▪ Statistical analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Australia as destination currently holds a strong position and will in the future become one of the top three most selected among Chinese travellers ▪ Australia is associated with exotic experiences, clean environment, great wildlife and nature, good lifestyle, safety and many famous buildings ▪ China's entry in WTO has forced the country to abandon its policy to forbid foreign travel agencies operating within China ▪ Chinese tourism must be open for international competition ▪ CNTA will no longer possess power of controlling ▪ Since Australia has good political and business relations to China, the country should emphasize on this for entering the Chinese market ▪ Enter strategies: non-independent entry, independent entry or retailing channel entry depending on firm capabilities

Table 2 - Overview: Previous Studies (Guo, 2002)

4 Nation branding and marketing concepts

This chapter is our frame of reference, the subject area of nation branding and related concepts of tourism marketing as well as destination branding is presented. The chapter will provide the theoretical base for the analysis.

There are several concepts dealing with the marketing of a country. Most significant are *nation branding*, *tourism marketing* and *destination branding*. The concept called *tourism marketing* is solely aimed to increase tourism in a country, region or even city. According to Blain, Levy and Ritchie (2005) *destination branding* should support the creation of a name, symbol, and logo for a certain destination and thereby create a competitive advantage.

We find Simon Anholt to be somewhat of a pioneer within the area of nation branding. Also the branding and marketing experts that we have consulted have recommended Anholt's work. Therefore Anholt has been given a significant role in our research.

In this chapter the different concepts are explained and a brief background to Sweden's work within these areas, especially nation branding, are given. In order to increase the understanding of the different concepts discussed a brief explanation of a few different concepts follows below.

Nation Brand and Nation Branding. Any country or nation has a *nation brand*, whether the country is working actively or not with the brand does not matter, the nation brand is how the nation is experienced and known abroad. *Nation branding* on the contrary is the active process that some country or rather organisation in that country undertakes in order to promote and strengthen the nation brand abroad. Fan (2006) defines nation branding as follows "Nation branding concerns applying branding and marketing communications techniques to promote a nation's image." (Fan, 2006, p. 2).

The conceptions of *nation* and *country* are also central to this thesis. Fan (2006) explains that a *nation* consists of a large group of people of the same race and language while a *country* is defined as an area of land occupied by a nation. Moreover there is a distinction between the terms *country image* and *nation brand* which are sometimes used in same sense. Kleppe (2002) states that country image is entrenched as a part of the product brand and the concept is meaningless without linking to the product. Nation brand refers to the nation as a whole, there are no links to the product and it describes the country's intangible assets.

In order to strengthen the brand Sweden internationally SI is working actively with Nation Branding, since they consider Nation Branding as an important strategy to promote the image of Sweden. With strong brand recognition abroad, Sweden would benefit from more incoming tourists, labour, students and investors; which in the long run facilitates for the country's economic development. For the moment SI has different regions they especially prioritize. China is included in that category together with Europe, North America, India, Japan and Brazil. During the last year SI has totally completed about 610 projects within 126 different countries where the prioritized regions represented 156 projects. In the near future SI considers culture to be a central factor branding Sweden, in particular Swedish literature. The home page www.sweden.se is Sweden's official web site for people interested in Sweden, which SI also maintains the control of (Swedish Institute, 2006).

The former Swedish Trade & Tourism Council is today known as VisitSweden. The main purpose of VisitSweden is to promote Sweden globally as an attractive destination and to brand Sweden towards foreigners. VisitSweden also maintains the control of

www.visitsweden.com, an online web portal for sharing information about Sweden for tourists. The organization believes that even if Sweden can not compete with the bigger tourist recipient countries, Sweden can compete as an alternative destination. Since the international travelling trends seem to point at various natural experiences, outdoor activities and design, it is absolutely relevant for Sweden to stay competitive in these areas (VisitSweden, 2005).

VisitSweden also arranges many different marketing campaigns in order to increase the awareness of Sweden. The yearly Scandinavian Workshop is held between 23rd of February to the 4th of March in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou (VisitSweden, 2005)

In addition SI and VisitSweden are part of a governmental function called the Council for the Promotion of Sweden. The role of this council is to bring representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish Trade Council, VisitSweden, SI and Invest in Sweden Agency together in order to create a discussion on how Sweden should be promoted internationally. Four times a year they all meet to discuss long terms strategies for making Sweden more attractive considering aspects such as foreign investment, travel destination, research and development, information technology, education, design, architecture and culture (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2006).

4.1 Nation branding

According to Anholt (2004) the importance for countries to have a strong nation brand has increased due to the prevailing globalization. Countries are competing in the attendance, respect and trust from interest groups such as investors, tourists, consumers, media and other nation's governments. With regards to these provisions it is a competitive advantage in a global context to have a strong and positive nation brand.

There is no single definition of nation branding but there is more extended explanations of what areas and activities nation branding covers. Anholt (1998) discuss this in terms of a strategic vision for the country that should be supported, reinforced and enriched by every act of communication a country makes towards the rest of the world. Fan (2006) advocates a broad perspective of what the nation branding activities should contain. *"The aim is to create a clear, simple, differentiating idea built around emotional qualities which can be symbolised both verbally and visually and understood by diverse audiences in a variety of situations. To work effectively, nation branding must embrace political, cultural, business and sport activities."* (Fan, 2006, p. 2).

The overall issue of nation branding is summarized by Goodman (2005) in following statement. *"Nation-branding is an attempt to invent a national reputation. The problem is, reputation is not what you say you are; it's what other people tell you that you are to them. Just like in high school, reputation is something you get; it is the reflection of yourself in the mirror of your peers. And it is based, in large part, on your actions, not on your words"* (Goodman, 2005, p. 1).

Further Goodman (2005) stresses the focus of the branding activities heavily should rely on a well defined message that is repeated all the time to the consumers. The message needs to be communicated consistently and in the same way at all levels and activities in the Nation branding process. Measurements have been made on the value of the nation brand, this is an important tool to consider when developing the different parts within nation branding, and the following part explains the framework.

Countries are like people. They are all associated with some attributes that distinguish them from each other. Different people have different personalities as different countries have

different characteristics. It forms the identity how people perceive certain things. *"Imagine France without fashion, Germany without automotive excellence or Japan without consumer electronics. There's no arguing that the image we have of another country says a lot about how we view it as a tourist destination, a place to invest or a source of consumer goods. How does a country brand differ from a product or service brand? Who controls it? And how do you ensure 'internal' alignment?"* (Frost, 2004, p.1).

According to Frost (2004) an increased awareness of companies' products or services does not always result that the certain brands automatically will act as promotion for the country. The fact is that the correlation is not always clear. Nevertheless the brand of a nation can not be considered as the same of the brand of a product or service. Wally Olins (the chairman of the branding consultancy Saffron in London and Madrid) said that: *"The idea of a nation as a brand – as Kellogg's Corn Flakes is a brand – is a very big mistake"* (Frost, 2004, p.1). The problem of associating a nation's brand and a product's in the same context has also been argued by Philip Kotler. Kotler means that it is much easier for companies to "change" and adapt a product or service due to how it develops within the market. But for countries the situation is more difficult. *"Obviously a country can't replace its beaches with mountains, or grow bananas if its climate favours snow"*. (Frost, 2004, p.1).

Frost (2004) believes that the key of a successful nation branding concept is to include parameters that people from other countries can recognize. This means including prominent representatives as famous people, well known products or being visible at important events. However according to Juergen Gnoth (a senior lecturer in the Department of Marketing at the University of Otago in New Zealand) and Nicolas Papadopoulos (Professor of the Sprott School of Business at Carleton University in Ottawa) the difficulties of branding a specific place lies within the message respectively the structure. By message Gnoth means that who is the aimed receivers, how is the idea that the brand should be perceived, does the brand represent a united image including the attractions of the country and would the message last in the longer terms (Frost, 2004). Papadopoulos on the other hand explains that difficulties would be *"lack of unity of purpose, difficulty in establishing actionable and measurable objectives, lack of authority over inputs and control over outputs, restricted flexibility, and relative lack of marketing know-how"* (Frost, 2004, p.1).

As different people perceive a certain country and its places different depending on their knowledge and background, it would be difficult for counties to concentrate on promoting the nation as one unit. Moreover it would be better to highlight the uniqueness of the various destinations within the country rather than to focus on the overall picture. To exemplify the statement the authors used Italy and described that even if the country is associated with for example mafia and Venice; nevertheless the two associations could not be bunched together in one image (O'Shaughnessy & O'Shaughnessy, 2000).

In conclusion Olins thinks that the trend of nation branding has only started. Due to the harder competition among countries to differentiate themselves, they will strive to find solutions whether it is in terms of attracting tourists or investors (Frost, 2004).

4.1.1 Measuring the nation brand and Anholt's hexagon

One of the most prominent scholars in nation branding is Simon Anholt who combines the intangible assets and perceptions of the tangible assets of a nation in a framework. This framework is constructed to get information about what the nation brand actually stands for.

Anholt's (2005, quarter 4) framework is called the Nation brand hexagon; it consists of six parameters. The measurement of the Nation brand is the sum of people's perceptions of the six areas; *tourism, exports, governance, investments and immigration, culture and heritage and people*.

1. *Tourism* is usually the most promoted aspect of the hexagon. However, people's perceptions of the specific country often get defective as the tourism is the most visible promotion and gets a disproportionate part of the total nation branding efforts. As tourism promotion only deals with certain characteristics of a country these characteristics also get a disproportionate part of people's minds. The result is that people gets a very general picture of the country.
2. *Exports*. In this area the consumer's satisfaction of product and services from an exporting country is determined. The relevance of commercial brands has become more and more important in a global context. Today commercial brands are a major conveyor of national identity. Important in the export aspect of the hexagon is to what extent the country contributes to the development of science and technology within the nation.
3. *Governance* deals with a country's governance, however the country is fairly and competently governed, trust of the country's government, human rights issues, security and uphold international peace are covered.
4. *Investment and immigration* basically deals with the human capital. For example foreigners willingness to live and work in the specific country for a longer period. Moreover this aspect deals with foreigner's perception of educational systems in the country and even the general opinion about the country's economic and social conditions.
5. *Culture and heritage*. This part of the hexagon sees to the perceptions of a country's cultural heritage. It also deals with foreigners' appreciation of, and intentions to consume popular and more commercial cultural products or activities. Sporting prowess also belongs to this aspect.
6. *People*. The focus in this area of the hexagon lies on the general perception about different nationalities. General pictures of the people's personalities in the countries are studied as well as if a foreigner would choose to have a person from the specific country as a close personal friend or hire a person as an employee.

(Anholt, 2005, quarter 4)



Figure 1 - The nation brand hexagon adapted from Anholt (2005, quarter 4)

Regarding Anholt's model, the nation brand hexagon, all parameters are to say forming the basis of a nation's brand. Depending on what purpose one might have, the brand can be used for that reason. Having a strong nation brand would definitely benefit the tourism sector and act as an attractive force to attract tourists.

The six measurement parameters also form the *Anholt Nation Brands Index*. The index is an analytical ranking of the world's nation's brands. The Anholt Nation Brands index measures the power and appeal of a nation's brand image, and tells us how consumers around the world see the character and personality of the brand (Anholt, 2005).

The Nation Brand Index is updated quarterly, last update a panel of 25 900 respondents in 35 countries participated with their perceptions of the different areas within the hexagon (Swedish Institute¹, 2005).

In a report published 2006, Sweden is ranked on the fifth place of the nation brands in the world. The top five countries in terms of nation brands are Great Britain, Switzerland, Canada, Italy and Sweden (Swedish Institute¹, 2005). According to the report the core profile of the countries were, westernized, OECD-member country, with liberal democratic traditions and high level of social-welfare provision by the state. These countries were not the greatest economic powers though.

According to this report Sweden is seen as almost universal admired country which has build its nation brand with a rare combination of a stable and responsible administration with reliable and honest people. Sweden is seen as young and dynamic nation with elements of vitality and an adventurous feeling. Further Sweden is known for successful culture export and an important location for investments (Swedish Institute¹, 2005).

For the first time a nation brand equity survey is made, Sweden is valued to 399 billion dollar, comparably to other nation brand equity such as USA which is valued to 18 trillion dollar. Another interesting comparison is the commercial brand Coca-Cola which has an estimated value of 67, 5 billion dollar (Swedish Institute¹, 2005).

4.1.2 Sweden according to the Nation brand hexagon

Anholt applied several countries, including Sweden within his Nation brand hexagon and found a central conclusion that benefits the larger countries rather than the smaller ones.

“The wealth of a country and its population size are important factors when considering the strength of a nation brand for several reasons. Larger countries engage in a higher volume of international trade and have more products on the global market, as well as more ambassadors. This offers them more opportunities to build a powerful and popular brand.” (Anholt, 2005, quarter 2, p.8).

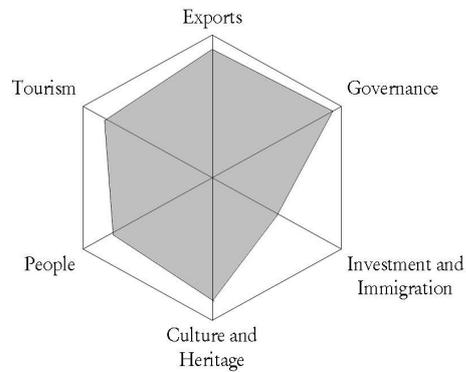


Figure 2 – Sweden’s nation brand adapted from Anholt (2005, quarter 2)

Implementing Sweden in Anholt’s Nation brand hexagon illustrates that Sweden is quite equivalent in the six parameter areas, however the main drawback lies within culture and heritage² (Anholt, 2005, quarter 2).

Anholt (2005, quarter 3) states that Sweden is indeed perceived as belonging to the more high-status nations in Europe together with France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and the UK.

4.1.3 Other important parameters influencing the nation brand

Beside the six parameters constituting Anholt’s Nation brand index, there are some other main parameters that also form peoples’ opinion about a nation: sport, science and technology and education (Anholt, 2005, quarter 4).

According to (Anholt, 2005, quarter 4) the value of sport and sport activities are of high importance since people tend to make assumptions of a certain country based on what they see in sport competitions. As sport is such popular event worldwide the use of sport indeed would raise the awareness of countries. All sportsmen and sportswomen that competes for their country are great ambassadors that can *“create global storylines about countries that can build their brand images almost overnight – especially courageous unknowns beating bigger and better-funded teams – but they will fade almost as quickly if there is no follow-through”* (Anholt, 2005, quarter 4, p. 6).

One great example might be the story of how the African nation Trinidad & Tobago managed to qualify for the 2006 Soccer World Cup in Germany. The competition is Trinidad & Tobago’s first ever and they are the smallest county that participates in this Soccer World

² Even though Anholt states that Swedens main drawbacks lies within Culture and Heritage he depicts the nation brand hexagon as in Figure 2, with main drawbacks in Investment and Immigration. We have chosen to depict the figure the same way Anholt does. Although the drawbacks in the figure should be on Culture and Heritage.

Cup. On the beforehand no one had expected that they would become one of the nations that would represent Africa in the World cup. Indeed Trinidad & Tobago's success story has undeniably given the country positive public news coverage around the world. One of the latest news is that EBay has been so fascinated by Trinidad & Tobago's skills that they are ready to be their official sponsor during the World cup competition. Who could imagine this from the beginning? Not the experts, not you nor me and for sure not EBay (Bringéus, 2006). The value of sport success is certainly a significant factor nation brands can build upon (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy, 2000).

Another sport event that always creates attention globally is the Olympic Games. The given country that hosts this mega event would be exposed dramatically and would give opportunity to brand the nation and hosting cities. In the ranking of top rated sport nations Sweden did not manage to position at the top 10, dominated by United States, Russia, Germany and China (Anholt, 2005, quarter 4).

Science and technology represent the second parameter indicates that a country which emphasize within this area is regarded as high-tech and modern by particularly younger people with higher education. Countries with high technological standards signify status which is well perceived by the younger generation and therefore constitutes as an attractive factor. Internationally Sweden is positioned in the ninth place after the leading countries Japan, United States and Germany (Anholt, 2005, quarter 4).

The third parameter, education is also of high relevance for countries to consider as foreign students will act as ambassadors when they arrive at their home country (Anholt, 2005, quarter 4).

One interesting sport marketing aspect unique to Sweden and China is the popularity of Jan-Ove Waldner in China. Almost every Chinese recognize Waldner and knows that he is a Swedish table tennis player. The fact that he has won over many Chinese players has indeed made him a feared rival but also admired among players and Chinese citizens. Waldner has gained the nickname "*the evergreen tree*"³ and "*the guerrilla leader*"⁴ (Marklund, 2005). Waldner is so popular in China that he in a ranking placed second after Bill Clinton over the world's most famous people. This investigation was performed several years ago when Clinton still was the President of the United States. This proves that Waldner's success has had huge influence on several hundred millions of Chinese citizens (Huldschiner, 2005).

As Waldner is such a celebrity star in China, he has tried to use his fame for business purposes. Nowadays Waldner owns a sports bar in Beijing and cooperates with several Swedish companies to promote their products (Huldschiner, 2005). Many Swedish firms have also seen the opportunity of being associated with Waldner and by this way gain attention from the Chinese people, since they are totally addicted to table tennis and especially Waldner. One of Waldner's most recent jobs was working with the Swedish floor manufacturer Kährs (Huldschiner, 2005). In the past both Skandia and Ericsson has consulted Waldner to work for them. Especially Skandia faced some obstacles when they operated within China; however with Waldner's help they managed to resolve the problems (Engqvist, 2002). In the future Waldner would also like to establish a table tennis school and use his name on several products (Huldschiner, 2005). Last year in 2005 Jan-Ove

³ Authors translation: Det evigt gröna trädet

⁴ Authors translation: Gerillaledaren

Waldner received the honour “Swedish of the year” title for his contribution raising the awareness of Sweden among the Chinese people. He was also praised for his achievements in table tennis and efforts made helping Swedish companies to establish in China (Föreningen Svenskar i världen, 2005).

4.1.4 Sweden and Nation Branding

At the 8th of June 2005, SI celebrated its 60th anniversary. Jointly to the celebration a conference was held with an important issue of how to raise the awareness of Sweden abroad, in terms of political, cultural, social and economical questions along with tourism questions. The vision is to market Sweden as a potential nation for foreign direct investments, lucrative trading partner, attractive tourist destination and receiving country for international exchange students (Swedish Institute², 2005).

According to the Swedish Institute² (2005) the reputation of a country is highly important. Bad reputation can easily deter investors as well as tourists. That is why SI constantly tries to strengthen and improve Sweden’s reputation globally through various methods including publishing and bringing about tourist information, publishing the official website to promote and inform about Sweden (<http://www.sweden.se/>). SI even translates Swedish literature, currently 26 languages are represented, in order to increase the availability of Swedish literature and spread Swedish culture and build up a good reputation.

Furthermore the Swedish Institute² (2005) means that Sweden indeed has a good reputation abroad and is generally well represented worldwide. However in relation to other countries that emphasize the nation branding concept, Sweden is far behind. Countries such as New Zealand and Ireland are the top countries while Great Britain, The Netherlands and even the neighbouring countries Denmark and Norway all are on their way up and have better resources than Sweden.

In 1998 Wallpaper, one of the world’s most popular magazines for international design and lifestyle, proclaimed Stockholm to be the world’s capital of design according to the Swedish Institute² (2005). In 2000 Stockholm and Sweden covered Newsweek’s front-page with headlines being the top IT and admass (media dominated) society. Such positive publications have to be better taken care of and trigger higher spin-offs promoting Sweden. According to Olle Wästberg, director-general of SI, they have not really understood the full potential of using media as a communication channel. Wästberg further argues that media indeed is a strong creator of public opinions; people become influenced of what they sense, feel and read. Therefore SI has to be better using media and PR to raise the awareness of Sweden (Swedish Institute², 2005). In line with Wästberg’s arguments John O’Shaughnessy and Nicholas Jackson O’Shaughnessy highly underscore the advantages of using media as marketing channels. The most common way to create an opinion about something is of course to be at place, however if that is not the case people mainly receive information through media. The problem is or it may even be an advantage that people tend to have stereotyped opinion about certain countries covered in the news. The authors gave an example with Holland to illustrate their statement about stereotypes. They claim that when Holland is mentioned among people, people tend to associate the country with typical stereotypes such as tulips, windmills, Phillips and Rembrandt (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy, 2000).

According to the Swedish Institute² (2005) Leif Pagrotsky, the Swedish minister of education and culture claims that Sweden is well known around the world. Pagrotsky said that *“Sweden raise respect, curiosity, attention. And this is good; it is good when we want to attract tourists,*

students, researchers, investors.” (Swedish Institute², 2005, p.15)⁵. Pagrotsky further emphasize the significance of attracting more foreign students to Sweden. Hopefully when these students one day turn back their respective countries, they have had such a great time and received that many positive memorable moments that they will spread the experiences to families and friends. In this way they will help to raise the awareness of Sweden to more people (Swedish Institute², 2005).

Common standpoints from the participants at the conference regarding how to work with nation branding for Sweden is openness and develop the story about Sweden. The country is considered to have rich and important stories to tell, for instance being one of the most prominent assistances to the third world. In those countries Sweden has strong brand equity and has to maintain it after the development of those countries. Annika Rembe, director of information and markets at Invest in Sweden Agency, argues that the story of the nature can be connected to the story of the industry or being connected to the open society in Sweden. Further Thomas Brühl, CEO at VisitSweden emphasizes the relevance of a narrow target group. He believes in find out what this certain target groups are interested in and appreciative and then let them talk about the experiences in Sweden in their home countries (Swedish Institute², 2005).

One interesting thing to mention to gain perspective of how nation branding can be conducted is the cooking show *Tinas Mat*. This TV show has been broadcasted in countries such as United States, Great Britain, France and Australia, and the interest of Swedish food has indeed increased. As the show took place in thirteen different places around Sweden, foreigners have also been introduced to the Sweden’s geography and nature. (VisitSweden, 2005).

4.2 Tourism marketing

Tourism has a central role for the nation branding and sustainable development for a country, in a large extent due to the fact that tourism is the worlds largest industry The tourism marketing is usually the only way countries market themselves to the outside world (Anholt 2005).

The importance and interest in tourism within the European Union started to grow more and more from 1990 caused of high unemployment and increased knowledge from public leaders that income from tourism can be raised more easily than other areas of the economy (Kotler, Asplund, Rein & Haider, 1999). Further Anholt (2005) discuss that the tourism industry is the only area where traditionally a government minister and a marketing manager will work side by side, but it is often an unclear division between public sector and private enterprises.

In order to define the tourism market, Papadopoulos (1989) divides the market into three elements. The first one is the tourist “composite” product, where the product has to be consumed in the particular place; it can not be an exchange of goods and services at the buyer’s local place. The second is the suppliers of tourist services such as tour and travel operators, hotels etc. The third element is the persons who actually purchase the travels.

⁵ Authors translation: *”Sverige väcker respekt, nyfikenhet, uppmärksamhet. Och det är bra, det är bra för oss när vi vill locka hit turister, studenter, forskare, investerare.”*

Regarding the third element the tourists will not be interested to go to every place within a country according to Kotler et al. (1999), therefore it is important to sharply define the target groups for each place. The first approach is to collect information about the current tourists. Questions to use are of following character; where do they come from? Why do they come to this place? How satisfied are they? These questions will determine which tourists that are potential and worth to attract. The second approach is to audit the places attractions to find out more values that a place can offer. The aim of this activity is to find new tourists groups that will be interested of going to place for other reasons then is already promoted about the place. For instance if ski resorts only promote skiing they would probably miss the summer hiking tourists.

Kotler et al. (1999) means that the main marketing activities for this type of marketing are to develop strong and attractive positions for the community and setting up attractive incentives for current and potential buyers and users of goods and services. Promoting the places benefits so the tourist is fully aware of the particular advantages of the place offer. The next activity is to be able to deliver the place product and services in an efficient and accessible way. This service is considered to be one of the most important since even how great and interesting the attributes of a place might be, it may not help if there is lack of transportation and access to major markets and key attractions.

Further Kotler et al. (1999) means that in order to attract tourists the places must respond to the travel basics of cost, convenience and timeliness. The cost is weighted by the tourist against the benefits of the particular destination. Convenience for the tourists is the second parameter to take into consideration, time involved in travel, language barriers, access to sights and need for special services like medical care, car rental and telecommunication. The timeliness sees to the risk factors of travelling such as wars, terrorism and political instability. The general rule among the destination is to be competitive in costs, minimized risks and maximized convenience for the tourists.

According to Swedish Tourist Authority¹ (2004) one successful way to pursue marketing campaigns in China is through localized campaigns, each adjusted for the specific Chinese region rather than standardized promotion for the entire nation. Chinese people living in the different parts of China do not share either common values or preferences. Three main regions in China are more important than others in terms of number of international travellers. Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou are the hubs for the Chinese outbound tourism. Travel destinations made within these regions are important indicators of what trends that are currently applied. Citizens from the capital of China, Beijing tend to make their destination choices via families, friends, travelling programs or TV-commercials while people in Shanghai prefer to be influenced by newspapers and magazines.

Are there only positive effects of increased tourism? As mentioned before tourism is the largest industry in the world, regarding this fact Anholt (2005) raises the importance of being aware of the great ecological damage mass tourism causes. For instance an average golf course in a tropical country needs 1 500 kg of chemical fertilizers and uses and uses as much water as 60 000 rural villages per year. Anholt further exemplifies with studies of one single ship which drop its anchor in the coral reef for one day. This result in a totally destroyed area about half the size of a football field which takes 50 years to recover. Eco-tourism means that people are going to environmentally sensitive areas, this is according to Anholt (2005) not the right way. Instead sustainable tourism needs to be developed. The tourists need to be aware of the environmental problems not just promoted by information, they also need to actually see the endangered places to be engaged. Anholt states that *“the world’s biggest industry can be the planet’s biggest helper, or its worst enemy”* (Anholt 2005, p.163).

Therefore it is important to be aware of the difference between eco-tourism and sustainable tourism (Anholt, 2005).

4.3 Destination branding

While nation branding aims at forming a complete picture of a nation, destination branding aims at promoting specific regions, cities, towns or critical components of the tourism industry within a country. The destination branding process can be performed in different ways, the main practitioners of destination branding is the destination management organizations. The destination management organizations members are a wide range of actors within tourist related activities, hotels, restaurants, tour operators, governmental bodies. However all actors that directly or indirectly supports tourism can be seen as destination management organizations (Blain, Levy & Ritchie 2005). Further Pritchard and Morgan (1998) discuss common problems that destination managers face. There are basically three main areas to overcome: lack of control over the entire marketing mix, relatively restricted budgets for particular destinations, and political considerations in destination branding activities. Hankinson (2005) states the lack of control is due to the complexity of the destination seen as a product to brand. Further he means the destinations are multi-functional, same place can offer a wide range of activities and sights consumed by consumers with different interests at the same time. The World tourist organisation also talks about seeing destinations as a fashion item which attract a certain type of traveller. This will lead to an easier identification of the traveller attracted to the destination (Morgan, Pritchard & Piggot, 2003).

According to Blain et al. (2005) destination branding should support the creation of a name, symbol, logo or word mark that clearly differentiates and identifies the destination. The activity shall also convey the promise of a memorable travel experience which is associated with the destination. The reinforcement of the emotional connection between the consumer and the destination is also important and thereby reduce the consumers search costs and perceived risk about the destination. All these activities are made to build up a positive pre and post attitude towards the destination. A survey made by the Ministry of foreign affairs (2005) about the picture of Sweden abroad. The most known destinations in Sweden where the Ice Hotel and Stockholm. The nature experiences and the midnight sun are primary seen as the most memorable travel experiences about the northern regions and the Ice Hotel. The second most talked about destination is Stockholm which considered being a hip city with good shopping opportunities.

The importance of the logo and appropriate slogans seems to be more and more important in the positioning strategy. Pike (2005) heavily stresses the relevance of the slogan to differentiate the destinations and give indications of its significance compared to other similar destinations. Places becoming more and more difficult to differentiate because of increased accessibility of information. The slogan is seen as the link between the brand identity and the actual brand image kept in the market. Successful destination branding has been made of countries such as New Zealand. Morgan, Pritchard and Piggot (2003) explain what arguments they have communicate through destination branding activities. A survey identified that New Zealand is rich in four aspects; landscape, people culture and adventure and to conclude this features the slogan New Pacific freedom. One main reason for the increasing tourism to New Zealand is the exposure in films such as Lord of the rings (Hudson and Ritchie 2006). The New Zealand tourist board looked at the movie as the equivalent to a promotional activity and estimated how much the exposure where worth. It was based on attendances and a wide range of assumptions generated in an estimated value of the exposure to over 41 million US dollar. Moreover Swedish films have contributed to an increas-

ing tourism to specific destinations within the nation. The Swedish author Mikael Niemi's book and film *Populärmusik från Vittula* led to a boost in tourism going to Tornedalen, and even initiated a project which purpose is to strengthen the entire region of Tornedalen with help of the PR the movie contributed with (Rehnstedt & Rantatalo, 2004).

Further Hudson and Ritchie (2006) discuss the excellence of destinations being featured on television, video or the cinema screen. The authors advocate that the tourism organizations can use films as springboards for marketing campaigns if the films are seen as appropriate for the destination. Indeed businesses and services can be created through film tourism that in turn may extend the visitor season. What also seems to be of significant aspect is that the film tourism is enduring. A film can continue to attract visitors year after year. Some places have even redeveloped locations to make the film connections more apparent, and succeeded to boost the tourism although the film is old. There are also drawbacks of promoting destinations through film. Some situations that can occur, is higher prices before the film is released due to the influx of production crew. Sensitive environmental areas can be disturbed. For example the movie "The Beach" was filmed in the Phi Phi Islands in southern Thailand and after the release of the movie the destination became very popular which has led to great environmental damage.

A well known Swedish example of destination branding is the Ice Hotel. The Ice Hotel was founded during the 1970s in Jukkasjärvi, a small suburb to Kiruna in the Northern part of Sweden. However at the beginning the Ice Hotel did not really exist since it only offered summer activities as nature experiences, walking tours, fishing, white-water rafting etc. If visitors come in the summer, they would not be able to experience the "real" Ice Hotel, since there is no snow to build the hotel. The ice needed for the construction is taken from the Torne River. The Ice Hotel that we are used too was instead established in the 1980s. The rest is history. Today the Ice Hotel is highly recognized throughout the world with many foreign visitors each year. The unique thing with the Ice Hotel is that it does not look the same every year. The structure changes depending on who is creating it, since the Ice Hotel invites internationally famous guest architects for each season. Even if the Ice Hotel is opened both in the summer and winter, most visitors from abroad comes in the winter-time (Icehotel AB, 2006).

5 Chinese Tourism

This chapter, Chinese Tourism, will provide a comprehensive description of China's outbound tourism, general background of the country as well as areas related to tourism, for example information about contacts and relations between China and Sweden.

5.1 General background of China

The Chinese outbound tourism is expected to boost the market radically in the near future. According to a report published by the World Tourism Organization, in 2020 the total number of Chinese tourists abroad will only be beaten by the Germans, Japanese and Americans. Chinese travellers will dramatically be increased with the entire 900 percent from 10 million in 2000 to estimated 100 million in 2020. This figure is equivalent to 6.4 percent of the total estimated market share in 2020. Together the top ten outbound countries will constitute of 51.8 percent of the entire travel industry (World Tourism Organization, 2003).

According to statistics from the Swedish Migration Board (please refer to appendix 1) Sweden approved 13 046 visas for Chinese visitors 2004 and 18 278 in 2005. These figures can be said to be quite modest considering Chinas enormous population of approximately 1,3 billion citizens (CIA, 2006). If the Chinese tourism would increase in accordance with the World Tourism Organizations calculations above the number of Chinese visitors to Sweden could increase up to 100 000 per year in the year of 2020 (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

Further we can conclude from the statistics from the Swedish Migration Board (appendix 1) that the majority of the Chinese the main purpose for travelling to Sweden is business. However, according to the World Tourism Organization (2003) as the initial business purpose has been finalised, many Chinese spend the rest of the trip for leisure purposes.

5.1.1 Strong development

Today the economical growth in China is constantly increasing. The living standard is getting better and the current living Chinese people have more money than previous generations. In 2010 there will be an explosion of groups with good financial conditions, equivalent to the middle classes in most Western countries. Literally the boost means that approximately 250 million Chinese will have the same opportunity to have a living standard and lifestyle equivalent to most Western Countries. Europe and North America will struggle with difficulties to compete with the enormous potential Chinese market. China's economic advance will be hard to stop. Already today China has 18 million of dollar millionaires and 60 million internet users. The total number of cell phone registrations increases today with about five million a month in a country where only 10 percent of the population has access to a cell phone. No Western country can even be compared with the Chinese growth figures. China and the Chinese market are definitely got potential for the future (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

As China is becoming a more dominant actor in the world economy, the country has made huge investments on enhanced infrastructures and made more funds available to attract foreign tourists. During only seven years China has built amazingly three hundred new airports to facilitate for both inbound and outbound tourism. This strategy is only one of the many approaches that have been pursued in order to open the country towards the rest of

the world (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004). The number of approved travel agencies with permission to handle foreign travels, from the Chinese government has increased from year to year and application processes for passports have been decreasingly bureaucratic. By these efforts it is evident that China is on the progress of diminish the international travel barriers (World Tourism Organization, 2003).

During the coming years China will be the centre of attention as it will be the host nation for many big events. Worth mentioning is that The Summer Olympic Games 2008 will be held in Beijing and the World Expo 2010 in Shanghai. The combination of opening up its borders more and more together with the strong economic growth will undoubtedly strengthen the country's position as an important hub for commerce and tourism in a near future. China already hosts various conferences and events for important international organizations and the G8-union member states (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

5.2 Contacts and relations between Sweden and China

5.2.1 History

In 1949 Sweden was the first Western European country to initiate political relations with the Chinese government, and ever since then the two countries have maintained a strong relationship. Official visits from the both nations have been done frequently over the past years. The King of Sweden His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf, The Prime Minister Göran Persson and the two former Foreign Ministers Laila Freivalds and Anna Lindh are only a few important Swedish persons that have visited China, while Sweden also have had visits from prominent Chinese persons. Due to the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the first diplomatic relation, the former vice Prime Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen made an official trip to China. The good relationships with China have resulted in several of mutual projects and agreements in the areas of foreign investment, cultural events, education, military training and exchange of technical know-how (Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2004).

The affairs between the two nations have also ended in the establishing of friendly cities relations. Since 1997 Guangzhou has formed a network with both Skåne and Linköping while Tianjin has exchange with Jönköping (Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2004).

5.2.2 Trade and Commerce

According to the Swedish Trade Council (2006), the importance of having China as a trading partner has increased from year to year. Presently China is regarded as of having the fifth largest economy of the world and the boost is still to come.

China is the single most important market for Sweden in the Asian region. Investments and the presence of Swedish companies in China are very strong. Today several larger Swedish corporations have offices and business operations in China. The country is counted as the twelfth largest trading partner that Sweden has established businesses with. On the contrary Sweden only constitutes a small share from the total foreign trade of China. However Sweden is nevertheless the largest actor in Scandinavia within trade and commerce for China (Serger & Widman, 2005).

Together with major Swedish companies in China, the Swedish presence is also represented by the Swedish Trade Council, the Chamber of Commerce, consulates and the embassy. In

order to facilitate for Chinese businesses in Sweden, the Invest in Sweden Agency (ISA) have been established (Embassy of Sweden, 2004).

The commerce relations between Sweden and China are indeed very strong. The Swedish government has really stressed and emphasized the importance of good connections with China. Representatives from the both countries are having meetings yearly in order to discuss important issues dealing with trade and how improvements of both nation's involvement in future projects (Embassy of Sweden, 2004).

5.3 The nature of Chinese tourism

Due to strict regulations from the communistic China, Chinese citizens were not allowed to make travelling across international borders until 1983 when mainland Chinese first got permission to visit relatives in Hong Kong and Macau. However the visits were still very limited and application procedure were complicated. During the 1990's the government started to add countries to the list of countries to which mainland Chinese were allowed to visit. At first Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand were added. This movement was an important step towards the "Open Door Policy". However it should be mentioned that there were still limitations and barriers regarding international travel. Only a few selected agencies in China who were approved by the government were allowed to issue permission for travelling. During the years to come new destinations were allowed and the Chinese citizens now got opportunity to visit countries such as Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia, South Africa, Egypt and others. The destinations that became approved received "Approved Destination Status" commonly known as ADS. Approved Destination Status means that travelling to those specific countries were allowed without any restrictions (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

Approved Destination Status is an agreement based on the allowance for Chinese tourists to visit the recipient country. However travelling to countries that hold Approved Destination Status still may require application for certain visas or invitation letters from the company to be visited. But Chinese who can insure that they have sufficient financial support can make international trips without restrictions as long as the recipient country allows individual visas (World Tourism Organization, 2003).

To receive Approved Destination Status from the Chinese government is therefore essential for all countries that want to be a part of the giant Chinese outbound tourism. Thus it is not very likely that Chinese' visitors are travelling to countries without Approved Destination Status since this would make the whole travelling process more restricted and complicated. (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

A statement made by several people in the travel business can be used to illustrate the importance of actually receive Chinese tourists: "*Only the Chinese tourists are using cash. They come in large groups. Today, many countries regard them as a hope for economic recovery.*" (World Tourism Organization, 2003, p. 27)

5.3.1 European Union-agreement

A historical moment occurred in 2004 on the 12th of February when China signed an agreement with the European Union which officially gave all the member states Approved Destination Status. This advance means that Sweden, a member of the European Union now was allowed to receive Chinese visitors. All countries within the European Union are

expected to have an increasingly higher arrival of Chinese travellers for the reason of the Approved Destination Status. If Sweden could become a popular destination among the Chinese, this would generate huge profits both economically in terms of profits for the entire tourist trade industry but also strategically in terms of higher recognition and stronger country brand name (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

5.3.2 Legislation

However as it seems, China has tried to open its borders for their citizens but there is still limitations and drawbacks. Certain passport types regulates how often and for how long time Chinese tourists are allowed to travel. All journeys have to be made in groups, individual travelling is forbidden. Furthermore the Chinese can only book their travel through a handful of travelling agencies selected and approved by the Chinese government (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004). Besides, it is absolutely prohibited for the Chinese tour operators to arrange tours to countries not yet confirmed as Approved Destinations. Even nowadays the foreign airline companies are not allowed to decide on themselves how frequently aviations they wish to arrange to China. Such decisions are only made by signed mutual contracts with the Chinese government (World Tourism Organization, 2003).

However since China joined the World Trade Organization in 2003 criticism has arisen due to China's restricted travel policy. Especially the member states and affluent Chinese people are not satisfied with the barriers. Countries that join the World Trade Organization should allow an unrestricted free market, including free movements across the borders. Even if China has not yet agreed with any specific conditions with the World Trade Organization regarding tourism, the China National Tourism Administration claims that in five years, until 2008 all the Chinese citizen will be able to travel free. China National Tourism Administration is the central organization in China that administrates travel policies and decides which country that will receive Approved Destination Status (World Tourism Organization, 2003).

5.4 The Chinese tourist

According to an investigation made by the consulting firm Price Waterhouse Coopers in 2001, the average Chinese tourist is a married male between 24 and 44 years old with high income. He holds a university degree with and works in an executive position. Highly significant factors that determinate which destination a Chinese traveller tend to choose are criteria such as price, cost of living, quality of hotels, weather conditions, friendly attitude and welcoming from hosts so that they feel that their invested money has been worth spending. However the investigation also concluded that there are mainly three groups of Chinese that could be distinguished; *seniors* in China retires relatively early comparing with the Western World which gives them much more free time for travelling. The seniors are often travelling in group excursions during off-peak seasons and it is not unusual that the children are paying for the trip as this is common practice in China. The second market segment, *younger people* between 25 and 35 years old are those who seek for more adventurous journeys comparing with the seniors during summer holidays. The youth have become a strong consuming group with high purchasing power. The third and last segment includes *families*. Families are those who are more price sensitive than younger people and seniors. Therefore they tend to cut their travelling expenses through travels to neighbouring countries (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

Even if the majority of Chinese travellers are represented by men, female travelling is on the increase. Chinese students studying abroad are also the group which has increased in number. As a working Chinese citizen tends to travel only one week up to nine days it is very much of importance that they can do as much as possible during the short time period (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

The table below summarizes the current trends in Chinese tourism. The trends on how the Chinese outbound tourism will develop indicate a strong increase for visiting more interesting places rather than only within Asia. Here Europe and especially Scandinavia can capture some market share since the Chinese people are becoming more and more interested. As it is today, travelling to Australia and New Zealand is highly popular among the Chinese. Sightseeing to larger cities is also very popular since many Chinese prefer to buy things. One important aspect to consider is that the Chinese wish to pay all expenses before they make their trips. Today as more Chinese people are travelling than before, almost all types of travels seems to increase (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004). However Chinese group travels to Asian destinations seems to decrease. The Singapore Tourism Board declare a drop from 73 percent 1993 to 60,4 percent year 2000, Macau faces the same development with decreasing group tourism (World Tourism Organization, 2003).

Trend	Location	Status
Traditional destinations is replaced by new interesting places	Australia, New Zealand & Japan	↑
Traditional sightseeing replaced by active participation activities	Anywhere	↗
Travelling during off-peak seasons	Anywhere	↗
Short tour trips in order to visit many places during a shorter time period	Anywhere	↑
Arrangements to big cities with sightseeing	Metropolis and larger cities	↑
Culture travels and experiences	Anywhere	↗
Echo tourism and nature experiences	Anywhere	↗
Sun travels	Warm and sunny places	↗
Skiing travels with winter activities	Dominated by north-east China and South Korea	↗
“Zero dollar tourism”, all expenses paid beforehand when travelling with tour operators	Anywhere	↑

Table 3 - Current trends on Chinese travelling (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004)

5.4.1 Chinese tourism in Europe

In China, four customer segments are identified more Europe friendly than others and therefore have higher tendency to visit Europe. The first corresponds to the *intellectual Chi-*

nese. This group has in some way been familiar with the European lifestyle through literature, music, television or art and therefore wants to experience the region at place. The second is the *youth* group, who is into the way western way of living, which is represented in Europe. They want to feel the atmosphere and therefore have a desire to visit Europe. The *rich and wealthy* Chinese choose Europe as an alternative destination because Europe for them is a very exotic place. The last group is represent by the more *common Chinese* that have made long time savings in order to make a trip to Europe (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

Even if these groups have been easily identified, their preferences are dependent on which region of China they are living in. For example, the same group of rich people in Beijing would not prefer to do same things as rich in Shanghai. Generally people from the capital town Beijing have a preference for culture, architecture and art. They are fascinated with European history and ancient monuments, while people from Shanghai prefer shopping and diverse amusements. Various adventure activities are factors that tempt people from Guangdong. (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

5.4.1.1 Popular destinations

Asia is still the most popular region to visit for the majority of the Chinese travellers. The region stands for over 60 percent of total outward journeys while Europe is second with 23 percent followed by North America (10 percent) and Oceania (3 percent). In Europe, Russia is the single most popular destination among the Chinese with nearly 60 percent (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

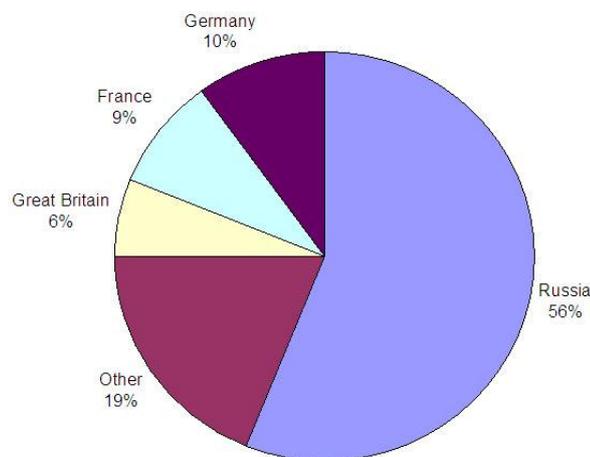


Figure 3 – European destinations for Chinese outbound tourists (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004)

Nevertheless according to a report published by the China Outbound Tourism Research Project, the demand for travelling to the United Kingdom, Germany and France has increased highly from recent years, while Russia as a destination has diminished slightly. Figures from 2004 indicates that other European destinations, excluding the larger popular countries Russia, Germany, France and UK, represented 38.8 percent compared with only 19 percent from 2000 (China Outbound Tourism Research Project, 2006).

Exact figures on how much of the market the Scandinavian countries captures is hard to say. However data from 2002 indicated that somewhere between 60 000 up to 80 000 Chinese visited Scandinavia (Scandinavian Tourist Board, 2004).

5.4.2 Chinese tourism in Scandinavia

Even if Scandinavia has not yet become a popular or frequent destination among the Chinese, it is on the right track. One important issue to overcome is that Scandinavia has never been the first choice for Chinese travellers. Scandinavia is relatively unknown for most of the Chinese people. For many Chinese visitors to Scandinavia, it has only been a destination to visit since they have been in neighbouring countries. In order to overcome this psychological barrier, Scandinavia as a destination must be able to attract the Chinese tourists (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

The majority of Chinese tourists visiting Scandinavia are people on so called *Technical Visits*. This includes individuals as civil servants working for the government or major Chinese firms and students on exchange. The purpose with technical visits is to send Chinese people to foreign countries to learn more about and adopt new knowledge that could be useful for the Chinese government and companies. Scandinavia is mostly an attractive destination for this type of technical visits since the region is recognized as a high tech society with political stability and an efficient market economy. Hitherto traditional and regular tourists have not been a usual phenomenon. According to Scandinavian Tourist Board, one important factor that in the end matters why a Chinese select Scandinavia is due to the nature within the region. For Chinese people Scandinavia possesses a beautiful nature that is nice to behold. Visiting the nature and experience it is something Chinese people rarely can do in their own country and this is therefore highly appreciated when they visit Scandinavia (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

	Common Chinese tourist	European Chinese tourist	Scandinavian Chinese tourist
Who?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Married male between 24 and 44 years old People with high incomes People with university degrees People with executive positions at work/Business Families Seniors Younger people Women Students First time travellers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intellectual Youth Rich & Wealthy People with long-time savings Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business tourists Students
Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tech visits Enjoy life First time travelling Adventure Shopping Studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tech visits Studies Atmosphere Europe Experience lifestyle Exotic foreign destination Long time savings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tech visits Studies Nature Spontaneous

Table 4 - Characteristics of the different Chinese tourists (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004)

How Chinese people experience Scandinavia in relation to other selected destinations can be illustrated in a perception map. Figure 2 shows Scandinavia's position in relation to other selected destinations. As the figure shows Chinese people regard Scandinavia as a rather expensive destination, only Japan is considered to be more expensive. Japan has also the highest perceived quality. New Zealand has slightly higher perceived quality (Swedish Tourist Authority¹, 2004).

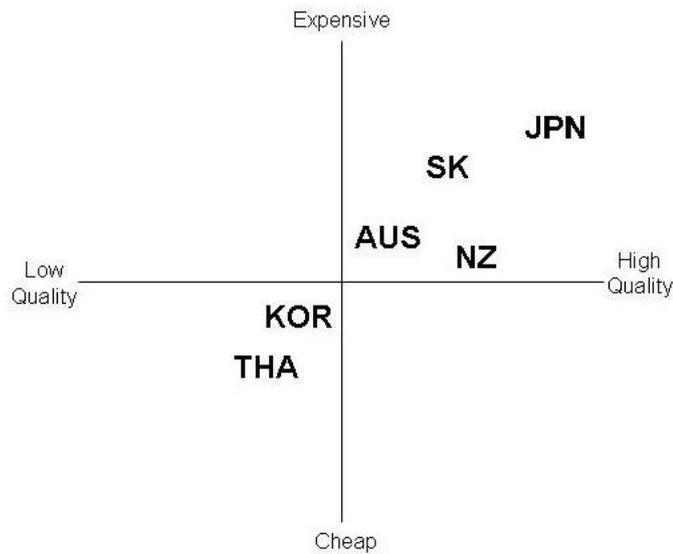


Figure 4 - Scandinavia's (SK) position on a perception map, compared to competing destinations. JPN=Japan
 AUS=Australia NZ=New Zealand KOR=Korea THA=Thailand. Figure adapted from Swedish
 Tourist Authority¹ (2004, September)

5.4.3 Chinese tourism in Sweden

Figures from 2005 showed that 18 278 Chinese visited Sweden that given year. 80 percent entered Sweden with business visa while barely nine percent travelled on a tourist visa and just about six percent visited family. Remaining five percent belonged to culture, politic, education or other minor visa categories (see appendix 1 for full statistics). According to the Swedish Tourist Authority² (2004) the main attraction for Chinese visitors is without any doubt Stockholm. Most visitors' stays between one to seven days and the majority of the Chinese visitors enjoy their stay in Sweden. Due to the positive reactions among the Chinese travellers, many of them would not hesitate to recommend Sweden to their families and friends. Only a small percentage has had negative opinions.

A large portion of the travellers were middle aged men with various university degrees. It is almost only the upper middle class and richer families that have possibility to visit Sweden with regards to financial matters (Swedish Tourist Authority², 2004).

6 Empirical findings

In this chapter our empirical findings are presented. The results are categorised under marketing a country and Chinese tourism. Finally there is also a part about the perception of Sweden among Chinese citizens.

In total twenty-five respondents have been involved in the empirical research.

Gunilla Sjöberg and *Ylva Björnberg* both work with VisitSweden, a Swedish national tourism organisation dealing with the marketing and branding of Sweden abroad. Sjöberg works as Market Coordinator for Asia and works as Brand Development Manager. Björnberg stresses that her answers are only her own opinions. *Thomas Carlhed* and *Charlotte Juul* works at SI in Stockholm. SI mainly deals with branding of Sweden. Carlhed is the Brand Manager and Juul is the Project Manager coordinating the Swedish cultural activities in connection to the port calls of the Swedish Ship Götheborg (commonly known as Ostindiefararen in Sweden). *Anna Wihlborg* and *Per Dong* works for Scandinavian Perspectives, a Swedish travel agency bringing Chinese visitors to Sweden and Scandinavia. Wihlborg is the Marketing Manager in Stockholm and Dong is manager of the company's operations in Shanghai. *Tommy Hägg* is the Sales and Marketing manager over north Europe and Russia at Miki Travels in Stockholm. Miki Travels is also a travel agency bringing Chinese tourists to Sweden. *Dan Björk* is the manager of sales and marketing for the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi.

In addition, five Chinese exchange students at Jönköping International Business School have participated in a focus group interview and twelve Chinese citizens have responded to an e-mail survey regarding their knowledge and perception about Sweden.

6.1 Nation branding

According to Carlhed the perception of Sweden is good in Europe and North America but weaker in Asia and that the evolving Asian regions therefore must be more prioritized. There are many positive arguments to use when promoting Sweden, yet the problem lies in how to reach the target. Björnberg declares that during the recent years the interest has increased due to higher visibility and publicity of Sweden and Swedish companies in China. So there is a great potential.

Sjöberg states that VisitSweden work through workshops, travel agents, newspapers and television programs in order to market Sweden in China. VisitSweden cooperates also with various organizations such as SI, the Swedish Trade Council, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Embassies, Invest in Sweden Agency and Stockholm Visitors Board. Unfortunately there are not sufficient resources for marketing activities aimed directly at the end consumer and no special marketing activities are therefore planned to the near future. Instead the focus should continue to be on media and tourist fairs. Further Sjöberg asserts that mainly printed media should be used in China in as large extent as possible since the most common medium to gain news in China is just printed publications. In addition Carlhed means that it is important that the message that is delivered to the Chinese is simple and clear. Further Carlhed highlights that the transfer of competence might be interesting as Sweden has much to offer to the Chinese. As many Chinese people nowadays have access to Internet, still controlled by the Chinese government though, web-based communication is something that SI will use more of.

Even though trade fairs are an effective way of raising awareness, every Chinese person can not afford to pay the fee and participate in the organized exhibitions where Scandinavia is

promoted. According to Juul, SI's main activity is to promote Swedish culture and society as appointed by the Swedish Foreign Ministry. SI's contribution to brand Sweden as a country lies within cultural activities as dance, movie, theatre and music arrangements. Carlhed points out that the institute is working closely to the Swedish foreign authorities in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Canton.

Björnberg declares the importance for VisitSweden to participating in travel fairs in order to gain and improve contacts with local Chinese travel agencies. She also makes it clear that decisions and marketing strategies are not centrally decided in Sweden, the foreign overseas offices have the full responsibility to determine and form strategies.

Today the same messages and arguments are used uniformly in basically the entire world, mainly because there is a lack of knowledge about how different messages work in different countries. However, in a not to distant future the knowledge will increase and the messages can be more adapted to the different markets. Björnberg says that when VisitSweden markets Sweden internationally, not only the tourism part is promoted but the whole image of Sweden as a brand is exposed. According to both Björnberg and Sjöberg, the brand "Sweden" has a relatively high recognition worldwide; however as a travel destination Sweden struggles with low acquaintance. When it comes to China, one reason for the low recognition might be that Sweden as destination has only been allowed recent years. During the conversation with Carlhed, he mentioned the Swedish culture is a good argument when marketing Sweden. Further Carlhed stated that culture is unique to a country and can not be copied. Sweden is a new thinking nation with strong ethnical values in terms of equality between women and men, environment and human rights. This is absolutely something he believes that Chinese are interested of and can make use of.

Carlhed mentions that Swedish gastronomy should be brought to the international market. The image of Sweden should not only be associated with Swedish meatballs, which indeed has been well introduced worldwide thanks to IKEA, he claims that there exists a strong demand of Swedish food, therefore the whole "Swedish kitchen" should be introduced.

In addition Carlhed thought that if Sweden was able to attract more students from China studying here, this would undoubtedly be a good alternative to introduce Sweden for them.

Carlhed consider all aspects (tourism, exports, governance, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, people, and tourism) are important when working with nation brands. Together the pieces represent the image of Sweden. One exception might be countries as New Zealand which has received much attention worldwide through culture, especially via movies. Carlhed means that the parameter *people* is important to the extent that Sweden and Swedish people have to indicate higher presence, both officially, for example the Swedish Royal Family and government members, and privately, that is companies. Regarding *culture* it is important that Sweden should not only be associated with Jan-Ove Waldner even if he is well recognized in China. Sweden must strive to connect all values, heritages and history to give a visual image of the country. However Carlhed means that today's resources are not enough to brand Sweden internationally. He would like to have more resources at disposal.

When we asked Carlhed if the Olympic Games would be a great event for Sweden to host in order to raise worldwide awareness including Chinese peoples, he absolutely considered this as a good idea. In general he believes that all major events would be good to use. Carlhed would also like to see more cooperation with the Swedish firms operating within China in terms of promotion activities. He mentioned that sometimes there can be compli-

cations and exemplifies this by saying that it might be hard to work with IKEA, as they are quite busy and there are no clear ideas how the institutions should work with the company. The same question was also given to Björnberg and Sjöberg, however none of them were as sure as Carlhed. Björnberg did not directly say it would be the perfect solution, nevertheless she thought that it might be a good marketing tactic.

The combination of exposing well perceived Swedish firms and persons by the Chinese, for example IKEA and Waldner together is indeed a good strategy that both Björnberg and Sjöberg at VisitSweden mutually agree upon. Further Sjöberg proclaims that the ship "Götheborg", the ship that sails from Gothenburg to China will be a great event to promote Sweden. According to Svenska Ostindiska Compagniet AB (2006), the Swedish Ship Götheborg will arrive in Canton and Shanghai 18th July respectively 29th August. Some of the major Swedish companies Volvo, Skanska, Ericsson, Atlas Copco, SKF that have sponsored Götheborg will be represented in the celebration events in China and also arrange various seminars on the ship. The Swedish Royal Family will also attend the ceremony together with the Confederation of Swedish Enterprise and the Swedish television SVT, who will broadcast the event and assist with promotion of the Swedish companies in order to be associated with Sweden.

Nowadays the mainstream of Chinese only knows that products from for example Ericsson are of high quality but they rarely recognize the products' country of origin. Juul announces that SI will also be represented with the Swedish ship Götheborg when it arrives in China. The mission is not to be a part of the expedition but to raise the awareness of Sweden as a country. Carlhed emphasize the amazing attractiveness of the ship Götheborg. He means that this is and will be an important event for Sweden to get attention from hundreds of millions Chinese that will follow the event, both at place and in media. Projects and events like this is something that has to be more often arranged in Carlhed's opinion. Moreover Juul says that the Svenska Ostindiska Compagniet is responsible for the sailing expedition while all events at the ports are arranged either by the "partners" (the Swedish companies supporting the expedition) or Swedish institutions.

Finally Juul states that SI together with VisitSweden, ISA, the Swedish Trade Council and the Swedish Foreign Ministry will jointly arrange a "Sweden-day" in Canton where seminars called "Share the Future" will be organized together with performances by Swedish artists.

A report published by the Swedish Tourist Authority in 2004 makes clear that marketing strategies should be localized rather than aimed to the mainstream since China is such a heterogeneous country. But in this point, Sjöberg did not really agree. According to Sjöberg this report is out of date. She pointed out that VisitSweden's marketing campaigns in China were not tailor made for certain Chinese region.

"We are in the learning stage, we find it difficult to know what marketing strategies that works on the common Chinese market."

(Gunilla Sjöberg)

Regarding evaluation of Sweden's nation branding efforts in China, Sjöberg states that in the short run it is hard to know whether certain marketing campaigns have been successful or not. Only after two to three years the various marketing strategies can be evaluated. However, since Sweden has not done any larger promotion in China, the evaluation process could be misleading. Sjöberg also concludes that the promotion work of Sweden still can meet barriers set up by the Chinese government:

“It is still much about politics in China. Directives from the government could make our work more difficult.”

(Gunilla Sjöberg)

Carlhed says it is unfortunate that VisitSweden’s official homepage, with all information about Sweden, is not available in Chinese due to lack of resources. As the majority of Chinese people do not understand English, a Chinese homepage would be to prefer. However Hägg at Miki Travel says that even if the knowledge in English is not common among Chinese people, the situation has certainly becoming better and better. In Asia Sweden works in cooperation with VisitDenmark and Innovation Norway in an equally owned company named Scandinavian Tourist Board. Chinese webpage for all three countries are available in this cooperation

6.2 Tourism marketing

Scandinavian Perspectives has a very diverse portfolio of arrangements and almost every arrangement sold is tailor made to some extent. Arrangements where Chinese visitors visit either one Scandinavian country or two or more countries in just a few days are common. For many Chinese Scandinavia is known for the beautiful nature, therefore nature related activities are common in combination with other activities related to culture and sightseeing.

A large portion of the visits that Scandinavian Perspectives handles are some called technical visits where the visitors has possibility to study and learn about for example infrastructure, city planning, environment, education and elderly care. Even though Chinese economy is experiencing a strong growth the country still is far behind Sweden in many of these aspects. Therefore technical visits are common and popular.

One of the main obstacles restraining Chinese from visiting Sweden is according to Wihlborg the high price level. It is hard to motivate Chinese tourists to choose Sweden instead of other cheaper and better known European destinations such as France and Italy. Hägg argues that the Chinese travellers are not that price sensitive when it comes to for example shopping. However as long as the quality is good they prefer to save money on food and accommodation.

One problem marketing Sweden is that Sweden for the majority of the Chinese citizen is totally unknown. Björnberg and Wihlborg agree that the main challenge indeed is the low acquaintance about Sweden as a country. Since the majority of the Chinese people do not have much knowledge about Sweden, Björnberg emphasizes the importance to market the entire image of Sweden along with certain destinations.

Moreover Sjöberg states that VisitSweden does not market Sweden alone at the moment, rather they market entire Scandinavia. For example the Norwegian fjords are one of the most popular Scandinavian sights and consequently a frequently promoted feature. Other things related and promoted are nature, big cities, unique experiences, qualitative travels and Scandinavia as a high status destination. Wihlborg says that Scandinavian Perspectives are using arguments like exotic, beautiful environment and high status to attract Chinese travellers.

According to Wihlborg Chinese usually have rather high demands and expectations on service when travelling. Language is usually a problem, therefore Scandinavian Perspectives

always have Chinese speaking guides travelling along with the Chinese visitors. Chinese food is also a continuing theme when dealing with Chinese tourists. Usually the Chinese demand genuine Chinese cuisine when travelling abroad. Scandinavian Perspectives always provides food from genuine Chinese restaurants in order to satisfy their customers, according to Wihlborg even the hotel chain Scandic provides Chinese food to their Chinese visitors, as well as Chinese newspapers and television. Such extra services are important to take into account when dealing with tourists, sometimes it is not enough to only promote the country, being unable to cater for the needs of the tourist can hurt the tourism industry substantially. Sjöberg compares these needs of the Chinese to the Swedish tourists need when Charter tourism was introduced in the 1960's.

Wihlborg also discussed the practical aspects of tourism marketing in China. As a Swedish travel agency it is not possible to market the company's offerings straight to the consumer (business to consumer). Scandinavian Perspectives has to work as a subcontractor (business to business) to Chinese travel agencies approved by the government. In order to reach out to these agencies internet and e-mail, as well as direct marketing are important tools. Maybe even more important are trade fairs, for example CITM, Chinese International Travel Mart. Hägg claims that it is not illegal to promote directly to end consumer, it is just a question about distribution of the travels which at the moment is most effective done through the local travel agents. It would be to act beyond these agencies which have great influence and trust within the market for travel and thereby Miki Travels might loose customers. Networking is also very important in general when doing business in China according to Wihlborg. In order to keep the business running smoothly Scandinavian Perspectives has two local offices, in Beijing and Shanghai. These offices are also important in order to establish good relations with local companies and authorities.

Miki Travel is using basically the same methods to sell their services as Scandinavian Perspectives. According to Hägg, Miki Travel is cooperating from the four local offices with Chinese travel agencies which sell their offerings. Miki travel also uses workshops and participates in trade fairs; they have cooperation with Scandinavian Tourist Board similar as Scandinavian Perspectives.

Hägg is of the opinion that Sweden's contribution with respect to marketing is rather weak. The tourism industry has a turnover at about SKr 100 billion in Sweden but still the occupation rate of the hotels in Stockholm are only about 30 percent and the figure for the entire country is about 50 percent. Hägg further suggests a more developed tourism plan for Sweden in China and that for example Chinese media should be invited to Sweden in order to increase the awareness of Sweden in China. He also mentions that it is a good idea to use the table tennis star Jan-Ove Waldner in order to promote Sweden, and for Swedish companies to appear with Waldner as he is very popular in China.

According to Hägg the budget for marketing in China is too small compared to the turnover of the tourism industry. Moreover Hägg means that the transportation barriers are a problem, for example Air China is the only airline that operates Stockholm-Beijing non-stop, which means that it is easier to travel to other Scandinavian and European destinations such as Helsinki (Vantaa) and Copenhagen (Kastrup), the bigger part of the Chinese travellers to these airports are only transferring and a small part stays in the two countries, a very small part to Sweden. Today the capacity is approximately 480 000 flight seats per year to Scandinavia from China. In these matters Carlhed supports Hägg's opinion. There has to be more direct flights from China to Sweden. Sjöberg mentions that VisitSweden works with a project called *Stockholm Access* together with Arlanda Airport, Stockholm Visitors

Board, Business Region Stockholm and Invest in Sweden Agency. The project promotes more direct flights between Sweden and China, for example from Shanghai and Canton.

Hägg also believes that Sweden and all the actors in this specific market have to unite and start working towards the same goals in order to attract more tourism from China. Regarding the question if there is some regulations about marketing Hägg explains that it is illegal to promote play and casino companies in China, there is many different kind of nightlife activities that is also forbidden to show in the promotion information about Sweden.

When dealing with environmental issues, Carlhed says that one good idea might be to market ecological travelling in Sweden. This means travelling around in alternative transport communications which does not harm the nature as badly as common means of transports. Carlhed means that too many incoming tourists could on the otherwise be harmful. He exemplifies this by saying that the wild and rich nature life of Serengeti, Africa, would not be the same if the concentration of tourists was too intensive.

6.3 Destination branding

Swedish winter tourism is a theme highly promoted according to Sjöberg. The Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi is one well known winter destination in Sweden. Indeed the Ice Hotel is a special destination to promote when marketing Sweden towards China. Even if the total number of Chinese visitors to the hotel is quite low today, it could definitely increase in the future. According to Björk at the Ice Hotel less than on hundred Chinese yearly visit the Ice Hotel. Today the Ice Hotel does not have any promotion towards China at all. However a delegation from the Ice Hotel will travel to Beijing this June in order to create awareness of its existence and establish contacts with Chinese travel agencies. The arrangement will be held together with Scandinavian Tourist Board. For the moment those Chinese who have visited the Ice Hotel have been invited by major Swedish companies operating in China. Only in this way they have been noticed by the existence of the Ice Hotel, since according to Björk again, the hotel has no promotion campaigns to the Chinese market. Furthermore Björk states that the main appreciated activities among the Chinese visitors are the common winter activities that is arranged by the hotel. As of today there has been no Chinese visitor to the Ice Hotel in summertime and hence it is hard to tell how the summer activities would be received by the Chinese visitors.

According to Björk the average Chinese tourist visiting the Ice Hotel is a business person. They have high demands of security and insist to eating Chinese food, which goes in line with the findings from Scandinavian Perspectives. As a language problem exists, the Ice Hotel offers translators as well. Especially the demand of eating Chinese food is something that Björk says the Ice Hotel has learnt during the years.

“Always Chinese food and translator”

(Dan Björk)

Furthermore Björk says that the feedback usually is very positive. However he says that the feedback comes from the company who has invited the Chinese and not directly from the Chinese visitors. In order to raise the awareness of the Ice Hotel, Björk believes in hard work, establishing networks with Chinese agencies and listen to those who knows the market. He also believes that the location of the Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi has advantages, if the hotel were located in for example Stockholm the competition would be of a whole differ-

ent nature with other metropolitan cities such as Paris. Jukkasjärvi is competing in a totally different category of cities.

6.4 Chinese tourism

The Chinese legislation changes all the time as the country is opening up the borders more and more. It is hard for all the different actors on the market to keep up to date with all the latest regulations, therefore some ambiguity can be experienced when dealing with this topic. The following findings are a compilation of our respondent's interpretations of the subject of matter.

6.4.1 Findings from travel agencies and institutions

One aspect that was brought up during the interviews with the travel agencies was the obstacles that the Chinese government has imposed on tourism as well as foreign travel agencies. According to Wihlborg the main obstacle for Chinese leisure tourists to go abroad is the visa regulations. The introduction of ADS-visa is still forcing with some bureaucratic barriers but it is getting better step by step. Leisure tourists must hand in their itinerary including what they want to do and hotels they are supposed to stay at. These programs can not be changed during the travel, it might even be illegal. All activities must be arranged by authorised travel agencies. In order for a foreign travel agency to become authorised the agency must provide the government with a great deal of information about organization, business, excerpt from trade registries etcetera. All this in order to prove that the agency runs a serious business.

Furthermore Wihlborg states that Business tourism has fewer limitations compared to leisure tourism, but an invitation letter must be provided from the company that the person wants to visit. The process is basically divided into two parts; first a reference letter from the local business partner including the whole travel programme. In the second phase is the invitation letter where all personal info and background about the travellers must be included. Embassies can deny such applications and this is not very uncommon as the controls are very strict. However, Scandinavian Perspectives does not experience any problems with this according to Wihlborg. In the case of technical visits the regulations looks pretty much like business travels.

Hägg means that the visa procedures are strangling the tourism. In order to get a tourist visa the group has to be at least five persons big. Three persons are required for equivalent visa in the categories private, business and governmental. There is a large pressure from the government on the Chinese travel agencies that the tourists actually return to China. According to Hägg there were between 130 000 and 140 000 drop-outs from the tours in the European Union during the year 2005. If a travel agency gets too many drop-outs the agency can be suspended from business for two years.

Nevertheless Wihlborg believes that there is a great potential for Chinese outbound tourism, today the huge Chinese outbound tourism has only started. It takes time, but once the process has started it will be impossible to stop. Great steps towards a more open society have already been taken by the Chinese governments. Bureaucracy is taking its time as well, but things are definitely starting to loosen up.

Wihlborg means that today all Chinese tourists are travelling in groups as this is the only option with regards to legislation. However, Wihlborg also believes that the Chinese would

prefer to travel in groups to remote destinations even if individual travelling was allowed as this gives some feeling of security. Today Scandinavian Perspectives does not see any indications that the demand for individual travel would increase. Hägg on the other hand states that compared to the Japanese travellers Chinese are less careful and therefore also less sensitive to travel alone. Dong believes that most of the people prefer to travel in groups because of the language barrier. For English speaking people or so called “white collars”, individual travel or travel with the family only is preferred.

Wihlborg says that the same reasoning goes for the question whether Chinese prefer to travel with arranged tours or to make own arrangements; as Chinese due to legislation have to travel with tours this is of course the preferred way to travel. Scandinavian Perspectives sells tailor made arrangements so in one way the arrangements are the customers own arrangement, there is always a large number of adjustments and changes before the arrangement is finalized.

When asked about what age groups in China are travelling most, Wihlborg and Dong responds that the middle-aged (31-59 years old) is the largest group and that this group is travelling mainly through their work. According to Sjöberg the senior generation, the “wealthy and healthy” couples that have high incomes are most interesting to aim the marketing at. The family segment starts to have more money and they often travel with their parents in group, making them an interesting group as well. Tommy Hägg, Miki travel divides the tourism into three categories, private tourists consisting of young people and business tourists who usually are between 31-59 years old. The political tourists are usually over 50 years old.

Sjöberg believes that the interest for travelling to Sweden is increasing, especially among business people. Dong says that Chinese outbound tourism is getting bigger and bigger and more different categories are starting to emerge. Right now most of the groups are focusing on low price and many countries; in the future quality will be an important issue. Also casual and cultural trips will become more popular.

According to Wihlborg the cities are the most interesting destinations for Chinese tourists in Scandinavian, but it is common to also make visits to the Norwegian fjords and Rovaniemi in Finland, known as the abode of Santa Claus. Even Dong mentions the fjords as a popular destination. The tourists are also interested in culture, nature and sightseeing. Shopping is never a main event but it is indeed popular to buy souvenirs such as various designer-ware and glass.

Adventure tourism is increasing in popularity. Another very popular activity that has become possible recently in Sweden is casino visits. Further Hägg means that the general Beijing traveller is more interested of culture and nature and the Shanghai travellers are a little bit more shopping and entertainment oriented. The Shanghai citizens put themselves on airs and have a more posh style than the citizens in Beijing. Dong agrees that nature and sightseeing are popular activities and even shopping. Sjöberg means that Chinese travellers unfortunately do not know what Sweden has to offer but that VisitSweden works a lot with winter tourism and Swedish design, among other things.

Asia is naturally the main destination for Chinese according to Wihlborg. Hong Kong and Macau as well as Australia have geographical advantages. Sweden is definitely an alternative destination in Europe. The main destinations in Europe are more well know countries such as France and Italy, countries that compared to Sweden has substantial price advantages. Dong states that Paris, London, Rome and the Alps are popular destinations in

Europe while New York and Hawaii are popular destinations outside Europe. Chinese travelling to Sweden has usually been in Europe before and wants to return. Chinese people tend to choose Sweden because it is exotic and they want to experience things that not many Chinese have done before, Therefore Sweden has become a high status destination and is on the way up in popularity Wihlborg claims. Among Chinese Sweden is known as a clean country with unspoiled countryside. It is also known as a country with high quality, high standard of living and expensive. Dong mentions that Sweden is known as a cold country that is very beautiful and clean, in addition many Chinese are familiar with Jan-Ove Waldner and Ikea but not too many other things. The notion of Sweden as an exotic destination is reinforced by Sjöberg. Sjöberg also states that especially the business tourists are not very price conscious which means that the price level is not a problem, it is also of some importance to many business tourists that the destinations are different so that they can brag about the exotic places they have been to. The price level is otherwise one problem that many of the respondents brings up, according to Wihlborg it is a problem both for the Chinese going here and for Scandinavian Perspectives as it is hard to motivate tourists to choose Sweden instead of France or any other cheaper European country. Hägg means that the Chinese tourists in general spends a small amount of money during the actual journey but on the other hand are they less price sensitive initially when booking hotels and other arrangements.

According to Wihlborg, Scandinavian Perspectives' clients choose to go to Sweden and Scandinavia mainly due to business purposes such as to learn more about infrastructure, city planning, environment, nature, education and elderly care. Today China is many years behind Sweden in development and therefore these points are interesting to study for Chinese. Hägg states there is also interest in the pharmaceutical industry. It is great start up and devolvement costs in this industry and therefore it is tendency to counterfeit from Chinese pharmaceutical companies.

Sjöberg states that since the business and leisure tourism is very regulated by the visa regulations, the countries which issues visa's easily also naturally become preferred destinations. This puts Sweden in a relatively good position. Unfortunately Sweden has a very weak position as destination and brand in China. The fact that China until recently has been much closed for outbound tourism might be one reason. The visa regulations are according to Wihlborg one reason that the Americas are not as popular as destination as one could believe.

Chinese tourists are demanding a very high service level and at the same time they are unpredictable, changes are very common. The requirements on standard of accommodation are very high, at least four star hotels are usually required, the Chinese also tend to think that Swedish four star hotels does not hold the same standard as equivalent hotels in China. Large rooms and large beds is a must. Electric water boilers in each room are a standard requirement. Chinese are very nitpicking on these points. Language is a common problem for Chinese tourists and Scandinavian Perspectives always has a bilingual guide speaking Chinese and local language to help the group. Requirements on food are also very high. Chinese food is required. The food must be genuine Chinese food and not Swedish style Chinese food. The groups usually eat one or two local meals and when they do they usually eat salmon. Sjöberg agrees on the food aspect, travelling Chinese still demand Chinese food, Sjöberg also mentions that Scandic Hotels in Sweden provides Chinese breakfast, news magazines and Chinese news television. Chinese demands high service and language translation. The demand for an emotional experience as well as food and secure locations are big according to Dong. The demand on accommodation does on the other hand not really

differ. Sjöberg says that the Chinese behaviour in this respect is similar to the Swedes behaviour during the start of the charter tourism to Spain.

6.5 Perception of Sweden among Chinese

In order to create a picture of the Chinese perception of Sweden and how private persons experience the regulations concerning travel and tourism one focus-group interview was performed as well as a e-mail survey was sent out to several Chinese in our extended personal networks, twelve replies were received.

6.5.1 Chinese living in Sweden

Five exchange students studying in Jönköping participated in the interview, four of the five students who were participating in the focus group had been in Sweden for 3 months when the interview took place, and one student had been living in Sweden for two years. Unfortunately only two of the respondents were from mainland China, one of them the one who had lived in Sweden for two years. The three others were from Hong Kong, even though the thesis deals with mainland China the three persons from Hong Kong are interesting since Hong Kong and mainland China share many values and culture.

At first everybody claimed that they chose Sweden for no particular reason or because exchange studies were compulsory at their home university. Anyhow, after some conversation everybody agreed that they were interested in Sweden and that the culture was important when choosing Sweden since it is very different from Asia.

The respondents had all visited Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö and Kiruna. Kiruna's or rather Jukkasjärvi's main attraction seemed to be the Ice Hotel. The three big cities seemed to be natural places to go for all the students.

When the respondents were asked what they are looking for when they are travelling in Sweden they all agreed on that rural destinations were most interesting, nature is definitely something that is highly appreciated. Urban destinations did not seem as appealing to these persons. Many different things that might be interesting to a tourist in Sweden were brought up during the interview. The respondents thought that nature was a big thing for Sweden and that rural destinations were more interesting than urban. Also architecture and history were mentioned as two interesting things about Sweden that could be interesting to Chinese tourists. Shopping in Sweden was rejected due to high price levels and short opening hours compared to Asia.

When asked about problems experienced as a Chinese tourist in Sweden numerous comments came up. Not very surprising were the language barrier. Problems understanding various forms and documents that only existed in Swedish and problems to get hold of local news were some of the reactions. The food did not seem to be a real problem; however the respondents found it hard to find genuine Swedish food. There were some reactions on the availability of reasonably priced accommodation for tourists.

Questions about perception of Sweden and the Swedes were also asked. When the respondents were asked to describe the typical Swede a great number of answers came up, as expected positive as well as negative attributes. The typical Swede is according to this group very direct and does not say very much. The Swede can also be seen as a bit passive, shy and closed towards foreigners. However the Swede is also always on time, self disciplined, willing to help and in addition, nice and easy to integrate with

Before arriving to Sweden the respondents thought that Sweden was a cold, beautiful and expensive country. They also associated Sweden with high quality, nice design and as a safe location. After arriving to Sweden they all think that this idealized picture aligns well with the reality. When asked to describe Sweden with a few words the answer is quiet, safe, cold, stylish and boring due to lack of entertainment.

None of the respondents have ever seen any promotion or advertising of Sweden in China, but all of them have seen advertising by IKEA which they all associate with Sweden.

Nobody in the group is sure whether he or she ever will return to Sweden after the studies here have been terminated. However nobody except one are reluctant to go back, it rather seems like there is no good reasons to go back to Sweden. The one person that says that he will not return later in his life states this very clear.

Most of the respondents say that they would recommend Sweden as a destination but rather for studies than for vocational or recreational purposes.

In order to sell Sweden as a destination in China various arguments would be useful according to the respondents; architecture, environment, design, history, the Nobel Prize and science. One respondent says that Sweden is simple but stylish, maybe the people would be a good selling argument but absolutely not the food.

The general perception of Sweden in China is probably, according to the respondents that Sweden is far away, cold, expensive yet cheaper than other European countries. The standard is high and so is the social welfare.

Swedish culture is a little bit hard to explain for the respondents but after some discussing they agree that the lifestyle is important and it is also important to enjoy life. People put less focus on their work compared to many Asian cultures. There are not really any cultural similarities between Sweden and China according to the interview.

Cultural differences make it complicated for all of the interviewed persons to live in Sweden. Especially negotiation is an issue. While Chinese are used to introduce themselves properly the Swedes get right down to the issue and talk less about other peripheral things. This also goes for other communication with Swedes, who according to the Chinese are very short when they speak. These differences sometimes makes it hard to integrate into the Swedish culture, language and hard to get to know Swedes and make friends.

China has substantial influences from American and western culture; brands, foods and movies are some examples of things that the Chinese already are used to when arriving in Sweden. However this makes living in Sweden easier or hard to tell, the effect is quite small according to the respondents.

When the respondents are asked about whether they think Chinese are easily adapted to other cultural behaviours the answer is that they probably are but in Sweden's case it is hard since it is hard to meet Swedish people and get into the Swedish family life. The lifestyle can easily be observed but that is about it. Swedes are too passive and therefore very hard to get to know well.

According to our respondents, governmental regulations is the main obstacle to leave the country. It is hard to get a Chinese passport and the receiving country must issue a visa. To get a passport in China is a complicated process and there are a lot of documents that has to be filed. It is common to apply for a Schengen visa that allows the person to travel in the entire Schengen area. For our respondents there has been no problem to get passports or

visas as they are travelling as students and a few of them were from Hong Kong which has a very open policy in these questions compared to mainland China. However the two mainland Chinese students claimed that it is not always business persons gets a passport even though all regulations are followed such as invitations from companies abroad.

6.5.2 Chinese living in China

In this part the response on the e-mail interview is presented, in total twelve Chinese citizens answered to our inquiry. Below is a compilation of the answers. As most of the respondents never had been abroad by the time of the interview the answers might be a bit biased due to lack of knowledge and experience. Nevertheless we deem it interesting to include their answers about their perception of Sweden and travelling from China. It is also worth mentioning that the respondents comes from Shanghai, Wuhan, Suzhou, and Changzhou and the answers should not be generalized as valid for entire China due to the diversity of the country.

Eight out of the twelve respondents have never been abroad from China. Out of the four who have been abroad, two have been to Sweden in business or technical training.

All the respondents says that nature is something they are looking for when they are going abroad, sightseeing is interesting to seven respondents followed by shopping which attracts half of the respondents. Culture respectively people attracts four out of twelve. Technology as well as entertainment and nightlife attract two persons each while adventure only is attracting to one.

Half of the respondents claim that they have special needs or problems with language when they go abroad. Service and food are also two aspects that five respondents mention as problem areas where there are special needs. Secure location is an issue to five respondents and emotional experience is varying in importance to three respondents.

Most respondents, eight out of twelve, prefers to travel in a small group, while one prefers to travel alone in order to easier capture the inside feeling. Remaining three prefers to travel in large groups. Five persons like to join arranged tours.

A few of the interviews associates Sweden with Volvo, also Sony Ericsson and IKEA are mentioned. Other things mentioned are pretty landscapes, nature, beautiful women, snow, skiing and drinking.

All respondents except for one say that they would consider going to Sweden, one is a bit hesitant, responding with a maybe. While most respondents do not give a reason to go to Sweden one answer that it would be a nice place to live for some time and one wants to study in Sweden. Middle age culture is also mentioned. Most respondents mention Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö when asked about places of interest. Uppsala and Hagfors are also mentioned, but in those specific cases the respondents are aware of these places due to business. Only one respondent were not aware of where Sweden is located geographically while all the other respondents knows that Sweden is a part of Northern Europe.

Several persons mention Jan-Ove Waldner when asked about famous persons from Sweden. Alfred Nobel, Carl Wilhelm Scheele, Ingrid Bergman and Greta Garbo were also mentioned by at least one person.

The respondents give various suggestions to how Sweden is perceived in China. Sweden is a beautiful country, clean and cold country, the life is relaxing and peaceful. Further Sweden is a rich country with a good welfare system. The population is small but creative and the people are tall and big. One respondent comments that Chinese know very little about Sweden. We believe that the things mentioned here are the knowledge of the respondents and are not very representative for China at large.

The respondents opinions about regulations of tourism differs, some of the respondents seems to be aware of the legislation while others claim that there are no regulations of travel or tourism and the largest obstacles for travel instead is economical and language and not legislation. However when asked about the future a few of the respondents states that China will open up more in the future as the demand for travelling is increasing.

7 Analysis of how to increase Sweden’s share of the Chinese outbound tourism

In this analysis chapter we are compiling the empirical findings with the theoretical framework. In order to make the structure clear we have used mainly the three groups presented in Table 1 and 5 when referring to the respondent’s opinions.

In order to facilitate for the reader the respondents names, positions and organizations are compiled in the table below.

Name	Position	Organization
Branding and marketing experts		
Ylva Björnberg	Brand Development Manager	VisitSweden
Thomas Carlhed	Brand Manager	Swedish Institute
Charlotte Juul	Project Manager	Swedish Institute
Gunilla Sjöberg	Market Coordinator	VisitSweden
Representatives from the tourism industry		
Dan Björk	Sales and Marketing Manager	The Ice Hotel
Per Dong	Manager	Scandinavian Perspectives
Tommy Hägg	Sales and Marketing Manager for	Miki Travel
Anna Wihlborg	Marketing Manager	Scandinavian Perspectives
Chinese citizens and exchange students		
Chinese citizens	Five exchange students in Jönköping	
Chinese citizens	Twelve Chinese citizens currently living in China	

Table 5 - Respondent overview

7.1 Nation branding

Fan (2006) defines the concept of nation branding as perceived and experienced image of a country among foreigners. In order to create a unified image it is important to include all “areas” when promoting a country. By areas Fan (2006) refers to politics, culture, business and sports. It is also important that the message is simple and clear so that people easily can understand it. Comparing Fan’s (2006) ideas to VisitSweden’s work, we can see that VisitSweden not only markets Sweden in order to attract tourism, rather the entire nation branding concept is taken into consideration. On the contrary O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy (2000) claims that promoting an overall picture of countries would be difficult since it is hard to form all attractions a country has to offer into one united image. Instead single destinations within the country and highlighted and promoted. Today, VisitSweden has selected the strategy of representing Sweden with a united image internationally. O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy (2000) base their arguments upon the different preferences and needs people have. Since VisitSweden does not have a clear strategy to identify which customer segments they want to target, they can not have individual strategies for each target group.

Both Gnoth and Papadopoulos declare the importance of the perceived image (Frost, 2004). Gnoth are of the same opinion as Fan (2006) when it comes to offering a united image of countries. Furthermore there has to be a clear structure where the recipients have been clearly identified (Frost, 2004). Carlhed’s opinion about offering a simple and clear message goes in line with what Fan, Gnoth and Papadopoulos opinions. Fan (2006) mentions that a nation brand is an abstract phenomenon that people have certain pre-

associations to. According to Frost (2004) people associate countries with various distinguishing-marks, for example France is known for fashion while Germany is associated with high quality and luxury cars. Further Frost (2004) claims that there is no doubt about that such associations would also affect peoples' opinions and choices about countries as travel destination.

Papadopoulos explains that reasons for not having a clear message might in some cases relate to insufficient knowledge about the market (Frost, 2004). According to Sjöberg, marketing coordinator at VisitSweden, the Chinese market is relatively unexplored and VisitSweden is still in the learning phase. Therefore they can not yet know the results of the strategies performed as there is still no long term perspective.

Björnberg and Sjöberg from VisitSweden say that Sweden as a brand indeed has a strong presence internationally, but when it comes to Sweden as a travel destination, the status is low. According to Carlhed, brand manager at SI, Chinese people perceive Sweden as a place too far away and unknown for Chinese. Those who actually knows something about Sweden usually knows Volvo, IKEA, Swedish meatballs or Jan-Ove Waldner. All the branding and marketing expert's opinions fully align with Frost's argumentation: high recognition of for example well known companies and trademarks does not always give an adequate and fair image describing the country. Applying Frost's argumentation to Sweden it is clear that even if many Chinese recognize Volvo or Jan-Ove Waldner they do not have a full understanding of Sweden as a travel destination, as their perception of Sweden only refers to products. In order to attract Chinese tourism more than product attributes should be brought to the market. Olins and Kotler state that it is a mistake to assume that a product or service brand is the same thing as the brand of a country (Frost, 2004). Even if the companies are an important part of Sweden's brand they definitely do not reflect all aspects of the tourism possibilities of the country.

In order to overcome the difficulties of having only one perspective of Sweden and not have the opportunity to provide a comprehensive image of Sweden Carlhed, brand manager at SI, believes that it is important to introduce for example the complete Swedish kitchen and food culture to the Chinese in order to change the perception. Too much concentration on Jan-Ove Waldner would neither be good as the aim is to establish a comprehensive picture of Sweden as a nation. Sweden must strive to connect all relevant parameters in order to give the prospective visitor a visual image of how it might be in the country.

Using Goodman's (2005) framework for nation branding, we know that even if Sweden wants to be recognized as a well developed country with beautiful nature, social equality and well preserved environment, all these aspects would absolutely be useless if people are not aware of the country's existence. As the majority of people in China still have small knowledge about Sweden it does not matter in which direction Sweden want to markets itself. Primary people have to be aware of a country's existence.

The parameter *culture* in Anholt's (2005) nation brand hexagon tells us how foreigners perceive the culture and heritage of a country. Juul, project manager at SI, believes that a country's culture always is unique and can not be copied. Promotion of the Swedish culture would best be conducted through activities such as dance, movie, theatre and music arrangements. We definitely consider this to be an area of great interest to market in China. Since the emotional relationship to culture within a country is probably much stronger than for instance the relation to products from Sweden. A great example of promotion of the *export* and the *tourism* aspects is the ship Götheborg. According to Anholt (2005), export describes the consumer's satisfaction of products and services from the specific country.

The ship Götheborg markets Swedish companies towards China in order to create awareness of the of what the participating companies offerings. Even though some Chinese are aware of Ericsson's first-class cell phones, not very many knows that the country of origin of the company is Sweden. If the project works out like it should the export will benefit and Swedish companies gain more attention in China. Form a nation branding perspective even the tourism industry will benefit from the promotion efforts by the participating companies. In addition to the culture context, the use of the ship Götheborg could work as a describing story book related to Sweden since the ship already contains much history about Sweden.

Considering sports as a promotion channel for a country, Anholt (2005), Frost (2004) and O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy (2000) all have the same opinion. They all claim that using sports without a doubt is a good channel. Carlhed, brand manager at SI, believes that sports undoubtedly have strong penetration power. Hosting for example the Olympic Games could be a major breakthrough for Sweden. Anholt (2005) states that people make assumptions of countries based on what they see in sports. Jan-Ove Waldner's achievements in table tennis are clear evidence of Anholt's (2005) statement. Waldner have beaten many Chinese table tennis stars during his career and is both loved and feared in China and maybe most important; highly associated with Sweden. Frost (2004) also supports Anholt's (2005) arguments of the importance of hosting events and of to relate famous people with the country of origin effect.

Anholt (2005) also discusses *education* as an important parameter to strengthen a nation's brand. Foreign students in Sweden acts as ambassadors for Sweden once they return to their home country. Carlhed, brand manager at SI, also indicates that education is and will be a parameter to count on, he strongly believes that the more Chinese students Sweden receives, the higher the recognition will be.

7.2 Tourism marketing

According to Kotler et al. (1999) the tourist has to be fully aware about the advantages a particular place offers. The main marketing activities for this type of marketing are to develop strong and attractive positions for the community and setting up attractive incentives for current and potential buyers and users of goods and services. The respondents from VisitSweden also accentuate these issues and explain that it is important to create a comprehensive image of Sweden and Scandinavia in order to provide a clear and competitive message and thereby raise the interest from a broader group of tourists. Scandinavian Perspectives aims at offering a unique experience combining nature, culture and sightseeing. The focus is towards business tourism, the areas where the visitors are interested in are Swedish infrastructure, city planning, environment, education and elderly care.

The travel agencies has a more naturally way to market Sweden towards Chinese business travellers compared to SI and VisitSweden. While these institutions have to attract a broad and more diverse group, the travel agencies can focus on their target markets. The business travellers have a clear purpose with their visit and most likely a little thorough knowledge about Sweden through their cooperation with Swedish companies. The branding expert's points out the main challenge with marketing Sweden is the lack of awareness and knowledge about Sweden as a tourism destination.

Swedish and Scandinavian nature is an excellent feature to use in the promotion, moreover unique experiences such as winter activities should be highly promoted according to

Sjöberg, market coordinator at VisitSweden. However according to the Swedish Tourist Authority¹ (2004) Chinese usually goes to north-east China and South Korea for winter tourism. It seems to be of more interest for Chinese tourists to enrich their spare time with trips to warm and sunny destinations and, Sweden might not have the most appealing climate. Therefore we can assume that more promotion of for example the Swedish archipelago during the summer and the beaches along the southern coast would attract the Chinese tourists. Sweden is in this sense is able to provide an “exotic” alternative to Mediterranean locations.

The business tourism is less price sensitive than the private tourism. The branding experts claim that the high price level in Sweden is an obstacle to attract Chinese tourism, due to other cheaper and better known destination within Europe. Hägg, sales and marketing manager at Miki Travel, on the other hand states when it comes to shopping the Chinese traveller are not very price sensitive but they are willing to make cost reductions when it comes to food and accommodation as long as the quality is decent. Kotler et al. (1999) claims that weigh the cost against the benefits of the particular destination. Therefore we believe that the Swedish price level can be a substantial problem.

Wihlborg, marketing manager at Scandinavian Perspectives, talks about the desire for high status consumption, the more expensive a trip is, the better. Björnberg and Sjöberg assert that VisitSweden want to communicate qualitative travels and expose Scandinavia as a high status destination. This phenomenon can be an expression for the nouveau rich in China. Since these customers are an emerging group, there is of relevance to focus at some particular marketing activities towards them. Those are the ones with the highest purchasing power and may also work as creator of public opinion back in China. Thomas Brühl, CEO for VisitSweden, sees to the importance of finding a narrow target group. He also believes in finding out what these certain target groups are interested in, appreciate and let them talk about the experiences of Sweden in their home countries (Swedish Institute², 2005). These thoughts are supported by Kotler et al. (1999) who stresses the need to define the targets group for each places before doing any marketing activity.

What also became apparent during our interviews with the travel agencies and the branding and marketing experts was the common standpoint about inefficient transportation in terms of too few direct flights between China and Sweden. The accessibility to a country and the places within a country is considered to be one of the most important factors to succeed in actually bringing the tourist to certain places, because even how great and interesting the place attributes are it may not help if there is a lack of transportation and access to major markets and key attractions according to Kotler et al. 1999. Hägg, sales and marketing manager at Miki Travel, declare that the stops made in Copenhagen and Helsinki seldom leads to visits to Sweden, instead the Chinese chose to go to other destinations in Europe such as London and Paris. The branding and marketing experts definitely agree on this point. Since convenience is an important aspect, more direct flights would absolutely be a strong marketing argument, promoting Sweden to Chinese tourists.

According to Kotler et al. (1999) convenience for the tourists is one of the basic needs that have to be fulfilled attracting tourists. Several tourism agencies as well as branding and marketing experts agree on this point. Both with regards to transportation convenience as well as to food and accommodation during the stay in Sweden. Sjöberg, market coordinator at VisitSweden, explains that the hotel chain Scandic Hotel has adapted there services to the Chinese customer, in addition several other services are adapted to the Chinese visitors, for example Chinese magazines are available. Adapted services raising the convenience for

Chinese tourists would probably be an excellent argument to use when promoting Sweden as a tourist destination in China.

When we discussed new opportunities with Carlhed, brand manager at SI, the question of ecological tourism came up. Anholt (2005) discusses the relevance of being aware of the great ecological damage mass tourism causes and exemplifies with surveys made on the damage. We believe that since China is in the start-up stage of the economical development the question of ecological sustainability might not be on the top of the agenda today but will probably become increasingly important in the near future.

7.3 Destination branding

During our interviews we found some common destinations that the branding experts and travel agencies regarded as special sight in Sweden to promote. The Ice Hotel in Jukkasjärvi was the most common sight mentioned. Björk, sales and marketing manager at the Ice Hotel, explains that unfortunately few Chinese tourists visit the hotel. Nevertheless he believes in the unique location of the Ice hotel and claims it would have been less attractive if it were located for instance close to Stockholm. We consider the exotic feeling of being in the middle of nowhere is a good argument for urban people within the bigger cities in China. On the other hand it could be an obstacle caused of less convenient communication for the Chinese tourists.

Blain et al. (2005) states that destination branding should support the creation of a name, symbol, logo or word mark that differentiates the destination and activities should provide a memorable experience. The Ice Hotel has become a symbol in terms of the name and in addition we believe that the hotel provides a memorable experience. Therefore we believe that the Ice Hotel should stand as an example of how a destination can be marketed. However we have understood that Chinese are not very keen on cold climates and therefore it could be a good idea to market the Icehotel and Jukkasjärvi as summer destinations, offering midnight sun and adventure activities, towards Chinese tourists. This is also important for the entire Sweden as it might be positive to create a picture of Sweden as a warmer country and erase the arctic perception many prospective tourists might have.

Stockholm is without a doubt the most popular destination for Chinese tourists in Sweden. The city is considered to be hip and up to date, especially when it comes to culture and design. Since Stockholm has a good reputation and a lot to offer in many areas such as culture, design and nature experiences, it should really be used more in the promotion towards the Chinese market. The Chinese travellers need to be more aware about Stockholm and the surrounding areas, with other words not only the Royal castle and Djurgården, surrounding areas such as Uppsala and Nyköping also has a lot to offer.

According to the branding and marketing experts it is a complex task to attract mass tourism to Sweden. It is also evident that Chinese tourists do not see Sweden as a natural choice when going to Europe. One reason for choosing other destinations before Sweden is of course the price level but it can probably also be explained by how rich culture other countries such as France and Italy can offer. But how do the Chinese people know about this? Maybe by a long and well documented and dynamic history, and simply constantly promoting the culture of those countries in various marketing contexts. One way of communicating these features for a country could be movies. For instance Italian movies like the "Godfather" probably known among Chinese people than Swedish productions such as *Populärmusik från Vittula* and *SOS: Segelsällskapsresan*, movies that in an excellent way gives

a hint about Swedish culture and glorify features of the nature. This might not be the most appropriate movies but it could also be of interest to produce new movies with focus on certain destinations in Sweden and use the movies as tools for destination branding and with that increase the number of tourists. There is a clear concern from the branding experts and travel agencies about the limited budget for promoting Sweden in China, as movies can be funded other ways and even are profitable it could be a good idea to use these to promote Sweden. According to Hudson and Ritchie (2006) the tourist organizations can use the films as springboards for marketing campaigns if the films are appropriate for the destination. Even if the film is not currently released it will still attract tourists year after year to the destination. According to Anholt's (2005) nation brand hexagon for Sweden, the country has a lack of rich culture reputation among the participating countries. Movies could be an effective way to enrich and promote the Swedish culture. Further TV programs could be at least as effective as movies, for example the TV show *Tinas mat* that have been broadcasted in several countries recently.

The branding and marketing experts which have a broad perspective of how Sweden could attract more tourism means that Sweden definitely have the capacity of land area to host more tourists. The travel agencies claims the hotel reservations are only 50 percent of the capacity within the Stockholm region. Probably those actors have incentives to exaggerate the picture of Sweden's lack of tourism to get the governments attention for different purposes. The main conclusion from the different parts is that Sweden need to broaden the promotion of culture.

7.4 Chinese tourism

Chinas economical growth boost as leading to higher wealth and living standards in combination with deregulations of the tourism market are the main motivations for Swedish tourism industry to start invest and work more aggressively towards the Chinese markets. In order to succeed in this highly complex market knowledge about the specific features is of great importance.

Our findings from the travel agencies align quite well with the findings from VisitSweden. Scandinavian Perspectives identified their customers as 31-59 years old and Miki Travel had a little broader definition of their customers where age was related to purpose of travel. VisitSweden claims that the largest portion of travellers is middle aged. From our research we have concluded that economical factors is an obstacle to many Chinese to travel abroad, this finding is supported by VisitSweden that claims that almost upper middle class and richer families from China visits Sweden. On the contrary, Price Waterhouse Coopers investigation if the Chinese tourist showed that the average Chinese tourist is between 24 and 44 years old, in other words slightly younger than the Chinese tourists travelling to Sweden. Price Waterhouse Coopers claims that the tourists hold a university degree and high income which supports the other findings, both our findings and the Swedish Tourist Authority¹ (2004).

With regards to the findings above we believe that marketing should be directed towards the richer part of the population at first as marketing towards the poorer parts of the population would be fruitless. The age categories should be considered more carefully. Right now the Chinese tourists travelling to Sweden are rather old but there seems to be a demand for travelling to Europe even among younger people and as this group is gaining a higher wealth it will also become more prone to travel, therefore they should not be neglected in the marketing.

The Swedish Tourist Authority¹ (2004) discusses the relation between different regions and different interests, people from Beijing as interested in culture, architecture and art while people from Shanghai are interested in shopping and diverse amusement and people from Guangdong appreciate adventurous activities. This shows the diversity of the Chinese market. This is of relevance to be aware about when creating targeted marketing campaigns for these different types of consumers. Since we have discussed the importance of finding certain target groups within China those general facts should be considered when forming the marketing arguments towards the groups what is attractive in Sweden.

Today the most problematic area when dealing with Chinese tourism is the high complexity of the rules and regulations surrounding the tourism industry. As a Swedish travel agency the regulations affects both direct and indirect. The direct effects on the foreign agency are in China much harder than in many other countries to reach out with a product or service to the market. As we learned from the interviews with the travel agencies, they are not able to market the product or service directly to the end consumer, instead you have to go through some intermediary travel agency approved by the government to handle outbound tourism and even though a intermediary is handling the business with the consumer the foreign travel agency needs approval from the Chinese government in order to deal with Chinese tourists. Indirectly the regulations affect the agencies as it is rather complicated for Chinese to get passports and visas, which means that the barriers for the tourists are high.

The regulations seem very complex. While some of the interviewed Chinese claims that there are basically no regulations regarding tourism, the agencies experience the regulation as problematic, both for the Chinese and themselves. There is a jungle of different legislations concerning passports, visas, invitations and agreements that constantly changes. In the mail interview with twelve Chinese citizens the respondents were asked about the legislation and regulations regarding travel. Several replied that there are no regulation constraining tourism and that as Chinese citizen you can travel basically anywhere without problem. However this is due to lack of knowledge in the area (all the respondents had not been abroad and hence never been confronted with the legislation) or because the respondents did not think that the current regulations are problematic is hard to tell. Since all the respondents wanted to stay anonymous it could be that they simply do not want to comment on the legislation for different reasons. When asked about the future for tourism a few respondents however replied that in the future it will have to change for different reasons. The World Tourism Organisation (2003) emphasizes China's membership in the World Trade Organisation which will force them to deregulation within the tourism industry.

Another recurrent aspect is the travel behaviour with respect to group travel. Today the legislation does not allow Chinese to travel individual in any larger extent. However Chinese prefer to travel in group or individual is hard to tell. Five out of the twelve Chinese citizens interviewed said that they prefer to travel in a small group while one preferred to travel in a large group and one preferred to travel alone.

Wihlborg, marketing manager at Scandinavian Perspectives, states that at the initial stage of tourism where China is today it is likely to believe that Chinese prefers to travel in groups since this gives some feeling of security when visiting remote destinations. She also said that today there are indications that individual tourism would increase in the future. Hägg, marketing manager at Miki Travel, on the other hand compares Chinese travellers to Japanese travellers where the Japanese stands for the more careful travellers preferring group travel while Chinese are less careful and therefore are less prone to travel in group. Dong, manager for Scandinavian Perspectives in Shanghai, believed that most of the Chinese prefer to travel in groups due to the language barrier and that English speaking Chinese or so

called “white collars” prefers individual travel or travel with the family only. Since the legislation looks like it does with requirements in group sizes in order to apply for visas it is a hard question to answer whether Chinese actually prefers to travel in small or large groups or even individual. We can assume they are interested of travel alone or in small groups regards to the information from the respondent.

Most of the interviewed Chinese citizens indeed claimed that they prefer to make their own arrangements. This does not really align with our findings from the interview with Wihlborg, marketing manager at Scandinavian Perspectives. According to this interview Chinese prefer to travel with arranged tours. There are of course also different degrees how arranged a tour can be. Even if Scandinavian Perspectives sells the whole arrangement, it is usually designed together with the customer and therefore the Chinese basically makes their own arrangement.

That Chinese mainly travels in groups today should be seen as a market feature that actors on the market have to accept today. Nevertheless the actors dealing with Chinese tourists have to be prepared to provide possibilities for Chinese tourists to travel individually if the legislation would change and it turned out that the travel patterns are different compared to what is allowed today.

7.5 Perception of Sweden among Chinese

Several of the branding and marketing experts mentioned that the brand Sweden has a relatively high recognition worldwide but as a travel destination Sweden struggles with low acquaintance. During the focus group interview with the five Chinese students and from the e-mail interview with the twelve Chinese citizens we can conclude that Chinese seems to have some knowledge about Sweden. The most common association about Sweden among the respondents was the Swedish nature. However, except for the nature the Chinese seems to think about Sweden in terms of well known companies, persons and social welfare. Some of the Chinese citizens saw Sweden as a possible nation to live and study for a while, however even the five students who choose to study in Sweden had some problems motivating their choice of country. During the interviews with the branding experts it was discussed however Sweden has low recognition as destination as it only has been allowed as destination for a rather short time. However this is the case or not can be discussed since most other countries also have been closed for Chinese tourism for approximately the same time. Many of the respondents also stated that Sweden is an alternative European destination, for example according to the marketing manager of Scandinavian Perspective it is hard to motivate Chinese tourists to go to Sweden compared to cheaper European countries. In the perception map (figure 4) made by the Swedish Tourist Authority¹ (2004) Sweden is perceived as a country with high quality but to a rather high price. As economical factors are a real obstacle for many Chinese Sweden’s price level naturally becomes an obstacle.

The problem does not really seem to be that the Chinese are unaware of Sweden’s existence, rather that other countries are more attractive as destinations, both with regards to economical aspects and cultural aspects. Language is also part of the convenience aspect as described by Kotler et al. (1999). Problems with language are a continuing theme for the interviews. Almost all private persons that participated in the focus group and e-mail survey thought that language is a problem when abroad. Both the travel agencies and the branding experts brought up language as a problem area for Chinese tourists in Sweden. On the

other hand almost all countries in the world will have the same problems with the language barrier.

8 Conclusion

In this chapter we are presenting our conclusions in order to answer the research question and fulfil the purpose.

Before presenting our conclusions we would like to once again review the purpose of the thesis. The purpose of the thesis is to investigate from different perspectives how Sweden through nation branding and marketing can increase its share of the Chinese outbound tourism.

We would also like to review the research questions.

- *How can Sweden gain a larger share of the Chinese outbound tourism?*
 - *How should nation branding and marketing be used in order to promote Sweden?*
 - *Are there any specific Swedish attributes that should be promoted?*
 - *Are there any obstacles that should be alleviated in order to facilitate for the Chinese tourists?*

After conducting the interviews it was evident that there is a lack of cooperation between travel industry, Swedish institutions and companies operating in China. In order to strengthen a nation's brand, all six parameters from Anholt's (2005) nation brand hexagon should be used. This means that all parts have to be linked together and thus conveys the brand status. High brand recognition would facilitate for the entire country from government to companies and in particular the tourism industry. Increased recognition would also attract investors and hence, efforts made by Swedish institutions, companies or travel agencies would in the long run benefit all the parts. Tourism industry, institutions and companies has to cooperate closer in order to increase the tourism. Since Swedish companies in some cases are better known in China than the nation itself, the companies could be a powerful channel to use in order to promote Sweden as a destination. The Swedish ship Göteborg is an excellent example illustrating how the different actors can cooperate in order to promote Sweden in China.

The nature of Sweden is an excellent feature to use in the marketing but since this is already a big part of the promotion it is important to find other aspects to highlight. Today the brand Sweden has a strong presence internationally, but when it comes to Sweden as a tourism destination, the awareness of Sweden is low. Chinese people think of Sweden as a place far away with an unfriendly climate. Swedish companies and products are in some cases more recognized than Sweden as a nation. The emotional relationship created by promoting Sweden's culture is probably much stronger in the long run than the relation to products from Sweden. Further Sweden stands for strong ethncal values, equality, environmental responsibility and human rights, areas that we believe will become more important to China in a near future as China develops.

Movies can be one excellent channel for promotion of Sweden. Swedish culture and values can relatively easy be promoted in movies as well as other aspects such as nature. Regarding sports activities we can conclude that people make assumptions of countries based on what they see in sports. Jan-Ove Waldner has for example contributed a lot to a positive attitude to Sweden in China. To host the Olympic Games would definitely raise the awareness of Sweden, not only in China but in the entire world.

Many respondents have mentioned Sweden as a winter destination, however, after conducting the research we have got the perception that Chinese are somewhat avoiding to go to cold places and rather travel to a warm place if possible. Therefore Sweden should promote all that the Swedish summer has to offer. For example the archipelago and the mid-night sun.

We believe that Sweden should position itself as an alternative destination and in this way create and keep the image of an exotic place to visit besides the more popular European destinations. Due to the large population of China it is not a problem to concentrate on just a narrow target group. Sweden should initially focus on the top of the pyramid segments where the purchasing power is high and creators of public opinion exist.

Looking at obstacles we can conclude that the largest problem today is the legislation. It is still a complicated process for Chinese citizens to acquire passports and visas, even though much has happened recently in this area. Price is also an evident obstacle for Chinese tourism to grow. Today affluent Chinese constitutes the largest part of the outbound tourism coming to Sweden. However in the long run more budget alternatives should be provided in order to attract a broader audience from China. The lack of non-stop flights between Sweden and China are also an obstacle. Today there is only one direct flight connection, between Stockholm and Beijing. More direct flights between Sweden and China would make Sweden a more attractive destination in terms of convenience. Today the majority of the Chinese visitors in northern Europe ends up in Copenhagen or Helsinki since these cities have better communications with China. Until recently Swedish travel agencies have faced great barriers bringing their services to the Chinese market, however since China entered the World Trade Organization it will become easier for foreign companies to enter the Chinese market.

9 Discussion

In this discussion chapter we are looking back and evaluate our findings and conclusions. We are also presenting a few topics that might be interesting for further studies.

9.1 Reflections on our findings

The results derived from Guo's research about how Australia can attract more Chinese tourists are also applicable and interesting to our case. Guo points out that China's entry into the World Trade Organisation has forced them to abandon their restrictions not allowing independent foreign travel agencies to sell trips in the country, this is indeed a very interesting remark from Sweden's point of view. Especially for the travel agencies. This would allow Swedish travel agencies to have stronger presence within China and not only be limited working with Chinese partners. However we would fully agree with Hägg at Miki Travel that even if the Chinese market has more or less opened up, Sweden should still continue to work with their local Chinese partners since they possess many valuable relationships with the customers.

Many conditions, for example weather and price level, gives Sweden substantial disadvantages compared to other European destinations such as France and Italy. It is somewhat wishful thinking and naive to believe that Sweden can compete on the same level with the more Chinese friendly countries does.

One surprising discovery during the thesis work was that Chinese tourists demand Chinese food during their stay abroad. This aspect is in fact very important for travel agencies and hotels to take into consideration in order to satisfy the Chinese tourists. This proves that even aspects that can seem to be of small importance to a Swede can be of crucial importance to someone of a different culture, for example a Chinese.

One question that we have struggled with during the work is however the results are applicable to other countries? Looking to the branding and marketing aspects the result is probably rather specific to Sweden but there are many other aspects that other countries can learn from. For instance the obstacles that we have mentioned and convenience aspects.

9.2 Lessons

Regarding the empirical research we can conclude that when interviewing the native Chinese speaking respondents a survey where the respondent could choose from a few alternatives probably would have been more effective in order to get accurate answers. However, the proposed alternative also has its drawbacks. If answers are predetermined, the respondent has to think less and therefore threads, that the person constructing the interview form did not think of, never are brought up.

We have also learned how difficult it is to study a country that undergoes such a large transition as China currently do. Information gets obsolete extremely fast, especially with regards to legislation.

9.3 Recommendations for further research

During the research work we have come up with a few topics that we deem as interesting for further research.

The first topic is to investigate what creates demand for travelling among Chinese tourists. This research would be highly valuable for all business dealing with Chinese outbound tourism, Swedish as well as foreign business.

Another topic that would be interesting to investigate is Chinese tourism and ecological tourism. This topic is particularly interesting with regards to the presumed increase of tourism from China. Possible research questions are;

- How will increased outbound tourism affect the environment?
- What can be done in order to achieve ecological sustainability as the Chinese outbound tourism increase?

Technical Visits has also been discussed. Today this type of tourism is relatively large but as China develops the demand for technical visits might decrease. Also as it is getting easier for Chinese to travel as leisure tourists the demand for technical visits might decrease. What can be done in order not to lose this valuable tourism? New areas?

Sweden has a relatively strong nation brand to rely on and this also constitutes a good start when promoting Sweden abroad, but how should a nation with lower brand recognition approach the tourism market? What is most essential in order to start attracting tourists?

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Appendix 1: Number of approved visas at the Swedish embassies in Beijing and Shanghai, 2001-2005

Reason for application	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Business				11947	14730
Work-non visa				1	0
Family				1006	1025
Invitation				3	2
Conference				25	284
Culture					58
Politic					16
Sports event				8	64
Tourism				52	1610
Education					364
Work/Professional				0	124
Other, Old codes				4	1
Sum	8949	10626	9298	13046	18278

Comment: Categorized data for 2001-2003 is not available.

Source: The Swedish Migration Board (2006)

Appendix 2: Focus Group – Chinese citizens in Sweden

Experience of Sweden

1. For how long have you been in Sweden?
2. Why did you choose Sweden?
3. What places in Sweden have you visited?
4. What are you looking for when travelling in Sweden
 - a. Rural or urban destinations
 - b. Culture
 - c. Nature
 - d. Technology
 - e. People
 - f. Sightseeing
 - g. Adventure
 - h. Shopping
 - i. Entertainment and nightlife
 - j. Other (give examples)
5. During your stay in Sweden, have you had any problems or special needs with the following? Try to describe.
 - a. Service
 - b. Standard of accommodation
 - c. Language translation
 - d. Emotional experience (prefers the culture instead of nature, sights etc.)
 - e. Food
 - f. Secure location
 - g. Other
6. How would you describe the typical Swede?
7. What was your opinion and perception about Sweden before you arrived here?
 - a. Did your opinion and perception align with the reality?
 - b. Has your opinion and perception changed during your stay here?
8. Describe Sweden in three words.
9. Have you seen any advertising about Sweden in China?
10. Do you plan to return after your studies?
 - a. Vacation
 - b. Work
 - c. Further Studies
 - d. Business
11. Would you recommend Sweden as a place for your friends to go? For studies as well as for tourism.
12. If you would sell Sweden as a destination to a Chinese, what arguments would you use?

13. What do you think is the general perception of Sweden and the Swedes in China?

14. Movies are one important conveyor of country image;

a. Have you seen any Swedish movies?

b. What image of Sweden did this/these movies convey?

Culture

15. What is Swedish culture for you?

16. Are there any cultural similarities between your native country and Sweden?

17. Is there any culture differences that makes it complicated to live in Sweden?

18. Are there any influences of western culture in China?

a. Does this make it easier for you to live in Sweden?

19. Do you think Chinese people are easily adapted to other cultural behaviours?

Chinese outbound tourism

20. What is the main obstacles for you to go abroad?

a. Regulations, visa etc. (please explain)

b. Economical

c. Lack of free time

21. Do you think that the regulations of the Chinese tourism will change? In what way?

Appendix 3: E-mail survey– Chinese citizens in China

Tourism

1. Have you ever been abroad from China?
 - a. In what purpose, e.g. Studying, Working, Business Tourism or Leisure Tourism?
 - b. Where did you go? (please even mention visits to Hong Kong and Taiwan)
2. If you are going abroad, what are you looking for?
 - a. Rural or urban destinations
 - b. Culture
 - c. Nature
 - d. Technology
 - e. People
 - f. Sightseeing
 - g. Adventure
 - h. Shopping
 - i. Entertainment and nightlife
 - j. Other (give examples)
3. When you are travelling abroad, do you have any special needs or any problems with the following?
 - a. Service
 - b. Standard of accommodation
 - c. Language translation
 - d. Emotional experience (prefers the culture instead of nature, sights etc .)
 - e. Food
 - f. Secure location
 - g. Other
4. How do you prefer to travel? In a large group, smaller group or by yourself. Please try to motivate your answer.
5. Do you prefer to make your own arrangements or to join an arranged tour for your travels?

Sweden as a destination

6. Have you ever been to Sweden? If yes, please explain your journey and purpose.

7. What do you associate with Sweden? In other words, what is the first thought when Sweden is mentioned?
8. Would you consider Sweden as a destination for your tourism? Try to motivate your choice
9. Do you know any Swedish cities or places of interest?
10. Do you know where Sweden is geographically located?
11. Do you know any famous Swedish persons? Celebrities, sportsman or such.
12. What do you think is the general perception of Sweden in China? In other words, what does Chinese think about Sweden and the Swedes.
13. What is your dream destination in the entire world?
14. The Chinese outbound tourism is regulated by rules, what are the main obstacles for Chinese to go abroad? What is required in order to leave the country?
 - a. In leisure purpose
 - b. In business purpose
 - c. Technical visits

Chinese outbound tourism

15. What is the main obstacles for you to go abroad?
 - a. Regulations, visa etc. (please explain)
 - b. Economical
 - c. Lack of free time
16. Do you think that the regulations of the Chinese tourism will change? In what way?

Appendix 4: Interview guide – Scandinavian Perspectives and Miki Travel

Chinese Outbound Tourism

1. The Chinese outbound tourism is regulated by rules, what are the main obstacles for Chinese to go abroad? What is required in order to leave the country?
 - a. In leisure purpose
 - b. In business purpose
 - c. Technical visits
2. How do you look at the future opportunities for Chinese outbound tourism?
3. How do Chinese people prefer to travel? Alone or in groups? Please motivate.
4. Generally, what age groups in China are travelling most?
 - a. Youth, 15-30
 - b. Middle-aged, 31-59
 - c. Senior, 60+
5. How does the Chinese prefer to travel?
 - a. In larger groups
 - b. Individual or small group
6. Does the Chinese prefer to travel with arranged tours or to make own arrangements?
7. Why are Chinese tourists (business as well as leisure) going to Sweden?
 - a. Rural or urban destinations
 - b. Culture
 - c. Nature
 - d. Technology
 - e. People
 - f. Sightseeing
 - g. Adventure
 - h. Shopping
 - i. Entertainment and nightlife
 - j. Other (give examples)
8. What is the general perception of Sweden in China? In other words, what does Chinese think about Sweden and the Swedes.
9. How large do you think the interest of going to Sweden is among Chinese people?
10. Which destinations are most popular among Chinese travellers?

- a. In Sweden and Scandinavia
 - b. In Europe
 - c. World
11. Is there any difference in need from Chinese customers compared to Swedish customers in terms of
- a. Service
 - b. Standard of accommodation
 - c. Language translation
 - d. Emotional experience (prefers the culture instead of nature, sights etc.)
 - e. Food
 - f. Secure location
 - g. Other

Your agency's work

12. What is the main marketing channel in China for your services?
- a. Internet/e-mail marketing
 - b. Direct marketing
 - c. Telemarketing
 - d. Advertising in newspapers or magazines (Daily/Weekly/Monthly etc.)
 - e. TV or Radio advertising
 - f. Other channels (give examples)
13. What do your clients like and dislike with Sweden and Scandinavia? In other words, what positive and negative feedback do you get from your clients?
14. Is the Swedish price level a problem for your clients?
15. Are there any common problems that your clients experience during their stay in Sweden and Scandinavia?
16. Why do your clients choose to go to Sweden and Scandinavia?
17. What is the most common purpose for your clients' visit to Sweden?
18. What arguments are you using when promoting Sweden in China?
19. What are your opinions about the potential of Sweden and Scandinavia as travel destinations?

Appendix 5: Interview guide – SI and VisitSweden

1. Vilka marknadsaktiviteter har ni idag i Kina? Enligt f.d. Turistdelegationens rapport från 2004 bör marknadsföringen vara olika utformade för att Kina är ett heterogent land. Förklara?
2. Finns det några marknadsaktiviteter planerade för framtiden?
3. Vad använder ni er av för argument idag för att sälja Sverige till kinesiska turister?
4. Använder ni er i dagens läge olika argument i olika länder? (Eller är det samma marknadsföring överallt?)
5. Hur upplever ni intresset för att resa till Sverige bland kineser?
6. Vad tror och vet du om vad kineser uppskattar i Sverige?
7. Varför väljer kinesiska turister att resa till Sverige? Privatturism? Affärsturism?
8. Vad i Sverige intresserar Kineser?
 - a. Stad eller land
 - b. Kultur
 - c. Natur
 - d. Teknologi
 - e. Människor
 - f. Sightseeing
 - g. Äventyr
 - h. Shopping
 - i. Underhållning
 - j. Nattliv
 - k. Annat, ge exempel
9. Finns det några speciella områden där kineserna är extra krävande när de reser?
 - a. Service
 - b. Standard på boende
 - c. Språk
 - d. Emotionell Upplevelse (Är t ex kultur viktigare än natur)
 - e. Mat
 - f. Säkerhet
 - g. Annat, ge exempel
10. Vilka är de huvudsakliga hindren för kineser att resa till Sverige?
11. Vilken är den största utmaningen med att marknadsföra Sverige?
 - a. Internationellt
 - b. Specifikt i Kina

12. Vilka marknadsföringskanaler anser du vara lämpligast för att nå ut till kineser?
 - a. TV
 - b. Radio
 - c. Internet
 - d. E-mail
 - e. Event
 - f. Reklam i dag/vecko/månadsspress
 - g. Public Relations
 - h. Andra kanaler, ge exempel
13. Vilket segment är mest intressanta? Vilka riktar ni er marknadsföring till
14. Sysslar ni enbart med att ”sälja” Sverige som turistmål till Kina eller samarbetar ni t.ex. med svenska företag i näringslivet och på så sätt förmedlar en image av Sverige. Dvs. ju fler kineser som kommer i kontakt med svenska företag och svenska produkter desto större chans är det att de skulle vilja besöka Sverige.
15. Hur stor potential bedömer ni att Sverige har som ett attraktivt resmål för kineser?
16. Vad för svenska företag/produkter/personer är särskilt ”stort” i Kina som ni kan tänkas användas av för att attrahera fler kinesiska turister?
17. I framtiden hur stor tillströmning av kinesiska turister väntas besöka Sverige?
18. Hur ”starkt” är varumärket Sverige generellt och som destination?
19. Får ni direktiv från staten eller det är upp till er själva att bestämma? Tycker ni att era resurser är tillräckliga?
20. Vilka konkreta åtgärder skulle behöva göras för att öka kinesisk turism, tex OS?
21. Eftersom svensk gastronomi är relativt känt och att Sverige har en internationell erkänd matkultur, skulle detta kunna användas i marknadsföringen?
22. Vad är ert mål med ostindiefararen ur ett nation branding perspektiv? Vad är huvudsyftet med seglatsen?
23. Simon Anholt gör kontinuerliga undersökningar kring länders varumärkes värde. De delar han undersöker är: *turism, export, regering, investering och immigration, kultur och arv* och slutligen *människor*. Är det några delar som ni anser vara särskilt viktiga för att stärka varumärket Sverige?
24. Hur kan man stärka varumärket Sverige i Kina, vilka är de viktigaste delarna i denna process?
25. NSU arbetar med att hitta en gemensam ”rubrik”/nämnare för Sverige, har ni i nuläge några tänkbara exempel kring detta?

Appendix 6: Interview guide – The Ice Hotel

1. Ungefär hur många kinesiska besökare har ni årligen?
2. Upplever ni någon trend i den kinesiska turismen? Ökande eller minskande antal besökare?
3. Jämfört med andra asiatiska länder, hur placerar sig Kina med avseende på antal besökare till ishotellet?
4. Hur marknadsför ni er mot kinesiska marknader?
5. Hur har era kinesiska kunder normalt fått vetskap om ishotellet?
6. Vilka aktiviteter brukar kineser uppskatta när de besöker ishotellet, mer än just hotellet?
7. Hurdan feedback brukar ni få från era kinesiska kunder?
8. Vilken typ av kinesisk turist är vanligast hos er? (kön, ålder, leisure/business etc.) Med andra ord, beskriv genomsnittskinesen som besöker er.
9. Upplever ni att kineserna är extra krävande på något område (med avseende på er verksamhet och turism)?
10. Språket är ofta ett problem eftersom få kineser talar god engelska. Hur upplever ni detta och hur gör ni för att kommunicera med era kunder?
11. Vilka konkreta åtgärder skulle behöva göras för att öka kinesisk turism?