



REGIONSAMARBEIDET
Buskerud Telemark Vestfold



BTV: Sevletunet

A Series of Cultural Tourism Projects in Norway



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1 PROLOGUE

Information about Glasgow Caledonian University – The Heyerdahl Institute Multi-purpose project & Buskerud-, Telemark- and Vestfold Project from 2004-2008.

Since 2002 Glasgow Caledonian University has had a formal collaborative agreement with The Heyerdahl Institute to work together on a variety of projects. The University is one of Scotland's largest with its 15 000 students and has people from 70 countries studying in its eight schools. It can offer a wide range of services across all these areas (www.caledonian.ac.uk).

The Heyerdahl Institute is a new international organisation, located in Thor Heyerdahl's home town of Larvik. According to the articles of association, it has three main objectives. It aims; to promote and continue the research and development ideas of Thor Heyerdahl; it would like to pave the way for international social dialogue through international conferences: and it hopes to increase the visibility and importance of Norway's international role. The institute was founded by Vestfold County Council in the year 2000(www.heyerdahl-institute.no).

The cooperation the two organizations has led to a number of activities taking place, including:

- The creation of a new MSc Cultural Heritage Studies with a strong multi-disciplinary emphasis. The degree is based on the study of cultural heritage, management theory, collaboration between public and private bodies and sustainable resource management.
- Grants provided by Telemark and Vestfold County Council for Norwegian students to study this Masters degree.
- Formalisation of a Europeans Union Erasmus exchange between Glasgow Caledonian University and Telemark University College.
Negotiation of an EU-contract between Glasgow Caledonian University and Buskerud University College.
- Personal and student exchange trips: Scotland to Norway and Norway to Scotland.
- Fact-finding trips by NHO-Vestfold, Innovation Norway and Vestfold County Council.

In 2004 The Heyerdahl Institute and the Glasgow Caledonian University was successful in gaining funding for the Buskerud-, Telemark- and Vestfold (BTV-project) to build on the success already achieved by working on the three main objectives:

- **To promote the building of international alliances in the Buskerud, Telemark and Vestfold region.**
- **To develop international educational co-operation across county borders**
- **To direct attention towards bridging the gap between business and research**

There has been made good progress in the majority of the planned activities from 2004-2006 and both Glasgow Caledonian and the Heyerdahl Institute are very happy with everything that has been achieved.

2007-2008

For the last period of the project , 2007-2008 the organisations will be working together with the regional network for projects in Buskerud-, Telemark and Vestfold with a focus on cultural monuments and added value.

As a result of the Institute's relationship with Glasgow Caledonian University we are proud to include the Moffat Centre, as a part of wider Glasgow Caledonian University, in this pilot project. The Moffat

Centre has worked in over 30 countries on more than 350 tourism projects. In this project period we will provide the Buskerud-, Telemark and Vestfold network with the following:

1. **Initial Workshop in Stavern, Norway 23-24 January** (organised by Vestfold County council with workshop and lectures led by the Moffat Centre/GCU and the Heyerdahl Institute)
2. **Learning journey to Scotland 16-19 April** (led by the Moffat Centre/GCU and the Heyerdahl Institute)
3. **Work shop in Norway**, developing and identifying future strategies for the BTV-projects for 5-10 years (**Autumn 2007**) (led by Vestfold County council, The Moffat Centre/GCU and the Heyerdahl Institute)

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2 SEVLETUNET PROJECT

This is primarily a Self Catering, Bed and Breakfast and cabin accommodation business. It incorporates a number of heritage buildings over a sizeable area of land adjoining the main E40 road. This is an important over land route way to Bergen from the Larvik ferry and the Sevletunet business benefits from a key position midway on this route.

Currently, the demand is highly seasonal with peaking of trade in late June to August. The operation benefits from close proximity to Mountain and forest scenery with a range of attractions nearby. Some 80-85% of the business is from the internet site which is not interactive.



3 PRIORITIES

The primary purpose of this report is to guide the business to the greatest return and income.

4 TOWARDS FOCUS IN ACTIVITIES

It is vitally appropriate that this business now becomes focussed around those parts that will generate the greatest revenue return. This means that the business should move towards a strong focus on accommodation since this will have the greatest potential for profitability. The core strands of Self catering, cabin hire and bed and breakfast should dominate trading.



5 SIGNAGE

Signage on the road which currently is poorly sited (one sign partially obscures another) and has to improve.



Signage should stress the availability of bed and breakfast rather than signage that just focuses on the business title Sevletunet Gjestegard which has little international currency. The private sign should feature narrative indicating vacancies and price as well as the internationally recognised 'Bed and Breakfast'. The sign should also be illuminated at night and the paint used should be white on a dark shade so it is illuminated by car head lights effectively.

6 FOOD & BEVERAGE

Food and beverage, functions and events are labour intensive and will always struggle in terms of the creation of profitability. The site is compromised for the purposes of conferences and meetings by the limited availability of accommodation. The meetings, conference and corporate market will always require a much higher number of singles en suite than this site can offer. This is a market that will not share rooms and are loath to consider multiple occupancy accommodation solutions.



7 ACCOMMODATION OFFER

The orientation of the business should focus around maximising accommodation and providing it in an authentic a heritage context. This is the relatively unique selling proposition of this operation that needs to be capitalised on. The ground floor of the bed and breakfast and self catering offer are high quality heritage offers. Every effort should be made to continue this positive experience into the bedrooms and upper levels.



8 **MARKETING & THEMES**

The internet site should similarly feature accommodation with extensive photography of the interesting interiors (with heritage features) and on the attractive sylvan setting. The internet should also feature photographs of the breakfast table and a menu of the traditional foods. Translation of the website should be undertaken in English, German, Danish and Swedish. Ideally the website should be interactive and a range of offers should be available outside of the June to August period.

The data collection that has begun at this establishments is good but little is being done with the data base. The e-mail addresses represent one of the cheapest methods of marketing to existing / previous companies. Newsletters, special offers, seasonal promotions are all recommended. A good example of an analogous business utilising this type of approach can be seen at www.info@lochwinnoch.co.uk.

The focus of the marketing has to be sense based:

See, hear, feel, touch the age and atmosphere of old Norway.

Similarly in the case of food the emphasis should be:

Fresh, local, traditional, cultural

9 UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Fundamental to these recommendations is the **integration of the customer journey**.

Fundamentally, we must build an accommodation marketing plan from the consumer's perspective which maybe understood as the customer **journey**.

The consumer's perception of the organization is enhanced or undermined at various contact points with the organization.

Fundamentally, this attraction must understand that visitation is all about an experience for the consumer. This must be evident from:

- **Website**
- **Brochure**
- **Advert**
- **Signage**
- **Entry**
- **Personal Contact**
- **Fittings and Furnishing**
- **Bedrooms and Public Areas**
- **Exit**
- **Customer relationship marketing**

Concentration on improving these elements will differentiate this establishment from its competitors.

Every element of the experience has to be emphasized in each stage of the customer journey. From website to exit the experience has to put the consumer at the centre.

Currently a visitor will happen upon the unique heritage nature of the offer. The product merits stronger experiential marketing.

9.1. Website

The web must convey and better market the nature of the experience. It is key **information and marketing** tool that merits development.

The front page must feature the unique selling proposition of the product and its heritage appeal

The website should **major on the heritage and the experience of Old Norway**. It should offer a clear map and driving directions with numbered roads. Drive times to the nearest hour should also be included.

Detailed below are a number of key operating tips for web and e-mail promotion that we believe will help the operation considerably:

- Keep written passages short and absolutely no more than a 60 second read
- Do not use 'we' in the web site or in any e-newsletter
- Allow the site to fast load without images
- Ensure the business name and any attractive offers are in the subject line of any e-newsletters

- Always use visual images as a superior alternative to text.

The other key electronic marketing aid as discussed previously will be e-newsletters which should be mailed to **all email addresses** that have been collected. This is a most valuable marketing resource. These individuals have visited or made contact with the business in the past and are thus well disposed to return. An e-blast / e-newsletter campaign is recommended to all past customers and to Cruise and transport businesses located on arterial routes.

In general no more than 6 e-newsletters should be forwarded per year and every effort to replicate electronic marketing tips detailed above should be used.

The crucial data on the web should include things like opening times and prices.

The generic website should also be high on Google search optimisation. The aim here is to increase referrals. This can also be achieved via Google paid adverts (these will be found on the right hand side of the search title page). These are the 'click through' adverts which are only paid if the user clicks on the title. The other way of increasing search engine optimisation is increasing the number of references to Seveltunet in www.tripadvisor.com This is an increasingly influential peer review site that allows consumers to place reviews, discuss and recommend accommodation, attractions and activities throughout the world.

Referencing accommodation will increase citation index in the search engine and will help with search engine optimisation (listing in the search engine).

The **front page of the website** should also feature other facilities such as meeting space, gardens and foods.

9.2. Brochure

The current brochure must be replaced with a much more distinctive style that emphasises key offers

- Heritage accommodation
- Beautiful rural location
- Quality traditional food

The brochure must also feature the website address, opening hours, and an attractive excerpt from the menu and of course a clear and accurate map. This must represent where the accommodation can be found in respect of airports, ports and the capital. Then a more detailed map must feature the location of the accommodation on the main route to Bergen. Drive times and actual route titles are vitally important (as is the case with the website).

9.3. Entry Signage

The **experience of entering** the accommodation provision at the moment is somewhat low key and confusing.

The **car park and the entry through the dive** must also build anticipation. This is a key element of the visitor journey and signs, props and details can help significantly in ensuring nobody decides to reverse the decision to enter and experience what Seveltunet has to offer.

9.4. The Food Experience

The food element is one of the strongest elements of this project and needs to be marketed more effectively. The **menu** should link to local or historical or historically created dishes. Local foods and fruits are used to great effect and this should be promoted to differentiate the product.

9.5. House Orientation and the Nature of the Experience

The entry and ground floor areas are perhaps the **strongest part of the existing experience** and have seen the most significant investment. The recommendations here are all about marketing and getting wider awareness of the experience of this heritage building, its fittings and the friendly approach.

The upper areas / bedrooms and some of the self catering experience would merit investment to ensure it is of a comparable level. It is understood that this will be capital intensive and will take time.

9.6. Events and Private Hire

As a facility for private hire already exists event income is an area of revenue generation the operation cannot ignore. The key here is inclusive pricing which appears to offer a deal in a unique location.

Marketing the product to companies for away days and specific events again offers a range of potential sales options. The pricing formula will be critical and the event sale should propose three menu scenarios with and without alcohol.

The aim here is to offer a packaged range of menu items which combine clearly all elements with an inclusive price. The a la carte menu offer invariably encourages negotiation and barter which is time consuming and invariably leads to price reduction.

The simplest menu offer should combine in one packaged price:

- Room Hire
- Food
- Beverage

Suggested menus with prices are detailed below the titles offered are purely for working purposes only:

<p style="text-align: center;">The Sevletunet Welcome</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fresh Juice / Natural Mineral Water</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Homemade Fresh Seasonal Vegetable Soup and Bread</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Norwegian Open Sandwich Buffet (range of fillings with assisted service)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee / Tea</p>

Assisted service should be utilized in all cases and means that portion control/ service is via the owner or member of staff serving guests rather than guests serving themselves. All soups offered should be vegetable to keep costs down and where appropriate leftovers can be incorporated.

The Sevletunet Greeting

Glass of Wine (Red or White), Fresh Juice or Natural Mineral Water upon arrival

Homemade Fresh Seasonal Vegetable Soup

Traditional Norwegian Hot Cuisine with Heritage Names

Served with Second Glass of Wine/ Fresh Juice / Water

Dessert or Fresh Fruit

Tea / Coffee served with mints

The Sevletunet Luxury Option

Glass of Sparkling Wine, Fresh Juice or Natural Mineral Water upon arrival

Homemade Soup or Cold Starter

Choice from Two Traditional Norwegian Hot Cuisine dishes (one vegetarian one meat or fish) with Heritage Names

Served with up to two Glasses of Quality Wine/ Fresh Juice / Water

Choice of Dessert, Cheese or Fresh Fruit

Tea / Coffee served with Petit Fours

These set menu offers for groups allow for seasonal varied main courses but should always include vegetables as a major constituent in order to keep prices low. Similarly, a fruit alternative and non-alcoholic drink can be offered for an increasingly health conscious audience.

The nature of the main course should be varied but where possible should utilize Norwegian / local produce. Furthermore, it should echo the history and culture of the region and add to the Sevletunet experience.

Once again emphasis has to be placed on the Seveltunet Experience and when visitors enter this unique location service and friendliness should be second to none.

Marketing must commence this winter in earnest. All associations, trade unions, work organizations, ladies guilds etc will have to be contacted with these packages for event and function hire. A drive time of 2 hours should be targeted.

The website and the brochure are at the heart of the experience and should feature blogs and appreciative comments of those group and corporate bookings that have seen and enjoyed the experience.

9.7. Film and Photo locations – Enhancing Appeal and Market Awareness

The Sevetunet experience is strong enough to catalyse media appeal from a range of users from the film and media industries. This kind of utilisation of the establishment as a backdrop can reinforce the appeal and increase awareness of the location.

The establishment of demand for the location for film settings or as a backdrop to photography needs to be proactively marketed. A brief computer generated set of images and brochure should be created and mailed electronically to all photographers, film makers and advertising and marketing companies in the capital and other centers of population. An introductory discount should be offered to stimulate appeal and proximity. The availability of food, accommodation and a range of fittings, artistic props and scenery can be offered to accompany the location itself. This represents good high return business with minimum requirement for staffing and few direct costs.

9.8. Exiting the Experience

In returning to the analysis of the customer journey the end of the visit must be as pleasurable as the beginning. The end of the stay or hire period is the key opportunity to give customers a reason to return.

Existing customers have the greatest potential to become repeat users and the relationship has to be built. This is easier if email data is captured allowing for an e-newsletter / e-brochure with discounted offers to return.

Beyond this regular communication every 3 months, prior to key events, such as Christmas, Summer holiday period, Easter etc. is key.

Signage on exit has to also thank customers, suggest care on the exiting road junction and suggest a return offer.

9.9. Other Proposed Marketing Activities

Further marketing efforts should be focused on:

- On board marketing for in-bound cruise ships and at departure ports (via brochure)
- In house marketing aimed at local attractions and activity providers (via brochure distribution, electronic links and customer discounts)
- The leaflet marketing to local housing in a 45 minute drive time with a friends and family discount for the local community to use for friends and family they cannot accommodate themselves.

10 BENCHMARKING

The following offer similar products and merit review in the context of marketing and development:

Chalet accommodation

<http://www.ineurope.co.uk/switzerland/leysin.ski.chalet/>

<http://www.info-team.co.uk/french.alps/chalet.koala.php>

farmhouse/barns etc accommodation.

<http://www.thehall-milden.co.uk/> - as re-enactment venue and training holidays

<http://www.kingfisherbarn.com/>

<http://www.skirlinghouse.com/>

11 CONCLUSION

It is our considered belief the Sevletunet is a unique and appealing accommodation provider that does have real potential to grow customers if marketing is increased.