THE USE OF TERROIR PRODUCTS AS A TOOL FOR ONLINE DESTINATION BRANDING EXPERIENCE: CASE OF MOROCCAN TERROIR PRODUCTS

Assia Sadki[1]

Soumiya Mekkaoui[2]

Mohamed Sguenfle[3]

Abstract:

Terroir products can have an important added value to the promotion of a destination due to their association to a specific territory and history. They can contribute to different sectors of tourism: gastronomic tourism, rural tourism, ecotourism and health and wellbeing tourism. With this diversity, they can be used to create new attractions or enhance old ones as it can bring a distinguished touch to the experience. In this context, terroir products can be used in the branding of a destination, and as we are in a digitalized era, we can speak of online destination branding experience. Our objective is to understand if the tourism regional council of Agadir made use of terroir products of Agadir and its surroundings to promote the different tourism sectors of this area online, and to understand the actual online destination branding experience that the official website and social media of Agadir provide to potential tourists through these local products. To achieve this, we conducted a content analysis, a qualitative research method that helped us analyze the official online platforms of Agadir and its region.

Keywords: terroir products, online destination branding, territorial marketing, digital marketing, social media.

1. INTRODUCTION

During these last decades, the world has known a massive growth of tourism marketing. But it is only during the last few years that destination branding emerged and gave a whole new perspective to the way a country, a region or a city is promoted. Actually, the first traces of 'city branding' appeared in 2005 (Kasapi & Cela, 2017). Brands can be associated to a destination just as products, services, and companies. A destination has an array of distinctive attributes such as culture, heritage, art, and natural resources (Chernatony & McDonald,

---

[1] University of Ibn Zohr. sadki.assia@gmail.com
[2] University of Ibn Zohr. soumiyamekkaoui@hotmail.com
[3] University of Ibn Zohr. mohamedsguenfel67@gmail.com

2012). Combining these attributes is what allows a destination to create a differentiated perception of the place in the consumers' mind as well as a competitive advantage. Chernatony and McDonald explained that the brand is what consumers perceive and not what the marketer tries to project. But creating a product out of a destination is not as simple as that. The marketing of a destination can be complex because the target, which is the potential tourists, is remarkably diverse and make subjective interpretation of the travel itineraries, the activities, the cultural background, etc.

Even though the literature on destination branding is quite recent, ideas such as the construction of a regional image and linking a product to a place have been the center of topic in European Union since a long time. The objective of many countries in this union was to link specific products to specific regions (Libery & Kneafsey, 1998). The local products are used as features to characterize a place and can even be its main attraction. These products tend to combine a geographic area, its cultural heritage, and its traditions all at once (Asero & Patti, 2009). From the point of view of a tourist, a local product, when it is combined with other resources, can even be the main attraction of a destination. Asero and Patti used wine as an example to illustrate this. They affirm that a product that refers strongly to a territory in which it is produced, can be defined as a Territorial Intensive Product (TIP).

This paper focuses on local products of Agadir and its region that have been recognized as terroir products by the development board of production industries (Direction de Développement des Filières de Production, 2014) and are labelled within the framework of the Green Morocco Plan (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests, 2015). These labeled products have distinctive features of quality and origin. In other words, their characteristics depend highly on the place where they are produced. They also represent a cultural value and the territory's heritage. Thereby, they can play a major role in the tourist experience.

This paper will discuss the concept of online destination branding (ODB) and will verify if the tourism regional council of Agadir made use of terroir products of the region to promote the different tourism sectors of this area online, with the main aim of understanding the actual online destination branding experience that the official website and social media of Agadir provide to internet users through these local products. To measure this, we conducted a content analysis. It is a qualitative research method that helped us analyze the official online platforms of Agadir and its region.

2. ONLINE DESTINATION BRANDING

Kotler, Haider and Rein developed the concept of place marketing in 1993. They explicitly explained that places needs to be considered like businesses and be marketed in the same way in order to face the growing international competition and the changes of environment (Kotler et al., 1993). If a place or a destination were to be considered as a business, thus it also needs branding. And this is when destination branding is introduced. Destination branding is considered as a marketing tool that helps give to the tourist a representation of the potential experience that he can get from that destination (Jiménez Barreto et al., 2019). The objective of destination branding is to develop positive images about the attractions that a destination has (Morgan et al., 2003).

In the same way as destination marketing, destination branding needs to be seen as a creative process instead of a mechanical one (Bianchini & Ghilardi, 2007) by communicating about the unique value of a destination. The objective of destination branding is to build an identity for a destination and to make it possible for tourists to recognize it and be attracted to it.

Branding is a process that a company uses in order to differentiate its offer from its competitors (Jobber, 2004). In their definition of a successful brand, other scholars spoke about the ability of a product, service, place or person to be identifiable in a way that the user perceives a unique and relevant added value that matches his needs the most (Chernatony & McDonald, 2012). This definition concludes that a location can be branded just like a product or a service would be and that is about giving the place associations that make it desirable.

When speaking of the branding of a place, we speak about the destination brand. It is about making possible for tourists to identify the destination through a symbol, a word or any other graphic presentation that will help them recognize it. This presentation of the destination needs to convey the idea of a unique experience that is associated to that specific destination (Damnjanovic & Razek, 2009; Kerr, 2006).

In this digitized world, there are more and more scholars that are tackling the field of online destination branding. The use of sophisticated and innovative communication tools is necessary for an enhanced simulacrum of a destination and to give to the tourist a pre-taste of the destination. Thus, in order to promote this later one, it is important for it to be present online through social media, websites and virtual reality (VR) applications (Jiménez Barreto et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2018).

To study online destination branding, scholars base their research on branding experience and destination branding. Barnes, Mattsson, et Sørensen used the four brand experiences dimensions suggested by Brakus Schmitt and Zarantonello to replicate their work on tourism destination sector. The four dimensions are: sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual (Brakus et al., 2009). From a tourism perspective, the sensory dimension refers to experiences related to the five basic senses of humans: sight, smell, taste, hearing, and touch. The affective dimension is related to feelings and emotions. The behavioral dimension refers to activities and actions that a tourist performs. And the intellectual dimensions is related to the stimulation of curiosity and thoughts (Barnes et al., 2014; Brakus et al., 2009; Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2019).

On their work on brand destination, Jiménez-Barreto, Rubio and Campo Martínez explained these four dimensions in an online context and used some of them to study the official websites of destinations (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2019). It is the sensory dimension and the intellectual dimension that have been used in this recent work to study the ability of these websites to raise the users' visiting intentions and recommendation of the destination. Zhang et al. (2018) also considered the effective dimension from an online destination branding perspective in his research to measure the connection of the users to the destination through the pleasure and excitement experienced while visiting the official website and social media of a destination.

Research that takes the online context, and more specifically the social media context, into consideration for the online brand destination experience are very few. While the adaptation of the four basic dimensions is relevant to this field, it is more important to take

into consideration the particularity of the web. Thus, including the interactions between tourists and between tourists and the official platform of the destination is necessary (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2019).

Jiménez-Barreto et al. (2019) added two new dimensions to the four existing ones. These two dimensions are the social and the interactive dimensions. When the internet users perceive a high level of these two dimensions, they are more likely to make a favorable opinion of the brand destination and the website.

3. THE USE OF TERROIR PRODUCTS FOR ONLINE DESTINATION BRANDING AND DEVELOPING DIFFERENT TOURISM SECTORS

Today, terroir products are the new representatives of authenticity and attachment to a tribe, a village, a region, or a city. They have an important weight in the business field. They sector keeps growing constantly and strongly during the last years (Fort & Fort, 2006). Some scholars see terroir products as a production being part of a culture (Bérard & Marchenay, 2000). These scholars connect these products to two dimensions: first dimension is a territory or a geographical origin, and the second one is historical and cultural. Thus, terroir can be a mix of geographical and cultural definitions (The French Embassy, 2015). There are also products that are derived from these terroir products. In other words, these products use a terroir product as a raw material (Fort & Fort, 2006). For example, in Morocco there is *Amlou* that is made of edible Argan oil, almonds and honey, all blended to give a smooth paste. There are also cosmetic products that contain Argan oil or prickly pear seed oil that are made by the same companies or cooperatives that produce these terroir products.

Terroir products are considered as unique because they rely on a specific location, have a distinct production process and knowledge, tell a story, are connected to a culture and own notable benefits and characteristics. With this uniqueness, terroir products can act as a competitive advantage of a territory and be part of its identity and image (Sguenfle & Sadki, 2017). This is to say that these local products have the potential to hold the link between objects, ideas, and symbols. Also, in the actual time, terroir products benefit tourism as they can contribute in the following sectors: rural tourism, ecotourism, gastronomy tourism and health and well-being tourism (Sguenfle & Sadki, 2018).

Destination branding is about creating an information process that links objects, ideas, and symbols all together in a way that benefits tourists. Among these benefits, there are physical and mental health, rest, contentment and regeneration (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2019; Watson & Kopachevsky, 1994). This description of destination branding is something that we can detect in terroir products. Also, in the previous section, we have mentioned how destination branding is about associating a unique experience to a specific destination and this is something that local products can help with.

Terroir products can be referred to as typical products. They are considered as tourism supplies of a destination and can also be an important attraction for this same destination because they include strong references to where they are produced (Asero & Patti, 2009). Asero and Patti used wine in Italy as an example of how a terroir product can be used by a destination as a competitive advantage and a tool to attract tourists that are interested in

discovering the source of this local product, to know more about its production process as well as the region where it is produced.

Asero and Patti (2009) assert that when the more a terroir product is exclusive, the more development opportunities in the tourist sector are greater. This is the case with some terroir products of the region of Agadir. We can take as an example Argan oil and Saffron. And it is this exclusivity that allows a destination to create a strong brand image around its local product. Several European countries used a product they produce exclusively as an advantage to build a strong brand image. The purpose of our paper is to understand how terroir products of Agadir and its region are being used for the brand image.

Local communities usually encourage initiatives that are related to terroir products through national and international exhibitions, labels, congresses, supervised production authorizations, subventions, etc. But we are trying to understand through this paper is how local communities promote these terroir products online, and how they are used for online branding destination in the platforms of Agadir and the surroundings. Based on the literature review and the empirical studies that we took into consideration; we propose the research questions below:

Research question 1: are the social and interactive dimensions present in the official platforms of Agadir regarding terroir products?

Research question 2: are the terroir products of Agadir and its region exploited to promote the ecotourism, rural, gastronomy, health, and wellness tourism?

4. METHOD

For this research, we conducted a qualitative study. We opted for content analysis. This method has been used for so long as a tool to study communication messages (McMillan, 2000). It gives the means to collect data in a systematic and objective way in order to make inferences and to understand the meaning of the collected data, and in our case, the meaning of the information collected online. Content analysis will help us come up with suggestions of answers to our research questions (Cavanagh, 1997; Holsti, 1968).

Even though the method of content analysis has been used by so many researchers, there are still no universal rules on how to proceed with it. Scholars in this field suggested different processes. For our research, we opted for the steps of McMillan (2000). This researcher adapted previous process to the World Wide Web (Budd et al., 1967; Krippendorff, 1980).

McMillan (2000) process is constituted from five steps. The **first** one consists of determining a hypothesis or a research question. The particularity with the Web is that the researcher is confronted to a wide context where narrowing the research question can be challenging. The **second** step consists of selecting a sample. The challenges of this step do not arise in our research because we will be examining specific texts from a population of texts (Krippendorff, 2004). The third step is about defining categories. For this, there are two main measurement units: context units and coding units. The latter one is drawn from the first one. It is the drawing of the smallest segment from a body (Budd et al., 1967). The **fourth** step is about coding the texts and having its reliability checked. With the WWW, McMillan called on coders from different parts of the country to assist in the coding process remotely. And the

fifth step is about the analysis and interpretation of the data collected while coding (McMillan, 2000).

After formulating our research question in the previous section comes the sampling step. We opted for random sampling. This technique consists of listing the sampling units that will be included in the analysis (Krippendorff, 2004). In our research, the sampling units are constituted from Web pages. We chose to do a content analysis of the official online platforms of the region of Agadir. These platforms include the website and different social media on which the region is active. Our focus was brought on both images and texts that concern terroir products. We will also determine the importance given to terroir products amongst other information shared about the region. Below are the online platforms that will be analyzed through real navigation:

- Website: https://www.visitagadir.com/

- Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/visitagadir/

- Instagram page: https://www.instagram.com/visit.agadir/

- YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZUEYDP_BM8magtoJONPnHQ

- Pinterest page: https://www.pinterest.com/conseilrgionald/

For the third step, we considered four major categories which are: rural tourism, ecotourism, gastronomy tourism and, health and well-being tourism. These categories are constituted from 2 sub-categories which are related the online dimensions of OBD experience suggested by Jiménez-Barreto et al. (2019) which are: social and interactive dimensions. Considering the focus on the digital side of our research and the qualitative methodology we opted for which is the content analysis, we chose to focus on these two dimensions. Also, we believe that the other four dimensions can have a better and proper evaluation through other research methods that include users' assessment of the online platform.

The data related to terroir products that was collected from the official online platforms was classified according to its tourism type and dimension cited. Our objective was to determine if the platforms of Agadir and its region respond to the theory of Jiménez-Barreto et al. (2019) and exploit the advantages that terroir products have in territorial marketing.

For the coding in the fourth step, we applied the open, axial and selective coding manually (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). In the open coding, the collected data was broken down in an analytic way to have a new perspective on the data. In the axial coding, this division of data allowed to emphasize and develop the main categories and the subcategories. In the third type of coding which is the selective one, all the categories that were emphasized previously were unified around a main category (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Two people participated in the coding and analysis after being trained.

This type of coding allowed us to know which types of tourism and the dimensions that are exploited by the official platforms of Agadir and its region through rereading and reviewing the data all along the coding process and by comparing our work to the literature.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Website

The website of Agadir is constituted of 11 destinations that include the city of Agadir and other cities of Souss Massa region. The page of each city has a presentation and a listing of its main attraction.

In most of the pages (Agadir, Chtouka Ait Baha, Imouzzer Ida Outanane, Inezegane Ait Melloul, Tafraout, Taliouin, Taroudant, Tata and Tiznit), there were a mention of some of the products that are considered as terroir products according to the Direction of Production Industry Development (Direction de Développement des Filières de Production, 2014). The terroir products that are mentioned are Argan, saffron, almonds, honey, and dates.

Even though 9 of 11 cities mentioned the terroir products, not all of them highlighted them. For example, in the page of Tiznit, except of the mention of the localization of the city amongst dates, Argan and olive trees, there is no other valorization of terroir products through pictures or texts. The page of Inzegane Ait Melloul also mentioned briefly the Argan trees as part of the flora of the area with two pictures of the tree with no indication of what it is. Thereby, Tiznit and Inzegane Ait Melloul were excluded from our content analysis.

We did the content analysis to the cities and attractions that mentioned at least one of the terroir products of the region that are recognized by the Direction of Production Industry Development. These products include those that are labeled: Argan, roses, Barbary figs and saffron. The other flagship terroir products of the region are date palms, almond, honey and Henna (Direction de Développement des Filières de Production, 2014).

From a first scan of the totality of the pages of the official website of Agadir and its region, we did not find the mention of all the products. At the same time, other products were highlighted more than others. For example, there were no mention of Henna and roses, and Argan and honey were mentioned several times while Barbary fig was mentioned only one time. Some products, even if there were mentioned, there were no visuals to highlight them. On the pages that mentioned a terroir product, most of the visuals showed a view of a landscape of the region.

On the home page, there were seven featured categories amongst which are included: "circuits and guided tours", "gastronomy and terroir", "leisure activities" and "well-being". These categories coincide with the four categories of tourism where Moroccan terroir products can be used. Though, the links of these categories take to an internal directory of the website with large choice of restaurants, agencies, hotels, and shops that each of them try to promote their business briefly. Thus, instead of using this section to promote unique products and services for each category to help increase the value of the region, it is used to help tourists find companies so that they can organize their stay.

Hence, terroir products are not featured in the main pages. Also, they are hardly mentioned on the first page of a city. While browsing all the pages of the activities of the region's cities, the Moroccan terroir products are mentioned briefly without a focus on them. For example, in the page of the forest of Mesguina that is located nearby Agadir, we only find that the forest is referred to as "The Arganeraie biosphere reserve". And in the page of Souss Massa Natural Park that is in Chtouka Ait Baha, the text mentions the Argan tree as being part of the vegetal species with no pictures of the tree.

There are cases where the terroir product is highlighted like in Tafraout section, there is a page dedicated to the almond blossom spectacle given by nature as well as a page for the cuisine of the region that promoted many terroir products such Argan oil, almond powder and honey. There is also the Honey Road page in the Immouzer Ida Outanane section where honey is well highlighted. But even if these pages clearly showcased some of the terroir products of the region, they still lack visuals related to terroir products.

This lack of visuals regarding terroir products is compensated with a multimedia library that can be accessed from the home page. It is constituted of videos and images. Several videos give an overview of the main terroir products of the region (Argan trees, kernels and oil, olives and olive trees, dates, and date palm trees, *Amlou* and beauty products derived from terroir products of the region). These videos also gave a better view of the biospheres, rural areas, markets, and the flora that were mentioned in the pages of the activities and included terroir products. The drawback is that most of these videos are only available in French version of the website and cannot be found in the English version of the website.

Actually, visuals (images and videos) help the internet users to experience a better enjoyment of the website, to retain their attention, to increase their intention to recommend or visit the destination, and to encourage them to imagine shopping experiences that they could have (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2010).

The table 1 and table 2 give examples of the coding that helped us extract the categories related to tourism and terroir products. From this step of content analysis, we identified the four categories of tourism: ecotourism, rural tourism, gastronomy tourism and health and wellness tourism with a predominance of the two first categories. And amongst all the terroir products that were mentioned, it is Argan that is cited the most as being part of the flora or part of the architecture that sometimes include stalks of the tree.

As for the two dimensions that we selected for this research, there is an absence of the social dimension. The interactive dimension is present through the contact form. On the website, it is only through this form that the internet users can get in touch with the destination and experience an interactive dimension. Though, it is not a real time experience such as the one that social media provide.

Table 1. Examples of the open and axial coding of the official website of Agadir and its region.

Destination	Extracted examples	Open coding	Axial coding
Agadir The forest of Mesguina - the Arganeraie biosphere reserve.	"The forest of Mesguina lies between two big floristy regions: The classic Mediterranean flora on the slopes of the high Atlantic Atlas, and the micronesian on the Atlantic coast."	The Arganeraie biosphere reserve lies between two big floristy regions.	Rural tourism Ecotourism
	"Way before the 19th century, all the caravans coming from Sahara charged with gold and other precious materials used to	The forest of Mesguina has a long history.	Rural tourism

	pass through the region of Mesguina, the only passage across the Atlas mountains."		
Agadir Argan trees	"Spread all over the Souss Massa territories, and especially Imouzzar region, you can visit some Argan oil cooperations for the pleasure of savouring, and provisionning many Argan based products."	Visit of the Imouzzar region to try Argan products.	Rural tourism Gastronomy tourism
	"Argan oil, which is extract from the Argan nut, is often used in the culinary field, for the traditional Moroccan cuisine, but it also involved in pharmaceutics and cosmetic uses."	Argan oil can be used in the cuisine, pharmaceutics and cosmetic fiels.	Gastronomy tourism Health and wellness tourism
Taroudant Palmeraie of ait mansour	"The town of Taroudant is surrounded by vast cultivated land and large areas of Argan pasturage, where intensive livestock farming is practiced."	Taroudant is surrounded by an Argan flora.	Ecotourism
Tafraout Main page	"In the spring, all the almond trees of the Tafraout valley are in bloom, and the spectacle is great for lovers of hiking and excursions, who will be seduced by the exceptional wild nature and small villages in the vicinity of Tafraout."	Almond trees blossom offers a spectacle for tourists who hike around the city and its small villages.	Rural tourism Ecotourism
Immouzzar Ida Outanane Honey road	"The region of Immouzer, near Agadir in southern Morocco, is famous for its production of thyme honey, the most fragrant. A honey of amber color, renowned for its medicinal virtues. Farmers still produce it in a traditional way, making this highly appreciated product, a high-quality honey."	A high quality and appreciated honey is produced in this region that is also known for its medicinal virtues.	Gastronomy tourism Health and wellness tourism
Tata The oasis of tagmoute	"You will enjoy a pre-Saharan climate, with hot temperatures in summer, particularly suitable for the cultivation of palm trees, date palms, olive trees and almond trees that populate the oases of the South."	The oasis is populated by different type of trees such as date palms, olive and almond trees.	Rural tourism

Table 2. The selective coding of the examples in Table 1.

Destination	Open coding	Axial coding	Selective coding
Agadir The forest of Mesguina - the Arganeraie biosphere reserve.	The Arganeraie biosphere reserve lies between two big floristy regions.	Rural tourism Ecotourism	On the official website of Agadir and its region, the four sectors of tourism (rural tourism, ecotourism, gastronomy tourism and health and wellness tourism) occur. As for the dimensions on the pages, there is an absence of both the social and interactive dimension.
	The forest of Mesguina has a long history.	Rural tourism	
Agadir Argan trees	Visit of the Imouzzar region to try Argan products.	Rural tourism Gastronomy tourism	
	Argan oil can be used in the cuisine, pharmaceutics and cosmetic fiels.	Gastronomy tourism Health and wellness tourism	
Taroudant Palmeraie of ait mansour	Taroudant is surrounded by an Argan flora.	Ecotourism	
Tafraout Main page	Almond trees blossom offers a spectacle for tourists who hike around the city and its small villages.	Rural tourism Ecotourism	
Immouzzar Ida Outanane Honey road	A high quality and appreciated honey is produced in this region that is also known for its medicinal virtues.	Gastronomy tourism Health and wellness tourism	
Tata The oasis of Tagmoute	The oasis is populated by different type of trees such as date palms, olive and almond trees.	Rural tourism	

5.2. Soial Media

Agadir and its region have an official account in four social media: YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest. All these platforms are based on texts and visuals. Considering the objectives of our research, the tourism categories and the two dimensions of the online destination branding experience that we are focusing on, we disregarded the uses of different

languages on these social media and did the coding and analysis as if there were one language.

All the terroir products that were mentioned on the website can be found on the visuals of all the platforms. There are also products such as Henna and rose that were not mentioned on website can be found on Instagram and Pinterest. All the products that are shown on the videos and images are sometimes mentioned clearly and sometimes they are just alluded to.

The videos on YouTube include many terroir products but they are rarely accompanied by a text or a voice to highlight them. For example, if a tourist does not know *Amlou* or Henna, he or she might not pay attention to the product on the video or not acknowledge it as a local product. This is to say that even if they appear, there is a lack of texts and information that could bring the attention of the potential tourist on the terroir products of the region and the added value they can have in their experience.

Regarding the four categories of tourism (ecotourism, rural tourism, gastronomy tourism and health and well-being tourism), they can all be found in the four official social media of Agadir and its region. Just as on the website, ecotourism and rural tourism have a strong presence in all the social media. The difference is that with all the visuals, these platforms bring the internet user close to the destination. And unlike the website, the gastronomy tourism is more present on social media through the images on Pinterest, Instagram, and Facebook, and through videos and audios on YouTube and Instagram. As for the last category of tourism which is health and well-being tourism, the local products that can be featured in this section are mentioned but very briefly. Even though there is a whole video dedicated to well-being in Agadir, there is no mention of how some local products can be used in this field. Thus, a tourist interested in this category will not be able to see what make the experience special in the region.

The advantage of social media is that they provide the social and interactive dimensions by default. Thus, we witnessed a strong presence of social and interactive dimensions on Facebook and Instagram. For YouTube and Pinterest, even though it has an open space for socializing and interacting, videos that are related to our research topic have no comments.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper highlights how terroir products can contribute to the branding of a destination through their association to the different tourism categories as well as their development on online platforms to create new dimensions. The perception of a high level of interactivity and the positive social experience on the website and the social media can be linked to the attachment of the internet users to the brand and the creation of a favorable opinion of the destination.

Terroir products are valued in many countries, including in Morocco. Using these products as a tool for ODB is a way to give to the tourists the chance to discover the naturalistic and cultural background of the region. They are promoted in different ways such as exhibitions and labels. But while their use as a tool to promote a place and to create destination branding is widely common in some countries such as wine in Tuscany or cheese in Normandy and in Gouda, the potential of terroir products of Agadir and its region is still not drawn fully.

This study finds that the four categories of tourism in which terroir products can be involved (rural tourism, ecotourism, gastronomy tourism and health and wellness tourism) are all present on the official online platforms of the region of Agadir (the website and social media pages). Though, the two dimensions of the brand experience that were taken into consideration in this paper (the social and interactive dimensions) are not always incorporated. On social media, the social and interactive dimensions are found by default with a strong presence on Facebook and Instagram. But on YouTube and Pinterest, there is not much interaction and socializing happening there. As for the website, there is no presence of the social dimension. The interactive dimension can be found through the contact form, but it does not provide a real time experience as it is the case for social media.

The familiarity of tourists with the destination impacts their mental impression and tourist experience. Thus, for a future research, it is suggested to invite participants that represent potential tourists to navigate the same platforms to verify whether the same dimensions and categories will emerge or not. It will also be interesting to differentiate participants that are familiar with the region from those who are not (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2019).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Asero, V., & Patti, S. (2009). From Wine Production to Wine Tourism Experience: The Case of Italy. *Wine Economics*, *52*.

Barnes, S. J., Mattsson, J., & Sørensen, F. (2014). Destination brand experience and visitor behavior: Testing a scale in the tourism context. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *48*, 121–139. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.06.002

Bérard, L., & Marchenay, P. (2000). Le vivant, le culturel et le marchand: Les produits de terroir. In *Vives campagnes: Le patrimoine rural, projet de société* (Autrement, pp. 191–216).

Bianchini, F., & Ghilardi, L. (2007). Thinking culturally about place. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, *3*(4), 280–286. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.pb.6000077

Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand Experience: What Is It? How Is It Measured? Does It Affect Loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, *73*(3), 52–68. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.73.3.052

Budd, R. W., Thorp, R. K., & Donohew, L. (1967). *Content analysis of communications*. Macmillan.

Cavanagh, S. (1997). Content analysis: Concepts, methods and applications. *Nurse Researcher*, *4*(3), 5–16. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.4.3.5.s2

Chernatony, L. D., & McDonald, M. (2012). Creating powerful brands: In consumer, service and industrial markets. In *Creating Powerful Brands: In Consumer, Service and Industrial Markets*. Taylor and Francis.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (1990). Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques. *Qualitative Sociology*, *13*(1).

Damnjanovic, V., & Razek, M. (2009). Tourism Branding Strategy of the Mediterranean Region. *International Journal of Euro-Mediterranean Studies*, *Vol 2*, 99–120.

Direction de Développement des Filières de Production. (2014). *Produits du terroir du Maroc: Catalogue national*.

Fort, F., & Fort, F. (2006). Alternatives marketing pour les produits de terroir. *Revue francaise de gestion*, *no 162*(3), 145–159.

Holsti, O. R. (1968). Content Analysis. *Handbook of Social Psychology*, *2*. https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cirs/665

Jiménez Barreto, J., Rubio, N., & Campo Martínez, S. (2019). The online destination brand experience: Development of a sensorial–cognitive–conative model. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *21*(2), 245–258. https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2258

Jiménez-Barreto, J., Sthapit, E., Rubio, N., & Campo, S. (2019). Exploring the dimensions of online destination brand experience: Spanish and North American tourists' perspectives. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *31*, 348–360. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2019.07.005

Jobber, D. (2004). *Principles and Practice of Marketing*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Kasapi, I., & Cela, A. (2017). Destination Branding: A Review of the City Branding Literature. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, *8*. https://doi.org/10.1515/mjss-2017-0012

Kerr, G. (2006). From destination brand to location brand. *ERA - 2010*, *13*. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540271

Kotler, P., Haider, D. H., & Rein, I. J. (1993). *Marketing places: Attracting investment, industry, and tourism to cities, states, and nations*. Free Press.

Krippendorff, K. (1980). *Content Analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (1st ed.). SAGE.

Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Lee, W., Gretzel, U., & Law, R. (2010). Quasi-trial experiences through sensory information on destination web sites. *Journal of Travel Research*, *49*(3), 310–322. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287509346991

Libery, B., & Kneafsey, M. (1998). Product and Place: Promoting Quality Products and Services in the Lagging Rural Regions of the European Union. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, *5*(4), 329–341. https://doi.org/10.1177/096977649800500404

McMillan, S. J. (2000). The microscope and the moving target: The challenge of applying content analysis to the World Wide Web. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quaterly*, *77*(1), 80–98. Scopus. https://doi.org/10.1177/107769900007700107

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural Development, Water and Forests. (2015). *Labelled Products in Morocco*.

Morgan, N. J., Pritchard, A., & Piggott, R. (2003). Destination branding and the role of the stakeholders: The case of New Zealand. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, *9*(3), 285–299. https://doi.org/10.1177/135676670300900307

Sguenfle, M., & Sadki, A. (2017, November). Endemic Terroir Products as a Tool for Territorial Marketing: Case of Argan Oil in Promoting Tourism in Souss Massa. *Marketing et Management Des Territoires : Tendances et Pratiques*. Colloque International du Marketing et Management des Territoires, Kenitra, Morocco.

Sguenfle, M., & Sadki, A. (2018). The endemic argan tree as a tool for territorial marketing for tourism development in Souss Massa. *International Journal of Scientific Management and Tourism*, *4*(2), 501–519.

The French Embassy. (2015, May 7). Terroir: A Concept and Practice. *French Food in the US*. http://frenchfoodintheus.org/1034

Watson, G. l., & Kopachevsky, J. p. (1994). Interpretations of tourism as commodity. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *21*(3), 643–660. https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(94)90125-2

Zhang, H., Gordon, S., Buhalis, D., & Ding, X. (2018). Experience Value Cocreation on Destination Online Platforms. *JOURNAL OF TRAVEL RESEARCH*, *57*(8), 1093–1107. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287517733557