

I. INTRODUCTION

“**For ever for you!**” This National Trust (NT) motto has first and foremost been addressing the British public. However, the NT has got a lot of enthusiastic adherents all over the world, from Europe to America, Asia and Australia. Interestingly enough, among all international memberships the German one is the largest. This fact makes it very plausible to have a closer look at the **German market** for future expansion.

The starting point of this paper is a short **overview** to acquaint the reader with the origin of the NT and its development until today.

Before it is possible to think about international marketing opportunities for the NT it is necessary to take into consideration that the NT is a charity. This circumstance requires a non-profit marketing approach, which is provided by the *Freiburger Modell* in Chapter III.

The success of a marketing plan depends very much on the **greater environment** of a product or service so that Chapter IV and Chapter V introduce and analyse the geographical and historical background of Northumbria and the relevance of tourism in this region. The former is especially important because the NT product cannot be seen isolated from its surroundings. Since usually tourists do not only come to see a single attraction, but are also interested in the entire area, Northumbria has to be examined as a holiday destination as such. Chapter V puts further marketing efforts of the Northumbria NT into the wider context of the tourism industry in Northumbria and the UK in order to recognize threats and opportunities.

After getting to know the wider environment the reader is taken right into the centre of action by chapter VI in which the **Northumbria NT**, its properties and Marketing&Communications Department are introduced. Here is the origin for all activities regarding the pilot scheme for intensified marketing of the Northumbria NT in Germany.

To sell a product/service profitably the marketer must know the **consumer behaviour** of his/her target group. As the budget for international marketing is rather small at £ 5000, Chapter VII refers to external market research to develop the profile of the German tourist travelling to Germany.

The following chapter presents the results of a **survey** conducted by the Northumbria NT in autumn 2000. The outcome is as far as possible compared with the external sources of market research to examine their reliability. Furthermore, the survey informs about the degree of knowledge on Northumbria among the members living in Germany.

Finally, in Chapter IX a **marketing plan** is presented which has been developed on the basis of the above analyses.

The **aim** of this thesis is twofold. On the one hand it treats the subject on a theoretical basis as introducing a non-profit marketing model, on the other hand it suggests a marketing plan that could be translated into action to the benefit of the NT.

“For ever for you!” Can this be true for German as well as for British citizens? The following pages will show whether this is an **unrealistic dream** of expansion or a **realistic and wise marketing idea**.

II. THE PAST AND PRESENT OF THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR PLACES OF HISTORIC INTEREST OR NATURAL BEAUTY – A SHORT OVERVIEW¹

Today the NT seems to be a unique phenomenon, but not so in its founding days. In the last 25 years of the 19th century a lot of the institutions, which are today seen as typically British, came into being. Next to the NT (1895), other societies like the “Society of Ancient Buildings” (1877) and the “Royal Society for the Protection of Birds” (1889) were established. They all had the aim to preserve and protect the national heritage and environment.

Some reassurance of **British self-confidence** was needed in those times when generally everything seemed to be in a state of flux. Developments like the migration drift from villages into towns, the host of impoverished workers, the agricultural depression and the decreasing competitiveness of the British economy caused some social unease about the stability of British society and its leading role in the world. Keeping alive the more glorious past and protecting those elements of the British environment and society that were still intact seemed to be a solution to prevent a further decline by creating a counterbalance to those alarming developments. The countryside became a romantic symbol for the good old times when everything had been in the right balance. It was considered as “the very embodiment of decency, Englishness, national character and national identity” so that “the rural past was preferable to the urban present.”²

Liberals played a decisive part in the establishment of preservationist societies in those days. They prevailingly promoted the idea of increased public access to the natural assets of Britain. This policy has always been reflected in the NT programme as an essential part of its philosophy and also been applied to its properties.

¹ The overview is mainly based on: Newby, H. (ed), *The National Trust – the Next Hundred Years*, The National Trust 1997, as it is the newest and most critical book on the NT, its history and present developments.

² Newby, p 13.

The **founders** of the NT - Canon Rawnsley, Sir Robert Hunter and Octavia Hill - shared this approach. However, they did not put much emphasis on their political ties, although they all came from a liberal background. Generally speaking, the three had a mutual vision, but each had his/her own priorities: Rawnsley was committed to protecting the Lake District, Hunter supported the rights of public access and Hill fought against the horrible housing conditions of the working classes and thought that their spending time in nature would raise their moral standards. The protection of the environment as the manifestation of Englishness was their main aim, not so much the preservation of historic buildings.

Though the idea of preserving the English natural and cultural heritage was not unique, the **legal status** the NT acquired in 1907 was matchless and contrives to be until this day. The “National Trust Act” gave the NT the power to declare its properties inalienable. Inalienability means that the properties cannot be sold or mortgaged, or compulsory purchased against the wishes of the organisation without the permission of Parliament. Moreover, the NT was to preserve its properties for “the benefit of the nation”, for “public recreation” and “instruction” by making “all such provisions as may be beneficial for the property or desirable for the comfort or convenience of persons resorting to or using such property”³. Many house and estate owners have been motivated by these conditions to hand down their legacies to the NT. Today legacies remain one of the more important sources of fundraising.

Until the **second decade of the 20th century**, after the deaths of the three founders, the NT had not developed into an organisation of social and political importance. Although a quite reasonable number of members, 713 altogether, supported the organisation, it was still a long way to go before the NT became what it is today, the

³ Waterson, M. *The National Trust – The First Hundred Years*, 2nd ed, The National Trust, 1997, p 50/51.

largest private landowner, with a greater number of members than any other organisation in Britain (including political parties).

In the **interwar years** the “cult of the countryside”⁴ was taken a stage further as an answer to the suburban sprawl and the continuing destruction of rural areas. In this period John Bailey (chairman of the NT), G.M. Trevelyan (professor at Cambridge and personal friend of the PM Baldwin), R.C. Norman (chairman of the London County Council) and Oliver Brett (an insider of the British establishment) were the most influential men in the NT. Under their influence the NT gained much of importance in society which was certainly due to the fact that all of them moved in more influential circles than the founders. The support of the media, namely “The Times”, and the backing of the PM Baldwin helped to raise the number of memberships to 6,800 and to quadruple the NT’s holdings. In contrast to the first phase of the history of the NT, now **preservation** was considered as more important than guaranteeing public access. “it was a phase which may be described as elitist, paternal and culturally and politically conservative.”⁵

In the **mid 30s** a new development started: the protection of places of natural beauty had been the focus of the NT from the very beginning, but from now on for about another 30 years the acquisition and preservation of **country houses** became the centre of attention. This change of focus was intensified by the legislation of the post-war Labour government. A dramatic increase of death duty - a tax to be paid after the death of a landowner - made many people give their property to the NT to avoid paying the very high taxes. The “National Land Fund” created by Hugh Dalton in 1946 supported this tactic by reimbursing the Treasury for lost revenue through legacies to the NT⁶. Thus the NT expanded at an unprecedented speed. All in all, in the following 30 years the NT acquired

⁴ Newby, p 16.

⁵ Newby, p 19.

⁶ Newby, p 120

another 78 country houses. This period was the climax of aristocratic predominance in the NT, which becomes more than obvious by the NT Historic Buildings Committee, which at that time was mainly composed of peers.

The **late 60s** are a new turning point. Generally environmental issues became more and more important and new legislation limited the demolition of country houses. Consequently, in the **70s and 80s** the NT acquired only another 24 country houses and there is not much inclination to stop this decreasing trend. The protection of places of natural beauty became a priority topic again (e.g. “Enterprise Neptune” – a project to protect as much as possible of the coastline) and awareness for **ecologically sensitive management** awoke⁷. This awareness is also significant for the NT policy in the new millennium. The NT tries to combine environmental care and productive farming in agriculture, the global climate has become a focal point on a national and international level and the development of sustainable tourism is the centre of attention⁸.

In the sixties a further momentum was put on the NT agenda: the preservation of industrial buildings. This led the NT away from only focussing on the aristocratic history to paying more attention to the **history of the ordinary people**. This trend is still going on today as “downstairs-history” by, for example, explaining the life the servants led in an aristocratic household (e.g. Cragside).

Not only did the NT start to realize that - as well as the aristocratic and middleclass citizens - the working classes might also be interested in nature and national heritage (to a certain extent a revival of Hill’ s ideas), but they also began to **cooperate with other voluntary organisations** like “Wildlife Link”, “Countryside Link” and to develop loose contacts with the governmental “Countryside Commission”⁹.

⁷ Newby, p 39.

⁸ Newby, pp 40; see also VI.4. (*Strategic Plan*).

⁹ Newby, p 40.

These new developments coincided with some **structural changes** in the NT. The “Benson Committee”, which was installed after some harsh criticism about the NT’s undemocratic and obscure management, led to new structures. The position of the Director-General, responsible for the everyday routines, was established and more emphasis was put on getting away from the monopoly of aristocratic leadership in the NT and attracting people from different walks of life. Today the NT is mainly a middle-class organisation and cautious efforts are being made to open it up to the working classes and ethnic minorities.

Moreover, the necessity of a greater **economical orientation** of the NT was realized. As a consequence the NT shops in towns were started, literature published and fundraising was intensified. Additionally, more work was invested into creating more members and a higher public support.

During this time the “Royal Oak Foundation”, an American public charity, was founded (1973) at first to support all kinds of heritage projects in Britain, but later mainly NT properties. Today it is the National Trust’s US membership affiliate.

At the beginning of the new **millennium** the NT finds itself at a crossroads. Where should an organisation with 2 million members, holding more than 590,000 acres, 550 miles of coastline, 207 historic houses, 60 villages and hamlets, 8000 paintings and a million books¹⁰ go next? The workshop “Scenario 2015”¹¹ presented four different ways to go. The alternatives describe the NT as:

- Master of the Universe (doubling portfolio/doubling support)
- The ‘Waking’ Giant (static portfolio/doubling support)
- The Titanic (doubling portfolio, declining support)
- Withering on the Vyne (static portfolio, declining support)

¹⁰ Newby, p 11.

¹¹ AK.AWAY-Day.KPINDEX, *Knowledge Pack, Northumbria Regional Management Team, May 2000*, p 9.

The telling names of the last two visions show clearly that the workshop did not favour them. This is, of course, very plausible as a charity depends on its members and thus declining support would finally mean the dissolution of the NT. So the first two alternatives are mainly to be discussed, but still the latter two should be taken as warnings. The first option “Master of the Universe” may be tempting at first sight, but it could include negative consequences like

- the NT becoming an organisation too large and thus anonymous, which could lead to less volunteering commitment, a vital factor of the NT,
- the neglect of ‘uninteresting properties’ because they are of little economic value and
- the overloading of key properties with masses of visitors and thus ignoring the principle of sustainability.

“The ‘Waking’ Giant “ seems more promising in the long run as human, time and financial resources could be used

- to improve financial management
- to expand customer care
- to further expertise among the staff
- to intensify ecological policy
- to support ‘deficit properties’
- to raise salaries
- to reduce stress on staff
- to be more prepared to deliver change.

Enlarging the NT only for the sake of enlargement combined with the erroneous attitude that economic success is the only priority would not do justice to the preservationist and social starting point of the NT. However, the second concept

“The ‘Waking’ Giant” putting people and environmental issues into the centre of attention is in harmony with the founders’ original motivation, and as well with the needs of today’s members: being part of an organisation that safeguards the national natural and historic heritage for the well-being of its members and people in general. Thus the second option probably and hopefully will be seen as the road to take into the future.

III. THE *FREIBURGER MODELL* – A MARKETING MODEL FOR NON-PROFIT-ORGANISATIONS (NPO)

Marketing the Northumbria NT in Germany must take into consideration that the NT is a charity, i.e. a non-profit organisation, and thus a profit-oriented marketing concept cannot be used. The *Freiburger Modell* provides answers for the different marketing situation of NPOs.

The *Freiburger Modell* was developed for a postgraduate course of the university of Freiburg/Switzerland in 1986/87 and has been developed further since then. This model, which is one of the few academic models for NPO marketing,¹² serves as the foundation for the marketing plan in this paper. The model is, of course, only introduced to a useful extent for dealing with the given subject of the thesis.

III.1. Characteristics of NPOs¹³

NPOs are organisations, which are, generally speaking, situated between the state, and private business/organisations (PO) though there are also state NPOs, like schools.

¹² “(auch heute noch) [ist] der Bestand an Publikationen[über NPO-Management] gering und unstrukturiert“, i.e. even today there are only a few publications which are not well-structured, in: Schwarz,P., Purtschert,R., Giroud, Ch. *Das Freiburger Management-Modell für Nonprofit-Organisationen*, Bern 1999, 3rd ed, p 39.

¹³ Cp.: *Freiburger Modell*, pp 19.

The **nature of the aims** of private NPOs is *economic* (e.g. social insurances, trade unions), *socio-cultural* (e.g. sports clubs, private clubs), *political* (e.g. political parties, environmental organisations) or *social* (e.g. support of the poor, the handicapped). The specific aims of an NPO are laid down in a sort of agenda or constitution. The common aim, however, is to satisfy their members' needs, present them in- and outside the organisation and provide them with certain services.

There are two major differences between services provided by NPOs and industrial products. First, in NPOs the beneficiary is involved in the "production" which means that there is an **interactive relationship** between the "producer" and the receiver of the service. Second, in NPOs it is people, not machines, that create the product. Consequently, motivation plays a great role in leading an NPO and fostering the relationship with the members in order to achieve a high quality product/service, which satisfies the membership - the vital backbone of any NPO.

In contrast to POs, on the NPO-market there is not an equation as simple as money for product. The services are not offered for a price that covers the costs, but the coverage of the costs is achieved via other channels, like membership fees, donations, or state funding. Another way of "buying" services is exchanging them by working in cooperation, where each partner does a certain thing for the other one (e.g. free admission for members of the two involved NPOs). A further difference to POs is that the product/service need not be tangible (e.g. a book) or enjoyable (e.g. holidays), but aims to change behaviour (e.g. environmental consciousness). It can even have nothing to do with the client/member himself, like in the case of donations for third parties (e.g. fundraising for earthquake victims).

III.2. The Three Basic Pillars of the Model¹⁴

III.2.1. The NPO As a System

The NPO is a system, which must create a clear definition of the external and internal environment¹⁵ of the organisation in order to work efficiently.

The **internal environment** is the staff, the volunteers and the members¹⁶.

The **external environment** is the social, economic and legal framework of the NPO. Deep knowledge about this environment is the main prerequisite to be successful. Demographic developments, the economic and legal situation decide on the chances the NPO has to realize its aims.

The world outside the NPO is very important because the organisation can only exist through its relationship with its environment. The acquisition of new members - a constant aim of NPOs to safeguard their existence - the procuring of resources and, above all, the realization of their mission happens outside the organisation.

What is more, if the organisation can identify certain developments as problems earlier than others, they can offer new or better services, which will back up the importance of the NPO for society.

III.2.2. Incentive-Contribution-Theory¹⁷

The “Incentive-Contribution-Theory” in combination with the theory of motivation teaches how people are made to do certain things. For NPOs this means that they have to make an appealing offer to members and non-members to inspire them to commit themselves to the organisations by joining, donating money or time etc. **Incentives** may

¹⁴ Cp.: *Freiburger Modell*, pp 40.

¹⁵ ‘Environment’ is here and in the following not understood in its ecological meaning, but means the whole context an NPO exists in, like the social, political, ecological etc one.

¹⁶ Discussing whether members are seen as a part of the world outside the organisation or as being a part of the organisation would take things too far in this paper. Cp.: *Freiburger Modell* p 45.

¹⁷ Cp.: *Freiburger Modell*, p 45.

be material like free services for members, but, as NPOs usually have rather a lack of money, immaterial incentives, like intrinsic satisfaction (e.g. good conscience) would rather be promoted by the organisation. Whatever is offered, it must be of high quality to be considered an incentive to contribute.

In contrast to profit organisations, which have to satisfy only a certain target group, the difficulty for NPOs is to find an incentive that is appealing to so many different stakeholders as members, the public and the authorities.

III.2.3. Stimulus-Response-Model

Applied in our context the “Stimulus-Response-Model” means that NPOs should be **proactive** and not only reactive. The awareness about what is happening outside the organisation enables the NPO to discover problems early and start working on solutions in the organisation. Through this the organisation is not just seen as a kind of fire brigade, but as a far-sighted factor of society, which is fundamental for the further existence and success of the NPO.

III.3. The Structural Logic of the Management Model¹⁸

Generally, profit marketing is the source of NPO marketing, but, as the following will show, not everything can be adopted, but some aspects have to be selected, adapted and added.

The management model is divided up into three interdependent parts: **system management, marketing management** and **resource management**.

¹⁸ Cp.: *Freiburger Modell*, pp 49.

There are two strategies important to long-term management: the **market-based** strategy and the **resource-based** strategy. The former reacts to the market, i.e. the needs of the potential client, as to the quality and quantity of the products/ services while resources are not the prime consideration. The second strategy, which is more suitable for NPOs with limited finances, first checks the NPOs financial situation and then decides on possible services in accordance with their mission.

III.3.1. The System Management¹⁹

The management of the system (= NPO) determines the **mission** or aims of the NPO, the philosophy of management, the structures and processes, and is especially responsible for the formation of opinions within the organisation. It is also in charge of the planning and controlling of the services provided, the adaptation of the NPO's management model according to changes in the environment (Stimulus-Response-Theory, see III.2.3.) and the gradual elimination of possible resistance against these innovations.

All this should result in **Total Quality Management (TQM)**. The total quality of an NPO is the quality of both, the products/services and the whole organisation. Although we have already seen that NPOs have to offer product/services which satisfy all stakeholders (see III.2.2) the centre of attention is the satisfaction of the staff and the members as multipliers of the image of the NPO.

The culture of an NPO must be one of continuous improvement which means a constant rise in **effectiveness**, i.e. the NPO's activities are increasingly in harmony with its mission and simultaneously responding to changes in the environment. Thus more and more satisfaction is achieved in the outside world and within in the organisation. **Efficiency** is as important as effectiveness, i.e. wise usage of limited

¹⁹ Cp.: *Freiburger Modell*, pp 63.

resources and the endless creation of ideas to find new sources for fundraising. However, the striving for effectiveness and efficiency can often lead to a negligence of the quality standards, which must be of top priority to guarantee the survival of the NPO (III.2.3.).

Last, but not least, decision taking in the system management must acknowledge that every NPO has got its own **traditions, culture and characteristics** which are at least part of the NPO's essential basis and may not be carelessly sacrificed on the altar of innovation or economic rationality.

The system management takes care of the fulfilment of the mission and thus provides the framework for the marketing activities.

III.3.2. The Marketing Management²⁰

The marketing management translates the programme of the system management into action. Its main task is to **design** the services/products to the satisfaction of the members and to **communicate** the NPO's aims in a convincing way to members, staff and third parties.

Furthermore, like in profit organisations, the marketing management of NPOs takes care of **(1) the adaptation to the market** and **(2) the influencing of the market.**

- (1) a) The service must fulfil the client's/member's needs
- b) The service must differ from that of competitors
- c) The service must effectively be positioned on the market

²⁰ Cp.: *Freiburger Modell*, pp 149.

(2) Communication with the client/member must lead to a desired behaviour.

NPOs have become more and more aware of the relevance of marketing, which formerly was considered as rather immoral. Today influencing the market is even more important than in POs as in the case of NPOs the market has got a double function: providing resources for the supply of the product/service and buying the product/service.

Consequently, successful marketing management in NPOs depends on good relations with the outside world to realize the NPO's mission.

First the wider environment, the society the NPO exists in, must be understood in terms of its values, events and developments to build up marketing that is well received.

Second, the marketing management must segment the market to obtain the necessary resources. There is the job market for qualified staff, the market for donations or for fundraising, the market for buying equipment, the market of potential members and the market for cooperation with other NPOs or businesses.

Third, like in POs the relationship with the sales market must be influenced to make the market want and buy the offered product/service. The target groups are the members, the state, the public, other organisations and collectives. Members as a target group should not be underestimated as their contribution and the renewal of their membership are decisive for the existence of the organisation. The state is also to be taken seriously in this context because the provision or lack of laws or subventions can have great implications for the NPO.

The NPO marketing is more complex than profit marketing, as it includes not only the marketing of the product/service, but also the tracking down of possible resources.

III.3.3. The Resource Management²¹

The resource management is based on the message which the marketing management communicates to the world outside the NPO. If the mission spread and received positively, the resource management must make all market segments not only agree with the aims of the NPO, but also actively support it by joining the organisation, donating for special projects or forming a partnership.

Here the face-to-face contact and the “Incentive-Contribution-Theory” play a major role to gain **human resources**, which are at least as important as financial resources for an NPO. In general, solidarity and collective goods are not very effective incentives any longer, but individual, intrinsic and/or extrinsic benefits. This can be achieved by giving existing and potential members the feeling of making a difference to the NPO and to society. Especially volunteers have to be appreciated and not taken for granted, if the NPO wants to keep them in the organisation.

What is true for members and volunteers is also true for staff. Working in NPOs usually does not pay as well as working in POs so motivation and appreciation are essential to maintain a staff of quality.

Financial resources are a constant headache for most NPOs and fundraising has recently become more important, because state funding has decreased in the social and cultural field. Here as with the acquisition of human resources personal contact is most important and makes people donate more generously than for some dubious impersonal project.

²¹ Cp.: *Freiburger Modell*, pp 186.

Fundraising, whether on an individual or state level, is the first step. The second one is the analysis of the quantity and origin of the donations. This analysis can lead to changes in the system and marketing management to tap into more generous sources. In other words, if certain messages or ways of communication are more attractive than others, i.e. produce more donations and memberships, a revision of the system and marketing management will be useful. This makes clear that the interdependence of the three tiers of management is vital to market an NPO successfully.

In an NPO the resource management is also responsible for obtaining information from members to adapt the management to their needs, collect donations, administer membership fees and provide the staff with know-how.

The resource management takes up the message sent out by the marketing management and turns it into action. Furthermore, it is a means of controlling the system and marketing management as to effectiveness, efficiency and loyalty to the mission.

III.4. A Concept for Marketing an NPO²²

Concepts for marketing are long-term concepts for about 4-6 years and are the basis for all marketing planning and the creation of an effective brand. Here the elements of such a concept are only listed, as they are logical deductions of the above.

a) Analysis of the stakeholders

²² Cp.: *Freiburger Modell*, pp 164.

- b) SWOT-analysis (**S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, **T**hreats)
- c) Knowledge of marketing relevant aspects of the management system
- d) Basic statements as to services and communication (e.g. actions are member-oriented, members pay less than non-members, abolishment of inefficient projects)
- e) Positioning of the whole NPO
 - A name one can trust
 - A short version of mission
 - The uniqueness as to the organisation itself, to services, and in contrast to competitors
 - An analysis of target groups
- f) Communication of the positioning to CI/COOPI
 - CI (= corporate identity: identity of the organisation as a system, most important within the organisation)
 - COOPI (=cooperative identity: identity of the members, most relevant outside the organisation)

Both take decisively part in translating the positioning into action.

- g) Marketing areas
 - Within the NPO
 - Outside the NPO
- h) Organisation of the marketing actions
 - Distribution of tasks to various levels of the organisation and to individuals
- i) Priorities and immediate measures

- Deciding on priorities, especially important in the case of a host of innovations
- Immediate measures in the case of recognized weaknesses within the NPO or dangers outside the NPO.

Chapter IX will illustrate the application of this concept for the Northumbria NT.

IV. NORTHUMBRIA – THE “BEST KEPT SECRET IN ENGLAND”²³?

Sorry, not anymore. This region has got too much tourism to be called a secret destination. However, it certainly does not belong to the top UK destinations and for a majority of the tourists it is an unknown area.

An analysis of the marketing potential of a product in tourism includes an examination of its greater environment, as tourists - except for day trips - do usually not travel to an isolated sight, but to an area where they spend their holidays. The following conveys some geographical, historic and cultural insights relevant for dealing with Northumbria as a holiday destination.

IV.1. The North East of England – Northumberland – Northumbria

These terms are not actually interchangeable, but commonly they are all often used for the area focussed on in this paper. To avoid misunderstandings the meaning of each is explained.

The North East of England. England divides itself into 7 regions and one of them is the North East. This area covers the counties of

²³ 23 Spencer, B. *The Visitor's Guide to Northumbria*. Ashbourne, 1990, p 7

Northumberland, Durham, The Tyne, Cleveland, North Yorkshire and Humberside.

Northumberland is one of the counties within the boundaries of the region of the North East.

Northumbria. There is no official definition for the area, which is known as “Northumbria“. Generally the term is used for that part of the North East, which includes the areas of Durham, Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and the Tees Valley.²⁴ In contrast to the term ‘North East’ which is usually associated with business, the expression ‘Northumbria’ is often used by tourism as it has got a more emotional connotation rather referring to the intriguing past and landscape of this area.²⁵

The NT Northumbria region covers the area generally described as Northumbria: Durham, Tyne and Wear, Northumberland, but the Tees Valley is excluded and falls into the Yorkshire region.

IV.2. Geographical and Social Information on Northumbria

Northumbria is situated between Scotland in the north and Yorkshire in the south. It is one of the smaller regions of England. One half of it is urban or suburban, the other half is countryside. The majority of the population lives in the South and East where you find the nowadays declining-manufacturing industry. The traditional industries like coal and steel have

24 *Northumbria, England* Available: <http://www.northofengland.net/northumbria/> 6/10/2000, p 1.

25 In the 7th c the merger of two Angle kingdoms led to the creation of the new kingdom of Northumbria, stretching from Edinburgh to Hull. It was the land north of the river Humber and became soon the most important kingdom.

largely disappeared. Many of the former villagers have moved into various towns or the city of Newcastle. Thus village life is in danger: the traditional inhabitants leave their homes and are replaced by affluent people who now live, but do not work, in the countryside.

Newcastle is THE business and cultural centre of the North East and is gaining more and more international recognition, being one of the five fun cities of Europe and possibly the City of Culture in 2007. Moreover, Newcastle is considered a top shopping centre, if you do not happen to be in London.

Apart from these attributes Newcastle upon Tyne is furthermore important for Northumbrian tourism because it provides the connection to the rest of the world through its prospering ferry port and its two international airports. Not forgetting the main train station which takes you, for example to London in only about three hours.

The Northumbrian countryside is to a very high degree unspoilt by building activities. There are only few market towns or satellite towns, which leaves you with a landscape that for miles and miles is nothing but wild and beautiful scenery. Especially to be mentioned are the Northumberland National Park, the Cheviot Hills, Kielder Water and Forest, the North Pennines and the 60 miles of coast that provides clean and sandy beaches stretching over long distances.

As to agriculture, a crisis-hit sector as in many European countries, there is mainly sheep farming and some cattle rearing in the east while in the west arable land dominates.

All in all, Northumbria has to offer a mixture of entertainment: the city of buzzing Newcastle and its close surroundings satisfy those who are into culture, shopping and night life whereas the rest of the country offers lots of peace and quiet with numerous opportunities for outdoor activities. Nevertheless the assumption that there is no or little cultural life in the countryside would be a great mistake. The Northumbrian rural areas have quite a programme as to concerts and theatre plays, often organized by the many historic properties.

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The good traffic network and the diversity of leisure activities make Northumbria a holiday destination that can quite easily be reached and can fulfil the expectations of large market segments. Thus it is a region that has got the resources to successfully extend its efforts in tourism.

IV.3. Travelling Through the Centuries²⁶

One possible itinerary for a trip through Northumbria would be to organize your tour chronologically, starting with prehistoric sites and finishing either with the Victorian era or on a contemporary note with Newcastle, by, for example, visiting its latest attraction “The International Centre of Life“ (a commercial bioscience centre and human genetics institute which

²⁶ Cp.: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk>. 11.01.2001.

has become a visitor attraction through its interactive exhibitions) or a football match of the famous club “Newcastle United”.

Prehistoric sites: The earliest signs of human existence in Northumbria are 8000 years old. Signs that can be easily detected by lay people are cup and ring marks that date back to 3000 BC and 4000-year-old stone circles. Burial cairns, about 3500 years old, and hill forts from the Iron Age are further witnesses of human life in the past.

Roman times: The most famous Roman remnant is the World Heritage Site of Hadrian’s Wall in earlier days forming a border between the uncivilized peoples north of it and the civilized people dominated by the Romans south of it. The wall can be followed on paths for long stretches and in between more or less well-preserved forts can be visited.

The dark and golden age. After the Romans had left, Britain saw very rough times being invaded from Northern Europe, which caused a lot of bloodshed and hardship. However, this is not the whole story. Those days were also days of high cultural activity. Christianity came to Northumbria and the Priory on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne developed into one of the most important centres of Christian learning. - A person who must not be forgotten in this context is the Venerable Bede, England’s first historian, who was of Northumbrian origin.

The days of the Reivers. Northumbria has always been a border country but it was during the 14-16th century that this border was probably crossed most often without peaceful intentions and the whole area was a place of semi-lawlessness. The reivers lived in the hills on both sides of the border and have since then been considered either as criminals or heroes,

depending on the viewpoint. What they did was either interpreted as reckless theft of each other's belongings or noble protection of their families from starvation and misery by changing ownership of chattels, as for example sheep, in overnight raids. Fortifications of the border wars, like pele towers and border castles, can be seen in many places in Northumbria.

Country houses. After the border wars had calmed down, wealthy landowners of the 17th and 18th century now spent their time and money on more constructive aims. Country houses of great elegance and comfort with spacious gardens and parks were designed to display their owner's financial power and by that their political influence. Numerous examples of this wealth and grandeur are scattered over Northumbria.

The Industrial Revolution. Coal and railways played a major role in the Industrial Revolution and both are deeply connected with Northumbria. Northumberland was the most important supplier of coal, which is illustrated by various museums. And George Stephenson (1781-1848), the inventor of the locomotive was born in Wylam, Northumbria/Northumberland. His birthplace and several railway museums are witnesses of the technological development in those days. A further example of an inventive spirit is the first Lord Armstrong whose house at Cragside is a brilliant example of innovative technology in the 19th century: the first house in the world lit by hydro-electricity. Moreover, he invented high-pressure hydraulic machinery and modernized the design and manufacture of guns.

IV.4. The Density of Tourist Attractions

”Come on, let’s quickly do another castle. It’s only half an hour away.”

The density of the tourist attractions in a region decides very much on the height of tourism spending. The longest distance from south to north is about 106 miles, the longest from west to east is about 86 miles. These rather small distances have a lot of attractions to offer. Northumbria is fourth in England when regarding density of attractions per 1,000 square kilometres, only preceded by, of course, London, then the South East and the North West. This means that tourists can visit a lot of sights in a relatively short time which is especially convenient as nowadays people tend to go away more often, but on shorter holidays.²⁷

A lot of English history happened in Northumbria, a rather limited area, which is of advantage for tourists as it enables them to gain an insight into the past in a short period of time. The Northumbria NT is in the lucky position to own properties in Northumbria of each of the mentioned periods. This means that the NT can market the region as a whole and can as well be included in a marketing of the whole region on its full scale.

IV.5. The Northumbrian Identity

The prerequisite for marketing a whole region is that it must be special in contrast to other regions in order to have its very own appeal. The combination of remoteness and city excitements may also be found in other parts of the world, but there is a consciousness of an own and unique identity.

²⁷ Cp.: VII.6.

The significance of a North East identity is best demonstrated by the demand for a regional assembly in this area. Although this is a disputed idea there are more than just a few politicians and citizens who consider themselves as very different from the English and see the need for a mouthpiece to formulate the special needs of the North East.²⁸

Obviously Northumbrian culture is not a mere marketing product, but something very real. It finds its expression among others in its dialect called “Geordie”, its own music and tartan.

Geordie is a regional dialect spoken in the North East. It has got several variations, which are very important to the individual speakers. People in Newcastle as well as the towns clustered on either side of the mouth of the Tyne see themselves as Geordie whereas only 12 miles away in Sunderland people insist on being Wearsiders. In the north of Northumbria people speak another dialect called Northumbrian. It has got Celtic and Scandinavian elements as a result of the Viking occupation. Geordie, too, has got many similarities with the Scandinavian languages for the same reason²⁹.

Scottish bagpipes are very well known, but not so much the **Northumbrian small pipes** and **half-long pipes** or **Border pipes**. A recent finding of written music for half-long pipes from 1733 raises the question which instrument is the older one, as there is only written music for the Scottish bagpipe, which is 60 years younger. Another difference between the Northumbrian and Scottish pipes is that the first are inflated by one arm of the player and deflated by the other arm whereas the player of the Scottish bagpipes inflates the bag by blowing into the instrument.

²⁸ „A Geordie Nation?“ The Economist, 23/3/1999. Available: <http://www.britannica.com> 23/01/2001.

²⁹ „Local Dialect“, Available <http://www.bta.org.uk/destinations/areas/nothumbria>, 6/10/2000

Thirdly, the Northumbrian pipes are rather musical instruments for inside use.³⁰

The **Northumberland Tartan** or **Shepherd Tartan** is often worn by Northumbrian pipers at official performances. In the 18th century the Duke of Northumberland made this black and white check the dress of his pipers. This pattern dates back at least to the 3rd century AD when it was originally worn and made by shepherds from black and white undyed wool.³¹

Additionally to the conservation of historic estates and areas of natural beauty the Northumbria NT contributes to the maintenance of Northumbrian culture by live music with Northumbrian pipes on its properties, especially in the 18th century Wallington House. In this field much more could be done, which would also allow for a livelier presentation of some houses. However here again, the lack of financial means is preventing an extensive use of this possibility. Special events or workshop with admission fees could further the conscious experience and survival of Northumbrian culture and create some revenue at the same time. Cooperation with other culturally oriented organizations in this respect could help to overcome the financial problems and still be profitable.

³⁰ „The Northumbria pipes and the folk music of Northumberland“, available: <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk>, 12/01/2001.

³¹ „The Northumberland Tartan“, available <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk>, 11/01/2001.

V. TOURISM IN NORTHUMBRIA

Northumbria – a dwarf among giants in tourism? This chapter presents the role tourism plays in Northumbria and displays the position it holds on a national scale. Knowing these conditions helps to analyse the threats and opportunities the NT has when expanding its marketing activities.

V.1. The Importance of Tourism for Northumbria

The success or failure of a marketing idea can depend very much on the general conditions of the place where it is to be realized. When developing a marketing strategy for the NT product in Northumbria some difficulties have to be addressed.

The North East is in a comparatively bad situation within England: it has got the highest unemployment in England, the lowest regional GDP, the lowest number of business start-ups and the highest rate of business failure. Above all, the Northumbrian Tourist Board is granted the lowest government funding in England.³²

As to attractions, Northumbria does not rank especially well. On the list of the two hundred top districts in the UK, Gateshead with Metroland is 64th, Newcastle ranks 122nd, followed only in the 164th place by Berwick upon Tweed and Alnwick as the 176th.

Despite this difficult situation, a quite extraordinary development has taken place since 1990. Tourism spending has increased by 93% in contrast to only 60% as the average in the rest of England. In 1999 tourism accounts for 3% of the North East GDP and for 7% of all jobs. Moreover, it is the region where the rate of overseas visitors has been rising most quickly.³³ This shows the potential of Northumbria as a holiday destination.

³² *Northumbria Tourist Board Annual Report 1998-99*, p 3. Available: http://www.ntb.org.uk/ntb/ann_report.asp 6/10/2000.

³³ *NTB Annual Report 1998-99*, p 1.

The main idea is selling Northumbria as a *cultural* tourism destination which on the one hand has to offer an exciting regional history, folklore, heritage facilities, museums and galleries, entertainment, sport and music and on the other hand an environmental inheritance including a varied range of unspoilt scenery and picturesque man-made dwellings, villages, towns and cities.

However, the Northumbrian Tourist Board (=NTB) is also well aware that "tourism is intrinsically cyclical"³⁴ which means that this development depends on many unpredictable or at least irregular factors, like the weather or certain sports events. To maintain this upward bound trend, as long as possible the four following principles have to be observed:

- competitiveness (very good product for growing market segments)
- sustainability (a very good relationship between ecology and the rising visitor numbers),
- distinctiveness (emphasis of Northumbrian cultural and culinary specialities) and
- inclusiveness (facilities must be achievable for the greatest possible number of people).

The Northumbria NT is part of a difficult economic and social environment so that attracting more visitors to the region will not only improve its own financial position, but a further increase in tourism will also lead to more jobs and a higher regional GDP, which will add to the increasing economic well-being of Northumbria.

³⁴ NTB Annual Report, 1998-99, p1.

V.2. Comparison of Trends in Tourism in Northumbria/the North East and the UK

V.2.1. Visit Trends

In the ten years from 1989 to 1999 there is a **general growth** of the number of visits to the **UK**. An increase of 11% is to be noted in the whole of the UK while the change in the different countries varies. The country with the highest increase is Northern Ireland (27%), whereas Scotland has only got a growth of 13%. It is followed by England with 11% and at the very end of the scale there is Wales with only 1% of change.³⁵

A closer look at **England** alone shows that the tourist board region of London has been the most attractive one in the given period. A rise of 25% is to be noted in this region, surprisingly followed by Cumbria with a gain of 23% whereas at the bottom of the scale there is 'The Heart of England' (1%).

However, not everything has developed for the better. Yorkshire is in the worst situation with a loss of 2%, closely followed by **Northumbria** with a loss of 1%.³⁶ Interestingly enough, we get a very different picture looking at a longer period. From 1976 to 1999 an increase of 11% is to be noted in Northumbria, **which** means that for some reason in the last ten years Northumbria has become a little bit less attractive, although in 1999 there is an increase of 3% again.³⁷

Tourism like any other business is subject to many fluctuations. In 1999 the reasons for **positive developments** are, above all, better marketing (34%), more favourable weather (21%) and more special events (17%). On the other hand reasons

³⁵ ETC (English Tourism Council) Research and Intelligence, *Sightseeing in the UK 1999*, London 2000, p 14.

³⁶ This may seem to be contradiction to the increase of 93% in tourism spending. However, there are two possible explanations. Either less people stay for a longer period in Northumbria and so spend more money, or the destination has become more expensive so that even if people stay for the same length of time they must spend more money. This would explain a reduction in visitor numbers: Northumbria is not affordable for as many people as in former times.

³⁷ *UK Sightseeing* p 57.

given for **negative developments** are less favourable weather (29%), shorter opening hours (15%) and the overall economic climate (12%).³⁸

Obviously an improvement of marketing strategies, organisation of special events and opening hours are in the hands of tourism while everybody is powerless to change the weather. The general economic situation can be accounted to a certain extent by price reductions as long as the revenue is still large enough to maintain the attraction itself.

The Northumbria NT must improve its marketing, respond to the consumer's desire for more special events, be aware of the significance of opening hours (see VIII.2.4.) and the rather limited financial means of its potential visitors. Tapping into new sources of revenue, like overseas marketing, could partly be an answer to this situation.

V.2.2. Trends by Type of Attractions

In 1999 **museums & galleries** are the most visited attractions (19%). Together with country parks (18%) and historic properties (17%) they make up 54% of all visits. An interesting fact in this context is that though leisure parks are only 1% of the UK attractions they have 10% of all visitors.³⁹ It remains to be seen whether this will be a danger for all the other attractions in future or whether it is only a short-lived development.⁴⁰

Farms were the attraction with the greatest increase in visits in 1998-99 while historic properties (- 0.5%), visitor centres (-1%), museums&galleries (-1%) experienced a loss. On the one hand the latter is to be explained by the high pound which led to a drop of overseas tourists who proportionally show a greater interest in these attractions than

³⁸ *UK Sightseeing* p 58.

³⁹ *UK Sightseeing* p 22.

⁴⁰ *UK Sightseeing* p 9.

UK citizens; on the other hand the good summer weather made people spend their leisure time rather in outdoor than indoor activities.

In the **long run** on a total market basis the development is a different one. The trend from 1989 to 1999 regarding visits of historic properties (+8%), visitor centres (+57%), and museums & galleries (+14%) is one of constant growth. But here as well, the increase in visitor numbers at farms (81%) indicates that turning farms into attractions (+81%) has successfully targeted a new market. Apart from visits to wildlife sites (+3%), the lowest increase is to be noted with historic properties.

This shows that although people are still interested in indoor attractions, tourism must either try to make museums & galleries more attractive or shift their commitment to additional **outdoor attractions** to keep its clients.

The following diagram shows that the general trend of more interest in outdoor than in indoor activities is reflected in Northumbria:

TREND IN NUMBER OF VISITS TO UK ATTRACTIONS FROM 1998-99 ⁴¹			
Northumbria:		England	UK
historic properties:	-2	-1	-1
gardens:	+8	+5	+4
museums	+1	0	-1
wildlife sites	-2	+3	+3
other	+6	+3	+3
total	+3	+2	+1

Since the satisfaction of the customer's wishes are most important for a successful marketing, the NT in Northumbria should put more emphasis on a more up-to-date interpretation of their historic sites - in numbers their greatest asset - to prevent an

⁴¹ UK Sightseeing p 54.

increasing loss of visitors. – Furthermore, intensive research on what additional outdoor activities can be offered to make properties more attractive should be of high priority to keep up the interest in NT attractions.

V.2.3. The Revenue at Attractions

Looking at the increase in the revenue of attractions makes clear that tourism is an important economic factor. In the last ten years there has been an average increase of 100% in revenue in the whole of the UK. Gardens (135%), wild life attractions (96%), museums (93%) and historic properties (85%) have the highest increase rate. From 1998 to 1999 the record lay with farms, leisure parks and country parks (all had an increase of 11%), followed by steam railways (9%) and gardens (7%).⁴²

In the UK visitors spend most money on **admission** (49%), 8% less on products offered at the attractions and only 10% on food and drinks⁴³. Proportionally the highest prices are paid for admission at steam railways, wildlife attractions and historic properties. These high costs correlate with less expenditure on food and drinks and the acquisition of souvenirs. Nevertheless there is no automatic correspondence between high admission fees and little expenditure on the catering and retail articles. The least money for food is spent at museums & galleries, at workplaces and historic properties (mostly there is also the least chance of spending money as catering facilities are often limited). **Catering** plays a very important role at leisure and country parks because visitors often spend all day there. **Retailing** is very significant at workplaces (79% of the revenue), visitor centres (usually free of admission offering information and souvenirs for sale) and museums & galleries (guidebooks, posters, souvenirs etc). For steam railways, leisure

⁴² *UK Sightseeing* p 37.

⁴³ *UK Sightseeing*, p 63.

parks and wildlife attractions, which all have high admission fees, retailing is of lesser significance.

To achieve the highest possible revenue it is critical to find the right proportions for admission fees, prices for food and souvenirs/information. All of the Northumbria NT historic properties have tearooms or restaurants and shops whose offers are, especially for foreigners, more on the expensive side. **p.t.o.**

...

The idealistic customer will not hesitate to accept high costs to support his organization, but the question remains open whether an average price would not stimulate more spending and thus finally result in a rise of revenue⁴⁴.

V.2.4. Overseas Visitors in the UK and Northumbria

Overseas visitors account for 16% of tourism in the **UK**. Divided up in 21% for Northern Ireland, closely followed by Scotland with 20%, 15% come to England while only 9% travel to Wales. The most favoured region is London (44%), while the other regions have shares between 4% and 15%. **Northumbria** is visited by 7% of the overseas tourists. It is, after the North West (4%), the region with the second lowest visitor numbers.

All over Britain the most-liked **attractions** with non-British tourists are historic properties (33%), museums & galleries (23%) and visitors centres (17%). Of least interest are country parks (4%), farm attractions and wildlife sites (each 5%)⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ A certain children pullover bought at Cragside is for example up to 5 Pounds more expensive than in the country store at Scots' Gap, only 16 miles away. An annoying difference for the not too well-off customer. It would be worthwhile reconsidering the concept of idealistic prices for the sake of higher profits.

Most overseas visitors travel to **Northumbria** for **holidays** (40%), another 28% come to see relatives or friends while a quarter of them go on business. 7% have various other reasons for staying in this region.

The highest percentage of visitors is of Scandinavian **origin** (23%), but already on the second rank is Germany with 16%. US visitors account for 12 %. France and the Netherlands are in the midfield with 8% and 9% while Australians and Canadians have a share of 4 %. The remaining 24% are divided up among various countries⁴⁶.

The **season** that sees most visitors in Northumbria is summer (37%) whereas the other visits are quite evenly split up among the other seasons. In comparison to the average visitor numbers for England, it is striking that 6% less come to Northumbria in spring which probably depends on the harsher weather conditions in the north of England.

The **accommodation** most preferred is hotels or guesthouses (43%), followed by stays at friends' (41%). Very few rent a house etc, come by caravan or go camping (each 1%)

From all **sights** historic houses – like in the whole of the UK - enjoy the highest proportion of overseas visitors (15%). This has meant a considerable loss of revenue for many of the properties since the strong pound has been deterring quite a number of tourists to spend their holidays in the UK in the last years. Gardens, museums & galleries are of about the same interest (6%, 5%) while zoos and wildlife attractions are only very little favoured (each 1%). This tendency is the same on a UK scale (see above).

The idea of tapping into the international market as an additional source of income does not seem absurd looking at these figures. The NT can offer the most-liked attraction, i.e. historic buildings, and Germany is obviously after Scandinavia a good target. (see VII.1.).

⁴⁵ *UK Sightseeing*, p 26.

⁴⁶ English Tourism Council, Northumbria Tourist Board, *Facts of Tourism*, October 1999 (no page numbers) – All following data in V.2.4. are taken from this source.

VI. THE NATIONAL TRUST IN NORTHUMBRIA –

THE PULLER OF THE STRINGS

The Northumbria Region of the National Trust is one of its 13 regions in England and covers the area called Northumbria. It is the region with the second lowest membership (30,658) in 1999/2000 after Cornwall with 24,137 members. In contrast to this, the Southern region with 205,890 members and Thames and Chiltern with 202,753 members are the lead⁴⁷ and naturally in a much better financial situation.⁴⁸ Despite this financial drawback the Northumbria National Trust region has developed some innovative projects, which are of exemplary character to the other regions.

VI.1. The Northumbrian Properties – the Product to be Marketed

The Northumbrian region has got 10 **historic properties** of different size and visitor numbers. The bigger estates are usually visited more often than the smaller ones. Although the latter are not really of lesser historic importance, for the more 'sensational' tourist's point of view they are less spectacular at first sight. The following order of the properties reflects their size and importance for tourism.

Cragside House is considered the gem of the Northumbria National Trust region. This is confirmed by the fact that with 130,128 visitors in 1999⁴⁹ it is fourth in the ten top Northumbrian attractions charging admission in 1998⁵⁰.

⁴⁷ T.Rajukumar, *The National Trust – Membership Compendium 1999/2000*, London, July 2000, p.22. Northern Ireland is not mentioned as the region with the lowest membership because after the devolution it is often dealt with independently like Wales.

⁴⁸ Membership numbers do not alone decide on the financial means of a region, but raffles, donations and legacies considerably support the work of the regions.

⁴⁹ *UK Sightseeing*, p 81

⁵⁰ ETC, Northumbrian Tourist Board, *Facts of Tourism*. London, 1999.

It was built by the 1st Lord Armstrong in the 1880s and was one of the most modern houses of the time. The house was equipped with light by hydroelectricity, running cold and hot water, a Turkish bath, a well-organized communication system and a lift. Moreover, the land around the house, originally bare rocks, was turned into a 100 acre forest garden with 7 million bushes and trees newly planted.

Wallington House is mainly well-known for its vast grounds, park and garden. Moreover, the house itself, home of the Blackett and Trevelyan families, conveys an interesting insight into the 18th century life of the aristocracy and gentry. 102,294 visitors enjoyed this estate in 1999⁵¹.

Lindisfarne Castle is situated romantically on Holy Island, which can only be reached at low tide. It is probably due to this adventurous aspect that Lindisfarne Castle was the only NT property in Northumbria to have on 20 or more days the maximum capacity of visitors⁵². In 1999 the total number of visitors was 62,044⁵³.

Gibside – the most haunted place. Apart from this quality advertised in 2000, Gibside has to offer a completely restored Palladian Chapel (44,930 visitors in 1999), ruins and a landscape park of the 18th century. Another exciting aspect for many tourists may be that the estate was in the possession of the Queen Mother's family for a long time.

Hadrian's Wall Estate and Housesteads Fort (World Heritage Site) - a part of the most northerly outpost of the Roman Empire with one of the best-preserved forts - has actually got the second highest visitor numbers with 114,515⁵⁴. However, this property has got a special status as the land is owned by the NT, but English Heritage (EH) maintains and manages the fort on behalf of the NT. For this reason this site has been mentioned as the last of the larger properties.

⁵¹ *UK Sightseeing* p 80

⁵² *UK Sightseeing* p 61

⁵³ *UK Sightseeing* p 80

⁵⁴ *UK Sightseeing* p 80

The following properties are of smaller size and see less than 30,000 visitors per year.

Souter Lighthouse opened in 1871 is the first lighthouse in the world to be powered by alternating electric current. Visitors can climb the tower and have a panoramic view of the coast. The NT is not only the owner of the lighthouse, but also of a 2-½ mile stretch of coastline where a variety of coastal vegetation and various bird colonies are to be found. – Souter Lighthouse is developing into a more noticed sight as they have been arranging a lot of entertaining events, which are welcomed by the public.

Three of the rather small properties are (1) **Cherryburn**, the birthplace of the famous engraver Thomas Bewick, mainly interesting for lovers of art. (2) **Washington Old Hall**, the home of the ancestors of the first president of the USA, favoured, of course, by American tourists and by visitors who are interested what a knight's home looked like in the 17th century. (3) **George Stephenson's birthplace** in Wylam is a tiny property which shows the poor beginnings of the inventor of the locomotive and though the house may not be too impressive as such, the idea that in a single room shared by 8 people a man was born who changed the world dramatically makes it a tourist attraction, especially to well-off western tourists.

Off the Northumbrian coast the 10th property is located. The **Farne Islands** are small, but offer a very special attraction. Here the visitors can walk among the breeding birds without them feeling disturbed. However, not only can birds be seen here, but also a very small chapel built in memory of St Cuthbert, one of the Northumbrian saints.

All these properties have to offer a lot for culturally interested tourists and partly lovers of nature. For the latter the NT has even more in store. It holds 16 miles of unspoilt coastline, which is open to the public, free of admission. Moreover, there are 500 acres of hill and river scenery (Allen Banks and Staward Gorge) and some other smaller places

like Lady's Well in ownership of the NT which offer a wide range of opportunities for hikers to enjoy landscapes not excessively disturbed by civilization.

All in all, the Northumbria NT has got a wide range to offer to holidaymakers of different tastes, so that more than one market segment can be targeted.

VI.2. The NT Northumbria Region Has to Offer Even More

Being different from other suppliers and their products is vital for successful marketing.

This difference lies with the NT in its agenda that includes, apart from the protection of places of historic interest and natural beauty, environmental and social matters.

The significant environmental project '**Turning the Tide**', which will be finished in 2001, is a major regeneration project of the formerly heavily polluted coastline of County Durham. For about 50 years the beaches and cliffs had been used as a coal-tip of six collieries and also as a handy place to leave old cars and bikes. Only with the closure of the coalmines at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s the idea was born to restore this place. The NT joined the project and now owns and protects 5 miles of the 11-mile coast.⁵⁵ This environmental activity, which resulted in the returning of various species, is for sure not a matter of great interest to every tourist. However, those who are ecologically conscious may be fascinated by this rescue and restoration of nature.

Perhaps a bit difficult to imagine for the non-British reader, **farms** and even **villages** are owned by the NT. This may sound rather feudal, but has got an environmental dimension, which should not be underestimated. The conservation of landscapes and communities contributes to the maintenance of a culture which otherwise would die out because of an only profit oriented agricultural policy and the migration of villagers into cities. The NT does not want to turn farms into museums. It rather tries to

⁵⁵ The National Trust, *The Black Beaches of the Durham Coast*, Northumbria Regional Office, 2000, p 3.

go a way of maintaining as much as possible of the traditional scenery and still providing a living for the farmers and the people in the countryside by looking for opportunities to combine ecology and profitability in a sustainable way.

A second appealing field of commitment is the social work in the NT Northumbria Region. This may as well appeal to potential overseas members because here it is people, not only culture and nature, who are in focus. The most recent development is the opening of the “Holy Jesus Hospital”, the centre for the **Inner City Project** in Newcastle upon Tyne. It is now the home for inner city youth who want to get away from the city out into the countryside. Using a historic building for supporting young people from a sometimes-difficult social background is, of course, a controversial subject but has successfully been carried through.

The ‘**Walker Walker**’ s’ are another example of social commitment. Older people (50+) often leading isolated lives in Newcastle meet to enjoy the outdoor facilities of the NT. In the initial phase the groups are supported by NT employees or volunteers, but finally the groups organize their walks independently, funds themselves and their members even volunteer at certain NT events. Since 1991 100 people, now forming six groups, have found their way out of isolation through the project.⁵⁶

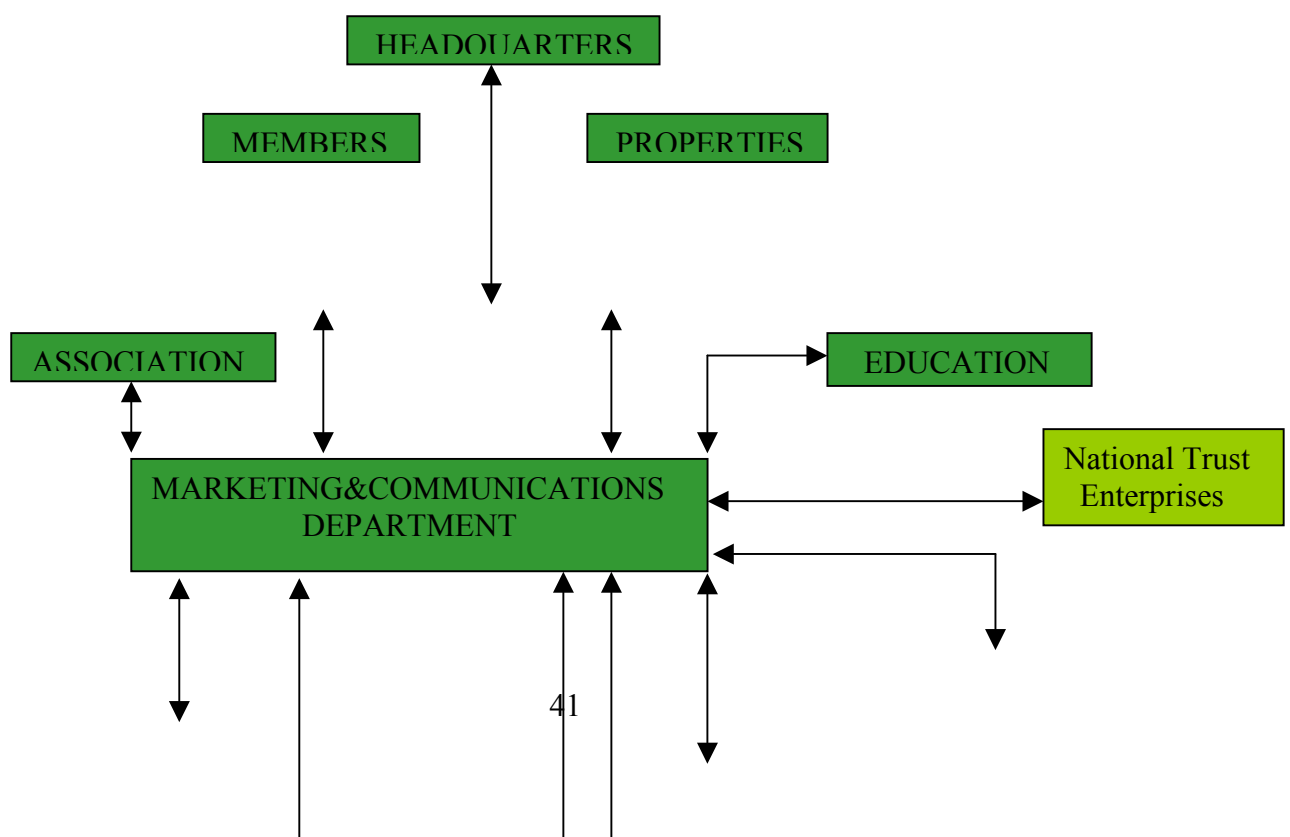
Not only is the environmental and social commitment of the NT an attractive addition to its main work, but it also involves possibilities for international contacts with similarly oriented organisations. Exchanges or only meeting up in Newcastle with overseas young and old people, who are entertained by the English counterparts, could lead to a proliferation of the idea of the NT, an enlargement of the NT membership and also to an increase in international understanding.

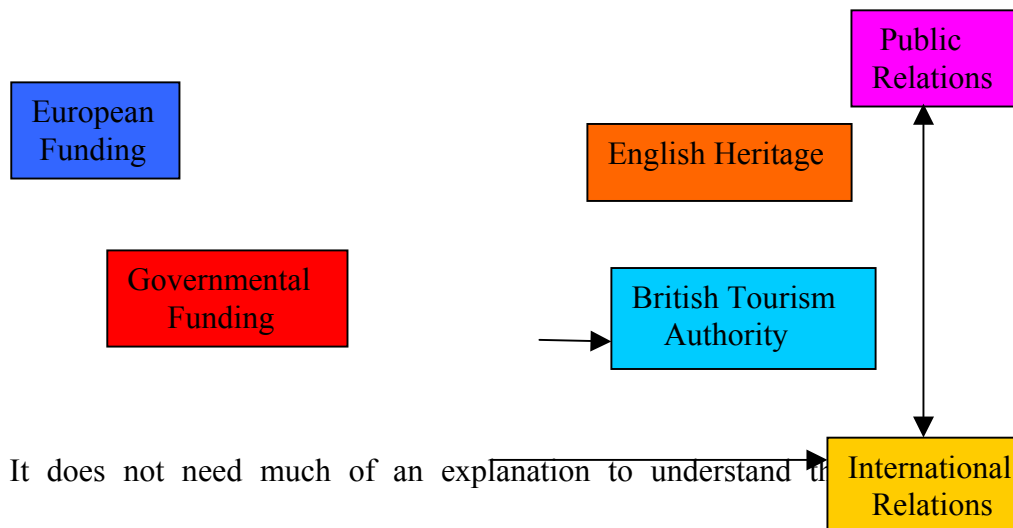
⁵⁶ The National Trust, *working with people in the north east*, Northumbria Regional Office, 1998, p15.

All this can open up new markets and will spread the ethical approach of the NT, which is one of the aspects that makes this organisation very different from other owners and administrators of tourist attractions.

VI.3. The Marketing&Communications Department of the Northumbria Region in Scots' Gap

Where is the problem of creating a successful marketing strategy and concept, if you have such a potential? This question may be asked by many forgetting that the NT is a charity, which generally means that there is a constant lack of money. In the Northumbria Regional Office (NRO) this becomes clear by the fact that for at least six years the Marketing&Communications Department had only two members of **staff**: the manager and his secretary. It is more than obvious at first sight that to market a whole region like Northumbria is rather impossible under these circumstances. To underline this impression the following diagram shows what since 2000 three staff members and one secretary have been doing and what one person and one secretary should have done in the years before.





It does not need much of an explanation to understand that this workload is only quite difficult to be done by four people. Although they could quite easily cope with the important everyday routine of maintaining the contact with the NT bodies (green fields)⁵⁷, reaching out for a bigger audience in order to create more members and attract more visitors public relations (pink, blue, yellow fields) definitely needs a **larger workforce**. It requires some staff that can concentrate on the presentation of the NT in the media as well as in the Internet and on market research, not only locally, but also nationally and internationally to gain access into the international market.

The **headquarters' press department** does work together with international journalists, but, if there is no regional staff that collects and forwards good stories, the regions will naturally not be mentioned in the media. Moreover, there has been no contact between the NRO and the **British Tourist Authority (BTA)** until autumn 2000 which means that the NRO has not been able to share the BTA's opportunities of marketing British products internationally, for example at fairs. There is collaboration between the headquarters and BTA, but because the regions work independently from London there has not been a special focus on Northumbria in the past, but the NT is rather advertised as whole.

The lack of staff in the NRO, especially in the Marketing&Communications Department, made it impossible to develop any links with the international market. Thus

⁵⁷ NT Enterprises has got an independent status as it is profit oriented (lighter shade of green), but its profit is given to the NT to help to finance the charity.

the **latest developments** are quite extraordinary: the NRO has now got German literature to offer on their properties, has got a link on the website of the well-known German travel magazine “tours” and most recently has started negotiations with DFDS, one of the major ferry companies connecting the Continent with Britain, as to DFDS supporting the Northumbria NT financially and by advertising it on their ferries.

No consumption without any offer. No offer without presence in the market. In the case of a non-profit organization it is first of all human resources that are needed to bring a product to people’s notice, even with the smallest budget. For too long the lack of human resources has prevented the realization of the plans being noticed by the German market. In charities human resources are, of course, not only paid staff members, but also volunteers. However, even with the overwhelming number of volunteers this problem has not been solved.

VI.4. Going International in 2001?

The draft for “Northumbria Region Strategic Plan 2001-2004”⁵⁸ does not say anything specific about international marketing. The main aims are

- (1)“Inspiring Support”,
- (2)“Improving Conservation and Environmental Quality”,
- (3)“Managing Our Affairs Effectively and Efficiently” and
- (4)“Developing Our People and Knowledge”.

The first aim is of relevance for our subject as it includes, apart from various improvements of three properties, the “**Reaching out to new audiences**” and “Customer Care Training”. Both aspects are also of importance for an international market

⁵⁸ *Northumbria Region Strategic Plan 2001-2004, Draft.*

concerning media presence etc. on the Continent and a considerate training of staff members on the properties to deal with the wishes and expectations of non-British visitors. However, the draft is far from focussing on another but the British public and naturally, above all, on the people living in the North East. The low membership numbers (see above) are, of course, reason enough to concentrate on **increasing local support**, but unfortunately the potential of the region for overseas tourism is left aside. Knowing this it seems even more surprising that the Marketing&Communications Department tries to go more international.

The further explanations of the third aim “Managing Our Affairs Effectively and Efficiently” could also be seen as a starting point for international marketing: “Provide resources for tapping new income sources”, but this goal is to be achieved by receiving “value from our existing operations” which means “at minimum extra effort.”⁵⁹ This again shows that there is not much of an **innovative approach** though the introduction of the draft says that one of the values of the NT is being “Innovative, happy to experiment with new ideas and approaches.” This definition can raise the hope that further international marketing is not beyond realization one day.

In my personal opinion there is quite a conservative streak and a certain complacency in the NT mentality, which slow down the reaching out to an international audience. This policy of isolation became obvious to the authoress in a discussion on making the joining of the NT more attractive to German citizens by short-term membership or certain price reductions. The opinion formulated in the headquarters’ marketing department was the following:

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⁵⁹ *Strategic Plan*, p10

Why should we do anything special for the German tourists, some come anyway and that is enough for us. This attitude reveals the reluctance to open up to other nations, which may be rooted in the fear to lose out in the end, but will actually result in a loss of valuable income for the NT.

VII. THE PROFILE OF THE GERMAN TOURIST

TRAVELLING TO

GREAT BRITAIN

With the NT being a charity and consequently not too well equipped with financial resources it must check whether it can rely on external market research in order to save money. In this chapter a profile of the German tourist is mainly introduced according to sources of the BTA and the German automobile club ADAC (Allgemeiner Deutscher Automobil Club).⁶⁰

To what extent the results can be adopted by the NT becomes clear by the survey of the NT members living in Germany, which is presented in Chapter VIII.

VII.1. The German Travel Market

Germany is considered to be the largest travel market in the world with an upward trend. In 1999 74% of the Germans went on holiday at least once. Since going on holidays is seen as a status symbol in Germany it takes a lot before Germans abstain from their holidays. This means for international tourism that the German market is a very reliable one. (BTA).⁶¹

⁶⁰ The BTA is a government-supported agency for promoting the UK abroad and the ADAC is the largest German automobile club.

⁶¹ British Tourism Authority, *Market Profile Germany 2000/2001*, BTA: 2000. (no page numbers).

VII.2. Great Britain as a Destination

In 1998 2.83 million German tourists came to Britain. This may sound quite a lot, but in comparison to other destinations it is rather poor. In many statistics Britain is not even mentioned as a holiday destination of the German market. According to the ADAC⁶² research 2.5% travel to England/Ireland while BAT states only 1% for 1999.

VII.3. Planning the Holiday⁶³

German tourists are inspired either by friends (34%) or by reports/documentaries (31%) and advertisements (28%) in printed media to travel to a certain holiday destination. When the decision for a destination is taken leaflets and brochures are sources of further information. Interestingly enough, reports on TV play a minor role (7.2%).

VII.4. Booking

In 1999 there was a balance between booking through a travel agency or independently (BTA). The majority of holidaymakers do not use the Internet for booking, but a third of them already tend to use this medium (ADAC).

VII.5. Transport

There is an increasing tendency of going by plane, which corresponds with a decrease in using one's own car (ADAC). This development can be interpreted differently: either the German holidaymakers generally prefer planes as means of

⁶² ADAC Reisemonitor 2000. Available: <http://www.wuv.de/studien/adac>, 27/9/2000.

⁶³ *Das Freizeitverhalten in der Metropolregion Hamburg*. Available: <http://www.hamburg.de/MR/downloads/infotouristudie>, 25/9/2000; n.b.: This survey examines the consumer behaviour as to holidays in the areas close to Hamburg, but to the authoress the data seem to be representative for the German market.

transport to their own cars or a higher percentage of Germans travel to destinations which can only be reached by plane.

This development of growing preference for travelling by plane is also true for Germans travelling to Britain. Comparing the years 1994 and 1998 there is a rise of 1% in favour of air travel. About a third of the holidaymakers go by ferry and 15% use the channel tunnel (BTA).

VII.6. The Length of holidays

From 1995-1999 the most favoured length of holiday is a two-week holiday, while only a minority decides on a three-week holiday. About 22% take only 1-week holidays. These numbers have to be seen in context with statistics on the frequency of holidays. In 1999 there is a slight drop in going on holidays at all, however, about one third go on holidays twice a year, while the majority affords holidays only once a year (ADAC). Despite these statistics there is a new trend in Germany to shorter, but more frequent holidays. The average length of holidays was 18.2 days in 1980 whereas in 1999 the average was 14.8 days. In general the sort of holidays for short breaks are mainly city-trips, tours or wellness-holidays. A new category in this context is event tourism: trips to musicals, championships etc.⁶⁴ BTA has discovered a new trend for fly-drive packages, all-inclusive packages, study tours and farmhouse holidays.

VII.7. Leisure Activities⁶⁵

50% of all leisure activities are seen as a counterbalance to mental work and therefore activity plays a major role. Walking and cycling for more than two hours or doing other sports are of top priority, but a perfect day out should also include going out for a meal

⁶⁴ Institut der deutschen Wirtschaft Köln, *Kürzer, dafür öfter ausspannen*. Available: <http://www.iwkoeln.de/IWD/I-Archiv/iwd29-00/i29-00-4.htm>, 26/09/2000.

⁶⁵ *Freizeitverhalten in der Metropolregion Hamburg*, see also footnote 4

(for over a third) and social contacts. If sightseeing is on the agenda, sights are generally not seen as the main motive of a trip, but still as attractions. Here as well opportunities for a good meal are an important part of a relaxing day, which is even better if there are shopping facilities.

The equation **X + food + shopping = a perfect day out** puts the expectation of excellent leisure time into a nutshell.

VII.8. Motives and Quality

There are six reasons for going on holidays (BTA):

- Having fun (33%),
- Relaxing (30%)
- Experiencing something new (19%)
- Having close contact with nature (18%)
- Being active (14%)
- Learning about culture (10%)

Closely related with the motives is what German tourists consider a quality holiday.

Three aspects of quality are differentiated.

- a) *Environmental quality* (scenery, climate, eco-friendliness, guarantee of sunshine)
- b) *Material quality* (food, cleanliness, value for money, inexpensive and comfortable accommodation, restaurants etc)
- c) *Immaterial quality* (atmosphere, hospitality, safety, little traffic, medical care)⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Opaschowsky, H.W. Qualität im Tourismus, Hamburg: BAT, 2000, p 19.

VII.9. The German Tourist in Britain⁶⁷

The source of the following analyses is the „Market Profile 2000-2001” of the BTA.

a) **Market segments:** According to BTA only 10% of all Germans have been to Britain, but for the future it has selected five target customer groups who are most likely to be attracted to spend their holidays in Britain:

- “Young Urban Professionals: Couples and singles aged 25-35 interested mainly in London and other British cities (nightlife, shopping, style&design) and activity holidays in the countryside (mainly first-time visitors).
- DINKS [=double income no kids]: Couples aged 35-55 ...[with] a very active lifestyle and high interest in culture. They are mainly repeat visitors with a positive attitude towards Britain.
- Families: Families with parents aged 35+ and children aged 15-20 with lifestyle interests (outdoor activities, sightseeing, car-touring, visiting attractions etc.).
- Gay & Lesbians. Couples and singles aged 20-50 with a very active lifestyle, very high propensity to travel abroad and mainly interested in city breaks to London, Manchester and Edinburgh or car touring holidays.
- Top Earners: Affluent couples (including retired couples aged 45+ with an interest in cultural and sports events and up-market accommodation (e.g. country house hotels).”

b) **Seasonality:** Britain sees most German visitors in summer, the least in winter. Spring is only a little less liked than summer and autumn preferred to winter by 5-10%.

c) **Average length of stay:** about seven days

⁶⁷ BTA, *Marketing Opportunities. Germany, Austria & Switzerland 2000/2001*. BTA: 2000. pp 5.

- d) **Spending:** the average spend by visit and day has slightly decreased: per visit in 1998: £311, per day £46.5.
- e) **Origin of German tourists:** an overwhelming 33.5% come from Nordrhein-Westfalen, 20% less from Bavaria, followed by Hessen and Baden-Württemberg with 11%. Less than 10% visitors come from other German countries.
- f) **Destination in Britain in 1998:** South England is the most visited area (26%), followed by London (25%). Central England (18%), Scotland (11%), North England (11%), and Wales (3%) are the less favoured areas.
- g) **German attitudes:**
- Cleanliness is most important
 - Criticism is expressed in a very straightforward way
 - Very demanding
 - Value for money is the key term
 - Their thirst for information is difficult to quench
 - English food is difficult to get used to
 - German literature and some German phrases by staff are very welcome, though most of the German visitors speak English quite well
- h) **Image of Britain:** Britain is an “industrialized and urbanized country with an unhealthy climate and bad food”. This general impression has been changed by television programmes (Rosamunde Pilcher, Mr Bean) for the better. Now beautiful landscape, expensive lifestyle, culture and even humour are more often associated with Britain”.⁶⁸

Conclusions for the Northumbria NT

⁶⁸ It is open to discussion whether these television programmes paint a picture that is less biased, though for tourism it is, of course, a more favourable one.

The Northumbria NT has chosen a reliable market, but also a market that is reluctant to make Great Britain its destination. Consequently, a lot of effort has to be put into positioning the product on the German market in order to make Britain more appealing. As the North of England belongs to the less visited areas of the UK Northumbria has to face an even greater challenge. To reach out to the German audience the NT should focus on printed media and start using the Internet for advertising. What German areas, whether Nordrhein-Westphalen or one of those with lesser interest in Britain, should be selected for further marketing activities depends on more detailed market research as to reasons for these different preferences.

Being the favoured means of transport, airlines and ferry companies are good partners for advertising the NT of Northumbria.

Offers by the NT should not only market the NT properties and the region, but either suggest tours or add an extra cultural incentive (e.g. special events) to attract more visitors. These suggestions should include opportunities for short breaks.

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Customer care should be a priority to create repeated visits. Especially cultural differences like the famous German directness, expectations of food and accommodation have to be taken into account.

Preparing the NT staff for some German peculiarities, reviewing NT restaurants/tearooms and enlarging the offer of NT holiday cottages would help fulfil the needs of the German tourists and guarantee high standards.

VIII. THE SURVEY 2000 OF NT MEMBERS LIVING IN

GERMANY

“It is well worth ... to get a better understanding of the customers and consumers right under your nose – those already in the family. The challenge then becomes to find more people like those we already have. A search for people who look like our customers is more a matter of selecting from a known universe than trying to predict who might be converted to us in future.”⁶⁹

The basis of this chapter is a survey launched in autumn 2000 by the Marketing&Communications Department of the Northumbria Regional Office. The purpose of the questionnaire is to analyse the consumer behaviour of the NT member living in Germany⁷⁰ to create a marketing concept for the German market. The NT headquarters provided the addresses of 651 members who live in the North of Germany. The quite unexpected result was that 251 members answered the questionnaire so that we have with 38,5% of answers sent back a meaningful foundation for a market analysis.

First, a comparison of analyses will show the relevance of external market research for the NT and second, the results specifically concerning the NT will be presented.

⁶⁹ Douglas B. Herron, *Marketing Nonprofit Programs and Services*, San Francisco 1997, p 78.

⁷⁰ The expression “The NT members living in Germany” instead of “German members” was chosen because there are also members living in Germany who are not German.

VIII.1. The Reliability of External Market Research

A comparison between the information on the German market provided by ETC (English Tourist Council), the NTB (Nortumbria Tourist Board) or BTA and the results of the Survey 2000 will show how much the NT can rely on external market research.

VIII.1.1. The Development of Tourism in Britain

According to the ETC there was a general drop of 1%⁷¹ in tourism as a consequence of the strong pound. This development is not echoed by NT members, as there is a significant rise of visits from 1999 to 2000 of over 100% (**Diagram 1 = D1**). However, only 2/3 of the surveyed members plan a trip to Britain in 2001 (**D2**). One third complains about the bad exchange rate and for most of them this is the reason for postponing their next trip to Britain until financially better times. In 2000 it was either the members' enthusiasm that made them ignore the high costs of a visit to Britain a bit longer than the average tourists, or this year was experienced by many as something special and so called for an extraordinary holiday. In any case now the general decrease in tourism to Britain is also valid for the NT (**D2**).

VIII.1.2. Demographic Segmentation⁷²

The largest part of the surveyed NT members belongs to the **46-55-year-old**, closely followed by the **56-65** and **36-45-year-old** members (**D3**). The majority of them travel

⁷¹ *UK Sightseeing*, p9.

⁷² Demographic segmentation usually also includes gender and the family life cycle. The analysis of the former was not possible in this survey, because the addresses provided by the NT did not show whether two members shared a home. The enthusiasm of the surveyed members led to questionnaires filled in by two people without making it clear who answered what question or whether the answers were a compromise of two opinions etc. – For future surveys this problem must be solved because there are frustrated comments like “Why aren't you interested in my partner's opinion?”. - The family life cycle analysis is partly dealt with in the question about travel companions.

with their partners. More than a quarter takes children along and a bit less than a quarter spends their holidays on their own (**D4**).

As to age the BTA survey has got very different results. According to them, the largest age group of German tourists is between 25-35, followed by the 35-45 year-olds. This outcome raises some questions for the NT. Why are their members so much older? Could they gain more visitors and members on the German market with a younger image? Is it rather wise to concentrate on the older generation bearing in mind the ageing German population or does the NT lose out on a lot of German tourists by sticking to its traditional ways of presenting itself?

The overwhelming majority of the NT members living in Germany are better off, 53% academics and 5% executives. The largest occupational group of the academics are teachers (33 %) whose salary is quite high in comparison to the whole national workforce, but is significantly surpassed by the average income of doctors and lawyers who are only presented with a low percentage among the academic NT members (**D5**).

The salary of skilled trade workers and civil servants can vary quite a lot depending on position and age, but the top salaries of this occupational group are comparable with those of teachers.

Estimating the financial means of freelancers and skilled manual workers is quite difficult. Some are affluent, others struggle to make ends meet.

However, it becomes clear that membership is mainly sold to the better off which may depend on more interest in cultural matters as a consequence of a good education or simply on being able to afford the membership fees, or a combination of both factors.

VIII.1.3. Source of information

The main source of information about the NT are the **NT properties** themselves. This means that tourists do not plan to see sights owned by the NT, but rather accidentally get

there. Thus the attraction is the reason for going there, not the ownership of the NT that stands for quality. Therefore enlarging the German market for NT products will mean making the NT a brand tourists rely on and choose deliberately.

Apart from marketing in lieu, people become aware of the NT through hearsay (20%) and guidebooks (11%). The media and advertisements in Britain play an absolutely minor role (**D6**).

These conditions should be seriously considered and changed in order to increase visitor numbers. Efforts to be more present in guidebooks, the media and also the internet will be necessary to be competitive as these are the most important sources of information for the German tourist.

VIII.1.4. Transport to Britain and in Britain

In contrast to the external analyses the survey shows that the majority prefers going by **ferry** to going by plane (**D7**).⁷³ Cooperation with ferry companies as to advertisement is the right way to reach the German tourists before touching British ground. Although Germans tend to plan their holidays at home rather than spontaneously, ferries are still a promising place for influencing the customer because the ferry crossing includes the first moments of relaxation.

DFDS (D8) is the most used ferry company and therefore a good partner for the NT to be sponsored by. This potential has been realized by the Northumbria NT. (see Chapter VI.3.).

Airlines are the second important means of transport (33%) so that they should also be addressed for supporting the NT by advertisements or articles in literature provided in the planes.

⁷³ It must be kept in mind that the addresses provided by the NT headquarters are all from North Germany, which could explain the preference of ferries because of the relatively near harbours.

BA is the preferred airline and should be addressed to further the aims of the NT by informing its passengers about NT offers.

Corresponding with their preference for ferries NT members mainly travel in Britain with their **own cars** (54%). Another 14% of them do not take their own car, but rent a car. Only about 16% consider driving “on the wrong side” a problem. This is reflected by a 21% usage of public transport (**D9**). However, not everybody seems to be happy with this means of transport. Approximately 4% complain about various difficulties, like unreliable timetables or bad connections.

BTA comes to the same conclusions as the survey: most Germans favour travelling independently.

VIII.1.5. Seasonality

There is a close correspondence between the external analyses and the NT survey in terms of seasonality. More than 50% of the NT members come to Britain in **summer**, about a third in autumn, spring attracts 13% and winter is the least liked season for this destination (**D10**).

VIII.1.6. Accommodation and Catering

The majority of NT members choose **B&Bs** as accommodation, less than a quarter book hotels, about 15% stay at friends’ homes or rent self-catering accommodation (**D11**).

Unfortunately the NTB statistics do not give any details about B&Bs, but count hotels and guesthouses as one category, which according to them is the most favoured form of accommodation. Interestingly enough, according to their sources, many more people stay with friends (41%) and only 1% rent a holiday

accommodation. In these respects we have a very different picture with NT members.

As to **food** NT members seem to be different from the average German tourist. Asked about difficulties during their stay in Britain only 11% point food out as a problem, while more than a quarter enjoy certain English dishes so much that they see them as a special enjoyment during their holidays (*D12, D13*).

The NT style of catering seems to hit the taste of the German members very well. The quality of **NT restaurants and tearooms** is considered as good (45%) or very good (34%). Only 15% are not too happy and a dwindling minority think the standards are bad (*D14*).

For less than 7% there is a problem with **value for money** concerning accommodation and food. A minority of about 5% complains especially about badly equipped accommodation regarding above all the quality of bathrooms (no showers, no mixer taps etc.) (*D12, D13*). This corresponds with the general picture painted by BTA about German expectations, but here it is only represented by a minority.

In this context another interesting problem should be mentioned. The different habits of paying in pubs and restaurants are seen as difficult by some NT members. It would be a nice gesture to make it clear in NT restaurants and tearooms when the customer is expected to pay when ordering or after having a meal.

VIII.1.7. Regions and Attractions

No question the North of England also belongs to the lesser-visited English regions with NT members, only 4 other regions are even **less favoured** than **Northumbria**. This result is in harmony with the outcome of other external examinations (*D15*).

The fact that overseas tourists are mainly interested in historic buildings is partly true for the NT membership. Nearly 38% spend their leisure time visiting historic sights,

but a more important reason to go to Britain is to enjoy **nature** and scenery (*D16*). However, what NT members enjoy to an even higher extent (60%) is the **British mentality** and way of life. This is specified as general politeness, friendliness and openness (*D13*).

VIII.1.8. Leisure Activities

In contrast to the German leisure activities at home (see VII.9) the German NT members spend most of their time in Britain **sightseeing** and for only 40% sports are on the agenda (*D16*).

VIII.1.9. Language

Asked about their language abilities 71% of the surveyed members assess their capability of speaking English as good or very good, another 25% as satisfactory and only 4% as basic (*D17*). About 10% mention speaking English as one of the special enjoyments (*D13*) during their stay in Britain while only 7% have problems with communication (*D12*). The other 83% do not mention the subject language at all, which means that there cannot be major problems in this field.

However, interestingly enough, 33% of the surveyed would like more information in German (*D18*). This outcome demonstrates that the BTA assessment is correct: tourism can rely on **Germans speaking English**, but they still like some information handed out in German.

VIII.1.10. Motives and Quality

NT members living in Germany have a host of reasons to enjoy Britain (*D13*). The most important ones, as already mentioned in VIII.1.7., are the scenery and nature, the British mentality and way of life and the historic sights. According to BTA sources, close contact

with **nature** is the desire of only 18 % of German holidaymakers, which is much less than the 62% of NT members who go to Britain because of its natural attractions.

Moreover, as to learning about **culture**, a desire of only 10% of the average German tourist (BTA), there is again a great difference with NT members: nearly 38% say that they spend their leisure time in Britain visiting historic sights (**D16**). Doing some kind of **sport** is favoured by 40% of the surveyed members (**D 16**), which again differs a lot from the 14% of the average German tourist analysed by BTA.

The positive experience of **peace and quiet** of about 12% of the NT members (**D13**) could be paralleled with the desire for relaxation expressed by 30% in the BTA analysis. However, the difference is that BTA asked for *desires*, while the NT survey focuses on actual *experiences*.

The important quality aspects found out by BAT (see VII.8.) are met by Britain according to the NT survey.

The **environmental quality** is highly estimated (**D12, D13**), even the weather is only criticised by about 2%, which is again balanced by more than 2% who love the climate. The lack of eco-friendliness is only mentioned by 1 person of 251.

The **material quality** is not considered as highly because the relation of value for money is not always quite successfully met and also accommodation is not beyond criticism (**D12**). However, the critical voices only form a very small choir in this respect. Much louder are the voices of those (31%) who see the strong pound as a real problem, which either prevents them from travelling to Britain until the exchange rate is better for them, or at least reduces the enjoyment of their stay to a considerable extent (**D12**)

The **immaterial quality** is considered very good as the members often experience a warm and friendly atmosphere (**D13**). Surprisingly a small percentage feel that traffic in

Britain is most relaxing, while more than 15% see driving on the left hand side as really stressful (*D12*).

In a lot of aspects the NT can trust external market research, but there is still a need for looking at their customers and target groups independently. As to

- the development of tourism,
- the age groups,
- the mode of travel to Britain,
- accommodation and
- interests

the market segment of the NT members living in Germany differs in a way that should not be ignored to succeed in marketing.

VIII.2. Criticism and Praise of the NT

Evaluation of your product is an essential part of marketing in order to adapt it to the needs of the market and so be able to offer a product that is attractive to the customer. The following introduces the members' opinions about the NT and its services. The answers are either multiple-choice replies where more than one answer is possible, or freely formulated replies by the surveyed.

Questions at the end of the paragraphs indicate possible fields of research to improve and expand the marketing in the future.

VIII.2.1. The Development of the Market

The market for the NT has been **growing very quickly** in the 90s and this trend is going on in the year 2000. 62% of the surveyed joined the NT in the 90s and an astonishingly

21% became members in 2000 (**D19**). The main **motive for joining** the NT is an interest in culture and history (58%), while 42% see a financial advantage in membership (**D 20**).

Unfortunately there is not any data about resignations sorted to nationalities, but anyway these numbers tell the NT that the German market can be taken seriously.

To get a realistic picture of the situation it is imperative to have a closer look at the readiness to stay a member for longer than the year people spend their holidays in Britain (**D21**). Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the surveyed members will renew their membership (7% of them are life members) while 19% will not do so. Another 5% is undecided. For 10% the prerequisite for the **renewal of their membership** is a trip to Britain. However, the NT can be congratulated on the high loyalty

of its German members, because, although 31% do not give any details about their next trip to Britain (and presumably do not have any plans because many of them argue that a trip depends on a better exchange rate), 21% stay with the NT anyway. Nevertheless some more research should be done to find out why the majority joined in the 90s. Has the German market become more aware of the NT in this decade? This would be sign of good marketing. Or does this mean people tend to get to know the NT and after a short time of membership resign? If this should be the case, the NT should have a closer look at this phenomenon, as it might be an avoidable loss of valuable resources.

Research: 1) Do German members only stay for a short period in the NT and what are the reasons?

2) Are stable German memberships desirable for the NT, or are they only to be considered as a pleasant surplus profit?

VIII.2.2. Communication

Marketing is a process of communication so if there are communication problems, i.e. the message is not received in the intended way, the marketer will sooner or later realize the consequences, namely a rise in resignations. More than 50% describe the communication between them and the NT as **good**, less than a quarter as very good and just about the same percentage would certainly welcome some changes. Interestingly enough, only 15% (**D22**) in comparison to 25%, who consider the communication as very good (**D23**), cannot imagine any changes for the better. 38% would probably greet some alterations but are at a loss to suggest something innovative.

A quite overwhelming 47% have **ideas for the improvement** of communication (**D18**). Most of them see themselves at disadvantage compared with their British fellow members regarding information about NT activities in Britain. Some suggest that sending newsletters by email could help to close this gap of communication. This change would, of course, mean that probably quite a lot members in the key customer group would be excluded because of having no access to the Internet.

A third of those who would like to see some changes would favour an opportunity of **communicating in German** with the NT in Britain, or best of all a German branch. The latter could also solve the following problems. There are more than a few complaints that letters in German are not answered, membership cards are often sent over too late and that the costs for NT services or products by mail order are immensely expensive because of international bank transactions.

A further interesting suggestion is to give more information to German members for planning their holidays abroad. This need could also quite easily be taken care of by a German branch or department for foreign affairs in the headquarters.

Research: 1) What are the costs for satisfying the German customers' need for more information in German?

2) Would the resources created by more permanent memberships be large enough to intensify customer care for German members?

VIII.2.3. Positive Features of the NT (D24, D25)

Well over a third sees the conservation of historic buildings and places of natural beauty as the main benefit of the NT. Another 8% and 7 % point out the particular meaning of the NT as to environmental protection and the standards of keeping historic buildings in good shape. The above shows clearly that altogether more than 50% have understood the **original mission** of the NT.

Meeting friendly and helpful people helps to make a destination **home from home** and the NT staff seems to meet this need to a high extent. 23% of the answers describe the positive attitude of the staff enthusiastically. This certainly has to be valued highly by the NT as a very successful part of its promotion among foreigners.

Information by **knowledgeable staff** and brochures (12%) and the feeling of being part of a well-organized body (4%) are further benefits enjoyed by the members.

Though a comparatively low number (8%) stress the **volunteering system** as an asset it should be mentioned here, as it could be used as one appealing momentum among others for advertising the NT in a German context.

To complete the profile of the NT member living in Germany the diagram (D25) shows the benefits appreciated by less than 5% to 2%, from which one might draw conclusions about the importance of these aspects to the majority, or even about their different opinions.

Only 21 members (8%) think of **NT facilities** (shops and services on the properties) as especially enjoyable moments (**D25**) while others rather worry about standardisation (**D26**).

Not more than 5 out of 251 praise the **good service** (**D25**) and 6 think that the handbook is great.

More interesting in terms of Germans is the fact that only 7 members talk about the **cleanliness** on NT properties (**D25**) – are Germans in the end not as paranoid about hygiene as always thought or could this low number also be interpreted in a different way, like for example missing standards?

Interestingly as well, only 6 people think that by being a member of the NT they save **money** (**D25**). Do the Germans live up to the general impression that value for money decides on their spending? If this should be the case, it would consequently mean that the NT offers good quality. Or is it the other way round? The NT is so expensive that only a dwindling minority can say that a membership is an economic benefit to them?

Word-of-mouth propaganda is a vital factor in all marketing, but especially important with NPOs because it is a form of free promotion. If customers are not satisfied, the costs to the NT in terms of recommendation to friends and family could be high.

Supporting the NT is seen as a **good cause** by nearly half of the surveyed members (48%) and a third recommends the NT for economic reasons (**D27**). Moreover, the NT is considered a good source of information (13%) and an organisation where you are not only a supplier of income, but a part of the big family (8%). Some German members (2%) see – probably in contrast to the majority of their British fellow members – a European dimension in the mission of the *National* Trust. Although this is only the conviction of a few it is a worthwhile thought and perhaps promising as well because the

NT taps into European funding for regional support and working programmes. And, of course, it is a good starting point for marketing the NT on the Continent!

Consequences: Promotion on the German market can rely on the appealing character of

- the NT mission as a good cause
- the homely atmosphere created by its staff
- being a good source of information and
- the volunteering system.

VIII.2.4. Negative Features of the NT (D26)

More than half of the surveyed members cannot find **any fault** with the NT. Herron's warning

“Wanting to please you, respondents may say on the questionnaire that they don't have any problems with you.”⁷⁴

should not be ignored in this context. Perhaps a different question would have led to more critical answers: A question like “Do you know any reasons why people do not join the NT or have left it?” provides the chance of hiding behind somebody else and gives more space to criticise anonymously.

Opening hours cause the highest degree of dissatisfaction. Usually the complaint is that properties are accessible too late and close too early. The culturally interested visitor, often on a relatively short break, wants to see as much as possible. The realization of this desire is very much reduced by opening hours from 11.00 am –5 p.m. Coupled with the need to relax it is difficult to see two properties in just one day.

6. Herron, p 74.

Too high **costs** for membership fees, products in NT shops etc are a problem for 16%. Interestingly enough, this percentage is confirmed by the reasons given for becoming a NT member: 58% say that their interest in culture and history made them join while the motivation of 42% was saving money. This means that 16% joined the NT despite the high costs and they are the members who still feel uneasy about the financial side (see above).

Criticism of **standardisation and commercialisation** of the NT properties, shops and tearooms/restaurants is presently only expressed by a minority, but can become a problem with repeated visits. A lot of the surveyed members have recently joined the NT so that their enthusiasm is still high, but it does not take much time to realize that NT shops offer a rather limited range of products. This prevents making new discoveries and hunting down “unique” souvenirs, a need of holidaymakers not to be underestimated.

The prohibition of **taking photos** in historic buildings is a further problem. Explanations why it is forbidden might help to make people agree to this measure, or the provision of slides for sale could abolish this nuisance. To the authoress' s knowledge some properties do this, but according to the survey this is not an overall offer.

The **bad service** mentioned when asked about negative features of the NT concerns mainly communication problems which are dealt with in VIII.2.2.

The demand for more **cooperation** with other organisations (3%) is understandable, particularly with English Heritage. Generally there is little knowledge about the difference between the NT being a charity and English Heritage being a government-funded organisation. Tourists only see that though being member of one of these organisations it does not save them the entrance fees

at properties of the other organisation. Here again some enlightenment might help to minimize the frustration⁷⁵.

Research: 1) Is it economically worthwhile to change opening hours to the benefit of overseas tourists?

2) How can the range of NT products become more typical of a property or region and thus further sales?

3) What kind of enlightenment can increase the acceptance of certain prohibitions and high costs?

Solutions for these problems are most probably not only relevant for overseas tourists, but also for British members. Thus some research will serve the whole NT.

VIII.3. Associations with Northumbria (*D28-1, D28-2*)

For more than a third of the surveyed members Northumbria is an **unknown destination**, another 7% simply associate this region with **Scotland** or as the gateway to Scotland. In any case Northumbria is nothing to put on the itinerary for sightseeing. Not much more favourable for Northumbria as a tourist destination are those 1% who think of it only as a **ferry port** – a starting point for a trip to Scotland. However, there are **insiders** who have quite some knowledge about the region (**58%**) and luckily for the NT 16% know some of its more prominent properties. The World Heritage Site, **Hadrian's Wall**, owned by the NT and run by English Heritage, is the best-known attraction of Northumbria.

⁷⁵ In autumn 2000 first steps of closer cooperating were taken at Hadrian's Wall. For a short period the NT and EH did not only promote and sell their own memberships, but each other's memberships as well. From personal talks I learned that this experiment was a success as both organisations have won new memberships sold by the other organisation. A long-term cooperation, however, still seems to be far away.

Research: 1) Why is Northumbria relatively unknown and how can it be put on the map of tourist destinations in Britain?

2) What are the reasons for Hadrian's Wall being the most famous attraction and what can be adopted of its the promotion for other attractions?

IX. A MARKETING PLAN FOR MARKETING THE NORTHUMBRIA NT ON THE GERMAN MARKET

The following marketing plan has mainly been developed according to the methods suggested by the *Freiburger Modell* (see Chapter III) and predominantly refers to the marketing of the Northumbria NT in Germany. To the writer's knowledge there is no plan for these marketing activities with the Northumbria NT, which makes this concept an absolute first. A lot of the parts of this plan are also valid for other regions and for the whole NT for marketing their organisation in Germany.

The four following points are the backbone of any marketing plan and so should be thought through thoroughly before starting:

Goal: Targeting the German market to achieve an increase of memberships and to retain current members⁷⁶

Benefits:

- For the NT:
 - Increase of NT income
 - Growing recognition as an internationally minded organisation

⁷⁶ Among overseas NT members Germans are with over 10,000 members the most highly represented nationality, which makes them a promising target for intensified marketing. Cp.: Rajukumar, T. *The National Trust Membership Compendium 1999/2000*, London 2000, p. 30.

- For the non-German members:
 - Increasing NT income stabilizes the NT budget and/or makes new services and acquisitions of properties possible
 - Being member of an open-minded organisation
- For members living in Germany:
 - More information
 - Increased feeling of being a part of the NT
 - Better holiday planning
 - Chance of volunteering for the NT in their own country
- For the public:
 - Short-term: the destination of Northumbria is put on the map of German tourists
 - Long-term:
 - Rise of tourism in Northumbria
 - Creation of new jobs
 - Improvement of the image of the North East
- **Programme:**
 - Provision of German information for members and potential members/visitors living in Germany
 - Sending out newsletters either in German or English, perhaps bilingual information for those who enjoy English communication
 - German website
 - German contact at headquarters
 - Quality standards: evaluation of the new service through surveys or invitations in newsletters to comment on the changes

- **Human resources:**

Northumbria NT:

- At the beginning only a very few people are needed to start the new marketing: the Northumbria NT has got some staff members at Hadrian's Wall and Souter Lighthouse who speak German. Certainly there are also other staff members and members in the whole organisation who would volunteer to help out with their knowledge of German.
- Members living in Germany volunteering to represent the NT at fairs, organizing the distribution of leaflets or translating
- Freelance translators for German brochures and a German website
- Cooperation with the students of the Humboldt-Universität in Berlin

Headquarters:

- Recruiting a German speaking member or part-time worker to take care of the German correspondence once or twice a month

Costs: the budget of the Northumbria NT is very limited with £ 5000 (year 2000), which requires a sound market research to use it wisely, but gives enough leeway to develop.

IX.1. Analysis of the Exchange Processes

The NT, like every NPO, depends on its stakeholders who are not simply its staff, volunteers and members, but also the public, the government and to a certain extent the EU. They all must support and agree with the marketing concept to avoid resignation of membership, donations and funding.

Staff and the **volunteers** as the representatives of the NT must be motivated to start an intensified marketing effort to German visitors. Therefore it is necessary to explain the reasons why and to feedback on the very positive picture German NT members paint of them.

The **non-German members** must be convinced that special marketing activities on the German market neither affect their privileges nor the existence and mission of the whole charity.

Some members living in Germany reject a special treatment in comparison to other members. Certainly for them being a member of a British charity has got its own appeal. This should be considered in the marketing plan and will probably also be greeted by many non-German members.

Since it is said that the NT has got a much greater acceptance in British society than the Anglican Church⁷⁷, the goodwill of the **public** to the NT actions may not be underestimated. Moreover, the public is the pool of potential members and customers of the NT facilities and special events.

It is not possible to consider all parts of the public here, but the **media**, as one of the major influencing social factors should be mentioned. The coverage of the NT is quite high in local Northumbrian newspapers (about one article per week) and TV and radio show reasonable interest in the NT. Thus their affirmative attitude should be gained.

The support of the **government** and the **EU** must be won to safeguard sources of funding. The tourism strategy "Tourism Tomorrow", the first comprehensive national tourism strategy, is a good frame for applying for financial support. Key points of this governmental strategy are, among others, sustainable tourism, aggressive overseas

⁷⁷ Cp.: Newby, p 26.

promotion and more central government support for the regions (the North East is especially mentioned), which all fits the idea of marketing the NT outside Britain.

With the European Commission the benefits for Northumbria must be stressed as one of its aims is to support the regions in the European Union (European Development, Objective 2).⁷⁸

IX.2. SWOT-Analysis

The aim of the SWOT-analysis is to find out the internal capabilities and the external threats and opportunities in order to correlate them for an optimal marketing. The NT cannot be isolated from the region of Northumbria, so that the SWOT-analysis focuses on the destination itself and on the Northumbria NT as such.

IX.2.1. Strengths

Destination:

- Transport: ferry port and airport
- Combination of buzzing city life and rural peace and quiet

- Little mass tourism
- Distinctive cultural identity

Northumbria National Trust

⁷⁸ Cp.: *Tourism policy: quality tourism*. Available: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/tourism/quality> p 1 and *forms and documents*. Available: http://www.culture.gov.uk/tourism/gov_report2 29/9/2000, p1-4.

- Committed conservation of history and nature, no German equivalent on national level
- Environmental activities
- Well-maintained buildings and scenery
- World Heritage Site: Hadrian's Wall
- Welcoming staff
- Good source of information
- Free admission for members
- Impressive volunteering system
- Enjoyable catering
- Home from home

IX.2.2. Weaknesses

Destination:

- No ferry connections from Germany to Newcastle
- No direct flights from Germany to Newcastle
- Expensive accommodation and catering (as in the rest of Britain)

Northumbria National Trust:

- No up-to-date market research on regional and national level concerning the German market
- Wrong associations with the brand "National Trust" in Germany (see IX.5.1)
- No communication in German at headquarters (membership questions, orders, enquiries)
- Customer care for members in Germany relatively poor

- No German literature (magazine, brochures on properties)⁷⁹
- NT products are very expensive for Germans
- Restricted opening hours prevent more frequent visits of properties
- No German website
- No representation on travel fairs
- Little awareness of cultural differences concerning advertising⁸⁰
- Not much NT accommodation
- The “National Trust Short Break Collection” does not include Northumbria
- Complacent attitude of the headquarters to improving marketing in Germany, which hinders a quicker development and the realization of the ideas in the Northumbria Communications&Marketing Department.

IX.2.3. Opportunities

Destination:

- Northumbria as a close European destination “to get away from it all”

NT:

- Short term membership for non-resident (!) tourists

⁷⁹ In the season 2001 German literature is to be distributed on the properties.

⁸⁰ The Northumbria NT promotes their properties with photos showing a lot of visitors – a lively place, not just boring history. Interestingly enough, the German travel magazine “Tours” uses pictures of Northumbria, which show a fantastic and lonely landscape. This seems to be attractive to the German tourist who wants to get away from the crowds – should he love the crowds, he would probably choose a city like London as a destination, not rural Northumbria.

- Product development (re-interpretation of the properties as to livelier presentation and better service for foreign visitors)
- Cooperation with ferry companies and airlines
- Development of short break itineraries for overseas visitors
- Enlarging offers of NT accommodation or accommodation recommended by the NT (grading system)
- Presence on the German Internet
- More information about sights, special events to the German audience via the Internet or via email for members
- Presentation of the NT on German travel fairs in cooperation with BTA, or independently⁸¹
- Articles in German newspapers/magazines⁸²
- Brochures distributed through German local newspapers
- Cooperation with rent-a-car firms
- German school trips: information to the education boards of each state about school memberships
- Exhibitions on the NT by German members in their neighbourhood, financially supported and rewarded with some kind of discount like volunteers get in Britain
- NT as counterbalance to the euro-scepticism easily associated with Britain

⁸¹ Presentation of the Northumbria NT at travel fairs in Germany does not exceed the rather limited budget for marketing in Germany. At the largest holiday fair in Germany, CTM Stuttgart, the costs for a stand/half stand are £2572/€ 1428. Another important fair is „Reisemarkt Cologne“ which attracts people from the all-important Nordrhein-Westphalia region (good access to Britain from this region). Here the costs are about the same £2143/€1429. cp.: www.koeln-messe.de and www.hamburg-messe.de.

⁸² The German weekly “Die Zeit” has shown some interest in publishing an article about the Northumbria NT. – The same is true for the German travel magazine “Tours”, on whose website the Northumbria NT has got a special link. Other alternatives are distribution of leaflets through the ADAC magazine in certain regions of Germany, or through local newspapers, especially free local newspapers.

IX.2.4. Threats

Outside the NT:

- Strong pound which makes holidays in Britain quite expensive
- Competition through EH
 - Various links on the German Internet
 - Membership fees of EH are less expensive and take financial needs of certain life cycle stages into consideration, like retirement (60+) or single parenthood; the latter is also considered with the NT, but with the NT single parents pay 1/3 more than with EH
 - “Overseas Visitor Pass” of EH: tourists save about 1/3 for 14 days, more than 50% for 7 days in comparison with the annual membership fee for 1 adult (21-59 years old) – no equivalent with the NT

Within the NT:

- Lack of understanding on the German members’ side as to high prices being a part of fundraising and the difference between EH as a government-funded organisation and the NT being a charity
- Standardisation and commercialisation of NT properties and other facilities
- Nationwide: recent decline in visitor numbers⁸³
- The Northumbria NT owns properties where relatively low admission fees are charged which make joining the NT not worthwhile only for your holidays. If you should manage to visit all properties in Northumbria, you will save £2.30 in the end - an incentive not too impressive. Of course, in other regions, especially in the south, tourist will save quite some money as members. However, no tourist in Northumbria will be attracted by the fact that somebody else spending their

⁸³ The National Trust, *National Trust Strategic Plan, March 2001-February 2004, 1st Draft*, April 2000, p 8.

holidays somewhere in the south, saves a lot of money, but they want some personal benefits for themselves here and now!

IX.3. Marketing Relevant Aspects of the Management System

The headquarters of the NT develops a national strategic plan, which is afterwards discussed by the regions and properties to create a regional plan. Because of this we can also refer to the national plan for relevant aspects of the management concerning marketing.

“The National Trust Strategic Plan March 2001- February 2003” (1st Draft, April 2000) categorizes the NT objectives under four headings:

- Inspiring Support
- Improving Conservation and Environmental Quality
- Managing Our Affairs
- Developing our People and Our Knowledge.

Though we do not find any allusion of reaching out to an international audience, “Objective 1” can be used to justify the marketing activities in Germany.

“... our success will depend on strengthening the bond that exist with those who already know the Trust and support its work and on attracting new members and supporters ... Every member of staff and every volunteer has a part to play in realising the Trust’s unique potential for enhancing the quality of people’s lives; we must become accustomed to asking the question `what can we do for you? ` rather than `what can you do for us?’”⁸⁴

Looking after those who are members and who could become members is nothing but a sound marketing goal. Even more useful are two of the listed values:

“Outward Looking: We recognise that we are a part of a wider world – looking out to learning from and linking with those around us”

⁸⁴ *National Trust Strategic Plan*, p 4. - These ideas are also found in *Northumbria Regional Strategic Plan Draft* – May 2000 and market research is added as a strategic tool of very high priority.

and

“Innovative: We have the courage to experiment with new ideas and approaches.”

The first priority is

“Enhancing the enjoyment and loyalty of our existing and potential supporters.”⁸⁵

These values are a good justification for tapping into the German market and trying to attract more members and keep those who are already part of the NT – non-Germans as well as Germans.

“The National Trust Communications Framework 2001-2004”⁸⁶ expresses the necessity of improving its communication techniques to survive in a world that also becomes more and more competitive in the non-profit sector. The listed key audiences include members ranked fourth, followed by visitors and the international press who rank tenth at the bottom of the list. Members and visitors are both British and overseas residents so that here again we have a starting point for international marketing. Suggested ways of communication are, among others, the NT publications, a good relationship with the media and the presence in the Internet, which can all be used for marketing the NT in Germany.

IX.4. Basic Statements as to Services and Communication

1. The wider German public must be informed about the existence and mission of the NT through the media and/or travel fairs.
2. The German speaking members must be better cared for on the properties by distributing German literature.

⁸⁵ *Strategic Plan*, p 6.

⁸⁶ The National Trust. *The National Trust Communications Framework 2001-2004*. London 2000. p 2.

3. The members in Germany must be better, more reliably and regularly informed by newsletters, email and/or the Internet.
4. German members must be more involved in NT activities, like helping out to open up a greater audience for the NT in Germany
5. German-only speaking members must be able to get information in German from the head office.

IX.5. The Positioning of the NT

The process of positioning includes selecting a definite target group, the branding of a product, the identification of a set of competitive advantages, which all clearly differentiates the product from the competitor's offer. In the case of international marketing cultural differences must be taken into consideration to secure the transmission of the message.

IX.5.1. A Name One Can Trust

“The National Trust? – What is it? The national front? Some right wing party? An insurance company?” These are the reactions you get when introducing yourself as working for the NT and wanting to make some inquiries. The major German newspapers, German rent-a-car firms, advertising agencies and last but not least nearly anybody in Germany, even people having been to Britain, react in this way. This is, of course, a personal experience and unlucky coincidence might be the explanation for the encounter with so much lack of information. However, in my opinion, the connotation the word `national` has got in Germany should not be ignored and rather be realized as a challenge for a marketing strategy. Reaching out to a wider audience than the current members living in Germany and their friends

means to put a lot of marketing effort into creating awareness of the actual meaning of the NT.⁸⁷:

IX.5.2. A Short Version of the Mission

The NT “safeguard the environment; promote cultural heritage; support the countryside; and provide benefit to people enhancing their quality of life.”⁸⁸

IX.5.3. The Uniqueness of the Organisation

Concerning the whole of the NT:

- The leading conservation and environmental charity in Britain and presumably the largest non-governmental heritage conservation organisation in Europe

This claim is supported by MORI (Market and Opinion Research International) who made a survey on “Attitudes towards the Heritage” in 2000. One of the questions runs “Which of the following organisations that look after historic buildings and monuments have you heard of?”. 53% had heard of the NT while only a third knew EH⁸⁹.

⁸⁷ In personal talks the staff of the marketing department of the head office denied all this, but funnily enough, their experience is mainly based on events in Germany organized by BTA and mainly visited by people connected with the NT and Britain anyway.

⁸⁸ *Strategic Plan*, p 9.

⁸⁹ *Attitudes towards the Heritage*. Available: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/discover/review/mori/responsible-organisation.asp>. 25/02/2001.

- No equivalent in Germany where are some national environmental organisations, but no national organisation looking after the German heritage, as cultural affairs are dealt with by the countries.
- Coordination of ENNHO (European Network of National Heritage Organisations) and maintenance and administration of the ENNHO website
- 106 years of experience
- Despite its non-governmental status, the NT has got a political say (it can exercise some influencing power in public discussions and in the generation of legislation concerning environmental and conservationist matters)
- The largest private landowner in the UK
- NT properties are inalienable⁹⁰

Uniqueness in contrast to EH, the most serious competitor of the NT:

- Charity status: apart from grants, independent of government
 - Largest source of income is membership subscriptions
 - Legacies are the second largest source
- Importance of volunteers for the functioning of the organisation: in 1997-98 volunteers outnumbered the permanent staff in the ratio 12:1⁹¹
 - Volunteers show great commitment for the sake of the NT, sometimes even more than paid staff
 - Wide range of offers for working holidays: combining fun, acquisition of particular knowledge and support of the national heritage

⁹⁰ For an explanation of the term 'inalienability' see Chapter II, legal status of the NT.

⁹¹ Cp.: Official information pack of The National Trust, sheet on "Volunteers" (no further bibliographical notes).

- On-line holiday booking: offers of holiday cottages, hotels and overseas holidays in cooperation with travel companies who make financial contribution to the NT for each booking
- On-line-shopping: Bookshop, Needlework Shop
- National Trust Visa credit card: £10 go to the NT on first usage, 5 pence for every further transaction, no annual fees.

Concerning the Northumbria NT

- A firm commitment to social inclusiveness (“Inner City Project” and “Walker Walker’s” in Newcastle)

IX.5.4. The Analysis of the Target Group

The following list sums up the characteristics of the current consumer, which should be the basis for future marketing in Germany. If there are two important aspects, both are noted, but the larger group of existing consumers is printed in bold letters.

- Age groups: **45-54**, 35-44, 55-64
- **Occupational groups: academics**, skilled trade workers
- Social status: well-off, but many still worry about high expenditure because of the unfavourable exchange rate
- Culturally interested
- Nature lovers
- Environmentally conscious
- Active (hiking!) people who want to make most of their time (opening hours!)

- Speaking English very well/**well**, but still enjoy some German literature
- Lovers of the British way of life (mentality and food)
- Communicative and socializing
- Independent travellers
- At least one travel companion, mainly partners
- Mode of travel: **own**/rented car though driving on the left is definitely not seen as a child's play
- Means of transport to Britain: **ferry (DFDS)** and plane (BA)
- Preferred travel seasons: **summer** and autumn
- Accommodation: **B&B** and hotel
- Apart from the World Heritage Site, Hadrian's Wall, limited knowledge about Northumbria, however those who have been there are really enthusiastic and have some detailed knowledge.

The prototype NT client is the middle-aged, well-off academic, physically and mentally active. He cares about his environment and is interested in history. He loves comfortable accommodation and particular British dishes, but the equation of value for money must be right. He loves private travel company and, therefore, certainly enjoys travelling independently in his own car. A perfect holiday is experiencing the real Britain, but this should not go so far that one has to renounce all well-loved amenities, like mixer taps.

IX.6. The Communication of the Positioning

A marketing plan may be well structured, based on good market research and supported by the management of an organisation, but it will only translated into reality effectively and efficiently, if the whole organisation is carefully informed about it through a special programme.

IX.6.1. The Communication to the CI

Innovations connected with changes of attitude and/or changes in the everyday routine are often encountered with some scepticism. Incentives, apart from sound information, can help to overcome this resistance.

Incentives for staff and volunteers may be the idea of working for an open-minded organisation of increasingly international importance. Moreover, staff, members and volunteers with special language abilities could bring more of their talents into play and by this experience a wider variety of tasks and a greater satisfaction in their jobs.

Considering only the NT Northumbria here, everybody of the staff and all volunteers of this region must thoroughly be told about the new strategy. Meetings should give space for discussion and explanations of reasons, advantages and consequences. Important features of the information must be

- (1) the congruence of the new marketing effort with the mission of the NT,
- (2) the emphasis of the necessity of everybody's contribution and
- (3) the competitive role of EH on the German market.

The following steps must be taken:

1. The marketing manager of the NT Northumbria informs
 - a. the other departments of the NRO, his own department about details, if still necessary, and
 - b. the property managers.

2. The property managers inform
 - a. the staff and
 - b. the volunteers.

On both levels enquiries from members should be dealt with carefully and enthusiastically.

IX.6.2. The Communication to the COOPI

In the Survey 2000 British citizens living in Germany comment with astonishment and sometimes indignantly on the idea of a special treatment for German members. In the same way a few Germans reject this approach because they do not want to be different from the other members. If financially possible, bilingual information should be available or a choice between English or German information.

This attitudinal problem must be solved by explaining through newsletters or the “National Trust Magazine” that there are not first and second-class members, but that

- (1) the NT (the organisation itself as well as its members) will benefit from increased marketing and that
- (2) the improved communication between the English and German members does not only have economic reasons, but is also a translation of the famous English helpfulness and open-mindedness into action. An appeal to support this new project with personal contribution of talent could enlarge the acceptance with worried members.

IX.7. The Marketing Areas

The idea of marketing the Northumbria NT must also be communicated to the exchange partners (see IX.1.) to gain their support, financially and attitudinally.

Sound information about the opportunities of this project must be at their disposal so that the exchange partners can get a thorough picture. Here we have to differentiate between the exchange partners within and outside the organisation.

Outside the NT the programme must be introduced to potential funding partners, like governmental bodies, MPs, European institutions, the media and the public, enlightening them about the benefits achieved by this project.

Inside the NT a similar procedure has to be followed: information, motivation and incentives should convince the organisation on all levels of the quality of the new strategy. In this context it is important to mention that the NT is an increasingly competitive situation because of EH⁹².

IX.8. The Organisation of the Marketing Actions

The marketing tasks must be distributed through the various levels of the organisation. The **Northumbria NT** can organize the following tasks in cooperation with German speaking staff, members and German students:

- a. Distribution of German literature on their properties
- b. Increasing awareness of the NT in the German public through
 - The presence of the Northumbria NT on the German Internet
 - Presenting the Northumbria NT at travel fairs
 - Articles in the German press⁹³
 - Leaflets inserted into local German newspapers

⁹² Cp.: English Heritage, *Tourism Facts 2000: Membership And Direct Marketing*. Available: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/education> 25/02/2001, p 1: Though only established in 1983 EH has already got 470,000 members. This successful development depends, at least partly, on the better financial situation of EH as a government-funded organisation. Consequently, EH can follow more aggressive marketing strategies, provide more services and discounts, which is, of course, attractive to potential members. The NT should not take this competition lightly, especially with overseas tourists.

⁹³ The German weekly "Die Zeit" showed some interest in an article on the NT. – An alternative to publications in the major German newspapers is the distribution of leaflets through local newspapers, especially free locals. Moreover, the ADAC can be engaged – without having costs that blow up the budget – to spread NT leaflets in selected regions through its magazine.

- Evaluation (degree of satisfaction among the German visitors)

Marketing activities along these lines can be started and organized by communicating in English with the respective German contact. Except for the publication of newspaper articles, translations are often offered for some extra charge or can be made by somebody within the NT.

Other marketing activities concerning all members in Germany must be organized by the **headquarters**, as they are major projects leading to changes concerning bureaucracy, new staff or the re-organisation of certain job descriptions, publications in the NT Magazine on additional marketing efforts in the German market place and appeals to German members to volunteer. Moreover, this includes

- Provision of more regularly sent out newsletters to the German members
- More on-line-information
- Involvement of German members in spreading the mission of the NT in Germany
 - Creation of incentives
 - Addressing German members to volunteer
- Provision of a German contact at the headquarters and/or in Germany
 - Bilingual/ German information for the German members, current and potential ones
- Discussion on short-term memberships, “NT Tourist Pass for Overseas Tourists” and/ or passive memberships⁹⁴.

⁹⁴ The argument that British members would reject these ideas is not proved by a survey, but only assumed. On the contrary, the argument that overseas tourist can use the facilities of the NT only during a very short time of the year in contrast to their resident fellow members is more than plausible. Some kind of discount for non-residents staying only a few weeks in Britain would certainly attract more visitors, especially in the times of a strong pound. As the Survey 2000 shows for a lot of people the time to renew their membership is when they plan their next holiday in Britain. Furthermore, not only a few would like to support the NT continually, but at lower costs. The question is whether the NT should afford renouncing this commitment and funding by not offering a passive membership.

IX.9. Priorities and Immediate Measures

The first steps have already been taken by the Northumbria Marketing&Communications department. German brochures have been prepared and are to be distributed by the properties in this season starting in March. What is more, the Northumbria NT has got a special link on the website of the German travel magazine “Tours” with a connection to the home page of the NT.

Now the priorities of the **Northumbria NT** are

1. Creation of more links on the German Internet
2. Contacting German speaking staff and volunteers to be prepared for German inquiries as a result of the first link to the German Internet or even offering a German contact
3. Research on possibilities to change opening hours for the benefit of overseas/German visitors despite organisational and staff problems
4. Research on funding resources for marketing the NT in Germany
5. Informing the media about new activities and building up a local pride in this proactive and progressive organisation.

The headquarters:

1. Research on where the NT infrastructure fails concerning services for German members (unanswered letters, membership cards are sent over too late, NT Magazine are not delivered etc.) and start of remedial actions

2. Information about marketing activities in Northumbria within the organisation and in the “National Trust Magazine”
3. German website.

X. CONCLUSION

At the beginning of the new millennium the NT will hopefully turn into the “The ‘Waking’ Giant”, i.e. the portfolio remains static and the support is doubled (see p 8). To achieve this growth of support the following two strategies should be used⁹⁵: (1) the strategy of **market penetration**, which aims at getting a greater number of sales from its existing market by measures like reducing prices and/or enhancing promotion and (2) the strategy of **market development**, which keeps on caring for its current clients, but tries to enlarge the market at the same time⁹⁶. These strategies are best suited to the NT as they do not put at risk too much of its limited resources. The NT considers the reduction of prices with some suspicion, while the intensification of promotion on a national and international level is greeted with less reluctance. It is no question that above all a charity must keep its current members to secure its existence, but expanding its market at the same time - with due respect for its existing supporters - is still a profitable way to go. On a **national** level this means gaining a resident audience and membership that includes the complete spectrum of British society. But why not cross the national borders and intensify **international** marketing?

Naturally there are **problems** to solve: Great Britain is not one of the top holiday destinations for the German market, the brand “NT” is not especially well known on the Continent, the present exchange rate for sterling is unfavourable, the customer care for

⁹⁵ Adrian Sargeant, *Marketing Management for Nonprofit Organizations*, Oxford 1999, pp 90.

⁹⁶ Sargeant suggests two more strategies, but both are not useful for the NT. (a) The **service development** which improves and expands the offer of services, but often requires substantial investments. (b) The **diversification of the product** which is the riskiest solution because new products/services are offered to new markets with no experience.

members living in Germany is not beyond criticism, the region of Northumbria itself is not very well known as an attractive destination and last, but not least, the fact that the small Northumbria NT region tries to be forerunner does not make the whole project any easier.

However, there are always two sides to a story and the bright one looks very **promising** in our case.

(1) Germany provides the largest international NT membership and is a very reliable market.

(2) Northumbria with its wide range of environmental, historical and cultural attractions is an appropriate destination for international tourism. The varied mix of products can attract very different market segments.

(3) National and international tourism develops very fast in Northumbria and supports the local economy.

Even a limited budget for international marketing should not prevent the Northumbria NT from continuing its efforts to be noticed by the German market. To be successful the place (Northumbria and the NT itself) needs further advertising in Germany, the price (membership fees) should be discussed and promotion (Internet, guidebooks, media) must be intensified. However, Northumbria, like the rest of the NT, has got the **right product** (historic properties and beautiful scenery), which has got the potential to attract more German visitors and potential members. To be competitive in future it will be important to build up a **vertically structured** offer⁹⁷: The booking of ferry crossings, flights, rented cars, accommodation and itineraries for interesting trips through Northumbria combined with price reductions for members should all be in one hand, in the hands of the NT.

⁹⁷ Cp.: VIII.6.: all inclusive offers

All in all, this paper has shown that marketing the NT in Germany is not an unrealistic dream, but a wise marketing idea that will help the NT to increase its income and membership. The Northumbria NT will be able to pursue its marketing activities in the German marketplace quite independently from the headquarters. However, in the long run gaining the support of the whole NT for this project would, of course, lead to better results. In any case it makes much sense to expand the market research on the German market, especially on the members living in Germany because this market segment differs from the average German tourist travelling to Britain (see VIII.). Doing this with a very limited budget may lead to limited success, while having some financial leeway will lead to well-founded marketing and thus be beneficial to the NT region of Northumbria and the whole of the NT.

May the “Giant” wake up quickly

and stretch its legs out across the Channel!