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The Enhancement of Place's Specific Heritage. Place Marketing and Corporate Museums.

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Abstract

The paper moves from the growing importance recognized to the enhancement of resources that define the identity of a place for the creation of multidimensional and multi-stakeholder value. In this framework, it aims to: i) illustrate how corporate museums can make a significant contribution to these purposes, acting as effective tools of place marketing; ii) identify the different types of value that can be potentially created from the enhancement of place's specific resources made by corporate museums for the benefit of the local socio-economic system; iii) present, as empirical evidence of the research hypothesis, an Italian successful case, example of best practice, and describe the strengths and weaknesses to focus the main innovations for optimum performance.

To this end, as theoretical framework, by one side will be recalled the main paradigms developed in the economic management field about place marketing and destination management, with particular attention to the role of strategic place's specific resources; on the other side will be remembered the new notions of culture, cultural heritage and territory.

We then illustrate the potential contribution which can be made for these purposes by museums and in particular from those corporate, focusing on the different types of value that can be generated by them for the local system, especially when integrated in place marketing actions implemented in a systemic dimension. We will finally present the results of the empirical survey on: i) the place marketing implemented in Piedmont leveraging on subject of wine, as factor that maximally identifies the area; ii) the Visitor Centre Martini & Rossi, corporate museum located in Piedmont and very integrated into these strategies.

Keywords: identity of a place, place's specific heritage, place marketing, corporate museums.

1 – Introduction

The paper addresses the issue of corporate museums as new tools for the enhancement of the place's specific cultural heritage and, therefore, as particularly effective tools for place marketing, in addition to those included in the literature for the creation of value for the socio-economic local fabric.

The interest on this subject is justified by:

- the increasing spread of corporate museums in recent years in Italy too, also as a result of the affirmation of the anthropological notions of culture and "cultural good" and the recognition of the company as an even cultural actor;
- the importance given in recent decades to place marketing strategies and policies, also in view of

the increasing competition among local contexts.

- the lack of economic managerial studies dedicated to this aspect, primarily due to the youth of the phenomenon of corporate museums.

In particular, the study seeks to explain why these museums should be recognized as important tools for creating multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder value and why, therefore, they cannot be neglected in the literature dedicated to place marketing nor by those who have the statutory responsibility for effective policies of this kind. This has the dual purpose of contributing to the progress of studies on the subject, as well as to provide practical suggestions to managers of corporate museums and public decision makers; these last, in fact, are responsible for the implementation in a systemic perspective of place marketing actions, shared by all the local actors starting with those cultural.

Basic assumption of the research hypothesis is that the identification and illustration to the public (i.e. putting into value) of the place's specific resources accumulated over the centuries in an area, made with particular effectiveness by corporate museums, reverberates throughout the economic and civil local system, bringing a considerable support for policies to promote the area. In order to achieve all the possible benefits, however, significant innovations are needed, particularly with regard to product policies, processes and especially in the organizational structure. To justify this hypothesis will be recalled the main theoretical assumptions produced in the field of business management on the destination management and the place marketing, as well as the concepts of culture, cultural heritage and territory that have spread since the 60s of the last century. Will then be presented the phenomenon of corporate museums, focusing on its potential for the enhancement of place's specific resources and the value creation for the local context.

As empirical support, is illustrated the survey conducted on:

- place marketing implemented in Piedmont¹ and based on the theme of wine production, to which contribute in an integrated manner many local actors;
- Visitor Centre Martini & Rossi, corporate museum belonging to a leading Piedmontese wine industry. The Centre leverages on the enhancement of place's specific resources to differentiate, for competitive purposes, the company's offer, and, to this end, it integrates into regional place marketing strategies.

The survey aims to identify the strengths of the solutions in place and to propose, on the basis of the weaknesses detected, some innovations (even incremental) that optimize value creation.

2 – Place marketing and place's specific cultural resources

For some time the competition between geographical areas has been increasing significantly (Baker, Cameron, 2008) and local marketing policies (Ashworth et al., 2008; Cercola et al., 2010; Caroli, 2011) have become necessary for many purposes, including the attraction of tourism, the promotion of local products and the lure of inward investment.

Are therefore crucial the strategies that aim to identify and to promote resources that define the identity which qualifies and differentiates a local area (Löw, 2001; Kalandides, 2012). This is in full agree-

ment with the increasing tendency to base models of economic development on a *value-driven* or *value-based* approach to planning, that is oriented to the identification and evaluation of all the values that make up the significance of the sites, as a condition that determines the choice of policies, strategies and interventions (Valentino, Misiani, 2004, pp. 22-23; Raagmaa, 2002; Denicolai et al., 2010).

In this context a remarkable account is taken of the peculiarities relating to cultural heritage and tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958; Polany, Prosch, 1975). In fact they have been recognized as factors of production of strategic importance² (Grossi, Meneguzzo, 2002; Grandinetti, Moretti, 2004; Valentino, Misiani, 2004, Throsby, 2005; De Carlo, Dubini, 2010), becoming essential at this stage of the knowledge economy to support local development (Valdani, Ancarani, 2000; Santos, Doz e Williamson, 2004; Santagata, 2006). In the era of globalisation, in fact, made in Italy products are welcomed in the global market not for the cultural heritage of consumers, but for the cultural heritage transmitted to products in the production process (Segre, 2005, p. 77; Bérard, Marchenay, 2006).

Underlying everything are the new systemic conceptions of culture, cultural heritage and territory (local area), which have spread in Italy since the 60s of the last century.

The notion of culture has in fact taken on an anthropological connotation to decline in relation to the geographical and historical context of reference, approaching the concept of civilization. Those, culture indicates the "integrated whole", that is the systemic set of tangible and intangible resources - as well as the resulting products - that a community has to respond to the needs warned by it in a given time and place. The cultural value of an object has been therefore recognized in its content of information regarding the common conditions of life of communities over the centuries, and it has then been extended to products of common use and even industrial.

At the same time the concept of territory, exceeded the neoclassical economic analysis vision anchored to the pure geometrical and physical appear-

² *“Il patrimonio culturale si candida sempre più a divenire un'importante risorsa dei processi di sviluppo locale, e anzi a rappresentare una delle possibili leve della strategia di sviluppo e di coesione socio-economica”* (Valentino, Misiani, 2004, p. 22). *“Un passo verso il riconoscimento del ruolo svolto dalla cultura nell'influenzare la performance economica nei piccoli e nei grandi gruppi e, più in particolare, nel sottolineare e condizionare i processi di crescita economica e il cambiamento dei paesi in via di sviluppo sta gradualmente diventando più evidente”* (Throsby, 2005, p. 110).

¹ Piedmont is a region of high economic and cultural weight, located in northern Italy.

ance³, has come to merge into a concept of the *environment* as a systemic set of ecological and therefore also social and cultural values economically relevant, that is *milieu*. Finally, it was identified with the *landscape*, understood as visible form, testimony of the history, as area of accumulation of cultural resources generated by the secular succession of civilization. In this new perspective the territory means an organized social, economic and civil reality, located in a specific area and identified by material and immaterial components (existing and potentially feasible) and their mutual relations.

Each area is therefore characterised by a peculiar vocation (*place personality*), which determines its identity (*place identity*). The communication of the latter to actual and potential users determines the formation in their mind of *place image*; this has the task of engender in the user's consciousness, in order to purchase, a substantial agreement between its needs and the tangible and intangible contents of the local area offer. The place image, then, is so important to be a real strategic resource: as intangible asset locally rooted, highly characterizing and intended to collect trust, it is in fact now, as a result of post-Fordist evolution of production and marketing, an essential driver of maintainable competitive advantage and an essential factor for proper placement of a local area and its products (Rullani, 1997; Kavaratzis, 2005; Jaffe, Nebenzahl, 2006; Ahnolt, 2009).

2.1 – Destination management

The tourist strand of place marketing, *de facto* coincident with destination management (Pechlaner, Weiermair, 2000; Nordin, Svensson, 2007; Martini, Ejarque, 2008; Pencarelli, Splendiani, 2008; Ashworth, Kavaratzis, 2010; Franch, 2010; Minguzzi, Presenza, 2010; Della Corte, Sciarrelli, 2012), has as its main objective the increase in the tourist number and the length of their stay, as well as the improvement of their distribution in terms of time and space for the sustainable development of tourism (Ritchie, Crouch, 2005; Gössling et al., 2009; Bramwell, Lane, 2011; Hall, 2011; Buckley, 2012).

A tourism product effective in this regard must take into account that destination choices are increasingly addressed to the research of unique and authentic experiences, the discovery of new places outside of the traditional and mass circuits, and, therefore, to a complex product-composite offer: museums, historic sites, exhibitions, nature, local

products (Pencarelli, 2005, p. 6; Quattrociochi, Montella MM, 2013). Essential therefore appears a correct definition of the "theme of the experience". Levering on communication and organisation of local resources in a organisationally widespread and culturally holistic perspective (Martini, 2005; Bonel *et al.*, 2005), consistent with the systemic-vital approach (Golinelli, 2011; Barile, 2011), you will have to create a set of information capable of positioning the local area in the minds of tourists and operators (Pencarelli, 2005, p. 156). To enhance an area and achieve all the possible value is, therefore, crucial to implement place marketing actions in a systemic perspective (Aiello, Donvito, 2007; Kalandides, 2012; Montella MM, 2012). Such actions, which are shared by all the local actors starting with the cultural (Le Blanc, 2010), would indeed allow to organize and present local heritage in an integrated way (Sciarrelli, 2007; Ashworth, Kavaratzis, 2007; Scott et al., 2008; Müller, 2012).

A tourism product optimally designed in this sense and provided in a manner able to get the full satisfaction of the users (that is having well understood their needs as well as personal resources they have in order to take advantage of it) will determine multiple benefits for the entire local socio-economic fabric that are bound to increase steadily, generating a virtuous economic cycle. In fact tourists, especially where the tourism product is the result of numerous intersections amongst the different local production chains (tourism, "museums & culture", food and wine, crafts, etc.), will also appreciate local handicraft products, wine and food industry and even industrial products, as expression of place's culture. In addition, once returned home, these potentially will still require those products, with a considerable benefit for the local economy and for local and national branding (Becattini, 1998; Iraldo, 2002). For more, tourists will become particularly effective witnesses of the excellence of the communicated image, "word of mouth" agents which constitute an essential lever to build a reputation and, therefore, to support the promotion of local areas looking for positioning.

3 – Place marketing and corporate museums

For the success of place marketing strategies (and, above all, destination management) based on the distinctive heritage of place's specific resources, a priority role belongs to museums of every types.

A satisfying experience of places, whose tangible and intangible resources have been distributed through the centuries with a rationality which is not always immediately apparent after a long time, requires, in fact, to be facilitated by means of organised

³ As is known, the territory was considered for the purpose of localization economies and, thus, as a source of constraints and natural resources that can be used in production processes, as well as space of possible agglomeration dynamics and market.

routes. These are articulated through hinges, which optimally lend themselves to be the Italian museums for their own capillary diffusion and the local character (Cerquetti, 2007; Tohmo, 2004). Also, cultural values (considered in a broad anthropological sense) embedded in material objects and intangible manifestation (from monuments to customs and traditions; from landscape form to cult places; etc.) must be explained fully and in a comprehensible manner for all the different visitor's clusters, and especially for those coming from afar. This, precisely, can be done by local museums that act as gateways to the local area, as effective tools for their interpretation, like the beginning of a story that continues in the city and local area. In this direction are also recommendations of Italian Ministerial Decrees, which caution that the local area-territory as "widespread museum" can be enjoyed and respected only if it finds in the museums a place of interpretation and communication of its values⁴; similarly, the *International Cultural Tourism Charter: Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance* (ICOMOS, Paris 1999) pursues the strengthening of cultural heritage management systems in order to make the heritage's significance accessible to users.

Among the museums, those corporate (Nissley, Casey, 2002; Marano *et al.*, 2004; Montemaggi, Severino, 2007; Montella MM, 2008, 2010, 2012 a, b)⁵ are particularly effective. In fact, these very endeavor to enhance the place's specific resources, since it is of primary importance for the achievement of:

- corporate marketing purposes (external and internal: brand promotion, spreading the image and strengthening of reputation, acquisition of consent and legitimacy, loyalty, ...; Montella MM, 2008 e 2010, 2013c)⁶

⁴ Italian Ministerial Decree 10 May 2001: *Atto di indirizzo sui criteri tecnico-scientifici e sugli standard di funzionamento e sviluppo dei musei* (art. 150, comma 6, D.L. n. 112/98).

⁵ Despite the absence of a uniquely shared definition, corporate museums can be defined as cultural institutions available to the public, which preserve, exhibit and, therefore, enhance material testimonies (objects and/or documents) relating to past and present activity of a company (still active or inactive), an industrial district or a productive tradition closely rooted in an area (Montella MM, 2010).

⁶ In accordance with the recognition of the territory as a strategic factor for the differentiation of company products and, therefore, for the acquisition of competitive advantages, these museums highlight the distinctive quality (material and symbolic) of company products arising from cultural heritage (tacit knowledge and skills) stratified in the place of pro-

- social and place marketing purposes (eg strengthening of community identity, promotion and dissemination of the place image; Montella, 2012a,b).

The corporate marketing purpose has priority for those museums that were founded by a company in order to generate benefits for its own advantage ("properly corporate museums"⁷).

The social and place marketing purposes, though important for these museums too, are the primary purposes of those corporate museums which are mostly publicly owned, and expressly dedicated to:

- preserve the memory of companies often no longer extant and document a piece of social and economic history of the local or national culture ("industrial museums");
- document and disseminate local products and industrial activities traditionally rooted in a specific area ("museums of local productive tradition"), without reference to a specific company.

Corporate museums, therefore, communicating to a wide and heterogeneous audience the place's specific resources, determine tangible and intangible usefulness for a wide range of subjects, mostly local, including not only social bodies and public administrations, but also economic actors, commencing with enterprises tied to tourism. This value, waiting for quantitative measurements hampered by predictable difficulties (Scandizzo, 1988; Andreoli *et al.*, 1998; Donato, 2008), can be segmented into two main types (figure 1).

The first type of value is that immaterial⁸. Wanting only to record some aspects, must be considered that the museum carries out an informative and educational function in regards to visitors. From this it is permissible to expect the increase in the user's personal capital (individual- private utility, generated from the direct use of museum services), as well as,

duction, as well as from cultural capital accrued by the company in the course of its history and forwarded to the local area.

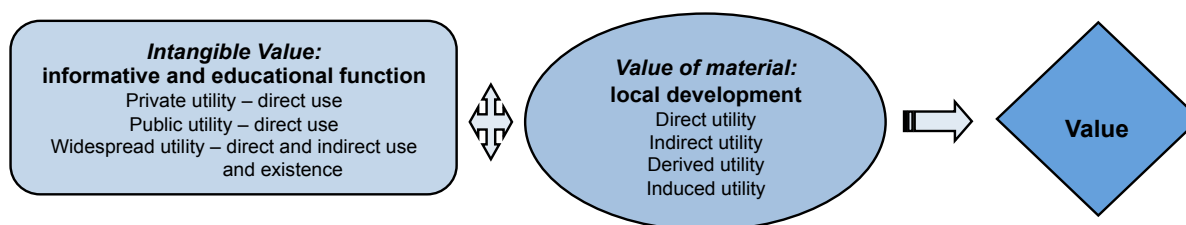
⁷ The three categories in which it is possible to segment corporate museums (properly corporate museums; industrial museums; museums of local productive tradition) have been identified and duly argued in the author's doctoral thesis.

⁸ The distinction between tangible and intangible utility concerns the starting point of fruition of museum heritage. In fact, in the season of the knowledge economy, the intangible usefulness (recognized in growth of knowledge of individuals and communities) is seen as an essential economic value, especially as success factor capable of determining in medium to long term the achievement of also monetary benefits.

even more when visitors are resident, the strengthening of the local community identity⁹ (public utility, generated from the direct use of museum services). In addition, making explicit the local culture's value embedded in the exhibits, the museum enhances the whole area (socially widespread utility, generated from direct and indirect use of the museum, as well as from its simple existence value).

In this way the museum also offers support to place marketing and place branding policies, contributing significantly to local development (Valdani, Ancarani, 2000; Bellini, 2000, 2011). In this case the value created is, ultimately, of material type, as identifiable in the increase of income for the whole economic-productive local system.

Fig. 1 – Value created by corporate museums for



the local contest

Furthermore, the museums' economic impact on the local area is generally segmented (Solima, 2004) into four main categories: direct, indirect, induced and derived. Direct utilities are apparent in the flow of wealth that the museum transfers to its staff. Indirect utilities relate to the benefits generated for external suppliers of products and services. Derivative impacts concern, on the one hand, multiplicative effects related to consumption processes stimulated by the additional remuneration generated by the museum, triggering the Keynesian multiplier and reverberating its positive effects throughout the local economy; on the other hand, these utilities are related to tax effects due to return to the public sector (through direct taxes on employees' wages and indirect consumer-related) of part of the wealth produced by the company-museum.

But even more important are the effects induced in the categories of *free* and *cheap riders*, constituted by those entities outside the museum's direct market, namely that don't contribute directly to the museum's

⁹ To this effect also contributes the appreciation (favored by the museum) of local cultural heritage by tourists. In fact, this makes people more aware and proud of the quality of their living environment and their cultural roots and causes them to rediscover uses, customs and traditions of their communities and to take care of this heritage inherited from past generations.

maintenance nor use it directly, but which arise benefits due to the increased local demand for goods and services, generated by his presence. In particular, to benefit from transfers of economic resource are the producers of goods with a local brand, and tourism operators.

4 – Empirical survey

4.1 – Object, goals and methodology

As empirical example of the contribution of corporate museums (especially when involved in integrated actions of place marketing and, thus, shared by multiple local players) to the creation of value for the local area through the enhancement of the place's specific

resource, were analyzed:

- place marketing implemented in Piedmont, region of northern Italy of high economic and cultural weight; this is based on the theme of wine production and in an integrated way involves many and different local players;
- Martini & Rossi Visitor Centre, corporate museum belonging to a leading Piedmontese wine industry; it leverages on the enhancement of place's specific resources to differentiate the company's products for competitive purposes and, to this end, it integrates into regional place marketing strategies.

The survey, qualitative and exploratory purposes (Edmondson, McManus, 2007), aims to identify the strengths of the solutions implemented and to propose, on the basis of the weaknesses detected, innovations, even incremental, that optimize value creation (Eisenhardt, Graebner, 2007).

Ended in 2012, it was divided into two phases. The first aims to outline the framework of place marketing implemented in Piedmont (strategies, issues on which leverages, policies, actors and actions) using indirect sources of various kinds, in print and especially web, including:

- a) websites and databases of:
 - public entities (municipalities, provinces and regions);
 - local and national organizations in the tourism sector (e.g. Chamber of Commerce,

Tourism Promotion Agencies, Tourist information and reception (IAT), Pro Loco)

- Institutions, trade associations, coordination structures: e.g.
www.italianodoc.com; www.atasti.it;
www.tigulliovino.it;
Università di Scienze Gastronomiche;
Slow food;
www.piemonteagri.it;
www.movimentoturismovino.it;
www.turismoinlanga.it; www.cittadelvino.it;
www.castellaribergaglio.it; www.gowinet.it;
www.salonedelvino.com; www.dujador.it;
www.agenziadipollenzo.com;

b) regional regulations.

The second phase investigates the general aspects of Martini & Rossi Visitor Centre, the offer delivered in 2011 (focusing on the enhancement of place's specific resources) and possible synergies with other local players. To this end, in addition to visit the building, the manager was interviewed on the basis of a semi-structured questionnaire. This was developed taking into account the standards set by the aforementioned DM 10/05/2001 and tested by scholars and experts in the field; it is divided into 8 sections: i) location and purpose; ii) background; iii) articulation; iv) legal status, governance and management; v) staff; vi) services; vii) users; viii) objectives, strategies and actions. There is a prevalence of closed questions (52%), in the form of verbal Likert-type scales (not at all, little, enough, very, very much; 35%), dichotomies (yes / no; 13%) and multiple choice (4%).

4.2 – Place marketing in Piedmont

The place marketing of Piedmont, one of the leader regions of Italian oenology, is a very interesting case study regarding all the aspects considered in the literature and quickly illustrated in the previous pages.

Based on the wine offer, this:

- leverages on the enhancement of tangible and intangible assets that make up the "significance" of the sites;
- is based on an asset correctly identified compared to the actual weight that it plays in the economy¹⁰ and in socio-cultural context of

Piedmont; moreover, this asset is characterised by a systemic notion of the tourist product (consistent with the approach based on the economy of experience) and of the cultural identity of places;

- it involves several local actors, starting with the museums and, in particular, from those corporate.

In particular, the wine is a place's specific product almost *par excellence*, and, especially when high-quality, it has full title of being part of the cultural heritage (Golinelli, 2012). In fact, its production processes incorporate an enormous heritage of tacit knowledge gained locally; in addition, the wine integrates in a particular manner with stories, traditions, rituals, values, vocabularies, landscapes, art of each geographical area. All this gives it to a great extent those cultural and symbolic meanings that, as seen, play an important role in current consumption choices.

Thermalizing the identity and image of Piedmont in a holistic perspective, leveraging on wine production in order to achieve a clear and strong positioning in relation to the existing and potential demand, as well as the offer (and in particular all the local players who for various reasons contribute to this), is, of course, a very persuasive choice. Piedmont, in fact, has always been recognized as an area of excellence at world level in this sector, especially thanks to some well-known appellations of origin such as Barolo, Barbaresco, Barbera, Gavi, Asti Spumante, Brachetto, Moscato d'Asti. The wine is therefore a primary source of value for this region, able to generate a significant economic-occupational prompt, to serve as a driving force for a wide range of other local quality products, as well as to attract substantial tourism flows.

To promote this wide range of high quality and traditional wine products, making explicit how much better to the broader demand its intrinsic organoleptic and intangible qualities, a wide range of attractions have been implemented. This includes wineries and "wine shops", a large number of museums and similar other facilities, as well as cellars open to visitors, tourist itineraries, events and research centers.

are IGT, compared respectively to 73, 330 and 118 recognised in Italy (equal to 13,7%, 13,64% and 2,54%). Even more interesting is that the value of wine production constitutes more than 10% of regional agricultural GDP (Istat and Federdoc), and that DOCG/DOC wine production constitutes about 65% of the regional total (25% approx. DOCG and 40% approx. DOC), compared to 35% approx. of table wine and the absence of IGT (Ismea), further evidence of the Piedmont's strong propensity for quality production.

¹⁰ For example, the analysis of Piedmont's wine sector for 2010 shows highly significant data compared to the Italian scene. This region, in fact, is high on the national rankings in terms of volume of wine produced, export rate and number of certified wines. According to the Ismea report, in Piedmont in late November there are 58 certified wines (56 in Tuscany and 50 in Veneto) compared to 251 in Italy (equal to 11,13%); of these, 10 are DOCG, 45 are DOC and 3

Important, in particular, is the creation of "Wine Districts"¹¹ and, inside them, the role assigned to the "Wine Routes" and the "Cathedrals of Wine". The wine routes¹² aim at the integrated promotion of the area, combining wine, festivals, fairs, enterprises, museums, farms, restaurants, villas and estates. The cathedrals of wine constitute a network distributed over much of the region¹³, including about ten wineries and more than twenty among "Wine Shops"¹⁴ and communal cellars, which are also home to small museums, restaurants, cultural events and festivals.

The events are also numerous¹⁵, as *Vinum* in Alba; the international fair of selected wines *Douja D'or* in Asti; the *Salone del Vino* in Turin, conference and exhibition for wine manufacturers and professionals; the festival of Barolo wine in Barolo; *In Vino Qualitas* in Novara, event to promote the noble wines of Novara Hill; *Calici di stelle* and *Cantine Aperte* offered in various locations.

The Pollenzo agency is also remarkable. The complex, a former Carlo Albertina farmhouse where already in 1833 experiments were conducted to improve the profitability of farming activities, has now become an international benchmark for food culture and food quality. Internally this houses the University of Gastronomic Science¹⁶, an elegant restaurant, a

four-star hotel and the "Banca del Vino", a sort of museum-archive of the best national wine production.

As for museums, it is not surprising to find that Piedmont has the largest number of those which are dedicated to wine and cultural issues connected to it, and that they have been established on the initiative of enterprises and local authorities¹⁷. Currently there are more than twenty. These are spread over the entire region, but more numerous, as is natural, in areas of the oldest winemaking tradition and with higher production volumes, such as Asti (48%), Cuneo (23%), Torino (19%) e Alessandria¹⁸ (10%).

These museums, like most of the other promotional tools, aim to put in value the characteristics of different varieties of Piedmont's typical wines and production processes peculiar to each. This also to motivate sales prices of this famous brand product, intended for high-end consumption, that cannot be compared with those for wines of wide consumption and other beverages that can accompany a meal. To this end, these firstly insist on the morphological characteristics of places of production. These, being mostly hilly, require high processing costs in the face of necessarily contained production volumes, but determine at the same time a high quality. It is also de-

¹¹ Wine Districts, where numerous wine-related activities are developed (tourism, food and wine, enhancement of traditional cultures, landscape protection, etc.), are located one north (District of Canavese, Coste della Sesia, Colline Novaresi) and one south (District of Langhe, Roero and Monferrato).

¹² The seven Wine Roads officially entered in the regional list are those of: i) Alto Monferrato; ii) Artesana; iii) Colli Tortonesi; iv) Monferrato Astigliano; v) Barolo and Grandi Vini di Langa; vi) i Vini Torinesi; vii) la Val Tiglione.

¹³ The network includes 135 municipal councils, that is one third of those who have vineyards.

¹⁴ These were created by the Piedmont Regional Law No. 37/80.

¹⁵ The events, as we know, are initiatives able to enhance the development potential of the area, contributing significantly to the strengthening of its identity and image, and therefore its promotion. as well as to the realization of an integrated product-area (Caroli, 2011; Cercola et al., 2010; Iasevoli, 2013).

¹⁶ The University of Gastronomic Science was founded in 2003 and promoted by "Slow Food" with the collaboration of the regional administrations of Emilia-Romagna and Piedmont. It is a privately run university, legally recognised, which acts as a centre for international training and research, at the service of those who work for renewed agriculture, the maintenance of biodiversity, an organic relationship

between gastronomy and agricultural science (www.agenziadipollenzo.com).

¹⁷ Are to report at least the following. i) In the province of Asti: the "Casa dell'Asti", the "Museo Gancia e Cantine Storiche", the Museo della "Distilleria Bocchino" and "Cantine Storiche Contratto" (Canelli); the "Museo della Civiltà Contadina della Bassa Langa e dell'Alto Monferrato" (Castagnole Lanze); the "Museo Storico della Vite e del Vino" (Momberecelli); the "Museo delle arti e mestieri d'un tempo" (Cisterna d'Asti); the "Museo Bersano delle contadinerie e stampe antiche sul vino" (Nizza Monferrato); the "Museo della civiltà contadina" (Castelnuovo Calcea); the permanent exhibition of Italian labels "I Caratteri del Vino" (Rocchetta Tanaro). ii) In the province of Cuneo: the "Francesco Cinzano & CIA - Archivi Storici e Mostra Permanente *Glass Collection*" (Santa Vittoria d'Alba); the "Museo Ratti dei Vini Alba" (La Morra); the museum of the Regional Wine Cellar (Grinzane Cavour); the "Museo Etnografico-Enologico del Castello Falletti" (Barolo); the "Ecomuseo dei Terrazzamenti e della Vite" (Cortemilia). iii) In the province of Turin: the "Visitor Centre Martini & Rossi" (Pessione of Chieri); the "Museo dell'Artigianato Vitivinicolo" (Prarostino); the "Museo delle vecchie tradizioni" (Adenzeno); the "Museo del Gusto" (Frossasco). iv) In the province of Alexandria: the "Gaviteca" (Gavi); the "Museo della Cultura Popolare e Contadina" (Carrega Ligure).

¹⁸ The three provinces of Cuneo, Asti and Alessandria cover, in fact, over 90% of the regional vineyards.

terminated by the specific locally accumulated skills, that characterize the entire production process: the selection and care of the land and vines, the stages of harvesting, dosage and fermentation, to bottling. The *milieu*, therefore, differentiates the offer for all these many reasons, as well as for the strong and distinctive symbolic connotations that customs, traditions and landscape give the products.

This attitude is particularly evident not only in museums of traditional kind¹⁹, but, of course, in eco-museums and especially in corporate museums.

4.3 – The Martini & Rossi Visitor Centre

The Martini & Rossi Visitor Centre was established close to the Chieri-Pessione facility (Turin), as a modern tool for the company's heritage communication. It offers a guided tours that start in the cellars of the original eighteenth-century villa, home since 1864 of the first facilities of the company and place where in 1961 the "Museo Martini di Storia dell'Enologia" [Martini Museum of Oenology History] was established. This illustrates the process of wine-making with more than 600 exhibits ranging from the seventh century BC to today. Then there is the Gallery "Mondo Martini - Viaggio nell'unicità di uno stile" [Martini World - Journey in the uniqueness of a style], which was opened in 2005 to illustrate the evolution of the brand from its origins to today, as well as the company history in relation to the contemporary economic, political and social events (i.e. corporate values, local roots of the company and social benefits determined from this). For this purpose the gallery uses historical products, audio-visual, photographic and printed materials of the era, including an extensive collection of advertising posters.

The tour continues with the Historical Company Archives, inaugurated in 2005, and a video room dedicated to today's business reality. Finally, there is provided an aperitif on the Martini terrace and a visit to the Bacardi-Martini Store & bookshop, which offers both corporate products and a wide range of Martini branded items (gadgets, clothing, bar tools, etc.), as well as texts concerning the two museums and the success of the Martini Racing Team.

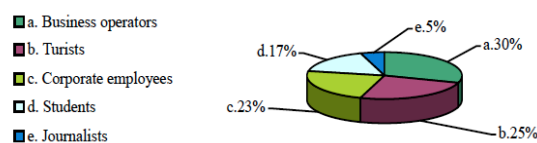
¹⁹ Noteworthy, for example, are: i) the "Museo Bersano delle contadinerie e stampe antiche sul vino" in Nizza Monferrato, which includes agricultural tools and objects of daily use in the area, prints, paintings and old menus, and organises shows and cultural evenings; ii) the "Casa dell'Asti" [House of Asti], the headquarters of the Consortium of Asti Spumante, which has a rich collection of tools for the production of sparkling wine, antique prints, photographs and posters.

The Visitor Centre has no legal personality and is an operating unit of Martini & Rossi S.p.A., directly managed by the Public Relations Office. The staff consists entirely of corporate employees and is composed of the manager and two clerks²⁰. Open free to the public with guaranteed opening times (48h/week) and on request, the Visitor Centre is equipped with essential tools for information and guidance and it's accessible to wheelchairs.

There is a wide range of core services in regards to enhancement²¹, as attested by the well-finished exhibition design and the accurate information kits, as well as by the realization of the Center itself as a result of the extension of the offer made in 2005²². Other relevant services are the audio-guide, the projection of audiovisuals dedicated to the current enterprise situation, the brochure, the guide and the catalogue of exhibits, as well as the opportunity to access the Corporate Historical Archives. In addition, the Centre organises exhibitions and events, has meeting rooms, spaces for other cultural activities and also a website with documentary material online. Among the services normally classified as additional, but which have assumed a considerable importance, there are merchandising and bookshop.

The audience, which reaches 6,000 visitors a year, is made up by business operators (30%), tourists (25%), corporate employees (23%), students (17%) and journalists (5%). There is no measurement for customer satisfaction.

Fig.2 – Main clusters of users of Visitor Centre Martini & Rossi (2011)



The Center was founded as an additional communication tool available to the company to enhance the culture of wine (Martini Museum of Oenology

²⁰ Of these employees, one is assigned to front office, the coordination of events and the maintenance, and the other is in charge of store and bookshop (purchase and sale of materials).

²¹ As in corporate museums in general, the range of core services appears quite low in regards to preservation.

²² As already mentioned, fifty years after the establishment of the Museum of the History of Enology Martini were realized the World Martini Gallery, the Historical Company Archives, the store & bookshop and video room, which came to constitute the new complex.

History) and the corporate brand (World Martini Gallery). As a result of such communication it is expected, with the goal of external marketing, the retention and expansion of corporate customers and, therefore, the strengthening of corporate positioning.

The Centre is also an important tool to illustrate the local roots of the brand and the mutual advantages that such roots have generated over time for both the local context and the enterprise. To this end, during the visit is explained, also with the aid of fixed informative equipment and audio-visual projections, the added value embedded in the industrial output, consisting in tacit knowledge and, therefore, in the abilities matured over the centuries in the reference milieu; at the same time the Centre shows the contribution of company's activities to the tangible and intangible development of local community, emphasizing the strong protection policy carried out by the company to employees already in the past²³. In addition, in order to strengthening the relationships between the company and the institutions and other organizations primarily local, it participates in socio-economic and cultural events promoted by public and private parties, even offering their own spaces.

Furthermore, to communicate the full range of value especially of the Martini brand, namely the quality both materials (physical and technical nature: composition, manufacturing techniques, organoleptic qualities and of use, etc.) and intangible (cultural and symbolic value), in 2010 was created the *Experience room*. Here, multimedia tools and interactive allow the visitors not only to learn about the products, but to live, in obedience to the paradigms of experiential marketing, an interesting, absorbing and fun experience. This facilitates the reception of messages and the formation of a lasting memory (Ricotta, 2004), thus increasing behavioural and mental "brand loyalty" in a perspective of life time value (Costabile, 2001; Bernstein, 2005)²⁴.

In addition, the Centre bears witness to the sensitivity of Martini & Rossi with respect to issues related

to CSR²⁵, illustrating in special section of "Mondo Martini" some of the specific merits of the company, such as investment in culture (in addition to the Centre, even music, art exhibitions and literature) and entry into the world of sport, both as sponsors and as protagonists (Martini Racing).

Considerable, finally, is the attention paid by the Centre to customer satisfaction and relationship marketing, with particular regard to policies of product segmentation and its quantitative and qualitative suitability in regards to interests, expectations and endowment of personal capital of the main clusters of users. The Centre, in fact, offers two possible itinerary: one educational, dedicated to the past and the knowledge (the illustration in the permanent exhibition of the history of wine and the company); the other for entertainment (the fun in the Experience room). Additionally it shows great care in differentiating from time to time the explanation given during the tour.

4.4 – Results

The place marketing developed in Piedmont relies on a place's specific asset properly identified, without artificially emphasise and extrapolate a too specific component from the systemic set which constitutes the local identity. This erroneous attitude, which occurred in other experiences, threatens to distort the perception of the area and create a false image of this, that outshines other important resources. This could compromise the credibility of the place's image and, therefore, the achievement of consensus and trust.

The wine, in fact, is a topic that does not reduce the amplitude of the historical and natural identity of the area; also it transmits communication in a organisationally widespread and culturally holistic perspective, consistent with the systemic-vital approach. This is because it is a theme that runs through all the historical phases and intersects all the tangible and intangible components that characterize the "spirit of place" and its particular vocation, identity and image, resulting in an effective placement of the territory and most of its products. In this way you accept the well-known theories of Resources-Based View, Competence-Based Strategies and Knowledge Management,

²³ To take advantage of the contribution of the peculiarities of the milieu (understood as a systemic set of ecological and properly cultural values of the local area: Dansero, 1998; Iraldo, 2002) to the realisation of industrial output, the company carries out in collaboration with the University of Turin special studies, beginning whit those relating to the methods of the cultivation of vines and winemaking processes.

²⁴ This intention, of which the public museums have to make an extremely prudent use in order not to derogate from their mission-orientated duty, is in fact perfectly compatible with the market-orientated mission of a corporate museum.

²⁵ The company has a special space in its website dedicated to these issues (in particular: self-regulation and codes of responsibilities, social organisations, programs for resellers, education and safe driving); it also pursues initiatives for its employees (kindergarten, summer camps for children, health insurance) and cultural activities, as well as implements a strong communication activities concerning the proper use of alcohol and driving safety.

in the awareness that an area can't be planned, like any other industrial product, on the basis of demand.

For the success of a place marketing so configured, it is also very functional the integration, observed in the case of Piedmont, of many local actors.

Among these, corporate museums, such as the Visitor Centre Martini & Rossi, have a primary role. First, the Center places great importance to the strengthening of relations with the institutions and other local subject involved in local marketing, having realized that the enhancement of the context has become in the era of *glocalism* a significant driver of competitive advantage, an essential component of social budgets of companies as well as their internal marketing. Thus, according to the mentioned anthropological and systemic concepts of cultural good and territory, in the Centre are explained the reasons of utilities that have determined the realization of wine products and their various characteristics, as well as the deep ties between the exhibits and the landscape, understood as area of accumulation of cultural resources generated over time.

Moreover the Centre, in compliance with its corporate mission, caters to the generality of the potential demand more than public museums normally do, trying to effectively communicate to visitors the place's specific features embedded into products.

Despite a generally positive picture, the survey shows the opportunity to give course to meaningful innovations, mostly incremental, of the solutions adopted so far mainly by the Visitor Centre, in order to better integrate into place marketing activities. Highly relevant, in particular, would be to further develop the different applications of so-called "museum-territory" strategy²⁶ (Montella M., 2003; Dragoni, 2005), by providing exhibition installations and information services that encourage visitors to explore the tangible and intangible cultural heritage widespread in the city and in the surrounding places. This would allow to grasp the real competitive advantage

²⁶ The "museum-territory" strategy, theorised mainly for traditional historical-artistic and archaeological public museums, is articulated in those of: i) "museum-compensation", which is to compensate the links between the objects collected in a museum and the physical and historical context of their origin, re-contextualising them within the dynamics of real life of which they were part; ii) of "museum- hinge of route", for which each museum acts as a service station of a large set of local itineraries; iii) the "museum-square", consisting in the provision of welcome services and information that encourage visitors to explore the tangible and intangible cultural heritage widespread in the city and in the surrounding areas; iv) the "museum-network", for which each museum presents to visitors those nearby and the best paths to reach them.

of Italy, consisting in the seamless spatial continuity of the historical evidence of culture. So the Visitor Centre would act even more as a gateway to the local area, reconstructing and explaining its history, traditions, natural environment and intangible resources.

All this would not create, however, all the possible value without the establishment of a planned network and extended to cultural places of each type and ownership and even intersected with the tourism industry and other local supply chains (Montella MM, 2013b)²⁷. Such a network would be indeed strategic for the implementation in a systems perspective of integrated place marketing action, able to achieve the greatest possible value for the local area and for the single actors who insist there.

5. Conclusion

The study seems to offer a contribution to the conceptual systematization of some important themes that emerged from some years also in Italy, as well as relevant managerial implications, revealing the existence of some gaps of strategic importance. In fact, the empirical investigation shows delays due to the narrow vision of the company as well as of public decision makers in order to benefit that the planning and the implementation of place marketing actions, shared by many local actors, would lead to the local socio-economic fabric.

In fact companies (starting with the Martini & Rossi), although have realized that the enhancement of the context has become in the era of *glocalism* a significant driver of competitive advantages and that the integration with the actors involved in local place marketing could lead to extremely important synergistic effects, still limit their effective participation in planned and extended network. Even more serious, however, is that the public administrators, who are institutionally responsible for the implementation of an effective place marketing for social and economic development, have not yet fully understood the value that a network extended to all the museums (including corporate) and all cultural and productive local actors would lead to local development. It is, presumably, in addition to a lack of a long-term vision, of the effects reported in the literature to the Agency Theory as applicable to the public administration. The time and effort required for setting up of such networks normally exceed, in fact, the time allowed for public ad-

²⁷ Among other things, for focusing a particular aspect and in itself rather marginal, consider the promotional effectiveness of windows, sampling services and stores dedicated to wine placed at bookshop of other types of museums and cultural places, starting with those with the highest number of tourists, such as, for example, "Venaria Reale".

ministrators and are, thus, scarcely productive for them.

In this situation, an essential local organization in support of effective governance and long-term is apparent in the ex-bank Foundations. These are required by law to respond to priority needs of local areas, working in close collaboration with the local system for purposes of social utility and the promotion of economic development, and having the opportunity to take direct action, to set up their own foundations and enterprises, to participate (also in position of control) to foundation or companies operating in the relevant sectors, to stipulate conventions and arrangements with public or private entities, to provide funding.

Concerning the limits of this paper, due to the impossibility of exhausting on a single occasion such a broad subject, for the moment it was decided to conduct and qualitative analysis focused on a case of best practice on the Italian scene. The intention is to open up to other studies of considerable implication for the business world and in the social sphere.

Among other things, it will be possible to: i) extend the number of cases of analysis and complete the qualitative research with quantitative surveys; ii) try to quantify the value that can be created by corporate museums acting in synergy with the reference area; iii) focus on the intersection between neighboring supply chains.

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