An instrument to communicate social services in (regional) branding

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From regional branding to:
- Certifying enterprises instead of products
- Qualifying social services of estates

Two case studies
- Het Groene Woud (region "The Green Forest")
- Project ‘Estates in 3D!’

Developing the instrument
Results
Lessons learned
Regional branding and certifying products

Certifying regional products, production methods and services
Can we certify enterprises instead of products?

Certifying enterprises based on their contributions to the quality of the region

Case study 1: Het Groene Woud ("the green forest")

- Very attractive region in an urbanised area
- Regional brand
  - active platform of regional stakeholders
  - public and private partners work together
  - cooperative association of 50 enterprises and farms
  - Sustainability criteria for activities
  - In search of a certification scheme for farmers to join the regional brand
Case study 1: Het Groene Woud ("the green forest")

- Platform approached:
  - Applied Plant Research (PPO-AGV) and
  - private consultancy service ‘Bureau Praedium’
- Certification scheme for enterprises
- What do these enterprises contribute to the qualities of the region?
- Focus: sustainability & social services
- Transparent, simple, self-evaluation
- Inspiration for other regional brands?

Development of the instrument

- An inventory of regional values (> 400 key words)
- Clustering
- Matching with themes from regional policy agendas
- Focussing on sustainability & social services
Themes under 3 domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Planet</th>
<th>Profit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearances &amp; Cultural history</td>
<td>Nature &amp; Landscape</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship &amp; Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community building</td>
<td></td>
<td>Customer satisfaction &amp; Hospitality</td>
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Regional Values (some examples)

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<tr>
<th>People</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local associations</td>
<td>Flora and fauna</td>
<td>Regional economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villages</td>
<td>Hedges, tree rows</td>
<td>Short chains</td>
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<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Quietness</td>
<td>Small businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious heritage</td>
<td>Scenery</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrarian heritage</td>
<td>Hiking &amp; biking trails</td>
<td>Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architectural style</td>
<td>Region-specific</td>
<td>Organizational skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Innovations</td>
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From themes to questionnaires

- Per theme 25 – 40 questions on actual achievements of enterprises (visible and verifiable facts and figures)
- “Yes” or “No” as an answer, “yes” → points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Examples of questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural History</td>
<td>• Is your farm or one of its buildings on a municipal list of historical or cultural heritage? y/n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>• Is part of your farm assigned and managed as nature reserve or ecological area? y/n</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>• How many visitors and clients does your enterprise receive yearly?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Less than 1000 per year                  y/n</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- 1000 – 5000 per year                      y/n</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- etcetera ...                                y/n</td>
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Results

- Output in a radar diagram with relative scores

Initiates communication and discussions!
Testing and improving

- Testing on 10 enterprises in ‘Het Groene Woud’

Differences and short-commings

From certifying enterprises to qualifying estates in their social services
From certifying enterprises to qualifying estates in their social services

Qualifying estates in their social services for the region

Case study: “Estates in 3D” (project)

- Platform of 4 different estates in the Netherlands
  - struggling with urbanisation
  - regulations and legislation
  - “to innovate to preserve”
- Seeking new roles and activities,
  in response to public needs and demands
Project ‘Estates in 3D!’

Goals for the instrument for estates

- **Awareness**
- **Showing social services**
- **Communication with authorities**
- **Support and freedom**
- **Innovations**
Development of the instrument

- Methods identical to ‘Het Groene Woud’ (small group!)
- An inventory of estates’ (traditional) values
- Clustering
- Matching with themes for social services & sustainability

Themes in ‘Het Groene Woud’ and for the Estates

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<td>Hospitality</td>
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Testing and improving

Results of the 4 Estates

- Differences and shortcomings
  - Initiates communication & discussions!

Lessons learned from 2 cases

- Especially useful as communication tool (in- & external)
- Part of a quality management programme?
- Both instruments far from finished:
  - Landless and small enterprises and estates?
  - Larger, more diverse samples to test and improve
  - Complex ideas reduced to visible facts and figures, ‘yes’ or ‘no’
  - Flexible and region specific; however:
    - How to compare regions and brands?
  - Involve more stakeholders (citizens, NGO’s regional authorities)
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New approach that meets its goals

We very much invite other groups with comparable approaches to discuss, improve and cooperate!

Thank you for your attention

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