ACCESS2MOUNTAIN

Sustainable Mobility and Tourism in Sensitive Areas of the
Alps and the Carpathians:

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY GESÄUSE

WP 6 | Act. 6.1

FINAL VERSION
Nationalpark Gesäuse
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1   SUMMARY

This Communication Strategy within the EU-funded project ACCESS2MOUNTAIN deals with a sustainable mobility and tourism concept in the „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse" which consists of parts of the Gesäuse National Park and the Nature Park Eisenwurzen in northern Styria. Overall objective of the project ACCESS2MOUNTAIN is to create tools for a sustainable accessibility and connection to, between and in sensitive mountain regions, benefiting all (potential) users. Core output is a fully developed point-to-point mobility offer, a mobility platform, for the National Park Gesäuse and its surroundings in order to provide a full accessibility to the region for tourists, visitors and in the long run inhabitants.

This document has the main aim to offer a practice oriented communication guideline to implement the mentioned planned activities. The strategy follows some key principles:

- Communication as a process
- Participation of all partners and stakeholders
- Decentralization: the strategy is based on partners' ownership
- Partly informal character for inner regional perception of the project
- Cost-effectiveness

The main target groups for providing information are as a primary audience tourists arriving in the region and people who spend their free time in the region for recreation on day trips. The secondary audience is, in the long run, the inhabitants of the region who are in need of a transport service like elderly people or people without an own mean of transport.

Facing that target groups, some communication channels are described in this strategy: interpersonal communication, community events, print and visual media, utility media, a website and a magazine of the National Park.

Furthermore this communication strategy describes, in which way the main promotion materials could be realized within the existing budget frame:

- Print productions, such as fact sheet, posters, brochures, articles, press releases and others
- Presentation material for events and fairs, such as public presentations, meetings and events, fairs and press conferences
- Website and software tool to offer am modern booking and administration tool
- Social media and new technologies

The pilot project should be implemented during the year 2013, so the communication process has to be started at the beginning of the third quarter of 2012

2 BACKGROUND

The communication activities are generally already listed in the application of the overall project ACCESS2MOUNTAIN. The Project Management Plan lists all activities of the project, including the communication activities. The Communication plan of the overall project describes how the activities listed in the application and Project Management Plan should be performed.

This communication strategy is providing the tools and guidelines to realize these activities and should act as a manual for communication on level of ERDF PP2, National Park Gesäuse bringing together several work packages. Since this product is the first of its kind in Work Package 6 of the overall project, it serves as a manual for communication on a transnational level also for all other project partners and it serves as a reference for the "Transnational Communication Strategy".

The strategy was developed with input from the National Park Gesäuse, the involved stakeholders and relevant target group members. The process began with a literature review of relevant data and important data on the region was gathered at several meetings and discussions with the responsible persons of the client. The study was set up and will be adapted to the circumstances at a further stage of the project, according to the actual development of the project and includes guidelines for the concrete implementation.

3 PRINCIPLES

The following key principles underpin this communication strategy:

- Communication as a process: communication of results to and engagement with target audiences is an on-going process which must be done throughout project realisation
- Participation: all partners and stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of the strategy
- Decentralisation: the strategy is based on partners' ownership of the entire process to be achieved through devolved planning, implementation and evaluation of the strategy and activities
- Partly informal character for inner regional perception of the project
- Cost-effectiveness: communication activities must be cost-effective and reach as many audiences as possible. This will be achieved by prioritizing our target and user groups, and using low cost but high-impact methods

4 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE AREA

The project area „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse" consists of parts of the Gesäuse National Park and the Nature Park Eisenwurzen in northern Styria, also „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse" managed by the Gesäuse Tourist Association Austria. The area is shortly described in this chapter and shown on the following map.

The project area stretches across the National Park Gesäuse which covers parts of the municipal areas of Johnsbach, Weng, Landl and Sankt Gallen. The municipalities of Johnsbach and Weng make up the majority of the park area, covering 50% and 30%. Located in the mountainous Upper Styrian region, the 110 km² big National Park covers large parts of the Gesäuse range within the Ennstal Alps and the steep water gap of the Enns river between Admont and Hieflau. The National Park was established in 2002 as the most recent of the Austrian National Parks. The mountainous landscape with its highest mountain Hochtor (2,369 m) ranges over about 11,000 hectares.

Part of the project implementation area is also the Styrian Nature Park Eisenwurzen, which spans over the communities St. Gallen, Weissenbach an der Enns, Altenmarkt, Gams, Palfau, Landl as well as Wildalpen. The total area of the Nature Park area is 586 square kilometers, in altitude 406-2144 meters above sea level.

Figure 1: Project area (Source: http://www.eisenwurzen.com)
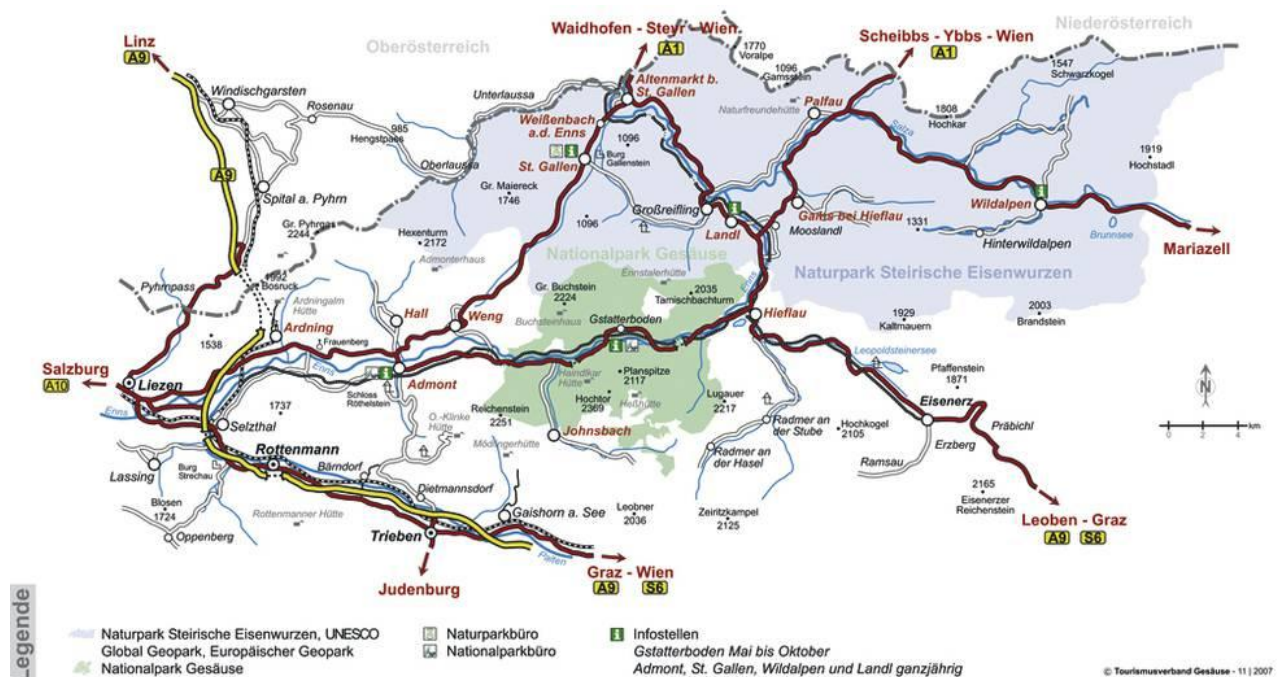
4.1 Tourism

The three westerly National Park municipalities Admont, Johnsbach and Weng in the Gesäuse, are part of the Gesäuse Tourist Association area „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse", with its information office in Admont. The tourism needs of Hieflau, the only municipality that is part of the Leoben district area, are also looked after by it.

Landl and St. Gallen are not only part of the National Park Region, they are also 'Nature Park municipalities' and along with five other places (Altenmarkt, Weissenbach, Gams bei Hieflau, Palfau, and Wildalpen) they are part of the Eisenwurzen Styrian Nature Park. Information for tourists is available from the local municipal offices and each of them has set up its own information desk.

The region „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse" records about 140 000 overnight stays per year, shown on the following map. Basically, the region is a summer destination, with a peak season from May to October. All in all the region consists of 3 thematic centers, also leading in overnight stays: rafting and adventure sports on the Salza (Palfau/Wildalpen), mountain climbing and hiking in the Gesäuse (the center is Johnsbach as mountaineering village community) and the cultural offer in Admont. Other attractions are the caves and rivers of the national and nature parks, the water park in St. Gallen, the Forest Museum Sylvanum, the Kläfferquelle and the Vienna Aqueduct Museum in Wildalpen.
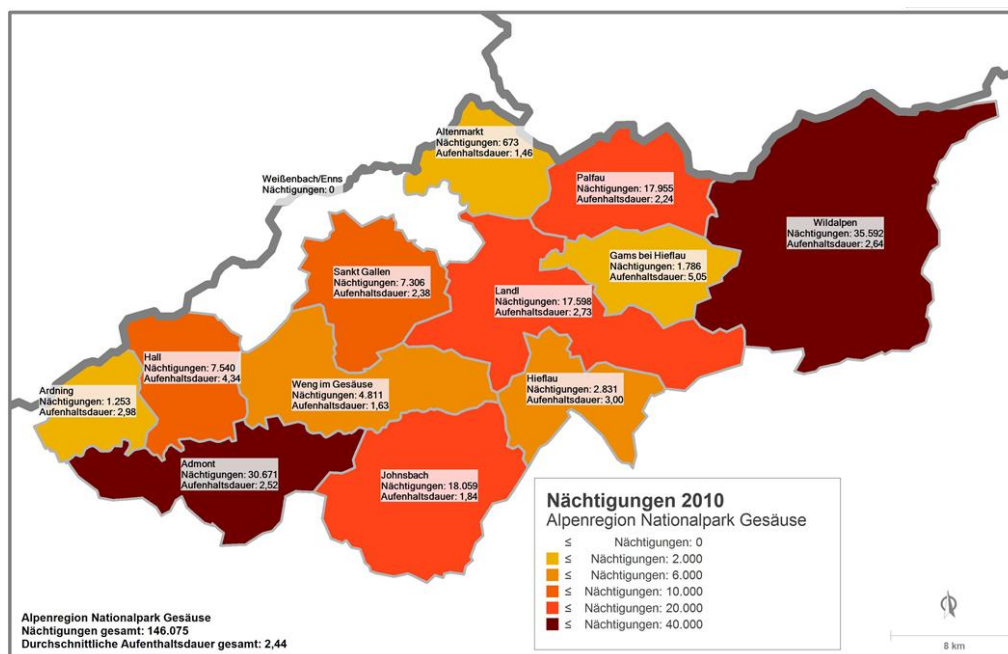
Figure 2: Overnight stays and duration of stay „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse" 2010

The cultural offer in Admont with the Benedictine monastery is a particular cultural jewel which houses the world's largest monastic library, a private Austrian museum rich in contrasts, the neo-Gothic monastery church and, since May 2004, a newly designed natural history museum and the natural offer in the National Park cover an immense target group.
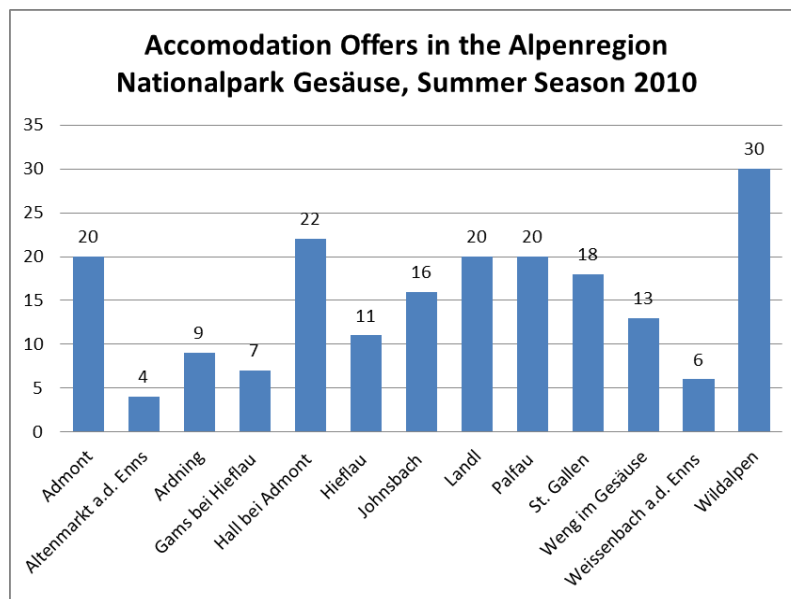
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Accomodation Offers in the Alpenregion Nationalpark Gesäuse, Summer Season 2010

Figure 3: Accomodation offers „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse" in the summer season 2010

In the summer season of 2010 the region had to offer 3548 beds in 196 accommodations. As shown on the deriving graph, the municipality of Wildalpen offers the greatest amount of accommodation in the region, due to its size and great adventure tourism offer.

The bed occupancy rate in the region varies around an average of 17,3% as shown on the following graph. Not only due to this fact a goal of the region has to be an increase of overnight stays and a great focus on new tourism offers.

Bed Occupancy Rate in %, Summer Season 2010
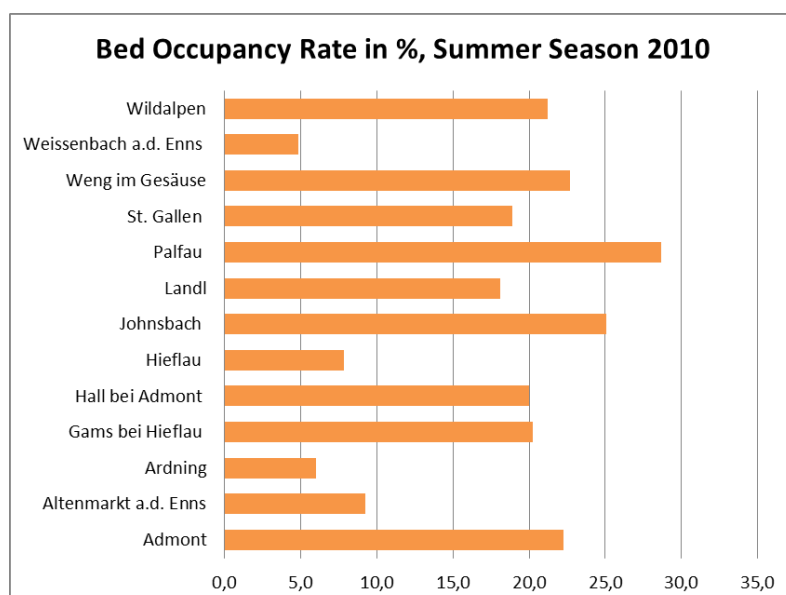
Figure 4: Bed Occupancy Rate im % „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse" in the summer season 2010

The nationalities visiting the project are are mainly Austrian and German. But also some other European nationalities are amongst the visitors. For this target group which has to cover a great distance it is very important to think of public transport possibilities and a green solution.

4.2 Accessibility and Traffic

The individual motorized travel and movement in the Alps, and particularly in a protected and sensitive area like the „Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse", is a significant environmental impact. Thus the creation of solutions for soft mobility in Tourism is one of the biggest challenges for such an area. The National park Gesäuse can be reached by environmentally friendly public transport. There are railway connections from Vienna, Linz and Graz stopping at Selzthal, Liezen, Ardning, Kleinreifling and Weißenbach an der Enns. Additionally there is a regional bus line.

Nevertheless, in the last year the region had to suffer a strong depletion of the regional connections (Graz, Salzburg and Linz). Just at the weekend one pair of trains runs from Amstetten to Gesäuse and back. Overall, the accessibility by public transport for the guests is very limited, it is easier to arrive there then to leave again and very difficult to plan for not local guests. Even for the local people the public transport system in the region is confusing and it is difficult to plan a travel. Mainly because there are different traffic suppliers and no overall connection or connected information platform. Thus the public transport system has a bad reputation amongst the locals which is a problem for future development. For guests it is even worse, because there is a major lack of information and possibilities.

Another problem, in addition to the time slots and frequencies, is the lacking accessibility of starting points for hikes and walks. This lack makes, next to regional busses, lines like the „Xeismobil" or the hiking taxi necessary. The accessibility by car is quite good, through the A9 that provides an easy link to the Graz and Linz. Also drivers coming from the Vienna area have a variety of possible routes to the National Park. These connections represent a burden for the area through individual leisure travel, which makes this project necessary for the region.

Public transport and mobility is a topic sufficiently sensitized in the Enns Valley in a negative coherence. Therefore a short collection of articles of the mood in the region concerning public transport is cited here shortly.

„ÖBB stellen den Personenverkehr ab 1. September ein. Passagiere werden dann mit Bussen transportiert, das Angebot soll ausgeweitet werden."

Ab dem Herbst wird im Gesäuse der regionale Personenverkehr auf der Schiene eingestellt und durch Busse ersetzt. Die Zahlen sind verheerend, wie auch Verkehrslandesrätin Kristina Edlinger-Ploder gestern im Gespräch mit der Kleinen Zeitung einräumte. Klar ist Edlingers Aussage auch zu einer Kostendeckung durch das Land: "Ich kann einfach nicht zwei Millionen Euro pro Jahr für eine Bahnverbindung zahlen, in der pro Zug fünf bis 25 Menschen sitzen. Das wäre nicht effizient.". So legte die Bahn bisher 220.000 Kilometer pro Jahr zurück, die künftigen Busverbindungen sollen auf 320.000 Kilometer ausgedehnt werden. Die Bahnverbindungen an Wochenenden und Feiertagen Richtung Wien bleiben aufrecht.

"Der Betriebsabgang beträgt im Gesäuse derzeit 2,2 Millionen Euro und nur 3,5 Prozent davon sind durch Einnahmen aus dem Fahrkartenverkauf gedeckt."

Resignierend klingt die Reaktion von Ludwig Wolf, Bürgermeister von Johnsbach. "Ich hab nichts anderes erwartet, aber von Landesseite war wohl auch nichts anders machbar." Wolf kritisiert das Verhalten der ÖBB: "Es fehlt an der Bereitschaft mit den Leuten zu kommunizieren. Dass die Bahn ideenlos arbeitet, ist gar keine Frage." So seien viele Straßen im Gesäuse gar nicht für den Busverkehr ausgerichtet. Außerdem müsste der Winterdienst entsprechend umgestellt werden.

„Die Einstellung des Personenverkehrs auf der Gesäusebahn sorgt nach wie vor für heftige Reaktionen und viel Kritik an Politik und ÖBB."

Die Aufregung um den Personenverkehr im Gesäuse reißt nicht ab. Die ÖBB hätten keinerlei Anstrengungen unternommen, um den Betrieb im Gesäuse effizienter zu gestalten und ein attraktives Angebot an Zugsverbindungen anzubieten.

"In den letzten Jahren wurde mit dem Xeismobil ein gutes und flexibles Rufbussystem eingerichtet, das den Eisenbahnverkehr durch das Gesäuse als Rückgrat benötigt. Wie soll dieses System jetzt weiterentwickelt werden?"

Kleine Zeitung, 02.07.2009, Gross U.: http://www.kleinezeitung.at/steiermark/liezen/2059914/index.do (Zugriff: 24.5.2012)

"Züge von und nach Linz und Wien wurden über Hieflau geführt, künftig ist in Weißenbach an der Enns Endstation." Fixiert wurde für das Gesäuse laut Bahn ein Kontingent von jährlich 320.000 Buskilometern.

Kleine Zeitung, 14.07.2009, Gross U.: http://www.kleinezeitung.at/steiermark/liezen/2080882/gesaeuse-buskonzept-sorgt-fuer-verwirrung.story (Zugriff: 24.5.2012)

„Ab Montag gibt es nur mehr Busverkehr. Die ÖBB argumentierten die Einstellung mit schlechter Auslastung und fehlender Wirtschaftlichkeit."

Letzter Tag der Gesäusebahn, ab Montag fährt auf der Strecke nur mehr der Güterverkehr und Ausflugszüge am Wochenende. Der Landtag hat sich gegen die Einstellung ausgesprochen, der SPÖ-Abgeordnete Ewald Persch aus dem Bezirk Liezen, Grüne, die KPÖ und FPÖ haben die Entscheidung der Bundesbahnen scharf kritisiert. Ebenso der Verein "Fahrgast", der von massiven Verschlechterungen für die Kunden, etwa durch deutlich längere Fahrzeiten und den Wegfall von Direktverbindungen spricht, auch würden Fahrten teurer werden. Erklärung: KPÖ-Vorsitzender Franz Stephan Parteder kontert: "Der Fahrgastrückgang ist auch eine Folge der Einstellung des Personenverkehrs zuerst auf der Präbichlbahn und dann auf der Strecke Hieflau-Eisenerz.

Kleine Zeitung, 05.09.2009, Gross U.:
http://www.kleinezeitung.at/steiermark/leoben/hieflau/2122357/letzter-tag-gesaeusebahn.story (Zugriff: 24.5.2012)

„Die drohende Einstellung weiterer Zugsverbindungen ruft Politiker des Bezirkes auf den Plan - Verkehr ist Thema der Regionalentwicklung."

Abgeordnete und Bürgermeister befürchten, dass den Eisenbahnverbindungen im Bezirk der Kahlschlag droht. Betroffen wäre das Ennstal auch von der Einstellung der Direktverbindung Graz-Linz, je ein Zug in der Früh und am Abend in beide Richtungen würde wegfallen. Die Bahn macht die Weiterführung von Zuzahlungen des Landes abhängig. Wenn das Angebot passt, sind auch die Fahrgäste da.

„Im Gesäuse seien die Fahrpläne immer unattraktiver geworden, bis schließlich die Kunden ausgeblieben seien, dann wird zugesperrt. Wir werden auf jeden Fall nicht tatenlos zuschauen, bis uns alle Züge weggespart wurden. Busse sind nicht immer die bessere Alternative."

Kleine Zeitung, 09.10.2009, Gross U.:
http://www.kleinezeitung.at/steiermark/liezen/stainach/2160704/hoechste-eisenbahn.story, (Zugriff: 24.5.2012)

„Das Mobilitätsprojekt "Xeismobil" wurde vor sechs Jahren als Vorzeigeinitiative in Sachen öffentlicher Verkehr und sanfter Tourismus bejubelt. Nach Einstellung der Gesäusebahn wird verhandelt. Beim Xeismobil hatten sich 16 Gemeinden der Bezirke Leoben und Liezen zusammengeschossen, um für Einheimische und Gäste ein attraktives Modell beim öffentlichen Verkehr zu schaffen."

Ziel war es, den öffentlichen Verkehr in der Region um den Erzberg und im Nationalpark Gesäuse zu forcieren. Und dieses Ziel hatte auch einen Namen: Xeismobil. Ein Projekt, das nicht nur von der EU großzügig unterstützt wurde, sondern auch "starke Partner" fand, wie etwa das Land Steiermark, den Bund, die ÖBB und den Verkehrsverbund. Als Vorbild galt damals das Bischofshofener Musterprojekt "Mobilko". Die Praxis sah so aus: Ein Fahrplan wurde geschaffen, und Fahrgäste, die ein im Fahrplan aufgelistetes Verkehrsmittel benutzen wollten, sagten per Telefon Bescheid, dass sie mitfahren würden. "Das hat sehr gut funktioniert, weil auch Gegenden wie Johnsbach oder die Kaiserau gut erschlossen waren", erklärt Projektleiter Markus Hauser. Im Jahr 2003 bezeichnete Werner Huber, damals noch FP-Gemeinderat und rühriger Verfechter des Xeismobil-Projektes, dass die Bahn das Rückgrat des Projektes sei und es auch ein Ziel sei, dadurch die Bahn zu erhalten. Das ist nicht gelungen.

Kleine Zeitung, 19.11.2009, Gross U.:
http://www.kleinezeitung.at/steiermark/liezen/weissenbach_bei_liezen/2208117/zittern-um-zukunft-des-projektes-xeismobil.story (Zugriff: 24.5.2012)

4.3   Demography

The National park Gesäuse has a low population density as compared with the entire federal state Styria. It is a rural region with a high amount of natural and cultural potentials. Although the region is located in a central point of Austria, it is a peripheral and structurally weak area amongst others because of the topographical position. A remarkable point is the steady decline in population since 1980. Population migrates steadily. A reason for that is certainly the slight proposal of jobs. In the following map (Statistik Austria) it is highly visible that the region is affected by an over aging of population. Most municipalities of the project area have a proportion of people aged 65 and more of more then 22,5%. This becomes a major problem for the area which also shows the need of a better developed public transport system.
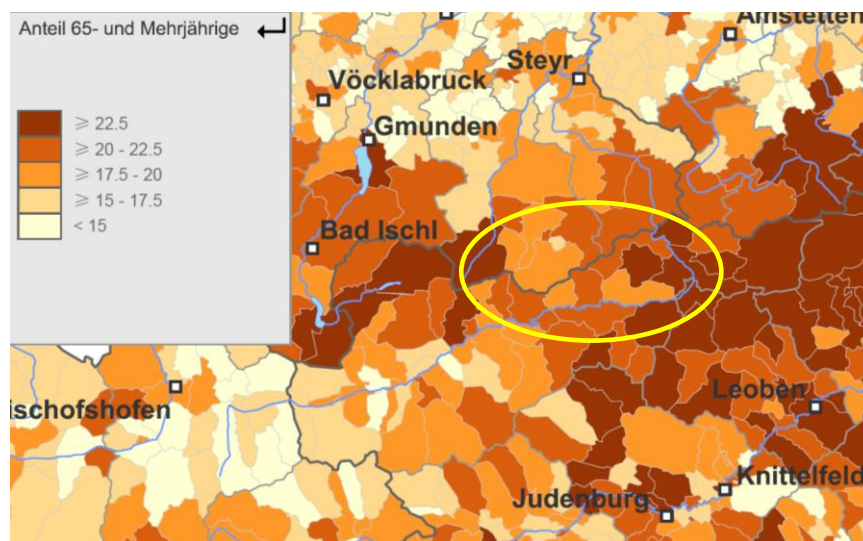

Figure 5: Proportion of 65 - year-old and more people per 1.1.2012 (Source: Statistik Austria Interactive Map, 24.05.2012)

5 STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 Stakeholder analysis

The first step has been to identify the most relevant stakeholders, nationally and locally. As the implementation of the project is going to happen on the regional level, the stakeholders on the supraregional level play a minor role in the analysis. Nevertheless, the supraregional stakeholders are mentioned here, this list is not exhaustive:

- Federal ministry of Environment and Traffic
- Styrian department of Traffic and Environment
- Alpine Associations
- Traffic suppliers like ÖBB, Verkehrsverbund and Erzbergbahn
- Steirische Eisenstraße, Project Observers

The focus was laid on the regional stakeholders who derive out of the projects aim including touristic, local political stakeholders and actors related to traffic and transportation in the project region. The main data was providet by the client. A basic finding of the present stakeholder analysis is there exists a lack of perception and commitment within the majority of the stakeholders in the region. The stakeholders want to be part of the process of developing new mobility solutions but flinch from taking responsibility for a proper project implementation. This is due to political or financial reasons. The project provides an invaluable opportunity to involve the community in identifying and prioritizing their needs and bring together different stakeholders to force communication and cooperation in the region.

5.2 Roles and Responsibilities

A row of (community based) organizations shall serve as major implementers or sales organizations/agents of the new mobility concept in the area. The client will assume overall planning, monitoring and implementation roles to ensure that the aims and objectives are met. The stakeholder analysis was carried out with the help of the client and is pictured in a well-arranged stakeholder map. The map has been aggregated from the stakeholder analysis to show which channels to reach with the stakeholders and how important they are (importance: white: minor important, grey: important, yellow: significant importance, light green: great influence, dark green: key players).
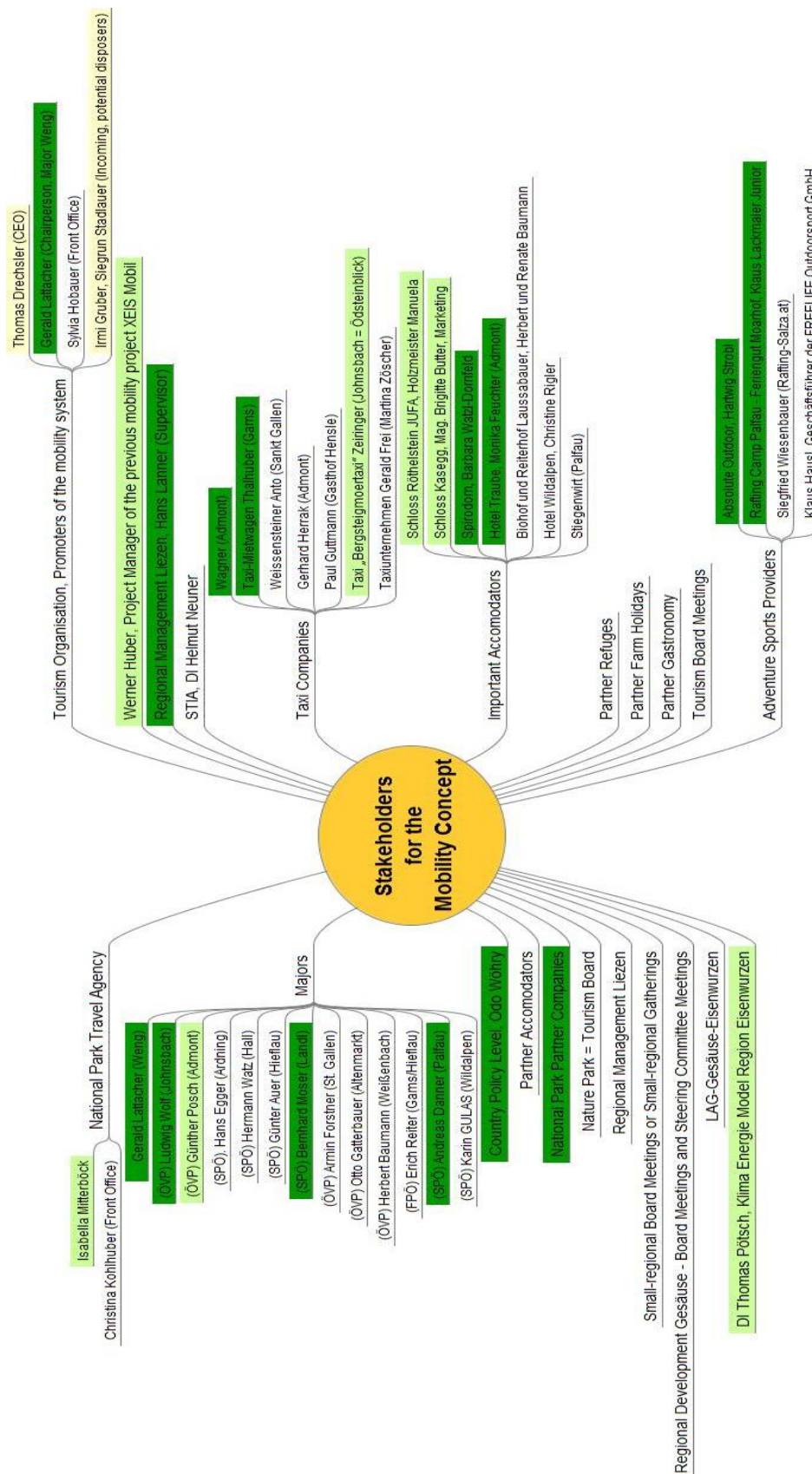
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Figure 6: Stakeholder Map

6 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives and the deriving measures are produced as a profile of several work packages of the project.

Overall project objective of the EU project: Sustainable accessibility and connection to, between and in sensitive mountain regions, benefiting all (potential) users.

Objective of the project to realize in the National Park Gesäuse and Nature Park Eisenwurzen: The aim is to create a fully developed point-to-point mobility offer, a mobility platform, for the national park Gesäuse and its surroundings in order to provide a full accessibility to the region for tourists, visitors and in the long run inhabitants.

6.1 Reasons why

An important goal for that project is that it will be successfully implemented in accordance with environmental, economic and social sustainability criteria. "Reasons why", respectively important factors for the implementation of the project are the following:

- It is the first mobility offer of that kind all over Austria with a total service concept for users and suppliers.
- Local ownership and regional value added for the project.
- Attractiveness of the tourist offer through better access to public transportation and mobility service.
- Canalization of traffic flow by using the mobility platform and website to bring tourists together on related routes at the same time (e.g. a newsletter service with actual daily offer packages in the region together with the taxi service).
- Ecological aspect, the reduction of the volume of traffic and the assurance of maximum road safety as well as traffic noise reduction.
- Acquisition of klima:aktiv subsidy.
- The social aspect, transport for less mobile people.
- Implementation of a cost-effective project through the contributions of partners and users.
- An outward image building showing modernity, mobility, nature and sustainability.
- Strengthen the brand of the National Park/Nature Park and implement a green image.
- Proactive linking of the core actors in the tourism sector.
- Simplification of the complex range of public transport offers.
- Creation of cost awareness among the guests and the locals, mobility costs an enormous amount of money.
- Creation of added value within the many day visitors (the Gesäuse region is very attractive for day visitors, but has a lack in overnight stays)
- Creation of a regional supply platform of products combined with mobility (products connected with tours or regional product lines).
- Minor employment effects.
- Cooperation beyond the mobility service as the importance to pull together gets more and more important.

6.2 Communication Objectives

The objectives of the mobility platform in terms of awareness rising, PR and spreading of information are multifaceted and tell what we want our communications to achieve.

- Increase the knowledge and awareness of the mobility topic in the region
- Spread the brand, develop a green brand
- Regularly inform audiences and users about the project and the mobility offers
- Inform regular visitors (through newsletters etc.)
- Get people to use the mobility platform
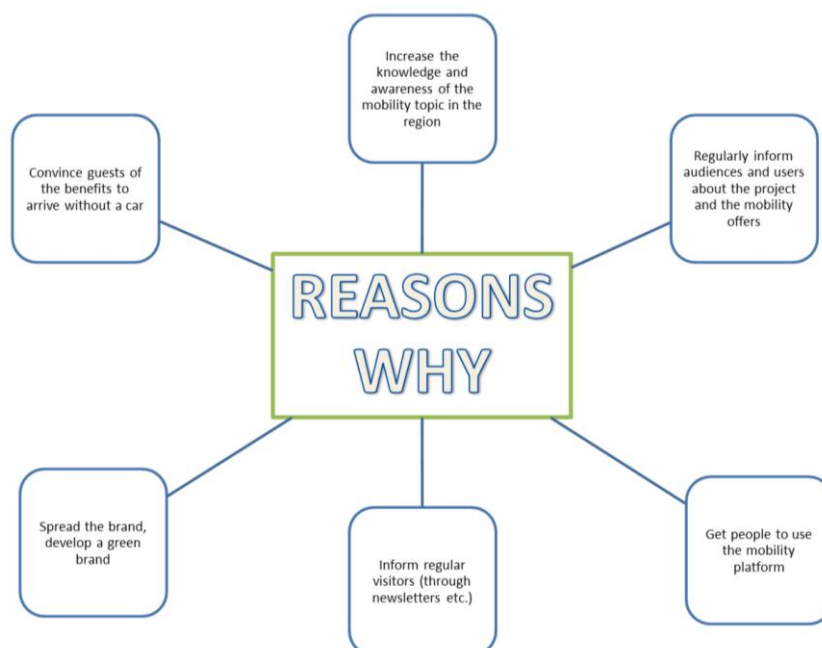- Convince guests of the benefits to arrive without a car

Figure 7: Communication Objectives Overview

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7 TARGET GROUPS AND USERS

It is essential to set out who is going to be the audience for the planned mobility project and what information that target group needs. The identification of the target group was carried out together with the client. Thus, the main target groups are the following:

7.1 Primary Audience

As a primary audience tourists arriving in the region by train or plane, respectively tourists who use public transport or tourists who could want to use it in the future. This target group is mainly arriving from urban areas like Graz or Vienna. The tourists stay at least over one night and thus need a transport service in the region in order to be able to enjoy all offers.

With 618 cars per 1,000 inhabitants, Burgenland has the highest grade of motorization of all states, followed by Lower Austria (612), Carinthia (591), Upper Austria (589) and Styria (568), Salzburg (527), Vorarlberg (512) and Tyrol (505). Vienna, at the beginning of the 1970s was still a leader, 2011 with 394 cars per 1,000 inhabitants it is in the last place, which is mainly due to the high availability of public transport in the capital. The fact is that people from Vienna are not as well motorized and need to use public transport and a good local offer and mobility network to be interested in spending their holidays there.

Also guests arriving by car who want to enjoy a stress less and flexible and mobile stay want to be able to enjoy also the culinary specialties of the region including alcohol consumption. Thus the mobility platform can act in several ways for different purposes covering a broad primary audience.

7.2 Secondary Audience

Secondary audience is, in the long run, the inhabitants of the region which are in need of a transport service like elderly people or people without an own mean of transport. Also the transport service can be used as a shuttle possibility after an event or mean of transport after alcohol consumption. An additional main target group is people who spend their free time in the region for recreation on day trips. The day-trip tourists spread the word in their regions and can possibly attract more overnight-stay guests.

Guests from potentially good arrival countries like the catchment area of Germany who come by plain, are not coming right now because there is no good public transport possibility except car hire. That problem can be solved by installing a good service for transport in the region and promote that service across borders.

8 STRATEGY

Based on the basic ideas of Chapter 3 (Objectives of the mobility concept and establishment of the 4 target groups) core strategies for public relations have been formulated:

Attainability of the target groups:

- Regular customer information through e.g. a website, leaflets, actors
- Exhibitions
- Public relations, promotions
- Events and offers within the project period

Modernity, new media:

- Establishment of Apps
- Integration of mobility into the touristic offers
- Web site
- Social Networks

Regional integration:

- Events, Awareness Raising
- Local media relations
- Training and information evenings, motivation, inform the informer
- Information brochures for stakeholders

Image building

- Logo design (ecological, modern, intelligent)
- CI/CD, systematics of the placement of logos, etc.
- Use of materials of stake holders, recognition

8.1 Available Budget

In this section a budget table was made in order to estimate the available resources for the development of the mobility concept. Due to **researched standard market rates including estimated personnel costs** the budgetary items for a successful and sustainable implementation of the project are the following:

Budget Overview	
Website-Development	€ 24.000,- – 28.500,-
Software-Development	€ 32.000,- – 36.000,-
5 Tablet PC´s	€ 5.500,- - 7.000,-
15 Magnet boards	€ 4.800,- - 7.000,-
Equipment for the drivers	€ 3.800,- - 6.000,-
Presentation Materials	€ 9.000,- - 12.000,-
Stakeholder events	€ 6.800,- 9.400,-
Awareness Raising	€ 18.000,- - 22.500,-

Table 1: Budget overview of the planned activities

8.2 Timeline

What is planned to achieve by the end of the project period is shown in the following timeline, beginning with the actual preparation phase and continuing with a pilot implementation phase in the summer of 2013:

- Preparation Phase 2012
- First stage - pilot project from July to September 2013
- Visitors of the region (particularly overnight guests)
- Leisure mobility for locals
- Second stage - normal operation from May to October 2014
- Third stage - operating as a municipal bus concept in 2015
- Year-round operation
- Residents of the region

The project shall be self-supporting after the project-period, the basic requirements for that are set within the ETZ project A2M concerning organization and equipment. The running operation in funded by klima:aktiv Mobil with 50%, the remaining sum is financed by the local touristic actors and pre-financed by the communities.

9   INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION MEASURES

9.1   Communication Channels and Tools

As indicated in the table below and further detailed in the following sections, different communication channels will be used in order to ensure a broad dissemination of the project results, not only inside the consortium during the project lifetime, but mainly to the outside interested stakeholders and broader to the public.

The dissemination of information will address each of the audience types by using as appropriate the following communication methods and channels. A wide range of channels has been selected that will optimize the communication activities. The communication of key messages using different kinds of media will serve to raise awareness, promote knowledge extend reach and create a supportive social environment for behavior change.

Print Productions/Publications
Fact sheet
Posters
Brochures
Articles, press releases and other publications
Presentation Material for Events and Fairs
Presentations, meetings and events
Events
External meetings
Fairs
Website
Software Tool
Social Media and new Technologies

Table 2: Media overview

Given the communication context of the project areas, it is very unlikely that extensive use of radio or TV will create needed impact particularly during the initial stages of the project. To achieve cost effective strategies it is recommended that initial use of media be focused on print, visual, utility and traditional media (billboards, leaflets, etc.). As the product becomes familiar in the project area, other media like radio spots could be incorporated into the mass media strategy. All mass media should be developed in the local language; message content should be clear and focus on the key messages. In a later stage it will be interesting to develop a strategy how to reach mass media for the core areas Graz and Vienna. A first suggestion would be to inquire at the local TV-stations to get cheap and good short stories about the region.

These are some of the key relevant communication channels identified:

- **Interpersonal communication**: Key messages will be disseminated during one on one counseling sessions, group discussions, workshops, community events, social club gatherings and community meetings.
- **Community Events:** such as traditional festivals, exhibitions, community fairs and meetings. They are cost effective, yet powerful channels for communicating key messages and mobilizing the community to use the new mobility platform.
- **Print media**: print materials with key messages will include colorful leaflets, booklets, posters and stickers or fact sheets. They are very valuable in reinforcing key messages.
- **Visual media**: includes photographs, murals, billboards, signs and point of sale displays with key messages. They can be used in a variety of situations to create awareness, aid discussion and reinforce messages.
- **Utility media**: refers to products like t-shirts, caps or badges. This media channel provides opportunities for repetitive messaging and can be effectively used to promote dialogue and to support community outreach activities such as drama, parades and events.
- **Web media**: online marketing, website, online newspaper and social web. The Project website with a connection to the website of the mobility platform.

9.2 Public Relation, Visual Identity

Visual identity tools aim at creating and maintaining the project's visual identity and supporting the visibility of the project. The aim is to create a regional track (name, logo, imagery) in addition to the A2M corporate identity and corporate design with a wide brand recognition with the following contents:

- Project acronym
- Logo
- Message
- Tagline
- Graphical Identity

It was tried to give a first insight in a possible corporate identity and corporate design for the mobility platform including a color concept, possible names and logo variations. This is only a collection of ideas but shall help to get the concept in the right direction.

The main demand for the design is to create a modern, simple, fresh and easily rememberable new appearance with a connection to mobility, nature and movement. An initial conceptual discussion of the topic led to the following conclusions.

9.2.1 The Style

Taxis and public transport characterize the typical image of many cities in the world through their appearance (e.g. black - London, yellow - New York City). They make it easier for tourists to quickly find their destination in the right vehicle, they are also cherished objects of identification for locals. Based on these findings the graphic design and corporate design of the mobility platform should be developed.

- The design should be modern and flashy,
- but still integrated into the rural appearance,

- and it has to be agreed with the Corporate Design of the national park.
- Tit has to be seen as "cool" and fun to use the service again.

In summary, a cross-over style is proposed: e.g. modern colors with rustic typography or vice versa.

9.2.2   Elements of corporate identity

The word-picture brand

In addition to a graphical element which reflects the keywords mobility, sustainability, nature, mountains, movement, etc., it is also important to develop a word mark, which stands for the transport. A catchy, easily pronounceable word would be desirable.

Car Design

Taxis are moving in the public domain and can be also understood as moving "billboards" by appropriate design. Besides its own brand so they can spread other relevant messages for the region through billboards.

Outfit and other presentation and promotional materials

The design should also be developed consistently in other presentation materials that are used - from clothing to give aways.

Starting with the creation of the corporate design immediately, this is the first step which has to be done.

Take care of the upper mentioned suggestions concerning style and corporate identity.

9.3 Presentation Material and Print Productions

9.4 Presentation Material and Print Productions

For a targeted presentation of the mobility platform, it is necessary to develop a design specification with changeable content for various presentation materials. It is advised to produce the material in an early stage of the project to guarantee its availability at any time of the project. Suitable for both a booth and a stand for events would be the following combination:

- Spider wall
- Bar
- Beach flags
- A-Boards

Some of these tools can be easily used with a changeable content and can be adapted according to the actual purpose. Optional to that, rollups and leaflet dispensers can be used. The corporate design, which has to be developed, will be used on all presentation materials and print productions.

9.4.1 Budget calculation

Based on an available budget of € 9.000,- - 12.000,- for presentation materials altogether, we act on the assumption that around € 5.000,- will be needed for development of the materials and **around € 2.000,- will be needed** for buying the equipment.

Recommended equipment (printing costs):

Beach flag outdoor (x3)	€ 170,- - 250,-	
Spider Wall + Bar	€ 550,- - 1050,-	
Roll-Up (x2)	€ 120,- - 200,-	
A-Board	€ 90,- - 120,-	
Sum	**€ 930 – 1.500,-**	**€ 1.390,- - 2.200,-**

Suggested company: **Konorg Media Holding GmbH,** http://www.display-discount.biz, price examples:

Faltset ECOLINE	min. € 1.048,-

Produktvarianten und Preise:

Faltdisplay 2x3 (B 210 cm x 236 cm) inkl. Thekenkoffer und Digitaldruck	849 EURO
Faltdisplay 3x3 (B 255 cm x 236 cm) inkl. Thekenkoffer und Digitaldruck	999 EURO
Faltdisplay 4x3 (B 300 cm x 236 cm) inkl. Thekenkoffer und Digitaldruck	1099 EURO
Deckelplatte Holzdekor mit Transporttasche und zwei Halogenstrahler	+199 EURO
Aufpreis für Monitorständer je Stk (Ohne Monitor)	+699 EURO
Deckelplatte für Thekenkoffer gegen Aufpreis in verschiedenen Farben erhältlich (schwarz,weiß,buche,verschiedene Holzdekore) inkl. Transporttasche	+59 EURO

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Rollups	3 pieces Rollups € 49,-/ x 3 = € 147,-
Beach flags	2 items „M" € 105,-/ x 2 = € 210,-
Aluminum Kundenstopper	2 items € 89,-/ x 2 € 178,-

Table 3: Price examples for presentation material

Promotional gifts are used to achieve different effects in recipients of promotional products. Optimally, giveaways fulfill several functions at once. Important above all, the recognition effect of the advertising company or organization should be increased. Optimal giveaways for the mobility project can be the following:

1. Wooden Pens

   Price example (www.giveaways.at): 1000 pens, € 0,740/piece incl. print = **€ 740,49**

Figure 8: Wooden Pen Giveaway

2. Flashlight

   Price example (www.giveaways.at): 500 flashlights, € 0,918/piece incl. print = **€ 459,12**

Figure 9: Flashlight Giveaway

3. Buttons

   Price example (www.buttons.at): 1000 Buttons, € 0,36/piece = **€ 364,20**

Endpreis 25mm			Endpreis 37mm		
10 Stk.	à 0,48 €	4,80 €	10 Stk.	à 0,48 €	4,80
30 Stk.	à 0,48 €	14,40 €	30 Stk.	à 0,48 €	14,40
50 Stk.	à 0,48 €	24,00 €	50 Stk.	à 0,48 €	24,00
100 Stk.	à 0,48 €	48,00 €	100 Stk.	à 0,48 €	48,00
300 Stk.	à 0,39 €	117,72 €	300 Stk.	à 0,41 €	124,20
500 Stk.	à 0,37 €	185,70 €	500 Stk.	à 0,39 €	196,20
750 Stk.	à 0,35 €	262,36 €	750 Stk.	à 0,39 €	288,90
1.000 Stk.	à 0,32 €	321,60 €	1.000 Stk.	à 0,36 €	364,20
2.000 Stk.	à 0,30 €	600,00 €	2.000 Stk.	à 0,34 €	686,40
3.000 Stk.	à 0,28 €	835,20 €	3.000 Stk.	à 0,33 €	986,40
4.000 Stk.	à 0,26 €	1.027,20 €	4.000 Stk.	à 0,31 €	1.257,60
5.000 Stk.	à 0,24 €	1.212,00 €	5.000 Stk.	à 0,29 €	1.428,00

4. Further material could be: Fridge Magnets, Lip Balm, USB Sticks, Caps;

9.4.2 Changeable Material

A very important tool for the presentation material is the changeability of contents, so that the material can be used over a long term and for different events, fairs or marketing activities. The suggestion how to provide that flexible system is to make the wall system adaptable in form of one exchangeable blanks or

parts. That blanks with different contents can then be reordered on demand. The price for a digital print for such a blank can vary in a broad price span, depending on the material and size of the spider wall. The content for that changeable material can be elaborated in course of the project and should be in the newly developed corporate design.

After the creation of a corporate identity, order the presentation material as suggested above in the table and consider the importance of outdoor proven and exchangeable material.

Decide for a goodie to represent the specialty of the mobility offer, as the suggested flashlight with a logo on it.

9.5 Templates, Print Media, Events

Naturally a well elaborated marketing, especially in this case where the project has to promoted amongst locals and potential partners, has to contain templates for power point presentations, documents, A0 posters and leaflets for refuges. Naturally also print media have to be considered using the corporate design of the mobility platform.

A suggestion would be to be present on several events connected with mobility in the catchment area, in Graz and Vienna. Especially fairs with a tourism or green mobility topic will be interesting, dates starting from autumn.

Furthermore, partners to promote the mobility platform should be found. Travel offices or travel operators have to be contacted and convinced of the well elaborated touristic concept in close connection to green mobility offers. One example is cooperation with sport companies in Austria like Hervis, Intersport or Giga Sport. It would be recommended to get in touch with the marketing departments shortly after the project start.

- Set up templates, leaflets posters and other print material with the new corporate design
- Use events and fairs to promote the region and the service
- Get in touch with cooperation partners in the tourism of sports sector

9.6 Website

The website of the new mobility platform will be the central core of the product, informing interested customers but also the involved stakeholders as well as offer links to touristic pages, and soft mobility offers. Furthermore the website should act as a planning tool and offer a link to the disposal software tool.

The design of the website should be based on the corporate design of the mobility platform, using the colors and fonts of the project logo. The design should be recognized immediately and offer a clear arrangement of the different parts of the website which are in detail:

- Information about the ACCESS2MOUNTAIN project and about the mobility platform
- The mobility platform and the associated software tool/app, which will be described in the next chapter. This part should be immediately visible on the start page.
- Offers of the region visible in packages. A content management system (with an access also through the website) should make it possible for all providers of leisure/adventure/sports/culture activities to upload their packages which will then be available on the website after an activation of the

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Alpenregion National Park Gesäuse". These packages should also be visible in form of a calendar for events in the region. This section should provide a good overview of all activities in the region and all offers in case of bad weather or special occasions for visitors and tourists.

- A possibility for the providers of all partners (gastronomy or accommodation as well as activity providers) to print out a daily newspaper or newsletter with daily actual offers, considering the offered transport possibilities.

- Social Media connection in form of a little register like **f facebook.** or **twitter**

- The new website should be immediately set up to guarantee a current information flow

- Use the newly developed corporate design

- Make sure that the website is clearly arranged and tested by potential user before it goes online

- Include links to the website of the National Park, the project ACCESS2MOUNTAIN and social media

- Use the website to form touristic offer packages and provide the possibility for touristic providers to actualize their offers

- Offer a daily actual newsletter with all offers and packages to canalize the mobility streams

9.7   Software Tool

The overall mobility concept of the project for the area National Park Gesäuse and Nature Park Eisenwurzen is divided into three topics, a shuttle service from the train station Liezen, a point-to-point mobility concept and charter offers and vehicle rental.

The software tool will explain the booking and scheduling of the rides with the point-to-point mobility service. Furthermore also a control and billing function is to be implemented. The associated website (described in the last chapter) shall act as an ordering platform a scheduling will be dealt with by one central scheduler.

Scheduling tool for driving jobs

- Should show where a free taxi is bounding and its contact information
- At least 3 persons should be transported with one taxi ride, if possible
- A time plan of the driving jobs should be available
- A possibility to assign and book trips should be offered
- SMS or e-mail notification of trip assignment

Billing tool for paid rides

- Listing of paid trips (number of persons, driven km etc.)
- Transparency between drivers and association

Ordering tool for customers/partners

- Guest or accommodators shall be able to order online and get a confirmation
- The scheduler should be able to insert request and confirm rides
- SMS or email confirmation
- Input of a leisure card (walks, attractions, partners, routes, sectors of the system)

For the implementation of that software tool a certain infrastructure will be needed. This includes tablet PC's for the use in the cars of the mobility services, either for drivers or for guests. Additionally material for the recognition of the service will be needed.

Infrastructure for the vehicles with an innovative new design is recommended, in form of 15 magnet boards. The drivers shall be equipped with identical soft-shell jackets and t-shirts in an eye-catching and attractive design which makes the drivers proud so they identify with the product and the service.

Figure 10: Examples for Taxi Apps (Source: news.preisgenau.de and archiv.kleine.at, access 20.05.2012)

Very important is the development of a concept for the refuges, where customers who want to use the mobility/taxi service will not have mobile reception to book taxis through their mobile phone apps. So the refuges have to receive leaflets with the most important information about the mobility platform which have to be posted visibly. The innkeeper then can order a taxi for a certain time at a certain place at the booking office.

- Build up a well elaborated system connected with an app and a background CMS including billing system
- Make sure that the driving scheduling is effective (at least 3 persons in a car if possible)
- Connect the system with the new website
- Purchase tablet PCs for the drivers and exe catching equipment
- At least 3 people within the organization of the project should be trained in how to use the software tool
- Elaboration of a map for mobile phone in areas with scarce reception

9.8 Social Media

A well planned and executed social media marketing strategy offers the possibility to share the voice of the project, get real time feedback for the offers, create an instant buzz for news, build customer loyalty, and reach an informed target audience. Very positive about that is that it requires very little financial investment. An effective strategy will leverage all quality online social hubs where users and customers meet and converse. A presence on diverse and multimedia social sites as implementation of social media like Facebook, twitter and YouTube is significant. The features should be implemented also into the website of the mobility platform.

9.8.1 Social Networking Sites: Facebook and Twitter

There are various social networking sites where you can create profiles to connect with your target audience directly. Create a Facebook fan page. According to statistics released by Facebook, the social networking website has around 500 million active users, of who around 50% log in every day for commenting or browsing. A Facebook fan page thus makes a lot of sense to reach an active online audience.

Another possibility is to create tweets and retweets on Twitter. Twitter has real time updates and news-worthy tweets that even search engines show in their search results. The tweets about your products are quickly read and responded to by other users. A Twitter account to respond to and create a buzz about your product is therefore essential.

9.8.2 Other Social Media

Websites like **YouTube** have created a whole new arena for multimedia interaction. Sharing and viewing videos is now, not just an activity enjoyed by individuals for their own pleasure, but also a great way for an organization to share information about its products. Organizations have found sharing interesting and related videos on YouTube to be a great way of ensuring continual, sustained interest of the target audience.

Sharing relevant and interesting images with your user base also helps in creating pleasant, long-term associations. The images can be about widely anticipated events like a product launch, celebrity associations, or the organization's internal events. Websites like Flickr have an active user base and can be leveraged for this purpose.

9.8.3 Monitoring the Social Media

It is significant to have practices and checks in place that ensure efficient execution and a quick response. The following measures ensure responsiveness and professional interaction:

- A query, tweet, or a comment requiring clarification on the Facebook page must be replied to within 24 hours.
- Posts and tweets must be of high quality and value and/or knowledge enhancing. The content in the posts should be good enough to get linked by other sites.
  Blog posts must be frequent enough to sustain interest.
- In case of critical comments, respond to them immediately and fairly. Negative comments need not always be deleted or removed.

Minimum effort for a social media strategy with Facebook and Twitter are 10 hours per week - that is 2 hours per day. Adding a newsletter 12 hours weekly should be scheduled.

In the morning it is first checked what was said online in the last 24 hours. Expense is at least 15 minutes daily.

Twitter should be used about three to four times daily - but never with boring self-promotion, or followers will run away. Expenses including research, dialogue and Twitter links, photos, video is 30 to 45 minutes every day.

Check Facebook three times a day, whether fans have commented or write your own posts. Publish at least 1 post every day and actively generate a community. Effort for Facebook is about 30 to 60 minutes daily.

In addition 1 to 2 hours of effort, the expense of the creation of content has to be considered. A newsletter is very useful for the viral spread ant to strengthen the branding.

- Set up a Facebook profile

- Set up a twitter account

- Try to get along with the for-free services, consider a bit of an investment to reach more users

- Use YouTube as a possibility to spread the region in pictures

- Organize and plan the monitoring of social media and consider the time factor

9.9 Awareness Raising

The present communication plan suggests organizing some events and activities for awareness rising. The most effective way to reach the target group and raise awareness through a maximum number of layers of society is to be present in regional events with a connection to soft mobility in tourism. At least two stakeholder events should be planned beforehand.

Stakeholder meeting with transport companies/taxi drivers

Stakeholder event with gastronomy partners and accommodators as well as refuges

More important for the awareness raising for the public a regional event is suggested, a **car free day in the Gesäuse region in 2013**, being all about green mobility. Pedelecs, bikes and e-mobility should play the major role in this event for all age groups which will best take place in the municipality Admont. Especially at that car free day it is important for the mobility platform to be present with presentation material as defined in the previous chapters to attract attention and interest.

Naturally it is suggested to also include at least **one event in a local school** with some according to the project plan. Therefore training for public mobility in five school classes is planned. This event includes a competition about green mobility, which should be carried out in a young and interesting way, possibly in connection with social media and video.

The pupils have to form groups of four, the task is to make a **short movie or photo story about mobility in the region** dealing critically with the problems and showing the advantages of the new mobility platform. School classes with younger pupils could try to develop a **mascot for the mobility platform**. The contributions have to be creative but not missing the content. The best contribution will be awarded by a jury (the client) and gets a price, possibly in two categories.

10 MONITORING AND CONCLUSIONS

Monitoring and evaluation involves an assessment of activities to determine whether the interventions were delivered as recommended and evaluate the extent to which the objectives of the project were met. The successful implementation of the strategy will depend on continuous monitoring of program delivery. To ensure maximum participation and better outcomes, effective supervision should be established at all levels. The "Alpenregion National park Gesäuse" should be the responsible organization to monitor the success and development of the project.

There should be an effective feedback system to track possible problems. Any identified field based problems should be immediately addressed. Lay the focus on output oriented features like what things have already been implemented, what about the time plan, who is controlling the implementation? Also think of the results-oriented indicators and quantify them if possible: Think of how many users you want to address in the first year, how many cooperation partners you want to reach, a number of sales you want to reach, and who is going to control the status quo.

It will be very important to lay regular reports and make feedback rounds.

Recommended will be a quarterly report in form of a newsletter to all stakeholders and partners and a half-yearly jour fixe to discuss the status quo.

The added value of that project will be a new way of moving, a better and more sustainable use of public transport and a canalization of mobility to strengthen tourism. Summed up the new mobility platform will offer the region a new way to present itself in a green way and as something unique within the Austrian touristic landscape.

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Project Partners

Lead partner
U-AT - Environment Agency Austria, AT

ERDF partner
bmvit - Federal Ministry of Transport, Innova"on and Technology, AT

ERDF partner
Gesäuse - National Park Gesäuse, AT

ERDF partner
Mostviertel - Mostviertel-Tourism Ltd., AT

ERDF partner
Miskolc Holding - Miskolc Holding Local Government Asset Management Corporation, HUN

ERDF partner
UNICAM - University of Camerino, IT

ERDF partner
EURAC research – European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano, IT

ERDF partner
CJIT Maramures - County Center for Tourism Informa"on, RO

ERDF partner
ARR-KE - Agency for the S upport of Regional Development Kosice, SK

20% ERDF partner
RARR-PL - Rzeszow Regional Development Agency, PL

10% partner
TIMOK -Timok Club, RS

10% partner
CFUA - Carpathian Founda"on Ukraine, UA

The project enjoys widespread support at transnational, national and regional level: the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, Focal Points of the Carpathian Convention, European Federation of Museum and Tourist Railways, Ministries of Environment (AT, IT), Ministries of Transport (SI, PL) and other observers at the regional level of the project partners.

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