

Tea Salonsaari

HOW IS KOUVOLA SEEN THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHS?

Master's Thesis

Master's Programme in Design and Culture

October 2016



Tekijä/Tekijät	Tutkinto	Aika
Tea Salonsaari	Design, Master of Culture and Arts	Lokakuu 2016
Opinnäytetyön nimi How is Kouvola Seen Through Photographs?		109 sivua 6 liitesivua
Toimeksiantaja Kouvolan kaupunki		
Ohjaaja Sanna Haapanen, Lehtori		
<p>Tiivistelmä</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen inspiraationa oli kuuden kunnan yhteen liittymisen jälkeinen aika, jolloin keskustelu velloi tunnepitoisena ja ristiriitaisena toreilla ja mediassa. Kuusi kuntaa liittyi yhdeksi kunnaksi vuonna 2009 ja valitsi yhteiseksi nimekseen Kouvola. Muutokset ja niihin sopeutuminen vie aikaa ja tämä on näkynyt julkisessa keskustelussa. Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää, miten asukkaat ja vierailijat näkevät Kouvola. Tutkimus perustuu vuonna 2014 järjestetyn valokuvakilpailun aineistoon, jonka muodostavat kilpailuun lähetetyt kuvat ja niihin kuvaajien liittämät tekstikuvaukset ja kuville antamat merkitykset.</p> <p>Tutkimus on yhdistelmä määrällistä ja laadullista tutkimusta. Valokuvat ja tekstimateriaali analysoitiin sisällön analyysillä, mikä perustui aineistosta nousevaan luokitteluun. Mitkään aiemmin annetut genret ja luokittelut eivät sopineet valokuvien sisältöjen analysointiin. Tekstimateriaalissa ilmeni kuvien lähettäjiä Kouvolaan liittämät arvot ja merkitykset helpommin käsiteltävinä. Valokuva tutkimuskohteena ei ole tarkkarajainen eikä mikään tutkimusmenetelmä ole vielä pystynyt analysoimaan valokuvia tyhjentävästi.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tuloksena voidaan sanoa, että asukkaat näkevät Kouvola monipuolisena kaupunkina, jolla on runsaasti luontoarvoja. Kouvola koetaan hyväksi paikaksi asua. Kouvolaassa kaupunki ja luonto sijaitsevat lähekkäin ja helposti ovat saavutettavissa. Metsät, maaseutu, Repoveden kansallispuisto, Kymijoki ja muut vesistöt nousivat voimakkaasti esiin arvostettuina asioina ja vapaa-ajanviettopaikkoina. Etenkin Kymijoki koettiin tärkeäksi ja kiinteäksi osaksi kaupungin historiaa, mutta se tunnistettiin myös vähän hyödynnetyksi ja huonosti markkinoiduksi identiteettitekijäksi.</p> <p>Tutkimus toi kiinnostavasti esille myös asukkaiden ajatuksia vanhan ja uuden Kouvola imagosta ja maineesta ja niiden ristiriidoista. Asukkaat ovat tietoisia suomalaisten mielissä viipyilevistä mielikuvista, joita sana Kouvola herättää. Tulokset kertovat siis hyvin myös tiettyyn nimeen liitetyn maineen rasitteista.</p> <p>Asiasanat valokuvat, identiteetti, imago, maine, paikan markkinointi</p>		

Author Tea Salonsaari	Degree Design, Master of Culture and Arts	Time October 2016
Thesis Title How is Kouvola Seen Through Photographs?		109 pages 6 pages of appendices
Commissioned by City of Kouvola		
Supervisor Sanna Haapanen, Senior Lecturer		
<p>Abstract</p> <p>The background of this study springs from the atmosphere in the city of Kouvola after six municipalities merged in the year 2009. Changes take time and even more time takes the adaptation of the inhabitants. This complex attitude could be seen in the impassionate and contradictory communication of the inhabitants and the local media. This study aimed to find out how is Kouvola seen by the inhabitants and visitors. The study bases on the photo material and textual descriptions attached which were collected through a photo competition organized by the city of Kouvola in the year 2014.</p> <p>The study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. The photo and the textual material was studied by the means of content analysis. The method was material driven and the classifications arose from the research material. None beforehand given genres or classifications seemed to fit, because of the obscure nature of photographs as a study subject. Any research method has not been able to give exhaustive answers when analyzing photographs. The textual material exposed the values and meanings given to the photos and to the Kouvola by the photographers of the competition.</p> <p>According to the results of this study Kouvola is seen as a city of diversity, with great nature values. Most competitors experienced Kouvola as a peaceful and good place to live in. In Kouvola the urban area and the nature are close to each other. The forests of the towns and the countryside, Repovesi national park, the River Kymi and other bodies of water were appreciated highly as the surroundings to spend leisure time. Especially the River Kymi was seen as an important nature element but also as a part of the area's history. It was also recognized as a poorly utilized identity factor of the Kouvola.</p> <p>The research brought up interestingly the thoughts of the inhabitants about the reputation or identity of the former and the current city named Kouvola. The inhabitants are quite aware of the prevailing perceptions which are brought up in social media and media from time to time. These perceptions show the burden of the reputation once attached to a certain name.</p>		
<p>Keywords photographs, identity, image, reputation, place branding</p>		

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	6
2	FRAMING OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	7
3	ABOUT PHOTOS AND VISUAL PERCEPTION.....	8
3.1	Visual perception	10
3.2	Power of photography.....	11
3.3	Empowering photography and the power of looking	13
3.4	Photographs and Texts.....	16
3.5	Research of photographs	17
3.6	Reading and interpreting photographs.....	21
3.7	Summary of theories about photographs.....	23
4	PLACE MARKETING.....	25
4.1	Identity	25
4.2	Image.....	25
4.3	Reputation	27
4.4	Place Branding	27
4.5	Photos and visuals in place branding	31
5	UTILIZING PHOTOS AND VISUAL IN MODERN MARKETING	32
5.1	What has already been done?	33
5.2	How to find and reach the target groups in the internet	34
6	RESEARCH.....	36
7	METHODOLOGY	40
8	RESULTS	42
8.1	Themes and genres of the photos	42
8.2	Clues of the photos.....	45
8.3	Themes of the descriptions.....	46
8.3.1	Aesthetic experiences	47
8.3.2	The Kymi River, Lakes and Rapids	48
8.3.3	Nature: Peace, Beauty and Recreation	49
8.3.4	History	57

8.3.5	Kouvola as a place to live in and to grow up	60
8.3.6	Leisure time and activities	64
8.3.7	New Kouvola vs. old Kouvola	68
8.3.8	Events	70
8.3.9	Railroad and location	73
8.3.10	Graceless beauty, concrete and "Kouvostoliitto"	74
8.3.11	Love for Hometown	77
8.3.12	Statements on the current social and economic situation	79
8.3.13	Messages for the municipality	83
8.3.14	Technical experiments and self-actualization	84
8.4	Demographic information and relation to Kouvola	85
8.5	Comparison of the themes of the photos and the descriptions	87
9	DISCUSSION	89
9.1	Comparison of the themes of the research of 2005 and 2014	91
9.2	Comparison of the results to the image research of 2016	95
9.3	Summary of the results	96
9.4	Can the commitment to the home town be strengthened by photographs	97
9.5	What could be done in the future	97
9.6	Ideation	98
	REFERENCES	100
	PHOTO REFERENCES	105
	APPENDICES	
	Appendix 1. A screenshot from the Kaunista Kouvolasta Facebook-page in 6.9.2016	
	Appendix 2. A screenshot from the Betonihelvetti.fi-page in 6.9.2016	
	Appendix 3. The rules of the photo competition	

1 INTRODUCTION

The city of Kouvola is a town of a large land area with lots of rural areas and forests and two town centers, a handful of smaller population centers and villages. “The new Kouvola” was born in 2009 when six neighbor municipalities merged into one big municipality and took the name Kouvola. The old images attached to the word Kouvola are still tightly set in many peoples’ minds. Local people know that the current Kouvola is a large area with versatile nature areas and lakes. The old Kouvola was a small town and it included mostly urban areas. Images or reputation are hard to change and it will probably take time before “the new Kouvola” has a new meaning for a larger audience in Finland.

The negative perception of the Kouvola that has risen up in media from time to time seems to have risen irritation and most of the citizens seem to think that their home town is being misjudged. The municipality, local businesses and the inhabitants have acknowledged this contradiction between the image they perceive in media and their own experience of their home town. People have begun to work against it actively. This appears in positive statements in media, praising posts in social media and various kind of happenings that people arrange in the city to create the sense of community.

In the year 2016 the activism and co-operation of the inhabitants and other operators of the city of Kouvola have been more visible than for years in Kouvola. Pop-up events are marketed in social media to get people together, for example, flea markets on a certain spot of the town (cf. Kaartinen 2016).

This thesis is based on the material collected by an open photo competition that was arranged by the municipality of the Kouvola in the year 2014. People were asked to take photos of Kouvola that according to them reflected the city. This was to find out what people think about Kouvola and how they see it. The competition was a success, 161 competitors sent 330 photos to the competition.

My bachelor’s thesis, *Stories of Kouvola*, works as the background work and comparative material to this study. The research handled branding places and concentrated on the city of Kouvola in the year 2005. The research material was collected by a story competition. I have got a strong theory basis on the

place marketing subject. It will also be interesting to compare the results of these pieces of research executed in different municipal situations and town concept and with a larger population.

The subject of this thesis was a quite natural choice for me after all. I have lived my whole life inside the area of the current Kouvola, but mostly in the central, “old Kouvola”. I have also lived in Myllykoski, in the former Anjalankoski area and also in Kuusankoski. I have spent lots of time in cottages in Jaala and Valkeala. I have also visited Elimäki several times. This gives me a perspective to the region and also a perception familiar to an inhabitant of “the old Kouvola” in this new municipality. The discussion in media and social media after the birth of new Kouvola has been somewhat impassioned and emotional. This made me wonder, how the inhabitants of Kouvola see their home town nowadays.

2 FRAMING OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study’s framework is place branding and how photos can be utilized in it. The most important concepts in this study are identity, image, reputation, place branding and photographs.

In this study identity is everything that the city is, people who live and act there and everything that happens there. Also the multiple messages, the planned and the uncontrollable communication influences the entirety. Through these and experiences of inhabitants or visitors the reputation of a place is born. The reputation can be good or bad or various in the eyes of different groups. Maybe it is possible to have multiple reputations. Anyway, people either living here or not, visiting or not visiting Kouvola, form an image of the city into their minds. All the facts, rumors, experiences and messages transform into an individual image that is reflected into their minds.

Photos are a powerful messenger, we are exposed to them maybe tens of thousands times in a day. Reading visual information is as fast as a lightning compared to reading texts. Photos can be helpful in changing outdated or “wrong” perceptions of people. Photos are used in this sense, for example, in

the field of empowering photography. Social media and digital marketing are great partners when aiming to spread messages widely and effectively.

The research questions of this study are:

- How is Kouvola seen through photography?
- How can photos be utilized in the interactive communication and marketing?

This study aims to find out how Kouvola is seen through photography by its inhabitants and visitors. The biased discussion and critical voices of the inhabitants that were swirling about media after the years of municipal merger made me wonder how the inhabitants and visitors of Kouvola really experience the town behind the loudest voices bringing out their own perceptions. Or was there something more to tell about Kouvola or something that was not noticed?

If the study brings up strong identity factors, how could those be marketed more powerfully to the inhabitants and to the rest of the world? The inhabitants are the first messengers, because their perceptions are based on a strong experience and hence are reliable in the eyes of others. The city of Kouvola needs powerful advocates to grow and prosper. The modern digital marketing and social media networks offer great possibilities, but differentiating is the challenge when trying to rise above the millions of voices in the field of marketing.

3 ABOUT PHOTOS AND VISUAL PERCEPTION

The world around us is filled with pictures, graphics and photos. The amount of pictures exploded in the 20th century and now we live an extremely visual period because of the wide range of technical media we use daily. (Seppänen 2010, 19; Alanen 2010.) Professional and nowadays more and more amateur photographers communicate abundantly with photos (Pienimäki 2013, 17; Alanen 2010). The citizen journalism has increased remarkably and at least in the western countries, most of the population possesses some device which can capture the moments in photos. Benedict Evans (2015) writes in his blog:

“...More photos will be taken this year than were taken on film in the entire history of the analogue camera business.” Evans works in a venture capital firm and is one of the persons who try to predict where the development is heading.

Digitalization has made taking photos easy. The amount of photos saved to memory cards, hard drives or to a digital cloud must be huge. There is no more need to save screens on film with a digital camera. This easiness influences probably the quality of pictures too. There is less need for consideration and more space for the trial and error method. On the other hand, Hannu Konttinen, the illustrator, writer and marketer says that if there is a powerful feeling in a photo, nobody will pay attention to composition or lightning (Huotari 2013).

A photograph is a reflection of the true world around us captured with an optical lens of a camera. A photograph is like a facsimile of real scenery, it is not just representing its object but technically it is a material part of it, because of its making process. Thus a photograph can be seen especially objective and “truthful” representation, this feature is usually attached to the perception of a photograph quite tightly. (Seppänen 2001, 152.)

“One photo tells more than thousand words” is a common saying. This probably is based on a simple perception that, for example, the appearance of a person can never be described with words as precise as it is expressed with a photo. (Seppänen 2001, 57; 2010, 178.) On the other hand, according to Mikkonen (2005, 52), pictures transmit meanings as well as words or text.

Photographs have different missions in different social, cultural and historical contexts, also the interpretations and giving meanings vary accordingly. Commonly shared concepts of different photo genres are born from different backgrounds and traditions. (Pienimäki 2013, 43.)

Digitalization has also made it easier to make things to look different. With few Photoshop skills it is easy to claim that something appeared or happened that really did not. This may have a little bit deteriorated the credibility of photographs recently, but still the evidential nature of the photograph is quite powerful. For example, if a woman’s face is published on the cover of the Vogue magazine, we believe that she has to be beautiful.

The applications of the digital world are maybe changing the values of photography. In the recent decades it has been easy to create most wonderful illustrative photographic pictures with photo editing programs. This phase has now slightly passed and natural photos have gained more appreciation. For example, in the Instagram most popular (selfie) photos are “natural” without any filters, they are marked with #nofilter hashtag (Zarrella 2014).

3.1 Visual perception

Photos influence us every day and shape our perceptions of the world, mostly quite unconsciously. The flow of the imaginary information is nowadays huge and most of it cannot be remembered afterwards. Our brain filters and blocks most of the flow out of the conscious thinking. It is more difficult to ignore a picture than text. Perceiving photos is more quick and holistic reading than reading texts. A text can be left unread, a picture is captured by eye almost inevitably. A picture has the power to give more meanings to text and also meanings that are not directed by text. (Emmison, Smith & Mayall 2012, 19; Seppä 2012, 56, 145; Seppänen 2001, 162; Seppänen 2010, 95.)

The cultural meanings influence our visual perceiving. The selectivity of the visual perceiving is based on biological, psychological and cultural aspects. Seeing is a multi-level choosing process where the most of the seen stays undetected. Visual perceiving develops together and in the same pace with linguistic developing. Language and cultural learning influences the way we see and experience the visual or interpret our perceptions. It is unclear if there can be one universal visual experience. There is also a question if a photograph has a specific visual order that a viewer has to learn. (Seppänen 2010, 96). Cultural conventions influence also the producing and presenting images or photos (Seppä 2012, 59, 110).

Visual perception process differs from reading. When “reading” a picture, the content appears in it, whereas when reading a text the content is composed in the reader’s consciousness. When looking at a picture or a photo the watcher will process what he sees in his mind and puts together hints of different perceptions, he builds up his own perception of the picture and his own experiences and culture will influence it. Language has its part in the process. Visual perception is giving a meaning in a certain context, when both the visual and the linguistic process are in use. Almost everything that is seen is

processed through cultural meanings. For example, a picture of a bear in the forest is processed to represent nature photography genre by a person from western cultures. (Mikkonen 2005, 26.)

Photographs include multiple visual orders through which we interpret them. A photograph is understood more realistic than a drawing and we tend to read photographs as reflections of truth. This constructs also the visual order of a photograph. Visual orders can also relate to represented objects and the ways of representing them. The way of representing gender, ethnic minorities or foreign countries are important visual orders in our culture, referring to the Finnish culture in 2010. (Seppänen 2010, 34.)

Everything we see comes a part of our cultural structures and visual order. These orders are both in the physical surroundings, in the world of objects and in the forms of visual representation and the contents of them. These orders are born and shaped according to the actions of people. The orders are shaped by new visual objects and pictures and the meanings people give them as a part of their actions and meanings. Producing interpretations of visual objects is also constructing visual orders. (Seppänen 2010, 34.)

Textual communication is based on mutually agreed symbol system. Also visual, cultural orders are born from settled and shared cultural meanings. A traffic sign is a good example of this as it is generally interpreted in the same way and assumed to retain its meaning. Understanding this shared meaning is based on a cultural learning process. (Seppä 2012, 107–109; Seppänen 2010, 36, 141.)

3.2 Power of photography

Jan-Erik Lundström, the Swedish researcher of photography, claims that anything can be done with photography. It doesn't resist, but upholds and promotes any wanted ideology. Photographs are already a part of us, we use them to express ourselves and to speak for us. Photos tell about us and narrate our lives. (Lundström 1991, 6–7)

Photography has been and is used for multiple purposes, for example, to promote products or ideologies. It is also used to change thinking and the behavior of individuals. Photographs are used for social, political or economic purposes and research. A camera can record effectively non-verbal

communication and interaction. Photos offer a vast amount of information. In scientific research the problem is how to separate the essential and the unessential. (Seppänen 2001, 59–60.)

A photo makes things visible and problems more tangible (Seppänen 2001, 62–63). Photos may raise feelings and experiences that cannot be easily or at all interpreted to verbal expressions (Seppänen 2001, 163; 2010, 37). Photos can influence in affective way, negatively or positively. Memories or experiences of a person may direct the viewer's experience of a photo, even to a direction that is very opposite to the one that the photographer has experienced or meant. The emotional reaction of the viewer may lead to a decision to read or not to read the text attached to the photo or it may lead to decisions concerning everyday actions of an individual. (Seppänen 2001, 62–63, 163.)

Miina Savolainen (2014) says that a photograph reaches the intangible without words. Verbal language isn't always the best tool to reach the intangible and emotional substance and change the experience of oneself, others or reality. By photography things can be made visible and proofed emotionally convincing. (Savolainen 2014.)

Everyone experiences the world in his own, personal way and lives in it, but the worlds of meaning can still touch each other. An essential question is what we will choose to look at. Important things can be strengthened by photography. (Miina Savolainen 2014; cf Pienimäki 2013, 30.)

"Reality is boring", says Adriaan Monshouwer. He claims that a photographer gets only poor photos if he shoots simply what is visible. He urges to truth bending and cropping out the unessential. He appreciates a fine story. According to Moonshouwer, the power of a photograph lies in that it convincingly claims to be true. "Anyway a good photograph is always a lie. Photographers are liars. But sometimes people love good lies", Monshouwer says. (Rotko 2013.)

So a photograph isn't just a straight reflection of reality although we tend to assume so. With a photograph one can make things to look like something, to choose what to show and what to frame out. It is possible to change the impression or the mood in a photo with lightning, composition, perspective and

details. Taking a photograph is a choice. It is choice to see and capture certain things at a certain moment. But there is always possibility of surprise. It is possible to capture more than one had planned, something intangible or something that cannot be controlled. The mystique of photography has not faded through the years of development.

3.3 Empowering photography and the power of looking

The empowering photography has been a very popular subject in public discussion in the field of therapeutic methods in Finland in the last few years. Miina Savolainen (2014), the developer of the method says that photography isn't the essential thing in the method but looking and being looked at.

The power of the empowering photography is in the look that accepts and redefines the object. It is also about changing the dynamics and perspective of photography, the object defines how he wants to be seen. By means of photography the dignity and the completeness can be seen and strengthened. A repairing look and correcting mirrors make the hidden into visible. (Savolainen 2014.)

Photography is the tool that helps to look at yourself with different and loving eyes and also helps others to see how one wishes to be seen. The experience of meaningfulness and dignity is needed to balance the experience of the uncontrollable life. (Savolainen 2014.)

Also Seppänen gives in his analyses examples in which photos have an enormously important role in creating meanings. Photos can work as metaphors and create possibilities for optional or competing interpretations, feelings and experiences. Interpretations of photos can be directed by text, but with photos totally new meanings can be attached to texts. (Seppänen 2001, 163.)

Visual reading is to understand visual order and cultural meanings of those and making justifiable interpretations of them. It is not just understanding how one is looking and interpreting visual reality but also understanding the power of the looks of others to our own identity and subjectivity. Looking is a bidirectional power. (Seppänen 2010, 16, 24, 148.)

This effect can be seen also in the relation to one's home town. The city of Kouvola has been several times in nasty headlines in media during the past few years and the public conversation has repeatedly shaken Kouvola in a quite negative light. This has led to some kind of counter effect, for example, in Facebook there are groups that are based on the appreciation of Kouvola, like "Rakkauteni Kouvolaan on lujempaa kuin betoni" – My love towards Kouvola is stronger than concrete or "Kaunista Kouvolaasta" – "Beauty from Kouvola" -group.

Kaunista Kouvolaasta -group publishes beautiful photos of Kouvola (Appendix 1). The group was established in the summer of 2014 and it gained an audience of thousands in few months. The administrators had to restrict the amount of the pictures published per day by a single person because of the huge popularity of the group and the eagerness of amateur photographers to share their pictures. (Hakaniemi 2015; Kouvola Sanomat 2014.)



Figure 1. One of the introducing slides in the Betonihelvetti.fi web site. Copyright by Nitro ID.

Also the city of Kouvola has utilized this counter effect and published a web-page called Betonihelvetti.fi (Appendix 2), freely interpreted: a concrete hell, in co-operation with Nitro ID in the year 2015. The page is a platform where anyone can publish Instagram, Twitter or YouTube posts by using certain hashtags. The introducing page provokes the audience by presenting negative hear-say statements of the Kouvola, like "A piece of the most awful Finland" (Figure 1), "Tšernobyl of Finland" or "Grey place" or "Boring Place". These statements are attached to the photos which tell a contradicting story to the

texts. After this the reader is asked to think for himself and urged to publish contents with hashtags like “#munbetonihelvetti” (my concrete hell). The “Tšernobyl of Finland” is an ironic statement to an internet meme that has been spreading in the social media (Figure 2.)



Figure 2. A meme-picture published and shared in social media by an unknown person that equates Kouvola and Tshernobyl.

After a year's experience I can say as one of the webmasters of the page that most of the people posting to the page have understood the idea in the way that was hoped for: They share glimpses of positive things and beautiful sides of Kouvola. Very few of the posts have been negative in any way. This majority of platform's content is produced by audience, so it is not controlled. Only possible abusive contents are moderated off the page.

So photography can be a quite powerful way of enhancing the commitment to one's home town, to see and seek beauty and good things in the surroundings. I also have got an empirical experience on this: In the year 2005 I designed and executed a web page for persons thinking about moving to the Kouvola region, “Kouvolanseudulle.fi” -portal. Pages included information and pictures of the former Kouvola region (before the municipalities united in the year 2009). This work, for which I took and gathered photos of the region, made me convinced that the Kouvola region was a beautiful and worthy place to live in and visit.

3.4 Photographs and Texts

Mostly pictures and texts appear together. They work together seamlessly, for example, in movies, advertising and in the internet. The relation of a picture and a text is formed in the understanding of the reader. Understanding the relation brings up other connotations of meanings that influence the interpretation. Text guides and expands meanings when viewing pictures. Text can also anchor the meaning of a picture and decrease ambiguity in the interpretation. Texts can also supplement the picture. The picture and the text are in relation to the third, wider meaning unit, which acts as a shared discourse context for both. (Mikkonen 2005, 44, 56, 58.)

The text and photo can also appear in contradict relation. Some use the term “counterpoint” when text and photo attached tell different stories. This effect is often used in children’s picture books, but some delicious examples can be seen also, for example, in advertisements. (Salisbury&Styles 2012, 94.)

As an expression form pictures differ from texts. It is difficult to tell a story or argue something with a single picture, although it is said that a one picture can express thousand words. Then again a picture can work as a visual comment. For example, a portrait where the personal characteristics of the model are emphasized may argue or persuade that the person in the picture is worth admiring. (Mikkonen 2005, 32–33.)

Text can be divided in smaller parts, signs are discrete. Visual signs are continuous, a picture cannot be divided into elements without a meaning which could be put together again and create new pictures. A line or a tone may have a meaning in a picture, but signs in a picture don’t have clear borders and meanings are defined through the entirety. (Veivo&Huttunen 1999, 64.) Images can be understood as analogue communication which is more free and indefinite than textual communication (Seppä 2012, 145).

Also combination of a picture and text is interpreted through a social convention. Social convention defines through expectations how the picture could be interpreted in relation to the interaction, correlation, conflict or absence between the picture and the text. The learned ways to read and view pictures will influence the perception of the relations of a picture and the text attached. (Mikkonen 2005, 36.)

Roman Jakobson has developed a term of inter-semiotic interpretation which means, for example, interpreting text to signs of a non-verbal sign system. This can be, for example, a presentation in which the linguistic meanings are interpreted to a dance or, in the context of photography, as an interpretation of a photo. (Mikkonen 2005, 36.)

The poet Robert Frost has said that "Poetry is what gets lost in translation". This refers to the difficulty of the interpretation of poems to another language where the endings of the words and verbal appositions have a specific meaning. A poem must be "written again" in another language. The same difficulty comes up with pictures. The meaning of a poem may be as unclear as the meaning of a picture. A photo may express an atmosphere or a feeling which is more complicated to put in words. (Mikkonen 2005, 37.)

Reliability of an inter-semiotic interpretation may not be the highest value, but rather how it works in another form of expression. Inter-semiotic interpretation cannot be a correlating copy of the original but more like a unique work as itself. (Mikkonen 2005, 37–38.)

When talking about pictures we don't explain pictures but our notions and our relationship to the picture. The description and interpreting definition intersect, even though the description is a tool for defining. Language generalizes and reduces visual perception. Language is bound to timeline and so it is a clumsy tool for analyzing immediately and simultaneously perceived pictures. (Mikkonen 2005, 386.)

Modern semiotic theories haven't been able to analyze the specific relation of signs, fields and the picture surface in visual presentation in which a sign is a part of the picture surface which makes the picture surface also a sign. Many theories have been written about the power of pictures, most of them agree on the idea of the illusion of the absent to be present. The difference between a picture and words is the core of the joy brought by the connection of pictures and language. (Mikkonen, 2005, 391–393.)

3.5 Research of photographs

Interest in visual research methods has increased during the last decade. Visual research methods are mostly used in the field of social sciences. Before the internet and the chance of ordinary people to publish their photos

and videos, visual research was mostly researcher-initiated auto-photography. Web-based visual material can yield insights into the 'world-views' of sub-cultural values of the individuals or groups involved. (Emmison et al. 2012, 19, 21.)

Photos can be researched in quantitative or qualitative tradition. A large amount of photos may give information on contemporary life and its trends and their connection to the changes in social or political circumstances. (Emmison et al. 2012, 64–66.)

Reading pictures is decoding images, this may take years of socialization to be able to decode pictures in the relevant way. A common sense has a significant role in reading everyday photos. People may read pictures differently depending on their identity, experiences and position they adopt. (Emmison et al. 2012, 74–75.)

Social science included photographs to research from the middle of the 60's. Before that photographs were only a tool in research, not the object of it. The research of photographs began within questions concerning feminism, power, modern and postmodern photography and the problems of the marginal groups of the society. Research examines photographs in relation to phenomena in the society. (Seppänen 2001, 10–13, 125.)

Janne Seppänen underlines in his dissertation "Valokuvaa ei ole" – "There is no photograph", that the meanings of a photograph are formed in those cultural conventions where it is looked at, used and interpreted. There is no universal concept of a photograph, it is always bound to its context and cultural connection. There is not ultimate ontology of a photograph, but billions of photos that have meanings in different cultural contexts. (Seppänen 2001, 8, 17, 21.)

A photograph can though create a context to multiple things. A photograph has the power to make us dress up and take a rigorous posture when we are to be the objects of it. In science, a photograph is the subject of research only after being defined as a concept, after which it is a part of a scientific discourse. Within rules of this discourse the photo can be defined and it will have an identity, but it is temporary, historically contingent and can be decoded. Photos offer a vast amount of information and in scientific research

the problem is how to separate the essential and the unessential. (Seppänen 2001, 8, 59–60.)

Seppänen studied newspaper articles of photographs by the photographer Esko Männikkö. He finds in his analysis two discourses from the interpretation frames: the discourse of truth and the discourse of interpretation. On the other hand a photograph is formed as a representative of the outer world of itself, it is truthful representation of the reality. On the other hand, a photograph is the tool of the subjective creativity of the photographer. The subjectivity of the photographer can be seen as a threat to the photographic truth, because of its unexpected nature in the otherwise mechanic action of recording the reality. On the other hand the subjectivity is the guarantee of the truth hence the photographer is experiencing the real situation while recording it. (Seppänen 2001, 64–65, 166.)

The discourse of truth and interpretation interlock. The creativity of the photographer influences how the object looks like in the photo, this can be regulated by lightning, angle and optics. The truth limits the creativity. One can shoot only the subject that actually is in the front of the camera. (Seppänen 2001, 166.)

Studying photos within semiotic theory is studying representations. The questions asked are what do photos represent and how, and also, what hidden meanings, like ideas and values, can be found in the photos. (Seppä, 128.)

In the sense of semiotics a photo can be an icon, an index or a symbol. It is also a metonymy which represents just a part of the whole truth or a scene. A photo is a conventional form of representation and it is used in many societal conventions or functions. Semiotic analysis method may be too restricted because it becomes easily quite textual in nature. Photos may touch the viewer beyond words. (Pienimäki 2013, 17, 67.)

Photos can be divided to genres like newspaper, advertisement, memory, family or art photos. Photos can also be divided to rough categories by their use, if it is fictive or documentary. (Pienimäki 2013, 17.) Leena Saraste (2010) divides photographs into three categories as memories, messages and art.

Pienimäki represents critical pedagogy which includes multiple conceptual approaches and theoretical point of views. Critical pedagogy evaluates, for example, the relations between knowledge and power or it may question the contemporary ideologies, culture or politics. Being critical is also an ability to take pictures which differ from traditional conventions. (Pienimäki 2013, 23–25.)

According to Pienimäki the critical reading of photos is explicit in nature which means that the interpreter acknowledges his experiences and interpretations, only this way the personal reflection and argumentation are possible. Implicit interpretation is experiencing photos emotionally and even physically and forming unintentionally meanings without rational analyzing. The expression and influencing means of a photograph are multidimensional. (Pienimäki 2013, 67–68.)

The meanings of photos can be researched, for example, by the concepts of denotation and connotation. The denotation of a photo is the obvious, literal common sense meaning of an image. Connotation is a more complex ideological or mythical theme that can be found in the image. (Emmison et al. 2012, 75.)

There seems to be just conventions and recommended practices in interpreting photos, there is no one way to do it because interpretations are bound to interpreter's experiences and knowledge and to the context of photos. The theory seems to wind up back to the researcher himself. Interpreting photos is learning of your own interpretations and about yourself and to challenge the common interpretations. This process is about to learn to understand the nature of photos as social and cultural constructions. It is making courageous self-reflections on one's own photo experiences and interpretations. (Pienimäki 2013, 73.)

Photos can be analyzed or interpreted through multiple theories and aspects and also with combinations of these. A photo can be studied through semiotics and with conceptual thinking or as a representative of a certain genre. (Pienimäki 2013, 82.) Narrative consideration can be an adequate approach with combination of photos and text (Emmison et al. 2012, 74).

3.6 Reading and interpreting photographs

Based on the theories of analyzing photos, I decided not to analyze single photos because that kind of analysis requires more experience on the subject than I possess. In addition, the socio-historical background of the photographers was unknown and so was the background information on what the certain picture was taken for. Was it originally meant to take part in the competition or was it captured for some other reasons?

Visual reading is involved with other senses and developing perceiving. People learn visual reading naturally. Visual reading is also understanding cultural symbols and communicating with them. In a more scientific sense, visual reading is reflecting the meanings of visual world and critical evaluation of them, this kind of visual reading is possible to learn by developing these skills and studying the aspects involved to it. (Seppänen 2010, 141–142.)

Interpreting, or critically reading photos is an ability to understand photos as social and cultural constructions and to challenge the common shared meanings in the society. It includes understanding ideals, ideologies, myths, norms, stereotypes and conventions of power attached to them. It is also an ability to reflect, evaluate and argue also one's own photo experiences and interpretations. (Pienimäki 2013, 13, 63.)

According to Mari Pienimäki an individual constructs the interpretation of a photo by himself, but the interpretation is always filtered through the adapted structures like the common image culture in his society. A reasonable interpretation is connected to the reason what the photo is interpreted for, the context, for example, therapy, media pedagogy or art critic. (Pienimäki 2013, 31–32.) The study of Schlottman and Anderson (1993, 785–799) state that the individual and cultural differences influence the perceived features and the meanings that are picked from images.

Because the interpretation is formed through the experience and knowledge of the interpreter, interpretations cannot be generalized (Seppänen 2010, 201). Hall argues that, for example, facial expressions may influence connotations strongly. For example, one facial expression in a photo can be interpreted to be angry or defiant or tragic. The interpreter must choose which connotation is

valid on the grounds of common sense knowledge that concerns the photo. (Emmison et al. 2012, 48.)

The interpretation is influenced by the context in which the photograph is perceived. If a photograph is in a newspaper, the interpretation is directed differently than an image in an advertisement. The knowledge of who has taken the photo and what for may direct the interpretation. If the photo is a part of some presentation or a representative of a certain genre, the common conventions may direct the interpretation. Interpretation can base on some or several scientific discourses or aspects. Photographs can be interpreted as the representatives of a certain commonly acknowledged genre. Genres are problematic too, because those can be created and divided on and on into smaller and new genres. Photos can be divided to genres in multiple ways, for example, by their themes or intended use. Though, genres may work well as a framing of an analysis. (Pienimäki 2013, 13, 17, 31–32, 56, 82–83, 89, 92–93, 97, 122; Seppänen 2001, 26.)

In photos can be found subject positions, for example, in a picture of woman and child, the woman is probably read to be 'a mother'. The scenery of the picture and the gaze with which the picture is read will direct the interpretation. Screen theory also argues that the subject position of the reader influences the interpretation. The image may be read in different ways according to what identity the reader foregrounds such as race, gender or age. Ambiguous photos may be read in preferred way due to readers own identification to social groups. (Emmison et al. 2012, 75–78.) Visual reading at its best is producing such presentations that argue general orders like stereotypes of presenting gender (Seppänen 2010, 148).

The theory of researching and interpreting photos is not giving a simple or a straight answer how to critically interpret photographs. Rational scientific analyses may be only made with tight framing and definitions of discourse. (Pienimäki 2013, 131.) To Interpret a photograph, the understanding of common life nonverbal communication and non-pictorial visual orders are needed (Seppänen 2010, 140).

People familiar with photographs interpret or read them naturally, without analyzing. Learning to interpret photos critically demands viewing them and

questioning the perspective and the meanings standing out of them.
(Pienimäki 2013, 13, 130.)

According to Routila the ability to read images and the experience provided by it, is depending on readers' individual socio-historical background. Also earlier image experiences affect the interpretation. (Routila 1986, 54–60, 74.) The ability to read images can be developed, knowledge can influence it and provide new image experiences. On the other hand the relevancy of interpretation depends on how close are the individual cultural and sociohistorical life situations and the experiences of the reader and the photographer. (Pienimäki, 1999.)

Experiencing photos is usually shared. Shared meanings create cultural structures which are relatively enduring but change during time according to conscious and unconscious actions of a human being. (Seppänen 2001, 76.)

3.7 Summary of theories about photographs

After reading theories about photographs, I came to the conclusion that there is no straight forward method for analyzing photographs. The analysis or interpretations of photographs are always filtered through the interpreter. The interpreter's own experiences, values and socio-cultural history will affect inevitably the interpretation. Photographs include (and also exclude by framing) a vast amount of information that can be interpreted from multiple aspects. The qualitative interpretation of a photo cannot be reliably generalized.

Jan-Erik Lundström says that photography escapes every box it is tried to force in. Photography does not stay in categories or obey definitions. Photographs are unreliable and hard to reach. Photographs are always defined in relation to producers, publishers and users. (Lundström 1991, 6–7.)

Photos and texts are formed by different symbol systems, but both can be used to narrate same views, things, feelings and meanings. Analyzing texts and photos is studying multiple scopes. There is a photo, a text and the combination of those. Text can guide, expand or even confuse the meaning of the photo. Also the photo may guide the interpretation of the text or be in contradiction with it, as in many cases in modern ironic memes in the internet.

Despite of the difficulty of analyzing photos, they are a powerful tool of influencing and are constantly used in good or bad, for marketing or information war, for religious meanings or as proofs of something. With photographs people are convinced of real or unreal needs or educated to gain a better health. Photos are used to illustrate stories or one's life in the social media, they are sometimes taken for just to remember or for multiple unintentional reasons. Photos still have a strong evidential nature despite of the easy means of modifying them and twisting the visual "truth". The interesting paradox with photographs is that even when we possibly know to which direction we are guided to with, for example, an advertise photo, we still are willing to believe its persuasive message.

Photos can be used to show things that are not written or spelled, a photo can express more than words or things that are difficult to express with words. Photos can be used in a healing and empowering way.

Photos can push societal changes as an evidence of happenings or changes in the society or, for example, as an evidence of a crime or cruelty. Photographs are quick means of influencing in the modern world where it is easy to make up one's mind and form a perception on matters with less and less knowledge. Photos are an important plinth of the western market economy where many things are sold on the basis what they look like or seem to be.

Usually photos appear with text and the interpretation is guided by it. Some photos or "settings" come familiar to us by the time, so that the photo may not need the guiding text. For example, a photo of a hungry child probably creates quite similar interpretations in the minds of the people living in western societies.

The power of photographs is indisputable and the way they affect the world lies mostly behind the philosophy of the message sender even if the receiver has the power of making his own interpretations. The huge mass of information makes us pick the information that is valid, pleasant or in some way meaningful for us. Not all photos are world changing or eye catching, the channel, the amount of audience, a moment in the history and sometimes a chance matters too.

4 PLACE MARKETING

4.1 Identity

In the place marketing traditionally the identity of a place has been a central concept. The identity includes everything in the place: people, location, infrastructure, history, culture and the municipal politics... simply everything that a place is. Identity is the characteristic that differs one from the others. Identity exists with or without definitions or specific actions made in purpose. (Karvonen 1999, 45.)

The identity is hard to define because it is a synthesis of thousands of features that a place (or a person) possesses. Identity is temporary, historically contingent and can be decoded. (Seppänen 2001, 8.) Both good and bad features are a part of it. It cannot be forced to a certain mold, but it may change through time and actions of people. (Ikävalko&Uimonen 1997, 181; Moilanen&Rainisto 2009, 21.)

In my opinion, photos are the ideal means of transmitting the wanted information on the place's identity. Every photo expresses the view of the capturer and there could be as many point of views as there are watchers or photographers. The shared cultural convention on interpreting photos usually guides people sharing a certain time and culture to reminiscent interpretations to some degree (Seppä 2012, 59, 109). But there can happen errors also in the visual communication. The transmitted image may differ radically from the experience of the receiver.

4.2 Image

According to the dictionary of standard Finnish (2016, s.v. mielikuva) "mielikuva", mental image, is the inner, psychic image or perception of something. Karvonen (1999, 38–42, 51, 316) defines it as perception forming in human mind of something existing or something not yet existing for which the mental image is a sketch.

Image is a perception that is formed into the mind of the receiver of the messages. This perception is influenced by the data processing of the

receiver which is influenced by the experiences, earlier information, values, attitudes, needs and perceptions of the receiver. The image is also influenced by the things and information which the message sender is transmitting to build up the perception. It is difficult to try to form the wanted image for the receiver because of the personal features that influence the processing of the transmitted image. This is why usually only few features are selected as messages used in marketing. Place marketing aims to influence the images and perceptions of people about a place. Perceptions may be born from a very light experience, little information or word of mouth. (Karvonen 1999, 38–42, 51; Isohookana 2007, 19–21.)

Nowadays it is acknowledged that the most powerful effect on the perceived image is born by own experience or by recommendation of some reliable person. Perceptions are often influenced by personal emotions.

(Rope&Mether 2001, 13–18; Jones 11.) Timo Halonen says in his dissertation (2016) that a taxi driver's testimony on a place is more powerful than the messages sent by an official municipal organization (Ikonen 2016).

In my opinion, there cannot be more important target group, co-marketer and recommender than the inhabitants of a place. Isohookana (2007, 21–22, 222) says that a good inner communication is a precondition of a successful marketing communication (cf. Safko&Brake 2009). Concerning cities, the group of inhabitants is quite large and they certainly have a strong experience on the subject. Platforms where the inhabitants can share their (positive) experiences and photos are worth of effort and money if the audience takes the channel as their own. Many times these channels are born without official actors to somewhere in the social media.

Received images change reality, because they may change the thoughts, values and behavior of the receiver. Organizations should manage their images because some image will be born in any case. It is better to influence the image in a positive way. (Pitkänen 2001, 56, 59.) Isohookana writes about planned and uncontrollable communication. All images that are born cannot be influenced, but by evaluating the uncontrollable communication, for example, in the internet, the planned communication and the actions of the organization can be modified to right direction. (Isohookana 2007, 19–21.) Received images change slowly and they are hard to change, but in branding

it is essential to influence them, because brands live only in the minds of people. The image of a place has to be built on true facts and factors otherwise it turns against itself. (Baker 2007, 43; Isohookana 2007, 28–29; Jones 2012, 11, 141–147; Kotler&Asplund&Rein&Haider 1999, 1, 125, 161–167, 222–225; Rainisto 2004, 18.) Brand is opened more in chapter 4.4.

4.3 Reputation

The reputation of a place could be understood as a wide spread shared image or perception of the place. Reputation is deserved and a good reputation is closely related to trust and reliability, it may be born also without marketing. The reputation is usually based on experience and referencing. If trust is lost, the good reputation goes with it. (Aula&Heinonen 2002, 14, 46–52, 66–67, 137.) Reputation is tightly linked to images and it often includes a positive or negative value (Isohookana 2007, 22–23).

The strongest influencer regarding reputation is one's own experience, secondly the word of mouth and thirdly, the information received by media. Reputation is formed by concrete actions and existing features. It cannot be created as a marketing action, but reputation is born in the minds of people based on their perceptions, experiences and thinking processes. Reputation can be influenced more likely by personal relations than by marketing. Reaching and maintaining good reputation demands a skill to listen to customers and monitor the changes in the society. Happy customer (inhabitant) is the best advertisement, unhappy one spreads negative message more effectively than any marketing department. (Pitkänen 2001, 15–20, 38, 89.) A place's or a person's reputation can be at the same time good and bad depending on the target group and its culture and values.

4.4 Place Branding

Place branding is different actions that aim to increase or change the value of the place in people's minds. A brand is much more than a business, a name, a logo or a location. A thing or a place with "a brand" has a good reputation and it is commonly known in "the markets". A brand is more of perceptions and emotions. It is born only when "a product" has added value compared to competitors in the minds of people. Branding demands networks and touching people emotionally. People are willing to pay or strive more for a trademark or

a brand. (Aaker&Joachimsthaler 2000, 11, 277–280, 373; Jones 2012, 11; Laakso 2003, 46; Moilanen&Rainisto 2009, 11–20; Rope&Mether 2001, 167, 241.) Isohookana (2007, 24) says that a brand is born, when the customer gives a product (or a place) the value of a brand.

Rainisto (2004) says that product marketing differs from place marketing a lot. A place has several target groups and place marketing rarely aims at direct profit gaining. Also a place is a multi-dimensional and complex entity compared to a tangible product. The politicians, officials, companies, inhabitants and all the other groups who influence the identity, have different needs and interests. This makes place marketing somewhat uncontrollable. It is most effective to focus on few main target groups in the marketing communication. (Baker 2007, 25–37; Rainisto 2004, 55–56, 64; Rainisto 2008, 46–50; Moilanen&Rainisto 2009, 19–24.)

Place branding is developing the place to direction which grows added value to the place and its inhabitants and visitors. The strength of a brand is to make people aware of a place and to detach wanted images to its name. Rainisto emphasizes co-operation between private and public sector because, for example, companies of the place create the image of the place and vice versa. (Rainisto 2003, 213–225; Rainisto 2008, 51–52.)

Place branding is all the actions that aim to create a positive image of the place. Besides marketing actions it can or rather, should be, for example, strategic plans and decisions or developing infrastructure. Also the inhabitants are, at least unofficially, a part of this, everyone is a messenger when their connection to the place is known. (Baker 2007, 25–37.)

All the place branding literature that I have read for this and my earlier study emphasize the politics, the role of the city council and other important decision makers and the coherent vision of all the stakeholders of a city brand. (cf Baker 2007, 25–37.) I have begun to think, that even though the role of municipal officers and decision makers is important, the real brand of the place is born in all those millions small moments where an individual meets something or someone that he combines to the place's very identity (cf. Baker 2007, 29). The

role of municipal actors is to enable the good actions of the inhabitants and businesses that will create the unique atmosphere of a place.

The municipal communications can, of course, help to spread the word of the unique and special things in the city, but it is not enough to print a brochure with praising phrases. Could these messages be modified into a form that urges to find out yourself “if the coffee in the place X is as wonderful as has been rumored” than to speak out marketing lines as a common truth? When something unique is born, the word will spread without spending large marketing budgets. A recommendation spelled out in enthusiastic tone to one’s network may create an unpredictable buzz.

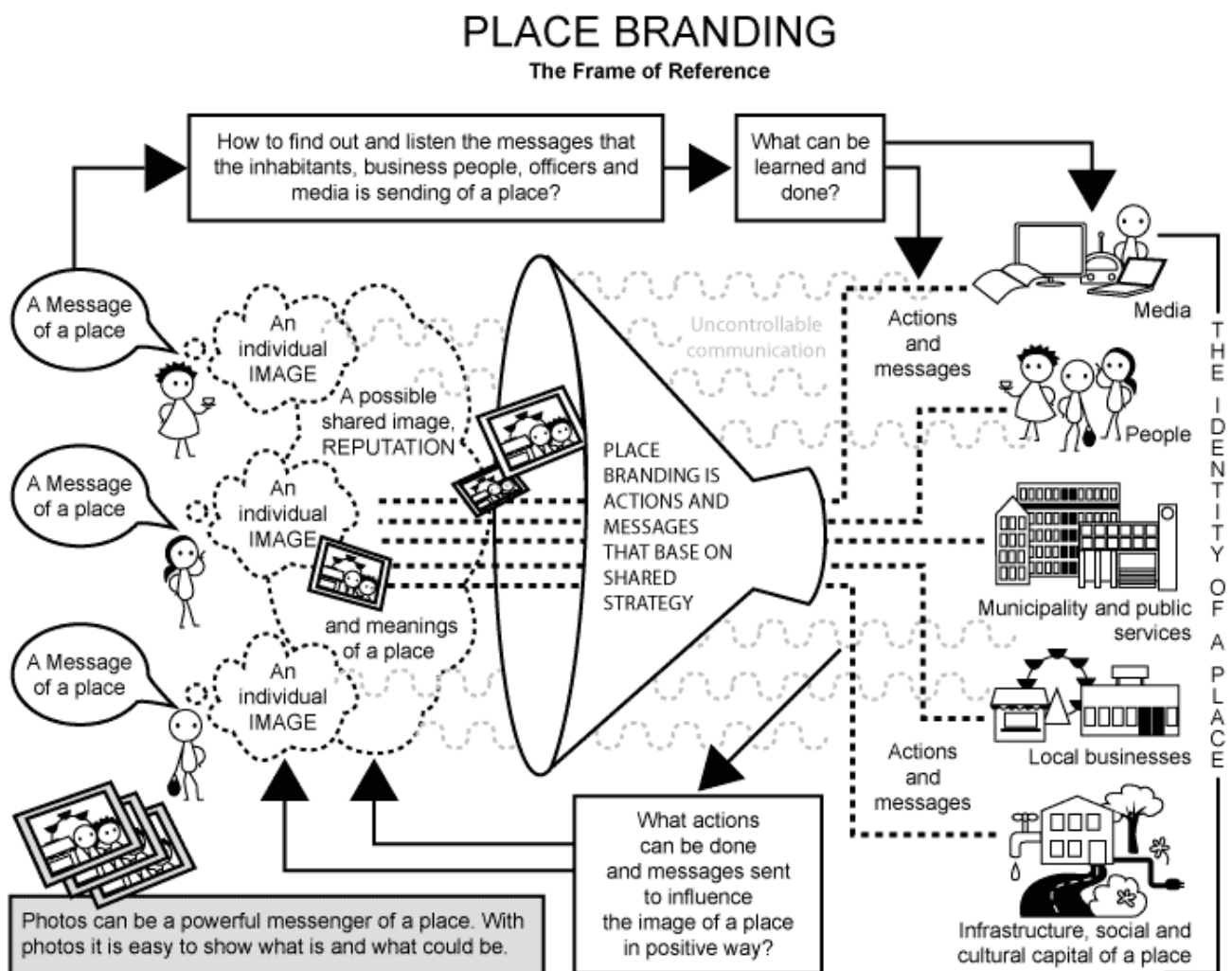


Figure 3. Place Branding frame of reference according to this research.

In this study place branding is as follows (Figure 3): People and their messages are in purpose the first thing on the left in the framework figure. An inhabitant,

customer, visitor or whoever person has a remarkably great power as a reliable messenger nowadays because of the interactive communication in social media and digital networks. Anyone's message can be important and spread around the world in minutes, if the message grabs the emotions of the receiver. It is essential to listen to people and to explore the communication that is going on about the city. That is the only way to find out what changes or services are needed.

The identity of the place is formed besides of the history and the physical surroundings also of all the people, organizations, businesses and media that are living and operating in the city. Inevitably there will be a huge amount of heterogeneous communication and contradicting voices. Strategic planning and actions are needed to create a consistent development and communication of the city. Many times a municipality is the coordinating operator that collects the stakeholders to create the mutual strategic plan to which all the stakeholders of the city can commit to. A shared will and expression can guide the actions and communication of the stakeholders to some degree and form a consistent message which can rise above all the noise in the communication field with active marketing and communications.

There could be formed an ideal marketing image of a city, but this could be violated easily. Rather the messages should be bringing out the great but truthful facts of a city and the real stories of the experiences of the inhabitants, visitors and business persons. The inhabitants usually want to think and speak well of their home place, so giving them chances and channels to do so will probably pay itself back. People will form an image of the city into their mind of their experiences and/or the experiences of someone they know or trust and/or of these planned messages and/or any uncontrollable communication in discussions and in media. Depending on what collection of these messages will reach the individual, the image may be born in any way from a strong experience to a half heard rumor. And most people share their experiences or opinions. If many people share related opinions or images of the city, it can be called the reputation of a place.

Photos as an instantly perceived message are an essential part of the modern place marketing and branding. Besides being an eye-catcher they are an

important illustrator of the life, views and possibilities of a city. It is easier to show with a photo that, for example, that a bunch of friendly looking people are doing something together in some corner of the city than to write a text in a way that would express the same atmosphere as well. Probably a bigger percentage of photos will be “read” than texts attached to them. Partly because of the “laziness” of human nature but also because of the nature of perceiving photos. It is hard to not “read” them, even if you didn’t want to, when your eye catches them. Photos are also an easy way for anyone with a smartphone to communicate and share moments of one’s life. It is an easy means of self-actualizing and expressing oneself.

4.5 Photos and visuals in place branding

Nowadays place marketing as any marketing utilizes photos and videos. Photos are a strong communication tool, they catch the eye and get attention (Isohookana 2007, 217). With impressive photos it is easy to lead the audience to wanted mood and to persuade them to read or surf in the internet pages further. For example, web pages targeted to travelers are based on tempting photographs of destinations and pleasant looking people enjoying activities regarded worth pursuing. But this concerns other target groups too, the amenable feeling is created with convincing photos as well for business leaders, families, pensioners and so on. Videos are especially in favor of younger generations and are seizing space more and more (Leino 2015). But photos still have their important role in various publications and the magic of photographs isn’t lost.

In western lifestyle countries most information and marketing brought to our eyes is visual. In publications the amount of text has decreased in relation to the percentage of photographic on the surface. Most information accessed through digital devices is strongly visual and is based on user interfaces where it is easy to find information or functions only by quickly gazing. (cf. Alanen 2010.) Seppä (2012, 152–153) calls this decreasing and simplifying of the content for large target groups a semantic poverty. Nowadays visual overcomes text as a message because of the speed of perceiving information from the vast amount of the information we encounter every day (cf. Seppänen 2010, 19).

5 UTILIZING PHOTOS AND VISUAL IN MODERN MARKETING

Digital and social media have changed marketing to be a conversation instead of a lecture. A marketer has to join the conversation and really listen to the customer which has changed from an audience to be an active participant. Digital marketing is a continuing process of acting and evaluating and changing the course when needed. (Ryan&Jones 2009, 24, 34, 151–152.) This is a challenge for the municipal, traditionally slightly rigid, operational environment.

Nowadays social media is anyway an important part of the municipal communication and, for example, marketing for travelers. In the municipal sector involving social media should be considered carefully, because of the limited resources and the “quick nature” of social media. The social media audience waits for almost instant feedback for their messages, in many cases some kind of accepting procedure would be too slow. The work in social media should be done by persons who know the municipal services and values well and are able to answer or find the answers quickly. Anyway, sharing wonderful stories, pictures, videos or other content could bring joy, entertainment and awareness for the inhabitants and possible visitors of the city. When the work is done well in the social media it may show itself quite worthy in the long run.

Social media is a tool to guide people to the landing page of the organization where all the information is updated. With clever posts and possibly “fun to share” contents can spread messages quite widely. Social media is an excellent tool to listen to the inhabitants and visitors and to find out what they want and appreciate. It is also a place for possible co-design and participatory communication. The best of all is that the audience is already there. (Ryan&Jones 2009, 154–169.)

Social media demands specific social skills. The message copied from official web pages will not work. Safko and Brake (2009, 44) encourage the administrators to be viral, innovative and nontraditional to give customers or the inhabitants a reason to pass our message on. Ryan and Jones (2009, 170) urge to be relevant, interesting and entertaining. There is always a thin

line between being glaringly humorous or totally impudent, so one should think, think and think before publishing anything that he is unsure of.

Ryan and Jones recommends to join the conversation and be helpful and responsive, to influence through influencers, engage with people who have positive attitude to the brand or a town, pass the message on through different social media channels to be shared and to collaborate with the customers or the inhabitants in developing better services. In social media it is essential to give people something they want or need. (Ryan&Jones 2009, 27, 156–157.)

The research material of this study was partly collected through social media and one of the prizes was given to a competitor whose photo was voted the best by the audience. The city of Kouvola utilizes social media in communication and, for example, event marketing. The actively updated channels are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Pictorial or video contents seem to receive more “likes” or shares than pure textual posts with links. Social media is a great tool when communication has possibilities to succeed. It can be a powerful channel of spreading messages which brighten the image of the city or to create curiosity which leads to visit the landing page. There is always a risk of failure, too, which could hurt the reputation. Social media applications are convenient and efficient channels for sharing photo contents. This is a good chance for Kouvola to introduce the current views of the city which are unknown for a majority of Finns.

5.1 What has already been done?

The city of Kouvola has used for some years a SoftGIS mapping application for development projects. This kind of map applications could work also as publishing platforms for stories about the experiences or the history of a place. The city of Porvoo has a photoframe on their web pages where audience can submit their own photos. Photos are published after administrators check and permission. (The city of Porvoo 2014)

In the year 2014 private persons have established several Facebook-pages that publish photos and information of Kouvola. For example, “Kaunista Kouvola”-page became enormously popular among amateur photographers and tens of gorgeous photos were shared daily on the page (Hakaniemi 2014).

The city of Kouvola launched Betonihelvetti.fi-pages (Concrete hell) in the summer of 2015. The page works as a platform that collects Twitter, Instagram and YouTube posts that use certain hashtags like “#munbetonihelvetti”. The content is mainly created by the audience. Few “recruited city evangelists”, who wanted to speak for Kouvola, have also created posts for free. The page got huge popularity in the beginning although it was marketed in unusual ways like attaching posters and cards to random public places and events over at least the Southern Finland. Some people in the social media took the page as their channel and media has grabbed the subject several times, too. The page has risen discussion and brought feedback because of its provocative name. “Napakat”, the local newspaper column for the readers’ short messages in Kouvola Sanomat, kept the page in spotlight for some time and it worked probably as a free marketing channel.

The Betonihelvetti-project had a risk that it would have been totally misunderstood, but it all went quite well. Most of the people posting through the page are sharing good things about Kouvola.

New platforms for influencing channels for the inhabitants are under construction as we speak and baby steps towards utilizing open data are also taken in Kouvola. The strategic plan how to proceed with digitalization is also underway.

If I was collecting similar data now, in the year 2016, I would utilize a digital platform where the photos would be spotted on a map and the descriptions would be attached to everyone to read. This could form a collective story board of the Kouvola. Betonihelvetti.fi –page actually works almost like one, only the textual material is shorter and mostly not very descriptive in nature. This kind of study could be done also purely based on the material of the Betonihelvetti.fi page or combining the social media material of the Kouvola.

5.2 How to find and reach the target groups in the internet

One of the most important target groups are the inhabitants of the city. They can be pleased only by producing adequate services and functional and aesthetic infrastructure. The inhabitants need to be informed about new services or development and possibilities to take part and influence. This group’s marketing power should not be underestimated. One inhabitant can

spread a plausible message of his home town in the shortest time for tens or hundreds of people. Unfortunately the negative news seem to spread more effectively, that is why rumors should be corrected and a negative feedback answered as fast as possible to cut the negative messages journey. (Jones 2012, 212.)

To attract visitors, students, recruits or companies we need to form messages that compress the offering of the city to an easily adaptable form. Photos are an important eye catcher in this. To get the message through all the noise in the internet it is almost necessary to buy marketing. Nowadays the most popular search engines and social media services have changed their algorithms so that the only way to get through to a wide range of audience is to pay for the marketing on the pages. (Kiviranta 2014.)

Social network sites like Facebook or LinkedIn have hundreds of millions of active users and the word spreads in seconds in them if the message is emotive or universally important in some way. By marketing in these sites the target audience can be defined and reached accurately by their age, area, interests and so on based on the profile information of users. Social network sites give also a great opportunity to improve online reputation by responding positively to the feedback received. (Ryan & Jones 2009, 89–91, 162–163; Kiviranta 2014.)

Also 'social brand evangelists' can be used as powerful messengers in these networks (Ryan & Jones 2009, 89–91, 162–163). It is called viral marketing, when social media users share and send message for the company. This is a very credible message, because it is word of a mouth message which usually is based on someone else's experience. The incomes of popular bloggers are based on this marketing mechanism. (Subramani & Rajagopalan 2003.) This can give great opportunities, but it is also a risk because the message is uncontrollable and can be negative, too. If the message is too pushy and seems to be sales talk, it will fail and the message sender loses his credibility. (Miller & Lammas 2010.)

Sharing messages in different channels will reach a larger audience. Media sharing sites like YouTube, Flickr or Instagram are very popular, users can upload and share visual content and discuss it. Educational or entertaining

videos are easily shared, even if those are made by companies. (Ryan & Jones 2009, 160.)

Blogs are also a good way to increase exposure because, for example, Google appreciates new, relevant contents. By creating an interesting blog on current topics related to the organization's work or being mentioned in someone else's popular blog will boost the awareness and increase credibility. (Ryan & Jones 2009, 164, 181–182.)

There are lots of different tools for visibility in the internet, for example, rating sites, competitions, questionnaire applications, microblogs, forums, podcasts and wikis (Ryan & Jones 2009, 165–168). Right tools must be considered by the target groups and resources, but sometimes just giving a try to something new may pay it back.

Social media provides a wide selection of means to engage people and build awareness. Social media is wide open to anyone with any opinion, it cannot be controlled. It is a powerful weapon that makes companies change their processes or actions, but on the other hand it is also a good place to scan customer needs and trends. (Ryan & Jones 2009, 150–169.)

6 RESEARCH

The research material of this study was collected by an open photo competition which was launched in the year 2014. The competition was launched in Facebook and marketed in social media and in the municipality's publications, for example, in the magazine for the inhabitants which was distributed to all homes in the Kouvola area. The subject of the photos was not defined, the only precondition was that the photo was taken in Kouvola during time 1.5.2013 –15.8.2014. The competition time when photos could be submitted was 15.5. –15.8.2014. The competitors were also asked to name their photo, shortly describe it and to answer the question: what does your photo tell about Kouvola in your opinion.

To motivate people to take part in the competition there were prizes. The winner of the ShortStack voting was awarded a prize and also the winner chosen by the competition jury. Also, one prize was drawn among the voters.

The competition jury included photographer Johannes Wiehn, the current director of the Poikilo -museums Anu Kasnio, communications director Anne Käki and communications officer Eeva Forsman.

The photo competition was executed technically with a ShortStack application attached to the Kouvola's Facebook profile. The audience and the participants were able to vote for their favorite photos in the application. The audience had also possibility to take part in the competition by submitting the competition photos through a web form that was attached to the city's web site. This was to enable the participation of persons who did not have a Facebook profile.

201 photos of the competition were submitted through the ShortStack application and took part in the voting and the evaluation of the competition jury. The rest 129 photos were submitted through the web form and were evaluated only by the competition jury.



Photo 1. Kirsti Utti's photo of a wintery rapid was the winner photo of the ShortStack voting.

The winner of the Facebook voting was (392 kpl) Kirsti Utti's photo of a wintery rapid (Photo 1). The jury chose as the winner of the whole competition the photo of Pirjo Hokkanen "Laituri ja usva" (Photo 2), the dock and fog. Both winners were awarded a present card to a camera shop. Among the voters of the Facebook competition was drawn a tablet computer.



Photo 2. The winner photo chosen by competition jury was Pirjo Hokkanen's 'Laituri ja usva'.

There was also an exhibition of the photos chosen to the final of the competition in the city library in 6.–25.10.2014. All finalist photos were not received from the competitors in printable quality and hence were not a part of the exhibition.

The research material was probably influenced to some degree by the rules of the competition (Appendices 3/2–3/3) which refer to the Finnish laws of publishing photographs. Also the personal perceptions of the competitors matter: what was worth sending to photo a competition. The framing of the competition time framed also the amount and the subjects of the photos, even it was extended a year backwards from the starting date of the competition. I was hoping to receive also some winter pictures, but the snowy period of the previous winter was quite short.

The textual part of the research suffered a bit of not so precise implication form. The analysis was not so easy when the answers to questions were not comparable. This appeared in the answers, the short description of the photo could include also more connotative material and the answer space for opinions of what the photo tells about Kouvola, included also general discussion. But altogether the answers were more fruitful when people told

what they wanted or needed to and I decided to handle the textual material as one and not classified by the fields of the competition form.

Ethics and reflection have an important role in my research, because of the partly ethnographic method in which the researcher makes interpretations on the research material: photos and the photographers' textual interpretations on their photos.

My study happened to have an ethical drawback: in the presentation or rules of the photo competition I arranged, it wasn't mentioned that the photos and the texts attached would be used as a research material. On the other hand, photographers were not identified in anyway in this research and the material was handled anonymously. The personalized information in the photo matrix is confidential and will only be seen by the evaluators of this thesis, if needed.

The research material was handled and reported in such a way that there was no harm or distress caused to the photographers that took part in the competition. No one's photographic skills or personal conceptions were evaluated, the photos were researched only concerning the content and the descriptions of them as interpreting connotations and given meanings. (Emmison, Smith & Mayall, 2012, 9.)

The photos of the competition were submitted through a web form that asked the name, the year of birth, e-mail address and parents' name, if the participant was under 16 years. This information was collected only to contact the winners of the competition and to reach the parent of participants under 16 years. Information was handled confidentially by the researcher as the secretary of the competition and will not be published. The pictures of the winners and the ones that took part in the exhibition in the city library of Kouvola were published with names of the photographers, with their permission. The participants of the photo competition accepted the rules of competition and so accepted that their photos can be published when it concerns the photo competition.

Any private information on photographers was not included in this research and the anonymity of photographers was respected. Any confidential information that the researcher saw or read while this research is safe and stays unpublished. (Emmison et al. 2012, 9.)

7 METHODOLOGY

The research method of this study is partly quantitative and mostly qualitative. The analysis of the research material is inductive and semiotic, it is based on the 330 photos and the descriptions attached to them that were sent to the photo competition of the city of Kouvola in the year 2014. The analysis is partly quantitative because of the amount of photos and the numeral results of the themes of the photos. It is qualitative and semiotic in the sense of finding meanings that the writers of the textual material have given to their photos.

The narrative material was collected with the competition form where the competitors were asked to name their photo, shortly describe it and to answer a question: what does your photo tell about Kouvola in your opinion.

The research material was analyzed with content analysis methods, in this case by categorizing and classifying the research material – themes of the photos and themes brought up in the textual descriptions attached to them. The aim was to bring up information on the perceptions of Kouvola. (Eskola & Suoranta 1996, 104, 111–115, 125; Hänninen 1999, 34.)

Janne Seppänen introduces multiple semiotic aspects regarding photographs. He thinks that most useful aspects to study concerning reading photos are denotation, connotation and metonymies. Denotation is what is obvious in the picture. Connotations of a photo are the impressions and the meanings that form into the mind of the watcher of the picture. Connotations pertain cultural values. A photo is a metonym in the sense that it represents a part of entity. Connotations include the meanings formed into the mind of the watcher. The meanings are linked to the socio-historical context and the place of the watcher, in this case Kouvola in the years 2013 and 2014. (Seppänen 2010, 178–193.) The gathered research material was quite large, so detailed iconographic analysis was not an adequate way to study the amount like this.

The research material was analyzed with two phase analysis. Mikkonen says that the names of paintings or works of art are like cutlines. They inform about how to read the picture and to which context to frame it (Mikkonen 2005, 79, 88, 381.) To avoid this unconscious guidance, the photos or rather the themes of the photos were first analyzed without any textual information attached to

them. In the second phase the descriptions attached to the photos were analyzed. The descriptions are denotations and connotations given by the competitors. These two analyses were brought together with other material concerning perceptions of Kouvola and lead to some conclusions.

The denotations of the 330 photos were collected to a matrix and calculated according to the amounts of certain themes and objects that appeared in the pictures multiple times. The textual themes merging from the descriptions attached to the photos were also calculated.

The research material was a quite large and heterogenic, categorizing it in different ways gave a good overlook on it. It also helped to find a reasonable way to approach it. Categorizing the material is interpreting it and also making interpretations on it at the same time. The researchers' interpretation will form a grounded theory of the subject. This is an adequate approach when analyzing textual material. (Eskola&Suoranta 1996, 104, 111–115, 125.)

This research and its interpretations were based on the researcher's interpretations. The researcher analyzed the photos and the texts through her own theoretical and practical knowledge. (Seppänen 2001 63–64.) The researcher's perspective is based on the over ten years work experience in communications and marketing in the municipal field. The perspective is formed also by the personal history as an inhabitant in the area and as an amateur photographer. The interpretations would probably have been different if the researcher was not a middle aged woman of northern genome living in a Finnish small town with rather western lifestyle in the year 2016.

The research method clarified on the way when it was obvious that analyzing 330 photos in detail would be mission impossible in the time frame of the study. Also the theory of analyzing photographs convinced that there should be strong experience on the subject to create adequate interpretations. The classifying of the photos in to different genres was tried too, but it proved to be difficult because most of the photos were not pure examples of a certain commonly acknowledged genre and the genres also overlapped in the same photo. The method of classifying the material in different themes was familiar to the researcher and it seemed to fit this material too. The themes of the photographs and the themes of the textual material were classified by the amounts of the themes that arose from the material. The research material

guided the research and eventually the textual material or the combination of photo and text appeared to be the most fruitful source for interpretations.

8 RESULTS

8.1 Themes and genres of the photos

The photography competition of the Kouvola 2014 received 330 photos. This research did not consider the materials' artistic aspects, only the visual content was studied.

In the first phase the denotations of the photos were collected to a research matrix. At first the material was categorized into genres, but it was difficult: 28 photos were clearly nature photos, there was an animal or a plant as a subject, but drawing the line was hard: what was a nature photo or was it nearly a landscape or was it both? Some of the animal pictures could have also been categorized as portraits because of their composition. There were only three photos where the nature was not a part of the photo in form of plants, sky or living beings. The genres were not an adequate way of classifying the material because of the overlapping.

Because categorizing photos by genres wasn't very successful, I categorized the photos just by the objects captured in them. Of course some of the photos include several objects theme in them. The main subjects of the competition photos were collected to a theme board (Figure 4).

Most of the photos sent to competition were landscapes with a river or a lake view and a sunset or a dawn. A river, a lake or some smaller water object was in some role in 137 photos.



Figure 4. Theme board of the subjects of the photo competition of the city of Kouvolaa in the year 2014.

Many competitors had appreciated close-ups, 88 photos were close-ups of the details in the nature or the domestic surroundings, 21 of which were close-ups of a plant or a flower. There was a dawn or a sunset in 71 photos. 68 photos were taken in a town or a village environment.

In my experience people take plenty of photos of their family members, but in this case, the publish rules of the competition (Appendix 3) and the possible publicity of the photos may have decreased the amount of the photos where people appear.

In only 61 photos there were people, 15 of these were portraits in their nature or photos where a person was in the focus. In most of the photos people were pictured from distance, as shadows or silhouettes or from behind. This was understandable because of the publish rules (The Finnish Criminal Law, Chapter 24, section 8). It takes more effort to ask people's permission to publish the picture than to take a photo of someone that cannot be recognized or just to take a picture without people in it.

There were 30 photos with animals, six of which were photos of pets, 16 of wild animals and 8 of farm animals. The photos of wild animals were mostly of birds, but there were also a couple of butterflies, a fox and a snake. I presume that most animals were easy to access and were photographed mostly in the nature near the photographer's usual territory.

Some kind of a bridge was in 24 photos. In most cases water ran under them and there was a reflection of the bridge that creates a magical symmetry to the picture. Agriculture was in some form in 20 photos. They were mostly photos of the farmed fields with farm buildings. 17 of photos was taken of a foggy view

In 16 photos was a dock in some role. A dock is a kind of a gate between land and water. A lonely dock seems to be waiting for someone to arrive. Maybe most of the photographers didn't think of these kinds of metaphors but the dock was a detail by the water that made the photo more interesting.

A factory was only in 10 photos and the railroad in 9 of which 7 had train in it. The factories and the railway are historically and culturally significant for Kouvola, those were the things that started the building up cities in the region. These elements seemed to fascinate only few of the competitors.

In ten photos a building was the main object. There were a couple of photos of factory buildings and a couple of manors or other classic style wooden buildings. Some were expressing the robust feeling of deteriorating or the contrast between nature and industry. Few photos were details of the buildings, for example, of the wall surface. In a couple of the pictures were buildings of a town center, like in the one with the glass walls reflecting sky.

Most photos were taken in the summer or in the spring, only 11 were clearly taken in the autumn and 11 in the winter time. A couple of the winter photos expressed the coldness extremely well with icy branches of trees and mist above freezing water. The timing of the competition may have influenced this, because the competition time was from May to August and the winter photos allowed to the competition should have been taken during the winter of 2013.

There were also a couple of photos of statues. Garbage left in the nature or somewhere else was captured also in few photos. Signs of nature attractions were in focus in a handful of photos, maybe to bring out reliably that there are

nature values in Kouvola. Or maybe these signs are rare, at least to people living mostly in the town territory.

Only few photos seemed to be prearranged or obviously posed. The position or synchronized movements of persons in the photo hinted strongly to prearranged situations of some degree.

8.2 Clues of the photos

This plain numeral listing of the subjects of the photos tells about appreciation of the nature. The rules of the competition and publishing laws (The Finnish Criminal Law, section 8) may have affected the subjects of the photos. The question remains if there would have been more photos of family and friends of there were no such limitations.

There are different motives or “clues” for taking a photo of something. Mostly people take pictures simply for “souvenirs” of special events or of someone or something dear to us and not minding deeper the composition. When it comes to artistic or self-actualizing reasons, the motives may be based on, for example, the composing of the photo area in the artistic way, catching movement, special lightning or peculiar angle of view. (Riihelä 2001–2005.)

Special lightning was the clue in quite many photos of the competition. A sunset or a dawn was captured in 71 photos. Also fog made a special atmosphere in 17 photos. A few photos had been shot in back lightning to make special effects or maybe to fade recognizable features of human figures. A couple of night shots were included too.

Timing and lucky situation was the clue in 60 of the photos. There were situations with people in action or right after action, like a man in wet clothes after dropping from a dock to the river. I also categorized photos with some nature element, like flock of birds flying through evening sky, as a situation photos, because the nature or the atmosphere of the photo would have been different just a moment after or before shooting it. Six of these situation photos were taken in some public event.

On the plain photo material I was not willing to make any deeper analysis due to my little experience in analyzing photos. I found the textual material more fruitful in this case.

8.3 Themes of the descriptions

The descriptions attached to the competition photos had in several cases wider scale of subjects or themes than the photo itself. In some cases people wanted to tell their perception of the Kouvola in general despite of the strict theme of their competition photo. This was very beneficial for this study.

On the other hand, there were also cases where the textual information of a description was in minimum scale. Only one description was passed with dashes and only the name of the photo was given. In six cases there was only a description or an answer to the question of the meaning of the photo and the other form field was passed with full stop or an emoji. All participants named their photos and gave their contact information.



Figure 5. Theme board of the themes mentioned in the descriptions attached to the photos of the photo competition of the city of Kouvola in the year 2014.

The most popular themes that rose up in the descriptions of the competition photos were collected into a theme board (Figure 5), these themes are opened more and quoted in the following chapters.

8.3.1 Aesthetic experiences

An aesthetic experience at the moment of taking the picture was mentioned some way in the descriptions of 113 photos. Beautiful landscapes were mentioned in the descriptions of 46 photos. Some of the competition photos were inspired by an unusual view or otherwise a personally impressive moment. To this theme belonged also the landscapes with rainbows or fog. The aesthetics of details was mentioned in 21 descriptions.

One participant had climbed with a companion to the top of Mielakka hill (downhill skiing hill) early in a summer morning. The sun was rising and fog floated over downtown. The competitor described this moment incredibly magnificent.



Photo 3. Aamurusko. The dawn.

Another participant had stopped his car in one autumn evening because of the “stunning” beauty of the view opening from the Korja-bridge over The River Kymi and he felt he had to capture it (Photo 3).

I had a job in the early morning somewhere between Myllykoski and Inkeroinen. Sky began to lighten up and the sun was about to rise. I arrived on a field and looked at the sky and noticed how magnificent purple it was. I decided that I had to capture this landscape in a photo.

”Olin aamuyöstä työkeikalla Myllykosken ja Inkeröiden välillä. Taivas alkoi pikkuhiljaa kirkastua ja auringonnousu läheni. Saavuin aukealle peltoalueelle ja aloin katselemaan taivasta, jolloin huomasin, kuinka upean sinipunertavaksi

piakkoin nouseva aurinko oli sen värjännyt. Päätin, että näin upeasta maisemasta on pakko ottaa kuva.”

Other unusual or aesthetic views were, for example, a fox trapped under the protective grating over a strawberry field or a blooming flower field or the play of light and colors reflecting from water surface.

8.3.2 The Kymi River, Lakes and Rapids

The River Kymi and other bodies of water were mentioned in the descriptions of 113 photos. The appreciation of the lakes and rivers of Kouvola came up in the descriptions strongly.

The town of rivers, rapids and lakes.

“Jokien, koskien ja järvien kaupunki.”

Man longs to be near the lakes and rivers; luckily we have the River Kymi, the Lake Repovesi, the Lake Lappalanjärvi.

“Ihminen kaipaa veden äärelle; onneksi meillä on Kymijoki, Repovesi, Lappalanjärvi...”

The River Kymi is an important part of Kouvola.

“Kymijoki on tärkeä osa Kouvola.”

The River Kymi has reached its position among people who like to go fishing. In the photo one can see the peacefulness of the river despite of the strong flow, the harmony and tranquility of the nature and the fascinating therapeutic influence of it.

“Kymijoki on vuosien saatossa saavuttanut jälleen paikkansa kalakansan keskuudessa. Kuvassa näkyy joen rauhallisuus voimakkaasta virrasta huolimatta, luonnon harmonia ja seesteisyys sekä lumoava terapeutinen vaikutus.”

Water, no matter if it is a river or a lake, it is an important source of recreation for the inhabitants of Kouvola. The shallow and cleans shores are suitable also for children to play. In the picture is the beach of the lake Lappala on the side of the Valkeala village, which is in active use from morning to the late night. Morning light and fog are interesting elements. The still surface of the lake reflects the dock and gives the picture a perspective, in my opinion.

“Vesi, olkoon se sitten joki tai järvi on kouvolaalaisille tärkeä virkistystyksen lähde.

Järvien matalat, puhtaat ja kauniit rannat sopivat hyvin myös lasten vesileikkeihin. Kuvassa Lappalanjärven Valkealan puoleinen uimaranta joka on ahkerassa käytössä varhaisesta aamusta iltamyöhään. Aamuinen valo ja usva ovat mielenkiintoiset elementit. Tyyni järvenpinta heijastaa laiturin kuvajaisen ja antaa mielestäni kuvalle syvyyttä.”

The River Kymi is very important for Kouvola. The importance of it is too often nearly forgotten. The out-of-towns appreciate it and it is a competitive advantage for us.

”Kymijoki on erittäin tärkeä Kouvollalle. Sen tärkeys meinaa meiltä aina unohtua. Ulkopaikkakuntalaiset osaavat sitä kyllä arvostaa ja se on meidän hyvä valttikortti.”

The beauty of the River Kymi, the peacefulness in the town. The photo is taken in Kuusankoski, towards the mill from other side of the bridge, which reflects well the color scale of the setting sun.

”Kymijoen kauneutta, hiljaisuutta kaupungissa. Kuva otettu Kuusankoskelta, kuvattuna tehtaalle päin sillan toiselta puolen, ja kuvastaa hyvin laskevan auringon luomaa väriskaalaa.”

The River Kymi and other bodies of water were appreciated in the descriptions as elements of recreation. The adjectives attached were, for example, peacefulness and tranquility. Also a therapeutic influence was mentioned. The River Kymi was also appreciated as an identity factor that could be used more in city branding, too.

8.3.3 Nature: Peace, Beauty and Recreation

The nature was mentioned in the descriptions of 81 photos. Most of the competition photos were taken of landscapes and the nature. The descriptions emphasized the experience of peace and tranquility that can be reached in the nature. Also beauty of the local nature was highly appreciated. Sunsets and dawns were the most usual objects of the photos. Also photos taken by a river or a lake were the most popular objects. Many times the sunset was captured from a river bank or a lake shore.



Photo 4. Vuohijärven ilta. A night at the Lake Vuohijärvi.

The nature of the Kouvola region and especially the lakes provide unbelievably beautiful views to those who care to search close enough. – One summer evening on the Lake Vuohijärvi. After thunder, the sunset is reflecting from clouds to a silent lake and makes the landscape to look like a painting.

”Kouvolan alueen luonto ja erityisesti lähistön järviolueet tarjoavat uskomattoman kauniita maisemia niille jotka malttavat etsiä tarpeeksi läheltä. - Kesäinen ilta Vuohijärvellä. Päivän ukkosmyrskyn jälkeen auringonlasku heijastuu pilvistä tyyneen järveen ja saa maiseman näyttämään aivan maalaukselta.” (Photo 4.)

The beautiful, clean nature is one of the best things in Kouvola!

”Kaunis, puhdas luonto on yksi Kouvolan parhaimmista puolista!”

We are located near the most beautiful nature in the Southern Finland, Repovesi National Park, which hasn't probably been marketed well enough.

”Olemme lähellä kauneinta luontoa etelä Suomessa, Repoveden Kansallispuisto, joka ei ehkä vielä ole saanut tarpeeksi hyvää mainosta.”

A photo is taken in June at the Kalalampi pond, invigorating oasis besides the Lehtomäki suburb, duckboards around the swampy pond, which reminds of Lappland wilderness and takes the mind far away from everyday life hurries. A beautiful place.

”Kesäkuinen kuva kalalammelta, virkistävä keidas lehtomäen lähiön kupeessa,

soisen lammen ympärillä pitkospuut jotka saavat mieleen lapin erämaat ja vievät ajatuksissa kauas arjen kiireestä .Kaunis paikka.”

The River Kymi flows through many populated communities to the Gulf of Finland. The river shows itself different in different seasons and times of the day. Near the river the mind is peaceful and thoughts flow as clear as the river. The atmosphere changes sometimes to unbelievable dreamlike views. There is something priceless in Kouvola: the clean nature.

”Kymijoki virtaa useiden paikkakuntien kautta Suomenlahteen. Joki on myös osa Kouvola. Kymijoki elää erilaisena jokaisena vuoden sekä vuorokauden aikana. Joen läheisyydessä mieli lepää ja ajatukset virtaavat joen lailla kirkkaina. Tunnelma joella vaihtelee joskus uskomattoman upeisiin unenomaisiin näkyihin. Kouvola löytyy jotakin korvaamatonta; puhdasta luontoa.”

There is a lot to capture and many beautiful places in Kouvola. In the time of the midnight sun one can even see a forest fairy in the fields of Tuohikotti.

”Kouvola löytyy paljon kauniita paikkoja ja paljon kuvattavaa. Juhannuksen aikaan Tuohikotin pelloilla saattoi nähdä jopa metsänkeijun.”



Photo 5. Juhannuksen taikaa. The magic of the midnight sun.

This description was attached to a photo (Photo 5) where a woman was standing in the middle of a foggy field and the atmosphere was quite mystical.

Some people on the other hand admired a neat, harvested forest:

There is also well kept forests in Kouvola.

“Hoidettua metsääkin löytyy Kouvolaasta”.

Nature experiences were many times attached to peace and silence, also to the peace of the mind and relaxation (Photo 6). Tranquility or peace was mentioned in the descriptions of 30 photos.



Photo 6. Iltahetki. An evening spell.

There are beautiful, quiet places on the lake shores in Kouvola. The photo was taken in Jaala, by the Lake Sonnanjärvi on a May evening, when the sun was setting and it was really peaceful.

”Kouvolaasta löytyy kauniita, hiljaisia paikkoja järvien rannoilta. Kuva on otettu Jaalassa Sonnanjärven rannalla eräänä toukokuuisena iltana, kun aurinko oli laskemassa ja oli todella rauhaisaa.” (Photo 6.)

Also Kouvola as a nature observation region was mentioned in the descriptions: *Kouvola is a great place to observe birds yearly moving.*

Barnacle geese on their fall move in 2013.

”Kouvola on loistava paikka seurata muuttolintujen muuttoa. Valkoposkihanhet syksyisellä muuttomatalla 2013.”

In the descriptions of the photos there are multiple mentions of recreation and resting in the countryside.

There were multiple beautiful peaceful places in the nature of Kouvola, where the soul and eye rest.

"Kouvolasta löytyy lukemattomia luonnonrauhaisia paikkoja, joissa sielu ja silmä lepää."

There is a beautiful countryside in Kouvola, where to enjoy the beauty of nature and recreation for soul in the middle of the busy times.

"Kouvolassa on myös kaunista maaseutua, jossa voi nauttia luonnon kauneudesta ja sielu voi levätä kiireisen ajan keskellä."

There are beautiful views and peaceful spots in Kouvola where one can find a peace of mind.

"Kouvolasta löytyy kauniita maisemia ja rauhallisia sopukoita, joissa mieli saa levätä."

The countryside was mentioned in the descriptions of 27 photos. There were a few photos of rural landscape and farm animals. The photo of a bull calf was attached with the description: *"The countryside is pop"* (Photo 7).



Photo 7. Toivotassu kotieläinpihan Lutu sonnivasikka. A bull calf called Lutu at the Toivotassu farmyard.

There is rural landscape almost in the center of Kouvola.

"Maalaismaisemaa on lähes keskellä Kouvolan keskustaa."

The romantic atmosphere of summer night and the landscape in the countryside. Kouvola isn't just paving stones but also a beautiful town with countryside. In the countryside one can find a peace of mind.

"Kesäyön romanttinen tunnelma ja maisema maaseudulla. Kouvola ei ole pelkkää katukiveä, vaan myös Kouvola on kaunis maaseutualueita käsittävä kaupunki. Maalla sielu lepää."

Kouvola is especially a rural town, there is organic farming and people who want organic food.

"Kouvola on etenkin maaseutukaupunki, jossa on luomuviljelijöitä ja luomua haluavia asukkaita."

Kouvola is a town of diversity. The nature is gorgeous and the air is fresh. It is good for people. My daughter came at last for a holiday. We felt happy and relaxed – and took it easy what comes to the gardening of a large yard.

Holiday in the countryside – it is SO organic and SO cool!

"Kouvola on hyvin moni-ilmeinen. Luonto on upea ja ilma puhdas. Ihmisen on hyvä olla.- Tyttäreni Helsingistä tuli vihdoin lomalle. Olo oli auvoista, otettiin lungisti - ison pihan hoitokin.- Lomalla maalla -NIIN luomua NIIN cool!"

Many descriptions referred to the nature experiences in one's own backyard or near home (Photo 8). The near or quick access to the nature was attached to the descriptions of 21 photos.



Photo 8. Luottamus huomiseen. A trust in tomorrow.

The marvelous places and moments right in our backyard are worth enjoying.
“Kannattaa nauttia niistä upeista paikoista ja hetkistä, jotka Kouvolaassa ovat aivan takapihallamme.” (Photo 8.)

While living in a peaceful surrounding you don't always have to leave your own yard to see something great.

“Rauhallisessa ympäristössä ei tarvitse aina lähteä omaa pihaa pidemmälle kohdatakseen jotakin hienoa”

This description was attached to a photo of a hare in a grassy yard (Photo 9).



Photo 9. Pieni ystävä. A little friend.

There is a lot to see for a nature-lover in Kouvola. Great wonders of the nature can be seen even in the home yard.

“Kouvolaassa on paljon nähtävää luontoihmiselle. Suuria luonnonihmeitä voi nähdä omassa kotipihassakin.”

In the photo was a sign which referred to a nature attraction. The description told that this sign stands before a protected spruce.

In Kouvola you can find a peaceful paradise in the middle of the town, where the nature is flourishing.

"Kouvolassa myös keskellä kaupunkia voit löytää rauhallisen paratiisin, jossa luonto on kauneimmillaan."

The photo attached to the description was taken at the Kalalampi pond which is located quite near the city center, besides the suburb.

There is a wonderful and clean nature in Kouvola! It is so in every case: If you are a butterfly, you see only beauty, but if you are a fly, all you see is dirt!! I want to be a butterfly! The photo is taken on one summer evening, when I was driving from Mikkeli to Kouvola.. The curve of the road besides the Lake Rapojärvi looks always wonderful and I thought I could stop the time for a moment and just enjoy the beauty.

"Kouvolassa on ihana kaunis ja puhdas luonto! Niin se vaan on jokaisessa asiassa: Jos olet perhonen niin näet pelkkää kauneutta ympärilläsi, mutta jos olet kärpänen niin et näe kuin likaa!! Haluan olla perhonen! - Valokuva on otettu kesäisenä iltana ajellessani Mikkelistä Kouvolaan.. Rapojärven mutka näyttää aina yhtä kauniilta ja ajattelinkin, että voisiko pysäyttää ajankulun hetkeksi ja nauttia vaan tästä kauneudesta."

Also near the town center one can enjoy the splendor of the nature.

"Lähellä kaupunkiakin voi nauttia luonnon upeudesta"

The rural and the urban area are set side by side in Kouvola. Short distances between the towns and the countryside was mentioned in 11 photos.

The countryside and the urban area meet right beside the central area of the city.

"Maaseutu ja kaupunki kohtaavat heti keskustasta lähdetäessä."

The high buildings of the town center loom right behind the paddock and the field. Countryside is located right beside the central area of the city.

"Heti hevoshään ja peltoaukean takaa häämöttävät keskustan korkeat talot. Maaseutu on lähellä kaupunkia."

In Kouvola we are in the city while we are in the countryside and in the countryside while we are in the city. There is everything that most people long for these days. Everything is nearby. Even in the middle of a field, the silhouette of the town looms in the horizon.

"Kouvolassa ollaan maallakin kaupungissa ja kaupungissa maalla. Kaikkea

mitä usea nykyisin kaipaa. Kaikki on lähellä. Pellon keskelläkin keskustan siluetti siintää horisontissa.”

How diverse the dwelling place is! 20 minutes from the town center and you are in the peace of countryside.

”Kuinka monipuolinen asuinpaikkakunta on, 20min keskustasta autolla olet maaseudun rauhassa”

The photo tells that Kouvola is a town of diversity where, for example, a pedestrian street Manski, shopping centers and countryside live peacefully side by side.

”Kuva kertoo Kouvolaista sen, että Kouvola on monipuolinen kaupunki, jossa mm. kävelykatu Manski, kauppakeskukset ja maaseutu elävät sulassa sovussa.”

Also the urban nature was appreciated which appeared in the photos. There were multiple photos of parks and flowerbeds.

This photo is a piece of the natural beauty of Kouvola.

”Tämä kuva on pala kouvolaan luonnonläheistä kauneutta.”

The tidy and beautiful pedestrian street :)

”Siisti ja kaunis kävelykatu :)”

This description was attached to a photo of a flowerbed of the pedestrian street.

The gorgeous flowerbeds of the town delights in the summer time.

”Upeat kukkaistutukset ilahduttavat kesäisin kaupungilla.”

8.3.4 History

Some descriptions appreciated historical sites and traditions. The history was mentioned 20 times in the descriptions. For example, manors, the war history and the industrial history were mentioned. Factories were mentioned in 14 descriptions.

The photo tells about the ability and will to treasure traditions.

”Kuva kertoo Kuvolaan kykyä ja halua vaalia perinteitä.”

The photo presented an old mill on a river bank which could be admired from a modern bridge besides it.

There are plenty of manors in Kouvola and history attached to them. Even the Finnish history. Many of manors are opened for audience as museums, art centers or event sites. Moisio manor stands in the fertile landscape of Elimäki. It is opened for the audience as an art gallery and event site, which is marvelous.

"Kouvolassa on paljon kartanoita ja niihin liittyvää historiaa. Jopa Suomen historiaa. Monet kartanoista on avattu yleisölle joko museoina, taidekeskuksina tai pitopaikkoina. Moisio kartano sijaitsee Elimäen viljavissa maisemissa. Kartano on avattu yleisölle taidenäyttelyin ja pitopaikkana, mikä on hieno juttu."

Kouvola is a grand garrison town and Vekaranjärvi is one of the biggest garrisons in Finland. (Garrisons) are also a big employer in our region. Twice a year a large amount of recruits arrive for service. The event of giving oaths is very impressive, parents of the recruits arrive there from places at the distance of hundred kilometers..

"Kouvola on suuri varuskunta kaupunki ja Vekaranjärvi on Suomen suurimpia varuskuntia. Myös tärkeä työnantaja seudullamme. Vekaranjärvi on suuri varuskunta. Vuodessa sinne tulee kaksi suurta erää uusia alokkaita suorittamaan varusmiespalvelustaan. Valatilaisuus on juhlava, ja sinne osallistuu sotapoikien vanhempia satojen kilometrien etäisyydeltä." (Photo 10.)



Photo 10. Valatilaisuus Vekaranjärvellä. The oath at the Vekaranjärvi.

Also historic, beautiful details have inspired the competitors:

The town of surprises. Secret aesthetic experiences can be found all around. The chandelier of an altar of an orthodox church. The church will be 100 years old in the year 2015.

”Yllätysten kaupunki. Salaisia esteettisiä elämyksiä voi löytää joka puolelta. Kattokruunu Kouvolan ortodoksisen kirkon alttarista. Kirkko täyttää 100 vuotta vuonna 2015.”

Industry has shaped the Kouvola region and has been crucial for the city center development. The railway was originally constructed for the needs of the paper industry. Whole villages or towns were running of the power of a paper mill and they formed communities around them with schools, fire departments, health care and hobbies. (Photo 11.)



Photo 11. Tehdas. A factory.

The factories and the meaning of them to the locals is opening up for me, too, who has moved from elsewhere. The riverbanks of The River Kymi are extremely beautiful and I hoped that despite of the history everybody could see its opportunities and the beauty around it.

"Tehtaat ja niiden merkitys paikallisille alkaa aukeamaan minullekin, muualta muuttaneelle. Kymijoen varsi on huikean kaunista ja toivoisin, että historiasta huolimatta kaikki yhdessä osaisivat nähdä sen mahdollisuudet ja ympäröivän kauneuden". (Photo 11.)

Some descriptions were almost poetic:

The willingness of citizens to destroy or protect the old. The electric battle has went on from a generation to another. The electric utility pole stands beneath the blue sky decorated by a water fountain as a land mark of The River Kymi. "Kansalaisten halua hävittää tai suojella vanhaa. Sähköinen kädenvääntö on jatkunut sukupolvelta toiselle.: Paperitehtaan kuuluisa suihkulähteen koristeleva sähkölinjatolppa Kymijoen maamerkinä sinitaivaan alla." (Photo 12.)



Photo 12. Sähköistä kädenvääntöä. Electric arm wrestling.

8.3.5 Kouvola as a place to live in and to grow up

Ten descriptions appreciated Kouvola as a good place to live and eight as a good surroundings to raise kids.

Everything that Kouvola is known for is combined in the photo: factories, sports, the beautiful nature and networking. The photo tells that there is everything in Kouvola, that a person could demand from a good dwelling place.

"Kuvassa yhdistyy kaikki mistä Kouvola tunnetaan eli: tehtaات, urheilu, kaunis luonto ja verkostoituminen. Kuva kertoo, että Kouvolaassa on kaikki mitä ihminen hyvältä asuin ympäristöltä vaatii! :)" (Photo 13.)



Photo 13. Auringonlasku 17.5. Sun set in 15.5.2014.

People move away from Kouvola to some suburb near the capital city and then later they try to seek for a summer cottage back in Kouvola. It is good to live in the Kouvola region, the forest is near even when living right in the town center.

"Jengi muuttaa pois Kouvolaasta johonkin pääkaupunkiseudun lähiöihin ja sitten myöhemmin etsitään kesämökkiä tältä seudulta. Kouvolaan ympäristössä hyvä asua, lyhyt matka metsään vaikka asuisi ihan siinä keskustassa! :)" (Photo 14.)



Photo 14. Going?

It is good for a family with kids to live here.

"Lapsiperheen on täällä hyvä olla" (Photo 15.)



Photo 15. Ensimmäistä kertaa rannalla. At the beach for the first time.

In the suburbs of Kouvola live plenty of children. Together they find out something to do and the best of all is the company of other children.

"Lähiöissä asuu paljon lapsia. Yhdessä he keksivät tekemistä, ja parasta on toisten lasten seura :)."

Kouvola is a good place for children to grow.

"Kouvolassa on lapsella on hyvä paikka kasvaa..."

Kouvola is a good and natural place for children to grow up.

"Lapselle Kouvola on hyvä ja luonnonläheinen kasvuympäristö"

I think it (the photo) reflects how well a family with children enjoys themselves in Kouvola.

"Minusta siinä välittyy miten hyvin täällä Kouvolassa lapsiperhe viihtyy."

(Photo 16.)



Photo 16. Anjalan tyttö. A girl from Anjala.

Because the summer has brought the sun and warmth also to Kouvola, we will not enjoy it inside the house. It is wonderful outside, especially bustling in one's own yard. We live in a peaceful area, it isn't far, for example, to go to buy ice cream in the town center. It's a good place for a child to live and grow up here.

"Koska kesä on tuonut aurinkoa ja lämpöä myös Kouvolaan, niin siitä ei sisällä nautita. Ulkona on ihanaa olla, varsinkin omalla pihalla touhuten. Asumme rauhallisella alueella, mistä ei ole pitkä matka vaikka keskustaan jäätelölle. Hyvä on lapsen täällä asua ja kasvaa."

Kouvola was praised also as a summer cottage region (16 descriptions):

Kouvola is a splendid summer cottage town, 40 minutes and the noise of the city is left behind.

"Kouvola on mainio mökkeilykaupunki, 40 minuuttia ja kaupungin häly jää taakse"

Kouvola is an excellent summer cottage town with plenty of lakes and hill plots with pine forests.

"Kouvola on erinomainen mökkikaupunki, lukuisine vesistöineen ja mäntyisine rinnetontteineen."

8.3.6 Leisure time and activities

Great opportunities for recreation (12) and facilities for hobbies (12), sports (14), outdoor and fishing (8) activities were mentioned several times in the descriptions.

There are several and good possibilities for outdoor activities and spending time with the family.

"Kouvolassa on useimpia mahdollisuuksia hyvää ulkoiluun ja yhdessä oloon perheen kanssa."

There are fine facilities for fishers in Kouvola, both for boating and fishing on the shore.

"On hienot puitteet niin veneilijöille kuin rannalta onkijoille Kouvolan alueella harrastaa kalastusta."

There are multiple possibilities for jogging, beautiful spots and the peaceful nature near the city center of Kouvola.

"Kouvolassa lähellä keskustaa paljon lenkkeily mahdollisuuksia, kauniita kohteita ja luonnon rauhaa."

There are fine possibilities and places for leisure activities. The River Kymi flows through the city and is a leisure time facility for many people. There are people paddling, rowing and fishing side by side.

"Kouvolasta löytyy hienoja harrastuspaikkoja ja -mahdollisuuksia. Kymijoki virtaa halki kaupungin ja toimii monelle hienona paikkana harrastaa. Siellä ovat melojat, soutajat sekä kalastajat rintarinnan."

The photos' description tells that:

Paddling on a summer morning is ending and the bow of a kayak is heading towards the Water Center of Myllykoski. There is a silent paper factory behind.

"Kesäinen aamumelonta lähestyy loppuaan ja kajakin keula suuntaa Myllykosken Vesistökeskukseen. Taustalla hiljainen paperitehdas."

The photo is named *Silently flows the River Kymi*, "Hiljaa virtaa Kymijoki" (Photo 17).



Photo 17. Hiljaa virtaa Kymijoki. Slowly flows the River Kymi.

There are wonderful landscapes in Kouvola and it is convenient to go bicycling.

"Kouvolassa on ihanat maisemat ja mukava pyöräillä."

There are good places for jogging and dog activities, too..

"Kouvolassa on hyviä paikkoja lenkeilyyn ja kaikkeen toimintaan myös koiran kanssa"

There are multiple hobby possibilities in Kouvola. In the summer time possibilities are even wider, when one can reach the nature around Kouvola. This photo was taken in Kannuskoski, on the Kouvola side of the river. The sign (in the photo) guides paddlers to Välliväylä, which is a popular paddling route. It is a former route for log driving.

"Kouvolassa voi harrastaa monipuolisesti. Kesäisin mahdollisuudet laajenevat vielä tuntuvasti, kun luontoon pääsee eri puolille Kouvola. Kannuskoskella, Kouvolan puolelta, napattu kuva. Kyltti opastaa melojia Välliväylälle, joka on suosittu melontareitti. Kyseessä on entinen tukinuittoreitti."

The photo tells about the diversity of the nature and outdoor areas in the Kouvola region. – We went in the midsummer 2014 to Repovesi for a short hike and the landscapes were as magnificent as I remembered. I happened to have a camera with me and this old suspension bridge was one of the interesting photographic targets.

"Kuva kertoo Kouvolan seudun luonnon ja ulkoilualueiden

monimuotoisuudesta. - Kävimme Juhannuksena 2014 kiertämässä Repovedellä pienen lenkin pitkästä aikaa ja maisemat olivat kyllä juuri niin mahtavat, mitä muistelinkin. Mukana sattui olemaan kamera ja tämä vanha riippusilta oli yksi mielenkiintoisista kuvauskohteista.” (Photo 18.)



Photo 18. Riippusilta Repoveden kansallispuistossa. A suspending bridge at the Repovesi national park.

Kouvola is a good place for geocaching, there are lots of geocaches! Without geocaching I would have missed many great places and also this picture would not be taken.

”Kouvolan alueella on hyvä geokätköillä, sillä kätköjä on täällä paljon! Ilman geokätköilyä moni hieno paikka olisi jäänyt näkemättä ja tämäkin kuva ottamatta.”

We are a sports town – UKK-rounds on the sports field (in the photo).

”Olemme urheilullinen kaupunki - Menossa on UKK-kierrokset urheilukentällä”

Sport unites the people of Kouvola – The winning party of KooKoo in the market place in the spring 2014.

”Urheilu yhdistää kouvolaalaiset. - KooKoon voitonjuhlalat torilla keväällä 2014.”

Recreation possibilities in a landscape with a factory can be seen as a great curiosity.

In the winter time it is possible to swim in the River Kymi while the pipes of a factory loom in the background.

"Kymijoella voi harrastaa talviuintia tehtaan piippujen häämöttäessä taustalla."

(Photo 19.)



Photo 19. Hyinen kylpy. An icy bath.

The woods of Kouvola work as a food storage. A summer day catch from the woods nearby. Locally produced food from the forest.

"Kouvolan metsät toimii ruoka-aittana. Kesäpäivän saalis lähimetsästä.

Lähiruokaa metsästä."

The country side, agriculture, the Mustila Arboretum... all those are a part of Kouvola. The Finnish championship of giant vegetables is suitable for our town and for the Mustila Arboretum perfectly. In the towns and villages there are lots of active people and different societies. There are many kinds of activities and surroundings for them in Kouvola. It is also easy to come to Kouvola – even with pumpkins of hundreds of kilograms.

"Maaseutu, viljely, the Mustila arboretum... ne kaikki ovat osa Kouvola.

Jättikasvisten SM-kilpailu sopii kaupunkiimme ja juurikin Mustila Arboretumin tiloihin mainiosti. Taajamissa on paljon aktiivisia toimijoita ja Kouvolassa erilaisia yhdistyksiä. Kouvolaan mahtuu monenlaista toimintaa ja löytyy ympäristöjä erilaisille aktiviteeteille. Kouvolaan on myös helppo tulla - vaikka satojen kilojen kurpitsojen kanssa :) (Photo 20.)



Photo 20. Jättikasvisten SM-kilpailu Mustila. The competition of giant vegetables in Mustila.

There are lots of activities for the whole family in Kouvola of which the best known is the Tykkimäki Amusement Park. Despite of unpleasant economic news it is possible to forget worries and find the inner child and enjoy in the amusement park!

"Kouvolaasta löytyy paljon koko perheen aktiviteetteja, tunnetuimpana Tykkimäen huvipuisto. Ikävistä talousuutisista huolimatta kaupungissa on mahdollisuus unohtaa muut murheet, löytää sisäinen lapsi ja riemuita huvipuiston hurvituksista!"

8.3.7 New Kouvola vs. old Kouvola

Many descriptions argue against supposed perceptions of the Kouvola. These perceptions base on statements of people that act in media. Kouvola seems to be some kind of synonym of a town that was built of concrete and represents typical architecture of the seventies with grey and edgy design. There is no study if Kouvola is more often used as an adjective in this sense than some other city names from the same era.

The statements of the competitors talked about "the current" Kouvola in 14 descriptions. The current Kouvola is multiple times larger than the town that was known as Kouvola in the year 2008. The area was before a small town, almost plain urban area. Nowadays Kouvola is mostly country side with few small towns, many villages, hundreds of lakes and also some wilderness. The

competitors wanted to bring forth these “new” features under the name Kouvola.

The bodies of water and landscapes are the current strength of Kouvola.

”Vesistö ja maisemat ovat Kouvolan nykyinen vahvuus”

The city (of Kouvola) is more than concrete houses!

”Kaupunki on muutakin kuin kivitaloja !”

Kouvola isn't a "dry" town anymore. (This is hinting to the 450 lakes of Kouvola)

”Kouvola ei enää ole kuiva kaupunki” (Photo 21.)



Photo 21. Maisema Väliväylältä. A landscape from the Väliväylä water route.

Kouvola is a rural town.

”Kouvola on maaseutukaupunki.”

The photo tells that Kouvola is a lot more than the center built of concrete. It is a nice summer town with a nature and rural areas, too.

”kuva kertoo, että kouvola on paljon muutakin kuin betonikeskusta. Se on mukava kesäkaupunki, josta löytyy myös luontoa ja maaseutua.”

Kouvola is often considered to be so called grey city, both by its appearance and also mentally, but as the photo shows, there are plenty of beauty and colors everywhere.

”Kouvola pidetään usein ulkonäöltään ja mieleltäänkin ns. harmaana

kaupunkina, mutta kuvastakin näkee, että kauneutta ja värejä löytyy yllin kyllin joka puolelta.”

The photo attached was taken of a park lane with flower plantings.

Kouvola is more than its central area and shopping centers. In Koria we live like in the countryside – it is peaceful and we have big yards and gardens to treasure with love.

”Kouvola on paljon muutakin kuin ydinkeskusta ja kauppakeskukset. Meillä Koriolla on kuin maalla - on rauhallista ja isot pihat ja puutarhat, joita vaalia rakkaudella.”

8.3.8 Events

Some photos were taken at the local events (12 pcs) and the descriptions (12 pcs) were written accordingly, for example:

A well organized, great event in a fine place.

”hyvin järejestyttö, hieno tapahtuma, hienossa paikassa”

There are various events in Kouvola – something for everyone.

”Kouvolassa on monenlaisia tapahtumia - jokaiselle jotakin”

The night of Arts, organized once a year, cheers Kouvola up nicely.

”Kerran vuodessa järjestettävä taiteidenyö piristää Kouvola mukavasti.”

The midnight sun festival party is early in the evening which pleases families with children, it can be seen also in the number of attendees. In Kuusankoski people gather around to the same place in the summer time for the midnight sun fire and in the winter time for the new year’s firework show.

”Kokkojuhlan ajoitus alkuiltaan on lapsiperheille mieluinen, ja se näkyy osallistujamäärässä. Kuusankoskella kansa kokoontuu samaan paikkaan kesällä kokkoa ja talvella ilotulitusta katsomaan.”

Kouvola is a place of thousands of possibilities and the sense of community.

The photo was taken at the Kouvo La Arctopolis medieval event in 2.8.2014.

”tuhansien mahdollisuuksien kouvola ja sen yhteisöllisyys - Kuva otettu Kouvo la arctopolis keskiaikatapahtumasta 2.8 2014” (Photo 22.)



Photo 22. Kohti ääretöntä ja sen yli. Towards the infinite and beyond.

Imagination takes the viewer back in time to a hay field. The photo transpires the old times and the local history. The photo was taken at a play which told the story of the Gustav III returning to the River Kymi in the Kouvolankylä village.

“Mielikuvitus vie katsojan ajassa taaksepäin heinäpellolle. Kuva huokuu ajan patinaa ja paikallishistoriasta. Kuva on otettu Kustaa III palaa Kymijoelle tapahtumasta Kouvolankylässä”

Also a couple of historic moments were captured in the competition photos. One of them was captured in the market place where local ice hockey team was celebrating the access to the Finnish ice hockey league.

The other historic “event” or rather a moment is connected to the municipal decision making. Reducing the amount of schools was ongoing in the year 2014. One of Kouvola’s high schools burned the same year. One competitor had captured the clock of the burned school, the clock showed the time of the fire approximately started. The description of the photo asked: *if the solution to the amount of schools was given by an accident.* (Photo 23.)



Photo 23. Yhteiskoulun kohtalohetki. The fatal moment of the Yhteiskoulu school.

"Kouluverkkouudistuksen taistelun. Ratkaisu syntyi itsestään. Vai syntyikö? - Yhteiskoulun kello pysähtyi todistamaan tulipalon tarkan ajan."

Some photos presented personal events and meaningful for the competitors because they related to special moments with friends or family, for example, a photo of a man holding baby with raised hands high above his head. The description told that the baby was swimming for the first time. Or a photo of a young girl of her friend on a beach (Photo 24):



Photo 24. Vesi roiskuu ja hymy on korvissa. Splashing water and a big smile.

We were having fun on the beach with my friend and I got this idea (of a photo). One can see on her face the joy we had yesterday

“Oltiin kaverin kanssa pitämässä hauskaa päivää rannalla ja tälläisen idean sain. Kyllä näkyy se ilo hänen kasvoilla mikä meillä eilen oli!” (Photo 24.)

Another competitor submitted a photo of a wedding couple walking in church towards the sunlight coming from the open doors. Besides the possible personal attachments and emotions the description brought out the symbolic meaning of the view:

There are dreams and love in Kouvola, too. A couple walks towards the sun and the life together for the rest of time..

”Unelmia ja rakkautta löytyy myöskin kouvolaista. Pari astelee kohti aurinkoa, kohti loppuelämää.”

8.3.9 Railroad and location

Only nine descriptions mentioned the railway, which was a slight surprise. The descriptions refer to the importance of the railroad in the history and the current time of Kouvola.

The railroad has brought bread to the plates of Kouvola’s inhabitants in many ways.

”Rautatie on tuonut leivän kouvolaalaisille monella tapaa.”

The railroad is an essential part of Kouvola. Now that we have a running steam engine train which takes to nostalgic travels, it is a really good travel attraction for Kouvola.

”rautatie on olennainen osa kouvola. nyt kun olemme saaneet tänne toimivan höyryjunan joka järjestää nostalgisia matkoja sillä, se on kouvolaalle tosi hyvä matkailuvaltti.”

Kouvola is a good traffic connection hub. It is easy to visit a neighbor town or to leave for a longer holiday.

”Kouvola on hyvien liikenneyhteyksien äärellä. Täältä on helppo lähteä hetkeksi lähikaupunkiin tai vaikka pidemmälle lomalle kauemmas.”



Photo 25. Syksy ratapihalla. Autumn in the rail yard.

The importance of the location of Kouvola and the beauty of the railway yard.

“Kouvolan sijainnin tärkeyden ja ratapihan kauneuden.” (Photo 25.)

8.3.10 Graceless beauty, concrete and ”Kouvostoliitto”

Concrete was mentioned in the descriptions 12 times either as a symbol of Kouvola or as in the meaning that Kouvola is so much more than concrete. The local language joke “Kouvostoliitto” was mentioned only two times. Some of us could see some graceless beauty in robust surfaces and urban shapes.



Photo 26. Pohjolatalon rampit. The ramps of the Pohjola house.

The ramps made of concrete are in my opinion gracelessly beautiful with their battered and tinted surface. Beauty can be found in surprising places.

"Betoniset rampit ovat mielestäni rujolla tavalla kauniit kolhuineen ja värjäytymineen. Kauneutta voi löytää yllättävistä paikoista" (Photo 26.)

The text attached to a photo of a vigorous concrete building stated:

In the middle of greyness one can find surprising pearls, sometimes also they are grey. A photo snapped on a grey day with a phone, a stylish old house in the focus.

"Harmauden keskeltä voi löytää yllättäviä helmiä, nekin joskus harmaita." - "Harmaana päivänä puhelimella napattu harmaa kuva, jossa keskipisteenä tyylikäs vanha talo."

Also "Kouvostoliitto" was mentioned two times in the texts attached to the photos of "the gracelessly beautiful" buildings. Kouvostoliitto is a word formed of Kouvola and a Finnish word for U.S.S.R. The word is mostly understood as an atmosphere of stiff bureaucracy or vigorous style of concrete buildings.



Photo 27. Puurakentamista betonin hengessä. Wood construction in the spirit of concrete.

Jocularly said the concrete grey reputation of Kouvola may not be in vain, if also the new wooden buildings look like a color chart of greys. The photo mentions neither the whole truth, nor the reputation. If one would go to the very place and get to know it "deeper", one will notice something more colorful.

"Vitsikkäästi jatkaen "Kouvostoliiton" betoninharmaa maine ei liene kovin

turha, jos uudetkin puurakennukset näyttää todellakin harmaan värikartalta. Kuva ei tosin kerro koko totuutta, kuten ei mainekaan. Jos paikalle menee ja tutustuu "syvemmälle" huomaa jotain paljon värikkäämpää. ;)"

The photo was named *"Wood construction in the spirit of concrete"* and in Finnish: *"Puurakentamista betonin hengessä"* (Photo 27).

And more descriptions of concrete and greyness:

The "concreteness" of Kouvola has formed as a nationwide joke a long ago. The chocolate bits offered by Kouvola are sometimes hard to chew. As a wrapping paper of concrete chocolate I suggest bitumen.

"Kouvolan betonisuus on jo kauan sitten muodostunut maanlaajuiseksi vitsiksi. Kouvolan tarjoamat suklaapalat ovat välillä vaikeita pureksittavaksi. Betonisuklaan kääreeksi ehdotan ohutta bitumikäärettä."



Photo 28. Palanen Kouvola. A piece of Kouvola.

And it went on with this explanation:

In Kouvola also chocolate is formed of concrete. I found this "chocolate slab" one day when parking my bicycle in the Kasarminmäki.

"Kouvolassa suklaakin on muotoiltu betonista. Löysin tämän "suklaalevyn" eräänä päivänä parkkeeratessani pyörää Kasarminmäellä."

In the photo there was a concrete slab which has a similar form as a chocolate slab (Photo 28.)

Modern architecture could be found aesthetic with a sign of growth and renewal too:



Photo 29. Ikkunoita. Windows.

A little bit more modern Kouvola. Kouvola is renewing bit by bit... and is growing.

"Vähän modernimpaa Kouvola." - "Kouvola uusiutuu pikkuhiljaa...ja kasvaa."
(Photo 29.)

8.3.11 Love for Hometown

Love for hometown was manifested in multiple descriptions in many forms:

Kouvola is a wonderful homestead full of surprises.

"Kouvola on ihana kotipaikka täynnä yllätyksiä!"

And as an explanation to the same photo:

Our dog collects reeds and carries them around on our home shore by the Lake Ruhmas. A perfect morning and the feeling of happiness.

"Meidän koira kerää kaisloja ja vie ne kierrokselle kotirannalla Ruuhas-järvellä Jaalassa. Täydellinen aamu ja onnekas olo."

Kouvola is a place of diversity. A part of it stays and grows as strong as the trees on the opposite shore, a part is living and on-going, refreshing like the river that flows in the middle. A part of it has done its job and gives space to new as the grass on the front. All this intertwines to a beautiful entirety. Just

like Kouvola.

“Kouvolassa on monta puolta ja erilaisia elementtejä. Osa pysyy ja kasvaa jyrkevänä kuten vastarannan puut, osa on elävää ja eteen päin menevää, virkistävää kuten keskellä oleva joki. Osa puolestaan on jo tehtävänsä täyttänyt ja antaa tilaa uudelle kuten etualan heinikko. Tämä kaikki nivoutuu yhteen kauniiksi kokonaisuudeksi. Aivan kuten Kouvola. - ”

Kouvola is a place of diversity – even the old Kouvola itself, could be called as the original Kouvola. The view from the Sarkola field encapsulates many things of it: ordinary life with the joy of exercise, verdancy, idyllic housing right in the central town, the railway and of course, the Pohjola-building, which proudly guards the landscape.

”Kouvola on monimuotoinen paikka - ja sitä on jo pelkästään vanha Kouvola, sitä Kanta-Kouvolaksi kutsuttakoon. Sarkolan kentältä avautuvassa näkymässä siitä kiteytyy aika monta asiaa: tavallinen elämä liikunnan riemuineen, vehreys, idylliset omakotialueet aivan keskustassa, rautatiet ja tietenkin maisemaa ylväänä vahtiva Pohjola-talo.” (Photo 30.)



Photo 30. Tiivistys. A summary.

There are wonderful shores and beautiful landscapes in Kouvola. It is good to live here.

“Kouvolassa on ihania rantoja ja kauniita maisemia. Täällä on hyvä asua.”

I was born at the border of Tirva and Kannuskoski in the Pyötsiä village. When we were children we used to drive bicycles and wander in the borderlands of the Valkeala and the Luumäki municipalities, in Kannuskoski where there was a shop near and swimming places besides the wonderful Välliväylä waterway.

"Olen syntyisin Tirvan ja Kannuskosken rajamaastosta, Pyötsiä-nimisestä kylästä. Lapsena pyöräiltiin ja liikuttiin paljon Valkealan ja Luumäen rajalla, Kannuskoskella, jossa oli kauppa lähempänä ja uimapaikkoja ihanan Välliväylän varrella."

This combination of a photo and a description could have also been interpreted as love for one's home town and its curiosities. The local humor is said to be quite ironic and black too. A couple of pictures had captured humorous details of the surroundings (Photo 31).



Photo 31. Matka jatkuu ? Journey goes on?

It surely made me laugh, it is Kouvola's local humor :)

"Kyllä se vaan nauratti, siis kouvolaista huumoria :)"

8.3.12 Statements on the current social and economic situation

Eight descriptions included statements on the current social and economic situation in the municipality of Kouvola. For example, reduction of schools and the lines of study were mentioned. In the photo attached was an office building and a school in a beautiful soft light which glows from behind the buildings. The photo is a bit melancholic with its deserted yard. The description tells that:

Afterwards the photo has raised different feelings about shutdown of schools and education. Money talks and the mainstays of the society are collapsing or deteriorating otherwise. What will be left, if the base of future is taken away? I have personally experienced shutdown of two study lines in Kouvola and I wasn't able to graduate from the first one. Luckily, the latter studies in the

university of applied sciences I have finished. It has been hard to watch the next classes to struggle with a decision of shutting down the study line.

"Näin jälkikäteen kuva on herättänyt erilaisia tunteita koulutuksen ja koulujen alasajosta. Raha puhuu ja yhteiskunnan tukipilarit sortuvat tai rapistuvat muuten. Mitä jää käteen, kun tulevaisuudelta viedään pohja? Omakohtaisesti olen kokenut kahden opiskelulinjan lakkauttamisen Kouvolassa, joista ensimmäisestä en kerennyt valmistua. Jälkimmäiset ammattikorkeakouluopinnot olen onneksi saanut suoritettua loppuun. On ollut vaikea katsoa vierestä, kun myöhemmin aloittaneet joutuvat kamppailemaan lopettamispäätöksen seurauksena."



Photo 32. Hiekkamyrsky. A sandstorm.

On the right in the picture (photo 32) is Kankaan koulu, the elementary school that was shut down, but taken back to use after another school burned down.

In Kouvola every child and young person has an opportunity to leisure activities and exercise. This possibility shouldn't be taken away.

"Kouvolassa on kaikilla lapsilla ja nuorilla mahdollisuus harrastaa ja liikkua. Näitä mahdollisuuksia ei tule ottaa pois."

The photo attached was named:

This place is important to us!

"Tää paikka on meille tärkeä!"

Young people are the future. Jobs for the young to prevent marginalization.

"Nuorisossa on tulevaisuus. Nuorille töitä koulun jälkeen ettei syrjäydy"



Photo 33. Kouvolaassa on upeita paikkoja, joissa on mahdollista karata täysin asfalttiteiden ja katovalojen ulottumattomiin. There are wonderful places in Kouvola, where one can escape the asphalt roads and city lights.

Also the municipal decision making got its share:

The glove in the photo reflects the process of decision making in Kouvola humorously.

"kuvan käsine kuvastaa kouvolan päättäjien päätöksentekoprosessia hieman humoristisesti." (Photo 33.)

The name of the same photo is like whole another description, in contradiction to its description by its atmosphere:

There are wonderful places in Kouvola, where one can escape the asphalt roads and city lights.

"Kouvolaassa on upeita paikkoja, joissa on mahdollista karata täysin asfalttiteiden ja katovalojen ulottumattomiin."

The degeneration of everything. Landscape near the Kaipiainen station.

"Kaiken rapistumista- Maisemaa Kaipiaisten asemanseudulta."

The photo is named "Mörkölä"- "A Spooky Place".

(The photo) gives a big picture of the central town. It is quiet there.

"Antaa kokonais kuvan tämänpäivän Kouvolan keskustasta "Hiljaista on"" (Photo 34.)



Photo 34. Kouvolan tori. The market place of Kouvola.

But also brighter sights and supportive comments were in the descriptions.

Every part of this town has its own important history. One should remember that tough work for it has been done, which can be concluded when looking at the old peasant objects and tools. Similar toughness is needed in the development for the home town also in the future... miracles will not happen at a snap of fingers. The most important thing is that every part of the city is regarded as an important and an equal part of our gorgeous home town. And we inhabitants, should stop and see the beauty of our town.

“Jokaisella kolkalla tässä kaupungissa on oma merkittävä historiansa. Se on hyvä muistaa, että työtä on tehty ennen melkoisella sitkeydellä, mitä pystyy pääättelemään mm. vanhojen talonpoikaissesineiden kautta. Sitä sitkeyttä kotikaupungin kehittämiseksi tarvitaan edelleen...hetkessä ei ihmeitä tapahdu. Tärkeintä on, että jokaisella alueelle annetaan arvo ja oikeutus olla tasa-arvoinen osa upeaa kotikaupunkiamme. Ja meidän asukkaidenkin täytyy muistaa pysähtyä kaupunkimme kauneuden edessä.”

Referring to entrepreneurship:

We dare to go for it in Kouvola.

"Kouvolassa uskalletaan yrittää"

There is a potential and hopes for the better future in Kouvola. Like in January we see glimpses of the warmth, the spring and melting ice. – The river Kymi was partly covered with ice, a pair of swans were sunbathing nearby.

"Kouvolassa on potentiaalia ja toivoa tulevasta. Aivan kuten tammikuussa näemme jo pilkahduksia tulevasta lämmöstä, keväästä ja jäiden lähdöstä. - Kymijoki matkalla Myllykoskelle. Joki oli osittain jäässä, joutsenpariskunta paistatteli päivää lähellä. "

The photo was named *"The promise of the future", "Lupaus tulevasta"*

The situation in Kouvola isn't good, but there is hope. Clouds over Lake Rapojärvi tempted to take a photograph.

"Kouvolan tilanne ei hyvä , mutta toivoa on. Rapojärven päällä olevat pilvet houkuttivat kuvaamaan."

8.3.13 Messages for the municipality

Eight of the descriptions included messages for the organizer of the competition, the municipality of Kouvola. Some of them with gratitude, some with propositions and some with accusations.

Recreation areas should be developed.

"Virkistysalueiden viihtyisyyteen tulisi panostaa".

The River Kymi is a visible part of Kouvola, but it has been utilized unfortunately little for travel purposes.

"Kymijoki on monin paikoin näkyvä osa Kouvola, mutta sitä on hyödynnetty matkailutarkoituksiin valitettavan vähän."

Also a credit was given for the municipality.

There are wonderful outdoor recreation areas in Kouvola, which the municipality wants to offer for its inhabitants, thank you Kouvola!

"Kouvolasta löytyy näitä ihania virkistäviä ulkoilupaikkoja joita Kouvolan kaupunki haluaa kuntalaisilleen tarjota, kiitos Kouvola !"

8.3.14 Technical experiments and self-actualization

Some descriptions described the taking of the photograph and technical experimentation (7). For example:



Photo 35. Vanha mänty. An old pine.

The photographing day was 24.5.2014. I tried to take a photo in a strong straight coming light, the photo is somewhat underexposure and it has been slightly adjusted afterwards.

"kuvauspäivä 24.5-14. kokeilin kuvata voimakkaaseen vastavaloon, kuvaa on alivalotettu jonkin verran, lisäksi valotusta säädetty hieman jälkikäteen."

There are many good places to take photographs (in Kouvola) if you only can look for them. By chance I tried to take a photograph against straight coming light with a bargain camera and I was very surprised of the outcome.

"Täällä on paljon hyviä kuvauskohteita kun osaa vaan etsiä niitä. Kokeilin sattumalta miten onnistuu kuvan ottaminen vastavaloon halpiskameralla ja yllätyin kovasti lopputuloksesta :) " (Photo 35.)

There are really good grounds for jogging when living almost in the country side (in Keltakangas). I tried this kind of reflection photo, it looked very nice live.

"Melkein maaseudulla (Keltakankaalla) asuvana täällä on todella hyvät lenkkeilymaastot. Kokeilinpa tälläistä heijastuskuvaa kun näytti ainakin livenä kivalta."

8.4 Demographic information and relation to Kouvola

Some demographic information was asked of the competitors, mainly because of legal publishing issues (age) and because of delivering the prizes (address). The rules of the competition said that by attending the competition the attendees assured that they had the legal right and permission to publish the competition photo. Under 18 years old attendees were asked for the name of their parent or custodian. The attendees were also asked about their relation to the Kouvola, if it was their home town, the current city of staying or if they were visitors or related in some other way to the city.

The competition form was not completely competent because the descriptions of the photo were answered also with opinions and other messages concerning Kouvola.

Mainly the attendees of the competition were former or current inhabitants of the Kouvola area. This was eventually impossible to define because of the poor planning of the submission form. The “home town” option, at least in Finnish, could mean the current home town or the place of birth or a place that has been the home town for some time at some point of one’s life. Also people who have moved to Kouvola to study may think themselves as inhabitants and/ or students. Only two competitors chose the option “student”. For the several inhabitants Kouvola was also their cottage region.

Five of the competitors announced themselves as visitors in Kouvola. For one competitor Kouvola was a place to work and four competitors announced Kouvola to be their cottage region. Five photos taken by three different persons did not have information on their relation to Kouvola. This was possible because a part of the photos were submitted by an email and it was on the competitor’s account to give all the demanded information.

The 11 photos sent by the five visitors did not differ from the general themes or genres. The nature, landscapes with a river or a lake were well represented. Five of the photos were of landscapes with bodies of water and one of them had pets in it too. The nature details were captured into five of these photos and one photo presented children at the fun fair (Photo 36).



Photo 36. Kesäriemua Satujunassa. Summer joy in a magic train.

Here are examples of the descriptions:

There are lots of activities for families in Kouvola, most famous of them is Tykkimäki amusement park. Despite of unfortunate economic news, one can forget worries, find the inner child and enjoy the joys of the amusement park!

"Kouvolasta löytyy paljon koko perheen aktiviteetteja, tunnetuimpana Tykkimäen huvipuisto. Ikävistä talousuutisista huolimatta kaupungissa on mahdollisuus unohtaa muut murheet, löytää sisäinen lapsi ja riemuita huvipuiston hurvituksista!

There are beautiful and silent places by the lakes of Kouvola.

"Kouvolasta löytyy kauniita, hiljaisia paikkoja järvien rannoilta."

There is a healthy nature in Kouvola, too.

"Tervettä luontoa löytyy Kouvolastakin."

The two descriptions sent by students reflected similar experiences:

Not everything is of concrete! (in Kouvola)

"Kaikki ei ole betonista!"

The Kouvola region offers great surroundings to relax in the nature. Kouvola is but nature, also people. The River Kymi flows like a human mind – waving and glittering.

"Kouvolan alue tarjoaa hienot puitteet rentoutua luonnossa. Kouvola on paitsi luontoa, myös ihmisiä. Kymijoki virtaa kuin ihmisen mieli - aaltoillen välkehtien." (Photo 37.)



Photo 37. Luonnonläheinen Kouvola. Kouvola is close to nature.

The photos or descriptions sent by people, who announced Kouvola to be their former home town, did not remarkably differ by their genre or nature from the photos and the descriptions of competitors that currently lived in Kouvola or announced Kouvola to be their home town. The descriptions that could have been described somehow criticizing or making fun of Kouvola were sent only by the current inhabitants or people who announced Kouvola to be their home town. This conforms the quite commonly heard hearsay talk, that the inhabitants of Kouvola criticize their own town more than others do. There were only a handful of slightly criticizing descriptions (6) and almost a similar amount of questioning descriptions that were not directly criticizing and few joking on Kouvola.

8.5 Comparison of the themes of the photos and the descriptions

The comparison of the textual material and the denotations of the photographs may be not a very essential or fruitful thing to do, but the denotations confirm the message risen from the descriptions.

The top of the themes in the descriptions and in the photos are presented in the Table 1.

Themes appearing in the descriptions	Total	Subjects or themes in the photographs	Total
Aesthetic experiences	113	Landscape	140
The River Kymi and other bodies of water	113	The River Kymi and other bodies of water	137
Nature	81	Sun set or dawn	71
Beautiful landscapes	46	Urban or populated area	68
Peace and tranquility	30	People	61
Countryside	27	Bridge	24
Closeness to the nature	21	Close-up of a plant	21
Aesthetics of details	21	Agricultural subjects	20
History	20	Fog	17
Cottage region	16	Wild animals	16
Factories	14	Dock	16
New vs. old Kouvola	14	Autumn	11
Peace of mind	14	Winter	11
Sport possibilities	14	Factory	10

Table 1. The top themes in the descriptions and in the photos.

The aesthetic experiences were mostly attached to landscapes (captured in 140 photos) in the countryside or by the bodies of water. A sun set or a dawn was often connected too to the feeling of beauty. Peace and tranquility was also tightly attached to the photos of these subjects.

The River Kymi and other bodies of water were mentioned only 113 times, even water objects appeared in 137 photos. This amount tells about the importance of the bodies of water to the inhabitants as an element of recreation. The nature (81) and beautiful landscapes (46) were mentioned altogether 127 times and were represented especially in the photos with bodies of water, fields, sunsets, plants and animals.

The sport possibilities were mentioned 14 times and the possibilities for hobbies in general 12 times. The subjects of the photos were rarely of sports or other hobbies, there were more descriptions on the subjects. On the other hand, the nature was the setting for jogging or recreation for many competitors and it appeared in the most photos.

The descriptions mostly described the photo and its subjects well, only few left this part more open. The answers to the question - what does your photo tell about Kouvola in your opinion – were more narrative and included more themes than could be read as denotation of the photo.

9 DISCUSSION

As an answer to my research question Kouvola is seen as a city of diversity, with great nature values and people mostly experienced it as a peaceful and good place to live in.

In practice the descriptions of the photos were mostly written by the current inhabitants so in this discussion I generalize the results as thoughts of the inhabitants of Kouvola. I came to this conclusion because there was also an option “the former home town” (3 pcs) to choose, but people chose mostly the option “the home town” (nearly 200 answers) which maybe refers to a more committed feeling about Kouvola. Over 100 of the answers included the status “current place of living”, but the same person sometimes chose “the home town”- status with another photo submission, maybe because he didn’t know which one was the proper way to answer. This was a drawback in the submission form.

The overall perception that I got from the research material was that the nature was highly appreciated and enjoyed in Kouvola, as a subject of photographs but also as recreation place. Experiencing beauty and peace was attached to the nature strongly, maybe this tells about the current time in the western society where more and more functions are taken to the internet and electrical devices surround us even at home. These aesthetic experiences of the nature were enjoyed in the urban surrounding, too. The importance of the nature for well-being and gaining strength came up several times. This conforms the results of the research project by David Halle in 1993: the one third of the photos displayed on the walls of homes were pictures of landscapes – without people in them. People like to capture and look at relaxing and peaceful things and the nature is at its best when enjoyed privately (Emmison et al. 2012, 113).

The forests of the towns and the countryside, Repovesi national park, the River Kymi and the other bodies of water were appreciated highly as the surroundings to spend leisure time. Especially the River Kymi was seen as an important nature element but also as a part of the area's history. It was also recognized as a poorly utilized identity factor of Kouvola.

Kouvola was experienced as a city of diversity where the urban area and the nature was near. One could reach the nature experiences quite close to the city center and on the other hand live in peace in the countryside and reach the services of the city in convenient distance and time.

The history of Kouvola was also brought up several times. The industrial and the railway history, manors and the military history were mentioned. Factories had in the old times a powerful influence for the whole town or the village where it was located. The whole society was built around them. This is seen also in Kouvola, in several population centers. Some factories have been shut down, some are still running and the changes of economic world are seen in many things in the city. For example, one reason for the ending of the local football league team, was that the factory, powerful sponsor, was shut down.

Kouvola was appreciated as a good place to live and bring up children. Also facilities for sports and hobbies were praised.

The research brought up interestingly the thoughts of the inhabitants of the reputation or identity of the former and the current Kouvola. *"Kouvola is more than concrete houses"*.. *"Kouvola isn't dry anymore"*... (This referred to the lack of bodies of water) and "The bodies of water and landscapes were the current strength of Kouvola". This tells that the inhabitants are quite aware of the prevailing perceptions that are brought up in social media and media from time to time. Partly this awareness is due to the fact that a part of the inhabitants shared once this perception themselves while either living in "the old Kouvola" or in some neighbor municipality. These perceptions show the burden of the reputation once attached to a name. The communications work to change the old perceptions or to market "the new Kouvola" has been done now for over seven years. This proves how slowly perceptions change. Who knows, it may even take new generations which grow to think in a different way?

Some descriptions reflected the worry of the economic situation in the city. It was a concern of reducing study options, jobs, services and facilities. On the other hand, some descriptions brought out the faith in the future in Kouvola and the hope for prosperous times. Few straight propositions came from some competitors. One of them urged to utilize the River Kymi more for travelling purposes. The other wanted the city to mind about the condition of recreations areas.

The love for the home town was represented in various forms in the descriptions. Some describe the town lovely and some said it is good to live here. If the positive commitment towards the town had born, it appears to be strong. Also the photo material reflected the willingness to share beautiful and happy sides of living in Kouvola. This of course may have something to do with the general tendency to capture the more happy moments and sides of life, but the descriptions confirm the perception that people found lots of beauty and good aspects in the city.

9.1 Comparison of the themes of the research of 2005 and 2014

This part compares the results to the study I made in the year 2005 of the perceptions concerning the old Kouvola, which is as an area, after the municipal fusion, only one of the two town centers in a large area with majority of rural areas. The study was called Stories of Kouvola – Bases for the image marketing of Kouvola. Its research material consisted of 49 stories of Kouvola that were written by the inhabitants.

In the year 2005, I hoped to find totally new identity factors for place marketing of Kouvola. There came up none and neither did with this study. In this study, based on the material collected in 2014, the aim was not to find new factors but to find out about perceptions of the new Kouvola. These perceptions can be used to bring up things that are credible as marketing statements for the inhabitants. Marketing slogans that sound false in the ears of the inhabitants are shot down in a seconds. If the local people will not buy them, nobody else will either.

Recreation possibilities were brought up in both studies. The variety of the hobby and sport possibilities has probably multiplied since 2005. Shopping, nightlife and the Tykkimäki amusement park were mentioned once or twice in

both studies in a quite descriptive way without any particular statements in positive or negative tone.

Kouvola as a sports town was mentioned in both studies. It wasn't in the highest point in the Kouvola's sport history in the year 2005, when the local ice hockey team was under the threat of closing up. This fortunately didn't happen. In the year 2014 Kouvola had a highlight in sports, the same local ice hockey team was raised to the Finnish league. One of the competition photos was taken of the celebration event in the central market place.

In the year 2005 Kouvola still had a university department in the city. The closing up of the local department of the University of Helsinki has changed the status of a student town since. There still are the University of Applied Sciences and the vocational school in the town, but the amounts of the students have decreased and perhaps the student town culture has changed a bit. Decreasing schools and study lines appeared at least in one description of the photo competition:

Afterwards the photo has raised different feelings about shutdown of schools and education. Money talks and the mainstays of the society are collapsing or deteriorating otherwise. What will be left, if the base of future is taken away? I have personally experienced shutdown of two study lines in Kouvola and I wasn't able to graduate from the first one. Luckily, the latter polytechnic studies I have finished. It has been hard to watch the next classes to struggle with a decision of shutting down the study line.

"Näin jälkikäteen kuva on herättänyt erilaisia tunteita koulutuksen ja koulujen alasajosta. Raha puhuu ja yhteiskunnan tukipilarit sortuvat tai rapistuvat muuten. Mitä jää käteen, kun tulevaisuudelta viedään pohja? Omakohtaisesti olen kokenut kahden opiskelulinjan lakkauttamisen Kouvolaassa, joista ensimmäisestä en kerennyt valmistua. Jälkimmäiset ammattikorkeakouluopinnot olen onneksi saanut suoritettua loppuun. On ollut vaikea katsoa vierestä, kun myöhemmin aloittaneet joutuvat kamppailemaan lopettamispäätöksen seurauksena."

The perception of Kouvola as a culture and event town wasn't high in 2005. Since then social media and modern marketing mix has made it better. Some events are more than locally known and information on events is easier to

access in the time of a web calendars. Events were brought up several times in the descriptions of the year 2014 material in a positive way.

The stories of the year 2005 expressed general contentment in living in Kouvola. The services of Kouvola appeared to be satisfying. The general feeling that I experienced from the descriptions of the year 2014 was similar. The nature nearby was appreciated and enjoyed according both studies. The majority of the descriptions of the year 2014 told about the nature and enjoying it. This was the strongest message that came through the research material.

Good traffic connections came up in the year 2005 study, the experience may be different in the year 2014, because the city area has multiplied and the bus lines to the country side travel seldom compared to the urban area lines. This interpretation didn't come from the study material but from my empirical experience as an administrator of the Kouvola busses Facebook pages. The one of descriptions of the year 2014 mentioned that the traffic connections are good in Kouvola. The description did not comment the traffic connections inside the city. Few others mentioned the railway as an important factor of the town and its history.

In the research of the year 2005 a couple of stories handled the threat of violence in the town. In the photo material or in the descriptions of the year 2014 such things didn't come up. The difference in expression forms of the research materials might explain this. It would have been harder to express something like that through photos, also the descriptions were tightly attached to the competition photos and the photos may have anchored the thoughts and interpretations of the competitors.

The stories of the year 2005 expressed longing for "the old Kouvola" and its historical buildings. The descriptions of the year 2014 expressed several times appreciation of the local history, but straight longing for the old times didn't rise up. Rather the appreciation of "the new Kouvola" with its new identity factors like wide and many diverse nature areas. "The new Kouvola" has obviously added values compared to the "old one". The architecture of Kouvola was criticized in the year of 2005 material. Some similar mention were in the descriptions of the year 2014 too, but mostly the descriptions were

defensive words about Kouvola being nowadays more than grey, concrete buildings.

Kouvola was experienced mostly sympathetic in the both research materials. There were no emotive expressions in the stories of the year 2005. The descriptions in the year 2014 in "the new Kouvola" were more appreciative and a certain love for the home town could be sensed.

In the year 2005 Kouvola was easy to adapt as a new home town. The feeling of home was affected by the state of life of a person and to what he was comparing Kouvola to. In this attitude can be found an important aspect of place marketing. The wide municipal area does not make a big city. The population of approximately 85 000 inhabitants is spread in several population centers and to villages, that does not make a big city either. Wide rural areas and the forests and the lakes hint more to a rural and a nature town than to a big city. Kouvola's merits could rather come with arguments like "a convenient sized town with nature benefits". The town without rush hour has been used in marketing and it is still quite true currently.

"The old Kouvola's" identity factors that arose from stories were the railway, the Tykkimäki amusement park and the pedestrian street Manski. Now that name Kouvola beholds more, the strongest identity factors that arose from the photos and the descriptions were the River Kymi and other bodies of water, the nature, countryside and tranquility.

In the year 2005 Kouvola was described in the stories dry, small, neat, well serving, convenient and beautiful. The descriptions in the year 2014 mostly described Kouvola a beautiful and peaceful city where the nature is clean and nearby. Many of the descriptions stated that Kouvola is other things than grey concrete, too. Thought there were also a couple of descriptions that still told about greyness:

Jocularly said the concrete grey reputation of Kouvola may not be in vain, if also the new wooden buildings look like a color chart of greys. The photo don't tell the whole truth though, as well as does the reputation either. If one would go to the very place and get to know it "deeper", one will notice something more colorful.

"Vitsikkäästi jatkaen "Kouvostoliiton" betoninharmaa maine ei liene kovin

turha, jos uudetkin puurakennukset näyttää todellakin harmaan värikartalta. Kuva ei tosin kerro koko totuutta, kuten ei mainekaan. Jos paikalle menee ja tutustuu "syvemmälle" huomaa jotain paljon värikkäämpää. ;)"

In the year 2005 the town center of Kouvola had been renovated a few years earlier and the pedestrian street had been rewarded "a lively city center" prize. Some criticized the renewal, but mostly the results confirmed the perception that it succeeded. The descriptions of the year 2014 include a couple of mentions of a neat pedestrian street, but the fact is that a new renovation of the Manski has just started over.

9.2 Comparison of the results to the image research of 2016

The city of Kouvola researched its imago in the spring 2016. The aim was to study the identity of the city in the eyes of the inhabitants and the image formed in the minds of people living in the areas nearby and in the Southern Finland. The research studied also if people living elsewhere were aware of Kouvola and what are its strengths, possibilities and attractions. The research made by Owl Group Ltd was a combination of a survey and a media-analysis and its marketing area included the capital city area, Lahti, Lappeenranta, Mikkeli and Kotka.

The survey received 1544 answers, 734 from the inhabitants of Kouvola and 810 from elsewhere, almost a half of these were from the capital city area. The encouraging result of this research was that a great share, 84 %, of the inhabitants of Kouvola would recommend their home town as a place to live. 60 % of the people living elsewhere could imagine living in Kouvola. Also 60 % of people that had visited Kouvola would recommend it as a place to travel.

The research conformed the results of my study. According the research the images of Kouvola were strong and clear, and also congruent among the inhabitants and others. Kouvola was described as a peaceful, close to the nature and a safe place, these features came up often in my research material, too. When asked spontaneously, the both groups described Kouvola small, boring and grey, but on the other hand, the inhabitants described their home town often beautiful and cozy. In my research material the greyness was mentioned few times, but mostly in the opposite perspective: Kouvola is not so grey.

The strongest brands of Kouvola appeared to be the Tykkimäki amusement park and the local ice hockey team KooKoo. Kouvola was also attached to the railway and described as a railway junction town. The image of Kouvola is still strongly associated with the city's center areas. These things were mentioned also in my research material, but not so many times as was the beautiful nature of Kouvola. This brought out the problematics of the image of "the old Kouvola" and "the new Kouvola". The new Kouvola was still not familiar as a whole to the people living elsewhere.

According to the research of the year 2016, the inhabitants of Kouvola appreciated the good traffic connections and sports, culture and recreation possibilities. These were among the most popular descriptions also in my research, except the traffic connections were not brought out that strongly. The inhabitants of Kouvola would take their guests to the Repovesi national park, to the Tykkimäki amusement park and to the Verla Unesco world heritage factory museum. These top attractions of Kouvola were mentioned also in my research, but the everyday life was mostly in the spotlight both in the photos and in the textual material.

9.3 Summary of the results

The descriptions of the photo competition gave interesting information on peoples' opinions and perceptions of Kouvola. The results mostly reflect appreciation of the home town and willingness to prove wrong the supposed perceptions based on the old concept of Kouvola. A handful of the descriptions brought up also more pessimistic perceptions, too. Most people wanted to tell more about their thoughts of Kouvola than I could possibly have read only from the pictures. The message seemed to be that people wanted and maybe even needed to bring up their appreciation (or in some cases also opposite) opinions of Kouvola. The beauty of the nature of Kouvola was the value which appeared strongly in the results.

The results tell about a somewhat new city with an old name. The uniting of the six neighbor municipalities has obviously added value to the name of Kouvola but the reputation does not match the identity yet. Gad (2002, 188) states that reputation cannot be created by doing the same thing over again, but creating new messages and 'brands'.

For the inhabitants it may be easier to mentally detach to smaller units like the nearest population area or village. There is nothing wrong with that, anything that strengthens the sense of community strengthens the whole town. What is a credit for a one village of the Kouvola, is a credit for the whole city and the name of Kouvola.

9.4 Can the commitment to the home town be strengthened by photographs

Most of the competitors attached explanatory texts to their photos on what is beautiful and well in Kouvola. The competition may have caused someone to seek the beauty, a view worthy of taking a competition photo. On the other hand, most of the competitors may already have appreciated Kouvola as a living place and have seen and captured the beautiful sides of it. But definitely photo competitions or other possibilities to share own photos encourages to tune one's eyes to see and seek for aesthetic angles of the home town. Good reflectors of this are the Betonihelvetti.com and the Kaunista Kouvola Facebook-page.

I think that a commitment to one's home town can be strengthened by photographs. The empowering photography can work also as a wider phenomenon in the society and create a sense of community. Sharing and watching beautiful photos of one's home town probably prompts the pride of it.

9.5 What could be done in the future

In a municipality's case, social media channels and other digital platforms where the inhabitants can take part in the content creating, event creating and place marketing etc. could be a powerful marketing channel, if the risks are accepted and there is enough trust. It could be true win-win situation, municipalities should create more possibilities for the inhabitants to be true operators and co-creators of the image of their home town. It could be a possibility to share stories of life in different corners of the city or sharing experiences of the services and infrastructure the inhabitants use. The inhabitants of the city could publish videos that present their own village or suburb. It could be also giving space for gatherings around different themes or just to get to know one's neighbors.

The word of mouth and recommendations are the most powerful marketing (Safko&Brake 2009, 8). By creating a platform where the inhabitants could

rate and recommend also the municipal services could be booster for developing work in the organization. People share their experiences anyway, wouldn't it be best to give a chance to do it in the place where the feedback reaches the service provider directly. (Safko&Brake 2009, 11; Ryan&Jones 2009, 154–155.)

Social media components can be added to the organization's web page which is the core of digital marketing. There can be, for example, ideation modules where new ideas and services can be suggested and voted for. The inhabitants of the municipality probably have skills and information that could be beneficial for the whole community. How could we harness the collective talent and intelligence of the community members to develop the municipality? Nowadays we have inhabitant juries and development groups but the digital native generation may demand more instant and more digital ways of influencing. (Ryan&Jones 2009, 170.)

All solutions are not to be about serious influencing but can be useful hints for everyday life. For example, to get answer to questions: which beach to visit today? Or is there snow in that skiing track already? Ryan and Jones (2009, 171) state that only imagination is the limit of the ways to use social media as a useful part of the main services and to provide a win-win situation with the company, in this case, a municipality and its customers, the inhabitants. The only way to engage the customers is to answer to their needs. The web service has to give them something they want and what they want to come back for. (Ryan & Jones 2009, 40–42, 60–62, 65–68.)

9.6 Ideation

The photos of the inhabitants and visitors could be utilized as changing contents of the official municipal or visitor websites. The social media posts are nowadays utilized through applications integrated to websites. The electric “postcards” are not popular anymore, but the same idea could be refreshed with short video greetings. The visual material could also be utilized as a photo and video reflections in the different places or the walls of the city. The walls of the buildings that are preserved architectonic could be taken to great marketing use with this option that doesn't leave a mark on them. For example, the railway station, which is a critical image creator for those who just pass by the city on the train, could be cheered up with a spectacular

lightning and beautiful views captured from other spots of the city. Now its appearance is quite grey and almost gloomy.

The augmented reality was a hot subject a few years ago, but at least in Finland I have not seen it in an active use. The PokemonGo -game seems to be the nearest experience where something is detached to the street view of the Kouvola. Some real historic stories and persons could be brought visible with this technique. This could also reshape the geocaching if the geocaches were digital, visual stories that could be watched in certain spots. Also the development of hologram technology will open new doors and possibilities, like digital sculptors or maybe someday a historic street view could be watched at the place where it once was.

Some old fashioned technics could also be intriguing when brought to the everyday surroundings, little peep holes in the structures of the streets where the eye catches, for example, a view to the Repovesi national park in the middle of the town center. Also stories attract people constantly: some book or an exhibition or a web spot where would be lovely little stories (with a photo or a picture, of course) that happened in Kouvola, would be nice bonus to the Kouvola experience.

There could also be an application where one could build a Kouvola-postcard digitally, but send it for real. In the application one could choose from the photos in the application or download own one and attach it to the chosen graphics, texts. With an address information and a small fee, it would be printed and sent to the receiver. Although most people use the digital devices and the internet, but there are always some who will avoid those more or less.

A more tangible way to bring Kouvola images to live would be to produce Kouvola home textiles in a "Vallila"-style: fabrics with local photographic patterns that could be produced to curtains and kitchen wear. Also photo exhibitions spread through the city in the places where people go and shop could open the eyes of the inhabitants for their home town and the places in which they may have never visited. Digital displays could show photos or a video stream at the bus stops, in banks, libraries or where ever they meet the eyes of the audience, also some surprising places like public toilets. A photo or video competitions can be activating experiences for many and this kind of possibility for self-actualization should be arranged regularly.

REFERENCES

- Alanen, A. 2010. Valokuvauksen talous digimurroksen jälkeen. Tieto&trendit - magazine 8/2010. Tilastokeskus. Available online: http://tilastokeskus.fi/artikkelit/2010/art_2010-12-22_003.html [Accessed: 18. September 2016].
- Aula, P. & Heinonen, J. 2002. Maine. Menestystekijä. Helsinki: WSOY.
- Baker, B. 2007. Destination Branding for Small Cities. The essentials for successful place branding. Portland, USA: Creative Leap Books.
- The city of Porvoo. 2014. Discussion with the communications department of the city of Porvoo in the Porvoo city hall in 3.7.2014.
- Emmison, M., Smith, P. & Mayall, M. 2012. Researching the Visual. Second edition. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Eskola, J. & Suoranta, J. 1996. Johdatus laadulliseen tutkimukseen. Rovaniemi: Lapin yliopisto.
- Evans, B. 2015. How many pictures? In blog post 27 August 2015. Available online: <http://ben-evans.com/benedictevans/2015/8/19/how-many-pictures> [Accessed: 18. September 2016].
- Gad T. 2002. 4D brandimalli. Jyväskylä: Talentum Media Oy.
- The Finnish Criminal Law, Chapter 24, section 8. 13.12.2013/879.
- Hakaniemi, K. 2015. Ratapihan romantiikkaa – ja paljon muuta. In Kouvola Sanomat 19 January 2015, 24.
- Huotari, M. 2013. Kuvan voima. In The Ajankuva magazine. Available online: <http://qcpublisher.com/ajankuva2013/kuvan-voima.html#.Uy8yBIO0lhU> [Accessed: 3. March 2015].

Hänninen V. 1999. Sisäinen tarina, elämä ja muutos. Tampere: Tampereen yliopisto.

Ikonen, T. 2016. Taksikuski kertoo sen uskottavimman tarinan – Kaupunginjohtaja teki väitöskirjan maineesta. In Yle news 31 August 2016. Available online:
<http://yle.fi/uutiset/3-9129942> [Accessed: 31. August 2016].

Ikävalko, E. & Uimonen, R. 1997. Mielikuvien maailma. Miten mediajulkisuutta muokataan ja imagoja rakennetaan? Helsinki: Gummerus Oy.

Isohookana, H. 2007. Yrityksen markkinointiviestintä. Helsinki: WSOY.

Jones, S. 2012. Brand like a rock star. Austin, USA: Greenleaf Book Group Press.

Kaartinen, N. 2016. Iltakirppis on yleisömenestys — vielä ehdit mukaan. in Kouvola Sanomat 24 August 2016. Available online:
<http://www.kouvola.fi/Online/2016/08/24/Iltakirppis%20on%20yleis%C3%B6menestys%20%E2%80%94%20viel%C3%A4%20ehdit%20mukaan/2016221194314/4> [Accessed: 24. August 2016].

Karvonen, E. 1999. Elämää mielikuva yhteiskunnassa. Imago ja maine menestystekijöinä myöhäismodernissa maailmassa. Tampere: Gaudeamus.

Kaunisti Kouvola -ryhmä vetää jäseniä Facebookissa. 2014. In Kouvola Sanomat 29 November 2014. Available online:
<http://www.kouvola.fi/Online/2014/11/29/Kaunisti%20Kouvola%20-ryhm%C3%A4%20vet%C3%A4%C3%A4%20j%C3%A4seni%C3%A4%20Facebookissa/20144690/4> [Accessed: 18. September 2016].

Kielitoimiston sanakirja. 2016. S.v. mielikuva. Available online:
<http://www.kielitoimiston-sanakirja.fi/> [Accessed: 18. September 2016].

Kiviranta, J. 2014. Conversation on phone on Facebook marketing 10 July 2014. Kouvola: advertising agency Hoop.

Kotler P., Asplund K., Rein I. & Haider D. 1999. Marketing Places. Europe. Financial Times.

Käki, A. 2016. Valtaosa kouvolaalaisista suosittelisi kotikaupunkiaan asuinpaikkana. In Ajankohtaista, Kouvola kaupunki 8 March 2016. Available online:
<http://www.kouvola.fi/index/uutiset/2016/03/valtaosakouvolaalaisistasuosittelisikotikaupunkiaanasuinpaikkana.html> [Accessed: 18. September 2016].

Leino, T. 2015. Social Media training by Someco at Kouvola Sanomat 2.12.2015.

Lundström, J.E. 1991. Valokuvaus rajoilla. In Laukkanen, L., Lundström, J.E. & Siitari, P. (eds.). Pohjoinen valokuva 91. Rajoilla - Valokuva ja kulttuuri-identiteetti. Oulu: Pohjoinen valokuvakeskus.

Mikkonen, K. 2005. Kuva ja sana. Kuvan ja sanan vuorovaikutus kirjallisuudessa, kuvataiteessa ja ikonoteksteissä. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.

Miller, R. & Lammas, N. 2010. Social media and its implications for viral marketing. In Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal, vol. 11, 1–8. Available at:
<https://blogs.deakin.edu.au/appri/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2010/02/11-miller-lammas.pdf> [Accessed: 18. September 2016].

Moilanen, T. & Rainisto, S. 2009. How to brand nations, cities and destinations. A planning Book for place branding. Palgrave Macmillan.

Pienimäki, M. 1999. Kuvanlukutaito. Viestintätieteiden yliopistoverkosto. University of Tampere Finland. Available online:
http://viesverk.uta.fi/kuvanluku/index.php?s=3&b=3_3 [Accessed: 3. March 2015].

Pitkänen, K. 2001. Yrityskuva ja maine menestystekijöinä. Helsinki: Edita Oyj.

Rainisto, S. 2004. Kunnasta brändi? Helsinki: Kunnallisan alan kehittämissäätiön Polemia-sarjan julkaisu nro 54.

Rainisto, S. 2003. Success Factors of Place Marketing: A Study of Place Marketing Practices In Northern Europe And The United States. Helsinki: Helsinki University of Technology, Institute of Strategy and International Business. Doctoral Dissertations 2003/4.

Rainisto, S. 2008. Kaupunkibrändi. Paikan markkinoinnin teoriaa ja käytäntöjä. Kouvola: Kymenlaakson Ammattikorkeakoulu.

Riihelä, M. 2001–2005. Lectures on photography in the years 2001–2005. Kouvola: Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences.

Rotko, L. 2013. Valokuva on aina valhe. In Journalisti 4/2013. Available online: <http://journalistiliitto-fi.directo.fi/journalisti/lehti/2013/04/artikkelit/valokuva-on-aina-valhe/> [Accessed: 3. March 2015].

Routila, L.O. 1986. Miten teen tiedettä taiteesta. Keuruu: Clarion Publishing Company.

Ryan, D. & Jones, C. 2009. Understanding digital marketing. Marketing strategies for engaging the digital generation. Kogan Page Limited.

Safko, L. & Brake, D. K. 2009. The Social Media Bible. Tactics, tools and strategies for business success. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Salisbury, M. & Styles, M. 2012. Children's Picturebooks. The art of visual storytelling. London: Laurence King Publishing Ltd.

Saraste, L. 2010. Valokuva – muisto, viesti, taide. Helsinki: Kustannusosakeyhtiö Musta Taide.

Seppä, A. 2012. Kuvien tulkinta. Helsinki: Gaudeamus Oy.

Savolainen, M. 2014. Voimauttava valokuvaus. Lecture in 12 November 2014. Kouvola: Kouvola kansalaisopisto.

Seppänen, J. 2001. Valokuvaa ei ole. Väitöskirja, Tampereen Yliopisto, tiedotusopin laitos. Helsinki: Kustannusosakeyhtiö Musta Taide.

Seppänen, J. 2010. Katseen voima. Kohti visuaalista lukutaitoa. Seitsemäs painos. Helsinki: WSOY.

Schlottman, A. & Anderson, N.H. 1993. An information itegration approach to phenomenal causality. In Memory & Cognition, Volume 21 (6).

Subramani, M.R. & Rajagopalan, B. 2003. Knowledge-sharing and influence in online social networks via viral Marketing. In Communications of the ACM, Volume 46, Number 12, 300–307.

Veivo, H.& Huttunen, T. 1999. Semiotiikka. Helsinki: Oy Edita Ab.

Zarrella, D. 2014. [Infographic] The Science of Selfies. What leads to more (or fewer) Instagram likes. In blog post 21 April 2014. Available online: <http://danzarrella.com/infographic-the-science-of-selfies/> [Accessed: 18. September 2016]

PHOTO REFERENCES

Photo 1. The winner photo of the ShortStack audience voting. Photo by Kirsti Utti. The name of the photo: Koski. Document name: 57718372. Row 18 in the research matrix.

Photo 2. The winner photo chosen by competition jury. Photo by Pirjo Hokkanen. The name of the photo: Laituri ja usva. Document name: 65507592. Row 197 in the research matrix.

Photo 3. Name of the photo: Aamurusko. Document name: IMG_1188. Row 265 in the research matrix.

Photo 4. Name of the photo: Vuohijärven ilta. Document name: Vuohijarven_ilta_2014. Row 330 in the research matrix.

Photo 5. Name of the photo: Juhannuksen taikaa. Document name: 61892214. Row 94 in the research matrix.

Photo 6. Name of the photo: Iltahetki. Document name: WP_20140531_17_04_40_Pro. Row 323 in the research matrix.

Photo 7. Name of the photo: Toivotassu kotieläinpihan Lutu sonnivasikka. Document name: 62849400. Row 104 in the research matrix.

Photo 8. Name of the photo: Luottamus huomiseen. Document name: 57710917. Row 17 in the research matrix.

Photo 9. Name of the photo: Pieni ystävä. Document name: 63530951. Row 130 in the research matrix.

Photo 10. Name of the photo: Valatilaisuus Vekaranjärvellä. Document name: 65166224. Row 179 in the research matrix.

Photo 11. Name of the photo: Tehdas. Document name: 57420660. Row 6 in the research matrix.

Photo 12. Name of the photo: Sähköistä kädenvääntöä. Document name: SAHKOISTA_KADENVAANTOA. Row 315 in the research matrix.

Photo 13. Name of the photo: Auringonlasku 17.5. Document name: 58164260. Row 36 in the research matrix.

Photo 14. Name of the photo: Going? Document name: 58177993. Row 38 in the research matrix.

Photo 15. Name of the photo: Ensimmäistä kertaa rannalla. Document name: 62938804. Row 111 in the research matrix.

Photo 16. Name of the photo: Anjalan tyttö. Document name: DSC_0024. Row 232 in the research matrix.

Photo 17. Name of the photo: Hiljaa virtaa Kymijoki. Document name: 64389467. Row 151 in the research matrix.

Photo 18. Name of the photo: Riippusilta Repoveden kansallispuistossa. Document name: image_13. Row 258 in the research matrix.

Photo 19. Name of the photo: Hyinen kylpy. Document name: 60251648. Row 79 in the research matrix.

Photo 20. Name of the photo: Jättikasvisten SM-kilpailu Mustila. Document name: 65155801. Row 175 in the research matrix.

Photo 21. Name of the photo: Maisema Väliväylältä. Document name: 63173090. Row 118 in the research matrix.

Photo 22. Name of the photo: Kohti ääretöntä ja sen yli. Document name: Kohti_aaretonta_ja_sen_yli. Row 282 in the research matrix.

Photo 23. Name of the photo: Yhteiskoulun kohtalohetki. Document name: YHTEISKOULUN_KOHTALONHETKI. Row 332 in the research matrix.

Photo 24. Name of the photo: Vesi roiskuu ja hymy on korvissa. Document name: image_2. Row 259 in the research matrix.

Photo 25. Name of the photo: Syksy ratapihalla. Document name: Kouvola-3-2. Row 287 in the research matrix.

Photo 26. Name of the photo: Pohjolatalon rampit. Document name: 58129429. Row 34 in the research matrix.

Photo 27. Name of the photo: Puurakentamista betonin hengessä. Document name: 62725723. Row 103 in the research matrix.

Photo 28. Name of the photo: Palanen Kouvola. Document name: 63000314. Row 115 in the research matrix.

Photo 29. Name of the photo: Ikkunoita. Document name: 62876251. Row 108 in the research matrix.

Photo 30. Name of the photo: Ikkunoita. Document name: 64111002. Row 147 in the research matrix.

Photo 31. Name of the photo: Matka jatkuu ? Document name: 57797560. Row 21 in the research matrix.

Photo 32. Name of the photo: Hiekkamyrsky. Document name: 57532736. Row 10 in the research matrix.

Photo 33. Name of the photo: Kouvola on upeita paikkoja, joissa on mahdollista karata täysin asfalttiteiden ja katovalojen ulottumattomiin. Document name: 63581807. Row 134 in the research matrix.

Photo 34. Name of the photo: Kouvola. Document name: toriKouvola. Row 319 in the research matrix.

Photo 35. Name of the photo: Vanha mänty. Document name: 65470899. Row 196 in the research matrix.

Photo 36. Name of the photo: Kesäriemua SatuJunassa. Document name: tytot_tykkimaessa. Row 320 in the research matrix.

Photo 37. Name of the photo: Luonnonläheinen Kouvola. Document name: Luonnonlaheinen_Kouvola. Row 301 in the research matrix.

Figure 4. Theme board of the subjects of the photo competition of the city of Kouvola in the year 2014. Theme board consists of several competition photos:

The winner photo of the ShortStack audience voting. Photo by Kirsti Utti. The name of the photo: Koski. Document name: 57718372. Row 18 in the research matrix.

The winner photo chosen by competition jury. Photo by Pirjo Hokkanen. The name of the photo: Laituri ja usva. Document name: 65507592. Row 197 in the research matrix.

A photo of a little girl: Name of the photo: Pikku emäntä. Document name: 63376234. Row 126 in the research matrix.

A photo of a bridge: Name of the photo: Silta. Document name: 64756852. Row 165 in the research matrix.

A photo of a bird: Name of the photo: Sinitäinen. Document name: IMG_4756. Row 271 in the research matrix.

A photo of a flower: Name of the photo: Aamukaste. Document name: 65224064. Row 183 in the research matrix.

A photo of a cow: Name of the photo: Kesäherkkuja. Document name: sarjislehma. Row 316 in the research matrix.

A photo of buildings: Name of the photo: Hiekkamyrsky. Document name: 57532736. Row 10 in the research matrix.

A photo of a sunset: Name of the photo: Auringonlasku 17.5. Document name: 58164260. Row 36 in the research matrix.

Figure 5. Theme board of the themes mentioned in the descriptions attached to the photos of the photo competition of the city of Kouvola in the year 2014. Theme board consists of several competition photos:

A photo of a sunset through some leaves of a tree: Name of the photo: Auringon lasku. Document name: DSC_3455. Row 239 in the research matrix.

A photo of a lake landscape: Name of the photo: Aamu Verlassa. Document name: 58659906. Row 55 in the research matrix.

A photo of colorful reflections on water: Name of the photo: Vesi. Document name: 63181960. Row 121 in the research matrix.

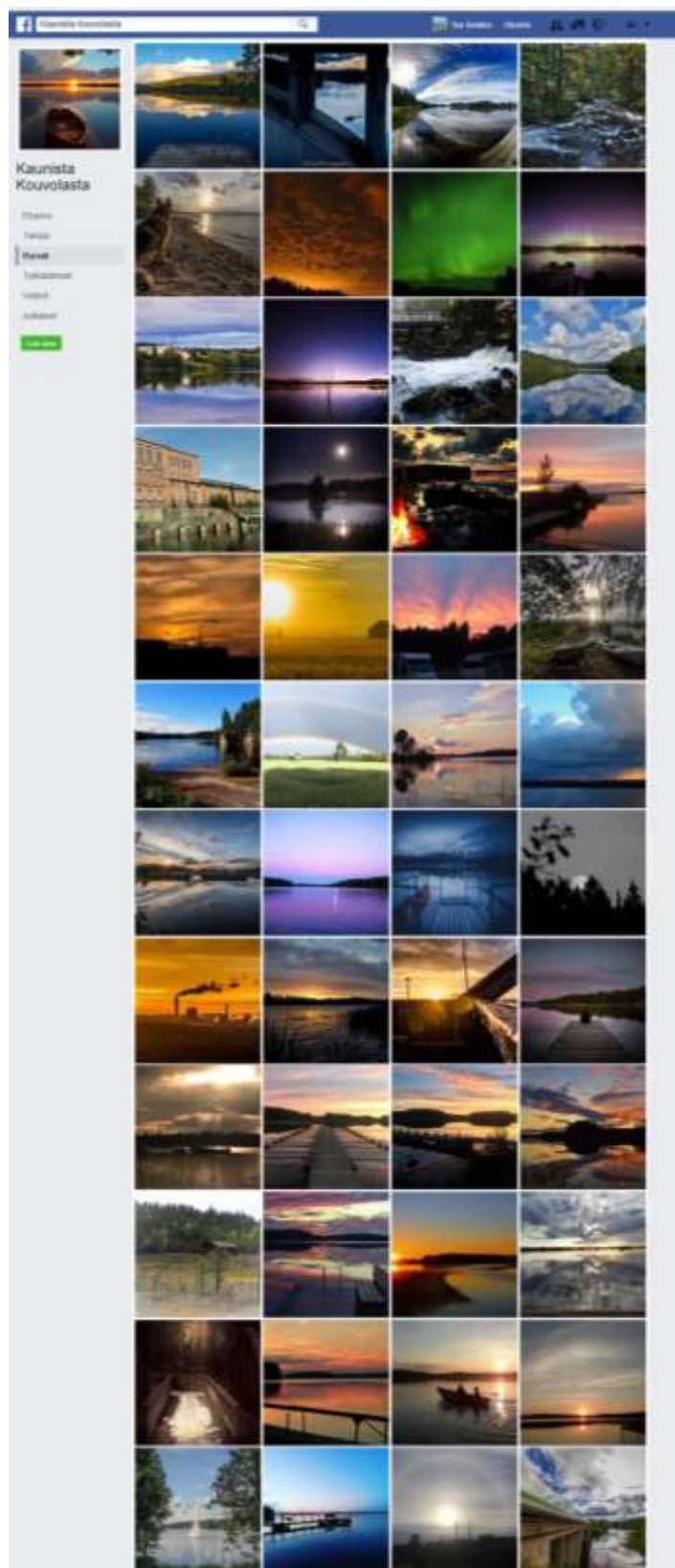
A photo of a swan: Name of the photo: Joutsen. Document name: canon_EOS_600D_235_edited-1. Row 229 in the research matrix.

A photo of a fox: Name of the photo: Mansikkavaras. Document name: 62972871. Row 114 in the research matrix.

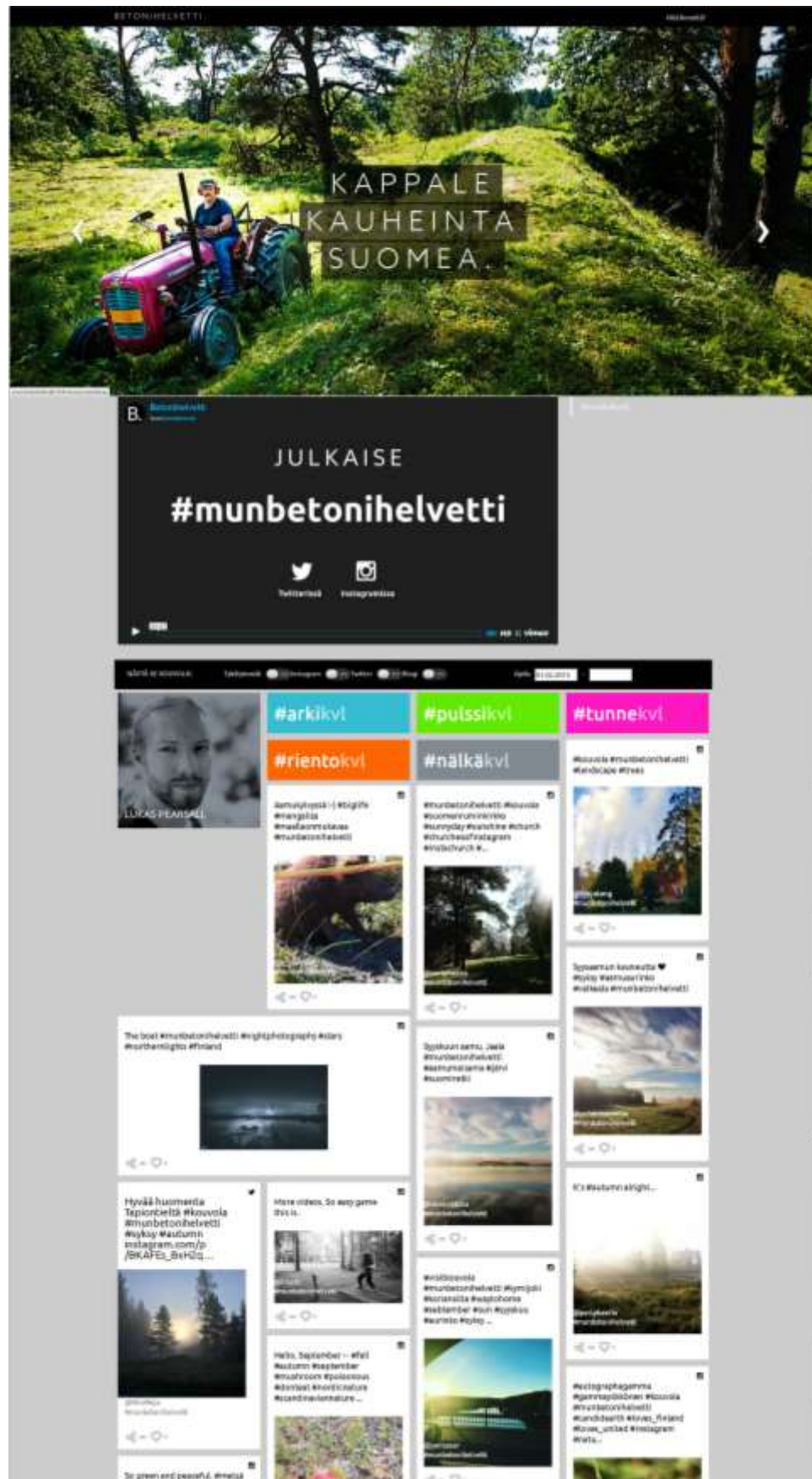
A photo of women in a hay field: Name of the photo: Heinäpellolla. Document name: WP_20140626_053. Row 328 in the research matrix.

A photo of a sunset reflecting to a lake: Name of the photo: Ilta Pyhäjärven rannassa. Document name: 58659740. Row 54 in the research matrix.

A screenshot from the Kaunista Kouvolasta Facebook-page in 6.9.2016



A screenshot from the Betonihelvetti.fi -page in 6.9.2016



The rules of the photo competition (in Finnish)

Säännöt

1. Kilpailun järjestäjä

Valokuvakilpailun järjestää Kouvolan kaupungin viestintäpalvelut (tekstissä myöhemmin kilpailun järjestäjä).

2. Kilpailuaika

Kilpailu on voimassa 15.5.–31.8.2014 välisenä aikana. Kilpailukuvia voi ladata kilpailuun Facebookin tai kouvola.fi/valokuvakilpailu2014 -sivun kilpailulomakkeen kautta 15.5.2014–15.8.2014 välisenä aikana. Facebook -kilpailuäänestys, johon vain Facebookin kautta ladatut kuvat osallistuvat, tapahtuu 15.5.–31.8.2014 välisenä aikana.

3. Kilpailun voittajat:

Kilpailun voittaja valitaan ja julkaistaan syyskuun 2014 aikana. Kilpailun voittajat julkaistaan Kouvolan kaupungin Facebook -sivuilla, www.kouvola.fi ja tiedotuslehdessä sekä mahdollisesti paikallisessa mediassa. Voittajiin ollaan yhteydessä henkilökohtaisesti. Kilpailun voittajiksi valitaan sekä Facebook -äänestyksessä eniten ääniä saanut kuva että kilpailuraadin kaikkien kilpailukuvien joukosta valitsema suosikkikuva. Kilpailuraadin kokoonpano vahvistuu syyskuussa 2014. Raatiin kuuluvat muun muassa valokuvaaja Johannes Wiehn, Poikilo - museoiden johtaja Anu Kasnio ja Kouvolan kaupungin viestintäpäällikkö Anne Käki. Raadin sihteerinä toimii tiedottaja Tea Salonsaari.

4. Kilpailun palkinnot

Facebook -äänestyksen voittaja sekä kilpailuraadin valitsema parhaan kuvan ottaja palkitaan molemmat 400 euron arvoisella kameratarvikelahjakortilla.

Kaikkien Facebookiin rekisteröityneiden, Facebookin kilpailusovelluksessa suosikkikuvaansa äänestäneiden kesken arvotaan tablettitietokone. Arvontaan voi osallistua vain sovelluksessa äänestyksen jälkeen arvontalomakkeen täyttämällä.

Kilpailun ja arvannon voittajiin otetaan yhteyttä henkilökohtaisesti.

5. Kilpailuun osallistuminen

Kilpailuun voi osallistua sähköisellä kilpailulomakkeella Kouvolan kaupungin Facebook -sivujen tai kouvola.fi/valokuvauskilpailu2014 -sivun kilpailulomakkeen kautta. Kilpailu on kaikille avoin. Alle 15-vuotias osallistuja tarvitsee huoltajan suostumuksen kilpailuun osallistumiseen. Kilpailukuvan tulee olla osallistujan itse ottama ja kilpailuun voi osallistua useammalla, mutta enintään viidellä kuvalla kilpailuaikana 15.5.2014–15.8.2014.

Kilpailuraati valitsee suosikkikuvansa www.kouvola.fi/valokuvauskilpailu2014 -sivun ja Facebook -kilpailulomakkeen kautta lähetetyistä valokuvista.

www.kouvola.fi/valokuvauskilpailu2014 -sivun kilpailulomakkeen kautta lähetetyt valokuvat eivät ole mukana Facebook -yleisöäänestyksessä.

Osallistut kilpailuun

a) Facebook-sovelluksessa

1. kun täytät yhteystietosi kilpailusivun lomakkeeseen,
2. ja lataat kilpailulomakkeen avulla haluamasi valokuvan - kuvan voi ladata tietokoneelta, Facebookista tai Instagramista,
3. liitä vielä mukaan lyhyt kuvaus lähettämästäsi valokuvasta
4. ja kerro, mitä lähettämäsi valokuva mielestäsi kertoo Kouvolasta.

•

b) www.kouvola.fi/valokuvauskilpailu2014 -sivulta löytyvällä lomakkeella

1. kun täytät yhteystietosi kilpailusivun lomakkeeseen,
2. ja lataat kilpailulomakkeen avulla haluamasi valokuvan - kuvan voi ladata tietokoneelta,
3. liitä vielä mukaan lyhyt kuvaus lähettämästäsi valokuvasta
4. ja kerro, mitä lähettämäsi valokuva mielestäsi kertoo Kouvolasta.

Kaikki kilpailuun ladatut tai lähetetyt kuvat tarkastetaan. Kilpailun järjestäjällä on oikeus poistaa sopimattomat kuvat kilpailusta (ks. kilpailukuvan ehdot) ja sulkea sopimattoman kuvan lähettäjä pois kilpailusta ilman erillistä ilmoitusta.

6. Kilpailukuvat

Kilpailuun voi osallistua kuvilla, jotka on otettu nykyisen Kouvolan alueella. Kuva voi olla maisema-, tapahtuma-, tilanne-, henkilö- tai yksityiskohtakuva. Aihe on vapaa. Kilpailuun voi osallistua enintään viidellä kuvalla, kuvia voi ladata yksi kerrallaan.

Kilpailuun voi osallistua vain digitaalisilla valokuvilla, jotka ovat jpeg tai png - tiedostomuodossa. Kuvan tiedostokoon tulee olla enintään 3 Mb. Facebookiin ladatut kuvat pienennetään automaattisesti verkkoon sopivaan kokoon. Kuvaajan tulee säilyttää kilpailuun ladatuista kuvista kuvaoriginaalit, koska kuvia ei palauteta ja mahdollisesti lunastettavista valokuvista ostetaan originaalikuvat.

7. Kilpailukuvan ehdot

Kouvolan kaupungin valokuvakilpailuun lähetettävien kuvien tulee täyttää seuraavat ehdot:

- Valokuva on kilpailuun osallistujan itse ottama ja kuvaaja omistaa kuvaan täydet käyttöoikeudet.
- Kilpailuun osallistuvaa kuvaa ei ole aiemmin julkaistu kaupallisessa tarkoituksessa. Henkilökohtaisessa käytössä julkaiseminen ei ole este osallistumiselle, kuva voi olla julkaistu omissa sosiaalisen median profiileissa.
- Kilpailukuvaa ei saa manipuloida, yhdistää toiseen kuvaan tai poistaa siitä elementtejä tai lisätä niitä. Kuvaa saa rajata, tehdä kontrastisäätöä ja tarkennuksen.
- Jos kuvassa esiintyy ihmisiä, on kuvaajalla oltava kuvan henkilöiden lupa kuvan käyttöön kilpailussa sekä kaupungin viestintävälineissä rajoituksetta. Mikäli kuvassasi on alaikäinen henkilö, on alaikäisen huoltajalta oltava lupa kuvan julkaisuun.

Journalistiliiton www-sivujen mukaan: ” Julkisella paikalla kuvaaminen on yleensä sallittua. Vaikka valokuvaajalla onkin kiistatta tekijänoikeus/lähioikeus julkisella paikalla otettuihin valokuvuihinsa, kuvan kohteilla voi olla yksityisyyden suojaa koskevan

lainsäädännön nojalla oikeus rajoittaa kuvien julkaisemista.

Henkilöä esittävää valokuvaa ei saa julkaista henkilön kunniaa tai yksityisyyttä loukkaavalla tavalla. Julkisellakin paikalla otettujen kuvien julkaisemisessa on otettava huomioon kuvatun henkilön yksityisyyden suoja. Kaikki mitä tapahtuu julkisella paikalla, ei välttämättä ole julkista.

Henkilön kuvaa ei saa käyttää mainostarkoituksessa ilman henkilön suostumusta”.

Lähde:

http://www.journalistiliitto.fi/pelisaannot/tekijanoikeudet/journalistien_erityiskysymyksiä/

- Kilpailukuvat eivät saa sisältää sopimatonta sisältöä. Julkiseen esitykseen sopimattomaksi luokitellaan säädytön, moraaliton, henkilöä tai ihmisryhmää loukkaava tai muuten sopimaton sisältö. Kilpailukuvien sisältö ei saa loukata yksityishenkilön, yrityksen tai jonkun muun osapuolen oikeuksia, yksityisyyttä tai kunniaa.
- Kilpailukuvilla ei tule markkinoida tuotetta, brändiä tai yritystä.

8. Kilpailukuvien käyttöoikeus

Kilpailun järjestäjä saa käyttää kilpailuun ladattuja kuvia ilman erillistä korvausta kilpailun markkinointiin ja viestintään. Kilpailun järjestäjä saa julkaista kuvia muun muassa kilpailumainoksissa ja kilpailusta kertoessaan Kouvolan kaupungin verkko- ja sosiaalisen median sivuilla sekä muissa markkinointikanavissa. Myös medially on oikeus julkaista kuvia kilpailusta kertovien artikkeleiden yhteydessä.

Kilpailun järjestäjällä on oikeus julkaista kilpailun voittajakuvat kilpailun tuloksista kerrottaessa ilman erillistä korvausta kaikissa Kouvolan kaupungin markkinointikanavissa.

9. Kilpailukuvien käyttöoikeuksien lunastaminen

Kilpailun järjestäjä neuvottelee kuvaajan kanssa haluamiensa kilpailukuvien käytöstä muussa viestinnässä, kuin edellä mainitussa tarkoituksessa. Kouvolan kaupungilla on oikeus lunastaa käyttöönsä viestintään ja markkinointiin soveltuvia kilpailukuvia, joiden kuvaoriginaalin lyhyen sivun pituus vähintään 2000 pikseliä. Korvaus painokelpoisen kuvan rajattomista käyttöoikeuksista on enintään 150 €. Käyttöoikeuksien lunastaminen ei rajaa kuvaajan käyttö- tai myyntioikeuksia kuvansa suhteen.

10. Kilpailuäänestys

Kouvolan kaupungin valokuvakilpailun Facebook-sivulla voi kuka tahansa Facebookiin rekisteröitynyt henkilö äänestää suosikkikuvaansa ajalla 15.5.–31.8.2014. Kilpailuun osallistuvat voivat parantaa voittomahdollisuuksiaan kutsumalla ystäviään äänestämään kuviaan. Äänestysaikana voi äänestää yhtä kuvaa joka päivä. Kaikkien äänestykseen osallistuneiden ja yhteystietonsa lomakkeella lähettäneiden kesken arvotaan tablettitietokone. Yhteystietonsa voi lähettää arvontaan vain kerran. Arvontaan voi osallistua vain äänestyksen jälkeen yhteystietolomakkeen täyttämällä ja lähettämällä.

11. Kilpailun järjestäjän vastuut ja oikeudet

Kilpailun järjestäjä ei vastaa kilpailuun osallistumisen yhteydessä mahdollisesti tapahtuvista tietoliikennehäiriöistä tai tietoteknisistä ongelmista, jotka estävät kilpailun osallistumisen. Kilpailun ja arvonnin voittajat vastaavat itse palkinnon lunastamisesta ja siihen tai palkinnon käyttöön liittyvistä kustannuksista.

Mikäli valittu voittaja ei vastaa voittajalle lähetetyssä palkintoviestissä mainittuun määräaikaan mennessä, kilpailun järjestäjä pidättää itsellään oikeuden peruuttaa palkinto ja valita toinen voittaja kiistattoman

12. Rekisteriote 14.5.2014

Rekisterinpitäjä: Kouvola kaupunki

Sähköposti: viestinta@kouvola.fi

www-osoite: www.kouvola.fi

Rekisterin tietosisältö: Nimi, puhelinnumero, sähköpostiosoite, sekä kilpailuun osallistuneen valokuva ja siihen liittyvät tiedot.

Tietolähteet: Kouvola kaupungin www-sivuilla ja Facebook-sivulla oleva kilpailu, jonka kautta käyttäjät voivat lähettää tietonsa lomakkeella.

Rekisterin tarkoitus: Tietoja käytetään ainoastaan Kouvola kaupungin www-sivuilla ja Facebook -sivuilla julkaistuun kilpailuun osallistumisessa.

Tietojen luovutus: Tietoja ei luovuteta eteenpäin muille tahoille.