City branding through the Olympic Games. A study of the London 2012 Games and its effect on the brand image of London

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Abstract

This thesis examines a phenomenon of city branding by hosting the Olympic Games as a way to enhance a city brand. A case of the London 2012 Games is employed to find out the key activities the host city exercised, based on the theory of city branding. The thesis provides a tool to review different event stages and also highlights the significance of involvement and communication towards different target groups. In addition, the study tries to explore the effect the event leaves on a city brand, more specifically, the impact on tourists’ impressions of the city. This thesis follows a deductive research approach, what means that a set of hypotheses is firstly proposed, then primary and secondary data is gathered to test them and answer the research questions. Secondary data forms the basis of research findings, while the findings from a conducted online survey give insights of what the young international audience, who have visited London after the event, perceives of the event and the city. Additionally, brand attributes are discovered, which are later compared to the ones the London 2012 Games aimed to promote and transfer to London’s image. The study concludes that London exercised city branding activities with a great focus on the early strategic planning and collaboration with target groups, especially with the government, and that consequently led to an enhancement of the city brand. Most importantly, this study of the London 2012 event, reveals a few insights into destination branding through this type of events, which could be followed by future host cities of the Games. Apart from the customary activities of destination branding, a future host is recommended to employ legacy in the strategy at the pre-event stage and to have an open data policy throughout the whole process.
# Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................. 5

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT .............................................................................................. 8
   2.1 Research purpose .................................................................................................. 8
   2.2 Research question ................................................................................................. 9
   2.3 Delimitation ............................................................................................................ 9
   2.4 Structure of the thesis ........................................................................................... 9

3. METHODOLOGY ........................................................................................................... 10
   3.1 Philosophy of science ............................................................................................ 10
   3.2 Research ideology ................................................................................................ 11
   3.3 Research Strategy .................................................................................................. 12
   3.4 Research design ..................................................................................................... 13
   3.5 Research technique ............................................................................................... 13
      3.5.1 Data collection methods ................................................................................ 13
         Qualitative ............................................................................................................ 14
         Quantitative .......................................................................................................... 14
         Secondary data ..................................................................................................... 14
         Primary data .......................................................................................................... 15
         Online survey ........................................................................................................ 15
   3.6 Limitations .............................................................................................................. 18
   3.7 The credibility of research findings ....................................................................... 19
   3.8 Overview of the methodology .............................................................................. 20

4. LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................................................................. 21
   4.1 Fundamentals of place marketing and branding .................................................. 21
      4.1.1 Definitions of a brand ................................................................................... 21
      4.1.2 Co-branding and image transfer .................................................................... 23
      4.1.3 Sustainable branding .................................................................................... 23
      4.1.4 Target groups and product’s specifics ........................................................... 24
         Visitors ................................................................................................................... 25
         Residents ............................................................................................................... 27
4.2 Fundamentals of events .................................................. 29
4.3 Fundamentals of the Olympic Games ..................................... 31
  4.3.1 Post-Olympic effects ................................................. 32
4.4 Destination branding and its relationship with sports events .................. 33
4.5 City branding through the Olympic Games ................................ 35

5. HYPOTHESES ................................................................... 38

6. PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS ....................................... 39

6.1 Secondary data ................................................................ 39
  6.1.1 Pre-event period ......................................................... 39
    6.1.1.1 London branding ................................................. 39
    6.1.1.2 Tourism strategy for 2012 ...................................... 41
  6.1.2 London 2012 ............................................................. 42
    6.1.2.1 London 2012 bid .................................................. 42
    6.1.2.2 Organisational bodies and event related costs .............. 43
    6.1.2.3 Security ............................................................. 44
    6.1.2.4 Tickets .............................................................. 44
    6.1.2.5 Design of London 2012 ........................................ 45
    6.1.2.6 Special initiatives ............................................... 46
    6.1.2.7 London 2012 Festival ........................................... 47
    6.1.2.8 Residents ......................................................... 48
    6.1.2.9 Business ......................................................... 50
    6.1.2.10 Sustainability .................................................. 51
    6.1.2.11 Media ............................................................. 52
    6.1.2.12 The Opening Ceremony ...................................... 52
    6.1.2.13 The Closing Ceremony ........................................ 52

6.1.3 Post-Olympic period ..................................................... 53
  6.1.3.1 Image of London ................................................... 53
  6.1.3.2 Visitors ............................................................. 54
  6.1.3.3 Residents ........................................................... 55
  6.1.3.4 Business ............................................................ 56
  6.1.3.5 Sustainability ...................................................... 57
  6.1.3.6 Media ............................................................... 59

6.1.4 The dark sides of the event .................................................. 60
  6.1.4.1 Local community .................................................. 60
6.1.4.2 Costs 60
6.1.4.3 Unrealised profits 61
6.1.4.4 Blanket coverage 61
6.1.4.5 Regulations 61
6.1.4.6 Lack of real regeneration 62
6.1.5 Measures 62
6.2 Primary data 63
6.2.1 Online questionnaire findings 63
6.2.1.1 Sample overview 63
6.2.1.2 Nationality, gender and age 63
6.2.1.3 General information 64
6.2.1.4 Interest in sports and the Olympics 65
6.2.1.5 Image of London 65
6.2.1.6 London 2012 67

7. DISCUSSION 68
7.1 Exploration of hypotheses 68
7.2 New lessons learnt from London 2012 76

8. CONCLUSION 77

9. FURTHER RESEARCH 78

10. REFERENCES 79

11. APPENDICES 92

Appendix 1 92
Appendix 2 95

List of figures

Figure 1. Overview of the methodology (Saunders et al., 2009) 20
Figure 2. Target groups (Zenker & Beckmann, 2012) 24
Figure 3. Visualisation of the theory 37
Figure 4. Nationality of survey respondents 64
Figure 5. Top 4 associations of London 66

Table 1. Visits of leisure tourists to London 2010-2015 (Visit Britain, 2016) 54
1. Introduction

Never before has the competition between cities in the global marketplace been more intense as it is today. Continuously increasing effects of globalisation make cities strive to attract talent, investments and tourism, and that highly depends on the management of their reputation and image. Therefore, various concepts of marketing and strategic brand management are adopted from the commercial world to achieve the latter objectives, since countries, regions and cities think of themselves in brand terms (Kapferer, 1997).

The concept of place marketing emerged by relating marketing theory to urban studies. It started in mid 1980s, when the public officials acknowledged the significance of promoting their cities, and later on, in 1990s, that resulted into a more systematic effort and strategies to brand the cities as unique places and create their identifiable images (Sahini & Baloglu, 2014). Place marketing is about development and enhancement of the place infrastructure and products. It is the development and improvement of the place image or brand, and promotion, where the place is a product and visitors are customers (ibid). The first publication and example of place marketing is thought to be Burgess’ article (1982), which questioned the advantages of place advertisement. Later on, the focus has shifted to place branding as the marketing academe noticed that more and more places used to conceptualise themselves as brands. Besides, scholars have noted and drawn a parallel between city branding and corporate branding, as there are shared similarities in terms of complexity and a variety of stakeholders involved (Sahini & Baloglu, 2014). Nonetheless, it is argued that city branding is much more challenging because of the product’s specifics (ibid).

The most known and successful city branding cases are usually named such campaigns as New York’s famous - I Love NYC, Amsterdam’s - I AMsterdam and Berlin’s - Be Berlin (Dinnie, 2011). The cities used slogans, visual images and symbols to create and promote their city brands. In addition, many destinations attempted to personalise or attach human characteristics to their brand images, what can be noticed from the examples mentioned above (e.g. I AMsterdam). It is claimed that if a person can be a brand, then a brand can be seen as a person as well (Aaker, 1997).
Recently, a range of city brand rankings have emerged, such as Saffron European City Brand Barometer and Anholt-GMI City Brands Index, which continually evaluate city brands based on respective factors. Apart from those, a plethora of publishers, such as Conde Nast Traveler, Lonely Travel or Forbes, to name a few, frequently create top lists of cities in various categories like ‘The best cities to live for millennials’ or ‘The best cities to visit this fall’. That further proves the increasing need and popularity of branding of places among officials (Zenker & Braun, 2010).

Furthermore, hosting an international mega event is yet another vehicle to promote a place and enhance its image. This type of event creates a huge level of awareness and exposes the place as an attractive tourist destination, as the place is visited by a number of tourists who otherwise would not travel there. Besides, local residents are reinforced to take pride and commit to their place image (Avraham, 2014). Moreover, local economy receives enormous support due to the event, as it usually contributes to infrastructure, sports and cultural facilities or new tourist attractions (ibid). Lastly, the destination attracts opinion leaders and journalists, which are thought to be able to indirectly improve the place image.

The leader of high profile events, or the genre known as mega events, is the Summer Olympic Games. It is the most prominent event a destination can host, followed by other events like Expo, the World Cup, Commonwealth or Asian Games (Avraham, 2014). The rivalry to win the rights to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games (from now on referred to as the Olympic Games or the Games) for investment and prestige is huge (Gold & Gold, 2008). It is argued that even constructing a bid represents that a city is ambitious for global attention (Ward, 2007 in Gold & Gold, 2008). However, it is significant to understand that simply winning the right to host the Games is not in itself a way to create a lasting effect on a country, region or city image. It is an amazing opportunity to get on the world stage, but it does not directly improve the city brand. The host city has to make one clear striking statement about itself, as a rate of awareness decays if strategic actions are not taken to keep the links visible (Ritchie & Smith, 1991). For instance, Athens, the host of Olympics in 2004, realised too late that it was the biggest promotional opportunity Greece had a chance to enjoy since the sack of Troy (Anholt, 2007). Nevertheless, Barcelona is an amazing example of how the Olympic Games held in 1992 were used to transform a city, from an industrialised port city to a world-class tourism destination (Clark et al., 2011).
Hence, even though it is argued that the event brings countless opportunities, historically every host experiences post-Olympic era differently.

In 2005, London secured the right to host the 2012 Olympics by only four votes over Paris, which had long been seen as the favourite. The other rivals were Madrid, Moscow and New York (Pound, 2012). It was the third time London won the Olympic bid as the Games were also held in the city in 1908 and 1948. However, at those times the event did not have such a huge prestige, neither opportunities to communicate the core city values and identity to the world. It was argued that London’s bid document in 2005 won over the other candidates because it put more emphasis on the legacy and after-effects of the Games than the event and its content (Lindsay, 2014). The document also consisted of integration of the Paralympics and ethnical inclusion (ibid).

The year of 2012 was hugely important for Great Britain and the city of London, because they did not only host the most viewable and attractive event in the world, but also celebrated the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee and the annual Wimbledon Championships (Girginov, 2013). The Olympics took place from 27th of July to 12th August, while the Paralympics took place from 29th of August to 9th of September. The Games was an extraordinary opportunity to use as a means of city branding, thus send a message to the world saying what the city truly is. The public collectively agreed it was the greatest Games ever (Beard, 2012). The media awarded London a gold medal (SkyNews, 2012), while the president of the International Olympic Committee at the time, Jacques Rogge had to be more modest and announced that: “It may still be too soon to call them the greatest Games ever, but ask the same question again in 20 years and you might just get a ‘yes’” (The Guardian, 2012).

This year, 2016, is an Olympic year again, and the Rio de Janeiro Games has recently ended. Thus, the public eye turned to this mega event for a few weeks in August and now reflects whether Rio has delivered the promises and took advantage of the world stage to deliver its message. Nonetheless, it has been eleven years since London won the bid and four years since the London 2012 Games took place. Hence, a substantial amount of time has passed to look back and explore the implications on London’s brand in general as well as to investigate more specific arenas, like destination image. The nature of Olympic analysis usually follows the approach which takes pre-
event promises and post-event delivery outcomes and assesses the conformity (Lindsay, 2014). This thesis provides a mixture of insights into the different event stages, city branding tools and destination image, since the author is driven by the wonder of what has remained when the euphoria of the greatest event on earth faded away.

2. Problem statement

2.1 Research purpose

This paper aims to investigate the successful event’s incorporation in the strategy of city branding. Hence, the thesis is directed to find the reasons behind the triumph by exploring the link between city branding theory and its actual use in London. In other words, the purpose is to test if the city branding activities exercised around the time of the Games were in accordance to the theory or else to find out what was unconventional. Furthermore, the study aims to gain an insight into how those activities affected tourists, more specifically their perception of the destination image of London. Therefore, another objective is to understand if visitors perceive the city differently now and whether the supposedly increased attractiveness of London as a tourist destination can be linked to the event.

In addition, this thesis is also driven by a long-time personal interest in the Olympic Games, supported by work experience in London 2012 Games. Thus, the desire and curiosity to understand the after-effects on the image of London, the city, where the author lived during the event period, are seen as potentially successful research endeavour. Lastly, the objective of the paper is to provide new insights from this role model case for destination branding for future hosts of the Olympic Games. Overall, the goal of this thesis is to expand the knowledge of city marketing through the Games and to explore the event’s impact on a destination image by examining the practice of the London 2012 Games.
2.2 Research question

As a result of the trends and ideas presented in the previous discussion the author has generated a set of two research questions, which would lead this study and allow to achieve the research goals:

*City branding through the greatest Olympic Games ever. What tools determined London’s success of city branding? How did the event affect the destination image?*

The following list contains areas, which are researched to answer the research questions:

- event stages
- target groups
- event and city co-branding
- destination image components
- sustainable branding

2.3 Delimitation

The project considers that the event itself was a success. It is a study of city marketing and branding, using the occasion of hosting the Olympic Games to rebrand the city of London. Thus, no other places are taken into consideration. Other means of marketing and branding London are not researched, implying that only the mega event, the Olympic Games in 2012, is studied in the thesis. In terms of a destination image, an area is constrained to the Greater London Area (GTA) and does not take into account further surroundings, such as England or Britain.

2.4 Structure of the thesis

The background has already been set in the introduction and the purpose of this thesis has been discussed in the previous section. The next chapter is methodology, which presents the philosophy of science, ideology and a research strategy taken for this study. Besides that, research design and techniques are also introduced. The following chapter is the literature review, which
helps to build a link between what is currently known and what is added to this knowledge as a result of the study. The overview of three main fields: place marketing, events and the Olympics is combined to a chart at the end of the chapter. In addition, as a result of the literature review a set of hypotheses emerge, which are introduced in the fifth chapter of this project. The chapter after follows the logic of theoretical tool and presents the secondary and primary data. Then the discussion chapter is designed based on the hypotheses. After making sure that the research questions are answered, the conclusion chapter outlines the critical points of this thesis. Lastly, a short paragraph on what could be researched in the future, to provide additional value to the field, ends the paper.

3. Methodology

The following chapter outlines methods used in the research, which were chosen to answer the research questions in the most effective and efficient manner. Hence, research strategy, design and data collection techniques are presented. Beforehand, the selected philosophy of science and research ideology are presented and explained.

3.1 Philosophy of science

The research philosophy is firstly discussed in order to inform the reader about the paradigm within which the paper is situated, or in other words, the author’s position on the nature of the world (i.e. ontology) and how she understands and gains knowledge about it (i.e. epistemology) are presented. These are the two main ways to think about the research process (Saunders, Levis, Thornhill, 2009). A clear stance of a research paradigm helps to guide and justify research design decisions, since researcher’s assumptions affect the research strategy and methods (Maxwell, 2008).

*Ontology* is concerned with the nature of social reality; it is about the way a researcher views the world. In other words, ontological assumptions describe what kinds of social phenomena do or can exist as well as the conditions of their existence and relationship (Blaikie, 2009). It is
significant to discuss that, because ontological assumptions shape the way a researcher sees and studies research objects (Saunders et al., 2009). One aspect of ontology is *objectivism*, which presents the position of existence of social entities in relation to external social actors. The other aspect is *subjectivism*, which claims that social phenomena stem from perceptions and consequent actions of social actors concerned with their existence (Saunders et al., 2009).

*Epistemology* discusses possibilities of kinds of knowledge, that is, where the researcher’s knowledge is from and what are the criteria to decide its adequacy and legitimacy (Blaikie, 2009). Besides, researcher’s ontological stand also has an impact on epistemology. A researcher who is resource-oriented advocates *positivism*, that means he or she states that the reality is represented by objects which are ‘real’, so the researcher is comfortable with collection and analysis of ‘facts’ (Saunders et al., 2009). Whereas a researcher who is feelings-oriented applies *interpretivist’s* philosophy, he or she studies feelings and attitudes, and emphasises the research of people as social actors rather than objects (ibid).

### 3.2 Research ideology

Extreme polar ends of research ideology are positivism and constructivism with pragmatism in between. The researcher of this study considers herself to have a pragmatic research ideology. Pragmatic researchers are open-minded in considering the ontological position to make sense of the data. A pragmatic researcher is creatively flexible in the overall approach as to achieve the most suitable research strategy (Strang, 2015). Thus, pragmatism involves using multiple theories to construct and guide the analysis rather than one single method. In other words, a pragmatic researcher combines qualitative and quantitative data and that allows to incorporate the strengths of both methods. This ideology stands for selection of most useful methods to address the underlying research questions (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). In terms of ontology, pragmatic researcher’s view is external and multiple in order to answer the research question in the best manner (Saunders et al., 2009). Epistemology of this ideology is about either or both observable phenomena and subjective meanings that can provide acceptable knowledge (ibid).
Hence, the author is an advocate of objectivism and claims that the reality is independent of the observer. The author’s epistemological stand is both resource-oriented and feelings-oriented. As the pragmatism ideology dictates, in order to answer the research questions, she considers the reality to be represented by ‘real’ objects to answer the first research question. While she chooses the feelings-oriented approach for the second research questions as the data from social actors (i.e. survey respondents) has to be interpreted.

### 3.3 Research strategy

A research strategy provides logic or a set of procedures to answer a research question (Blaikie, 2009). There are four research strategies — inductive, deductive, retroductive, abductive — which differ in starting and concluding points and alternative sets of steps between those points (ibid). A deductive research strategy was selected to answer the research question of this study. This approach refers to an application of existing theories or concepts to show how it describes, explains or evaluates the unit of analysis in the findings (Strang, 2015). The deductive strategy aims to test theories and starts with identification of a regularity that needs to be further explained. This research strategy argues that the knowledge of social world is led by means of a trial and error process (Blaikie, 2009). The project is led by five key steps in a deductive research process suggested by Robson (in Saunders et al., 2009):

1. Deduct a hypothesis from the theory;
2. Express the hypothesis in operational terms, that would propose a relationship of two variables;
3. Test the operational hypothesis;
4. Examine the specific outcome of the inquiry;
5. Modify the theory if necessary.

The deductive research approach claims that a researcher should be independent of what is being observed. Thus, operationalisation of concepts helps to measure the facts quantitatively. Besides, the principle of reductionism states that if problems are reduced to simple elements, they are
understood much better. Another important factor of deductive research is generalisation, which means that a sufficient sample has to be chosen in order to be able to generalise about regularities in human social behaviour (Sanders et al., 2009).

Overall, the researcher argues that a deductive research strategy is appropriate to answer this study’s research questions effectively and efficiently as hypotheses were formed and the data was collected to see if it matches the theory.

3.4 Research design

The study is based on a case of the city of London and the Games it staged in the summer of 2012. A case study is defined as an empirical inquiry that looks into a phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2014). Case studies are usually used in explorative research and it lets to observe a phenomenon. The London Games was the most recent case to investigate as an example of city marketing through the Games, when the thesis was started. Of course, multiple case studies would have provided more insights, but due to time constraints and the fact that the Olympics is a quadrennial event, it was not considered for this project. Nonetheless, a case study method relies on multiple sources of data and triangulation, what implies that the use of various data collection methods, which is introduced in the following section, increases validity. Overall, since this project is a descripto-explorative study as the research questions determined, the case study method provides the researcher with a rich understanding of the context and processes enacted, because it also suggests a combination of data collection techniques (Saunders et al., 2009).

3.5 Research technique

3.5.1 Data collection methods

This project used more than one data collection technique and analysis procedures in order to answer the research question. Multiple methods were also chosen due to the pragmatic research philosophy of the study and the case study method. Mixed method research refers to the use of
qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis in sequence, and the main benefit of this choice is assurance (Saunders et al., 2009). Different methods were used for different purposes — qualitative data was collected for the descriptive research goals, while quantitative and qualitative data was gathered for the exploratory research objectives. Hence, quantitative and qualitative data was used for different parts of the research question. Mostly, qualitative data helped to reveal *what tools determined London’s success of city branding*, while quantitative showed *how did the event affect the destination image*.

**Qualitative**

*Qualitative* is a term used for any data collection technique or analysis procedure that generates non-numerical data (e.g. words, pictures). It produces discursive descriptions and explores social actors’ meanings and interpretations (Blaikie, 2009). Qualitative data in this thesis was gathered mainly in the secondary research, but some of it was also collected in the online questionnaire provided by the answers to open-ended questions.

**Quantitative**

This data collection technique or data analysis procedure generates or uses numerical data (Saunders et al., 2009). Hence, it concerns counting and measuring aspects of social life. Quantitative data was collected in the online questionnaire and in some secondary sources which, for instance, communicated the data of international leisure tourists in London from 2010 to 2015 (Visit Britain, 2016).

**Secondary data**

Secondary data — already collected data by some other researchers for specific purposes (Blaikie, 2009). This type of data is advantageous in time and costs savings. A researcher did not have to collect data herself, thus she could spend more time and effort in analysing and interpreting the findings. Also, secondary research provides comparative and contextual data. In other words, a researcher’s findings can be placed in a general context or used for triangulation. On the other hand, the previous research was conducted with different aims and research questions, thus the
data may not match current research goals. Usually, not all areas of interest, to a current researcher, are included (Blaikie, 2009) that is why the primary research is done to complement it.

Nonetheless, secondary research contributed to a huge part of the research for this project and the data was gathered by researching and analysing academic articles, books, newspapers, and reports, which were found mostly on the Internet. Secondary research was conducted firstly, as the researcher wanted to achieve descriptive goals in order to inform the design and conduct of the primary research.

**Primary data**

Primary data is defined as data, which is gathered by a researcher who is responsible for a study to answer specific research questions. The researcher is in a direct contact with the data source and has control over the production and analysis of primary data (Blaikie, 2009). The main source of primary data in this study was an online questionnaire. As it was previously introduced, primary data collection began only after the majority of secondary data was gathered. Primary data was mainly collected in order to support the knowledge derived from the secondary research and also to answer the second research question.

**Online survey**

A self-administered online questionnaire is a strategy used for exploratory research, which grants a collection of information from a sizeable population in an inexpensive way (Saunders et al., 2009). The questionnaire had a set of questions in a predetermined order that each respondent had to answer on the digital platform called surveyXact. The main challenge of having an online survey was to produce a great set of questions to achieve the objectives as well as to ensure a satisfying response rate. Another limitation was a number of questions that a questionnaire could contain. Nonetheless, the questions were created based on the literature review and secondary research findings and provided sufficient amount of data to be analysed in the next chapters of this thesis.
The survey was pilot-tested by sending it to three people, who were asked to complete the questionnaire and provide any related feedback. There were no substantial negative comments, thus the survey was publicly launched and remained active in the months of May and June.

**Structure of the questionnaire**

The opening message introduced a respondent to the topic and purpose of the online questionnaire. Also, it was assured that the data would remain anonymous and confidential and it would be used for academic purposes only. At the end of the survey, a respondent received a ‘thank you’ message. The questionnaire consisted of a set of structured 26 questions and was sectioned into six parts, which are briefly described below. In addition, a five-point itemised rating scale was employed in the survey, which allowed respondents to indicate the extent of interest, favourability or willingness as there were both behavioural and attitudinal questions (Brotherton, 2008).

**Section 1**

A filter question was included in the first section in order to limit the bias, because the goal of the research was to examine impressions of people who visited the destination. Otherwise the researcher would not have been able to find out the affective and conative parts of the London image. Thus, a respondent was asked if he or she visited London since 2012 July. If a responded answered no, he or she was thanked for the interest in participation and finished with the survey. Else, a respondent continued with the following five groups of questions.

**Section 2**

The second section consisted of general questions about travelling habits, interest in sports and the Olympics. Thus, the aim was to find out the reason of going to London, associations about the city and if a respondent was there before the Games took place. Also, frequency of travelling and willingness to visit a city because of a sports event were included in this set of questions. Lastly, interest in sports and the Olympic Games were questioned.
Section 3

The third group of questions was created to find out a level of interest in London 2012 Games and impressions of the event as well as what characteristics respondents associate with the Games. Additionally, the media consumption habits during the London 2012 Games were questioned. The answers were supposed to later inform if the associations of event are coherent with the destination image and also to understand media consumption habits.

Section 4

The fourth block of questions concerned the perception of London in general and then East London area. Another purpose was to get to know if a respondent actually visited Olympic places/facilities. Besides, a number of visits to the city after 2012 August was questioned as well as the willingness to revisit. The willingness to recommend London to a friend was asked to be identified, which could have been further explained in the comments. The collected data mainly helped to interpret the effect on destination image and examine behavioural intentions.

Section 5

This section particularly aimed to understand respondent’s attitudes towards London’s image. Hence, the questions were about associations of London with the Games. Also, it included questions about the change of East London and sustainability of the image.

Section 6

The purpose of the last section was to collect demographic information. Since it is the most sensitive information a respondent is asked to reveal, literature suggested including it at the end of a questionnaire. Data about respondent’s age, gender and nationality was collected.
Sampling

A selection of elements from a population is called a sample and it is used to make statements about the population as studying the whole population may be impossible, slow and expensive (Blaikie, 2009). The sampling method used for the online survey is a non-probability method and it is based on convenience, as researcher’s professional, friends and family networks were approached. Also, some instances might have had snowball sampling effects as a web link of the survey was asked to be forwarded to other people, and that was used to boost a response rate.

Furthermore, the target audience of the research was young people, under the age of 30, and as a filter question already identified, the audience must have been to London since July 2012. Hence, the ways to reach the sample were chosen accordingly to the characteristics of it. A link to the survey was mainly shared on social media platforms and that was Facebook and Twitter. The reach out resulted to be relatively successful as over 300 people opened the link.

3.6 Limitations

There are some influences, that place restrictions on the research, which have to be acknowledged. First of all, time constraint is recognised as a limitation because the phenomenon was researched a certain point in time. Thus, longitudinal study would have enhanced the richness of the data as, for instance, the change during the years in perception of London could have been researched. It would have been more insightful and would have let to associate with specific branding activities exercised at the time. In addition, the research is limited by the sample size and representation, since the online questionnaire was active for a relatively short period of time and people surveyed were mostly of the same age group, thus generalisations about the whole population cannot be made. Moreover, the fact that statistical analysis was omitted from the methods employed in the study, limited the opportunities of exploring the relationships between variables. The depth of the analysis was also restricted by the page limit. For example, the perception of destination image of tourists depending on their interest in sports or frequency of...
travel could have been explored. Lastly, as the research philosophy dictated, a certain level of subjectivity could be present in some parts of the thesis.

3.7 The credibility of research findings

The methodology choices affect the credibility of research findings, thus the reliability and validity of the research have to be discussed. Reliability informs about the extent of consistency of findings, which the data collection techniques and analysis procedures would yield (Saunders et al., 2009). While the validity tells to what extent findings are really about what they seem to be (ibid).

The quantitative and qualitative secondary data is claimed to be generally valid and reliable, because it was collected from official governmental reports or other reliable sources provided by the event organisers. A wide range of sources, from books to blogs, statistics, articles reporting the findings in different event stages were analysed. However, it should be noted that the findings could be influenced by the observer’s bias as the researcher has been actively following the timeline of the case study at the time because of her personal interest. Hence, other researchers might have interpreted the qualitative findings with a higher level of objectivity and potentially different conclusions.

Furthermore, the quantitative primary data collected in the questionnaire is also thought to be valid and reliable as the sample was represented by a sufficient number of respondents of a wide range of nationalities. However, the convenience sampling could have prohibited the wider representation of social and educational backgrounds. Also, the researcher is aware that the findings could be biased by the fact that a small number of the respondents are the residents of London now, thus they belong to a different target group, which was aimed to be researched. Nevertheless, none of the respondents was born and raised in the place. Also, considering the fact that the results were consistent among all respondents of the survey it is concluded that the results are reliable. Lastly, the destination image was studied at a given point in time and it is expected that the situation is changing due to the micro and macro effects, thus the results in five years are expected to differ from what the researcher has found today.
3.8 Overview of the methodology

To summarise this chapter, the researcher of this thesis adopted a pragmatic ideology and that led to the formation of a deductive research strategy. The study was descripto-explorative and used a method of a case study, which allowed answering to both research questions. As pragmatism suggests, a mixed method research is usual to this type of ideology. Thus, primary research was conducted by releasing an online survey, which provided with qualitative and quantitative primary data. Whereas secondary research was based on literature and digital material and it provided with mainly qualitative secondary data. Overall, the researcher argues that the chosen methods were valid, reliable and ensured sufficient data for the further analysis. In order to better understand the choices and the sequence of methods, they are visualised in the graph below, which was created by the inspiration of the so-called ‘Research Onion’ introduced by Saunders et al. (2009).

![Figure 1. Overview of the methodology (Saunders et al., 2009)](image-url)
4. Literature review

The following chapter reviews literature related to the research topic and consequently a guiding framework for the analysis is compiled. This chapter follows a pyramid’s logic as the discussion starts from general knowledge of place marketing, then it identifies target groups and their role, afterwards definitions of events are presented, which later follows to overview of the Olympic Games. Finally, the narrowest point is the overview of branding a destination by using the opportunity of the Olympics. As a result of this chapter a set of hypotheses is generated and briefly discussed in the chapter afterwards.

4.1 Fundamentals of place marketing and branding

The globalisation has led to the environment where every place in the world competes for a share of commercial, political, social, cultural transactions and a brand image is a critical factor here (Anholt, 2010). Hence, to cut through the clutter, ambitious countries, regions and cities shape what the world thinks of them and position themselves with a strategic intent. Marketing techniques, which were previously only embraced in the commercial world for products and services, are employed in the place marketing.

The project specifically considers city marketing and branding, a narrower approach of place marketing, since the study case was chosen to be the city of London. According to Braun (2008) city marketing is “the coordinated use of marketing tools supported by a shared customer-oriented philosophy, for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging urban offerings that have value for the city’s customers and the city’s community at large” (Beckmann & Zenker, p.2, 2012). This definition establishes a division of city’s audiences, but in order to discuss it further, a brand has to be defined, since it is an overall goal to be created by city marketers.

4.1.1 Definitions of a brand

A brand is a sum of all tangible and intangible elements which create an impression of a product or service perceived in an individual’s mind (Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009). Additionally, it should be highlighted that a brand represents an organisation itself, its reputation and core values
A brand intends to identify the goods or services of a seller and differentiate them from those of competitors (Aaker, 1996). However, the network of impressions and associations is based on different target groups, what makes branding a multi-faceted subject (Zenker & Braun, 2010). Thus, it is suggested that a place should focus on the brand perception of different segments and strive to create strategies for building a place brand architecture (ibid). In other words, marketers create a brand identity and what visitors perceive of it is a brand image. The identity has to be translatable to different audiences, because the stakeholders should be able to relate to the brand.

Hence, a brand image is perception about a brand reflected by the associations in a consumer’s memory (Keller, 1993). The image consists of three types of interconnected associations — cognitive perceptions, affective image and brand personality. Brand personality reflects the set of human personality traits associated to a brand (Aaker, 1997 in Sahin & Baloglu, 2014). It is argued that a person is more likely to visit destinations whose personality matches his or her own self-concept (Schaar, 2013). Since it was found that the willingness to return and recommend a destination was higher if the place matched with a traveller’s personality (ibid). Thus, the strategic factor implies that a brand personality is an additional angle to market a place and appeal to audiences.

Brand awareness is significant for a formation of a brand image as it is related to brand knowledge. A high level of brand awareness refers to easiness to recognise and recall the brand (Schaar, 2013). Hence, it increases the likelihood that the place will be a part of a travellers’ consideration set for a particular category when making a purchase decision (Keller 1993, in Schaar 2013).

Brand attributes are a set of clear characteristics that a brand possesses. Those attributes form the ground to build on positive perceptions of the city across multiple audiences (Dinnie, 2011). Thus, brand attributes are key to build a strong brand on the world stage. Such question as “what comes to your mind when you think of this city?” should evoke particular attributes in target groups. The process of identification and selection of a set of city brand attributes has to engage all stakeholders. Most importantly, the selected attributes have to be communicated in an
effective way, which is not only through traditional channels, but also through today’s digital communicational channels and social media platforms (Dinnie, 2011).

The concept of brand architecture is well substantiated in the branding literature and it is generally an approach to design and manage an organisation’s brand portfolio. In city branding, brand architecture refers to ways in which a place brand organises its sub-brands, so it is the same as companies manage their portfolios of different products and services (Dinnie, 2011). The biggest challenge for cities is to develop a firm ‘umbrella’ brand under which different areas of activities are consistent and coherent in the eyes of divergent target audiences, while at the same time segment-specific brand communications can be created (ibid).

4.1.2 Co-branding and image transfer

Rao and Ruekert (1994) defined co-branding as an alliance of brands that consists of short or long term association or combination of two or more individual brands and/or other distinctive proprietary assets (Dong & Duysters, 2015). Usually, characteristics of one brand are transferred to the paired brand. Hosting an event is one of the means of co-branding. It is argued that characteristics of the event’s brand can be transferred to a city brand and/or vice versa. The direction and degree of the transfer depends on the fit and consistency between the city and event brands. The challenge is to determine the most relevant dimensions, along which to create a match (Xing & Chalip, 2006). Hence, the better the fit, the more positively destination and event images are evaluated and an image transfer occurs. More specifically, the elements or characteristics from one image that fit the other image are absorbed, and later on may become a part of it (Lai, 2015).

4.1.3 Sustainable branding

Cities strive to create not only a solid and recognisable, but also a sustainable city brand. The sustainability of it is firstly fostered by a long-term commitment to the strategy, rather than short-term activities and ad hoc campaigns. Thus, budgets have to be cautiously planned and adequate
responses to societal changes made, empowered by rigorous research (Dinnie, 2011). Furthermore, a wider dimension has to be adopted and the sustainability of the city itself should be promoted. That implies environmentally friendly long-term initiatives that benefit all target audiences and in that way create synergies. Sustainable initiatives are based on the idea of creating new green spaces in urban environment and including role of streets, roofs, rivers or bays.

4.1.4 Target groups and product’s specifics

In some cases, cities choose to brand a place in a ‘one-fits-all’ approach. However, as it was noted from the definition of a brand, networks of associations differ among various groups of people. Also, the target audiences have diverse needs and wants which city marketers attempt to meet. Thus, city branding has to demonstrate the use of the concept of brand architecture and focus on the different brand perceptions of various stakeholders remembering to maintain a coherent brand image.

Kotler et al. (1993) proposed that the main target groups in city marketing are visitors, residents and workers, and business. Zenker and Beckmann (2012) added media as an audience and suggested a more specific grouping of target audiences as the Figure 2 below illustrates. For instance, tourists are separated into categories of leisure, business and professional tourists.

Figure 2. Target groups (Zenker & Beckmann, 2012)
Another reason city marketers have to acknowledge the importance of different audiences of the city is the fact that a place as a product is very complex because it is more multidimensional than a consumer good (Schaar, 2013). Since a traveller visits different attractions, stays at a hotel, eats in various restaurants and uses various means of transport. Hence, the product is highly experiential in nature and the experience varies for each customer because he or she faces with different touchpoints (ibid).

Furthermore, the way, in which people generally perceive places, differs from the one they perceive commercial products (Hankinson, 2006) and it follows the multidimensional feature discussed above. There are many factors and signals such as people, arts, buildings, streets, which influence consumer’s mind and his or her associations about a place. It is different because the communicated signals are both intended and unintended. Thus, for marketers it is very challenging to market a place when some products’ attributes may be out of their control. Zenker and Braun (2010) proposed that the most significant aspect is the place physics, which are the real characteristics of a place, which determine the perception of a brand. However, even if it is true, it cannot discourage a city from segmenting the target audiences, because individuals see and experience a place in divergent ways as it was just argued. Overall, positive brand effects, such as brand identification by the target audience, are likely to increase if target-group specific communication is exercised. In other words, customers identify themselves with a matching specific brand more than with a general one.

**Visitors**

As it was discussed above, tourists are usually one of the key target groups for city branding specialists. Also, it is considered to be the key audience in this thesis, since the destination image is going to be explored. Thus, it is vital to understand the general theory behind what influences the consumer behaviour in this group.

**Motivations to visit**

Individuals have a motivation to travel to a specific city. Usually the motivation is identified as
either push or pull as Crompton (1979) suggested (Sahini & Baloglu, 2014). Push motivation comes from a person who is driven by a desire and need to travel. Whereas pull motivation stems from the characteristics and attributes of a destination, which are perceived by a potential traveller. Hence, a cognitive image, affective image, or destination personality, or a mixture of those three may motivate to visit a destination since they constitute a brand image of a place. The cognitive image is usually an expression of an intention to (re)visit a place (Dong & Duysters, 2015). Besides, it should be noted that travelling is a form of self-actualisation and self-expression. Thus, tourists choose travels to make lifestyle statements as they are aware that a destination they visit says something about who they are (Schaar, 2013).

The Tourist Gaze

A notion of the tourist gaze developed by John Urry (1995) also tried to explain why people travel to specific places. The author claims that tourists are driven by a quest for visual experiences different from home, which they already know from pictures or other sources. This approach is relevant for cities that aim to build city image and attract tourism, since powerful city branding can construct the tourist gaze (Hospers, 2011).

Five physical elements that constitute a city image for tourists are suggested (Lynch, 1960, in Dinnie, 2011):

- Paths: channels along which people move — streets, rail lines, trails (e.g. Champs-Elysées in Paris);
- Edges: linear boundaries not considered as paths, important organising features (e.g. Christianshavn in Copenhagen);
- Districts: neighbourhoods, quarters, sections of a city with a unique character (e.g. Toronto’s Chinatown);
- Nodes: squares, junctions, used for strategic meeting spots (e.g. the Plaza Mayor in Madrid);
- Landmarks: physical objects that serve as reference points (e.g. Malmo’s Turning Torso).

Apart from that, tourists gaze upon events that take place in a city. It is a chance for a city to
identify with the activities and demonstrate the organisational capacity on top of the physical features a city has.

Residents

Residents are crucial participants of determining and creating a city brand as they ‘live and breathe’ the identity of the city. However, their role is usually overlooked as the goal is to build a brand admired by tourists first. Dinnie (2011) suggested that residents should be involved in creating the shared vision for the city’s future, as satisfaction among residents is a critical indicator in city’s image. Hence, the focus should be on a long-term economic, social, environmental direction instead of spending huge amounts of time and money on logos and slogans, what links back to the sustainable branding. The involvement of residents in co-creation of the brand suggests credibility and sustainability of the city image as a result (ibid). All in all, an identity expressed by the community, city development goals and consistent and efficient communications are the crucial factors for developing a city brand strategy with the residents’ involvement.

The creative class

Florida (2003) introduced the idea of creative capital theory, which states that the economic growth of places is powered by creative people who prefer an innovative, diverse, tolerant environment. Thus, city policy makers should attract those people as residents and potentially improve the city brand. The creative class tends to move from traditional corporate communities to ‘creative centres’ which usually consist of a high level of innovation and high-tech. Besides, creative centres thrive, because people desire to live there and companies follow their way. Usual urban attractions such as shopping malls, sport stadiums, theme parks, are ignored as the creative class looks for the opportunity to express their identities as creative individuals.

Hence, according to the author cities that wish to stimulate innovation and economic development should attract creative people by focusing on technology, talent and tolerance as the author suggests. Since only in places that offer all 3Ts will the creative class be likely to settle in (Florida,
Technology aspect is defined as a concentration of innovation and high-technology in a place. Talent is the pool of people who hold a bachelor’s degree and above. Lastly, tolerance is all about inclusiveness and openness to all ethnicities, races and occupations. Florida named San Francisco Bay area, Boston, Seattle as great examples of creative cities that have put all 3Ts together. Overall, the creative class is a relatively new idea in the city marketing, but it has gained a lot of attention since it denies that physics of a place is the key determinant to create a favourable city brand.

Business and industry

A city brand is “both a lens through which information is viewed and a decision criterion” (Dinnie, p.15, 2011). Thus, it is a determinant for investment from public and private sectors. The city environment definitely helps a company to achieve its objectives, the following paragraph demonstrates the value of collaboration.

Network approach

It is argued that city branding and the regarded decision making cannot be reserved for a small elite group (Dinnie, 2011) and to achieve success a city needs to build strong allies between partners. Hankinson (2006) proposed a perspective of a collaborative approach between public and private sectors and a distributive approach of the ownership of city branding activities. The author stated that a Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) usually located in the public sector. That means a DMO is not-for-profit or government run and it is responsible for the development of a destination brand in many countries. A DMO tries to coordinate stakeholder groups in order to create brand equity (Schaar, 2013). Hence, it has to exercise an effective brand leadership by an establishment of a clear vision and core values of the destination brand. That is an incremental process, which is advanced by partnerships with stakeholders who deliver related services. Also, consistent and continuous communication with a wide range of stakeholders are vital. Even though tensions and challenges between a range of stakeholders are unavoidable, they should be welcomed as a way to create a feeling of buy-in and commitment to the city brand.
Media

Media group covers all publications from TV, newspapers, and travel books to in-flight magazines (Zenker & Beckmann, 2012). It is the most significant communication channel in terms of raising awareness among target groups. The means of spreading the word about the destination can be online and offline. In this digital age, much of PR and other promotional activities take place online on various social media platforms. For instance, 59% of people are expected to use their smartphones while watching the Games today (Chahal, 2016). Nevertheless, in terms of the public reach during the Games, TV broadcasts remain a top channel as people tune in to follow their athletes’ performances. Overall, it should be noted that, apparently, the most trustworthy way to leverage the Olympic opportunities is through the use of media, as the public sees it more reliable and objective than sponsored messages from some partner organisations. That means this target group also works as an agent to other audiences of city marketing.

4.2 Fundamentals of events

Event is defined as “anything which happens; result; any incidence or occurrence especially a memorable one; contingency of possibility of occurrence; an item in a programme (of sports, etc.); an organised activity at a particular venue” (The Chambers Dictionary 1998, p.560, cited in Bowdin et al, 2006). Events vary depending on size, content, history, status, values and promotion. Mega event is defined to be a category, that has a transformative effect on a host city (Brimicombe in ESRC, 2016).

Event image is a sum of characteristics of an event that includes the values it advocates, its purpose, and implications. They are generated ideas, feelings, values, and psychological associations with the event in a consumer’s mind (Dong & Duysters, 2015).

Events are usually categorised based on the content into cultural, business and sports events. The project is about a sports event that refers to the testing of sporting prowess through competition. Whitelegg (2000) argued that sport has “an unrivalled capacity to capture the attention of huge
“numbers of people” (Smith, p.222, 2005). Sports events date back to the ancient Greek Olympics and beyond, so it is one of the oldest human activities. They benefit a host government, sports organisations, and participants and bring entertainment to spectators (Bowdin et al., 2006). The Olympic Games, the focus of the study, belongs to a category of mega sports events, which are awarded after a competitive bidding.

Preuss (2007) suggested that an event is divided into hard and soft structures. Soft structures consist of knowledge — organisational, security, technological, networks — political, sport federations, security and cultural goods — cultural identity, cultural ideas, common memory. Furthermore, hard structures are divided into primary, secondary and tertiary structures.

Hence, the host city has to firstly create the primary structure that mainly consists of a stadium and special facilities like rowing course, swimming pool, shooting range, etc. The secondary structure affects housing and recreation area, since villages are constructed for athletes and media staff as well as various training facilities. The tertiary structure includes the remaining elements that are vital to host the event and to welcome tourists — labour and traffic. Thus, the event has the potential to advance urban development in housing, labour, recreation and transportation. If event-structures change any location factors in the city, the activity based on changes is the event legacy (Preuss, 2007).

Since the demand during the mega event may exceed a normal supply size, the structure discussed above is necessary to let spectators and tourists enjoy their stay. In terms of soft structures, the hospitality industry is thought to improve service delivery skills and knowledge as well as skills required to ensure a safe environment. In turn, all of this increases the quality of tourism industry (ibid). Overall, if a city takes a mega sports event as a way to improve its attractiveness as a destination, it has to acknowledge both hard and soft structures and aim to develop the related factors to experience the post-event benefits.

Events as experiences

Experiences are unique interactions of a consumer and producer, and events are perfect means to
provide it as they are of limited time and a consumer, producer and fellow consumers are all present. That is a new source of value for customers that Pine and Gilmore (1999) named the ‘experience economy’. The authors of this term noticed the transformation of economy from manufacture, to services and lately to the production of experiences. Cities are argued to be a great stage for events, where consumers look to experience greater additional value.

4.3 Fundamentals of the Olympic Games

The modern imitation of the classical Games held in ancient Greece for more than a millennium was re-established in 1894 by an initiative of Pierre de Coubertin. Consequently, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was formed and the first Games took place in Athens, Greece in 1896 (IOC, 2016c). The mission and role of the IOC is to promote Olympism and lead the Olympic Movement throughout the world. There are seven main principles of Olympism expressed in the Olympic Charter and the leading one is the following:

“Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles” (Olympic, 2016).

IOC leads the Olympic Movement which is a concentrated, organised, universal and permanent action. The purpose is to build a peaceful, better world by the education of youth through sports, practised in accordance with Olympism (IOC, 2016c). The five interlaced rings of equal dimensions in five different colours, a symbol of the Olympic Games, represent the union of the five continents and athletes meeting from around the world at the Olympics. The Olympic Games are divided into summer and winter games. Besides, the Paralympic Games were created in 1948 for disabled athletes and it takes place in the same host city a few weeks after the Olympics. Both of the Games are led by the Organising Committee of an Olympic Games (OCOG) which is the main body responsible for planning and hosting the mega-events at a host city.
The time pattern of the Olympic Games is divided into four phases. It starts from the idea of hosting the event followed by the bidding process and winning the right to host the Games. Then, the city has elected seven years followed by the construction and preparation for the event phase. Consequently, there is the event phase of the Olympics and Paralympics and the post-event phase. The post-event period is uncertain, but it can last for many years as it all depends on whether the Games create a legacy (Solbjerg & Preuss, 2007). Preuss (p. 211, 2007) defined legacy as “irrespective of the time of production and space, legacy is all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sport event that remain longer than the event itself”. Unfortunately, the vast majority of articles have suggested that the post-Olympic era is usually overlooked by hosts as the euphoria of the Games quickly fades away and it becomes an event in the past.

4.3.1 Post-Olympic effects

In the past years, there were a lot of discussions on the post-Olympic effects and legacy. The IOC aimed to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts on a host city or nation. As a result, the notion of Olympic Games Global Impact (OGGI or OGI) was introduced in 2000 to measure the post-Olympic legacy which produces the OGI report three years after the event (Homma & Masumoto, 2013). The new project aims to evaluate overall impact on the city, its environment and citizens. Thus, the focus is set on economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the Games. The sustainability rating used in the OGI report states that a minus score means unsustainable outcomes, a zero means a status quo and a score of one indicates full sustainability (Brimicombe, 2016). Hence, every bidding country is encouraged to discuss not only motivation and objectives of hosting the event but also the legacy in their bid documents.

Leopkey and Parent (2012) argued that there are positive aspects of legacy, which include: sport infrastructure, urban regeneration, increased tourism, business opportunities, renewed community spirit, and enhanced destination image. On the other hand, negative factors of post-Olympic legacy are identified as potential local and national debts, unused infrastructure, overcrowding of local resources, and housing issues, relocation of inhabitants. Besides, an organising committee is a temporary organisation that disbands within two years after the Games.
That implies an issue of legacy governance, since it takes more time to properly investigate and evaluate legacies. Also, the current OGI study produces a final report three years after the Games, while it is claimed that legacy may persist for a decade or even more (Homma & Masumoto, 2013).

In general, nowadays host cities express greater interest of legacy beyond the sports world and expect Olympics to improve the city in a more enduring way. Of course, the maintenance of event facilities may continue to give the international profile to the city in sports terms (Hiller, 2006). But also, it is expected that facilities will be integrated into urban life and adapted to the needs of stakeholders and not left as ‘white elephants’, in other words unused and abandoned facilities (Smith, 2008). Cashman argued (1999) that the Olympic legacy is reconstruction of Olympic memories in positive ways. Hence, it proves the point advocated by Smith and Fox (2007) that legacies are not inherent, they need to be levered by activities and initiatives to activate them and benefit from the Games (Weed, Stephens, Bull, 2011).

4.4 Destination branding and its relationship with sports events

This section specifically focuses on destination branding as it refers to a place image with a consideration that the activities are aimed towards a target audience of tourists. It contextualises ideas mentioned in the previous paragraphs above and that is done in order to create a smooth transition into an introduction of a theoretical framework of this project.

**Destination image** is the sum of ideas, impressions, and beliefs that an individual’s mind holds of a destination and it is a key determinant of a place competitiveness and popularity (Mossberg & Kleppe, 2005). The formation of it is a dynamic process, since many external and internal factors play a role, for instance previously introduced place physics or marketing efforts of a DMO. Prebensen (2007) suggested that from a consumer’s point of view a destination image is impacted by three types of information. The first is **organic image**, it is what a consumer learns about a place at school, hears on the news or by word of mouth (Schaar, 2013). **Induced image** is formed by the promotional material and destination marketing activities, thus information
sources, such as celebrity endorsements, news, and advertisements form the image for tourists (Deng & Li, 2013). Lastly, a modified-induced image is a result of personal experience with destination. Induced image together with organic image significantly impact a tourist’s behavioural intention, or in other words an individual’s travel purchase decision (Deng & Li, 2013). Also, traveller’s satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a travel purchase depends on expectations about the destination or previous impressions of a destination image and his or hers perceived performance of the destination (Pike, 2002). It implies that people who are satisfied with their experience in a destination are more likely to visit the place again as then the modified-induced image is be more positive. Hence, a strong destination brand can assure a tourist of quality experience and reduces search costs, because it bridges the gap between what a traveller perceives and destination’s assets (Schaar, 2013). Therefore, destination branding has to tie all aspects of the place and promote certain features more heavily to certain target groups. It is also significant that the aspects “should be able to be tied back” to the destination brand (Schaar, p.4, 2013) what refers to the coherent brand architecture introduced previously.

The formation of a destination image (or any image) is explained by an image-formation mechanism called the Associative Network Memory Model (ANMM) (Keller, 1993). It states that various subjects in the memory are regarded as a network of information nodes which are connected by information links. Associations retrieve that information related to a specific subject as at that time a node is activated. Thus, an event is an independent information node containing unique images (ibid). When an event and destination images are linked with each other, some nodes of the event will be associated with the destination node (Keller, 1993 in Deng & Li, 2013).

In general, it is argued that an overall perception of a destination is either favourable or unfavourable. While the literature often argues that the destination image construct is complicated to measure, however it is also useful to understand what composes the image. As it was already presented, a destination image consists of cognitive and affective images and a destination personality. The cognitive component reveals the beliefs and knowledge about a place. The affective component is an evaluation based on the feelings about the destination (Sahini & Baloglu, 2014). Destination personality is a sum of human characteristics and traits that are associated to the place. The behavioural intention (conative) part determines respondent’s
intention to revisit a destination and recommend it to others (Deng & Li, 2013).

It is argued that mega sports events positively influence the destination image as they have a huge symbolic significance and ability to reposition or solidify the image of a place (Gratton & Preuss, 2008). However, worldwide exposure does not solely depend on the event organisers, but also on the media representatives because it usually works as a catalyst of impressions to other target audiences. Thus, adequate media management, if negative publicity arises, is significant. Furthermore, any incidents such as a terror attack, organisational shortcomings or just bad weather have an impact on the image of the host place. Nationalism, inappropriate spectator behaviour as well as poverty and crime may also spoil the image of a tourist destination (Gratton & Preuss, 2008). Besides, the previously discussed fit of event and destination images (see Co-branding part) plays a significant role.

Reimaging or rebranding is a purposeful reconfiguration of ideas and conceptions of an image or a brand. By such efforts, urban destinations seek to adjust to dramatic economic and political shifts. Interestingly, sport has often been used as a component of reimaging the place (Smith, 2005). However, it is argued that even if the destination experiences sport-induced image advancement it is not necessarily that visitation levels increase or any other forms of economic development (ibid). Hence, the author suggests to utilise the event image beyond the event period to improve the host’s destination image.

4.5 City branding through the Olympic Games

The rights to host a mega event like the Olympic Games are sought after a number of places. Cities strive to win the bid and organise the Games despite the fact that they already have a strong brand and destination image. Kaplanidou et al. (2013) claim that this phenomenon is led by the belief that the Games serves as leverage for city image improvement, even for those with established strong brands (Avraham, 2014).

The initial touchpoint of city marketing in terms of hosting the Olympics is a candidature file as it projects city’s capacity to host a large international event and showcases attractiveness and
openness. The planning and delivery of the Games is one of the most challenging tasks the event organisers will ever undertake. However, the longevity of benefits emerged from the event is not assured even though the event is seen as an extraordinary opportunity for destination branding. Hence, city marketing and branding efforts have to continue after the event takes place, so that post-event impact on the city brand is sustained.

A host destination starts activities with market research in the pre-event phase, because a DMO needs to find out what consumers know and associate the place with. As soon as the perceptions are discovered, a strategy to achieve the desired destination image can be formed. To create a strong and unified desired brand the cooperation and collaboration with stakeholders is a key (Hankinson, 2006). A destination branding strategy is implemented when the research is done and the collaboration with stakeholders is acknowledged and active. Garcia (2012) argued that a DMO should create a strategy of two stages: first focusing on the stakeholders closest to the destination and then the visitors (Schaar, 2013). Garcia suggested if the locals do not buy into the brand, no other parties would and that proves the previously introduced point of Dinnie (2011). Local residents and businesses are as important features of the brand as the visitors, because they 'embody' the brand (Schaar, 2013). In the end, a successful destination branding has to have measures in place to track the effect of all branding activities (Schaar, 2013). In terms of the Olympics, the key results are revealed in the OGI report which is released three years after the Games.

Furthermore, the literature has proposed that the event is a powerful tool to rebrand a host city, if certain conditions are met. Most importantly, there has to be coherence between images of a place and event in order for the transfer of characteristics to take place. Moreover, it is crucial to acknowledge that a destination image is multi-dimensional, thus a traveller’s favourability towards a destination depends on his or her knowledge about a place, feelings and in turn that affects the willingness to visit and recommend the destination.

The author has summarised and generated a visual representation of the theory discussed, and the chart is provided below (Figure 3). It is used as a guidance tool to present secondary findings as well as to organize the discussion chapter later on.
Figure 3. Visualisation of the theory
5. Hypotheses

Following the ideas introduced in the previous chapter and linking it back to the problem statement, five hypotheses were formulated. The process of data collection was led by them, and later on in the discussion chapter by connecting the theory with the empirical data those hypotheses are examined.

**H1: There was a consistency between the event image and the destination image.**

The first hypothesis was generated based on the fact that London had the opportunity of co-branding the event and destination, thus it was proposed that the city established a fit of event and destination images.

**H2: Characteristics of London 2012 event transferred to the destination image. London utilised the Games to improve East London’s image.**

Furthermore, the theory stated that if there is a match between event and destination images, the features of event may be added to the destination image (Lai, 2015). Besides, it is suggested that London used the opportunity to enhance the image of the East London area where the Olympics were mainly hosted.

**H3: The Games positively affected the image of London as a tourist destination and tourists link it to the event.**

In the previous chapter it was discussed that a great match not only leads to the transfer of characteristics but also that the destination is evaluated more positively (Xing & Chalip, 2006). Also, the ANMM theory (Keller, 1993) suggested that some nodes of event would be associated to the destination node.

**H4: The improved destination image increases the intention to visit the city.**

The literature proposed that the event solidifies characteristics of a place and enhances pull motivation, hence the conative component of the image. In other words, the willingness to visit the city and recommend it to peers are enhanced.
**H5: The city branding initiatives are sustainable.**

It was argued that the Olympics is not only about a few weeks of festivities, but rather a long-time commitment. Thus, it has to involve long-term initiatives that the city promotes. This last hypothesis presumes that the city branding strategy executed in the London 2012 event has been sustainable.

### 6. Presentation of the findings

#### 6.1 Secondary data

This chapter of the thesis presents the research findings. Firstly, the secondary data is overviewed, in order to create a logic flow, Figure 3 introduced at the end of the literature review chapter is used to group the findings. The paragraphs are divided according to event stages and target audiences. Afterwards, the following section reveals primary data of this project.

#### 6.1.1 Pre-event period

##### 6.1.1.1 London branding

In August 2009, a director of marketing of Greater London Authority Daniel Ritterband started a unified visual approach campaign for London. The aim was to rebrand all existing promotional bodies like Visit London, Study London, Think London to fit a new single brand identity and bring the city’s essence together. Simultaneously, the Mayor of London Boris Johnson expressed the need to portray “the vivacity of this wonderful city in all its multifaceted glory” (Brownsell, 2010).

However, the key problem was that a century old back-story of the London Transport Roundel, stuck to the public’s mind, was one the main barriers for rebranding. Ritterbrand, identified the other challenge to market the city — the question whether to market it based on the heritage, history and traditions or on the forward-looking credentials was raised (Jones, 2012). The image of London financial sector (i.e. the City) had a negative reputation at the time. Also, the London riots which occurred later in 2011 damaged the image of city’s security. Despite all of that, the
biggest challenge was to translate the extraordinary London’s DNA into a coherent identity. Ritterbrand admitted that the city was a place of contradictions, but it was all about its people and its businesses and when asked to define the city in one phrase he said: “a cacophony of noise” (Jones, 2012).

At the end of the day, as the chief executive of Visit Britain, Sandie Dawe, said people would still want to come to London to see the heritage and the pageantry. According to Dawe, they could shop in any other mega cities, but they would not see the changing of the guard anywhere else (Jones, 2012). Thus, Dawe argued that the right London image should unite London old and London new. Ritterbrand agreed with an idea and added that people tend to come to London to be themselves since “anything can blossom in London and everything is encouraged in London” (Jones, 2012).

Furthermore, in April 2011, a non-profit organisation called London and Partners was established, which was led by a goal to have a single promotional agency for the city that would speak one voice and share a vision and mission to all the target audiences (Jones, 2012). The organisation was partially funded by the Mayor of London and a network of commercial partners. The establishment united the operations of Study London, Think London and Visit London brands. It was an official promotional company aimed to build international reputation and to attract visitors, students and investment. London and Partners saw their mission as to tell London’s story brilliantly and the overall vision was for London to be recognised as the best big city on Earth (London and Partners, 2016a).

Moreover, Saffron Brand Consultants organisation was selected by London and Partners to create a unifying branding programme and raise the city’s global profile. The company said that quirkiness makes London truly distinctive. Overall, before the Games began, the brand was managed by the Mayor of London’s Office in collaboration with the Promote London Council. The Mayor Boris Johnson acted as a brand champion of the city (Clark, Evans, Nemecek, 2011). Overall, it was decided to build new associations with London brand, which would signal city’s diversity and highlight that it welcomes everyone.
In addition, two city branding rankings were checked to see London’s position before the Games. According to Saffron European City Brand Barometer, in 2008 London was ranked eighth (City Mayors, 2008). The other brand ranking list, Anholt-GfK gave London a second place in year 2011 (GfK, 2016).

6.1.1.2 Tourism strategy for 2012

A Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) published a report (2007) called “Winning - A Tourism Strategy for 2012 and Beyond”. It connected tourism policies and the opportunities provided by the 2012 Games, however from a national perspective. Still, the report was written in accordance with Visit London, thus it is considered relevant for this project.

Most importantly, the strategy for 2012 pinpointed the fact of acknowledging displacement effects, which means that a number of tourists in London during the event would amount to existing number of visits, rather than in addition to (Smith & Stevenson, 2009). People were expected to visit other destinations, and the local tourists would go abroad to run away from the chaos associated with the event. An interesting fact is that those insights were usually overlooked by other scholars or institutions when talking about the tourism boost because of the event.

The article by Smith and Stevenson (2009) informed that there were seven headings the official London 2012 website divided the plans accordingly. The first four were supported by plans as listed below (ibid):

- The Olympic Park - guided by a Master Plan
- Transport - guided by a Transportation Plan
- Sustainability - guided by a Sustainability Plan
- Culture - guided by a Cultural Update (The Cultural Olympiad)

The plans were monitored yearly by a reporting process, which identified highlights and objectives for the next year. However, the other three categories - Technology, Security,
Ticketing and Accommodation were not linked to any strategies or plans.

Overall, the Tourism Alliance (2006) expressed concerns that actually none of the seven planning categories included tourism development in decision making (Smith & Stevenson, 2009). In other words, there was a lack of specific initiatives and imaginative ideas in the Olympic Games planning linked to the discussion of tourism (ibid). Nevertheless, the authors suggested that the report showed stimulation in thinking, communication and partnership between tourism industry representatives.

In addition, Weed et al. (2011) argued that the right to host the Games was an exogenous shock for the tourism sector, which made the DCMS think of strategic leadership of the tourism policy agenda. Thus, the tourism community was expected to strengthen as a result, not only in London, but in the whole Britain.

6.1.2 London 2012

6.1.2.1 London 2012 bid

Initially, there were five themes defined in the vision for the London 2012 Games in 2005, when the bid was formed, which were listed as follows (LOCOG, 2012a):

1. Deliver the experience of a lifetime for athletes;
2. Leave a legacy for sport in the UK;
3. Benefit the community through regeneration;
4. Support the IOC and the Olympic Movement;
5. Create compact, iconic and well-connected venues.

The initial ones were pretty broad so consequently, in 2007, five more specific promises were published, which London 2012 pledged to follow. London was said to be the first city, which shaped the bid round the notion of legacy. Never before has a host city been so ambitious about the idea to use the event as a catalyst for economic and social good as London was (Weed et al., 2011).
1. To make the UK a world-leading sporting nation;
2. To transform the heart of East London;
3. To inspire a generation of young people;
4. To make the Olympic Park a blueprint for sustainable living;
5. To demonstrate the UK is a creative, inclusive and welcoming place to live in, visit and for business.

The Mayor of London Boris Johnson slightly paraphrased the five promises above and gave five legacy commitments related to the city, its residents and opportunities coming from the Games. Firstly, the goal was to increase the opportunities for Londoners for involvement in sports. Secondly, he aimed to ensure Londoners benefit from new jobs, business and volunteering opportunities. Thirdly, the Mayor aimed to transform the heart of East London. Fourthly, he wanted to deliver a sustainable Games. Lastly, a goal was to show London as a city, which is diverse, creative and welcoming (UEL, 2015). Those goals were particularly taken into account for the project as the case study is about the city of London.

### 6.1.2.2 Organisational bodies and event related costs

There was a high number of organisations involved in planning and delivering the London 2012 Games. The government recognised the commitment to the event and the Mayor of London also agreed that his collaboration was vital to ensure a safe and successful Games (AMION, 2015).

The key organisational bodies of the London 2012 were the following:

- The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), was responsible for leading the construction of the Olympic venues, also for the development and regeneration of the Olympic Park;
- London Development Agency (LDA) took responsibility to purchase the Olympic Park and develop the legacy plan and the body was succeeded to The Olympic Park Legacy Company (OPLC);
- OPLC took care of the long-term planning, development, management and maintenance of the
Olympic Park facilities, it was a partnership between Mayor of London and government;
• Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) was accountable for the Games on behalf of the government (AMION, 2015).

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) was the main organisation responsible for staging the event (AMION, 2015). The LOCOG was chaired by Lord Sebastian Coe, who oversaw the London bid. London outperformed previous Olympic cities and a year before the event around 88% of construction was completed. The estimated budget before the Games began was £9.3 billion. £7.3 billion of public government money were attributed to building the Park, necessary infrastructure and staging the Games (ibid). Operation costs were managed through the LOGOC, financed by private sector (sponsors, merchandising, tickets, broadcast) and predicted to amount of £2 billion (Schorr & Stevens, 2011). However, it has to be kept in mind that that a budget is not sufficient if wider legacy outcomes are to be sought, thus it does not represent the full investment of hosting the Games to fulfil promises (Weed et al., 2011).

6.1.2.3 Security

The recent terror events in the city intensified worries and a threat level was stronger than for any previous city. In 2005, the day after London won the bid for the host city of 2012 Games, London bombings took place, leaving 55 people dead. In the summer of 2011, massive London riots shook the world (Lindsay, 2014). Hence, the public was deeply concerned about how this high calibre event would pass in terms of security and it was a huge risk for the city image. Unfortunately, the commercial partner of LOCOG, G4S, had failed to recruit appropriate number of security guards. Luckily, Home Office and Ministry of Defence deployed additional troops and that way increased the already tight security of the event and minimised public worries (ibid).

6.1.2.4 Tickets

The research revealed there were plenty of articles talking about the ticket situation prior to the
Games. 8.8 million tickets were available for the London 2012 Olympic Games. However, the organisers were accused of lack of transparency and ‘smoke and mirrors’ approach, while their actual goal was to supply the British public with as many tickets as possible. They were blamed for excluding people, because a huge number of tickets were allocated to VIPs rather than the public and they were not fairly distributed among price categories (Riach, 2012). There was a huge demand for the tickets before and during the event, but one could have seen that the seats were empty or filled with soldiers in some arenas, since the Olympic sponsors and other VIP ticket holders did not manage to show up. That caused some controversy, as it was announced that it was the first time both Olympics and Paralympics were sold out (UEL, 2015).

6.1.2.5 Design of London 2012

The visual design of the Games is thought to be one of the most complex exercises and the time to create and present the Olympic logo for London 2012 consequently arrived. In 2006, an international branding consultancy company Wolff Olins was selected to set the tone for the London 2012 Games. It was realised that there was no need to put the place on the map, rather the year of 2012 provided a change to do things differently, as the bid identified. The agency proposed a two-sided strategy, that mirrored the bid — “Everyone’s Olympics” and “Everyone Olympic” and presented the logo in 2007.

The London 2012 logo was “bold, spirited and dissonant — reflecting London as a modern, edgy city” (Wolff Olins, 2016) (See Appendix, 1 Figure A, to see the logo). An interesting feature of it was the fact that it allowed other parties to make the logo as their own. In other words, it could have been filled with colours of sponsors or sporting image. For example, Adidas could use the logo by adding its corporate colours of black and white (See Appendix 1, Figure B). Besides, the creatives treated the Paralympics equally and also had a single logo with the same sponsors (Wolff Olins, 2016). It was the first time an emblem for Paralympic Games used the same core shape and that truly reflected the commitment to host integrated Games (See Appendix 1 Figure C). Pink, blue, green and orange were official four colours of event’s brand identity. It was claimed that they communicated the spirit that was energetic, spirited, bright and youthful
The general colour scheme of the event was especially well pictured in the uniforms of volunteers, venues, banners and merchandising.

At the launch of the logo, it drawn public’s attention and received a massive controversy. People claimed that the logo did not reflect London, as it did not include any city’s famous landmarks and it was too dissonant and targets only youngsters. Also, they complained about the production cost of £400 000 and even called for a new logo, by publishing an online petition which received nearly 50 000 signatures. The designers responded that the dissonance was intentional and they wanted to make it noticeable as the Games were supposed to be different. The agency wanted to use the street language and not something “official”; also the world did not have to be told about famous London landmarks anymore. Nevertheless, there were individuals who claimed that the logo actually expressed everything what is good about living in London. Overall, the logo sought to promote inclusiveness and diversity.

The slogan of London 2012 was “Inspire a Generation” and power-to-the-people approach, which focused on social and cultural aspects, was communicated (Kushins, 2012). The idea was that everyone is welcomed to enjoy the event and everyone is able to make a difference. Consequently, many banners, signs, way finder markers with the slogan and logos of London 2012 filled the streets across the capital. Decorations, installations, sporting sculptures were added to London’s buildings and major tourist attractions. For instance, five Olympic Rings 25 metres wide and 12 metres tall were placed below Tower Bridge. When the Paralympics commenced, the Rings were replaced by the Paralympic Agitos. Every time a British athlete won a golden medal, the bridge lightning display would glow. Furthermore, Olympic rings floated on the River Thames and were also placed at the London Heathrow Airport and main train stations (Girginov, 2013). Hence, a wide variety of visual decorations communicated and supported the event’s atmosphere.

6.1.2.6 Special initiatives

The event key values of London 2012 communicated were inclusiveness and accessibility, so that everyone can be part of the Games, as the vision was to host a Games for everyone, which would inspire a lasting change. The Torch Relay, a journey of the Olympic flame, involved 15 million
people across the country, who lined the streets when the Olympic torch passed by their neighbourhood. It especially promoted the community engagement (Girginov, 2014). In the pre-Games period a two-week exhibition at the London City Hall was held in order to show visitors and Londoners how the capital would look during the Games. It included examples of how the 32 boroughs would be involved and how the streets would appear (BBC News, 2012). It was called a ‘Look and Feel’ programme, initiated by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and LOCOG, which aimed to maximise the benefits of the event for residents and visitors by building a celebratory atmosphere throughout the city (Girginov, 2013). Hence, the experience had to be expanded from competition venues to city’s landmarks and local sites in all the boroughs. A Look Book was issued, which explained all the decorative elements and a budget of £32 million was allocated to the initiative. Additionally, an initiative from GLA called “Your London 2012”, which provided £50 000 to each borough, enabled them to acquire ‘street dressing’ to decorate pulling buildings with flags and bunting (ibid). Some politicians criticised the huge budgets and said that it could have been spent on helping people to find jobs and cut their energy bills. Lastly, there were more than 70 Live Sites established in the country, which were ready to broadcast events on giant screens to the public, so everyone could join the crowd and experience the event.

6.1.2.7 London 2012 Festival

It is commonly known that London has a rich artistic and creative history, and having in mind that the cultural programme is one of the pillars of Olympism, it seemed to be promising. LOCOG called 2012 Games the largest Cultural Olympiad in the history and Bill Morris, a director of culture of London 2012, promised that the event would be especially inclusive and far-reaching. London 2012 Festival was the largest ever arts festival in the UK. In three months there were 12 000 events held at 900 venues and 25 000 artists performed. Performances were staged in various places and more than 19.5 million people joined the series London 2012 Festival events (IOC, 2013a). Additionally, an annual Thames Festival was hosted during the time of Paralympics, which included performances of international arts, fireworks, and boating competitions (ibid).
6.1.2.8 Residents

At first, Londoners did not take the bid to host the Games seriously, especially communities in East London. They did not back the bid at all, whereas the media represented a totally opposite situation. The members of East London community stated that they were not “Olympic People”, because the area around was high on poverty and deprivation (Lindsay, 2014). Thus, inhabitants were more concerned about surviving rather than hosting a prestigious mega-sports event. Overall, the level of support for the Games across communities in GTA was fluctuating, because in 2003 69% of residents were positive about the event, in 2005 it increased to 79%, while in 2009 it declined to 57% and then in 2010 raised to 66%. The enthusiasm might have changed due to the global economic down turn as the OGI report stated (UEL, 2015).

East London

One of the main ambitions of the bid, as it was already mentioned, was to achieve convergence between East London and the rest of London. The vision of London City Hall was to build a smart district with thriving local economy, politics, culture and a strong base of transportation, ecological sustainability and information technology infrastructure (Schorr & Stevens, 2011) or in other words — regenerate the area. Stratford, where the Olympic Park was located, in the borough of Newham in East London, was one of the most deprived areas in the capital. For many years the area had been famous for high rates of crime, unemployment and social deprivation. Before the Games, the area had only 19 companies per 1000 residents, compared to London’s average of 44. Thus, people were dependent on workplaces from the public sector which were very limited (Vandore, 2011). Hence, London 2012 Games was the most hopeful promise for urban regeneration of East London.

A Westfield shopping centre in Stratford was built especially for the Olympic tourists and locals. It was aimed to make it the biggest shopping complex in Europe. The new centre was to create 10 000 new jobs. Also, the organisational bodies planned to improve the housing situation in the area and promised to establish new residences for 40 000 East London inhabitants (Girginov, 2013).
Employment

The event was generally expected to provide with a vast number of new job places for Londoners. Most of them would come from the construction industry, followed by tourism and hospitality. The boroughs around the Olympic Park had a relatively high unemployment rate, as it was introduced, thus it was hoped to diminish the numbers and support the communities by creating job positions. Even though, they might have been temporary, for some individuals it was a first lifetime job, thus a good start for the further career of employment. Besides, various additional institutions were established in the area, which provided support for job-seekers in the Games preparation period and later on. For instance, London 2012 Employment and Skills Taskforce (LEST) attributed £75 million to support Londoners into jobs through apprenticeships and training. A separate body programme was created to assist the residents of the host boroughs (AMION, 2015). The initial aim was to create 130 000 new jobs for the London community (Girginov, 2013).

Transportation

Before the Games, residents feared that the public transport would be disrupted during the event and complained that no proper communication was established. Actually, secondary data revealed that there were community consultation events where representatives of LOCOG, TFL and other related bodies shared information and tips by presenting the campaign — “Get ahead of the Games”.

It was the first Games which relied on public transport as the main way of transportation across all client groups (IOC, 2013b). Hence, it was being developed to connect the area to the rest of the city and improve accessibility to everyone involved in the Games. A new rail line HS1 London - Kent via East London was opened in 2009 and improved the connection of East London. Stratford International train station would connect to continental Europe. Besides, Olympic Javelin trains connected Stratford to St. Pancras, and Jubilee tube, the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), and buses were further extended. Also, public bicycle scheme was planned to be installed by the political initiative of Boris Johnson. At the time London claimed to have the most
accessible transport system in the world at the time (IOC, 2013b).

Volunteers

Organisers argued that volunteering would strengthen community bonding as well as inspire the volunteering spirit beyond the Games. A quarter of a million people applied to become one of the volunteers at the Games and 73 785 volunteers (34% from London), or so-called Games Makers, were chosen (UEL, 2015). Those people were seen as the most important actors in creating the tone whether the public experiences good-natured or stressful passage in the Olympic event venues. Besides, 2000 of the volunteers were teenagers aged 16 to 18 who would usually help distribute results for the Technology team or help out on the field. The organisers aimed to involve a great diversity of people, which would communicate event values.

Moreover, the Mayor created a separate volunteering programme named “London Ambassadors” and to make it consistent he brought it under the LOCOG organisational umbrella (Girginov, 2013). Thus, additional 8000 volunteers received the same training and identity (i.e. uniforms) matching the London 2012 brand. London Ambassadors welcomed visitors to the city at 43 visitor hotspots and provided information about public transport or first aid.

6.1.2.9 Business

ODA and LOCOG established the CompeteFor portal to provide opportunities for SMEs in the pre-event stage where they could bid for supply chain or infrastructure works. Thus, not only large scale companies had a chance to form contracts in the Olympic development stage (UEL, 2015). Additionally, the London 2012 Business Network, a programme of business events was established in order to provide opportunities for enterprises in the UK and maximise the benefits from the events during the summer (AMION, 2015). Also, a dedicated website www.tourism2012games.org was created to publish the key dates and advise businesses in hospitality, leisure and tourism industry on how to make the most of that special period.
6.1.2.10 Sustainability

The organisers claimed they would create the greenest Olympics ever as the sustainability was forefronted since the London 2012 bid campaign and the subsequent legacy plan (Weed et al., 2011). The sustainability programme was aimed to be embedded in the infrastructure as well as the process of Games delivery. It was aimed that each Olympic venue would be at least 15% more energy efficient than it is required. While the Olympic Park was predicted to become 50% more carbon efficient than British standards required. Furthermore, at the former urban wasteland, where the Olympic Park was eventually created, a lot had been achieved before the Games began. For instance, one million cubic meters of contaminated soil were cleaned. The plans included incorporating 45 hectares of protected habitat with kingfishers and otters. Also, 525 bird and 150 bat boxes, 4000 trees and 300 000 wetland plants were planted (Schorr & Stevens, 2011). Hence, the Olympic Park was a symbol of sustainability itself (LOCOG, 2013b). Moreover, it was suggested that the Stadium’s flexible design would allow reducing the capacity of 55 000 seats to 25 000, and the materials would be recycled and reused. That illustrates the intention to avoid ‘white elephants’ in the post-event stage. In order to ensure all the plans are realised in the future an independent body called the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 was established (ibid).

Green Enterprise District

In addition, in 2010 the Mayor initiated a project “Green Enterprise District”, which was planned to spread through six east London boroughs and would help the city to lead the world in the low carbon economy (Girginov, 2013). It aimed to attract companies that were active in low carbon and sustainable initiatives and fill the undeveloped land. Before the Games, a company Siemens opened a flagship building, an urban sustainability centre, for East London’s Enterprise District. The centre was aimed to act as an exhibition for new technology and ways of living in a more sustainable city.
6.1.2.11 Media

There was planned to be 21 000 accredited members of the media from all over the world. 500 television channels broadcast the coverage of the London 2012 Games and that was also available to watch online, on a mobile phone or tablet applications. It was stated there were around 40 000 uncredited journalists, what was supposed to create an even bigger content generation power to the world. Furthermore, it was the triumph time of the social media, as the use of it in 2012 skyrocketed since the 2008 Beijing Olympics (Souza, 2012). The use of Twitter in four years grew from 6 million to 140 million. While Facebook user base increased from 100 to 900 million during the same time (ibid). The phenomenon of ‘the second screen’ emerged at that time as well, what means that an individual watched TV while having a second device (e.g. smartphone, tablet, laptop) also present. In this way, the public shared information, commented, reacted at the time when it was actually happening. The implication of that was that the power was not only in the professional journalists but in everyone’s who had hands on a device.

6.1.2.12 The Opening Ceremony

The event cost £41 million and the publicity received for the country and city was worth two to five billion pounds as David Cameron suggested. The ceremony was directed by the famous Danny Boyle and the event celebrated the British history, heritage and humour. Over a billion of people watched the ceremony worldwide on television, while 80 000 spectators enjoyed the spectacular celebration in the Stadium.

6.1.2.13 The Closing Ceremony

In 17 days, on the 12 of August, the closing ceremony took place — another extraordinary event marked the end of the greatest show on Earth. As the ceremony director Kim Gavin said, the final event celebrated the athletes, the volunteers, London itself, the country, and the world. 750 million people worldwide witnessed the spectacular show. Jacques Rogge, the president of the IOC at the time, named the games as “happy and glorious” (2013b). Afterwards, the Olympic flag was lowered, Olympic flame extinguished and handed over to the next host city of summer Olympics - Rio de Janeiro.
6.1.3 Post-Olympic period

As soon as the Olympic flame was extinguished the world started reflecting on what just happened. There was a plethora of articles, reports, reviews and other types of analysis on all kinds of media as well as impressions spreading based on the word-of-mouth. This section is going to be divided into specific themes as it overviews the results which were uncovered over the years.

6.1.3.1 Image of London

To start with, the most significant aspect of this project was to look at the effects on London image, especially from tourists’ perspective. Shortly after the event, LOCOG (2013b) stated that 65% of respondents believed that the London 2012 Games improved London image around the world. The press review suggested that the world noticed London’s renaissance. An article in Real Business by Knapp (2013) informed that London 2012 showed that the city is brave, confident, diverse, open and creative. The international community could have noticed that London is much more than history and heritage and see the real face of a modern city (Knapp, 2013). Furthermore, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Senior Responsible Owner for the Olympics, explained: “The Olympics have changed how people see us. Traditional – for instance Horse Guards parade, Eton Dorney – but at the same time in track with modern Britain – the Olympic Park, Stratford” (Norris, Rutter, Medland, p.27, 2013). Pound (2012) argued that the Games served as an opportunity to develop the brand into specific markets, for instance in emerging economies like Brazil and Turkey and rebrand itself towards China, where it was not seen particularly friendly beforehand.

Lastly, Saffron European City Brand Barometer in 2014 placed London in the third position, compared to eighth in 2008 (Knapp, 2014). While in the Anholt-GfK ranking London topped the list in 2013 and in 2015 London came second (GfK, 2016). That implies that in both city brand rankings the city improved its position after the Games. Another significant fact to notice is that in 2016, London was rated as the world’s best travel destination for 2016 in TripAdvisor’s Travellers’ Choice awards (London and Partners, 2016b).
6.1.3.2 Visitors

The reports stated that in total 10.8 million ticket holders saw the Games live, and 800 000 of them were overseas visitors, who came to London for Games-related events (Thornton, 2013). Additionally, there were surely many visitors who did not witness any Olympic matches, but experienced the atmosphere in the city though initiatives like the London 2012 Festival. As the statistical trends of the last five Olympic Games indicate, usually tourism revenues tend to decrease during the mega event. Since spectators can watch TV broadcasts and the increased costs of travelling and accommodation in the host city discourage tourists from visiting. It did not occur in London as Olympic or Paralympic ticket holders spent £1290 on average during their visit in the UK, compared to other visitor who spent £650 (ONS, 2012 in Girginov, 2013).

The table below presents the number of visits to London from 2010 to 2015. It shows how many tourists, whose main reason to visit London was holidays, visited the city and the total amount of money they spent and nights stayed. The data illustrates the fact that the number of tourists, expenditure and nights stayed in the city did not decrease due to the event as the rising numbers show (Table 1), thus there was no so-called displacement effect, at least compared to the annual numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Visits (holiday)</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Nights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7.33 million</td>
<td>£3.94 billion</td>
<td>37 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>7.62 million</td>
<td>£4.13 billion</td>
<td>37.09 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>7.65 million</td>
<td>£4.69 billion</td>
<td>37.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>8.51 million</td>
<td>£5.52 billion</td>
<td>42.78 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>8.91 million</td>
<td>£5.44 billion</td>
<td>43.43 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>9.21 million</td>
<td>£5.36 billion</td>
<td>44.96 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Visits of leisure tourists to London 2010-2015 (Visit Britain, 2016)
In addition, the reports published yearly from 2012 to 2016 by London and Partners (2016c) informed that the city targeted specific tourist markets before and after the Games. It showed that country-specific marketing and PR campaigns were communicated towards tourists from the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Australia, Spain and the US (See Appendix 1 Table 1).

6.1.3.3 Residents

The public was pleased with the event, because a week after the Games 83% of Londoners expressed positively about the event (Norris et al., 2013). The London 2012 Festival was supposed to specifically target the locals and engage them in the Cultural Olympiad. However, the research informed that most of the Londoners were not aware of the related events and opportunities. Additionally, communities frequently questioned if physical transformations of surroundings were made for the locals or the Olympic show (Girginov, 2014). Nevertheless, there was a huge success of the Torch Relay among the communities as thousands of people joined the streets to see, in many cases the only live experience of the Games. Overall, the residents had as diverse impressions after the event as the city’s population is, but it woke up the pride of being a Londoner in everyone (ibid).

Volunteers

The research revealed that the volunteering programme turned out to be successful and Games Makers contributed a lot to the success of the event. It was found that 93% of London 2012 Games Makers identified the overall experience of both Olympic and Paralympic Games was satisfying (Girginov, 2014). According to the OGI report, the event inspired the younger generation to volunteer as the young age groups were over-represented in the Games Makers programme (UEL, 2015). However, it was argued that the opportunity to build upon the success of the Games Makers programme has been lost as the planning started too late. In the OGI report Richard Sumray explained that LOCOG’s responsibility was only to create the volunteering programme, but then the government did not manage to create a successful take-over as they started the initiative of managing the volunteering legacy too late. Nevertheless, an organisation ‘Join In’ was still created which has continued to promote volunteering in local sports clubs since then (ibid). As a result, the Games Makers formed a choir which now has over 150 members and
performs in the country’s sporting events (Girginov, 2014).

Moreover, the programme established by the Mayor continued its activities. In the summer and then Christmas time in 2013, initiative of London Ambassadors returned to the capital and around 800 volunteers welcomed visitors at various sites like Gatwick Airport, Covent Garden, Piccadilly, etc. Ambassadors continued their festive cheer and provision of top information in 2014 and in 2015 the programme attracted 130 new volunteers (Team London, 2016). A survey created to research the initiative showed that 96% of visitors reported that the information received was truly helpful while 91% would recommend London as a place to visit (ibid).

**East London**

East London has become one of the London’s fastest evolving areas. The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park rapidly becomes one of the top go-to destinations in London and has already seen over four million people since the re-opening (Queen Elizabeth Park, 2016b). The Westfield Stratford City proved to be a success and not only local residents, but also tourists no longer have to go to the Oxford Street for shopping. On the other hand, it might have resulted in less business for the old local shops and cafes in East London. Furthermore, a business district named International Quarter next to the shopping centre is being built and it is planned to be open in 2016 (Queen Elizabeth Park, 2016a). It is about to create more than 25 000 jobs and high-profile companies such as Transport for London and the Financial Conduct Authority will occupy the space there. Apart from the office area, the place is planned for over 300 homes, hotels, retail and childcare and community facilities (Queen Elizabeth Park, 2016b). In addition, Shoreditch in East London has become a creative tech cluster as many companies continue to settle in there (Economist, 2013). Olympicpolis, the Mayor’s vision to establish a world class education and cultural district, is to be created, which will include a new V&A museum, London College of Fashion, University College London and others. Hence, Stratford has attracted institutions, which would bring even more talent to the area (Queen Elizabeth Park, 2016b).

**6.1.3.4 Business**

The event brought direct impact to business, especially events industry. It was reported that 60
companies have won contracts which are worth 150 million to work with Brazil 2014 World Cup and Rio Olympics. Besides, it turned out that London and Partners secured 38 inward investment projects solely as a result of the Games (Inspired by 2012, 2015).

In 2013, London was elected as the Global Sports City, when the Sportful Annual Cities Index took into consideration sports events taking place from 2008 to 2019 (London and Partners, 2013). The success is due to the attraction of the Rugby World Cup 2015 and IAAF World Athletic Championships 2017. Other high profile events, which were secured due to the successful organisation of the Games were: the Tour de France 2014, EuroHockey Championships 2015, the European Swimming Championships 2015, the ICF Canoe Slalom World Championships 2015 and UCI Track World Championships 2016 (London and Partners, 2013).

6.1.3.5 Sustainability

As it was frequently mentioned, the London Olympic Authority aimed to organise the greenest Olympics ever. LOCOG was the first OCOG to track and measure carbon footprint over the project period. However, as the event passed, officials were switching their promises of halving carbon footprint to reducing or mitigating (Singh, 2014). Nevertheless, the Games has established a new level of sustainability for mega event management. All the reviewed reports and articles boasted about the impressive numbers in sustainability measurement. In the report published in 2015 London achieved a score of 0.63 — environmental 0.56, economic 0.61 and socio-cultural 0.68 — and that is 0.26 higher than the score reported in the pre-event stage which was 0.37 in 2010 (Brimicombe, 2016).

The area, where Olympic Park was located, composed 250 hectares, at the Lower Lea Valley. Overall there were 34 Olympic and 20 Paralympic venues created, 60% of the venues were located in the borough of Newham. The next section provides an insight into what the hard structures turned to after the event.
Primary structures: stadium, special facilities

The organisers were doing the best to avoid ‘white elephants’ and in the planning stage claimed that 80% of venues were either already existing or temporary venues (LOCOG, 2013b). Thus, they only built what the community would afford and use after the Games. Also, the city incorporated the world-famous sights into the event. For instance, the beach volleyball was held at the Horse Guards Parade in central London.

Here is some of the data to illustrate the successful management of Olympic facilities: in July 2013, the first Olympic venue Copper Box Arena and the north of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park were reopened. The arena served as a multi-use sports and entertainment space. In March 2014, London Aquatics Centre welcomed the swimmers and divers, what enabled not only elite but also community use. Later on, Velo Park, Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre were opened to the public. The Olympic stadium was opened again in August 2016 and now will serve as the centre of athletics and home to West Ham United football club (Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, 2016a). Despite that, it is projected that the real regeneration of the Olympic Park will not be complete until 2030 (Brimicombe, 2016).

Secondary: housing and recreation

In November 2013, the former Athlete’s Village welcomed the first residents, 2818 units in the “East Village” became new homes for families and professionals and in 2015 it was reported that more than 4500 people lived there (Inspired by 2012, 2015). It has to be noted that at first 40 000 new residences were promised to be provided for East London. In March 2014, the south of the Park was re-opened, what allowed people to visit historic waterways, the Orbit and use Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre services. As it was previously mentioned, Queen’s Elizabeth’s Park is highly popular among locals as well as visitors. The researcher of the project has also revisited the Park and she found it very welcoming and well-developed. The OGI report also suggested that the Park enhanced recreation and open-air activities in East London (UEL, 2015).
Tertiary: labour and traffic

The report published by DMC stated that from 62 000 to 76 000 previously unemployed Londoners found a job because of the Games (Thornton, 2013). The investment of £6.5 billion in transport, which would not had happened that soon if not the Games, particularly in East London, made a huge impact to the city (ESRC, 2016). Surveys revealed that 74% of spectators of the Games evaluated the ease and efficiency of public transport in London during the period as extremely good (LOCOG, 2013a). Besides, ticket holders were granted with a free one-day travel cards, which in a sense encouraged them to use the public transport. As a result of the event the city can now enjoy improved transport system and use the gained management during massive events skills. The experience in travel demand management gained from the Games was applied to other large events in the city like Rugby World Cup in 2015 (Inspired by 2012, 2015). Overall, the investment in transport for London 2012 has benefited the whole transport network in London, since not only the connectivity of public transport improved, but also the infrastructure for cycling, accessibility and the use of city’s waterways were enhanced (UEL, 2015).

6.1.3.6 Media

Majority of the world saw the Games through a media lens, thus it had a considerable influence on viewer’s experience, even though it was short-lived. In total, the London 2012 Games attracted 3.6 billion of global TV audience. LOCOG (2013b) reported that the ‘new media’ played a significant role at London 2012, as the event was fully digital. There were 150 million Games-related tweets published, 100 million ‘likes’ for related the Games content on Facebook, 15 million people downloaded London 2012 app and London 2012 website was the most visited Games website in history (LOCOG, 2013a). Thus, it was called the first social media Olympics - Sociolympics. Social media led everyone to enjoy the event ‘together’. As for example, athletes could join Olympic Athletes’ Hub to communicate with fans. Also, Twitter gathered all tweets form fans, athletes and their families and used during the broadcast on the NBC (the US) channel. The official Games’ report informed that 78% of respondents confirmed that they saw more positive press than negative press (LOCOG, 2013b). Furthermore, according to the Global Broadcast Report, the Games were broadcast 60% more hours than Beijing 2008. On average, a
viewer consumed 7.5 hours of Games coverage (Global Broadcast Report, 2012). Some viewers in the US were even able to see the sports in 3D, what is also a different and new way of Games experience. Apart from the opportunities mentioned above, the public was provided with two mobile apps, one mobile game and a website (LOCOG, 2013b).

To sum up, the event supplied the global audience with information and news like never before. As the range of coverage available was the widest in the Games history. At the same time, the huge supply of content created the risk that the way London was portrayed in global media might have differed and deviated from the desired image of the organising committee.

6.1.4 The dark sides of the event

The fear of terrorism attacks or some other massive incidents, which were publicly talked about, fortunately did not materialise during the times. Nevertheless, this section briefly discusses other negative aspects of the London 2012 Games that were consequently uncovered.

6.1.4.1 Local community

Soon after the event, there was a documentary named “The Dark Side of the London Olympics” released that uncovered less optimistic facts. The local people at Stratford were interviewed and said that the community was being dispersed (Lindsay, 2014). Residents were removed and businesses had to close down or relocate because of the Games. Locals mainly complained about the housing, that the promises to provide new places to live were late, and often overpriced (ibid).

6.1.4.2 Costs

The London 2012 Games gained a lot of criticism on the budget. Initially, when the Candidate File was presented, the amount equalled £4.1 billion and later on the final numbers turned out to be more than twice greater (£9.3 billion). Critics suggested that the bidders provide a low budget
and vague promises on purpose, just to win the rights for the event, and afterwards they rely on lobbying to increase and collect the realistic amount. The London 2012 Games were announced to be the costliest Olympics in the history. Flybjerg and Stewart (2012) stated that on average the cost overrun of Olympic Games is 178 per cent and the percentage for London 2012 was much higher (227%).

6.1.4.3 Unrealised profits

There was much criticism received from the retail and hospitality industries, as companies expected to benefit from the period. The streets in West London, including shops and restaurants, were quiet as tourists were focused on the East London and locals tried to avoid the action. Research suggested that the retailers did not remind customers that life existed outside Stratford at the time and did not use the opportunity for PR and marketing (Baker, 2012).

6.1.4.4 Blanket coverage

Another disadvantage could be identified as the blanket coverage that media provided (Girginov, 2014). That means that a channel, for example BBC, used to solely broadcast the Games. Though, it is not a surprise that not everyone in the world is, or was at the time, crazily interested in the Olympics. Hence, individuals found it hard to escape from the Olympic hype and pressured involvement.

6.1.4.5 Regulations

Extreme control of activities related to the Games was another aspect. The IOC was named as a supranational power because everything had to be done according to the strict rules and policies of Olympic marketing. For instance, athletes were not able to post content from the events themselves, visually reference to Olympic five-ring logo and acknowledge personal sponsors. Hence, those restrictive rules handcuffed participants from their usage of social media in a way (Souza, 2012). In addition, the Torch Relay was criticised by the fact that it was sponsored by
Coca Cola, Lloyds TSB and Samsung, and was organised under strict guidelines. Thus, it actually did not let to genuinely engage 15 million people in sports participation (Nichols, Ralston, 2014 in Girginov, 2013). Another example of strict regulations was the fact that non-sponsor businesses could not use any Olympic symbolism. Therefore, many people felt like it prevented from the joy of the Games and amazing atmosphere as they always had to think if they adhere to the rules.

6.1.4.6 Lack of real regeneration

The public expressed that the Games were too commercial, even though the slogan communicated the ‘togetherness’ message. Sadly, there was a corporate feel, which is best illustrated by the sale of athletes’ village to the Qatari Sovereign Wealth Fund (Castella, 2012) and the previously mentioned facts about the IOC regulations. Nonetheless, there is a plethora of projects still being uncovered today, which would not have taken place if it was not the event.

6.1.5 Measures

Vancouver Winter Olympics in 2010 and London Olympics were the first Games to follow and measure the impact of the event (ESRC, 2016). The OGI study released in 2015 measured the impact of the Games for twelve years taking 2003 as a base year, including three years of legacy period (Brimicombe, 2016). The analysis took into account three scales: the six host boroughs as a ‘city’, London as a ‘region’ and the UK as a ‘country’. It was aimed to find out if changes in data from 2003 onwards can be attributed to the Games (ibid). The study assessed legacy in the aspects of environment, economy and socio-cultural environment. Brimicombe, a professor at University of East London and a project manager for the IOC’s games impact study had around 200 reports on various aspects of anticipated legacy of the London 2012. This trend shows that not only the government and organisational bodies (the IOC) have been accountable, but also the matter generated a great interest among academic researchers. In addition, London and Partners had been publishing an annual summary of their activities that always included chapters on city’s reputation, leisure tourism and events (see Appendix 1, Table 1). Some of the results reported were specifically attributed to the Games.
6.2 Primary data

6.2.1 Online questionnaire findings

6.2.1.1 Sample overview

To start with, in total the questionnaire was distributed to 333 respondents, 87 respondents answered to all the questions and 22 partially completed the survey. Hence, there was a high number of people who opened the questionnaire, but only read the first page and were not interested and motivated enough to actually start and complete the survey. That implies that the main hurdle and disadvantage of an online questionnaire the researcher encountered was a response rate. On the other hand, the literature suggested that 30 completed questionnaires ensure validity (Brotherton, 2008). Hence, it was concluded that the sufficiency of responses was reached and the survey was closed.

The reason behind that fact that only 26% of respondents completed the survey fully could have been the specifics of the topic. People might not have had an interest in sports, London, Olympics or generally did not feel motivated enough to answer all questions as no incentives were provided. The other issue was partially completed questionnaires, that means a respondent answered some questions and then closed the page. Another significant reason was the filter question — it was problematic to reach out individuals who visited London in the past four years. Also, in the end it was noticed that the questionnaire was not perfectly designed to fit into a smartphone’s screen. Thus, people would usually have to find time on their laptops, what might have caused some inconvenience. Nevertheless, this method of primary data collection provided with rich quantitative and some qualitative data which is presented in this section.

6.2.1.2 Nationality, gender and age

The sample consisted of people representing 25 different nationalities. The majority of the respondents were Lithuanians (30%), followed by Brits (11%) and Danes (8%). The rest represented a variety of countries and that is illustrated in a Figure 4. Furthermore, 41% of the
survey respondents were male and 59% were female (See Appendix 2 Figure 25). The age groups of respondents were mainly from 18 to 24 years, what accounted to 64% of the sample, and 25 to 29 years, what accounted for 31% (see Appendix 2 Figure 24). All in all, the target audience was perfectly reached as the initial goal was to collect data from international adults aged under 30.

![Figure 4. Nationality of survey respondents](image)

### 6.2.1.3 General information

Individuals were asked about the reason of going to London and they mostly responded that it was a visit to see family or friends (30%), while the second most popular answer was holidays (25%), what indicates that they were leisure tourists (Appendix 2 Figure 2). Also, 21% of respondents indicated the reason as “other” and then explained that it was due to moving to work or study in London. Besides, the best part of people who filled out the questionnaire tends to frequently travel, as 45% indicated they travel from two to four times per year and 38% travel over five times per year (Appendix 2 Figure 3). Another important factor is that 70% of the
respondents had been to London before July 2012 (Appendix 2 Figure 4). Thus, they have seen the city before and after the London 2012 Games.

6.2.1.4 Interest in sports and the Olympics

Most of the respondents were quite interested in sports and the Olympics, but the interest in the London 2012 Games was not as great, consult Appendix 2 Figures 6, 8 and 9 to see the explicit data.

Furthermore, the survey uncovered that a majority of respondents would not visit a city if a sports event was happening there. Only 12.5% indicated they would be very willing and 6% were extremely interested in going to a city to attend a sports event. That can be explained by the fact that respondents mainly travel because of holidays or family and friends’ visits, as data about the reason of London visiting indicated.

6.2.1.5 Image of London

London was seen as a favourable city by the respondents as the average score when they were asked to evaluate favourability was 3.9 (i.e. on the scale from 1 to 5). They described London as diverse (74%), modern (73%), historic (58%) and creative (51%). Also, the Figure 5 below illustrates top associations respondents had, when asked to write what comes to their minds when they think of London. The associations were grouped into four main categories as the majority mentioned same things: multiculturalism, fun, history & heritage and big city life. It was interesting to find out that only one respondent out of 96 mentioned Olympics and other six people mentioned sports or football (e.g. Wembley stadium). Consult Appendix 2 Figure 27 for raw data, while the summary of it is represented below.
Furthermore, the favourability of East London was questioned, which resulted to be 3.2 on the scale from 1 to 5, as 52% of the respondents had a neutral opinion. Nonetheless, a small amount of people actually stated that East London changed while almost one-fifth (18%) indicated it did not.

Willingness to visit London again is extremely high as 47% (excluding respondents who live there) indicated that, while 37% said they were very willing to come back to the city. In addition, the recommendation rate is also relatively great, since 47% of respondents would recommend their friends to visit London and 40% would strongly recommend it. Most of the respondents stressed a plethora of activities that match all tastes one can have: "there's a lot to do in London,
whatever you’re interested you can do it in there. Very multicultural and fun.”. Also, the blend of history and modernity was highlighted by a respondent — “It has so much history alongside the modern city. It has everything to offer”. On top of that, there were a few respondents also mentioned the ease of transportation — “There are generally many beautiful buildings, monuments, parks. The city is well looked after. It’s quite comprehensive to get around, even if you are not from London. Help is always available to advise about transport”. And a theme of events was brought up saying that London is a “great place to discover both cultural and sports events. However, I think the city is too expensive”. Overall, the basis of recommendation to visit the city is nicely summarised in the following quote (Appendix 2 Figure 28):

“It’s one of my favourite holidays destination when I need a quick getaway or something. It’s beautiful just being there people are very welcoming and very fast moving. So that gives that pace in life in normal life I mean. Nightlife wise it’s the best city. London offers the best food, city life, it’s basically a hub of everything whether it comes to tourists or people who have lived there for time being.”

6.2.1.6 London 2012

People were asked to evaluate their impression of the London 2012 Games. It resulted to be relatively positive as the average score was 3.5 (i.e. on the scale from 1 to 5). Besides, the event was described as welcoming (61%), diverse (50%), creative (41%) and accessible (31%). People who followed the Games mainly watched TV broadcasts or followed the Internet and social media. 78% of respondents did not visit any Olympic facilities while they were in the city. Therefore, it also does not come as a surprise that the association of London and the Olympic Games in respondents’ minds is very modest. Since 44% indicated they did not at all associate the city with Olympics and only 24% and 21% said they have slight or moderate associations. That may be explained by the belief that the effect of London 2012 is not lasting, which was suggested by a quarter of the respondents. The rest of them thought that the effect is slightly (30%) or moderately (28%) lasting.

Overall, the collected primary data shows that the young international individuals, who fulfilled the online questionnaire, perceive London as a favourable destination to visit and would highly
recommend it to their friends. The respondents expressed their views on the destination and event images by attributing specific characteristics as well as explaining the reasons behind the recommendations. This data combined with the previously presented secondary findings are used in the upcoming chapter to examine hypotheses and answer the research questions.

7. Discussion

The key findings from primary and secondary research have been presented, thus the five hypotheses set in the beginning of the research process are to be examined in the next chapter in order to answer the research questions. Afterwards, the next section provides the key implications regarding city branding for future hosts of the Olympics.

7.1 Exploration of hypotheses

**H1: There was a consistency between the event image and the destination image.**

To start with, the study found that the images of Olympic Games and London had common characteristics in general. They both have a rich history and are globally known. Since the Olympics is the greatest and most known event on earth dating back to ancient times (Olympic, 2016) while London is a financial centre of Europe and its history stretches back to Roman times (Roumpani & Hudson, 2014). Hence, organisers realised that there was no need to “put London on the map” (see 6.1.1.1 London branding) or introduce the Games to the world. Besides, it was the third time London was a host city. Only the tone had to be selected, which happened to be consistent in the minds’ of LOCOG and London marketers and that is explained in the next paragraph. In addition, fortunately, the ground for it was already set up in the candidature file and bidding process.

Following the bid, which identified the vision of the event, the image of the Games was firstly set by its visual look. The logo was created to be bold, modern and dissonant, meaning an unusual combination (see 6.1.2.5 Design of London 2012). Another characteristic — inclusivity — was
supported by the fact that a logo blueprint could have been used by other companies to fill it up with their corporate colours, and also the same emblem was used for the Paralympics. The official colour scheme of purple, pink and tangerine communicated energy, spirit and youthfulness. Also, the slogan of the Games highlighted the event’s approach of making it inclusive and accessible to everyone. Despite the visual design, the event image was further supported by related activities like Torch Relay and Cultural Olympiad, which communicated the same message of making the event inclusive. Lastly, LOCOG strived to host the greatest event in the history, and it was highlighted in an early and considerate planning, attributed great budgets and high-profile individuals and organisations involved in all stages of the event.

The image of the destination at the time was going through the re-imaging period, which was a planned reconfiguration of ideas of an image (Smith, 2005). The organisation of London and Partners was recently formed, thus city branding and marketing strategy was still fresh. Despite that, it was aimed to portray London as a diverse, creative and welcoming city (see 6.1.1.1 London branding). The officials knew tourists would still come to see the historic heritage the city offers, but at the same time there was a goal to create additional associations mentioned previously, thus align the London old and London new images was set as a goal. Furthermore, the mission was (and is still present today) to make London recognised as the best big city in the world (London and Partners, 2016a).

Literature argued that it is a challenge to find relevant dimensions along which to establish a match between images (Xing & Chalip, 2006). In the London 2012 case, as it was presented by the two paragraphs above, which described images of the event and destination at the time, there was a consistency and coherence between them. Both strategies wanted to avoid solely using associations of London with its rich history, heritage and physical objects tourists tend to have. Besides, the event image as well as destination image shared the same mission of being the best of its kind (i.e. the greatest Olympics hosted and the greatest city on Earth). The fit was strengthened by initiatives such as Live Sites and London Ambassadors, which promoted the values of London welcoming for everyone.

To summarise this section, there was a fit between the event image and destination image as the
analysis of branding and marketing strategies at the time confirmed. Officials realised that the Games was a great way to decrease the gap between a perceived and desired destination image.

**H2: Characteristics of London 2012 event transferred to the destination image. London utilised the Games to improve East London’s image.**

As it was just concluded there was a coherent match between the event image and destination image, thus features of the Games had a possibility to transfer to the destination image (Xing & Chalip, 2006). According to the literature the direction of transfer could have been opposite as well (ibid). However, due to the event nature, it being the oldest and greatest sports event in the world with strong values and mission (Olympic, 2016), the image of the Games was not likely to adopt new features, nor there was an aim for it. Of course due to some macro factors like the technology development, politics, creative solutions and experience economy the Games image could alter during the time. Nonetheless, the research confirmed that the features of London 2012 were transferred to the city brand, because the secondary data confirmed that people could notice the ‘renaissance’ of the city after the event (Knapp, 2013). Primary data also proved it, as findings showed that international tourists see London as a diverse, modern and creative destination (Appendix 2 Figure 14). It is argued that the transfer was mainly accomplished by a strong match of images introduced in the previous section and co-branding activities, strengthened by a great exposure of the city and event to the public that the period provided (see 6.1.3.6 Media).

To be more specific, the first reason of transfer was the successful media management as the target group as well as the tool to reach other target audiences of city branding. The event provided a vast amount of accredited journalists, the modern media centre and most importantly it was the golden peak of social media and various platforms available to follow the event (ibid). As it was presented in the dark sides of the event section, apart from ticketing situation, there were no substantial negative sources of news, which encouraged negative press and affected the event image.

The second factor was an involvement of residents by encouraging them to take part in the preparation stage and that aligns with Garcia’s (2012) thoughts that a city should firstly target the
locals as they ‘embed’ the brand. Londoners were provided with public transport campaigns and agencies to help find work related to the event were created (see 6.1.3.3 Residents). During the event residents also experienced the festive environment of Look and Feel programme and got involved as volunteers (Games Makers and London Ambassadors), what resulted in tourists feeling welcomed and receiving necessary help anytime (Team London, 2016). Moreover, the survey suggested that visitors admire Londoners, as they called the city Europe’s New York and a creative hub, and that could be related to Florida’s (2003) term of a creative class. This neglects the idea that only the place physics create a favourable brand (Zenker & Braun, 2010).

The use of network approach by London, thus the creation of strong collaborative relationships, establishing platforms like London Business Network, contributed to the overall positive image and co-branding. For the city, London and Partners organisation served as a DMO (see 6.1.1.1 London branding), whereas for the event it was the LOCOG, that had to adhere to strict rules of the IOC (see 6.1.2.2 Organisational bodies). Hence, unfortunately, in some cases those regulations negatively affected the branding process as too many advertising and marketing activities were prohibited. That could have prohibited businesses (not related to Olympic sponsors) from being fully engaged in the event, as they were feared to be punished for inappropriate use of Games symbolism (see 6.1.4.5 Regulations). Despite that, both parties achieved a successful collaboration, which was enhanced by a close partnership with the government (AMION, 2015). Moreover, celebrity endorsement was used to promote the London 2012 — the Mayor was always portrayed as a brand champion, he established the special projects such as a volunteering programme and worked together to create the city’s DMO (Clark et al., 2011).

Lastly, the rise of experience economy at the time might have intensified the transfer of event features as the public got involved and witnessed the Torch Relay, London Festival and spectacular shows in Opening and Closing ceremonies. People worldwide who did not physically attend the event could follow it on various innovative as well as on ordinary digital platforms (see 6.1.3.6 Media). Hence, mostly innovative technology created a new level of sports event experience and fostered the features of modernity and creativity to be transferred to the destination image.
In addition, the goal to use the event as a platform for regenerating East London’s image succeeded. The survey showed that not remarkably, but the image of the area has improved in respondents’ minds (Appendix 2 Figure 22). Even though the majority of respondents had not visited the Olympic facilities in the East End, secondary data confirmed that the reasons of enhanced image of East London was the legacy provided by hard event structures in East London like Queen Elizabeth Park, Westfield Shopping Centre, International quarter and new accommodation opportunities. East London areas such as Stratford and Hackney have been developing very fast during the last years and regenerated areas have inspired many creative industry specialists to move or start their businesses there (see East London). Overall, the convergence of London and East London was powerfully initiated by the Games.

**H3: The Games positively affected the image of London as a tourist destination and tourists link it to the event.**

The reputation of London has improved after the event as the city brand rankings illustrated (Knapp, 2014, GfK, 2016). The world has noticed London’s renaissance and at first people used to naturally link the improved image to the event (LOCOG, 2013b). This could be explained by the post-Olympic euphoria and fresh impressions as the majority of the world faced blanket coverage and were talking only about the London 2012 during that period of time. There were many surveys and reports to be done by the organisers straight after the event as the officials needed to see immediate evaluations from the public and other results to further manage the legacy planning (Homma & Masumoto, 2013).

However, there was no solid link of London and the Olympics in respondents’ minds as the primary data revealed. It could be explained by the business model of the Games. According to Nickisch (2016) the IOC sells a franchise and a city is obliged to host the world’s biggest, most extravagant and complex event, but only once. Thus, individuals’ memory might not form any long-term links to it. In addition, it was discovered that place physics play an incredibly strong role in London’s case as a plethora of respondents mentioned Oxford Street (*paths*), Soho, Westminster and the City (*districts*), St. Paul’s and Tower Bridge (*nodes*) and Big Ben, London
Eye, Wembley Stadium (*landmarks*) (Lynch, 1960, in Dinnie, 2011; Appendix 2 Figure 27). Thus, the image of London, respondents communicated, has strong ties with physical elements, which existed prior to the event (see 6.1.1.1 London branding). In other words, a cognitive factor plays a significant role in forming London’s destination image.

On the other hand, other components of the image were suggested to be active in people’s memory as well. An affective image was supported by positive feelings towards the place (Sahini & Baloglu, 2014) because a high favourability of the place was expressed by the respondents (Appendix 2 Figure 13). Brand personality was consistently described by associating human traits (ibid) to London such as: friendly, creative, busy and diverse. Lastly, the conative aspect proved to be relatively powerful as the willingness to revisit and recommend the place to a friend were great (Appendix 2 Figure 18, 19).

Even though the actual progress and change in strength of the image could not have been evaluated because the data about image factors were not gathered before the event, the primary research proved that all image components of London play significant roles. On the other hand, that might have resulted due to the fact the survey investigated the modified-induced image, because the sample consisted of the people who visited London after the event.

Altogether, the event positively impacted the brand and destination image of London. The link happened to be only short term, but the author argues that is due to the event’s nature.

**H4: The improved destination image increases the intention to visit the city.**

Following the previous discussion of theory and empirical data, it was concluded that the transfer of event characteristics positively influenced the destination image. In return, pull motivation was strengthened and that resulted in the continually rising number of leisure tourists in London as the official statistics declared (Table 1, p. 54). Thus, those findings denied the displacement effect usually happening in host cities of mega events (Smith & Stevenson, 2009). Also, as it was previously stated, survey’s respondents expressed a high willingness to revisit the city and London was announced to be the world’s best destination for 2016 (London and Partners, 2016b).
On one hand, there is not enough evidence to confirm that a high intention to (re)visit London could be linked with the London 2012, since the survey findings suggested that the effect of Olympics is not lasting and people no longer associate the destination with the Games (Appendix 2 Figure 21). On the other hand, an important factor is that respondents see the place as a destination, which offers everything a tourist may wish for and are very willing to travel there. A perfect blend of heritage-based offerings like museums, monuments and welcoming and inclusive facilities to shop, explore the nightlife are the key drivers to visit the city as the primary research revealed (Appendix 2 Figure 26). Furthermore, London and Partners reported that the Games served as a perfect platform to win other world-class events (see 6.1.3.4 Business), attract foreign investment and create new tourism campaigns (Appendix 1 Table 1) and that illustrates city’s use of London 2012 image beyond the event period.

Overall, secondary research proved the positive effects of the event on visitation numbers of London. While the primary data analysis added that the intention to travel to London remains fairly strong and that suggests the active post-event benefits to the city’s tourism industry.

**H5: The city branding initiatives are sustainable.**

As it was previously explored, despite the fact that tourists normally associate the city with its historic features, the brand attributes of London 2012 — modern, creative and diverse — come to their minds after four years have passed (see Figure 5). Thus, the initiative to add new associations to London’s image, or blend the London old and London new, can be concluded to be lasting. Even though it was once said that “once an Olympic city, always an Olympic city” (IOC, 2010 in Girginov, p. 301, 2013) in London’s case it did not prove to be right. Of course the Olympic Park, now named the Queen Elizabeth Park, serves as the best reminder of the Games and a symbol of sustainability on its own (LOCOG, 2013b).

The literature claimed that if event-related structures change location factors, activities based on those changes are called legacy (Preuss, 2007). Continually, shortly after the event, many event facilities were re-opened not only for the professional, but also for the public use (6.1.3.5
Sustainability). Hence, the phenomenon of ‘white elephants’ was evaded, to be precise, it was strategically planned in the early stages as the research showed. Furthermore, soft event structures like various volunteering initiatives continued to take place and involve residents in sports related activities. Not only sports, but also new jobs and business opportunities have emerged as a result of the event. For instance, the know-how of London 2012 was requested to be shared with Rio 2016 organisers and tens of contracts were secured (Inspired by 2012, 2015). The greatest difference made in terms of event-related structures was transportation, especially in the way of the knowledge gained in demand management. Moreover, the ambition to deliver the greenest Olympics in the history has been accomplished as the official reports stated (ibid).

Taking everything into account, the success and sustainability of city marketing can be explained by the great strategic collaboration of private sector and public sector. Close collaboration with the government let to manage the after-effects of the glorious event, when the two years after the Games the official organising body LOCOG disbanded and then a year after the OGI report was produced. Since the Olympic Park Legacy Company took the responsibility over the Olympic Park, while the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 continued the activities regarding sustainability.

Furthermore, London 2012 acknowledged the significance of targeting different stakeholders and most importantly started doing it from the early stages. Even the bid to host the Olympics included references to Londoners, businesses and visitors (see 6.1.2.1 London’s bid). In addition, London was one of the first host cities of mega events, which actually included legacy and sustainability in the pre-event stage, which was incorporated in the bidding process as well (ibid). That is a rather unusual practice, because host cities tend to put the majority of focus on the event itself, but that can be explained by the recent encouragement of the IOC to host cities to acknowledge the after-event effects.

Moreover, London incorporated measurements in both pre-event and post-event phases. As the secondary research showed, the event planning progress was monitored by the annual Master, Transportation, Sustainability and Cultural Update Plans (Smith & Stevenson, 2009). Afterwards, the event induced effects were not only managed by the government’s organisational bodies
discussed above, measured in the OGI report, but they also inspired various consultant companies and academics to perform studies. That further illustrates a great involvement of different stakeholders and the success of strategical collaborative network approach. Another key fact is that most of the data, studies and reports have been made publicly available by the government (Brimicombe, 2016). Thus, the measures were available not only for the IOC, the government, but also for researchers, residents or future hosts. In spite of the outcomes, which in some areas did not meet the expectations, for example the housing situation in East London (Secondary: housing and recreation), the city acknowledged that it might take longer time to see the results and some effects would be brought by generational changes.

In conclusion, this chapter is best summarised by the quote from Richard Pound (2012) who agreed that despite the fact that the Games is an excellent promotional tool, “becoming and remaining a world capital is not a matter of good luck, but good management” (Pound, p.3, 2012). Hence, London’s success to transfer event attributes to its destination image is explained by a thoroughly and early planned strategy executed by the top talent who were engaged in the collaborative approach and led by a clear vision to be the best.

7.2 New lessons learnt from London 2012

The project was written with an idea to generate new insights for destination branding for future hosts of the Olympic Games, based on the success story of London 2012. Relying on the findings, firstly, a city should embed event legacy from the beginning and do not forget to review it during any stage of the event. Secondly, future hosts should follow London’s example of open data policy. That means a city has to ensure availability of data, especially in the post-event stage, what ensures transparency and encourages knowledge sharing. Thirdly, a host city should not rest on one’s laurels and a city’s promotional body has to continue the rebranding activities even in a more intense manner than in the pre-event or event stage. Besides, it is not necessary to link the destination branding with the Games because tourists’ associations may fade as the time passes, especially if there are already strong links with the city brand beforehand. The study showed that if the city already has a solid brand, an event may add new characteristics to brand identity, but it cannot change it completely. Hence, hosting the Games as a city branding tool may be more
beneficial for places with a blurry or weak image. Fourthly, a city should follow and take into consideration macro trends at the time, and from the case of London it was best illustrated by the social media boom. It also has to be highlighted that even though the IOC provides a city with the framework, every host city’s circumstances are very unique. Overall, the destination branding theory proved to be beneficial, thus the conventional activities of market research, DMO establishment, collaboration with shareholders, involvement of residents and media management should be in place on top of the previous suggestions.

8. Conclusion

The world’s attention is now taken over by evaluative impressions of Rio 2016, yet London’s name will be mentioned as a role model for staging a spectacular and successful mega event in the years to come. The London 2012 organisers put a lot of effort in all event stages and did not overlook the post-Olympics era, which had been a common mistake of previous hosts. Most importantly, London exploited the benefits of network effects, that is, the city involved as many stakeholders as possible in the process of city marketing through the event. The close cooperation with the government and having the Mayor as a brand advocate resulted in a success. Fortunately, London did not need to prove to the world it is a great global city, only to remind it. The event served as a stage for the city’s DMO to reduce a gap between a perceived image and a desired image. The initially created and communicated image of London 2012 coincided with the image London’s promotional body, London and Partners, wanted to spread to the public. Hence, the fit of images resulted in a transfer of event characteristics to the destination image. More specifically, it was concluded that the event served as a platform to blend London old and London new and add the features of ‘creative’, ‘modern’ and ‘welcoming’ to the existing associations visitors had with London’s brand. The survey confirmed, that the current destination image positively influences the willingness to come to London, even though there is no longer a link with the Games in tourists’ minds. Nevertheless, the city mastered the chance to show-off to the world and convince, that London is not only about Big Ben, double decker buses, tea and museums. London is also a creative, diverse and welcoming city, providing events and other attractions for all possible tastes and needs, and the legacy effects of the London 2012 Games are still uncovering.
9. Further research

There are a few perspectives, which could be taken to better explore the topic of this study and add more value to the field. A primary data collection from individuals who have not been to London could be done. Then their impressions could be compared to the already existing data gathered for this thesis. In this way differences between organic, induced and modified-induced images could be researched as this project only researched the modified-induced destination image. Another way to enrich this study could be researching the remaining target groups and their beliefs of London. That would provide material for a more thorough study of city image instead of the one from visitors’ perspective only. Moreover, an employment of statistical analysis would provide opportunities to explore the relationships between different variables, hence, the specific behavioural or attitudinal factors affecting perceptions of a destination could be discovered. Lastly, further research looking into the organisation itself could be done, by researching the organisational culture and leadership and the influence on the exemplary strategic management of the London 2012 Olympic Games. In terms of the research of city branding and destination image of future hosts, it is advised to employ longitudinal studies and data collection, so that the changes during the time could be explored.
10. References


Queen Elizabeth Park, a (2016a). Timeline. Available at: http://queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-story/transforming-east-london/timeline

Queen Elizabeth Park, b (2016). Facts and figures. Available at: http://queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/media/facts-and-figures


11. Appendices

Appendix 1

Figure A. London 2012 Olympic logo (Logok, 2016)

Figure B. Example of logo incorporation by event sponsors (Anderson, 2011)

Figure C. London 2012 Paralympic logo (London Pins, 2007)
Table 1: Results of London and Partners promotional activities (London and Partners, 2016c)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Reputation</th>
<th>Leisure tourism</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 63% of travel trade operators said their perception of London has</td>
<td>• Marketing and PR campaigns targeted the UK, France,</td>
<td>• Outdoor, festival, cultural, music and sports events market is valued at 1.2 billion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>improved to London and Partners support.</td>
<td>Germany, Italy, Australia, Spain, the US.</td>
<td>• Secured new events until 2017, and developed a pipeline of new events (e.g. 2016 European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 84% of all operators said they cannot find a similar level of support</td>
<td>• Increase in international visitors by 1%, visitor</td>
<td>Swimming Championships, 2016 Track Cycling World, Championships and 2018 Gay Games).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>anywhere else.</td>
<td>spend 7% (contradicting trend).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 5 front pages of the Evening Standard</td>
<td>• Secured celebrity support for The London Story</td>
<td>• Secured 6 new events for the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• International coverage of Mayor’s trip to China, including by media</td>
<td>campaign and achieved 1.63m visits to microsite.</td>
<td>• Successful, award winning inaugural RideLondon event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>partner CBN</td>
<td>• New virtual tour on vl.com with 1 year of dwell</td>
<td>• Built Next Big Thing event goers database to over 83,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Active collaboration with London’s top cultural institutions.</td>
<td>time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2014-2015 | • reached over 70m people by collaborating with the UK Government in a major campaign.  
• Autumn in London is GREAT campaign.  
• London Technology Week 2014. | • helped London attract 17.4m international visitors in 2014, 3.5% up on 2013, cementing the capital’s position as the world’s top tourist city. | • London & Partners’ major events team and the Mayor of London’s sports team created London’s major sports events strategy, a framework for all rights holders to request formal city support for sporting events in London. E.g. NFL, RideLondon.  
• helped 277 events come to London, attracting 180,000 delegates and adding £30m to London’s economy. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2015-2016 | • reported as the most successful year ever for generating exposure for London, securing £270m of positive media coverage.  
• Launching hotels.london  
• Guest of Honour campaign became the most successful leisure marketing campaign ever, and reached 300m people globally and landed three major industry awards. |  | • Collaboration with the British Airways and Hilton to celebrate the Queen’s 90th Birthday and the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s legacy.  
• Secured 281 future events.  
• RideLondon festival of cycling, now in its third successful year. |
Appendix 2

Figure 1. Have you visited London since July 2012?

Yes 96% 109
No 4% 5

Figure 2. What was the reason of your trip?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holidays</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business trip</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting family or friends</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend getaway</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. How often do you usually travel every year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once per year</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 4 times per year</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 5 times per year</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not travel</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Have you been to London before July 2012?

Yes 70% 67
No 30% 29

Figure 6. What is your interest in sports?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly interested</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately interested</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very interested</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely interested</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7. How willing are you to visit a city because of a sports event taking place there?

Figure 8. What is your interest in the Olympic Games?

Figure 9. What was your interest in the London 2012 Games?

Figure 10. What was your impression of the London 2012 Games?
Figure 11. What described the London 2012 Games best? (Select all that may apply)

- Sustainable: 7%
- Inclusive: 16%
- Diverse: 45%
- Welcoming: 55%
- Creative: 37%
- Accessible: 28%
- Unwelcoming: 0%
- Chaotic: 11%
- Dissonant: 1%
- Exclusive: 11%

Figure 12. How did you follow the London 2012 Games? (Select all that may apply)

- TV: 62%
- Spectator (i.e. I watched it live): 8%
- Internet and social media: 49%
- Press: 22%
- I did not follow the event: 21%
- Other: 4%

Figure 13. How do you perceive London as a city?

- Unfavourable: 2%
- Somewhat unfavourable: 8%
- Neutral: 8%
- Favourable: 52%
- Extremely favourable: 19%
Figure 14. What describes London best? (Select all that may apply)

- Open: 41%
- Diverse: 66%
- Inclusive: 18%
- Historic: 18%
- Modern: 52%
- Exclusive: 65%
- Displeasing: 7%
- Welcoming: 33%
- Creative: 45%
- Sustainable: 8%

Figure 15. How do you perceive East London?

- Unfavourable: 6%
- Somewhat unfavourable: 8%
- Neutral: 52%
- Favourable: 27%
- Extremely favourable: 7%

Figure 16. Have you visited any of the Olympic facilities?

- Yes, just one: 9%
- Yes, a few: 10%
- Yes, many of them: 3%
- No, I have not: 69%

Figure 17. How many times have you visited London since the Games ended (August 2012)?

- Once: 28%
- 2 - 4: 35%
- 5 times and more: 18%
- I live in London: 16%
Figure 18. How willing are you to visit London again?

Figure 19. Would you recommend London as a tourist destination for your friend?

Figure 21. Do you associate London with the Olympic Games?

Figure 22. Do you believe that East London has changed after the London 2012 Games?
Figure 23. Do you believe the effect of the London 2012 Games is lasting?

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about the lasting effect of the London 2012 Games.]

- Not at all: 20%
- Slightly: 30%
- Moderately: 28%
- Vary: 15%
- Extremely: 1%

Figure 24. What is your age?

![Bar chart showing age distribution.]

- Under 18: 0%
- 18 - 24: 64%
- 25 - 29: 31%
- 30 - 34: 3%
- 35 - 39: 0%
- Over 40: 1%

Figure 25. What is your gender?

![Pie chart showing gender distribution.]

- Male: 41%
- Female: 59%
Figure 26. Overall status of the questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributed</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially Complete</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 27. What comes to your mind when you think of London?

- Britishness, Big Ben; Tower Bridge; doubledecker; Tate; interesting street markets; businesspeople; diverse, exciting atmosphere
- Culture
- Crowded streets
- St Paul's, Oxford Circus
- Opportunities
- Union jack, earl grey, big ben, fish and chips
- Busy
- Big Ben
- Work, underground
- Holiday, food, fancy English people, pubs
- Big Ben, rain and free museums!
- Memories
- Britain
- Multicultural, cosmopolitan
- Too many people
- Luxury
- Huge city
- Multi-cultural
- London eye
- Sightseeing, business
- Integration, multi-cultural, inequality
- “Mosquito” alarms...
- Wickedly awesome
- A beautiful city
- Multi cultural city
- Cultural Diversity, Big City Living, Long Commute, Westminster, Soho
- Busy, busy (you know what I mean :D)
Style, freedom, creativity, excitement

The queen and the big ben

Red buses

Big and rainy

shopping

It's beautiful. I love the fashion there. Best city when it comes to Nightlife. It is very busy city but that's not a downside. Shopping and food is amazing.

Multicultural

Big Ben

Multiculturalism

football

A busy city

Big Ben

Multiculturalism

rain

football, diversity, music, queen

Tall buildings, traffic, crowds, expensive living, opportunities, "you can find anything in London"

Olympic Games, tower, Big Ben

City

Friendly people

Shopping and tourist attractions

Fast rhythm of life, multicultural, red buses, fascinating city

history, pubs, crowded streets, cabs, Englishness

Big Ben

big ben

Shops

Multicultural, fast pace, love, amazing

Football

Football

Culture, legacy, aristocracy

Tourists, parliament square, rain, royalty, grey buildings

Fun, large

Multicultural

Expensive

Cultural diversity

Europe's NY

Rain

Busy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stress</th>
<th>Captial City, London Underground, Camden, Nightlife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping, brits, good food</td>
<td>misleading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busy city and double decker buses</td>
<td>Amazing city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazing city</td>
<td>Busy, quirky, crazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endless opportunities</td>
<td>multiculturalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multicultural</td>
<td>Big, gray, crowded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini Manhattan</td>
<td>Expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expensive</td>
<td>Big Ben or Queen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tube</td>
<td>Indulgence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indulgence</td>
<td>Vibrant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking, good food and party</td>
<td>History, capital, sports, culture, nightlife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History, capital, sports, culture,</td>
<td>Large, dull, expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nightlife</td>
<td>Big city with shopping opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big city with shopping opportunities</td>
<td>Multicultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural</td>
<td>Multicultural and always buzzing with life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural and always buzzing</td>
<td>Big Ben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with life</td>
<td>Wembley Stadium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expensive</td>
<td>Elegant and magnific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>busy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 28.** What would be the reasons for your recommendation?

I think London is a very interesting place, with much to offer to people with all sorts of interests. My own first visit (before 2012) was extremely positive, fun and inspiring. I enjoyed the architecture, the people I met, the interesting neighbourhoods (everything from Peckham filled with exotic Caribbean shops, to upscale Notting Hill). London is a city that symbolizes coolness to me.
Something to do for everyone

First reason: everything in London is overpriced, starting from accommodation and finishing with transport. Second reason: it is difficult to relax in overpopulated city since the life in the big the cities is too busy and rushed. The last but not least reason to not choose London as a tourist destination is food. There is nothing special in English cuisine. In conclusion I would advice my friend to visit West coast of South America or Mediterranean Countries instead. The weather in those countries is better, hotels are cheaper, food is delicious and there are many things to see for a tourist.

Vibrant cultural life, diversity, restaurants

Must see once in a life time

People think that London is better than it is

Culture, shopping, night life

free museums

It is unique city with its own distinctive history and charm.

1. Historic city with profound culture to explore

2. Modern and fashionable with so many designer shops and fancy boutiques to explore

3. Museums and art galleries

4. Nice bars, nice nightlife

5. Multicultural and inclusive with people from all over the world (but not sure if this is going on after Brexit...)

6. People are ambitious there. This is a place where you can realise your dream!

It's a good place to go out and the food is amazing

Eat out every single day. Travel on your own and find out the historic places in london. Take out nice beautiful walks at night in central London.

Whatever you are looking for, you'll find it in London. Whether you are more into sports or into arts, into books or music..

Great place to visit with a diverse cultural, political and social setting

If you have a sunny day then is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. All the modern buildings, all the places to visit, musicals, hipster areas (SOHO RULES).

Because it's an amazing city to visit

Amazing food, diverse, good shopping

London is one of the cities every traveler should visit at least once in their lifetime; rest assured it has something to offer for everyone

Lots of activities happening in London

Unique atmosphere

Fashion
Friendly people  
shopping, culture, attractions

It's one of my favourite holidays destination when I need a quick getaway or something. It's beautiful just being there people are very welcoming and very fast moving. So that gives that pace in life in normal life I mean. Nightlife wise it's the best city. London offers the best food, city life, it's basically a hub of everything whether it comes to tourists or people who have lived there for time being.

One of the most important cities in the world.

Everything about London! the sights, the parks, the ethnic neighborhoods, the quaint side streets, the walks along the river, the diverse restaurants, the modern cafes, the traditional pubs, its multiethnic diversity juxtaposed with its very traditional "Britishness"

as i’m a football fan, i love the stadiums and the atmosphere you breathe in the city.

as well london is not also football, but has a lot of things do do/see

tradition, history, multiethnic and innovative at the same time

Lots of things to see, to get a feeling of what one of the busiest cities in the world looks like

Plenty of other places to enjoy in europe. Unless you want to see the historical landmarks - sure, go to London

It's Not a great place to live, but tourists may find it attractive for a short visit. There are many free things like exhibitions and shows you can find if you look for it. Also you can find unusual things to your taste in areas like Camden and Bricklane. You can experience all cultures of the world in one city - Indian temples, African cuisine, China town... I don't think many other cities offer this opportunity.

There are generally many beautiful buildings, monuments, parks. The city is well looked after.

It's quite comprehensive to get around, even if you are not from London. Help is always available to advise about transport. However, public transport here is expensive.

City of a great culture and points of interest, many venues to visit, concerts and events

- Historic places
- Art Galleries
- Theatres and museums

It's a great city with a little bit of everything, something for different tastes in all ages.

Nice touristic places to visit, shopping, positive vibes, energy, people are always outside doing activities

It's a historic city.

Museums
Shops

Sightseeing

An amazing city full of love...something for everyone!
good food, football, great architecture

Great place to discover both cultural and sports events. However, I think the city is too expensive.

It is very historic but I am neutral because my group of friends is more interested in Asian history compared to British history.

It is a very large city with a very diverse cultural background, rich history, hundreds of places to visit and see.

The vibe there is something different

Fun city for the young

multicultural financial hub

has it all

It's impressive architecture and history. Parks and museums.

Top house and techno nightclubs,

Camden, Brixton and other full of life places.

Borough market and food places

Good pubs

It is the Capital City, with an array of things to do, much more than the standard sight seeings which take place on the first time.

Diverse

Atmosphere, culture, food, possibilities, shopping,

- historic

- former centre of an empire

- diverse

- creative city

The diverse of the culture and the people, the high end living lifestyles

Amazing city for tourists

A home from home! Busy, exciting and full of culture

Sightseeing: many places of interests to visit

Endless leisure possibilities: museums, musicals, pubs, restaurants, parks, etc.
Multicultural diversity

there is no such city that could be viewed in similar terms as London. It has its very specific culture and environment. I believe that London can also be regarded as a hub of young and creative people who are striving towards creating their own businesses, start-ups.

It's a place you "should" se

Amazing history and architecture

Good shopping

It's a nice city but it's too cold. There are better cities to travel to.

Cheerful people, nice places to eat, museums (sometimes even free), great outdoors!

London has a lot to offer in all of the aspects: culture, history, food, it's a great experience!

There is always something for anyone. Tho everything is with a hint of British glamour.

A lot of things to do and see in the city, easy to get around, a lot of culture and history.

There's a lot to do in London, whatever you're interested you can do it in there. Very multicultural and fun, however not the place to live in the long term due to the rush and how busy it is. 

It has so much history alongside the modern city

It has everything to offer

You have to see it as a tourist because of the historical context, but you couldn't live there.

"when you tire of London you are tired of life" - Samuel Johnson

Do not think i could live there but it is a nice tourist destination, because there are many places to be visited both modern and historic and also lots of new experience there especially when you come from much smaller country.

References

