Does UiA build a good reputation through UiA Lounge?

An analysis of reputation building in UiA at the Norway's first university lounge from a perspective of strategic communication.

YUKIKO IWAZAKI

SUPERVISOR

Hans Olav Hodøl

Abstract

UiA (University of Agder) is a relatively new university with a 13-year-old history. They opened the first university lounge, UiA Lounge, in Norway in the domestic terminal of Kristiansand Airport on November 1, 2019. The aim of the lounge project is to visualize the collaboration between the university and other organizations under the strategy, co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge. In addition, to visualize itself to greater stakeholders because the university is not known in other regions in the country.

The research question of this thesis is, "Does UiA build a good reputation by UiA lounge at Kristiansand Airport?" Two sub research questions are addressed. First, "How does UiA try to build a good reputation?" Second, "How good or bad reputation does UiA have?" These research questions are analyzed from a perspective of strategic communication by means of naturalistic paradigm of qualitative interview with the employees and leaders of the organizations, and quantitative survey to the people who waited for their flights at the lounge area at the airport.

Four findings are discussed. First, UiA has balanced multiple identities. Second, the university and Kristiansand Airport share and enjoy a circle of reputation at UiA Lounge. Third, the airport gets better impact by the lounge than the university. Fourth, it becomes clear that an exhibition area and three digital screens which visualize the possibilities of collaboration between the university and other organizations don't make a great impact on the stakeholders regarding change of the university's images. In conclusion, from the perspective of reputation, a possibility of even better results by improving the way and the direction of communications is presented.

Foreword

My identity has become stronger and stronger after I moved to Kristiansand with just a suitcase five years ago from Tokyo where I was born and grew up, where my family and the closest friends live. Why do they always ask me where I am from? Who am I? It means a lot to me to major in communication in a master's degree here with Norwegian classmates as a Japanese and Asian woman. Many struggles. Thank you, the Norwegian state, for (almost) free education!

I am really thankful for Hans Olav Hodøl for being my supervisor and giving me shrewd advices and ideas for this thesis. Tusen hjertelig takk. Also thank you very much for participating in the interviews, Hans Kjetil Lysgård, Thomas Eikeland Fiskå, Sunniva Whittaker, Arne Johan Johnsen, Ellen Gjerde, and a couple of members of UiA. I could not write this thesis without your helps. And thank you, my dear husband, for always being the best cheerleader.

Kristiansand, November 2020
Yukiko Iwazaki

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport

According to the official website of the university (UiA, n.d.-d), University of Agder (hereafter UiA) officially opened in 2007, but its history roots since 1828 when Kristiansand Museum was founded. In 1994, six colleges in southern Norway merged into Agder University College (HiA), and this is the predecessor of UiA. UiA has 13,690 students in autumn 2020. It has 550 administrative staff and 890 academic staff in autumn 2019 at two campuses located in southern Norway in Kristiansand and Grimstad. Agder is a name of the region located in southern part of Norway including Kristiansand. There are 11 regions in Norway, and Agder is one of them (Kommunal- og moderniseringsdepartementet, 2019). According to a national statistic (Nygård, 2019), UiA is the 10th biggest university compared with other public universities and colleges in 2018. Apropos, there are not private universities in Norway. Private schools which offer higher educations are categorized as colleges, which fields are limited to for example economics or art. On the other hand, Norwegian public universities offer wide range of fields for example from nursery education, sports science to literature.

UiA opened a lounge area of 63 m^2 at the domestic terminal at Kristiansand Airport on November 1, 2019. This lounge is the first university lounge in Norway, and it was a part of a celebration of 10 year anniversary of UiA (Pedersen, 2019). This lounge area is divided into two areas, one for collaboration area which offers a seating area with exhibition and three digital screens which show slides with information about study courses, researches, and further education for adults. The exhibition would be the most eye-catching content of the lounge. The exhibition visualizes collaboration between the university and the organizations which UiA Lounge aims for. When the lounge opened on November 1, 2019, the exhibition was about an inter-disciplinary student organization, Align Racing (see figure 1.1 below). During the summer in 2020, the Faculty of Fine Arts at UiA and Kilden (theater and concert hall in Kristiansand) took over the area, and they have an exhibition to visualize their collaboration. A member at the communication division at UiA said that these digital screens and exhibition will be shifted, but there are no concrete plans by now.

The other area is a focusing area with calm lights, chairs and desks for passengers who want to work or relax with their digital devices before boarding (see figure 1.2). These two areas are divided with a low glass wall decorated with parts of motifs of UiA's logo (see figure 1.3). Outlets for charging electronic devices are available for every seat in the area, and employees, researchers, and students at many universities can connect to a Wi-Fi service, eduroam which is a world-wide roaming network providing access across research and education networks (eduroam, n.d.).
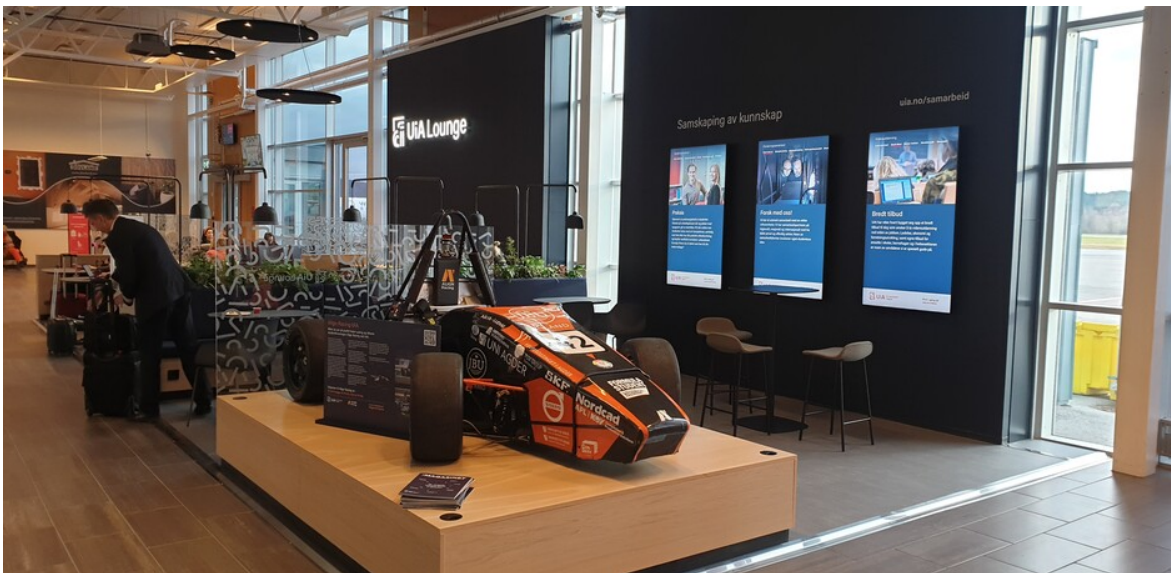
Figure1.1: Three digital screens and an exhibition area at UiA Lounge, retrieved from
https://www.uia.no/en/news/uia-opens-new-lounge-at-kjevik

Figure 1.2: Focus area of UiA Lounge, taken by the author on July 7, 2020

Figure 1.3: Partition between focus area and collaboration area, taken by the author on July 7, 2020

This lounge area is not only for employees, researchers, and students, but also for everyone who is waiting for flights at Kristiansand Airport. Usually, lounge at airports requires an entrance fee. For example, it costs 329 NOK at lounges by Scandinavian Airlines if the fee is payed at the airports (SAS, n.d.). Contrarily, UiA Lounge is neither separated by gates nor walls, and it has a totally free entrance.

According to an article on UiA's web page, "UiA aims to visualize the collaborative opportunities between the University and private business" (Pedersen, 2019) at UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport. Also, Sunniva Whittaker, a principal of UiA talked in this article that "UiA's vision is to create new knowledge through collaboration with other parties," "in this new lounge, we hope that many others will get informed about opportunities to collaborate with us." In fact, a member and an interviewee of UiA told that main target group of UiA Lounge is existing and potential collaborative organizations within practice and research fields (T. Eikeland Fiskå, personal communication, October 5, 2020). The university uses the lounge as a communication tool towards people and organizations outside of UiA.

1.2 Research question

According to the article about the lounge on UiA's web page (Pedersen, 2019), the lounge aims to inform people in other sectors about collaborative opportunities. A member at communication division at UiA explained that the main goal of UiA Lounge is to make UiA better known. Thus, they do not seek for a good reputation at the first place. However, the member also mentioned that they expect gaining a good reputation as a by-effect in a way. In this context, I construe that the lounge sets a sub-goal to give good impressions of UiA to the people who are waiting for flights in the terminal and give good images by offering good experiences at the lounge as well as visualizing collaborative researches and works between the university and organizations. And then, the good images of the university build a good reputation as a part of many other factors which form a holistic reputation.

If the lounge contributes to building a good reputation, the university could get more attention and get opportunities to collaborate with organizations. Collaboration with organizations means gaining profit. The funds by collaborating organizations would be used for projects at the university, which would lead students and researchers to publish academic articles, and to get citations by other academics. These cycles affect university rankings such as THE World University Rankings (THE World University Rankings, 2019), the largest university rankings today (THE World University Rankings, n.d.-a). Bowman and Bastedo researched whether THE World University Rankings effects on university reputations in their paper (Bowman & Bastedo, 2011). The conclusion is that university rankings make an impact on universities' reputations. "It is difficult to maintain the fantasy that reputational scores are independent from the rankings themselves" (Bowman & Bastedo, 2011, p. 440). It means that a university which ranks higher than other competitive universities gets better reputation. When it comes to rankings, the concern of UiA is that UiA doesn't rank in any international famous university rankings. For example, University of Oslo (UiO) ranks 131st at The World University Rankings 2020 (THE World University Rankings, n.d.-b) and 113rd at QS University Rankings 2021 (QS TOP UNIVERSITIES, n.d.). A member at the communication division of UiA said that they do not take it as a concern since every university ranking has different criteria, and the measures are ambiguous. Bowman and Bastedo advocate that it is difficult to change rankings once reputational assessment are formed (Bowman & Bastedo, 2011, p. 441). In this way, it might be nonsense for UiA to aim to jump in international university rankings. However, at the same time, I am interested in the reputation of UiA and the effect of UiA Lounge which might not come out in rankings. Therefore, I state a main research question as below:

Does UiA build a good reputation by UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport?

To answer the main research question, I state two sub research questions.
1. How does UiA try to build a good reputation?
2. How good or bad reputation does UiA have?

I will analyze the reputation building of UiA Lounge at UiA from a perspective of strategic communication. Since UiA Lounge is in a domestic terminal at Kristiansand Airport,

both reputations of UiA and Kristiansand Airport interact with each other. But first, to analyze reputation, identity of the organization must be unclosed (Brønn, 2019, p. 25). There are many discussions about how to find out the identity of organizations and many definitions of it. In this research, I use mainly the AC^2ID test by Balmer and Greysers. According to Balmer and Greyser, an organization does not consist of one single identity but multiple identities from many perspectives (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 73). Therefore, I had interviews with board members and employees at communication division at the university, and an airport manager and a leader of administration division at Kristiansand Airport. Also, I had a survey at Kristiansand Airport to figure out images, whether the people want to talk about the university to others, and whether UiA Lounge makes any impacts on images of UiA. Hence, I use both qualitative and quantitative interview methods in this research.

1.3 Structure

This master thesis consists of six main chapters including this introduction chapter. This introduction chapter fill a role for leading this paper to the following main chapters.

In the second chapter, I present earlier researches about reputation building and features of reputation building in public organization. In the third chapter, I present theories for analyzing identities, images and reputation, and several theories for measuring identities, images, and reputation. Here, I define how I interpret these theories and combine them in this thesis. In the fourth chapter, I present methods. In this thesis I use qualitative interview method and quantitative survey, and I explain why and how I choose to implement these methods. Moreover, I show how I have chosen informants and collect answers as well as how I limit the answerers.

In the fifth chapter, I describe and analyze identities, images, and reputation of UiA from the qualitative interviews and the quantitative survey. It becomes clear that the university has multiple balanced identities by using the AC^2ID test. And this finding leads to the following chapter for analyzing UiA Lounge. In the sixth chapter, I analyze if UiA Lounge makes any impacts on the change of UiA's image. Also, I discuss possibilities of improvement of UiA's communication at the lounge. At last, I summarize the thesis in the last chapter with conclusion.

2.0 Earlier researches and literatures

Reputation is very ambiguous and has many definitions. Many researchers describe reputation in many ways and from many perspectives, for example one from marketing field and another from communication field. There are no precise or specific explanations about reputation which everyone agrees with as mathematics and physics. Also, those theories and definitions are often built for private organizations, not for public organizations. In this chapter, I present seven earlier researches and literatures in five categories which inspired and gave me a better understanding of this field.

Before going further, I note a use of the word, *stakeholder*, in this thesis. I use stakeholder as every individual and organization who has stakes in the organization. It includes for example customers, partner companies and their employees, environmental groups and their members, and the employees at the organization itself.

2.1 Strategic communication

In *Defining Strategic Communication* (Hallahan et al., 2007) and *Strategic Communication: Defining the Field and its Contribution to Research and Practice* (Zerfass et al., 2018), authors describe what strategic communication is in a comprehensive view. These two articles are not quite a consecutive article, but the latter article can be read as an improved version after the study field got to be more matured. According to the authors of both articles, strategic communication is "the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission" (Hallahan et al., 2007). Entity is scalable, communication includes both messaging and listening, and communication happen in many arenas, for example between customers and employees, private talks, in mass media and on social media (Zerfass et al., 2018, p. 493). This means that every action which is taken by the organization is meaningful. However, often in a large organization, it is impossible for leaders to control all the communications which are taken by and through many employees. Also, there might be some issues which leaders might not acknowledge as top-down style management. There are some issues which should be picked up, considered, and resolved, but the issues don't reach leaders so easily. Therefore, authors advocate that an ideal way of resolving issues is to have bottom-up style (Zerfass et al., 2018, pp.

493-494). Thus, strategic communication demands efforts by all the members in the organization.

Authors also point out a volatility of communication (Zerfass et al., 2018, p. 495). James E. Grunig advocated symmetry communication between an organization and its stakeholders (Grunig, 1993b, pp. 144-146). Grunig's symmetry communication model is that an organization is not just a one-way informer who tries to persuade its stakeholders to make them buy products and services. Instead, the organization opens the ears and eyes and gets interaction with its stakeholders. The organization improves itself along with communication with stakeholders. On the other hand, stakeholders are listened and taken their demands by the organizations carefully. Hence, Grunig's symmetry communication is a win-win for both sides, the organization, and the stakeholders. In this way, meaning creation in a communication occurs among both sender and receiver. And it "is often the outcome of the interaction between the two" (Hallahan et al., 2007, p. 23). Therefore, even an organization plans a communication strategically and carefully, they never know whether it goes well or not before sending the messeage to public sphere.

2.2 Identity, image, and reputation

ÅPEN eller INNADVENDT: omdømmebygging for organisasjoner (Brønn, 2019) is a book which explains what identity, image, and reputation are, and how we can measure those ambiguous objects with examples from many organizations and researches. In this thesis, I use this book to define the use of words since the author is a Norwegian and the objects of this thesis, UiA and Kristiansand Airport, are Norwegian organizations.

2.3 Reputation management

Strategic Reputation Management (Aula & Mantere, 2008) is a book which its focus is how to manage reputation in an organization. Main points of the book are, a good organization is doing good deeds, communicating good, and managing good relationships with its stakeholders. According to the authors, "reputation is something that is spoken about and discussed" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 21). In this way, reputation is formed and constructed in communication through the organization and stakeholders. The authors advocate again and again in the book that

being a good storyteller is a key of getting a good reputation by stakeholders. As Zerfass et al (2018, p. 495) write in their article that communication is vulnerable and dynamic. Aula and Mantere (2008, p. 130) advocate that a messege from an organization never be interpreted by receivers as the organization intends. It is because the receivers do not have the same background or understanding of the world. People have different experiences and those experiences form their perspectives. Hence, "reputational stories cannot be controlled or managed" by organizations (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 54). However, organization can make an effort to tell their stories to stakeholders so that the stakholders conceive the stories as the organization intends.
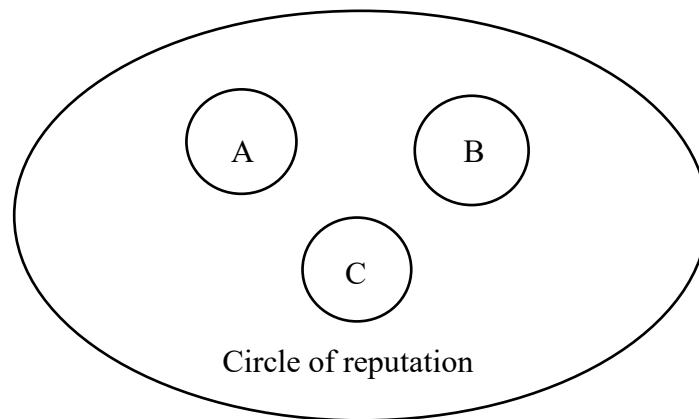
Figure 2.1: Borrowing reputation by Aula and Mantere (2008, pp.118-129)

Moreover, the authors show network strategies which several organizations share, borrow, outsource, or steal reputational capital, or form alliance in "a circle of reputation" as they call (Aula & Mantere, 2008, pp. 118-129). Figure 2.1 is a mode where three organizations share their reputations with each other. Every organization has a reputation. These organizations in a circle of reputation enjoy their positive sides as well as suffering negative sides of reputation.

2.4 Corporate branding and identity in public organizations

UiA and Kristiansand Airport are both public organizations financed by the Norwegian state. In the two articles, *Can public sector organizations be coherent corporate brands?* (Wæraas, 2008) and *Branding without Unique Brands: Managing similarity and difference in a public sector context* (Sataøen & Wæraas, 2013), authors argue about differences of corporate branding and reputation management in public sector and private sector.

To establish a corporate brand, it is believed that an organization needs to differentiate itself from other organizations and brands (Wæraas, 2008, p. 207). For example, a sports brand has a catchy logo, unique design, and their own tone of describing the products and themselves. Hence, there is a coherent corporate brand which differentiates from other competitive brands. However, it is difficult to establish a coherent corporate brand when it comes to public organizations. The reason is that public organizations "must provide equal services and gain legitimacy" (Sataøen & Wæraas, 2013, p. 443) which is not a concern for private organizations. Public organizations consist of multiple identities and character of inconsistence since they provide services to inconsistent public which cannot be explained with a specific audience, and their goal is not making money. Thus, many public organizations have blur and general explanation of themselves and visions. For example NAV, Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration, set one of the organization's main goals as "to provide the right services and benefits at the right time" and "to provide good services tailored to the users' needs and circumstances" (NAV, 2019). These goals sound very general, and these goals could be used in other organizations too, such as telephone providers or factories which make small parts for mobile phones. This tendency which organizations fall into is called *conformity trap* (Antorini & Schultz, 2005, p. 60). Some organizations prefer being similar to other organizations. However, Wæraas (2008, p. 217) advocates that setting one consistent identity in a public organization by getting rid of diversity in the organization would cause diminishing their attractiveness and good images. Therefore, according to Wæraas (2008, p. 217), public organizations should convey their multiple identities as they are. Paradoxically, this inconsistence makes public organizations unique.

2.5 Corporate branding and identity in a university

In *Defining the essence of a university: lessons from higher education branding*, Wæraas and Solbakk (2008) show a finding that a university might have too many complexities to have one single definition of its identity. For example, for Noroff, a vocational and bachelor level private school which is specialized for digital arena (Noroff, n.d.), it might be easier to differentiate itself from other educational organizations. On another front, UiA offers from bachelor's degree to master's degree as well as PhD. In this way, there is a great diversity in a university.

Authors conclude that higher education institutions are able to be strong brands if they articulate themselves with their unique strengths and virtues (Wæraas & Solbakk, 2008, p. 460). However, authors also point out that allowing diversity means that the institution loses one consistent definition of identity and corporate brand. This is a dilemma because it is believed that an organization's identity should be as clear as possible to position itself in a market (Wæraas & Solbakk, 2008, p. 450).

3.0 Theory

We often hear and see these words, identity, image, and reputation in media. However, these words have ambiguous definitions. In this theory chapter, I present theories as well as defining the words and how I combine them in this thesis. First and foremost, according to Balmer (2001, p. 281), an organization needs a clear definition of itself to make the organization better known. Brønn (2019, pp. 25-26) writes that stakeholders get some impressions and images of an organization by experiencing the identities. Identity is an essential key for conveying images and building reputation for an organization. Therefore, I start this chapter with identity.

3.1 Identity

According to Brønn (2019, p. 25), attention to the term of identity increased in the 1990s and 2000s. We cannot describe identity with just a word because identity indicates and contains several meanings and definitions. To begin with, I will explain organizational identity.

Organizational identity

Organizational identity is a starting point of identities. According to Brønn, organizational identity is in short, "what and who we are" (Brønn, 2019, p. 29). Albert and Whetten advocate that there are three criteria for organizational identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985, p. 265). First, *central character*. This is a term which describes essence of the organization, what the organization stands for or the reason why the organization exists. As people who exist in a society, the criterion, central character, is the very basic point to recognize the organization.

Second, *distinctiveness*. Finding uniqueness in the organization and differentiating from other organizations make the organization stand out. There are many organizations which sell and provide similar products and services. For example, soap, toothpaste, or mobile subscription. Thus, finding distinctiveness in the organization itself helps to be recognized by others as something different and outstanding.

Third, *temporal continuity*. Organizational identity derives from an organization itself. Thus, organizational identity is a result of the organization's history over years and decades. In

the period of business and operation, organizational identity has been continuously formed. Aula and Mantere (2008, p. 57) advocates that the people inside of the organization change, but the identity continues.

This organizational identity is not the one on their websites or catch copies in advertising. The "who we are" which we see on media is categorized as corporate identity and communicated identity, and I explain them in the next section. Organizational identity is the identity which is extracted and integrated from all the employee's perspectives in an organization. It is not a simple work to define one organizational identity as a whole organization. Wæraas and Solbakk (2008, p. 450) point out the difficulty of defining one organizational identity by researching a Norwegian university. In their research, employees at different departments have different interpretations and definitions about the university. Their work indicates that it costs human capital and consumes time to define an organization with one identity. However, organizational identity contributes to building fundamental solidity, binding together, and fostering organizational culture as a whole, which is necessary for branding and positioning in a market. Therefore, generally, organizations sacrifice the human capital and time, and they try to figure out one identity for one organization.

Corporate identity

In short, corporate identity is "who and what we say we are" (Brønn, 2019, p. 35). Organizational identity has inward-focused character. It is an integrated description of the people, histories, and culture in the organization. These actual organizational identities within employees' hearts are not seen so clearly from outside. Contrarily, corporate identity focuses on how and what organization expresses and describes themselves to the people outside and inside of the organization. Hence, not only the expressions on the "about" page on organization's website, but also every word they convey and express on press conference, social media, product designs, logo designs, vision, and even behaviors of employees are concerned as corporate identity. Brønn (2019, p. 36) assumes that the idea of corporate identity came from the marketing field. As a marketer, the main goal of building and controlling corporate identity is to differentiate their organization from another organization. Hence, they put great value on

external communication to whom such as investor relations, potential clients, and mass media. In this way, corporate identity in marketing field has an outward character.

On the other hand, in the communication field, all the communication are their concerns. Brønn (2019, pp. 36-37) points out that employees would also be clients for the organization. As citizens in a town, we often overlap our social rolls. For instance, a man is working at a fitness center in a town, so he is recognized as an employee while he is wearing a uniform. At the same time, when he does not wear the uniform, he is recognized as a customer. If he has a good relationship with the fitness center, he might spread positive word of mouth to his friends. Contrarily, if he is unsatisfied with the work environment or the communication he gets from his bosses or colleagues, he might spread bad rumors of the training center. Thus, the deed comes back upon the doer. Taking care of the employees matters to the reputation of the organization.

Corporate identity is a holistic communication which is conveyed by organization and the members. In this manner, visual identity is one of the corporate identities. Visual identity is for example, logo, style of picture, videos, and so on. Many of us living in Western countries would recognize Nike's logo or McDonald's logo without any explanations. This is a strength of visual identity. Also, by colors and fonts, we imagine what they provide, corporate character, and corporate culture too. Figure 3.0 shows that Miljøpartiet De Grønne, a Norwegian political party, has a green color logo with a little round font (Miljøpartiet De Grønne, n.d.). Their policies are based on environmental protection. The round font of Miljøpartiet De Grønne gives a soft and mild image, and the white color letters gives a clean image. These images are a symbol of the goal which the party aims to. Mild climate without abnormal weather such as typhoon and flood, and clean globe without air pollution or garbage issues.

Figure 3.0: logo of Miljøpartiet De Grønne, retrieved from https://www.mdg.no/ on August 31, 2020

Green color is often used for a symbol of nature and environmental protection. A German party, DIE GRÜNEN, which also calls on environmental protection uses green color as their image color (see figure 3.1) (BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN, n.d.). They have a little sharper font than Miljøpartiet De Grønne, and it gives stronger image. Moreover, the sunflower next to the name of the party gives a healthy and vital image. Hence, visual image is one of the corporate identities which makes a great impact on the images of the organizations.

Figure 3.1: logo of DIE GRÜNEN, retrieved from https://www.gruene.de/ on September 1, 2020

Multiple identities

Every organization has many facets and tasks along with divisions. And an organization is composed of people with different perspectives which are based on their difference experiences and backgrounds. Brønn points out that even a person has multiple identities depend on different situations and audiences (Brønn, 2019, pp. 41-42). In their article, Wæraas and Solbakk (2008, p. 450) write that it is believed that a description of what and who the organization is "should be as precise and consistent as possible, and communicated very consistently." Since the idea of corporate identity came from the marketing field, it sounds natural. Marketers' goal is to make the organization or brands known as much as possible and sell products and services as much as possible. So, the simpler the corporate identity is, the easier people recognize and remember the organization. However, this idea would most fit for organizations which have limited number of aims, services or products. For instance, Greenpeace, an environment conservation group, has a clear aim. Greenpeace aims to protect

environment and prevent climate change (GREENPEACE, n.d.). Contrarily, public organizations provide wide range of services. Wæraas (2008, p. 205) advocates that "public organization will benefit more from branding on the basis of inconsistent values and multiple identities rather than trying to promote one set of values and one identity at the expense of others." This contention is totally opposite of the myth in the field which encourages organizations to have one single corporate identity. As I explained above in an earlier section, all the communications which are taken by an organization are parts of the corporate identities in the communication field. It means that corporate identity includes a great complexity.

Balmer and Soenen introduced *The ACID Test of Corporate Identity Management* in 1999 (Balmer & Soenen, 1999), and Balmer and Greyser introduced *the AC²ID test* in the 2000s (Balmer & Greyser, 2002). The AC²ID test was made for managers and leaders in organizations to measure success and value of the organization. At that time, corporate identity was the major term of identity, but they meant corporate identity was not enough for managers and leaders to get a whole picture of the organization and lead it to success (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 72). To solve the issue, they divided the concepts of organizational identity, corporate identity, corporate branding, corporate reputation, organizational structure, and so on into five categories (figure 3.5). AC²ID stands for actual identity, communicated identity, conceived identity, ideal identity, and desired identity. Authors describe that these five categories of identities are connected and entangled together.
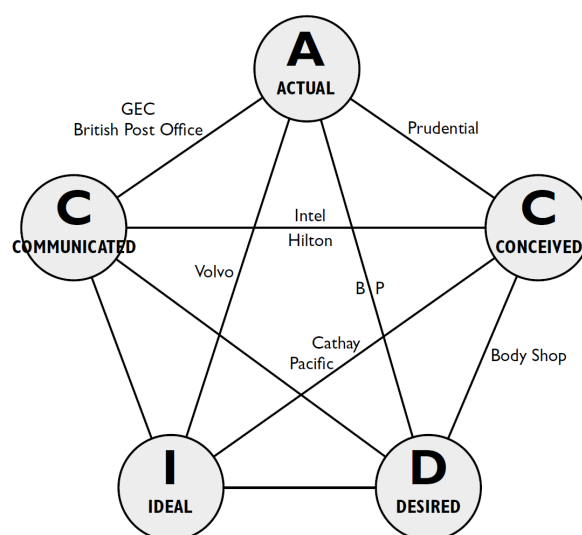

Figure 3.5: The five identities of the AC²ID test (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 74)

1. Actual identity is the organization itself which is not converted to catchy phrase or visual image yet. It is composed of whole current attributes of the organization, such as business activities, positioning in the market, vision, as well as values of leaders and employees. And the most important group for actual identity is employees.

2. Communicated identity is the identity which the organization conveys through communication and expresses who and what the organization is. It is controllable communications such as advertising, sponsorship, and public relations.

3. Conceived identity is the identity which is received and interpreted by stakeholders. It includes overall image and reputation. Conceived identity cannot be controlled by the organization because people percept phenomena differently by their own perspectives.

4. Ideal identity is the "organization's optimum positioning" (Brønn, 2019, p. 43). Ideal identity is based on scientific knowledge, and leaders and owners of the organization often decide it. This identity could be changed by shifts in public opinions. For example, it was not recognized as a problem to mock at immigrants who have foreign accent in a tv program a year ago, but it might be controversial in 2020.

5. Desired identity is the identity which the leaders of the organization wish how the organization appears in the market and public. Desired identity is an ego of the leaders, and sometimes it mismatches between actual identities.

Balmer and Greyser explain perils of misaligned identities with examples in their article (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, pp. 78-84). The examples describe that the five identities, actual, communicated, conceived, ideal and desired identity, need a good balance to keep an organization healthy. If the five identities have an unbalanced status, the organization might face peril to its business. Thus, the five identities need to be maintained through organizational activities.

3.2 Image

There are many definitions of image. As Grunig (1993a, p. 124) writes, "image has almost as many meanings as the number of people who use it." Brønn (2019, p. 14) defines

image as "immediate impression which stakeholders get to an organization, which in turn forms the basis of reputation." For example, if a person gets a good service at a hotel, the person will get a positive impression of the hotel. Contrarily, if a person gets a bad experience at a restaurant, the person will get a negative impression of the restaurant. Those impressions and experiences are converted to images with the person's feelings. Then, these images based on impressions and experiences impact on the person's latter behaviors.

Brønn's definition and explanation of image looks like a hybrid of what Grunig points out (Grunig, 1993a). From an artistic concept of view, image is given by a sender such as communicator to receivers such as stakeholders. Differently, from a perspective in psychology, image is something which receivers construct through their personal observations and are influenced by other people (Grunig, 1993a, p. 126). It means that people in an organization (sender) convey information and identities to its stakeholders (receivers) by trying to control how it impacts on the stakeholders. And of course, they try to make a good impression on their organization. However, ironically, senders cannot control the image at all since the conceived images "vary from person to person because people are different" (Brønn, 2019, p. 67). From this point, it is important that the gap between the images which the sender really means and the receiver conceived should be as small as possible

3.3 Reputation

As identities and images, there are many definitions of reputation. Brønn mentions that a research found out that there are 49 definitions, and the definitions vary in accordance with academic fields such as psychology, economy, marketing, sociology, and so on (Brønn, 2019, p. 80). In a previous section, I referred to Brønn's definition of image that image forms the basis of reputation. In this way, reputation is led by image. A reputation of an organization "is the way in which its stakeholders assess its goodness or badness" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 21). If a person experienced a good service at a store, the person gets a positive impression of the store. Because of this positive impression, the person would keep going to the store. Perhaps, the person will talk about the store to his or her friends and family members. Thus, reputation is something which is earned and talked.

In addition, it takes time to earn good reputation, but it is easy to lose. Aula and Mantere explain that people assess an organization with three time-dimensions by past, present and future (Aula & Mantere, 2008, pp. 24-25). First, past is the history of an organization. What the organization have done, how they have treated their stakeholders and the assessment of the organization at that time. Second, present is the current status of the organization. What the organization conveys, how they communicate with their stakeholders, and whether they have any concerns. Third, future is the stakeholders' expectation to the organization. Based on past and present, stakeholders forecast whether the organization keeps doing well in the future. Accordingly, it demands these three pieces with good balance to earn good reputation. If the organization lacks one of the pieces or two, the organization cannot expect a good result. And as these three pieces show, it takes time to earn good reputation. Aula and Mantere also point out that it is challenging for a startup company to get a good reputation because they have to start without any histories (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 25). On the other hand, an organization with long history and good reputation just needs to take care of their present and future.

Reputation as capital

Milton Friedman, an American economist who won a Nobel Prize in economics in 1976 (COLUMBIA 250, n.d.), states that the only one social responsibility of business is to increase its profits (Friedman, 1970). Organizations invest a large amount of their economic resources for earning better reputations than other competitive organizations. It is because people believe that good reputation increases organization's profits. In short, good reputation reduce costs and increase profit.

Aula and Mantere explain how it works (Aula & Mantere, 2008, pp. 48-49). When an organization has a good reputation, they do not need to use a big amount of money on marketing to differentiate themselves from other competitive organizations. The services and products of the organization are already seen better than others in a market. It applies when the organization come into a new market too. The good reputation of the organization can even be taken over to a new market which the organization does not have any experiences. Besides, good reputation

attracts job seekers and existing employees. Simply, people want to work in a good work environment. Nice colleagues, high income, and goodwill. These work conditions and environments are not completely transparent to public. People never know before they really work there. However, people can make a prediction based on the reputation. More applicants apply for a post at an organization if the organization have a better reputation than other organizations. It means the organization gets a possibility to hire competitive human capital who have for example higher education, longer experience, and profitable ideas. Those human capital are going to lead the organization to even better results. From a perspective of employees, when employees enjoy the good reputation of the organization, the loyalty and productivity increase. When it comes to crisis, the employees try to resolve the issues. As such, organization with good reputation can reduce costs of marketing of services and products as well as human resources.

Moreover, an organization with a good reputation attracts investors. If an organization with a good reputation is a publicly traded company, the stock is popular and stable. Even when the organization faces some issues or scandals, the stock could endure. Differently, if the organization has a flimsy reputation, investors do not want to invest in the stocks. The stocks are not as tolerant as the organization enjoying good reputation. In this way, the organization with a good reputation increases profit. That is to say, a good reputation fulfills the Friedman's statement, the only one social responsibility of business is to increase its profits.

Reputation as interpretation

Aula and Mantere underline the importance of storytelling (Aula & Mantere, 2008, pp. 49-59). They advocate that nobody notices the organization if they don't tell anything to public sphere even if they are being good and doing good. For example, there is an old guy who picks up cans and cigarette end on a road in the very early morning before other neighbors wake up. The road is always clean because of him, but if he doesn't tell about his dedication to the community, his neighbors never notice that. From a perspective of virtue in rhetoric, Aristoteles might give the old guy applause. Nonetheless, it doesn't help his reputation at all. And the same goes for an organization. Aula and Mantere explain that there are at least two participators, but the storytelling doesn't go one way from sender to receiver (Aula & Mantere, 2008, pp. 50-51). It is something building up through their interactive communications. The storytelling continues

by concerning the organization's past, present as well as future. From this standpoint, an organization must be interpreted by someone to show their existence. If the organization want to be interpreted, then they must tell their stories. It means that if the stakeholders stop interpreting the organization's story, it is the same as if the organization doesn't exist anymore. So, organizations "are created in stories, and they live and die according to how their stories are kept alive" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 54)

Moreover, the authors point out an important aspect of storytelling. Even if the organization tries to convey their favorable stories to people, the people don't receive and build the stories as organization wishes. Also, the story isn't just built by the organization, but with its stakeholders. The story of the organization is a product by interactive communications between the organization and the stakeholders. In this way, organization cannot control the stories. It means that the organization cannot control the reputation. What they can do is trying to express the stories so that the stakeholders interpret them as the organization wishes.

4.0 Method

As I state in an earlier chapter, the research question of this thesis is to find out whether UiA builds a good reputation through UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport. In the thesis, I research UiA's organization identity, corporate identity, image, and reputation as well as whether UiA communicates right from the perspective of strategic communication. To fulfill the analyses, I have chosen both qualitative interview method and quantitative survey. In this chapter, I show which method I have chosen with which needs. Also, I explain the limitation of materials such as contents of social media for this analysis.

4.1 Qualitative research

According to Anne Ryen (2002, pp. 18-21), qualitative research is to make sense of findings and interpret phenomena from natural data in natural settings. She describes what qualitative research prefer in the research. Qualitative research is forms of pictures and words, not numbers. Qualitative research is not about numbers because numbers are quantitative data. Natural data means observation and unstructured interview. Moreover, qualitative research is not to test hypothesis, but to generate hypothesis. From this standpoint, she advocates that qualitative research is inductive, but quantitative research is deductive (Ryen, 2002, p. 29).

As I state above, I have chosen qualitative interview to fulfill qualitative research as Ryen describes. Through the interviews, I have got some ideas of different hypotheses, and it has been a challenge for me to reform the structure of this thesis. However, as Ryen writes in her book, the findings of my research generate hypothesis, and it confirms this research is an inductive research.

In addition, I got an opportunity to do internship at the communication division in UiA while I was working on this thesis. The internship period was from September 7th to October 16th, and it was conducted as one of the study programs of UiA which had to be done for the master's degree. The communication division is the division which has the responsibility for UiA Lounge. They are also responsible for managing UiA's identities, images, and reputations (UiA, n.d.-c). This internship opportunity gave me a chance to observe the environment and circumstances of the division and the organization in natural settings. I got to know the people

working there, and I was also able to have interviews for this thesis during the internship period. Besides, this experience gave me much deeper understanding of UiA, and that made it easier to analyze the objects.

4.2 Qualitative interview

Ryen categorizes qualitative interview to four paradigms (Ryen, 2002, pp. 60-72). First, naturalism which researchers themselves get access to the subjects' society. It is not just an access to data, but also including physical contact with subjects. In this paradigm, the subjects' words represent truth and reality of the society. One of the advantages of naturalistic approach is that the researcher can build trust and be closer with them. It gives the researcher higher chances to get natural data through interviews.

Second, ethnomethodology focuses on collecting natural data without intervention by researchers. Therefore, in ethnomethodology, researchers prefer using recorders or monitoring camera to observe the subjects without having any impacts by researchers. On the other hand, in naturalistic approach, for example researchers' questions, tones of voices, or how they build the communication with subjects affect outcomes of the interview. Moreover, the analysis in ethnomethodological paradigm focuses on how reality is created by communication between subjects. Thus, researchers need to be excluded from data collection.

Third, emotionalism focuses on feelings of the subjects, while naturalism and ethnomethodology analyze language and linguistic findings. In this paradigm, researchers' response to the subjects are also counted as one of the elements.

Fourth, postmodernism deconstructs texts which were written in the past. The point of postmodernism is the interpretation of which the texts by researchers are just one of the representations. A text by a researcher was written through the researcher's perspective based on his or her own experiences. Thus, the text contains a specific social context. So, the aim of postmodernism is to redefine another truth and find it in the text by deconstruct it.

In this thesis, I have chosen the first paradigm, naturalism because of two reasons. First, the internship period helped me to observe the organization in natural settings. During the internship period, I could get to know the people, work environment, tasks, and routines there

well. Second, naturalism suits the most for analyzing the object of this research. My research question is whether UiA builds a good reputation by UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport. Neither ethnomethodology, emotionalism, nor postmodernism would help the analysis since I don't have the needs to analyze social construction or emotions of the employees in the organization.

4.3 Selection of informants to qualitative interview

Ryen describes how to select informants to the interviews, and she advocates how important the process is (Ryen, 2002, pp. 79-95). "The most important thing is not the number of the interviews, but the information they give" (Ryen, 2002, p. 85). Based on this advice from her book, I have selected informants by considering which organization and division the informants belong to, what roles they have in the division, and what information they might give. My research question is whether UiA builds a good reputation by UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport. Also, sub research questions are "How does UiA try to build a good reputation?" and "How good or bad reputation does UiA have?" To answer these questions, I need to analyze UiA's identities and images. Therefore, it is necessary that the informants are leaders in the organization and working at the communication division. In addition, the focus of analysis is on UiA rather than Kristiansand Airport. Hence, I have chosen more informants from UiA than Kristiansand Airport.

Talking of Kristiansand Airport, the organization which manages Kristiansand Airport is called Avinor, "a wholly-owned state limited company under the Norwegian Ministry of Transport and Communications" (Avinor, n.d.-b). However, there are many other organizations which play different roles at the airport. There are airlines such as KLM, Scandinavian Airlines, Norwegian, Widerøe, and Wizz Air. There are companies which are responsible for ground operations and services, cleaning companies, transportation companies, security companies, and so on. So, Kristiansand Airport is a name of a place, and many different organizations cooperate there. To collect information of Kristiansand Airport, I had an interview with two officers from Avinor at Kristiansand Airport. It is because they have been involved in the lounge project as main personals from the beginning on the airport side.

From the reasons above, I have chosen and had interview with the informants below:

- Hans Kjetil Lysgård, vice principal of UiA

- Thomas Eikeland Fiskå, project leader of UiA Lounge and coordinator at the communication division of UiA

- Sunniva Whittaker, principal of UiA

- Arne Johan Johnsen, airport manager of Avinor

- Ellen Gjerde, leader of business development and administration of Avinor

In addition, I had a few interviews with some employees in UiA who chose not to be revealed their names or roles in this paper. All the interviews were taken place in a period from June to October in 2020.

Interviews were done alongside of an interview guide which I submitted to NSD (Norsk senter for forskningsdata), Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD. n.d.-a) (see attachment 3 in the final pages of this paper). I registered this interview project at NSD and declared that I follow the Norwegian laws and rules by submitting a document about handling of personal information (see attachment 1 and 2). Interviewees have read the document about information of interview and handling of personal information, and they signed the consent before the interviews began. I needed to register my project on NSD and get consent from the interviewees because I wanted to record the conversation on recorders at the interviews. It is mandatory to use Dictaphones for interviews for theses, so I borrowed them at the university. Officers at the university also gave me SD cards every time I borrowed the Dictaphones, and they physically cut them and deleted all the information in the SD cards after I returned the Dictaphones and SD cards.

4.4 Quantitative survey

I have chosen qualitative interview method with the leaders and the employees to analyze the strategic communication of UiA and UiA Lounge. Ryen (2002) criticizes quantitative research again and again in her book. Østbye et al. (2013, pp. 25-26) explain that there are deviations between the reality and the interpretation regardless which observation methods

researchers use when it comes to quantitative research. The conclusion which researchers draw from results of quantitative research depends on how they look at the results. However, qualitative research has been also gotten critiques about validity and reliability of the results. The naturalistic approach which I conducted needs intervenes between the researchers and the subjects. It is because the researchers' attitudes, reactions, and relationships to the subjects have impacts at least in some degree even if the researchers try to exclude them. In the paradigm of emotionalism, the vocabularies of the subjects are important elements for analyses. So, what kind of expressions and words the researchers can prize out of the subjects is dependent on the researchers. Besides, it applies to all the paradigms of qualitative research that the analyses are based on researchers' perspectives. Researchers interpret the words and behaviors which the subjects express through the researchers' understandings of the society. So, the outcome could be different if researcher A analyzes the same subjects as researcher B. From this standpoint, validity and reliability of qualitative research are not as sure as mathematics. In this way, it is not necessary to use only qualitative interview method for this thesis.

My interest is not only on what the leaders and the employees in UiA think and take actions along with their communication strategy, but also how the other stakeholders interpret and assess the university and UiA Lounge. As I mentioned in chapter one, a member at the communication division in UiA told that their aim of the lounge project is to enhance the visibility of UiA through UiA Lounge rather than building a good reputation. They had research by their own before and got results that people in southern Norway know about UiA, but UiA is not known well in other regions in Norway (H. K. Lysgård, personal communication, June 17, 2020; S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020). Therefore, one of the most main targets of UiA Lounge is the stakeholders who do not know about UiA, who are from or live in other regions in Norway. To reach those demographics, I need some networks from other regions despite of southern Norway. However, unfortunately it seemed unrealistic to find right informants for me. Therefore, I decided to conduct a paper-based survey to random people at the lounge.

For the two reasons above, I decided to combine qualitative interview and quantitative survey in this thesis. The survey was conducted in the domestic terminal at Kristiansand Airport

from July to August in 2020. I applied for visitor's cards at Avinor to take the survey and got allowance for access to the terminal. The survey was conducted by author by handing out questionnaires with 15 questions about images and reputation of UiA and Kristiansand Airport, and impressions of UiA Lounge. Subjects answered the questions by crossing squares in the questionnaires. The survey neither contained any questions which have possibilities to identify personal information, nor had marked anything to identify personal information on the questionnaires. I handed out the questionnaires only to the people who were sitting in the lounge area for more than 15 minutes. It was because some of the questions were about impressions of UiA Lounge, so I needed to be sure that the people have already experienced the lounge area. Besides, the first question of the survey was about which demographic the subjects belong to along with the locations of the organizations. However, I did not ask about their gender by considering controversies surrounding genders. Also, it is not relevant for this research.

4.5 Impact of Covid-19 situation on the thesis

During the period I had conducted the survey was under the so called Covid-19 situation all over the world. Covid-19 "is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus" (World Health Organization, n.d.). Vaccine against Covid-19 has not been ready as of November 2020, and the virus have already taken 1.3 million lives in the whole world (World Health Organization, 2020). Norway has been affected by Covid-19 since March 2020. Schools and businesses which need to have close physical contacts between other people were temporarily shut down by Norwegian state on March 12th (Statsministerens kontor Helse- og omsorgsdepartementet, 2020). Because of this abnormal situation, the number of passengers at Kristiansand Airport in September 2020 dropped around 70% compared with the same month of last year (Olsen & Sellevold, 2020).

The Covid-19 situation was also very visible at the airport. There were very few passengers in the terminal, and the terminal was stably quiet even if it was in the middle of summer vacation season (see figure 4.1). However, my understanding is that the situation did not have any impacts on the results of the survey neither positively nor negatively. The questions of the survey were about reputations of UiA and Kristiansand Airport, and there were not any

questions related to Covid-19. To mention one negative impact by Covid-19, it took me longer time to collect answers than I imagined. I went to the airport three or four times per week, and I needed to stay in the terminal for three to four hours per day. Besides, the demographic of the respondents would be different. If it was a regular summer vacation, there might be more passengers who live in Kristiansand area traveling to, for example Oslo to transit to other plains.

Figure 4.1: Empty Kristiansand Airport, taken by the author on August 13, 2020

4.6 Limitation of research materials

According to Brønn (2019, pp. 35-37), corporate identity is a comprehensive communication what an organization expresses itself to its stakeholders. Also, Zerfass et al. write that all the communication is purposive in the term of strategic communication (2018, p. 493). From this point of view, all the communications should be analyzed. On the other hand, it is not realistic when the research objects and the organization cover a wide range of topics and activities. My research question is whether UiA builds a good reputation by UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport. So, the main research object is communication by UiA. Since UiA is a

university, there is a wide variety of study fields. The employees cooperate with other researchers at other universities and faculties or divisions, and sometimes they cooperate with students and work with a variety of projects. Thus, the communications by UiA members appear on TV, in newspaper and social media, at conference and workshop, as well as word-of-mouth level personal communication with neighbors.

I have faced these complexities of the organization and organizational activities from the beginning of the research, and I have chosen not to analyze all the contents on social media, all the articles in newspapers and on UiA's website, or all the activities by members of UiA because of following two reasons. First, it is almost impossible to track all the activities and communications by UiA. Second, it is not relevant for my research to pick up all the communications to analyze identities, images, and reputation. Because first of all, my goal of this thesis is to find out whether UiA builds a good reputation UiA Lounge.

5.0 Analysis

This chapter is composed of three subchapters. Subchapter 5.1 is an analysis of identities of UiA. In the first subchapter, I explain strategies of UiA because it is a key of UiA's identities and communications. Next, I explain the relation between the strategy and the lounge project. Then, I analyze the identities of UiA by using the AC^2ID test. In subchapter 5.2, I describe UiA's images by using qualitative interviews and summering up the result of the AC^2ID test. In subchapter 5.3, I analyze the reputation of UiA from the qualitative interviews and the quantitative survey. This chapter answers the sub research questions, "How does UiA try to build a good reputation?" and "How good or bad reputation does UiA have?"

5.1 Identities

5.11 Vision and strategy of UiA

Before going further to analyze identities, I need to explain a strategy of UiA because the strategies and identities of UiA are connected very tightly. UiA is composed of six faculties, Health and Sport Sciences, Humanities and Education, Fine Arts, Social Sciences, Engineering and Science, and School of Business and Law, and one unit for Teacher Education. In addition, there are 12 administration divisions, University Director, and principal under the highest body of UiA, University Board. See figure 4.3 below for organizational structure (UiA, n.d.-f).
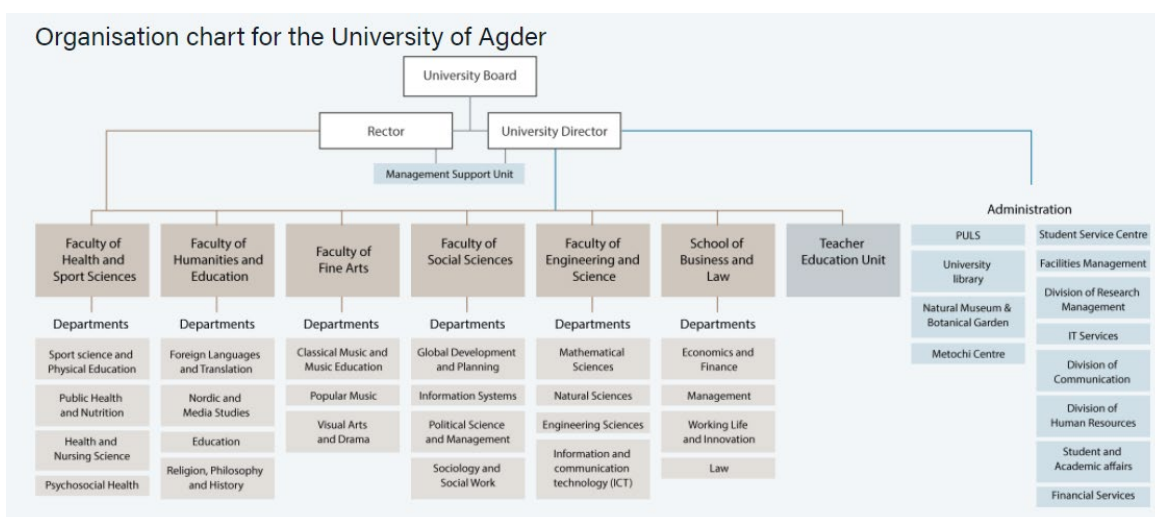

Figure 4.3: Organization chart for UiA (n.d.-f), retrieved from https://www.uia.no/en/about-uia/organisation on October 22, 2020

UiA has a four-year strategy from 2016 to 2020, and they set a vision, "co-creation of knowledge," as a kind of slogan for the strategy (UiA, n.d.-a). One of the interviewees of UiA emphasized that it is co-creation, not cooperation. Co-creation includes a meaning that people work together and make something together. On the other hand, cooperation means just working together. Thus, co-creation has a more creative sense in the word meaning. Here is a question, co-creation with whom? UiA wishes to collaborate with people who have different and new perspectives in other fields. UiA describes what they seek in an explanation of the strategy. "UiA seeks to be an open and inclusive university that is characterized by a culture of collaboration" (UiA, n.d.-b).

Also, as a public university, UiA has an important social responsibility. A university's role in a society is to educate students and make them ready for contributing to the society. For fulfilling the role, the latter part of the vision, *knowledge*, is a keyword. First and foremost, UiA has a responsibility to make students gain knowledge and develop knowledge. They describe the latter part of the vision as, "knowledge is successfully co-created when staff, students and the larger community challenge each other" (UiA, n.d.-b). So, UiA aims to co-create knowledge by working with interdisciplinary approach.

This strategy has been used since 2016, and a new strategy will be ready for 2021. Therefore, members at the communication division and UiA's board members have been discussing the new strategy throughout the year 2020. On June 16th, 2020, UiA's university board adopted a new strategy for the next four years. The face of the new strategy, a new vision is "co-creation of tomorrow's knowledge" (Moen Eskedal & Larsen, 2020). This new strategy is built further based on the former strategy. UiA wants to strengthen the position as a co-creative university from the former strategy and set research as a central theme. And they put *tomorrow* before knowledge in the phrase because they realize it was unclear for what or to whom they aim to co-create the knowledge. Thus, they highlight that they aim to develop "knowledge needed in the future" (Moen Eskedal & Larsen, 2020). However, looking at the former strategy from 2016 to 2020, UiA has already described one of the priority areas as "Learning and Education for the Future" (UiA,n.d.-b). So, the concept, knowledge needed in the future, is not anything new, but UiA wants to highlight it in the new vision of the new strategy for 2021 – 2024.

UiA Lounge was opened on November 1, 2019 at Kristiansand Airport. The lounge was opened during the period of the former strategy, co-creation of knowledge, but UiA plans to rent the area until 2022 from Avinor (Pedersen, 2019). So, the lounge is going to exist in the next years with the updated vision of the new strategy, co-creation of tomorrow's knowledge. According to Hallahan et al. (2007, p. 3), strategic communication "is defined as the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission." Also, Zerfass et al. (2018, p. 493) points out that all the communication by an organization means something even a daily routine task which is not considered as a part of strategic or purposive communication. In the term of strategic communication, UiA Lounge is one of the communications UiA takes to a public sphere. UiA plans the use of the area carefully based on the strategies. Coordinator and designer as well as the project leader of the lounge project at UiA, Fiskå, told that UiA and Avinor at Kristiansand Airport used one year to plan the lounge project (T. Eikeland Fiskå, personal communication, October 5, 2020).

Several interviewees of UiA told a fact that UiA took a survey and knew that UiA is known in the southern Norway, but not in other regions in Norway (H. K. Lysgård, personal communication, June 17, 2020; S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020). Therefore, UiA knew that they needed a place to visualize itself to the people who don't know much about UiA. Apropos, UiA had already two places for advertising the university at Kristiansand Airport before UiA got contact from Avinor at Kristiansand Airport about the lounge project. One place is on a wall outside of the airport (see figure 5.1). The other place is inside of the airport where passengers from domestic flights go through for exiting the airport (see figure 5.2). Thus, UiA Lounge is the third place for UiA to promote itself at Kristiansand Airport, and UiA Lounge is apparently a bigger project than the existing banners.

Figure 5.11: An advertisement of UiA outside of Kristiansand Airport, taken by the author on June 18, 2020.

Figure 5.12: An advertisement of UiA inside of Kristiansand Airport, taken by the author on June 18, 2020.

5.12 UiA's strategy and UiA Lounge

UiA Lounge is divided into two areas. At collaboration area, UiA visualizes collaborations between the university and organizations. At the focus area, UiA provides calm lighting, comfortable desks, and chairs for the passengers who want to work or enjoy their digital devices before boarding. From an interpretative reputation's point of view, UiA Lounge is a right tool to communicate itself with stakeholders. To visualize the organization means that they are telling its story. Aula and Mantere point out that a young organization especially needs to be a good storyteller because the organization doesn't have fruitful stories to legitimate their being (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 25). It makes sense because UiA is a 13-year-old new university compared with other universities which have more than 100 years' history. UiA doesn't have that much collaborations with other organizations or Nobel Prize winners such as Stanford University in USA. A university without fruitful stories or histories would have very fragile position in a market because generally universities stand for pile of researches and high-quality education with scientific facts. To tell its history with examples of collaborations with other organizations makes UiA a good storyteller. Even if it's a few, it's something. Moreover, an organization which doesn't have history from the past needs to tell the future (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 25). By telling UiA's stories, they let stakeholders imagine and dream about what the stakeholders can do in the future with the university. And these communications coincide with UiA's visions of strategies, "co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge" Considering these reasons, UiA Lounge is a right tool, and UiA takes a right path to communicate.

5.13 Analyses of multiple identities of UiA with the AC^{2}ID test

Balmer and Greyser introduced the AC^{2}ID test in the 2000s (Balmer & Greyser, 2002). AC^{2}ID stands for actual identity, communicated identity, conceived identity, ideal identity, and desired identity. By measuring these facets of the organization, managers and leaders can analyze closer whether the organization has any conflicts or problems which need to be solved immediately as well as success and value. Then, I start with the analysis of actual identity.

Actual identity

Actual identity is what and who the organization really is. It is easy to define actual identity if all the members at UiA have the same interpretation to UiA. However, people have different backgrounds and understandings of the world, and they have different tasks even in the same organization. Hence, it is natural that people have different interpretations.

However, I found a very interesting fact through the interviews with members in UiA. All of them said that UiA is a university which is good at cooperating and in some degrees co-creating together beyond borders of divisions and organizations (H. K. Lysgård, personal communication, June 17, 2020; T. Eikeland Fiskå, personal communication, October 5, 2020; S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020). While I did an internship, I got to observe that the work environment at UiA is very good, and people enjoy working there. They are good at having small talks, and it looked like they are willing to work together with other people at other divisions and other organizations as well as colleagues at the same division. I might especially have recognized it because my internship was at communication division. It is unavoidable for people working at communication division to work mutually with other divisions and organizations. Nonetheless, looking at it from the other side, people at other divisions looked like they like to work together with the people at communication division.

Also, being good at cooperating and co-creating are an organizational culture which is continuously formed in the history of UiA. UiA is a young organization as a university compared with other historical universities. So, UiA is a new organization in the specific market. However, a 13-year-old organization is not new as a freshman. Some organizational cultures which make UiA as UiA have been woven and formed for these 13 years. Thus, cooperating and co-creating are the enduring characters of UiA.

Balmer and Greyser explain that some concepts of organizational identity are categorized as actual identity in the AC²ID test (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 77). As I showed in chapter three, Albert and Whetten advocate that there are three criteria, *central character*, *distinctiveness,* and *temporal continuity* for organizational identity (Albert & Whetten, 1985, p. 265). From the interviews above, it turns out that being good at cooperating and co-creating are distinctiveness as well as a character of temporal continuity of UiA. Besides, the character of

UiA as a higher education institution fulfills the last criteria, central character, of organizational identity. A university's main task for a society is to educate students and make them ready for contributing to the society by providing and developing knowledge. There are 10 public universities in Norway today (Kunnskapsdepartementet, n.d.). And UiA is the only university located in southern Norway. There are many college-level private schools, but there is no private university in Norway (NOKUT, n.d.). One of the interviewees of UiA expressed the university as "a big and important social institution in this region." As the interviewee said, UiA fulfills an important role for the region, and it is the central character of UiA.

Considering all the factors above, actual identity of UiA is, first, cooperation and co-creation as its distinctiveness. Second, cooperation and co-creation as the character of temporal continuity. Third, being responsible for the region as a higher education institution as the central character. And these keywords are expressed in the visions of the strategies of UIA, co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge.

Desired identity and charisma problem

According to Balmer and Greyser, desired identity is leaders' vision for the organization (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 75). To analyze desired identity of UiA, I had interviews with a principal of UiA, Sunniva Whittakker and one of the vice principals of UiA, Hans Kjetil Lysgård.

I asked how they desire that UiA appears, and the principal brought up two points (S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020). First, UiA stands out as a research university with high quality research. This is from a context that UiA has its history since 1828, and it was a college with several campuses in the southern region before it was accredited as a university in 2007 (UiA, n.d.-d). The history as a regional college was long, therefore UiA recognizes that the image does not stand out as a university yet. Second, students are well treated. In the new strategy for 2021 – 2024, UiA describes "Our students are active participants in the knowledge community, together with researchers, members of the larger community and the professional sphere" (UiA, n.d.-g). To fulfill the description, for example some faculties have mentors for new students so that the new students feel they are involved in the new environment

and well treated. Moreover, UiA is focusing on involving students in researches through projects and internships so that students get real experiences. A statistic about the percentages of students who finished their undergraduate degrees within three years shows that UiA got the best rate compared with other universities in Norway in 2019 (NSD, n.d.-b). The statistics indicate that UiA follows up the students well. From above, both points are what UiA's new vision of the strategy for 2021 – 2024, co-creation for tomorrow's knowledge, highlights.

The vice principal also brought up two points (H. K. Lysgård, personal communication, June 17, 2020). First, UiA gives a strong trust to a society. This subject sounds similar to the subject which the principal said, but the angle is a little different. UiA is an organization which is doing researches with scientific knowledge. Therefore, it is primarily important that UiA stands out as a trustworthy organization. Second, integrity. To carry out trustworthy research, the way UiA takes steps regarding the researches is important. It is UiA's responsibility to educate students, and students will play roles in a society as human resources with high quality knowledge. These subjects which the vice principal brought up are interpreted as the central character of UiA's actual identity. It means that his perspective of the desired identity coincides with the actual identity. Besides, the former and new strategy are formed based on the actual identity which coincides with his desired identity. In this way, his perspective is reflected in the new strategy.

Balmer and Greyser describe that desired identity "may have more to do with a vision informed by a CEO's personality and ego than with a rational assessment of the organization's actual identity in a particular time frame" (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 75). From this aspect, the leaders of the organization have strong voices and prerogatives which strongly reflect the leaders' personal views. The subjects which the principal and the vice principal told in the interviews are reflected in the new strategy. Then does it mean the new strategy is the leaders' personalities and egos?

I realized that desired identity of UiA would make only a small impact on the organization's identity while researching the principal's social media accounts, such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as analyzing interviews with the principal and the vice principal. UiA has 13,690 students in autumn 2020, 550 administrative staff and 890 academic staff in autumn 2019 (UiA, n.d.-d). Looking at these figures, the size of the organization is quite big. Contrarily, only

548 people follow the principal's official Facebook page (Sunniva Whittaker, rektor ved UiA, n.d.), and 121 followers on Twitter account (Sunniva Whittaker, n.d.). From these numbers, it is clear that stakeholders don't pay much attention to what the principal posts or says to a public audience.

Also, from interviews with the principal and the vice principal, I realized that UiA is not an organization which an authoritarian management works. Wæraas and Byrkjeflot (2012, pp. 196-197) call it the charisma problem of reputation management in public organizations. Authors advocate that especially in public organization, leaders cannot build emotional appeal or "have the autonomy to 'speak freely' or otherwise act independently of the political level" (Wæraas & Byrkjeflot, 2012, p. 193). Fombrun and van Riel advocate that "strong reputations result when companies build emotional appeal" (Fombrun & van Riel, 2004, p. 95). By this means, the more emotional the leader becomes, the stronger the organization's reputation becomes. However, apparently, UiA is not an organization which is built on emotional appeals. Generally, universities are not built by leaders who speak out what they feel, like Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla and Space X, or Donald Trump, the 45th president of USA. Universities have trusts because they are built on scientific evidence.

From these discussions above, desired identity does not have a strong poisition in UiA. . At the same time, the points which the principal and the vice principal brought up in the interviews are neither personality nor ego. And it should be evaluated positively that the desired identities link the strategies of UiA. It leads to the fact that actual identity and desired identity are linked.

Communicated identity

Communicated identity is the most controllable corporate communication (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 74). And the concept of corporate identity can be also interpreted as communicated identity in some degree (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 76). That is to say, communicated identity is what and who the organization says it is (Brønn, 2019, p. 35). On UiA's webpage, we cannot find the word, "who we are" or "our identity" which many organizations often use when they explain themselves. Instead, UiA shows a vision, co-creation of knowledge (see figure 5.13 below).
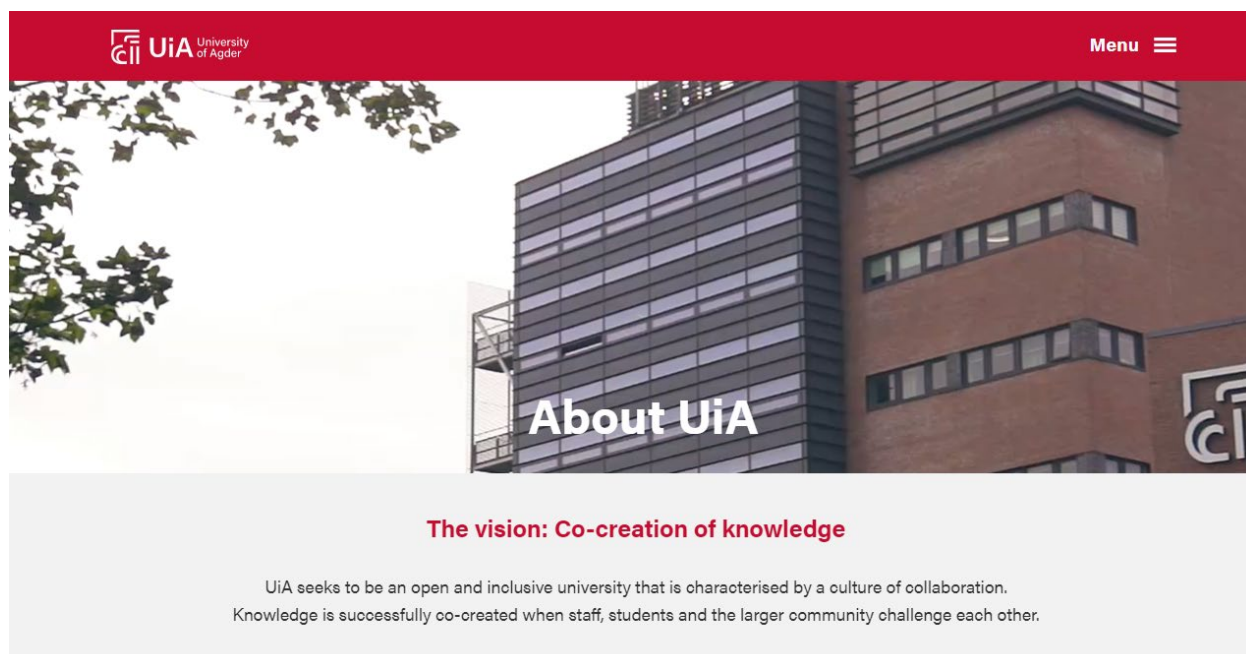
Figure 5.13: Screen shot of UiA's webpage, About UiA, retrieved from
https://www.uia.no/en/about-uia on November 6, 2020.

The word vision doesn't directly mean who the organization is. Cambridge Dictionary defines it as "an idea or mental image of something," "an experience in which you see things that do not exist physically, when your mind is affected powerfully by something such as deep religious thought or drugs or mental illness," and "the ability to imagine how a country, society, industry, etc. could develop in the future and to plan for this" (Cambridge Disctionary, n.d.). From these explanations, vision on the webpage of UiA is something UiA aims for by looking ahead to the future. This interpretation gives an impression that UiA does not achieve the aim yet, but they are currently working on it.

Differently, the interviews brought out that UiA uses vision as actual identity and communicated identity. According to the principal, "vision and identity (identities) are connected" (S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020). Thus, vision can be interpreted as who and what UiA aims for, and who and what UiA says it is (= communicated

identity). Therefore, it turns out that vision, communicated identity, actual identity, and desired identity are linked together.

- Communicated identity: Visual identity

In chapter three, I explained that visual identity is a part of corporate identity. Also, visual identity is one of the communicated identities in the term of the AC^{2}ID test (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 78). UiA itself has grown since the colleges were merged in 2007, and the visual expressions became fragmented (Universitetet i Agder, 2019). From the standpoint of strategic communication, fragmented brand images are not desirable for an organization. The communication would be complicated and difficult to send the concise and right message so that the receivers interpret as the organization wishes.

To communicate a great diversity and unify the visual images of UiA, UiA launched a new logo in 2018 (UiA, n.d.-e). The new logo is used in every communication where UiA is the sender. The new logo (see figure 5.14) was formed by the old logo (see figure 5.15). The new logo became minimalistic and iconic. Besides, the new logo expresses less authoritarian image than the old logo. It gives stakeholders a friendly impression of the organization. UiA is not top-down but flat, and they involve the students. The red color is from the old logo, although there is no information on the webpage why they chose the red color when they first launched the old logo in 2007. Generally, a long history of an organization is valuable from the perspective of reputation (Aula & Mantere, 2008, pp. 24-25). UiA has a shorter history than other older universities, and UiA is still in a phase where it needs to enhance its identity. "– We take care of our history, even if we renew ourselves, says Fiskå" (Moen Eskedal & Larsen, 2020). "People change; identity continues" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 57). So, the red color of the new logo includes a meaning that they take over their identities.

The left lower motif expresses Agder's wave. Agder, the region, is located on the North Sea, and both campuses in Kristiansand and Grismstad have good access to local beaches. The right part of the logo expresses pillar of knowledge. To contribute to the Norwegian and global society by educating students with high quality knowledge is the reason of the organization's existence in the region. So, "Agder's wave meets the pillar of knowledge" (Universitetet i Agder,

2019). Also, the new logo is easier to connect with other projects and names. For example, UiA Lounge or UiA Alumni. By this means, UiA's new logo expresses the visions of the strategies, co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge.

      In an earlier subchapter about actual identity, I discussed that cooperation, co-creation, and knowledge are the keywords of UiA's actual identity. UiA describes their new logo that "the new visual identity communicates what UiA is about" (UiA, n.d.-e). In this manner, again, UiA's actual identity, desired identity and communicated identity are linked.

Figure 5.14: The new logo of UiA, retrieved from https://www.uia.no/en/about-uia/new-visual-identity-for-the-university-of-agder-uia, November 12, 2020.

Figure 5.15: The old logo of UiA, retrieved from https://www.uia.no/en/about-uia/new-visual-identity-for-the-university-of-agder-uia, November 12, 2020.

Ideal identity

"Ideal identity is the primum positioning of the organization in its market in a given time frame" (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 74). This type of identity is based on research and analysis by strategic planners. In UiA, the communication division plays the role for researching and discussing, and they are responsible for formulating the strategy of the organization. However, UiA's new strategy for 2021 – 2024 was not formulated only by the communication division. "The development of the new strategy has been made through an open and involving process. The strategy draft was sent for external and internal consultation and the board has followed the process closely" (UiA, n.d.-h). Moreover, during my internship period, they were having workshops for a week for working on further action plans and action points based on the adopted new strategy. This process was open and included the leaders of UiA, the employees at the communication division, and also voluntarily participators although they needed to register themselves for participation the workshops beforehand.

For these reasons, the new strategy of UiA is the ideal identity of UiA which is analyzed and formulated by many actors for a given time frame, from 2021 to 2024. In addition, the

strategy is on UiA's website which everyone has access to. In this way, it can be also said that the ideal identity is UiA's communicated identity.

Conceived identity

Conceived identity is perceptions of the organization which includes overall images and reputation of the organization (Balmer & Greyser, 2002, p. 74). Hereby, I analyze the conceived identity of UiA by an interview with the principal and results of the quantitative survey taken at Kristiansand Airport.

The current principal, Whittaker was elected to the principal of UiA in February 2019 (Olsen, 2019). Before starting her career at UiA, she was working at another organization in another region in Norway. She told that when she was considering applying for the job at UiA, she had an impression that people at UiA are good at cooperating and co-creating with other divisions and organizations (S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020). And after being elected to a principal, she has still the same impression. Her perception of UiA leads to a fact that UiA communicates as it really is. Moreover, the communicated identify and the conceived identity have little gap. Thus, the conceived identity of UiA is interpreted also as the actual identity, communicated identity, and ideal identity.

- Conceived Identity: results of images from the survey

The survey at UiA Lounge was taken from July to August in 2020. I asked everyone who looked like they were more than 18 years old and sat at the lounge area for more than 15 minutes to participate in the survey. The reason why I waited for at least 15 minutes before I approached them was that I wanted them to experience the lounge and get some impressions on the lounge, the university, and the airport. The survey is composed of 15 questions, and I handed the questionnaires one by one. During the period I took the survey, there were only one or two flights per hour. The people spread and sat everywhere in the terminal as they could have minimum one-meter distance between each other because of the Covid-19 situation. 159 respondents participated in the survey, and I didn't mark anything on questionnaires to identify who answered what.

The first question was about occupation to see the demographic of the respondents. Table 5.1 shows the answers of respondents. The right column shows the percentages of the answers of the respondents. The calculation is: respondents/159 times 100. The numbers are rounded to the nearest hundredth. One thing I regret here is that I gave them the alternative, "others/do not want to answer." Looking at table 5.1, 18.2% of the respondents chose "others/do not want to answer," and it is not very helpful to analyze the results by the demographic.

	Number of respondents	%
Student	40	25.2
Employee at university	7	4.4
Employee/employer in Agder	33	20.8
Employee/employer in another region	46	29.0
Retiree	4	2.5
Others/do not want to answer	29	18.2

Table 5.1: Demographic of the respondents

Question 2.1 asked whether they have good images of UiA. The respondents got to choose an alternative from "strongly disagree," "disagree," "neither agree nor disagree," "agree" or "strongly agree." Table 5.2 below shows the result categorized by alternative which respondents chose in question 1. The third column from the left shows the percentages of the answers divided by the number of respondents. What the result shows is that 66.6% of the respondents have good images of UiA. Only 5.7% have negative images of UiA, and 27.7% of the respondents have neither positive nor negative images.

Do you have a good image of UiA?	Respondents	% of whole	Student	Employee at university	Employee/ employer in Agder	Employee/ employer in another region	Retiree	Others/do not want to answer
Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	9	5.7	3	1	2	1	1	1
Neither agree nor disagree	44	27.7	8	1	7	18	1	9
Agree	84	52.8	23	4	19	22	2	14
Strongly agree	22	13.8	6	1	6	4	0	5

Table 5.2: Result of question 2.1 (Do you have a good image of UiA?) categorized by the result of question 1 (What is your occupation?)

Since the survey was taken at Kristiansand Airport in the summer 2020, there were many tourists who enjoyed their summer vacations from other parts of Norway. The destinations from Kristiansand Airport in the period I took the survey was, to Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Harstad/Narvik, and Bodø. Also, Covid-19 brought about a positive impact on the Kristiansand city. People could not travel outside of Norway because borders between other countries were closed, or not permitted to travel abroad without keeping themselves in quarantine for many days after traveling beyond national boundaries. Therefore, domestic trips became very popular, and Kristiansand was one of the most popular places among Norwegian tourists. In July 2020, hotels in Kristiansand have had an increase of 14% compared with the last year (Hole, 2020).

Regarding table 5.2, 15.1% of the respondents who chose "neither agree nor disagree" in question 2.1 are the members of organizations of other regions. Several interviewees of UiA from the qualitative interview research told that UiA is known in Agder, but not in other regions in Norway (H. K. Lysgård, personal communication, June 17, 2020; S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020). As it confirms their information, some of the respondents who chose "neither agree nor disagree" wrote, "Don't know anything about UiA," "Little knowledge to UiA," and "I know nothing about UiA" on the questionnaires.

However, from the results of question 2.1, there is not any specific tendencies related to the demographic. For the reason of little tendency, there might be two factors. First, I didn't ask which region they live in, or where they are from. Second, 18.2% of the respondents did not want to answer which demographic they belong to. Thus, I realized that which alternative the

respondents chose in 2.1 is a key for analyzing the images and reputation of UiA although the demographic does not quite contribute to the research. Question 2.2 asked how the respondents get the good or bad images of UiA. Table 5.3 shows the results of question 2.2 categorized by the alternatives which the respondents chose in question 2.1.

What is the reason for your evaluation in 2.1?	Respondents	% of whole	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Based on personal experiences	43	27.0	9	22	5	7	0
Heard of it from acquaintances (family members, friends and colleagues etc.)	70	44.0	10	49	10	1	0
Heard of it in the media	17	10.7	2	10	4	1	0
Unsure	21	13.2	1	4	16	0	0
Other reasons	15	9.4	0	2	12	1	0

Table 5.3: Result of question 2.2 (What is the reason for your evaluation in 2.1?) categorized by the result of question 2.1 (Do you have a good image of UiA?)

Looking at table 5.3, the respondents who have personal experiences with UiA tend to choose "strongly agree" or "disagree" in the previous question, "Do you have a good image of UiA?" in higher probability. 40.9% of the respondents who chose "strongly agree" and 77.8% of the respondents who chose "disagree" in question 2.1 chose "based on personal experiences" in question 2.2. Next, looking at the respondents who chose "neither agree nor disagree" in 2.1, 11.4% chose "based on personal experiences," and 36.4% chose "unsure." Compared with the respondents who chose "strongly agree" or "disagree" in question 2.1, the unsureness increases. That is to say, the respondents who have personal experiences tend to have surer images of UiA. Besides, it indicates that personal experience is a stronger factor than rumor by acquaintances or media when it comes to a sureness of an organization.

Also, 27.3% of the respondents who chose "neither agree nor disagree" in question 2.1 chose "other reasons" in question 2.2, and the percentage is higher than other groups. Several respondents who don't know about UiA wrote that they had not had any information to rate UiA's images. When it comes to an alternative, "heard of it from acquaintances," the result indicates that the factor is not strong enough to choose "disagree" to good images of UiA, but strong enough to choose "strongly agree" or "agree."

From these results, three findings came out. 66.6% of the respondents have good images of UiA. People tend to have surer images of UiA when they have personal experiences related to the organization. Besides, the demographic of the respondents doesn't have clear impacts on preference of images.

- Conceived Identity: results of reputation from the survey

According to Aula and Mantere, reputation is interpretation as well as capital (Aula & Mantere, 2008, pp. 49-59). An organization is kept alive in the stories which are created and interpreted by stakeholders. If the stakeholders stop telling the organization's story to other stakeholders, the organization would not be interpreted anymore even if the organization still exists. Therefore, to see the reputation of UiA, question 3.1 asked whether the respondents want to recommend UiA to someone whom they know well. Table 5.4 shows the result of question 3.1. 58.5% of the respondents chose "strongly agree" or "agree," and only 2.6% chose "disagree" or "strongly disagree." Besides, there is a clear tendency. The degrees of preferences of UiA's image give related grades to the reputation. The respondents who have good images of UiA tend to choose "strongly agree" or "agree." The respondents who chose "neither agree nor disagree" for UiA's images tend to choose "neither agree nor disagree" also in question 3.1. And the respondents who have bad images of UiA are unsure about whether they want to recommend, or they chose not to recommend UiA.

Do you want to recommend UiA to someone whom you know well?	Respondents	% of whole	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Strongly disagree	2	1.3	1	0	0	1	0
Disagree	2	1.3	0	0	1	1	0
Neither agree nor disagree	62	39.0	0	20	38	4	0
Agree	70	44.0	10	52	5	3	0
Strongly agree	23	14.5	11	12	0	0	0

Table 5.4: Result of question 3.1 (Do you want to recommend UiA to someone whom you know well?) categorized by the result of question 2.1 (Do you have a good image of UiA?)

Hence, the degrees of preferences of images to UiA affects their behaviors. If the stakeholders have good images of the organization, they are willing to talk about the organization. If not, they do not use their time on the organization. According to Brønn, image is "immediate impression which stakeholders get to an organization, which in turn forms the basis of reputation" (Brønn, 2019, p. 14). And the result of the survey confirms Brønn's definition of image.

5.14 Summary of the analyses of multiple identities

As a result of the analyses of multiple identities of UiA with the AC^2ID test, it turned out that actual identity, desired identity, communicated identity, ideal identity, and conceived identity of UiA are linked. Besides, 66.6% of the respondents of the survey have good images to UiA, and 58.5% of the respondents want to recommend UiA to others. Considering the AC^2ID test by Balmer and Greyser, I conclude that UiA has transparent and balanced identities. However, it is a current analysis of the organization. Moreover, I didn't analyze all the communicated identities such as social media or articles on mass media. The condition of the organization would alter day by day and year by year in the history of the organization. Thus, it is necessary for the leaders and the employees in UiA to evaluate, measure, and maintain the identities continuously to keep the balance between identities.

In chapter two, I introduced earlier researches by Wæraas (2008), Wæraas and Solbakk (2008), and Antorini and Schultz (2005). They advocate that finding and defining one identity for a public university might be difficult because this type of organizations includes a great complexity. Therefore, they often fall into the conformity trap by trying to formulate one identity. The visions of the strategies of UiA, co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge, sounds very general which can also fit into other universities. All the universities stand for knowledge which are based on co-creation and cooperation with other researchers and earlier researches. However, looking at the findings from the analyses of the AC^2ID test, the concept of the conformity trap does not fit for UiA. The vision of the strategy expresses who UiA is, and the multiple identities are balanced. Moreover, co-creation is UiA's distinctiveness and temporal continuity, and knowledge is the central character. That is to say, co-creation of (tomorrow's)

knowledge meets the criteria of the identity. In this manner, UiA differentiates itself from other universities. It seems like a general identity, but it is who UiA is.

5.2. Image

From the qualitative interviews with the leaders and the employees in UiA, it turned out that UiA actually expresses to itself who UiA is. In chapter three, I explained that the gap between the images which the organization really means and the stakeholders conceived should be as small as possible. Considering the analysis of conceived identity in the AC^2ID test, UiA has a transparent image.

In the earlier sub chapter of conceived identity, I showed the result of the preference of UiA's images at UiA Lounge in table 5.2. In the survey, 66.6% of the respondents answered that they have good images to UiA. The leaders and the employees of UiA are also one of the stakeholders. They perceive images of UiA through their everyday tasks and other stakeholders. Therefore, the members of UiA have the most fruitful resources to form the images of their own organization. I asked in the interviews whether they have good images of UiA. And all of them answered "yes." During my internship, I could observe the environment of the organization, and I could also perceive the members' positive images to UiA. These facts and observation indicate that UiA has overall good images by stakeholders including the employees.

One of the interviewees, Fiskå, pointed out that UiA looks a little messy because of the characteristics of the university which has a wide filed of research (personal communication, October 5, 2020). Looking at UiA's Norwegian Facebook account, they publish a wide range of articles and information (Universitetet i Agder, n.d.). Wæraas and Solbakk advocate that "a university may be too complex to be encapsulated by one brand or identity definition" (Wæraas & Solbakk, 2008, p. 449). From this aspect, it is natural that UiA looks like they have many projects, and it demands some efforts to unite the images together. Besides, people interpret information differently based on their backgrounds and perspectives. Therefore, it is natural that they get different images to UiA through different aspects. Here, UiA's new logo plays a part in unifying the images of UiA. Under the visions of the strategies, co-created knowledges are

gathered under one brand, UiA. However, it requires further research focusing on the logo to find whether the new logo contributes to forming a holistic image of UiA.

5.3 Reputation

I confirm that images of the organization are the basis of people's behaviors to the organization from the results of the survey in question 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3. The results show that 58.5% of the respondents answered they would like to recommend UiA to someone whom they know well. Only 2.6% of the respondents answered they would not like to recommend UiA. Thus, in the interpretive term of organizational reputation, UiA has a good reputation by the stakeholders. However, the demographic of the respondents is not composed of only members of UiA, but also including students, workers, and retirees who are living in and/or are from Agder and other regions. Aula and Mantere write that interest of reputation "is often focused specifically on the external stakeholders of organization. In terms of reputation, however, an organization's most important stakeholder is its own personnel" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 144) From this aspect, reputation by the members of UiA is the most important.

The reputation of an organization "is the way in which its stakeholders assess its goodness or badness" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 21). It became clear through the interviews that all the interviewees of UiA have good images to the university (H. K. Lysgård, personal communication, June 17, 2020; T. Eikeland Fiskå, personal communication, October 5, 2020; S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020;). I asked also whether they want to recommend UiA, and all of them answered "yes" if UiA is relevant for their acquaintances. From the interpretative view of reputation, it is positive for the organization that the members in the organization would like to talk about its own organization. An organization is "created in stories, and they live and die according to how their stories are kept alive" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 54). When the members in the organization talk about the organization positively, then the positive stories float around, and other stakeholders interpret the organization positively. From these aspects, the reputation of UiA is good.

Furthermore, from the capital view of reputation, the positive stories attract competitive prospective students who have motivation to complete the studies, human capital who are going to make the organization more attractive, researchers who publish valuable researches, and other

organizations who consider collaborating with UiA. It is important to note that UiA cannot control how people interpret and tell the stories to others. Some of the stakeholders would talk negatively about UiA. However, fortunately, the results of the survey tell that most of the respondents have experienced and heard of the organization positively.

I summarize the analyses of identities, images, and reputation by saying that UiA has transparent identities, overall good images, and a good reputation at the moment. However, the members at UiA realize that the university does not communicate good enough to outstand better than other competitors. Aula and Mantere write strategic reputation management is "being good, doing good, looking good" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 9) UiA is being good and doing good. Also looking good for some stakeholders, but they need to communicate better so that other stakeholders such as the people in other regions and other countries conceive UiA as an outstanding higher education institution which co-creates tomorrow's knowledge. This is the reason why they formulated the visions, co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge. And this is the reason why they opened UiA Lounge. I hereby answered the sub research questions. "How does UiA try to build a good reputation?" and "How good or bad reputation does UiA have by stakeholders?"

In the following last chapter, I analyze whether UiA builds a good reputation through UiA Lounge.

6.0 Impact of UiA Lounge on images of UiA

I analyzed identities, images, and reputation of UiA, I also answered the sub research questions, "How does UiA try to build a good reputation?" and "How good or bad reputation does UiA have?" in the previous chapter. This is the last chapter of this thesis, and I analyze the relativity between UiA Lounge, UiA, and Kristiansand Airport to answer the research question, "Does UiA build a good reputation UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport?" First, I show the results of the survey to look at whether Kristiansand Airport has good images and a good reputation as the character of interpretation by the users at the airport. Second, I analyze whether UiA Lounge makes any impacts on the images of UiA.

6.1 Images of Kristiansand Airport from the survey

In question 6.1 of the survey, I asked whether the respondents have good images of Kristiansand Airport. Respondents chose an alternative from "strongly disagree," "disagree," "neither agree nor agree," "agree" or "strongly agree." Table 6.1 shows the results of question 6.1 categorized by the demographic which the respondents chose in question 1.

Do you have a good image of Kristiansand Airport?	Respondents	% of whole	Student	Employee at university	Employee/ employer in Agder	Employee/ employer in another region	Retiree	Others/do not want to answer
Strongly disagree	2	1.3	0	0	0	2	0	0
Disagree	13	8.2	3	0	1	8	0	1
Neither agree nor disagree	28	17.6	9	0	6	6	1	6
Agree	96	60.4	24	7	21	24	2	18
Strongly agree	15	9.4	4	0	4	3	1	3

Table 6.1: Result of question 6.1 (Do you have a good image of Kristiansand Airport?) categorized by the result of question 1 (What is your occupation?)

The result shows 69.8% of the respondents have good images to Kristiansand Airport, and only 9.5% have bad images. More respondents who work in other regions have worse images of the airport than the respondents working in Agder. However, same as the result of the images to UiA, the result includes many respondents who chose "others/do not want to answer." And I asked neither where they live, nor which region they are from. Therefore, the demographic

is not helpful for the research as with the results of questions about images and reputation of UiA.

What is the reason for your evaluation in 6.1?	Responde nts	% of whole	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Based on personal experiences	141	88.7	15	93	19	12	2
Heard of it from acquaintances (family members, friends and colleagues etc.)	2	1.3	0	0	2	0	0
Heard of it in the media	1	0.6	0	1	0	0	0
Unsure	7	4.4	0	1	6	0	0
Other reasosns	7	4.4	0	3	3	1	0

Table 6.2: Result of question 6.2 (What is the reason for your evaluation in 6.1?) categorized by the result of question 6.1 (Do you have a good image of Kristiansand Airport?)

In question 6.2, I asked how they got the images of Kristiansand Airport. Table 6.2 shows the result of question 6.2 categorized by the result of question 6.1. 100% of the respondents who chose "strongly agree" or "strongly disagree" chose "based on personal experiences" in question 6.2. On the other hand, 21.4% of the respondents who chose "neither agree nor disagree" in question 6.1 chose "unsure" in question 6.2, and the percentage is the highest among the groups. Thus, the respondents who have personal experiences tend to have surer images of Kristiansand Airport. It is the same tendency as the images of UiA, and the result confirms that personal experiences related to the organization give surer images of the organization.

6.2 Reputation of Kristiansand Airport from the survey

In question 7.1, I asked if the respondents want to recommend Kristiansand Airport to someone whom they know well. Table 6.3 shows the result of question 7.1. 67.3% of all the respondents answered they would like to recommend Kristiansand Airport. Besides, 100% of the respondents who chose "strongly agree", and 84.4% of the respondents who chose "agree" in question 6.1 also answered "strongly agree" or "agree." On the other hand, 38.5% of the respondents who chose "disagree," and 100% of the respondents who chose "strongly disagree"

in question 6.1 chose not to recommend Kristiansand Airport. Moreover, 67.9% of the respondents who chose "neither agree nor disagree" in question 6.1 chose "neither agree nor disagree", and it is the highest percentage compared with other groups.

The results of question 6.1 and 6.2 confirm again that image is "immediate impression which stakeholders get to an organization, which in turn forms the basis of reputation" (Brønn, 2019, p. 14). The respondents who have good images of Kristiansand Airport tend to be willing to recommend the airport, while the respondents who have uncertain images of the airport are unsure whether they would like to recommend the airport.

Do you want to recommend Kristiansand Airport to others whom you know well?	Responde nts	% of whole	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Strongly disagree	1	0.6	0	0	0	0	1
Disagree	7	4.4	0	0	1	5	1
Neither agree nor disagree	39	24.5	0	15	19	5	0
Agree	81	50.9	2	69	7	3	0
Strongly agree	26	16.4	13	12	1	0	0

Table 6.3: Result of question 7.1 (Do you want to recommend Kristiansand Airport to others whom you know well?) categorized by the result of question 6.1 (Do you have a good image of Kristiansand Airport?)

The survey shows that more than 65% of the respondents have good images of both UiA and Kristiansand Airport. However, compared to the table 5.2 and 5.4 in chapter five, and table 6.2 and 6.3, Kristiansand Airport got better results than UiA. 3.2% more respondents answered that they have good images of Kristiansand Airport, and 8.8% more respondents answered that they want to recommend Kristiansand Airport. The reason of the results is that some respondents from other regions had not had any contacts with UiA before experiencing UiA Lounge, so they did not have any ideas to answer positively about UiA's images and reputation. Even after the respondents got to experience UiA Lounge, the main body of UiA is located at the campuses. In this way, the respondents didn't really "experience" UiA at UiA Lounge. Contrarily, Kristiansand Airport is the place where all the respondents stayed and experienced at the

moment. UiA Lounge is sponsored by the university, but the lounge is a part of the airport. What they really experienced is the main body of the airport.

To summarize the findings from the survey so far, people tend to have surer images to the organization when they have personal experiences related to the organization. In question 2.2, 27.0% of the respondents chose "based on personal experiences" while 88.7% of the respondents chose it in question 6.2. It points out that 61.7% more respondents answered that they have personal experiences with Kristiansand Airport. From this point of view, the respondents had surer images of Kristiansand Airport than UiA. And it led to the results of question 3.1 and 7.1 which asked whether they want to recommend UiA and Kristiansand Airport from the perspective of interpretative character of reputation.

6.3 Impression of UiA Lounge from the survey

In question 4, I asked if the respondents liked UiA Lounge. Table 6.4 shows the result of question 4 categorized by the result of question 2.1, "Do you have a good image of UiA?" and table 6.5 shows the result of question 4 categorized by the result of question 6.1, "Do you have a good image of Kristiansand Airport?"

First of all, the respondents had already good impressions of UiA Lounge when they looked for places in the terminal. I waited for at least 15 minutes before handing out the questionnaires to them, because I wanted them to experience the lounge area and get some impressions. There were some people who left the area maybe because it was uncomfortable for them. During the survey period, Fine Arts faculty of UiA had an exhibition to show a collaboration with Kilden, the local concert hall in Kristiansand. There were mannequins dressed up like band members in the exhibition area with pop and colorful lights (see figure 6.1). I got a comment from a respondent that the rest of the lounge was nice, but the flushing lights from the exhibition area was uncomfortable.

Figure 6.1: Exhibition of Fine Arts faculty at UiA Lounge, taken by the author on July 7, 2020

When looking at the group who chose "disagree" or "strongly disagree" in question 2.1 and 6.1 in table 6.4 and 6.5, even if the respondents don't have good images to the organizations, they liked UiA Lounge to a large extent. From the results of question 4, people don't necessarily have good or bad images of UiA Lounge in relation to the images of UiA or Kristiansand Airport. People look at UiA Lounge separately in a way. Moreover, as Brønn defines (2019, p. 14), images of the organization are the basis of reputation. From this aspect, the fact that around 80% of the respondents have good images to UiA Lounge is interpreted in a positive way for both UiA and Kristiansand Airport. Several respondents left positive comments on the questionnaires. "I'm very positively surprised by the Lounge. Great place to chill before flight." "This is a good initiative! Also, very nice that it's free." "I don't know much about UiA, but I liked the lounge because of the atmosphere and function." On the other hand, some respondents left negative comments, but those comments are mostly to the airport and UiA, not about UiA Lounge.

Do you like UiA Lounge?	Respondents	% of whole	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Strongly disagree	1	0.6	0	1	0	0	0
Disagree	1	0.6	0	0	1	0	0
Neither agree nor disagree	24	15.1	3	9	12	0	0
Agree	76	47.8	6	39	23	8	0
Strongly agree	52	32.7	12	33	7	0	0

Table 6.4: Result of question 4 (Do you like UiA Lounge?) categorized by result of question 2.1 (Do you have a good image of UiA?)

Do you like UiA Lounge?	Respondents	% of whole	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	1	0.6	0	0	0	1	0
Neither agree nor disagree	24	15.1	5	14	3	2	0
Agree	73	45.9	3	48	14	7	1
Strongly agree	51	32.1	6	32	9	3	1

Table 6.5: Result of question 4 (Do you like UiA Lounge?) categorized by result of question 6.1 (Do you have a good image of Kristiansand Airport?)

6.4 Does UiA Lounge make stakeholders' images of UiA better?

In question 5.1 and 8.1, I asked whether UiA Lounge made the respondents' images of UiA or Kristiansand Airport better. This question is for analyzing whether UiA Lounge makes big enough impacts on their interpretations to change their images of UiA and Kristiansand Airport. Table 6.6 shows the result of question 5.1, "Did UiA Lounge make your image of UiA better?" categorized by the result of question 2.2, "What is the reason for your evaluation in 2.1 (Do you have a good image of UiA?)?" Table 6.7 shows the result of question 8.1, "Did UiA Lounge make your image of Kristiansand Airport better?" categorized by the result of question 6.2, "What is the reason for your evaluation in 6.1 (Do you have a good image of Kristiansand Airport?)?"

Table 6.6 shows that 56.0% of the respondents got better images of UiA by UiA Lounge. Table 6.7 shows that 74.9% of the respondents got better images of Kristiansand Airport by UiA

Lounge. These results explain that UiA Lounge contributes to making better images of Kristiansand Airport than UiA. In other words, even if the respondents have good images to UiA, UiA doesn't receive the benefit from UiA Lounge as much as Kristiansand Airport.

Did UiA Lounge make your image of UiA better?		% of whole	Based on personal experiences	Heard of it from acquaintances (family members, friends and colleagues etc.)	Heard of it in the media	Unsure	Other reasons
Strongly disagree	2	1.3	2	0	0	0	0
Disagree	2	1.3	1	1	0	0	0
Neither agree nor disagree	66	41.5	22	21	9	8	6
Agree	61	38.4	9	33	5	6	8
Strongly agree	28	17.6	6	14	4	3	1

Table 6.6: Result of question 5.1 (Did UiA Lounge make your image of UiA better?) categorized by the result of question 2.2 (What is the reason for your evaluation in 2.1 (Do you have a good image of UiA?)?)

Did UiA Lounge make your image of Kristiansand Airport better?		%	Based on personal experiences	Heard of it from acquaintances (family members, friends and colleagues etc.)	Heard of it in the media	Unsure	Other reasons
Strongly disagree	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	4	2.5	4	0	0	0	0
Neither agree nor disagree	35	22.0	30	0	0	3	2
Agree	78	49.1	70	0	1	4	3
Strongly agree	41	25.8	38	0	0	0	3

Table 6.7: Result of question 8.1 (Did UiA Lounge make your image of Kristiansand Airport better?) categorized by the result of question 6.2 (What is the reason for your evaluation in 6.2 (Do you have a good image of Kristiansand Airport?)?)

Considering the characteristics of Kristiansand Airport and UiA, these two organizations have a large difference. Kristiansand Airport is an airport where passengers must come to get on and get off the plains. And to offer a comfortable zone for passengers in a terminal is one of the airport's main tasks. This kind of concept has prevailed after New Public Management came to Norway in 1980s (Frølich, 2005, p. 224). The idea of New Public Management is, in short, public organization should look after customers as private organizations do. Avinor's social responsibility is to connect "the country in a safe, reliable and predictable way. Avinor creates connection from north to south, from east to west" (Avinor, 2018). Avinor has a complicated

organizational structure which demands many external partners when it comes to practical everyday operations at the airport. In 2013, Avinor launched a new logo so that they can communicate their brand holistically (Snøhetta, 2013).

From around this time, Avinor started to focus on customer satisfaction. For example, in these years, Avinor at Kristiansand Airport built a new parking garage in 2019 (Nodeland, 2019). In 2020, they renovated the international terminal after complaints from customers (Damsgaard, 2020). Along with this train, Avinor has "been considering the possibility of a lounge area at Kjevik (Kristiansand Airport) for a long time" (Pedersen, 2019). From the standpoint of Avinor, UiA Lounge was one of the projects which aims to provide a good experience for the stakeholders in the terminal to get better customer satisfaction.

- Circle of reputation

From the analyses of UiA's identities with the AC^2ID test and the results from the survey at this point, a circle of reputation of UiA and Kristiansand Airport can be sketched (see figure 6.2). Figure 6.2 indicates that UiA and Kristiansand Airport share their reputations at UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport as a platform. Via UiA Lounge, both UiA and Kristiansand Airport gets better images by the stakeholders. In addition, even if the university make all the contents of the lounge by spending their own budget, the platform is still Kristiansand Airport. In this manner, UiA Lounge makes a direct impact on images of Kristiansand Airport. This is also an explanation of the results of question 5.1 and 8.1 which 18.9% more respondents answered that they got better images of Kristiansand Airport by experiencing UiA Lounge. What people really experience at the lounge area is not only the information and communication by UiA, but also Kristiansand Airport. Since UiA is a university, their main task is to educate students and make them contribute to the society. And unfortunately, people cannot literally experience what UiA provides for the society at UiA Lounge although people can get information about it. Therefore, Kristiansand Airport gets better effect than UiA by the lounge.
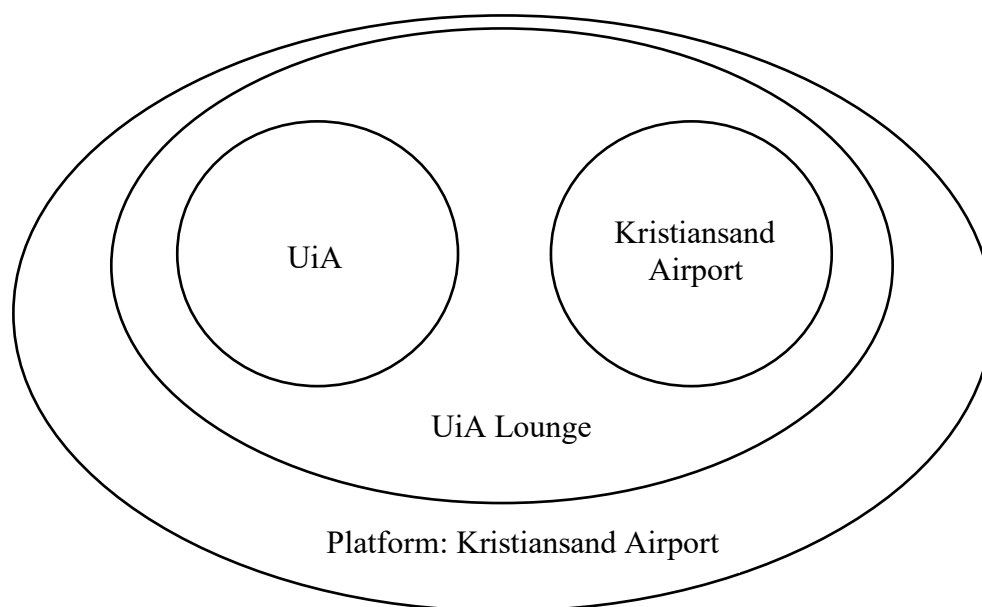
Figure 6.2: Circle of the reputation of UiA and Kristiansand Airport

"A good partnership is always a so-called win-win situation" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 193). Several interviewees of UiA said that UiA and Kristiansand Airport have a win-win relation by the intermediary of the lounge project (T. Eikeland Fiskå, personal communication, October 5, 2020). Also, the airport manager talked in an article about opening of UiA Lounge, "when we were looking for a collaborative partner, UiA was at the top of our list" (Pedersen, 2019). As such, the university and the airport have an ideal win-win situation. They enjoy the circle of the reputation as shown in figure 6.2. However, reputation is lost easily, but takes time to build. The relations between organization constantly alter and change by their communications, conceived images, and reputations. Thus, relations between UiA and Kristiansand Airport in the circle of the reputation might be completely different at some point in time.

- UiA Lounge makes the biggest impact on the people who have heard of UiA from acquaintances

Some respondents who answered that UiA Lounge did not change their images of UiA left comments about question 5.1, "Did UiA Lounge make your image of UiA better?" A respondent works in an organization in Agder, and the organization has already collaboration with students from UiA. He or she wrote, "It doesn't change my image of UiA. The lounge didn't change anything, but it's a nice place to sit and wait for a plane." A respondent who works at UiA wrote, "It doesn't make much difference." In addition, a respondent who works at an organization in another region wrote, "I have been a student at UiA myself, and this lounge did not affect my view of the university."

Looking at table 6.6, 37.5% of the respondents who chose "based on personal experience" in question 2.2 chose "strongly agree" or "agree" in question 5.1. And the percentage is the lowest compared with other groups. 68.1% of the respondents who chose "heard of it from acquaintances," 50.0% of the respondents who chose "heard of it in the media," and 52.9% of the respondents who chose "unsure" in question 2.2 chose "strongly agree" or "agree" in question 5.1. These results indicate that UiA Lounge doesn't always give strong enough impressions to the people who have personal experiences with UiA to change their images of UiA. UiA Lounge works best to the people who have heard of the university from someone whom they know. From UiA's strategic perspective, the lounge project works well. UiA has a need to make the university visible to the stakeholders who don't have contacts with the university yet. More than 50% of the people who don't have personal experiences with UiA, or the people who don't interpret the images of UiA based on personal experiences get better images of the university by the lounge.

However, from the view of reputation, this finding can be seen differently because "an organization's most important stakeholder is its own personnel" (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 144). The result indicates that employees, students, and business partners who have personal connection with the university don't always tend to get better images by the lounge. Apparently, the lounge project has a stronger character as marketing than communication. While communication looks toward all the stakeholders inside and outside around the organization, marketing looks toward customers in a specific market (Ihlen, 2016, p. 22). In the case of UiA

Lounge, a member and an interviewee of UiA told that the main target group is existing and potential partners, and the secondary target groups are politicians, potential students, potential employees, and other travelers (T. Eikeland Fiskå, personal communication, October 5, 2020). At UiA Lounge, people have opportunities to get to know about UiA by checking the exhibition, three digital screens, and brochures about study programs and researches in a small shelf at focus area (see figure 6.3). In addition to these contents, there is a small flyer at the focus area about collaboration with the university for the people working in other organizations (see figure 6.4). From the information at the lounge area, it is clear to whom UiA wants to convey the information.

The concern is that the most important stakeholder, employees of UiA, don't get much benefit at UiA Lounge. There is a free Wi-Fi network, eduroam, which employees, researchers, and students of many universities have access to (eduroam, n.d.). However, Avinor already provides a free Wi-Fi network for everyone at the airport (Avinor, n.d.-a). Hence, it is open to doubt whether eduroam gives favorable treatment to the employees of UiA. Moreover, there is not any other services specifically provide for the employees. From above, from the perspective of reputation management, UiA doesn't quite communicate right at the lounge. UiA needs to take care of its employees more.

Figure 6.4: Magazines and brochures published by UiA, taken by the author on July 7, 2020.

Figure 6.4: Flyers about collaboration with UiA for the people who work in other organizations. "Hi business, do you want new impulses and fresh competence?", taken by the author on July 7, 2020.

6.5 Does UiA Lounge communicate right at UiA Lounge?

The results from the survey indicate that the exhibition and the digital screens don't contribute to giving better images to neither UiA nor Kristiansand Airport. In question 5.2 and 8.2, I asked why they chose the alternatives in question 5.1, "Did UiA Lounge make your image of UiA better?" and in question 8.1, "Did UiA Lounge make your image of Kristiansand Airport better?" Table 6.8 is the results of question 5.2 categorized by the result of question 5.1. And table 6.9 is the result of question 8.2 categorized by the result of question 8.1.

What is the reason for your evaluation in 5.1?	Respondents	% of whole	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Design/atmosphere	51	32.1	16	27	7	1	0
Function (charger, Wi-Fi, desks and chairs etc.)	64	40.3	16	30	18	0	0
Exhibition and digital screens	3	1.9	3	0	0	0	0
Frequency of use of Kristiansand Airport	38	23.9	4	14	20	0	0
I do not get why UiA built a lounge at Kristiansand Airport.	10	6.3	0	2	7	1	0
Unsure	9	5.7	0	0	9	0	0
Other reasons	15	9.4	4	0	9	0	2

Table 6.8: Result of question 5.2 (What is the reason for your evaluation in 5.1 (Did UiA Lounge make your image of UiA better?)?) categorized by the result of question 5.1

What is the reason for your evaluation in 8.1?	Respondents	% of whole	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Design/atmosphere	57	35.8	19	34	4	0	0
Function (charger, Wi-Fi, desks and chairs etc.)	69	43.4	17	45	7	0	0
Exhibition and digital screens	6	3.8	4	0	2	0	0
Frequency of use of Kristiansand Airport	35	22.0	10	12	11	2	0
I do not get why Kristiansand Airport has UiA Lounge.	6	3.8	0	0	5	1	0
Unsure	5	3.1	0	0	4	1	0
Other reasons	10	6.3	4	0	5	1	0

Table 6.9: Result of question 8.2 (What is the reason for your evaluation in 8.1 (Did UiA Lounge make your image of Kristiansand Airport better?)?) categorized by the result of question 8.1

The results show that the functions at UiA Lounge made the biggest impact on the respondents in regard to the change of the images of the organizations. From Avinor's standpoint, the functions provide better experiences in the terminal for the stakeholders. On the other hand, from UiA's standpoint, it is to visualize and inform co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge by providing the function so that the stakeholders imagine it with positive experiences. The second highest alternative is the design and atmosphere at the lounge. It was predictable because the people who choose to spend time at the lounge basically have positive impressions to the appearance of the lounge beforehand. According to Fiskå (personal communication, October 5, 2020), UiA Lounge is designed with the same tone as the entrance hall of campus Kristiansand (see figure 6.4 and 6.5). In addition, the pattern on the see-through partitions between sections and seats are from the logo of the university. In this way, at UiA Lounge, the stakeholders get an opportunity to perceive the atmosphere of the university which communicates their identities under the strategy, co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge. Images

of an organization are formed by experiencing the identities of the organization. (Brønn, 2019, pp. 25-26) Therefore, UiA needs to communicate their identities to the stakeholders at UiA Lounge although the stakeholders cannot really experience it at the campuses. From this perspective, UiA takes a right way. UiA has transparent and balanced multiple identities. It means UiA is being good and doing good. That is to say, UiA fulfills the two prerequisites to be a good storyteller.
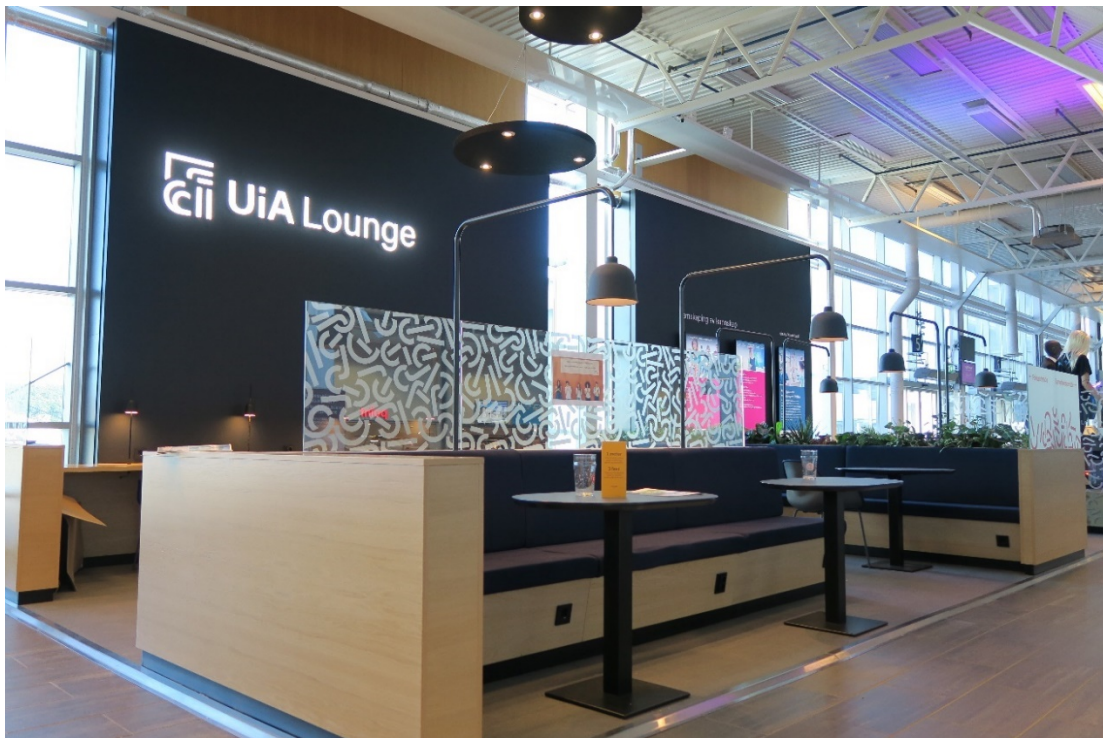

Figure 6.4: UiA Lounge. This picture is taken by the author on July 7, 2020.

Figure 6.5: The entrance hall, Virmlehallen, at campus Kristiansand, taken by the author on November 20, 2020

However, regarding the alternative, "exhibition and digital screens" in table 6.8 and 6.9, the numbers show that few of the respondents chose this alternative as a factor of the change of the images. 1.9% of the respondents chose the alternative as a reason of the change of images of UiA in question 5.2. 3.8% of the respondents chose the alternative to Kristiansand Airport in question 8.2. These numbers are very low compared with "function" and "design/atmosphere." People might check the exhibition and the digital screens, but these factors don't give strong enough impressions to them so that they get better images of the organizations. It is also considered that the communication through the exhibition and the digital screens don't reach the people who are at the focus area in the lounge.

I got a comment about the exhibition and the digital screens in the survey. A student wrote, "The texts at the displays are too small to read." See figure 6.1 in an earlier page and figure 6.6 below. There are two caption boards on the stage of the exhibition area, and the letters are very small compared with the size of the mannequin's foot next to the caption board. And the

same applies to the digital screens behind the exhibition area. The letters on the screens are small, and it would make the people reluctant to read the texts. It loses a chance to give information about "the collaborative opportunities between the University and" other organizations (Pedersen, 2019). The digital screens and the exhibition are the core tools for visualizing the identity and the opportunity of collaboration. The result of the survey indicates that the main point of the lounge project is lost. The stakeholders don't get informed about UiA's identities and opportunities to collaborate with UiA against the university's expectation.
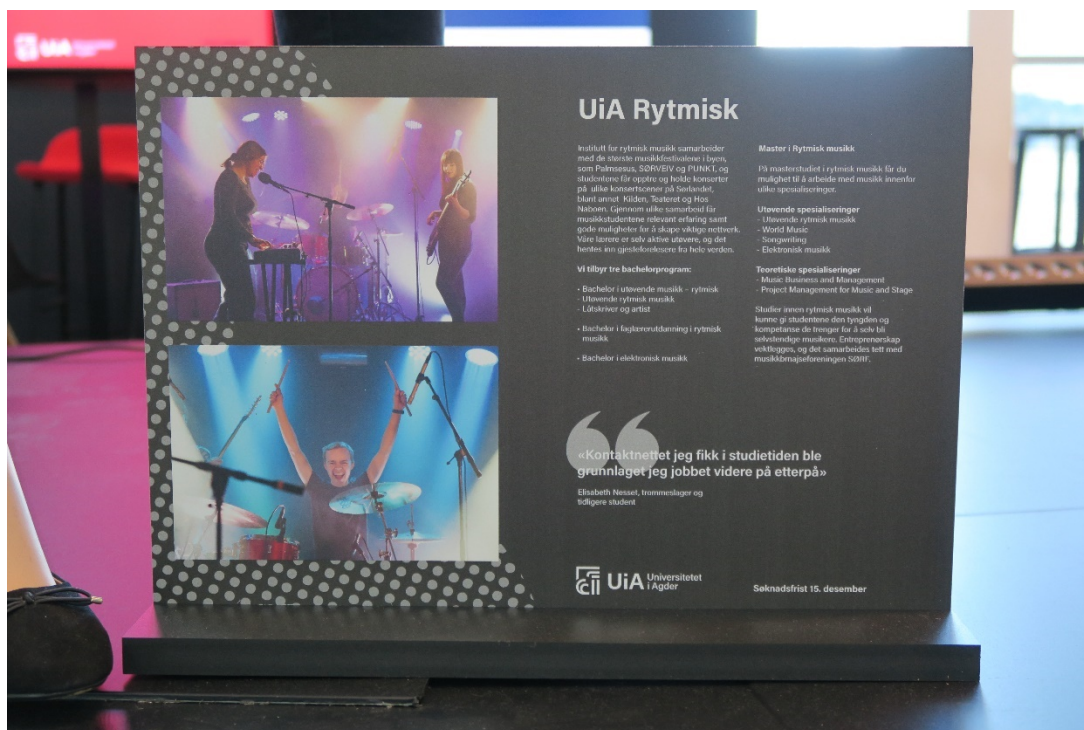

Figure 6.6: Caption board on a stage of an exhibition at UiA Lounge, taken by the author on July 7, 2020

From the result of question 5.2 and 8.2 as well as the comment from a student, UiA has possibilities to communicate in a better way at the lounge. More specifically, they could make some improvements to the way they display and inform the identities. In the interview, the principal of UiA said (S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020), "We don't want to scare people" in a context which the percentage of the population with higher education in Agder is lower than other regions which have big cities. According to a national statistic (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2020), 26.2% of the men and 34.7% of the women have higher education

in Agder in 2019. In comparison with the percentages in Agder, 49.5% of the men and 55.3% of the women in the capital of Norway, Oslo, and 30.7% of the men and 40.2% of the women in the county of the second biggest city of Norway, Bergen, have higher education.

The small letters on the caption boards and the digital screens would not be so friendly for all the stakeholders. They look academic, and it might scare the stakeholders who UiA had a chance to collaborate with. The target groups of the lounge are from existing and potential partners to potential students, and other travelers. It is very wide. And it is not ideal to exclude some stakeholders in the term of building a good reputation because the employees of the organization are the most important stakeholder (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 144). And this perspective is missing at UiA Lounge except for Wi-fi system.

Moreover, Grunig advocates symmetry communication between the organization and the stakeholders (Grunig, 1993b, pp. 144-146). Through the interviews, it turned out that UiA Lounge does not have any features to get feedbacks from the users. Although Avinor gives verbal feedbacks to the university, it is based on their impressions. Since the opening of the lounge in November 2019, they have not had any surveys at the lounge yet. In this manner, the lounge is missing the symmetry character of communication. The communication at the lounge is asymmetric. UiA gives information about UiA and collaboration, but they are unsure whether the information reaches to the stakeholder. If the lounge had some opportunities to get feedbacks and opinions, it could be easier for UiA to update the way they convey the information. It could also help the faculties which use their budgets to build the exhibitions. By making some efforts to improve the communication at the lounge, the concept of the lounge could outstand better than now. However, Fiskå, told that Covid-19 situation gave them a difficult situation (T. Eikeland Fiskå, personal communication, October 5, 2020). Since the number of passengers decreased dramatically (Olsen & Sellevold, 2020), the priority of the lounge project became lower. This is one of the reasons why they have not had any surveys at the lounge yet.

I summarize four findings and discussions in this chapter. First, people have surer images of Kristiansand Airport than UiA at UiA Lounge. The reason is the difference of the characteristics of the organizations. Kristiansand Airport is where the people really experience while UiA's main body is not at the lounge. Therefore, people cannot experience the university

although they can imagine how it would be and get information. Second, UiA and Kristiansand Airport share a circle of reputation and get a positive synergy. Around 80% of the respondents answered they liked UiA Lounge, 56.0% of the respondents answered they got better images of UiA, and 74.9% of the respondents answered they got better images of Kristiansand Airport. Third, UiA Lounge makes larger impacts on Kristiansand Airport than UiA regarding the change of images of the organizations. It is also because of the difference of the organizations' characteristics. Fourth, UiA has possibilities to communicate in a better way to visualize co-creation of (tomorrow's) knowledge. Few respondents answered the exhibition and the digital screen were the factors in regard to the change of the images of the organizations. And the communication at the lounge mainly looks toward the stakeholders outside of the organization. Besides, the communication at the lounge is asymmetric.

7.0 Conclusion

In this thesis, I have researched whether UiA builds a good reputation by UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport from the view of strategic communication. To answer this research question, I have stated two sub research questions. "How does UiA try to build a good reputation?" and "How good or bad reputation does UiA have?" I have mainly combined three theories. Brønn's (2019) perspective for analyzing identity and image, the AC^2ID test by Balmer and Greyser (2002) to find out UiA's multiple identities, and Aula and Mantere's (2008) perspective to analyze reputation. To research identities, images, and reputation of UiA, I have used naturalistic paradigm of qualitative interview. Several employees and leaders in UiA and Kristiansand Airport participated in the interviews. In addition, I did my internship for six weeks at the communication division at UiA, and the internship period was used for observing the organization in natural settings. To research the change of images, the reputation, and the impact of UiA Lounge, I have used quantitative survey. The survey was taken from July to August 2020 in the domestic terminal of Kristiansand Airport where UiA Lounge located. In total 159 respondents answered the questions on questionnaires handed individually, and the results have been processed anonymously.

Thorough the analyses of multiple identities, I have found that UiA has transparent and balanced multiple identities. They express themselves as they are (actual identity and communicated identity), and it coincides with how the stakeholders outside of the organization conceive (conceived identity). The vision of the strategy of UiA expresses actually who they are (ideal identity), and the principal's and the vice principal's desires (desired identities) link with the other identities too. These facts answer to the first sub research question, "How does UiA try to build a good reputation?"

The results of the survey indicate that both organizations share a circle of reputation at UiA Lounge in the domestic terminal. UiA and Kristiansand Airport have gotten good images from nearly 70% of the respondents, and 58.5% of the respondents would like to recommend UiA while 67.3% of the respondents want to recommend Kristiansand Airport. In the term of reputation as interpretation, these results, and the analyses of UiA's identities and images lead to a conclusion that UiA has an overall good reputation. And this answers to the second sub research question, "How good or bad reputation does UiA have?"

The results of the survey show that 56.0% of the respondents got better images of UiA by UiA Lounge, and 74.9% of the respondents answered they got better images of Kristiansand Airport by the lounge. I have pointed out that the airport has gotten larger impact by the lounge than the university does regarding change of images of the organizations. The different characteristics and social responsibilities of the organizations cause closer impression of experiences, surer images, and a greater impact on Kristiansand Airport than UiA. The airport manager talked in an article that they had been considering having a lounge in the terminal long time (Pedersen, 2019). In this way, the airport utilizes the lounge project well.

On the other hand, it became clear that the exhibition and the digital screen which tell the stakeholders about the collaborative opportunities with UiA and UiA's identities don't give a positive impression against the expectation. 1.9% of the respondents answered the exhibition and the digital screens were the reason for change of images of UiA, and 3.8% of the respondents chose the alternative for Kristiansand Airport. UiA wants the stakeholders to get informed about the opportunities to collaborate and bring it back home. UiA formulated the new strategy based on the former strategy to enhance the organization's visibility as an outstanding higher education institution. However, the results and analyses indicate that they have possibilities to be an even better storyteller.

Moreover, from the perspective of reputation management, UiA doesn't quite communicate right at the lounge. The most important stakeholder for the organization is its members (Aula & Mantere, 2008, p. 144). The primary target group is existing and potential partners, and the secondary target group are politicians, potential students, potential employees, and other travelers. Hence, the communication via UiA Lounge looks toward these target groups. Therefore, the lounge project has a stronger character as marketing than communication. Thus, UiA needs to look toward its employees. In addition, the communication at UiA Lounge is asymmetric. The stakeholders do not have any opportunities to give feedbacks to the university or Kristiansand Airport. It makes the communication at the lounge asymmetric, and UiA loses an opportunity to improve its communication at the lounge.

From above all, I make a conclusion and answer to the research question, "Does UiA build a good reputation by UiA Lounge at Kristiansand Airport?" UiA builds a good reputation

by UiA Lounge in some degree, but it would be possible to make even better results by improving the way and the direction they communicate.

       For further research, I would like to bring up two points. Based on my analyses, UiA has multiple transparent identities, good images, and good reputation. However, I didn't research all the communications which the members of the university have, such as contributed articles in newspapers, conference speeches, or posts on social media. People conceive and interpret the organization through many factors and aspects. If I researched all the communications, it might be a different conclusion. Even if the new strategy of UiA, co-creation of tomorrow's knowledge was formulated by involving internal and external stakeholders so that the strategy would be transparent (UiA, n.d.-h), it could be some fragments with other aspects of the organization which are not picked up yet.

       Besides, it is impossible to know a pure impact of UiA Lounge on UiA's reputation from the perspective of reputation as capital. Reputation has many aspects and has been earned and built by every kind of stakeholders around the organization. Thus, nobody knows how much Norwegian krone UiA has really earned by UiA Lounge. In the interviews, several interviewees of UiA said, "the time shows" whether UiA Lounge has performed well when I asked about evaluation of the lounge (T. Eikeland Fiskå, personal communication, October 5, 2020; S. Whittaker, personal communication, October 7, 2020). They might be right. It might be too early to evaluate it because reputation is accessed by the organization's past, present, and future (Aula & Mantere, 2008, pp. 24-25). Therefore, I hope they will carry out research again in the near future.

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Attachment 1: Notification Form on NSD

NSD NORSK SENTER FOR FORSKNINGSDATA

Notification Form 932912

Last updated

05.10.2020

Which personal data will be processed?

- Name (also with signature/written consent)
- Email address, IP address or other online identifier
- Sound recordings of people

Type of data

Will you be processing special categories of personal data or personal data relating to criminal convictions and offences?

No

Project information

Project title

Interview Research for Identities and Reputations at University of Agder and Kristiansand Airport

If the collected personal data will be used for other purposes, please describe

The collected personal data will not be used for other purposes.

Explain why the processing of personal data is necessary

The persons I will interview are chosen because of their specific experiences and tasks on their work. These personal data will reinforce my master thesis, and therefore it is necessary to process personal data.

External funding

Type of project

Student project, Master's thesis

Contact information, student

Yukiko Iwazaki, yukiki18@student.uia.no, tlf: 92158485

Data controller

Data controller (institution responsible for the project)

Universitetet i Agder / Fakultet for humaniora og pedagogikk / Institutt for nordisk og mediefag

Project leader (academic employee/supervisor or PhD candidate)

Hans Olav Hodøl, hans-olav.hodol@uia.no, tlf: 4738141365

Will the responsibility of the data controller be shared with other institutions (joint data controllers)?

No

Sample 1

Describe the sample

Persons who are in charge for identities and reputations at UiA and Kristiansand Lufthavn

Recruitment or selection of the sample

I will choose samples by sending messages from official email addresses on organizations' web page.

Age

25 - 70

Will you include adults (18 years and over) who do not have the capacity to consent?

No

Personal data relating to sample 1

- Name (also with signature/written consent)
- Email address, IP address or other online identifier
- Sound recordings of people

How will you collect data relating to sample 1?

Personal interview

Legal basis for processing general categories of personal data

Consent (art. 6 nr. 1 a)

Information for sample 1

Will you inform the sample about the processing of their personal data?

Yes

How?

Written information (on paper or electronically)

Sample 2

Personal data relating to sample 2

Third Persons

Will you be processing data relating to third persons?

No

Documentation

How will consent be documented?

- Electronically (email, e-form, digital signature)

How can consent be withdrawn?

If data subjects contact me via email, the consent will be withdrawn.

How can data subjects get access to their personal data or have their personal data corrected or deleted?

If data subjects contact me via email, I will delete the personal data.

Total number of data subjects in the project

1-99

Approvals

Will you obtain any of the following approvals or permits for the project?

Processing

Where will the personal data be processed?

- Computer belonging to the data controller
- Mobile device belonging to the data controller
- Private device

Who will be processing/have access to the collected personal data?

- Project leader
- Student (student project)
- Data processor

Which data processor will be processing/have access to the collected personal data?

Microsoft One Drive - Universitetet i Agder

Will the collected personal data be transferred/made available to a third country or international organisation outside the EU/EEA?

No

Information Security

Will directly identifiable data be stored separately from the rest of the collected data (e.g. in a scrambling key)?

No

Explain why directly identifiable data will be stored together with the rest of the collected data

Because I choose persons who have specific tasks and experiences in organizations in order to reinforce my thesis. Therefore these identifiable data cannot be stored separately.

Which technical and practical measures will be used to secure the personal data?

- Multi-factor authentication
- Restricted access
- Personal data will be stored in encrypted form

Duration of processing

Project period

04.03.2020 - 30.06.2021

Will personal data be stored after the end of the project?

No, the collected data will be stored in anonymous form

Which anonymization measures will be taken?

- Any sound or video recordings will be deleted

Will the data subjects be identifiable (directly or indirectly) in the thesis/publications from the project?

Yes

Explain why

Because I choose persons who have specific tasks and experiences in organizations in order to reinforce my thesis. Therefore these identifiable data will be identifiable in my thesis.

Additional information

Attachment 2: Information of interview and consent

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

" Intervjuforskning for identitet og omdømme på UiA og Kristiansand Lufthavn"?

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke organisasjonsidentiteter og evalueringer av omdømme. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål
Målet med oppgaven er å finne ut hvordan UiA bygger opp et godt omdømme ved å ha en lounge på Kristiansand Lufthavn, og hvordan det påvirker omdømmet til Kristiansand Lufthavn.

Dette prosjektet er en del av min masteroppgave ved UiA i samfunnskommunikasjon, og skal gjennomføres i løpet av 2020.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?
Yukiko Iwazaki, en masterstudent i samfunnskommunikasjon ved UiA er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?
For å svare på prosjektets forskningsspørsmål på en best mulig måte, er det ønskelig at datainnsamlingen omfatter flere ekspertintervjuer. Utvalget vil bestå av fagpersoner fra et spesifikke felt i organisasjoner, som hver for seg kan kaste lys over omdømmebygging. Det er med dette utgangspunkt du er forespurt å delta.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?
Hvis du velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer det at du blir intervjuet i ca. 60 minutter, basert på en intervjuguide. Spørreskjemaet inneholder spørsmål om organisasjonsidentiteter og evalueringer av omdømme. Spørsmålene er ikke personlige, men vil dreie seg om ditt fagfelt. Du vil derfor bli identifisert gjennom din stilling og bakgrunn fra feltet du blir intervjuet om. Dine svar fra spørreskjemaet blir registrert elektronisk.

Det er frivillig å delta
Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle dine personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger
Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Som
deltaker vil du bli identifisert i den endelige publikasjonen med navnet ditt og stillingen din på organisasjon. Det er kun veileder Hans Olav Hodøl og student Yukiko Iwazaki som vil ha tilgang til disse filene.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?
Opplysningene anonymiseres når prosjektet avsluttes/oppgaven er godkjent, noe som etter planen er 30.06.2021.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:
- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- å få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?
Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra UiA har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?
Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:
- Student (Yukiko Iwazaki), yukiki18@student.uia.no.
- Veileder (Hans Olav Hodøl), hans-olav.hodol@uia.no.
- Personvernombud ved UiA (Ina Danielsen), ina.danielsen@uia.no

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til NSD sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med:
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS på e-post (personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller på telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen

Hans Olav Hodøl   Yukiko Iwazaki
(Forsker/veileder)   (Student)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet Intervjuforskning for identitet og omdømme på UiA og Kristiansand Lufthavn, og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

☐ å delta i intervju
☐ at opplysninger om meg publiseres slik at jeg kan gjenkjennes slik at synspunkter blir sett i lys av din stilling/posisjon

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Attachment 3: Interview guide

Intervjuguide til organisasjonsidentitet og omdømme

Masteroppgave:

Omdømmebygging på UiA ved å ha UiA Lounge på Kristiansand Lufthavn

Denne masteroppgaven dreier seg om hvordan organisasjonen bygger opp et godt omdømme ved å ha en lounge på Kristiansand Lufthavn.

I dette intervjuet vil jeg undersøke organisasjonsidentitet og omdømme på deres organisasjoner.

1. Egentlig identitet

1.1. Hvordan tenker dere at ansatte i organisasjonen tenker hvem dere er? Hvorfor?

1.2. Hvordan måler dere deres identiteter?

2. Ideell identitet

2.1. Hvordan beskriver dere identiteten deres? Hvorfor?

3. Ønsket identitet

3.1. Hvordan ønsker du at deres organisasjon fremstår? Hvorfor?

4. Evaluering av omdømmet

4.1. Hvordan vil dere evaluere omdømmet til deres organisasjon? Hvorfor?

4. Fakta om UiA Lounge

4.1. Hva er særtrekk på UiA Lounge spesielt for å bygge opp et godt omdømme for deres organisasjon?

4.2. Hvorfor valgte dere UiA/Kristiansand Lufthavn?

5. Evaluering av omdømmet til UiA Lounge

5.1. Hvordan vil dere evaluere omdømmet til UiA Lounge? Hvorfor?

5.2. Vil dere evaluere at UiA Lounge bidrar til å bygge et godt omdømme til UiA og Kristiansand Lufthavn?