The resilient retail area

A research on the relation between resilience and branding

Simon Tjoonk

Masterthesis Economic Geography
Nijmegen School of Management
Radboud University
August 2015

Preface

Before you lies my master thesis. This thesis is the final part of my master specialization: Economic Geography at Radboud University.

In this thesis two cases are explored with the aim of finding out how the economic position of retail areas can be improved. This has been done within the theoretical framework of resilience and branding. With this research I hope to provide tools that can be used to strategically improve the economic climate in retail areas.

I would like to thank several people for aiding me in reaching this milestone. First of all Dr. Roos Pijpers and Drs. John Bardoel. I want to thank Roos Pijpers for answering my questions swift and clearly and helping my navigate safely through the waters of academic research. John Bardoel has been very helpful in my efforts to build a bridge between literature and praxis and was always ready to brainstorm with me when this was needed.

Last but not least I want to turn to my respondents who were kind enough to invest time to talk with me and answer my questions. These interviews have become an important part of this thesis.

I hope you enjoy reading my thesis.

Simon Tjoonk

Nijmegen, 31 augustus 2015

Abstract

Retail areas in the Netherlands face significant challenges. First, online sales have seriously affected the offline sales in retail areas and are still growing (Platform 31(2014, p.5). Second, the demographic buildup of the customer base is changing due to an aging population and declining population numbers (Platform31, 2014). Furthermore, the economic crisis has lead to a decline in consumer spending (Platform31, 2014, p. 4). These three main challenges compel retail areas to take action in order to keep up a positive economic position.

This research focuses on resilience as a concept that helps in making the [economic] position of a retail area more visible and help to strategically intervene to strengthen the observed level of resilience. Further, branding will be a topic of research. As cities and regions have used branding as a way to position themselves, this might be an interesting target for retail areas. Especially the process to come to a brand for the area might be interesting in strengthening resilience as this requires cooperation and support from the area. Combining these concepts might both help the area in gaining visitors as strengthening internal ties. This assumption leads to the following research objective: *"The objective of this research is to offer insight in how retail areas can use their image to strengthen their (economic) position."* Next, I formulated a central question to reach this objective: *"How can a retail area use the process of branding to strengthen its resilience?"*

Two cases were selected to answer the main question. The first case, the van Woustraat in Amsterdam, offered insight into how a process of branding might strengthen the cooperation in a retail area. The second case, the Lange Hezelstraat in Nijmegen had already experienced a process of branding and offers insight in the long-term effects of a process of branding on a retail area.

From my analysis I have concluded that cooperation and communication in a retail area are key in improving its resilience. The first reason is that it helps the area to work towards a common goals and build a 'team' of retailers in the form of a strong undertakings. Second, through good communication with the government spatial alterations in the area might be adapted to the needs of the retailers and so lead to a higher spatial quality. Further, a process of branding stimulates and reinforces cooperation and communication. Together they help strengthen resilience on both of its aspects: vitality and adaptivity. This can, however not always be achieved without help from 'outside'. A retail area manager can prove valuable in helping retailers and government in creating a more resilient retail area.

Table of contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Project framework

The Dutch retail has been under pressure for a number of years. Many factors play their part in this. Platform31 (2014, p.36) names the economic crisis as the most influential. Declining consumer spending have left their mark on the Dutch retail sector. From 2008 to 2013 the turnover of the entire Dutch retail sector declined with 9 percent. Some branches even saw a decline of more than 25 percent. Online shopping increased relatively strong and the effects of the economic crisis were strongly felt (Platform31, 2014, p. 4).

Next to declining turnovers a decline in revenue per square meter of shopping floor [floor productivity] was observable. In 2013 the total surface of retail space in the Netherlands was 30 million square meters. This was a huge growth compared to the surface in the sixties. When looked at in more detail a growth of 15 percent can be seen in the last decade (Platform31, 2014, p. 43). The largest increase was visible for furniture stores, DIY shops, garden centers and the like on peripheral and/or large scale retail locations. Between 2004 and 2013 the number of shops decreased further. When these trends are combined one can conclude that floor productivity has decreased. Besides that, a shift in the amount of bankruptcies was a fact. The amount of shop bankruptcies in was especially high in 2013 with 940 shops going bankrupt in comparison with 36 in the year 2000. Multiple reasons are underlying for this fact, but the fact itself is noteworthy (Platform31, 2014, p. 38).

An underlying question in these economically disadvantageous trends is demographic change. The Netherlands have been familiar with an ageing and declining population. These trends are now not only visible in Zeeland, Noordoost Groningen en Zuid-Limburg, but have become a topic to consider on a national scale. For but a few areas in the Netherlands a prognosis of a stable or growing population can be made (Platform31, 2014). These demographic developments ask for a development in shopping areas. They have to adapt to a changing customer base.

In order to be able to see how this affects retail areas in reality it is important to have a definition of 'retail area' and to know how retail areas differ from one another. Evers et al. (2011, p. 326) see a retail area as a clustering of at least 5 shops within a distance of at least 50 meters between them. This is, however, the minimal requirement. They discern different types of retail areas, from a neighbourhood centre to inner cities (Evers et al., 2011). Between these areas there are often also differences in the size of floor surface, the degree of branching and the types of products. A small residential area, for example, has more shops that supply day to day products, whilst a main shopping area often is more aimed at offering luxury products (Ibid, p. 78).

The subject of internet shopping is one that requires a further inquiry in light of a changing demographic situation and a discrimination between types of retail areas. As mentioned above, online shopping has greatly increased in recent years. Platform 31(2014, p.5) views a rise in the share of online retail of 6 percent on the total volume of Dutch retail to 12 percent in 2020 as a real possibility. Their view on this trend is not strange, considering that more and more products are being offered to consumers. In the Netherlands the market for online shopping is primarily in hands of a few large companies. Ahold [including Bol.com], RFS Holding [including Wehkamp.nl] and Zalando together have a market share of 22 percent. The top 100 of online companies together have a market share of 75 percent. The remainder is shared by the other almost 50.000 web shops (Platform31, 2014, p. 39). This division gives a loose view into the type of products consumers buy on the internet. Consumers primarily choose internet shopping because of lower prices, convenience, wide choice in products and shopping outside normal shopping hours (van der Velden & van Gerwen, 2013). Foodstuffs, products for personal care and other products that people want to see, smell or taste before buying them are scarcely bought via online retail (Raatgever, 2014, p. 40). Besides that, the experience of shopping itself is a reason for consumers to shop 'offline'.

Though online shopping has proven to be quite a challenge for retailers so far, it also offers an opportunity for retailers to reach their customers more directly and more adapted to their preferences. Janssen (2013) presents a five-step set of possibilities for a strategy that can help retail areas reach their customers via the internet. He describes possibilities ranging from being findable on the internet to using mobile technology both inside stores and public space and in that way fully integrates internet into the shopping experience. An example can be using communication beacons to directly send information to mobile devices customers are carrying so that they receive information or targeted deals whilst shopping. This means that retailers will have to decide which level of online-integration suits their customer base best.

Concluding the trends mentioned in the above, the Dutch retail sector stands for a complicated mix of challenges. Not only do people increasingly buy products online, the build-up of the population [and thus the customer base] is changing and the effects of the economic crisis are clearly felt. The question thus is how retail areas can maintain a good position. In this research this question will be posed within the framework of Resilience.

1.2 Research objective

The objective of this research is acquiring a better insight into how retail areas can adapt to internal and external factors that affect their economic stability. Subsequently the objective is answering how the resilience of the area, in relation to these factors, can be strengthened. Especially the role of branding and communication and cooperation between retailers has a central place in this research.

> *"The objective of this research is to offer insight in how retail areas can use their image to `strengthen their (economic) position."*

In this research I will take a closer look at the relation between branding and the image of a retail area, cooperation between retailers in the area and the resilience of a retail area. That cooperation, or at least a degree of intercommunication, by retailers strengthens the resilience is known. If and how a process of Branding might influence this positively requires more inquiry. This research will try to shed light on this aspect by trying to get clear how Branding might be strategically used for the purpose of improving resilience in retail areas.

1.3 Central question

In this paragraph, the central question and sub questions are formulated. They give direction in an attempt to reach the research objective. To achieve the research objective an answer has to be found to the following central question:

"How can a retail area use the process of branding to strengthen its resilience?"

To answer this central question, the following sub questions have been formulated:

Sub questions:

- *"How can the resilience of a retail area be measured?"*
- "How might the resilience of a retail area be improved in practice?"
- " How does passing through a process of branding, influence the resilience of a retail area?"
- "How can a process of branding be used to strengthen the resilience of a retail area?"

1.4 Research relevance

Before carrying out a research it is important to establish what the relevance if answering the research question is. For this research I have reflected on this relevance in two ways. First I will argue that this research is relevant from a societal perspective, second I will argue that the same is true from a scientific perspective.

1.4.1 Societal relevance

Retail areas are under pressure from trends that change the retail landscape [as described in paragraph 1.1]. This drives retailers, retail areas and municipalities to the necessity of acting to adapt

to these trends. Resilience is a perspective that is already used as a tool to make loose concepts tangible in a perspective of regional development. Resilience might also prove a useful tool for retail areas. On this point, however, not a lot of work has been done.

Branding is already being used by a lot of cities and has had success in several cases. The effect branding has on an area is very interesting and can provide retail areas with changes. In this research, however, the process itself is more important than the objective [the brand] that is achieved by following the process. If branding is actually an effective tool to bring retailers in an area together, it might prove an effective tool in improving the quality of retail areas.

1.4.2 Scientific relevance

Resilience is a perspective that had, until recently, only found its way to regional approaches after originating in environmental studies in the research of Holling (1973). Subsequently it found an adaptation within regional studies (Balsas (2004), Foster (2006) & Fernandes & Chamusca (2012)) Following that line, resilience might prove to be an interesting perspective on retail areas. Very little work has been done on the possibilities resilience might provide in relation to this scale. The question is thus how resilience might help to give insight in the challenges retail areas face and might help to make these challenges more tangible.

Further, this research aims to shed light on how a process of branding might affect the resilience of an area. Work has been done on the positive effects that cooperation in an area has on the area itself (Kärholm, Nylund, & de la Fuente, 2014). Second, the potential gain a successful branding strategy gives in terms of consumer visits and spending is also known. On the question if linking the cooperation a process of branding requires and the effects on the area itself, less is known. The question thus remains if the process of forming a branding strategy can actually activate and/or motivate retailers into engaging in cooperation. In this research I will try to connect Resilience and Branding to see if these concepts together, can provide a better insight in the practice of improving the economic position of a retail area.

2. Theory

2.1 Theoretical framework

The theoretic framework serves as a representation of and a critical view on existing literature in relation to the research topic. In this chapter I will reflect on 'Experience Economy', 'Branding' and 'Resilience'. In the last paragraph I will explain how these concepts are linked and summarize these relations in a conceptual model.

Though this storyline starts with experience economy, it is resilience from which the theoretical background of this thesis started. With the negative trends retail areas face, the subject of resilience is an interesting point of view for an analysis. It is from here that the situation of an area might be assessed and problems might become clear. As experience economy is a theoretical concept that retail areas are already familiar with, I introduce Branding as a way of building a bridge between the two. Resilience offers insights on an area wide range, whilst experience economy is more consumer oriented. This combination through branding might bring these two closer together.

2.1.1 Experience economy

The first step in finding what makes a street suitable for retail is figuring out why people visit a retail area. Experience economy, as introduced by Pine and Gilmore in 1998 might provide an insight into this question. They see experience as a fourth level of value next to commodities, goods and services (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Just as the first three can be bought, they argue that the current day economy also allows experiences to be bought and sold. They exemplify this with the case of a cup of coffee. Companies that grow and harvest coffee sell it for a price that comes down to a few cents a cup, when bought at a retail establishment and brewed at home. The coffee in small café or restaurant will cost more. The coffee at the terrace in a central tourist area however, might cost you several Euros (Pine & Gillmore, 1999, p.2). They connect this to the experience the consumer is willing to pay. Though the coffee might be exactly the same, the atmosphere in which it is presented proves so valuable to the consumer that he or she is willing to pay several times the price of brewing the same cup of coffee at home.

This same logic underlies theme restaurants. In their book, Pine and Gilmore (1999, p.3) give a second example of the workings the experience economy. They present the case of theme restaurants. The food they offer is not significantly different than that at a 'normal' restaurant. Still, consumers are willing to pay more for the experience that the theme, attached to the dining itself, offers.

This line of thought can also be applied to retail areas. As described in the introduction of this research proposal, an important reason for consumers to visit a retail area, instead of shopping

online is the experience of shopping itself. This means that presenting a suitable experience to shoppers can make them visit the shopping area. This poses both a problem and an opportunity for retail areas. Firstly, it gives a retail area the necessity to think about the experience they offer their consumers. Secondly they need to try to improve the experience they are offering in order to stay competitive with other retail areas.

2.1.2 Branding

As experiences can be important in how successful retail areas are, the question arises how these experiences can be adapted and used to attract customers and spending to the area. A process of Branding might prove to be useful in this effort. Inner cities have grown more similar because of a process of homogenization. A consequence of this is that impressions and imaging have gained importance in locational choices of, among others, businesses and visitors (Hospers et al., 2011, p. 9). Hospers et al. (2011, p.10) Point out that this has left policy makers with one concrete question: what is the identity of the city? This is where 'City branding' and 'City marketing' come into view. City marketing and City branding are two sides of the same medal. City branding is about creating an image of or a brand for an area. City marketing is about sending forth this image. Therefore these are two processes that should be implemented in combination.

City branding is a means with which the image people have of an area might be shaped or influenced. Herein experiences, representation in movies, news articles and the like and the physical space of an area play their part. The impression we get and the messages we receive about an area shape how we perceive the image of this area. In practice there are three instruments that can be identified to achieve this: association with persons, architecture and design or the organization of events (Ashworth, 2011, p. 54).

Mommaas (2011, p. 54) emphasizes that a shared perspective of development is needed amongst stakeholders. To get beyond simply advertising, a narrative for the area that is needed so that [city]marketing can be used as a form of area development. This depends on an image that is jointly shared and supported by stakeholders in the area and is reinforced with physical developments in the area. Mommaas (2011, p. 45) further emphasizes the need for co-creation, co-production and spatial involvement.

Citymarketing is a means to actively display the image of an area and trying to settle it in the minds of a target audience. Hospers et al. (2011, p. 11) see Citymarketing as a mix of public administration, geography and marketing. The difficult part of marketing a specific geographically defineable area is that it is not a clear product. Ibid: "a city consists of a collection of people that can not be put on display like a can of peas." Hospers (2011, p.123): "Citymarketing thus includes much more than a catchy slogan and advertising. The underlying message must correspond with the image

that is propagated. A clear choice for a brand identity, a core target group and a scale need to be behind this." Choosing too large a scale or target group leads to unfocused marketing. Here the 'rule of the strawberry jam' must be taken into account. (Ibid, p. 30): "The more it is smeared out, the thinner it gets." This means as much as: who, what and where need to be defined clearly and be demarcated (Hospers , 2011, p. 123). To that has to be added that a marketing campagne is not succesful from one day to the next. Citymarketing asks for a long breath in order to be able to convince a target audience of the marketed image.

Though branding has been used by multiple cities and regios, it has not yet seen much use in relation to retail areas and streets. Literature is, be it to a limited extent, available on the topic of branding of shopping centres. The problem with directly linking this to other retail areas and/or streets is that a shopping centre is easier to define and delimit.

Hospers (2011), Mommaas (2011) and Dennis et al. (2011) thus all agree on the statement that a brand needs a long-term perspective, needs to be internally supported and needs to credible. As this is true for cities, regions and shopping centres and theere is no evidence on the contrary, one can expect this to be true for retail areas and retail streets accordingly. Because no other theoretical backing can be found for this claim, this assumption will have to suffice for the purpose of this research.

What I want to add here from my own perspective is the question what a 'brand' is. Going back to the need for and the use of a brand, a brand is in essence but the name of a producer. Consumers might associate this name with several aspects like quality, geographical location, way of production and taste, but these are only the labels they themselves add to the brand. These labels might be influenced be a branding strategy, but the brand stays the same. What I am trying to say is that in order to change the experiences and associations people have with the brand [in this context I still mean the name of the producer of the product], the product might be the most obvious aspect of this concurrence to alter.

2.1.3 Resilience

As I described in the above experiences and shaping them might help a retail area to face changing circumstances and the challenges that arise from these changes. Resilience is a concept that provides a framework to measure the initial situation of a retail area and the (positive or negative) changes it goes through. Resilience is a concept that was first introduced in environmental studies by Holling. In his article 'Resilience and stability of ecological systems' (Holling, 1973) he described how the resilience of a population of a species is crucial in its survival in the event of an unexpected setback. His definition of Resilience rests on the idea that a population is more resilient if it can either resist

setbacks to a greater extent, or if it can overcome these setbacks more quickly. A species than would also be more resilient if it is able to continue its existence through time.

In this formulation Resilience describes the degree to which a population is adapted to a situation and to what degree it can adjust to changing conditions. This means that there are two things to consider. How well the area has adapted itself to the current situation and how strong the adaptability of the population is.

The question how Resilience should be made measurable, is part of a larger theoretical discussion. Martin and Sunley (2015) draw a framework that discerns between different perspectives on resilience. This is the discussion between thinking about Resilience form a perspective of equilibrium or from a perspective of evolution. In this paragraph I already touched this subject briefly, but a further understanding is required in order to fully understand what Resilience means in relation to shopping areas. From the perspective of equilibrium an area is more resilient if it can resist shocks and changes. In this way the area does not need to adapt to changing conditions in order to continue its functioning in a stable way. The more resilient an area would be, the less it would change over time (Simmie & Martin, 2010, p. 29).

From the perspective of evolution the adaptivity is more important. Underlying is the idea that there is no single unique equilibrium. In this sense an area could reach an equilibrium that is different from its starting position whilst remaining resilient. A non-resilient area would be one that does not adapt to change and becomes locked in (Simmie & Martin, 2010, p. 30). This view on resilience also provides the possibility to look beyond equilibria. Carpenter (2005) points out that measuring the boundaries or thresholds of a system is only possible by crossing them. By understanding what is in between of equilibria as thresholds, it becomes hard to identify how human agency could actively affect resilience. This argument could be strenghtened by not observing a resilient place as one that has reached an equilibrium, but rather observing it as being in a process of change, or being able to change. The features of a resilience that give room for human agency, as described by Foster (2006), would then fit within the framework of resilience.

This might even be drawn away from the idea of equilibria. Pendall et al. (2009, p. 6) state that a system that is associated with a continual change should not contain assumptions about equilibria. They describe a cycle of continuous change in which the resilience can be high or low depending on the stage in the cycle. They pose that a system is at its highest resilience when it is at its maximal flexibility. At this point "…the region experiences new partnerships, allignments and agreements emerging from competition for ideas and power" (Kärholm et al. 2009, p.7). In this thought cooperation would be started more easily as resilience is higher and cooperation would contribute to a higher resilience. They however also mark a disadvantage in this. Within this cycle an increase in connections might lead to a stabilisation, rather than a continued flexibility. This,

following the cycle, will lead to a decrease in resilience. Human agency might prevent this from happening. Pendall et al. (2009) agree with Foster (2006) in the sense that human actors can influence trends because of foresight and creativity. Concluding this, cooperation between actors in an area would lead to a more resilient area over time, so long as connections remain flexible.

Here, the discussion in literature moves away from its ecological origin towards its use in regional studies. Though Holling's Resilience was primarily focussed on ecological questions, another use was later found in regional studies. Fernandes en Chamusca (2012) describe Resilience as the speed with which a system can return to its [new or former] equilibrium or the intensity of the change it can absorb. They are, however, aware of the difficulty that comes with presuming an equilibrium for a city to be a feasible. "They [cities] are understood as dynamic products of human processes where places evolve with different rythms and patterns but do not return to their previous state" (Fernandes & Chamusca, 2012, p. 171). Fernandes and Chamusca (Ibit) define retail resilience as "the ability of different types of retailing at different scales to adapt to changes, crises or shocks that challenge the system's equilibrium, without failing to perform its functions in a sustainable way".

As an addition to this perspective a working paper by Foster (2006) can be mentioned. She describes three important features that make an important change to the resilience of areas. First, humans are capable of foresight and intentionality. Second, humans communicate. Third, humans develop technology. With these three features she exemplifies how human agency can strengthen a region's resilience. Specifically when these three features are being taken into account together one can conclude that urban areas can develop a strategy for strengthening their resilience, whilst this is not possible for subjects in the ecological context [without human interference]. This means that human agency and communication between actors in an area is important in defining its resilience. Especially for the part of adaptivity within resilience the importance of the relation between actors is evident.

In measuring the Vitality of an area a good representation of the situation is neccesary. First it has to be clear what the current situation or starting point is. In this research that shall be described as 'Vitality'. Secondly the question is how the area adapts or changes from this position. This will be desribed as 'Adaptivity'. The combination of Vitality and Adaptivity will than make it possible to describe the Resilience of an area from both a perspective of a current situation and a perspective on future development. This requires knowledge of both the factors that make a succesfull shopping area and the factors that work against a succesfull shopping centre. Balsas (2004) names several ways in which a succesfull city centre can be measured in his article. The factors that make up the Vitality of the area will be discussed in paragraph 2.3.

Adaptivity describes how an area can take action itself to face changing conditions. On this side of Resilience moving away from the starting position has a central place. Here the features of resilience that human agents add to resilience should be taken in consideration. Important indicators in this are the level of organization, co-operation between public and private parties and the freedom retailers have to work together (Bardoel & Schildkamp, 2014). The indicators of adaptivity will also be described in paragraph 2.3.

2.1.4 Cooperation between actors

Continuing the line of thought that cooperation between actors is a significant aspect within the adaptivity of a retail area, it is important to understand how this cooperation comes to be, why actors might be willing to engage in this cooperation and how cooperation might be stimulated. The literature on civic activism could be used to learn from processes where this cooperation did, or did not, work. Though civic activism is more oriented at a cooperation or debate with a government or institution, it might answer the question what is needed to motivate people [in this research retailers] to take action and participate in a collaborative process.

An actor can have various reasons to take part in a process. A first consideration is the balance between costs and benefits for an actor. If participating costs time and effort, but does not contribute to gains for the actor, one cannot expect an actor to do so (Pattie & Seyd, 2003). The primary question, however, is what benefits are needed to convince actors to participate. A benefit that could be derived from participating is personal satisfaction (Ibit, p.444). Further, Olson (1972) sees an important place for the use of providing incentives for those that participate in order to prevent free-riding. *"Actors are more likely to participate if they receive more benefits, whether collective (accruing to all, irrespective of whether they participate) or selective (available only to those who participate), and they become less likely to participate as the costs increase."* (Pattie & Seyd, 2003, p. 444). Pattie and Seyd (2003) see three elements that, together, make up selective benefits: process benefits, outcome benefits and group benefits. Group benefits accrue to the group an actor represents and thus only need part of the group to participate. Outcome benefits can persuade an actor to participate, as he might enlarge his gain in the outcome by joining in the process. Process benefits might convince actors for which the other benefits do not (directly) count, as participation in the process itself will grant benefits.

This way of observing participation only includes a rational decision. Socio-psychological aspects should also be included (Pattie & Seyd, 2003, p. 444). An actor that feels a stronger attachment and/or sense of duty will be more inclined to contribute. Pattie and Seyd also argue that social capital might increase this willingness to participate. Though it is conceivable how this works for civic activism, it is harder to explain this within the framework of retail areas. One might expect a

retailer to be more inclined to participate as he not only has this social aspect to consider, but also his financial position as a business owner.

2.1.5 Linking theoretical perspectives

In order to be able to use the theoretical perspectives in the above, an insight into how these are linked is necessary. First I will look into the relation between Resilience and Experience. As described in the paragraph about experience economy, experiences are an important motivation for shoppers. Not only convenience and practical considerations count, but also the experience, that shopping itself offers, must be considered. Following this line of thought it is not hard to see how a retail area that offers its visitors a unique experience can be more resilient than one that does not. This pairs of with the dimension of atmosphere and experience within vitality [see paragraph 2.3].

Resilience and branding firstly connect via vitality and the physical structure of the retail area. As branding requires a sameness and similarity between the area and the brand that is attached to it, the vitality of the area partly determines what can be accomplished through branding. Also, the [potential] spatial alterations during the process of branding [re]shape the area and thus influences its vitality through adaptation. Secondly, branding is a process that requires cooperation between stakeholders within the area and a brand that is supported by as many as possible. This means that Branding is connected to the dimension of communication within vitality and the insight civic activism provides.

As a third relation Branding and experience are linked. Branding is a process that tries to create a brand for a spatially delimited area. It is justifiable to say that this brand should be a representation of the experience that the area is trying to sell. In this sense, making alterations in the environment within the process of branding also alters the experience that a visitor gains. These links are represented in the conceptual model [figure2].

Figure 2.1: Conceptual model

2.1.6 Canvas Business model

Though the paragraphs above cover most of the theoretical discussion, I believe it is important to zoom in a bit further on the relation between consumer and retail area. Here I want to implement the Canvas business model (Ostwalder & Pigneur, 2010). This model will not be implemented as a new theoretical perspective, but rather as a tool to help put the theoretical perspectives in the above in a different light. I believe that this makes the playing field of vitality, adaptivity and the role of branding more visible, but also offers a guide to something very important in reaching results: profit. For profit is something the theories above do not sufficiently hit, whilst this is one of the aspects that is of most importance to retailers. Retailers might or might not contribute to the resilience of their street of to the process of branding, but would not be there in the first place if they were not be able to earn a living. Next to that "if the high street was in single ownership, like a department store, it would have a vision, a high level strategy and direction, it would choose what it wanted in a particular space to fit with a vision and proactively target the businesses and services that were missing." (Portas, 2011)

The canvas business model (Ostwalder & Pigneur, 2010) identifies several aspects and relations between a business, its suppliers and its consumers. The model is illustrated in figure 2.2. First there is the customer segment. This is the target audience that needs to be reached with the product. This also means that the business model needs to be centered around this objective. Second, there is the value proposition. This is the product or service that creates value for the consumer and so what needs to be 'sold'. Next, there are channels. Here the business and customers meet when it comes to communication, sales and distribution. Customer relations are about retaining customers and gaining new ones.
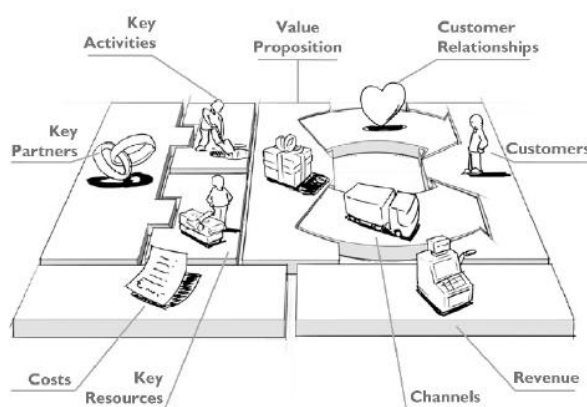
Figure 2.2: Business model Canvas. Source: Ostwalder & Pigneur (2010)

On the left side of the model there is the business itself. The key activities, key partners and key resources. The key resources are the assets with which to build the value proposition. Ostwalder and Pigneur (2010) designate this part of the model for physical, financial, intellectual of human

resources that the business owns or acquires through its key partners. The key activities are the actions a business must do to function successfully. Together with the key resources they are required for creating a value proposition. Key partners are the suppliers and partners of the business that help it in achieving its key activities or help in providing key resources. The two parts of the model that are left are costs and revenue. These contain the financial considerations of the business. Revenue is obtained from customers purchasing the product, but must be weighed out with the cost as a business its prime goal is making a profit. An operationalisation that translates this model to a format useable for retail areas will be explicated in chapter three.

3. Research Methods

3.1 Research strategy

To achieve a delimitation for this research a research objective and central question have been set up. The objective of this research is to offer insight in how retail areas can use their image to strengthen their (economic) position.

To reach this objective the following question has been formulated: *"How can a retail area use the process of branding to strengthen its resilience?"*

In order to be able to answer this research question a suitable approach needs to be chosen. For this research that is a comparative case study. A case study offers a thorough insight into a question which involves research objects or processes that are restricted by time and or place and involve a real-life and contemporary setting (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010 p.183 & Creswell, 2013 p. 97). As this research involves a retail area [which is delimited within space] and a process of branding [which is delimited in time] this seems an appropriate approach. This research question requires an in depth research, rather than a broad research asks for a qualitative approach. As the insights of individual in the area are an important source of information (Creswell, 2013 p. 98).
The comparative aspect can be seen in the comparison between the cases of the van Woustraat and the Hezelstraat [see paragraph 3.3]. These cases will not be observed with an identical approach. The Hezelstraat is a case on which both practical and scientific literature are available. This requires less fieldwork. The van Woustraat, however, is a case on which less is documented. Also, the van Woustraat has just started a process of branding, whilst the Hezelstraat has already passed through this process. This permits for a differentiation between cases, where the van Woustraat will be thoroughly explored, whilst the Hezelstraat will serve as a case for reference. More about the case selection will be described later.

Another argument for this choice would be the depth that is needed for a thorough case study. A choice for a balanced approach to both cases would necessitate for an amount of fieldwork that is too large for a master thesis. By taking what is available about the Hezelstraat and doing a new research in the van Woustraat both existing knowledge and an in depth case study can be combined.

3.2 Research material and data collection

This research focuses on the effect branding has on the resilience of retail areas. In order to achieve this, a choice for two cases will be made. The first case is a retail area that is in the middle of a process of branding and shall, hopefully, grant insight into the effects branding has on resilience

during its startup and advancement. The second case is a retail area that has already undergone such a process. This might give insight to the effect on resilience once the process of branding has been carried out. This second case will only be used for reference and so will ask minimal effort. The first case will be investigated in depth.

In the first phase of research, literature study will have a central place. Scientific literature, internet sources and news articles will give insight in the central concepts. This is needed to gain full insight into the depth and scope of the problem (Creswell, 2013, p. 51).Besides that, they will be used to give understanding into how retail areas function, which problems they face and how they currently oppose these. The information that comes forth from this research phase will be joined into the theoretical framework of my Master thesis. The second phase of research consists of an individual analysis of both cases. For each case the vitality and adaptivity [and thus the resilience] will be made clear, whilst simultaneously inquiring into the effect of the process of branding to these. In this second phase policy documents and other sources will be used to identify the resilience of the cases, which stakeholders are involved and how their stakeholders contribute in the process of branding. Next to this interviews with stakeholders will be needed to understand how they experience[d] the process of branding and the [possible] changes in the resilience of the area.

To achieve this for the van Woustraat several stakeholders need to be interviewed. First, government actors are important, as they bear a responsibility for the quality of the public space in a broad sense. This means that they have a stake in strengthening the resilience of a retail area. Second, retailers in the area are important. They make up the diversity in the retail area and are the actors that should, theoretically, be the people that communicate and cooperate to create a more resilient area. Third, property owners are an interesting group. As their rents can rise when the quality of the retail area rises they have a stake in the resilience of the area.
The government actors that were interviewed for this research are the district manager, the district police officer and the senior account manager for economical affairs. By interviewing these people I tried to get a coherent image of the relations between government actors and retailers. Also, the stance and approach on the retail area is was important. Choosing which government actors to interview was straightforward as it was clear who are responsible for certain portfolios.

Making a choice into which retailers would be interviewed was hard. From a scientific perspective it would be ideal to select entrepreneurs randomly. A case study does not always provide this opportunity as the amount of chosen research respondents is lower. This allows for a strategic sample from the population (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2010, p. 185). Given the background knowledge from my internship, I knew some retailers were very enthusiastic about cooperation and others were far from that. Next to that, some retailers are member of the undertakings [or even a board member] and others do not want to join in the undertakings. Knowing

what the stance of entrepreneurs is on the subject, it is easier to find entrepreneurs for both sides of the argument. In my selection for respondents I tried to find entrepreneurs that had a sympathetic stand towards cooperation, entrepreneurs that did not have a sympathetic stand towards cooperation and entrepreneurs that had a stand somewhere in the middle. Next, I tried to find retailers from different parts of the street. As the van Woustraat can be divided in three different parts [see the case description] it would be important to include retailers from various standing points for every part of the street to be able to make objective claims about the van Woustraat. This left little room for a random selection of research subjects.

3.3 Operationalization

In the previous chapter, a distinction was made between two aspects of resilience: vitality and adaptivity. In order to be able to use these in this research a further operationalisation is needed. In the tables below a summary of the indicators that will be used to describe Vitality and Adaptivity. These include both quantitative and qualitative data. The amount of shops or the mutation rate, for example, can be represented with the use of quantitative data, but this is much harder for an indicator like the appearance of public space. This means that both quantitative and qualitative indicators will be implemented in this research. The dimensions and indicators used to determine vitality are derived from Bardoel & Schildkamp (2014). Table 3.1 gives a summary for Vitality. Important sources are statistical data from governmental sources and carried out visitor surveys. By interpretation of these indicators an image of the vitality, and so a snapshot of the situation, can be made.

Dimensions	Indicators	Type of indicator	Means of inquiry	Other sources
Range of shops	Number of shops	Quantitative	Personal observation	
	Branching	Quantitative	Personal observation	
	Amount of branche stores versus SME's	Quantitative	Personal observation	
	Mutation rate	Quantitative	Personal observation and desk research	Documentation on mutation
Ambiance and experience	Quality of public space	Qualitative	Personal observation	Visitor survey
	Look of buildings	Quantitative	Personal observation	Visitor survey
	Vacancy of buildings	Quantitative	Personal observation	
	Safety	Qualitative and quantitative	Desk research	Visitor survey and crime rates
Accessibility	Accessibility by	Qualitative and	Desk research	Visitor survey

	public transport	quantitative		
	Parking spaces	Qualitative and quantitative	Desk research	Visitor survey and overview of parking spaces

Table 3.1: Indicators to determine vitality of retail areas (source: personal adaptation)

Table 3.2 gives a summary for Adaptivity. These dimensions and indicators are derived from literature (Pattie & Seyd, 2003) and Bardoel & Schildkamp (2014). Interviews will be the key research strategy in acquiring this information. The fact that these indicators are both quantitative and qualitative stems from the fact that both the frequency of contact as its pay-off are interesting in measuring adaptivity. This also means that the first two dimensions in the table need to be assessed in reflection on the last two dimensions and vice versa, as the question is how cooperation and communication meets adaptation.

Dimensions	Indicators	Type of indicator	Means of inquiry	Other sources
Structural cooperation and communication	Membership of association of undertakings	Quantitative and qualitative	Interviews with entrepreneurs/retailers and shopping area manager	
	Consultation between municipality and retailers	Quantitative and qualitative	Interviews with entrepreneurs/retailers, municipality and shopping area manager	
	(informal) communication between retailers	Quantitative and qualitative	Interviews with entrepreneurs/retailers and shopping area manager	
	Consultation between Municipality, entrepreneurs/retailers and external parties	Quantitative and qualitative	Interviews with entrepreneurs/retailers, municipality and shopping area manager	
Incidental cooperation and communication	Consultation between municipality and retailers	Quantitative and qualitative	Interviews with entrepreneurs/, municipality and shopping area manager	
	(informal) communication between retailers	Quantitative and qualitative	Interviews with entrepreneurs/retailers and shopping area manager	
	Consultation	Quantitative and	Interviews with	

	between Municipality, entrepreneurs/ret ailers and external parties	qualitative	entrepreneurs/ret ailers, municipality and shopping area manager	
Adaptations by entrepreneurs/ret ailers	Adaptations in retail area	Quantitative and qualitative	Interviews with entrepreneurs/ret ailers, municipality and shopping area manager	
Adaptations by municipality	Adaptations in retail area	Quantitative and qualitative	Interviews with entrepreneurs/ret ailers, municipality and shopping area manager	

Table 3.2 Indicators to determine adaptability of retail areas (source: personal adaptation)

In the last chapter I introduced the canvas business model as a way of zooming in on the relation between resilience and branding. This means that the canvas business model needs to be translated into a tool that is fit for analyzing a retail area. For this I want to use a research by Weltevreden (2015). He used the business model canvas on retail areas to provide a tool for collective marketing. Though my research is not centered around collective marketing, this adaption of the business model provides a good insight into the possible use of the model for retail areas.

The business model canvas has several aspects. I will 'translate' these to a retail adaptation in the following. First there are key partners. For a retail area these would be relations with the municipality and other government actors. Second, key activities a retail area could implement. When categorized they fall in the following denominators: Clean, whole and safe; collective online actions; customer loyalty; monitoring; entrepreneurship and services. The key resources include much of what is part of vitality. These are the resources/base values the area can work with. The value proposition relates strongly to what is defined as a 'brand' in the above. This is what the retail area has to offer and wants to emit towards the consumer. This proposition finds its way towards customers through relationships and channels. Channels and relationships can be combined within this problem. They include a website, newsletters, social media, a webshop, a mobile application of flyers. Last, there are costs and revenue. Costs are made for key activities and key resources. Revenue is obtained from (increased) customer spending. This adaptation of the canvas model is illustrated in figure 3.1. Though the sort of content per block comes from an adaptation from Weltevreden (2015), the content itself is influenced by own experiences during my internship and my research.
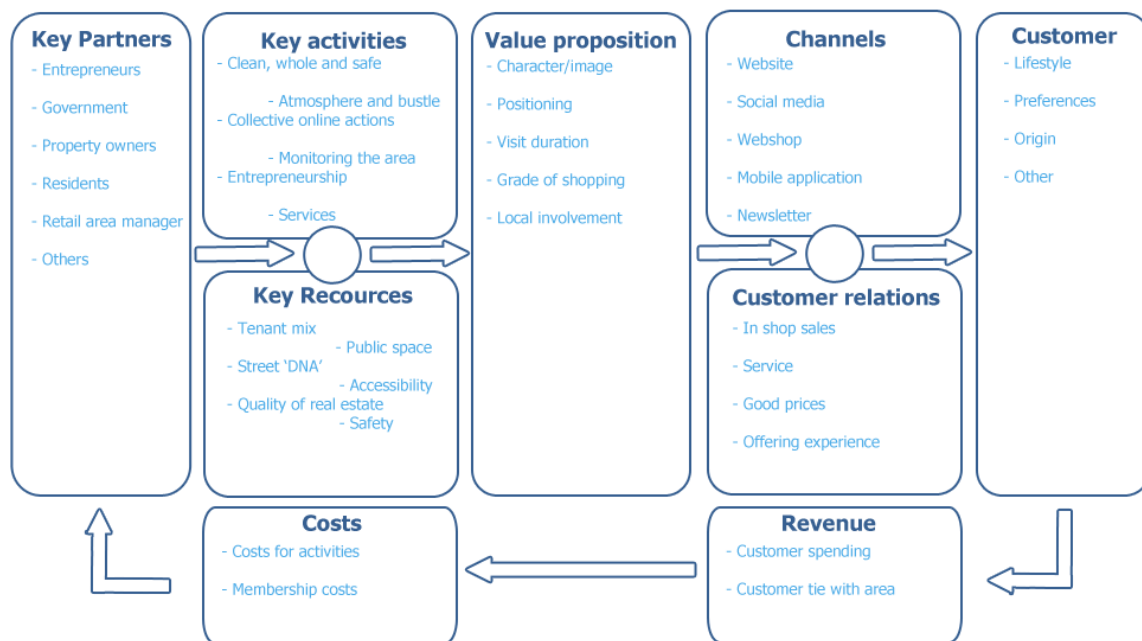
Figure 3.1: Business model canvas adapted to retail areas. Own adaptation.

In this adaptation resilience finds its way most evident through key activities and key resources. The key resources strongly relate to the aspect of vitality and provides the area with the basic conditions. The key activities have a strong relation to adaptivity as these are the actions that are taken to remain at, or change the position of the area. The value proposition is then translatable as the brand the area uses.

3.4 Case selection

The reason for carrying out this research through case study's comes forth from the fact that, in answering the research question, the perspective of entrepreneurs in a specific area is important. Answering how cooperation itself could be improved would require a different approach. The fact that my research focuses on retail areas means that the perspective from actors in a retail area is of primary importance. To acquire a description of this perspective, these actors need to be contacted. This means that field work is a key element of this research.

The choice for a mainly qualitative approach comes forth from the fact that relation and communication within the area are important. These can [not easily] me measured in a quantitative way. For variables that have quantitative components, for example vitality, some questions can be answered without interviews. Still most questions need to be asked to actors in an in depth interview in order to get a good answer.

3.4.1 van Woustraat

The van Woustraat is a retail area in Amsterdam within the district 'de Pijp' [figure 3]. Situated just outside of the city center it can be defined as a highly urban area with a high retail density. The Pijp knows four important streets from a retail perspective: the Ferdinand Bolstraat, Albert Cuypstraat, Ceintuurbaan and van Woustraat. Each of these streets has a different character and might be interesting for a different target group. Furthermore several other retailers are situated spread out over the district. The area as a whole is covered by a 'Stichting promotie de Pijp'. This is a foundation that is set up with the intention of marketing a brand for de Pijp. The undertakings from the different streets in de Pijp are represented in this association.

The van Woustraat is actively trying to shape the public space in a way that, hopefully, better suits the requirements of its visitors. This would, following the previously quoted literature, increase the area's vitality. The process of branding this involves is very interesting. This process has been started in order to be able to find a joint vision for the street. From this joint vision choices for adaptations in the public space can be made. This, however, comes down to a form of branding. Though it is not primarily focused on providing a marketable brand, the process is focused on finding a common vision on the retail area and making changes so that the area better suits this vision. The relation with the overall brand of de Pijp and the focus of the retailers within the district might also be an important factor to consider.
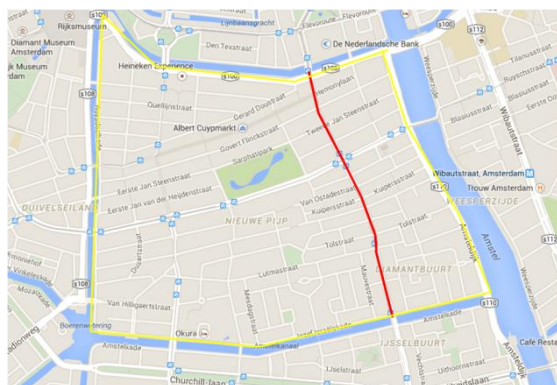
Figure 3.2: map of 'de Pijp' with the van Woustraat in red and boundaries of de Pijp in yellow. Source of basemap: Google Maps (2015)
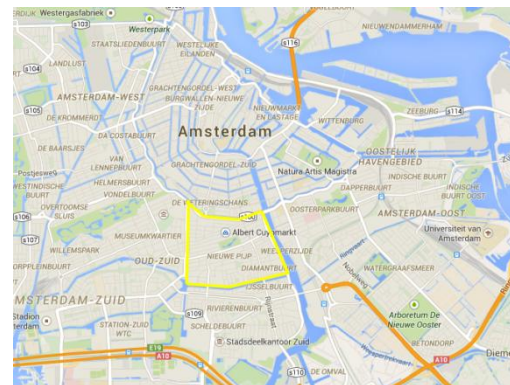
Figure 3.3: de Pijp in Amsterdam. Source of basemap: Google Maps (2015)

3.4.2 Hezelstraat

The Lange Hezelstraat in Nijmegen might be an interesting second case. Though the size of the city is different, the relative function of the Lange Hezelstraat is quite similar to that of the van Woustraat. Apart from that, it functions within a similar network within the city center of Nijmegen as the van

Woustraat within de Pijp. A brand for the city centre as a whole can be distinguished, apart from a brand for the Hezelstraat.

What makes the Lange Hezelstraat suitable for a reference case is the fact that a lot has been documented about this retail area over time and that this case seen a process of branding. This means that both the process of branding as its result can be taken into account within a similar spatial framework. What sets it apart from the van Woustraat is that the van Woustraat offers insight in the start of the branding process, whilst the lange Hezelstraat offers insight into the whole process.
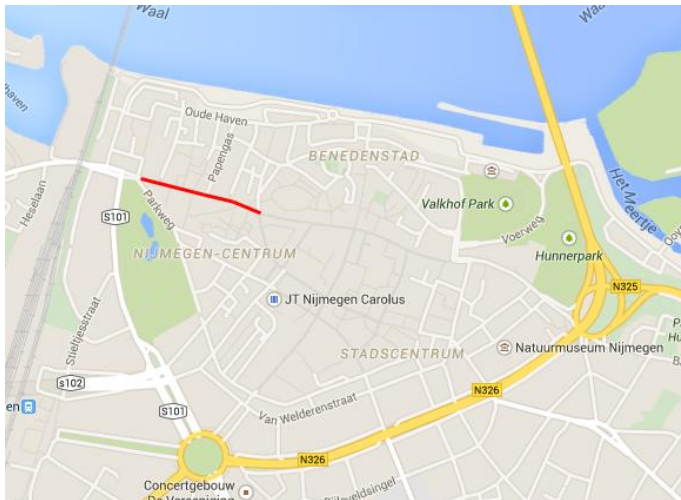

Figure 3.4: Nijmegen city centre with Hezelstraat in red.

Source of basemap: Google Maps (2015)

4. Research results van Woustraat

This chapter is all about the case van Woustraat. Though vitality and adaptivity can be separated quite easily within theory, an analysis in real life makes it harder to distinguish these two aspects. In this chapter I will present my research results for the van Woustraat. There will not be a distinction between both aspects at every point, as I believe the 'story' the case itself narrates is more important than this hard distinction between vitality and adaptivity. I will refer to this distinction in the conclusion of this chapter, where I will reflect on the other paragraphs. This makes it possible to preserve the description of the case as a whole, whilst making a distinction from a theoretical point of standing. For this chapter I have chosen to work from the case description in chapter 3 and onward instead of first expanding this description. A full description would give an overlap with the analysis of vitality and adaptivity.

4.1 The vitality of the van Woustraat

Some indicators for vitality can be presented without interfering with the story the case tries to narrate. These are mainly the quantitative indicators. They can be objectively presented as a fact, as they did not require interviews or further context. In this paragraph I will talk about these indicators.

4.1.1 Range of shops

The van Woustraat is home to about 180 shops. Some have been in the street for decades, some settled very recently. When observing the van Woustraat this range in shops can be characterized in several ways. Shops can be ordered by the type of product they sell. There is, for example, a distinction possible between shops that sell food articles, non food articles, shops that sell both or supermarkets. Another possible distinction could be made between new and entrepreneurs and ones that have settled longer ago. From a third point of view a distinction could be made based on their customer base. Some shops are new and trendy, whilst others sell common day-to-day articles. Not one of these distinctions can be used on its own to attribute for the entire van Woustraat. In the following I will try do construe an image that suits the buildup of the van Woustraat veritably.

The van Woustraat can be objectively split into three areas. This is illustrated in figure 5.1. First there is the part from the Stadhouderskade down to where the van Woustraat meets the Ceintuurbaan. This part has a mix of SME's and branche stores. Branche stores are slightly clustered around entry points to the street.
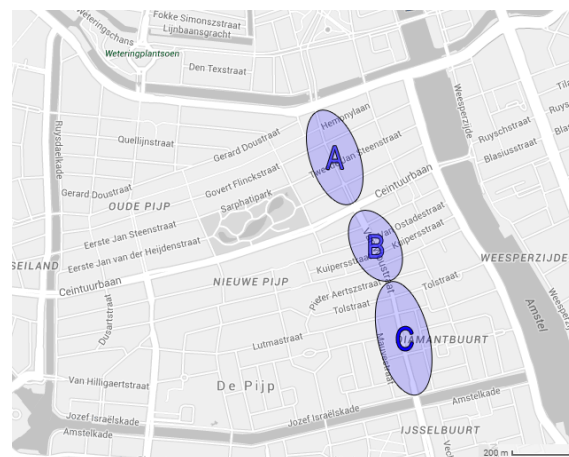

Figure 4.1: distinguishable parts of the van Woustraat.
Source of basemap: Maps Amsterdam

The second distinguishable part of the van Woustraat lies from the Ceintuurbaan to the Pieter Aertszstraat. This part has more SME's but also has several well known branche stores and has attracted quite a few new shops.

The last part starts at the Pieter Aertszstraat and goes on till the Jozef Israëlskade. This part is characterized by a broader layout of the street. This also means that there is room for trees, plants and bicycle parking. Though this part offers a lot of potential when purely looking at the quality of public space, you also see the most vacant shop units in this part. This contrast is quite remarkable. The shops that are situated here are almost all SME's. The only branche store in this part is a supermarket.

Throughout the street you can see that the more people visit the northern part of the van Woustraat than the southern part. Especially the most southern part [part C in figure 5.1] is an area that is more calm. For the entire street one could say that it is more or less true that the street gets calmer towards the south, though the intersection with the Ceintuurbaan is an exception.

4.1.2 Ambiance and experience

Look of buildings: A distinction can be made between the ground floor level and the floors above. The ground floor level, in most cases, is where shops are located in the van Woustraat. The floors above often have a residential function. The buildings in the van Woustraat have a high potential quality of appearance. For some buildings this has been revealed with good maintenance. Examples are the buildings of 'Geflipt' and 'Marqt' [see pictures below]. There are also quite a few buildings that require work.

Figure 4.2: Facade of 'Geflipt'   Figure 3.3: Facade of 'Marqt'

Vacancy of buildings: In this respect there are several differences within the street. Some vacant shop units have been vacant for years, others are vacant for only weeks. This seems to depend strongly on the place in the street and the size and price of the unit. The bustle in the street seems to be related to this. The areas that are busier are the places where new retailers tend to fill in vacant units. Vacant units in the calmer areas are vacant for longer periods of time. Simply the idea that more visitors lead to more turnover does not seem to explain this in full.

Only selling the product a consumer wants does not guarantee a large turnover. The fact that people want an experience whilst shopping [the theoretical discussion about experience economy] means that the ambiance and consistence of shops in the area affects the amount of visitors. This can be seen in various parts of the van Woustraat. The area between the Ceintuurbaan and the Pieter Aertszstraat is a good example. This part has recently seen a high mutation rate. The new businesses that have filled up shop units here all more or less share a target audience. They try to attract [relatively] young shoppers with an eye for craftsmanship and durable production. These shops profit from each other's proximity as shoppers can buy more articles that suit their demand in one area. A factor that seems to be important in this aspect is that when people are visiting a neighbor/competitor in the street, the chances are high a retailer will see an overflow in shoppers. The map in figure 4.1 shows the situation in December 2014 versus march 2015 . You can see that the distribution of vacancy has changed quite a bit, whilst some units remain vacant. Distinctively noticeable are the shop units in the southern part of the street.
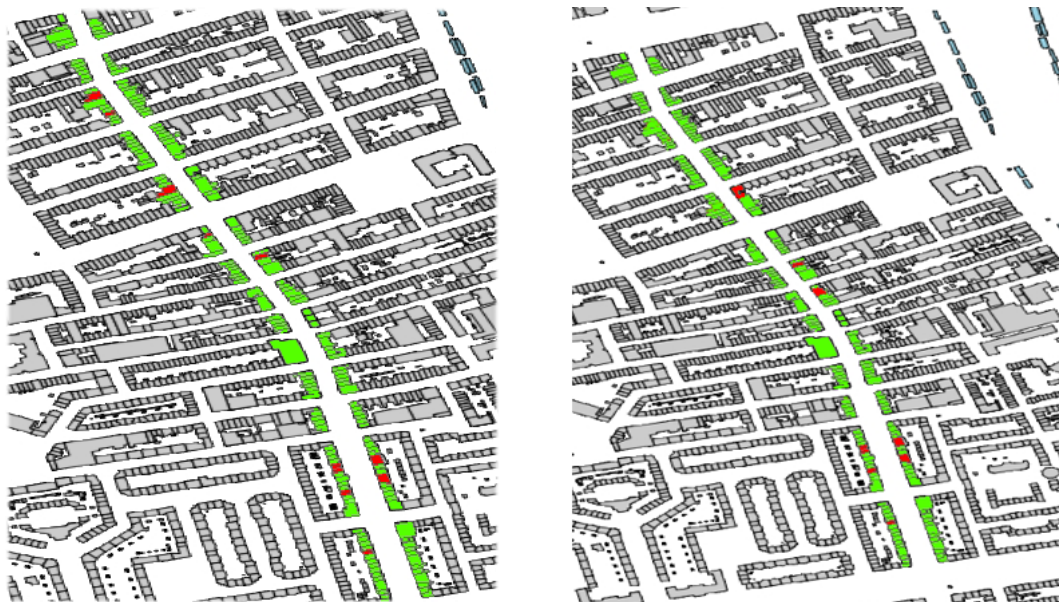
Figure 4.4: Vacancy [in red] in December 2014 and march 2015. Source of base map: Maps Amsterdam

Safety:

Safety can be split up into two parts. First there is traffic safety and second there is overall safety. When it comes to traffic safety the van Woustraat is a street that does not score high. The street is defined as a 'red route' for cycling traffic from the Stadhouderskade to the Ceintuurbaan and from the Ceintuurbaan to the Jozef Israëlkade as a 'orange route' for cycling traffic. A red route indicates more than fifteen accidents involving bicycles in three years per kilometer of road. A orange route indicates from ten to fifteen accidents involving bicycles in three years per kilometer of road. This means that the entire van Woustraat has an indication as a high risk cycling area.

This can partly be explained by the way traffic is structured in the street. The street has two traffic lanes for cars, with on each side of the street a cycling lane next to it. These lanes are not separated from each other by more than a line painted on the asphalt. Next to the cycling lane, a lane of car parking divides it from the sidewalk. This creates an image of a street that is intensively used by cyclists, cars and pedestrians over the length of the entire day. Combined with a partly obstructed line of sight from the parked cars it is not difficult to see why the van Woustraat sees many traffic accidents.

For the overall safety a further distinction can be made between objective and subjective safety. The subjective safety in the street has been measured within a visitor survey on two occasions (Seinpost 2014 & Seinpost 2015). In November 2015 the van Woustraat scored 6,9 points out of ten. In 2014 the street scored 7,0 points out of ten. This means that the experience visitor have of the street is more or less the same.

If we look at the 'objective safety index' published by the municipality of Amsterdam, we can see how the street scores on objective safety. This is more difficult to define, as these rates are measured for de Pijp as a whole and divided per neighborhood. The problem here is that the van Woustraat runs through all three neighborhoods. This makes it difficult to divide data for the van Woustraat from the rest of de Pijp.

4.1.3 Accessibility

The van Woustraat has quite a high accessibility by several modes of transport. There are several tram stops in the street with frequent stops and, with driving lanes for both directions, accessibility by car and bicycle is high. Figures 5.4 and 5.5 give the accessibility in peak hours measured in traveling time needed to reach zip code area 1074. This is the zip code for the whole Pijp on the eastern side of the van Woustraat.

<15 minutes	30 - 60 minutes
15 - 30 minutes	Water
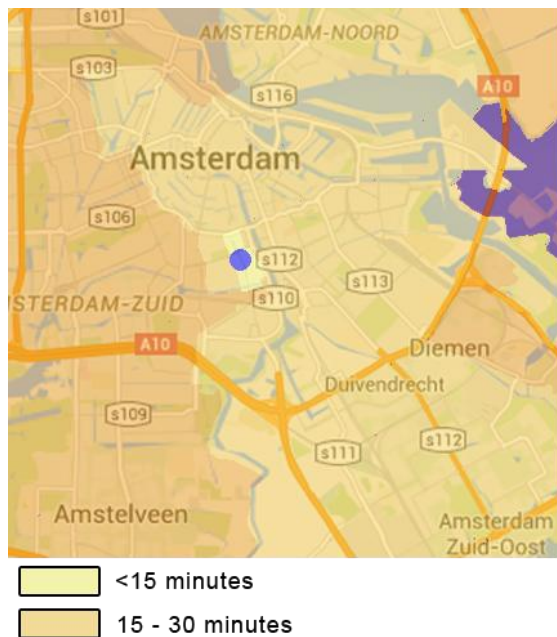
Figure 4.5: Accessibility by public transport during peak hours. source: Bereikbaarheidskaart
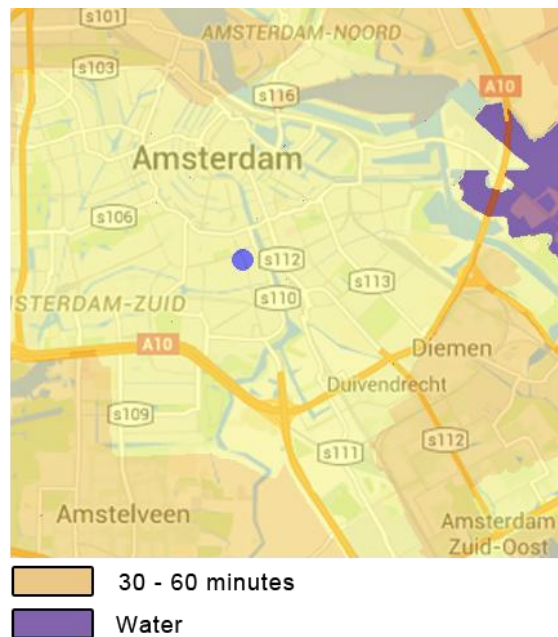
Figure 4.6: Accessibility by car during peak hours. source: Bereikbaarheidskaart

The only, accessibility related, problem worth mentioning is parking. For both car and bicycle parking spaces are limited. Cars can be parked for only €0,10 in the van Woustraat till 4.00 pm for up to one hour a time. This means that the van Woustraat has one of the lowest tariffs in Amsterdam. This policy comes from a conflict between interests in the street and a shortage

Figure 4.7: image for reference. zipe code area 1074 outlined in red. source: Google Maps

of parking space. Entrepreneurs want enough parking spaces in the street for their customers and residents want to be able to park close to home. Cheap, short duration, parking during opening hours and parking for longer duration outside opening hours solve part of this problem. The availability of car parking spaces is an important topic in the restructuring of the street.

Bicycle parking is an issue with similar considerations. Cycling is a very important mode of transport in Amsterdam. This means that, with both residents and shoppers parking in the area, parking spaces are limited.

4.2 The character of the van Woustraat is shifting

The van Woustraat is a street that is changing. This has not gone unnoticed by the media as both NRC Handelsblad (12-06-2015) and het Parool (13-06-2015) have written about this trend. The van

Woustraat is gaining in popularity and this can be noticed in the street. Different shops are filling in shop units and different people start to visit the street. As a result one could say that the color, or character of the street is changing.

4.2.1 A visitor survey shows a changing target audience

A visitor survey in the van Woustraat gives insight in the way the flow of shoppers and passing people changes through time. This visitor survey, carried out by Seinpost (2015) offers the possibility of looking at changes through time. This survey gives facts for both the district de Pijp and the van Woustraat as an individual retail area. All tables in this paragraph have this survey as a source.

Van Woustraat	First measurement	Second measurement
Male/female	46/54	40/60

Table 4.1: gender of visitors in the van Woustraat

Age	First measurement	Second measurement
Younger than 20	4%	2%
Between 20 and 30	26%	15%
Between 30 and 40	16%	18%
Between 40 and 50	13%	15%
Between 50 and 65	29%	29%
Older than 65	12%	20%

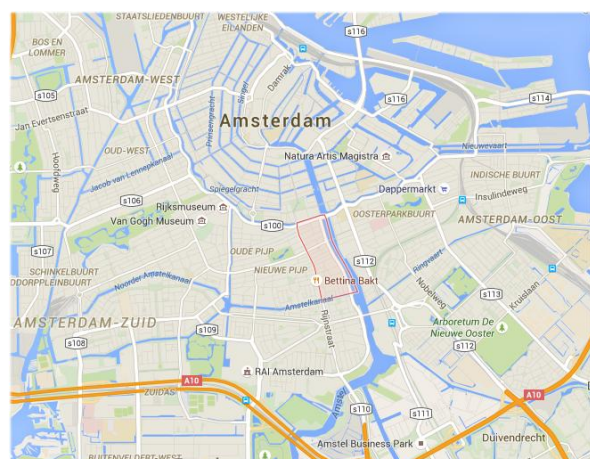Table 4.2: age of visitors in the van Woustraat

The distribution between male and female visitors has changed but little, as seen in the table above. Further, a change in age distribution can be seen. The group between twenty and thirty years old has almost doubled and there are more visitor above 65 years old. Where these visitors came from also offers an interesting insight. In the next table a change can be seen. Though numbers have changed a small bit, the percentage of visitors from Amsterdam has increased. De Pijp [zip codes 1072, 1073 and 1074] and the rest of Amsterdam made up for 84 percent of visitors at the first measurement, but this went up to 88 percent at the second measurement. A subtle conclusion could be that the van Woustraat is attracting an audience from further away, as visits from de Pijp itself have slightly decreased and visits from the rest of Amsterdam and the rest of the Netherlands have increased.

Origin	First measurement	Second measurement
1072 [ZIP code]	6%	4%
1073 [ZIP code]	24%	24%
1074 [ZIP code]	20%	24%
Rest of Amsterdam	38%	32%
Rest of the Netherlands	11%	15%
Foreign	0%	1%

Figure 4.3: Origin of visitors in the van Woustraat

Spending during a visit to the van Woustraat has increased from the first measurement to the second. Fewer people spend nothing when visiting the street and more people spend more than €50,-. In this survey people were asked how much they had spend in the street. The average during the first measurement was €22,- but rose to €45,- during the second measurement.

Spending	First measurement	Second measurement
Nothing	12%	5%
Less than €10,-	12%	20%
Between €10,- and €50,-	69%	66%
More than €50,	6%	10%

Table 4.4: Consumer spending in the van Woustraat

The most striking results from these surveys are that especially people between the age of 20 and 30 find their way to the van Woustraat better. Also, people tend to travel a greater distance to visit the van Woustraat and spending has gone up.

4.2.2 Changes in retailers

The changing target audience delineated in the above might be linked to a change in the mix of shops in the street. Through time the van Woustraat is a street that sees a lot of changes for shops coming and going. The price level of products in the street is rising. Where changes in tenants for retail units happen, there is also a change in products being offered. Low price food businesses often make place for shop or food businesses with a higher price/quality level. This also means that the average price level in the street is slowly, but steadily, rising. Examples of these are Stach, Geflipt, Marqt, Landmarkt and Juice brothers. They have all started in the van Woustraat in the past year or two, but all target a younger audience that is willing to spend a bit more for products and have a preference for trendy venues. The newspaper article by het Parool (13-06-2015) gives a nice description of the changes in retailers the street has recently seen. Figure 4.8 [included in the article] illustrates this statement. These new retailers all more or less target young urban professionals. This

Figure 4.8: New shops in the van Woustraat. Source: Het Parool

is, however not the whole story of the van Woustraat. There are other entrepreneurs that are important in describing the street. Small businesses [SME's] that have been in the street for decades also are important for the character of the van Woustraat.

4.2.3 Changes in physical space

The van Woustraat has, historically, grown to the street it is now. The van Woustraat has, as the name of the district suggests, an important function as an entry point to the city centre. De Pijp got its name as a 'Pipeline' through which people commuted to and from the city centre. This function can still be partly seen in the van Woustraat. It is a street that has a heavy traffic density and traffic takes up a large share of the diameter of the street. Trams, cars and bicycles drive on both sides of the street. This leaves a sidewalk that is as narrow as one and a half meters at its narrowest. This is quite slim, considering the number of pedestrians that pass through the street.

The question that rises is whether this is a problem. The van Woustraat had a character that fitted a street for short stops. Shops and restaurants aimed at convenience, or fast food were numerous in the street. This made the van Woustraat more of a 'stop, shop and go' street. When looking at the changes the street has seen in recent years, one can conclude that the van Woustraat does not fit this profile anymore. The physical profile of the street itself, however, does. This provides a challenge that the municipality faces in relation to the restructuring of the street.

4.2.4 The price of housing in de Pijp is rising

Though it might not be the most obvious topic to talk about in relation to retail areas, I would like to describe the house values in the Pijp. The reason I think this is important is that more than half of the consumers in the van Woustraat lives in the Pijp. With such a large share of spending coming from within the neighborhood, it might be interesting to look into changes in house values in the past years.

In the following figures the house value per square meter is represented for various years. In this illustration it is clear that houses in the Pijp are valued quite high and that the northern part of the Pijp has more expensive houses. Further you can see that, though the economic crisis and its effect on the real estate market is visible, the Pijp has become more popular. This also illustrates the increase of young urban professionals wanting to live in de Pijp.
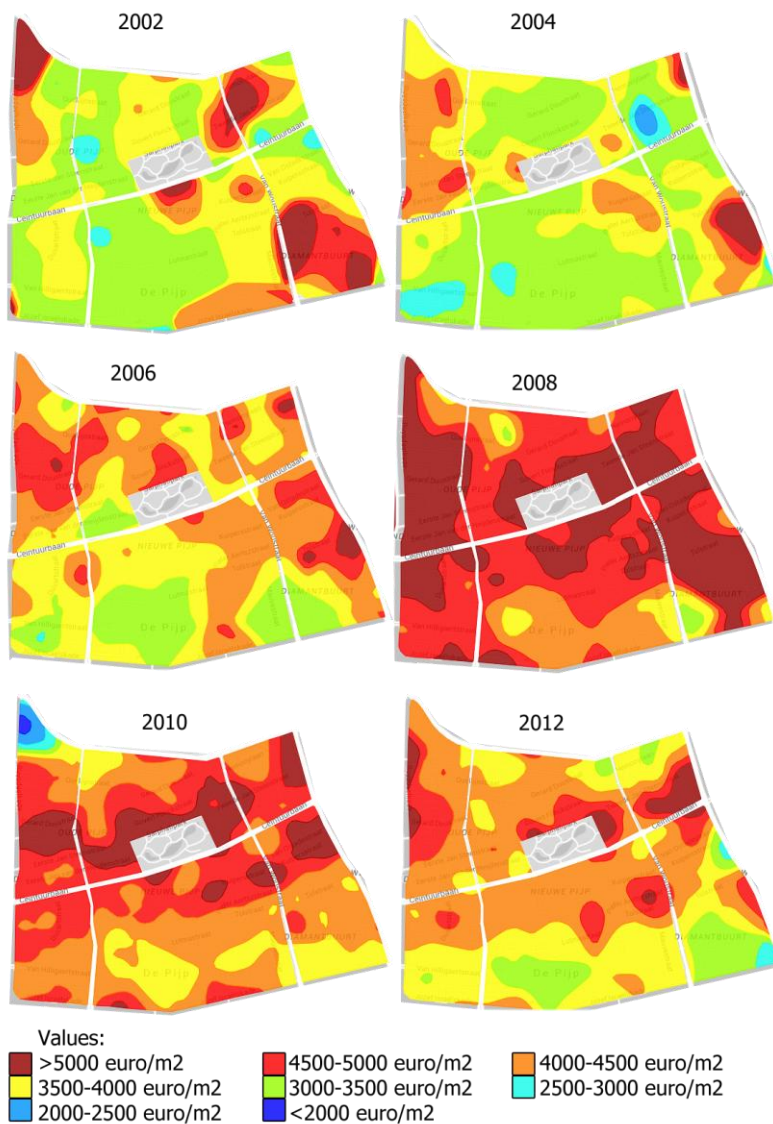
Figure 4.9: House values per m2 in de Pijp. Source: Maps Amsterdam

4.3 Cooperation between retailers works, but can be taken to a higher level

The van Woustraat knows some cooperation between retailers, but this has been between a limited number of individuals. The group that partakes is small and so can only achieve limited results. This creates a problematic loop. Some entrepreneurs need to be convinced with results, but results sometimes require more effort than a small group can make. The main question that can be put forward is how more entrepreneurs can be convinced to join participation.

The entrepreneurs I spoke during interviews all valued cooperation. They were of the opinion that the economic position of the street could be strengthened by working together as a collective. "When your business is doing well, it is good. But when the street is doing well, your business can do only better." (Pierre Norbart, personal communication). Apart from that, they saw value in informal communication between shop owners. Keeping each other up to date on developments in the street

was seen as a way to get to know one another. This could be described as a way of teambuilding. Some shop owners literally described the retailers as a team. "As retailers we do have a lot in common and do have a common interest in the street. I think that is why we should work as a team." (Jesse Tenhaeff, personal communication)

Though several entrepreneurs are actively working together, they only account for about ten percent of the entrepreneurs in the street. The other ninety percent does not actively join the attempts to improve the economic climate in the street. There might be several underlying reasons, but they are hard to verify as I could not convince entrepreneurs in this category to participate in an interview. The answer to the question why these entrepreneurs were not willing or able to cooperate thus needs to come from the other interviews and my own observations.

Entrepreneurs that did not want to participate in the research told me they did not have time for an interview. Though this sounds like a simple excuse, this might be part of the main problem when it comes to cooperation between entrepreneurs. "Some entrepreneurs are self-employed and don't have time or personnel to fill in for them, so it is hard for them to participate." (Jesse Tenhaeff, personal communication). The van Woustraat houses many SME's where the owner works in his shop himself. This means that he or she has to schedule personnel when he needs to make time for activities outside of the shop. As a result participating in the undertakings or joined activities come with a price tag in the form of wages. As a result, one might expect retailers to participate as soon as they [quite literally] can afford it. This might be strongly liked to their turnover.

In activating more entrepreneurs, the value of participating has to be made clear. As it simply costs an entrepreneur to participate, he needs to know what he will gain from it. In this sense financial gains are very important. Will there be more traffic from visitors? Will sales go up? Will spending increase? If those questions can be answered with a "yes", or at least a "probably" then entrepreneurs can start to see participating as a way of investing for the benefit of their own turnover. This also requires them to recognize that shopping is an 'experience' and that not only their own product and shop count. The experience retailers as a whole provide is important in creating an attractive retail area.

4.4 Branding is not yet a fully attainable issue

This research is centered around branding of retail areas. As a theoretical line of thought branding is a suitable tactic for creating a competitive retail area. What this process of branding is, what it includes [or does not] and how this should be achieved are questions that I have found to be not so easily answered as thought.

The entrepreneurs, municipality and retail area manager have started working on a brand for the van Woustraat, but have [until now] only focused their attention on attuning an, already

scheduled, restructuring of the street to better fit its character. The starting point for this discussion was adjusting the planned measures to the needs of entrepreneurs in the street, residents and the general safety. This started the discussion of at a point of physical space with subjects like parking spaces, sidewalk width and speed limits.

One reason for this focus is that this restructuring is primarily about these physical aspects, but putting it like this does not cover everything. Another main reason is that only a few entrepreneurs are at the table. Again, these are often the entrepreneurs that are already active in the undertakings. These entrepreneurs, however do see the value of having a brand to identify with. "It would be good to have a collective idea about where we want to go with the street. ... It would be important that we collectively formulate our idea about the street." (Aran Sanders, personal communication)

In chapter two I introduced the process of branding. There I explained that, in order for a brand to work, you need to have a clear choice for a target audience, a clear choice for a message you want to transmit and support from as many parties as possible to commit to these choices. What makes it hard for the van Woustraat is that the van Woustraat misses a large share of that support, as only a few entrepreneurs are at the table, and that it is hard to justify such specific choices without that support. In short: there are too few to decide for the many.

Another important reason is that a lot of information is needed in order to have informed discussions and to make decisions about the brand's target audience. Data is needed about who the customer is and how this customer could be facilitated. An example of this, is the parking discussion in the van Woustraat. In a meeting about the restructuring of the street, some entrepreneurs voiced their concern about reducing the amount of parking spaces. They felt like many customers used this mode of transportation to reach the area. A customer survey by the retail area manager and undertakings, however pointed out that only about 13 percent (Seinpost, 2015) of the customers came to the van Woustraat by car. To be able to move away from hunches and towards statistical data in branding the area, a large basis of information is needed. For the van Woustraat a lot of information about the customer is available, but more has to be known about customer preferences and visiting purpose to make a more precise indication of customers in the van Woustraat. It then would be possible to find a common denominator not in the mix of entrepreneurs, but in the customers they serve.

4.5 There are two sides to the local government

The entrepreneurs experience the government in two very different ways. First there is the government as a policy making apparatus. They encounter this government in for example the

restructuring project. This government makes plans and asks for input from entrepreneurs but stays quite 'far away' for them.

Entrepreneurs do not feel like their input is always appreciated enough. The municipality does ask them to participate in the process, but they have the feeling that the municipality does not give enough feedback on how it used their input. "You have entrepreneurs that have been in the street for more than twenty years and have become disappointed by several things and have lost trust in the district government. People should however, in one way or another have faith that the government actually takes up their input." (Bettina Loose, personal communication) This makes them question what worth they get from investing their time. "on one side all goes well. They are actively involved on many topics. On the other side things go a bit sluggish." (Pierre Norbart, personal communication).

From the government perspective this is not entirely true. The municipality actively tries to communicate their plans and planning with entrepreneurs, but has a hard time reaching them (Hennie Loos, personal communication). Again, the restructuring is a good example. The municipality actively tried to involve entrepreneurs early in the process and integrate their comments into the planning process. The difficulty here is that, as described above, only a small part of the entrepreneurs is reached. As the others are not at the table, they are not well informed. This as a result creates the idea that the government does not value input from entrepreneurs enough, whilst in reality it gets to little input to act upon.

Second, there is the government the entrepreneur sees every day. This is either in the capacity of enforcement or maintenance. Marcel van der Weijde (personal communication). noticed that there was quite a challenge ahead of him when he started working in the van Woustraat. Entrepreneurs had a negative image about maintenance of public space. Before not all reports were followed by action. This resulted in entrepreneurs not reporting when things in the public space were damaged or dirty. In order to keep the quality of the public space at a high level a cooperation between entrepreneurs and municipality was needed. This more active attitude paid off. (Marcel van der Weijde, personal communication)When entrepreneurs noticed that the municipality was working on the quality of public space, they sent in reports of problems more often, resulting in more action from the municipality. The most important thing here was gaining trust from the entrepreneurs again.

For both 'faces' of the government the aspect of trust is important. Entrepreneurs want to know what is done with their input and how it is used. On top of this is the fact that the project of the restructuring of the street was handed over from the district government [Stadsdeel Zuid] to the 'central city'. The entrepreneurs were afraid that this would not help in getting their voices heard. "We had very good conversations with the district government and let them know what we would

like to see in the van Woustraat... Now everybody is being moved off the matter and it is given to the central city, I get the feeling we are starting all over again." (Pierre Norbart, personal communication)

4.6 Trust is an important aspect for a functioning undertakings

When talking to several actors there was often one important topic that was discussed: trust. Whether it was about not wanting to make the first step in cooperation or thinking another actor would not use given input, actors found it difficult to act if they would not be certain they got something in return.

4.6.1 membership of the undertakings is dependent on previous success

An important factor for the success of the undertakings is success in the past. "some people have been in the street for so long they don't believe in it anymore... I experienced it in two or three years as an entrepreneur here that you become numbed, because so little effort works out." (Pieter Jongens, personal communication) "At one point we were very active and had about 110 members over 170 entrepreneurs, but when we planned a meeting about 20 showed up."(Sven Heinen, personal communication)This might sound like a strange fact, but is something that became clear both through interviews and own observations during my internship. The 'active' retailers look beyond this, but the 'inactive' retailers first want to see results before they want to invest time in the undertakings. As mentioned before, participating comes with financial costs. As their revenue does not allow for much spare time, participating costs them more than they believe they can gain. These retailers first need to be convinces with results before they want to invest themselves.

Linked to this was the fact that the undertakings had a voluntary [paid] membership. Not only would active participation cost time, support would also cost money. "you need financial resources to achieve results, so we tried to achieve quick wins so we could prove that we were doing something... we tried to get another pedestrian crossing, but ran into resistance from the district government and the GVB."(Sven Heinen, personal communication). [the GVB is the company that supplies public transport in Amsterdam]This meant that only a limited group was part of the undertakings, though the undertakings was active for all retailers in the street. "It has been a long and lingering process... The people in the board of the undertakings spoke each other, but further there was little commitment. We organized a meeting one evening and from about 200 entrepreneurs about fifteen showed up. It was like you were flogging a dead horse." (Pieter Jongens, personal communication) This lead to two things. First, only activities with relatively low costs could be financed. Second, there was a feeling of unfairness in this melioration due to some retailers enjoying free rider benefits.

The result is a negative cycle. Due to low membership, the undertakings were able to achieve but limited results. Due to limited results, membership remained low. The way to break this cycle is to achieve visible results from activities.

4.6.2 The BIZ might be able to break the negative cycle

The entrepreneurs I spoke saw a good chance in changing this cycle with the 'bedrijfsinvesteringszone' [BIZ]. "We hope that it will start to give more connectedness between shop owners... What is being done with my contribution? I hope that will activate people in participating in meetings." (Pierre Norbart, personal communication) The BIZ is a new regulation that allows for an obligatory contribution to investments in retail areas to be retrieved through taxes. A group of retailers writes a five year investment plan for the area and has to formulate the ways in which they will try to achieve their goals. Entrepreneurs in the area can subsequently vote for the proposal. At least half of them need to vote with at least two thirds of that minimum in favor of the proposal. If it gets approved, the municipality will retrieve the contribution of every retailer in the defined area through taxes. This excludes the possibility of free rider behavior, as all entrepreneurs are obliged to participate.

In theory, this resolves the issue of a lack of support as a reason for a lack of success. That basis is no longer needed to achieve successes, as financing of initiatives can be obtained through this taxation. The only hitch is that the plan needs to be approved by a majority of voters and that at least half of the retailers need to cast a vote.

Another way in which the BIZ might help entrepreneurs is that it takes a lot of work of their shoulders. "For the undertakings, collecting contribution took a lot of work. The time that took can now be put to better use in organizing things." (Pieter Jongens, personal communication).

4.7 The retail area manager is a potential connector

In the above I described several challenges that make it hard to work on the resilience of the van Woustraat. Entrepreneurs either have little time to take an active role or need to be convinced that this active role pays off. Next to that there is a noticeable gap between the municipality and the entrepreneurs.

Here the retail area manager plays an important role. The retail area manager is a person that autonomously acts for the benefit of the retail area. This means that a retail area manager will support the undertakings when it comes to organization or communication with the municipality. The retail area manager will, however also provide the municipality with necessary information (John Bardoel, personal communication, N.D.). Funding for hiring a retail area manager can come from the undertakings, the municipality or both. For the van Woustraat, the municipality hires the retail area manager. This autonomous position gives an interesting perspective. The task here is to pick the side

of the retail area itself, not necessarily of the actors involved in this area. This means that the retail area manager can have a different role with regard to different topics and situations.

For the van Woustraat the retail area manager has several topics at hand. First, there is the level of organization of the undertakings. The membership count for entrepreneurs in the van Woustraat was low and the organizational strength of the undertakings was below a desirable level. Second, The municipality is planning a restructuring of the street and public space and wants input from entrepreneurs. The retail area manager is involved in connecting entrepreneurs with the municipality. Third, there is the business climate in the area which the retail area manager tries to stimulate. Concluding, the retail area manager can be valuable as a connector between retailers, property owners and the municipality.

The topic of the retail area manager was more important than I expected when I started my interviews. The entrepreneurs valued the work of the retail area manager quite highly and experienced the benefits. "Many entrepreneurs are very focused on their own business, but he shows you that there is more to the street than just your own shop." (Pierre Norbart, personal communication)

4.8 The van Woustraat in the Canvas business model

In chapter 2 I introduced the Canvas business model as a way of looking at the relation between branding and resilience from a more profit centered point of view. In this paragraph I will elaborate on this within the boundaries of the van Woustraat. By doing so I will try to identify how the situation fits and works within the model and how the van Woustraat might act to improve its business case. Figure 5.7 illustrates the conceptual business model for retail areas, as presented in chapter three. Within this model I will try to put my description of the van Woustraat from the paragraphs above into a coherent framework. As this regards the street as a whole, I will focus on the perspective of the undertakings.
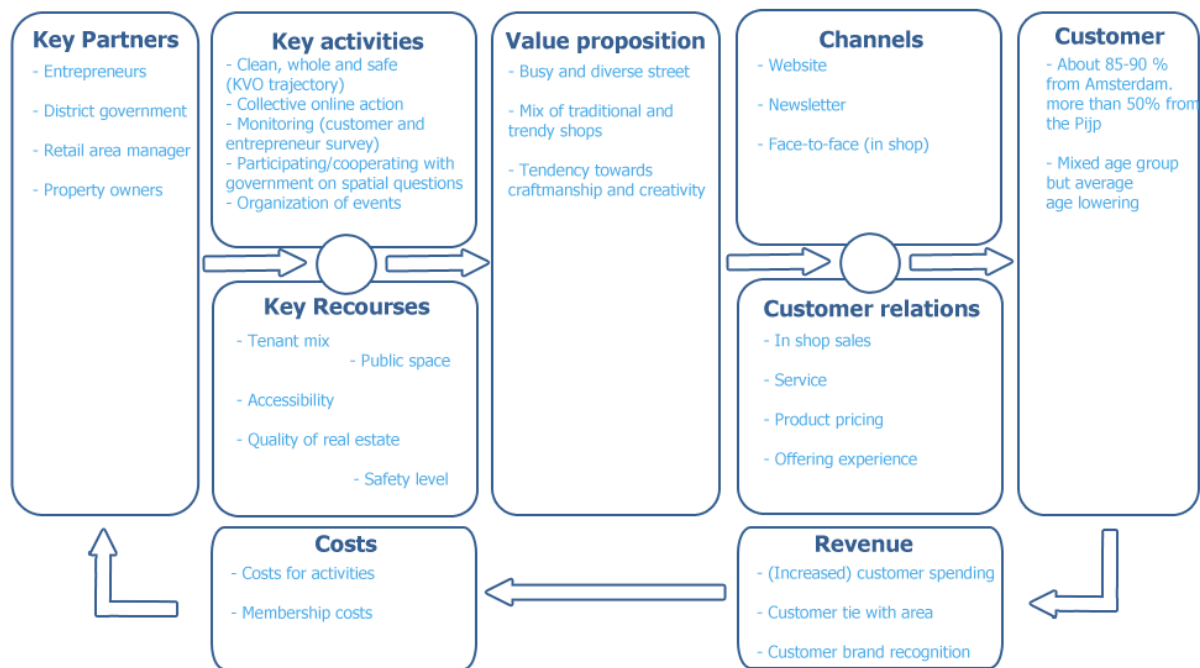
Figure 4.10: Business model canvas for the van Woustraat

Within the van Woustraat several things are notable, when looking at the model above. First the key partners are limited to four groups. Though the residents in the district/street make up for more than half of their customers, there is little communication between the undertakings and [groups of] residents. When it comes to the key activities one can see that the undertakings is quite active on a broad spectrum. The value proposition [or brand] for the van Woustraat has started to take shape. Customers recognize the van Woustraat as a busy and diverse street, but the brand needs some delineation. It is not yet focused enough to target specific audiences through marketing. It does however provide a basis to build upon. The van Woustraat is mostly reliant on face-to-face contact with customers when it comes to passing on its value proposition. There is a website with limited content and the undertakings is not [very] active on social media. This means that most customers receive the message of the value proposition by visiting the area itself. A good estimate about the balance of revenue and costs is hard to make. Entrepreneurs pay contribution through BIZ taxes, with which activities are organized. The question at this point is how much the area gains in the sense of increased consumer spending and a consumer tie with the area. Monitoring of this would be required for making such an estimate.

4.10 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter I started by drawing an image of the van Woustraat. I tried to give a truthful overview of the area's resilience by describing both its vitality and adaptivity. Further I described how far the van Woustraat has progressed in the process of branding and how the actors in the area are involved in the functioning of the street.

My first observation is that the van Woustraat is an area with high potential. It is situated within a busy district and has a relatively good business climate. This can be seen in the fact that many new entrepreneurs have chosen the van Woustraat as the area to start their new business. This does not mean that the street cannot be brought to a higher level. There are large differences in between the three parts of the street and several indicators within vitality and adaptivity is not as high as they could. The quality of public space and traffic safety, for example pose serious challenges. Further, the cooperation and communication between entrepreneurs and between entrepreneurs and the municipality needs work.

First steps have been taken through appointing a retail area manager, planning for a restructuring of the street, professionalizing the structure of the undertakings and starting a process of branding. The active entrepreneurs have expressed their faith in this approach and hope it will bring more entrepreneurs to the table and so bring more support.

There is a start of a brand that is being shaped by a group of active entrepreneurs and the retail area manager. From here on actions can be taken to strategically improve the resilience of the area. The brand helps in this way, because it offers a long term perspective and a goal to work towards. It goes beyond the quality of the street in the present, which would only be bettered by keeping the area whole and clean and makes it possible to work towards long term improvements.

Concluding, through this case analysis, I see first parts of proof that a process of branding might improve the resilience of the area. It brings entrepreneurs together around a common goal and helps them think beyond actions in a short-term framework. The support of the retail area is experienced by entrepreneurs as a successful supportive tool.

In the conclusion of this chapter I want to emphasize that this cooperation will remain important and needs to be a topic of importance for the future. It gives the undertakings both more potency with regard to representation [towards the municipality] and with regard to improving the quality of the area. The process of branding seems to be a way helps in achieving these goals. It does, however need to determine a more delimited and targeted brand on the basis of customer and retailer backgrounds.

5. Research results Lange Hezelstraat

The Lange Hezelstraat is the second case in this research. This street brands and markets itself as "the oldest retail street in the Netherlands" (Hezelstraat Nijmegen). What makes this case interesting regarding this research is its process of branding and the cooperation between retailers.

5.1 The Lange Hezelstraat and its position

The Lange Hezelstraat runs between the Stikke Hezelstraat and the Joris Ivensplein as seen in figure 5.1. As one of the characteristic streets that survived the allied bombardment during the second world war, it is one of the few streets in Nijmegen's city centre that still have medieval buildings. This means that the buildings are different from the rest of the city on both the inside as the outside. In most of these buildings a lot of wood is incorporated in the facade. The structures are narrower and the floor surface is limited. This old way of building offers both perspective and a challenge. The look of the buildings offers a quality that can be used, but their layout and size makes it hard to run a retailing business in them. I will go into this in the following paragraphs.
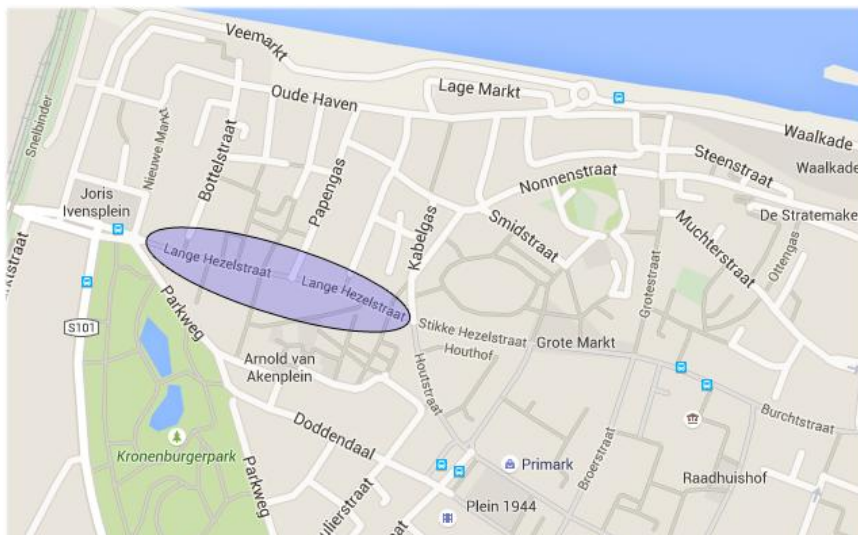
Figure 5.1: the lange Hezelstraat in Nijmegen. Source base map: Google Maps

The Lange Hezelstraat has a long history of active cooperation between retailers. The undertakings has always known a high percentage of membership and the relation with the municipality has been mostly active and constructive. (Bardoel, personal communication, 2015 & Verhoef personal communication, 2015).

5.1.1 The streetscape fits the image the buildings send out.

The Lange Hezelstraat is paved with cobblestones and has street lights that looked aged on both sides of the street. Further, cars are not allowed in the street and the street has greenery in the form of trees. This layout was chosen to fit the look of the buildings and to support the experience that the

area wants to send forth with the brand (Bardoel, personal communication (N.D.). Another feature in the street [as seen in figure *X*] that reinforces this image is the signage on the facades. When walking through the street this image is very recognizable. The combination of factors makes it seems like the street has always been structured this way [I will say more on this in paragraph 5.2]. This streetscape thus fits the image of the brand. With a street that looks old and original, " the oldest retail street in the Netherlands" becomes a believable framework.

Figure 5.2: the Lange Hezelstraat. Source: own picture

5.1.2 Accessibility

The accessibility of the Lange Hezelstraat is relatively good. Though the street is closed to all traffic other than suppliers, the accessibility by car is good, as the Joris Ivensplein provides in parking spaces. Further, there are bus stops nearby, so accessibility for public transport is also good. Figure 5.3 gives the accessibility in peak hours measured in traveling time needed to reach zip code area 6511. Here you can see the area from which consumers can get to the Lange Hezelstraat a given time limit. What needs to be addressed in this section is that the Lange Hezelstraat also has a function of connection between the Joris Ivensplein and the main shopping area. This means that a share of the people will pass through on their way to and fro (Bardoel, personal communication, 2015 & Verhoef personal communication, 2015).
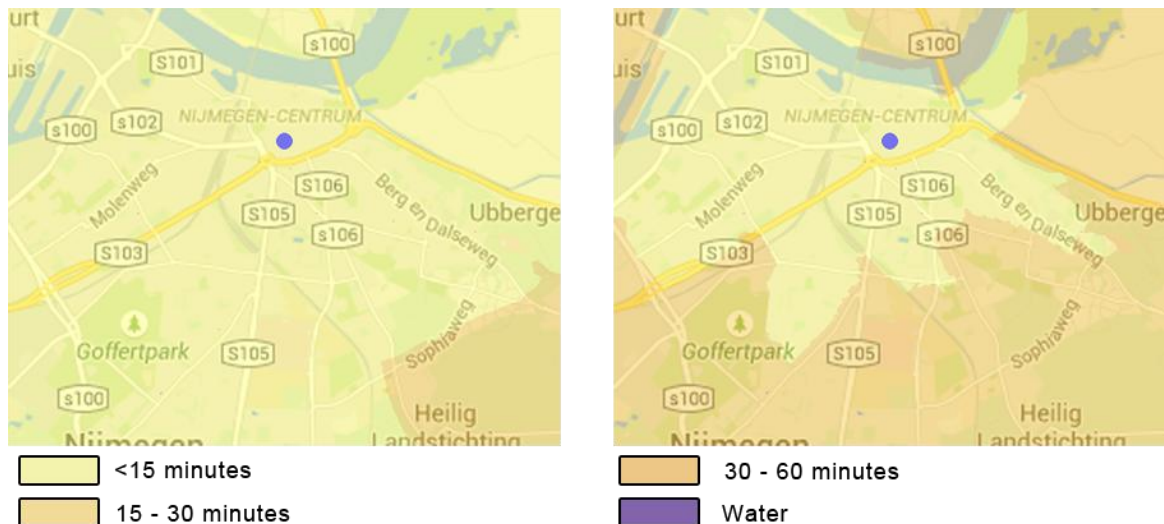
Figure 5.3: Accessibility by public transport during peak hours [left] and by car during peak hours. source:
bereikbaarheidskaart

5.1.3 The tenant mix in the lange Hezelstraat

The tenant mix in the Lange Hezelstraat consists of retailers and a few cafes and restaurants. The
current mix is oriented on a more leisurely kind of shopping (Bardoel, personal communication, 2015
& Verhoef personal communication, 2015). This can be seen as the busiest shopping day is Saturday
and few shops are primarily oriented on everyday products. For example, there is a Spar supermarket
in the street, but there are far more shops that are quite specialized. Shops like are 'Simon Lévelt' ,
'Versailles' and 'Gator' [among others] are shops that get customers for specific purchases.
Customers know the shop is situated in the Lange Hezelstraat and specifically visit for that reason
(Bardoel, personal communication, 2015). Also, the street has visits from people who visit for
leisurely shopping. These customers are attracted to the 'experience' of shopping (Ibid).

When looking at the shopping segment, the Lange Hezelstraat scores within segments B1 and
B2 [see figure 5.4]. There are several segments[A1, A2, B1, B2 and C] of which A1 would be a main
shopping street with many visitors (van Houtum, Raaphorst, & van der Lugt, 2013). Segment B1
scores 25 to 50 on an index of amounts of visitors [A1 being the index with 100] and has many
independent entrepreneurs. These area have a mix of retailers, cafés and restaurants and services.
Segment B2 scores between 10 and 25 on the index of amounts of visitors. These areas typically
know a mix of independent entrepreneurs, supermarkets and other non-retail functions (Ibid).
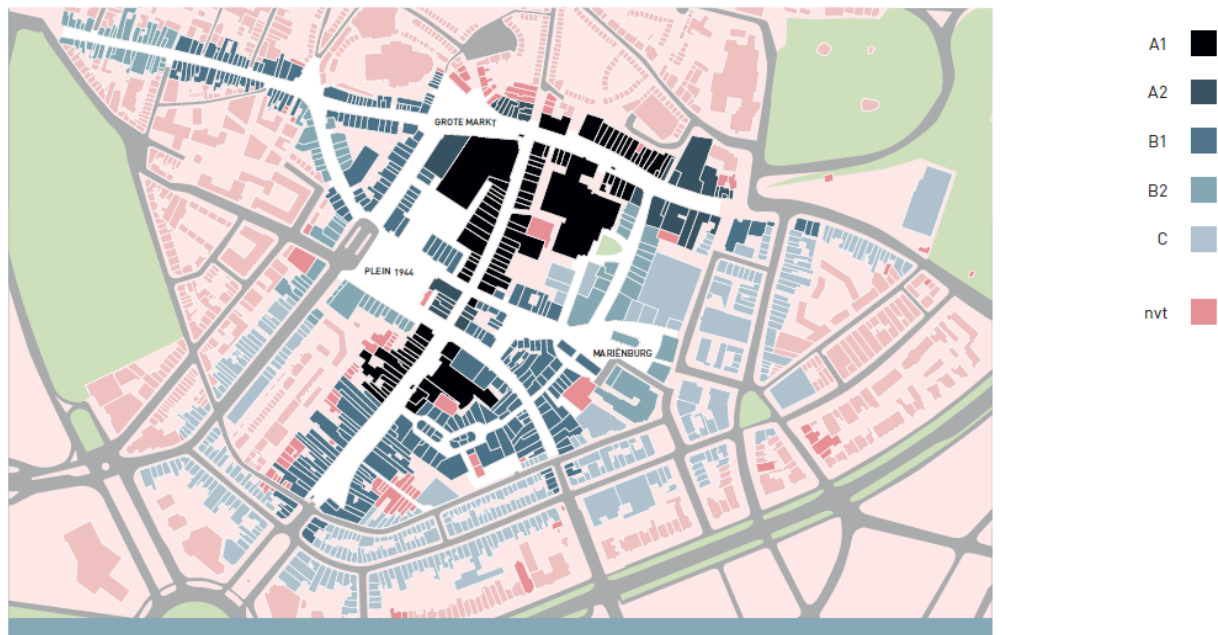
Figure 5.4: retail segments in Nijmegen city centre. Source: Municipality Nijmegen

These segments can be recognized when looking at passer-by intensity and the rent asked for shop units [see figure 5.5]. Renting a shop unit in the busier part of the street is clearly more expensive than in the quieter part. This can be seen from east to west.
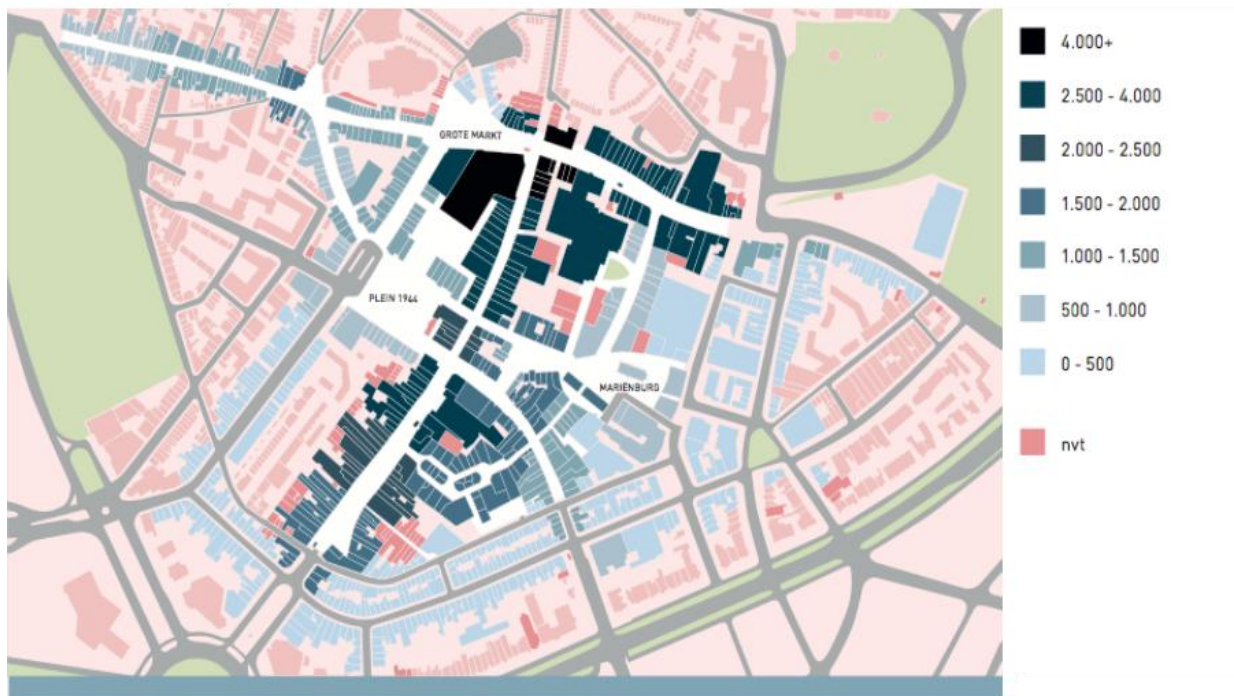
Figure 5.5: passer-by intensity per day. Source: (Nijmegen, 2011)

5.2 De Hezelstraat changed through time

As described above, the Lange Hezelstraat has been a retail street for a very long time. With time passing the street has seen some changes. In figures 5.6 and **_X_** you can see two pictures from how the Lange Hezelstraat looked in the past. On the left there is a picture from 1952. At this time there was still traffic through the Lange Hezelstraat and the city of Nijmegen still had trams. Though this year would be too far back for this analysis, the picture to the right is more fitting. Here one can see the streetscape in 1976 [and onward]. The Lange Hezelstraat became a pedestrian street with very distinctive lanterns. The most important difference here is the 'speed' of the street. With a change from a traffic street to a pedestrian street, the character of the street changed (Verhoef personal communication, 2015). Construction works to change the street towards its current layout started in 2001.

Figure 5.6: Lange Hezelstraat in the year 1952.
Source: (archief)

Figure 5.7: Lange Hezelstraat in the year 1976.
Source: (archief)

In table 5.1 the number of shops per sector are shown through time. Here several trends can be seen. First there is the economic crisis that more or less follows the vacancy numbers. Apart from that, there is always a percentage of vacancy. For the Lange Hezelstraat a reason for this is the size and shape of the shop units. There are some shop units that a so small or strangely shaped that it becomes very hard to earn a income from a shop in these units (Bram Verhoef, personal communication). Second there is a contrast between leisure and leisure oriented shopping on one side and daily shopping and services on the other. This hints towards the changing character as described by Verhoef (personal communication 2015) and Bardoel (personal communication 2015). There was a period where the Lange Hezelstraat knew quite a lot book- and antique stores. This used to strongly influence the image of the street and drew a different audience. At this moment these shops are no longer present.

Group	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Vacancy	11	9	11	7	9	5	5	8	5	9	13	13
Daily products	15	17	17	17	17	16	13	13	13	13	14	15
Fashion and luxury	29	29	31	30	28	31	31	28	30	27	26	24
35-Vrije Tijd	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	3
37-In/Om Huis	12	12	10	10	12	12	13	14	13	14	11	11
Remaining retail	5	5	5	5	3	4	5	7	9	8	7	10
Leisure	12	11	11	14	13	13	18	18	18	16	17	17
Services	17	16	14	15	16	14	12	12	13	13	12	13
Total	105	103	103	103	103	100	102	104	105	105	104	106

Table 5.1: number of retailers per sector. Source: municipality Nijmegen (2015).

5.3 Branding in de lange Hezelstraat

The Lange Hezelstraat is an important retail street when it comes to the subject of branding. The Lange Hezelstraat has a clear brand that is actively used. It characterizes itself as 'oldest shopping street in the Netherlands'. Further, it wants to be a street for specific purchases. Though there is a supermarket in the street, it is clearly not a street for daily groceries. The shops that are situated in the street [as described in the above] fit within this framework and make it a believable frame.

5.3.1 Use of the brand

The brand was formed in the process of marketing the street. Entrepreneurs wanted to set up a joint effort through, among other things, setting up a website and needed a narrative (Bardoel, personal communication 2015). The physical appearance of the street provided a good starting point. With

This does not make the Lange Hezelstraat a brand with much depth, but the imaginative strength of the combination with the look of the area is quite strong.

The brand is used on two paths. First through marketing and second through physical space. In marketing the brand is actively sent forth in communication from the entrepreneurs and undertakings. Often with the phrase "oudste winkelstraat van Nederland" [oldest retail street in the Netherlands]. This takes shape most clearly through the website and 'huis van de binnenstad' [a promotional foundation for Nijmegen's city centre].

In the physical space this brand was taken into account in the restructuring of the street. This made the brand and the area it reflects upon even more coherent. I would like to argue that this might be the strongest way to use branding. By creating a spatial look and feel in the street that fits the narrative like a glove, the narrative becomes much stronger. This helps in marketing the

narrative/brand towards consumers. By strengthening this narrative an added effect was achieved. The business climate in the street became more interesting, as the focus of the street became more sharp. I see this as a confirmation of the statement in chapter two that a branding and/or marketing strategy needs to have a specific target audience in order to be successful. The positive side effect was that retailers that fitted within this narrative became more interested in settling their business in the Lange Hezelstraat. I will describe this in more depth in the next paragraph.

5.3.2 The results of branding in the Lange Hezelstraat

The success might be measured by using the Canvas Business model [as also used for the first case]. The model helps to connect the process of branding and the effects on resilience in a dynamic way. An illustration of the business model for the Lange Hezelstraat is given in figure 5.7.
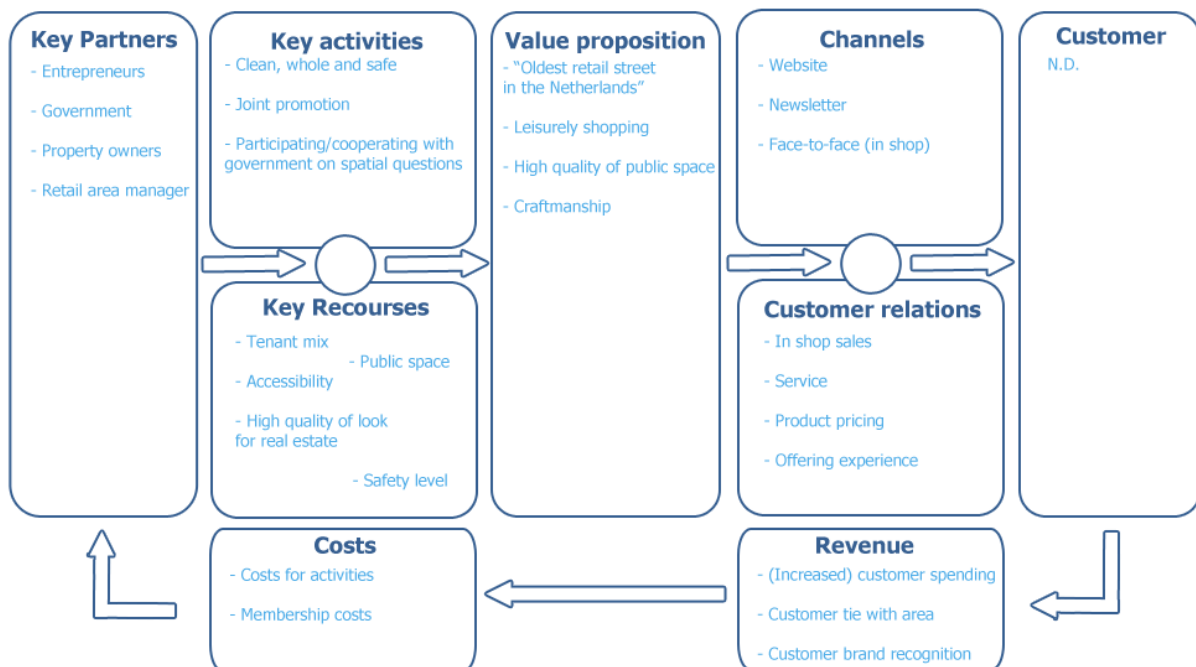
Figure 5.8: Canvas business model for the Lange Hezelstraat

Within this model several things need attention. First the area gains a head start with regard to its key recourses. The look of the buildings and the feel/experience this provides gives it an interesting head start for its value proposition. Without touching on the tenant mix in the street it already has a quality that is appealing to customers.

The key partners for the Lange Hezelstraat are entrepreneurs, the undertakings, the municipality and the retail area manager. The fact that the undertakings are active and function effectively make that key activities can be better implemented. Also, the communication and cooperation between municipality and entrepreneurs/the undertakings creates a positive climate for

actions in the physical appearance of the area. Further, a retail area manager helped the entrepreneurs and undertakings in taking collective actions and thus increases their clout. Key activities in the Lange Hezelstraat takes place mainly at the level of joint promotion. There is a website where the undertakings present themselves and the shops in the street and there has been active promotion in the past.

When asking whether the branding strategy had effect my answer would be 'yes'. Since the street actively started branding itself the tenant mix has changed. Dille and Kamille has, for example, chosen to open a store in the Lange Hezelstraat because the image of the street matched the image they wanted to send forth themselves (Bardoel, personal communication 2015). With a change in the tenant mix, the street offers a more coherent experience. The street is growing towards an orientation on quality and craftsmanship. This already was a common denominator for many retailers before the branding process, but has been brought to the front by the process itself. On top of that, the vacancy of shop units has gone down steadily. Of course the physical change in the public space should be taken into account, as a factor that makes the street more attractive to visitors. The way it has been restructured, however, links up with the branding strategy and has been given shape through communication between municipality and retailers. A good estimate on the growth of the amount of visitors is hard to make. The only data available to me is seen in figure 4.8
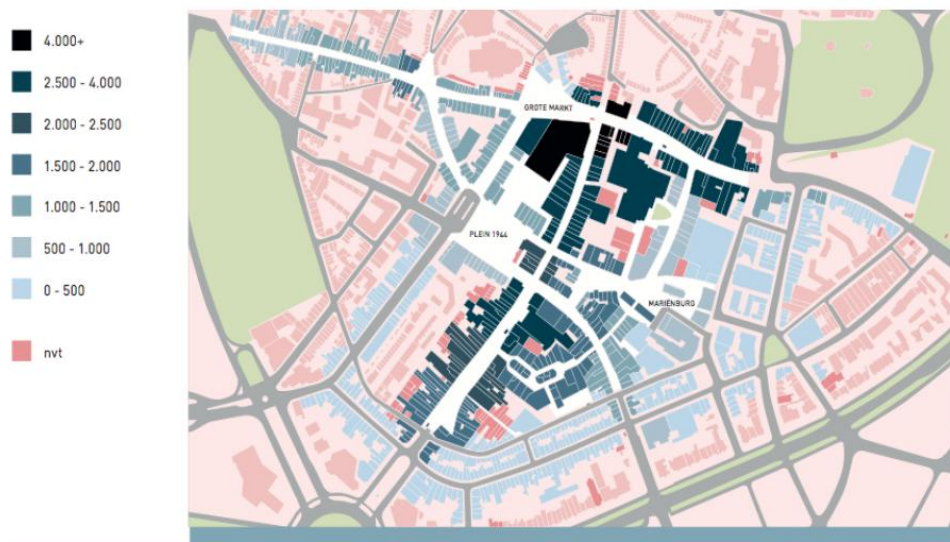
Figure 5.9: visitor intensity per day. Source: Municipality Nijmegen (2011)

5.3.3 Chapter conclusion

In relation to the theoretical framework, the Lange Hezelstraat seems to confirm various assumptions. Most importantly the resilience of the retail area seem to have been positively influenced by a process of branding. In a first way the branding process led to a different physical

appearance of the street. This means that the vitality increased with the increase in the quality of public space.

Second, the process of branding meant that actors had to meet on a regular basis in order to build and support the brand. This brings a cooperation with it and a reason for continuation of this cooperation and as a result a higher adaptivity.

Third, the changes in the street that resulted from this process also drew new/different entrepreneurs to the street. Examples being 'Dille en Kamille' and 'Heydenrijck'. These retailers fit within the framed brand and, by being part of it, enforce the brand's framing. This link between the tenant mix and the "truth" of a brand's message and the connection to credibility and internal support [see Hospers (2011), Mommaas (2011) and Dennis et al. (2011) in chapter two].

What lacks in this analysis is data about how customers observe the brand of the Lange Hezelstraat and if it attracts more visitors. I could not acquire this data and it would have been to much of a workload for a master thesis to produce this data myself. From patching together the different parts of the analysis one could expect to see that it does, as vacancy numbers have gone down and new retailers fitted within the brand's narrative.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter I will answer my main research question and sub questions based on the research and analysis in the chapters in the above. First I will elaborate on the individual sub questions, leading to an elaboration on the main question. Following this, I will give both a theoretical reflection and policy recommendations.

6.1 Answers to the research questions

At the start of my research I formulated a set of 4 sub questions that should lead to an answer on my main question *"How can a retail area use the process of branding to strengthen its resilience?"* In the following I will discuss these four sub questions in detail and answer them with my findings from my research.

6.1.1 Measuring resilience

As my first sub question I asked : "How can the resilience of a retail area be measured?" This question came forth from a need to conceptualize and operationalize resilience in a way that made it possible to use it as a tool for assessing the situation of a retail area. I will elaborate on the way this was done and my experience with this operationalization in the following.

Resilience is a concept that is to broad to conceptualize without splitting it in parts. Within this research I made a distinction that divided resilience in vitality and adaptivity. Vitality is the consists of the more stable factors, whilst adaptivity [as the name suggests] consists of the factors that are more susceptible to change. Vitality is to a larger extent focused on the base values an area has to offer. The quality of public space and accessibility are examples of indicators that fall within vitality. This makes vitality dimension of resilience that is more spatially directed. Adaptivity concerns the more human aspects of the area. Cooperation and communication are important within this direction. A shortened overview of the conceptualization, as given in chapter three, is represented in table *X.* To apply these theoretical dimensions I construed a set of key performance indicators [KPI's] to help assess the resilience of a retail area [see chapter three]. This translation from theory to the practice of retail areas also helps to take more directed action in strengthening the resilience of the area. On this I will elaborate in the next paragraph.

Vitality	Adaptivity
Range of shops	Structural cooperation
Ambiance and experience	Incidental cooperation
Accessibility	Adaptations to area by entrepreneurs
	Adaptations to area by municipality

The canvas business model is a tool I introduced after I did my fieldwork. I noticed that resilience, as provided within literature, failed to touch on the subject that was most significant in the eye of retailers: revenue. Though this is an underlying thought when describing a well functioning retail area, the theoretical backing for incorporating this theme was lacking. As entrepreneurs mentioned this as a reason for contributing in efforts to better the economic situation of the area, I found it necessary to incorporate this in my research. The canvas business model proved a useful way to incorporate revenue, whilst keeping resilience as a central concept. An added advantage in using this model is that it implies a dynamic area, rather than a static one. This conforms with resilience [and an evolutionary perspective] in the sense that resilience can only be measured for a small instance. The resilience is dependent on several changeful indicators. As a result both the Canvas business model and resilience can be interpreted as a continuous process.

6.1.2 How to improve resilience

As my second sub question I asked :"How might the resilience of a retail area be improved in practice?" This question aims at providing directions in improving resilience, as measured in the way the first sub question provided. The case of the van Woustraat in Amsterdam provided most of the information for answering this question.

The division for resilience in vitality and adaptivity as illustrated in my conceptual model [figure X] proved to be very useful in differentiating several key performance indicators.

Figure 4.1: conceptual model

First, there is vitality. This part of resilience includes the physical indicators of resilience such as the look and layout of the street. This means that these are mostly slowly changing factors. Of course how clean a street is can change by the day and safety can change due to shifting crime, but most aspects within this dimension remain the same over a longer period of time. The accessibility does not change very quickly and large scale maintenance or refurbishment of public space is not a yearly

task. This makes vitality more or less a base to build upon. Changes in vitality are thus of strategic importance in a structural and long-term perspective.

Second there is adaptivity. This dimension of resilience is much more fluent. With indicators as [structural or incidental] cooperation, communication and membership of the undertakings, this is a more changeable dimension. It is strongly dependent on people and the links between them. This also makes it possible to make changes within a shorter timeframe and reach results quicker. On the seam side the retail area can also 'lose ground' faster here.

Linking these dimensions, both are important in strengthening each other. When the area has a higher vitality, entrepreneurs might be more able or willing to cooperate. Through interviews I learned that some entrepreneurs simply do not have the means to participate [see §4.3] due to the fact that they have no staff to fill in for them. As a retail area with a higher vitality will probably lead to a higher revenue for entrepreneurs, this problem becomes smaller and entrepreneurs would be able to participate to a larger degree. From a different perspective, a more adaptive retail area would be more able to strengthen its vitality. With more organization between entrepreneurs and more communication with other key partners it would be able to make bigger changes in vitality. More entrepreneurs would help finance activities [trough membership of the undertakings] and the link with the municipality would be better. A reference can be made here with the Lange Hezelstraat.

Here strong ties between municipality and undertakings meant that the restructuring of public space was strongly influenced by communication between actors. This meant that the look and feel of the street [within the dimension of vitality] were adjusted to the wishes and needs of the entrepreneurs.

This explanation does not yet give a clear answer to how resilience can be improved. Theoretically speaking, this would be possible by either targeting vitality or adaptivity [or both at the same time]. The preference would be to target adaptivity first. A first argument for this is that adaptivity can be affected within a shorter period of time. This means that results would be seen quicker. Second, in order to make large adjustments to the vitality, communication with retailers in the area is crucial in reaching better results. This helps to tune the planned activities to the wishes and needs of the user. When there is more cohesion between retailers, it becomes easier for the municipality [and other actors] to cooperate with them. I used these words many times in this thesis, but through my research I experienced that cooperation and communication between actors is of most importance in reaching a more resilient area.

6.1.3 The influence of branding on resilience

My third sub question was "How does passing through a process of branding, influence the resilience of a retail area?" With this question I tried to gain insight in how a process of branding might further

improve resilience. In answering this question I looked at the Lange Hezelstraat in Nijmegen in particular. This retail area has completed a branding process [as far as a continuous process can be completed] and provided an interesting case in the effects of branding on resilience.

From a conceptual and theoretical background, the process of branding should lead to an area that has formulated a specific experience that targets a specific target audience. This experience should then be both supported by the retail area and be experienced by customers as being true/believable.

The first influence of branding on resilience would be that a brand needs to fit the area. This means that a brand should either fit the area or the area needs to make adjustments to fit the brand. In the latter, steps need to be taken within the scope of vitality. As the area does not [perfectly] match the brand, the physical appearance of the area can be adjusted. This can be seen in the Lange Hezelstraat, where the public space has been refurbished to match the entrepreneurs/retailers in the street. In that case the brand and the retailers behind it matched, but there was some distance between the brand and its connection to the retail area at a spatial level. When fitting the brand to the area, however, cooperation between the retailers in the area is absolutely required. The majority needs to fit within the shaped brand and it needs to be supported by them. This means that there lies a challenge in shaping a brand that is both capacious when it comes to including shops and specific when it comes to a target audience.

What both approaches bring with them is a need for entrepreneurs to come together on a regular basis and work together with other key partners. The branding process gives them an objective to work towards and a reason to communicate. This regular basis for coming together helps entrepreneurs in getting to know each other and maintaining a network. Another benefit is that the undertakings has a continuous task to carry out. The sentiment that the undertakings are inactive or ineffective [as was the case in the van Woustraat] will be less likely to grow. This also helps to keep the retailers organized as a whole. As a result, the adaptivity [through stimulated cooperation and communication] grows, as does the vitality [through changes in public space and tenant mix]

6.1.4 Insights from the process of branding in a retail areas

My final sub question was "How can a process of branding be used to strengthen the resilience of a retail area?" This question lays a bridge between the other three questions. With an answer to how resilience can be measured, how it can be strengthened and how branding influences resilience, it becomes interesting how branding can be used as a tool to strengthen resilience.

My first insight regarding this question is that it is not possible, or at least very hard, to 'just' start a branding process at any time. In paragraph 6.1.3 I described that branding should improve

cooperation in the area, but a minimum of cooperation is needed in order to start the branding process. For the process to work many of the entrepreneurs need to be at the table.

Second, branding needs quite a lot of analysis. In short: the area/undertakings need to know 'who' the customer is. The only way to do this effectively, is by doing customer surveys and the like. What I want to say with this is that a basis of information about customers is needed and that preparatory research is required [see paragraph four in chapter four]. The area should not look at the similarities in shops, but at the similarities in customers. They then can aim at branding the area in a way that fits customer preferences.

6.1.5 Answering the main question

My main question in this research was "*How can a retail area use the process of branding to strengthen its resilience?*" This question was broken up in sub questions which I tried to answer in the above. This means that this paragraph is more like a conclusion to the sub questions.

A retail area can use a process of branding when it already has some basis of cooperation and organization between entrepreneurs in the area amongst each other and between the entrepreneurs and other actors. The cooperation between entrepreneurs and municipality is one of these relations that is a good example. This basis means that actors know how to 'find' each other and that there is broad support.

Branding is a step that can be taken as soon as the is the resilience is at a good base level. This means that [as I just mentioned] a base level of cooperation and communication is required and that the area needs a base level of spatial quality. The branding process then helps to structurally improve the network in and around the area and improve the spatial quality. With 'improving' not only an objective quality in the sense of an area that is whole, clean and safe is needed, but also an area that better suits the wishes and needs of the customer.

Concluding, branding requires a base level of resilience. The process of branding then can improve resilience by both supporting its adaptivity and vitality.

6.2 Theoretical reflection

Within theory, resilience is a concept that is clearly delimited and can be clearly described. A conceptualization is more difficult to make as the existing literature is primarily theory oriented. A translation to practice has remained difficult as the concepts from the existing literature were quite broad and related to the regional, rather than the district, level. The theoretical discussion to this point stagnates at a more philosophical discussion about equilibria and evolution [see chapter 2]. Though this is required to build as groundwork for further research, it does not provide enough to build on for a methodological perspective. This meant that I needed to incorporate more practical literature in my research to make this translation from theory to practice possible.

It was mainly through my interviews with entrepreneurs in the van Woustraat that I started to see that my theoretical chapter did not touch on the subject of revenue enough to effectively match up with reality. The theoretical backing of resilience not yet goes deep enough into the question of what makes an area resilient. An example of this is that the business climate of an area is important for an area to be resilient. That much is clear, but in my research I learned that the effects of that business climate and how that business climate comes to be might be more important. Here I would like to reflect on paragraph three of chapter four, were I quoted entrepreneurs in saying that they first need enough revenue to be able to participate in activities that improve the business climate.

Concluding, I think resilience offers a topic and framework that is very useful with improving the quality of areas. It does need further specification and adaptation with regard to retail areas as these areas have their own specific challenges and opportunities.

6.3 Policy recommendations

Through this research and my internship have been able to gain a lot of experience with retail areas within a short period of time. Especially my work in the van Woustraat has made it possible to see theoretical assumptions about branding and resilience work out in practice. In this paragraph I will give policy recommendations and provide a toolbox for strengthening the resilience during several phases of the process. These recommendations are based on both these experiences and my own research.

6.3.1 Provide a retail area with a retail area manager.

Entrepreneurs are willing to organize and put time and effort in improving the area. They, though they know their trade, are not experts when it comes to strengthening the economic position of retail areas. Therefore it is good to support them where possible. A retail area manager, as was provided within both cases in this research, can help intensify the efforts of local retailers and offer them a professional impression about the area, backed by experience and arguments.

Especially when it comes to branding, a lot of research needs to be done in order to come to a brand that fits the [potential] customer. Entrepreneurs rarely have the knowledge how to carry out these researches, nor the time to invest in such time-consuming efforts. This is specifically where a retail area manager is needed for support.

Further, when there is little cooperation within the area a retail area manager can find and bring together entrepreneurs that are willing to take action. Here I am referring to helping them formalize an undertakings and starting cooperative action to stimulate the business climate. During my internship I saw how entrepreneurs needed support in this matter. They were quite able to do this themselves, but often did not know how. During my internship I wrote a 'manual for board

membership in the undertakings'. This is a reference that helps entrepreneurs in the first steps to structurizing and formalizing cooperation in the area. It included, for example, a list and explanation of task for the chairman, secretary, treasurer et cetera and a guide on how to register at the chamber of commerce. More tools are given in paragraph 6.3.4.

6.3.2 A growing demand for information

When the entrepreneurs in the area proceed in their efforts it might be required rethink the role of the retail area manager and change the approach. As I described in the paragraph above, a more organized retail area requires a different support than an area that is just starting the process. With this difference a different background, knowledge and experience is needed. This means that rethinking the role of the retail area manager becomes important. In early stages a retail area manager is needed to 'get things on track', but as soon as entrepreneurs know how to run an undertakings and organize themselves. In later stages customer information becomes more important and support in more analytical tasks is needed. Here the retail area manager needs to help the entrepreneurs in formulating a vision for the area.

6.3.3 The role of the government

This aspect of this chapter comes forth primarily from the restructuring of the retail area as described in both the case of the van Woustraat as the Lange Hezelstraat. An actively cooperative government, which is most often the municipality regarding retail areas, can make a big difference in the outcome of spatial projects. In the Lange Hezelstraat the results were quite visible as the look and feel of the public space and the street were adapted in such a way that it fitted seamlessly with the image the entrepreneurs/undertakings wanted to send forth through their brand. This did mean that lines had to be kept short and that government and retailers had to meet frequently.

In the van Woustraat the case was more difficult. The government started the process of restructuring with a similar approach, but had a hard time reaching many entrepreneurs. Further, the task that way laid out was more significant. The restructuring affected both more entrepreneurs as residents. Also, the van Woustraat knows a lot of traffic, whilst the Lange Hezelstraat is a pedestrian street. What can be said, however, is that the entrepreneurs wanted more information about what was going to happen. Looking back on my analysis of the van Woustraat I think the fact that the process changed hands [from district government to the central city] was a significant one. Entrepreneurs want to know who their collocutor is. This kind of a change gave them the impression, be this true or false, that their opinions about the project were not very weighty.

Concluding this, the government should actively work on its communication with the retail area and try to explain the steps in the process and how the input from entrepreneurs will be taken into account. Also, it should try to provide the area with a structural contact person.

6.3.4 Toolbox for improving resilience

When trying to improve resilience it is important to observe the phases of a branding process. This means that a division should be made for measures that improve resilience. In the above I already described that there is a minimum of cooperation and spatial quality that is needed to effectively start a process of branding, but in this paragraph I will give a further explanation on this statement. First there is improving cohesion and cooperation. Second, there is stabilization and third, there is either growth or decline. These phases are illustrated in figure 7.13.

For more resilience a basis of cooperation and organization seems to be necessary. This is phase A in figure 7.13. A small group needs to take initiative and build a structure for further strengthening of resilience. In this phase it would be important to bring a group of enthusiastic entrepreneurs together, reccomendatly with some basic support from a retail area manager [or the like], and start an undertakings. From this point onward it becomes important for the group to grow and get support from a larger share of the entrepreneurs in the street. Tools that can help in this phase are listed in the table below [table 6.2]

Tool	Target	Participants
Script board membership undertakings	Familiarizing board members of the undertakings with the tasks belonging to their function.	Board members of the undertakings.
Introductory meetings	Starting communication between entrepreneurs in the street.	All entrepreneurs in the area.
KVO Trajectory	Creating a clean, whole and safe retail area. Additional: first links between municipality, police, and entrepreneurs.	Entrepreneurs, retail area manager, municipality, fire department and police.
Newsletter to entrepreneurs	Showing what the undertakings is doing and keeping entrepreneurs informed about plans for the area.	Retail area manager, municipality and board of undertakings.

Table 5.2: Tools in phase A

Phase B represents a phase of stability. The area has a certain degree of organization. Tools that can help in this phase are listed in the table below [table 6.3]. In this phase expanding the group of active and/or participating entrepreneurs is central. In phase A the undertakings started with a small group of people. In phase B the objective is to broader the support and cooperation in the street.

Tool	Target	Participants
Customer survey	Gaining insight into 'who' the consumer is, including spending, origin, age, preferences et cetera	Retail area manager and board of undertakings.
Entrepreneur survey	Gaining insight into what the entrepreneurs think that can be improved.	Retail area manager and board of undertakings
Organizing [promotional] events	Gaining visibility of the area to a larger public and strengthening the bond with existing consumers	Board of undertakings, other members of undertakings and retail area manager
KVO Trajectory	Creating a clean, whole and safe retail area. Additional: continuing links between municipality, police, and entrepreneurs.	Entrepreneurs, retail area manager, municipality, fire department and police.
Newsletter to entrepreneurs	Showing what the undertakings is doing and keeping entrepreneurs informed about plans for the area.	Retail area manager, municipality and board of undertakings.
Start of branding process	Gathering entrepreneurs to start thinking about the image/brand of the street Additional: providing a common goal and increasing communication/cooperation between retailers.	Board of undertakings, other active/interested entrepreneurs and retail area manager.
Starting a BIZ	Formulating long term goals, gaining support from entrepreneurs, strengthening the visibility of the undertakings and gaining financial resources.	

Phase C is a critical phase following the stabilization. Here I would like to make a theoretical reference. As I stated in chapter two, an evolutionary perspective on resilience is important to prevent a lock-in situation. This phase thus requires a new step in the attempt to strengthen resilience. This is where it is important to set both targets for the future and remain flexible in order to remain a high level of resilience." the region experiences new partnerships, allignments and agreements emerging from competition for ideas and power" (Kärholm et al. 2009, p.7). Tools that can help in this phase are listed in the table below [table 6.4]. This is specifically where the process of branding is needed.

Tool	Target	Participants
Customer survey	Gaining insight into 'who' the consumer is, including spending, origin, age, preferences et cetera	Retail area manager and board of undertakings.
Entrepreneur survey	Gaining insight into what the entrepreneurs think that can be improved.	Retail area manager and board of undertakings
Organizing [promotional] events	Gaining visibility of the area to a larger public and strengthening the bond with existing consumers	Board of undertakings, other members of undertakings and retail area manager
Newsletter to entrepreneurs	Showing what the undertakings is doing and keeping entrepreneurs informed about plans for the area.	Retail area manager, municipality and board of undertakings.
Expanding branding process	- Gathering more entrepreneurs to thinking about the image/brand of the street. Customer and entrepreneur surveys serve as a basis. - Broadening support for the brand in the area.	All entrepreneurs and retail area manager

Table 6.3: Tools in phase B

| | - Specifying and delineating brand

Additional: providing a common goal and increasing communication/cooperation between retailers. | |

Table 6.4: Tools in phase C

As is visible when looking at the tables above, the work that needs to be done increases as time progresses. The assumption here is that, whilst using the tools in the toolbox, the professionalism of the undertakings grows in both active participants as clout.
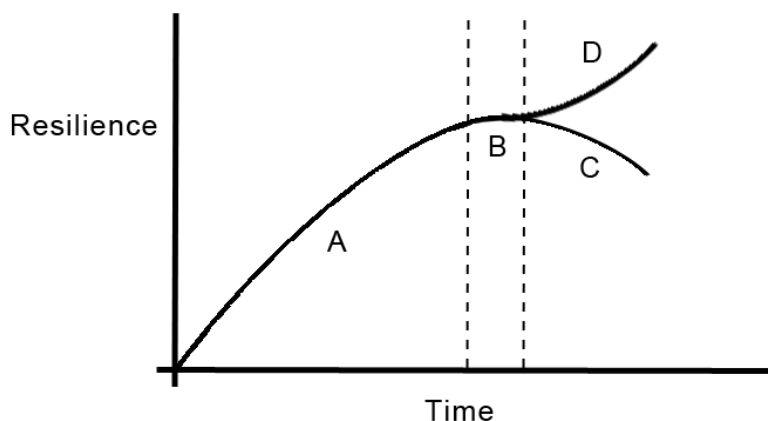
Figure 6.2: Conceptual progression in resilience over time

Not only do these phases ask for different tools, also they ask for a different role for the retail area manager. In phase A support is primarily needed for raising the undertakings and bringing the entrepreneurs together. This also asks for providing help with mastering tasks as a board member of the undertakings. As phase A progresses a start with brand identification can be made. Here a retail area manager would need to help to keep the retailers together and find their similarities and/or differences. The next step would be to distill a brand from the outcome. phase B represents a well function retail area. Without further branding this more or less the peak of what the area can achieve. The area is whole, clean and safe, but has no specific value proposition [as used in the canvas business model]. Here the area is leaning towards phase C, where it either goes on a downturn or starts a process of branding. In phase C the process of branding can help the area to be more than just an accumulation of shops in an area that is whole, clean and safe. This next step might be an addition to its maximum quality of the business climate.

6.4 Reflection

As part of any research a critical reflection is needed. In this paragraph I will reflect on both the content of this thesis and the process of research and writing the thesis. Here I want to focus on a few aspects: my fieldwork, research results, research planning and thesis completion.

First of all I really enjoyed this part of my master programme. Especially the internship that comes with this research was something that I found exiting and took up more time than I expected [and may have wanted]. To this I can find both benefits and drawbacks. My research planning was something that I found hard to keep up with and this lead to handing in my final version much later than expected. I should have put more effort in writing my thesis at an earlier stage, so this might not have been the case. This extended progress has, on the other side, benefitted my research results. I have been in the van Woustraat for a longer time and made more observations. This also meant that I was able to put research data into better perspective.

Regarding my fieldwork, I think the Lange Hezelstraat could have needed more attention. I think I gathered enough information to draw a decent conclusion, but the process of branding in the street is something I would have liked to go into a bit deeper. For the van Woustraat I think I am able to draw very thorough conclusions. I spoke to many actors and gathered a lot of data on the area. Though I was not able to come into contact with property owners I was able to partially compensate this with other data. Concluding, I was very satisfied with the way I carried out my research in the van Woustraat.

When talking about my research results I think I made a useful connection between literature and praxis regarding resilience and branding. Some insights have already been implemented in the van Woustraat and seem to work. On a theoretical perspective I think I added new insights to the discussion about resilience. This theoretical discussion did not know an orientation towards retail areas, although I do believe this is a useful perspective. On top of that the literature on resilience does have eye for the topic of a business climate in an area, but pays little attention to the aspect of revenue that goes with it. I hope I made an addition to this by introducing a business model to the equation.

On the whole, I am pleased with my thesis and the process it was part of. Though I had found it difficult to keep up with my planning I think made a proper analysis of my cases and was able to formulate a good addition to both theory and praxis.

7 References

archief, R. (sd). *Beeldbank regionaal archief*. Opgeroepen op 06 25, 2015, van http://studiezaal.nijmegen.nl/ran/_intro.aspx?bsoorten_277

Ashworth, G. (2011). De instrumenten van place branding: hoe worden ze ingezet? In G.-J. Hospers, W. Verheul, & F. Boekema, *Citymarketing voorbij de hype; Ontwikkelingen, analyse en strategie.* Boom Lemma.

Balsas, C. J. (2004). Measuring the liveability of an urban centre: an exploratory study of key performance indicators. *Planning, Practice & Research , 19* (1), 101-110.

Bardoel, J., & Schildkamp, B. (2014). *Centrummonitor Sittard-Geleen.* Waalwijk: Seinpost Adviesbureau BV.

Bereikbaarheidskaart (2015). *De Nationale Bereikbaarheidskaart*. http://www.bereikbaarheidskaart.nl/ accessed on 15-08-2015

Carpenter, S. (2005). Surrogates for Resilience of Social-Ecological Systems. *Ecosystems* , 941-944.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design; Choosing among five approaches.* Los Angeles: Sage.

Dennis, C., Murphy, J., Marsland, D., Cockett, J., & Patel, T. (2011). Measuring image: shopping centre case studies. *The international review of retail, distribution and consumer research* , 355-373.

Evers, D., van der Krabben, E., & Kooijman, D. (2011). *Planning van winkels en winkelgebieden in Nederland.* Den Haag: Sdu.

Fernandes, J. F., & Chamusca, P. (2012). Urban policies, planning and retail resilience. *Cities* (36), 170-177.

Foster, K. (2006). *A case study approach to understanding regional resilience.* University of California, Institute of urban and regional development, Berkeley.

Google maps (2015). www.maps.google.com. accessed on 20-06-2015

Het Parool (2015). De Facelift van de van Wou. 13-06-2015 p. A1-A5

Holling, C. (1973). Resilience and stability of ecological eystems. *Annual review of ecology and systematics* (4), 1-23.

Hospers, G.-J. (2011). *Er gaat niets boven Groningen; Hoe zet je een plaats op de kaart?* Zaltbommel: Haystack.

Hospers, G.-J., Verheul, W., & Boekema, F. (2011). Inleiding: citymarketing voorbij de hype. In G.-J. Hospers, W. Verheul, & F. Boekema, *Citymarketing voorbij de hype; Ontwikkelingen, analyse en strategie.* Boom Lemma.

Janssen, I. (2013). Beleving en gemak moeten hand in hand gaan. In P. binnenstadsmanagement, *Signalen uit de binnenstad; jaarpublicatie 2013.*

Kärholm, M., Nylund, K., & de la Fuente, P. (2014). Spatial resilience and urban planning: addressing the interdependence of urban retail areas. *Cities* , 121-130.

Martin, R., & Sunley, P. (2015). On the notion of regional economic resilience: conceptualization and explanation. *Journal of Economic Geography* , 1-42.

Maps Amsterdam (2015). www.maps.amsterdam.nl . accessed on 20-06-2015

Mommaas, H. (2011). Gebiedsmarketing 2.0: van promotie naar ontwikkeling. In G.-J. Hospers, W. Verheul, & F. Boekema, *Citymarketing voorbij de hype; Ontwikkelingen, analyse en strategie.* Boom Lemma.

Municipality Nijmegen (2015). Data received through personal communication with Bram Verhoef.

Nijmegen, M. (2011). *Welkom in Nijmegen; bruisende stad.* Opgehaald van Gemeente Nijmegen: www2.nijmegen.nl/mmbase/.../Bidboek_%22Bruisende_Binnenstad%22

NRC Handelsblad (2015). *Die espressobar is niet de oplossing*. 12-06-2015 p.25

Ostwalder, A., & Pigneur, Y. (2010). *Business Model Generation: a handbook for visionaries, game changers and challengers.* John Wiley & Sons.

Pattie, C., & Seyd, P. (2003). Citizenship and civic engagement: attitudes and behaviour in Britain. *Political Studies* , 443-468.

Pendall, R., Foster, K., & Cowell, M. (2009). Resilience and regions: building understanding of the metaphor. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* , 1-14.

Pine, B. J., & Gillmore, J. H. (1999). *The Experience Economy.* Boston: Harvard Business School.

Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy. *Harvard Business Review* , 97-105.

Platform31. (2014). *Winkelgebieden van de toekomst; Bouwstenen voor publiek-private samenwerking.*

Portas, M. (2011). *The Portas review; An independant review into the future of our high streets.*

Raatgever, A. (2014). *Winkelgebied van de toekomst; Bouwstenen voor publiek-private samenwerking.*

Simmie, J., & Martin, R. (2010). The economic resilience of regions: towards an evolutionairy approach. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* , 27-43.

van der Velden, E., & van Gerwen, N. (2013). Maak de binnenstad internetproof. In P. binnenstadsmanagement, *Signalen uit de binnenstad jaarpublicatie 2013.*

van Houtum, H., Raaphorst, K., & van der Lugt, R. (2013). *De binnenstad als monopolyspel; wie bezit welke panden en waar in de Nijmeegse binnenstad?* Nijmegen: Radboud University Nijmegen.

Verschuren, P., & Doorewaard, H. (2010). *Het ontwerpen van een onderzoek* (4th ed.). Den Haag: Lemma.

Weltevreden, J. (2015). *Internet als succesfactor: collectieve marketing van winkelgebieden als antwoord op het online winkelen.*

Attachment 1: Respondents

Van Woustraat

		Role	Date
Hennie Loos	-	Economic affairs Stadsdeel Zuid	19-03-2015
Marcel van der Weijde	-	District managment Stadsdeel Zuid	17-03-2015
Pierre Norbart	-	Entrepreneur 'Handyman'	25-03-2015
Sven Heinen	-	Entrepreneur 'Smit en Heinen'	31-03-2015
Pieter Jongens	-	Entrepreneur 'Hutspot'	30-03-2015
Jesse Tenhaeff	-	Entrepreneur 'Venten'	13-04-2015
Tom Wimmers	-	Manager 'Albert Heijn'	03-04-2015
Aran Sanders	-	Entrepreneur 'Grape district'	31-03-2015
Bettina Loose	-	Entrepreneur 'Bettina bakt'	25-03-2015
John Bardoel	-	Retail area manager	No specific date. I spoke with John on several occasions as he was a direct colleague during my internship.

Lange Hezelstraat

		Role	Date
Bram Verhoef	-	Municipality Nijmegen	23-06-2015
John Bardoel	-	Retail area manager	No specific date. I spoke with John on several occasions as he was a direct colleague during my internship.

Attachment 2: Interviewguide

- How well does the respondent know the retail area?

    - Sample questions from statistical data derived from customer survey

- What challenges do you think the van Woustraat currently faces?

    - Are they being addressed properly?

    - How should they be addressed?

- How do you think cooperation in the van Woustraat is going?

    - How is the cooperation/communication between entrepreneurs?

    - How is the cooperation/communication between entrepreneurs and municipality?

    - On which topics do they cooperate/communicate?

    - How was the cooperation/communication in the past?

    - Could the cooperation/communication be improved? And how?

- How do you think the institution of the BIZ [bedrijfsinverstingzone] will affect the area?

- Do you think the street would benefit from a joint image in promoting the street?

    - How do you think this might [not] contribute?

–