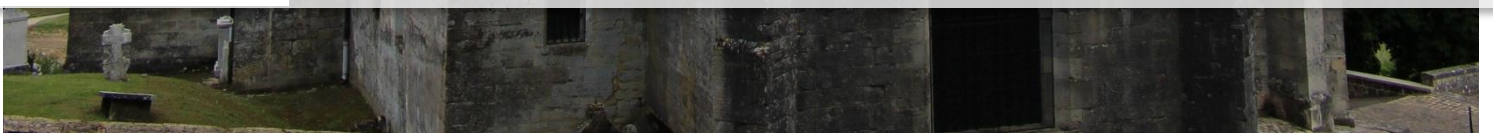




SKIVRE Implementation Guide

A Guidebook for Marketing Monastic Products



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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 What can monasteries expect from the SKIVRE Implementation Guide?

Welcome to the SKIVRE Implementation Guide. This guide is a supplement to the SKIVRE training modules. The purpose of this implementation guide is to provide additional information, checklists, and review tools.

The SKIVRE Implementation Guide is organised into easy-to-read guidelines from the SKIVRE training modules that have been developed and are made readily available to all interested stakeholders. It offers easy-to-use material for the implementation of the full SKIVRE training. The guide is meant for representatives of European monasteries, which already have monastic products in the market or would like to develop products; interested parties in producing and selling monastic products (monasteries, retailers); local actors in close collaboration with monasteries like parishes, non-profit associations like “friends of the monastery.”

While the intended audience is representatives of monasteries, the information may be used by anyone interested in marketing a monastic product. The information is also meant for monasteries at any stage of marketing monastic products from those that simply have an idea to those who already have shops or monastic production in place.

Ultimately, the goals of the SKIVRE project and this guide are to help monasteries develop their monastic products in order to generate an income for the upkeep of the monastery as well as to preserve traditional craftsmanship as an aspect of intangible cultural heritage.

In order to determine which information will be useful for you and your monastery, in the following chapter you will find a guided tour through the process of identifying the needs and defining the learning process linked to the SKIVRE training material. Additionally, there will be checklists in the following chapters that will help you self-evaluate the lessons learned from the training modules.

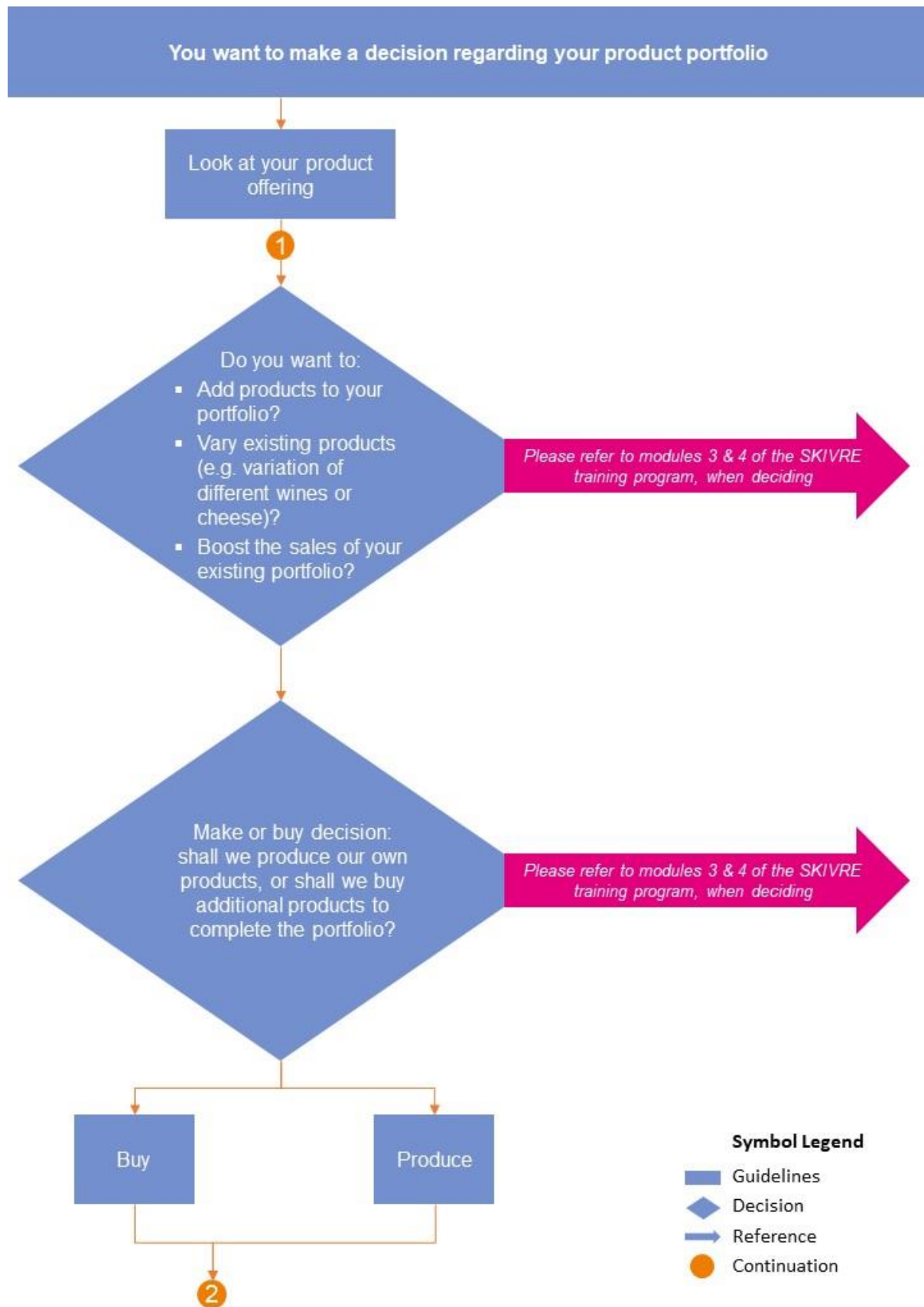
Decision making for training needs

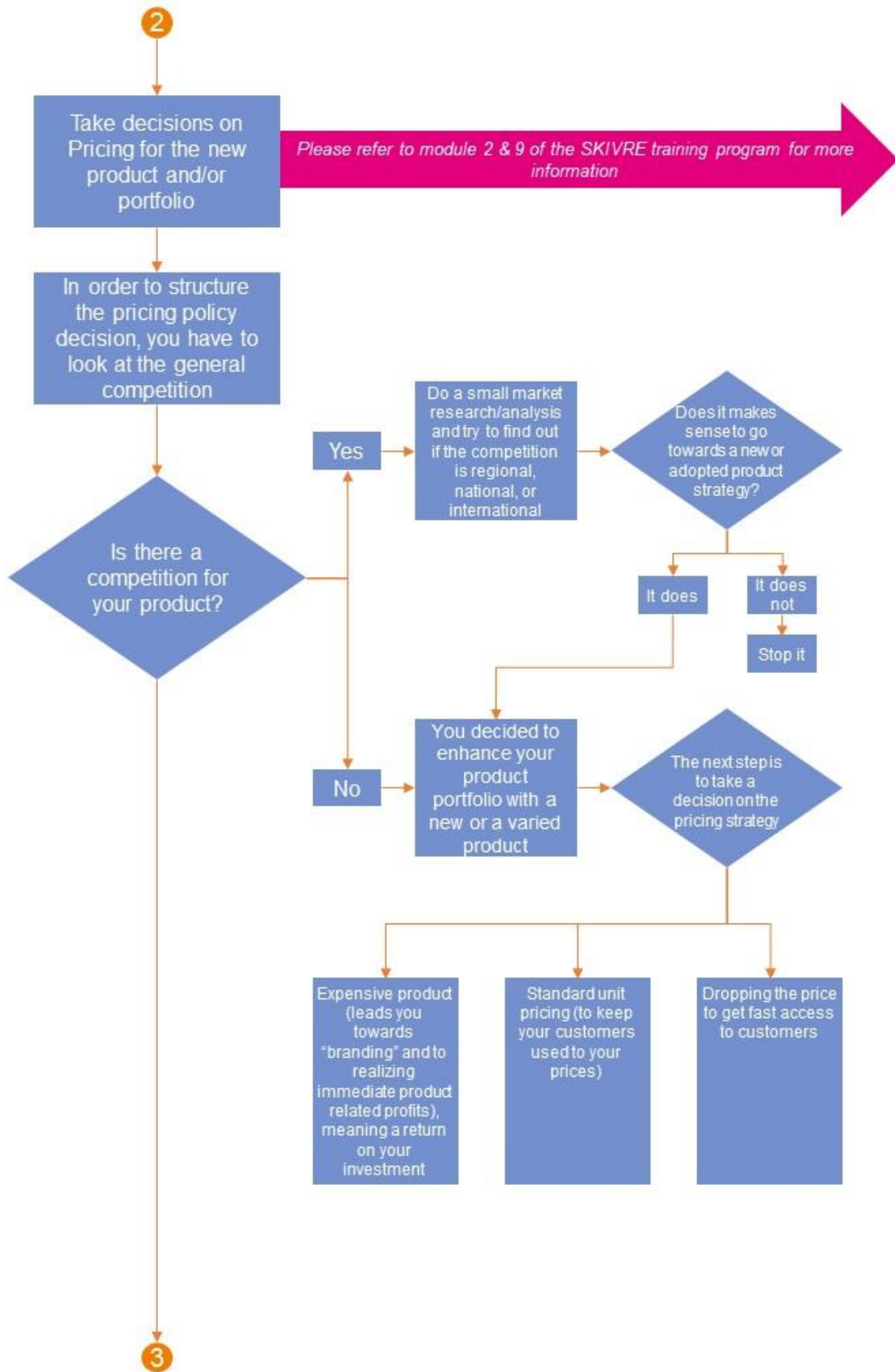
Creating or expanding your product portfolio of monastic product needs many decisions – their background and outcomes are described in the ten SKIVRE training modules. So where to start?

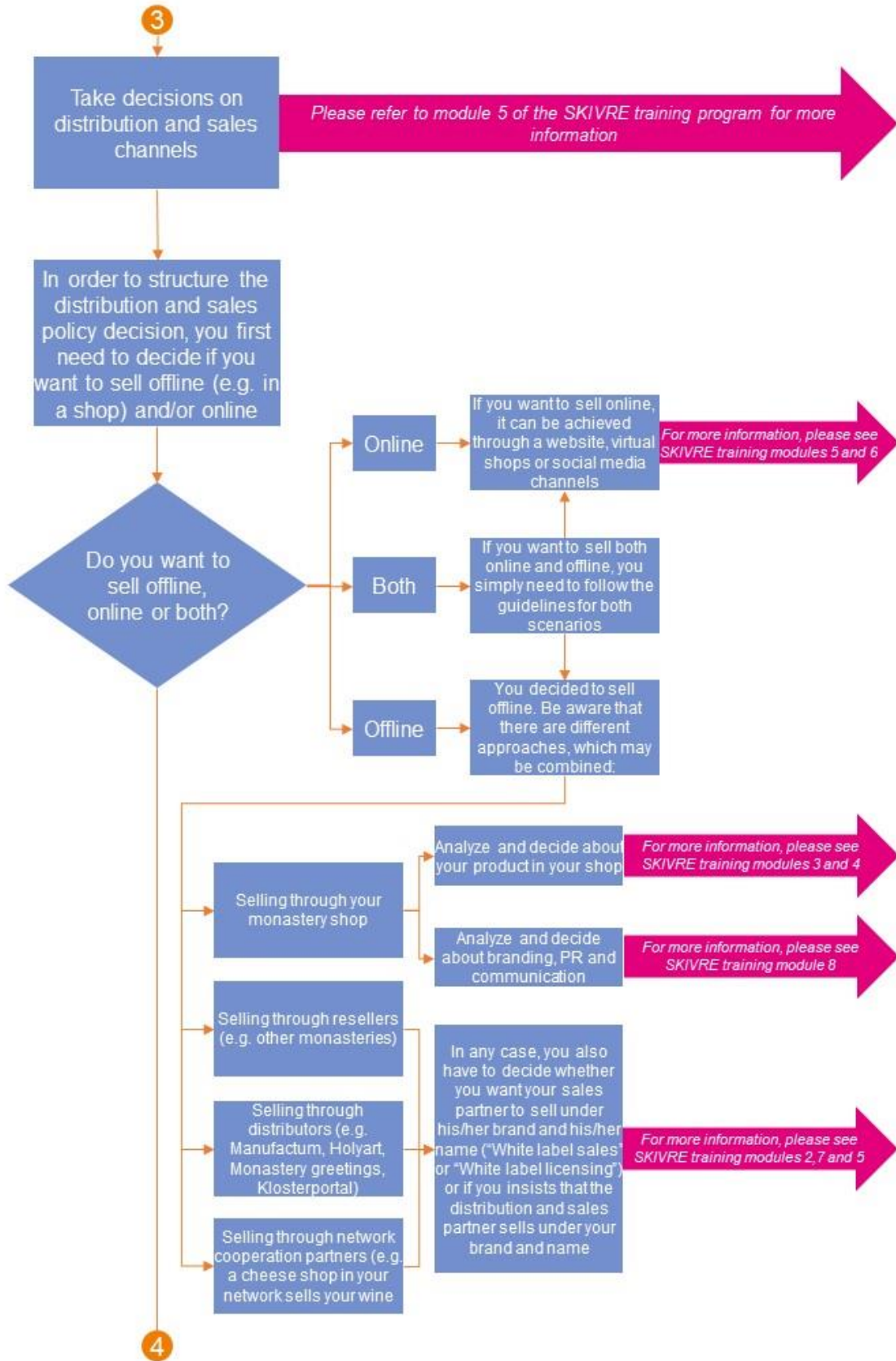
In order to support your considerations, you will find in the following a decision-making scheme, tailor made to the requirements of developing and marketing of monastic products. The scheme guides you step by step through all decisions and every single step refers to the respective SKIVRE training Module.

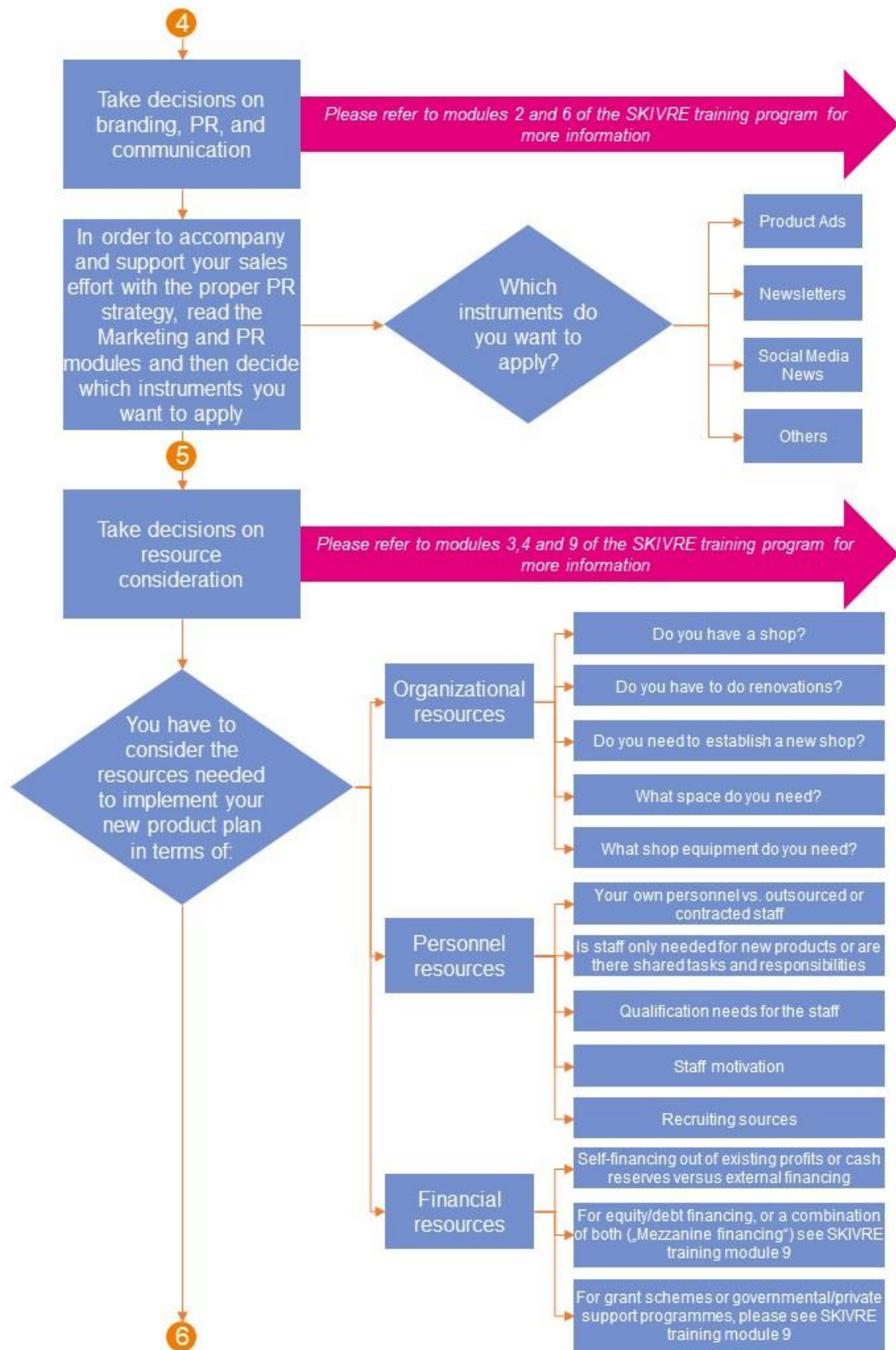
This guided tour will also help you identify in which areas you might require further reading of the training modules. It will then indicate which modules you should re-read, or if you should move on to the next module. Proceeding on this learning path will also help you to self-evaluate the lessons learned from the SKIVRE training modules.

After this guided tour you will know exactly where to start with the training in order to benefit most – have a try!









1.2 How Can Monasteries Benefit from the SKIVRE Training?

SKIVRE - 'Skills Development for the Valorisation of European Religious Heritage' was a project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The project partners developed a training scheme targeting the management, staff, monks and nuns of European monasteries and monastery shops in a committed and responsible way. The training is geared towards providing tools for the development and sales of high-quality monastic products. This assists in the understanding of what should be considered to boost the sales of monastic products, thereby contributing to the goal of raising finances for the preservation of religious heritage sites. Nevertheless, production and product sales are a business for a monastery, and monasteries must find the balance and make sure that this business does not overwhelm the core purposes of the monastery.

The SKIVRE Implementation Guide targets monks and nuns, management, staff and volunteers at European monasteries, no matter if they are run by Catholic or Protestant Orders or the Orthodox Church, by public or private operators. These persons are different in terms of skills and competences level and can be differentiated in three groups:

- Group 1: People working at the implementation level like those in monastery shops.
- Group 2: People with a special knowledge or experiences and/or specified tasks in the monastic management.
- Group 3: People at a strategic decision level with a highly specialized / experienced background and respective responsibilities in a monastery.

By using the SKIVRE Implementation Guide, all monastery staff will have a quick access guide readily available for their benefit. The focus of the guide will be mostly on the assessment of products and production and marketing processes. More specifically, themes such as branding, authenticity, marketing, and distribution will be examined specifically for your individual monastic purpose. This will help budding product ideas or old traditions, evolve into an authentic and well branded product. In addition to this, methods of selling, producing, and distributing will be covered. Through understanding these topics, it will help monastic staff and representatives of monasteries improve their expertise and professionalism.

1.3 Learning outcome of the SKIVRE Implementation Guide

The SKIVRE training scheme is organised in 10 modules covering topics such as; using networks appropriately, collaborating with experienced partners, product categories and presentation, selling monastic products without reducing their 'authenticity', labelling of the products, using social media and the internet for communication with the general public, how to brand products, how to finance activities linked to product development, how to distribute products, and how to manage a sustainable monastery shop. . This Implementation Guide will give the reader quick access to the SKIVRE training modules through references to the modules and relevant questions throughout.

In the Implementation Guide, the information from the training modules has been summarised and the main points highlighted for easy access. At the end of each section, there is an implementation checklist provided that can be used to ensure that the information has been understood and that progress has been made. Additionally, you will find links to the SKIVRE training content in the training modules in order to have quick access to respective chapters and learning units.

More specifically, this practical guide will help the reader understand specific practices for improving their monastic products such as pricing, packaging, how to create a logo, how to be a good networker, which social media platform to use, qualities of a good salesman for a monastic shop, and much more.

Chapter 2

How to: Practical Tools and Instruments

2.1. Marketing Strategies

MARKETING MIX

Marketing mix is an expression used to describe the various types of marketing decisions which need to be taken to bring the product to the target market. It incorporates the four basic pillars in any marketing strategy: product, price, place, and promotion, the “4 Ps”.

A **product** refers to an item that satisfies the consumer's needs or wants. It is important to understand and identify the **needs of your customers**, the **benefits** of your product to satisfy those needs, and the **features** of your product(s) itself. Product decisions should consider the **design, quality, and features** of the product as well.

A product's **price** depends on both the seller as well as the customer. Therefore, it is important to understand how useful your products are and how the customers perceive them. Sometimes, the low price equals low quality, and the high price means better quality. Therefore, pricing is essentially a balancing of quality and accessibility.

Placement means where the product will be available for the customers, where exactly in the shop, or in which shop, or in which city, or may be delivery “from-door-to-door”. Therefore, a decision should be taken about the distribution channels. Distribution includes either **selling directly** in the shop – the most common among monasteries, and the advantage is the personal direct communication between the seller and customers or **selling through a reseller**, which gives a wider range of distribution on different places, but a third party - there-retailer, requires intense collaboration.

Promotion includes advertising and PR to target customers. Like special offers, advertising, sales promotions, brand advertising, product advertising, publishing in print media or advertising in TV, radio, and social channels. Promotion refers only to communication about the product and is a part of the entire marketing strategy.

MARKETING STRATEGY

The **main task of developing a strategy** is to define a way from the current situation to the final marketing goal. Long-term marketing strategies can be between 5-10 years and cover structure, while short-term marketing strategies should be between six months and one year, covering details and short-term wins. Each must be constantly assessed and adapted.

Strategic thinking and acting is a combination of your applied knowledge of marketing management know-how. Logical thinking should be applied by following logical conclusions.

Characteristics of strategic thinking include:

- **Visionary thinking** – recognising future possibilities.
- **Differentiation thinking** – to be different from the competition.
- **Advantage thinking** – to search for competitive advantages.
- **Directional thinking** – to search for options for the future and identify how to reach the goal.
- **Potential thinking** – to recognise and understand influence factors.

Strategy development

A **strategic mix** is a result of strategic possibilities: development strategies, competitive strategies, and customer strategies.

Development strategies aim at securing positions in the market. There are three different strategies in order to decide on a development strategy:

- **Growth strategy** – depends on your resources and is often limited by existing infrastructure and by ecological or social boundaries.
- **Stabilisation strategy** – because of the limitations, it is often important to think of maintaining the same volume, but to think of qualitative growth instead.
- **Shrinkage strategy** – this need not be a sign of defence or crisis. A supply shortage may lead to higher prices and thus to better economic results.

Competitive Strategies look at your own market position vis-à-vis your competitors. Depending on the situation, you might decide to go for more aggressive or for more cooperative strategies, depending on whether you plan to enlarge your market share or to defend it. In aggressive strategies, you will use your own strengths. This may concern: **quality leadership** - you use your success position or USP as an asset; or **cost leadership** - if you have cost advantages over your competitor, then you could employ aggressive pricing strategies, but this is not a qualified option for monopolies.

Customer strategies deal with market segmentation according to target groups. Segmentation criteria can be put together using various criteria: **socio-demographic** segmentation, segmentation according to **travel styles**, and **psychographic** segmentation.

MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Marketing Communication refers to the means which a monastery can adopt to convey messages about their monastic products and the brands they sell. They can use different marketing channels to provide their message directly or indirectly to interested people.

The goal should be **effective marketing communication**. The goal is to increase the awareness of the positive features and benefits of the product, and therefore, to increase the visitors who buy the product. Examples of marketing communication channels include events organised by the monastery, personal selling in the monastic shop, or a website organised as an online shop of monastic products.

In order to be successful in delivering your marketing message, you should follow some **basic communication rules**:

- Get to know your target audience.
- Know the effect you want to achieve.
- Adjust the contents of the message and the design to the target group.
- Select the right media.
- The message should arrive without interference to the target audience.

The identity of your products is communicating via their brand, while the **image of your product reflects** the opinion of the people about your monastic products. The image or also called “**public image**” consists of the knowledge about the product, plus the feelings, attitude, and satisfaction of the product communicated between the customers and the people around them,

Sales promotions are all communication measures that encourage distribution and access to customers. Those measures can be handled on your own, or by external salespersons or sales units, as well as retailers. **Requirements of the salespeople** are the ability to communicate, self-confidence, the need to know the products very well, not forgetting that they are there to serve the customers, well-mannered. **Good salespeople** are also experts in marketing distribution, market research, sales reporting, and public relations.

2.1.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Do you understand how to create a good marketing mix for your products?

1a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your understanding and success:

	You have understanding and knowledge about the needs of your customers.
	Your product (s) is/are accepted by the customers because of their so-called customer values (e.g. benefits and usability).
	Your pricing is balanced and effective.
	Your placement has proven effective.
	You are promoting your products.

1b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** Training Module 2 “Marketing Strategies”(exercise 1,3), Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically Monastic Products”(exercise 2,3,4), Training Module 5 “Distribution Channels” unit 1 (exercise 1,2,3).Then you can get back to 1a).

2. Are you able to develop a good marketing strategy that will work for your monastic products?

2a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your knowledge about marketing strategies development:

	You have a long-term strategic marketing goal.
	You have short-term objectives, which are leading to the long-term goal.
	You have considered each of the five ways of strategic thinking (visionary, differentiation, advantage, directional, and potential).

2b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** Training Modules 2 “Marketing Strategies” (exercise 2), Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically Monastic Products” (exercise 1,2,4). Take a look at Training module 5 “Distribution channels”(exercise 1,2,3), Training module 6 “Social Media and Communication”(exercise 3-10), Training module 8 “Branding”(exercise 1,2,3)to decide which aspects need more consideration and check the exercises. Then you can get back to 2a).

3. Do the salespeople in your monastic shop meet the criteria of a good salesperson?

3a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess the relevance and success rate of the salespeople:

	Your salespeople have good communication skills.
	Your salespeople are self-confident.
	They know how to explain the products well.
	They understand that they are there for the customers.
	They are well mannered.

3b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** Training Modules 3 “The Monastic Product”(exercise 1,2,5,7), Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically Monastic Products”(exercise 1,2,4,5) to decide which aspects need more consideration and check the exercises after both modules pointed above. Then you can get back to 3a).

If you are unable to complete this checklist or are unsure about any of the items, please see **Module 2 “Marketing strategies”** of the SKIVRE Training Program.

2.2 Monastic Products

WHAT MAKES A PRODUCT A REAL MONASTIC PRODUCT?

Monastic products can be classified into four different categories:

1. Those that are **original and authentic** are produced in the monastery or nearby and the production was carried out by monks or nuns or at least under their supervision.
2. Those that were **purchased originally and authentically** are essentially the same but were bought from other monasteries.
3. Those that were **externally produced for the monastery only**, were licensed by the monastery and the monastery promotes the product with the monastery's image.
4. Finally, there are **souvenirs and other items** that cannot be classified into the previous three categories and are not real monastic products.

DEVELOPMENT OF A MONASTIC PRODUCT

In order to develop a monastic product, there are **eight stages** to follow:

1. **Generate an idea** and think if it is something worth considering.
2. **Screen the idea** to see if the product is compatible with Monastic objectives.
3. **Develop the concept** and test it to see if consumers would buy the product.
4. **Develop a market strategy** to find a cost-effective strategy.
5. Do a **business analysis** to see if this product will help meet your market goals.
6. **Develop the product** and ensure that you have a technically and commercially sound product.
7. Give it a **market test** to see if the sales meet the expectations.
8. **Commercialisation**: ensure that product sales are meeting your expectations.

THE MONASTIC SHOP

Customers do not visit monastic shops to do their regular grocery shopping, they visit them for the reason that the traditions and knowledge have been passed down through centuries that can produce a high quality product that they can tangibly purchase. It is therefore important to have this reflected in your monastic shop. In order to develop a monastic shop, it is important to first **identify the target group** so you can consider ways to adhere to their values. A suggestion of target visitors would be locals, tourists, spiritual tourists, or educationally motivated monastery visitors. **Things to consider** would be for example: if the monastery is located along a bike path or pilgrimage route, it is a good idea to have a place for free water and to have a selection of small products for them to carry.

It is important to have a **range of monastic products always on hand in the shop**. Examples of these can include handcrafts, body care, food, wine/spirits, media like books or movies, spiritual products, and souvenirs. It is then important to balance these different product types by reflecting on the **following points**:

- What makes your products unique?
- Could you supplement your offer with other products?
- Avoid making your monastery shop look like a general store.
- Create a relaxed friendly atmosphere.
- Try to get monks and nuns present in the shops themselves.
- Have additional information on the products available.
- Never forget that people who may not be interested in the products will come to the shop looking for monastic services.
- Always invite customers to visit the adjoining church.

UNIQUE SELLING POSITION (USP)

It is important to know what your shop's unique selling point is and how this separates you from the competition. Some **features** that make a monastic shop unique are:

- The shop is connected to a monastery with live traditions.
- The shop offers its own monastic goods.
- The products are authentic, natural, healthy, made with organic ingredients, high quality, special, cannot be bought anywhere else, strongly related to the local place.
- The visitor is served by monks or nuns or by well-informed staff.

2.2.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Do you understand how to classify your monastic products?

1a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your understanding of how to classify your monastic product:

	You understand what makes a monastic product original and authentic.
	You have defined the authentic characteristics of your products?
	Have you classified the products in your shop according to their authentic characteristics?

1b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module 3 “The Monastic Product” unit 1, section 1, to learn more about how to classify your monastic products. You may come back later to proceed with 1a).

2. Do you understand the steps in developing your product?

2a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your understanding of the steps in developing your product:

	You understand how to generate an idea.
	You understand how to screen an idea.
	You understand how to develop the concept.
	You understand how to develop a marketing strategy.
	You understand how to conduct a business analysis.
	You understand how to develop the product.
	You understand how to do a market test.
	You understand how to commercialise the product.

5b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module 3 “The Monastic Product”, unit 2 to learn more about the different steps in developing your product. You may come back later to proceed with 2a).

3. Do you understand what is necessary to run a good monastery shop?

3a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your understanding of what is necessary to run a good monastery shop:

	Your shop reflects the values of the monastery.
	You have identified your target group(s).
	You have a good range of products.

3b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module 3 “The Monastic Product”, unit 3 to learn more about what is necessary to run a monastery shop. You may come back later to proceed with 3a).

4. Do you have a good balance of products in your monastic shop?

4a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your product balance in your monastic shop:

	You have identified your target customers.
	You have considered customers’ needs.
	You have products to meet each of these needs.

4b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module “The Monastic Product” unit 3, section 6. to learn more about how to maintain a good product balance. You may come back later to proceed with 4a).

5. Do you know your shop’s unique selling point (USP)?

5a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your shop’s unique selling position (USP):

	You have considered the USP of your monastery.
	The shop is connected to the monastery.
	It offers its own monastic goods.
	The products are authentic.
	The staff have a good understanding of the products.

5b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module 3 “The Monastic Product” unit 3, section 7 to learn more about your unique selling point (USP). You may come back later to proceed with 5a).

6. Does your shop reflect the values of your monastery?

6a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether your shop reflects the value of your monastery:

	Your products are authentic.
	Your marketing and branding reflect the values of the monastery.
	Your products are mostly locally made and original.
	There is information available about your Order and the history of the Order and the monastery.
	There is access to a person (monk, nun, manager) who is approachable for customers who want to know more about the values of the Order and the monastery.

6b) If no: Please go back to SKIVRE Training Module 2 “Marketing Strategies”(exercise 3), Training Module 3 “The Monastic Product” unit 1, section 1 (exercise 1,2,3,5), and Training Module 8 “Branding”(exercises 1,2,3) to learn more about how to help your shop reflect the values of your monastery. You may come back later to proceed with 6a).

7. Does your shop meet the needs of the types of customers that visit?

7a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether your shop meets the needs of the types of customers that visit:

	Your shop meets the needs of religious visitors.
	Your shop meets the needs of educationally oriented visitors.
	Your shop meets the needs of locals.
	Your shop meets the needs of non-local tourists.

7b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 3 “The Monastic Product” unit 3, section 7 to learn more about meeting the needs of different types of customers. You may come back later to proceed with 7a).

2.3 How to Sell Monastic Products Authentically

It is important to know one's **goals** and to **consider**:

- why products are sold.
- with which product and quality requirements these are defined.
- what these products are supposed to do for buyers.
- the purposes for which the income will be used.

It is also important to think about **customer values and customer expectations** when purchasing monastic products.

There are **four target groups** to consider:

1. **Locals** – may be regional or supra-regional who come looking for a range of products differing in quality and originality.
2. **Tourists** - people from outside the region and are looking for things like souvenirs.
3. **Spiritual tourists/people of faith** - may be looking for devotional objects with spiritual value.
4. **Educationally motivated monastery guests** - will not miss the opportunity to look in the shop and could be looking for anything.

It is essential to understand the **expectations** of the target groups and to match them with the product assortment. **Quality should always rank above quantity**. It is not always possible to satisfy the needs of all target groups, especially if they differ from the values of the monastery.

AUTHENTIC SALE OF MONASTIC PRODUCTS

Your monastery products and the monastery shop should absolutely have a **connection to the monastery** because this is the only way to make the monastery shop and the monastic product offer authentic. Keep in mind: Your monastery shop is not a trendy "concept store" focusing primarily on an unusual combination of assortments and brands. The products found in your monastery shop are all - without exception - subject to your own clearly defined quality requirements.

Products related to monasteries are usually considered to be of **high quality**, organic, and healthy. This is often used in the branding of several products that are no longer produced in

monasteries. It is therefore the responsibility of the monastery to produce a **truly authentic product** of the highest quality.

It is important to have a **careful selection of the product portfolio**. Less is more, so that customers do not have the feeling of standing in a convenience store. Authenticity also means not being obliged to follow every trend and satisfy every target group.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MONASTERY SHOP

Location

It is not the size of the sales area that is decisive for the economic success of the monastery shop, but the location and well-presented goods. Choose a suitable central and easily accessible location in your monastery complex, where the infrastructure conditions can also be fulfilled.

Creating a Sales Atmosphere

When it comes to arranging the shop, there are no limits to ideas and design. For the creation of a good atmosphere, it is however important to ensure that the shop is integrated into the monastery environment and is welcoming for the visitor. The sales staff also need to reflect the surroundings and quality: a nun or a monk, offers the opportunity to address other topics related to the monastery and its spiritual aspirations, apart from pure selling. It goes without saying, however, that the monk's and nun's robes are not costumes that can be put on arbitrarily.

Product information is important. While proper labelling is important, the most authentic and effective way of telling stories is always through personal conversation between sales staff and customers.

Qualification of the Sales Staff

The staff must identify with the monastery shop and their own work in it to guarantee a successful business. In addition, some stories relating to the product are always well appreciated by customers and build up good relationships. They will always remember it when using or consuming the product and pass the knowledge on positively. Do you, your colleagues, and employees, know the entire product range of the monastery shop well enough? Can customers' questions be answered, can they be well informed, and can recommendations be given? The staff must regularly be updated about new products.

2.3.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Do your products and monastery shop help to achieve your goals?

1a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether your monastic shop helps to reach your goals:

	The monastery provides services for monastery visitors.
	Your monastery shop generates additional income as an economic necessity.
	Your monastery shop is a platform to present the monastery's own products.
	Your monastery shop gives access to people who do not come for religious or spiritual reasons.
	Your monastery shop offers the local population as well as tourists a gateway to the monastery, thus enabling people to get an insight into monastic life.

1b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 "How to Sell Authentically" unit 1, section 1 to learn more about using your monastery shop to reach your goals. You may come back later to proceed with 1a).

2. Which are the main expectations of your target group when purchasing monastic products?

2a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether you understand the main expectations of your target group:

	Desire for quality, purity, and honesty in food production.
	A range of monastic products differing in quality and originality from comparable product offers
	Devotional objects of spiritual value.
	Souvenirs that bring the remembrance of the monastic experience to their home.
	Opportunities are given to browse through the monastery shop.
	Acquire educational content.

2b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically” unit 1, section 2 to learn more about the main expectations of your target group. You may come back later to proceed with 2a).

3. Do your products fulfil the expectations of your target groups?

3a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether your products fulfil the expectations of your target group:

	your products suit locals.
	your products suit tourists.
	your products suit spiritual tourists.
	your products serve educationally motivated visitors.

3b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically” unit 1, section 3 to learn more about fulfilling the expectations of your target group. You may come back later to proceed with 3a).

4. Do your products reflect the values of your monastery?

4a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether your monastic products reflect the values of your monastery:

	Your products have branding that shows their authentic, monastic qualities.
	Information is provided on quality criteria.
	Your products are clearly linked to the monastery and monastic life.

4b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically” unit 1, section 3 to learn more about using your products to reflect your monastery’s values. You may come back later to proceed with 4a).

5. Are your products made on site at your monastery?

5a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether your monastic products are locally sourced:

	All or most of your products come from the monastery or the local community.
	If your products are not produced locally, they come from another monastic community

5b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically”, unit 2 to learn more about locally sourcing your products. You may come back later to proceed with 5a).

6. Is your monastery shop well located and easy to find by customers?

6a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether your monastic shop is well located:

	There is adequate signage for customers to find your monastery shop.
	The shop is connected to or close to the monastery, and easy to access.
	Customers can locate your shop from each of the entrances and exits of the monastery.

6b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically”, unit 3, section 1 to learn more about the accessibility of your monastic shop. You may come back later to proceed with 6a).

7. Does the atmosphere of your monastic shop reflect the values of your monastery?

7a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether the atmosphere of your monastic shop reflects the values of your monastery:

	The shop has good lighting.
	The staff have a pleasant attitude and are dressed appropriately.
	The shop is not too crowded with too many shelves and there is room for the customers to browse.
	The shop offers a relaxed and silent atmosphere.



7b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically” unit 3, section 2 to learn more about using your monastery shop to reach your goals. You may come back later to proceed with 7a).

8. Are your staff qualified enough to answer customers’ questions about your products?

8a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess whether your staff are qualified to answer customers’ questions:

	Your staff can answer questions about the production of the products or special reasons why they are sold in your shop.
	Your staff are knowledgeable about the monastery’s history.
	Your staff are familiar with the local community (nearby restaurants, gas stations, able to give directions, etc.).

8b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically” unit 3, section 3 to learn more about ensuring that your staff are qualified. You may come back later to proceed with 8a).

2.4 Distribution Channels

WHAT IS A DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL?

Distribution is an action of sharing products or services out among several recipients as clients. Also, distribution is the way, in which something is spread over an area or a region. A **distribution channel** is a chain of intermediaries through which a product or service passes until it reaches the final buyer or the end consumer. They can include wholesalers, retailers, distributors, and the Internet as an online channel. Different ways of distributing monastic products include: selling the products in their **own monastery shop**, selling the products in **another monastery shop** with which the monastery has established a collaboration, selling the products through an **online** monastery shop, selling the products through **a retail organisation in shops different from the monastic ones**, and selling the products by using **a combination of two or more ways as above**. Monasteries can use different places and types of intermediaries to sell their monastic products according to their philosophy, willingness to sell on their own or not, and also very important - according to their production capacity, time, and ability to organise sales.

CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE STARTING DISTRIBUTION

Designing a successful distribution strategy requires establishing a good network with various stakeholders as suppliers, supporters, retailers, distributors, promoters, etc. With the involvement of experienced stakeholders and partners as retailers and distributors and under their guidance, the business and product delivery models can be further developed and enhanced.

Inbound sales are a personalised, helpful, modern sales methodology. Inbound salespeople focus on their prospect's pain points, act as a trusted consultant, and adapt their sales process to the buyer journey.

Inbound leads are sales that are likely to come to you. They are often a result of your content marketing strategy. They have an initial knowledge about your organisation, monastic shop or monastery, etc.

Outbound leads are prospects that you reach out to. They come from your direct emails or phone calls to prospective customers. The **outbound sales** activities can be distinguished in direct sales (through sales personnel) as well as in indirect sales, e.g. through distributors, other intermediaries, and partner collaboration.

Monasteries that are producing different products need to consider several things when they start to plan their distribution.

Consideration 1: What characteristics do your products have? What is their durability? Perishability? Production per month?

Consideration 2: Who is your target customer? Are they locals or tourists? Are they pilgrims'?

Consideration 3: What are the needs and possibilities of your monastery related to the distribution process? What is your budget? What is the marketing strategy?

Consideration 4: What do you expect from your intermediary? What are your expectations on availability, willingness, functions, potential relationship?

Consideration 5: Environment, what are your legal restraints? Political issues? Cultural differences?

CHOOSING YOUR DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS

Distribution can be done through either online or offline sales and through direct or indirect sales. If you choose to sell online, there are requirements for having an online shop or an online portal.

The requirements are:

- a sufficient range of products.
- storage capacities.
- packaging and shipping areas.
- formulation of general terms and conditions.
- knowledge of the right of withdrawal.
- duty to provide information to customers.
- knowledge of the precise and legally described product description.

Direct Sales are made through direct distribution in the monastery shops situated in the monasteries or by direct sales to people's homes by trained salespeople working for the monastery.

Indirect Sales use outside intermediaries such as agents, retailers, or even distributors who have large distribution channels with the right target customers for the monastery.

INTERMEDIARIES IN DISTRIBUTION

Intermediaries are the people who aid you in distribution. Different types of intermediaries include:

- **Middleman** - an independent person who operates as a link between producers and consumers or organisational buyers.
- **Retailer** - a middleman who is engaged primarily in selling to end customers.
- **Agent** - a business unit that negotiates purchase, sales, or both but does not take a title to the goods in which it deals.
- **Wholesale** - a merchant establishment operated by an enterprise organisation that is primarily engaged in buying, usually storing and physically handling goods in large quantities, and reselling the goods to retailers or organisational buyers.
- **Manufacturer's Agent** - an agent who generally operates on an extended contractual basis, often sells within an exclusive territory, handles non-competing but related lines of goods, and possesses limited authority regarding prices and terms of sales.
- **Distributor** - a wholesale middleman especially in lines where selective or exclusive distribution is common at the wholesaler's level in which the manufacturer expects strong promotional support, often a synonym for wholesaler.

2.4.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Do you have a distribution strategy?

1a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess its relevance and your knowledge:

	You have identified the main characteristics, benefits and quality of your monastic products.
	You know who your potential customers are – from where they are coming, what they need and what they expect from your monastic products.
	You have already identified what the monastery can provide as financing to support different aspects of the monastery shop.
	You have trained salespeople to work in the monastic shop. Are they volunteers or employees?
	You are in collaboration with intermediaries in your distribution activities because the monastic production is increasing.
	You have certain expectations from the distributor of your monastic products, and you have listed them in a contract.
	You understand your environmental limitations (cultural, legal, etc.)

1b) If no: Go to SKIVRE Training Module 5 “Distribution Channels”, Units 1, 2 and 3 and read the main considerations that must be considered when you build your distribution strategy. Look at Picture 2 as well. Read the good practices and accomplish Exercises 5.1.

1c) If you realise that you lack finance for fostering distribution activities, please look at the financing theme in Module 9, Unit 1.

2. Do you understand the different types of distribution channels?

2a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your understanding:

	You have your own monastic shop because your production is small and strongly connected with the monastery.
	You sell your monastic products in other monastery shops, with which the monastery has established a good collaboration.

	You sell the products through a re-sale or retail organization, because of your large production capacity
	You understand how distribution through the internet works – you have your own online shop to sell monastic products, or you use another online platform to sell your monastic products.

2b) If no: please go to SKIVRE training Module 5 “Distribution Channels” Unit 2, Unit 4 and all exercises at the end of Module 5. As well, go to SKIVRE training Module 2 “Marketing Strategies” for a better overlook as well and get back to 2a).

2c) If you want to consider the different distribution options in general, please refer to Module 5 “Distribution Channels” Unit 3.

3. Do you have online distribution channels?

3a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess their relevance:

	You have a website to promote the monastery and, in addition - the monastic products produced in your monastery with a special contact form for purchasing and requests.
	Your website has a special page, organized as an online shop, where customers can inform themselves about the monastic products and are able to purchase as well.
	You have an online shop, which is separate from the official website of the monastery.
	You have the means to deliver your monastic product to customers remotely.

3b) If no: please go to SKIVRE training Module 5 “Distribution Channels” Unit 4, subunit 4.1 and Exercise 5.3. Please go to SKIVRE training Module 2 “Marketing Strategies” and go back to 3a).

4. Do you understand which type of intermediary is suitable for you?

4a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess their relevance:

	You have direct sales - your intermediaries are volunteers, or hired salespeople, or monks/nuns from the monastery who are acting as salespeople.
	You have organized indirect sales using some outside intermediaries as other monastic shops, or special shops offering monastic products from different monasteries, or a distributor who is offering your monastic products to other organizations and shops.
	You understand very well the functions of the outside intermediaries such as agents, retailers, or even distributors.

4b) If no: please go to SKIVRE Training Module 5 “Distribution Channels” Unit 4, subunit 4.2 and subunit 4.3. Please read all good practices listed at the end of Training Module 5 as well and get back to 4a).

5. Do you have the necessary requirements for your distribution methods to match the specifics of the monastic products and capacity of production?

5a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess their relevance:

	You use direct distribution because production is small.
	You use direct distribution because your monastic products are strongly related to the monastery and its spirit.
	You use direct distribution to satisfy the specific needs of the visitors to the monastery.
	You use indirect distribution because your production is big, and you need more places to sell to ensure bigger incomes for the monastery.
	You use indirect sales to promote the monastery and its spirit in other regions and places.
	You use indirect sales because you have established good collaborations with other monasteries and monastic shops for mutual support.

5b) If no: please go to SKIVRE Training Module 4 “How to Sell Authentically” and SKIVRE training Module 5 “Distribution Channels” Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3 and Unit 4, subunit 4.2 and subunit 4.3. All exercises related to Module 5 and Module 4 will help for your improvement. Please read all good practices listed at the end of the training module and get back to 5a).

If you are unable to complete this checklist or you are unsure about any of the items, please see **Module 5** of the SKIVRE Training Program.

2.5 Social Media and Communication

OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR MONASTIC PRODUCTS

Social media usage for monastic products touches upon a niche market which is diverse but limited to certain product categories. One can assume that customers are people who value good, solid, reliable things that they can trust, and they are aware of the monastic context. Social media offers the opportunity to reach people outside of the specific religious clientele. Above all, it also allows reaching people who care about quality, who want to live sustainably and who value social interaction. All these are currently strong trends that appeal to many people, which can significantly expand the market for monastic products. Therefore, social media offers a direct route to your customers.

The basics for a successful relationship between monasteries and their visitors are rather simple, but crucial:

- **Stay authentic** - define how to sustain the dignity of a site and insist on compliance with its rules (quietness, respect).
- **Improve visibility** - invest in an interactive website, blogs, activities in social media.
- **Create products and souvenirs with added value** - enable visitors to take something home of special value.
- **Encourage** visitors to share and contribute to their experiences.

Here are some tips for effective management practices in the context of digitalisation, social media use, and faith-based tourism:

- provision of **energy supply** and **Wi-Fi** at religious sites and pilgrims' shelters.
- access to state-of-the-art **information & communication** technologies.
- state-of-the-art **websites, blogs, apps, social media pages** or other ways for visitors to get and stay in touch before, during and after their visit.
- **sound interpretive facilities** at the monastery (including bilingual or multilingual information, (audio) guides, etc.).
- **basic facilities** for catering and refreshments; restaurants or **accommodation nearby**.
- possibilities to obtain **provisions**.
- **access to further information** on places worth visiting in the area, tourism services, or mobility options.

COMMUNICATING WITH VISITORS AND CUSTOMERS

Be aware that most visitors to your monastery plan their trip beforehand and gather information using social media networks; they collect tips from friends and virtual contacts. Social media as a marketing tool can help to save costs, build, and strengthen relations and to communicate with your visitors and customers. For successful online publishing and communication with your followers on social media try to include an **iconographic setting**, try to avoid banal and obvious images, as well as “glossy” and commercial pictures. For **text**, use short and direct texts; also, remember to talk to users as you would talk to a friend but **never lose authority**.

Your visitors and customers have the possibility of writing reviews, leaving comments, and presenting different perceptions of your monastery on countless amounts of review sites and social media platforms. Be aware of negative comments and use them for improvements. Visitors and customers trust other visitors and customers who have had similar experiences more than nice, eye-catching presentations from websites, brochures, leaflets, TV, etc. Therefore, your monastic products and services well promoted and presented in social media become a stimulus for visiting and buying, empowering the visitor and customer, AND helping the monastery with promotion and innovative ideas. This is both true at an internal as well as an external marketing level.

To choose the right social media channels, they were examined in Module 6 of the **SKIVRE** training scheme. In brief: **Facebook** is the most powerful tool, that is good for videos, photos, events, and immediately attracting an audience, also for creating interest groups. **Instagram** is strong due to their focus on pictures and stories. **Twitter** relies on hashtags; it is good for reaching a global audience. Finally, **YouTube** is the most important instrument for visualised content.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT MESSAGES

The following are recommendations for formulating messages in connection with your monastic products:

- **Post relevant content** - post content that the target audience would appreciate.
- **Create a story** - leading up to your big post with commentary before and after.
- **Create discussion** - discuss with the audience, ask questions, and get their opinion.
- **Ask the audience** to read and share - leave a link and compose a short message for your readers to simply read and share.
- **Keep it short and simple** - otherwise you will disengage your audience.
- **Re-read** the content before posting.

- **Watch your tone** - remember to be professional.
- **Re-evaluate your pictures** - keep them professional looking.
- **Have a complete profile** - be prepared for people to look at it to learn about your monastic site and get basic information like opening hours and facilities on site.
- **Stay consistent** - always maintain the same voice and content.

ANALYSIS AND MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS IN SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

There are a few basic rules for social media marketing. The following are some important recommendations for marketing in social media: **agree on common rules** within the social media team. **Reflect the quality of your products** in all your marketing efforts, also in your social media activities. Build up an **active and dedicated fan community**. Familiarise yourself with the creation of good **image and video material**. Think about which content is suitable for which medium. Be ready for **dialogue** and react quickly to comments from your visitors and customers.

The criteria and key figures for **measuring success** include the number of website visitors, fans/followers, visitor reviews, and tweets/retweets. There are also contact requests, backlinks from blogs, statements about appearance, taste and effectiveness of your products, general mentions of your products, share of your products, dealer inquiries, interview requests, and requests for conference contributions. There are a few questions to ask yourself to **evaluate your performance**:

- What works and what does not?
- Which social media platform works better than others?
- Which posts were well received, and which were not?
- Are efforts and yield in a good relationship?
- Which topics and products do people get involved with?
- Which contributions lead to visits or purchase decisions?

2.5.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Do you have one or more social media account(s) for your monastery?

1a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess the relevance and success rate of your social media activities:

	Your posts are recognised and liked.
	You get feedback from comments in your social media account(s).
	Comments of your users give information about their expectations.
	Comments of your users provide you with inspiration (for improvements of your monastic products, for your facilities, etc.)
	The number of your followers is constantly rising.
	You get in touch with people who might be valuable multipliers.
	You have access to analytical data for your account(s).

1b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 6 to decide which social media accounts might be the right ones for your monastery. Exercises 1 – 5 and 10 will support your decisions and you can get back to 1a).

2. Do you see the benefits of social media for marketing your monastic products?

2a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess the benefits deriving from your social media activities:

	We can raise attention to our monastic products by a broad audience.
	We can create stories around our products which raise the interest level of our customers.
	We are regularly in touch with our visitors and customers.
	We can communicate the activities of our monastery in general and/or create a context linked to the spiritual ambitions of our Order.

	We get feedback from our visitors and customers which confirms the quality of our products or which help us to improve them according to customers' expectations.
	We are in touch with people who are in line with our own ambitions and philosophy of producing and selling.
	We are in touch with interested third parties e.g. retailers or producers of goods which could complement our own range of regional products.

For the statements that do not apply to you, please go back to the **SKIVRE** Training Module 6 "Social Media and Communication", units 1 and 2, and exercise 6.4.

2b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module 6 to learn how to create benefits from social media for your monastery. Then get back to 1a).

3. Do you have someone or a team who can manage your social media accounts?

3a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess the conditions for these people:

	We have a person or a team handling our social media activities.
	The social media activities of the person(s) are agreed with and supported by the management of the monastery.
	The social media person or team have clearly allocated working time for the efforts.
	The person(s) handling the social media activities get regular training.
	We have created a social media calendar to organise the social media activities.
	Our social media expert(s) check the success of their activities regularly.
	Our social media expert(s) are in close contact with the producers of our monastic products.
	The social media accounts are checked every day by clearly identified persons.
	Questions and comments of followers are answered within 1 day.

3b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module 6 units 2 and 3 and exercise 9 in order to decide how to organise and train the staff for social media activities. When you have been successful, get back to 3a).

4. Do you understand how to measure your success on social media?

4a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess the success of your social media accounts:

	Are you in direct contact with your visitors and buyers via your social media account(s)?
	Are you in direct contact with your business partners (retailers, suppliers, network partners) via your social media account(s)?
	Have you established reliable rules that ensure your customer contact?
	Are you familiar with instruments for monitoring success that provide valuable information on user behaviour?
	Are you using tools to help you monitor and evaluate visitor and customer data?
	Have you identified and agreed upon the measurement and analysis of key figures?
	Are you checking the performance of your social media activities regularly and based on data which is linked to key figures?

4b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module 6 “Social Media and Communication” unit 3 and Exercises 9 and 10 to learn how to measure success. When you have more information on that, check it in your social media accounts and get back to 4a).

5. Do you have an overview of the different ways to market your products through social media?

5a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your most successful ways to market monastic products on social media:

	Are you familiar with the different distribution channels for your monastic products in social media?
	In case you are using different social media, did you create different messages for different social media channels?
	Are you aware of the high relevance of creating stories about your monastic products?
	Have you created stories about your monastic products which fit the special requirements of social media?
	Have you created a social media calendar for your products to make sure that your social media content is linked to special events?
	Have you thought about working with influencers and found out whom of them are active in your field?
	Is your local destination management organization, e.g. your regional tourism office, aware of your social media activities and supports them?

5b) If no: Go to SKIVRE training Module 6 “Social Media and Communication” unit 3 and exercises 4, 6, and 8 to learn more about different ways in marketing monastic products via social media. You may come back later to proceed with 5a).

5c) If you wonder how to raise the performance of your social media activities through partnerships and networking, please refer to Module 7 “Value adding through networks”, Unit 1.

*If you are unable to complete this checklist or are unsure about any of the items, please see **Module 6** of the SKIVRE Training Program.

2.6 Value Adding Through Networks

WHAT IS NETWORKING AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Networking can be interpreted in different ways and comes in different shapes and in different forms. However, overall, **it is about building relationships and enjoying them in different ways**. It builds on the notion of helping each other and sharing significant knowledge between parties. **Networking** is defined as the action or process of interacting with others to exchange information and develop professional or social contacts.

BUILDING A NETWORK

There is no blueprint for how to build a network, however, there are **measures and good practices** one can follow. Successful networks are long-term initiatives based on **solid financing models**, which are developed cooperatively over the years. Networks need **patience and a chance for growth** and development in small steps. These networks are often led by **strong personalities**, people who understand that networks are sensitive bodies which need strategies, rules, and sustainable structures. Leading and organising a network needs **time and professional commitment**. Successful networks are based on a **common understanding** of the needs of local representatives. Networks must **cope with individual ambitions**. It is essential to be aware of and sensitive to the fact that they can destroy a process of mutual trust and understanding. Networks are open to new partners and **never organised as a “closed shop”**. They meet according to a **clearly defined and reliable schedule** without big gaps. Networks also have a social dimension and **encourage friendships**.

ENSURING THE ENDURANCE OF YOUR NETWORK

Sustainable networks need **a structure**. It is important to understand the structural requirements of the network to establish the commitment of its members. They also need **formal commitments from its members** which can be done through buying shares, having a membership fee, donating, etc. They need **a person responsible** for the day-to-day tasks of the network. This person will help the network grow. Finally, they need **a financing model** that is understood by all the members. The most often use models of membership fees and opportunities through local or regional authorities.

To determine your strategy to network you could ask yourself several questions.

As an **individual**, it is important to ask: what your key skills are, are you a doer or a listener? Are you happy to interact with all sorts of people or is that something you need to learn?

As a **member of your monastery**: What collective skills might be useful in starting to network and to build local connections? What knowledge do you have of your locality that is useful for starting a network? Does your environment already offer conditions that meet customers' needs (e.g. through tourist activities, through an existing network of on-farm outlets, through the promotion of small producers, etc.)? If not, how would you start bringing visitors in? Who has PR and marketing skills? Who has production skills and is sure your products are ready to reach a wider audience? Do the products look professional and are things that people would want to purchase? Who is the natural leader of the group and ready to promote and link to other producers, so you have a natural local grouping?

BASIC NETWORKING STRATEGIES

There are some **basic tips and tricks** to consider while networking which are necessary to enhance the effectiveness of your networking activities:

- Make yourself known.
- Never be shy!
- Come prepared.
- Do not be short sighted.
- Ask others what you can do for them.
- Become a volunteer.
- Use active and passive networking.
- Follow up on contacts.

COMMON NETWORKING PITFALLS

Networking can be a challenging task, and for some people it comes more naturally than others. Here are some **common pitfalls** presented to prevent you from falling for them in the future:

- Only asking and not giving.
- Being too passive.
- An overdose of information.

2.6.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Do you understand what a network is and why it is beneficial to your monastery?

1a) If yes, use the checklist to assess your understanding.

	You understand the benefits of a network.
	You know where to find a network to join.
	You know of tasks that other members of a network could help with.

1b) If no, please go back to the **SKIVRE** Training Module 7 “Value adding through networks” and read units 1 and 2, exercises 1,2,3. Then you may return to 1a).

2. Are you an active member of a network?

2a) If yes, use the checklist to assess the success of your networking activities.

	You are a member of one or more network/s.
	You actively communicate with your network/s.
	You actively help other members of your network/s.

2b) If no, please go back to the **SKIVRE** Training Module 7 “Value adding through networks” and read unit 3, exercises 1,2,3. Then you may return to 2a.

3. Do you have an idea of any potential network partners or where you might find them?

3a) If yes, use the checklist to assess the success of your networking activities.

	You can identify them through collaboration with other monasteries.
	You can identify them through local or regional cultural organisations.
	You include marketing specialists.

3b) If no, please go back to the **SKIVRE** Training Module 7 “Value adding through networks” and read unit 3, exercises 1,2,3. Then you may return to 3a).

4. Do you understand what is necessary to improve your networking skills?

4a) If yes, use the checklist to assess the success of your networking activities.

	You understand how to make yourself known.
	You are not shy.
	You are prepared.
	You search 'outside the box' when it comes to making new connections.
	You offer aid to others.
	You volunteer for tasks.
	You follow up with your connections.

4b) If no, please go back to the **SKIVRE** Training Module 7 “Value adding through networks” to exercise 2 (What personal skills/competences are helpful when networking?). Then you may return to 4a).

5. Is your network mutually beneficial for all partners?

5a) If yes, use the checklist to assess your network.

	You actively participate in your network's projects.
	You offer aid to all members of your network.
	You utilise all aid from other members of the network.

5b) For the statements that do not apply to you, please go back to SKIVRE Training Module 7 “Value Adding Through Networks” (exercise 1,2,3). Please also study the good practice example no.3 (The International Trappist Association - International network to protect brand and values). Download link: <https://training.skivre.eu/gp.php/GP3-EN>. Then you may return to 5a).

6. Do you have a co-ordinator in your network?

6a) If yes, use the checklist to assess your network.

	You are the co-ordinator.
	You know the co-ordinator.
	The network is rather informal and has no co-ordinator.

6b) If no, please go back to the **SKIVRE** Training Module 7 “Value adding through networks” to unit 3, section 2 (Ensuring the Endurance of your Network). Then you may return to 6a).

7. Do you have the necessary resources to participate in a network?

7a) If yes, use the checklist to assess your participation in the network.

	You have access to important communication tools (internet, phones, laptop/computer/tablet).
	You are accessible and open to new contacts.
	You can travel in order to meet with your network in person.
	You have someone responsible for dealing with your network.

7b) If no, please go back to the **SKIVRE** Training Module 7 “Value adding through networks” to unit 2, section 2 (Types of Networks) and exercises 1,2,3. Then you may return to 7a).

8. Do you understand how to network as both an individual and as part of a network?

8a) If yes, use the checklist to assess your participation in the network.

	You understand how to communicate as an individual.
	You can present yourself as the representative of the monastery.
	You are happy to share information with network partners.
	You are proactive in reaching out to new contacts.

8b) If no, please go back to the **SKIVRE** Training Module 7 “Value adding through networks” to unit 1, section 2 (The Practice of Networking) and exercises 1,2,3. Then you may return to 8a).

If you are unable to complete this checklist or are unsure about any of the items, please see **Module 7** of the SKIVRE Training Program.

2.7 Branding

A **brand** is a symbol, name, or a picture that represents a company. A **brand soul** are the values and emotional elements of the brand. A **brand personality** can be associated with human characteristics such as gender or age as well as human personality traits such as warmth and sentimentality. **Brand culture** is a system of values that surround a brand such as cultural aspects of the monastery or the values of its region. A **brand character** is related to the promise of the brand to deliver certain experiences as well as with trustworthiness and honesty of the brand. A **brand image** is related to how the brand is perceived with customers. Finally, a **brand identity** is the uniqueness of the brand, the first associations that customers have after hearing the name of the brand. It also reflects how the monastery as a producer of the monastic products wants the brand to be perceived as well.

BRAND POSITIONING

Brand positioning is an act of designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinct place in the mind of the target market. It identifies the benefits of your monastic products or services and why they are unique in the market. There are three steps of brand positioning. The first step is to perform **market research** to define what other monastic products and brands are in the marketplace. The second step is to **know your target audience**. The third step is to **make a statement** about who you are and what your vision is.

One must also understand the brand promise and the reason to believe. The **brand promise** is the most compelling (emotional/rational) benefit to your target customers that your brand can own. The **reason to believe** is the most compelling evidence that your brand delivers on its brand promise

A **design brief** is a description of your production activity or monastic shop, and its unique points. It includes the objectives and goals of the new design. It should focus on your target audience. One should be aware of the scope of the design project, the available materials/required materials, the overall style/look/feelings/tone, and any definite "do nots".

VISUALISATION OF THE BRAND IDENTITY

A **visual system** establishes standards for each of the following: logo, typography, colour, imagery, layouts, and formats. A **logo** is a central part of the brand image that helps customers remember the producer and to discover it again. **Colours** are important for making your brand consistent and recognisable. Be aware of colours which are difficult for people with visual impairments.

Choose a professional designer or continue your collaboration with your logo designer. Your designer needs to understand your brand identity to visualise it. Communicate openly with your brand statements, values, and key characteristics of the products as well as your market analysis. Another important thing to be communicated with the designer is the **unique value of your products/group of products**. Visual elements matter, pictures, illustrations, colours, typography are imperative when it comes to a product label. choose your packaging materials with care. Very often, the **packaging materials** used for your monastic products are not considered as something important. However, the package is a part of your product because it protects your product after the sale. Also consider **brand protection**, make sure your brand is legally protected. Your packaging also reminds people of what they bought from you.

COMMUNICATE YOUR BRAND

Once your brand is completed, consider how to communicate your brand. Create your **brand story**. Key elements of the brand communication strategy are **brand message, audience, media**, and how they work hand in hand with the integrated marketing communication. Communicate your brand directly with the customers. Communicate the values and key characteristics of your brand.

2.7.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Do you have a brand for your product?

1a) If yes: use the following checklist to assess the relevance and success of your brand:

	You have a recognisable logo on your monastic products for your customers.
	Your brand conveys the authenticity of your products as monastic products.
	Your brand reflects the values of your monastic products and/or your monastery.
	Your brand is distinctive and easily recognisable.

1b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 8 “Creating a Strong Brand” to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercises 1 and 2 will support your decisions and you can get back to 1a).

2. Have you considered all of the necessary elements for creating a brand?

2a) If yes: use the following checklist to assess their relevance:

	You have considered brand soul.
	You have considered brand personality.
	You have considered brand culture.
	You have considered brand image.
	You have considered brand identity.

2b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** Training Module 8, Units 1, 2 and 3 to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercise 1 will support your decisions and you can get back to 2a).

3. Do you have proper brand positioning?

3a) If yes: use the following checklist to assess your steps for positioning:

	You have done market research.
	You know your target audience.
	You have a brand promise based on your values.
	You have identified the key benefits of your monastic products.

3b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 8 “Creating a Strong Brand”, Units 2 and 3 to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercises 1 and 2 will support your decisions and you can get back to 3a).

4. Do you understand how to visualise a good brand?

4a) If yes: use the following checklist to assess your knowledge:

	Your logo design reflects your monastery.
	The colour scheme reflects the quality of the product.
	The packaging and presentation are visually appealing and reflects the authenticity of the product.
	Your brand is legally protected.

4b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 8 “Creating a Strong Brand”, units 3 and 4 to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercise 2 will support your decisions and you can get back to 4a).

5. Do you know how to communicate your brand?

5a) If yes: use the following checklist to assess your knowledge:

	Do you know where to communicate your brand?
	Are you aware of the social media challenges?
	Do you know how to evaluate your performance?
	Do you know the basic rules of social media marketing?



For the statements that do not apply to you, please check **SKIVRE** training Module 8 “Creating a Strong Brand” (exercise 1,2,3) and SKIVRE training Module 6.

5b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 8 “Creating a Strong Brand”, unit 5, and SKIVRE training Module 6 “Social Media and Communication” unit 1 (exercises 1-10), to decide which aspects need more consideration. You can then go back to 5a).

If you are unable to complete this checklist or are unsure about any of the items, please see **Module 8** of the SKIVRE Training Program.

2.8 Financing Strategies

FINANCING STRATEGIES AND ITS STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

Some important concepts to understand are **Internal Financing**, which involves developing new products through what is already available in your organisation's assets. This can be personal savings, or through the sale of assets. The second concept is **capital structure** which is a business finance term that describes the proportion of an organisation's capital, or operating money, that is obtained through debt and equity. These two types of financing strategies will be explored below.

DEBT FINANCING

Debt financing is a strategy that involves borrowing money from a lender or investor with the understanding that the full amount will be repaid in the future, usually with interest. The **advantages** of debt financing are it allows owners to retain ownership of the organisation, it is easy to administer, and it is less expensive for organisations in the long term. The disadvantages are that it requires regular monthly payments of principal and interest, its availability is limited to established institutions, and it can be difficult for an unproven business to obtain loans.

EQUITY FINANCING

Equity financing is a strategy for obtaining capital that involves selling a partial interest in the organisation to investors. The equity, or ownership position, that investors receive in exchange for their funds usually takes the form of co-ownership in the company. The advantages of this financing strategy are: there is no obligation to repay the money, it is more likely to be available in the early stages of a company, and investors turn out to be good sources of advice and contacts for small business owners. The disadvantages are: that the owners must give up some control of the business, some sales of equity can be difficult and expensive to administer, and equity financing requires a lot of legal paperwork that can be hard to administer.

GRANTS AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Grants are non-repayable funds or products disbursed or given by one party (grant makers), often a government department, corporation, foundation or trust, to a recipient, often (but not always) a non-profit entity, educational institution, business or an individual. To receive a

grant, some form of "Grant Writing" often referred to as either a proposal or an application is required.

The EU provides funding for a broad range of projects and programs covering areas such as: regional & urban development, employment & social inclusion, agriculture & rural development, maritime & fisheries policies, research & innovation, or humanitarian aid. Other funding opportunities can take the form of grants for specific EU projects, contracts issued by EU institutions, small business grants, NGO, and civil society organisations.

Ways to find other sources of money include local organisations, government, or district institutions, nationally, big foundations, national banks, supra-regional institutions, voluntary funding organisations, international aid organisations, and foreign embassies.

2.8.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Have you already made the necessary preliminary considerations and decisions for growth?

1a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your awareness and relevance:

	Decisions were taken in your monastery to grow the business with monastic products.
	Your order or management supports a strategy of growth.
	You are creating or have created a development plan.
	You are aware what a financing strategy is.
	You are aware that you might need additional money for implementing your growth ambitions.

1b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 9 “Financing strategies”, Unit 1 to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercise 1 will support your decisions and you can get back to 1a).

2. Are you aware of your funding sources?

2a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your knowledge:

	You understand the differences between internal and external financing.
	You have understood opportunities of internal financing.
	You understand the advantages and disadvantages for choosing to use debt financing.
	You are aware of private sources of debt financing.
	You are aware of public sources of debt financing.
	You understand the reasons for using equity financing.
	You understand the advantages and disadvantages for equity financing
	You are aware of the so-called mezzanine funds.
	You understand the risks of each financing strategy for your monastery.

For the statements that do not apply to you, please check **SKIVRE** training Module 9 “Financing strategies”.

2b) For a video explanation of the differences between Debt Financing and Equity Financing please follow: <https://bit.ly/35a37y4>.

2c) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 9, Units 2 and 3 to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercises 1 and 2 will support your decisions and you can get back to 2a).

3. Are you aware of other opportunities obtaining funding?

3a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your awareness:

	You understand what a grant is.
	You are aware of regional funding opportunities.
	You are aware of advantages and disadvantages of your regional funding schemes.
	You are aware of national funding opportunities.
	You are aware of advantages and disadvantages of national funding schemes.
	You are aware of EU funding opportunities.

3b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 9, Unit 4, Subunit 4.1 “Regional, national and European Grant Schemes” to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercises 1, 2 and 3 will support your decisions and you can get back to 3a).

3c) If no: you may also refer to the good practice example: Good practice 17 “Fund-raising for NGOs – a Participant’s Manual”,

Download link: <https://training.skivre.eu/gp.php/GP17-EN>

4. Do you know how to obtain funding from the European Union?

4a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your knowledge:

	You know where to look for EU funding.
	You are aware of different funding schemes.
	You have chosen a funding scheme which meets best your ambitions.
	You understand how to apply for EU funding.
	You are aware of advantages and disadvantages of EU funding.

4b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 9 “Financing strategies”, Unit 4, Subunit 4.1 “Regional, national and European Grant Schemes” to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercises 1, 2 and 3 will support your decisions and you can get back to 4a).

5. Have you looked at donations or public grants as funding sources?

5a) If yes: Use the following checklist to assess your awareness:

	You have investigated international charitable organisations or embassies as sources of funding.
	You have checked funding sources offered by voluntary, social, business organisations.

5b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 9, Unit 4, Subunit 4.2 “Finding other money for product development and sales” to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercises 1, 2 and 3 and the good practices #17 and #18 will support your decisions and you can get back to 5a).

If you are unable to complete this checklist or you are unsure about any of the items, please see **Module 9** of the SKIVRE Training Program.

2.9 Aspects of Sustainability

BASIC ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability refers to the capacity of the product owner to continue his/her production during a long-term period. This includes aspects of integration of product development and product sales, organisational aspects, sustainability of personnel and consideration of requirements of visitors and customers in the New Media Age.

WAYS TO MAKE A MONASTERY SHOP SUSTAINABLE

An **organisational structure** is the way you organise the management and decision-making process of your business activities reaching your strategic goals. There are two types of organisational structures, vertical and horizontal. A **horizontal** structure is one where you grant employees the authority to make decisions without having to obtain approval. A **vertical** structure is better for an organisation with many employees because it employs a pyramid structured organisation with managers, and sub-managers. A vertical organisational structure is recommended for a monastery shop.

When choosing **staff for the monastery shop**, hire people that share the values of the monastery. Define what your staffing requirements are. Guide and educate your employees regularly. Be a great place to work and keep the best people. When choosing **contracts and partners**, decide if you want an independent contractor or employees in your monastery shop. Distinguishing between employees and independent contractors can impact your activities in production and in the monastery shop. An independent contractor operates under a separate agreement or distinct from the monastery and the monastery shop. The involvement of **volunteers** in your monastery shop needs special considerations as volunteers might have quite different motivations for getting involved. This does not necessarily have to be synonymous with your strategy. The classical motives of volunteers for "helping" and "sense of duty" are extended by the motives "creative will" and "self-design". At the same time, the demands on voluntary activity have grown.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY: SELF-FINANCING VS. EQUITY/DEBT FINANCING

When you use the mechanism of **internal financing**, you fund the development of new products with liquidity, so-called cash flow, which is already available within your organisation's assets: this may be savings or money available in the monastery's bank accounts or even money that may be available in a very short term through a so-called

liquidation of assets. With internal funding available, you can start on your product development project immediately, with no approval required other than that of your management.

Debt financing is a strategy that involves borrowing money from a lender or investor with the understanding that the full amount will be repaid within a specified future, usually with interest. In contrast, **equity financing**, in which investors receive partial ownership in an institutional exchange for their funds, does not have to be repaid.

The way you finance your monastery products can therefore contribute significantly to sustainability. You should have a basic knowledge of financing options or have access to appropriate experts or information. The more you develop your products and the deeper you enter the market, the more important questions of financing become to ensure sustainability.

SUSTAINABILITY ROADMAP

The sustainability roadmap for your monastic products are the main steps that need to be taken to help product sales develop and endure to value adding services. The steps are as follows: **Commitment** - gaining the commitment of all of the stakeholders; confirming the key **product portfolio**; confirming the **stakeholders and benefits**; **business model** development; and finally, **value creation** and improvement.

2.9.1 Implementation Checklist

1. Is your business plan sustainable?

1a) If yes: use the following checklist to assess the relevance and success of your business plan:

	Product development and product sales are linked in an integrated process.
	Your organisational structure is solid.
	You have a varied product mix.
	Your business is integrated with the local community.

1b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 10 to decide which aspects need more consideration. Exercises 1 – 5 will support your decisions and you can get back to 1a).

2. Are you currently part of one or more sustainable network/s?

2a) If yes, please use the following checklist to assess the relevance and success of your network:

	Your network is mutually beneficial.
	You utilise the partners in your network and they utilise you.
	You often communicate with the partners in your network.
	You support your network partners.
	Your network has a structure with long-term goals.

2b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Module 7 “Value Adding Through Networks” to decide which aspects need more consideration and check the exercises. Then you can get back to 2a).

3. Do you understand the criteria for monastic shop employees?

3a) If yes, please fill out the following checklist to assess the suitability of your monastic shop employees:

	Your staff is trained, motivated and experienced.
	The staff members are knowledgeable about the monastery's history and values.
	The staff members understand the basics of salesmanship.
	The staff members have a kind and welcoming attitude.
	The volunteers are well integrated and understand the standards and values of the monastic shop.
	The staff members and volunteers are consistently offered training and further education.

3b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Modules 4 and 10 to decide which aspects need more consideration and check the exercises. Then you can get back to 3a).

4. Is your organisation integrated with the local community both economically and socially?

4a) If yes, please refer to the checklist to assess how integrated your organisation is with the local community:

	Your monastic products are made using local products.
	Your business strategy involves local and regional providers/partners.
	You have established a common quality assurance system with your local and regional providers.
	Your monastic activities are well known throughout the local and regional community.
	Your monastery is involved in community events.

4b) If no: Go back to **SKIVRE** training Modules 4 “How to Sell Monastic Products Authentically” and 10 “Sustainability Aspects” to decide which aspects need more consideration and check the exercises. Then you can get back to 4a).

If you are unable to complete this checklist or are unsure about any of the items, please see **Module 10** of the SKIVRE Training Program.

Chapter 3

Technical Terms/Glossary

A

Authenticity - true to one's own personality, spirit, or character; conforming to an original to reproduce essential features.

B

Brand - a public image, reputation, or identity conceived of as something to be marketed or promoted.

Brand identity - Brand identity is the visible element of a brand, such as colour, design, and logo, that identifies and distinguishes the brand in consumers' minds.

Brand positioning - conceptual place you want to own in the target consumer's mind — the benefits you want them to think of when they think of your brand.

C

Capital - wealth in the form of money or other assets owned by a person or organisation or available for a purpose such as starting a company or investing.

Channel - a fixed or official course of communication.

Communication - a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviour.

D

Debt - a state of being under obligation to pay or repay someone or something in return for something received, a state of owing.

Debt financing - when a firm raises money for working capital or capital expenditures by selling bonds, bills, or notes to individual and/or institutional investors. In return for lending the money, the individuals or institutions become creditors and receive a promise to repay principal and interest on the debt.

Distributor - one that markets a commodity.

E

Equity - the money value of a property or of an interest in a property more than claims or liens against it

Equity financing - the method of raising capital by selling company stock to investors. In return for the investment, the shareholders receive ownership interests in the company.

F

Financing - the act or process or an instance of raising or providing funds.

G

Grants - a sum of money given by a government or other organisation for a particular purpose.

I

Internal financing - Receiving funds from a company's operating activities, as opposed to borrowing money from a bank or through means such as issuing equity or debt.

L

Logo - an identifying symbol (as for use in advertising).

M

Market - the course of commercial activity by which the exchange of commodities is affected: extent of demand.

Marketing mix - an expression used to describe the various types of marketing decisions which need to be taken to bring the product to the target market.

Media - the main means of mass communication (broadcasting, publishing, and the Internet) regarded collectively.

Middleman - an intermediary or agent between two parties; especially: a dealer, agent, or company intermediate between the producer of goods and the retailer or consumer.

N

Network – an interconnected group or association of persons (such as friends or professional colleagues).

O

Original and authentic product –this is the “real” monastic product. It must be produced in a monastery or in the immediate vicinity, the production must be carried out by nuns or monks or at least under their supervision.

R

Retail - to sell in small quantities directly to the ultimate consumer.

Retailer - an entity that sells goods such as clothing, groceries, or cars directly to consumers through various distribution channels with the goal of earning a profit.

S

Stakeholder - one who is involved in or affected by a course of action in an enterprise.

U

USP – Unique Selling Proposition / Unique Selling Point is an outstanding performance feature, which clearly sets an offer apart from the competition. In the monastic field: It is the unique advantage of a monastery shop in comparison to other shops.

V

Value - the monetary worth of something.

W

Wholesale - performed or existing on a large scale especially without discrimination.

Chapter 4

The SKIVRE Project – Monastic Heritage Preservation for the Future

SKIVRE - Skills Development for the Valorisation of European Religious Heritage was a European project (2018-2021) funded by the **ERASMUS+ programme**. Following the vision of the “European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018”, **SKIVRE** project contributed to the “Sharing Heritage” – theme by developing a training scheme for manufacturing and marketing of high-quality handcrafted products of European monasteries.

MONASTIC HERITAGE – IN THE PAST AND TODAY

Monastic heritage is an important part of European cultural heritage, shared by all European member states. Monasteries were always economic hotspots for the development and exchange of goods and services. Today, there are different business models for monasteries: some are still organised and led by their Orders with a focus on ecclesiastical duties. The majority are now either secular or (co)financed by public authorities on a regional level. The majority are in rural areas. In fact, these monasteries are companies: They employ administrative, technical and management staff, pay taxes and social costs. In monasteries operated by public or private operators there is a regular staff for maintaining the buildings, opening them for visitors and producing products for selling on the premises. They link cultural and religious heritage to the economy.

Monastic products for heritage preservation

SKIVRE links European history with the future: The fabrication of monastic products is an enormous economic chance for many monasteries to gain income for their preservation efforts as well as for creating employment for local people, specifically in rural areas. They contribute to both the tourism industry and the local economy. The production of monastic products (e.g. handcrafted personal care products (soaps, lotions), textiles, food (bread, marmalade, liquors, beer, wine, religious products) is therefore a means for generating income and contributes to preserving heritage. Without producing and selling these products, monasteries often could not survive. The historic knowledge of manufacturing these products is part of the intangible cultural European heritage.

Target groups, activities, and outcome

The **SKIVRE** training focuses on a most interactive approach, which targets secular staff, monks, and nuns at monasteries in a committed and responsible way. All activities are geared towards gaining relevant skills for raising revenues for the preservation of religious heritage sites. These **SKIVRE** outcomes support their activities:

- A **multilingual training scheme** for increase of professionalism of monastic products in production and marketing,
- A **user-friendly digital learning platform**,
- An **Implementation Guide for professional production and marketing** of monastic products in shops or at special retailers
- **Publication on the historic crafts of monasteries** and their potential for social entrepreneurship for citizens in rural areas.

All information and material is available on the **SKIVRE** homepage www.skivre.eu and the SKIVRE training platform (access via the homepage).

SKIVRE closed a training gap for European monasteries working hard in the preservation of their sites. The training opens new markets and improves access to existing markets. Staff at monasteries can upscale knowledge and are trained for the employment market. European citizens obtain better access to high-quality monastic products with a background linked to their own heritage.

The SKIVRE Partnership: Empowering monasteries to harvest the potential of monastic products

The partnership comprises a multidisciplinary European team, which represents the target groups and expertise needed for training development:

media k GmbH | GERMANY

(coordinator)

media k GmbH offers long-year expertise in religious heritage preservation and in the management of heritage preservation projects.

www.media-k.eu

Future for Religious Heritage

| BELGIUM

Future for Religious Heritage is a non-faith organisation open to all. It brings together those working to protect religious heritage all over Europe.

www.frh-europe.org

GUNET | GREECE

GUNET is a Greek specialist in creating online learning platforms, which offer different kind of learning experiences adapted to different topics.

www.gunet.gr

INI-Novation Bulgaria OOD | BULGARIA

INI-Novation is an education provider specialised in generating economic effects from cultural heritage.

www.ini-novation.com

Bronnbach Monastery | GERMANY

Bronnbach monastery is a former Cistercian monastery now operated by a public authority in the German Tauber valley. The monastery started to develop monastic products based on the history of the site.

www.kloster-bronnbach.de

Wissenschaftsinitiative

Niederösterreich | AUSTRIA

Wissenschaftsinititative is an education provider with longstanding experiences in developing learning platforms and learning material for heritage preservation.

www.wissenschaftsinitiative.at

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