

1) **regional branding on the exhibition ground of the major exhibition centre in our area, namely Kortrijk Xpo** . The visitor of Kortrijk Xpo can choose between two entrances : the entrance for trade fairs and the entrance for the congress and seminar facilities. In both entrances we will communicate about the region. The cost of this action will be partly financed by a within the XIM project. XIM is a non-profit organisation that has been established within the framework of expansion of Kortrijk Xpo. The functioning of XIM is financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Province of West-Flanders and the Intercommunale Leiedal. The other partners are the Chamber of Commerce of West-Flanders, KULAK (Catholic University of Leuven, department Kortrijk) and the high schools of the area: KATHO, KHBO and HOWEST.

**The idea however to promote the region in the exhibition centre was triggered by the international conference Vital Rural Area Conference in Norwich. (2009)**

We were told that an exhibition centre is an excellent location to communicate about your region because there a lot of people coming into your area in a short period of time. We were able to convince the strategic committee and the Board of the XIM, consisting of the most important regional actors. The XIM will invest 50.000 euro in this action. Brian Legein and Peter Verheecke give input to a work group that coördinates the action. We have chosen that the way we brand the region should be similar to the way the

Province of West-Flanders

brands its region, because the

Kortrijk

area is part of West-Flanders. There is a good co-operation and understanding between the Kortrijk Region and West-Flanders, thanks to the Vital Rural Area project. Last week a communication and marketing company has been selected. In October 2010 the regional branding in the exhibition centre has to be finalised. We hope we will in this way be able to tempt the international and national visitors to come back to our region. (see enclosure 1 : 20100331\_Leiedal Regional branding in Kortrijk Xpo)

2) Secondly, we will work together with the Province of West-Flanders in order to give content to **events inside and**

**outside the exhibition centre**

, after that the trade fair has closed it's doors. More specific, we would like to invite the entrepreneurs who are ambassadors of West-Flanders, to tell international visitors about the strengths of our region. This formula will be offered to exhibition organiser, who can choose to offer this in their turn to the exhibitors.

3) Thirdly, I-points will be installed in the exhibiton centre. **I points** are guide posts with a computer screen. Behind this hardware there is software and a complex connection of databases. This should make it easy for the visitor to explore the strengths of our region while he is visiting the region.

4) Finally, there will be a **mice manual**. One of the most important chapter in this mice manual is the international accessibility. If ones region is situated in a rural area, you should stress that your region is not situated in the middle of nowhere. We are making maps in order to proof that the travelling times towards are region are very good. The goal of the mice manual is to attract as many visitors, exhibitors and trade fair organisers as possible. The necessity of a Kortrijk Convention Centre is now being investigated in the scope of the XIM project. We permanently give input.

Click here to view the presentation of this project: [Kortrijk Xpo XIM presentatie.pdf](#)