

THEORETICAL BASES OF TOURISM BRANDING

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Abstract: The emergence of a brand is a consequence of the idea of identifying a particular product. Its beginnings are related to craftsmanship and the desire of every master to make his work recognizable and memorable. The brand can be perceived as the distinctive feature of the subject that will make the audience choose it for others in the same field. The brand can be a megabrand, an international brand, a national and a local brand. From the level of his development stems also the specifics of his elements - name, visual, verbal and sound symbols, etc. The smart management of the brand gives a number of advantages to the company, assists in building a positive image of the brand that they associate with the company and its production. Branding helps consumers orient themselves in the huge flow of information, discover the products and services of companies that have built up their preferences. Companies are given the opportunity to launch new products / services at lower costs and thus increase revenue ratios. A tourist brand is a slogan and a logo of a city, region, or country for the exit of that territory into the tourist services market. The territory or region is seen as a product that, like others, has its significant elements. The tourist destination brand has its own specificity. It can not be created in "green" and is associated with the main assets of the destination: landscape, people, culture and history. The brand must be consistent with a complex set of factors and elements that determine the quality of the tourist product, its accessibility and consumer interests. Its features are the creation of an experience like the product being sold, and the experience is hard to sell. Branding has to wrap up the experience as something that can be easier on the market. The destination brand is capturing the distinctive elements of the destination within the brand and transmitting these elements through the brand's components: identity, personality, image, character and culture.

Keywords: brand, tourism, tourist destination

Modern economic development is linked to trends such as globalization, regionalization and the knowledge-based economy³⁶³. The Old Norse word "brand" entered the English language in the 10th century to denote the origin, the manufacturer or the owner of a particular product. Today it expands its importance and is used in the sense of identifying the product and / or the service with the manufacturer, the intermediary, the trader with simultaneous differentiation from the similar products and services, but mainly in the minds of the clients. Despite the many specialized studies, there is no unambiguous and commonly accepted definition of a brand. The emergence of a brand is a consequence of the idea of identifying a particular product. Its beginnings are related to craftsmanship and the desire of every master to make his work recognizable and memorable. For example, livestock owners have tagged (ie dug up) their livestock to be able to identify it, to separate it from the livestock of the other owners (Interurban Group). Thus, in the antiquity, the potters' brands and various other craft guilds emerged (Keller, 2003). However, a suitable environment for development and the beginning of brands and especially of brand management did not appear until the second half of the 18th and early 19th centuries (Low and Fullerton, 1994). The second half of the 18th century is seen as a favorable environment for brand development when the national (mostly American) branding emerges. The favorable environment for brand development is due to the wide variety of production, more advertising opportunities, expanding the sales network, increasing the population and living standards, etc. (Keller 2003). At the beginning of the 19th century, brands dominated the mass market, after the Second World War, brand management was established (Low and Fullerton, 1994).

The American Marketing Association gives the following definition of brand: "name, word (sign) or expression, designation (designation), design (design idea) or their combination intended to identify the commodity or service of a specific communicator , a separate person or organization) and differentiating it from that of competitors "³⁶⁴. The definition sets out the two main purposes of creating a brand and explains in detail the system

³⁶³ Найденов Кл., Иванов М., Анализ и оценка на инвестиционната привлекателност и конкурентоспособност на регионите, РЕГИОНАЛНА ИКОНОМИКА И УСТОЙЧИВО РАЗВИТИЕ - 2017, 2018, Издателство „Наука и икономика“, Икономически университет – Варна, ISBN 978-954-21-0956-3, стр.143-156

³⁶⁴ <http://www.americanbranding.org/>

for identifying goods / services. Bennett modifies the concept by adding the logo or some other feature, and Brown thinks that the brand is "a collection of all the current connections that arise between buyers and brand owners" (Abadzimarina 2000: 40). Rhys and others. (2000) note that "the strength of a trademark lies in its ability to influence the buyer's behavior". (A. Rees et al., 2000: 10)³⁶⁵. In this sense, the brand can be perceived as the distinctive feature of the subject, which will make the audience choose it to other subjects in the same field. Kotler (2003) argues that the brand is the most important element of marketing, "art and the cornerstone of marketing".

The signs distinguishing the brand are first of all those that provide benefits to the client for which he agrees to pay (Abadzimarina 2000). Randall (2000)³⁶⁶ summarizes several functions that the brand needs to fulfill. In general, these are:

- Identity (the identifier must be identified as such, such as the name, the slogan, the logo, the colors, etc.);
- Associativeness (the identity of the subject should call a memory to the recipient for all the information he has about the product, service, etc.);
- Security (the subject must guarantee the positives expected of him / her);
- Differentiation (the subject must be clearly distinct from the competitor);
- Added value (the subject has to offer something more).

The brand is associated with consumer perceptions of value, utility, it leads to "continuity of interconnections"³⁶⁷ (Sunghyup 2009:531) with the preferred product, knowledge of the brand is formed and thus its value increases. In connection with this, Aaker's theory of four dimensions of brand value is well-known and widely applied: the adoption of the brand; brand image; brand loyalty and consistent quality. If these attributes exist, the brand becomes a valuable asset to the company. The brand is directly related to the brand, it awakens consumers emotions, feelings and impressions, especially if a big brand is known. " It is in direct connection with the trademark, an irrational category that reflects certain socio-psychological peculiarities on the part of users of services and goods.

In other words, the concept of brandy is interpreted in two respects: narrowly and in a broad sense. In a narrow sense, it associates only with the image of the brand, and in addition to its widespread additional elements of socio-psychological nature or related to the individual style, products and services of the company.

In the narrow sense of the word, the brand is a sign of identifying a particular product and overlaps its content with the concept of a trademark³⁶⁸. In the broad sense of the word, the brand includes additional elements and is interpreted as a set of mechanisms of impact, images and perceptions. In broad terms, the brand includes a tangible and intangible part:

The brand can be a megabrand, an international brand, a national and a local brand. From the level of his development stems also the specifics of his elements - name, visual, verbal and sound symbols, etc. The brand is closely related to the brand image (established and enforced on the market and in the mind of the consumer)³⁶⁹. Therefore its main element is the name. The name of the brand is one of the first contacts of the product with the user. Proper naming stimulates buying and positive associations and is a sales agent. It, along with product identification (company), gives knowledge, describes the difference and provokes (not provoking) confidence. The name of the brand can be descriptive (the essence of the business or product) based on experience, distinctive. Linguistic analysis is often used for its creation, consistent with the level of its development. The second important element of the brand is its visual elements. Among these, the first is the so-called logo - the main visual "associate" of the brand. The name of the brand and the logo are often performed in one style and presented as a logo. Significant elements of the brand are also the verbal and sound symbols.

³⁶⁵ Рийс, А., Рийс, Л. 22 неизменни закона на брендинга, С., Класика и Стил, 2000,

³⁶⁶ Randall, Geoffrey. Branding. London, Kogan Page Limited, 2000, 12.

³⁶⁷ Sunghyup, S.,H. Creating a model of customer equity for chain restaurant brand formation. – B: *Int. Journal of Hospitality management*, 28, 2009, 531.

³⁶⁸ may cover homogeneous products produced by the same manufacturer; different type and purpose products are identified by quality and origin; with a particular brand (which forms kinship brands); diverse brands of products offered by the same company, a sub-brand proposes a modification of an established brand offered on a particular market segment.

³⁶⁹ Each company can register a trademark, but it does not automatically form a brand. T. Brand image is a concept introduced by David Ogilvy in the 1950s.

The brand structure also includes an architecture or tool that solves the tasks of running the brand in a single system mode. There are different classifications of the types of architecture, but the most widespread is that of David Aaker who creates House of Brands and Branded House (home-branded or branded house). The first approach is spread mostly in Europe and America, and the second, allowing megabrands to be considered, is preferred by Japanese and Chinese corporations. A classic solution within the Branded House strategy is to put the company's production under one corporate brand (Sony, Mercedes, BMW). If the company creates House of Brands, its portfolio is dominated by individual brands, each of which is used for one product (eg Procter & Gamble has about a hundred independent brands).

Another classification includes the so-called integrated sub-brands of products - sea, mountain and ski, spa and SPA, etc. and of regions - Black Sea, etc.). Branding (also called brand management) means the process of building a favorable image of a product or company that, in the minds of consumers and potential customers, distinguishes them from competitors³⁷⁰. Branding connects the concept of the manufacturer, the product and its characteristics, the brand and its image into the mind of the user. Some authors reduce branding to managing customer relationships. "Branding is about setting your prospects to see you as the only solution to their problem"³⁷¹ (Frankel 2010:56), a mutually beneficial, stimulating and win-win relationship is created and maintained between the brand and the user. Other authors expand the content of the branding and attribute it to the company's management activities as a concept at a higher hierarchical level. Branding imposes a brand on consumers, it is created by itself, and its creators only give it the necessary attributes, sell its defined features, and skillfully launch it into the consumer environment where it grows, develops and grows stronger over time. The main strength of the branding lies in the natural psychological features of consumers. The most widely accepted definition of branding is that of Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000). The authors offer a theory that claims the brand's value is based on four major factors: brand awareness, brand associations, and brand loyalty.

Rhys and others. (2000) describe several laws on branding. They first pay attention to the extension of a mark: if its name is used excessively³⁷², this could blur its messages and confuse customers. The authors recommend narrowing the focus of the brand. Another important point in their study is the recommendation of "having one word in the mind of the client" or mentioning the subject to associate with a particular word bearing a positive characteristic. A key law described by the authors is the Law of Recommendations or Claims for a Brand's Authenticity. This is a fundamental moment in shaping the public image of a country, for example. It must have something authentic in itself and at the same time - positive. Consideration should also be given to the importance of the brand logo - ie. the combination of the sign and the brand name. As a universal rule, it is possible to perceive the good legibility of the logotype, its attachment to brass, the ease with which it perceives the human eye.

Branding is based on two different approaches, called "product plus" and "holistic branding" (Ambler and Styles 1995, 1997). According to the traditional definition of "product plus", the brand is a kind of supplement to a product (Gardner 1995, Kotler 2003)³⁷³ and is one of several important additions to it (along with packaging, price, and promotions). In this approach, the main purpose of the branding is to identify the product and / or the seller and to define the product and / or the seller of the competition. Branding has much more to do with advertising agencies than with developing and launching new products. As a result, from the perspective of the "plus product", branding is primarily related to mass communication with the user.

In the holistic point of view (Ambler 1992, Ambler and Styles 1995, 1997) the brands are compared with the psychological concept of the gestalt. Using this analogy, Murphy (1990) argues: "nothing is a simple sum of its constituent parts"; "A brand behaves like a gestalt, as it is more than the sum of its components, and its consolidation in the mind of consumers takes a long time" (Murphy 1990: 45). The holistic approach confirms that brands exist in consumer minds (Disowned al, 1996).

The branding process involves different steps for brand realization.

³⁷⁰ the origin of branding as a marketing discipline is rooted in the marketing of fast-moving consumer goods, ie food, beverages, cosmetics and cleaning products (Morgan et al., 1999).

³⁷¹ Frankel, R. The revenge of brand X, Frankel & Anderson, 2010, 56

³⁷² on multiple and unrelated products or features without a clear advantage on which the license is concentrated

³⁷³ Chernatony and McDonald say the difference between brands and products can be understood as added value. In their opinion, branding and added value are synonymous concepts. In marketing, value added is not measurable and perceived as a benefit to the consumer.

The smart management of the brand gives a number of advantages to the company, assists in building a positive image of the brand that they associate with the company and its production. Branding helps consumers orient themselves in the huge flow of information, discover the products and services of companies that have built up their preferences. Companies are given the opportunity to launch new products / services at lower costs and thus increase revenue ratios. At the same time, the efficiency of advertising and marketing activities, the cost of marketing communications, the unity of advertising and public relations with the other marketing tools of the company are achieved. Last but not least, branding strengthens the corporate spirit, unites employees, builds a sense of commitment to common affairs. It is positively influenced by the aesthetic level and the visual environment of the company. Successful branding is an attestation of outstanding maturity of corporate governance. Branding a brand is a process of constant, purposeful and sustainable communication on the part of the owner. The brand must be present in every act of marketing activity.

A tourist brand is a slogan and a logo of a city, region, or country for the exit of that territory into the tourist services market. The territory or region is seen as a product that, like others, has its significant elements.

The tourist destination brand has its own specificity. It can not be created in "green" and is associated with the main assets of the destination: landscape, people, culture and history. The brand must be consistent with a complex set of factors and elements that determine the quality of the tourist product, its accessibility and consumer interests. Its features are the creation of an experience like the product being sold, and the experience is hard to sell. Branding has to wrap up the experience as something that can be easier on the market. The destination brand is capturing the distinctive elements of the destination within the brand and transmitting these elements through the brand's components: identity, personality, image, character and culture.

A destination brand can be strengthened by creating a new "product" under the name of the same hat. With the continued growth of Internet use by travelers, online branding has become very important. Websites can be the communication tool that moves the minds of consumers, from brand awareness to brand preference, and finally loyalty to the brand. In order to know how effective the destination brand is, market professionals should monitor its effectiveness.

Tourist brands are different types:

- Region, part of territory, locality
- Natural sites: rivers, lakes, waterfalls, mountain peaks
- Monuments of culture and art: temples, museums, etc.
- Tourist routes
- Events: festivals, holidays
- Services

The process of branding a tourist destination includes:

1. Research, analysis and synthesis. Analysis of available research data; quantitative research on targeted markets; Legal analysis
2. Define strategy, mission, vision, goals. Creating and discussing the brand's core focus and branding approach
3. Design and content of basic creative elements. Creating brand elements
4. Testing and evaluation. Create a final basic brand
5. Design and activation of brand architecture. Create subsets - product and regional
6. Positioning and communication. Creating a brand structure and guidelines for brand communication
7. Maintenance, monitoring and development. Brand management system

For tourist destinations, the concept of visitors' experiences (identified as a concept of critical tourism by Ruan 2002) has to be embedded in the branding process (L.Berry 2000; Pine and Gilmore, 1999). Research has found that despite the purchase of individual tourist services by visitors, the overall visitor experience is what is effectively purchased (Otto and Ritchie 1996). In an attempt to express the importance of branding through symbols, Ritchie and Ritchie 1998 defined the destination brand as a name, symbol, logo, word, or other graphic sign that identifies and differentiates the destination; contains a promise of a memorable experience that uniquely associates with the destination; serves also to reinforce and validate the collection of pleasant memories accumulated by the experiences of a destination. The destination can be considered as an area that includes all the goods and services the tourist uses during his stay (Terzibasogly, 2004). This destination form must become a unique and competitive destination brand that expresses the reality of the destination and represents the perspective of the tourists. Marketing organizations in the destination and businesses are involved in the construction and marketing of

destination marketing services (Grangsjö, 2003), so the destination should focus on both consumers and products. The marketing success of a given destination is dependent not only on the so-called activation factors (market-dependent forces) but also on the retention factors that have a major impact on the success of the branding of a given destination.

Destination branding is defined as the selection of a sustainable mix of elements that is distinct and identifiable in positive image building (Cailiping, 2002), i.e. how users perceive the destination. Destination branding promises a memorable experience on a trip that uniquely associates with the destination, it also serves to unite and enhance the collection of pleasant memories of experiences in a destination (Goeldner, Ritchie and MacIntosh, 2000, Kaplanidou and Vogt, 2003). The pursuit of a destination to become recognizable is a marketing challenge (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006). The successful destination brand has to express the expectations of a memorable tourist experience that is clearly associated with this destination (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, Blain, Levy and Ritchie, 2005, Knapp and Sherwin, 2005).

An empirical study demonstrates that branding highlights visitor visibility and helps target marketing organizations in measuring achievement. Branding achievements include Courtyard by Marriott (Alford, 1998), Forte Hotels (Connell, 1994), I Florida (American Marketing Association, 1997). In addition, the 1998 Annual Travel and Tourism Survey Association, reported a number of achievements of destination branding. These include destinations like New York, Tasmania, Australia, Canada, Texas, and more. The stories of the achievements of two smaller destinations - Fredericksburg, Texas and Branson, Missouri, also demonstrate how branding can be a positive driving force for municipalities. The branding success of accommodation firms (Beirne, 1999; Higley, 1998; Salomon, 1998) is also noted. Various aspects of the branding concept described by the Canadian Tourism Commission (2004), Alford (1998) and Nerry (1998). From the point of view of the national brand Hamilton (2000), Scotland is regarded as extremely strong in integrity, ingenuity, resilience and vigor. All studies highlight the importance of enhancing the unique image or personality, as well as the distortion of the destination by competitors. The reasons for the branding, whether it be a commercial product or a destination, should be understood before the destination branding can be fully explained. Should the marketing organizations in the destination be engaged in branding? Does that benefit to them? This study was conducted under the assumption that branding benefits the destination. It is considered that if the destination branding is properly applied, it can help to create and maintain the desired destination image; it can attract visitors based on brand awareness and as a result cause behavioral changes; and by measuring brand perception, destination branding can help marketing organizations celebrate achievements. The assumption that branding can benefit destinations is based on literary research. These sources have repeatedly stated the claim of experts and researchers that branding can be applied to destinations and will benefit them. There are successful examples of destination branding, but there is no empirical evidence. Despite the lack of such evidence, experts such as the Canadian Tourism Research Institute, Morgan and Pritchard and others, They claim that branding benefits destinations.

In the context of tourism, geographical location is a destination brand. The destination brand is defined as a name, symbol, logo, word or other graphic symbol that identifies and differentiates the destination at the same time; it is a promise of a memorable tourist experience, uniquely associated with the destination, serves to unite and reinforce the sumptuous memories of the experiences of the destination (Kerr, 2006: 277). The product of tourism is much more complex than other products and is an experience rather than a tangible product (Gartner, 1986, 643). According to Baker and Cameron, the effect of globalization is that marketing at a given place (country, region, city) is a very important strategic process because of the competition between many destinations that want to attract investors and visitors. The destination brand is essential nowadays because it is necessary for a destination to be brought to the attention of buyers and shareholders (Baker and Cameron, 2008, 88). There is also the claim that the same destination product may be adopted differently depending on the target groups (Hankinson, 2005: 12).

Clarke (2000) identifies six benefits of branding related to tourist destination products: 1. Branding helps reduce choice of destination. 2. Branding helps reduce the sense of non-materiality of the destination. 3. Branding creates a sense of consistency and logic in the presence of many opportunities and time periods; 4. Branding can reduce the risk factor associated with taking a vacation decision; 5. Branding favors the precise segmentation of the destination; 6. Branding helps to draw attention to the manufacturer's efforts so that consumers can work in the same direction. Branding has benefits for society: it creates a common focus to help all public, private and non-profit organizations that rely on the image of the site and its attractiveness; brings increased respect, recognition, loyalty and popularity; corrects outdated, irregular or unbalanced perceptions; improves the shareholding, profit margins

and increases tax revenue, increases the opportunity to attract and recruit talented people; enhancing civic pride and protection; extends the share to shareholders who receive a larger share.

Because tourism is a service, destination branding should focus even more on the overall branding process: strategic planning, research, platform development, brand identity and creative strategy, media strategy development, and brand monitoring.

The tourist brand is:

- Excellent
- Memorable
- Priced for specific market segments
- Flexible
- Demanding dynamic relationships with potential users
- Creating an identity, an attractive, authentic look of the destination, it is a promise, a request for something valuable, memorable, recognizable, distinct from others

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