

Mihalis Kavaratzis · Gary Warnaby  
Gregory J. Ashworth *Editors*

# Rethinking Place Branding

Comprehensive Brand Development for  
Cities and Regions

 Springer

# Rethinking Place Branding

Mihalis Kavaratzis · Gary Warnaby  
Gregory J. Ashworth  
Editors

# Rethinking Place Branding

Comprehensive Brand Development  
for Cities and Regions

 Springer

*Editors*

Mihalis Kavaratzis  
School of Management  
University of Leicester  
Leicester  
UK

Gregory J. Ashworth  
Faculty of Spatial Sciences  
University of Groningen  
Groningen  
The Netherlands

Gary Warnaby  
School of Materials  
The University of Manchester  
Manchester  
UK

ISBN 978-3-319-12423-0      ISBN 978-3-319-12424-7 (eBook)  
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-12424-7

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014956196

Springer Cham Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London  
© Springer International Publishing Switzerland 2015

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer International Publishing AG Switzerland is part of Springer Science+Business Media  
([www.springer.com](http://www.springer.com))

# Preface

The idea for this book was first discussed while two of the editors (Mihalis Kavaratzis and Gary Warnaby) were organising a Special Session at the 2012 European Marketing Academy Conference in Lisbon, Portugal. The title of the session was ‘Rethinking Place Marketing: The Necessity of Marketing to Citizens’ and included presentations of four papers none of which actually made it into the book.

We would like to thank the participants in that Special Session (Rob Aitken, Erik Braun, Adrianna Campelo and Sebastian Zenker) who, during a memorable dinner in the centre of Lisbon, agreed to participate. It was also in Lisbon the next day when we discussed the book with Prashanth Mahagaonkar from Springer and his enthusiastic response was a catalytic factor in taking the project further.

As the main idea of the book was to propose a re-assessment of where things stand in place branding and how they should proceed, we wanted to commission contributions from authors who we knew could undertake the kind of ‘rethinking’ we had in mind. We would like to thank all authors who responded to our invitation to contribute their work to the book and took the time to write original and thought-provoking chapters. We extend our gratitude to those whose work, for various reasons, could not feature in the final product.

We would also like to thank Prashanth and everyone else in Springer who worked to see this book reach its audience.

We hope the book will be useful to students, researchers, academics, consultants and practitioners who feel the responsibility to advance the theory of place branding and improve its practice.

Leicester, UK, July 2014  
Manchester, UK  
Groningen, The Netherlands

Mihalis Kavaratzis  
Gary Warnaby  
Gregory J. Ashworth

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>The Need to Rethink Place Branding</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
	Gregory J. Ashworth, Mihalis Kavaratzis and Gary Warnaby	
<b>2</b>	<b>Rethinking the Place Branding Construct</b> . . . . .	<b>13</b>
	Graham Hankinson	
<b>3</b>	<b>Rethinking the Place Product from the Perspective of the Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing</b> . . . . .	<b>33</b>
	Gary Warnaby and Dominic Medway	
<b>4</b>	<b>Rethinking Sense of Place: Sense of One and Sense of Many</b> . . . . .	<b>51</b>
	Adriana Campelo	
<b>5</b>	<b>Rethinking Place Identities</b> . . . . .	<b>61</b>
	Greg Kerr and Jessica Oliver	
<b>6</b>	<b>Rethinking Virtual and Online Place Branding</b> . . . . .	<b>73</b>
	Robert Govers	
<b>7</b>	<b>Rethinking Strategic Place Branding in the Digital Age</b> . . . . .	<b>85</b>
	Sonya Azad Hanna and Jennifer Rowley	
<b>8</b>	<b>Rethinking Place Branding from a Practice Perspective: Working with Stakeholders</b> . . . . .	<b>101</b>
	Julian Stubbs and Gary Warnaby	
<b>9</b>	<b>Rethinking the Roles of Culture in Place Branding</b> . . . . .	<b>119</b>
	Gregory J. Ashworth and Mihalis Kavaratzis	

<b>10</b>	<b>Rethinking Place Branding and Place Making Through Creative and Cultural Quarters.</b> . . . . .	135
	Graeme Evans	
<b>11</b>	<b>Rethinking Place Brand Communication: From Product-Oriented Monologue to Consumer-Engaging Dialogue</b> . . . . .	159
	Anette Therkelsen	
<b>12</b>	<b>Rethinking the Visual Communication of the Place Brand: A Contemporary Role for Chorography?</b> . . . . .	175
	Gary Warnaby	
<b>13</b>	<b>Rethinking Place Branding and the ‘Other’ Senses.</b> . . . . .	191
	Dominic Medway	
<b>14</b>	<b>Rethinking the Measurement of Place Brands</b> . . . . .	211
	Sebastian Zenker and Erik Braun	
<b>15</b>	<b>Rethinking Brand Equity—Possibilities and Challenges of Application to Places.</b> . . . . .	225
	Magdalena Florek	
<b>16</b>	<b>Sketching Futures for Place Branding</b> . . . . .	241
	Gary Warnaby, Gregory J. Ashworth and Mihalis Kavaratzis	

## Notes of Contributors

**Gregory J. Ashworth** was educated in Geography at the Universities of Cambridge, Reading and London (Ph.D. 1974). He has taught at the Universities of Wales, Portsmouth and since 1979 Groningen, The Netherlands. Since 1994, he is Professor of heritage management and urban tourism in the Department of Planning, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen (NL). His main research interests focus on the interrelations between tourism, heritage and place marketing, largely in an urban context. He is author or editor of around 15 books, 100 book chapters, and 200 articles. He received honorary life membership of the Hungarian Geographical Society in 1995, an honorary doctorate from the University of Brighton in 2010 and was knighted for his services to Dutch Science in 2011.

**Erik Braun** Ph.D., is a senior researcher and lecturer in urban economics, place marketing and real estate at Erasmus University Rotterdam. His current place marketing research interest concern the application of marketing and branding concepts by cities and regions, place brand management, place brand perceptions and the governance of place marketing. His research is published in books, book chapters and academic journals including *Cities*, *Environment and Planning C*, *Public Administration Review* and *Urban Studies*.

Erik Braun can be contacted at: Erasmus School of Economics, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Room H16-17, P.O. Box 1738, 3000 DR Rotterdam, The Netherlands; Tel.: +31 10 4082740; Fax: +31 10 4089153; E-mail: braun@ese.eur.nl.

**Adriana Campelo** is a lecturer and researcher in marketing at Cardiff Business School—UK. She holds a Ph.D. in Marketing Management (University of Otago—New Zealand), Master in Management (UFBA—Brazil), Specialization in Economics (UNIFACS—Brazil) and in International Economics (Minerva Program at George Washington University—USA), and a Law Degree (UCSAL—Brazil). Her research interests include branding and place marketing. She is particularly interested in the use of branding for economic development and urban regeneration. E-mail: campelosantanaa@cardiff.ac.uk. @adrianacampelo.



**Dr. Graeme Evans** is Professor of Urban Cultures and Design in the School of Art and Design, Middlesex University. He also holds a Special Chair in Culture and Urban Development at Maastricht University. Author of ‘Cultural Planning: An Urban Renaissance?’ and ‘Designing Sustainable Cities’, he is a leading expert on city cultures and planning, having advised the UK Cultural Ministry, the OECD and other agencies on creative city and industry strategies, and devised national planning guidance on both culture and regeneration and cultural planning.

**Dr. Magdalena Florek** is Adjunct Professor at Poznan University of Economics, Poland. She is a lecturer in place marketing, place branding, brand management and marketing planning and a Scholarship participant of Fulbright Foundation at Northwestern University and Kellogg School of Management, USA. In 2006/2007 she was a senior lecturer at Marketing Department, University of Otago, New Zealand. She is author and co-author of numerous publications on the possibilities of implementation of marketing in places of different scales and a consultant in terms of brand strategy, city and region promotion. She is also a co-founder and member of the board of “Best Place—The European Place Marketing Institute”.

**Robert Govers** (Ph.D.) is a scholar, speaker and author on the reputation of cities, regions and countries and an independent advisor for national, regional and city government administrations. He has also been an adjunct and/or visiting scholar at the University of Leuven, Belgium; Rotterdam School of Management, The Netherlands; IULM University Milano, Italy; and several institutes in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He also teaches Place Branding on the UNESCO World Heritage at Work Master programme in Torino, Italy and is co-editor of the quarterly journal, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, besides being a prolific author on the subject.

**Graham Hankinson** began his academic career as a research officer at the London School of Economics. Following a brief period as an energy economist, he continued his academic career and eventually held professorial appointments at Thames Valley University and the University of Lincoln. His research career has focused on the study of brands, but for the last 15 years he has pioneered the development of research into place branding and its management. He has now retired from full-time work, but continues his teaching at Kingston Business School, UK.

**Dr. Sonya Hanna** is a Lecturer in Marketing at Bangor Business School, Bangor University, UK. She has a Ph.D. in Strategic Place Brand Management, an MBA in General Management and an LLB (Hons.) in Law. Her research interests are focused on place branding and in particular the process of strategic place brand management, considering place brand communications in the digital arena and looking at the development of brand architecture and the provision of the brand experience. She has published in various journals, including the Journal of Marketing Management, Town Planning Review, Journal of Market Research, Place Branding and Public Diplomacy and the Journal of Town and Country Planning Association.

**Mihalis Kavartzis** is Senior Lecturer in Marketing at the University of Leicester School of Management. He has taught marketing and tourism-related courses in Budapest, Hungary and Leicester, UK. His research focuses on marketing and branding places and tourism destinations. He has published extensively in marketing as well as geography journals on those topics. He has co-edited (with G.J. Ashworth) 'Towards Effective Place Brand Management: Branding European Cities and Regions' (2010, Edward Elgar).

**Greg Kerr** has held management positions in local government in Australia, followed by a career in business development. He has been a board member of tourist associations, a credit union and a chamber of commerce. Greg held governance roles at the University of Wollongong, including Head of Marketing and Member of Academic Senate, and now works at the University of Wollongong in Dubai.

**Dominic Medway** a geographer by training, is Professor of Marketing at Manchester Business School. He has published extensively on the interrelated subjects of place management and marketing, and has explored some novel branches within this research area, such as perverse place marketing, place demarketing, toponymic commodification and the semiotics of place branding. His work can be found in leading academic journals, including: *Environment and Planning A*, *European Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Management*, *Area*, *Cities and Marketing Theory*.

**Jessica Oliver** completed a Master's by Research in the field of place marketing in 2011. She is now completing a Ph.D. at the University of Wollongong investigating how residents' experiences influence place identities. Jessica is a lecturer and tutor of public relations and brand management and works as a consultant to industry.

**Jennifer Rowley** is Professor in Information and Communications and Head of Postgraduate Studies in the Faculty of Humanities, Languages and Social Science, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK. Her research interests include: information and knowledge management, e-marketing, branding, place branding, and innovation and entrepreneurship. She has published widely, including recent articles in *Journal of Marketing Management*, *Marketing Theory*, *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *Journal of Information Science*, *International Journal of Information Management*, and *Internet Research*. She is Editor of the *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, and an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Marketing Management*.

**Julian Stubbs** is a brand strategist, writer and presenter who has worked with developing brand strategies and identities for a wide range of organisations and places. His first business book, titled 'Wish You Were Here', explores the branding of places and destinations as well as his work for the city of Stockholm, where Julian created the brand positioning and tag line 'Stockholm, The Capital of Scandinavia'. Today Julian is working with a number of brand and identity assignments. He is founder and CEO of UP THERE, EVERYWHERE the global cloud-based consultancy group, which today has over 150 people based in 19 cities

around the world. Julian travels over 100 days a year from his home just outside of Stockholm, Sweden. He is married with two boys and in his free time his passion is watching Liverpool FC, reading history and trying to finish writing his novel.

**Anette Therkelsen** is Associate Professor of tourism studies at the Tourism Research Unit, Department of Culture and Global Studies, Aalborg University, Denmark. Her research interests include place branding at different geographical scales and various aspects of tourism-related consumer studies, and she has published internationally on these topics. She is currently working on a project on food and place branding and consumption.

**Gary Warnaby** is Professor of Marketing in the School of Materials at the University of Manchester. His research interests focus on the marketing of places and retailing. Results of this research have been published in various academic journals in both the management and geography disciplines, including *Environment and Planning A*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Journal of Marketing Management*, *Marketing Theory*, *Consumption Markets and Culture*, *European Journal of Marketing*, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *Area*, *Cities and Local Economy*. He is co-author of *Relationship Marketing: a Consumer Experience Approach*, co-editor of *Perspectives on Public Relations Research*, and has contributed to numerous edited books.

**Sebastian Zenker** Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at the department of marketing, at the Copenhagen Business School. His current research interests are mainly the measurement of place brands and place brand perceptions with the special target group of residents. His work was presented at various international conferences, book chapters and peer-reviewed journals, such as *Cities, Environment and Planning A*, or the *International Journal of Research in Marketing*. Sebastian can be contacted at: Copenhagen Business School, Department of Marketing, Solbjerg Plads 3C, 3rd floor, DK-2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark; Tel.: +45 3815 2100; Fax: +45 3815 2101; E-mail: zenker@placebrand.eu.

# Chapter 1

## The Need to Rethink Place Branding

Gregory J. Ashworth, Mihalis Kavaratzis and Gary Warnaby

**Abstract** This chapter argues for the need to rethink the theory and practice of place branding and in doing so, it outlines the rationale for this book. We propose four major questions that guide the rethinking undertaken here: (a) why is place branding important? (b) what builds place brands? (c) who builds place brands? and (d) what is place brand management? Possible answers to these questions are given throughout the book and, while not always explicitly, all chapters collectively attempt to provide a clearer appreciation of their interrelations. The chapter ends with a brief description of each chapter and its contribution.

### Introduction

Is it possible to introduce an edited volume on place branding and avoid overly excited references to the significant growth in academic interest and practical application that the field has seen in recent years? It seems hard indeed. Place branding has proven to be a popular practice and has become a central part of the contemporary place management agenda. Increasing funds are invested in place branding activities by local, regional and national authorities and, mirroring this, place branding is an increasingly appealing topic for academic research. In the last

---

G.J. Ashworth  
Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands  
e-mail: g.j.ashworth@rug.nl

M. Kavaratzis (✉)  
School of Management, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK  
e-mail: m.kavaratzis@le.ac.uk

G. Warnaby  
School of Materials, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK  
e-mail: Gary.warnaby@manchester.ac.uk

10 years a series of books have been published (e.g. Anholt 2007; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008; Govers and Go 2009; Ashworth and Kavaratzis 2010), dedicated journals have been launched (Place Branding and Public Diplomacy in 2004; Journal of Place Management and Development in 2008, and a multitude of academic articles have appeared in journals across a range of disciplines (marketing, urban studies, geography, public administration, cultural studies etc.). Although the few sentences above show that we have not totally avoided the excited references to the growth of the field, we would like to introduce this book by raising questions based on misgivings about the theoretical advancement that place branding has witnessed. To what extent has this proliferation of published material reflected theoretical development and led to disciplinary ‘maturity’? A number of academic publications have attempted to initiate a theory of place branding but this has been in a somewhat piecemeal, fragmentary manner (Lucarelli and Berg 2011; Gertner 2011), perhaps as a consequence of the inherent multi-disciplinarity of the subject. In fact, notwithstanding a number of important contributions (many of which actually come from authors included in this volume), little theoretical refinement seems to have occurred since the publication of two seminal books on place marketing more than 20 years ago, i.e. ‘Selling the City’ by Ashworth and Voogd (1990) and ‘Marketing Places’ by Kotler et al. (1993), which from very different disciplinary perspectives set the scene for what followed. As repeatedly noted in the literature (e.g. Skinner 2008; Warnaby 2009; Hankinson 2010), partly as a consequence of its inherent interdisciplinary nature, place branding still lacks a clear and commonly accepted theoretical framework that would structure and guide its practical application and fill the evident gap between existing theory and practice.

## **What Does This Book Set Out to Do?**

This book is based on the premise that the field of place branding is ripe for a rethinking in terms of its roots, theoretical underpinnings, practical application and expected outcomes. The growth in academic commentary on the topic, coupled with the accumulation of practical experience gained in cities and regions across the world, with the involvement of self-claimed specialised consultants amongst others, necessitate the re-examination of place branding theory and practice. This would be particularly useful if accomplished in a manner that integrates and synthesises the variety of subject matter, clarifies its unique characteristics and illustrates its potential to assist urban and regional development. To move in this direction, a series of prerequisites are evident. A first need is to better integrate knowledge emanating from the various disciplines that contribute to place branding. Contributions from many disciplinary backgrounds are necessary in order to understand the nature of place branding in a more overtly holistic and synthetic manner. Furthermore, it is necessary to identify recent developments in broader marketing

thought and practice that resonate with the specificities of places and their branding requirements. A priority in this sense is to explore theoretical perspectives based on relatively recent developments in marketing thought (e.g. Service Dominant Logic, experiential marketing, co-creation of experiences) and marketing practice (e.g. digital marketing). A third need would be to examine more closely the role of the multiplicity of stakeholders in place branding and identify ways in which they can be involved in all steps of the process of branding a place. Finally, a fourth need is to integrate the practice of place branding with wider theoretical considerations. Insights from the practice of place branding (e.g. stakeholder management, residents' involvement, the use of social network sites) can be gained to assist and complement theoretical development.

It is along these lines that this book has been designed, and in these directions that it attempts to proceed. The main aim of the book is to ascertain the future prospects of place branding by laying the theoretical foundations for a more responsible development of the discipline and a more academically rigorous study of its nature and practice. The book sets out to identify the ways in which the discipline could and should advance in order to become more effective, more efficient, more socially responsible and more grounded in theory. The book is joining a series of books published in the last decade or so (Broudehoux 2004; Anholt 2007; Baker 2007; Greenberg 2008; Moilanen and Rainisto 2008; Govers and Go 2009; Ashworth and Kavaratzis 2010; Go and Govers 2010, 2011, 2012; Dinnie 2011; Colomb 2012). The difference in the perspective adopted is that this book aims at being neither managerial in its approach (i.e. it is not a 'how-to' handbook) nor esoteric and overly critical (i.e. approaching place branding as a politically suspicious practice). This volume does not shy away from political and social struggles and dubious effects but, at the same time, it does not disregard the necessity for down-to-earth suggestions and effective practices. It adopts a highly critical—but we hope sober and constructive—stance on the fundamental prerequisites, potential effects and consequences of branding places. It takes a balanced stand arguing unashamedly for a responsible development of the discipline in terms of both theory and practice.

## **What Is There to Rethink?**

The rethinking of place branding proposed here aims at raising several important points around the development and management of place brands that are in need of clarification, refinement and even reconsideration. These can be usefully thought of as a series of questions pertaining to the theory and practice of place branding. Providing complete answers to these questions lies outside the ambitions of this book. Partial answers have been given to some of the questions in the literature or, at least, there are suggestions on how to go about answering them. However, raising the questions here not only delineates the contents and 'spirit' of the book but also

helps provide a structure for the on-going conversation and debate. In other words, these questions can serve as the basis for the necessary rethinking of place branding.

### ***Question 1: Why Is Place Branding Important?***

A first fundamental question is: Why are place brands important and why do places attempt branding in the first place? After all place branding costs money and effort, which are in limited supply in most public authorities and if marketing is a zero-sum game to places as a whole, then each would benefit by all desisting from the practice. Several answers can be (and have been) given. For instance, one possible answer is because they help places fight in the increasingly intense arena of *inter-place competition*. This is the most common justification given for the relevance and significance of place brands as well as the most common reason stated for the popularity of place branding as a practice. Following this logic, the place brand is a useful tool that places use as they compete with each other for limited, hyper-mobile financial, human or cultural resources. The place brand is assumed to help in securing a desired position within these global flows of people and capital. A second possible answer is that place brands provide *strategic guidance* for place development. This logic assumes that the usefulness of place brands is their potential to be used as an instrument for envisioning an aspirational ‘imagined future’, (i.e. as an ideal scenario for the place’s condition). Place brands are thought to provide a vision for the place’s future and a direction for the planning and implementation of various sorts of measures that will help achieve this vision. A third answer is that the place brand provides a *basis for stakeholder cooperation*. This is a logic that views the place brand as ‘common ground’ for the various stakeholders to set a collective goal and work together towards achieving this goal. The place brand is thought to provide the general framework under which actions of different stakeholders can complement and reinforce each other and collectively produce the desired result. A fourth possible answer is that place brands provide *solutions to practical/functional place-related problems*. This more functional and instrumental view assumes that a place brand provides the context in which several specific and time-bound issues can be solved. Examples of such functional problems can be how to attract investment for a planned development/regeneration project, how to fully capitalise upon a tourist resource in the area, or how to increase usage or yield of a recently re-developed site. A final possible answer is that place brands can help *maximise positive place experience*. This view assumes that place brands are crucial for the way in which places are experienced by their consumers (residents, visitors, investors and so on). Place brands are thought to shape the expectations people have of a place and thus their experience, which, in turn, is thought to lead to increased satisfaction that people derive out of such experience. This makes place brands useful in the managerial effort to align the expectations people have of a place with the actual place reality.

## ***Question 2: What Builds Place Brands?***

The second major question is: What are the components of place brands? What resources are used for their construction? A very common answer is that place brands are made of *promotional tactics and identity claims*. This assumes that the main resources for place brand construction can be found in official, intentional and co-ordinated communication by local stakeholders (most commonly tourism offices or place branding agencies). This is a managerial view that approaches place branding as a powerful and persuasive promotional activity. A second possible answer is that place brands consist of *associations with place-making elements*. This is a much more nuanced view that finds the essence of place brands in understanding, enhancing and even helping to shape ‘sense of place’ and how this changes over time. This view assumes a much stronger link between the place and the brand and conceptualises branding as a wide and complex set of processes rather than isolating its promotional character. A third answer is that place brands are better thought of as *narratives or ‘place stories’*. This view finds the main resources used for place brand formation in the general ‘story’ of the place as this is narrated by all possible story-telling organisations, people, objects and devices (obviously going well beyond tourism offices). A fourth possible answer is an extension of the previous and approaches place brands as *interactive formations*. The emphasis here is on the collective construction of the meaning of place as this is undertaken in social actuality and through social interactions.

## ***Question 3: Who Builds Place Brands?***

A logical follow-on from the previous is the third fundamental question: Who are the agents of place brand formation and who actually constructs place brands or influences their construction? A first possible answer is that place brands are constructed by *institutions that undertake place branding projects*. This is an organisation-centric view that ascribes agency in place brand formation to organisations and institutions, which can be from public, private and voluntary sectors. These commonly refer to dominant groups and the systems they design. Such groups are the local financial, political or cultural elites and can be authorities, major businesses, closely related industries, as well as consultants. A second possible answer is that place brands are formed by individual *place consumers who make place-related decisions*. This view accepts that the major players in place brand construction are place users as they use and experience the place. This can be as they go about living their everyday lives (residents), escaping their everyday lives (tourists) or in work-related circumstances (business visitors or investors). A third answer is that place brands are actually constructed by *groups of individuals*. This accepts that different groups of individuals form different brands as they experience and appropriate the place and its brand in their own, particular ways.



A final possible answer is that place brands are formed by *the society*. Such societal views incorporate within individual-based or group-based views the influence of the social/cultural context and how this alters individual meanings towards a more collective perspective.

#### ***Question 4: What Is Place Brand Management?***

The fourth major question is: How should place brand management be understood and undertaken, and what influences this? A first possible answer is that place brands are influenced through *promotional activities* aiming to attract place users. An extension of the view of place brands as promotional devices and identity claims as seen above, this view conceptualises place branding as a set of promotional activities intended to appeal to specified appropriate ‘target groups’. A second answer is that place brands are influenced by wider *image/reputation management*. This is a slightly wider view that sees place branding as aiming to create a favourable place image and a general, positive place reputation to underpin development/regeneration efforts. Most commonly, place branding is thought of as a process of place re-imaging (given that place images already exist and will continue to exist regardless of any deliberate attempt to change them) in order to ‘correct’ a negative image or to increase awareness of the place. A third possible answer is that place branding is undertaken as a *power exercise*. This is a more overtly critical view that situates place branding within wider struggles of political, financial and social power. It is most commonly assumed that place branding works to conceal such power struggles and to impose elite-led interests and directions while suppressing opposing voices. This is possible through a focus on the spectacle under the ‘glitter’ of the place brand. A fourth possible answer in direct contrast to the third, is that place branding is a *community-building exercise*. In this view, the main aim of place branding is to identify common ideas and directions for the future of the community and to produce collectively generated place stories and visions. This is an approach that focuses on internal audiences assuming that the aim of place branding is to reinforce peoples’ identification with the place and increase place-attachment.

Evidently, the above four questions can be answered in radically different ways. Answering them depends on a wide range of personal, cultural, contextual and practical considerations. Different scholars, consultants, politicians and practitioners have their preferences concerning answers to all these questions based on personal ideological approaches, objectives and the capacities in which they engage with place branding. The answers to the above questions are also interrelated and it is very likely that a person adopting one particular answer to one question will be more inclined to adopt a particular answer to the others. If, for instance, the importance of place brands is thought to lie in attracting specific audiences, then it is very likely that the promotional aspect of place brands will be the answer to the questions of what place brands are made of and the way in which they can be

influenced. This is because the questions form the basis of a conceptualisation of place brands that inevitably influences the conceptualisation of place brand management. Additionally, these are not the only questions that need to be answered in order to advance the theory and practice of place branding. However, their significance lies not so much in the answers themselves but in searching for these answers, in the sense that these major issues describe the lines along which place branding needs to develop. In other words, the search for answers to these fundamental questions provides a helpful structure for the effort of place branding scholarship and any further development of place branding theory. Although none of the chapters that follow explicitly deals with all the above questions, all of the chapters are underpinned by these issues. In different ways and to differing extents, all contributions to this book examine these questions and provide their individual, although inevitably, non-conclusive answers.

## The Chapters of the Book

The contributions that comprise this volume come from academics who have all proven their expertise in various aspects of this fascinating field of study. This introduction is followed by a chapter by *Graham Hankinson* that lays the foundation for the whole book with its detailed examination of the place branding construct. Hankinson draws useful parallels between the development of general (i.e. product and corporate) branding and place branding. He identifies seven main constructs of fundamental significance for place branding (most of which are further examined in other chapters). Additionally, Hankinson suggests three factors that increase the complexity of the place branding endeavour: setting the brand's objectives, managing the branding process and measuring brand performance. Outlining these issues is an important step forward towards greater conceptual understanding of place branding and to a great extent consolidates progress towards a more mature domain of study.

The following chapter by *Gary Warnaby* and *Dominic Medway* also delves into the world of general marketing and branding with a constructive examination of the Service-Dominant Logic for marketing and its consequences for place branding. Warnaby and Medway undertake a rethinking of the constitution of the place product in light of a phenomenological approach. This leads to an explanation of the co-creative aspects of both the place and its brand. As a result, the authors propose a conceptualisation of the place product as a network of stakeholders who collaborate with place users to co-create the place. Their conclusion points towards the necessary emphasis on collaborative and participatory forms of place branding, something that is echoed by several of the chapters that follow.

Chapter 4 by *Adrianna Campelo* is an exploration of the—often mistreated within the place branding literature—notion of 'sense of place'. The chapter argues for the significance of understanding sense of place as the basis for the place branding effort and provides an outline of the elements and processes that allow

people to create the meaning of a place. Campelo proposes as the fundamental constructs that create a sense of place the elements of Time, Ancestry, Landscape and Community, all of which are clearly fundamental for the construction of place identity and the place brand. In line with the previous chapter, Campelo also argues in favour of a distinct form of place branding based on the need to include the local community, its habitus and its sense of place.

The topic of place identity is the focus of the next chapter by *Greg Kerr* and *Jessica Oliver*. Before elaborating on place identities, the authors introduce the Rossiter-Percy Grid to the field of place branding suggesting it as a useful tool to guide advertising messages. The chapter goes on to argue that place identity lies at the heart of effective place branding, raising the important point that identity provides both content for communication and at the same time is a result of communication. Kerr and Oliver outline the basic characteristics of place identity that place branding needs to always bear in mind: place identity is resident-held, it is pluralistic, it is fluid and it is co-produced. The chapter then usefully links these characteristics of place identity to practical considerations of place brand management.

In the next chapter, *Robert Govers* examines the rapidly growing practices of branding places in the online world. Govers uses the extended examples of various virtual and online place branding campaigns to discuss the impact technology and the internet have had on the reputations of places and how online tools are used for place branding purposes. Importantly, the chapter addresses online branding both as a novel tool for place branding and as a new context in which place branding is undertaken. As a conclusion, Govers issues a warning that place branding practice might better move away from the currently dominant use of technology as an end in itself (i.e. in order to reflect values of openness and innovation) and towards the use of technology as a tool to reflect the real meaningful and distinctive values of the place brand.

This is taken further in the chapter that follows by *Sonya Hanna* and *Jennifer Rowley* in their adaptation of the well-known strategic place brand management framework to the demands of the online world. The outline of multiple channels of communication and the simultaneous existence of multiple brand representations lead Hanna and Rowley to propose what they term the '7Cs' of digital place branding in which they examine the components of place branding strategies in the digital age. Thus, they describe their suggestion for a strategic place brand management process, which, in line with several other chapters of the book, also highlights issues of community building, brand co-creation and stakeholder collaboration.

A practitioner-oriented view is presented in the following chapter by *Julian Stubbs* and *Gary Warnaby*. The chapter draws significantly on the practical consultancy experience of one of its authors to discuss from a different perspective and examine in more detail a topic present in most previous chapters: stakeholders of place branding. Stubbs and Warnaby first provide a useful outline of the range of place stakeholders that influence the development of place brands. Then the authors go on to discuss several methods and tools for stakeholder engagement such as

stakeholder workshops, developing a shared vision for the place and managing the relationships between stakeholders. In this sense, the chapter provides a valuable link between theory and practice.

In their chapter, *Gregory Ashworth* and *Mihalis Kavaratzis* undertake an investigation and re-consideration of the links between place branding and culture. Starting with a justification for the use of culture within place branding, they outline the several ways in which cities across the globe attempt to base their place branding efforts on culture. Ashworth and Kavaratzis question these practices in terms of both their evident interpretations of culture and their outcomes and the chapter warns against the pitfalls of using culture-based place branding. They conclude with a reassertion of the construction of culture and of the meaning of creativity and what these imply for place branding.

A logical extension of the previous chapter's overview is presented in the following chapter by *Graeme Evans*, which focuses on how places attempt to brand themselves through creative and cultural quarters. The chapter effectively evaluates the impacts of place branding tactics on the urban landscape. A major part of the chapter's contribution comes from an underlying re-assessment of the notion of the creative city and how this relates to place making and place branding. Evans highlights and critically discusses the use of iconic architecture and urban design as tools of city reimagining. The chapter illustrates the significant issues involved through a multitude of enlightening examples of city districts around the world.

The next chapter by *Anette Therkelsen* returns to the issue of brand co-creation and examines the changing nature of place brand communication. This is undertaken not only in the light of the influence of online technologies but also through a wider appreciation of the dialectics involved in place branding and the active involvement of consumers. Therkelsen first outlines different approaches to place brand communication that progressively lead to increasing consumer involvement both in symbolic representation of places and in actual place-making. The chapter then presents empirical data on a place branding initiative of Denmark as a tourism destination, which helps clarify and illustrate the potential of dialogue-based place branding campaigns.

*Gary Warnaby* in Chap. 12 examines the visual communication of place brands through the neglected, at least within place branding studies, notion of chorography (i.e. a combination of cartography and landscape painting). The chapter analyses visual representation of the city of Liverpool in its promotional material and identifies several chorographic instances. The analysis allows Warnaby to describe the context in which profile and oblique methods of viewing are used and emphasises the significance of associative properties encapsulated in structures such as buildings. At the same time, the chapter links to experiential notions of place and how these can be cultivated through a chorographical approach.

From the importance of vision and visual representations of place, in the next chapter *Dominic Medway* turns our attention to the largely neglected 'other' senses. Starting with an examination of how humans navigate through and consume place, the chapter provides an exploratory overview of the role that smell, hearing, taste and touch can play in place branding. Using, for instance, examples of smells

associated with certain places and of ways in which music might be harnessed for place branding purposes, the chapter illustrates the multi-sensory nature of place encounters. Based on the role of these ‘other’ senses in the place experience, Medway argues in favour of their deliberate involvement in the place branding effort.

In Chap. 14, *Sebastian Zenker* and *Erik Braun* identify and critically discuss different approaches to the measurement of place brands. The chapter first provides an overview of how the success and effectiveness of place brands might be conceptualised and evaluated; itself a useful contribution. Zenker and Braun then describe several methods that have been suggested in the academic literature as well as the practice of place branding. The methods they review include qualitative, quantitative as well as mixed methods. The authors are highly—and rightly—critical of available methodologies and conclude with the suggestion that something as complex as the place brand needs a combination of different approaches.

The issue of measuring the place brand is also considered in the next chapter by *Magdalena Florek*, which focuses on the concept of place brand equity. The chapter introduces the concept of brand equity as this has been developed in general branding studies and goes on to comment on its relevance and appropriateness for place branding, particularly focusing on Consumer-Based brand equity. Florek identifies the sources of place brand equity in the place consumers’ awareness, their knowledge of the brand and their brand experience, all of which are crucial for an understanding of how they connect to and assess a place brand.

Finally, in the last chapter the editors attempt to reflect on the collective contribution of the chapters that constitute this volume, linking them back to the four main questions that are outlined in the beginning of this introductory chapter. Thus the final chapter attempts to consolidate the rethinking that this book sets out to undertake and provides sketches of possible futures for the discipline of place branding.

## References

- Anholt S (2007) *Competitive identity: the new brand management for nations, cities and regions*. Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke
- Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (eds) (2010) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham
- Ashworth GJ, Voogd H (1990) *Selling the city: marketing approaches in public sector urban planning*. Belhaven Press, London
- Baker B (2007) *Destination branding for small cities: the essentials for successful place branding*. Creative Leap Books, Portland
- Broudehoux AM (2004) *The making and selling of post-mao Beijing*. Routledge, London
- Colomb C (2012) *Staging the New Berlin: place marketing and the politics of urban reinvention post-1989*. Routledge, London
- Dinnie K (ed) (2011) *City branding: theory and cases*. Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke
- Gertner D (2011) *Unfolding and configuring two decades of research and publications on place marketing and place branding*. *Place brand Pub Diplomacy* 7(2):91–106

- Go F, Govers R (eds) (2010, 2011, 2012). *International place branding yearbook*. Palgrave McMillan, Basingstoke
- Govers R, Go F (2009) *Place branding: Glocal, virtual and physical identities, constructed, imagined and experienced*. Palgrave McMillan, Basingstoke
- Greenberg M (2008) *Branding New York: how a city in crisis was sold to the world*. Routledge, New York
- Hankinson G (2010) Place branding: a cross-domain literature review from a marketing perspective. In: Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 22–42
- Kotler P, Haider D, Rein I (1993) *Marketing places: attracting investment, industry and tourism to cities, states and nations*. The Free Press, New York
- Lucarelli A, Berg PO (2011) City branding: a state of the art review of the research domain. *J Place Manag Dev* 4(1):9–27
- Moilanen T, Rainisto S (2008) *How to brand nations, cities and destinations: a planning book for place branding*. Palgrave McMillan, Basingstoke
- Skinner H (2008) The emergence and development of place marketing's confused identity. *J Mark Manag* 24(9/10):915–928
- Warnaby G (2009) Towards a service-dominant place marketing logic. *Mark Theory* 9(4):403–423

# Chapter 2

## Rethinking the Place Branding Construct

Graham Hankinson

**Abstract** The emerging convergence between the disciplines contributing to the development of place branding as a field of study has led to a more holistic view of the subject, broadening the research platform and encouraging the publication of future research agendas. Nevertheless, place branding research has only just begun to take account of the significant deepening and broadening of the mainstream branding domain. Greater conceptual understanding of branding concepts is required before place branding can be regarded as a mature domain of study. This chapter delineates the place branding construct by identifying the concepts that form and reflect it and the variables that moderate its implementation and impact. The chapter begins with a review of the mainstream branding construct in order to identify concepts of relevance to place branding. On the basis of this analysis seven concepts which are central to the place branding construct are proposed: the brand image, positioning and equity, brand extension, brand architecture, brand identity and orientation. Secondly, three moderating variables are identified: brand objectives, brand management and performance measurement. Issues of transference are then discussed.

### Introduction

Place brands exist in various forms (e.g., in the branding of nations, cities, regions and tourism destinations) and there is no doubt that it is now well-established as an area of academic study. Despite its long history, it was not until the last quarter of the twentieth century that articles on place branding began to appear in the academic literature (Kavaratzis 2005; Pike 2009). A recent study by Lucarelli and Berg (2011) highlights, in particular, the rapid expansion in the number of articles published on

---

G. Hankinson (✉)  
Kingston Business School, Kingston University London, Kingston Hill Campus,  
Kingston upon Thames KT2 7LB, UK  
e-mail: g.hankinson@kingston.ac.uk

place branding over the period 1988–2009. These appeared predominantly in urban studies, tourism and geography journals, and more recently in marketing journals. The latter combined mainstream branding theory with academic literature from the other three disciplines which hitherto, had largely ignored both mainstream branding theory and each other. As a result of this emerging convergence, it has been suggested that “the focus of discussion for place branding has shifted ... to business and marketing” as the dominant perspective (Hanna and Rowley 2008, p. 69). This claim may be contested, but there can be no doubt that these cross-disciplinary synergies have led to a more holistic view of place branding. They have helped to develop place branding theory which has, in turn, provided a broader platform for further study and accelerated the process of research (Dinnie 2004; Kavaratzis 2005; Hankinson 2007). This progress has encouraged the publication of a series of future research agendas (for example, Pike 2009; Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2008; Dinnie 2008; Balakrishnan 2009; Hankinson 2010a) and the development of a more critical perspective of place branding and marketing (Gertner 2011a, b).

This suggests that, although there is considerable potential for further interdisciplinary synergy, there is some way to go before place branding can be regarded as a mature academic domain. In particular, place branding research has only just begun to take account of the significant deepening and broadening of the mainstream branding domain which has taken place.

Furthermore, future synergy will also be inhibited by continuing confusion in the literature as regards terminology. Thus, in the foreword to the first issue of *Place Branding and Public Policy*, Anholt (2004, p. 4) suggested that “almost nobody agrees on what, exactly, place branding means”. Although this may no longer be true, terms such as location, country, nation, region and city have frequently been selected in preference to place rather than being recognised as alternative manifestations of place (Lodge 2004; Hanna and Rowley 2008). This has, it may be argued, prolonged the compartmentalisation of place branding and inhibited domain unification. Several authors (e.g. Kavaratzis and Hatch 2013) also point out that the term place branding continues to be confused with the term place marketing, failing to recognise that branding is a subset of marketing. Such conceptual confusions are, of course, part of the evolution of a relatively immature discipline such as place branding, reflecting, in particular the subject’s multi-disciplinary origins. Nevertheless, greater understanding of the place branding concepts forming and reflecting the place branding construct is required before place branding can be regarded as a coherent domain of academic study (Skinner 2008).

Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to delineate the place branding construct by identifying both the concepts that form and reflect the content of this construct and the variables that impact on its implementation. The chapter begins with a review of the mainstream branding construct—its growth and conceptual development—in order to identify the concepts of relevance to place branding. The conclusions from this analysis are then set in the context of the existing and future conceptual development of place branding. Finally, variables that are problematic in the implementation of place branding and issues of conceptual transference are examined.



## The Conceptual Development of Mainstream Branding

Branding's use as a modern business tool can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century (Low and Fullerton 1994). Several substantive reviews of these developments have appeared in the academic press in recent years (see for example Low and Fullerton 1994; de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley 1998; Louro and Cunha 2001).

Branding theory, which first emerged in the 1950s, was initially developed in the context of consumer products. However, increasing understanding of branding and the associated addition of new concepts has followed the extension of branding practice beyond its consumer product foundations. Thus, during the 1990s branding was increasingly applied to brand-owning corporations in addition to their products. While much of the academic work in this area has so far been conceptual, it is clear that corporate brands are different from product brands. First, they frequently play an overarching role with respect to a set of sub-brands. Secondly, responsibility for their management rests with the senior management team. Thirdly, they reflect the organisational culture of their owners. Fourthly, they are required to manage a wide range of stakeholders, not just consumers. Finally, in order to grow, they are increasingly required to work in partnership with other corporations.

In parallel with the growth in corporate branding, attention also turned to the branding of services, the majority of which, it is worth noting, have corporate names. *Services brands* like corporate brands are dependent on a supportive corporate culture (Hatch and Schultz 2003) in order to deliver brand values effectively. Thus, people and processes become central to the successful delivery of service brands (de Chernatony and Segal-Horn 2001). However, services also have certain unique characteristics, in particular intangibility, which gives service brands a distinctive role to play as providers of physical evidence and pre-purchase information about the brand experience (Keller 1998; Zeithaml and Bitner 2000; Hankinson 2010b).

We have also seen a similar trend in the application of branding to non-profit organisations (Ewing and Napoli 2005). This has included for example, charities, social services and health organisations (Balabanis et al. 1997; Hankinson 2000). However, the application of branding in non-profit sectors is made more complex as a result of its unusual exchange process. Unlike the commercial sector in which value is exchanged directly between the consumer and the branding organisation, in non-profit sectors, the branding organisation is frequently not the direct beneficiary of the value created by the brand. Such complexities, of course, have inevitably attracted academic interest and, as a result, non-profit branding, of which place branding is arguably a part, is now a well-established academic area (Hankinson 2004).

In parallel with this broadening in the application of branding to new areas there has been a corresponding deepening in the conceptual understanding of branding. A timeline of the development and inter-relationships between the various stages of this conceptual development is set out in Fig. 2.1. This figure denotes the times when publications first appeared.

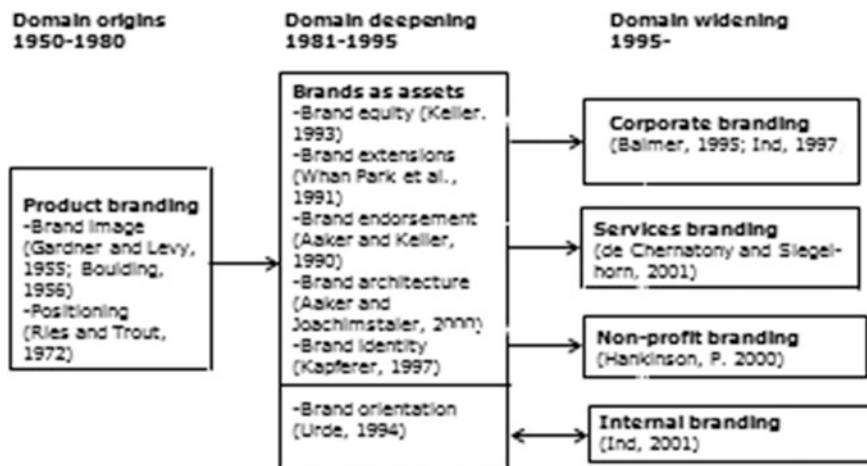


Fig. 2.1 The development of mainstream branding—a timeline (Source Author)

## Brand Image and Positioning

### Image

Articles on branding did not appear in the academic press until the 1950s. These began the continuing debate about the concepts which formed and reflected the content of the branding construct. As a result, brands became more than just a means of product identification, the principal purpose for which they had hitherto been used. Early articles argued instead that a brand was not only a tangible product identifier but also an intangible symbolic image (Gardner and Levy 1955; Boulding 1956). Thus, Gardner and Levy (1955, p. 35) wrote that a brand name was “a complex symbol” that represented “a variety of ideas and attributes... built up and acquired as a public object over a period of time”. Further, they suggested that the image represented by this complex symbol may be more important than the ‘technical’ qualities of the product and that advertising should therefore seek to differentiate the brand by focusing on feelings about the brand rather than on the product’s functional or technical merits. As such, brands needed to emphasise emotional rather than functional associations as the principal competitive differentiators (Gardner and Levy 1955).

Since these early papers, research into the nature of brand images has continued and a general consensus has emerged. This suggests that brand images consist of two categories of associations: functional and symbolic (de Chernatony and Dall’ Olmo Riley 1998); although some authors add a third category, that of experiential associations (e.g., Park et al. 1986; Keller 1998), which are particularly relevant in the case of services.

## ***Positioning***

Further conceptual developments followed as the marketplaces of the late 1960s became increasingly crowded and competition intensified (Low and Fullerton 1994). Thus, in the early 1970s, Ries and Trout (1972) added the concept of brand positioning to the brand construct. The basic idea of positioning was that brands should not attempt to compete ‘head on’ with competitors via ‘me-too’ brands, but rather seek to create unique positions in consumers’ minds through specific brand associations targeted at clearly defined segments (Ries and Trout 1981).

## **Brands as Assets**

The 1980s was a crucial turning point in the development of brands (Kapferer 1997), following a series of take-overs of large brand-owning companies by other brand-owning companies. These take-overs, which occurred across several countries, highlighted the financial value of brands. For example in 1988, the Swiss company, Nestle, acquired Rowntree Mackintosh, a UK company with tangible assets of £300 million and a pre-bid capital value of £1 billion, for £2.3 billion, after a hard-fought battle with a close competitor, Jacobs-Souchard. The excess value placed upon Rowntree by Nestle represented an evaluation of Rowntree’s intangible assets which included their brands.

## ***Brand Equity***

The Rowntree’s case and others like it fuelled a debate about the value of brands (their brand equity) and whether financial valuations could be put into company balance sheets, a debate which spilled over into academic marketing journals (e.g., Barwise et al. 1989). The debate on financial brand equity however, lost momentum when it became clear that the practice of accounting for brands in company balance sheets was not acceptable to professional accounting bodies, particularly in Europe and the USA. Nevertheless the debate continued in the form of Customer-based Brand Equity (CBBE). This concept, which represented the value placed on brands from a consumer perspective, was first discussed in a seminal article by Keller (1993), in which he defined the term as “the effect of brand knowledge on consumer’s response to the brand” (p. 8), where consumers’ brand knowledge was defined in terms of brand awareness, favorability, strength, uniqueness and the relevance of their brand associations as reflected in the brand’s image. This concept continues to develop as understanding of its meaning and measurement grows (for further developments see Keller 1998.)

## ***Brand Extension***

Recognition of the value of brands led companies to focus more closely on longer term brand strategies (Hankinson and Cowking 1993) and enhanced the attraction of brand acquisition as a means of establishing and growing market share in new markets more rapidly. Once acquired, brands became the basis for brand extensions, a strategy whereby successful brand names were used to endorse other, less well known brands in order to enhance sales growth (Aaker and Keller 1990; Park et al. 1986). Through this process of brand endorsement, consumers' positive perceptions of successful brands could be transferred to newly launched or acquired brands, reducing purchasers' risks and cutting the speed and costs of new product launches (Park et al. 1986; Aaker and Keller 1990). Thus, when Nestlé, acquired the UK confectionery company, Rowntree-Mackintosh, the owner of well-known UK brands such as Smarties, Kit-Kat and Quality Street, Nestlé used its corporate brand to add value to the newly acquired UK product brands through association with its globally recognised brand and thereby, leverage international sales growth.

## ***Brand Architecture***

The increasing number of brand acquisitions and brand extensions led to more complex brand portfolios and the need to manage an organisation's brands more effectively (Aaker and Joachimstaler 2000; Devlin 2003). Brand architecture was the response to this problem. It is an organisation's approach to the design and management of its brand portfolio (Devlin 2003). Building a coherent brand architecture became a key component of a firm's overall marketing strategy, providing a structure within which to launch brands into new markets, as well as providing a framework within which newly acquired brands could be integrated across markets (Douglas et al. 2001). Brand architecture could also provide guidance on brand support and the allocation of resources across increasingly diverse international markets (Kapferer 1997). It also provided a structure within which issues, such as which brands should play overarching roles and how many sub-brands should they support, could be addressed.

## ***Brand Identity***

Recognition of the value of brands raised the management level at which brands were managed (Kapferer 1997; Keller 1998). Brands now became part of corporate strategy and the responsibility of senior management. This in turn, led large multi-brand organisations to communicate their corporate brand to a wider range of stakeholders and in particular, shareholders (Keller and Aaker 1992; de Chernatony

and Dall’Olmo Riley 1998; Ind 1997). As a result, companies now had to consider more carefully the kind of identity they wanted to communicate. This view of the brand is eloquently argued by Kapferer (1997), who suggested that knowing what brands stands for from a company perspective (brand identity), should guide long term corporate brand communications and take precedence over the short term management of individual product brand images. As strategic assets, brand identities became part of the inventory of organisational assets and competencies (Urde 1999).

### ***Brand Orientation***

As such, responsibility for brands could no longer be left to the marketing department alone (Kapferer 1997; Keller 1998). Increasingly all employees were encouraged to take responsibility for the corporate brand through an internal branding process by which senior management communicated their brand’s values to all staff, not only those directly involved with customers (Ind 2001; de Chernatony and Segal-Horn 2001; Hatch and Schultz 2003; Hankinson 2009). Corporate culture was also made more brand-centric through the organisation’s recruitment processes by selecting new employees who reflected the values of the brand (Hatch and Schulz 2003). This practice formed the basis of the wider concept of brand orientation—a managerial approach “in which the processes of the organisation revolve around the creation, development and protection of brand identity...” (Urde 1999, p. 117). This required a re-orientation of all organisational processes around the corporate brand and a move from individual brand strategies towards brand-based strategies (Merrilees et al. 2005).

### ***The Mainstream Branding Construct***

On the basis of the above discussion, it is argued that the seven factors discussed above (a brand’s image, positioning, equity, extension, architecture and identity together with brand orientation) represent the basic concepts of the mainstream branding construct. Nevertheless, it is recognised that the conceptual development of branding will continue as the practice of branding develops. However, as a consequence of differences in the management and value creation models underpinning place branding, transference of some of these concepts from the commercial sector to non-profit sectors such as place branding can sometimes be problematic.

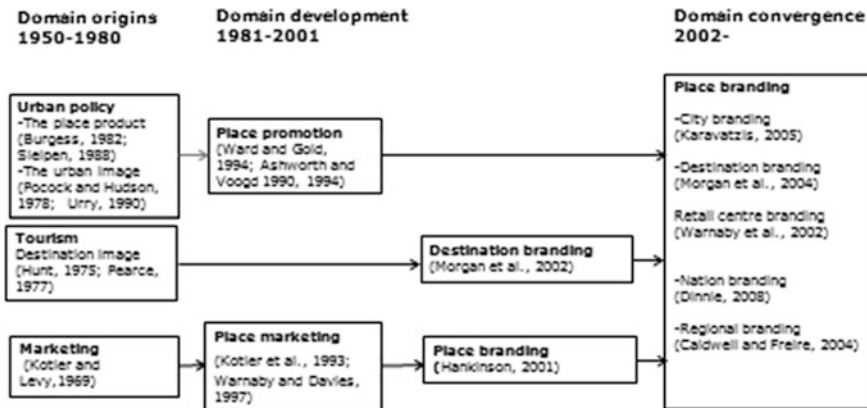


Fig. 2.2 The development of place branding—a timeline (Source Author)

## The Conceptual Development of Place Branding

The origins of place branding have been well documented (e.g., Ward 1998; Kearns and Philo 1993; Ward and Gold 1994). Early academic interest came principally from the perspectives of urban policy and tourism. However, these domains, for a long period of time, worked independently of each other and with little reference to mainstream marketing. Borchert (1994) notes, with reference to the early place promotion literature that “there exists only a weak relation with modern developments in marketing theory”. Since the turn of the century however, inter-disciplinary convergence has begun and common conceptual development is emerging.

Figure 2.2 provides a time-line of the development of place branding beginning with early papers in the urban policy literature, focused on the distinctive nature of the place product (see for example, Sleipen 1988; Ashworth and Voogd 1990, 1994; Burgess 1982; Urry 1990). However, it is argued here that these factors do not form part of the place branding construct but should rather be treated as factors which moderate both the management and the outcome of place branding, issues which are discussed later in this chapter. The focus here is upon the transferability of concepts from mainstream branding to place branding.

## Place Image and Positioning

### Image

Early literature in both the urban policy and the tourism domains to varying degrees, focused on place image promotion. However, several of these publications, notably in the urban policy domain (see, for example Hunt 1975; Pearce 1977;

Burgess 1990) were highly critical of this so-called “commodification” of places (Urry 1990). As a consequence, image research was predominantly, but not exclusively (see for example, Hunt 1975; Pearce 1977), in the tourism domain, focusing on destination images. Pike (2002) reviews 142 destination image papers. However, while this work on place image formation models is recognised (See for example Echtner and Richie 1993; Gartner 1993), they contain very little reference to mainstream branding literature (Kavaratzis 2005; Hankinson 2010a). Also, both destination and place image research has, until recently, tended to be case study based, focusing on individual places rather than cross-sectional studies. This has limited the development of a general theory of place image.

Transition from place image promotion towards the broader concept of place branding began in the latter part of the twentieth century beginning with papers by mainstream branding authors (e.g., Kotler et al. 1993, 1999; Hankinson 2001). From a tourism perspective, this was followed by (Morgan and Pritchard 2002) and continued from a mainstream branding perspective, by Hankinson (2004, 2005). These publications suggested that place images consisted of largely functional and experiential (ambience related) associations in contrast to the predominantly functional and symbolic associations which characterise mainstream brand images. From a tourism perspective, work has also focused on the relationship between destination image and image congruity (Sirgy 1982; Sirgy and Su 2000).

## *Positioning*

In the context of tourism, few papers address the issue of positioning, particularly in the important context of brand competition (Pike 2009; Pike and Ryan 2004). Pike (2009) reviews 74 tourism articles published between 1998 and 2007 and identifies the need for further research particularly into multiple positioning which addresses questions such as how many activities can one place effectively represent without causing customer confusion and perceptual dilution. Thus, larger places can offer a wider range of activities that enable them to support several positionings; but this requires more complex brand messages (Hankinson 2009). Pike (2009, p. 8) also suggests positioning is frequently driven by political rivalries between local vested political interests and argues for the need to further understand the impact of positioning strategies on the attitudes of local communities. More recently, work by Zenker and Beckman (2013) has examined the role which residents can play as brand ambassadors and the impact this can have on positioning.

From an urban policy perspective, Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008) argue for the need to research all stakeholders’ roles in the development of a place’s positioning. In particular, they emphasise the need for local communities to be consulted in the positioning decision and to support it. At the same time, Hankinson (2009) found some place brand organisations (PBOs) consulting with residents and other stakeholders as a means of identifying potential positioning strategies.

## **Place Brands as Assets**

### ***Brand Equity***

Since 2000, the implications of brands as assets has begun to be explored in the place branding literature (see, for example, Balakrishnan 2009; Merrilees et al. 2005; Trueman et al. 2004). The customer-based brand equity (CBBE) model (Keller 1993, 1998) has attracted particular interest and has been used as a measure of destination brand performance (for example, Konecnik 2006; Konecnik and Gartner 2007; Pike 2007). Pike (2009), nevertheless, sees brand equity, as a research gap, suggesting that its use as a performance tool should be extended to include place brand loyalty and the tracking of re-branding and re-positioning strategies. In the context of urban policy, Kavaratzis (2005) links brand equity to brand identity as well as performance measurement. The increasing importance of place brand equity is also evidenced by special issues in academic journals (e.g. Place Branding and Public Diplomacy 10 (2), 2014) devoted to the topic.

### ***Brand Identity***

In the context of tourism, the need for destinations to create unique identities which differentiate their brands from the competition is emphasised by Morgan and Pritchard (1999). Similarly, Dinnie (2008) concludes that there is considerable scope for more imaginative input into the development of nation brand identity, suggesting as an example, the possibility of including ideological associations such as sustainability. Pike (2009) highlights the political difficulties in doing this and calls for in-depth case studies of the politics of destination brand decision-making. The key issue here is the impact of internal conflicts between local authority departments and external conflicts between stakeholder organisations and groups. Such conflicts are seen as having the potential to inhibit the development of a common brand identity. The problem of political conflict is reflected also in work by Hankinson (2001, 2004b) who criticises the practice of developing separate brands for individual areas of activity within the same place rather than the development of unified place brands. Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) similarly argue for a better understanding of the relationship between place identity and place brands and the balance of stakeholder involvement in the development of brand identity and its management.

### ***Brand Architecture***

The importance of brand architecture is highlighted in a study of 25 PBOs by Hankinson (2010a) which identifies this as a common theme of concern amongst place branding practitioners. Rainisto (2003) suggests that, just as corporate brands



play an overarching/umbrella role as regards individual product brands, by adding value through endorsement, strong place brand can play a key role in brand architecture by adding value through their association with less well-known brands. From a tourism perspective, Pike (2009) includes umbrella branding as a research gap, in particular, as regards their success. Iversen and Hem (2008) analyse the nature of umbrella brands and their role in the promotion of countries, regions and cities. In the context of country branding, Dinnie (2008) points to future growth and interest in the role of co-branding when countries bid to host major international events. Discussion of the role of brand architecture in the context of tourism can also be found in (Morgan and Pritchard 2002).

### ***Brand Orientation***

There is very little evidence of internal branding by PBOs and there are only a limited number of articles on place brand orientation and brand culture. As a result Anholt (2002) argues for more research into the role of brand orientation in the place branding area. Nevertheless, several papers have been published on brand orientation in the non-profit sector literature (for example, studies by Hankinson P. 2000, 2004c; Ewing and Napoli 2005). There have also been at least two papers published in the place branding literature (Hankinson 2009, 2012). These papers have adapted the concept of brand orientation and developed measurement scales based upon variables relevant to non-profit and place branding organisations. Hankinson (2012) suggests that brand orientation must begin with cultural change within both the PBO and the organisations who deliver the brand experience, in order to ensure that employees and processes across stakeholder organisations are focused on the place brand's values. This requires partnerships and commitment to the place brand to ensure the brand is communicated consistently (Hankinson 2009). In a review of the corporate branding literature, Kavaratzis (2005) draws attention to the important role of organisational culture in place brand delivery. Despite this work, place brand orientation remains a relatively under-researched area.

### ***Brand Endorsement***

Brand endorsement is not a subject which explicitly appears anywhere in the place branding literature. Indeed, there is little evidence of its explicit use in place branding practice. Nevertheless, in the context of tourism, well known place brands are used to promote less well known place brands, a strategy referred to as 'attack and slipstream' branding (see for example, Hankinson 2009, 2010a). Such strategies, it could be argued, are a form of place brand extension through endorsement (Pike 2009; Dinnie 2008) designed to maximise the value of branding within a

country or region. They increase a place brand's overall franchise in terms of services offered and levels of consumption. The potential for greater application of brand extension as a means of growing the place brand franchise justifies more thought and research.

## **The Place Branding Construct**

While all the concepts which form and reflect the mainstream branding construct have, to varying degrees, become part of place branding practice, the above analysis suggests that there are significant variations in the extent to which these concepts have been the topic of academic publication. This, to some extent reflects problems of conceptual transference. In particular, the concept which seems least developed is brand extension. Nevertheless, despite the problems of transference it is reasonable to conclude that the core of both the mainstream branding and the place branding constructs are similar.

## **Moderating Variables**

Despite the similarities between place brands and mainstream brands, it is important to remember that place branding has characteristics that distinguish it from mainstream branding and which have the potential to moderate the place branding process and its outcome. Recent research by Eshuis et al. (2013) confirms the concerns of earlier work in this area. In a survey of 274 public managers they concluded that, there are problems associated with the transference of classical marketing as well as political and administrative obstacles. These factors make place branding more complex than mainstream branding in three ways: setting the brand's objectives, managing the branding process and measuring brand performance.

## ***Place Branding Objectives***

Mainstream brands are owned by commercial sector organisations which are ultimately required to deliver value for their shareholders. These organisations however, also have to meet the needs of a wider group of stakeholders, for example, employees, suppliers, governments and regulatory agencies. In contrast, place brands, are located in the public sector and not owned by any organisation or group of shareholders. Nevertheless, they deliver value to groups of stakeholders including residents, who pay taxes, and local organisations which not only pay taxes, but also invest money on behalf of their shareholders to help finance place

brand development. The objective of place branding therefore, is not to maximise shareholder value but to maximise economic value and social welfare on behalf of local residents and other stakeholders. This model of value creation is indirect and more complex when compared to the model pertaining in the commercial sector. It is also more prone to conflict between stakeholder groups, each of whom has a vested interest in the brand's success, even though they do not share the PBO's economic and welfare objectives (Hankinson 2007).

### ***Managing Place Branding***

The effective management of place branding is made more difficult as a result of the network character of place brands (Hankinson 2004a) and the need to rely on other organisations to deliver the brand experience. Furthermore, mainstream brands are established and grown through a line management process, but place brand management is a facilitation process. The central issue for PBOs is therefore, how to accommodate the conflicting needs, priorities and expectations of their network of stakeholders who deliver and influence the brand experience, (Hankinson 2007). Poor 'management' by PBOs can result in the adoption of the lowest common denominator solution and limit the brand's role to communications and a focus on symbols, logos and publicity rather than brand delivery (Leitch and Richardson 2003). There is also evidence that the undue influence of dominant partners can lead to the abandonment of potentially effective brand strategies (Pike 2005). Facilitation of a balanced buy-in from stakeholder organisations and the support of residents, both of whom impact on the brand experience, is crucial (Curtis 2001). However, evidence also suggests that allowing more enthusiastic organisations to take a bigger role may generate economies of scale and effort.

There is support for further research into the area of stakeholder management, both from PBOs (see Hankinson 2010a) and from recently published research agendas (Pike 2009; Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2008; Dinnie 2008; Balakrishnan 2009). From an urban policy perspective, research agenda items include: the identification of more effective organisational structures and the role of coordinating bodies in place management (Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2008). From a tourism perspective, Grangsjö (2003) suggests a comparison of the relative benefits of inter-urban cooperation rather than competition. From a mainstream marketing perspective, Hankinson (2004a) argues for more research into the role and structure of networks in the delivery of place brands.

### ***Measuring Performance***

The complex value creation process which characterises place branding also creates difficulties in the measurement of performance and brand equity (see also Zenker

and Braun this volume and Florek this volume). First, the benefits of strong place brands are shared between stakeholder organisations (including PBOs). Secondly, because these benefits are measured differently by different stakeholder groups they cannot be aggregated. For example, local governments measure benefits in terms of increases in tax revenues, hotels measure the benefits in terms of occupancy rates, while residents look for improved public services. These difficulties are compounded by elected members of local governments who represent residents' interests but whose composition changes regularly as part of the democratic process. Such political instability has the potential to destabilise place branding strategies.

Performance measurement of place branding is thus difficult, but nevertheless, essential (Hankinson 2010a). From a tourism perspective (Pike 2007, 2009) calls for a better understanding of place brand performance in general but in particular, as regards its impact on business competitiveness. From an urban policy perspective, Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008) suggest that future research should examine the relationship between different indicators of place performance, not only changes in the perception of place image, but including also, citizen satisfaction indicators and financial returns. From a marketing perspective, Dinnie (2008) also calls for greater use of marketing metrics in place branding.

In addition to these moderators, there are other variables which can affect responses to place branding. It may reflect spatial scale, for example, as reflected in variations between countries, regions, cities and towns. Variations in response may also reflect differences in place positioning strategies, for example, differences in positioning based on tourism, financial services, retail and sport. This suggests the need to establish benchmarks for different types of place.

## Conclusions

This analysis of the conceptual development of mainstream and place branding raises several important issues.

First, while mainstream branding has diverged into specialist domains, place branding is emerging as a domain through a process of convergence. While the launch of the *Journal of Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* provides concrete evidence of this convergence, a comparison of conceptual development in mainstream and place branding suggests that the overall rate of convergence and movement towards a fully developed domain is slow. With the exception of the significant volume of research into the concept of place image (notably in the tourism domain), articles relating to other concepts forming and reflecting the mainstream branding construct are still considerably less numerous. The analysis presented here suggests that place branding has however, been significantly strengthened by its links to mainstream branding. These have enabled the study of place branding to progress beyond its narrow focus on image towards the more rigorous introduction of mainstream branding concepts, allowing the place branding

domain to form and develop a common body of theory. As a result, researchers from across the place branding spectrum now recognise and cross-reference each other. Domain delineation however, is not yet complete. As Fig. 2.2 depicts, place branding is, at present, an umbrella term which encompasses the literature from at least five areas including the branding of cities, destinations, retail centres, nations and regions. But all of these share common problems as evidenced by the increasing amount of overlap between these contributions. For example, nation and regional branding is, to some extent conflated with destination branding (Anholt 2004; Hanna and Rowley 2008). Furthermore, destination and retail centre brands reflect alternative positionings rather than different types of place.

Secondly, while there has clearly been convergence, there remains a need for tighter specification of the concepts. Thus, it has been noted that some old concepts such as place promotion remain, alongside new concepts such as place branding (Kavaratzis and Hatch 2013). Clearer understanding of the key conceptual terms is necessary if empirical research is to progress. Without clear specification of the concepts, measurement, which is fundamental to empirical research, cannot take place. However, issues of definition will be aided by the increasing congruity between the concepts forming the mainstream and place branding constructs.

Thirdly, future empirical research will need to evaluate the relevance and potential transferability of mainstream branding concepts. This research could also, explore the transferability of embedded concepts such as the components of brand equity: brand knowledge, brand awareness and salience (Keller 1998), as well as perceived quality and brand loyalty (Aaker and Joachimstaler 2000). These concepts may not easily be transferred and issues of adaptation will continually need to be explored. While the analysis presented here shows that a wider discussion of concept transferability has now begun (see Karavatzis and Ashworth 2008; Dinnie 2008; Pike 2009; Hankinson 2010a), much of this work has so far been qualitative and of an exploratory nature. There is now a need for more confirmatory research based upon quantitative data in order to specify more clearly the role of the key concepts discussed above in the development of place brands.

To conclude: as the areas contributing to place branding continue to converge, academic attention must focus on the concepts that form and reflect the place branding construct, a potential list of which has been proposed in this chapter. This however, is inevitably incomplete and certainly not incontrovertible. At the same time, a distinction should be made between the concepts that reflect and form the place brand construct, and the moderating variables, which impact on the management and outcomes of place branding. Future research into these concepts must also examine the impact of the moderators in terms of their relevance and impact on the transferability of these concepts.

However, while the continuing convergence is to be encouraged, it is unlikely to result in complete congruity. Place branding will remain an interdisciplinary field of study attracting researchers from multiple perspectives. Some of these may be critical, although place branding is not unusual in this respect. For example, Klein (2000) published a strong critique of mainstream branding practice in her book "No logo". Also, although the mainstream marketing literature is primarily written from a

normative perspective, contributors are also drawn from disciplines such as economics, social science and organisational behaviour, which have alternative perspectives. Therefore, multi-disciplinarity should be viewed as a strength rather than a weakness.

## References

- Aaker D, Joachimstaler E (2000) *Brand leadership*. The Free Press, New York
- Aaker D, Keller KL (1990) Consumer evaluations of brand extensions. *J Mark* 54(January):27–41
- Anholt S (2002) Foreword to the special issue on nation branding. *J Brand Manage* 9 (4–5):229–239
- Anholt S (2004) Foreword to the first issue. *Place Branding Pub Dipl* 1(1):4–11
- Ashworth GJ, Voogd H (1990) Can places be sold for tourism? In: Ashworth GJ, Goodall B (eds) *Marketing tourism places*. Routledge, London, pp 17–41
- Ashworth GJ, Voogd H (1994) Marketing and place promotion. In: Gold J, Ward S (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 41–57
- Balabanis G, Stables R, Phillips H (1997) Market orientation in the top 200 British charity organisations and its impact on their performance. *Eur J Mark* 31(8):583–603
- Balakrishnan M (2009) Strategic branding of destinations: a framework. *Eur J Mark* 43 (5–6):611–629
- Barwise P, Higson C, Likierman A, March P (1989) *Accounting for brands*. London Business School and the Institute of Accounting in England and Wales, London
- Borchert J (1994) Urban marketing: a review. In: Braun G (ed) *Managing and marketing of Urban development and Urban life*. Dietrich Reimer Verlag, Berlin, pp 67–79
- Boulding K (1956) *The image*. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor
- Burgess J (1982) Selling places: environmental images for the executive. *Reg Stud* 32(1):1–17
- Burgess J (1990) The production and consumption of environmental meanings in the mass media —a research agenda for the 1990s. *Trans Inst Br Geogr* 5(2):139–161
- Curtis J (2001) Branding a state: the evolution of brand Oregon. *J Vacation Mark* 7(1):75–81
- de Chernatony L, Dall’Olmo Riley F (1998) Modelling the components of the brand. *Eur J Mark* 32(11/12):1074–1090
- de Chernatony L, Segal-Horn S (2001) Building on services’ characteristics to develop successful services brands. *J Mark Manage* 17(7–8):645–670
- Devlin J (2003) Brand architecture in services: the example of retail financial services. *J Mark Manage* 19(9–10):1043–1065
- Dinnie K (2004) Place branding: overview of an emerging literature. *Place Branding and Publ Dipl* 1(1):106–110
- Dinnie K (2008) *Nation branding concepts, issues, and practice*. Butterworth-Heinemann, London
- Douglas S, Craig C, Nijssen E (2001) Integrating branding strategy across markets: building international brand architecture. *J Int Mark* 9(2):97–114
- Echtner C, Richie B (1993) The measurement of destination image: an empirical assessment. *J Travel Res* 31(Spring):3–13
- Eshuis J, Braun E, Klijin EH (2013) Place marketing as governance strategy: an assessment of obstacles in place marketing and their effect on attracting target groups. *Publ Adm Rev* 73 (3):507–516
- Ewing M, Napoli J (2005) Developing and validating a multidimensional nonprofit brand orientation scale. *J Bus Res* 58(6):841–853
- Gardner B, Levy S (1955). The product and the brand. *Harvard Bus Rev* March(April):33–39
- Gartner W (1993) Image formation process. *J Travel Tour Mark* 2(3):191–212

- Gertner D (2011a) A (tentative) meta-analysis of the 'place marketing' and 'place branding' literature. *J Brand Manage* 19(3):112–131
- Gertner D (2011b) Unfolding and configuring two decades of research and publications on place marketing and place branding. *Place Branding Publ Dipl* 7(2):91–106
- Grangsjö Y (2003) Destination networking: co-opetition in peripheral surroundings. *Int J Distrib Logistics Manage* 33(5):427–448
- Hankinson P (2000) Brand orientation in charity organisations: qualitative research into key charity sectors. *Int J Nonprofit Volunt Sect Mark* 5(4):207–219
- Hankinson G (2001) Location branding: a study of twelve English cities. *J Brand Manage* 9(2):127–142
- Hankinson G (2004a) Relational network brands: towards a conceptual model of place brands. *J Vacation Mark* 10(2):109–121
- Hankinson G (2004b) The brand images of tourism destinations: a study of the saliency of organic images. *J Prod Brand Manage* 13(1):24–32
- Hankinson P (2004c) The internal brand in leading UK charities. *J Prod Brand Manage* 13(2):84–93
- Hankinson G (2005) Destination brand images: a business tourism perspective. *J Serv Mark* 19(1):24–32
- Hankinson G (2007) The management of destination brands: five guiding principles based on recent developments in corporate branding. *J Brand Manage* 14(3):240–254
- Hankinson G (2009) Managing destination brands: establishing a theoretical foundation. *J Mark Manage* 25(1–2):97–115
- Hankinson G (2010a) Place branding research: a cross-disciplinary agenda and the views of practitioners. *Place Branding Publ Dipl* 6(4):300–315
- Hankinson G (2010b) Place branding: a cross-domain literature review from a marketing perspective. In: Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 22–42
- Hankinson G (2012) The measurement of brand orientation, its performance impact, and the role of leadership in the context of destination branding. *J Mark Manage* 28(7–8):974–999
- Hankinson G, Cowling P (1993) *Branding in action*. McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead
- Hanna S, Rowley J (2008) An analysis of terminology use in place branding. *Place Branding Publ Dipl* 4(1):622–675
- Hatch MJ, Schulz M (2003) Bringing the corporation into corporate branding. *Eur J Mark* 37(7/8):1041–1064
- Hunt S (1975) Image as a factor in tourism development. *J Travel Res* 13(January):1–7
- Ind N (1997) *The corporate brand*. MacMillan, London
- Ind N (2001) *Living the brand*. Kogan Page, London
- Iversen N, Hem L (2008) Provenance associations as core values of place Umbrella brands: a framework of characteristics. *Eur J Mark* 42(5–6):603–626
- Kapferer JN (1997) *Strategic brand management*. Kogan Page, London
- Kavaratzis M (2005) Place branding: a review of trends and conceptual models. *Mark Rev* 5(4):329–342
- Kavaratzis M, Ashworth G (2008) Place marketing: how did we get here and where are we going? *J Place Manage Dev* 1(2):150–165
- Kavaratzis M, Hatch MJ (2013) The dynamics of place brands: an identity-based approach to place branding. *Mark Theor* 13(4):69–86
- Kearns G, Philo C (eds) (1993) *Selling places: the city as cultural capital. past and present*. Pergamon, Oxford
- Keller KL (1993) Conceptualising, measuring and managing customer-based brand equity. *J Mark* 57(1):1–22
- Keller KL (1998) *Building, measuring and managing brand equity*, 2nd edn. Pearson Education, Upper Saddle River
- Keller KL, Aaker D (1992) The effect of sequential introduction of brand extensions. *J Mark Res* 29(February):35–50

- Klein N (2000) *No logo*. Picador, New York
- Konecnik M (2006) Slovenia: new challenges in enhancing the value of the tourism destination brand. In: Hall D, Smith M Marciszewska B (eds) *Tourism in the new Europe: the challenges and opportunities of EU enlargement* (CABI), pp 83–99
- Konecnik M, Gartner W (2007) Customer-based brand equity for a destination. *Ann Tourism Res* 34(2):400–421
- Kotler P, Rein I, Haider D (1993) *Marketing places—attracting investment, industry and tourism to cities, states and nations*. Free Press, New York
- Kotler P, Asplund C, Haider D, Rein I (1999) *Marketing places—Europe*. Pearson Education, Harlow
- Leitch S, Richardson N (2003) Corporate branding in the new economy. *Eur J Mark* 37(7/8): 1066–1079
- Lodge C (2004) Opinion pieces: where is place branding heading? *Place Branding Publ Diplomacy* 1(1):12–35
- Louro M, Cunha P (2001) Brand management paradigms. *J Mark Manage* 17(7–8):849–902
- Low G, Fullerton R (1994) Brands, brand management and the brand manager system: a critical-historical evaluation. *J Mark Res* 31(May):173–190
- Lucarelli A, Berg P (2011) City branding: a state-of-the-art review of the research domain. *J Place Manag Dev* 4(1):9–27
- Merrilees B, Getz B, O'Brien G (2005) Marketing stakeholder analysis: Branding the Brisbane goodwill games. *Eur J Mark* 39(9–10):1066–1077
- Morgan N, Pritchard A (1999) Editorial. *J Vacation Mark* 5(3):213–214
- Morgan N, Pritchard A (2002) Introduction. In: Morgan N, Pritchard A, Pride R (eds) *Destination branding: creating the unique destination proposition*. Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, pp 3–14
- Park CW, Jaworski B, McInnis D (1986) Strategic brand concept-image management. *J Mark* 50 (October):135–145
- Pearce PL (1977) Mental souvenirs: a study of tourists and their city maps. *Aust J Psychol* 29 (1):203–210
- Pike S (2002) Destination image analysis—a review of 142 papers from 1973 to 2000. *Tour Manag* 23(5):51–61
- Pike S (2005) Tourism destination complexity. *J Prod Brand Manage* 14(4):258–259
- Pike S (2007) Consumer-based brand equity for destinations: practical DMO performance measures. *J Travel Tour Mark* 22(1):51–61
- Pike S (2009) Destination brand positions of a competitive set of near-home destinations. *Tour Manag* 30(5):857–866
- Pike S, Ryan C (2004) Destination positioning analysis through a comparison of cognitive, affective and conative perceptions. *J Travel Res* 42(4):333–342
- Rainisto S (2003) *Success factors of place marketing: a study of place marketing practices in Northern Europe and the United States*. Ph.D. thesis, Helsinki University of Technology, Institute of Strategy and International Business
- Ries A, Trout J (1972). *The positioning era*. *Advert Age* 24(April):35–38
- Ries A, Trout J (1981) *Positioning: the battle for your mind*. McGraw-Hill, Maidenhead
- Siryg M (1982) Self-concept in consumer behaviour: a critical review. *J Consum Res* 9 (3):287–300
- Siryg M, Su C (2000) Destination image, self-congruity and travel behaviour: toward an integrative model. *J Travel Res* 38(4):340–352
- Skinner H (2008) The emergence and development of place marketing's confused identity. *J Mark Manag* 24(9–10):915–928
- Sleipen W (1988) *Marketing van de historische Omgeving*. Netherlands Research Institute for Tourism, Breda (cited in Ashworth G.J. & Voogd, H. (1990). *Selling the City*, London: Belhaven)
- Trueman M, Klemm M, Giroud A (2004) Can a city communicate? Bradford as a corporate brand. *Corp Commun An Int J* 9(4):317–330



- Urde M (1999) Brand orientation: a mindset for building brands into strategic resources. *J Mark Manage* 15(1–3):117–133
- Urry J (1990) *The tourist gaze*. Sage, London
- Ward S (1998) *Selling places: the marketing of towns and cities 1850–2000*. Routledge, London
- Ward S, Gold J (1994) Introduction. In: Gold J, Ward S (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 3–11
- Zeithaml V, Bitner MJ (2000) *Services marketing—integrating customer focus across the firm*. McGraw-Hill, New York
- Zenker S, Beckman S (2013) My place is not your place—different place brand knowledge by different target groups. *J Place Manage Dev* 6(1):6–17

# Chapter 3

## Rethinking the Place Product from the Perspective of the Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing

Gary Warnaby and Dominic Medway

**Abstract** Since its promulgation in 2004, the service-dominant (S-D) logic of marketing has become an influential perspective on the study of marketing. This chapter considers the nature of the place ‘product’ from the perspective of the S-D logic, where intangibility, exchange processes and relationships are central constructs. The chapter begins by outlining the foundational premises of the S-D logic and considers the nature of place resources. Here, the paper distinguishes between operand and operant place resources to consider not only the nature of the tangible elements of the place product, but also a more phenomenologically-oriented notion of what constitutes a place ‘product’. The chapter reviews the potential contribution of the emerging sub-discipline of service science to the conceptualisation of place products as networks of stakeholders with differing capabilities who will collaborate to co-create place products with users/consumers of the places concerned. The chapter concludes that an S-D logic perspective emphasises the role of a bottom-up approach to place branding, in terms of a more co-creative and collaborative creation and communication of the nature of the place product.

### Introduction

On its inception in 2004, the service-dominant logic (SDL) immediately became an influential perspective in the study of marketing, and has generated much subsequent debate. This began with a number of commentaries in the same issue of the

---

G. Warnaby (✉)

School of Materials, University of Manchester, Sackville Street Building,  
Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL, UK  
e-mail: Gary.warnaby@manchester.ac.uk

D. Medway

Manchester Business School, University of Manchester, Booth Street West,  
Manchester M1 3GH, UK  
e-mail: Dominic.medway@mbs.ac.uk

*Journal of Marketing* where the concept was first promulgated (Vargo and Lusch 2004—and for commentaries, see Day et al. 2004), and has continued apace, in special journal issues or sections (e.g. *Marketing Theory* 2006, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 2008, *Industrial Marketing Management* 2011, *European Journal of Marketing* 2011, and *Journal of Marketing Management* 2012), as well as numerous individual articles. Notwithstanding the extent of the debate on SDL (and it has not been accepted uncritically, see for example, various contributions in Lusch and Vargo 2006), it cannot arguably be ignored in any consideration of current marketing theory. The aim of this chapter is, therefore, to consider the implications of the service-dominant logic for place marketing, with particular reference to the notion of places as ‘products’, which can be commodified and marketed.

## **The Service-Dominant Logic of Marketing: A Brief Explanation of Foundational Premises**

The promulgators of SDL, Vargo and Lusch (2004), argue that marketing has moved from a goods-dominant logic (characterised by the centrality of tangible outputs and discrete transactions between firm and customer), to a service-dominant (S-D) logic, where intangibility, exchange processes and relationships are central. In other words, they argue that much of the dominant logic of marketing has shifted away from the exchange of tangible goods, and has shifted towards the exchange of intangibles, specialised skills and knowledge, and also processes. It is through these latter, more intangible exchange processes that value is increasingly created, through the use and integration of *resources*.

Drawing on Constantin and Lusch (1994), Vargo and Lusch (2004) distinguish between two different types of resources: *operand* and *operant*. Operand resources are resources on which an operation or act is performed to produce an effect. These resources can be thought of in economic terms as factors of production (e.g. land, minerals, other natural resources etc., which are ultimately finite), which can be converted into outputs at low cost. Vargo and Lusch (2004) argue that the development of a goods-centred dominant logic saw these operand resources considered as primary. By contrast, operant resources are defined as resources that produce effects, potentially enabling firms to multiply the value of their natural resources and create additional operant resources. Operant resources, they argue, are often invisible and intangible, and are likely to be dynamic and infinite rather than static and finite (as is usually the case with operand resources). Thus operant resources could be thought of in terms of Prahalad and Hamel’s (1990) concept of core competences, and also in terms of organisational processes.

Developing these notions, Vargo and Lusch expounded SDL in terms of an original eight—and subsequently 10 (see Vargo and Lusch 2008)—foundational premises, which are discussed in more detail below.<sup>1</sup>

Acknowledging the fundamental importance of the concept of exchange to marketing, Vargo and Lusch argue that people engage in exchange to acquire benefits (e.g. knowledge and skills) accruing from specialised competences or services. Knowledge and skills are, thus, *operant* resources in that, as noted above, they can act upon other resources to create benefit. This is in contrast to *operand* resources, which are resources (e.g. natural resources, goods etc.) that must themselves be acted on to be beneficial. Thus, recognising the importance of operant resources, Vargo and Lusch argue in the first foundational premise:

The application of specialised skills and knowledge is the fundamental unit of exchange.<sup>2</sup>

Vargo and Lusch (2004) argue that over time, as organisations have become increasingly large, complex, bureaucratic and hierarchical, exchange has moved from the one-to-one trading of specialised skills by individuals to the indirect exchange of skills in vertical marketing systems. Thus, most organisational personnel, as their activities became more microspecialised, engaged in exchange with others in the organisation, and stopped interacting directly with the organisation's end customers (and thereby often did not pay attention to the customer's needs). Thus, they argue that because service is often provided through complex combinations of goods, money, and institutions, the true basis of the exchange which occurs with the end customers may not always be apparent. Thus, the second foundational premise states that:

Indirect exchange masks the fundamental basis of exchange.

With regard to the role of goods in the marketing process, physical goods are viewed as transmitters of operant resources (e.g. knowledge, skills, competences); in other words, they are 'intermediate' products that are used by customers as appliances in value-creation processes: they derive their value through use (i.e. the service they provide). Thus, tangible goods could be seen to be the means to an end rather than the end in itself. They argue, therefore, that it is the skills and competences that create these tangible goods from which competitive advantage emanates. These points are articulated in the third and fourth foundational premises:

Goods are a distribution mechanism for service provision.

Operant resources are the fundamental source of competitive advantage.

---

<sup>1</sup> Apart from the first foundational premise, all those articulated below are drawn from Vargo and Lusch (2008), in which some of the original premises were modified, and two additional ones (the ninth and tenth foundational premises) were added.

<sup>2</sup> This was later simplified to reflect the central role of service in exchange. Thus, Vargo and Lusch (2008) rework this first foundational premise to read "service is the fundamental basis of exchange".

Vargo and Lusch, therefore, regard service as fundamental in all economies, as articulated in the fifth foundational premise:

All economies are service economies.

This has implications for the role of the customer, who is consequently viewed as a *co-creator* of service, as a result of the interaction of resources undertaken. Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2000) note that customers are becoming increasingly involved in the process of value creation, and argue that organisations should welcome this more active involvement. In line with this, Vargo and Lusch (2004) argue that the customer becomes primarily an operant resource (i.e. a co-producer) rather than an operand resource (i.e. a “target” for the activities of marketers). Following this logic, marketing is, therefore, the process of doing things in interaction with the customer, as articulated in the sixth foundational premise:

The customer is always a co-creator of value.

Consequently, how value is thought of and determined is a key issue. The service-dominant logic sees value as perceived and determined by the customer on the basis of ‘value in use’, resulting from the beneficial application of operant resources. Firms can, therefore, only make ‘value propositions’, which may or may not be taken up by customers. The seventh and eighth foundational premises succinctly articulate this notion as follows:

The enterprise cannot deliver value, but only offer value propositions.

A service-centred view is inherently customer-oriented and relational.

How the firm and customer interact is consequently crucial, and SDL regards the customer primarily as an operant resource, who combines with organisational resources to co-create value, however this may be defined. Accordingly, customers are active participants in relational exchanges and co-production through the integration of their individual (and possibly collective) resources, as articulated in the last two foundational premises (Vargo and Lusch 2008):

All social and economic actors are resource integrators.

Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary.

Four of these foundational premises have been described as *core* premises (Vargo 2009) and as such are axiomatic of SDL. These are the first, sixth, ninth and tenth foundational premises. There are implications for place marketing here, and indeed Warnaby (2009) has suggested that SDL could be a means by which place marketing—considered by many as a special and distinct type of marketing (see for example, Ashworth 1993; Ashworth and Voogd 1990a; Corsico 1993; Kavaratzis 2007; Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005; van den Berg and Braun 1999)—could be brought more into the marketing mainstream, as well as providing a specific avenue for research within the place marketing sub-discipline.

In this chapter we consider how this might be the case, with particular emphasis on ‘rethinking’ the notion of the place as a ‘product’. Here, we consider places as

collections of resources—both operand and operant—arguing that this notion has some resonance with various approaches that have been employed to conceptualise the nature of spatial competition (see for example, Musterd and Murie 2010), and also more broadly, to understand the nature of place per se (see for example, Agnew 1987; Cresswell 2004; Cresswell and Hoskins 2008). We consider how concepts integral to an SDL perspective, such as resource integration, value co-creation/production, and the recent notion of places as service systems (see IfM and IBM 2008; Maglio and Sporher 2008 for an outline of this concept) could lead to a rethinking of the notion of the place product. We conclude with a discussion of the potential implications for place marketing theory and practice.

## A Resource-Based Perspective on Place

Drawing on the corporate strategy literature, this SDL perspective has parallels with the resource-based view of strategy, which argues that if an organisation (or in this case a place) is to achieve competitive advantage over others, it will do so because it has capabilities that others do not have, or have difficulty in obtaining (Johnson et al. 2005). In the more usual organisational context, the foundations of this strategic capability can be found in the configuration of resources and competences enjoyed. These resources come in a variety of forms, with a basic distinction between tangible (i.e. physical assets such as plant, labour and finance), and intangible (i.e. non-physical assets such as information, reputation and knowledge). Johnson et al. state that while the actual nature of these resources is important, how they are *deployed* is equally important, and they identify the notion of *competences*, which is used to describe ‘the activities and processes through which an organisation deploys its resources effectively’ (ibid., p. 119).

The parallels with the notion of operand and operant resources from an SDL perspective are evident. Whilst not an exact analogy, operand resources could be regarded as equating to physical and (to a lesser extent) intangible organisational resources, and operant resources being more akin to competencies, and especially the notion of core competences (Prahalad and Hamel 1990), defined as the activities and processes through which resources are deployed in such a way as to achieve competitive advantage in ways that others cannot imitate or obtain.

In a place (and more specifically urban) context, Musterd and Murie (2010) identify four main theoretical frameworks that have been put forward to conceptualize the essential conditions for competitiveness in an increasingly globalized world, which implicitly draw on the principles of this resource-based view.

According to Musterd and Murie, the first, and perhaps most established and well-known, theoretical approach focuses on the creation of ‘hard’ conditions attractive to those seeking to invest in a particular place. These would include, for example, availability of capital and an appropriately skilled labour force, an institutional context with the right set of regulations and sufficiently attractive tax

regimes, good infrastructure and accessibility, availability and affordability of office space, and educational facilities.

The second approach—economic cluster theory—has had widespread influence in both the academic and policy arenas in terms of explaining spatial competitiveness. It draws on the concept of agglomeration, whereby various activities are assumed to cluster together in a particular place because they have linkages to each other, use the same public and private services and institutions, and are connected to the same environment, and also profit from each other's presence and proximity. Porter (1998, p. 78) defines such clustering, or clusters, as 'geographic concentrations of interconnected companies and institutions in a particular field. Clusters encompass an array of linked industries and other entities important to competition'.

By contrast, an alternative approach—the 'soft' conditions field of theory—asserts, within an urban context, the importance of specific amenities that create an environment that attracts those specific types of people who are perceived as integral to the most promising economic activities for the economic development of a region (Musterd and Murie 2010). Identifying these key people is perhaps most closely identified with the work of Richard Florida (2002, 2005), and his notion of the 'creative class'. Here, Florida argues that this approach can explain why a specific place may seek to attract such individuals, thereby creating concentrations of talented people who power innovation and economic growth. There is some resonance with agglomeration and cluster arguments outlined above (in terms of capturing efficiencies generated from tight linkages and/or proximity etc.). In articulating this perspective, Florida emphasises that the power of place remains, but suggests that in this context, the 'creative class' group are drawn to creative centres or hubs, not for the traditional economic reasons outlined in terms of 'hard' conditions, but because they seek abundant high-quality amenities and experiences, an openness to diversity of all kinds, and above all the opportunity to validate their identities as creative people. Musterd and Murie note that this approach has been the subject of extensive critique, arising from the amorphous nature of 'soft' factors, and the consequently weak empirical basis to the arguments underpinning this approach.

Another approach—namely, network theory—focuses on the impact of personal ties, local relations, and organizational affiliations. There is resonance with cluster theory, but this network approach is distinguished by a more overt focus on the concept of embeddedness. Here, a key issue relates to the motives influencing place stakeholders in their decisions about where to settle and where to stay, and this approach introduces a criterion for differentiation on the basis of the origins and history of an individual's personal relationships (e.g. place of family, place of birth, place of study, proximity to friends etc.). This draws on notions of place attachment, which are discussed in more detail in a subsequent section of this chapter.

In many ways the differences between these different perspectives on urban competitiveness are relative rather than absolute, and could be considered from the perspective of the resource-based view of strategy and SDL. Thus, in terms of different resource types implicit in SDL, in this spatial context *operand* resources

could be likened to the ‘hard conditions’, and perhaps to a lesser extent, cluster theory approaches, whereas the ‘soft conditions’ and network theory approaches have some resonance with the notion of *operant* resources. This is to some extent an oversimplification of a very complex (and interconnected) reality, and the distinctions between the different resource types (as with the four approaches to urban competitiveness described by Musterd and Murie, which are outlined above) will be permeable. Such issues are now addressed below.

## Places as Operant Resource? Tangible and Intangible ‘Hard’ Conditions

Kotler et al.’s (2008) definition of a product as anything that is offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need is deliberately inclusive, and explicitly mentions places as objects of exchange transactions. However, in an urban context, Ashworth and Voogd (1990a, p. 66) state that any attempt to define the concept of ‘a product’ confronts ‘an immediate problem of double meaning’, in that the word ‘city’ could refer both to the place as a whole (i.e. the *nuclear product*) and to the specific services, facilities and attributes that occur at/within this place (i.e. *contributory elements*).

Similarly, van den Berg and Braun (1999) identify three levels of (urban) place marketing, comprising:

- The individual urban goods and services (Level 1), which can be marketed as discrete attractions/facilities, but which can also be combined to create;
- Clusters of related services (Level 2) which can be marketed to attract particular segments of place users but which can also in turn coalesce to create an overall perception of;
- The urban agglomeration as a whole (Level 3). This third level is mainly concerned with identity and image building for the urban place as a holistic entity (van den Berg and Braun 1999). The town/city can, as a consequence, be open to various interpretations, because different combinations of individual goods/services and clusters may be promoted to distinct market segments (Ashworth and Voogd 1990b).

Illustrating this in a tourism context, for example, the first level constitutes those individual attractions and facilities (analogous to tangible goods and more intangible services mentioned above in the context of SDL) which combine (or cluster) to create the overall tourism ‘offer’ of the city (i.e. level 2). This, in turn, contributes to the final level, namely the image/perception of the city as a whole (which could incorporate elements other than tourism, but which may be related to it—and indeed underpin it, such as infrastructure, culture, population characteristics etc.).

Drawing on the notion of differing product levels (see Baines et al. 2011; Brassington and Pettitt 2006; Kotler et al. 2008), other conceptualisations of the



urban place ‘product’ utilise core and supplementary/peripheral elements, or primary and secondary elements (see for example, Getz 1993; Jansen-Verbeke 1986). This approach has also been applied to more diffuse place ‘products’. For example, Warnaby et al. (2010) apply this approach to the archaeological features that constitute Hadrian’s Wall in the north of England, one of the most significant set of Roman archaeological remains in the UK, highlighting the extent of materiality of Roman remains to distinguish between different levels of product as ‘core’ or ‘supplementary’, and acknowledging a range of ‘complementary’ Hadrian’s Wall ‘product’ elements (including the multitude of pubs, hotels, retail outlets and non-Roman leisure attractions and features that surround the Wall itself), as well as distinctive elements of the physical landscape within which all these elements, and their associated human activity, are framed. The analogies with the levels of place marketing outlined above are evident, in that with the case of Hadrian’s Wall as a place ‘product’ there are a range of individual attractions/facilities, which can either be explicitly related to the region’s Roman archaeology (i.e. ‘core’ elements), or are less overtly Roman-related (i.e. supplementary elements), which can be—and are—marketed as separate attractions, but which can also combine to create a more holistic product which has been branded as ‘Hadrian’s Wall Country’ (see Warnaby et al. 2013).

In the above place product conceptualisations the focus is primarily on tangible elements—understandable perhaps, given the importance of the material in the designation of the historic/landmark significance attached to many places (Cresswell and Hoskins 2008). However, some conceptualisations—particularly of places as brands—incorporate both tangible and intangible place elements (see Balakrishnan 2009; Hankinson 2004; Hanna and Rowley 2010; Parkerson and Saunders 2005), and explicitly recognise their interaction, given the need to create positive place associations and ‘brand personality’ connotations in the minds of place consumers, and also in terms of place product/brand co-creation (Aitken and Campelo 2011).

This focus on both the tangible and intangible aspects of place is consistent with SDL principles (Vargo and Lusch 2004, 2008), which emphasise value as being created through resource integration by multiple actors associated with an exchange. The utilisation of both operand and operant resources within exchange relationships is manifest in this specific context in relation to the dualistic nature of places mentioned above, which can capitalise upon both physical aspects (e.g. location, infrastructure etc.), and more service-oriented elements (e.g. skills and character of the population, the cosmopolitan and bohemian nature of the place etc.—see, for example, Florida 2002, 2005) in order to motivate exchange.

The fact that differing combinations (and the relative importance) of both tangible and intangible product elements can contribute towards an overall offer to consumers is a feature of the service marketing literature (Lovelock 1991). Indeed, there have been attempts to use services marketing principles to explain place marketing and the nature of the ‘product’ being marketed in this context. Thus, for example, the concept of the servicescape has obvious application in this context (see Bitner 1992, for the first exposition of this concept). The servicescape has been

defined as ‘a physical, material setting designed and built to shape consumption behaviour’ (Venkatraman and Nelson 2008, p. 1010), and this incorporates ambience, function and design (Bitner 2000). The servicescape concept has been developed and extended to numerous different place and spatial contexts by Sherry (1998).

Another commonly used framework for conceptualising the management and marketing of services is the ‘servuction’ model (Langeard et al. 1981), which highlights the experiential aspects of the purchase of goods/services. The servuction model outlines how the organisation providing the service is broken into two elements—visible and invisible. The visible element comprises both the inanimate environment within which the service experience occurs, and the contact personnel within the organisation who interact with consumers during the service experience. Supporting this is the invisible element—namely, the support infrastructure that enables the visible part to function. This model has been adapted to an urban spatial context by Warnaby and Davies (1997). Here, the visible element could comprise two main factors equating to the inanimate environment and contact personnel. The first of these factors is the *physical setting*, which would include consumer service venues (i.e. cultural, leisure and other activities), but in addition the general ambience of the place as a whole, thus recognising the fact that the place product should be considered as a holistic entity (Ashworth and Voogd 1990a, b). Recognising that one aspect of how places can be defined refers to the social relations that occur within a given area (see for example Agnew 1987), the second factor is the *social milieu*, which would comprise contact personnel within all the above venues, as well as the wider socio-cultural factors of the city as a whole such as friendliness of the population and local customs etc. (attractive or otherwise), which will provide a context for the behaviour of all parties. In discussing the city servicescape, the contributions of both physical setting and social milieu to the user’s experience of place highlight the need for a holistic perspective, which encompasses both hard and soft conditions, and we now turn to this latter aspect.

### **Taking a Phenomenological Perspective? ‘Soft’ Conditions and Place Product as Co-created Entity**

As noted above, ‘soft’ conditions theories place more emphasis on operand resources inherent in places, and consequently the notion of co-creation with the place consumer assumes greater prominence. Indeed, the complex nature of the place ‘product’, encompassing both the physical dimensions of places and what goes on within them, begs a question as to who is responsible for creating the place product. Ashworth (1993), for example, suggests three possible ‘producers’ of the urban place product. The first two are: the assembler of the various elements in the place product ‘package’ (for example, tourism providers and operators); and governments and their agencies. These actors, who—in isolation or more likely, in

combination—integrate operand and operant resources at their disposal, can be considered (using SDL parlance) ‘value networks’, defined by Lusch et al. as:

a spontaneously sensing and responding spatial and temporal structure of largely loosely coupled value proposing social and economic actors interacting through institutions and technology, to (1) co-produce service offerings, (2) exchange service offerings, and (3) co-create value (2010, p. 20).

Lusch et al. state that value networks may interconnect and that individual value networks may nest within larger, more encompassing ones, and this notion of functional/spatial ‘nesting’ (see Boisen et al. 2011, for a more detailed discussion) has parallels with van den Berg and Braun’s (1999) levels of place marketing, and the palimpsestic qualities of place (see Warnaby et al. 2010).

According to Ashworth (1993), the third ‘producer’ of the urban place product are consumers themselves, who create their own unique place product from the variety of services, amenities and other elements, with the ostensible place producer having little direct control over this process. Consequently, Ashworth suggests the primacy of the consumer as place product creator. Considering this from the perspective of the foundational premises of S-D logic, Warnaby (2009) notes that a number of what have been considered as core S-D logic foundational premises (Vargo 2009) are manifest in this specific context. The S-D logic argues that the customer is always a co-creator of value (i.e. Foundational Premise 6) and that value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary (i.e. Foundational Premise 10), paralleling Ashworth’s view outlined above. Those organisations/groups/local authorities who, from a more traditional perspective, could be regarded as creators of the place product would, from an SDL perspective, only perform an intermediate role (Vargo and Lusch 2004) in terms of the ability to offer place value propositions arising from a particular assemblage of place product elements (i.e. Foundational Premise 7). Such value propositions would be created through the integration of resources—in other words, place product elements—available within the place (i.e. Foundational Premise 9). Thus, the material—and also less tangible—place product elements arguably constitute the means to an end, rather than the end in itself, in that place consumers will reside in/visit/locate to a particular place in order to realise a variety of benefits/experiences available therein (Warnaby 2009). Moreover, the relative importance of place product elements will be determined by the consumer, in line with the S-D logic’s Foundational Premise 10—‘Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary’ (Vargo and Lusch 2008). This links to the notion of place as ‘realm of meaning’, as discussed by Cresswell and Hoskins (2008), and also place attachment and topophilia, defined as ‘the affective bond between people and place or setting’ (Tuan 1974, p. 4).

Similarly, Hidalgo and Hernandez define place attachment as ‘an affective bond or link between people and specific places’ (2001, p. 274). Various demographic, social, physical and symbolic factors will influence place attachment (see for example, Florek 2011; Hay 1998; Hernandez et al. 2007; Steadman 2003). According to Lewicka (2008) place *attachment* and place *identity*—defined by Florek as ‘the process by which, through interaction with places, people describe

themselves in terms of belonging to a specific place' (2011, p. 347)—are two different, although related, phenomena, and they are often used interchangeably. However, it might be useful in the context of place marketing to consider place attachment as pertaining to an individual, whereas place identity is a communal phenomenon, around *shared* identity and culture (see Aitken and Campelo 2011).

From a geographical perspective, these phenomenological aspects resonate with Cresswell and Hoskins' (2008, p. 394) description of place as a 'lived concept', in that place involves different levels of practice and performance arising from the fact that it is inhabited, and the residents will have experience of being 'in' a place. Indeed, Cresswell (2004, p. 37) notes that place 'needs to be understood as an embodied relationship with the world'. Drawing on the work of Pred (1984), he argues that places be regarded as the result of processes and practices, and consequently a sense of place is developed through the interaction of structure and agency. Thus, '[p]laces are constructed by people doing things and in this sense are never 'finished' but are constantly being performed' (Cresswell 2004, p. 37).

These process dimensions, and their experiential implications (highlighted by Pred 1984, and Seamon 1980) therefore have implications for the nature of place as a 'product'. Thus, places could be regarded as stages for performance, and as Cresswell (2004, p. 39) argues, in this sense place becomes an 'event', which is 'marked by openness and change rather than boundedness and permanence'. Thus, the place product is co-created through the actions of those within and around it. This may be particularly apposite in situations where the definition of a particular place 'product' may be somewhat hazy or 'fuzzy', in relation to issues such as spatial scale, administrative structures, and how it is represented etc. (see below).

This discussion so far, like much of the place marketing literature, has primarily focused upon the urban. However, as Ashworth and Voogd (1990b) and Boisen et al. (2011) point out, a city is inevitably one component in a spatial hierarchy, and this is of fundamental importance to the nature of the place product and its marketing. Thus, many place products are defined by the jurisdictional areas of the local authorities/agencies responsible for their marketing, but this may not correspond to place users' perceptions of what constitutes the 'product' they experience (Ashworth and Voogd 1990b).

Indeed, there are situations where a place which is marketed as a holistic entity cuts across administrative/jurisdictional areas. In addition to an established focus on cities in the extant literature, a more recent emphasis on the marketing/branding of nations is also evident, and Warnaby et al. (2010) note that such places are obviously delineated through jurisdictional boundaries which, whilst occasionally disputed, are sharply defined. However, they go on to introduce the notion of place 'fuzziness' to refer to places that defy such clear jurisdictional definition. 'Fuzzy' places (e.g. major conurbations, regions etc.) may be identified as much by symbols, institutions and social practice as by territorial scope (Hospers 2006, Paasi 2002), and realm of meaning may be the defining aspect of place identity (although this may be the source of much contestation). Considering regions, for example, Paasi (2010) is explicit in describing them as 'social constructs', which can be thought of as 'assemblages' created by a complex range of agency and actors.

Hadrian's Wall was identified by Warnaby et al. (2010) as an archetypal 'fuzzy' place, characterized by multiple attributes and multiple, overlapping boundaries. For example, the Hadrian's Wall Management Plan Committee (convened as a consequence of World Heritage Site designation) recognised the fragmentation of ownership and jurisdiction of the Wall and its environs, and the plurality of interests involved in its management (Warnaby et al. 2013). As a consequence of the inevitable tensions arising, there was contestation among stakeholders, which Warnaby et al. (2010) argue led to *jurisdictional*, *functional* and *strategic* 'fissures'.

## A Role for Service Science? Place Product as Capability Network

In relation to resource integration, the emergence of 'service science' (see IfM and IBM 2008; Maglio and Sporher 2008) and the notion of 'service systems' has much potential utility in conceptualising the nature of place products. Proponents of service science highlight the linkage with the S-D logic—as Maglio and Sporher state:

We think Vargo and Lusch's (2004) service-dominant logic might provide just the right perspective, vocabulary and assumptions on which to build a theory of service systems, their configurations and their modes of interaction. Simply put, service-dominant logic may be the philosophical foundation of service science, and the service system may be its basic theoretical construct (2008, p. 19).

Maglio and Sporher, in their articulation of the principles of service science are explicit in stating that places can be viewed as 'service systems', defined as, 'dynamic configurations of people, technologies, organisations and shared information that create and deliver value to customers, providers and other stakeholders' (IfM and IBM 2008, p. 1). This resonates with Turok's (2009, p. 14) description of cities as 'complex adaptive systems comprising multitudes of actors, firms and other organisations forming diverse relationships and evolving together' to develop place-based competitive advantage, and is also explicit in Hankinson's (2004) discussion of places as 'relational network' brands.

With regard to the *people* element of service systems, within cities there exist a multiplicity of different actors (individuals, formal and informal groups, associations, organisations, public administrations etc.) that—individually and collectively—will integrate their resources to create a place service system. This raises questions of who (co-)creates place product, as discussed earlier in relation to Ashworth's (1993) discussion of this issue. An important factor to bear in mind here is the context specificity of places: in other words, each place will have its own unique combination of people responsible for its administration and marketing, with its own internal and external dynamics.

Regarding the *organisations* element, the complexity of the mechanisms for planning and implementing place marketing has been identified as a factor that distinguishes this particular context (Warnaby 2009). One of the specific characteristics

of place marketing is the plethora of stakeholders from private, public and voluntary sectors (often with competing agendas) that are involved in this activity—what van den Berg and Braun (1999) have termed the *strategic network*, responsible for the place management/marketing effort. The consequent need for a consensual and inclusive approach to place marketing strategy making is emphasised (See for example, Ashworth and Voogd 1990a; Fretter 1993; Kotler et al. 1999). Van den Berg and Braun stress the importance of ‘organizing capacity’, defined as, ‘the ability to enlist all actors involved and, with their help, to generate new ideas and to develop and implement a policy designed to respond to fundamental developments and create conditions for sustainable development’ (Van den Berg and Braun 1999, p. 995).

When these inter-related people/organisations elements are considered from an S-D logic perspective, then issues of resource integration—influenced by the context within which this integration occurs—will assume much importance. Citing Hunt and Morgan (1995), Chandler and Vargo (2011) identify the importance of resources as owned or accessible by multiple actors, and also their role in facilitating actor interaction (in order to capitalise more optimally upon resources). In this particular context, where resource (especially operand resource, such as finance) may be limited, then actor interaction and network development becomes even more important (Warnaby et al. 2002).

Chandler and Vargo also stress the importance of *context*, defined as ‘a set of unique actors with unique reciprocal links between them’ (2011, p. 40), highlighting that context heterogeneity will affect the efficacy of resource mobilisation. They regard context as a multilevel conceptualisation, incorporating three different levels, as follows:

- *micro*—i.e. framing direct exchange between individual actors as part of dyads;
- *meso*—i.e. framing more indirect exchange as it occurs among dyads within triads; and
- *macro*—i.e. framing exchange as it occurs among triads, which may create complex networks.

If such conceptualisations are applied in a place context using van den Berg and Braun’s (1999) three levels of urban place marketing, then interaction between individual actors (i.e. micro-level) might create individual place product elements, such as tourism attractions. These individual place product elements might then be marketed as a cluster (i.e. meso-level), to for example, create an overall tourism offer which can, through interaction with non-tourism oriented (but nonetheless related) marketing actors, in turn be an element of a wider holistic product (i.e. macro-level).

Given the inherent complexity of organisational mechanisms for the marketing which, *inter alia*, creates the specific characteristics—or context—of place marketing, then these levels may be even more interrelated, with individual clusters of elements being marketed by complex networks of actors. Moreover, Chandler and Vargo (2011) add another—*meta*-level, which introduces notions of time and replication, leading to institutionalisation, and the ongoing nature of some place management/marketing initiatives suggests that relatively permanent ecosystems can be created, which become established as a valid element of urban management more generally.

A key factor ensuring the efficacy of this will be the pooling of resources where appropriate and the sharing of information and competence between the entities with the service system responsible for the management and marketing of a place product. Maglio and Sporher (2008) suggest that this may occur along at least four dimensions: *information-sharing*, *work-sharing*, *risk-sharing* and *goods-sharing*. The nature of the organisational mechanisms for place marketing with their high level of interaction (Warnaby et al. 2002) obviously facilitates such exchange and sharing. The urban place and its institutions, therefore, become the forum in which urban stakeholders communicate and (hopefully) reach some consensus as to future development. However, there is inevitably potential for tension and conflict within the ‘strategic network’ (analogous to Warnaby et al.’s 2010, notion of ‘fissures’ in the context of Hadrian’s Wall, given the possible differences that exist between disparate place stakeholders). Moreover, further tension and conflict may occur between those responsible for place marketing (i.e. the ‘strategic network’), and those outside it (for example residents, businesses, and other groups etc.) who may not be party to decisions made (with which they might strongly disagree). Managing such potential conflict, so as to achieve as strong a consensus as possible, is a key element of place management and marketing.

The final element of service systems is *technology*, which in this service systems context can be thought of in terms of two properties: *physical* (i.e. the technology hardware) and *codified conceptual* (i.e. shared information etc.), that service systems can own and provide access rights to others in order to enable value exchanges to create the place ‘product’ from the constellation of constituent elements. The role of technology in the context of place branding (with particular reference to Web 2.0) is discussed by Hanna and Rowley in more detail in Chap. 7. However, it could be argued that in this place branding context the notion of resource integration and co-creation, which are fundamental aspects of SDL, can significantly facilitate the ability of all place stakeholders (not just those nominally responsible for place brand creation and development) to contribute to, and comment on, place branding activity. Thus, technology can enable the creation of multiple and ‘bottom-up’ narratives of a place which will change and potentially compete over time (see Warnaby and Medway 2013).

## Conclusion

This chapter has examined how service dominant logic and its associated concepts could contribute to a rethinking of the place product. From such a perspective, places can be regarded as service systems, in that they constitute a combination of both operand and operant resources, and/or hard and soft conditions, which are integrated to develop an offer (or in SDL parlance, a value proposition) to potential users. However, a particular characteristic of places, in this regard, is their inevitable spatiality. With more stereotypical marketing contexts, a supply chain for a given product may involve an extended hinterland of interconnected organisations and



marketing exchanges and an interplay of operand and operant resources, often spread spatially through a variety of geographical locations—indeed many supply chain systems are global in scope. For a place product, however, the network of complex exchanges and interactions between operand and operant resources are necessarily focused in on one specific geographic location. This is because for place products the operand resources themselves are fixed. Thus, the hard conditions such as a city's infrastructure, landmarks, built environment, etc. are largely immovable—in other words, the place product can be thought of, both literally and metaphorically, in terms of what Therkelsen et al. (2010) call the 'city of stones'. Even though the value adding exchange of operant resources combining to co-create the final place product may be internal (i.e. city marketing agencies, residents etc.) or external (e.g. tourists, inward investors) the location, the exchanges themselves are always focused upon, or emanate from, the geographical fixedness of the place in question.

However, when considering the specific nature of the place product, there is a paradox. This arises as a consequence of the phenomenological perspective outlined earlier, whereby a place product is co-created through the relationships between individual place users and the specific configuration of place product elements with which they interact. This is consistent with FP10 of the service dominant logic, which states 'value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary'. From this perspective the place product is not fixed at all, but is paradoxically characterised by extreme fluidity, in that consumers construct their own individual version of the place product in their minds on the basis of place experiences, and their own narratives and stories that surround the place in question. This can then be reflected in related place marketing activity through attempts to create a sense of place attachment amongst users and potential users of a place. Thus, a city could be arguably regarded as a social construction, and in marketing terms, is represented as much through narratives and stories as it is through tangible product elements—what Therkelsen et al. (2010) have termed the 'city of words'.

This begs a question as to the process(es) by which the place product is created. Here, a distinction may be made between 'top-down' (i.e. place marketing activities planned through what van den Berg and Braun (1999) term the 'strategic network', perhaps in conjunction with external consultants etc.) and 'bottom-up' processes. An SDL perspective perhaps emphasises the role of a bottom-up approach in terms of a more co-creative and collaborative creation and communication of the nature of the place product.

## References

- Agnew JA (1987) *Place and politics: the geographical mediation of state and society*. Allen & Unwin, Boston
- Aitken R, Campelo A (2011) The 4Rs of place branding. *J Mark Manage* 27(9–10):913–933
- Ashworth G (1993) Marketing of places: what are we doing? In: Ave G, Corsico F (eds) *Urban marketing in Europe*. Torino Incontra, Turin, pp 643–649
- Ashworth G, Voogd H (1990a) *Selling the city*. Belhaven, London



- Ashworth GJ, Voogd H (1990b) Can places be sold for tourism? In: Ashworth G, Goodall B (eds) *Marketing tourism places*. Routledge, London, pp 1–16
- Baines P, Fill C, Page K (2011) *Marketing*, 2nd edn. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Balakrishnan MS (2009) Strategic branding of destinations: a framework. *Eur J Mark* 43(5/6):611–629
- Bitner MJ (1992) Servicescapes: the impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *J Mark* 56:57–71
- Bitner MJ (2000) The servicescape. In: Swartz TA, Iacobucci D (eds) *Handbook of services marketing and management*. Sage, Los Angeles, pp 37–50
- Boisen M, Terlouw K, van Gorp B (2011) The selective nature of place branding and the layering of spatial identities. *J Place Manage Dev* 4(2):135–147
- Brassington F, Pettitt S (2006) *Principles of marketing*, 4th edn. Financial Times Prentice Hall, Harlow
- Chandler JD, Vargo SL (2011) Contextualization and value-in-context: how context frames exchange. *Mark Theory* 11(1):35–49
- Constantin JA, Lusch RF (1994) Understanding resource management. *The Planning Forum*, Oxford
- Corsico F (1993) Urban marketing, a tool for cities and business enterprises, a condition for property development, a challenge for urban planning. In: Ave G, Corsico F (eds) *Urban marketing in Europe*. Torino Incontra, Turin, pp 75–88
- Cresswell T (2004) *Place: a short introduction*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford
- Cresswell T, Hoskins G (2008) Place, persistence, and practice: evaluating historical significance at Angel Island, San Francisco, and Maxwell Street, Chicago. *Ann Assoc Am Geogr* 98(2):392–413
- Day GS, Deighton J, Narayandas D, Gummesson E, Hunt SD, Prahalad CK et al (2004) Invited commentaries on “evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing”. *J Mark* 68(1):18–27
- Florek M (2011) No place like home: perspectives on place attachment and impacts on city management. *J Town City Manage* 1(4):346–354
- Florida R (2002) *The rise of the creative class ... and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life*. Basic Books, New York
- Florida R (2005) *Cities and the creative class*. Routledge, New York
- Fretter D (1993) Place marketing: a local authority perspective. In: Kearns G, Philo C (eds) *Selling places: the city as cultural capital past and present*. Pergamon Press, Oxford, pp 163–174
- Getz D (1993) Planning for tourism business districts. *Ann Tourism Res* 20:583–600
- Hankinson G (2004) Relational network brands: towards a conceptual model of place brands. *J Vacat Mark* 10(2):109–121
- Hanna S, Rowley J (2010) Towards a strategic place brand-management model. *J Mark Manage* 27(5–6):458–476
- Hay R (1998) Sense of place in developmental context. *J Environ Psychol* 18(1):2–29
- Hernandez B, Hidalgo MC, Salazar-Laplace ME, Hess S (2007) Place attachment and place identity in natives and non-natives. *J Environ Psychol* 27:310–319
- Hildago MC, Hernandez B (2001) Place attachment: conceptual and empirical questions. *J Environ Psychol* 21:273–281
- Hospers G-J (2006) Borders, bridges and branding: the transformation of the Øresund region into an imagined space. *Eur Plan Stud* 14(10):15–33
- Hunt S, Morgan R (1995) The comparative advantage theory of competition. *J Mark* 59 (April):1–15
- IfM and IBM (2008) *Succeeding through service innovation: a service perspective for education, research, business and government*. University of Cambridge Institute for Manufacturing, Cambridge
- Jansen-Verbeke M (1986) Inner-city tourism: resources, tourists and promoters. *Ann Tourism Res* 13:79–100
- Johnson G, Scholes K, Whittington R (2005) *Exploring corporate strategy*, 7th edn. Financial Times Prentice Hall, Harlow

- Kavaratzis M (2007) City marketing: the past, the present and some unresolved issues. *Geography Compass* 1(3):695–712
- Kavaratzis M, Ashworth G (2005) City branding: an effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick? *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 96(5):506–514
- Kotler P, Asplund C, Rein I, Haider D (1999) *Marketing places Europe: attracting investments, industries, and visitors to European cities, communities, regions and nations*. Financial Times Prentice Hall, Harlow
- Kotler P, Armstrong G, Wong V, Saunders J (2008) *Principles of marketing*, 5th European edn. Financial Times Prentice Hall, Harlow
- Langeard E, Bateson J, Lovelock C, Eiglier P (1981) *Marketing of services: new insights from consumers and managers*. Report No. 81-104. Marketing Sciences Institute, Cambridge
- Lewicka M (2008) Place attachment, place identity, and place memory: restoring the forgotten city past. *J Environ Psychol* 28(3):209–231
- Lovelock CH (1991) *Services Marketing*, 2nd edn. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs
- Lusch RF, Vargo SL (2006) The service-dominant logic of marketing: dialog, debate and directions. M. E. Sharpe, Armonk
- Lusch RF, Vargo SL, Tanniru M (2010) Service, value networks and learning. *J Acad Mark Sci* 38 (1):19–31
- Maglio PP, Sporher J (2008) Fundamentals of service science. *J Acad Mark Sci* 36:18–20
- Musterd S, Murie A (2010) *Making competitive cities*. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester
- Paasi A (2002) Bounded spaces in the mobile world: deconstructing regional identity. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 93:137–148
- Paasi A (2010) Regions as social constructs, but who or what ‘constructs’ them? Agency in question. *Environ Plan A* 42:2296–2301
- Parkerson B, Saunders J (2005) City branding: can goods and services branding models be used to brand cities? *Place Branding* 1(3):242–264
- Porter ME (1998) Clusters and competition: new agendas for companies, governments and institutions. In: Porter ME (ed) *On competition*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston, pp 197–287
- Prahalad CK, Hamel G (1990) The core competence of the corporation. *Harvard Bus Rev* 68 (3):79–91
- Prahalad CK, Ramaswamy V (2000) Co-opting customer competence. *Harvard Bus Rev* 78 (1):79–87
- Pred AR (1984) Place as historically contingent process: structuration and the time-geography of becoming places. *Ann Assoc Am Geogr* 74(2):279–297
- Seamon D (1980) Body-subject, time-space routines and place-ballets. In: Buttimer A, Seamon A (eds) *The human experience of space and place*. Croom Helm, London, pp 148–165
- Sherry JF Jr (1998) *Servicescapes: the concept of place in contemporary markets*. NTC Business Books/American Marketing Association, Chicago
- Steadman RC (2003) Is it really just a social construction? The contribution of physical environment to sense of place. *Soc Nat Resour* 16:671–685
- Therkelsen A, Halkier H, Jensen OB (2010) Branding Aalborg: building community or selling place? In: Ashworth G, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 136–155
- Tuan Y-F (1974) *Topophilia: a study of environmental perception, attitudes, and values*. Columbia University Press, New York
- Turok I (2009) The distinctive city: pitfalls in the pursuit of differential advantage. *Environ Plan A* 41(1):13–30
- Van den Berg L, Braun E (1999) Urban competitiveness, marketing and the need for organising capacity. *Urban Stud* 36(5–6):987–999
- Venkatraman M, Nelson T (2008) From servicescape to consumptionscape: a photo-elicitation study of Starbucks in the New China. *J Int Bus Stud* 39:1010–1026

- Vargo SL (2009) Alternative logics for service science and service systems. Presentation at service systems workshop, University of Cambridge, March 20. <http://www.servicesystems.group.cam.ac.uk/serviceforum.html>. Accessed 23 April 2009
- Vargo SL, Lusch RF (2004) Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing. *J Mark* 68(1):1–17
- Vargo SL, Lusch RF (2008) Service-dominant logic: continuing the evolution. *J Acad Mark Sci* 36(1):1–10
- Warnaby G (2009) Towards a service-dominant place marketing logic. *Mark Theory* 9(4):403–423
- Warnaby G, Davies BJ (1997) Commentary: cities as service factories? Using the servuction system for marketing cities as shopping destinations. *Int J Retail Distrib Manage* 25(6):204–210
- Warnaby G, Bennison D, Davies BJ, Hughes H (2002) Marketing UK towns and cities as shopping destinations. *J Mark Manage* 18(9/10):877–904
- Warnaby G, Bennison D, Medway D (2010) Notions of materiality and linearity: the challenges of marketing the Hadrian's Wall place product. *Environ Plan A* 42(6):1365–1382
- Warnaby G, Bennison D, Medway D (2013) The management and marketing of archaeological sites: the case of Hadrian's Wall. In: Walker C, Carr N (eds) *Tourism and archaeology: sustainable meeting grounds*. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek, pp 111–126
- Warnaby G, Medway D (2013) What about the 'place' in place marketing? *Mark Theory* 13(3):345–363

# Chapter 4

## Rethinking Sense of Place: Sense of One and Sense of Many

Adriana Campelo

*A sense of one's place but also a sense of the place of others.*  
—(Bourdieu 1989, p. 19)

*We are shaped by the heritage and the island conditions;  
Shaped by the people and the landscape.*  
—(Chatham Islander)

**Abstract** The concepts of sense of place have been explored in the discipline of Geography since the late 19th and early 20th centuries (e.g. Friedrich Ratzel, Paul Vidal de La Blache) but it remains new in marketing management. Little research has been done in terms of understanding sense of place and its application to place branding within marketing. This chapter is based on an ethnographic research (Campelo et al. 2013) that investigates communal understanding of sense of place: the influential elements and how they are created and experienced by the local community. This chapter discusses the fundamental constructs that create a sense of place and how each one of the constructs of Time, Ancestry, Landscape and Community contributes to a communal habitus. It is advocated that understanding the sense of place is important in attempting to develop brands for places. The uniqueness of each place is its sense of place. Therefore, it is important to understand the meanings and signifiers that create the uniqueness of each place. A distinct form of place branding needs to include the local community, its habitus and its sense of place.

### Introduction

The development of a place brand may face the challenge of being inclusive and representative of all segments of a community. Operating in contrast to corporate strategies where brands help define values and identity, a sustainable place brand

---

A. Campelo (✉)  
Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK  
e-mail: adrianacampelosantana@gmail.com; campelosantana@cardiff.ac.uk

could be driven by the communal identity of the people that live there and their shared values. For this reason, a community-centred approach for branding a place requires an understanding of the constructs that people attach to their place. These constructs are perceived and expressed through a communal sense of place. Thus understanding sense of place is an important aspect in developing brands for places upon which this chapter focuses. The concepts of sense of place have been explored in the discipline of Geography since the late 19th and early 20th centuries (e.g. Friedrich Ratzel 1844–1904; Paul Vidal de La Blache 1845–1918) but it remains new in marketing management. Therefore research has been done in terms of understanding sense of place and its application to place branding within marketing.

To Tuan (1975) sense of place is a topophilia acquired by the experience of a place, constructed through the use of all our senses and developed through time. Relph (1976) considers that sense of place is based on relationships between people in a setting created through a variety of experiences. Both concepts embrace experiences of embodiment and passing of time constructed out of particular interactions and mutual articulations of social practices and understandings. Manzo (2003) reports that some authors argue that sense of place, place dependence and place identity are all forms of place attachment (as elaborated by Williams et al. 1992; Bricker and Kerstetter 2000) whilst, others consider sense of place to be broader than place attachment (e.g. Hummon 1992; Butz and Eyles 1997; Hay 1998).

The term derives from the Latin *genius loci*, which translates as the spirit of place, which in classical times was believed to be the guardian divinity and spirit of a locality from which unique communal characteristics would derive (Jackson 1994). The classical concept of *genius loci* is now translated as the atmosphere of place, being a more general interpretation of a spirit of place.

Campelo et al. (2013) understand sense of place by taking account of the *genius loci*, not as a divine guardian, but as a shared sense of the spirit of the place. This shared atmosphere includes place attachment, social context, community ties, and ancestral connections (as stressed by Low and Altman 1992; Hay 1998). The concept of place attachment is closely related to sense of place because sense of place implies sensory, emotional, cognitive and subjective experiences. The attachment to a place is an emotional bond that influences degrees of rootedness in it (Kyle and Chick 2007; Stedman 2003). It is through bonds between people and place, people and landscape and people and people in a place that meanings are constructed, developed and ascribed to physical features (as noted by Ryden 1993).

This chapter is based on ethnographic research conducted on the Chatham Islands of New Zealand (Campelo and Aitken 2011; Campelo et al. 2013). The research investigated communal understanding of sense of place: the influential elements and how they are created and experienced by the local community. In particular, this chapter aims to reflect on the fundamental constructs of a sense of place proposed by Campelo et al. (2013) and to discuss how each one of the constructs contributes to a communal habitus. The concept of habitus is based on Bourdieu's (2002) definition as "a system of dispositions, that is of permanent manners of being, seeing, acting and thinking, or a system of long-lasting (rather than permanent) schemes or schemata or structures of perception, conception and action" (p. 27).

Habitus is embedded in social exchanges as “a set of acquired characteristics which that are the product of social conditions” existing among a group or community (Bourdieu 2002, p. 29).

The concept of sense of place that is adopted here involves the set of communal and shared experiences in a place, which are based on the social relationships that exist in a place, which are influenced by history, culture, spatial location, landscape, economic factors and which are constructed through the use of our senses as argued by Tuan (1975) and Relph (1976).

## Encounters of Physical Dimension and Social Construction

The role of the physical environment may be an influential part of symbolic meanings attributed to place and landscape (Stedman 2003). Landscape and physical environment are not the same. Landscape is a cultural construct and meanings are assigned to them through interpretations that reflect social and cultural experiences. These meanings are products of shared behaviour and cultural processes interacting within a landscape. Indeed, the physical features of the environment may influence the *genius loci*. Characteristics of the environment such as shape, colour and quality of light, texture, slope, wind, sounds and scents engage our senses and the way we interact with places (Ryden 1993). People assign meanings to place through the process of living in it and/or experiencing it individually and collectively, both via contemporaneous interactions and perceived historical ties. Even individual experience has, almost always, some degree of relationship with others. In fact, meanings are also created through interaction with others, through shared experiences constructed within and between social narratives (Hay 1998; Kyle and Chick 2007) and many other ways.

Stokowski (2002) sees sense of place as socially constructed not only because it is mediated by others, but especially because it may be reproduced and sustained through contact with others. The interactions and narratives about the place confirm symbolic meanings and validate the discourses of people, update memories and rituals, and reinforce myths, fables, and traditions (Hay 1998; Ryden 1993; Stokowski 2002). To Stokowski (2002), language is of central importance in the formation of a sense of place and she emphasises that language maintains live narratives of the place that connect people, time and physical settings and thus, help to create sense of place. Through narratives, people share stories of the past, engage with experiences of the present, and make predictions for the future. The continuum of a place’s narratives perpetuates meanings through inter-generationally developing and reinforcing habitus (Kyle and Chick 2007).

The interactions that occur within physical settings have different degrees of tangibility. Geographical location, landscape, space, and people are more tangible, whilst social interactions and affective engagements are less so. Indeed, these subjects of interactions together create the atmosphere of the place. Although some interactions are intangible in terms of the emotional bonds that are formed, they are

very tangible when expressed by the customary ways things are done. The meaningful atmosphere of a place finds materiality through habitus, lifestyle, history and local culture. Because different people engage with the world in different ways, so that sense of place is changeable, fluid and unique.

The research of Campelo et al. (2013) aimed at understanding what social constructions determine sense of place and how it is created. Their findings revealed the constructs of time, ancestry, landscape, and community were determinants for the Chatham Islanders' sense of place. The four constructs identified were revealed through the voice of the community who recognised these elements as major influences on their *habitus*, lifestyle, personal and communal identity (Campelo et al. 2013). That time, ancestry, landscape and community can be found at any inhabited place is self-evident. However, what is important is that these constructs (Zaltman 2003) mean different things in different places.

## *Time*

The co-relation between time and space supports our experience of being in the world and being in a place. Time has social implications as societies and communities conceptualise it differently (Lévi-Strauss 1963; Bourdieu 1977; Moore 1986; Harvey 1990; Bender 2002). Heidegger (1924) examined time related to the past, present, and future in terms of the 'how' of being in the world. He studied the 'how'—in what manner and by what means—of time. In other words, the past of how (manner and meaning) influences the 'how' of being in the present. For the Chatham Islands, time is both related to the presence of the past and to the weather.

The influence of natural forces (e.g. weather and seasons, especially monsoons) might determine cycles and localised concepts of time. For example, on the Chatham Islands the notion of time is closely related to the weather, which is, in fact, the determinant for time frames. The weather determines arrival and departure times of the ship and the plane, and influences the decisions of which jobs (fishing or farming) can be done daily. It diverges from clock or calendar time, creating another frame work that does not follow the pattern of business days (Monday–Friday) and 9 a.m.–5 p.m. work time. A similar sense of time is described by Bender (2002) who considers time as “event-driven” (p. 107).

A particular sense of time was demonstrated by Bourdieu (1977) with his research in the North African Kabyle. Based on a chain of cultural processes, time in Kabyle was socially constructed individually and collectively. The construct of time-reckoning governed by cultural constraints is also discussed by Giddens (1985), who, following Bourdieu (1977), attach time to the “basic composition of day-to-day activities” (p. 284). What Giddens (1985) explains related to the Kabylean experience of time based on the agrarian calendar is very similar to the Chatham Islands weather dependency (Campelo et al. 2013).

The other aspect of time is about how the past influences contemporary lives and current habitus. According to Heidegger (1924), the past, is not a 'what', but a

‘how’. The past ‘how’ (the way of doing things) influences the ‘how’ in the present, and, by extension, the future ‘how’. The past influences social constructions, social reproductions and shared experiences in the present. These experiences evolve over time and are assimilated into the culture. They became ingrained in the way of doing things, forming an evolutionary *habitus*—“an open system of dispositions constantly subjected to experiences” (Siisiainen 2000, p. 15).

Time as a construct may be locally created and understood in relation to local cultural constraints (Bender 2002). This connection determines the frames of time, and, consequently, establishes the rhythm of a place. It might also influence a local calendar. For example, in Salvador—Brazil it is common knowledge that both business and school years commence in full after carnival. The carnival activities follow the Catholic calendar and lasts for 7 days until Ash Wednesday. Other cities in the same country will not have a similar timeframe. For place branding it is critical to acknowledge that time differs qualitatively among different societies (as noted by Harvey 1990). What is important is to understand how cultural constraints determine each permutation of a place’s sense of time (and vice versa), and to recognise how it impacts on the social reproductions of place.

The implications for place branding are related to how communal and collective practices of groups of people are linked to ways of understanding and doing things. Time (whether traditional, modern, slow-pace, busy) impacts the lifestyle of the place and its significance in the processes of social reproduction, communal and collective practices and behaviour. The understanding about how social order is established, including procedures with explicit and implicit rules, ought to be taken into consideration in developing place brands.

## ***Ancestry***

Ancestry is an important construct in terms of how genealogy, tradition and historical facts influence contemporary practices of everyday life. The construct of ancestry contains meanings and reasons for doing things in a particular way, which influences *habitus*. The *habitus* of a group reflects who they are and how they became who they are now. The recognition of ancestral influences in social reproduction reinforces ontological features of a society and community, and consequently, explains the reasons of doing things in particular ways. Ancestry is part of a place’s social capital and contains values, history, and culture. Bourdieu uses the term capital as a resource not only having an economic connotation, but “resources such as status, power, personal contacts and formal and informal forms of knowledge” (Hillier and Rooskby 2002, p. 8). He explains that “capital-in whatever form-insofar as it is represented, i.e., apprehended symbolically, in a relationship of knowledge or, more precisely, of misrecognition and recognition, presupposes the intervention of the *habitus*, as a socially constituted cognitive capacity” (Bourdieu 1986, p. 56).



Bourdieu explained social capital as “the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p. 119). Three elements are important for the definition of social capital: acquaintance, recognition and length of time.

Social capital is, by its nature, a resource derived from a collective phenomenon linked to a certain group (Bourdieu 1986; Siisiainen 2000). It gives what Bourdieu called a “credential” for belonging to that particular community. Ancestry is intrinsically related to the previous construct of time, in the sense of how the past influences the present (Heidegger 1992[1924]). In this way social practices reinforce aspects that defined social capital, such as acquaintance, recognition and length of time. Recognising the symbolic dimensions of capital, Bourdieu explains that “symbolic capital represents the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognised as legitimate” (Bourdieu 1989, p. 17). The symbolic capital helps to reveal the tradition, symbols and images that exist in the repertoire of a place’s social capital.

For place branding this seems to be related with the notion of brands as socio-cultural entities developed by Cayla and Arnould (2008). They propose that brands should be researched and managed as cultural forms by programmes that “are contextually embedded and culturally relative; are historically embedded; assume the (sometimes unpredictable) polycentricism of sources of brand meaning, and adopt a mythic or symbolic perspective on brand meaning notwithstanding the ostensible functionality of the product or service” (Cayla and Arnould 2008, p. 104).

## *Landscape*

Landscape is a meaningful social and cultural construction connecting and mediating relations between people and physical environments. It is through the landscape that people experience the place. The different types of physical environment such as urban/rural or coastal/mountainous, influence differently the engagement between people and the surrounding landscape (Sack 1988). It is important to note that this engagement is also influenced by social and cultural characteristics, and by ancestry and life-events (past and present). The engagement does not occur as a linear sequence of events on a continuum, but as an open-ended series of social interactions that constantly influence social reproductions. Consequently, this engagement will influence the development of ways of doing things, lifestyles and *habitus* (Hillier and Rooksby 2002).

While experience within places creates the meanings of landscapes, the materiality and physicality of landscape provides people with a shared pictorial reference of their experience. Ultimately, landscapes provide a face to places offering a communal visual background to our relationships and memories, working as a bonding agent (Cosgrove 2006). As a construct, it contains a set of meanings very

particular for a group of people who engage with that landscape. These meanings are created by socio-cultural attributes and emotional bonds. The importance for place branding is that it not only provides a better understanding about the *habitus* and ethos of the place, but also provides an image for places.

Scholarship on place branding acknowledges how landscape plays an important role in developing place brands. For example, according to Dooley and Bowie (2005), brand New Zealand developed around the New Zealand landscape and the recreational engagement between people in and with the natural environment. Mediating between people and place, landscape reflects the way we deal with our external, tangible and visible world (Massey 2006) and forms part of our on-going social exchange.

The interactions with landscape lead to practices that link culture to particular locations and create meanings that are both responses to the present and reflections of the past. It is important for marketers to understand the possible interactions between people and landscape, beyond its role in providing representative images.

## *Community*

The meaning ascribed to places depends on the interactions developed between people and the surrounding environment. In large measure, these interactions bring together social, natural, and cultural aspects in the human world. This phenomenon affects the engagement between individuals and the environment, and between individuals and individuals. The cultural and social relations create a communal sense of group, and a shared understanding of these relations provides the characteristics of a community. It is the shared values and meanings underlying people's attitudes and interactions towards each other that transform a group of people into a community. Collectively, people develop a capacity to produce and consume meanings of a place (Creswell 2004).

This construct holds the characteristics of social interactions and social reproductions of a community. It stands for the characteristics of the social capital, symbolic capital, and *habitus* of a place (Bourdieu 1977; Casey 1996). It is definitely influenced by the meanings portrayed by time, ancestry and landscape. It is important to note that beyond the set of meanings held by each construct that influences community, it is the 'how' of each set of meanings that matters the most. The 'how' of each construct applies in the process of development and insertion or inclusion of each one into the *habitus*. The 'how' of social reproductions engenders peculiarities of each community.

## Making Sense of *Habitus*

Places are brought alive by people. The set of meanings for each construct depends on how they are socially created, shared, and represented. An understanding of what the constructs are, how they work, and their cultural significance leads to knowledge of the *habitus* of the place.

The *habitus*—embodied history, internalised as a second nature and so forgotten as history—is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product. As such, it is what gives practices their relative autonomy with respect to external determinations of the immediate present. This autonomy is that of the past, enacting and acting, which, functioning as accumulated capital, produces history on the basis of history and so ensures the permanence in change that makes the individual agent a world within the world. (Bourdieu 1990, p. 56)

Hence, *habitus* is embedded in social exchanges as “a set of acquired characteristics, which are the product of social conditions” existing among a group or community (Bourdieu 2002, p. 29). The constructs of time, ancestry, landscape and community interact creating the *habitus*. *Habitus* entails a “sense of one’s place” but also a “sense of the place of others” (Bourdieu 1989, p. 19). Furthermore, as Hillier and Rooksby (2002) explain, “*habitus* is thus a sense of one’s (and others’) place and role in the world of one’s lived environment [...] *habitus* is an embodied, as well as cognitive, sense of place” (p. 5). These definitions reinforce the idea of interrelationships between the concepts of *habitus* and sense of place.

Sense of place, as the atmosphere of place, is the expression of an evolutionary *habitus* created out of the combination of social reproductions interacting within a physical setting. The subjects of these interactions have different degrees of tangibility and vary in terms of importance. However, together these subjects create the spirit of the place, more intangible in terms of emotional bonds and sensory perceptions, but very tangible when expressed in the ways of doing things.

## Sensing Forward

Understanding the sense of place is important in attempting to develop brands for places. As stressed by Campelo et al. (2013), it is not the presence of the four constructs that shape the sense of place, but the significance, the meanings, the ‘how’ of each construct that determines the sense of place. The uniqueness of each place is its sense of place. Therefore, it is important to understand the meanings and signifiers that create the uniqueness of each place.

The development of brands for places is complex because it requires the recognition from local people, acknowledgement of local cultural values and idiosyncrasies, and in my opinion, an understanding of communal sense of place. A distinct form of place branding needs to include the local community, its *habitus* and its sense of place.

As proposed by Campelo et al. (2013) the relationship between the elements and constructs discussed, provides insight into how each construct influences *habitus*, and how the interactions between the four constructs create a communal and shared local sense of place. Avenues for future research might be to investigate the connections between the environmental aesthetics of places and sense of place. Following Hepburn, a pioneer in environmental aesthetics, “in exploring the logic of sense of place, the emphasis can be on the emotive, on the cognitive, on ‘aesthetically knowing’ or ‘grasping’ a place. Sense of place as (aesthetically) knowing a place” (1999, p. 7).

## References

- Bender B (2002) Time and landscape. *Curr Anthropol* 43(S4):S103–S112
- Bourdieu P (1977) Outline of a theory of practice. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Bourdieu P (1986) The forms of capital. In: Richardson J (ed) Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education. Greenwood Press, New York, pp 241–258
- Bourdieu P (1989) Social space and symbolic power. *Sociol Theory* 7(1):14–25
- Bourdieu P (1990) The logic of practice. Stanford University Press, Stanford
- Bourdieu P (2002) *Habitus*. In: Hillier J, Rooksby E (eds) *Habitus: a sense of place*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp 27–34
- Bourdieu P, Wacquant L (1992) *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago
- Bricker KS, Kerstetter DL (2000) Level of specialization and place attachment: an exploratory study of whitewater recreationists. *Leisure sci* 22(4):233–257
- Butz D, Eyles J (1997) Reconceptualizing senses of place: social relations, ideology and ecology. *Geogr Ann B Hum Geogr* 79(1):1–25
- Campelo A, Aitken R (2011) Travelling to the past: narratives of place and national identity on the Chatham Islands. In: Frew E, White L (eds) *Tourism and national identities: an international perspective*. Contemporary Geographies of Leisure, Tourism and Mobility Abingdon: Routledge, pp 190–201
- Campelo A, Aitken R, Thyne M, Gnoth J (2013) Sense of place: the importance for destination branding. *J Travel Res* (published online 19 July 2013). doi:[10.1177/0047287513496474](https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287513496474)
- Casey ES (1996) How to get from space to place in a fairly short stretch of time: phenomenological prolegomena. In: Feld S, Basso K (eds) *Senses of place*. School of American Research Press, Santa Fe, pp 13–52
- Cayla J, Arnould EJ (2008) A cultural approach to branding in the global marketplace. *J Int Mark* 16(4):86–112
- Cosgrove D (2006) Modernity, community and the landscape idea. *J Mater Cult* 11(1–2):49–66
- Dooley G, Bowie D (2005) Place brand architecture: strategic management of the brand portfolio. *Place Brand Public Dipl* 1(4):402–419
- Giddens A (1985) *A contemporary critique of historical materialism: the nation-state and violence*. T.J. Press, Padstow
- Harvey D (1990) Between space and time: reflections on the geographical imagination. *Ann Assoc Am Geogr* 80(3):418–434
- Hay R (1998) Sense of place in developmental context. *J Environ Psychol* 18(1):5–29
- Heidegger M (1992[1924]) *The concept of time*. Blackwell, Oxford
- Hepburn R (1999) *Knowing (aesthetically) where I am*. University of Lancaster, Department of Philosophy, Lancaster

- Hillier J, Rooksby E (2002) Introduction. In: Hillier J, Rooksby E (eds) *Habitus: a sense of place*. Aldershot, pp 3–25
- Hummon DM (1992) Community attachment: local sentiment and sense of place. In: Altman I, Low S (eds) *Place attachment*. Plenum, New York, pp 253–278
- Jackson JB (1994) *A sense of place, a sense of time*. Yale University Press, New Haven
- Kyle G, Chick G (2007) The social construction of a sense of place. *Leisure Sci* 29(3):209–225
- Lévi-Strauss C (1963) *Structural anthropology*. Basic Books, New York
- Low S, Altman I (1992) Place attachment: a conceptual inquiry. In: Altman I, Low S (eds) *Place attachment*. Plenum, New York
- Manzo LC (2003) Beyond house and haven: toward a revisioning of emotional relationships with places. *J Environ Psychol* 23(1):47–61
- Massey D (2006) Landscape as a provocation: reflections on moving mountains. *J Mater Culture* 11(1–2):33–48
- Moore B (1986) *Space, text and gender*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Rolph E (1976) *Place and placelessness*. Pion, London
- Ryden KC (1993) *Mapping the invisible landscape: folklore, writing, and the sense of place*. University of Iowa Press, Iowa City
- Sack RD (1988) The consumer's world: place as context. *Ann Assoc Am Geogr* 78(4):642–664
- Siisiainen M (2000) Two concepts of social capital: Bourdieu Vs. Putnam. In: ISTR fourth international conference: the third sector: for what and for whom? Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, 5–8 July 2000
- Stedman RC (2003) Is it really just a social construction? The contribution of the physical environment to sense of place. *Soc Nat Resour* 16(8):671
- Stokowski PA (2002) Languages of place and discourses of power: constructing new senses of place. *J Leisure Res* 34(4):368
- Tuan Y-F (1975) Place: an experiential perspective. *Geogr Rev* 65(2):151–165
- Williams DR, Patterson ME, Roggenbuck JW, Watson AE (1992) Beyond the commodity metaphor: examining emotional and symbolic attachment to place. *Leisure Sci: Interdiscipl J* 14(1):29–46
- Zaltman G (2003) *How customers think: essential insights into the mind of the market*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston

# Chapter 5

## Rethinking Place Identities

Greg Kerr and Jessica Oliver

**Abstract** This chapter reconfirms the need for place marketing and place branding and reminds of the markets available to places. We point out the decision to place purchase, that is, to visit, invest or locate, is a high involvement one and guided by the Rossiter-Percy Grid, advertising messages must be believed as being true by recipients if there is to be a likelihood of purchase. Subject to the purchase motivation, the place benefits must either offer a solution to a problem or offer some form of enjoyment or even social approval. We argue that revealing and selecting a place identity should be at the base of place branding and marketing strategies. In doing so, a brand strategy is more representative of the characteristics of the place and will better align place advertising with other channels of place communication. In addition to being guided by relevant advertising and communication frameworks, we draw upon our research and relevant literature to support our arguments. The objective of our chapter is to contribute to the understanding of place identity and its role in effective place marketing and place branding strategies.

### Introduction

Place marketing has come to the fore in recent years with an increase in academic work as well as practitioner interest and application. Notwithstanding earlier works relating to selling and promoting places, Kotler et al. (1993) reinforced the need for a marketing approach. They identified the markets for places as being *new*

---

G. Kerr (✉)

Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong in Dubai, Blocks 5, 14 & 15,  
Dubai Knowledge Village, P.O. Box 20183, Dubai, UAE  
e-mail: GregKerr@uowdubai.ac.ae

J. Oliver

Faculty of Business, University of Wollongong, Northfields Ave,  
Wollongong, NSW 2522, Australia  
e-mail: jlb209@uowmail.edu.au

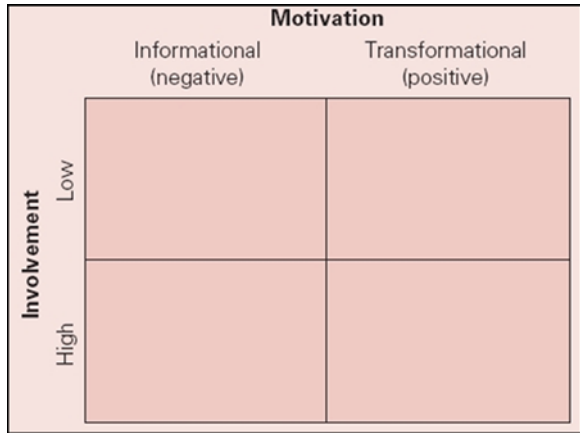
*residents, corporate headquarters, tourists and conventioners, investors and exporters.* Reasons for a marketing approach include the existence of a supply–demand relationship between a place and its markets, the ability to segment these markets, the competition between places to appeal to these markets and also the increasing mobility or ‘brand switching’ by place purchasers. With regard to brands, a place name complies with earlier definitions as the name *identifies* and *differentiates* (American Marketing Association 2005). Marketing textbooks include the brand as part of the *actual product* when discussing the levels of product (core, actual and augmented). Notwithstanding, the meaning, importance and management of brands has advanced over the past decade, to the extent that an organisation can adopt a *brand orientation* which is an “inside-out, identity-driven approach that sees brands as a hub for an organisation and its strategy” (Urde et al. 2011, p. 15). In this regard, many of the concepts used in place marketing and place branding (e.g. *brand, brand orientation, identity, image, attachment* and *loyalty*) have prior use in other domains. Place researchers have used these concepts and related theories to guide research. In this work, we take a similar approach, with the aim of making a contribution to the relevance and application of place identity to place branding. To do this, we use the Rossiter-Percy Grid (Rossiter and Percy 1997) which was developed to guide advertising strategies. Some of our earlier research findings together with current literature are drawn upon to support our arguments. Central to our approach is the claim places are sellers seeking to attract and retain place customers who include tourists, investors and new residents. To effectively market and brand-manage a place, we point out that an understanding of what place consumers are buying, and as well, the type of buying-decision is essential. We argue it is *place identity* that is being offered by a place and can represent the value purchased by ‘place customers’.

## Purchasing Places

As with other types of brands, place brands have the ability to communicate functional and symbolic meanings (Hankinson and Cowking 1995). Ideally, these meanings should relate to benefits, that is, the value offered. This value may provide a motivation to buy, pay a price premium, and be more loyal—all contributing to brand equity. With a focus on meaning, we commence our discussion by considering the role of advertising in the branding of places and in doing so, proceed to show the importance of place identity.

It should be remembered that advertising has the objective of motivating a consumer to *trial* or *rebuy*. Advertisements targeting place markets might encourage people to *try* the place (e.g. for a tourist—to visit; for and investor—to invest; for a new resident—to locate). *Rebuy*, depending on the nature of the market includes decisions to revisit, reinvest or remain. Related to the rebuy of places,

**Fig. 5.1** Brand attitude strategy quadrants from Rossiter-Percy Grid. *Source* Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliot (2012)



loyalty is important. Place loyalty and related concepts *place attachment* and *place satisfaction* have been given attention by geographers (e.g. Brown and Raymond 2007), environmental psychologists (e.g. Hidalgo and Hernandez 2001) and place marketers (e.g. Zenker et al. 2013; Zenker and Rütter 2014).

To explain the place purchase decision (either trial or rebuy), we introduce the Rossiter-Percy Grid (Rossiter and Percy 1997), shown as Fig. 5.1.

The Grid is a 2 × 2 attitude framework, with the vertical axis being involvement, that is, ‘perceived decision risk’. The risk may be financial, functional, psychological or social and is dichotomised as being ‘high’ or ‘low’. The *efforts* individuals will make to reduce the likelihood of making a wrong decision can be used to indicate if a decision is high risk or low risk. The classification as to whether a decision is high or low risk for an individual is determined primarily through qualitative interviews (Rossiter et al. 2000). Referring to the Grid, and admittedly without the benefit of empirical data, we suggest the decision to *purchase a place* (visit, invest, locate) is a high involvement one as for most it involves financial, functional, and in some cases psychological and social risks. Conversely, low involvement decisions imply that the risk of making the wrong decision is minor; not an expected attitude when an individual is deciding to place purchase.

As shown in the horizontal axis of the Grid, Rossiter and Percy distinguish between negative and positive motivations, explaining the former are not ‘bad’ per se, but are negatively orientated with possible communication objectives being *problem–solution*, *problem-avoidance* or *incomplete–satisfaction* (Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliot 2012, p. 185). In contrast, positive motivations to buy are aligned to *enjoyment* and *social approval*. We contest that conspicuous consumption (Veblen [1899] 1931, p. 36), status consumption (O’Cass and McEwen 2004, p. 34) and cool consumption (Hebdige and Potter 2008) have relevance to positive motivations. Fashion is also relevant (Atik and Firat 2013) and has been contextualised to places (Lewis et al. 2013).



Regarding the *purchase of place*, two points are made. First and intuitively, potential purchasers must have an *awareness* of the place (the brand) and second have a *positive attitude* (not to be confused with positive motivation) towards the place for a purchase to be likely. The positive attitude must be based upon a benefit. We argue this benefit needs to exist within a place's identity, and as we point out further on, should not be 'made-up', put into a slogan, tag-line and/or jingle and termed 'the brand'. We draw on the high-involvement decisions in the Rossiter-Percy Grid to defend this stance.

As pointed out, the decision to purchase a place may be based on positive or negative motivations. For negative motivation, people who leave war affected or economically depressed places, for example, might be addressing a *problem—solution* motive. People who relocate to give their children a better education or more career opportunities would be an example of *problem-avoidance* motive, whereas people looking for a better lifestyle are addressing *incomplete satisfaction*. In contrast, people may decide to purchase a place for positive motivations, that is, to enjoy the place (*sensory gratification*) or to impress others (*social approval*). For further discussion on purchasing motivations, see Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliot (2012, p. 185).

While Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliot (2012) emphasise different communication strategies are necessary for negative motivations (being informational strategies) and positive motivations (being transformational strategies), in both cases, there are common requirements which we argue are relevant to places. If the place purchase decision is based on *negative motivations*, then information must be provided in a manner to convince the target audience. This includes understanding current attitudes. If people have a negative attitude, (not negative motivation) even if it is outdated or wrong, they are not likely to buy. For this reason, place marketers need to know what attitudes are held by potential place purchasers and those who influence their decision. In one of our consultancies, we addressed this issue by interviewing external opinion leaders from industry sectors relevant to the place (Baxter et al. 2012). It is also necessary to establish what benefits are important to potential place purchasers.

If the place purchase decision is based on positive motivations, then aligned with the Rossiter-Percy Grid, not only must the message *be accepted as true*, the target audience must "personally identify with the brand and the benefits portrayed" (Percy and Rosenbaum-Elliot 2012, p. 193)—that is, the place will satisfy sensory gratification and/or social approval. Pivotal to our argument on place identity, potential purchasers in high involvement decisions must accept the *benefits communicated as being true*—an important point when considering the relevance of place identity to place marketing and place branding.

This section has established the type of decision involved in purchasing a place. Advertising of course is only one form of communication and we hold that other forms of communication should deliver a consistent message about a brand (place or other). For example, Ashworth (2009, p. 1) explains people "make sense of place by constructing their own understandings of them in their minds through contact

points”. The contact points include: accumulated personal experiences; forms of representation such as films, novels and media reports; and deliberate policy interventions related to planning and urban design.

## Communication

As mentioned at the outset, those involved in place marketing and place branding, have used established, yet relevant, concepts and theories to guide their research usually with the benefits and limitations of doing so being acknowledged. Studies in communications are a case in point.

Similarities exist between Kavaratzis’s (2004) city image communication model and Balmer and Gray’s (1999) model of the corporate identity-corporate communications process. Kavaratzis (2004) explains the content and result of place communications is image formation, whereas Balmer and Gray (1999) posit identity as the content of brand communications resulting in corporate images and reputation. We argue place identity is the content and result of place communications. As content, identity is communicated formally and informally. Kavaratzis’ (2004) model includes *landscape, infrastructure, government structure, and internal stakeholder behaviours* as contributing to primary communication. Similar to Balmer and Gray’s model, these characteristics refer to stakeholder’s first hand experiences with places (or organisations). Secondary or formal communications include public relations, visual identity systems and promotions and advertising; the latter being the focus of the Rossiter-Percy Grid discussed earlier. Finally, tertiary communication includes word-of-mouth (between internal-to-internal stakeholders and internal-to-external stakeholders), media and competitors’ communication. In the context of tourism Kerr et al. (2012) refer to the role and potential of ‘bragging rights’, a point which is likely to have relevance to other place markets. Bearing in mind that residents are producers of the place product, place identity is also the *result* of communication. As the primary, secondary and tertiary communications are interpreted by residents they inherently have influence on place product itself. We extend this point in the following section.

We now return to the point raised in the previous section about the requirement of brand benefits advertised (formal communication) being accepted as true by the potential purchaser in high involvement decisions (regardless of the motivation). In doing so, we also point out the futility of advertising a place message if it is not consistent with other forms of communication. A so-called brand tagline could be communicated by way of an advertisement but if the claim is not communicated through primary and tertiary sources, then it is unlikely this will be *accepted as true* by a potential place purchaser. Tertiary word of mouth communications by existing place purchasers to potential ones is a case in point. For this reason an *identity-driven approach* to place marketing and place branding is essential. We now explain place identity.

## Place Identity

Place identity is a concept used in other disciplines including environmental psychology and geography. With regard to corporations, identity describes ‘who we are as an organisation’ (Brown et al. 2006, p. 102). Brown et al. (2006) explain the identity holders not only take part in the creation of organisational identity but are also shaped by it. The organisational member is a *producer* and *consumer* of organisational identity. We refer to the Structural Model of Identification in which Scott et al. (1998) build upon Giddens’ (1984) Structural Model to support the duality of identity and identification. They explain identification both a process of attachment and a product of that process. Identification relates to emerging identities and has relevance to the identity-driven approach we subscribe to in place branding. Identity and the communication of that identity by individuals express belongingness, that is, attachment, to various collectives. Scott et al. (1998) remind of the social costs and rewards of maintaining various identities; a point we argue relates to the high involvement decision to place purchase which is in effect a process of identification. The place purchaser seeks a place which offers an alignment with their perceived or desired identity. The decision to visit, invest or relocate in a place by some individuals (or organisations) is an example of identification that contributes to an emerging identity. The impact of the Creative Class (Florida 2002) is an example of the identification process and a consequent emerging identity. Some of the characteristics of place identity are now provided.

### *Residents Are the Identity-Holders*

Similar to the organisation and its employees, residents are the identity holders of a place. Residents have views about *who (or what) we are as a place*. As explained in more detail further on, ideally the identities held by residents need to be considered within place branding strategies. A place brand strategy that is far removed from its place identity (what we are) will not likely be accepted as *true* by residents let alone the external recipients of advertising communications.

### *Place Identity Is Pluralistic*

The argument for multiple identities is established in the literature regarding individuals (Barker and Galasinski 2001), organisations (Balmer and Greyser 2003) and places (Baxter et al. 2013). With regard to nations, de Cillia et al. (1999, p. 200) conclude “there is no such thing as the one and only national identity”. Hall (2003, p. 194) explains these multiple identities occur from “positive and negative (place)

evaluations". The uniqueness and distinctiveness of a place is subjective to those who live there and is relative to their experiences. The place identities (identity-set) may include complimentary or uncomplimentary identities; not only towards each other, but even toward adopted marketing and brand strategies.

### *Place Identity Is Fluid*

As a social and relational concept, place identities are inherently fluid and subject to change (Minca 2005; Mueller and Schade 2012). It is the socially derived expectations of a setting that influences cognitions, and hopefully reflects the intended value and significance of the setting to the individual (Stokols and Shumaker 1981; Wynveen et al. 2012). Altman and Low (1992, p. 7) describe places as "repositories and contexts within which interpersonal, community, and cultural relationships occur". Although place identities are created through individual interpretations of place, they are constrained to the identity-holder's cultural environment. We concur with Kalandides (2011) and Kavaraztis and Hatch (2013) in that the fluidity of place identities implies they are a process not merely an outcome of research. It is because place identities are fluid and influenced by sources within and outside the place, that constant monitoring and management of place identities is important.

### *Place Identity Is Co-produced*

Co-production of place identity refers to the meaning-making process between residents and place, that is, residents are producers and consumers of identity. We subscribe that the multiples of place identity are the result of constant meaning-making processes between people and the place they live. Place identities are residents' interpretation of place elements, such as culture, the natural and built environment and influenced by sources within and outside the place. Place as distinct from space requires human interaction. To illustrate, an outdoor basketball court in its simplest form is just a slab of concrete. As people utilise the space it becomes a place of sport and socialisation. Place identities are formed through communicative processes, between place and people, as well as between people.

Place identities are social and exist "in the experience, eye, mind, and intention of the beholder as much as in the physical appearance of the city or landscape" (Relph 1976, p. 5). From a city planner's perspective of place, Hague (2005, p. 7) describes environmental cognitions as the process of filtering "feelings, meanings, experiences, memories and actions" through social structures. In addition, Wynveen et al. (2012) propose the place meaning-making process is influenced by "the setting, the individual, and the individual's social worlds" (Wynveen et al. 2012, p. 287). Therefore, the very essence of place is social. In their place branding model, Aitken and Campelo (2011) emphasise co-creation of meaning. Central to

this model is the need to understand the shared identities within place. Understanding shared identities and how they represent daily life is crucial to creating an authentic place brand.

After reminding of the need for place marketing and place branding, we have addressed the nature of the place purchase decision, the types of communicative process for places followed by an explanation of place identity. We now proceed to expand upon the relationship between place identity and place brand management by drawing upon our own research work and relevant literature.

### Place Identity and Place Brand Management

We have pointed out in an earlier work (Baxter et al. 2013) of the misunderstandings which exist between place identities and place brand identity. Place identity is pluralistic and fluid. Differently, place brand identity is selected and designed and more formally communicated. Figure 5.2 which relates to a study of the City of Wollongong, Australia (Baxter 2011) is used to explain this point.

Semi-structured interviews with a purposefully selected sample of Wollongong residents were used to reveal Wollongong’s identities. The objective was to reveal the ‘population of identities’ which are shown as ‘A’ in Fig. 5.2. The open arrow in

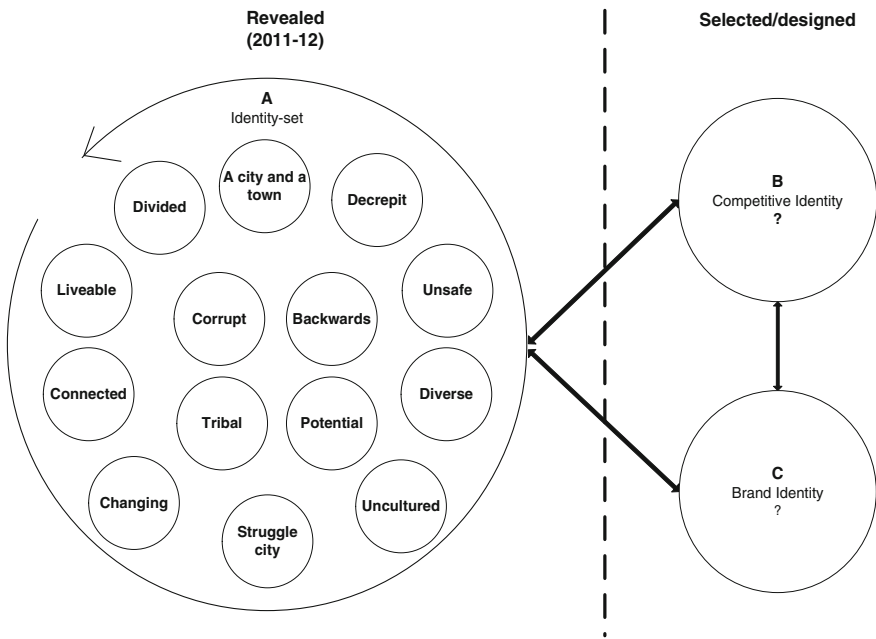


Fig. 5.2 Relationship between place identities, competitive place identity, and place brand identity. Source Adapted from Baxter et al. (2013)

'A' is to suggest the fluidity of place identity. Not dissimilar to other places which have developed and implemented a brand strategy, Wollongong some 10 years prior to our study had selected and designed the tagline of 'city of innovation' as its competitive identity and brand identity. Interestingly, despite millions of dollars in promotion and a timeframe of a decade, the theme of innovation was not apparent in the revealed identities, raising some questions as to the appropriateness and effectiveness of the brand strategy. This brings us to the point as to the role of place branding in identity management. For instance, to argue the effectiveness of a place brand strategy, a longitudinal study of identities may show changes in identity over time and even emerging identities as discussed earlier; of course we acknowledge place identities are influenced by more than a brand strategy.

With the benefit of hindsight and the advantage of acquiring a better understanding of the nature of place identity and place branding, our recommendation is to select a competitive identity from the revealed identity set 'A' and link this with a designed brand identity. We point out that the *designed* identities ('B' and 'C' in Fig. 5.2) represent the strategic choices, in this case, led by the local council.

The discussion regarding Fig. 5.2 brings us back to the main argument in this chapter regarding the high involvement place purchase decision to visit, invest, or relocate. The Rossiter-Percy Grid insists advertising messages need to be accepted as being true in the minds of the place purchaser. We extend this argument to include other forms of place communication identified by Kavaratzis (2004) in particular word of mouth from current place purchasers. Referring once more to Fig. 5.2, the 'city of innovation' brand strategy and associated advertising campaign, we question how such communication would motivate the place purchase decision. Does it aid a problem-solution decision? Would it contribute to sensory gratification or social approval? Is the message accepted as being true?

From the findings of our research, as shown in Fig. 5.2, the identities of 'potential' 'changing' and 'connected' are examples of identities which could be selected as competitive identities and form the basis of a brand strategy. These identities could be benefits in an advertising message which have a likelihood of being accepted as being true by prospective place purchasers. Identities may communicate different benefits to different markets. For instance, 'potential' and 'changing' may have appeal to investors and new residents but less so for tourists. This does raise the issue as to whether one selected and designed brand identity can be effective in multiple markets. Kerr and Balakrishnan (2011) refer to this issues in their discussion of place brand architecture. In addition to external relationships, a selected brand strategy may isolate and even alienate some internal stakeholder groups. Regardless of the place brand strategy deployed, the link to identities should not be overlooked.

Our approach to place branding is identity-driven. Supporting this Kavaratzis and Hatch (2013) refer to identity selection as producing a brand-identity statement, which should be negotiated between stakeholders through participatory methods. Using the terminology of Kavaratzis and Hatch's (2013) identity based place brand model, the objective here is to *reflect* and *express* place identities in communications.

## Conclusion

Based on the need to market places, we argue that if the objective is to attract and retain desired place market segments, the place purchase decision needs to be understood. Central to our argument is the high involvement nature of the place purchase decision. What is advertised must be accepted as true—a difficult task if the message is not aligned in some way to place identity. Further and ideally, primary, secondary and tertiary communications should be aligned, remembering that residents in particular contribute to and deliver the brand promise. The place purchase decision is more likely to occur if the messages are consistent and accepted as true by potential purchasers. To achieve this, we subscribe to the view that an identity-driven approach is fundamental. Not only is a brand promise based on a complimentary identity likely to be believable, it has the potential to over-ride or even terminate some negative identities. We subscribe to the need for a better understanding of identity formation which in turn aids identity management through marketing and branding strategies. The development of new theory which will have both academic and practitioner relevance is our priority.

## References

- Aitken R, Campelo A (2011) The four Rs of place branding. *J Mark Manage* 27(9–10):913–933
- Altman I, Low SM (eds) (1992) *Place attachment*. Plenum Press, New York
- American Marketing Association (2005) Dictionary of marketing terms. <http://www.marketingpower.com/mg-dictionary-view329.php?> Accessed 20 June 2007
- Ashworth G (2009) The instruments of place branding: how is it done? *Eur Spat Res Policy* 16 (1):22
- Atik D, Firat AF (2013) Fashion creation and diffusion: the Institution of Marketing. *J Mark Manage* 29(7–8):836–860
- Balmer J, Greyser S (2003) *Revealing the corporation*. Routledge, London
- Balmer JMT, Gray ER (1999) Corporate identity and corporate communications: creating a competitive advantage. *Corp Commun Int J* 4(4):171–177. doi:10.1108/eum000000007299
- Barker C, Galasinski D (2001) *Cultural studies and discourse analysis: a dialogue on language and identity*. Sage Publications, London
- Baxter J (2011) A systemic functional approach to place identity: a case study of the city of Wollongong. Masters by research masters by research thesis, University of Wollongong, Wollongong. <http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4371&context=theses>
- Baxter J, Kerr G, Clarke R (2013) Brand orientation and the voices from within. *J Mark Manage* 29(9–10):1079–1098. doi:10.1080/0267257x.2013.803145
- Baxter J, Kerr G, Clarke RJ (2012) *Identities and images of Wollongong*. Wollongong City Council, Wollongong
- Brown G, Raymond C (2007) The relationship between place attachment and landscape values: toward mapping place attachment. *Appl Geogr* 27(2):89–111
- Brown T, Dacin P, Pratt M, Whetten D (2006) Identity, intended image, construed image, and reputation: an interdisciplinary framework and suggested terminology. *Acad Mark Sci J* 34 (2):99

- de Cillia R, Reisigl M, Wodak R (1999) The discursive construction of national identities. *Discourse Soc* 10(2):149–173
- Florida R (2002) *The rise of the creative class*. Basic Books, New York
- Giddens A (1984) *The constitution of society*. University of California Press, Berkeley
- Hague C (2005) Planning and place identity. In: Hague C, Jenkins P (eds) *Place identity, participation and planning*. Routledge, Oxfordshire, pp 3–19
- Hall S (2003) *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices*. Open University, Sage
- Hankinson G, Cowking P (1995) What do you really mean by a brand? *J Brand Manage* 3(1):43–50
- Hebdige D, Potter A (2008) A critical reframing of subcultural cool and consumption. *Eur Adv Consum Res* 8:527–528
- Hidalgo MdC, Hernandez B (2001) Place attachment: conceptual and empirical questions. *J Environ Psychol* 21(3): 273–281
- Kalandides A (2011) The problem with spatial identity: revisiting the “sense of place”. *J Place Manage Dev* 4(1):28–39
- Kavaratzis M (2004) From city marketing to city branding: towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Brand* 1(1):58–73
- Kavaratzis M, Hatch MJ (2013) The dynamics of place brands an identity-based approach to place branding theory. *J Marketing Theory* 13(1):69–86
- Kerr G, Balakrishnan M (2011) Challenges in managing place brands. *J Place Brand Public Dipl* 8(1):6–16
- Kerr G, Lewis C, Burgess L (2012) Bragging rights and destination marketing: a tourism bragging rights model. *J Hosp Tour Manage* 19(1):7–14. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/jht.2012.17>
- Kotler P, Haider D, Rein I (1993) *Marketing places: attracting investment, industry, and tourism to cities, states, and nations*. Free Press, New York
- Lewis C, Kerr G, Burgess L (2013) A critical assessment of the role of fashion in influencing the travel decision and destination choice. *Int J Tour Policy* 5(1/2):4–18
- Minca C (2005) Bellagio and beyond. In: Cartier C, Lew A (eds) *Seductions of place: geographical perspectives on globalization and touristed landscapes*. Routledge, Abingdon, pp 103–120
- Mueller A, Schade M (2012) Symbols and place identity, a semiotic approach to internal place branding—case study Bremen (Germany). *J Place Manage Dev* 5(1):81–92
- O’Cass A, McEwen H (2004) Exploring consumer status and conspicuous consumption. *J Consum Behav* 4(1):25–39
- Percy L, Rosenbaum-Elliott R (2012) *Strategic advertising management*, 4th edn. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Relph E (1976) *Place and placelessness*. Pion, London
- Rossiter J, Donovan R, Jones S (2000) Applying the Rossiter-Percy model to social marketing communications. Paper presented at the ANZMAC 2000, Gold Coast, Australia
- Rossiter J, Percy L (1997) *Advertising communication and promotion management*, 2nd edn. McGraw-Hill, New York
- Scott C, Corman S, Cheney G (1998) Development of a structural model of identification in the organisation. *Commun Theory* 8(3):298–336
- Stokols D, Shumaker SA (1981) People and places: a transactional view of settings. In: Harvey J (ed) *Cognition, social behaviour and the environment*. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, pp 441–488
- Urde M, Baumgarth C, Merrilees B (2011) Brand orientation and market orientation—from alternatives to synergy. *J Bus Res* 66(1):13–20
- Veblen T ([1899] 1931) *The theory of the leisure class: an Economic Study of Institutions*. The Viking Press, Inc., New York
- Wynveen CJ, Kyle GT, Sutton SG (2012) Natural area visitors’ place meaning and place attachment ascribed to a marine setting. *J Environ Psychol* 32(4):287–296. doi:[10.1016/j.jenvp.2012.05.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2012.05.001)



- Zenker S, Petersen S, Aholt A (2013) The citizen satisfaction index (CSI): evidence for a four basic factor model in a German sample. *Cities* 31(0):156–164. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2012.02.006>
- Zenker S, Rütter N (2014) Is satisfaction the key? The role of citizen satisfaction, place attachment and place brand attitude on positive citizenship behavior. *Cities* 38(0):11–17. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2013.12.009>

# Chapter 6

## Rethinking Virtual and Online Place Branding

Robert Govers

**Abstract** This chapter discusses the impact technology and the internet have had on the reputations of places, how online tools are used in place branding and what the future might look like. The discussion is interspersed with case studies such as Queensland’s Best Job in the World campaign, the @Sweden Twitter rotation account, the Province of Limburg, Netherlands, and social media analysis on Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Qatar. It is concluded that because of the importance of personal experience and word-of-mouth in place marketing, information technologies and social media will soon replace mainstream media advertising as the main tool for ‘branding’. Today, however, technology is still too often used in place branding as an end in itself, in order to reflect commoditised virtual brand values of modernity, openness and innovation, as opposed to being a tool to reflect meaningful, distinctive, relevant and real brand values through substance and symbolic actions.

### Introduction

Considering that the ‘discipline of place branding’ has been around for over a decade (the journal of *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* celebrates its tenth anniversary in 2014), it is probably the right time to rethink the concept. Hence, this book is timely and in light of today’s pervasive media and omnipresent internet and mobile technology, a chapter on virtual and online place branding should not be missing. On the other hand, it seems perhaps odd to cover this topic in a separate chapter and not throughout or at the start of the book, because, one could pose the question whether not all place branding is to a certain extent virtual. Possibly, this distinction between real and virtual could be found at the core of a lot of the confusion about place branding. This requires explanation before embarking on the

---

R. Govers (✉)  
Antwerp, Belgium  
e-mail: rgovers@rgovers.com

discussion about the ways in which online developments are moulding place branding and how they might impact it in the future.

Place brands *are* virtual phenomena. A brand intends to create unique mental associations in the minds of consumers linking it to a name, symbol or other feature of identification. In other words, a brand intends to create a means for consumers to recognise a product, service, organisation or other entity (such as a place), to create name awareness for that entity, to subsequently build a positive image in the minds of consumers and, ultimately, loyalty (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000). Hence, brands intend to align projected and perceived images, from supply to demand, from reality to perception (Gallarza et al. 2002). However, unlike corporate, product or service brands, the physical form of which we encounter daily in retail environments or through product experience, place brands are largely virtual. The actual experience of place is the prerequisite of locals and those, relatively few, international travellers that visit a certain place (with possibly the exception of a few global cities that are visited by many).

For the vast majority of people, the brand images of most places are almost completely virtual and hence it is not surprising that word-of-mouth has been known to be one of the most important sources of information for people to form images of places (Beerli and Martin 2004; Sirakaya and Woodside 2005). By extension, the increasing importance of social media is hardly surprising (Xiang and Gretzel 2010). It therefore seems that the Internet has revolutionised this domain and will increasingly dominate place branding as it allows many new ways in which to virtually enhance both the reality and representation of place, both through the ‘democracy’ of the net and the sharing of opinions, reviews, ideas, information and insights from peers.

As such, it will make advertising, on which many place branding campaigns seem to waste resources, even less effective (Govers et al. 2007; Hildreth 2010). While advertising pushes messages onto an unwilling audience, search and social media engagement provide opportunities for a willing audience to pull, enhance and share stories about places that are of interest to self-selected audiences, thus facilitating brand co-creation. It is the virtual nature of place brands and the opportunities the internet provides that are central to place branding. So what is it that the internet has contributed and how can the practice of place branding be improved? That is what the rest of this paper will attempt to shed light on.

## **Place Branding and the Impact of Technology**

Place branding is about influencing image formation (through reputation management). There are several ways in which an image may be influenced and many sources of information potentially impact the way that people understand the world. These are referred to by Gartner (1993) as ‘image formation agents’. The most important agents that form perceptions in peoples’ minds are, of course, their own experiences (also referred to as ‘organic agents’), followed by word of mouth about

the experiences of peers; friends, relatives or otherwise networked contacts ('social agents'). Other important sources of information are provided by news media ('autonomous agents'). Only last in this line of agents vying for attention are the 'induced agents'; marketing communications messages with commercial intent. People are least receptive to these latter kinds of agents (Beerli and Martín 2004; Gartner 1993; Govers and Go 2009). Most commercial brands depend mostly on organic and induced agents, which generally can be influenced by design. Carefully planned product use, retail environments or flagship stores manipulate organic agents and ingenious integrated marketing communications influence induced agents. At the same time, autonomous agents tend to be relatively unimportant for most commercial brands, compared to places that, due to their multi-faceted nature, tend to receive much more attention in news media and on a wider range of topics and issues than corporations and product offerings do (in fact, most news media are wary of messages that potentially have a commercial impact).

Also, logically, because of higher levels of involvement (Dhar and Wertenbroch 2000; Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Leemans 1994), people are inclined to share more intense stories about their hedonic consumption experiences (their travels, the books they read or that movie that they saw) as opposed to the utilitarian goods they use (their vacuum cleaner, toothpaste or the soft drinks they like). Notice that these hedonic goods are often linked to place. Besides, the complexity of places allows for even more intense interaction and engagement and it is not surprising that social media have had a considerable impact on place marketing activities (Fouts 2010; Xiang and Gretzel 2010). Hence, it seems rather obvious that control over image formation agents for places is much more complex than it is for corporations. Considering that the product offering that places are promoting to outsiders mostly involve 'experiential services' (offering tourism, study, investment, work, living opportunities) where word-of-mouth has always been an extremely important image formation agent, and considering the ineffectiveness of advertising, place marketers increasingly acknowledge the importance of the internet and social media as they allow for the enrichment and sharing of experiences (ETC/UNWTO 2013).

Although tourism focused, one case-study that best illustrates this is the award winning "Best job in the World" project. The challenge was to create global awareness for the islands of the Great Barrier Reef. Instead of spending large sums on advertising, Tourism Queensland posted classified ads in newspapers around the world offering what they called the 'best job in the world'; a position as island caretaker with a US\$8,800—a month salary and a rent-free three-bedroom villa with plunge pool. On day one of the campaign <http://www.islandreefjob.com> received four million hits an hour (more hits in the UK than <http://google.com>). After the 6 weeks application process the website had received almost 3.5 million unique visitors. Almost 35,000 video applications had been posted. This generated 6,000 news stories worldwide and an estimated US\$80 million media coverage value. If place branding is about reflecting place identities and building unique reputations, awareness and perceived images in the minds of a global audience, Queensland has done a nice job exploiting the novel opportunities provided by the internet to activate all major image formation agents but one (they did not waste

resources on advertising). Organic agents were exploited by allowing enthusiasts to become part of the project by uploading their video applications and hoping for an invitation to travel to the island for job interviews. Covert induced agents (classified ads) were used to launch the initiative. This resulted in a shockwave of social media buzz (email forwards, blogs, mentions of social networking sites), which was then picked up by news agencies and in television programmes (autonomous agents). The creation and sharing of individual experiences (i.e. content, generated by consumers themselves) was the essential ingredient for the success of this project. All that Tourism Queensland did was to coordinate, construct and kick-start the 'on-brand' online stage. We will surely see more of this, in various forms and increasing levels of sophistication in future, as social media will start to dominate place brand engagement.

## Future Online Place Branding

So how can these processes be influenced? Place branding projects require several elements. Like in most projects, the first phase involves analysis or assessment. Neither the literature, nor practitioners seem to disagree with this. The rest, however, remains contested. Anholt's Competitive Identity framework of "Strategy, Substance and Symbolic Actions" (Anholt 2007) is widely acknowledged. Govers and Go (2009) identify the elements of brand essence, construction and communication. Designing the brand essence involves a formulation of brand purpose, positioning and brand values based on the national, regional or urban identity, formulating an aspirational strategic vision of what the place wants to be known for. This can be aligned with what Anholt refers to as strategy. Construction involves the policies, investments, projects and innovations that build what Anholt refers to as substance. The third element of communication, in this context, is not to be interpreted as 'marketing communication' and even less as advertising. It is intended as communication in its basic form of interpersonal dialogue and engagement; stories that are shared because they are appealing. This also seems to be what Anholt's symbolic actions are about: "the pieces of substance that have an intrinsic communicative power and that are especially suggestive, remarkable, memorable, picturesque, newsworthy, topical, poetic, touching, surprising, dramatic and symbolic of the strategy" (Anholt 2010, p. 13). All the above elements are impacted and will continue to be impacted significantly by information technology. In fact, the above Best Job in the World case is a clear example of a symbolic action that was facilitated through technology; a piece of imaginative substance—a contest for a real job on a real island, with a real television show—gone global through online media.

Analysis involves three domains that are particularly relevant and of key importance in place branding (Govers and Go 2009): identity analysis (who are we?), perceived image analysis (what is our reputation?) and projected image analysis (how are we talked about?). In the development phase of a place brand, it is

essential to get a thorough sense of the identity of place. This continues to be a laborious process of intensive qualitative and desk research. Observing online engagement between ‘locals’ and diaspora can also reveal valuable insights into local identity, so online opportunities are appearing in this area. As an example, see <http://www.nzedge.com>, where New Zealanders across the world strengthen their identity and foster their global community.

The strength of a place brand online is obviously determined by the strength of the brand in general. Existing image surveys such as The Anholt-GfK Roper Nation and City Brands Index and commissioned perceived place image research therefore continue to provide valuable input. Even though such surveys are now conducted online, no major changes are expected as it still involves traditional survey research methods, regardless of interviews being conducted on- or offline. However, there are novel opportunities for projected place brand assessment, many of which will become more important in future. The strength of a brand online (its projected image) can, for instance, be measured in the following ways (ETC/UNWTO 2013):

- Key phrase research—the extent to which people are searching for a place and the type of key phrases they are using to do that compared to competitors;
- Content audit—a qualitative audit carried out as part of a content inventory. This assesses to what extent content and marketing messages support brand purpose and are in line with the place brand strategy, substance and symbolic actions;
- Brand monitoring—across social media and online mainstream news media, assessing the number of mentions, where they are occurring and the nature of image associations and the sentiment of those mentions.

Currently, social media monitoring will provide place brand managers with insights into the projected images of opinion leaders ‘only’. Hence, it is not suitable for identifying perceived images. Even when social media become more mainstream and average consumers linked-in, it still does not suffice to only conduct social media analysis to measure perceived image, as what people express online is not always necessarily what they think and not everything that they think is necessarily being expressed online (or offline).

## **Case Study: Social Media Analysis for Dubai and Its Competitors in the Middle East**

The following brief summary describes a relevant example of a study of the competitive brand position of Dubai, compared to Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Bahrain, through content analysis of global social and online news media using Radian6 (Govers 2012).

Radian6, provides content and sentiment analysis based on both online news and social media. At the time of the analysis in 2011, Radian6 scanned 150+ million blogs, 90+ million Tweets, 25k+ online mainstream news sites, 420+ video and

image sharing sites, hundreds of thousands of discussion boards, Facebook, Friendfeed, and LinkedIn Answer in 17 international languages. The main metric used here is just the number of postings, but social media analysis usually also provides sentiment scores. Although the former is a straightforward quantitative count, the latter requires a more complex automated process of assessing whether the posts, and in particular their qualitative content, are either positive, neutral or negative in sentiment.

The daily number of postings in news media versus social media channels for the three year period June 30, 2008–June 30, 2011, is depicted in Fig. 6.1. It shows that Dubai has attracted most attention in news as well as social media. This buzz is generally positive with the exception of the enormous amount of media coverage around the Dubai debt crisis announcement at the end of 2009. Nevertheless, the competition has been able to attract lots of positive attention for short periods of time occasionally overshadowing Dubai in recent years with the Abu Dhabi and Bahrain Grand Prix and the selection of Qatar as host for the 2022 FIFA soccer world cup. Lastly, a dramatic change occurred in the second quarter of 2011, in the fact that social media buzz (more so than mainstream news media attention) for Bahrain drowned out the competition in the region. However, this consisted of generally very negative buzz around the opposition protests and government reactions. So, all in all, it seems that Dubai still had a lot going for itself.

However, it seems that the whole region was attracting more attention since beginning of 2010, although this might also be a reflection of increased use of social media. Two events, however, had a dramatic impact on global attention. First, the election of Qatar by FIFA as host to the 2022 Soccer World Cup generated off-scale postings totalling 178,116 in all social media, including ‘only’ 2,433 postings on news-media websites. Then, the Bahrain protests as part of the Arab spring generated a tremendous amount of buzz over an extended period. The highest number of posts on one day was off-scale both in news-media and social media postings totalling 4,334 and an astonishing 214,631 respectively. These numbers are not visualized in Fig. 6.1 where the scale is cut-off at 50,000 social media posts in order not to dwarf the rest of the graph into illegibility.

What is of particular interest is that some events gain news-media attention without much social media buzz, such as the April 2011 Doha summit on Libya or the Arab League summits, while other events generate relatively more social media buzz as opposed to mainstream media attention, such as the Bahrain protests or sports (related) events (also, indoor athletics and Formula 1 racing get similar coverage in the news media, but the latter generates much more buzz in social media). These are important insights with implications for the way in which places should invest in substance and symbolic actions and how they are linked to the integration of content and socialisation.

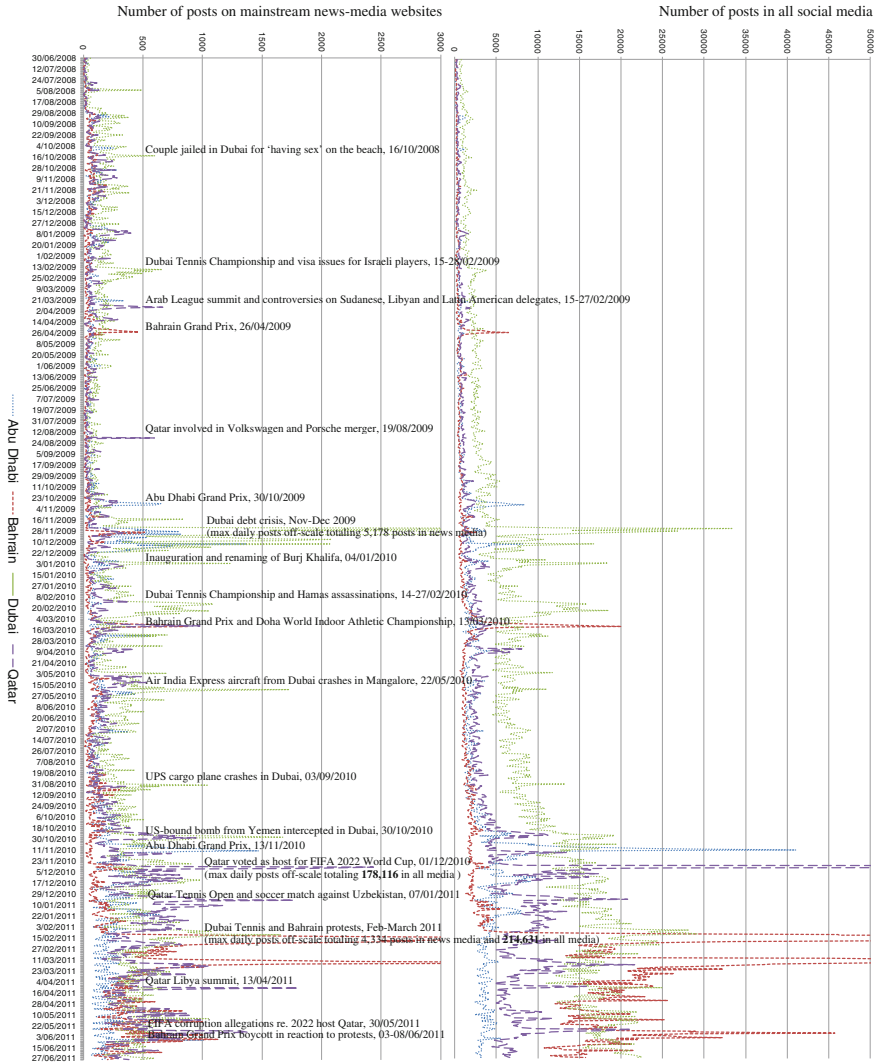


Fig. 6.1 Number of posts on news-media websites and in all social media linked to events between June 2008 and June 2011 (Source Govers 2012, used with permission)

## Online Place Brand Strategy and Substance

The relationship between place brand strategy and technology seems to be an ambivalent one. In their attempt to show the world that they are able to compete globally, numerous places focus on showing that they are innovative and high-tech, even when this is counter intuitive considering existing perceptions of places such as, for instance, Flanders (Belgium) or Wales (Govers and Go 2009). So many



places use technology not as an instrument for branding, but as an end in itself (to reflect brand values of progress). Of course, very few places are isolated from globalisation, so using technology as a brand positioning in itself is very unlikely to be a differentiating reputational positioning element. The paradox is that globalisation is generally blamed for the need for place branding, but at the same time it results in brand strategies that consistently embody the same globalisation-driven brand values (i.e. countless places position themselves as dynamic, entrepreneurial, creative, innovative, high-tech).

A good example of this is the @Sweden case. Since December 2011 the Swedish government rotates the national @Sweden Twitter account among Swedish Twitter users, assigning a new Swedish ‘curator’ every week. These so called curators are then given free rein to tweet what they like, when they like, in order to allow global audiences to peek through a technology window into real life in Sweden. Also referred to as ‘rotation curation nation branding’ such projects claim to project authentic on-brand images of what a city or country is about. However, the media attention that Sweden received after launching @Sweden did not focus at all on what these Swedish curators had to say about their country. It revolved around discussions of openness, censorship and democracy. Sweden was quick to argue that these were the intended brand values that they were trying to convey. However, Christensen (2013) found that: “the limited range of Swedish Twitter users, the curator selection process, clear rules of engagement, and the problem of ‘the imagined audience’ caused the narrowing of the scope of the project in terms of content”. So as opposed to using technology as part of the toolbox for the implementation of brand strategy, technology becomes the strategy in itself, showing off technology use and (pretend) transparency as brand values. This paradoxically leads to “policy commodification” (Christensen 2013) as copycat governments and creative agencies replicate such initiatives that have no anchoring in ‘sense of place’ or entry barriers (e.g. any city, region or nation can start its own twitter account or Facebook page). As Christensen (2013) puts it: “as global politics begins to find a place in the social media realm, a key challenge posed to states is how to harness the potential of these media, while at the same time controlling (as far as possible) both the message and the interaction. Thus, it is plausible to suggest that, from a critical perspective, it is not a reputation for transparency, democracy and openness which the @Sweden ultimately bequeaths upon Brand Sweden, but rather public relations acumen, and an understanding of how technology discourse and commercial logic can be applied to shaping national image in the geo-political arena”.

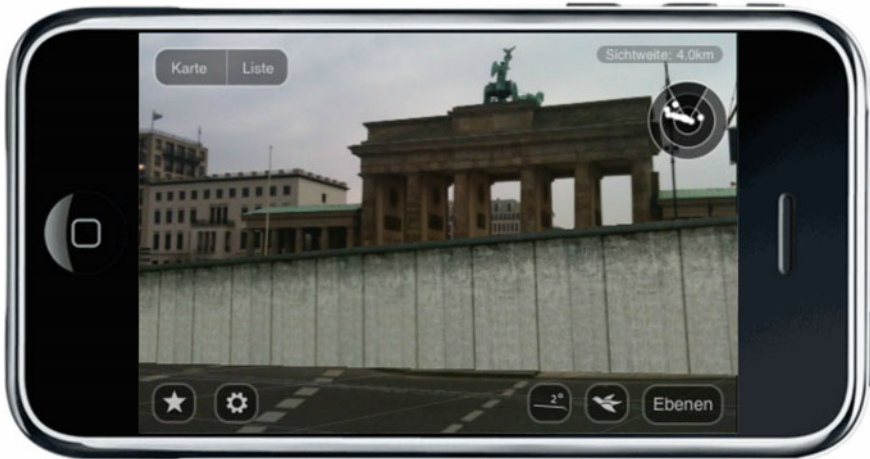
It is the creation of unique content that builds competitive brand purpose and online positioning and construction or substance is what builds content in an online context (Munro 2011). It requires a strategy that is distinctive, authentic, motivating, relevant and meaningful. A recent and interesting example of this is the province of Limburg, Netherlands (Anholt et al. 2012). The region functions as a Dutch cross-border corridor into the heart of Europe. Today, the region of Limburg interfaces with Belgium and Germany as well as Luxembourg and France, but it has dealt with shifting borders constantly over the course of its history. Limburg itself

has had a major impact on European borders in the past. In 870 A.D. the Treaty of Meerssen (today a village close to Maastricht and Aachen, where, Charlemagne, alias Charles the Great, took court) replaced the 843 A.D. Treaty of Verdun to keep Europe divided into three parts of what remained of the Carolingian Empire. The people of Limburg will argue that they repaired this division with the reunification of Europe as a result of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992.

Limburg formulated a brand strategy that drives the region, its residents and public, private and civil society stakeholders to simultaneously regain and capitalise on Limburg's relevance, reputation and pride as a border region; to again become the breeding ground of "European-ness" within the Netherlands; and, to play a meaningful role as a historic prototype region of a borderless Europe (and a borderless world) which nevertheless sustains strong local identities. This strategy involves and recruits ingenuity and imagination in the way that Limburg deals with the dynamics of borders in its own way, seeing them not as barriers but as interfaces, positioning Limburg as a unique European corridor of The Netherlands. Some of the ways in which this Limburg strategy aims to build substance is through proposed projects such as: cross-border employment information desks; a Euro-regional job-portal; cross-border industrial parks; a global Olympic games in which individuals compete, not countries (i.e. nationalities are irrelevant and not listed); a smuggling museum experience in cross-border marl caves south of Maastricht; a Limburg Institute for Border Research and Advocacy; or twinning of border regions.

Interestingly, the distinction between marketing communication and substance development becomes increasingly fuzzy, with developments such as Google Maps/Earth based information delivery; augmented reality; and location based services, information provision, peer-to-peer engagement and reviews. These provide increasingly potent opportunities for the creation of substance that integrates virtual and physical developments. Examples for Limburg include a Linked-In app that visualises cross-border and international networks on member profiles; a virtual border observatory with infographics and border webcams or the visualization of historical borders through location based services and augmented reality on smartphones that are similar to the Berlin example shown in Fig. 6.2 (including gaming potential such as collecting points by doing as many border-crossings as possible with <http://www.foursquare.com>).

In the online context Symbolic Actions build what is referred to as Socialisation (i.e. engagement) (Munro 2011) and hence communication. The growth of social media means that customers are sharing their experiences, and stories that they are excited about, with others. The above Limburg Linked-In app example provides such opportunities for socialisation. Another example is I-AMsterdam, which became a successful brand initiative, not because of the application of clever design gimmicks to build brand equity, but because it allows for socialisation around something that people are already proud of or engaged with. The brand equity was already there. The logo and giant 'I AMsterdam' letters, which are moved around the city for people to take pictures of, just help to create something to characterise and share that equity (i.e. the brand). Limburg could do something similar by



**Fig. 6.2** Berlin wall rebuilt with augmented reality on smartphones (Source Govers 2012, used with permission)

emphasising Schengen or historic borders through landscape architecture or pieces of art and virtual geo-tags. Technology now allows place marketers to manage content all the way through to consumers' desktops and mobile devices, supporting a strong branding strategy and management of diverse perceptions. As mass media place branding campaigns are increasingly ineffective as they cannot be appropriately targeted, this creates tremendous opportunities of online branding. Combined with technologies such as provided through ambient intelligence, augmented reality and virtual environments, that allows for completely customized but consistent content feeding, virtual place experiences and customer engagement.

## Conclusion

The potential for effective online place brand management is clearly there, considering the state of the technology. Also, because of the importance of personal experience and word-of-mouth in place marketing, information technologies and social media will take over from advertising-driven 'branding' in future. Nevertheless, there are few (if any) best practice examples of cities, regions or countries that have managed to come up with a proper brand strategy; developing substance; appropriately creating, curating and integrating relevant online content; and to build socialisation around it, in order to build reputation consistently, controlling image formation agents all the way to the individual consumer out there.

In fact, as the @Sweden example has illustrated, when technology is used in the specific context of place branding it is often not as a tool but as an end in itself. However, the use of technology to brand places as cutting-edge, innovative, open-

mindful and transparent is commoditised and ubiquitous. Everyone does it. Technology-liberated globalised places are becoming common-place, so places that still focus on using technology to reflect modern brand values in their branding efforts are establishing anything but a strong brand. It is time to start using technology as a means to an end, as opposed to opting for the quick me-too strategy.

## References

- Aaker DA, Joachimsthaler E (2000) *Brand leadership*. The Free Press, New York
- Anholt S (2007) *Competitive identity: the new brand management for nations, cities and regions*. Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke
- Anholt S (2010) *Places: identity, image and reputation*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke
- Anholt S, Govers R, Hildreth J (2012) *Competitive identity Limburg*. Limburg Provincial Government, The Netherlands
- Beerli A, Martín JD (2004) Factors influencing destination image. *Ann Tour Res* 31(3):657–681
- Christensen C (2013) @Sweden: curating a nation on Twitter. *Pop Commun* 11(1):30–46
- Dhar R, Wertenbroch K (2000) Consumer choice between hedonic and utilitarian goods. *J Mark Res* 37(1):60–71
- ETC/UNWTO (2013) *Handbook on E-marketing for tourism destinations*, 2nd edn. World Tourism Organization, Madrid
- Fouts J (2010) Impact of social media and immersive spaces on place branding. In: Go FM, Govers R (eds) *International place branding yearbook 2010*, vol 1. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp 113–120
- Gallarza MG, Gil Saura I, Calderon Garcia H (2002) Destination image: towards a conceptual framework. *Ann Tour Res* 29(1):56–78
- Gartner WC (1993) Image formation process. *J Travel Tour Mark* 2(2/3):191–215
- Govers R (2012) Brand Dubai and its competitors in the Middle East: an image and reputation analysis. *Place Branding Publ Dipl* 8(1):48–57
- Govers R, Go FM (2009) *Place branding: glocal, virtual and physical, identities constructed, imagined and experienced*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke
- Govers R, Go FM, Kumar K (2007) Promoting tourism destination image. *J Travel Res* 46(1):15–23
- Hildreth J (2010) Place branding: a view at arm's length. *Place Branding Publ Dipl* 6(1):27–35
- Hirschman EC, Holbrook MB (1982) Hedonic consumption: emerging concepts, methods and propositions. *J Mark* 46(3):92–101
- Leemans H (1994) *The multiform book: using information in purchasing hedonic products*. Eburon, Delft
- Munro J (2011) The digital challenge. In: Morgan N, Pritchard A, Pride R (eds) *Destination brands: managing place reputation*, 3rd edn. Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, pp 141–154
- Sirakaya E, Woodside AG (2005) Building and testing theories of decision making by travellers. *Tour Manage* 26(6):815–832
- Xiang Z, Gretzel U (2010) Role of social media in online travel information search. *Tour Manage* 31(2):179–188

# Chapter 7

## Rethinking Strategic Place Branding in the Digital Age

Sonya Azad Hanna and Jennifer Rowley

**Abstract** It is important that a coherent and strategic approach is adopted to place branding, and, in particular, that this approach is multi-channel and embraces digital place branding. This chapter commences with a review of the nature of strategic place brand management, and identifies the key components of the process, as a basis for reflecting on how managing a significant digital presence might impact on future models of strategic place brand management. Next, the 7 C's of digital strategic place brand management are proposed: channels, clutter, community, chatter, communication, co-creation, and co-branding. Finally, these 7 C's are matched to the components of the strategic place brand management process.

### Introduction

Place branding practice and theory has advanced considerably from when branding as a concept was seen as relevant, but not always understood or applied effectively (Hankinson 2001). Place branding is becoming an increasingly strategic approach to positioning and the creation of competitive advantage in the development of a place (Alonso and Bea 2012), in pursuit of attracting resources, business relocation, foreign investment, visitors and new residents (Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005). Moreover, there is now widespread recognition of the need for a holistic and strategic approach to place branding. Various authors have proposed models of place branding processes (Laws 2002; Cai 2002; Hankinson 2004, 2007, 2009; Kavaratzis 2004, 2009; Baker 2007; Gaggiotti et al. 2008; Balakrishnan 2008, 2009; Moilanen

---

S.A. Hanna

Bangor Business School, Bangor University, Bangor LL57 2DG, UK  
e-mail: abse29@bangor.ac.uk

J. Rowley (✉)

Department of Languages, Information and Communications, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester M15 6BH, UK  
e-mail: j.rowley@mmu.ac.uk

and Rainisto 2009; Zenker and Braun 2010), and most recently, building on these prior models, we proposed and tested the Strategic Place Brand Management Model (SPBMM) (Hanna and Rowley 2011, 2013).

There is also a growing body of research and advice on place marketing using the Internet (Park and Gretzel 2007; Law et al. 2009; Diaz-Luque 2009; Chiem et al. 2010; Trueman et al. 2012; Bulhalis and Neuhofer 2012; Alonso and Bea 2012). This is coupled with an increasing recognition of the importance of the Internet for place branding (Bulhalis and Costa 2006; Bulhalis and Neuhofer 2012). Roig et al. (2010) suggest that perceptions of a place or destination can be influenced as much by the virtual world as by traditional communication channels. In addition, there are some recent studies that consider place brands in digital spaces, but these studies tend to focus on specific aspects of the place brand management process, such as stakeholders (Merrilees et al. 2012), the relationships between company and city brands (Trueman et al. 2012) or the impact of tourist-created content on destination branding (Munar 2011). As such, there has been very little discussion in either the practitioner or the research literature on the implications of digital presences on the processes associated with strategic place brand management. Yet, the digital presence of place brands is arguably more important than that of other types of brands, since potential and existing investors, visitors and residents increasingly use the web to explore and research places, and to make decisions regarding the inclusion of the place, or its venues, resources, or events into their consideration set, to execute transactions and bookings, and to gather information on the move. This chapter seeks to identify the key considerations associated with the strategic management of place brands in the digital age.

The chapter commences with a review of the nature of strategic brand management, acknowledging the various perspectives adopted to seek an understanding of place branding processes. The chapter identifies the key components of the process, as a basis for reflecting on how managing a significant digital presence might impact on future models of strategic place brand management. Next, drawing on wider literature on digital branding theory and practice, coupled with insights from the limited prior research on place brands in digital spaces, this chapter proposes the 7 C's of digital strategic place brand management: channels, clutter, community, chatter, communication, co-creation, and co-branding.

## **Strategic Place Brand Management**

Despite place branding's recent roots in the tourism marketing field (Papadopoulos 2004; O'Leary and Deegan 2005; Kerr 2006; Morgan et al. 2004, 2011; Baker 2007; Ruzzier 2010), places are increasingly recognising the need to consider branding in a wide range of contexts, with interest in place branding extending beyond tourist destinations. With fierce global competition fuelled by free movement of goods and people, places are facing increased substitutability and competition and must provide an environment that not only effectively competes for

new resources, foreign investment, residents and visitors but also provides an environment that sustains and satisfies exiting economic, commercial and residential activity. Some commentators suggest that as the economic base of many places is eroded, places are in competition with each other for survival (Kerr 2006; Olins 2002). Hence, the question facing a place is not how to brand, but how to manage the process. A strategic approach to managing the brand associated with a place, and associated assets such as reputation, image, identity and experience must accommodate the complexity of the place brand constructs. In particular, the need to provide place stakeholders with a sense of collective identity and/or to deliver a consistent and coherent place experience, simultaneously makes a strategic approach both more important and more challenging (Hankinson 2009).

In pursuit of some clarity regarding the place branding process and its management, a number of authors have proposed various models, the majority of which focus on destination branding (e.g. Cai 2002; Baker 2007; Balakrishnan 2008, 2009; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009). Others focus specifically on cities (e.g. Kavvaratzis 2004, 2009; Gaggiotti et al. 2008). Importantly, whilst three of these models are empirically tested (Cai 2002; Balakrishnan 2008; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009), none have been empirically tested in a range of geographical locations, while only one other draws its basis from previous place branding models demonstrating a lack of an agreed body of knowledge (Kavvaratzis 2009). Moreover, all of these models take different perspectives on the branding process with the exception of Balakrishnan (2008, 2009) and Moilanen and Rainisto (2009) who provide more holistic approaches. This tends to mean that the different models incorporate different components of the brand management process. For example, the City Image Communication Model (Kavvaratzis 2004) considers brand evaluation, infrastructure, stakeholder engagement, leadership, brand communication and word-of-mouth, whilst Hankinson's (2007) Framework for the Management of Place Brands includes stakeholder engagement, leadership, brand identity, and brand communication. Together these models reveal a number of important aspects of the place brand management process, so they formed a rich foundation for our holistic theoretical model of the place branding process, 'The Strategic Place Brand Management Model' (SPBMM), which we proposed in Hanna and Rowley (2011), and subsequently empirically tested with place brand practitioners (Hanna and Rowley 2013). This framework influences our subsequent discussion of place branding in the digital age, and, in particular is the basis of a mapping between trends in digital branding and the place brand management process.

The model proposed, and later empirically tested, the ten components of the place management process (Hanna and Rowley 2011, 2013). These components are listed, with their descriptors, in Table 7.1. Figure 7.1 shows the theoretical model (Hanna and Rowley 2011). Our empirical research, conducted with place brand practitioners, associated with a variety of towns, cities and regions, confirmed all of the components in the theoretical model as constituent parts of the place brand management process, but it only partially confirmed the relationships in the theoretical model. It would be useful to explore this further, but we suspect that this is because different places and their place managers make different links between the

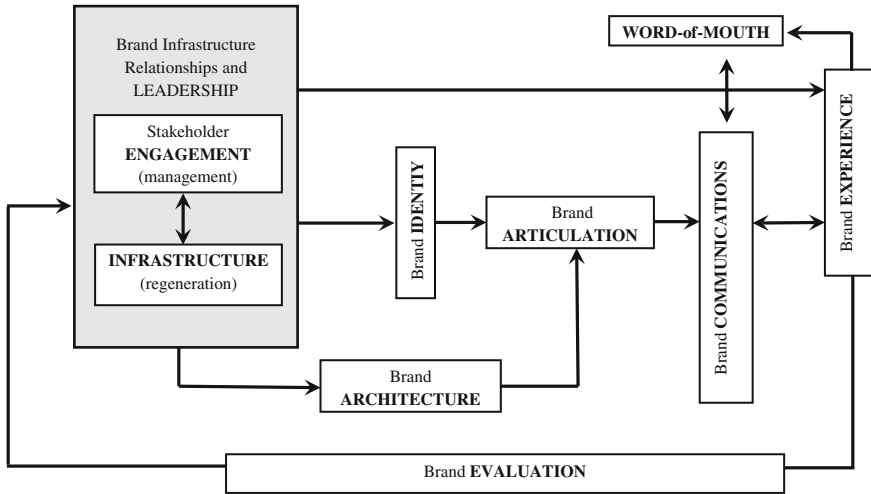
**Table 7.1** Descriptors of the components in the strategic place brand management model

Component	Descriptor
Brand evaluation	The methods used to gather feedback on brand experience
Brand infrastructure (regeneration)	The existence, accessibility and sufficiency of the brands functional and experiential attribute
Stakeholder engagement (management)	The methods used to identify stakeholders, their interests and the management of their interactions
Brand leadership	The engagement (management) of stakeholders by providing focus and fostering commitment
Brand architecture	The process of designing and managing portfolios of the brands owned by communities associated with the place
Brand identity	The essence of the brand, the characteristics that make 'it' what it is
Brand articulation	The brand's visual and verbal identity expressed through the brand name, logo, colour palettes and photographs
Brand communications	The promotional mix used to communicate the brand
Word-of-mouth	The informal communications between the 'consumers' of the brand experience
Brand experience	The consumer's engagement with the brand

components in the model (Hanna and Rowley 2013). Place brand leaders must develop an understanding of the relationships between these components and the processes, activities and success factors that are appropriate to their specific context while accounting for the complexity of the links between these processes, which may vary over time, and between stakeholders.

The model incorporates a number of components and links between them that might potentially be impacted by the digital presence of place brands. Accordingly, it is useful to elaborate on the processes encapsulated in Fig. 7.1. It is possible to commence the discussion of the model from any of the components, and indeed, some would opt to start with an audit process (brand evaluation) and others with understanding and elucidating the place/brand identity. However, we choose our starting point in the Brand Infrastructure, Relationships and Leadership box, which encapsulates some of the key assets associated with the place that influence the place identity, image and experience and therefore underpin the brand identity and experience. Brand infrastructure refers to the place's functional (e.g. built environment, public spaces) and experiential attributes (e.g. leisure, tourist and service facilities). Infrastructure is owned by a range of stakeholders, and can often be viewed as beyond the control of place brand leaders, but the infrastructure is pivotal to delivering on the brand promise, and hence attempts must be made to align brand infrastructure development with the brand identity and brand communications. In order to achieve this alignment, brand leaders need to work with stakeholders, including residents, activities groups, local and national businesses, employees, other places in the region, local, regional and national government and visitors,





**Fig. 7.1** Strategic place brand management model (SPBMM) (Source Adapted from Hanna and Rowley 2011, 2013)

since stakeholders have a significant impact on policy making associated with both the functional and experiential aspects of the place infrastructure.

The interaction of the processes and agencies in the brand infrastructure, relationships and leadership box leads to and influences the place identity and its brand architecture. For credibility and consistency, the place identity must be the foundation of the place brand architecture, and its key values and attributes. Specifically, the brand identity must be elucidated through meetings, discussions and forums, in which stakeholders are able to explore and share their perceptions of how they see their place (status quo), and how they would like it to be (aspirational). The place brand architecture is based on the portfolio of brands associated with a place, such as the brands of the different constituent place stakeholders, and the interactions between those brands, both in terms of identity and values, and also in terms of brand articulation and communications. Many of these brands will be owned by stakeholder organisations, and might include, for example, churches, football teams, universities, or associated places. Achieving a high level of coordination is likely to be challenging and will not suit all brands associated with a place as the objectives and needs of the various stakeholders may not be compatible; this may lead to a rather fuzzy and incomplete brand architecture for a place.

Once the brand identity is formulated, the remaining stages of the process are those that are viewed as core to branding. The first component, the brand articulation, is the way in which the brand is presented through various marketing media, including its visual and verbal identity, expressed through a brand name, logo, colour palettes and images. Next, brand communication focuses on the activities associated with the communication of the brand identity, including the promotional mix used to communicate the brand. The branding process culminates with the

consumers' brand experience, which, in turn, influences their perceptions of the place. A wide range of aspects of the branding process influence the brand experience, including brand articulation, marketing communications, word-of-mouth, as well as service delivery and other aspects of the experiential or functional place infrastructure. Ultimately, both brand experience and brand communications may influence word-of-mouth, and exchange of views on the place and place experiences with others. Finally, brand evaluation is important to assess the brand experience, and other branding activities and processes that contribute to the experience. Ultimately, brand evaluation has potential to not only inform future marketing and branding activities, but also in informing developments in brand infrastructure, stakeholder engagement, and place and brand identity.

## **7 C's of Digital Strategic Place Brand Management**

Overall, places of any size have a digital place brand presence, and possibly multiple brand representations. An important component of this brand presence is the website of the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO), but this is often supplemented by the websites of other organisations associated with a place, such as the City Council, or a citizen organisation, as well as comments on recommendation and social media sites. However, research on the management of place brands in digital spaces is sparse. This lack of knowledge represents a major gap in branding theory, and leaves practitioners with little guidance. Possible factors for this lack of knowledge are that DMO's delegate design of their web site to digital agencies, viewing it as no more than 'just another channel' (Rowley 2004). Digital branding has only recently started to receive greater attention from researchers (Ibeh et al. 2005; Simmons 2007), whilst place branding, as an emergent discipline, has justifiably been pre-occupied with core theory development. Accordingly, this section recognises the importance of digital spaces and proposes the key characteristics of place brand digital spaces and the strategies that place brand managers need to consider in the digital age; the 7 C's of digital strategic place brand management. This proposal is based on recent research and commentary in both digital branding and place branding. It is designed to aid reflection on digital strategic place brand management, and thereby to promote development of both theory and practice. The remainder of this section discusses each of the 7 C's in turn.

### ***Channels***

Traditionally place branding was executed largely through print channels, including brochures, leaflets, and other documents, with some brand communication through ambient media, such as posters, billboards, notices, logos and other types of communication on, for example, pavements, buses, and buildings. Launching a

website, and the development of other types of digital presence, adds another marketing communication channel, with very unique characteristics as a communication medium. For example, Rowley (2004) suggests that the Internet is interactive, accessible, and widely available, and integrates marketing communications with commercial transactions and service.

Place brand managers now face the challenges of multi-channel marketing. Strategic choices need to be made as to which services or messages will be communicated through which channels, and to which audiences (Chaffey et al. 2009). Moreover, practitioners need to make decisions as to whether to seek to push audiences to a specific channel, or to promote switching between channels. Choices also have to be made with regard to the relative level of investment for each channel and the level of consistency of marketing communication between channels, in order to implement strategies with the objective of achieving and sustaining the latter.

Furthermore, the digital space itself comprises a number of sub-channels, including blogs, social media, search engines, and mobile platforms. With the growth of smart phones, 'the brand is in the hand', and always present. Mobile marketing, especially with the advent of the smart phone can be used to build customer engagement with a brand, through text messages, mobile advertising, permission based marketing, the delivery of mobile content, user-generated content, and mobile commerce (Persaud and Azhar 2012). One of the characteristics of mobile platforms that has great potential for promoting place brands is the facility to provide information on the basis of the users' location, such as: finding nearby facilities/services, transportation information, tour guides; film and concert ticketing; and collecting shop and restaurant discount coupons (Yuan and Zhang 2003). Another option is the use of mobile applications (apps) to create personalised content thus promoting brand engagement (Chiem et al. 2010).

## *Clutter*

'Clutter', sometimes referred to as information overload, is a characteristic of the internet; almost anyone can load anything (as long as it is digital). Places are not immune. Place branding theory tends to assume that there is only one place brand associated with each place entity and name. Whilst this delusion may be sustainable in other channels, where brands created and maintained by different organisations associated with a place are less likely to be juxtaposed, it is rapidly dispelled through a quick web search. In a recent study, Rowley and Hanna (2013) found that European and UK cities typically had two or more place websites, run respectively by the City Council, the DMO, and other commercial organisations or citizens. These web sites, together with those of other organisations that use the place name in their name/brand (e.g. Manchester United, Manchester Museum) all appear on the first page of a Google listing. Furthermore, links between such website are rare, as is any evidence of a coordinated approach to brand articulation.

Cities are multi-branded places, so, which of these is ‘the place brand’?, and which is the audience to take as aligning with and communicating the place brand identity? The answer depends on whether the user is a tourist, investor or a citizen, and sometimes, but not always, web-site content appears to be targeted towards different audiences. Other authors have raised the issue of multiple brand visions arising from different stakeholder groups and expressed concerns about the impact on the consistency and coherency of the brand (Trueman et al. 2004; Virgo and de Chernatony 2006). Merrilees et al. (2012) suggest that organisations may need to question the general branding assumption that consistency is necessary, and move in the direction of accommodating multi-faceted, multiple meanings of the place brand to suit different markets and audiences. Place brand leadership need to decide how to respond to being not the ‘only brand in town’ and start identifying the portfolio of brands associated with a place, especially of those promoting the same place name. In identifying such portfolios, leadership may then decide whether to seek alliances and alignment or differentiation and co-opetition (simultaneously cooperating and competing), recognising their responsibility to contribute to presenting a coherent, if not consistent place brand presence in the digital space.

## *Community*

The rhetoric of place branding currently talks in terms of stakeholders; individuals and organisations, which have a stake, or interest, in a place. Several authors have emphasised the need for stakeholder buy-in into the place brand identity and the delivery of the place brand experience (Baker 2007; Kavaratzis 2012; Pryor and Grossbart 2007). This is seen as leaderships’ responsibility to achieve through engagement and negotiation. Branding theory, however, privileges the notions of brand relationships and communities especially with the advent of digital branding (Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou 2011; Muniz and O’Guinn 2001; Rubenstein 2002). Informed by relationship marketing theory, the emphasis is on attracting, cultivating and empowering community members, who will stay loyal to the place brand, offer constructive feedback, and act as advocates for the brand (Morgan and Hunt 1994). In addition, since opinions communicated between members of a consumer community can be regarded as a form of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) (Henning-Thurau et al. 2004) brand community members may impact on customers’ attitudes and behaviours.

According to Shang et al. (2006), experiences in a virtual community may be a significant part of the consumer experience of a brand. Moreover, a number of commentators have suggested that brand communities can create brand value and brand equity (Bruhn et al. 2012; Schau et al. 2009) and offer suggestions as to how this can be achieved (Drury 2008). In the following section, the theme of Chatter is developed further, but first it is important to emphasise that developing a place brand community may be a more fruitful way forward than wrestling with stakeholder buy-in. Digital platforms provide arenas in which the community can

interact, air their views, and present their stories. Place brand leadership need to develop a strategic approach to the development of place brand virtual communities by setting objectives for their initiatives, developing and evolving a programme of action, thus enhancing their understanding of their place brand communities and their members, and the relationship of these communities with the audiences of their place brand.

### *Chatter*

In the digital space, particularly on blogs, online reviews on travel websites (such as Trip advisor, Simmonseeks) and social media such as Facebook and Twitter, and any social media platforms managed by the DMO, there is great scope for chatter about the place. People's traditional enthusiasm for talking about and sharing photographs and other images of their holidays and travels has been translated to the web. Social media, have, for instance helped to enhance the visibility of city brands (Sigala 2009). This chatter, or eWOM, may be passed around closed groups, or be visible to a much wider audience.

Initially, organisations were concerned about the impact of user generated content on the brand because they had no control over negative messages from unsatisfied customers on the Internet (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). Brand managers felt that Web 2.0 with its capacity for the generation of user generated content posed a threat to the traditional one-way marketing communication (Ketter and Avraham 2012). Nevertheless, as digital chatter on social media has become a staple of everyday life, organisations are finding that the balance of positive and negative comments creates a buzz that is generally beneficial and generates visibility and interest, and are learning to capitalise on the more interactive nature of communication in social media. Notwithstanding, there is still ongoing debate regarding the role of social media in shifting the balance of power regarding the brand from the organisation to the consumer (Bernoff and Li 2008; Fisher and Smith 2011). According to Christodoulides (2009), post-internet branding is about facilitating conversations around the brand, and the co-creation of meaning. In short, through social media, consumers have been empowered to comment on their experiences with and opinions of, a brand, and if they choose, to tell a different story about the brand to that which the brand owners seek to disseminate. Accordingly, in the digital age, place brand leaders need not only to seek to build brand communities, by also to take a strategic approach to listening to and engaging with those communities.

Notwithstanding their history of working with stakeholders and their experience of negotiating brand identity, and its associated articulation and communication, the digital age calls for place brand leaders to develop processes that support an even more proactive approach to the facilitation of co-creation of brand meanings and identity. Dijck and Nieborg (2009) suggest that whilst 'crowds' cannot be easily controlled, they can be 'steered'. Ketter and Avraham (2012) offer an extremely

useful set of examples of how some DMO's are using social media in place marketing campaigns to 'steer'. They suggest that the components of source, message and receiver cease to be clearly differentiated as these campaigns empower users and encourage them to take an active role in the creation and distribution of campaign messages.

## *Communication*

Communication is central to community building and maintenance. Whilst it is important that DMO's engage in two-way communication, and listen to place chatter, traditional marketing and brand communication remain important, but need to be adapted for the dynamic digital environment, in order that they continue to promote place brand awareness, draw attention to the place, and communicate the place brand identity. The primary venue for this marketing communication and any associated service delivery, is the DMO's and other place marketers' websites (Diaz-Luque 2009). Websites provide an opportunity that is less easy to achieve through other channels, for dynamic communication, providing information about events, news, and special offers. Mobile versions of these websites may be accessed by users 'on the move', which, in turn, has consequences for the type of content that DMOs' websites might contain. DMOs should also consider the role of their websites in reputation management, when, for instance, reports of undesirable natural, social or criminal events hit nation and international new headlines. A further opportunity, in collaboration with other organisations associated with the place, is transactions, but since many DMO websites restrict themselves to information provision, they are missing out on this opportunity. Websites are also accessed by diverse and international audiences; their content and design need to accommodate these different cultural requirements. In responding to all of these issues, DMO's need to pay particular attention to web-site design and content management.

Rowley and Bird (2011) argue that website design to promote brands needs to attend to the following aspects of web-site design: logo, graphics and images, text and copy, shapes, up-to-dateness colour, and layout. Additionally, it is important to drive traffic to the website through search engine optimisation, search engine marketing, affiliate networks and partner programmes, e-mail newsletters and other types of communication, advocacy or viral marketing, and offline promotion of the website. Law et al. (2009) offer a useful summary of website evaluation in tourism, but only identify a handful of studies of DMO websites. Amongst these, Park and Gretzel (2007) offer a useful distillation of the success factors for destination marketing websites, but take a broader marketing perspective, rather than focussing specifically on branding. They identify the following factors as being important: information quality, ease of use, responsiveness, security/privacy, visual appearance, trust, interactivity, personalisation, and fulfilment.

## ***Co-creation***

Co-creation involves working with the place brand community to increase place brand equity, in both physical and digital spaces, through co-creation of the brand identity and the experiences associated with the brand. Place brand websites not only offer detailed information, but also create virtual product experiences (Alonso and Bea 2012). Accordingly, it is said that perceptions of the potential or actual experience associated with a place brand can be achieved indirectly through communication tools (e.g. colours, typefaces, websites, advertising) (Addis et al. 2007). Schmitt (1999) calls these *Experience Providers* or ExPros that must be managed in three ways: (1) coherently (that is in an integrated manner); (2) consistently over time; and (3) by paying attention to detail and using each ExPro to its fullest potential for creating the experience. The underlying assumption is that the overall brand is inextricably linked to various forms of information that can be affected by stimulus factors but also through consumption experiences.

Overall, the online environment has enabled web-based interactive media alongside this as an economical, accessible and effective tool for creating and staging experiences incorporating the virtual world's mediated experiences along with the real world's lived experiences (Tynan and McKechnie 2009). In the context of destination branding, Allen (2007) argues that a traveller's choice of a given destination depends largely on the images held by a customer after, as well as before, visiting the place. Therefore, it is increasingly important to create a compelling brand experience beyond the physical place. As communication technologies become more sophisticated, the ability to enrich the pre and post physical experience of a place increases significantly.

Moreover, due to the array of available online communications technology, consumer-to-consumer communications are easier providing unprecedented levels of direct engagement of consumers and other stakeholders with one another (Kavaratzis 2012). This factor has dramatically emphasised the role of stakeholders as co-creators of the place experience.

## ***Collaboration***

Collaboration is about capitalising on the opportunities for building a web of brands associated with the place brand in digital space to mutual benefit, thereby enhancing the digital experience associated with the place brand. Hence, complexity arises when the brands associated with a given place, include corporate brands, and the brands of 'sub-places'. Previous case study research offers some interesting models of umbrella branding at the country level (Gnoth 2002; Iversen and Hem 2008; Kavaratzis 2004; Trueman et al. 2004), and there has also been some theoretical discussion of place brand architectures and brand webs (Anholt 2004; Hankinson 2005; Hanna and Rowley 2013), but overall place brand webs have received very

**Table 7.2** Mapping the 7 C’s of digital place branding to the components of the SPBMM

Characteristic of place brand digital spaces	Digital branding management process	Relevant SPBMM components
Channels	Developing and delivering on a multi-channel strategy, which includes digital channels, mobile channels, and support for channel switching	Brand identity Brand communication Brand articulation Brand experience
Clutter	Identifying and evaluating the portfolio of brands associated with a place, and contributing to the creation of a coherent digital presence for the place	Brand architecture Stakeholder engagement
Community	Contributing to the community associated with a place, through managing or facilitating digital spaces where brand communities and congregate and communicate	Brand communication Stakeholder engagement
Chatter	Listening to and engaging with eWOM regarding a place, and acknowledging the need to empower participation in the evolution of the place identity	Brand evaluation Brand identity
Communication	Creating dynamic digital communication, through website design and other channel interfaces or interactions, that responds to the changing needs of a diverse audience	Brand communication Brand articulation
Co-creation	Co-creation of the place brand experience, in partnership with community members, involving both the digital contribution to enhancing real world place experiences, and the creation of digital experiences of the place. Co-creation leads to changing experience, hence evaluation processes are integral	Brand evaluation Brand experience Brand communication
Collaboration	Using the opportunities provided in the digital space to communicate the strategic links between brands associated with a place, and building on this to collaborate in the digital experience of the place. The ultimate aim of collaboration is to enhance the overall place brand equity	Brand articulation Brand communication Brand architecture

little attention. Nonetheless, the digital space is an arena through which consumers, citizens and other stakeholders increasingly interact with place brands, place brands are juxtaposed in a way in which they may not be in other contexts and media; brand leadership should manage this opportunity, creatively and collaboratively (Christodoulides 2009; Munar 2011).



Central to this notion of collaboration is the importance of aligning the identities of the co-branded organisations, and the concerns about the transfer of negative images and reputations between the co-branding entities (Kahuni et al. 2009). A number of authors have raised the issue of multiple brand visions arising from different stakeholder groups, and the impact on the consistency and coherence of the brand (Trueman et al. 2004; Virgo and de Chernatony 2006). Trueman et al. (2012) undertake an interesting study to investigate the relationships between the city brand of Bradford, and the brands of companies associated with the city. Notably the study found that the negative reputation of the city brand was not transferred to the organisation brands, and further that Bradford based businesses, were, through their websites, able to influence the constructed city brand. More research into the consequences of building brand relationships is necessary.

## Conclusion

Table 7.2 summarises the discussion in the previous section, by presenting the key management processes associated with each characteristic of a place brand's digital space. In addition, it links these processes to the Strategic Place Brand Management Model (SPBMM), by identifying those components of place branding that are most likely to be affected by a specific characteristic of the place brand digital space.

The evidence is that all components of strategic place brand management are affected by engagement in the digital space. This, in turn means that DMO's, and other organisations associated with place branding need to be proactive in developing their digital presence, and in developing their understanding of the unique features of the digital space as a communication, service delivery, and branding medium. They can be supported in their endeavours by sharing of good practice and benchmarking. Furthermore, there is considerable scope for further research and development in the arena of digital place branding, in order to better understand:

- The nature and effective use of place brand webs as a tool for the management of information overload,
- The methods through which practitioners can influence pre/post physical experience of the place through website design,
- Practitioners influence/control over eWOM, as such their influence over brand value and brand equity.

## References

- Addis M, Miniero G, Scopellite I, Soscia I (2007) Creating consumption experience to build brand image. Conference paper, thought leaders international conference on brand management, Birmingham Business School, UK
- Allen G (2007) Place branding: new tools for economic development. *Des Manage Rev* 18 (2):60–68

- Alonso I, Bea E (2012) A tentative model to measure city brands on the Internet. *Place Brand Publ Dipl* 8(4):311–328
- Anholt S (2004) Foreword. *Place Brand Publ Dipl* 1:4–11
- Baker B (2007) *Destination branding for small cities: essentials for successful place branding*. Creative Leap Books, Portland
- Balakrishnan M (2008) Dubai—a star in the east: a case study in strategic destination branding. *J Place Manage Dev* 1(1):62–91
- Balakrishnan M (2009) Strategic branding of destinations: a framework. *Eur J Mark* 43(5–6):611–629
- Bernoff J, Li C (2008) Harnessing the power of the oh-so-social-web. *MIT Sloan Manage Rev* 49(3):36–42
- Bruhn M, Schoenmueller V, Schafer DB (2012) Are social media replacing traditional media in terms of brand equity creation? *Manage Res Rev* 35(9):770–790
- Buhalis D, Costa C (2006) *Tourism management dynamics: trends, management and tools*. Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford
- Buhalis D, Neuhofer B (2012) Everything you need to know about Internet marketing. *Ann Tour Res* 39(2):1266–1268
- Cai L (2002) Cooperative branding for rural destinations. *Ann Tour Res* 29(3):726–742
- Chaffey D, Ellis-Chadwick F, Mayer RE, Johnston KJ (2009) *Internet marketing: strategy, implementation and practice*. FT Prentice Hall, Harlow
- Chiem R, Arriola J, Browers D, Gross J, Limman E, Nguyen PV, Sembodo D, Song Y, Seal KC (2010) The critical success factors for marketing with downloadable applications: lessons learned from selected European countries. *Int J Mob Mark* 5(2):43–56
- Christodoulides G (2009) Branding in the post-internet era. *Mark Theory* 9(1):141–144
- Diaz-Luque P (2009) Official tourism websites and city marketing. In: Gasco-Hernandez M, Torres-Coronas T (eds) *Information communication technologies and city marketing: digital opportunities for cities around the world*. Information Science Reference, Hershey
- Dijck JV, Nieborg D (2009) Wikinomics and its discontents: a critical analysis of Web 2.0 business manifestos. *New Media Soc* 11:855–874
- Drury G (2008) Social media: should marketers engage and how can it be done effectively. *J Dir Data Digit Mark Pract* 9(3):274–277
- Fisher D, Smith S (2011) Co-creation is chaotic: what it means for marketing when no one has control. *Mark Theory* 11(3):325–425
- Gaggiotti H, Cheng P, Yunak O (2008) City brand management (CBM): the case of Kazakhstan. *Place Brand Publ Dipl* 4(2):115–123
- Gnoth J (2002) Leveraging export brands through a tourism destination brand. *J Brand Manage* 9(4):262–280
- Hankinson G (2001) Location branding: a study of the branding practices of 12 English cities. *J Brand Manage* 9(2):127–142
- Hankinson G (2004) Relational network brands: towards a conceptual model of place brands. *J Vacat Mark* 10(2):109–121
- Hankinson G (2005) Destination brand images: a business tourism perspective. *J Serv Mark* 19(1):24–32
- Hankinson G (2007) The management of destination brands: five guiding principles based on recent development in corporate branding theory. *J Brand Manage* 14(3):240–254
- Hankinson G (2009) Managing destination brands: establishing a theoretical framework. *J Mark Manage* 25(1–2):97–115
- Hanna S, Rowley J (2011) Towards a strategic place brand-management model. *J Mark Manage* 27(5–6):458–476
- Hanna S, Rowley J (2013) A practitioner-led strategic place brand management model. *J Mark Manage* 29(15–16):1782–1815
- Henning-Thurau T, Gwinner K, Walsh G, Greuter D (2004) Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer opinion platforms: what motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the Internet? *J Interact Mark* 18:38–57

- Ibeh KIN, Luo Y, Dinnie K (2005) E-branding strategies of internet companies: some preliminary insights from the UK. *J Brand Manage* 12(5):355–373
- Iversen N, Hem L (2008) Provenance associations as core values of place umbrella brands: a framework of characteristics. *Eur J Mark* 42(5–6):603–662
- Kahuni A, Rowley J, Binsardi A (2009) Guilty by association: image spill-over in corporate co-branding. *Corp Reput Rev* 12:52–63
- Kavaratzis M (2004) From city marketing to city branding: toward a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Brand* 1(1):58–73
- Kavaratzis M (2009) Cities and their brands: lessons from corporate branding. *Place Brand Publ Dipl* 5(1):26–37
- Kavaratzis M (2012) From necessary evil to necessity: stakeholders' involvement in place branding. *J Place Manage Dev* 5(1):7–19
- Kavaratzis M, Ashworth GJ (2005) City branding: an effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick? *Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie* 96(5):506–514
- Ketter E, Avraham E (2012) The social revolution of place marketing: the growing power of users in social media campaigns. *Place Brand Publ Dipl* 8(4):285–294
- Kerr G (2006) From destination brand to location brand. *J Brand Manage* 13:276–283
- Laws E (2002) *Tourism marketing: service and quality management perspectives*. Stanley Thames, New York
- Law R, Qi S, Buhalis D (2009) Progress in tourism management: a review of website evaluation in tourism research. *Tour Manage* 31(3):297–313
- Merrilees B, Miller D, Herington C (2012) Multiple stakeholders and multiple city meanings. *Eur J Mark* 46(7–8):1032–1047
- Moilanen T, Rainisto S (2009) *How to brand cities, nations and destinations: a planning book for place branding*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke
- Morgan-Thomas A, Veloutsou C (2013) Beyond technology acceptance: brand relationships and online brand experience. *J Bus Res* 66(1):21–27
- Morgan RM, Hunt SD (1994) The commitment-trust theory of relationship marketing. *J Mark* 58(3):20–38
- Morgan N, Pritchard A, Pride R (2004) *Destination branding: creating a unique destination proposition*. Elsevier, Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford
- Morgan N, Pritchard A, Pride R (2011) *Destination brands: managing place reputation*, 3rd edn. Elsevier, Oxford
- Munar A (2011) Tourist-created content: rethinking destination branding. *Int J Cult Tour Hospitality Res* 5(3):291–305
- Muniz AM, O'Guinn TC (2001) Brand community. *J Consum Res* 27(4):412–431
- O'Leary S, Deegan J (2005) Ireland's image as a tourism destination in France: attribute importance and performance. *J Travel Res* 43(3):247–256
- Olins W (2002) Branding the nation—the historical context. *J Brand Manage* 9(4–5):241–248
- Park YA, Gretzel U (2007) Success factors for destination marketing with web sites: a qualitative meta-analysis. *J Travel Res* 46(1):46–63
- Papadopoulos N (2004) Place branding: evolution, meaning and implications. *Place Brand* 1(1):36–49
- Persaud A, Azhar I (2012) Innovative mobile marketing via smartphones: are consumers ready? *Mark Intell Plan* 30(4):418–443
- Pryor S, Grossbart S (2007) Creating meaning on the street: towards a model of place branding. *Place Brand Publ Dipl* 3:291–304
- Roig AH, Pritchard A, Morgan N (2010) Place making or place branding? Case studies of Catalonia and Wales. In: Ashworth G, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective brand management*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 116–136
- Rowley J (2004) Just another channel? Marketing communications in e-business. *Mark Intell Plan* 22(1):24–41

- Rowley J, Bird D (2011) Online branding. In: Pattinson HM, Low DR (eds) *E-novation for competitive advantage in collaborative globalization: technologies for emerging e-business strategies*. IGI Global, Hershey, pp 122–142
- Rowley J, Hanna S (2013) One place, one brand? the elephant in the closet. Academy of Marketing Conference, Cardiff University, July 2013
- Rubenstein H (2002) Branding on the Internet—moving from a communication to a relationship approach to branding. *Interact Mark* 4(1):33–40
- Ruzzier M (2010) *Destination branding*. LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, Germany
- Schau HJ, Muñiz AM, Arnould EJ (2009) How brand community practices create value. *J Mark* 73(5):30–51
- Shang R-A, Chen Y-C, Liao H-J (2006) The value of participation in virtual consumer communities on brand loyalty. *Internet Res* 16(4):398–418
- Sigala M (2009) Web 2.0, social marketing strategies and distribution channels for city destinations: enhancing the participatory role of travellers and exploit their collective. In: Gasco-Hernandez M, Torres-Coronas T (eds) *Information communication technologies and city marketing: digital opportunities for cities around the world*. Information Science Reference, Hershey, pp 221–245
- Schmitt B (1999) Experiential marketing. *J Mark Manage* 15(1–3):53–67
- Simmons GJ (2007) I-branding: developing the Internet as a branding tool. *Mark Intell Plan* 25(6):544–562
- Trueman M, Klemm M, Giround A (2004) Can a city communicate? Bradford as the corporate brand. *Corp Commun Int J* 9(4):317–330
- Trueman M, Cornelius N, Wallace J (2012) Building brand value online: exploring relationships between company and city brands. *Eur J Mark* 46(7):1013–1031
- Tynan A, Mckechnie S (2009) Experience marketing: a review and reassessment. *J Mark Manage* 25(5–6):501–517
- Virgo B, de Chernatony L (2006) Delphic brand visioning to align stakeholder buy-into the city of Birmingham brand. *J Brand Manage* 13(6):89–96
- Yuan Y, Zhang JJ (2003) Towards an appropriate business model for m-commerce. *Int J Mob Commun* 1(1–2):35–46
- Zenker S, Braun E (2010) The place brand centre—a conceptual approach for the brand management of places. Paper delivered at 39th European marketing academy conference, Copenhagen, Denmark

# Chapter 8

## Rethinking Place Branding from a Practice Perspective: Working with Stakeholders

Julian Stubbs and Gary Warnaby

**Abstract** This chapter considers the role of stakeholders in the development of place branding, arguing that understanding who they are and the nature of their opinions about the place in question should be key determinants of any place branding strategy. After briefly considering the issue of who ‘owns’ the place brand, the chapter discusses the concept of stakeholding more generally. Using case examples from the first author’s place branding practice over many years, the range of potential place stakeholders that may exist are identified (including residents, politicians, governmental organisations, promotional agencies, infrastructure and transport providers, cultural and sports organisations, business, academic organisations and schools, and religious organisations). The chapter then discusses key issues relating to the process(es) involved in getting stakeholder commitment to place branding activities, including issues such as stakeholder workshops, shared vision and positioning, developing close relationships and having an internal brand engagement plan.

### Introduction: Ownership and the Place Brand?

One of the most important distinctions between a consumer brand and a place brand relates to ownership of the brand itself. As Clegg and Kornberger state: ‘Legally speaking, commercial brands are owned by organizations that hold the copyright over them, but who owns a city?’ (2010, p. 9). In the usual fast-moving consumer goods context of much marketing activity, ownership of the brand is clear and,

---

J. Stubbs

Up There, Everywhere, P.O. Box 100, 193 23 Sigtuna, Sweden  
e-mail: julian@uptereeverywhere.com

G. Warnaby (✉)

School of Materials, University of Manchester, Sackville Street Building, Oxford Road,  
Manchester M13 9PL, UK  
e-mail: Gary.warnaby@manchester.ac.uk

despite occasionally having issues to contend with regarding specific external factors that may negatively influence consumer perceptions (as in crisis management situations, e.g. product contamination scares etc.), the brand owner has autonomy with regard to how the brand is managed in the marketplace. Ultimately the brand owner controls all elements of the branding, marketing, selling and distribution, having full control, and full responsibility.

However, place brands are very different and much more complex. Indeed, this has been suggested as a key factor that distinguishes the marketing and branding of places from more stereotypical marketing contexts (Warnaby 2009). This difference is manifested in various ways. First, whilst all brands are made to be sold, places fulfill a variety of important functions beyond merely being sold or marketed. Places are arguably first and foremost about the people who live there, and the social relations that exist therein. Thus, places constitute the locations of jobs, education, and social care through health and welfare systems. They are where we live, work and learn. They also provide the important cultural and infrastructure needs of communities (i.e. recreation and sports facilities, cultural facilities such as museums and galleries, restaurants, shops, transport systems etc.). Various conceptualisations of what constitutes the place 'product' (e.g. Jansen-Verbeke 1986; Getz 1993) are explicit in acknowledging this complex and kaleidoscopic blend of place elements. The second area of complexity and difference is the wide range of people, groups and organisations who have a vested interest in the place's success, and crucially, a point of view in terms of how this success will be achieved (see for example, Clegg and Kornberger 2010; Houghton and Stevens 2011; Kotler et al. 1999). Moreover, the mechanisms through which place marketing activities may be planned and implemented are often characterised by complexity (Van den Berg and Braun 1999; Warnaby et al. 2002), manifested in the existence of numerous organisations, often with different specific (and potentially conflicting) remits, methods of operation, and criteria by which success is judged.

Consequently, the place marketer will most likely be working in conjunction with a large number of disparate groups and individuals, with varying levels of interest in the place brand. The identification of these various *stakeholder groups* is, therefore, one of the most critical tasks facing those responsible for place marketing and branding. Identifying who will need to be partnered with to be successful, and how to get everyone working together, will be vital. At some stage it is important to get as wide a consensus as possible on some form of vision for the place. Notwithstanding the fact that airports have been viewed as the epitome of *non-places* (see Augé 1995), in 2002 for example, the first author was involved in the re-positioning and branding of Stockholm's main international airport: Stockholm-Arlanda, which at that time was operated by *Luffartsverket* (LFV)—The Civil Aviation Authority in Sweden.

Here, the key to developing a new brand strategy was first to identify which groups had the major stake in the success of the airport and its operations. The stakeholders were not only LFV, and its various departments, but also the airlines, the airport retailers, airport tenants, the local municipality, the city of Stockholm, the national government, as well as users and residents of the adjacent area. Taking this

wider perspective of who actually has a major interest in the place or destination, it becomes apparent that no single entity has total control over the success of a place brand. Once the main stakeholders are identified, building strong relationships with (and between) each of these partners is critical in developing the right branding and marketing approach. This can be a long process. In the case of Stockholm-Arlanda, it took over a year before a strategy and new identity were developed that were felt to be appropriate for the airport, and would fit with the input and feedback received from all key stakeholder partners. So asking who *owns* the place brand is the wrong question. The right question perhaps is who has *a stake* in the place brand (and it could be argued that ultimately everyone involved with the place has a stake in its branding), and consequent to this, how do place marketers accommodate the views of what may be a very disparate set of stakeholders into the development of place brands? This chapter addresses these issues.

We begin by discussing the concept of stakeholding more generally. Using case examples from the first author's place branding practice over many years, we then identify the range of potential place stakeholders that may exist, and discuss key issues relating to the process(es) involved in getting stakeholder commitment to place branding activities. We conclude by analysing the implications for place branding practice into the future.

## The Stakeholding Concept

In an early seminal work, Freeman defined a stakeholder as 'any group or individual who can affect, or is affected by, the achievement of the organization's objectives' (1984, p. 46), and suggested that the degree to which a stakeholder feels affected by the achievement (or non-achievement) of organisational objectives, will typically be related to the perceived resource stake (in terms of time, money etc.) that has been invested.

Various ways by which stakeholders can be classified and understood have been promulgated (Mitchell et al. 1997). From the specific perspective of business organisations, classifying different types of stakeholder can arise from their perceived *characteristics*—Clarkson (1995), for example, distinguishes between *primary* and *secondary* stakeholders (with primary stakeholders being those individuals or groups who are essential to the wellbeing of the organisation, and secondary stakeholders defined as those with whom the organisation interacts but are not essential to its survival), and also between *voluntary* and *involuntary* stakeholders (with the main distinction being that involuntary stakeholders do not choose to enter into a relationship, nor can they easily withdraw their stake). Savage et al. (1991) advance a stakeholder classification system based on two key criteria, namely the potential to either *threaten* or *cooperate with* the organisation. From this, they identify four key stakeholder types: (1) The supportive stakeholder (who supports the organisation's goals and actions—i.e. the 'ideal' stakeholder); (2) the marginal stakeholder (neither highly threatening nor especially cooperative—although they

have a stake in the organisation and its decisions, they are generally not concerned about most issues); (3) the non-supportive stakeholder (high on potential threat, but low on potential cooperation); and (4) the mixed blessing stakeholder (who has an equal potential to threaten and to cooperate).

The management literature also attempts to understand and classify stakeholders through their *interactions*. Podnar and Jancic (2006), for example, identify three main levels of interaction between stakeholders and an organisation: (1) *Inevitable* interactions are the most powerful and occur with stakeholders considered essential to an organisation's existence; (2) *Necessary* interactions are important and occur with stakeholders which have less power, but retain influential associations with the organisation; and (3) *Desirable* interactions, which occur with stakeholders who have the power to influence an organisation, but with whom interaction is not a necessary component of organisational survival. Thus, organisations must tailor activities with stakeholders according to these different levels of interaction.

Clarkson (1995) argues that organisations have responsibilities and obligations towards all stakeholder groups, notwithstanding their potentially differing interests, which indeed, may be diverse (Anheier 2000; Clarkson 1995; Freeman 1984; Macedo and Pinho 2006) and contradictory (Bruce 1995; Dartington 1996). There has, consequently, been debate as to whether organisational managers can satisfy all stakeholders, or whether the satisfaction of one group inevitably comes at the expense of another (Strong et al. 2001). Given the nature of place branding outlined above, with the potential for inputs into brand development from a multiplicity of interested parties, such debates are particularly apposite. Another issue arising from the particular nature of place marketing/branding also has the potential to impact on the way(s) in which stakeholder management occurs. Central to stakeholder theory in the management literature is the notion of the 'firm'—an apparent shorthand term for the organisation which lies at the centre of a given network of stakeholder relationships. Where place branding is concerned, the potential complexity of the organisational mechanisms for planning and implementing activities makes such notions of centrality somewhat problematic. Van den Berg and Braun (1999) use the term 'strategic network' to describe those parties involved in developing and implementing city marketing/branding activities (in other words, stakeholders?). We now move to consider who the major place branding stakeholders are.

## Identifying Place Branding Stakeholders

Place brand stakeholders will come in many different shapes and sizes and will constitute a variety of governmental and non-governmental organisations. All will have their views about the place and all, to a greater or lesser extent, have a legitimate reason to be listened to. Thus, working with these stakeholder groups on an on-going basis is important and needs to be treated not as a one-off activity, but a long-term commitment. However at some point, decisions inevitably need to be made as to what needs to be done. In such circumstances, trying to please everyone in this respect is



normally not always feasible. Indeed, the inherent difficulties have been highlighted by previous research in the context of urban regeneration partnerships—for example, Peck (1995) argues that, despite variations in size, number and organisation, such partnerships usually represent a narrow range of local interests, often favouring a specific market-oriented agenda. Membership of partnership agencies can reflect ‘continuing representation of the ‘old’ power bases’ (Sadler 1993, p. 187). This potential tension and inequality in stakeholder relationships can lead to possible conflict which can cast doubts on the longevity of many such partnership agencies (Peck 1995; Peck and Tickell 1994), or alternatively, the situation whereby partnerships are built on a fragile consensus and continue to exist primarily by avoiding hard choices that may prove divisive (Bassett 1996).

However, if stakeholders have had sufficient input and feel they understand the reasons why the branding strategies have been developed in the way they have (notwithstanding the fact that it might not be totally compatible with their own specific goals), then they can still be reasonably engaged and involved. One way to facilitate this is to develop a common vision. This will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter, but the remainder of this section identifies some of the different stakeholder groups in relation to place branding, and their typical perspectives.

## *Residents*

Residents are often neglected in place branding activities (Braun and Zenker 2012; Kavaratzis 2012), and the first author has experience of being invited to work with some place branding and marketing projects where the local residents are not even included in the initial briefing. Taking into account the views and feelings of the people who live in a place is vital—as Braun et al. (2013) note, residents can play various roles in relation to place branding: (1) as an integrated part of the place brand, through their characteristics and behaviour; (2) as ambassadors, granting credibility to communicated messages; and, (3) as citizens and voters, who are instrumental in the political legitimisation of place branding.

Experience from the first author’s place branding practice, indicate that the importance of having local people, not just passively supporting, but positively engaged with, any city or place promotion or marketing efforts, cannot be overstated. Many places are under-funded when it comes to marketing (Warnaby et al. 2002), and in such circumstances the main carrier of the brand is the people who actually come from the place itself—not advertising, even when manifest in viral marketing—which, according to Baines et al. (2011, p. 746), is ‘the unpaid peer-to-peer communication of ... content (i.e. relating to a place in this context) originating from an identified sponsor using the internet to persuade or influence an audience to pass along the content to another’. Thus, having local people promote their own city, both at home and abroad, as ambassadors, is a huge asset.

Of course, in some cases residents can be indifferent, or at worst, even sceptical and obstructive to the marketing (and perceived consequent commodification) of

their *home*. A fundamental point that should not be ignored is that cities, municipalities and most other places exist for many more important reasons than simply to be marketed in some form, and that feelings of place attachment (see Hildago and Hernandez 2001) will run deep for many residents (see Hernandez et al. 2007). This could potentially result in antagonism among residents to place marketing/branding activities, especially if such activities are perceived as inadequate in terms of representing their perceptions of the place in question. Taking this into account, and having a genuine sympathy with this issue, is important for the place marketer—fully understanding the local residents' point of views is crucial when developing a place branding programme.

When conducting research with the local people of Stockholm, the first author found that locals were seemingly a little too unconcerned about their home city and their passion for talking about it. In contrast, people from Sweden's second city of Gothenburg would not only answer any questions place marketers had, but would happily continue the conversation for much longer. The majority were enthused and engaged when it came to talking about their home town. Further investigation as to why this lack of engagement apparently existed in Stockholm revealed that of its two million population, around half were not originally from the city itself, or in many cases even from Sweden. Finding some way to enthuse the inhabitants about their city therefore became an important element in Stockholm's promotion. One result was the *Stockholm Hall of Fame*. Portraits of many of the famous people who have been associated with the city are displayed as people walk through the arrivals area of the airport. The pictures not only include the obvious (e.g. ABBA and Björn Borg), but also individuals with meaning to the local populace—sporting stars such as golfer Annika Sörenstam, actresses Greta Garbo and Britt Ekland, dynamite inventor Alfred Nobel, astronaut Christer Fuglesang, and nearly a hundred more. This Hall of Fame has been in place for over 10 years and keeps developing. It has proved to be a clever and relatively low cost promotion, capitalising on the place's residents, which is also done in many other airports.

## ***Politicians***

Whether national, city or municipal, politicians are in many ways the key component in deciding the fate of a place—and its branding and promotion—for good or ill. One of the biggest issues that place marketers will have to deal with is developing a *long-term* brand strategy. Many of the best-known consumer brands have existed for decades, and arguably place *brands* should be no exception—10, 15 or 20 year perspectives should be the goal. However, political change tends to happen every 4 or 5 years in most countries and this can lead to changes in both strategies and funding regimes as far as place marketing/branding is concerned—particularly if politicians want to signal a 'change' from the previous incumbents in office. This can work against the brand's need consistency and persistence, although it is acknowledged that perceptions of many places—and the resulting positioning

in the minds of the place user—can be enduring (and indeed, the need to change existing (often negative) perceptions of a place through ‘reimaging’ activities is an important theme in the place marketing literature—see for example, Ward 1998).

Lessons from the first author’s practice indicate that a key task should be to get both sides of the political divide in agreement with the long-term brand or marketing plans for the city or place—getting their input as key stakeholders and their agreement to focus on the long-term and stick with a long-term brand and plan. Agreeing long-term visions and goals is important, and something that has to be tackled early on. Often it is more productive for the organisation or group charged with marketing the place to drive this process with the politicians and to get agreement amongst them. Sometimes in developing place branding activities the first author has had to deal with the different political groups in separate sessions, in order to prevent them becoming locked into potentially unconstructive political debate by hosting a joint meeting.

An additional issue to be considered when working with politicians (and also some non-politically appointed civil servants), is their tendency to adopt promotion messages and activities that are unlikely to alienate any groups (possibly linked to the fact that the first stakeholder group mentioned above, the place’s residents, have the ultimate sanction of not returning them to office at some point in the future if they do not agree with policies enacted in their name). Consequently, many politicians would prefer to use generalities and go for the lowest common denominator, rather than be specific or use hard-edged branding statements or positions, which may work against the development of a distinctive positioning for the place. Indeed, a major theme in the place marketing literature is the homogeneity of marketing and promotional activities (see for example, Barke and Harrop 1994; Burgess 1982; Clegg and Kornberger 2010; Eisenschitz 2010; Harvey 1987, Holcomb 1994; Young and Lever 1997). Kavaratzis and Ashworth note that a crucial element of place branding should be ‘discovering or creating uniqueness in order to improve the competitive position of the place marketed’ (2008, p. 154). However, politicians’ inclinations towards not offending important constituencies may work against this.

### *Governmental Organisations*

Another key stakeholder group will be the local city/governmental organisations that will use or work with the place brand in some way. In many respects, the services they deliver will either support the brand or potentially damage it, in that they will often be responsible for constituent elements of the place product (e.g. schools and other educational establishments, waste and energy facilities, parks, leisure facilities and cultural events, transportation and employment agencies etc.). Gaining the insights and active support of the groups who manage such activities is an important and constant process. As an example, claiming that a city is ‘green’ as part of a branding strategy will be quickly undermined if, in reality, services such as

energy or waste administration do not truly support that particular claim, and the city does not have the capability to deliver. When it comes to attracting new residents or even inward investment, a key issue could be education and schools for children. Again, if the city or municipality does not do things that support any claims that are made, the offering of the place will be undermined. Working with local governmental agencies, getting a realistic picture of why the agency can deliver and then ascertaining what is realistically achievable is extremely important.

### ***Promotion Agencies***

As noted above, one of the characteristics of place marketing/branding may be the plethora of promotion agencies within an individual place, who are actually responsible for managing (at the least, some specific aspects of, if not all) the branding/promotional activities undertaken on behalf of the city. Often in such agencies, especially if public sector-oriented, many marketing roles can be filled by people who do not necessarily have marketing skills or experience. Similarly, many general promotional consultancies have been quick to spot the opportunities of working with place marketing. These consultants and external agencies might have strong experience in other areas, but frequently underestimate the challenges and long-term nature of successful *place* branding and marketing. This raises challenges and in some instances leads to a patchy appreciation of the complexity of the issues involved. Typically the area that is most underestimated is understanding the importance of stakeholders, and working with them in more than a superficial way. Working with stakeholders is hard and demanding. However, experience suggests that it is far less work and far less demanding than launching an initiative that fails to gain their support, or fails because it has not addressed the key issues. The first author's practice suggests that developing an open and collaborative relationship between the responsible governmental department, the key stakeholder groups and any external consultants will be key in developing a successful place branding and marketing programme.

### ***Infrastructure and Transport Providers***

Many place marketing messages emphasise *location*, even when the basis for claims as to, for example, centrality and accessibility may be dubious (Burgess 1982; Holcomb 1994; Ward 1998). Kotler et al. (1999) coin the phrase 'infrastructure marketing' to describe an emphasis on those elements needed to sustain quality of life and support economic productivity (see also Short and Kim 1999; Short 1999). This is especially the case when it comes to airports, roads and rail links, which are the lifeblood of many places. If a place does not have good and easy connections, all the place marketing on earth is going to be a waste of money,

as transport infrastructure is recognised by many as an important place product element (Kotler et al. 1999). In the case of one municipality in the middle of Sweden that the first author was asked to advise about place branding, after a 6 h journey from Stockholm, in a meeting with the heads of the promotion department responsible, they wanted to know the most important thing they could do that would have an impact on their destination. They were advised to either lobby strongly to get a direct rail route from Stockholm or build an additional motorway exit from the E4 motorway, a local highway some 5 km away, and erect large signs along the whole stretch of motorway telling people about the place. Assessing the place brand's infrastructure and logistical assets and leveraging them, or even changing them if possible, are vital.

### *Cultural and Sports Organisations*

Another stakeholder group who can have a powerful effect and impact on a place brand are cultural and sports organisations. For example, a 'brand' such as Liverpool Football Club is an asset for the city of Liverpool itself, especially for football enthusiasts. Globally, Liverpool as a place is far better known than comparable cities of its size because of such assets. Making these stakeholders part of the brand building efforts, and gaining their support and insights is critical. On a smaller scale, one of the first author's municipality clients has a wide network of local sports organisations, covering a multitude of activities. When working with this brand, considerable time was spent listening to these grass-roots organisations to understand their opinions and to see how the perceived value they brought to the place could be capitalised upon.

Cultural organisations, such as museums, art galleries and music venues etc., provide a high value to residents and a potential magnet for bringing in visitors—the impact of the Guggenheim Museum on the fortunes of the Spanish city of Bilbao is well-attested in the literature (although the use of such 'iconic' architecture is not without critical comment—for more detail, see for example, Jones 2011). Too many place brands leave these assets to fend for themselves instead of using their full potential. When conducting a place audit in one particular location, the first author found that it had a large number of cultural events happening, but the various organisations responsible for these events were working in isolation. By bringing them together to market the cultural attributes of the destination in a joint effort, a far greater impact was created. Indeed, the place marketing literature abounds with studies of the impact of cultural facilities, from development of place-specific associations (see for example, Ashworth 2009), to the spectacular event, such as the Olympic Games (see for example, Ward 2010; Waitt 1999) and *European Capital of Culture* designations (Garcia 2004a, b; Richards and Wilson 2004; Sjøholt 1999).

## ***Businesses***

Local business is obviously an important stakeholder for any place. In his place branding practice, the first author generally divides local businesses into two distinct groups: those who have a direct relevance or involvement in a place brand (e.g. hotels or restaurants etc.); and those who are directly involved or dependant on the success of the place brand perhaps to a lesser extent, but who nevertheless have an interest in the health and prosperity of a place, as they probably employ many local people (e.g. larger manufacturing companies etc.). The relevance for the first group to the success of the place brand and why they should be so interested in its development, is clear, and their input provides valuable insight on the destination. The second group however, those not directly involved, are sometimes more difficult to engage. Understanding their motivation for becoming involved with a place branding initiative is important. They are often key employers in the local area and their investment can be crucial. Experience suggests that these groups have to be considered on a case-by-case basis, and a true understanding of their own objectives examined and understood to be able to fully engage them in the stakeholder process. The ideal scenario is that they become ‘ambassadors’ for the place in that they proudly promote the fact that their success as an organisation is in some way related to the area within which they are based (consistent with notions of economic clusters—see Porter 1998). In addition, the first author’s place branding experience suggests that one of the most important of the business sectors who will have a direct interest in the success of the place branding initiative will be the local real estate companies. The success of the place marketer will have a very direct impact on their business, and their viewpoint and input can be extremely valuable as they deal with the very real and measurable value of the place (although, of course, the aim of place branding goes far beyond increasing real estate values and yields).

## ***Academic Organisations and Schools***

Educational establishments, such as universities and schools, can be very important place brand stakeholders, emphasising the importance of human capital as a long-standing element of place marketing activity (Ward 1998). Ward describes universities as ‘invariably key ingredients in the post-industrial [urban] mix’ (1998, p. 189). According to Florida, they constitute ‘a basic infrastructure component of the Creative Economy’ (2002, p. 291), and as such, are ‘a huge potential source of competitive advantage’ for the places in which they are located (ibid, p. 292), in terms of both economic development (Charles 2006) and the ‘creative milieu’ of a place (Landry 2000, p. 133). Thus, academic resources and infrastructure are high on the wish list of many organisations wanting to find a new place to locate to or open facilities in. Having access to a highly educated workforce can be a real

incentive for many companies in choosing a specific location (Charles 2003), a specific factor which is part of the notion of economic clusters mentioned above.

Also of interest is having strong schools and educational establishments for the families and children of companies based in, or moving to, an area, especially those offering good international programmes for companies with international employees who have to relocate. One Nordic city the first author has worked with is particularly lacking in respect of both a strong university, as well as good international schools, and this has proved to be a real hindrance in its development plans.

### ***Religious Organisations***

In some destinations, religious organisations should also be classified as a key stakeholder and influencer group. Not only will they provide an important view of the destination that might not have been available from the more commercially oriented groups but, depending on the region, these groups can also have profound impacts on the local population, and even legislation (although it must be stressed that religious organisations within a place may not necessarily constitute a homogenous group).

In the UK, around 10–15 % of the population regularly attend religious services (Gallup 2004), and in the US a comparable figure is around 40 % (Gallup 2013). In specific places, these can constitute a significant proportion of the population, and those representing and articulating the views of their congregations can be influential stakeholders. In Sweden, where less than 5 % of the population on average regularly attend religious services (Gallup 2004), one could be forgiven for thinking this group would not be significant. However, on one particular project, in the south of the country in a traditional blue-collar employment area, the strong church-going habits and beliefs of the local population had led to stricter than normal local laws when it came to drinks licence approvals for local restaurants. The first author had been asked to consider ways of helping develop this traditional manufacturing area into one with a greater white-collar—and especially *creative class*—focus. Facilities such as restaurants, bars and social entertainment are a high priority for many in the creative class (see Florida 2002). Talking with the local religious leaders to gain their views and input as a plan was developed for making these adjustments was critical in this case.

In concluding this section of the chapter, an important point to make (and exemplified in the preceding paragraph), is the fact that the specific blend—and relative importance—of individual stakeholders who will input into the development of place branding activities in a particular place will vary. This reflects the notion of place-specificity, which has been identified as a factor which characterises place marketing and branding (Warnaby 2009), and requires those responsible for the development of place branding activities to make meaningful efforts to identify who exactly the stakeholders are, and equally importantly, to ascertain the nature of

the interactions and power relations between them (perhaps utilising some of the classificatory frameworks outlined in ‘The Stakeholding Concept’ section above) in order to create a consensus in relation to a place branding strategy. In the next part of this chapter, we consider some general lessons from practice that will hopefully optimise the effectiveness of this process.

## **Engaging Place Brand Stakeholders**

This section seeks to address the issue of once the particular key stakeholder groups in the destination have been identified, how should their input and involvement be captured. A number of issues relating to this are discussed below.

### ***Stakeholder Workshops***

Experience from the first author’s work with numerous places suggests that stakeholder workshop sessions can be extremely valuable and informative in gaining insights. These are typically designed to be short sessions, of 2–3 h, or longer sessions, of up to 6 h. Decisions made regarding the composition of workshop participants usually mixes different stakeholders together in order to get a degree of cross-fertilisation and interaction. The size of groups for such workshops varies, but typically somewhere between eight and twenty people would be normal for an individual workshop session (which is then sub-divided into smaller ‘breakout’ groups to conduct the exercise elements undertaken during the workshop). If there is a need to engage a larger group of people, two or three workshops would be run on successive days.

Workshop sessions are deliberately structured to combine some short educational elements, where attendees are taken through a particular aspect of brand or place marketing, and then more specific topics and exercises, where attendees are asked to work together to provide feedback on a particular area of interest. This could cover subjects such as visions and values, target audiences, identity, value propositions, story-telling, competitors etc. Sessions are kept short, fun and highly engaging, asking all attendees to take part in developing the feedback as well as presenting it. This last part, asking the participants to present their conclusions back to the full group, is particularly important as it stimulates a good degree of debate, discussion, and obviously disagreement at times. But by doing this, and exposing the thinking of the sub-group to the larger group, more effectively tests the strength of attendees’ attitudes and ideas, and for the moderator, quickly provides a good indication of the main issues and discussion points. Having run hundred of such workshops over the years, the first author suggests that each session develops its own dynamic, and rarely two sessions are alike. In addition to providing valuable insights and learning, these workshops importantly get the attendees enthusiastically engaged in the subject and



process—this can be one of the most important success factors for any destination. Of course, once stakeholders are engaged, the momentum must be maintained, and it is important to keep the stakeholders involved and provide constant feedback and updates on what is happening in the destination, to maintain their high level of engagement.

### *Shared Vision and Positioning*

Getting different stakeholder groups to work together, despite having very different views or opinions, is an important issue. Inevitably, stakeholders become engaged in the process either because of a genuine interest in the destination or, as is more often the case, because they have a stake in it from their own perspective, and wish to influence any future decisions or plans. Given the fact (highlighted at the very start of this chapter) that no one person or organisation owns a place brand, then these disparate stakeholders will somehow have to find common ground in order to develop a strategy for the place brand. This can present obvious challenges, but a key aspect in this is to develop a common vision for the place that supports each individual stakeholder, allowing them to maintain their own individual goals and objectives (but without descending to the lowest common denominator of generic and bland messages mentioned previously). Along with its vision, positioning goes to the very heart of any brand building initiative. Defining what you are, what you stand for and represent, and then having the supporting evidence to back it up can be the key. Developing tag lines or mere slogans is not.

The branding work carried out by the first author for the city of Stockholm is a case in point. In initial workshops with the key stakeholders there was a high degree of diversity in the goals, and a wide spread of opinion with regard to the topics that had to be discussed with a number of discrete target audiences that had been previously identified. An initial aim was to promote the city for tourism, and position it as a great tourist destination and the natural place to start a vacation in the Nordic region or to choose for a short city break. However, there was also a need to engage with a variety of business audiences, and a desire to appeal to the meetings and congresses industry, and position Stockholm as a strong venue for conferences and exhibitions. The very difficult challenge was how to appeal to all of these diverse audiences at the same time while keeping a strong, singular positioning. The city's positioning had previously been quite inconsistent, focusing first on one topic and one audience and then, as another became more important, jumping to a new topic and new audience.

The answer was found in developing a positioning strategy that enabled the city brand to more effectively communicate on all of these topics in a relevant context and maintain a consistent focus (see Iverson and Hem 2008). Thus, Stockholm was positioned as *The Capital of Scandinavia*. The city of Stockholm as a brand would thus represent the best elements of Scandinavia. Using this umbrella positioning made talking across the wide range of subjects relating to the place brand much

easier, whilst not unduly focusing on—or alienating—any of the individual groups of internal stakeholders that had been part of the brand development process. Finding this common ground and positioning enabled a great deal of flexibility in the individual topics the Stockholm brand needed to engage in (there were three legs to this positioning, relating to culture, business and centrality), whilst maintaining a common point of reference. This positioning strategy was somewhat contentious, with inevitable reaction from other Scandinavian cities. Finding a common vision and brand positioning is not always easy, and it takes time and energy, but can be an extremely valuable way of uniting a group of disparate stakeholders goals.

### ***Developing Close Relationships***

Notwithstanding the inherent advantages of developing a shared vision and positioning for the place brand, an obvious issue to be faced is the potential competition between the different stakeholder groups. Moreover, such competition can exist *within*—as well as *between*—particular broad stakeholder groups: for example, hotels in a destination will regard each other as competitors and are more focused on how to beat each other as opposed to promoting the destination for everyone's benefit. The most successful approach is to again find some common ground where these potential competitors can come together and genuinely work together with a common focus. Working with the destination of Sigtuna, a municipality of forty thousand people just north of Stockholm, the first author found extremely close co-operation among the different stakeholder groups and a willingness to work together to help the destination's overall situation. Part of the overall brand positioning was a focus on environmental activities, and in the hotel and conferencing sector, companies that would normally view each other as competitors were willing to set aside competitive issues to work together in joint initiatives, with regard to this environmental aspect of their operations in order to contribute to an overall positioning strategy for the place in this respect.

### ***Internal Brand Engagement Plan***

One of the aspects that can be easily overlooked or underestimated is brand engagement. Getting the stakeholders fully in alignment with the brand and marketing strategy and keeping them updated regularly as the situation progresses. In general, those responsible for the management of consumer brands recognise the value of internal marketing, namely, the application of marketing concepts and principles, within an organisation, normally targeted at employees with a view to encouraging them to support and endorse the organisation's strategy, goals and brands (Baines et al. 2011). If this is true in the consumer world, it is even more so

with regard to places, given the often very disparate nature of place stakeholders. Thus, those responsible for place branding need a programme of constant brand engagement, to keep key stakeholder organisations aware of the latest developments, as well as to simply remind them of the overall strategy. For many clients, the first author runs such stakeholder update sessions every 6–18 months, bringing stakeholders back around the table, to inform them of successes, failures and any changes that are needed. Often the personnel turnover in place stakeholder organisations is such that half the faces in the stakeholder groups will be new, and so a reminder of the vision, strategy, positioning and goals are needed.

## Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate the critical importance of, as far as possible, engaging all relevant stakeholders in the development and implementation of place branding activities. As noted above, the complexity of both the place ‘product’/brand itself and the organisational mechanisms for its development and management have been identified as key characteristics that distinguish place marketing and branding from other application contexts (Warnaby 2009). As a consequence, it can be argued that the successful practice of marketing will be highly place-specific. Indeed, as noted above, the tendency for very different places to develop place marketing/branding activities that are very homogenous has been advanced as a critique of place marketing practice—Eisenschitz (2010, p. 27) argues that many of the same marketing techniques are commonly used and that ‘once a formula has been adopted, then no city will have a unique selling point’. Barke and Harrop state that the convergence of place marketing activities ‘could be argued to be a significant step in the ‘commodification’ of place’ (1994, p. 99). In the process of developing a distinctive brand position, which Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008) argue is important in successful place marketing/branding, fully understanding the blend of stakeholders and the interactions and power relations between them—which will vary markedly from place to place—is critical. As examples from the first author’s practice outlined above show, developing this understanding can be time-consuming and require much effort, but is worth it in the long run.

This also reflects the fact that, as mentioned in other chapters in this book, place products and brands are *co-created* by those within a place—in other words, by those who have a ‘stake’ of some kind in it. Such a perspective links back to the notion of a place itself as something created and produced by people and their actions, either as individuals or within the context of organisations. This draws explicitly on the social constructionist and phenomenological dimensions of place outlined by Cresswell (2004), and as far as place brands are concerned, suggest that those responsible for their development and management should be open to the widest possible stakeholder participation in terms of brand development.

## References

- Anheier HK (2000) Managing non-profit organisations: towards a new approach. Civil society working paper 1, London School of Economics. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/pdf/cswp1.pdf>. Accessed 21 July 2008
- Ashworth GJ (2009) The instruments of place branding: how is it done? *Euro Spat Res Policy* 16 (1):9–22
- Augé M (1995) *Non-places: an introduction to supermodernity*. Verso, London
- Baines P, Fill C, Page K (2011) *Marketing*, 2nd edn. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Barke M, Harrop K (1994) Selling the industrial town: identity, image and illusion. In: Gold JR, Ward SV (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 93–114
- Bassett K (1996) Partnerships, business elites and urban politics: new forms of governance in an English city? *Urban Stud* 33(3):539–555
- Braun E, Zenker S (2012) I am the city—thus I own the brand! The problem of ownership in place branding. Paper presented at special session on rethinking place marketing: the necessity of marketing to citizens, European Marketing Academy Conference, Lisbon, May
- Braun E, Kavaratzis M, Zenker S (2013) My city—my brand: the role of residents in place branding. *J Place Manage Dev* 6(1):18–28
- Bruce I (1995) Do not-for-profits value their customers and their needs? *Int Mark Rev* 12(4):77–84
- Burgess J (1982) Selling places: environmental images for the executive. *Reg Stud* 16(1):1–17
- Charles D (2003) Universities and territorial development: reshaping the regional role of UK universities. *Local Econ* 18(1):7–20
- Charles D (2006) Universities as key knowledge infrastructures in regional innovation systems. *Innovation* 19(1):117–130
- Clarkson MBE (1995) A stakeholder framework for analysing and evaluating corporate social performance. *Acad Manag Rev* 20(1):92–117
- Clegg SR, Kornberger M (2010) An organizational perspective on space and place branding. In: Go FM, Govers R (eds) *International place branding yearbook 2001: place branding in the new age of innovation*. Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, pp 3–11
- Cresswell T (2004) *Place: a short introduction*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford
- Dartington T (1996) Leadership and management: oedipal struggles. *Leadersh Organ Dev J* 17 (6):12–16
- Eisenschitz A (2010) Place marketing as politics: the limits of neoliberalism. In: Go FM, Govers F (eds) *International place branding yearbook 2001: place branding in the new age of innovation*. Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, pp 21–30
- Florida R (2002) *The rise of the creative class ... and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life*. Basic Books, New York
- Freeman E (1984) *Strategic management: a stakeholder approach*. Pitman, Boston
- Gallup (2004) Religion in Europe: trust not filling the pews. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/13117/Religion-Europe-Trust-Filling-Pews.aspx>. Accessed 26 Mar 2014
- Gallup (2013) In U.S., four in 10 report attending church in last week. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/166613/four-report-attending-church-last-week.aspx>. Accessed 26 Mar 2014
- García B (2004a) Cultural policy and urban regeneration in Western European cities: lessons from experience, prospects for the future. *Local Econ* 19(4):312–326
- García B (2004b) Urban regeneration, arts programming and major events: Glasgow 1990, Sydney, 2000 and Barcelona, 2004. *Int J Cult Policy* 10(1):103–118
- Getz D (1993) Planning for tourism business districts. *Ann Tourism Res* 20:583–600
- Harvey D (1987) Flexible accumulation through urbanisation: reflections on postmodernism in the American city. *Antipode* 19(3):260–286
- Hernandez B, Hidalgo MC, Salazar-Laplace ME, Hess S (2007) Place attachment and place identity in natives and non-natives. *J Environ Psychol* 27:310–319

- Hildago MC, Hernandez B (2001) Place attachment: conceptual and empirical questions. *J Environ Psychol* 21:273–281
- Holcomb B (1994) City make-overs: marketing the post-industrial city. In: Gold JR, Ward SV (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 115–132
- Houghton JP, Stevens A (2011) City branding and stakeholder engagement. In: Dinnie K (ed) *City branding: theory and cases*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp 45–53
- Iverson NM, Hem LE (2008) Provenance associations as core values of place umbrella brands: a framework of characteristics. *Eur J Mark* 42(5/6):603–626
- Jansen-Verbeke M (1986) Inner-city tourism: resources, tourists and promoters. *Ann Tourism Res* 13:79–100
- Jones P (2011) *The sociology of architecture: constructing identities*. Liverpool University Press, Liverpool
- Kavaratzis M (2012) Participatory place brands: stakeholders in the foreground. Paper presented at special session on rethinking place marketing: the necessity of marketing to citizens, European Marketing Academy Conference, Lisbon, May
- Kavaratzis M, Ashworth G (2008) Place marketing; how did we get here and where are we going? *J Place Manage Dev* 1(2):150–165
- Kotler P, Asplund C, Rein I, Haider D (1999) *Marketing places Europe: attracting investments, industries, and visitors to European cities, communities, regions and nations*. Financial Times Prentice Hall, Harlow
- Landry C (2000) *The creative city: a toolkit for urban innovators*. Comedia/Earthscan, London
- Macedo IM, Pinho JC (2006) The relationship between resource dependence and market orientation: the specific case of non-profit organisations. *Eur J Mark* 40(5/6):533–553
- Mitchell RK, Agle BR, Wood DJ (1997) Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Acad Manage Rev* 22(4):853–886
- Peck J (1995) Moving and shaking: business elites, state localism and urban privatism. *Prog Hum Geogr* 19(1):16–46
- Peck J, Tickell A (1994) Too many partners ... the future for regeneration partnerships. *Local Econ* 9:251–265
- Podnar K, Jancic Z (2006) Towards a categorisation of stakeholder groups: an empirical verification of a three-level model. *J Mark Commun* 12(4):297–308
- Porter ME (1998) Clusters and competition: new agendas for companies, governments and institutions. In: Porter ME (ed) *On competition*. Harvard Business School Press, Boston, pp 197–287
- Richards G, Wilson J (2004) The impact of cultural events on city image: Rotterdam, cultural capital of Europe 2001. *Urban Stud* 41(10):1931–1951
- Sadler D (1993) Place marketing, competitive places and the construction of hegemony in Britain in the 1980s. In: Keams G, Philo C (eds) *Selling places: the city as cultural capital past and present*. Pergamon Press, Oxford, pp 175–192
- Savage GT, Nix TW, Whitehead CJ, Blair JD (1991) Strategies for assessing and managing organisational stakeholders. *Acad Manage Exec* 5(2):51–75
- Short JR (1999) Urban imagineers: boosterism and the representation of cities. In: Jonas AEG, Wilson D (eds) *The urban growth machine: critical perspectives two decades later*. State University of New York Press, Albany, pp 37–54
- Short JR, Kim Y-H (1999) Globalisation and the city. Longman, Harlow
- Sjøholt P (1999) Culture as a strategic development device: the role of ‘European Cities of Culture’ with specific reference to Bergen. *Euro Urban Reg Stud* 6(4):339–347
- Strong KC, Ringer RC, Taylor SA (2001) THE\* rules of stakeholder satisfaction (\*timeliness, honesty, empathy). *J Bus Ethics* 32(3):219–230
- Van den Berg L, Braun E (1999) Urban competitiveness, marketing and the need for organising capacity. *Urban Stud* 36(5–6):987–999
- Waitt G (1999) Playing games with Sydney: marketing Sydney for the 2000 Olympics. *Urban Stud* 36(7):1055–1077

- Ward SV (1998) *Selling places: the marketing and promotion of towns and cities 1850–2000*. E. & F.N. Spon, London
- Ward SV (2010) Promoting the Olympic city. In: Gold JR, Gold MM (eds) *Olympic cities: city agendas, planning and the world's games*. Routledge, London, pp 1896–2016
- Warnaby G (2009) Towards a service-dominant place marketing logic. *Mark Theory* 9(4):403–423
- Warnaby G, Bennison D, Davies BJ, Hughes H (2002) Marketing UK towns and cities as shopping destinations. *J Mark Manage* 18(9/10):877–904
- Young C, Lever J (1997) Place promotion, economic location and consumption of the city image. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 88(4):332–341

# Chapter 9

## Rethinking the Roles of Culture in Place Branding

Gregory J. Ashworth and Mihalis Kavaratzis

**Abstract** Within place branding, culture is assumed to create positive associations with the place and is, therefore, used extensively. However, we argue that the understanding of culture is inadequate and leads to disconnection between local culture and the place brand instead of synergy. A critical evaluation of the methods commonly used reveals that culture is misinterpreted and oversimplified. The article discusses significant tensions relating to the dominance of certain cultural elements and actors and the effects on identity. The relationship between place brands and culture is reconstructed through a re-appreciation of its complexity and reciprocity. Synergies are found in understanding culture as a process of meaning production and in clarifying the role of place brands (as cultural phenomena themselves) in culture.

### Let's Get 'Cultured'

The July 2014 issue of the Lonely Planet Traveller magazine features a 'mini guide' on 'Culture in Crete' stating that as "the birthplace of Europe's first advanced society, the Minoans, this Greek island has ample ancient treasures to explore alongside unique customs and historic traditions". The guide goes on to highlight three museums (the Iraklio Archaeological Museum, the Nikos Kazantzakis Museum in Myrtia and the Lychnostatis Museum near Malia) and three archaeological sites (Knossos, Gortyna and Lato). Additionally, three arts festivals are suggested (music in Paleohora and Houdetsi and arts in Iraklio). The interpretation of culture in this guide to Crete then focuses—perhaps rightly so—on two elements,

---

G.J. Ashworth  
Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands  
e-mail: g.j.ashworth@rug.nl

M. Kavaratzis (✉)  
School of Management, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK  
e-mail: m.kavaratzis@le.ac.uk

namely history and the arts. This is an interpretation common in development policies and tourism advertising but it is not the only possible interpretation. While the arts and local history are unquestionably parts of culture, are these the only or main expressions of culture? Or are they the ones that make places ‘visitable’ (Dicks 2010)? Why not other aspects of culture? The renowned Cretan Cuisine or the laid-back Cretan life style are not mentioned in this instance although they are arguably integral parts of ‘culture in Crete’. Meanwhile, in Metro’s ‘Escape’ column (Monday, 9/6/2014, p. 34) there is an article with the normative title ‘Get cultured in Gdansk’, Poland. The brief article starts with clarifying that Krakow is the cultural capital of the country but there “the museums are teeming come mid-summer”, so we are advised instead to “go to the chilled-out Baltic seaport of Gdansk for [our] culture fix”. Two museums in the city are then suggested as the places where we can get ‘cultured’, namely the Amber Museum and the National Maritime Museum. Here then culture is interpreted as exhibitions in museums. On the same page, there is another article titled ‘Art attack in Seville, Spain’, which starts stating that “Seville, with its galleries, gardens and churches, is a divine place to disappear for an arty summer break”. This is rather unexpected as gardens and churches would easier be related to the wider term ‘culture’ rather than the more narrow term ‘the arts’. It is two galleries that are then suggested (the Andalusian Centre of Contemporary Art and the Museo de Bellas Artes). Paradoxically, the article goes on to state that “[f]ood is an art form, too, in Seville” so we are advised of the best places to “feast on tapas”. So the interpretation of ‘the arts’ here is actually much wider than the interpretation of ‘culture’. This chapter starts with the position that understandings of culture in destination and place branding are limited and do not embrace the full complexity of culture. We question the extent to which culture-based branding tactics add to and re-create local culture. Furthermore, as Miles (2007, p. 1) also states, “different uses of such terms indicate different assumptions”. We aim at exploring these assumptions and clarifying what they mean for place branding.

## **A New World of Culture**

Throughout this book, like many others on the contemporary management of places around the world, there has been a persistent theme of how actors, whether governments, enterprises or individuals, could or should react to and use the changing contexts within which they operate. There are new objectives: what we expect places to do and to be, new means of communication that are shaping different relationships between individuals, as citizens and consumers, and the place-bound services and amenities they experience and use. There are new ideas of governance linking citizens and their governments, and, most evident in the field of marketing, new competitive arenas, both within a place and between places, on scales from the local to the global, within which a confusing mix of intensified competition and increasingly necessary cooperation between places alternate. Both the context,



whether the physical and spatial setting or the economic and social environment, and the processes of change are producing outcomes not anticipated, most notably in the changing cityscape and the wide range of urban experiences. Whether intentionally or not, several of the diverse processes set in motion under contemporary urban governance are underlined by an attempt to “re-image” the city thus linking to the domain of place branding. Several common threads are evident in place branding methods and have been examined in the literature, including the chapters in this book. Many of these common threads, none of which could be classified as trends with clearly understood trajectories leading to envisaged outcomes, are woven around culture in some form or another.

Of course, culture is a notoriously slippery word whose many definitions depend on who is defining it and for what purposes. Suffice it to note that culture is a ‘shared system of meaning’ (e.g. McEwan 2005) that enables us to make sense of the world and communicate that sense to others through a myriad of ‘cultural’ practices that are shaped by and simultaneously constantly shape culture. Thus it is a socially defined, and constantly redefined (e.g. Rodseth 1998), process rather than an outcome. It is not our intention to embark upon the near impossible task of considering all definitions of culture in cities and all their ramifications relevant to place marketing and place branding. For our limited purposes, “... rather than attempting to uncover its essence, we should rather focus on the ways and contexts in which it is used” (Meethan 2001, p. 115). Our intention is to focus upon the intersection of culture and place, namely the simpler task of how culture, in some of its manifestations is increasingly being used in the construction of place brands. The simple point here is that culture is necessarily strongly related to place-branding, specifically how a place sees itself and wishes to be seen by others. However, the simplicity of the relationship breaks down once the variety of objectives and outcomes and of techniques and processes is examined in detail.

Two different but related approaches encapsulated in the ideas of ‘culture in cities’ and ‘cities of culture’ are often conflated. There is a set of activities that most people and their governments recognise as being ‘cultural’, which have been produced and consumed in cities almost since cities began. However, previously culture, in this sense of artistic production was seen as a merit good, something to be indulged in from surplus production once more basic needs had been satisfied. Whereas culture in the contemporary city is being also treated as a resource, not least for economic development. In the city of culture, “economy and culture were once regarded as ‘self’ and ‘other’; they are now seen to be linked, co-constitutive or seamlessly intertwined” (Castree 2004, p. 206).

## **Rethinking the Justifications and Rationale**

There is nothing especially novel in focusing upon culture in place management, as either cause or result, input or output. Culture has two obvious characteristics that have always rendered it attractive to governments. First, as all peoples have always

needed to understand their worlds and communicate this understanding, the resource is both enduring in time and ubiquitous in space. Secondly it is pervasively accessible, frequently as a public good, in both an economic and social sense. It is a resource that is omnipresent and easily available and from the moment when people felt the need to impose government upon themselves, it has been automatically and inherently involved. Given these advantages, small wonder then that culture is used as an instrument in the fulfilment of many management objectives (Ashworth and Kavaratzis 2014). It is, therefore, not the fact that culture is used but how it is used that is worth studying and contains the novelty.

The traditional use of culture was the provision of consumable aesthetic experiences through artistic production and performance simply because people enjoy some pleasure or satisfaction from this. In this sense culture is ‘the best that man can produce or feel’ (Arnold 1869/1925) and is defined as having no use beyond itself as ‘art for art’s sake’. The idea can be extended from the individual to the place with culture in some form as public amenity enhancing the experience of the place and adding value to it as a location in which to live, work, recreate or visit. A quite different view is to treat culture as a resource rather than a consumable. As Kearns and Philo have noted (1993, p. 3),

[c]entral to the activities subsumed under the heading of selling places is often a conscious and deliberate manipulation of culture in an effort to enhance the appeal and interest of places, especially to the relatively well-off and well-educated workforces of high-technology industry, but also to up-market tourists and to the organisers of conferences and other money-spinning exercises.

The creative industries take their place alongside or more often as a replacement to other productive industries (Kunzman 2004) producing marketable cultural products. The ‘creative city’ (Landry 2000), considered in more detail later, is not only consuming culture, it is self-consciously producing it. This is linked to but different from the link between culture and the idea of the ‘creative class’ (Florida 2002). Here the word ‘creative’ has shifted its meaning from the production of cultural products to inventive and enterprising individuals innovating new ideas in fields beyond the traditional artistic. The link is twofold: first, such people, regarded as exceptionally spatially mobile, are attracted to places containing the opportunities for cultural experience in the original sense and secondly by their very presence they create a market for such experiences thereby attracting other, often ‘non-creative’ activities. Additionally, culture is linked to the major economic and social activity of tourism both contributing directly as a resource in the creation of artistic experiences consumed by tourists—either as the prime reason for their visit or as ancillary *divertissement* during their visit as is generally understood by the term ‘cultural tourism’—as well as contributing in a broader sense to the generalized place ambiance within which many place-products, whether ‘cultural’ in the first sense or not, are generated for tourist consumption. Finally and combining all of the above, culture both in the sense of artistic production and characteristic way of life becomes an expression of local identity, whether un-self-consciously

conferring the quality of uniqueness upon a place and its inhabitants or deliberately as a promoted attribute distinguishing this place from its competing neighbours.

In summary, culture provides consumable often marketable aesthetic experiences, it functions as a resource for economic activity, both directly by attracting cultural tourists and indirectly by attracting activities often with little direct culture content, it attracts a so-called ‘creative class’ as environmental amenity and finally culture expresses the identity of a locality to itself and the world. Even such a brief and incomplete summary of the roles of culture in places reveals not only multiplicity but difference. There is often an unexpressed assumption that the simultaneous use of culture in different ways for different purposes will be somehow mutually supportive of each other whereas in reality there are as likely to be incompatibilities and even contradictions. Even when all may be contributing to evolving place brands, it may not necessarily be the same brand.

## **The Instruments**

It can be asserted with some confidence that we now know how culture can be used in the branding and re-branding of places. In the course of the last 20 years or more, place management authorities have developed, originally through risk taking and experiment, and subsequently through best practice exchange, a tool-box of instruments that are widely familiar. Indeed it is this very familiarity that has encouraged an almost automatic, unthinking application of such instruments, regardless of the specific contexts and local objectives, as a deceptively easy route to success. There are three techniques that are used invariably, namely signature structures, event hallmarking and personality association.

### ***Signature or Flagship Structures***

The idea of governments using buildings to express their existence and their ideologies and policies to themselves, their citizens, the rest of the world and posterity is so irresistible as to be commonplace in most historical epochs. The adjective ‘signature’ suggests an expression of unique individuality so that the architecture by its distinctiveness and even notoriety rather than its aesthetic quality, announces the existence of a unique place. The adjective ‘flagship’ conveys the purpose of such structures as more than accommodating various functions but through their very notable and memorable existence to make clear statements about the character and policies of the authorities that erected them. As Dicks (2003, p. 1) describes, “[t]hrough heavy investment in architecture, art, design, exhibition space, landscaping and various kinds of redevelopment towns, cities and countryside proclaim their possession of various cultural values”. In practice such structures may be historical or contemporary, even futuristic, in design. All are intended to be noticed but the

content of the message is different. Historicism states that the place is enduring and traditional while futurism states that it is daringly *avant-garde*. Among the first cities to erect a major public building to house cultural objects, using an arresting original design by a 'star architect' (Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano), was the Paris 'Centre Pompidou' art gallery on the Beaubourg in 1977. Other cities noticed the instant publicity, and its messages of commitment to culture and to experimental originality, rapidly followed until the erection of such a new museum or gallery in some eye-catching style had become something of a cliché, with 'Beaubourging' becoming an obvious and universally applicable strategy thus failing in its primary objective of notability.

Because it is unlikely that the complex character and multiple aspirations of a city can be expressed in a single building whatever its striking physical and aesthetic qualities, signature building has often been extended into the shaping of entire districts. The signature of the city is conveyed through the ensemble of related buildings, spaces and streetscape elements, including signage, paving, street furniture and not least the labelling of the district. The objective is not just a coherent unity in design but the expression of statements about the place as a whole to insiders and outsiders. The two most usual assertions are, 'we are old/historic', or 'we are cultural' depending on whether the district is based upon the preservation and re-creation of historic forms, as in the now classic 'heritage conservation area' or upon the presentation and consumption of cultural experiences through theatre or museum districts. Such signature cultural districts (see Evans in this volume for a detailed analysis) are intended to reflect upon the city as a whole beyond the immediate neighbourhood, even in, or perhaps especially in, cities whose main activities and image have little to do with culture (an obvious case being the *Museumufer* in Frankfurt am Main where the city is declaring that it is more than just a centre for financial services).

### ***Event Hallmarking***

Cultural events have been hosted in and by cities for almost as long as there have been cities. The relevance to place branding lies in the addition of the adjective 'hallmark', that is qualities involved in the staging of the event contribute to the place brand of the city as a whole. Such a contribution may be no more than demonstrating to citizens and to the wider world that the place has the technical organisational skills and political commitment to successfully stage such events. Secondly, as well as asserting its existence and competence, the place acquires importance depending of course on the importance of the event staged. Only thirdly does the place benefit from association with the content of the event. Events could be political, sporting or commercial as often as cultural in which cases the content has little to offer to the place brand but with a cultural content there are a number of potentially beneficial associations. These could be the longevity and continuity of cultural production, the contemporary cultural creativity of inhabitants or the

appreciation, consumption and patronage of the arts. In short, we have a long history of cultural production, we are culturally creative and we are a cultured people. It is doubtful if all three can be claimed simultaneously and often a choice has to be made between using such events as an effective stimulus for encouraging a local cultural creativity or showcasing the place as a patron of global cultural production to the world. The extent of the availability of such potential benefits depends on scale and continuity ranging from small one-off cultural events for local consumption to regular mega events for global markets in places branded as festival cities (Edinburgh, Salzburg, Stratford, Bayreuth etc.) whose brand and much of whose local economy, depends upon their staging of regular festival events for export rather than for locals.

Although almost all places stage cultural events, with various justifications, and a few places have been remarkably successful in benefiting, in the ways suggested above, from such events. In reality it should be remembered that most cities, stage cultural events as a civic service for the satisfaction of citizens' leisure-time alongside libraries, parks and swimming baths with little concern for the potential contributions of the event to the place brand. The evidence of the impact of major events on the local cultural scene is scarce and contradictory. Quinn (2006) concluded from a number of Irish cases that festivals may increase tourism, generate some local revenues and even contribute to place recognition. However, 'city authorities tend to disregard the social value of festivals and to construe them simply as vehicles of economic generation' (Quinn 2005, p. 927). Van Aalst and van Melik (2011) however concluded that the evidence of a link between festivals and the host city are at best weak, confined to a limited part of the population and often effectively non-existent. Even if there is an interaction between a global event and local culture, Boland's (2010) concern is that the former will overwhelm and change the latter into a globally more comprehensible and acceptable pastiche.

### ***Personality Association***

As individuals are unique a place in search of uniqueness has only to associate itself with a named individual to acquire this characteristic. Furthermore the various associative attributes can be transferred from the nominated individual to enhance the place in some way. It is in this sought for transference of associations from person to place, that the branding lies. As all places have a history and can thus lay claim upon some person, whether historical or mythological, this ubiquitous and free resource seems to offer an easy, universally available and well-trodden route to successful branding and there are numerous well documented cases (Ashworth 2010; Giovanardi 2011; Scaramanga 2012). However, there is a check list of attributes leading to success or at least avoiding failure. First, the personality selected should be widely known or at least capable of being popularly promoted in the targeted markets and the link between person and place should be feasible and credible. Secondly, the association should be sustainable over time. Celebrity status

is necessarily transient and celebrity endorsement has a short lived impact. Cultural fashions change and the popular appreciation of artists, styles or periods waxes and wanes and history is constantly reinterpreting the reputations of its personalities. A link once seen as effective and beneficial may become less effective, less relevant and less beneficial as fashions change. Thirdly, and although obvious, an often overlooked condition is that the personal attributes transferred to the place should enhance or reinforce the desired brand. It should convey associations that have a contemporary value to the brand being created. Notoriety is not enough. Nottingham may have won the contest of the popular imagination to claim Robin Hood but apart from recognition it is not clear what attributes of the myth (defiance of authority, redistribution of wealth, theft?) are being transferred.

### *The Example of Salford*

An example that seems to match all of the conditions above would be the post-industrial town of Salford. Here economic collapse, physical dereliction and resultant deep seated negative place image, among outsiders but also residents, were countered by a regeneration strategy in which culture, expressed through both past artistic production and contemporary architecture and design, together with the heritage associations of the quite recent industrial past and above all locality were the central components of the Salford Quays development. This redeveloped the former now defunct Salford Docks (the change of name from 'docks' to 'quays' is itself part of the rebranding) begun in the 1990s. Its centrepiece was the *Lowry Centre*, (opened in 2000) named from and displaying the works of the local painter of industrial Salford, but housed in a striking contemporary building and including a mix of cultural and entertainment facilities, including a theatre and restaurant. The traditional cultural theme was continued in the *Imperial War Museum North*, designed by celebrity architect Libeskind (opened 2002) but the wider links with creativity, entertainment and speciality retailing were introduced into the functional mix through *Media City UK* (housing the BBC), the *Lowry Outlet Shopping Mall* and cinema, Sports Centre and new office and residential properties. The design is self-consciously contemporary but the nomenclature (*Grain Wharf*, *Merchants' Quay*, *Labrador Quay*) echoes the industrial past. Clearly this case uses art, both historic and *avant-garde*, a heritagised industrial past serving contemporary purposes and acting as a backdrop to contemporary shopping, entertainment, and sporting activities together with an eclectic mix of strong local association with globally recognised cultural players. It also needs stressing that the rebranding is only an element, albeit a central one, in the development strategy which depends heavily upon investment in infrastructure (especially the *Metrolink* tram) and both public and private real estate. Although all the components of the successful use of culture within a rebranding exercise seem to ensure an automatic success in place rebranding, it must be remembered that the success stories are heavily outweighed

by the failures and replication elsewhere, without the particular time and place conditions of Salford, does not promise the same results. This leads us to consider the pitfalls of culture-based city rebranding.

## Rethinking the Instruments

All the practices described above, attempt in one way or another to display the particular city's cultural offering in an alluring and, to a large extent, glamorous manner, an effort linked to significant potential gains but not free from dangers. A formal designation involving several of the techniques reviewed above that illustrates the potential and pitfalls of using culture to achieve branding objectives is the 'European City (after 1999 'Capital') of Culture' title of the European Union. This epithet bestowed now (2014) on 50 cities, seems to offer national and international recognition of cultural excellence both past and present, expressed in increased tourism visitation, stimulation of local cultural consumption and networks of production, all for the little cost of recognition and exploitation of what already exists. Each element of the triad, local culture, local self-image and the local economy seem all to be almost effortless winners. This in itself explains the often fierce competition among cities for the award and the accompanying high local expectations it evokes (Hakala and Lemmetyinen 2013). Indeed an evaluation of the impacts bestowed on recipients over the years can identify cities for which their year of cultural fame seems to have been a defining moment in their wider development and marks their entrée into the elite group of world cultural capitals. Although any such evaluation has a large subjective element there is a consensus among commentators that Glasgow (1990), Dublin (1991), Cork (2005) and Essen (2010) fall into a category of clear winner. However even more numerous are major cities whose national and international position was never in doubt (e.g. Athens 1985, Paris 1989, Copenhagen 1996, Krakow 2000) and the accolade contributed next to no additional benefit. Finally, there are cities for whom the award was based not upon recognition of what already existed but upon an optimistic hope that the designation would stimulate its own justification in new cultural activity. In many instances (e.g. Antwerp 1993, Thessaloniki 1997, Reykjavik 2000, Sibiu 2007, Pécs 2010, Maribor 2012) it did not and the expectations of the city managers, citizens, visitors and the observing world were not fulfilled, leading at best to no change and at worst to frustration and disappointment. It should be remembered that the stimulation of culture is not the goal, nor is it often especially important for increased cultural consumption in such cities. The goal is to stimulate wider urban development, principally through its value in shaping and propagating an improved place-brand both outside the city and even more important as a self-branding exercise aimed at creating a new local self-perception and élan. This will only work when the brand can deliver on its promise and the city actually deserves wider recognition as a result of changes that have already occurred.

More generally, culture-based place branding might turn into a gamble if its pitfalls are not considered. Practical experience from place after place that has attempted it, allows a careful consideration of the significant risks involved. We discuss these risks below in two overlapping strands.

### *The Risk of Planned Success*

The dangers now becoming evident, stem largely not from the chance that the rebranding will fail but that it will be successful. If, for instance, the place is successfully associated with a historical personality, the resulting anxiety is that the diversity and depth of local cultures is lost: Salzburg becomes monopolistically synonymous with Mozart, Liverpool with the Beatles and Nottingham with Robin Hood. Thus places may become imprisoned in single episodes of their long history and particular expressions of their diverse local culture at the expense of all the rest. The stronger and simpler the brand association the more likely it is to be successful but also the harder it will be to change in response to changing fashions. There may be more to Pamplona than 'bull running', more to Volgograd (Stalingrad) than a battle and more to Memphis than Elvis Presley but attempts to change or even diversify such strong brands would be difficult, if not impossible. Attaining notability or even notoriety in this way appears easy and if it is easy then everywhere, with the necessary financial resources, can do it, then everywhere may try, which contradicts the original intention of creating distinctiveness. Imitation, or as place managers are more likely to put it, importing best practice from elsewhere, reduces the impact as a pioneering originality becomes a well-trodden path. This is most evident in the competition to erect the world's tallest, most unusually shaped or curiously located building. Each new structure will sustain its impact for only a few years before being surpassed by another. The durability of the signature effect of an Eiffel Tower or a Sydney Opera House is the rare exception rather than the universal rule. The dangers of what could be called 'Guggenheiming' are beginning to be appreciated (using the exemplar of the 1997, Frank Gehry designed well-known Guggenheim museum in Bilbao (see Gomez and Gonzalez 2001; Evans this volume). The strategic objective was to aid the economic regeneration and image transformation of the economically weak and decayed industrial city of Bilbao by means of first making a clear statement to both its citizens and the world that the city existed and is to be noticed and secondly that it is committed to 'culture' as support for that existence and reward for that notice. The results is that the originally stated strategic objective has not, or at least not yet as the time elapsed allows, been achieved with an economic revitalization of the city and realignment of its identity (Evans 2006) nor has it stimulated much local cultural creativity (Ashworth and Kavaratzis 2014) beyond that directly linked to the museum and in its immediate vicinity (Evans, this volume). Tactically it has been successful in generating a flow of short stay tourists, specifically to the museum. However as a rebranding exercise it has been almost immediately successful, to the extent that



mention of the town now immediately evokes the museum. ‘The key point is that the model is believed to be effective and thus acts as a talisman supporting the self-esteem of residents and a place image attractive to exogenous investment’ (Ashworth and Graham 2012, p. 587). Unsurprisingly therefore it has thus been continuously emulated elsewhere (see the many cases described by Evans in this volume). Success in achieving the strategic objectives depends largely upon the existence of actual or potential local synergies in the economy or culture of the city enabling it to profit from such a development. The irony is that such success is most likely in cities already possessing such synergies and thus in least need of a new, direction changing impulse.

### *The Risk of Unplanned Fragmentation*

With all these instruments, the overall danger is treating them in isolation from each other and from other measures. For instance, in organizing events and festivals, ranging from Mega-events such as the Olympic Games to small local festivals, local authorities find a seemingly effective way to reinforce and project a cultural image of their place. We would argue, however, that, like any strategy put in the service of branding the place, such activities need to be guided by clear strategic directions (Kavaratzis 2011) and their effects need to be considered not only in economic terms (Garcia 2005). What is often encountered in practice is the attempt to organize a multitude of different events in the place choosing from an infinite list of choices: smaller festivals along with larger festivals; one off events along with series of regularly organized events; events covering all art forms; events based on the place’s cultural past along with others that focus on progressive artistic production; events focusing on ‘high culture’ such as opera or classical music along with festivals of popular culture to name a few. The critical question that has been raised is whether this type of ‘all events go’ strategy is effective in creating or reinforcing a cultural place brand (Kavaratzis 2011). A further question relates to the purpose of these events. Are they used as a means of promoting local cultural development in order to work towards the future of the place’s culture, as a means of establishing local cultural features in order to preserve and strengthen a cultural past of the place or as a means of attracting external audiences in order to foster tourism development? Can a single event or the array of staged events work towards achieving all these goals?

In general, it is unlikely that any application of a single technique will be effective. Such activities need clear strategic direction (Ashworth and Kavaratzis 2014) and are not ‘quick fix’ solutions to entrenched long term problems. They work effectively in combination with each other and with other policy measures as part of a long term strategic effort. The success stories related here and in the literature are often misleading through the very evident nature of the success, encouraging simplistic assessments and over optimistic imitations. Barcelona did not change overnight from a hardworking harbour and textile manufacturing town

to a vibrant city of culture as a result of the discovery and promotion of Gaudi alone. Neither did what Gibson and Stevenson (2007) named the ‘Glasgow model’ turn a depressed industrial city into a city of culture through its fortuitous designation as European City of Culture in 1990 (Richards and Wilson 2004; Quinn 2005, 2006). In all such cases change both functionally and in image was already in progress for many years and the intervention whether in design, association or event, worked as a catalytic culmination of much that had already occurred and as a trigger for much that occurred afterwards. It was not the change in brand, dramatic as it was, that reversed the fortunes of the place as much as the changes in the place that powered the changing brand. It confirmed and popularised an already evident if unpublished success.

## **Rethinking Culture, Branding and Creativity**

The essential contradiction stemming from much of the discussion above is that a place is both an entity whose meaning is interminably being renegotiated through its culture in response to social and political change, within and beyond it, but also is a commodified and marketable product. These continuous, common processes result in two quite different coexisting outcomes. On the one hand the search for the distinctive whether for external competitive advantage or internal citizen identification would seem to stress a unique individuality, while on the other hand the similarity of the forces, reactions and objectives would seem to tend towards the homogeneous and generic. The resulting contradictions are not resolved in a self-conscious, agreed consensual compromise but result in the tangle of inconsistencies and paradoxes that typify the reality of most places. Inevitably places developing a brand that in the first instance distinguishes them from their neighbours and competitors, will seize upon the cultural and historical characteristics of the locality, searching through the personalities, events, customs, myths and relict structures of the past and present for the distinctive. Local cultural expression, whether as art or way of life, is thus both a favoured instrument and an objective. This use of locality on an extra-local scale has led to the envisaging of the existence of a dichotomy of local/global, assumed to be exclusive categories of people with necessarily opposing interests, who each lay exclusive claim to the same culture. The accusation of appropriation is based on the assumption that a local culture already in existence for local purposes is ‘hijacked’ (Kavaratzis and Ashworth forthcoming) by global interests for their own purposes to the detriment or exclusion of those who originally produced it. This accusation of misuse is based upon four charges relating to how that culture is used.

The first charge against the use of culture in place branding is that such use views culture as an existing entity to be quarried for immediate consumption ‘as artefact rather than as process’ (Rantisi and Leslie 2006, p. 374) operating over the longer term. Secondly, it fails to understand, or to have any interest in understanding, how cultural artefacts, events and practices acquire their meaning.

Du Gay et al. (1997) argue that there is a ‘circuit of culture’ with five facets, whose interaction is essential to the understanding of its meaning, namely, how is culture represented, how does it relate to social identities, how is it produced, how is it consumed and how is its use regulated. Place branding considers only one part of this circuit, namely representation. Thirdly, the production of marketable cultural products is undertaken by what Evans (2001) called a ‘cultural production chain’, whose phases include inspiration, production, circulation, delivery and reception. Each of these phases requires different and distinctive infrastructure, skills, technology, transport, which results not least in favoured locational spatial patterns. Branding, however, is interested only in the result, not the long chain that produced it. Fourthly, the mechanistic view of culture as a place bound resource that can be manufactured and managed on demand, usually though an application of the techniques mentioned earlier, takes the view “of culture as a detectable and distinctive variable” (Brewis and Jack 2011, p. 234) rather than an organic, collective, dynamic and on-going processes (Brewis and Jack 2011). Branding views culture as a place asset: something the place *has* rather than something the place *is* (see Ortner 1973; Smircich 1983). The consequence of such thinking is that if the place *has* little (or inappropriate) culture then more (or more appropriate) culture can be manufactured.

At the core of much local misgiving and distrust, which may be expressed in indifference, resentment or resistance, to the imposed brand is encapsulated in posing the simple question ‘whose culture is it?’ The question itself is loaded with assumptions about culture, its nature and the ownership claims made upon it. A brand communication favours the spectacular and the immediate to capture attention and then simplicity and brevity to convey the message. It is therefore easily accused of a selectivity that reduces a complex multifaceted local culture to a unifaceted, clichéd, blandness. Diversity is reduced to uniformity, depth to superficiality and authenticity to speciousness. The constraints imposed by the necessity to communicate are magnified by the need to communicate with quite different markets while using the same message. Seizing the attention and transferring some instantly understood meaning simultaneously to potential investors, entrepreneurs, tourists or residents requires reducing the content to its simplest in which all complexities or distractions of meaning have been filtered out, leaving a residue, which may be no more meaningful than ‘I amsterdam’. ‘BeBerlin’ or ‘totally London’. We also need to be aware that culture is very commonly oversimplified in place branding. What often happens is that the place’s culture is instrumentalised for the purposes of branding the place through, for instance, festivals that are a single-faceted simplification of the variety that culture always includes. This is not only ineffective place branding but also a mistreatment of a very sensitive notion. Furthermore, it actually destroys the raw material that it attempts to work with.

Finally, as culture-led regeneration remains a popular strategy and the notion of creativity is strongly linked to place re-branding, it is worth re-stating that a major part of the problem is the fact that culture is treated as if separate from the conditions of its production (Miles 2007). Similarly, creativity seems to be treated as a symbol that floats above the city rather than being a constitutive element of social

life within it. If creativity is “a way of getting rid of rigid preconceptions and of opening ourselves to complex phenomena which cannot always be dealt with in a strict logical manner” (Landry and Bianchini 1995, p. 10) then the ‘creative city’ is a city capable of redefining itself beyond a simple re-labelling as creative. This is perhaps what is missing from current practice and exchange of best practices leading to what Miles (2007) describes as models of cultural renewal being sold through cultural industries consultancy regardless of localised conditions. As Ind and Todd (2011, p. 48) note,

in the wake of the ideas proposed by Richard Florida (2002), the idea of creativity has been conflated with a specific creative class. As a consequence, cities have jumped on the bandwagon that has encouraged managers to think in similar ways as to how they can position their brands by encouraging or managing creativity. Yet creativity does not need to be the property of a creative class nor used in an instrumental way to move a place up a league table of desirability.

The same authors continue to assess that the role of place brand managers becomes not to manage creativity itself but to manage *for* creativity. This demands innovation and creativity in the culture of planning and place branding as strategies for urban change. Healy’s (2004) distinction between three meanings of creativity is helpful here. First, creativity is linked to innovation and the search for the ‘new’, placing value on the “capacity to draw in new ideas from outside and link them to the specifics of local situations” (Healy 2004, p. 89). Secondly, creativity addresses the dimensions of urban dynamics emphasising the importance of the creative endeavour as enriching human existence, going beyond material benefits and profit and demanding a “very different appreciation on the part of funders, building regulators, land use planners and impact assessors” (Healy 2004, p. 90). Thirdly, creativity can be seen as a process of creating a new product, whether a “new urban locale, a new market niche, a new governance practice” (Healy 2004, p. 90). The important suggestion of Healy (2004) is that creativity suggests a new governance mode; one that goes beyond definitions of what a city should be like and encourages innovation and an “evaluation culture which focuses on learning new approaches and new practices” (Healy 2004, p. 90).

## Concluding Remarks

We have undertaken above a summary examination of the uses of culture within place branding and have attempted to raise significant warnings. The question, ‘can culture be harnessed in the service of place-branding?’ is passé because the literature is now full of cases answering with a confident and self-evident affirmative and because place managers now accept that this path to assured success is easy, obvious. The rethinking is necessitated not by the subsequent question of ‘how should it be done?’ as by ‘what are the wider consequences of doing it?’

The only lesson of global experience is that there is no universally applicable model, no set of reliable and predictable instruments and no certain successful outcome.

Elsewhere, we have suggested that the brand should be used as resource for people to construct their culture (Kavaratzis and Ashworth forthcoming). The implication for place branding is that this changes the role of the place brand manager. Traditionally, the task is to define the city's culture, attempt to persuade that this definition is the correct, authentic or most expedient one and provide its 'content' in order to make it a legitimate branding statement. Perhaps it is better to think of the task as highlighting the many facets of a city's culture and facilitating their interaction through a multitude of channels. Kornberger (2014) uses the (conveniently art-related) metaphor of the brand manager as a gallery curator who does not produce content but makes editorial decisions on themes, inspirations and quality. "Similarly, the brand manager's role would not be to produce content but to put the means to tell their own stories in the hands of the consumers" (Kornberger 2014, p. 189). In this sense then, the rethinking of the roles of culture in place branding undertaken here leads us to usefully rethink our place brand management culture.

## References

- Arnold M (1869/1925) *Culture and anarchy: an essay in political and social criticism*. The Macmillan Company, New York
- Ashworth GJ (2010) Personality association as an instrument of place branding. In: Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 223–233
- Ashworth GJ, Graham B (2012) European cities: culture and economy. In: Stone D (ed) *Oxford handbook of post-war European history*. Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (2014) Cities of culture and culture in cities: the emergent uses of culture in city branding. In: Haas T, Olsson K (eds) *Emergent urbanism: urban planning and design in times of systemic and structural change* (forthcoming). Ashgate, Aldershot
- Boland P (2010) Capital of culture—you must be having a laugh! challenging the official rhetoric of liverpool as the 2008 European cultural capital. *Soc Cult Geogr* 11(6):627–645
- Brewis J, Jack G (2011) Culture: broadening the critical repertoire. In: Alvesson M, Bridgman T, Willmott H (eds) *The oxford handbook of critical management studies*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 232–250
- Castree N (2004) Economy and culture are dead! Long live economy and culture! *Prog Hum Geogr* 28(2):204–226
- Dicks B (2003) *Culture on display: the production of contemporary visitability*. Open University Press, Maidenhead
- Du Gay P, Hall S, Jones L, Mackay H, Negus K (1997) *Doing cultural studies: the history of the sony walkman*. Sage, London
- Evans G (2006) Branding the city of culture the death of city planning? In: Monclus J, Guardia M (eds) *Culture, urbanism and planning*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp 197–213
- Evans G (2001) *Cultural planning: an urban renaissance?* Routledge, London
- Florida R (2002) *The rise of the creative class and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life*. Basic Books, New York

- Garcia B (2005) Deconstructing the city of culture: the long-term cultural legacies of Glasgow 1990. *Urban Stud.* 42(5/6):841–868
- Gibson L, Stevenson D (2004) Urban space and the uses of culture. *Int J Cult Policy* 10(1):1–4
- Giovanardi M (2011) Producing and consuming the painter Raphael's birthplace. *J Place Manage Dev* 4(2):53–66
- Gomez MV, Gonzalez S (2001) A reply to Beatriz Plaza's 'the Guggenheim-Bilbao museum effect'. *Int J Urban Reg Res* 25(4):898–900
- Hakala U, Lemmetyinen A (2013) Culture is the message: the status of cultural capital and its effects upon a city's brand equity. *Place Brand Public Dipl* 9(1):5–16
- Healy P (2004) Creativity and urban governance. *Policy Stud.* 25(2):87–102
- Ind N, Todd L (2011) Beyond the fringe: creativity and the city. In: Go F, Govers R (eds) *International place branding yearbook*. Palgrave, London, pp 47–58
- Kavaratzis M (2011) The dishonest relationship between city marketing and culture: reflections on the theory and the case of Budapest. *J Town City Manage* 1(4):334–345
- Kavaratzis M, Ashworth GJ (forthcoming) Hijacking culture: the disconnection between place culture and place brands. *Town Plan Rev*
- Kearns G, Philo C (eds) (1993) *Selling places*. Pergamon Press, Oxford
- Kornberger M (2014) Open sourcing the city brand. In: Berg PO, Bjorner E (eds) *Branding Chinese mega-cities*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 180–194
- Kunzmann KR (2004) Culture, creativity and spatial planning. *Town Plan Rev* 75(4):383–404
- Landry C (2000) *The creative city: a toolkit for urban innovators*. Earthscan, London
- Landry C, Bianchini F (1995) *The creative city*. Demos, London
- McEwan C (2005) Geography, culture and global change. In: Daniels P, Bradshaw M, Shaw D, Sidaway J (eds) *An introduction to human geography: issues for the 21st century*, 2nd edn. Pearson, Harlow, pp 265–282
- Meethan K (2001) *Tourism in global society: place, culture, consumption*. Palgrave, Basingstoke
- Miles M (2007) *Cities and cultures*. Routledge, London
- Ortner SB (1973) On key symbols. *Am Anthropol* 75(5):1338–1346
- Quinn B (2005) Arts festivals and the city. *Urban Stud* 42:927–943
- Quinn B (2006) Problematising 'festival tourism': arts festivals and sustainable development in Ireland. *J Sustain Tourism* 14:288–306
- Rantisi N, Leslie D (2006) Branding the design metropole: the case of Montréal, Canada'. *Area* 38:364–376
- Richards G, Wilson J (2004) The impact of cultural events on city image: Rotterdam, cultural capital of Europe 2001. *Urban Stud.* 41:1931–1951
- Rodseth L (1998) Distributive models of culture: a Sapirian alternative to essentialism. *Am Anthropol* 100:55–69
- Scaramanga M (2012) Talking about art(s): a theoretical framework clarifying the association between culture and place branding. *J Place Manage Dev* 5:70–80
- Smircich L (1983) Concepts of culture and organisational analysis. *Adm Sci Q* 28:339–358
- van Aalst I, van Melik R (2011) City festivals and urban development: does place matter? *Eur Urban Reg Stud* 19:195–206

# Chapter 10

## Rethinking Place Branding and Place Making Through Creative and Cultural Quarters

Graeme Evans

**Abstract** Cultural and creative quarters—from historic districts to new digital hubs—feature heavily in economic development and cluster studies, but their role in place making and branding is only recently being discovered. Essentially production based, they also tend to locate in industrial areas of cities which are also the subject of regeneration and transformation. As cities seek to widen their brand offer and diversify the range of destinations to a discerning visitor and residential market (local, domestic and international), these areas, which combine work and play, represent a distinct place brand. Through city case studies from several countries, this chapter critiques the emergence of the creative quarter through organic place making and their value as a place brand in areas of the city which have not traditionally been considered a destination. How far policy and planning can support and protect these post/new industrial quarters is also discussed, including the concomitant risks of gentrification and commodification that branding can infer.

### Introduction

City branding strategies and the practice of place-making have a wide range of rationales and effects. They may inter-act or more often represent quite separate processes and operate at different macro and micro spatial scales. Cities are said to act as a kind of ‘super-brand’ implicating all the brands relating to the qualities of everyday urban life (Baumann et al. 2002). The extent to which branding is a conscious and explicit goal of urban development is also variable and often an indirect effect arising from other strategies, in part due to the essentially incremental nature of most land use and economic (as well as social and cultural) development, but also to the lack of awareness of branding as a concept and approach to city

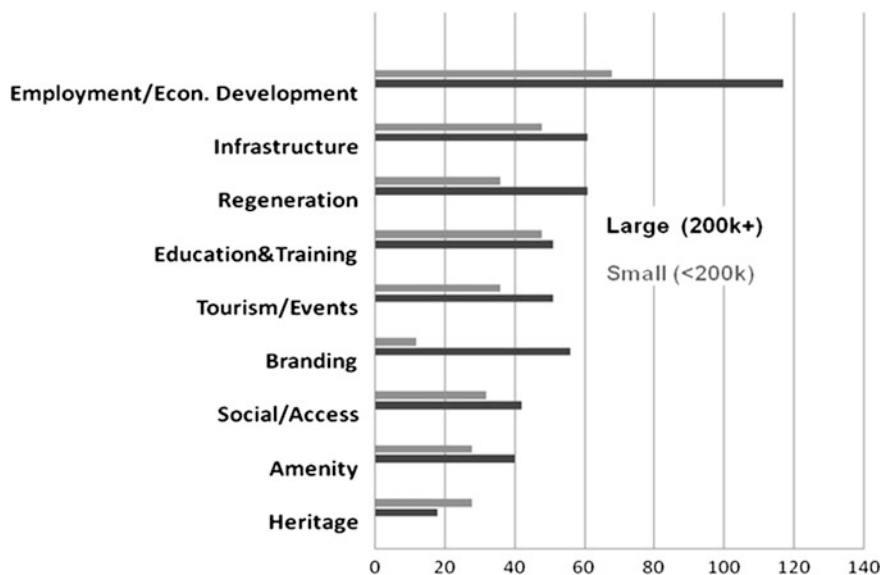
---

G. Evans (✉)  
School of Art & Design, Middlesex University, The Burroughs,  
Hendon, London NW4 4BT, UK  
e-mail: g.evans@mdx.ac.uk

development and planning (Evans 2006). The treatment of cities as commodities in need of marketing and selling themselves (Ward 1998) is commonly rationalised for example by Harvey's perceived shift from managerial to entrepreneurial urban governance (1989 and cf. Hubbard and Hall 1998) in response to the twin forces of post-industrialisation and globalisation, and the growth of a so-called network society (Castells 1996). However as Tuan earlier observed (1977), boosterism through major projects and cultural facilities has been long practiced—from pre to post-industrial times—and it would be simplistic to paint city management as a free market process at the cost of local amenities and governance. As more pluralist regime theories suggest (Stoker and Mossberger 1994), the reality is more complex with quality of life, distributive equity and local economic development still counterbalancing concerns at city level, notwithstanding city branding efforts which whilst occasionally high profile, are generally incidental to urban planning and development, outside of specific sites, events and regeneration zones.

## Creative Cities and Branding

In an international study of creative city strategies (Evans 2009a) branding in large cities ranked behind economic development/job creation, infrastructure and regeneration as the prime rationales for public investment and policies (Fig. 10.1). Investment in the built environment and area-based regeneration does of course



**Fig. 10.1** Creative city policy rationales in large and small cities (Source Evans 2012)



provide opportunities for re-branding and place-making, and as this chapter reveals, the phenomenon of economic development through area-based clusters has presented new place-brands around creative ‘production’ quarters and districts. In the case of smaller cities however, branding was the least frequent reason for investing in creative city campaigns and strategies (Evans 2012). This creative ‘meta-brand’ is perceived by smaller cities who often lack the economic, political or cultural clout to engage in city branding, as either being outside of credible reach, or rejected altogether, along with Florida’s notion of a footloose ‘creative class’ (2005) which is seen to be at odds with vernacular and endogenous culture and community creativity. Here, branding is more closely associated with heritage (Fig. 10.1), and in some cases, a more collaborative, ‘polycentric’ network of regional towns (Evans and Bagwell 2011; Evans 2012) and ‘creative regions’ (Chapain and Comunian 2010).

## From Product to Place-Branding

Models of city and place branding generally draw their references from product and corporate branding as an extension of marketing strategies that address the product life-cycle decline-renewal challenge (Butler 1980). In this sense towns and cities, and specific areas in need of ‘regeneration and renewal’ that face post-industrial or other structural socio-economic change, have been presented with the branding option as a response to the competitive-authentic city dialectic. How this is achieved and sustained is the stuff of city branding literature with results reflected in proprietorial branding and related indices, league tables and measurement formulae. Here the various models attempt to disaggregate or ‘reverse engineer’ the key factors and variables that provide the brand (marketing) mix—the elements that together present the brand value and power of a place. These combine hard and soft infrastructure with historical and cultural amenities and qualities—which themselves are hard to quantify and value—values that also vary according to the viewpoint of resident, visitor, investor, media and politician. As Zenker maintains (2011), place identity (a wider concept than the “brand”) influences the perception of the target audience, however *prior* perceptions (and their historic and contemporary sources) also influence the identity of a place as seen both internally and externally, and these are often reinforced through city marketing images of urban landscapes. In urban space, and therefore in place-making efforts, the ‘social production’ that Lefebvre observed (1974) also stresses the essential experiential nature of the relationship with our everyday environment, and our identification with discrete places and spaces. In this sense we do not “use” space or our urban environment as “consumers” (e.g. of branded products), but we experience it individually, productively (i.e. work) and collectively, albeit with diminishing influence over the (re)construction of the public spaces we inhabit.

The topic of interest in this chapter is that of the urban quarters that have been recreated and appropriated through branding and city marketing strategies, which

present particular urban experiences. In city branding models, the cityscape (or ‘urban landscape’) is characterised in several ways: as ‘place physics’ (Anholt 2006); and ‘spatial picture’, as distinct from specific amenities and historical and cultural facilities such as theatres, museums and parks (Grabow 1998). Kotler et al. (1999) prioritise design (‘place as character’) as distinct from ‘infrastructure’ and ‘attractions’ in their place improvement and marketing approach, whilst Ashworth and Voogd (1990) first proposed a ‘geographical marketing mix’ to capture the ‘whole entity of the place-products’ (Kavaratzis 2005, p. 336) with ‘spatial-functional’ measures one of four instruments in this mix. Infrastructure also typically includes transport systems and facilities, hospitality and increasingly connectivity, with the latter used as part of city promotional strategies in ‘smart’ cities such as Seoul as well as in digital highways and “free wifi here” zones. However, despite the physical imagery and changing skylines strongly associated with city and place branding and destination marketing (Hauben et al. 2002), it is interesting to note that in Zenker’s (2011) analysis of 18 place branding studies (2005–2010) architecture, buildings and city spaces were largely absent in the brand elements cited (‘physical’ or ‘built’ environment and ‘architecture’ as ‘positive asset’ are mentioned in three studies). The surveys on which these studies were based tended to focus on generalised or intangible associations (culture, historical, ‘buzz’ etc.) rather than specific physical or spatial attributes. This is in part self-fulfilling however, since the survey methods used were all text-based questionnaires with no use of visual aids or images as prompts or references, or any ranking of specific buildings and sites. It would be unlikely if a brand awareness study of Bilbao ranked ‘art museums and galleries’ as its key element (it has several), whereas Gehry’s Guggenheim Art Museum building would dominate the rationale to visit and in city brand awareness (Plaza et al. 2013). In city branding, the design(er) prefix indicates the strength of a particular architectural city identity (and legacy), for instance ‘Gaudi Barcelona’, ‘Mackintosh Glasgow’, along with the more recent (and thus less diversified) ‘Guggenheim Bilbao’. In practice, these cultural representations are often identified with and clustered in particular areas and quarters of the city (Fig. 10.2).

The remainder of this chapter will therefore critique the changing place of the urban quarter in city branding strategies and place identification, including the extent to which city brands rely on both pre-existing spatial and physical assets and the extent to which new/adapted buildings and quarters have helped to create or reinforce place brands (Evans 2009b). First a typology of the forms by which city development manifests itself through urban design and quarters are summarised, with notable examples. This is followed by more detailed cases of urban cultural and creative quarters that have emerged over time, or that have undergone dramatic or significant redevelopment—and which have been used to create or extend brand image and identity.

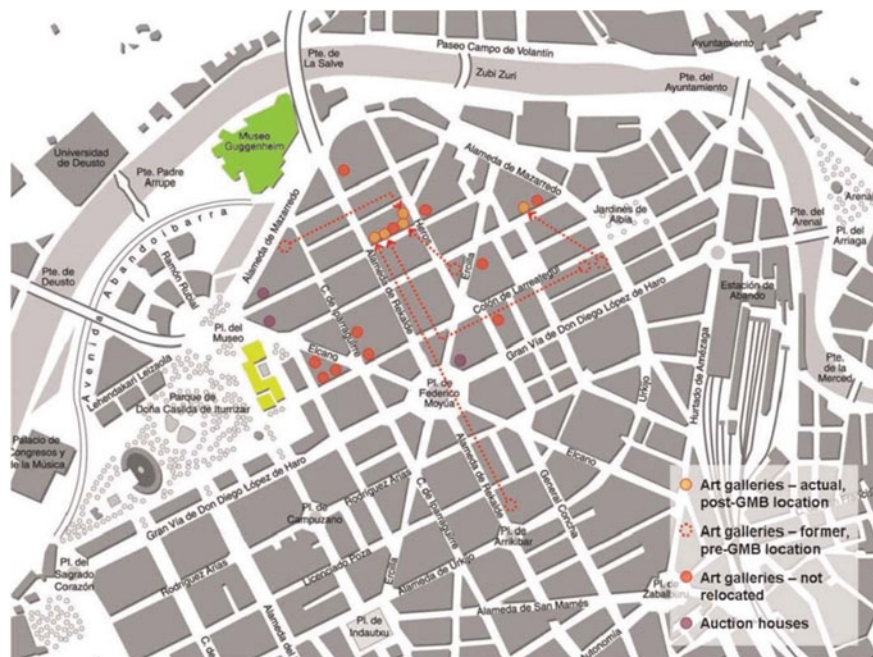


Fig. 10.2 ‘Guggenheim Bilbao’ gallery cluster (Source Plaza 2009)

## Branded City Landscapes and Place-Making by Design

The physical place-branding efforts of cities—national and regional capitals, historic and heritage towns and now smaller and peripheral cities (Evans 2012)—appears to have been following a familiar path of two types of intervention in the urban environment. These are not exclusive and one can feature in the other, and vice versa notably in mega-event and regeneration project sites:

1. Iconic architecture—new and refurbished buildings, e.g. cultural facilities, public buildings, mixed use developments (e.g. Brindley Place, Birmingham), offices/towers; shopping malls; transport interchanges; public art/installations; extensions of historic sites (e.g. Acropolis, Athens).
2. Urban design and quarters—public realm improvements; parks and open spaces/squares; cultural, heritage or creative quarters; transport and routes/trails; area-based cultural, housing and mega-event-led regeneration.

Whilst their impact may seem similar, particularly where these engage in international architecture, design and brand marketing strategies, this takes place as part of a trajectory that is both particular, often long term and gradual, and therefore received and interpreted and experienced differently in different locations and through different planning and socio-cultural systems (Evans 2009a). Although

incremental development is the norm, punctuated by major building and urban design projects (e.g. transport: air, road, rail, bridges; major regeneration zones), city extensions and occasionally new cities and urban settlements do provide the opportunity for ‘zero-base’ city identity-building. In this case, the rationale and identity is still largely set by political or commercial imperatives. For example Brazil’s new capital Brasilia built in a climatically inhospitable region, and deliberately breaking from the post-colonial capital Rio to mark and celebrate a Corbusian ‘Radiant’ city through appropriately modernist architecture, grand public buildings and public spaces (Dekker 2000). Several Arab states also vie against one another, drawing on their diminishing oil funds to diversify their economies through culture and tourism and join the international art establishment. An example is Abu Dhabi’s Guggenheim and Louvre franchises in a newly created cultural district Saadiyat Island, designed by Gehry and Nouvel respectively—this ‘cultural cluster’ will also house the Zayed National Museum designed by Foster as part of a \$27 billion development.

Aside from these extreme cases of ‘place-making’, urban extensions to overcrowded historic core city centres also require a discrete identification, that is a part of or even separate from the existing city, both to justify public investment, attract new residents and businesses. In some cases this may be presaged by regeneration-led mega-events or the opportunity to experiment with design and building styles without (or at least minimising) conflict with the existing morphology or vernacular style. Examples include the Ørestad extension to Copenhagen; London’s 2012 Olympic Park/Village (open to the public in 2014); Barcelona’s Extension—site of ‘Universal Forum EXPO’ 2000; and Shanghai’s 2010 EXPO site (Fig. 10.3). In contrast to the urban sprawl seen in American and Chinese cities for instance, these extensions still retain the potential for place making and sub-regional branding within the overall city brand, not least through mega-events.

The literature on iconic building projects is now extensive (cf. Ponzini and Nastasi 2011; Glendinning 2010; Foster 2011) and whilst their brand impact and significance is still under-developed and surprisingly less considered in city branding literature (Dinnie 2011) they do represent the most visible manifestation of city branding. On the other hand, the less iconic urban design and place-making

**Fig. 10.3** Russian Pavilion, Shanghai EXPO 2010  
(Source Author)



**Table 10.1** Forms of urban design and quarters

Spatial form	Key types	Examples
Urban design	Squares, routes/avenues, parks/trails, pedestrian zones, public art, wayfaring	Centenary Square (Birmingham); La Villette (Paris); Olympic Park (London); High Line (New York), Barcelona waterfront
Ethnic quarters	Area/street-naming, signage, gates, street furniture, festivals	'Chinatowns', 'Curry Miles'; Banglatown (East London); Arab Monde and Musee du Quai Banly (Paris); Little Portugal (Toronto)
Heritage and cultural quarters	World heritage sites, heritage quarters and historic sites, arts districts/culture parks	Saltaire (Bradford); Lace Market, (Nottingham); Distillery District (Toronto); Kreuzberg (Berlin); Hua Shang Culture Park (Taipei, Taiwan); 789 Art district (Beijing)
Creative industry quarters	Artist/crafts studios, managed workspaces/incubators, digital media/techno parks	SoHo 'Loft living' (New York); Liberty Village, (Toronto); Digital Shoreditch (East London); Amsterdam Noord; Eagle Yard/Adlershof, (Berlin); Sheffield cultural industries quarter

associated with established and emerging cultural and creative quarters represent a new aspect of city branding that is on one hand more organic and arguably authentic, and on the other hand more integrated with the post-industrial urban economy and therefore creative city aspirations (Evans 2009a, b). The cultural or creative quarter can thus build on symbolic and heritage legacies, and also create new destinations and experiences in areas that have not formerly been identified as places of interest to visitors, or be part of a city brand portfolios.

Urban spatial interventions that have come to reflect branding aspirations and which are adopted in city branding portfolios can be seen in several forms (Table 10.1). These are increasingly linked and are not therefore exclusive, with events and festivals spawning new (iconic) structures and quarters of various types imposing branded design and wayfaring and legibility images through signage, street furniture, banners and other markers. Open spaces including parks and squares are frequently used as focal points for events and celebrations, sculpture and other art and media installations, in some cases a rediscovery of their 'pleasure garden' past. They can also anchor cultural quarters and entertainment zones, ranging from the spectacular, permanent to the everyday and ephemeral.

## *Urban Design*

Urban design is a now common hybrid practice between architecture and planning, manifested at varying scales—from area masterplans, urban quarters to new urban

settlements, ‘villages’ and even entire cities and city extensions (Table 10.1). Not limited to buildings or single sites, urban design also focuses on street layout, mobility/transport, and development schemes also include public squares, parks and open spaces and the relationship between the built environment and the public realm. Place-making takes the more meso level urban design process and focuses design interventions at a more micro-level on specific locations and sites. Since place-making and branding is arguably the public face of the city and its projection to its residents and other dwellers, urban design has gained more significance in city branding in providing welcoming and attractive places and in creating local destinations that together make up the ‘geographical marketing mix’. Indeed, since building development is primarily a private/commercial activity (by landowners, developers), public space is one of the few areas on which city and local authorities can influence the quality and primary usage—a role and power that is also diminishing as privatisation of public space expands through shopping and office malls, and even street activity such as café culture and sponsored space. Spatial design in this sense is important in ensuring both the effective flow and distribution of people whatever their purpose (resident, commuter, tourist), and in creating public spaces for gatherings, formal events and for marking key nodes and quarters of the city. The redesign of public squares has thus been prioritised in many city centres, as part of urban renaissance, traffic/pedestrianisation and place-making schemes, for example Trafalgar Square, London; Times Square, New York; Centenary Square, Birmingham; Peace Square, Sheffield, and Plein 1992, Maastricht (Fig. 10.4)—to name a few (Corbett 2004).

Indeed there are very few cities and large towns that do *not* have urban design schemes underway or planned, in response to policies, demographics and land use change reflecting shifts in residential, retail and commercial markets and to aspirations towards more sustainable ‘compact’ cities on the one hand, and economic development towards service and creative industries and related tourism activity on the other. City branding is effected by all of these, but particularly by the distinctiveness and qualities offered by the physical environment in all its forms, and by venues and destinations which should add value through the content and experience they provide.



**Fig. 10.4** Centenary square and new library, Birmingham; Peace Square, Sheffield; Plein 1992 and new library, Maastricht (*Source* Author)



## *Quarters*

A particular device in urban design and planning is the spatial concept of *quarters*—dividing areas of the city into discrete and congruent zones that reflect their land use, morphology, economic and social mix. This is resonant with older medieval times, where quarters specialised in particular crafts, cultural or ethnic activities, often outside of city/guild controls e.g. as in Clerkenwell and South Bank areas of London (Evans 2004). According to new urbanist Krier: ‘the urban quarter is a city-within-a-city ...it contains the qualities and features of the whole ...provides for all the periodic local urban functions within a limited piece of land ...and are zoned block-wise, plot-wise or floor-wise. An urban quarter must have a centre and a well-defined readable limit’ (1995, in Montgomery 2013, p. 339). This can build on pre-existing areas notably historic or heritage, business or university districts, retail and entertainment zones. From a countervailing perspective, one of the leading architect-planners Rem Koolhaas claims that: ‘progress, identity, the city and the street are things of the past’ (1995, cited in Glendinning 2010, p. 114). So cities are faced with the individualism and ‘karaoke architecture’ (Evans 2003) promoted by international firms, or a plan-led approach to urban design—a conflict perhaps between ‘starchitect-led’ city branding (Ponzini and Nastasi 2011) and place-making (Moor and Rowland 2006).

As well as a planning and development mechanism allowing for effective zoning of a city, quarters are also used as an area regeneration, conservation and economic development strategy. The latter includes destination and tourism management, which encompasses area branding around heritage, entertainment or other visitor-oriented districts (Roodhouse 2010). Conservation areas have been used since the 1960s to protect and preserve the built environment and to a lesser extent, usage and occupation, with historic building and heritage listing or grading used by planners and governments to preserve heritage assets. This includes national and international heritage status with World Heritage Site inscription awarded to a growing list of cultural sites worldwide. Urban heritage sites seeking and gaining listing are also increasing as the value of and imperative for conservation intensifies. City branding therefore looks to the historic stock and heritage sites as key elements in visual imagery and brand associations. Entire cities claim ‘historic’ or ‘heritage’ city status (Evans 2010), where this represents a significant part of its identity, but in reality the heritage element is only a minority of the built environment and local economy. Attempts to ‘modernise’ the image and identity of historic cities into ‘creative class’ cities (Florida 2005) can also create a backlash from residents (Evans 2009a) and undermine an established brand, such as in Bruges 2002 ‘European Capital of Culture’ (ECoC) where a clear conflict emerged between resident and tourist identification with its historic character—the very reason that ECoC and hallmark event status was granted in the first place—and the bid organiser’s motivation to change the image and cultural profile of the city as a competitive cosmopolitan place (Boyko 2008; Evans 2014).

**Fig. 10.5** High line, New York (Source Author)



In terms of branded landscapes, heritage quarters are also the subject of further development, both to extend the quarter and modernise its facilities. For example the final ‘fourth grace’ mixed-used development in Liverpool’s World Heritage Site; the modernisation of The Lighthouse Grade I-listed Macintosh building, Glasgow; and the long term, if less than authentic, ‘completion’ (due 2026) of Gaudi’s *Sagrada Família* in Barcelona. Reclaiming industrial heritage has also benefited cultural institutions with newly renovated iconic buildings that add to the branded cityscape, but also to urban amenity through regenerated open space and routes. For instance, New York’s greening of the meat-packing rail freight route—the *High Line*—has created a newly accessible green route above the streets of the city and significantly opened up the district to leisure/night time activities. This has added a new attraction, an evolving amenity for residents, and a new image for this part of the city (Fig. 10.5).

A particular heritage area with both symbolic and cultural economic significance is the *Ethnic Quarter*—designating a residential/commercial/cultural neighbourhood through its association with a migrant community—from the ubiquitous Chinatown and Jewish Quarter (or “Ghetto”), to *Little—Italy* (New York), Portugal (Toronto), Germany (Bradford), Tokyo (Los Angeles), Vietnam (San Francisco) and so on. In many cases the ‘oriental’ communities have long moved on—or were never there, e.g. *Barrio Chinois*, Barcelona—but their heritage is manifested through signage, street furniture, place/road naming and banners and residual activities such as restaurants. These are important for city branders however, since they provide an eclectic offer and diversity that the city may otherwise lack and this may also be reinforced through annual community festivals and events, e.g. Diwali, ethnic food festivals. An extreme ethnic quarter makeover is seen for example in East London’s rebranded ‘Banglatown’ (Shaw 2011), centred on Brick Lane “curry quarter” in an area that has experienced successive waves of migration and occupation over several centuries—from Methodists, Huguenots, Jews, to Bangladeshis and now young gentrifiers in this city fringe location (Fig. 10.6).





Fig. 10.6 Banglatown, East London (Source Author)

## Cultural and Creative Quarters

Although less visible than heritage and ethnic quarters, an emerging city quarter that is being drawn into the branding mix is the cultural or creative industries production district (Evans 2004, 2009b). Whilst residual cultural production has featured within heritage quarters, e.g. Rope Quarter, Liverpool; Lace Market, Nottingham; Cultural Industries Quarter, Sheffield; Bethanien Art quarter Kreuzberg, Berlin—due to the availability of cheaper and flexible industrial premises and consumption spaces (art and entertainment, cafes, clubs, street markets etc.)—the value of creative production in new sectors such as the digital economy has extended the city brand landscape. Quarters that have achieved international brand status include Digital Shoreditch/Silicon Roundabout in East London (below) and emerging digital clusters in post-industrial areas in Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris, New York. These production zones pre-occupied with generating the new social and creative media (i.e. mobile apps, video games, web services—Foord 2013) thus combine the buzz and scene associated with “cool cities”, alongside a vibrant club and cosmopolitan culture—directly addressing a young and mobile market. Their visual imagery encompasses graffiti/street art, original, large scale billboard adverts, digital displays and artworks on and around buildings—rich material for visual branding and destination marketing.

These new industrial creative hubs also use the traditional trade fair and exhibition as cultural events which transcend the sector itself, engaging in media and entertainment, fringe, showcasing and public engagement activities. Design Festivals and Architecture Biennales (Fig. 10.7) now supplement the art biennales and fashion weeks to bring visitors to production quarters, unusual venues and in some



**Fig. 10.7** London Architecture Biennale, Clerkenwell (*Source* Author)

cases permanent venue sites, emulating earlier models such as Milan’s annual Fiera and Venice’s biennale. Examples include the annual Design Mai (May) festival in Berlin and Open Studios events in London—both organised by artists and designers using mapped trails linking studios, design shops and workshops in ‘hidden’ creative areas of the city. In city branding terms these new production quarters are seldom planned or institutionally developed (attempting to do this risks just that, institutionalisation and likely failure). This leaves city branding and economic development in an intelligence role (spotting where these areas emerge) and supporting their independent development and operation through local networks, key events and joint marketing.

### **Exemplars—Established and Emerging**

The following extends the coverage of selected cultural and creative quarters in terms of their evolution and distinction (Evans 2009b), as well as lessons arising for place-makers. Examples range from historic/heritage districts and business improvements areas; redesigned public spaces/squares; established and evolving creative digital quarters, to emerging creative zones—all in their different ways, extending and reinforcing their city cultural brands and destination offer, whilst fulfilling key economic development and cultural amenity opportunities for city residents.

### *The Distillery Historic District, Toronto*

The potential symbolic and economic value of former industrial heritage buildings is now well recognised (Zukin 1995). They can provide attractive and interesting spaces to accommodate creative and cultural activity—both exhibition/entertainment and production-based. As Jane Jacobs argued: ‘old ideas can sometimes use new buildings’ (1961, p. 188). New ideas must use old buildings’. Jacobs herself had emigrated from the USA to Toronto in the late-1960s and her seminal *Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) formed the basis of her continued interest in urban design, mixed-use and the importance of a vibrant urban environment.

The Distillery District is strategically located linking the city’s downtown and waterfront areas with a mixed use/tenure neighbourhood, as promoted by Jacobs. Toronto’s Distillery District, once home to the Gooderham and Worts Distillery which finally closed in 1990 and now a national historic site, was redeveloped as a pedestrian-only village entirely dedicated to arts, culture, and entertainment. Developed by Cityscape Development Inc., the district is now home to restaurants, galleries, event spaces, lofts and condominiums, cafés, and independent retail boutiques selling creative products ranging from jewellery to furniture to photographic services (Fig. 10.8). The Distillery District also houses one of the city’s largest affordable work space developments for artists and arts organizations operated by the not-for-profit Artscape organisation (Evans 2001). After a C\$3 million renovation between 2001 and 2003, 60 tenants moved into the Case Goods Warehouse and Cannery Building. These include artist and designer-maker studios, non-profit, theatre, dance, and arts organizations (Gertler et al. 2006).

An innovative partnership in the Distillery District is the resident Soulpepper Theatre and a collaboration with the Theatre School at George Brown College. A new facility to house these two organizations, the Young Centre for Performing Arts, was opened to the public in 2006. This 44,000 ft<sup>2</sup> performing arts, training and youth outreach centre allows students and professionals to work, learn and live



**Fig. 10.8** Distillery District, Toronto (Source Author)

side-by-side, sharing work studios, rehearsal halls, wardrobe and scenic facilities. The Centre features eight performance spaces suitable for audiences of 40–500. The project founders were aware of the shortage of theatre space in the city and, therefore encourage other performing arts organizations to book the facilities for their work. The Distillery District not only provides space for arts and creativity in the city, it is also now one of Toronto’s top tourist destinations and an established visitor destination (Gertler et al. 2006). The district is also an important resource to the film industry. In the first 10 years over 1,000 films, television shows, and music videos have been filmed on location in the district.

Since re-opening, the complex has undergone substantial capital investment in upgrading and new facilities, but at the same time key anchor tenants (galleries, restaurants, retail) have vacated the site. Maintaining a diverse mix and affordability for a range of tenants has proved problematic. Meanwhile the neighbourhood has attracted new investment and dwellers with new apartment blocks and ‘condos’ under construction adjoining the heritage site. When completed, the local population will reach 2,500 which will be supplemented with further residential development in the surrounding neighbourhood. Whether this mixed neighbourhood can retain its quality and distinctive brand will remain to be seen—the next phase may see this heritage visitor district evolve to a more local destination. This also rests on its connectivity with other areas of the city, such as the undeveloped waterfront and connection to the downtown area of the city (Matthews 2010).

### *Liberty Village, Toronto*

Liberty Village is a 38 ha, inner-city mixed use site of commercial, light industrial, and residential uses (Fig. 10.9). The area was traditionally a conglomeration of



**Fig. 10.9** Liberty Village—interior and exterior (*Source* Author)

factories, prisons, and ammunitions storage that drove the industrial era, until 1858 it was the site of Toronto's Industrial Exhibition. The developer's and the City of Toronto had explicitly branded the area 'Liberty Village' and like the Distillery District, engaged the Artscape artists studio operator to create managed workspaces for arts and media firms. Today most of the Village's century-old buildings have been retained and converted into commercial spaces that house a collection of creative enterprise in digital, fashion and home furnishing design, media, advertising, high technology, printing, food and drink industries. New apartments have been created in some of the large converted industrial buildings.

Due to the strong presence of technology-intensive firms in the area, Liberty Village is almost completely wireless. For example, the Liberty Market building, one of the latest redevelopment projects in the neighbourhood, developed 300,000 ft<sup>2</sup> of commercial, retail, and studio space including a completely wireless network (a local tech company based in Liberty Village, struck a deal with the City of Toronto to wire the area). The Liberty Village Business Improvement Association (BIA) has played an integral role in protecting and promoting this creativity-rich employment area. Officially designated in 2001, it was Canada's first non-traditional, non-retail BIA, with a campus style mixed use layout rather than the high street retail strip typical of most BIAs. The LVBIA is funded by a special tax levy collected from commercial properties in the area. Businesses in Liberty Village automatically become one of the 500 LVBIA members, representing the more than 7,000 people who work in the district. The LVBIA endeavours to improve and enhance the design, safety and security features of the area. It also acts as a liaison with the community through newsletters and special events and expresses the community's voice on various issues.

Liberty Village's critical mass of creative entrepreneurs, wireless infrastructure, and reasonable rents has been a major selling feature of the area to businesses looking for modern, innovative workspaces. The village consists of over 100 properties zoned commercial or industrial and is designated an employment zone in the City of Toronto Official Plan. The City's employment zones do not allow for residential use, with the exception of artists live/work studios. Nevertheless, the Village's popularity over recent years has brought on the pressures of residential, condominium encroachment, particularly to the west and north of the village. The Liberty Village BIA has worked with the area's City Councillor and the City of Toronto's Urban Development Services to review the planning of the area in order to provide direction for future development and identify where residential development would be most appropriate. This review also considered public realm, heritage, land use, and transportation issues facing the area (Gertler et al. 2006). However as Wieditz observed: the area's makeover is supported by newspaper articles that promote the area as an "artsy loft district," a "bohemian enclave," and a "neighbourhood to live, work and play" for people who want to be close to the entertainment district and to the gentrifying Queen Street West area. With the influx of large-scale developers, it is likely that the new developments will obliterate any trace of the "artsy" and "bohemian" residents who once populated the area' (2007, p. 6).

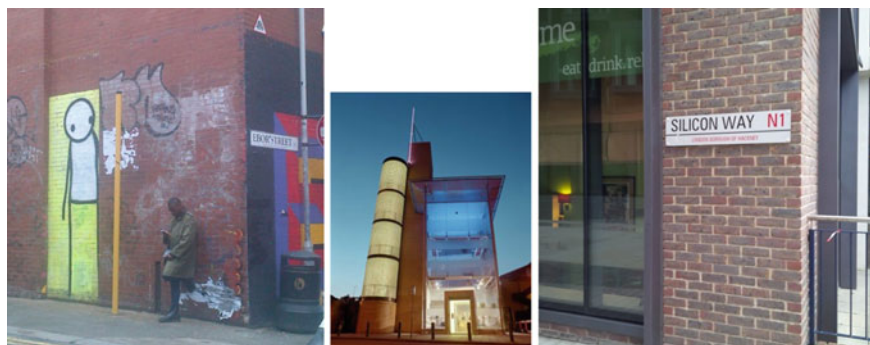


Maintaining mixed use and mixed economy therefore remains the prime challenge to these renewed urban quarters and in sustaining their distinctive brand.

### *Digital Shoreditch, London*

The pattern of technology districts adopting the prefix ‘Silicon’ has accelerated over the last decade. On the one hand this is a case of place and ‘hard branding’ (Evans 2003) through the hope value associated with emulating Silicon Valley or ‘Silicon Somewheres’ (Florida 2005), on the other, a shorthand for what is primarily a ‘soft-hardware’ version of information and technology production originally represented by hi-tech manufacturing and related R&D. Clusters that have evolved more organically, to those envisioned through government investment and development areas can be seen at various scales, both regional and highly concentrated spatial geographies. Examples include Digital Corridors (Malaysia, S. Korea), Silicon ‘triangles’ (Alpine), the sub-regional Silicon Fen (Cambridge, UK) and Silicon Glen (Scotland), to local hubs where ICT and digital firms often co-locate with creative and other advanced producer and financial services. Examples of the latter include Silicon Sentier, Paris; Silicon Allee, Berlin; Silicon Alley, New York—and Silicon Roundabout or Digital Shoreditch, in East London.

This latter creative-digital district (Foord 2013) presents an interesting city branding case, located in a city fringe area historically non-descript, with a low income/deprived resident community, essentially a working area of the city untouched by the visitor economy or more conspicuous cultural consumption (Fig. 10.10). Its cultural workspace tradition dates back several centuries to crafts (jewellery, metalwork), fashion and textile sweatshops, printing and publishing, with an established artist community occupying cheaper studio spaces. This low cost cultural economy provided crucial elements in the area’s transformation to one of the most vibrant creative and ‘tech city’ quarters in the world. This now contains



**Fig. 10.10** ‘Digital Shoreditch’—street art, accelerator incubator and newly-named ‘Silicon Way’ (Source Author)

a high concentration of new media and digital firms, alternative clubs and venues for music, art and independent retail outlets and a high concentration of “black collar” workers—an update of the black collar mine/oil worker, now representing the digital/designers and the fashion of wearing black. This profile and reputation has created a demand for hosting key design and digital events and festivals from the London Design Festival to the week-long Digital Shoreditch Festival which was first held in 2011 attracting 2,000 participants/visitors rising to 6,000 in 2012 and 15,000 in 2013. What is of particular significance is that this network of over 1,000 creative-digital firms and growing annual festival is self-organised, with no public subsidy. In this sense, the quarter ‘brand’ is owned and has been created ‘bottom-up’, leaving local and city authorities in an enabling role and ensuring through planning and zoning that the character and socio-economic mix of uses is retained. This includes in this case, developing schemes for local residents and young people to access this growing digital employment sector.

As an indication that this production district is now a “destination”, several boutique hotels have opened in recent years including the ACE hotel, the first outside of the USA, designed with materials produced locally—from specialist bricks, tiles to lighting, and with photographic references in bedrooms to the building’s music hall past. The strategic importance attached to this sub-regional cluster and its role in the new digital industries was also recognised in 2010 when the UK government designated the wider area anchored in the city fringe by this creative industries quarter, as ‘Tech City’—a swathe connecting this quarter further east to the Olympic Park, representing the physical the legacy from the London 2012 Summer Games. However, this top-down intervention in city branding through high tech economic development (see Fig. 10.1), runs counter to the organic and cultural evolution that has created the Shoreditch cluster and distinctive quarter of the city—primarily a small firm, creative entrepreneur and informal network phenomenon. The same risks and fears that undermine established cultural and heritage quarters (e.g. in Toronto above) are present here—gentrification effects though rapid rent and property valuation; the import of large firm and institutional organisations and venues; and a decline in the mixed use and diversity of the area. These are, of course, the key elements that created the attraction of these creative production quarters and that have contributed to their distinctive brand.

### *Schouwburgplein, Rotterdam*

Schouwburgplein provides an example of a city centre square designated as an important focus for cultural activities for the whole city. Its stark urban design, designed to reflect the port has been controversial. However the square’s “cool urban” image and central location has made it a popular meeting place for young people from a variety of different backgrounds. Schouwburgplein or “Theatre Square” is a large 12,250 m<sup>2</sup> square situated in the heart of Rotterdam, close to the central station and to major shopping streets and flanked by the City Theatre, the



**Fig. 10.11** Schouwburgplein at night (*Source* Author)

City Concert Hall, Rotterdam's largest film theatre complex, and a variety of cafes and restaurants (Evans et al. 2012). The square is located above an underground parking lot and is raised above street level as a result with an unusual surface made using light durable decking. It consists of a central void with most activity taking place around the perimeter in the various cultural venues, cafes and restaurants. Custom made seating is provided along one side. The square's most prominent feature is the four iconic crane-like hydraulic lights that can be interactively altered by the inhabitants of the city (Fig. 10.11). These together with the hardscape surface are designed to be a reflection of the Port of Rotterdam.

Schouwburgplein has been designed to be used as an interactive public space, flexible enough to accommodate a variety of different uses during the day, evening and different seasons of the year. By raising the surface of the square above the surrounding area, a "city stage" was effectively created for festivals and installations. Regular cultural events, including music and dance are held in the square and attract diverse audiences from across the city and beyond. During the day the ramped roof entrance to the underground garage is used for skate boarding, other areas become an informal playground or football pitch, and the seating area provides a relatively tranquil area for shoppers and workers to take a break from work or the hustle and bustle of the surrounding shopping streets and offices.

The location of the square, close to the newly renovated Rotterdam Central station, the shops and the cinema means that it is an ideal spot for a rendezvous with friends and is used as such by people from all over the Netherlands and beyond. Surveys of the users found that the square particularly attracts young people, including those from a diverse ethnic backgrounds who come to skateboard, play football, meet friends, pose, or even flirt. Being some distance from their home neighbourhoods these young migrants are away from the prying eyes of family and fellow community members.



However, mixed views are held regarding the square. Some like it because it successfully captures the hard urban character of Rotterdam or because they feel that it is open and soothing—an oasis in the city centre. Others (generally older, indigenous white Dutch people) feel that it is barren space lacking in atmosphere, and the greenery and water features that are commonly found in other squares. Young people from immigrant communities see it as a friendly place where it is easy to meet people from different backgrounds. The design of the square has nonetheless successfully captured both the modern day urban image of Rotterdam and incorporated symbolic emblems of the docks—an important part of the city's cultural heritage and formerly a key source of employment for both indigenous Rotterdammers and early immigrants. It works in terms of providing a meeting area in the city centre for those from different backgrounds and reflects the multicultural identity that is Rotterdam today. It functions well as a multi-purpose space in the centre of the city offering sufficient space for a variety of activities. It provides a quiet place to sit and chat in the day time, and a focus for a range of multi-cultural events on summer evenings and weekends. The open nature of square allows for users to be easily seen and enables those with young children to keep sight of them whilst they play on the square.

The experience of *Schauburgplein* illustrates the need for the effective management of public spaces to ensure their use is inclusive, but does not encourage anti-social behaviour. The square's location has been key to the way it is used and its role in encouraging intercultural mixing. The modern urban design has particularly resonated with young people who often feel excluded from branded consumption and heritage quarters of their own city.

### *Amsterdam Noord*

An emerging creative quarter example is the area north of Amsterdam in a former working class district separated from the centre by the IJ 'river'. Literally the back door of the city, with access behind the main rail terminus, free ferries operate 24/7 with short 5–15 min journeys across the water. Here both new build and re-use of former industrial buildings is creating a creative zone combining workspaces for ICT and media firms, a unique multi-use arts and entertainment venue 'Tolhuistuin' (concert hall, theatre, galleries), whilst several floors of the former Shell building have been occupied for dance clubs and all night events (Fig. 10.12). The iconic Eye Film Institute/Cinema new building also opened there in 2012, relocated from its former museum quarter site. Along the waterfront, also connected by free ferry, is MTV's Benelux HQ, as well as artists' workspaces in newly-converted warehouses, including a 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> hangar hosting an 'arts city' of makeshift studios.

This regenerated quarter of the city is combining cultural activity with creative industry production and entertainment, and it will be interesting to see how these will coalesce into a zone for work and play over the new few years. What this combination of entrepreneurial, institutional and post-industrial place-making does



**Fig. 10.12** Amsterdam Noord (*Source* Author) (l to r—part of eye building, former Royal Dutch Shell tower, A-Lab and Tolhuistuin pavilion)

demonstrate however, is that new quarters of a city can still emerge in areas otherwise overlooked, effectively extending the city whilst relieving pressure on over-crowded and commodified cultural and tourist districts. The relocation of cultural flagships to more diverse areas can also present an interesting strategy for the cultural planning of the city, and present a radical alternative to the increasingly sterile museum and cultural quarters that have resulted in over-concentrated, mono-cultural areas of many cities. A sign of the competitive nature of these digital clusters however, is the relocation of Google’s European headquarters from Amsterdam to London, attracted by the Tech City brand (above).

## Conclusion

Whilst creative hubs associated with former cultural and heritage quarters indicate the importance of historical and symbolic association and building types, which can transform and recreate new creative districts, it can be seen that zones can also emerge from post-industrial areas of cities that otherwise lack brand potential. These former industrial city workshop areas such as in Clerkenwell London; SoHo New York and Distillery District Toronto, thus benefit from proximity to the city centre in ‘city fringe’ locations that effectively extend the city’s visitor and cultural footprint. Planning and zoning rules are also needed in order to help protect the ‘industrial’ land and building use from higher value changes and the break-up of larger spaces for residential and commercial offices and retail development—as operates in cities such as Copenhagen and in Barcelona, as part of their creative city aspirations (Evans 2009b). For example, the designation of the Poblenou district of Barcelona’s new university-media-hitech quarter “@22” as an industrial (as opposed to services/education/housing) zone reflects its transition from a textiles production district to a new creative industrial quarter. What is clear in these

scenarios is that the new creative, media and digital industries require industrial planning and zoning protection no less than their industrial manufacturing forerunners, and that an industrial brand is no less effective than a heritage or primarily consumption based place.

As can be seen, this 'quarterisation' can in turn widen further, as new adjoining districts join the spread of regeneration and cultural redevelopment, as witnessed for example in Brooklyn, New York with the new quarters of Williamsburg, Red Hook and Dumbo—and in London's inexorable spread east towards the post-Olympics zone at Stratford. Connectivity is therefore important in creating and sustaining new branded quarters, as is a certain degree of distinction between these areas. This can be reflected in terms of legacy and historic association (e.g. place of origin branding); physically through the morphology and architectural quality and style; through ethnic or other cultural experiences, e.g. festivals, food; as well as in terms of particular cultural activities and business, e.g. speciality retail, street markets and trade fairs etc.

City branding through physical interventions and re-imaging the cityscape is evident in both incremental and radical forms, although this is generally less an act of deliberate branding, more a consequence of new-industrial development and globalisation. Larger and established cities use this strategy to enhance and extend their cultural offer, and to signal their continued growth and confidence in the future. Spatially this is also used to create images and welcoming spaces for underdeveloped zones and sites as part of place-making and festivalisation efforts (Palmer and Richards 2010). At the other extreme, new or resurgent cities look to major works and spectacular architecture to impose a new physical brand and city image, often a high risk strategy where little or no vernacular, pre-existing or cultural content is available. Both approaches tend to be 'top down' in their execution, despite so-called consultation processes (Evans 2005, 2006). The cultural and creative quarter on the other hand presents an alternative dimension to place-making—and therefore in extending city brand opportunities. This is due to their organic and largely unplanned development trajectory, but also as a result of a combination of a symbolic/historic production culture and vernacular spaces, and entrepreneurial spirit, led by individuals or often 'not for profit' agencies such as workspace providers and heritage organisations, and small firm networks. This includes Business Improvement Areas/Districts based around cultural and creative industries and festivals, e.g. Chicago Loop and London's South Bank BIA/BIDs. This more 'bottom-up' revitalisation of city space has coincided with the growing pursuit of greater authenticity and the co-creation of everyday experiences by residents and to visitors to these new and rediscovered quarters of the city.

Cities are complex, messy and cultural forces that are lived and experienced from below, often colliding with notions of a brand in the product or corporate sense. This is a good thing, since the enduring 'brand' is one shared but differentiated in the minds of communities of interest. Their view, literally and psychologically, of their city—whether they currently live or work there or not—makes up the collective identity of a city, which encompasses resistance and obduracy (Hommels 2005)—and also the adoption of changes to the city landscape. City branding as an aspiration

should therefore form part of, and be subsidiary to, a cultural planning approach to the city, which is both sustainable (Evans 2013) and a product of cultural governance and comprehensive mapping of a city's cultural assets (Evans 2008). Urban design, and the support of cultural and creative quarters, would seem to have an important place in giving substance to place-making, and where appropriate, place-branding efforts. As Mommaas maintains: 'city branding not only meets the increased need to make one's own city stand out in the midst of an expanded and more mobile reality, but at the same time it also meets the need for sources of urban orientation and identification...lead(ing) to the creation of a need to refill a fragmented space with positive meanings that can function as new sources of civic pride' (2002, p. 44).

## References

- Anholt S (2006) Anholt city brand index—"how the world views its cities", 2nd edn. Global Market Insight, Bellvue
- Ashworth GJ, Voogd H (1990) *Selling the city: marketing approaches in public sector urban planning*. Belhaven Press, London
- Bauman C, Cerba P, Schele J (2002) Everybody does EEM. In: Hauben T, Vermeulen M, Patteeuw V (eds) *City branding: image building and building images*. NAI Uitgevers, Rotterdam, pp 25–34
- Boyko C (2008) Breathing new life into old places through culture: a case of bad breath? In: Richards G, Wilson J (eds) *From cultural tourism to creative tourism—part 3: changing places, the spatial challenge of creativity*. ATLAS, Arnhem, pp 67–82
- Butler RW (1980) The concept of the tourism area life cycle of evolution: implications for management of resources. *Can Geogr* 24(1):5–12
- Castells M (1996) The information age: economy society and culture. In: *The rise of the network society*, vol 1. Blackwell, Oxford
- Chapain CA, Comunian R (2010) Enabling and inhibiting the creative economy: the role of the local and regional dimensions in England. *Reg Stud* 44(6):717–734
- Corbett N (2004) *Transforming cities: revival of the square*. RIBA Enterprises, London
- Dekker T (2000) Brasilia: city versus landscape. In: Dekker T (ed) *The modern city revisited*. E & FN Spon, London
- Dinnie K (2011) *City branding: theory and cases*. Palgrave, Basingstoke
- Evans GL (2001) *Cultural planning: an urban renaissance?*. Routledge, London
- Evans GL (2003) Hard branding the culture city—from Prado to Prada. *Int J Urban Reg Res* 27(2):417–440
- Evans GL (2004) Cultural industry quarters—from pre-industrial to post-industrial production. In: Bell D, Jayne M (eds) *City of quarters: urban villages in the contemporary city*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp 71–92
- Evans GL (2005) Measure for measure: evaluating the evidence of culture's contribution to regeneration. *Urban Stud* 42(5/6):959–984
- Evans GL (2006) Branding the city: the death of city planning? In: Monclus J (ed) *Culture, urbanism and planning*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp 197–214
- Evans GL (2008) Cultural mapping and sustainable communities: planning for the arts revisited. *Cult Trends* 17(2):65–96
- Evans GL (2009a) Creative cities, creative spaces and urban policy. *Urban Stud* 46(5&6):1003–1040

- Evans GL (2009b) From cultural quarters to creative clusters: creative spaces in the new city economy. In: Legner M (ed) *The sustainability and development of cultural quarters: international perspectives*. Institute of Urban History, Stockholm, pp 32–59
- Evans GL (2010) Heritage cities. In: Beauregard R (ed) *Encyclopaedia of urban studies*. Sage, New York, pp 136–138
- Evans GL (2012) Creative small and medium-sized cities. *Int J Cult Adm (Beijing)* 1:141–157
- Evans GL (2013) Cultural planning and sustainable development. In: Baker G, Stevenson D (eds) *Handbook of planning and culture*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp 223–238
- Evans GL (2014) Maastricht: from treaty town to European capital of culture. In: Grodach C, Silver D (eds) *The politics of urban policy: global perspectives*. Routledge, London, pp 264–285
- Evans GL, Bagwell S (2011) Case study of The Hansa (Die Hanse) cultural route. Council of Europe, Strasbourg
- Evans GL, Bagwell S, Worpole K (2012) *Intercultural public space design and management*. Council of Europe, Strasbourg
- Florida R (2005) *Cities and the creative class*. Routledge, New York
- Foord J (2013) The new boomtown? creative city to Tech City in east London. *Cities* 33:51–60
- Foster H (2011) *The art-architecture complex*. Verso, London
- Gertler M, Tesolin L, Weinstock S (2006) Toronto case study: strategies for creative cities. University of Toronto Munk Centre for International Studies, Toronto
- Glendinning M (2010) *Architecture empire? the triumph and tragedy of global modernism*. Reaktion Books, London
- Grabow B (1998) Stadtmarketing: Eine Kritische Zwischenbilanz. *Difu Berichte* 98(1):2–5
- Harvey D (1989) From managerialism to entrepreneurialism: the transformation in urban governance in late capitalism. *Geogr Ann Ser B Hum Geogr* 71(1):3–17
- Hauben T, Vermeulen M, Patteeuw V (eds) (2002) *City branding: image building and building images*. NAI Uitgevers, Rotterdam
- Hommels A (2005) *Unbuilding cities—obduracy in urban sociotechnical change*. MIT Press, Cambridge
- Hubbard P, Hall T (1998) The entrepreneurial city and the new urban politics. In: Hall T, Hubbard P (eds) *The entrepreneurial city: geographies of politics, regime and representation*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 1–12
- Jacobs J (1961) *The death and life of great American cities*. Vintage Books, New York
- Kavaratzis M (2005) Place branding: a review of trends and conceptual models. *Mark Rev* 5:329–342
- Kotler P, Asplund C, Rein I, Heider D (1999) *Marketing places Europe: attracting investments, industries, residents and visitors to European cities, communities, regions and nations*. Pearson Education, London
- Lefebvre H (1974) *The production of space* (trans: Nicholson-Smith D). Blackwell, Oxford
- Matthews V (2010) *Place differentiation: redeveloping the distillery district, Toronto*. PhD thesis, University of Toronto, Toronto
- Mommaas H (2002) City branding: the necessity of socio-cultural goals. In: Hauben T, Vermeulen M, Patteeuw V (eds) *City branding: image building and building images*. NAI Uitgevers, Rotterdam, pp 25–34
- Montgomery J (2013) Cultural quarters and urban regeneration. In: Baker G, Stevenson D (eds) *Handbook of planning and culture*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp 243–265
- Moor M, Rowland J (2006) *Urban design futures*. Routledge, London
- Plaza B (2009) Bilbao's art scene and the 'Guggenheim effect' revisited. *Eur Plan Stud* 17 (11):1711–1729
- Plaza B, Silke N, Haarich N (2013) The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao: between regional embeddedness and global networking. *Eur Plan Stud* 13(1):23–44
- Ponzini D, Nastasi M (2011) *Starchitecture*. Allemandi, Venice
- Palmer R, Richards G (2010) *Eventful cities. Cultural management and revitalisation*. Butterworth, Oxford

- Roodhouse S (2010) *Cultural quarters. Principles and practice*, 2nd edn. Intellect, Bristol
- Shaw S (2011) Marketing ethnoscapas as spaces of consumption: Banglatown—London's curry capital. *J Town city Manag* 1(4):381–395
- Stoker G, Mossberger K (1994) Urban regime theory in comparative perspective. *Environ Plan C Gov Policy* 12(2):195–212
- Tuan YF (1977) *Space and place: the perspective of experience*. Minnesota University Press, Minneapolis
- Ward SV (1998) *Selling places: the marketing and promotion of towns and cities 1850-2000*. E & FN Spon, London
- Wieditz T (2007) *Liberty village: the makeover of Toronto's King and Dufferin Area*. Centre for Urban and Community Studies, Toronto
- Zenker S (2011) How to catch a city? the concept and measurement of place brands. *J Place Manage Dev* 4(1):40–52
- Zukin S (1995) *The culture of cities*. Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge

# Chapter 11

## Rethinking Place Brand Communication: From Product-Oriented Monologue to Consumer-Engaging Dialogue

Anette Therkelsen

**Abstract** Different approaches to consumers in place brand communication are under scrutiny in the present chapter and special attention is given to dialogue-based campaigns. This is further developed by looking at place branding from a performative perspective that centres on co-creation through active consumer involvement in event activities. Place consumers are identified as both external markets i.e. international tourists, and internal markets i.e. local populations in that building community is seen as an end in itself as well as a means to the external marketability of a place. To shed further light on these matters, the tourism branding event ‘IMAGINATION—Discover the Danish Spirit’ is analysed and based on this combination of theoretical and empirical studies, it is concluded that place branding events have the potential to meet consumers’ needs for active involvement and co-creation. Moreover, entering into dialogue with event staff and possibly other guests as well as performing aspects of a place generate a sense of place for place consumers, which may be hard to achieve through monologue-based place branding communication.

### Introduction

Place brands are all around us with their promises of incredible adventures, lucrative business opportunities and rewarding educational and working possibilities. The majority of these place brands never manage to grab our attention, however, a few stick in our minds which may be explained by various factors: Certain places are significant to us due to our personal history and interests for which reason we may be particularly attentive to the way in which they are marketed; other places use tremendous amounts of resources on media exposure

---

A. Therkelsen (✉)

Tourism Research Unit, Department of Culture and Global Studies,  
Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark  
e-mail: at@cgs.aau.dk

making it almost impossible not to notice them; and still others employ new ways of getting their message through to us which trigger our curiosity and make us want to know more—perhaps even visit or engage on a more long term basis with the place. It is the latter types of place branding campaigns that has the attention of the present chapter in that the focus is directed at consumer-engaging campaigns, where consumers play an active part in creating the place.

Furthermore, this chapter centres on national place branding aimed at private consumer markets, more specifically tourists, and what communicative strategies are used to attract attention and create preferences for a given place. Whether the emerging understanding of the consumer in product branding as an active and equal partner of dialogue (Dahlen et al. 2010; Louro and Cunha 2001) has started to permeate place branding practices is of particular concern here, as this seems to have quite fundamental implications for the way in which brand communication should be designed and executed. In the same vein, concepts of customer co-creation (Payne et al. 2008; Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004) and performance of place (Ren and Gyimóthy 2013; Ek et al. 2008) are tendencies that take the agency of the consumer seriously and these concepts are likewise brought into the discussion.

Though the main attention is directed towards external markets, recent debate on the importance of internal markets for place branding efforts (Therkelsen et al. 2010; Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005; Pedersen 2004) also has a bearing on the present study. In other words, how a tourism place branding campaign can benefit from considering local residents as part of their target group, is debated, not just because they constitute a domestic tourist market, but also because they are an integral part of the product on sale. Therefore local commitment and pride are important ingredients in making a place attractive to external groups (Colomb and Kalandides 2010). Combining the preferences and needs of both markets in the same branding strategy thus has some potential synergetic effects, but it also constitutes a challenge. Therefore it is interesting to study how this is managed in the context of a particular place branding effort.

The specific place branding effort scrutinized here is the Danish, national place branding event 'IMAGINATION—Discover the Danish Spirit', which took place during the London Olympic Games 2012, organized by the national tourism organisation, VisitDenmark, and one of the Danish national TV-stations, TV2 (VisitDenmark 2012). The main purpose of the event was to market Denmark as a tourism destination, which naturally meant that the market focus was directed at international tourists. The question is then whether internal markets were also considered and if so whether synergy between the two appeared. Furthermore, analyzing the communicative strategies in use at the event will illustrate whether dialogue and co-creation with visitors were given priority and whether this resulted in relationship-building that may eventually lead to place consumption.

The chapter is organized in the following manner: First a theoretical discussion on three overall tendencies within place branding and its implications for place brand communication will be undertaken. This will lead to a discussion of different approaches to place consumers and place branding communication and, not least,



identification of present-day tendencies. Next the research approach applied in the case study is related, including a description of the case at hand. Subsequently, the analytical section identifies the consumer approach and communicative strategies of the studied case. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main empirical findings and highlights the contribution made to existing knowledge on place brand communication.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Before focusing on place brand communication, it is instructive to discuss three general developments in place branding, both among scholars and practitioners, as these have implications for the way in which communication to place consumers is designed and executed.

### ***General Developments in Place Branding and Their Implications for Communication***

As argued elsewhere (Therkelsen et al. 2010), a development is detectable, both in scholarly and practitioners' contributions to the place branding field, from understanding place branding mainly as a communication effort to acknowledging the close interconnection between symbolic representation and physical place-making. Urban planning research and practice, which has its focus on the built and social environment of places, has been among the instrumental forces in this development in that the narrative and its place-bound context are seen as two closely-knit entities (Jensen 2007; Eckstein and Throgmorton 2003). Close interrelation between symbolic representation and physical place-making is a necessity in order to ensure that external and internal markets that encounter the branding effort are not misled or misrepresented. Furthermore, as will be argued below, to engage consumers in place branding efforts today, they need to be considered active co-creators of both representation and place, whereby place marketers increasingly need to consider the making and representation of place as a matter of mixed agency between the place branding organization and the place consumer.

As touched upon earlier, place branding is no longer solely directed at new lucrative markets, but is also concerned with maintaining established markets through community building activities. That local commitment and pride add to the external marketability of the place is a highly appreciated side-effect. Corporate branding theory has been found useful in accounting for the complex strategy of simultaneously building community and selling place (e.g. Hankinson 2007; Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005), however, it is also acknowledged that differences exist between corporations and places in that the complexity of the product and the

stakeholders involved seems to multiply in a place branding context (Therkelsen and Halkier 2012; Kavartzis and Ashworth 2005). The double role of residents is interesting to consider as they are, on the one hand, stakeholders that constitute and contribute to a given place, both in their capacity as local professionals and private citizens, and, on the other hand, they are target groups for place branding efforts, also those directed at tourists, and hence they expect a variety of services and experience offers. The challenge is therefore to develop brand communication that has functional relevance as well as emotional appeal to both long-term and short-term place consumers, and one solution to this challenge seems to be consumer inclusion (Ren and Gyimóthy 2013; Colomb and Kalandides 2010) that will be further elaborated below.

A third general development in place branding is cross-sector alliances that seem increasingly to be used strategically by place branding organizations to further individual and common goals (Therkelsen and Halkier 2011). From a tourist consumer perspective, strategic alliances between tourism organizations and consumer goods producers seem to make good sense in that some recent contributions to the tourism literature argue (Larsen 2008; Uriely 2005) that de-differentiation increasingly characterizes tourist experiences. This means that for the consumer holiday experiences are not necessarily differentiated from every-day consumer experiences and routines and so considerable overlaps exist between what and how we consume at home and when away on holiday. Hence not just extraordinary sights and activities, but also more mundane products are of relevance to consumers, and so a tourism branding strategy that includes consumer goods traditionally seen as belonging to an every-day context becomes highly relevant. Hence we bring our everyday lives, its routines and many of the accompanying products into our holidays and vice versa, which speaks in favour of a tourism branding effort encompassing a wide variety of sectors that are not traditionally seen as relevant to tourism.

### ***Approaches to Place Brand Communication***

As argued by Dahlen et al. (2010, pp. 236–272), in general brand communication, a development is detectable within the past decades from a company-generated monologue to mutually constructed company-customer communication. Hence product-orientation and positioning in relation to competitors are gradually being supplemented and replaced by a stronger consumer-orientation, where the focus is on the emotional experiences of the consumer through co-created measures. A central means towards this end is relationship building between company (in situ a place marketing organisation) and customer. Strong company-customer relationships may lead to brand loyalty, in the case of places, ranging from visitors returning on a regular basis to people choosing to settle down at the given place.

It is possible to describe further this development by means of Louro and Cunha's (2001) four brand management paradigms, which they argue entered into

the field of brand management in the consecutive order outlined below, but which all coexist today. The paradigms are defined within a framework of brand centrality i.e. the degree to which the company's strategy is governed by its brands, and customer centrality, i.e. the degree to which customers are involved in creating meaning and value. First, within *the product paradigm* the product is the locus of attention and is seen as that which creates value. Communication through logos, slogans, names and design performs the role of supporting the product strategy and designating ownership, and the legal protection of these communicative instruments is of major concern. A 'silence metaphor' (p. 856) is used by Louro and Cunha to illustrate the absence of communication and interaction between company and customer. Interestingly, Louro and Cunha argue that the product paradigm is the most widespread approach to brand management also in the twenty-first century even though it contradicts basic branding principles of customer-oriented value creation. Secondly, *the projective paradigm* signifies a more strategic understanding of brand management in that an integrated approach to the total brand portfolio is taken and projecting a consistent message to all stakeholders is central. The point of departure is made in the brand identity of the organisation and brand meaning is created on the basis of its vision, mission, values and culture. This also means that a 'monologue metaphor' (Louro and Cunha 2001, p. 860) is used for capturing this paradigm's focus on the company's input as the primary generator of brand meaning and hence communication with the consumer becomes one way. Considering the field of place branding, this is an approach that is, by no means, unknown.

Thirdly, with *the adaptive paradigm* the consumer enters the picture more forcefully in that he/she is perceived as a central constructor of brand meaning through evaluations of the brand. A 'listening metaphor' (p. 863) is used for capturing this focus on consumer response to the brand, however, as with the projective paradigm the communication becomes asymmetrical in this case because the organisation's resources and strategic intent are basically ignored and sensing the market becomes key. Fourth and finally, in *the relational paradigm* the customer becomes a co-author of brand meaning together with the organisation in that entering into active dialogue with consumers and co-creating personalised experiences are central to the brand management organisation. Hence a 'dialogue metaphor' (p. 866) is used for characterising this approach that combines sensing the market with identifying organisational resources and strategies and taking seriously the potentially creative outcome of the meeting between the two. In a place branding context we have witnessed increasing efforts to let the voices of potential and existing place consumers be heard, particularly on websites where posting consumers' place experiences has become widespread. Likewise dialogue with consumers, not least in a tourism context, via social media like Facebook and Twitter has been a central strategy over the last decade.

Along the lines of the relational paradigm and set in the context of place branding, Ren and Gyimóthy (2013) argue for a performative approach to place branding in which one-way advertisement campaigns touting a streamlined place image seem to be losing ground to dialogue with stakeholders and customers obtained not least

through place-bound practices like place branding events. Performing aspects of a given place at a place branding event allows for people to become actively engaged and through that, mirror themselves in the place marketed. It is also, however, stressed that misunderstandings are likely to appear, particularly between culturally distant places and for which reason cultural translations may be necessary. Hence combining consumer agency with strategic intentions is argued for here. A similar dialogue-based, performative approach to place branding is argued by Colomb and Kalandides (2010) in this case with a focus on building community among local residents. Engaging local residents as storytellers about themselves and their achievements, a multiplicity of messages about the place may be recorded and displayed in campaign material, which, it is argued, constitutes a unique and place-specific discourse about the place. A community feeling among residents may be reinforced by tapping into the resources local residents constitute. However, in terms of attracting external markets it may be necessary to employ elements of cultural translation to ensure that the patchwork of messages is intelligible and relevant. Engaging external markets in storytelling may be a useful addition in terms of engaging all relevant target groups in dialogue, which is a central tenet of scholars dealing with co-creation of tourist experiences (e.g. Ek et al. 2008; Uriely 2005). Basically, consumer agency should also be taken seriously in relation to tourists in that they construct their experiences by combining offers in various ways and by engaging with the other actors present. In the words of Firat and Dholakia tourists are 'linked to each other and to firms in value-producing and value-transferring networks' (2006, p. 138).

In addition to the framework presented above, it is pertinent to consider relationship building as something that also takes place among consumers, for instance in social groupings with a common brand enthusiasm. Consumer-consumer relationships are also named consumer tribes (Cova and Cova 2002), and here the focus shifts towards the social links and community identity that the brand provides and away from the experiences of the individual. In the case of places, tourists or residents sharing a passion for a place, or an aspect of a place, expressed for instance through on-line communities are examples of tribalisation. A colourful example of this is offered by Banyai (2010), who, through a study of tourists to the alleged residence of Count Dracula, demonstrates the existence of a consumer community that performs vampire-related rituals and shares their performances and post-visit evaluations on-line. It is, however, important to bear in mind that consumer tribes are characterised by being ephemeral and small-scale (Cova and Cova 2002).

In sum, the theoretical discussion has pointed to a development of increasing consumer involvement both in symbolic representation of places through social media and in actual place-making through events, of which the latter is the subject of attention here. This seems to constitute a significant alternative to monologue-based place branding campaigns, which may be losing their appeal due to increasing advertisement overload and accompanying consumer fatigue. Building on active engagement rather than passive persuasion, consumer-involving approaches to place branding take the agency of the consumer seriously and though they

may be challenged in terms of uncontrollable interpretations and misunderstandings, the marketer is in dialogue with the consumer at events that should further mutual understanding. Company-consumer relationships may be the outcome of dialogue and co-creation and may enhance the chances of tourist visitation. Consumer-consumer relationships may also be the result of sharing the same event experience and perhaps engaging in joint activities, though it is important for marketers to realize that consumer tribes are consumer-driven therefore facilitation of these has to be handled with care.

## Methodology and Empirical Data

As mentioned earlier, the case under scrutiny here is the place branding event: ‘IMAGINATION—Discover the Danish Spirit’, and data on this event is mainly derived from the website of one of its organizers, VisitDenmark, which features quite an elaborate description and evaluation of the event. This naturally entails certain limitations as VisitDenmark has an interest in presenting their activities in a favourable light, thereby justifying their actions. Attention was also given to the media coverage of the event, which did not, however, add any new perspectives to the data available from VisitDenmark. Participant observations at the event would have been a great advantage as the actual execution of the event and level and nature of visitor involvement could have been registered. This would also have facilitated direct contact with visitors and hence their views on the event. However, as the event took place 1 year prior to writing this chapter, the author has to rely solely on secondary sources.

### *Case Outline*

During the London Olympic Games 27 July to 12 August, 2012, the place branding event, ‘IMAGINATION—Discover the Danish Spirit’ took place at the initiative of the national tourism organisation, VisitDenmark, and one of the Danish national TV-stations, TV2, who jointly developed and ran the event during the entire period of the Olympic Games (VisitDenmark 2012). The event was situated at St. Kathrine Docks and encompassed quite an extensive area which made possible a significant number of activities (Fig. 11.1).

The purpose of the event was formulated as follows by VisitDenmark:

‘...to brand Denmark, Danish life style, products and competences via a different Danish marketing platform during the Olympics in London. The purpose was to attract visitors to the event and create preferences for Denmark as a holiday destination, create a feel for travelling and affect the visitors’ decision to undertake a holiday in Denmark’ (VisitDenmark 2012—own translation).



**Fig. 11.1** A view of the 'IMAGINATION' event area. Photo courtesy of VisitDenmark

Hence the purpose of the event was not only to market Denmark for tourism purposes but also to showcase various Danish products, primarily within the areas of food, fashion, sports and entertainment, and so business partners within these industries were offered the opportunity to participate and display their products. In addition to the product displays, a number of activities took place during the 3 weeks of the Olympics, some of which were: a food festival with taste samples, a hotdog stand and a chefs show; Viking related activities and games, including the arrival of a Viking ship; Hans Christian Andersen storytelling; a biking event; Lego play activities; a 'try your jump shot at a handball goal' activity; a Danish holiday house decorated with Danish design; live music and dance shows; a pub and restaurant with Danish staff; live interviews with athletes; and a big TV-screen from where the Olympic Games could be watched (VisitDenmark 2012). The event was visited at various occasions by the Danish royal family, several Danish ministers and Danish athletes participating in the Olympics.

The targeted audience was first and foremost guests at the Olympic Games, UK residents as well as international visitors, but also business partners from the UK and other places and the world press were aimed at. Figure 11.2 illustrates the crowds of visitors occasionally present at the event, not least Danes.

250.000 people visited the event during the Olympics of which 56 % were British, 16 % Danish and 28 % citizens of other nationalities. Of these, 88 % evaluated the Danish marketing event to be better than those of other countries, 84 % felt more inspired to visit Denmark after visiting the event, and VisitDenmark estimates that 63.400 decisions on visiting Denmark will be made on the basis of the event (VisitDenmark 2012). In terms of the world press, 15 TV-stations, 13 UK-newspapers, three radio stations and six magazines visited and made





**Fig. 11.2** Visitors at the ‘IMAGINATION’ event. Photo courtesy of VisitDenmark

interviews at the ‘IMAGINATION’-event. Moreover, 31 bloggers from all over the world uploaded content about the event. In terms of national press coverage, TV2 transmitted daily from the event location just as other Danish media visited and reported from the area throughout the Olympics (VisitDenmark 2012). The event was, furthermore, awarded a silver medal by the Sunday Times as the second best national marketing platform during the Olympics out of 40 competitors.

All in all, VisitDenmark evaluates the branding event to have been a big success resulting in international attention and preference for visiting the country (VisitDenmark 2012) and the return on the investment of almost 1 million Euro is estimated to have been much higher compared to what could have been achieved through traditional branding activities. VisitDenmark naturally has a vested interest in presenting their activities and expenditure as successful, however, there is no doubt that the event created some level of attention among Olympic Games visitors, and more broadly in the UK and Denmark. The subsequent analysis will try to find explanations as to why attention was created and what the reasons may be for the apparent satisfaction of the visitors.

## Case Analysis

The analysis falls in three sections which deal with the stakeholders involved, the target groups aimed at and the communicative strategies employed. All three analytical perspectives are related to the consumer approach employed by VisitDenmark in this place branding event.

### *An Umbrella Branding Initiative of Sorts*

As the organizational set-up behind ‘IMAGINATION—Discover the Danish Spirit’ spanned several sectors and involved 57 Danish partners from within and outside tourism, the foundation for an umbrella branding initiative seems to have been laid. Having said that, the purpose of the event, cited above, makes it obvious that branding Denmark as a holiday destination was the main objective, and so food, fashion, sports and entertainment activities and displays mainly worked towards supporting the tourism brand. Hence partners from industries beyond tourism were selected to support a certain message about Denmark as a holiday country and so interests were clearly skewed in favour of tourism. Whether this was seen as problematic by the partners involved, has not been included in the present study, however, what is scrutinized here is the experience the multi-faceted tourism branding event may have provided the visitors with.

As argued in the theoretical section, the de-differentiation characteristic of tourist experiences today seems to support the cross-sector set-up of the ‘IMAGINATION’-event. For the type of tourists who are attracted by a combination of extraordinary and mundane experiences, it makes sense to have a tourism branding event organized around a combination of classic tourist experiences like historical attractions and funparks and everyday consumer goods like fashion, furniture, entertainment, toys and a wide variety of food products. The question is whether it would have been beneficial to extend the co-operation even further to other areas in which Denmark has a special reputation, like the energy and social welfare sectors. We have, furthermore, witnessed a de-differentiation of work and holiday within recent years, in that people increasingly combine business travels and holidays and for instance bring along their electronic devices also for working purposes when on holiday. This means that a branding effort that targets both private and professional consumers like the ‘IMAGINATION’-event fits well into this tendency in that professionals, who are attending the event for business related purposes, may also have their attention directed at consumption opportunities related to their interests as private consumers (i.e. tourists), thus being present at two ‘consumption platforms’ at the same time.

### *Selling Place with Elements of Building Community*

Again with reference to the stipulated purpose of the ‘IMAGINATION’-event, the intention was obviously to sell Denmark as an attractive holiday destination to international markets present at the Olympics. The activities and displays of the event represented, on the one hand, classic Danish flagship attractions like Vikings, Hans Christian Andersen and Lego(land), and, on the other hand, modern elements, perhaps less well-known to international markets like gourmet food, designer furniture and clothes, and music, all staged in interactive surroundings. Hence a classic



strategy of using well-known national images as a hook to grab the consumer's attention and then surprise him/her by means of unknown elements of the place seems to be employed here (Therkelsen 2003; Morgan and Pritchard 2001). The risk exists, however, that the combination of representations of Danishness is unintelligible to the consumer, demanding considerable cultural translation to make sense. Judged by the number of visitors, it seems fair to argue that VisitDenmark was successful in creating attention for and visits to the event, also in view of the fact that the normal visitor flow at St. Kathrine Docks almost doubled during the event period. Using events for promotional purposes, however, entails the danger that the consumer mainly or solely becomes involved in the representation and not the place. For this reason, VisitDenmark's estimation that 63.400 holiday decisions in favour of Denmark will be the longer term outcome of the event has to be considered with a high degree of caution.

It is also important to note that 16 %, around 40.000, of the visitors, were Danes present in London during the Olympics. Hence the event also had an attraction to the national population, which may be explained by several factors: Seeing how one's country is represented abroad is fascinating to many people—in some it may generate pride, in others a laugh, and still others contempt but it is something that many will engage in; Sharing sports experiences of Danish athletes in action broadcasted on large TV-screens, with other Danes in Danish surroundings may add an extra dimension to national emotions and pride, which are significant components of any international sports event, not least the Olympics; And finally, Danish celebrities, the royal family, politicians, media people and athletes, have an attraction to many Danes (and perhaps not many others) and may likewise have a community building effect not least in a foreign context. Hence the 'IMAGINATION'-event seems to have had the capacity to build community among the Danes visiting the event, however, also for many Danes at home the high media exposure of the event may have resulted in a similar effect. Not least due to TV2's broadcasts from St. Kathrine Docks where interviews with Danish athletes were carried out, as well as their coverage of the various activities going on, the 'IMAGINATION'-event was present on Danish national TV several times every day for 3 weeks. Hence Danes at home were part of this celebration of Danishness abroad that had the potential for creating national pride.

### *Communicative Approach: Interacting with the Consumer*

Looking at the campaign material for the event, what dominates is the slogan 'IMAGINATION. Discover the Danish Spirit'.

As appears from Fig. 11.3, 'IMAGINATION' entails a play on words both referring to creative abilities and the nation (highlighted in red). This is followed up by an invitation to the reader to discover an allegedly Danish way of being and doing things, which establishes 'imagination' as a particular Danish quality. The logo of the event consists of classical icons of both the United Kingdom: Tower



**Fig. 11.3** Logo of ‘IMAGINATION’. Photo courtesy of VisitDenmark

Bridge (which is close to St. Kathrine Docks) and a Viking ship and windmills—a representation of Denmark of the olden and present days. The intention is likely to symbolise that parts of Denmark are going to the UK, where it can be encountered in the vicinity of this exquisite location, however, it seems rather inadequate in anchoring the creative and fantasy related abilities that the slogan points to. Despite this limitation, the slogan indicates a concern with the experience of the consumer and points towards consumer-orientation where the visitor is considered an active party in creating that experience. A similar impression comes across when consulting the concept behind the event as formulated by VisitDenmark:

‘IMAGINATION was a country — and an area. From here Danish lifestyle, experiences, products and competences were presented in a cosy, fun, different, inclusive and relaxing manner. The purpose was to make an impression and leave a mark, to make the visitors interested in Denmark, give them food for thought, new perspectives and a relevant and attractive feeling for what creative and innovative Denmark has to offer (VisitDenmark 2012—own translation).

In this concept outline, very little is said about the actual content of the event, it is the manner in which the event is represented that is given prime attention as well as the aimed for reaction of the visitor. Creating a relaxed and homely (i.e. cosy) atmosphere where there is something for everyone (i.e. inclusive), room for a good laugh (i.e. fun) and surprises (i.e. different) is set up as guiding principle for the event and comes across as that which constitutes the Danish spirit. Hence in line with classic branding theory, it is not the products as such that is the focus but rather the values, feelings and atmosphere they create and that they may create similar feelings in the consumer. Applying an adaptive strategy by listening to the specific wants of the market is, however, close to impossible in the context of a highly multicultural event like the Olympics, and so it seems more a general dedication to creating consumer feelings and experiences that characterizes the approach. The critical observer might, however, argue that characteristics such as relaxation, informality and good fun are generic qualities of the tourism discourse that do not set Denmark apart from other places. On the other hand, the characteristics are arguably well in line with general Danish self-perceptions (TV-2 2009), and so

taking seriously the community that VisitDenmark represents bears witness to a community-oriented approach to place branding. Looking at the plethora of representations of Danishness—from hotdogs to Lego bricks and Danish fashion—it may be hard to detect a clear message about Denmark, however, a common denominator is that they all belong to a leisure context. So if the event managers succeed in creating an atmosphere of relaxation, informality and good fun through the way in which products and activities are staged and visitors approached, a quite distinct idea about the place may materialise.

Whereas market adaptation is highly challenged when planning the promotional strategy as well as the event, the execution of an event facilitates an actual meeting with the individual visitor and with that adaptation to individual demands. Dialogue with visitors is bound to take place when people visit product stands and engage with these representations of Danishness through a far more extensive sense-stimulation than can be achieved through promotional campaigns. Likewise dialogue will take place when visitors are invited to join in various activities. Engaging in ancient Viking games, making constructions in Lego bricks and practicing one's handball jump shot means that the visitor performs aspects of the marketed place and becomes a co-creator of his/her own experiences. It needs, however, to be noted that Vikings can carry unfavourable connotations, and though they have been stripped of their hostile imagery among Danes through repeated usage in comic strips, on food products and as teddy bears, this may not be the case on international markets for which reason cultural translation needs to be practiced. The fact that a substantial number of Danes were present at the event represents the possibility for international visitors to meet Danes in an informal setting, for instance by joining in on the same activities. The possibility of meeting locals can be viewed as an addition to the professional staging of Denmark, but whether any efforts were made to facilitate this meeting is unknown. Furthermore, it is difficult to determine whether consumer-consumer relationships were created at the event without in situ observations, however, in particular the wide-screen TV-broadcasts of Danish athletes' efforts at the Olympics seem to have had the potential of creating relationship and ephemeral social bonding among Danish visitors in particular, which may have added extra dimensions to the consumer experience and with that the relationship with the place brand.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed approaches to consumers in place branding efforts and has zoomed in on the potential of dialogue-based campaigns directed at tourism markets. To illustrate this, the tourism branding event 'IMAGINATION—Discover the Danish Spirit' has been analysed and its approach to the consumer identified. First, it was concluded that by applying umbrella branding measures through a combination of classic tourist experiences with everyday consumer goods, the place branding event seemed well tuned into the demands of post-modern tourists who

seek a mixture of extra-ordinary and mundane experiences. Secondly, a combination of selling place to foreign markets and building community among domestic ones is employed in that internationally well-known components of the Danish image are coupled with less internationally established components, which, however, go down well with Danish self-perceptions. Through this combination, the former may serve as attention grabbers for the latter on international markets. Estimated by the visitor flow and its massive broadcast on Danish national TV, the event seems to have caught attention and possibly emotional attachment both among domestic and foreign markets, however, whether attention is solely created for the event or whether it extends to the place is difficult to determine here. Thirdly, dialogue with the consumer is encouraged both in the market communicative effort (i.e. the slogan) and in the event structure. Hence efforts are made to create customer experiences through active participation, and by joining in Danish activities, tasting, smelling, touching Danish products, and perhaps meeting some of the many Danes at the event, the likelihood that the experience will stay with the visitor after he/she has left the event increases.

This study contributes to our understanding of place branding communication by highlighting the agency of present-day place consumers and the potential that place branding events may hold in terms of meeting the consumers' needs for active involvement. Performing aspects of the place is likely to leave an impression in the consumer that may be more emotionally engaging than encountering a monologue-based advertising campaign. Finally, it is worth reflecting on the irony of the fact that the present study is also an example of one place piggy-backing on a major place branding event of another place, which goes to show that the field of place branding is a highly muddled but also intriguing affair.

## References

- Banyai M (2010) Dracula's image in tourism: Western bloggers versus tour guides. *Eur J Tour Res* 3(1):5–22
- Colomb C, Kalandides A (2010) The 'be Berlin' campaign: old wine in new bottles or innovative form of participatory place branding? In: Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham and Northampton, pp 173–190
- Cova B, Cova V (2002) Tribal marketing. The tribalisation of society and its impact on the conduct of marketing. *Eur J Mark* 36(5/6):595–620. doi:[10.1108/03090560210423023](https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560210423023)
- Dahlen M, Lange F, Smith T (2010) *Marketing communication. A brand narrative approach*. Wiley, Chichester
- Eckstein B, Throgmorton JA (eds) (2003) *Story and sustainability. Planning, practice and possibility for American cities*. MIT Press, Cambridge
- Ek R, Larsen J, Hornskov SB, Mansfeldt OK (2008) A dynamic framework of tourist experiences: space-time and performances in the experience economy. *Scand J Hosp Tour* 8(2):120–140. doi:[10.1080/15022250802110091](https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250802110091)
- Hankinson G (2007) The management of destination brands: five guiding principles based on recent developments in corporate branding theory. *Brand Manag* 14(3):240–254. doi:[10.1057/palgrave.bm.2550065](https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.bm.2550065)

- Jensen OB (2007) Culture stories. Understanding cultural urban branding. *Plan Theory* 6 (3):211–236
- Kavaratzis M, Ashworth GJ (2005) City branding: an effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick? *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 96(5):596–614
- Larsen J (2008) De-exoticizing tourist travel: everyday life and sociality on the move. *Leis Stud* 27 (1):21–34. doi:[10.1080/02614360701198030](https://doi.org/10.1080/02614360701198030)
- Louro MJ, Cunha PV (2001) Brand management paradigms. *J Mark Manag* 17:849–875. doi:[10.1362/026725701323366845](https://doi.org/10.1362/026725701323366845)
- Morgan N, Pritchard A (2001) Advertising in tourism and leisure. Butterworth & Heinemann, Oxford
- Payne AF, Storbacka K, Frow P (2008) Managing the co-creation of value. *J Acad Mark Sci* 36:83–96. doi:[10.1007/s11747-007-0070-0](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-007-0070-0)
- Pedersen SB (2004) Place branding: giving the region of øresund a competitive edge. *J Urban Technol* 11(1):77–95
- Prahalad CK, Ramaswamy V (2004) Co-creation experiences: the next practice in value creation. *J Interact Mark* 18(3):5–14. doi:[10.1002/dir.20015](https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.20015)
- Ren C, Gyimóthy S (2013) Transforming and contesting nation branding strategies: Denmark at the Expo 2010. *Place Brand Public Dipl* 9(1):17–29. doi:[10.1057/pb.2012.25](https://doi.org/10.1057/pb.2012.25)
- Therkelsen A (2003) Imagining places. Image formation of tourists and its consequences for destination promotion. *Scand J Hosp Tour* 3(2):134–150. doi:[10.1080/15022250310003105](https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250310003105)
- Therkelsen A, Halkier H, Jensen OB (2010) Branding Aalborg. Building community or selling place? In: Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham and Northampton, pp 136–156
- Therkelsen A, Halkier H (2011) Branding provincial cities—the politics of inclusion, strategy and commitment. In: Pike A (ed) *Brand and branding geographies*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham and Northampton, pp 200–213
- Therkelsen A, Halkier H (2012) Destination branding challenges—or why getting the right umbrella can be difficult. In: Mykletun RJ, Furunes T, Marnburg E (eds) *Current research in hospitality and tourism*. Fagbokforlaget, Bergen, pp 353–369
- TV-2 nyhederne (2009) Vi er de sjoveste—ifølge os selv. 27 July 2009. <http://nyhederne.tv2.dk/article.php/id-23956735.html?rss>
- VisitDenmark (2012) Imagination—en anderledes dansk markedsføringsplatform ved OL i London. [www.visitdenmark.dk/da/danmark/imagination-ol](http://www.visitdenmark.dk/da/danmark/imagination-ol)
- Urieli N (2005) The tourist experience. Conceptual developments. *Ann Tour Res* 32(1):199–216

# Chapter 12

## Rethinking the Visual Communication of the Place Brand: A Contemporary Role for Chorography?

Gary Warnaby

**Abstract** This chapter considers a potential role for chorography in the representation of urban places for marketing purposes, through an exploratory case study investigating how the city of Liverpool in the north-west of England is represented visually in promotional material of three agencies with some responsibility for its marketing. A number of visual representations of the city that can be classified as chorographic are analysed. This analysis highlights the contexts within which profile and oblique methods of viewing are used, and the importance of structures with associative properties with the place, which can be viewed as synecdoche. The chapter concludes with some suggestions as to how chorography might inform the visual content of place marketing messages and a discussion of the implications for the representation of urban places arising from current advances in geographical information systems technology.

### Introduction

This chapter analyses a potential role for chorography in city branding and marketing, with particular reference to its implications for the representation of urban locales in branding/marketing activities. Chorography is connected to—and intertwined with—geography and also cartography (i.e. the study and practice of making maps), yet is distinct, and notwithstanding its historical contribution to the means by which (particularly urban) places are represented, it is somewhat neglected by comparison. Gregory (2009, p. 82) regards chorography as representing *the oldest tradition of Western geographical enquiry*. However, geography and chorography can be differentiated, with the former regarded as relating to the world as a whole, whereas the latter refers to the depiction of a single part of the

---

G. Warnaby (✉)

School of Materials, University of Manchester, Sackville Street Building,  
Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL, UK  
e-mail: Gary.warnaby@manchester.ac.uk

world (Casey 2002)—usually a town or city, but could also encompass districts, or occasionally whole regions (Frangenberg 1994; Nuti 1999).

The distinction between chorography and geography was not merely one of scale, but also of representation, with geography perceived as being more ‘scientific’, and chorography more subjective and aesthetic in terms of place depiction. Casey presents chorography as a commingling of cartography and landscape painting, whereby places were presented *as quasi-topographical views of their subject matter, complete with a spread-out vista and a horizon* (2002, p. 159). Thus, such place representations—common through the European Renaissance of the 14th–17th centuries—could be regarded more like landscape paintings than maps as we know them today. As Casey notes, in this period, [*cartographers and landscape painters freely exchanged roles, and in any case influenced each other profoundly*] (ibid, p. 159). This had implications for how a particular place’s specific character or *genius loci* (i.e. ‘spirit of place’) was conveyed. Casey suggests that a distinctive difference between cartography and painting was that maps for the most part represent places *incidentally*, whereas *landscape paintings represent places centrally and essentially*, and goes on to argue that much the same contrast can be seen in the basic difference between geography and chorography:

Whereas geography puts its representations of the earth within the embrace of a unitary space that reduces places to points or positions—that is, regards them as **sites**—chorography takes any such space as **already diversified into concrete places**. For the chorographer, even a region is viewed through its constituent places and not as a simple block of space... (ibid, p. 167. Original emphasis).

If, as suggested above, chorography has been regarded as a means of representing and communicating the distinctive character of a place, then there is arguably much resonance with the objectives of place branding, a crucial element of which, according to Kavaratzis and Ashworth should be *discovering or creating uniqueness*, in this case, in order to improve the competitive position of a given place (2008, p. 154). Colomb and Kalandides (2010, p. 175) state that place branding has a dual aim: *to form a ‘unique selling proposition’ that will secure visibility to the outside and reinforce ‘local identity’ to the inside*. Given this focus of place branding activity, it could be argued that chorography might not merely be of specialist historical interest, but could potentially have a more contemporary role to play, in the sense that chorographic principles may have some scope to inform how place brands may be visually represented to best effect.

The chapter continues with a brief history of how chorography and its associated techniques have been used to portray towns and cities, in many cases for what could loosely be described as ‘promotional’ purposes. It then provides a brief overview of how urban places can be represented visually in current place marketing/branding activities. An exploratory investigation of the application of chorographic principles in a more contemporary context is then presented, through an analysis of how the city of Liverpool, in the north-west of England, is represented visually in the promotional material of three agencies with some responsibility for its marketing/branding, whereby a number of pictorial images of the city that can be classified as

chorographic are analysed. The chapter concludes with some suggestions as to how chorography might provide some principles for better understanding the visual content of place marketing messages.

## Chorography—A Brief History

Frangenberg describes the term chorography as having two manifestations: (1) describing *a view or a plan of a city or of any other local area produced in the context of geography* (often called a chorography); and (2) referring to *the art of making such views or plans* (1994, p. 41). This practice was common during the Renaissance, its main manifestation being the town portrait, which were sold as individual sheets, as well as collected in books. Such books also incorporated written descriptions of the place, combining topography, history and geography (Delano-Smith and Kain 1999).

These town portraits had two main alternative methods of representation—*profile* and *oblique*. Nuti likens a profile view to perceiving the town/city from *a very low viewpoint taken at a distance, with a wide and open horizon, and with a significant proportion of pictorial space occupied by sky* (1999, p. 98). The oblique view was more all-embracing, *from an elevated vantage point at a distance, such as surrounding hills, in order to grasp urban form and shape* (ibid, p. 98). Frangenberg (1994) notes that chorographies with an oblique perspective, representing an area as if seen from above, were perceived as more informative. Cosgrove states that through such birds-eye views:

[t]he city is revealed as a theatre, seen from an elevated point far above and beyond its confines, at an angle sufficient to reveal both its plan pattern of streets, squares and open spaces, and the elevation of its principal buildings and monuments. Distant, to be sure, yet close enough for the rhythm of its life to be pictured in the pedestrians, carriages, wagons and ships on its roads and waterways, the city is immediately legible as a coherent community (2008, p. 176).

Cosgrove (2008, p. 175) argues that these chorographies formed a distinct cartographic genre and were *overwhelmingly celebratory, intended to frame in a comprehensive image the city's complex social and spatial totality*—much, it could be argued, like contemporary place branding activities. As noted above, chorographies are different to modern notions of urban maps, yet Delano-Smith and Kain (1999) note that from early medieval times onwards, the idea of maps and the practice of mapping had a place in a wide range of contexts, and that the boundary between portrayals of places generally accepted as maps and those traditionally classed as pictures was a fluid one. Indeed, the relationship between cartography and art is the subject of ongoing debate (see Cosgrove 2005—and for specific examples of cartography as art, Harmon 2004, 2009).

Chorography as a means of urban representation declined after the Renaissance. Cosgrove notes that urban maps became *increasingly unconcerned with the urban*



*iconography that traditionally expressed civitas or the city as public space* (2008, p. 172). As profile and oblique chorographies were superseded by maps adopting an orthographic view (that is, according to Campbell 1993, a view drawn as though every point were seen from directly overhead), a *more severe, undecorated style* of representation was adopted, reflected in maps *whose intent was increasingly analytic rather than synthetic* (Cosgrove 2008, p. 177). Their emphasis was to render the city more legible.

Notwithstanding this, Nuti (1999, p. 102) states that after the Renaissance period, *the search for a totalising image of the town* continued, and was manifested in different ways. The growth in size of cities in the 16th and 17th centuries led to the development of multiple views as a means of representing urban places, each view exploring a different experience in time or space. Recognising that the town/city was *a complex object*, which must be *sectioned off, explored and studied by multiple views, in its different modes of being*, such chorographies constituted *a composite sheet on which different images of a town were recorded one beside the other, offering different possibilities of knowledge* (ibid, p. 105). These representations of towns and cities often comprised complex combinations of plans, representations using both profile and oblique perspectives, and both global and partial views of the place: the parallels with the frequent use of the collage approach in contemporary place promotional materials (see Gold 1994) are evident. Another manifestation was the panorama, which became very popular in the 19th century as a means of representing the burgeoning industrial city (Comment 1999), capitalising on technical advances such as the camera obscura and later, photography.

The next section of this chapter considers some of these issues through a discussion of contemporary pictorial images of urban places for the purposes of place marketing—in other words, the attempt to communicate what Hunt has termed the *urban USP* (unique selling proposition), via *an aesthetic vision of what constitutes the significance of the city* (2005, p. 4). Such a desire to differentiate places is a factor which has arguably motivated urban place marketing activity since its inception (Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2008).

## Visual Place Representation in City Marketing and Branding

Representing the city to actual/potential user groups—citizens, inward investors, tourists etc.—to serve various social and economic objectives, is an important element of urban place marketing. Ward and Gold's (1994, p. 2) definition of place promotion as *the conscious use of publicity and marketing to communicate selective images of specific geographical localities or areas to a target audience* has resonance with chorography. However, instead of necessarily creating and communicating a *totalising image* (Nuti 1999, p. 102) which was an aim of chorography, contemporary place marketing representation is often selective (Griffiths 1998;

Hall 1998; Holcomb 1994; Sadler 1993), characterised by the explicit accentuation of the positive and the obscuring of negative aspects of a locale (Short 1999). Perhaps reflecting the fact that human perception of the environment is primarily through our eyes (Porteous 1990; Ingold 2000, 2011), Hubbard and Hall, suggest that in the context of marketing/branding, places can be *constituted through a plethora of images and representations* (1998, p. 7). Kotler et al. (1999, p. 171) note that the use of *visual symbols* has been prominent in place marketing, and indeed, there is a clear emphasis in place marketing/branding on the creation of visually appealing messages and forms of communication (Gold 1994; Ward 1998).

The importance of the visual in city marketing activities has been considered in detail by Hospers (2009), who draws upon the work of Lynch (1960) and Urry (1990) to bring different, yet complementary, perspectives to bear on this issue. Thus, he argues that Lynch's work (from a planning perspective), regards the city as being predominantly perceived as a *built image*, primarily constituted in terms of five distinct elements of the built environment: *paths* (i.e. channels along which people move); *edges* (i.e. clear transition zones and boundaries); *districts* (i.e. (sub) sections of the city with a distinctive character); *nodes* (i.e. strategic meeting points); and *landmarks* (i.e. physical objects that serve as public reference points). Urry's work on the 'tourist gaze' from a sociological perspective, Hospers suggests, portrays the city as a *graphic image*, stating: *It is not enough for a city to have image carriers in the built environment—it is important that these are photographed, reproduced and distributed via the media* (2009, p. 228). This creates elements of anticipation, imagination and expectation about the place arising from how it is portrayed. Hospers goes on to argue that insights from these different perspectives can provide lessons for city marketing. Thus, he suggests that if (according to Lynch) the visual elements of built environments affect our perception of urban areas, then those responsible for city marketing/branding activities should take more account of the importance of this 'imageability' in developing their activities, by developing clear 'signs' that can be gazed upon (often these same elements of the built environment). Resonating with the point made above about the selectivity inherent in many place marketing/branding messages, then those responsible for marketing places have some freedom to select which features of their city should be emphasised (of course, according to Short 1999, accentuating the positive in the process). The result of this editing process may well be the collage type approach of many place marketing messages, where a range of place attributes are highlighted (Gold 1994).

Hospers highlights *how important it is to identify objects or occasions in the urban landscape that can be photographed. If a city does not have imageable and scenic features, it will be a hard job for city marketers to communicate it* (2009, p. 230). A key theme in the place marketing/branding literature is the need for differentiation, and there is an acknowledgment that much place marketing activity is less than successful in communicating the individuality of specific places, summed up in Fitzsimons' (1995) notion of 'serial sameness'. Given this, perhaps there may be some benefit in adopting a more overt chorographical perspective—given its emphasis on accurate depiction of place as a holistic entity (Frangenberg

1994; Nuti 1999)—in the consideration of how towns and cities are visually represented in place marketing activities, in order to more effectively communicate the realities and experiential aspects of an urban milieu?

## **An Exploratory Chorographical Investigation of Visual Representation in the Context of Place Marketing/Branding**

The next part of this chapter considers these issues in the context of an exploratory chorographical investigation of promotional material produced in 2010 by agencies responsible for the marketing of the city of Liverpool, in the north west of England: Liverpool Vision, The Mersey Partnership, and the Liverpool Commercial District Partnership. Liverpool Vision (LV) is the city's economic development company, *focused on building a strong, sustainable economy which can compete more effectively in international markets than ever before* (Liverpool Vision 2010). The mission of The Mersey Partnership (TMP), which focuses on the wider Liverpool city-region (and now referred to as the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership), was at the time articulated as: *To build a dynamic partnership campaigning for the Liverpool City Region as a great place to invest, live, work and visit—generating greater returns for all* (The Mersey Partnership 2010). The spatial remit of the Liverpool Commercial District Partnership (LCDP), formally constituted as a business improvement district, is inevitably narrower, focusing on a specific area within the city centre, where relevant stakeholders *strive to improve the trading environment, encourage investment in the area and work with public sector partners to maximise the unique opportunities that the next few years offer to the City of Liverpool* (Liverpool Commercial District Partnership 2010).

The first stage of this investigation comprised content analysis of the pictorial representations of the city in promotional literature and websites used by these agencies. Gold (1994, p. 20) notes that in a place context, *most researchers carry out some form of 'content analysis' when studying media messages, if only as a first step*. This is the case here, where pictorial representations were classified in terms of primary place element depicted (i.e. content) and also quantity (i.e. the number of times elements were represented in the specific publication). Following this, a smaller group of pictorial representations, were classified as more overtly chorographic, in the sense that they depicted a significant part of the city and/or structures clearly associated with the city utilising either an oblique or profile perspective, often incorporating an elevated vantage. These representations were then subject to further analysis in relation to their chorographic properties.

## Content Analysis

Pictorial representations of the city in the promotional literature (e.g. Corporate brochures, Economic prospectus/review) produced by these agencies, reflect to some extent their specific remits (with particular emphasis, for example, on networking in TMP publications), and consistent with Hospers' (2009) notion of the city as a built image, a focus on the architecture of the city, which is perhaps inevitable given the 'iconic' nature of the city's waterfront and some of the buildings located close by (see Table 12.1). There were 19 images that could be classified as chorographic (as defined above).

Pictorial representations of the city incorporated within the websites of the three agencies were also subject to similar content analysis (see Table 12.2). There is a more limited range of subject matter on websites compared to printed promotional materials, with particular architectural structures being the most popular (10 images,

**Table 12.1** Content analysis of brochures—number of images per category

Pictorial subject	LV corporate brochure	TMP corporate brochure	LCDP corporate brochure	LV economic prospectus <sup>a</sup>	TMP economic review
Chorographic <sup>b</sup>	1	5	6	7 <sup>c</sup>	1
Infrastructure/transport/energy	–	3	–	2	3
Science (i.e. high-tech industries)	–	3	–	2	1
People at work <sup>d</sup>	2	2	–	6	3
Business networking/meetings	–	13	–	3	–
Existing advertising material produced by agency	1	4	–	1	–
Architecture—generic <sup>d</sup>	1	–	2	1	–
Architecture—specific structures in the city	5	–	15	25	3
Cultural provision		–	–	8	1
Shopping/retail	1	–	1	4	–
Leisure/sport	2	2	4	6	–

<sup>a</sup> Many of these images were part of a montage format—each image within the montage has been counted as a separate item

<sup>b</sup> Some images included views of the city skyline from windows in high buildings

<sup>c</sup> This included one image of Shanghai, where Liverpool was participating in Expo 2010 Shanghai

<sup>d</sup> i.e. 'Generic' images, where company/location/structure is not readily linked to the city on normal inspection

**Table 12.2** Content analysis of websites—number of images per category

Pictorial subject	Liverpool Vision website	The Mersey Partnership website	Liverpool CDP website
Chorographic <sup>a</sup>	2	3	–
Infrastructure/transport/energy	–	–	1
Science (i.e. high tech industries in city-region)	–	–	1
People at work <sup>b</sup>	3	–	1
Architecture—generic <sup>b</sup>	–	1	–
Architecture—specific structures in the city	4	2	4
Leisure/sport	–	2	–

<sup>a</sup> Some of these images included views of the city skyline from windows in high buildings

<sup>b</sup> i.e. ‘Generic’ images, where company/location/structure is not readily linked to the city on normal inspection

perhaps capitalising on their strong association with the city, in an effort to create and communicate place distinctiveness), followed by chorographic representations (five images).

### *Analysis of Chorographic Representations*

Those images classified as demonstrating chorographic characteristics were subject to further analysis. Gold (1994) identifies various problems in analysing place promotional images using what could be described as art historical approaches, stating that there are no readily available taxonomic systems, and that where it has been attempted (e.g. Barke and Harrop 1994) the frameworks used are necessarily ad hoc. Notwithstanding this, Gold does note that there is potential utility in extant analytical approaches, and this paper builds on these in identifying image content, but also incorporates aspects relating to chorography, such as the method of representation (i.e. oblique or profile), and the extent to which representations are ‘panoramic’, in terms of the word’s derivation from the Greek for an *all-embracing view* (Adams 2003, p. 22).

Regarding content, 13 of the 19 images in brochures featured the city’s waterfront, incorporating the distinctive Royal Liver Building (which also featured in a further two images of the city skyline). The docks have been central to the development of the city, and the waterfront is an extensively used image, particularly the Pier Head, with a trio of buildings—the Royal Liver Building, the Cunard Building and the Port of Liverpool Building—collectively referred to as ‘the Three Graces’, regarded as a symbol of the city’s maritime history (see Fig. 12.1). This emphasis is more pronounced in chorographic representations on websites, with



**Fig. 12.1** The Three Graces (Source Author)

four of the five such images showing the waterfront and/or its associated built environment.

The use in promotional materials of a limited number of city elements suggests the existence of synecdoche, described by Lanham (1969, p. 97) as *the substitution of part for whole, genus for species or vice versa*. Thus, architectural features with very strong associative property (Warnaby and Medway 2010) with a place, such as in this case, the Pier Head and waterfront (and particularly the Royal Liver Building—see Fig. 12.2), could be regarded as clear attempts to create and communicate place differentiation. In this way, these structures become almost a ‘shorthand’ representation of the city, and indeed, Turok (2009) has identified the built environment as a potent source of potential urban place distinctiveness. This is also evident with regard to the Catholic and Anglican Cathedrals, which in profile also constitute a distinctive element of the city skyline (see Figs. 12.3 and 12.4). Indeed, one of the particular visual tropes used is the inclusions of these structures (and also the Albert Dock) in representations of the city skyline as seen through the windows of offices/meeting rooms in high-rise buildings, perhaps thereby trying to combine the ‘iconic’ properties of these buildings with the more usual business development messages, in an attempt to create a sense of place, and thereby differentiation from other, competing cities by capitalising upon heritage and built environment. Some images of the waterfront (especially those using an aerial oblique perspective) show the extent of the River Mersey and prominent in two images are cruise liners, again highlighting the city’s maritime heritage. According to Ward (1998), the juxtaposition of heritage and innovation is a key theme in the marketing of post-industrial cities, and Liverpool is no exception, with aerial images in both brochures and





**Fig. 12.2** Liver Building (*Source* Author)

websites depicting the spatial extent of redevelopment within the city, and also indicating the locations of some of the iconic built environment heritage elements in relation to the rest of the city.

‘Chorographic’ representations utilise both oblique and profile modes. Aerial photographs of the city are used in most of the publications in order to illustrate its spatial extent and also to explicitly highlight topography (with particular reference to the waterfront and the River Mersey). These images employ the oblique mode, and here seven of nine such images use a high-oblique projection as opposed to the low-oblique used in the other two images. Campbell (1993) distinguishes between them, in that high-oblique aerial images include the horizon, whereas low-oblique do not. Given the distinctive architecture of the city, profile is used extensively in an attempt to create differentiation by emphasising the city’s skyline as a whole, and/or



**Fig. 12.3** Roman Catholic Cathedral (*Source* Author)

specific elements of the built environment (that have strong associative property) in nine of the chorographic brochure images and three of the website images.

The use of a high-oblique method of representation, especially with aerial photographs, facilitates a more overtly panoramic projection of the city. These panoramic representations (which all occurred in brochures) were given further emphasis by their size and prominence, with some comprising full-page or two-page size. The ‘iconic’ nature of the waterfront, with its distinctive skyline, provided opportunities for impressive profile panoramas, which coupled with its strong associative properties, were capitalised upon in the Liverpool Vision economic prospectus in particular, with one such image comprising front and back cover in a single continuous image.





**Fig. 12.4** Anglican Cathedral (from Hope Street) (*Source* Author)



**Fig. 12.5** Liverpool 08 logo (with Silhouettes of iconic architecture) (*Source* Marketing Liverpool, used with permission)

## Conclusion

This chapter has sought to illustrate how chorographic concepts can potentially inform urban place representation for marketing and branding purposes. The identification of principles underpinning the choice of images to portray the city in marketing/branding materials could arguably contribute to the development of more effective marketing messages—particularly in terms of creating place distinctiveness, an aspect assuming ever more importance (Turok 2009).

The aims of chorography—conveying an accurate and informative, and positive, impression of the nature of a town or city (Frangenberg 1994; Nuti 1999)—resonate with those of much contemporary urban place marketing activity. Moreover, given the importance of illustration in place promotion (Gold 1994; Hubbard and Hall 1998; Kotler et al. 1999), the effective use of pictorial representation could be a potent tool in effectively marketing a locale. Hospers notes the importance of the ‘imageability’ of a city, and of developing clear ‘signs’ arising from its visual features (particularly with regard to the built environment), and the choice of *objects or occasions in the urban landscape* (2009, p. 230), which can be highlighted in marketing/branding activities.

This exploratory analysis of images of Liverpool in printed and online promotional material suggests that where there are phenomena with strong associative property, then their potential as synecdoche should be capitalised upon. In depicting these phenomena (especially if architectural) in marketing/promotional materials, the profile method of chorographic representation—using photographic images of the city skyline, or as silhouettes in pictures and/or logos is a common device. Warnaby and Medway (2008, 2010) highlight the use of features of the built environment in place logos and where a place has distinctive and recognisable features in the built environment, then they can be capitalised upon to communicate place distinctiveness. Liverpool is no exception with regards to this, and logos developed by agencies responsible for marketing and branding the city have incorporated its distinctive skyline. Thus, for example the logo representing the City’s designation as European Capital of Culture (Liverpool 08) in 2008, uses a profile of the skyline where individual buildings are recognisable by their silhouettes (see Fig. 12.5).

Chorographic theory suggests that if the aim is to present a detailed impression of the more overtly *experiential* dimensions of an urban locale, then an oblique view would be more appropriate (Cosgrove 2008). Here, it could be argued that, dependent upon the prime purpose of the image, the choice of high- or low-oblique perspective could be important. Thus, if the aim is to emphasise the territorial extent of a town/city, then a high-oblique view—emphasising the panoramic—may be more appropriate, whereas a low-oblique view gives a more detailed impression of ‘life on the streets’. This has resonance with De Certeau’s (1984, pp. 91–93) contrast of the ‘panorama city’ as viewed from above, as opposed to *the ordinary practitioners of the city who live “down below”, below the levels at which visibility begins*. To view the city from above, De Certeau argues *is to be lifted out of the city’s grasp, transforming the bewitching world [i.e. of the city’s streets] by which*

one was “possessed” into a text that lies before one’s eyes (ibid. p. 92). However, De Certeau argues that the real experience of the city occurs ‘down below’, especially by those of its citizens that walk, which he describes as *an elementary form of this experience of the city* (ibid. p. 93).

Representing such urban attributes (for the purposes of place marketing among other things) has in the past been problematic, but advances in technology are facilitating the ability to portray cities in a more accurate, more overtly experiential manner to give a more realistic (and interactive) impression of the actual visual experience of being there. An example of this is the incorporation of three dimensional cityscapes in Google Earth whereby, *you can see complete 3D representations of buildings and terrain throughout metropolitan areas. 3D imagery provides an immersive experience as you explore, just like the view you’d have if you were flying over the city* (Google 2014). This experience (albeit virtual) of De Certeau’s (1984) notion of a ‘panorama city’ can also be combined with the experience of the city ‘down below’ at ground level as one moves from Google Earth into Google Street View (i.e. moving from high-oblique, through low-oblique, to profile projections).

The potential place marketing applications of this are evident, although they currently remain embryonic. As one commentator notes (quoting a representative from Google):

3D cities might look pretty, but what are the actual benefits to this kind of technology besides swooping virtually over San Francisco or London to show off a smartphone or tablet?

“Behind the scenes, this is very valuable for future applications like augmented reality”, said [Google representative] Parsons. “It gives you the ability to attach information to objects in three dimensions. For example, I’m currently sitting on the sixth floor of an office in Soho, and that’s three-dimensional information. Increasingly, mapping will be more and more 3D both online, and on mobile devices” (Dredge 2009).

Thus, into the future, online representations of urban places will have the facility for much greater interactivity, with the ability to access additional information relating to elements of the place product (such as cultural facilities etc.) merely by clicking on a representation of the building within which they are located on some kind of 3D panorama of the city, thereby bringing a whole new (hyper-real) dimension to the experiential representation of the city. The marketing and branding implications of this contemporary manifestation of chorography—in terms of both message content and mode of delivery to identified target audiences—are ripe for further research.

## References

- Adams C (2003) Between the angels and the beasts. In: Anderson E (ed) *The impossible view*. The Lowry Press, Salford, pp 16–23
- Barke M, Harrop K (1994) Selling the industrial town: identity, image and illusion. In: Gold JR, Ward SV (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 93–114

- Campbell J (1993) *Map use and analysis*, 2nd edn. Wm. C. Brown Publishers, Dubuque
- Casey ES (2002) *Representing place: landscape, painting and maps*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis
- Colomb C, Kalandides A (2010) The 'be Berlin' campaign: old wine in new bottles or innovative form of participatory place branding? In: Ashworth G, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 173–190
- Comment B (1999) *The painted panorama*. Harry N. Abrahams Inc., Publishers, New York
- Cosgrove D (2005) Maps, mapping, modernity: art and cartography in the twentieth century. *Imago Mundi* 57(1):35–54
- Cosgrove D (2008) *Geography and vision: seeing, imagining and representing the world*. I B Tauris, London
- De Certeau M (1984) *The practice of everyday life* (trans: Rendall S). University of California Press, Berkeley
- Delano-Smith C, Kain RJP (1999) *English maps: a history*. The British Library, London
- Dredge S (2009) Google unveils 3D cities in Google Earth and offline Google Maps for Android. *The guardian apps blog* (6 June). <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/appsblog/2012/jun/06/google-maps-3d-street-view>1. Accessed 7 June 2012
- Fitzsimons DS (1995) Planning and promotion: city reimagining in the 1980s and 1990s. In: Neill WJV, Fitzsimons DS, Murtagh B (eds) *Reimagining the Pariah city: urban development in Belfast and Detroit*. Avebury, Aldershot, pp 1–49
- Frangenberg T (1994) *Chorographies of Florence: the use of city views and city plans in the sixteenth century*. *Imago Mundi* 46:41–64
- Gold JR (1994) Locating the message: place promotion as image communication. In: Gold JR, Ward SV (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 19–37
- Google (2014) 3D imagery in Google Earth. <https://support.google.com/earth/answer/2661942?hl=en>. Accessed 10 March 2014
- Gregory D (2009) Chorology/chorography. In: Gregory D, Johnston R, Pratt G, Watts MJ, Whatmore S (eds) *The dictionary of human geography*, 5th edn. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester, pp 82–83
- Griffiths R (1998) Making sameness: place marketing and the new urban entrepreneurialism. In: Oatley N (ed) *Cities, economic competition and urban policy*. Paul Chapman Publishing, London, pp 41–57
- Hall T (1998) *Urban geography*. Routledge, London
- Harmon K (2004) *You are here: personal geographies and other maps of the imagination*. Princeton Architectural Press, New York
- Harmon K (2009) *The map as art: contemporary artists explore cartography*. Princeton Architectural Press, New York
- Holcomb B (1994) City make-overs: marketing the post-industrial city. In: Gold JR, Ward SV (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 115–132
- Hospers G-J (2009) Lynch, Urry and city marketing: taking advantage of the city as a built and graphic image. *Place Brand Publ Dipl* 5(3):226–233
- Hubbard P, Hall T (1998) The entrepreneurial city and the 'new urban politics'. In: Hall T, Hubbard P (eds) *The entrepreneurial city: geographies of politics, regimes and representations*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 1–13
- Hunt T (2005). *Cities of the mind*. *The Guardian* G2. 25 Oct, pp 4–5
- Ingold T (2000) *The perception of the environment: essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. Routledge, London
- Ingold T (2011) *Being alive: essays on movement, knowledge and description*. Routledge, New York
- Kavaratzis M, Ashworth G (2008) Place marketing: how did we get here and where are we going? *J Place Manag Dev* 1(2):150–165

- Kotler P, Asplund C, Rein I, Haider D (1999) *Marketing places Europe: attracting investments, industries, and visitors to European cities, communities, regions and nations*. Financial Times Prentice Hall, Harlow
- Lanham RA (1969) *A handlist of rhetorical terms*. University of California Press, Berkeley
- Liverpool Commercial District Partnership (2010) Home. <http://www.liverpoolcdp.com/index.asp>. Accessed 27 Oct 2010
- Liverpool Vision (2010) Liverpool Vision—about us—introduction. <http://www.liverpoolvision.co.uk/aboutus/aboutus.asp>. Accessed 27 Oct 2010
- Lynch K (1960) *The image of the city*. The MIT Press, Cambridge
- Nuti L (1999) Mapping places: chorography and vision in the renaissance. In: Cosgrove D (ed) *Mappings*. Reaktion Books, London, pp 90–108
- Porteous JD (1990) *Landscapes of the mind: worlds of sense and metaphor*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto
- Sadler D (1993) Place marketing, competitive places and the construction of hegemony in Britain in the 1980s. In: Kearns G, Philo C (eds) *Selling places: the city as cultural capital past and present*. Pergamon Press, Oxford, pp 175–192
- Short JR (1999) Urban imagineers: boosterism and the representation of cities. In: Jonas AEG, Wilson D (eds) *The urban growth machine: critical perspectives two decades later*. State University of New York Press, New York, pp 37–54
- The Mersey Partnership (2010) About us. <http://www.merseyside.org.uk/displaypage.asp?page=1>. Accessed 27 Oct 2010
- Turok I (2009) The distinctive city: pitfalls in the pursuit of differential advantage. *Environ Plan A* 41(1):13–30
- Urry J (1990) *The tourist gaze: leisure and travel in contemporary societies*, 2nd edn. Sage, London
- Ward SV (1998) *Selling places: the marketing and promotion of towns and cities 1850–2000*. E. & F. N. Spon, London
- Ward SV, Gold JR (1994) Introduction. In: Gold JR, Ward SV (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 1–17
- Warnaby G, Medway D (2008) Bridges, place representation and place creation. *Area* 40 (4):510–519
- Warnaby G, Medway D (2010) Semiotics and place branding: the influence of the built and natural environment in city logos. In: Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Northampton, pp 205–221

# Chapter 13

## Rethinking Place Branding and the ‘Other’ Senses

Dominic Medway

**Abstract** Place branding activity is a predominantly visual phenomenon, but what of the other senses? What role do smell, hearing, taste and touch have to play in the way humans navigate and consume space and place? This chapter explores the role these non-visual senses can, or could, play in the way places are branded. Although, there is clearly an opportunity to engage all the senses in place branding campaigns, most focus on sight and, at best, just one or two other senses. It is argued that a more holistic approach is required, with place marketing practitioners aiming to stimulate all five senses when they embark on place branding activity. This is likely to deliver a more enriching experience for the recipient of place branding effort and, ultimately, the place consumer.

### Introduction

Place branding activity is, at first glance, a very visual phenomenon. Previous literature identifies that distinctive natural features (such as plan views of recognisable river meanders, silhouettes of well-known mountain ranges and island coastlines), along with iconic built structures such as the Eiffel Tower and the Brandenburg Gate, are commonplace in place brand communication and logos (Warnaby and Medway 2010). Furthermore, the choice of visual feature used to represent a place in logo form can sometimes serve as metaphorical shorthand for the marketer’s vision of the place in question. Bridges in particular appear to serve this purpose, arising frequently in the iconography of place branding campaigns. Here, they present an effective visual representation of a ‘linking’ metaphor, and typically a symbol of bringing two communities together—a common theme in the marketing of places such as Halton (incorporating the UK towns of Runcorn and

---

D. Medway (✉)  
Manchester Business School, University of Manchester, Booth Street West,  
Manchester M1 3GH, UK  
e-mail: Dominic.medway@mbs.ac.uk

Widnes) and the UK's NewcastleGateshead Initiative (Warnaby and Medway 2008). The dominance of the ocular in place branding effort also extends to typography. Warnaby and Medway (2010) discuss a distinctive example of this in the logo of the Pisa Tourist Board (APTP/ISA), where an italicised and red letter 'I' becomes representative of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. All of the above represent a semiotic mode of relationship between visual place phenomena and place branding material.

The dominance of the visual in place branding is hardly surprising, indeed it is indicative of how we primarily navigate and consume space and place. Usually, all of our senses are engaged in such activity, but sight is very much privileged. Porteous (1990) suggests that sight is the 'common sense', providing 80 % of our knowledge of the world around us. Similarly, Drobnick notes that although: *[m]any theorists of spatial experience gesture toward the necessity of understanding places via all of the senses, noting that something like synaesthesia or "simultaneous perception" is required, most neglect to follow through and explore the ramifications of such statements, only to reiterate, ultimately, a methodology centred on visualist and discursive modes* (2002, pp. 32–33).

Accordingly, it has been argued that our ability to process more holistic spatial information has been desensitised, and we have lost what Berger (1987) refers to as the ability of 'concentrated looking'. Put another way, the non-seeing senses provide important information about the space around us that is often crowded out by the visual. In such situations landscapes can become 'blandscapes' (Porteous 1990), in which the all-pervasive nature of what can be seen covers, smoothes over and muffles the intricate spatial topographies of sound, smell, taste and texture like a blanket of snow. It would appear that non-visual sensory information seems to be processed subconsciously on an everyday level as part of habituation, and only brought to our conscious attention if particularly pronounced, unfamiliar, or if suggestive of a potential source of pleasure or danger (Truax 1984; Henshaw 2013).

From a place branding perspective, the importance of sight and seeing is exacerbated by an ocular-centric approach to the design of places, especially urban areas (Sennett 1994). Here, architectural and planning processes have often privileged sight whilst reducing our appreciation of the qualities and opportunities that other senses might present in environmental experience and, in turn, the marketing of the city. The enduring dominance of the visual in urban design, and related ocular concepts such as vista and perspective, is emphasised in the work of key individuals and movements in the shaping of urban form, all of which have had a lasting legacy in some of our major global cities. These include Hausmann's work on Paris and the City Beautiful Movement in the United States. The latter took its architectural cues from the very visual forms of neo-classical and Beaux-Arts design, and had a lasting influence on the appearance and look of cities like Washington, Chicago and Detroit (Bluestone 1988).

However, the non-seeing senses provide us with different, and often crucial information about our environment. It has been demonstrated, for example, that sound, as heard, profoundly influences human perceptions (see for example, Schafer 1977a; Truax 1978, 1984; Davies et al. 2007; Payne 2008) and behaviour in particular



service contexts (see for example, Milliman 1986; Yalch and Spangenburg 1990; Hui et al. 1997; Oakes and North 2008). Equally, smell has been shown to have strong links to memory and nostalgic associations with places (Porteous 1985, 1990; Rodaway 1994; Henshaw 2013). Taste and touch also have a role to play in how we navigate, understand and appreciate place. Thus, the non-seeing senses can provide an immersive and experiential impression of the environment (Drobnick 2002; Zardini 2005; Pallasmaa 2005; Henshaw and Mould 2013), and are suggested by Porteous (1985) to evoke more emotional as opposed to rational associations. Despite this, relatively little research has explored the relationship between place and the other senses, particularly from a marketing perspective. As Porteous states:

Vision distances us from the landscape; it is easy to be disengaged. Such is not the case for other sensory modes, particularly smell and touch. Yet, except for hearing, these other senses are increasingly neglected in urban civilisation. While visual landscapes have been analysed to death, non-visual sensory modes have been paid little attention in studies of 'landscape appreciation.' (1990, p. 5).

This chapter explores the role the non-seeing senses play, or could play, in the way places are branded, and in doing so moves beyond the notion of landscape as a primarily visual construct to incorporate a wider sensory appreciation and understanding of places. This fits with notions of place branding and 'otherscapes', or more specifically 'smellscapes', 'soundscapes', 'tastescapes' and 'touchscapes' (Porteous 1990).

## Smell and Place Branding

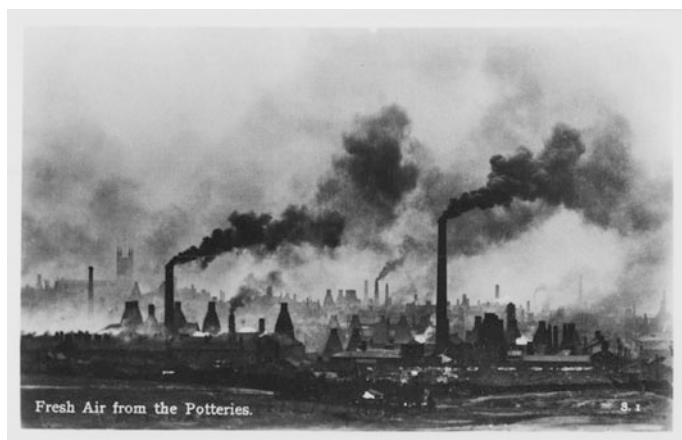
A lot of places smell of something, although residents do not always notice this as they get used to it, or habituated (Engen 1982). Smell is, however, usually recognised by visitors to a place, and Porteous (1990) demonstrates this through an analysis of the vivid accounts of the smell of places in travel writing and biography. Even for residents, whilst smell may not be being processed consciously, it is still happening subconsciously, especially as olfactory receptors are linked directly to the limbic system of the brain (Gloor 1978). Porteous (1990) also argues that the language we use in relation to smell is typically biased towards the negative (stench, whiff, pong, reek, acrid, foul, hum), whilst positive words are rarer (fragrant, perfumed, heady). Similarly, when we talk about smell and places, apart from certain exceptions, it often appears to be about the fact that they smell bad. Cities, in particular, have a long history of unpleasant odours (Classen et al. 1994; Cockayne 2007; Reinartz 2013). In the past, this was generally connected with unsanitary conditions created by people living in close proximity without proper sewage disposal. In this respect, London was home to the Great Stink of 1858, when during a hot summer the smell of human waste flowing into the Thames became so strong that MPs in the House of Commons were overwhelmed by the stench from the adjacent river. In response, an act of parliament was passed within months to fund a



system of sewers, designed by Joseph Bazalgette (Halliday 1999). Wealthier residents learnt to cope with the problem of unpleasant urban smells in a more personal way, with ladies and gentlemen carrying vinaigrettes—small gilt lined boxes containing a sponge filled with aromatics, warding off a malodorous urban environment. This issue of unpleasant smells in the city has also influenced urban design, particularly after the onset of industrialisation, with increasing thought given to how the odour of industry could be diverted away from residential areas. A notable example, though never fully realised, was the linear city design—first developed by Arturo Soria y Mata for a part of Madrid during the 19th century, and further promoted by the Soviet planner Nikolay Milyutin in the late 1920s. In terms of smell, the city would be designed in parallel lines of land use, such that the prevailing wind would blow from housing areas to the industrial strip, and ensure that residents were not subject to the stench of industry.

From another perspective, the smell of 19th and 20th century industrial towns and cities was linked to economic progress and wealth creation, and Barke and Harrop (1994) argue that those responsible for marketing the industrial town did not always try to disguise its realities. Indeed, smoke and associated smell was arguably a symbol of progress and a positive place brand attribute to be celebrated and marketed, albeit in a self-deprecating manner, as postcards from the time emphasised (see Fig. 13.1). As Briggs notes, *the smoke could be defended* because in many ways it was symptomatic *of the energy of the city rather than the problems it had to face* (1968, p. 70). In such instances, there is an element of ‘perverse place marketing’ at play (Medway and Warnaby 2008).

An associated facet of 19th and 20th century industrialisation in Europe was the desire for escape to where the air was fresher. Factory workers, in particular, followed their noses to seaside towns during the small windows of recreational time provided by the more philanthropic owners of production. Those responsible for



**Fig. 13.1** Postcard for Stoke-on-Trent from the 1950s. *Source* [www.marshallcolman.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.marshallcolman.blogspot.co.uk)

places of escape were clearly aware that fresh air and the smell of the sea or countryside, or no smell at all, were attributes to be capitalised on for the purposes of place branding—what Ward (1998), in his historical overview of place marketing activity, has termed ‘selling the resort’. This approach is typified by John Hassel’s iconic promotional poster with the caption ‘Skegness is so bracing’. As well as coastal towns, spa-resorts in mountain areas also promoted the perceived health-giving benefits of a smoke and smell-free environment, deploying messages emphasizing their clean air; a welcome respite for wealthier 19th and 20th century TB sufferers seeking escape from the industrial city. Even today, alpine spa-resorts continue to emphasise their fresh air environment. For example, the town of Bad Gastein in Austria opens its entry on <http://www.alpinresorts.com> by reminding potential visitors that it ‘basks in fresh mountain air’.

In services marketing, smells are introduced intentionally into environments to change the amount of time spent within them, and specific behaviours practised. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) refer to this as approach and avoidance behaviour. However, unlike the deliberate scenting used to brand service settings such as hotels (YouTube clip 1), retail spaces (Davies et al. 2003; Ward et al. 2007; Doucé and Janssens 2013; <http://www.air-aroma.com>) and even museums (Aggleton and Waskett 1999), smells that are associated with places tend to have emerged through a more organic process. Typically, they are a long-standing by-product from commercial activities, ranging from brewing and distilling to chocolate (Steel 2008) and even breakfast cereal manufacturing (<http://www.innovationtrail.org>). In such cases, smells that have long pervaded (and arguably polluted) the air of urban centres have, over that time, become intertwined with the place itself. When such smells are pleasant it is easy to see how they can become incorporated into the place brand. Examples might be the sweet-smelling air of Grasse in Southern France, a result of numerous perfume manufacturers that exist within the town. Indeed, Grasse and perfume have become synonymous, and the smell of perfume has become a recognised brand asset in the marketing of Grasse to tourists. An article on the town in Norwegian Airlines in-flight magazine comments thus:

Grasse leaves you with little doubt that it’s the perfume capital of the world. On the 35 km drive inland from Nice, huge signs point you to Galimard, Fragonard and Molinard, the old perfumeries that continue to draw one million people a year for their organised tours, during which visitors get spritzed with the scents they’ll hopefully buy. In the pretty town itself, which is packed with boutique perfumers, they pump wafts of jasmine of mimosa into the streets, just in case you missed out on a tour. (Skinner n.d.).

The smell of a manufacturing process that becomes linked with a place does not always have to be universally pleasant, reflecting Porteous’s (1990) notion that everyday habituation to any smell can make it less noticeable and offensive. Steel (2008, p. 116) notes the *the fishy whiff of Billingsgate, which lingered long after the market closed in 1982*. Similarly, the city of Edinburgh is known for the smell of ‘Auld Reekie’, a distinctive melange of unintended olfactory releases, emanating primarily from whisky distilling, but also including other less attractive odours such as the smell of penguins in Edinburgh Zoo (McLean 2013). In this sense,

unintended local smells, whether perceived as good or bad by the olfactory recipient(s), can combine to create part of the sensory identity for places. When smell becomes intrinsic to a place in this way it can become a point of contestation. An argument about smell becomes an argument about place identity. Thus, the idea of fitting an odour control tower onto the North British Distillery in Edinburgh in 2009 was met with opposition by locals who felt it was an attempt to change the distinctive character of their locale (<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk>). Continuing with the idea of contestation, if a perceived bad smell hangs over a place then it can conflict with any attempts to create a positive brand image focused upon the other senses. As Knopper (2002, p. 1) notes: *Denver is trying to market itself as a sophisticated place for urbanites. But on certain days, when the wind shifts, there's a hint of cow manure in the air that reminds everyone of the city's agricultural roots.*

Leverage between olfaction and the place brand can be maximised by producing products that smell which feature the place's name. An example would be the City of Parma in Italy, which uses the scent of Parma violets in a whole range of souvenir products, including the perfume Aqua di Parma (see, for example, <http://www.parmashop.com>). What we see here is place marketing's answer to brand merchandise. The sale of a bottle of Aqua di Parma perfume is admittedly not quite the same as the sale of a Coca-Cola emblazoned base-ball cap, but both transactions help promote the brand name or, in the case of the Parma, the toponym.

In summary, the particular spatial configuration of odours and their relation to place has characteristics that strongly impact on the ways in which smell could be utilised in terms of place representation, place branding and marketing/promotion. Having said this, smells are ephemeral, with mutable meanings and problematic duration and placing. They tend to be discontinuous, and fragmentary (Drobnick 2002, after Porteous 1990). They disperse at different rates, according to weather and other environmental conditions. Some odours linger, others are fleeting. Smells have different intensities, but it can be hard to distinguish exactly where they come from. And crucially, they are perceived differently: the same smell may carry a positive connotation for one person, but might be disliked by another. Moreover, there are significant cultural variations in these perceptions, across societies, and according to age and gender. Together, these attributes mean that smell is not an easy sense to incorporate into place branding effort. Perhaps its biggest advantage comes in its memorability, which is surely something to be capitalised on if it can help position a town, city, or locale more clearly in the place consumer's consciousness: As Porteous (1990, p. 37), referring to the work of Engen and Ross (1973) and Engen (1977), notes:

...while we may distinguish between smells with only 20 per cent accuracy, we are able to remember these smells with almost the same degree of accuracy up to a year later. In contrast, visual recognition shows an almost 100 per cent accuracy..., but this accuracy rapidly falls off with time.

Being memorable is fundamental in the success of any brand. If smell can help places achieve this, then it should not be overlooked.

## Sound (as Heard) and Place Branding

The relationship between sound and place is not a well-trodden path in academic writing. Some previous work has focused on unwanted sound or ‘noise’ as a place pollutant (Cameron et al. 1972; Zanin et al. 2002) and the legal issues that surround this (Jones 1980). Schafer’s (1977b, 1978) work looks at changes in both urban and rural soundscapes. In the latter, he recognises an increase in technological sounds and an associated ‘degeneracy in the variety and complexity of community sounds’ (Schafer 1977b, pp. 79–80). Finally, there is a small amount of more recent work that explores the role of sound (and principally music) in shaping tourist destinations (Sellars 1998; Saldanha 2002; Gibson and Davidson 2004; Gibson and Connell 2007). But, by and large, examination of the interplay between sound and place appears limited and fragmented. Part of the reason for this is undoubtedly the difficulty in pinning sound down as something that is spatially delineated. Indeed, if it is spatially delineated at all, then the boundaries of this will vary from person to person on the basis of a whole range of conditions: These include environmental factors such as wind direction, to personal factors such as how good an individual’s sense of hearing actually is. As Carpenter (1973, p. 36) explains in his study of the Inuit people:

Auditory space has no favoured focus. It is a sphere without fixed boundaries, space made by the thing itself, not space containing the thing. It is not pictorial space, boxed-in, but dynamic, always in flux, creating its own dimensions moment by moment. It has no fixed boundaries; it is indifferent to background. The eye focuses, pinpoints, abstracts, locating each object in physical space, against a background; the ear, however, favours a sound from any direction... I know of no example of an Eskimo describing space primarily in visual terms.

Despite these challenges of exploring the sound—place nexus, Porteous (1990), after (Truax 1978), indicates that a useful approach in getting to grips with the soundscape is to start by classifying the types of sound that can occur within it. He identifies six categories: natural, human (vocal), motor, activity, indicator, and neighbour. However, for the purposes of understanding the role sound and the sense of hearing might have to play in place branding, it might be more helpful to think simply in terms of natural sounds and man-made sounds—especially music.

In terms of the former, a number of national parks across the world have used the sounds of animals and natural features such as waterfalls to try and emphasise a more immersive and ecosophical (Varley and Medway 2011) visitor experience. For example, the North Cascades National Park in the USA is keen to promote itself as part of a nationwide ‘Natural Sounds Program’, claiming that:

Waterfalls thundering out of hanging valleys, rock or ice plummeting down a steep slope, the constant chorus of birdsong - these are the sounds that make visiting North Cascades National Park Service Complex a unique experience. Natural and cultural sounds reawaken the sense of awe that connects us to the splendor of the national park experience and have a powerful effect on our emotions, attitudes, and memories... Natural sounds are essential for

appreciating and enjoying park features. Our ability to see is a powerful tool for experiencing our world, but sound adds a dimension that sight alone cannot provide. (<http://www.nps.gov>).

More widely, the National Park Service for the whole of the USA has a section of its website devoted to exploring sounds in park settings, where natural sounds can be listened to online and advice is provided on enhancing your ‘soundscape experience’ (<http://www.nature.nps.gov>) However, beyond this rather generic approach, examples of natural sounds being actively used to enrich the place brand seem thin on the ground. The same can also be said of most man-made noises, other than music.

Certain man-made noises have clear place association. A factory whistle might convey the essence of an urban industrial area and the blare of a foghorn might remind us of the sea or coast—although the natural sounds of seagulls might too. A key point is that none of these sounds appear specific to just one place, and perhaps for that reason they do not appear to be actively woven into place branding efforts on a regular basis, although there is no reason why they might not be. Music, however, is rather different, as it has a long and multifarious connection with places and how they come to develop a sense of brand identity. As an early indication of the potential in this area, Gibson and Connell (2007) note how visitors once travelled large distances in the later 19th century to visit Bayreuth in southern Germany (Wagner’s birthplace) to see performances of the Ring Cycle of operas. Historically, other places have been able to capitalise on such musical connections in building an identity. Vienna, became intimately tied up with the waltz music of Johan Strauss I and II throughout the 19th century, and New Orleans and Jazz became synonymous in the early 20th century. What is significant is that all of these musical genres and, in the case of Wagner, musical artists, still have a stake in the brands of these places today. Thus, Bayreuth in Germany continues to hold an annual festival of Wagner’s music to attract tourists (<http://www.bayreuther-festspiele.de>). Meanwhile, Vienna’s online information site dubs it the ‘City of Music’, and goes on to state that:

Welcome to the world’s music capital! More famous composers have lived here than in any other city - in Vienna, music is literally in the air: Waltzes and operettas have their home here, and so do musicals “made in Vienna,” which have conquered international audiences. (<http://www.wien.info>).

New Orleans also integrates jazz music, and music more generally, into its place marketing efforts and overall brand image, not least with the annual New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival which has run since 1970 (<http://www.nojazzfest.com>). Ellen de Generes, the US comedian and a New Orleans native, has gone so far as to comment on one promotional website for the city: *What is New Orleans without music?* (<http://www.neworleansonline.com>).

Gibson and Connell (2007) present a typology of music tourism, and their work might usefully be adapted to understand the ways in which music can represent place (see Table 13.1), and in turn be used for the purposes of place branding. In order to do this, it is helpful to categorise approaches to representing place through music; first, via the actual sound of the music directly, and, second, indirect representation

**Table 13.1** Ways music can represent place

Category	Approach	Examples
Direct	Sounds from certain musical instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound of instrument associated with the place and native to it: <i>Alpine horn—Switzerland; bodhrán—Ireland; Northumbrian pipes—Northumberland</i></li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound of instrument associated with a place but not exclusively native to it: <i>Castanets—Spain; accordion—Paris; bagpipes—Scotland.</i></li> </ul>
	Songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Songs written about places: <i>I left my Heart in San Francisco; Mull of Kintyre; New York, New York; The Girl from Ipanema; Flower of Scotland.</i></li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Songs associated with places: <i>Jerusalem—England; Waltzing Matilda or Men at Work’s ‘Down Under’—Australia; The Fields of Athenry—Ireland.</i></li> </ul>
Indirect	Classical composers and popular performers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Composers: <i>Mozart—Salzburg; Beethoven—Bonn; Wagner—Bayreuth</i></li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular performers: <i>Elvis Presley—Memphis; Roy Orbison—Wink, Texas; The Beatles—Liverpool; Runrig—Isle of Skye and Scotland; U2—Ireland</i></li> </ul>
	Genres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Jazz—New Orleans; Country—Nashville; brass bands—northern England; Waltz music—Vienna; Dance—Ibiza; Trance—Goa; Trip hop—Bristol; Alternative /Psychedelic Rock—Manchester or ‘Madchester’; steel bands—The Caribbean</i></li> </ul>
	Places of music production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recording venues and record labels: <i>Abbey Road—London; Motown—Detroit; Stax—Memphis</i></li> <li>• Live performance venues: <i>Sydney Opera House—Sydney; Broadway—New York; Moulin Rouge—Paris; Royal Albert Hall—London</i></li> </ul>

through the activities that surround music as an aural art form. A lot of what has been discussed already will be seen to fit into the latter category.

In terms of direct approaches, there are sounds from certain musical instruments that when heard are perceived as exclusively native to a place and hence come to represent it. An example would be the alpine horn from Switzerland and the bodhrán from Ireland. Indeed, on rare occasions an instrument and the sound it makes is so rooted in a specific place that it acquires the toponym, as in ‘Northumbrian pipes’. In other instances, an instrument and its sound are not exclusively native to a place, but have become strongly associated with it. Examples are castanets and Spain, bagpipes and Scotland, or the accordion and Paris. In the sense that the connections between the sounds these instruments make and places they are from is already strong, then they are intimately tied to the place brand itself. Whether this connection is then leveraged in place marketing effort is another matter. An example of how this can occur is the inter-terminal train in Zurich Airport. This pipes ‘Swiss noises’ through the train, including that of the alpine

horn, to help promote some of the identity of Switzerland to travellers, whether they are tourists, residents of the country, or simply those in transit. Interestingly, other more natural and man-made sounds are also heard on the journey, including mooing cows, cowbells and yodelling (see, YouTube clip 2).

Another direct approach to representing place through music comes in song. Some songs are about places and have the toponym within their titles and/or lyrics, as in *Mull of Kintyre*; *I Left me Heart in San Francisco*; *New York, New York*; and *The Girl from Ipanema*. However, it would seem that the songs that really become woven into a given place brand are those ‘unofficial anthems’ that may not mention the place itself at all. Examples would be *Jerusalem (England)*, *The Fields of Athenry (Ireland)* and *Waltzing Matilda (Australia)*; the first two being particularly popular with supporters of national sports teams. The use of songs that are tied into the place brand in place marketing campaigns appears rare, perhaps because they may not be fully representative of all the residents of the place in question, but there are sporadic efforts by places to emphasise their brand connection with a song for the purposes of promotion. The town of Winton in Queensland Australia invites visitors to experience the ‘home of Waltzing Matilda’ (<http://www.experiencewinton.com.au>) at the Waltzing Matilda Centre no less, whilst a tourism portal for Rio de Janeiro discusses the origins of the *Girl from Ipanema* song as a vehicle to promote an outsider’s understanding of the attractions within the Ipanema district of town (<http://www.rio.com>).

Turning to indirect approaches to representing place through music, towns and cities across the globe are keen to incorporate connections to famous classical composers and rock stars into their place brand image if those individuals have resided in the place in question or been born there. The way in which Bayreuth in southern Germany capitalises on its Wagner connections has already been noted above. Similarly, Salzburg is makes a major feature of its links to Mozart on the city’s main tourist site (<http://www.salzburg.info>), whilst Bonn emphasises the fact it was the birthplace and (for a time) the home of Beethoven (<http://www.bonn.de>). These intimate biographical connections between the music artist and the place brand spill over into popular genres too. For example, the strong connections between Elvis and Memphis are noted by both Leaver and Schmidt (2009) and Gibson and Connell (2007). Equally, The Beatles have become a critical element in the Liverpool place brand and a significant amount of place marketing effort centres on connections with the band and the attractions in the city that draw on this (<http://www.visitliverpool.com>).

Another indirect connection between music and place is found in genres. The links between Waltz music and Vienna and Jazz and New Orleans have already been discussed. However, there are many other such connections, such as Nashville and Country music and Steel Bands and the Caribbean; although Nashville sees its music connections as even more broad brush and inclusive, adopting the strapline ‘music city’ on its tourism website (<http://www.visitmusiccity.com>). Saldanha (2002) has also identified the connections between Goa and trance music, to the extent that, ‘[Y]ou can find a Goa trance section in record shops’ (ibid., p. 46). Similarly, Sellars (1998) highlighted the connections between Ibiza and the dance

music scene. And the emergence of alternative/psychedelic rock bands in Manchester in the late 1980s and early 90s, such as the Happy Mondays and The Stone Roses, meant that for a time the city was colloquially named ‘Madchester’, suggesting that if the connections between music and place are strong enough it can affect the toponym as well as place brand image.

A final consideration in the indirect representation of place through music concerns places of production. This can include both recording venues and live music performance. In terms of the former, Detroit is still associated with the Motown moniker; and even though the record label has not recorded in the city since 1972 there is still a dedicated museum there. Similarly, in Memphis, the Stax museum is on the list of music venues to visit, helping reinforce the city’s strapline of ‘Home of the Blues, Birthplace of Rock ‘n’ Roll’ (<http://www.memphistravel.com>; Leaver and Schmidt 2009). Live music performance venues can also have strong place connections. An obvious example is the Sydney Opera House, which is so intimately woven into the brand image of Sydney and its surroundings that it features in a stylised form in the place brand logos for both Sydney (<http://www.sydney.com>) and New South Wales (<http://www.visitnsw.com>).

In summary it would appear that sound and hearing already play an important role in place branding effort, particularly in terms of the direct and indirect man-made sounds of music. The opportunity to develop place branding around natural sounds also exists and in some cases is being explored, but it would seem there is further scope for development here.

## Taste and Place Branding

Taste and place go together. The world can be mapped by national, regional and local dishes, and this geography of cuisine has been regularly celebrated in multitude of ‘taste travelogues’ that have emerged since WWII in popular culture. Aside from reference publications such as the Michelin Guide, an early and seminal example of the genre was Elizabeth David’s *Italian Food* (1954), which in England, and elsewhere, captured a growing wave of public interest in Mediterranean cuisine, fuelled by a rise in cheaper air travel and the resultant new eating experiences of many holiday makers. This continued through the published and TV work of Keith Floyd and his ‘Floyd on...[insert relevant toponym]’ series. In Floyd’s wake, a host of celebrity chefs have taken their viewers and readers on their own taste travelogues—Rick Stein has undertaken a *Seafood Odyssey* (Stein 2000) and Jamie Oliver ‘does’ Spain, Morocco, Greece, Italy, Sweden and France, inviting us to partake of, *Easy twists on classic dishes inspired by my travels* (Oliver 2010). In the taste travelogue’s most sassy and up-to-date incarnation, Anthony Bourdain has garnered a multi-national audience for his globally syndicated ‘No Reservations’; a program which across 9 series and 142 episodes celebrates food, and its taste, as it is found at the local level (or even by street and household) in the world’s far (and near)-flung places.



The language we use for food on day-to-day level also has an inherent place dimension—we ‘go for an Italian’, we ‘fancy a Chinese’, we might invite friends around for ‘an Indian’. This toponymic discourse also relates to regional dishes (Chicken Kiev and Maryland; Spaghetti Bolognese; Wiener Schnitzel) and food products (Philadelphia Cheese—in fact most cheeses carry a regional or local toponym; Frankfurters; Scotch Pies). Indeed, on occasions the commodification of the toponym in relation to food products becomes an asset worthy of Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status in Europe (or variants thereof), examples being Roquefort Cheese, Melton Mowbray Pork Pies, Arbroath Smokies, Parmesan Cheese and Parma Ham (<http://www.ec.europa.eu>). In addition, in many parts of Europe wine is named after the place it comes from, as opposed to the grape that made it. Like the example of Aqua di Parma, discussed previously, these food-place associations serve as further examples of brand merchandising, in that a place is promoted through incorporation of its toponym in a product name, the only difference being the context is gustatory rather than olfactory.

Beyond these more obvious examples, the use of taste in place branding efforts does appear to be a remarkably common occurrence. Certainly, in a developed world context, there is barely a website devoted to potential visitors that does not have at least one element of food, drink or restaurants as a drop-down menu selection or tab, irrespective of whether it is countries (<http://www.australia.com>), cities (<http://www.barcelonaturisme.com>), or more rural areas (<http://www.yorkshire.com>) that are the focus. Every travel guide seems similarly effusive about the tastes that can be experienced within a given centre or location, and there is significant part of the tourism industry built around tourist taste trails (Boyne et al. 2002; <http://www.topdeck.travel>) and exploring wine regions (Bruwer 2003; Sparks 2007; <http://www.queenstownwinetrail.co.nz>), appealing to Keith Floyd’s notion of the ‘gastronaut’. Some places are even more up-front about how they use taste as central pillar of place branding efforts. Thus, Jones and Jenkins (2002) have previously reported on (and critiqued) attempts to bring taste to the very forefront of Welsh tourism with the ‘Taste of Wales’ campaign.

It would seem, therefore, that unlike other senses such as smell and, as we will see, touch, taste is not being underused in place branding efforts and place marketing campaigns more generally. One of the reasons for this may be that food is a universal requirement and for most a potential source of pleasure. Food also has an ability to bring all the senses together in a synergistic combination, so it has proven a remarkably powerful vehicle for tourism as it provides an opportunity for multi-sensory excitement. As Benzmilller (2008, p. 1) notes:

While traditional sightseeing allows tourist to view the cultural Other, culinary tourism provides a more integrated way to explore the diverse cultural offerings of unfamiliar communities through taste, smell, and touch as well as sight. (Sic.).

Despite taste having strong place brand associations, the only problem with its use in place marketing campaigns is that it seems overly reliant on indirect descriptions of how good taste is, rather than direct experiences of tasting by the

potential place consumer. This is analogous to the indirect representation of place through the activities that surround music as an aural art form, rather than through directly hearing the sound of the music itself.

## Touch and Place Branding

There is only minimal thought given in the literature to the sense of touch and its interrelationship with place, whilst the matter of touch and place branding appear to be uncharted territory. When one considers the inherent and undeniable materiality of places, both in terms of the built form and the textures of surfaces underfoot (or under-wheel), it may seem surprising that the touch-place interface has been so overlooked. On the other hand, touch has a level of universality not witnessed with the other senses, not least in the fact that there are few human conditions, if any, which result in complete somatosensory deficit. Put another way, unlike the senses of sight, sound, smell and taste, it is almost impossible for a conscious individual to be without an ability to feel at least something against a part of their skin. It is, perhaps, this universality that renders touch as the taken-for-granted sense, and one rarely examined in relation to how we might understand and interpret places. When such matters are discussed, it is usually in the context of another form of sensory impairment, typically visual, in which touch can gain a more critical role in delivering a compensatory and meaningful place experience. Thus, Hetherington (2002a, b) has discussed how touch can enhance the visits of the visually impaired to museum places.

Evidence of the incorporation of touch into place branding effort appears scant. Holiday destinations, such as Lapland or the Costa del Sol, often emphasise weather and related temperature, either hot or cold, as part of their tourist appeal; and an ability to sense temperature is clearly related to touch. Firmer evidence of the potential of touch in place branding and understanding place more generally come from the National Trust in the UK. This organisation has recently launched a campaign aimed at younger visitors to their properties and reserves entitled: '50 things to do before you're 11¾'. It is interesting to note that 'barefoot walking' has been voted in the top ten of this list of 50 potential activities. As one contributor to the Trust's website explains:

I love barefoot walking as it helps you feel all the different surfaces and textures on your feet. I like walking in mud, on beaches and over rocks at the seaside. Walking in streams and the sea is great fun too. In the winter we even barefoot walked in the snow and left footprint trails. (<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk>).

Similarly, the world-renowned Yorkshire Sculpture Park promises that within its 500-acre grounds: *there are many hidden treasures to hunt for, and unlike traditional galleries, ...you can touch the sculptures.* (<http://www.ysp.co.uk>).

Whilst National Trust properties and the Yorkshire Sculpture Park are undoubtedly places, they do not typify the kinds of city, region and nation locations

normally discussed in relation to place branding. That said, in their marketing and promotional efforts they do demonstrate the enduring appeal of being able to touch and physically feel aspects of the environment around us. Perhaps this is something place branding could make more of in the future. In this regard, Hetherington (2002a, p. 1943) notes that the full reality of place is the combined sense of smell, taste, hearing and sight, but that:

‘...touch is there as well in the making of places.’ Moreover, ‘Place is not just found in the materiality of a location but is confirmed in the praesentia found in the dirt of time. Just like the finger marks of piety on the medieval caskets of the bones of saints, in it we sense our location in the world and our continuity with it. A place gets generated through such practices.’

## Conclusion

In the same way Therkelsen et al. (2010) referred to the social construction of place in terms of the ‘city of words’ versus ‘the city of stones’, perhaps this concept needs to be stretched into a city of smells, sounds, tastes and touch. Looking at much existing place branding effort, it is predominantly appealing to the visual sense, in the form of glossy promotional imagery and smart logos to reinforce supposed place brand values. We have seen in this chapter how the sense of taste regularly gets attention. Hearing also gets a look in, largely through the man-made sounds of music, both directly and indirectly, and occasionally through more natural sounds, particularly in place-specific ecotourism ventures. Sometimes too, the sense of smell is targeted in place branding, though far less so than hearing. Touch, meanwhile, is largely ignored in place branding activity.

A key theme emerging in this analysis of the non-visual senses and place branding is that of direct and indirect representation. Typically, therefore, the focus of sensory perception, and any potential place-brand connections it may carry, appears easier to communicate if it is smelt, heard, tasted or touched directly by the potential (or actual) place consumer, rather than indirectly through writing or other activities surrounding the sensory stimulant in question. An issue here is the relative ease or difficulty of direct sensory communication through the various available media channels. If, for example, such channels are broadly divided into (1) printed media (outdoor or newsprint), (2) digital media, and, (3) live events, then it is easy to see how the non-seeing senses can struggle to make a comprehensive promotional impact.

Visual communication, directly stimulating sight, works well through all three of these media channels, largely through the use of place images and photographs. By contrast, direct stimulation of hearing only works well through digital media and live events, but in the printed media form relies on indirect stimulation. The sense of smell and touch are even more problematic. In printed media they could be directly stimulated through odour impregnated or textured paper respectively,

although there is little evidence of this being used as a means of communicating the sensory essence or feel of a place brand. That said, in olfactory terms, fragrances representing places have been created for locations as diverse as Mastenbroek in Holland (<http://www.luckyscent.com>) and Burton-on-Trent in England (The Telegraph 2011). There is no reason, other than perhaps expense, why such place-related smells could not be impregnated into printed media, adopting techniques used by leading perfume brands. There is also nascent technology to digitally reproduce smell (Hodson 2013; USA Today 2006; Nakaizumi et al. 2006), which indicates future opportunities for web-based place marketing campaigns wishing to directly convey olfactory aspects of the place brand. Furthermore, technological progress into augmented and virtual realities may open up new digital communication pathways for place brands via direct olfactory, tactile and auditory stimulation.

Perhaps the trickiest sense to deal with is taste. It has already been noted that despite its strong place brand associations, the communication of taste in place marketing campaigns is overly reliant on indirect descriptions of how good taste is. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that direct communication of taste is seemingly impossible through digital media, and almost impossible through printed media—unless you enjoy licking paper! However, this does not deny that potential place consumers can taste the cuisine of a place when distanced from it through the food they might eat, even if this has nothing to do with any coordinated or deliberate place marketing activity. In effect, therefore, an Italian meal eaten in a London restaurant may act as a form of unintentional place marketing for Italy. This restaurant example also illustrates that perhaps the most fruitful path for direct and multi-sensory stimulation in place branding lies with live events. An event, as a form of place marketing, even if geographically distanced from the place being promoted, can stimulate all the senses of event attendees directly and in real time. Currently, events are mainly used as a media communication channel in business-to-business place marketing campaigns, typically in the trade-show form. Yet their effectiveness in multi-sensory stimulation might translate into face-to-face, business-to-consumer place marketing contexts. The potential here is reflected in the reported practices of travel company Fred Olsen; rubbing coconut oil on the backs of seats in their agencies so that the resultant aroma can help promote holidays in Caribbean locations (Gordon 2009).

In summary, there is clearly an opportunity to engage all the senses in place branding campaigns, but it seems this rarely happens. At best campaigns might major on sight and one (or sometimes two) other sense(s). A more holistic approach is perhaps required, with place marketing practitioners ensuring that all five senses are catered for before they embark on any endeavour in relation to the place brand. It is easy to imagine how this might be of benefit to those potential, and actual, place consumers who have some form of single or dual sensory impairment, as Hetherington (2002a, b) has indicated. But a reality is that everyone might benefit from place branding with multi-sensory dimensions. As Saldanha (2002, p. 43) argues in relation to tourism:

...important though vision has been in the economies and everyday interactions of tourist destinations, are tourist merely pairs of eyes?... don't they go other places to taste, smell, listen, dance, get drunk, have sex? (Sic.).

The answer is that tourists, along with other place consumers, partake of multi-sensory involvement with the places they visit or inhabit. Any rethinking of place branding should involve acknowledgement of this, and a consideration of how current practice could be improved to deliver a more holistic sensory experience and understanding of place.

## References

- Aggleton JP, Waskett L (1999) The ability of odours to serve as state-dependent cues for real-world memories: can Viking smells aid the recall of Viking experiences? *Br J Psychol* 90 (1):1–7
- Barke M, Harrop K (1994) Selling the industrial town: identity, image and illusion. In: Gold JR, Ward SV (eds) *Place promotion: the use of publicity and marketing to sell towns and regions*. Wiley, Chichester, pp 93–114
- Benzmiller H (2008) Culinary tourism in the Music City: the place of culinary icons and local flavours in Nashville tourism. *Vanderbilt Undergrad Res J* 4(1):1–8
- Berger J (1987) To take paper, to draw. *Harper's* 275:57–60
- Bluestone DM (1988) Detroit's City Beautiful and the problem of commerce. *J Soc Archit Hist* XLVII(3):245–262
- Boyne S, Williams F, Hall D (2002) On the trail of regional success: tourism, food production and the Isle of Arran Taste Trail. In: Hjalager A-M, Richards G (eds) *Tourism and gastronomy*. Routledge, London, pp 91–114
- Briggs (1968) *Victorian cities*. Pelican Books, London
- Bruwer J (2003) South African wine routes: some perspectives on the wine tourism industry's structural dimensions and wine tourism product. *Tour Manage* 24(4):423–435
- Cameron P, Robertson D, Zaks J (1972) Sound pollution, noise pollution, and health: community parameters. *J Appl Psychol* 56(1):67–74
- Carpenter E (1973) *Eskimo realities*. Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, New York
- Classen C, Howes D, Synnott A (1994) *Aroma—the cultural history of smell*. Routledge, New York
- Cockayne E (2007) *Filth, noise and stench in England*. Yale University Press, London
- David E (1954) *Italian food*. Macdonald, London
- Davies BJ, Kooijman D, Ward P (2003) The sweet smell of success: olfaction in retailing. *J Mark Manage* 19(5–6):611–627
- Davies W et al (2007) The positive soundscape project. In: 19th International congress on acoustics, Madrid
- Doucé L, Janssens W (2013) The presence of a pleasant ambient scent in a fashion store: the moderating role of shopping motivation and affect intensity. *Environ Behav* 45(2):215–238
- Drobnick J (2002) Toposmia: art, scent and interrogations of spatiality. *Angelaki J Theor Humanit* 7(1):31–46
- Engen T (1977) Taste and smell. In: Birren JE, Schaie KW (eds) *Handbook of the psychology of aging*. Van Nostrand, New York
- Engen T (1982) *The perception of odor*. Addison-Wesley, Mass
- Engen T, Ross BM (1973) Long-term memory of odors with and without verbal descriptions. *J Exp Psychol* 100:221–227
- Gibson C, Connell J (2007) Music, tourism and the transformation of Memphis. *Tour Geogr Int J Tour Space Place Environ* 9(2):160–190

- Gibson C, Davidson D (2004) Tamworth, Australia's country music capital: place marketing, rurality, and resident reactions. *J Rural Stud* 20(4):387–404
- Gloor P (1978) Inputs and outputs of the amygdala: what the amygdala is trying to tell the rest of the brain. In: Livingston KE, Hornykiewica O (eds) *Limbic mechanisms*. Plenum, New York
- Gordon S (2009) Smell of success: travel agents use holiday scents to sell trips. Mail online, 29 June. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-1196232/Holiday-smells-pumped-travel-agents-sell-trips.html>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- Halliday S (1999) *The Great Stink of London: Sir Joseph Bazalgette and the cleansing of the Victorian metropolis*. Sutton Publishing Limited, Stroud
- Henshaw V (2013) *Urban smellscape: understanding and designing city smell environments*. Routledge, London
- Henshaw V, Mould OT (2013) Sensing designed space: an exploratory methodology for investigating human response to sensory environments. *J Des Res* 11(1):57–71
- Hetherington K (2002a) Spatial textures: place, touch, and praesentia. *Environ Plan A* 35:1933–1944
- Hetherington K (2002b) The unsightly; touching the Parthenon frieze. *Theor Cult Soc* 19 (5–6):187–205
- Hodson H (2013) Smell-o-vision screens let you really smell the coffee, 29 March. <http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg21729105.900-smellovision-screens-let-you-really-smell-the-coffee.html#.UdakpPm1GV4>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- Hui MK, Dubé L, Chebat JC (1997) The impact of music on consumers' reactions to waiting for services. *J Retail* 73(1):87–104
- Jones HW (1980) A physical description of noise. In: Jones HW (ed) *Noise in the human environment*. Environmental Council of Alberta, Edmonton
- Jones A, Jenkins I (2002) A taste of Wales—Blas Ar Gymru: insitutional malaise in promoting Welsh food tourism products. In: Hjalager A-M, Richards G (eds.) *Tourism and gastronomy*. Routledge, London, pp 115–131
- Knopper M (2002) Cities that smell: some urban centres use common scents. *The environmental magazine* E. <http://www.emagazine.com/includes/print-article/magazine-archive/8161/>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- Leaver D, Schmidt RA (2009) Before they were famous: music-based tourism and a musician's hometown roots. *J Place Manage Dev* 2(3):220–229
- McLean K (2013) Sensory maps (cities). [http://www.sensorymaps.com/maps\\_cities/edi\\_smell.html](http://www.sensorymaps.com/maps_cities/edi_smell.html). Accessed 13 May 2013
- Medway D, Warnaby G (2008) Alternative perspectives of marketing and the place brand. *Eur J Mark* 42(5/6):641–653
- Mehrabian A, Russell JA (1974) *An approach to environmental psychology*. The MIT Press, Cambridge
- Milliman R (1986) The influence of background music on the behaviour of restaurant patrons. *J Consum Res* 13(2):286–289
- Nakaizumi F, Yanagida Y, Noma H, Hosaka K (2006) SpotScents: a novel method of natural scent delivery using multiple scent projectors. In: *IEEE virtual reality 2006*. Alexandria, pp 207–212
- Oakes S, North AC (2008) Using music to influence cognitive and affective responses in queues of low and high crowd density. *J Mark Manage* 24(5–6):589–602
- Oliver J (2010) *Jamie does....* Michael Joseph, London
- Pallasmaa J (2005) *The eyes of the skin*. Wiley, West Sussex
- Payne SR (2008) Are perceived soundscapes within urban parks restorative? *J Acoust Soc Am* 123:3809
- Porteous JD (1985) Smellscape. *Prog Hum Geogr* 9(3):356–378
- Porteous JD (1990) *Landscapes of the mind: worlds of sense and metaphor*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto
- Reinartz J (2013) *Past scents: historical perspectives on smell*. University of Illinois Press, DeKalb
- Rodaway P (1994) *Sensuous geographies*. Routledge, London
- Saldanha A (2002) Music tourism and factions of bodies in Goa. *Tour Stud* 2(1):43–62

- Sellers A (1998) The influence of dance music on the UK youth tourism market. *Tour Manage* 19 (6):611–615
- Sennett R (1994) *Flesh and stone—the body and the city in western civilization*. W.W. Norton & Company, London
- Schafer RM (1977a) *The tuning of the world*. McLelland and Stewart, Toronto
- Schafer RM (1977b) *Five village soundscapes*. ARC Publications, Vancouver
- Schafer RM (1978) *The Vancouver soundscape*. ARC Publications, Vancouver
- Skinner T (n.d.) Inside Grasse's perfume industry. <https://www.norwegian.com/magazine/features/2013/07/inside-grasses-perfume-industry>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- Sparks B (2007) Planning a wine tourism vacation? Factors that help to predict tourist behavioural intentions. *Tour Manage* 8(5):1180–1192
- Steel C (2008) *Hungry City—how food shapes our lives*. Vintage Books, London, pp 116–117
- Stein R (2000) *Rick stein's seafood Odyssey*. BBC Books, London
- Therkelsen A, Halkier H, Jensen OB (2010) Branding Aalborg: building community or selling place? In: Ashworth G, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European Cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 136–155
- The Telegraph (2011) Burton-on-trent launches 'Eau-de-Burton' perfume, 25 Oct. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/howaboutthat/8848577/Burton-on-Trent-launches-Eau-de-Burton-perfume.html>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- Truax B (1978) *Handbook for acoustic ecology*. ARC Publications, Vancouver
- Truax B (1984) *Acoustic communication*. Ablex, Norwood
- USA Today (2006) Japanese gadget records, replicates odor, 7 December. [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/tech/news/techinnovations/2006-07-11-japanese-smell-device\\_x.htm?csp=34](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/tech/news/techinnovations/2006-07-11-japanese-smell-device_x.htm?csp=34). Accessed 23 April 2014
- Varley P, Medway D (2011) Ecosophy and tourism: rethinking a mountain resort. *Tour Manage* 32 (4):902–911
- Ward SV (1998) *Selling places: the marketing and promotion of towns and cities 1850–2000*. E. & F. N. Spon, London
- Ward P, Davies BJ, Kooijman D (2007) Olfaction and the retail environment: examining the influence of ambient scent. *Serv Bus* 1:295–316
- Warnaby G, Medway D (2010) Semiotics and place branding: the influence of the built and natural environment in city logos. In: Ashworth G, Kavaratzis M (eds) *Towards effective place brand management: branding European cities and regions*. Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, pp 173–190
- Warnaby G, Medway D (2008) Bridges, place representation and place creation. *AREA* 40 (4):510–519
- [www.air-aroma.com](http://www.air-aroma.com/who-scenting/retail). <http://www.air-aroma.com/who-scenting/retail>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.alpinresorts.com](http://www.alpinresorts.com/en/towns/austria/salzburg/bad-gastein). <http://www.alpinresorts.com/en/towns/austria/salzburg/bad-gastein>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.australia.com](http://www.australia.com). <http://www.australia.com/explore/things-to-do/food-and-wine.aspx>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.barcelonaturisme.com](http://www.barcelonaturisme.com/Where-to-eat/_xMcfM9AMDI-IDmPOLSUZio9EgOjytVleLUN-twdHdRU). [http://www.barcelonaturisme.com/Where-to-eat/\\_xMcfM9AMDI-IDmPOLSUZio9EgOjytVleLUN-twdHdRU](http://www.barcelonaturisme.com/Where-to-eat/_xMcfM9AMDI-IDmPOLSUZio9EgOjytVleLUN-twdHdRU). Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.bayreuther-festspiele.de](http://www.bayreuther-festspiele.de). <http://www.bayreuther-festspiele.de>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.bonn.de](http://www.bonn.de). [http://www.bonn.de/tourismus\\_kultur\\_sport\\_freizeit/?lang=en](http://www.bonn.de/tourismus_kultur_sport_freizeit/?lang=en). Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.dailyrecord.co.uk](http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk). <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/locals-in-uproar-over-plans-to-take-1037895>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.ec.europa.eu](http://www.ec.europa.eu). <http://www.ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/door/list.html;jsessionid=pL0hLqQLXhNmFQyF11b24mY3t9dJQPflg3xbL2YphGT4k6zdWn34!-370879141>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.experiencewinton.com.au](http://www.experiencewinton.com.au). [http://www.experiencewinton.com.au/en\\_GB](http://www.experiencewinton.com.au/en_GB). Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.innovationtrail.org](http://www.innovationtrail.org). <http://www.innovationtrail.org/post/buffalo-smells-cheerios-so-why-not-make-big-deal-about-it>. Accessed 23 April 2014

- www.luckyscent.com. <http://www.luckyscent.com/shop/category.asp?section=1&categoryid=329>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.marshallcolman.blogspot.co.uk. <http://marshallcolman.blogspot.co.uk/2012/03/old-postcard-of-stoke-on-trent.html>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.memphistravel.com. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.nationaltrust.org.uk. <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/article-1355792511153/>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.nature.nps.gov. <http://www.nature.nps.gov/sound/explore/index.cfm>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.neworleansonline.com. <http://www.neworleansonline.com/neworleans/music/>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.nojazzfest.com](http://www.nojazzfest.com). Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.nps.gov. <http://www.nps.gov/noca/naturescience/natural-sounds.htm>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.parmashop.com. <http://www.parmashop.com/english/beauty/parma-fragrances.html>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.queenstownwinetrail.co.nz. <http://www.queenstownwinetrail.co.nz>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.rio.com. <http://www.rio.com/practical-rio/ipanema>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.salzburg.info. <http://www.salzburg.info/en/>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.sydney.com](http://www.sydney.com). Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.topdeck.travel <https://www.topdeck.travel/tours/european-taste-trail> Accessed 23 April, 2014
- www.visitliverpool.com. <http://www.visitliverpool.com/things-to-do/attractions/the-beatles>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.visitmusiccity.com. <http://www.visitmusiccity.com/visitors>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- [www.visitmsw.com](http://www.visitmsw.com). Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.wien.info. <http://www.wien.info/en/music-stage-shows/city-of-music>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.yorkshire.com. <http://www.yorkshire.com/what-to-do/food-and-drink>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- www.ysp.co.uk. <http://www.ysp.co.uk/page/families-at-ysp/tc>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- Yalch R, Spangenburg E (1990) Effects of store music on shopping behavior. *J Consum Mark* 7 (2):55–63
- YouTube clip 1. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7bzX6zvtic&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7bzX6zvtic&feature=player_embedded). Accessed 23 April 2014
- YouTube clip 2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fq1yVyGJG6A>. Accessed 23 April 2014
- Zanin PHT, Diniz FB, Barbosa WA (2002) Environmental noise pollution in the city of Curitiba, Brazil. *Appl Acoust* 63(4):351–358
- Zardini M (ed) (2005) *Sense of the city—an alternative approach to urbanism*. Lars Muller Publishers, Montreal



# Chapter 14

## Rethinking the Measurement of Place Brands

Sebastian Zenker and Erik Braun

**Abstract** Place brand managers often disregard the complexity of place brands, as do their counterparts in the academic arena: they repeatedly use simple explorative descriptions of certain place brands, rather than a precise measurement. Thus, this chapter aims to identify and discuss measurement approaches that could prove useful in place branding. Therefore, we will define the brand and examine various options regarding what to measure in place branding. Finally, we will discuss the different approaches of brand measurement for their use in place branding, namely the approaches to measuring the brand in the form of free brand associations of target customers with qualitative methods; in the form of attributes with quantitative methods like standardized questionnaires; and with mixed methods that combine qualitative research with quantitative methods. Two mixed methods, namely the network analysis and the advanced brand concept map method, are explained in more detail. In conclusion, we also outline current and future challenges in measuring place brands and their outcomes.

### Introduction

In recent years, the branding of places (and cities in particular) has gained popularity among place management officials (Anholt 2010; Kavaratzis 2008). As a result, place marketers increasingly focus on establishing the place as a brand (Braun 2012) in an effort to promote their place to its existing and potential target groups. Unfortunately,

---

S. Zenker (✉)

Department of Marketing, Copenhagen Business School, Solbjerg Plads 3C, 3rd Floor,  
2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark  
e-mail: zenker@placebrand.eu

E. Braun

Erasmus School of Economics, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Room H16-17,  
P.O. Box 1738, 3000 DR Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
e-mail: braun@ese.eur.nl

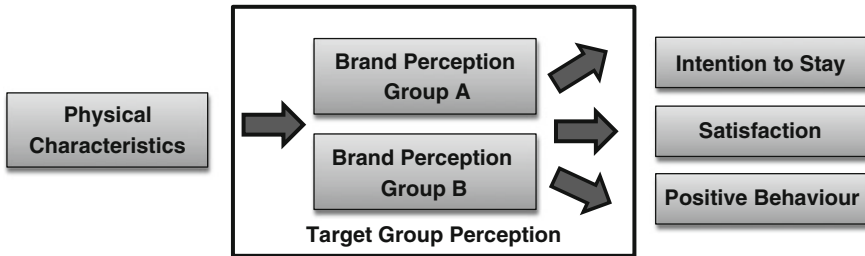
place marketers often believe that the brand is a controllable and fully manageable tool that can be defined and measured easily. Yet a place brand is based on the perceptions of different customer groups (Zenker 2011; Zenker and Braun 2010) and these perceptions of a place can differ strongly given the various target groups' myriad perspectives and interests (e.g., between residents and tourists or internal and external target groups—see: Zenker and Beckmann 2013). Fulfilling these diverse demands with the support of a fitting place brand poses quite a challenge.

Nevertheless, in practice as well as in academia the interest in place branding is greater than ever. Evidently, places are eager to garner positive associations in the place consumer's mind in order to further develop and promote their brand. The introduction of city brand rankings such as the Anholt-GMI City Brands Index (Anholt 2006) and the Saffron European City Brand Barometer (Hildreth n.d.) exemplify this effort. In marketing scholarship, the interest in this subject is also growing, as the first meta-analyses of the field by Lucarelli and Berg (2011) and Gertner (2011) show, but unfortunately, there seems to be no real consensus about a shared definition of the place brand.

## What Is the Brand?

In practice, as well as in theory, the definitions and concepts of place branding and the place brand often lack a proper definition and a consistent usage. As a result, place branding is often mistakenly understood as place selling (see for a deeper discussion see Ashworth and Kavaratzis 2009; Berglund and Olsson 2010), concentrating solely on the promotional aspects of branding while disregarding the broader aims and scope of place branding. Thus, there are no shared definitions but multiple viewpoints about what a place brand is: a *brand* for instance is, according to the American Marketing Association (2013), a “name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers.” Some researchers criticize this definition as too narrow for using it in the field of companies and especially places (e.g., Kavaratzis 2008; Zenker and Braun 2010) while others have proposed that the essential feature of a brand is “nothing more and nothing less than the good name of something that's on offer to the public” (Anholt and Hildreth 2005, p. 164). According to Keller (1993, 2003), this ‘good name’ or reputation exists as a network of associations in the minds of the consumers as so-called *brand knowledge*. This knowledge about a brand is built through *brand awareness* (i.e. the degree to which customers are aware of all features of a brand) and their *brand image* (defined as perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in customer memory). Thereby, customers evaluate those associations and change their behaviour accordingly; this leads to so-called *brand equity*, defined as “the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand” (Keller 1993, p. 8).

In line with this, Zenker and Braun (2010, p. 3) note that a *place brand* is “a network of associations in the consumers' mind based on the visual, verbal, and



**Fig. 14.1** The concept of place brand perception

behavioural expression of a place, which is embodied through the aims, communication, values, and the general culture of the place’s stakeholders and the overall place design” (for a deeper discussion see also: Zenker 2011). According to the authors, the place brand is not the communicated expression or the physical characteristics of the place (i.e., landscape, architecture, and other concrete expressions of the place), but the perception of those expressions in the minds of the target audience(s). These perceptions lead to measurable brand effects such as a willingness to stay at a place (Zenker and Gollan 2010), or resident satisfaction (Insch and Florek 2008; Zenker et al. 2013b), or positive place behaviour, like caring for the place (Stedman 2002), as shown in Fig. 14.1, and they therefore seem noteworthy when dealing with measuring place brands. In summary, all of these definitions highlight the complexity of place branding, which only lends further challenge to the effective measurement of place brands.

## What Do We Want to Measure?

From a general brand perspective we have three main approaches to measuring the brand: First, the branded object itself (physical characteristics); secondly, brand value drivers (such as the brand image or brand awareness); and thirdly, so-called brand equity. The traditional marketing literature, and especially the definition by Keller (1993), shapes the broad understanding of brand equity—a brand metric of high importance. Keller (1993, p. 8) asserts that “customer-based brand equity is defined as the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand.” To measure such consumer response, it is necessary to know who is affected by the brand.

### *Physical Characteristics*

In place branding one often mentioned option involves measuring or describing the place itself in terms of ‘real’ or physical place characteristics. These descriptions

often formed through case studies (e.g., Lee and Jain 2009; Vanolo 2008) using secondary data such as numbers of visitors, demographic details of the residents, domestic growth rates, or the percentage of wooded area. This approach yields unquestionable usability, but remains limited in two major ways: First, it generally suffers from inadequate comprehensiveness—as do most approaches used in place branding so far, since they typically depend upon the accessibility of data rather than a theoretical model that defines elements or dimensions that are part of a brand (Zenker 2011). Secondly, a limited focus on measuring ‘reality’ could prove to be misleading, since facts can arise that are not recognized by the target audience. For example, Berlin is, in fact, much greener than Hamburg—the former features 18.1 % of wooded area compared to the latter’s 16.8 % (Federal Statistical Office of Berlin-Brandenburg 2009; Hamburg Marketing GmbH 2009)—but the target audience perceives this reality as the complete opposite (Zenker et al. 2013a). Thus, for a more comprehensive approach one cannot be limited to this measurements; one also needs to take place perceptions into account.

### ***Brand Value Driver***

The second approach is the measurement of brand value driver(s). The brand value driver affects consumers’ response towards a brand and generates valuable information regarding the customers’ brand knowledge structure, measured on a non-monetary base (e.g., Keller 1993). Relevant drivers such as brand awareness (in terms of brand recall and recognition) and brand image (characterized as the favourability, strength and uniqueness of brand associations) offer an overview of the customers’ knowledge structure and provide essential information for the brand management (Keller 1993, p. 3). In this regard, the identification and quantification of the brand value driver in this specific context play an important role for the management of place brands, especially when analysing the changes of driver over time and identifying the interdependences of drivers.

By more closely examining place marketing practice, it can be observed that non-monetary place brand equity metrics (especially image analysis) are already common for place brand measurement. For example, De Carlo et al. (2009) try to understand the brand of Milan in terms of brand personality, how the city ‘smells,’ ‘tastes’ or ‘looks like’ by using questionnaires and qualitative interviews to measure this. Trueman et al. (2007), search for positive and negative assets of a city, using open and closed questions to reveal the perception about the place by asking city users. However, place brand measurement needs an improvement in its tracking systems (especially over time) in order to identify central brand value drivers for each target group and capture some of the complexity of a place.

## ***Place Brand Equity***

Third, in order to manage place branding activities, we need also to analyze the influence of a brand (and its value drivers) on outcome variables of the customer-brand relationship (e.g., a resident's willingness to pay more in terms of living expenses and/or accept a lower salary for the perceived benefits of a preferred choice of place). From the point of view of place branding literature, research has only begun to discuss the connection between a place brand and the different outcome variables of the customer-brand relationship.

Papadopoulos and Heslop (2002) presented the first evidence for the use of place brand equity from an investor perspective: they translated the idea of country brand equity for products (country-of-origin) to country brand equity for investors (foreign direct investments *FDI*). Jacobsen (2009, 2012) developed this idea further and formulated a framework of drivers for the Investor-based Place Brand Equity (*IPE*), then analysed the linkage between brand value drivers and the decision to invest in an area (*FDI* location preference).

Zenker et al. (2013a) presented another approach by exploring the use of different city brand image dimensions, in monetary terms, for the target group of talents (i.e., academics). With the help of brand-anchored conjoint (*BAC*) analysis (Louviere and Johnson 1990) and the Hybrid Individualized Two-Level Choice-Based Conjoint (*HIT-CBC*) method (Eggers and Sattler 2009), the study measured the percentage of wage that talents were willing to sacrifice for their preferred choice of place. In this approach, the overall willingness to sacrifice (in terms of annual salary) could be employed as an indicator for place brand equity.

With present research work and place branding practice as a background, further research needs to compose a clearer picture of how to put place brand equity into practice. Even though place brand equity is a future-directed performance indicator that gives important information on the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing spending, it is currently unused by place marketers and seldom used by companies in general. The main reason for the lack of usage is that branding literature has yet to devise a standard for brand equity measurement. As such, research is also required for the context of places. In order to estimate brand equity, relevant customer-brand outcome variables (including monetary perspectives) for each target group need to be clarified. This becomes especially pivotal given that the estimation of the monetary brand equity assumes that certain information—such as future place brand-specific cash flows, costs and brand-specific risk factors—have to be estimated. Furthermore, the large variety of different place target groups makes it hard to measure the 'real' impact of a place brand, since a place brand often influences the different groups simultaneously.

### Who Is Affected?

Place branding has to encompass an assortment of special characteristics, such as the inherent variety of a place’s customers. Since the perceptions of these target groups differ (Zenker and Beckmann 2013), these different target groups have to be taken into account while measuring brand value drivers and brand equity.

From a theoretical point of view, the main, broadly defined target groups in place marketing are: (1) visitors; (2) residents and workers; and (3) business and industry (Kotler et al. 1993). However, as shown in Fig. 14.2, the groups actually targeted in recent marketing practice are much more specific and diverse (Avraham 2000; Braun 2008; Hankinson 2005; Zenker 2009). Within these groups, different sub-groups can be found like leisure tourists versus business tourists, or internal and external target groups. These target groups differ not only in regard to their structure, but also in their particular place needs, demands and expectations. Leisure tourists, for example, are searching for leisure-time activities like shopping malls or cultural offerings; investors are more interested in business topics, such as infrastructure and potential qualified workforce; whereas the places’ customers need a suitable environment for their purposes rather than simply a ‘dot on the map.’ It is of great importance that a proper brand measurement parallels these diverse demands, as those measurements must be related to every one of the multiple target groups.

Additionally, non-traditional target groups can be of strong interest for places, such as the public opinion in general, the public employees, creditors, the competitors, and the political agenda setting (public diplomacy). Non-traditional target groups are often ignored, especially for measuring place brand equity, even though the impact of the place brand on and from those target groups can be very strong.



Fig. 14.2 Different target groups for place branding

## How to Measure a Place?

The empirical measurement of a brand in general can be divided into three main approaches: First, in the form of free brand associations of target customers using *qualitative methods* (e.g., Calder 1977; Supphellen 2000); secondly, in the form of attributes uncovered with *quantitative methods* like standardized questionnaires on different brand dimensions (e.g., Aaker 1997); and thirdly, with *mixed methods* such as multidimensional scaling (MDS; e.g., Carrol and Green 1997), network analyses (e.g., Henderson et al. 2002), the brand concept map method (John et al. 2006; Schnittka et al. 2012), or the laddering technique based on means-end chain theory (e.g., Grunert and Grunert 2005; Gutman 1982).

The extant place branding literature mainly represents the first two approaches, that is measuring place brand associations with qualitative methods, for example with focus group interviews (e.g., Hankinson 2001; Morgan et al. 2002); and place attributes with standardized questionnaires on different location factors (e.g., Merrilees et al. 2009; Zenker et al. 2013b). The third approach of mixed methods is not yet widely used even though this approach has the potential to overcome general shortcomings of the other two. While qualitative methods have the advantage of open questions and therefore allow researchers to explore unique associations within a place or a brand in general, comparing two different place brands or target groups with this data is nearly impossible. By contrast, measuring the perception of a place with the help of a standardized questionnaire does allow for meaningful comparison but not without the advent of other problems, such as results being strongly affected by the selection of attributes that may leave out important dimensions (Grabow et al. 1995). The ranking scales that compare places at least partly derive their results from the respective focus of each study (Zenker et al. 2013b). Furthermore, this kind of direct measurement harbors strong vulnerabilities to different kinds of social bias like the response bias (Fazio and Olson 2003). Fortunately, a trend has arisen in recent research to merge both qualitative and quantitative techniques into multi-method approaches, as a means of combining their advantages and minimizing their faults. In the following sections, we want to present two mixed methods as examples that try to accomplish such goals.

### *The Network Analysis Method*

One way to assess both unique place brand associations and the comparability of place perception between different groups is the network analysis method (Henderson et al. 2002), which uses data from qualitative research (top-of-mind associations) and analyzes it quantitatively. The method calculates the centrality of an association within the network of associations (i.e., by the numbers of interconnections between associations) and the result is a network of brand associations for each group, which can then be compared with each other. The objective is to

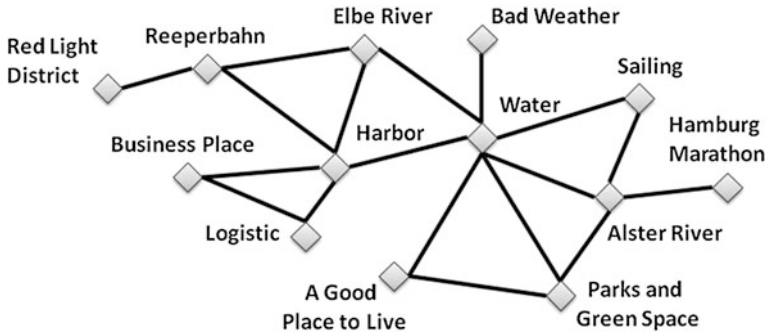


Fig. 14.3 Example of a place brand network

identify top-of-mind brand associations that are strongly connected in the image network and to assess the differences in perception between the different groups.

In order to do so, Zenker and Beckmann (2013) assessed the image associations for the city of Hamburg by using qualitative, in-depth interviews and the laddering technique (Grunert and Grunert 2005; Wansink 2003) within the different target groups (e.g., external and internal residents). All associations were listed and then coded into a list of different associations-categories by three independent coders. In the second step, the structure of the associations was analyzed with the help of network analysis, calculated by their centrality in the network using Freeman's degree of centrality (Farsky and Völckner 2008). Figure 14.3 give an example of an outcome derived from a network analysis.

While network analysis has the advantage of quantifying the importance of each association within the brand network and makes such associations comparable within the network and between different networks, it does not evaluate the association nor evaluate the brand as such. In other words, you cannot say which association or brand is better—just which association is more central in the association network. For the first question, the advanced brand concept map method seems more suitable.

### *The Advanced Brand Concept Map Method*

John et al. (2006) have introduced the brand concept map (BCM) approach as a powerful tool to measure brand image according to the structure of the underlying brand association networks and reveal the strength and uniqueness of brand associations. Nevertheless, the brand concept map method does not include explicit measures of the favourability of brand associations. Thus, Schnittka et al. (2012) extended the original-BCM approach with explicit information about the favorability of single brand associations and a further-developed new metric: the brand association network value (BANV) that quantifies overall network favourability.



This advanced-BCM approach and the new BANV metric allow one to compare the favourability of networks at both individual brand association and aggregate network levels.

The original-BCM procedure consists of three major stages to provide individual brand maps: In the *elicitation* stage, highly relevant brand associations are identified (e.g., through in-depth interviews). In the *mapping* stage, respondents are asked to develop an individual brand map out of these predetermined brand associations in which the brand emblem appears in the centre. Respondents then assign different strengths of association linkages to connect the selected brand associations directly with the brand emblem or indirectly with one another. Thus, the original-BCM approach provides individual network information regarding (a) the presence of each of the predetermined brand associations on the brand map (i.e., uniqueness =  $m$ ), (b) the level at which each association appears on the brand map (e.g., first-order association = directly connected to the brand; second-order association = connected under a first-order-association;  $L_{aj}$ ), and (c) the strength of linkage connecting each association to the brand or to another association (i.e., weak links = single lines; moderate links = double lines; strong links = triple lines;  $S_{aj}$ ).

Since the original-BCM approach does not provide any explicit favourability information regarding single brand associations, the advanced-BCM procedure includes an additional evaluation stage as a part of the mapping procedure regarding (1) consumers' evaluative judgments of each brand association ( $E_{aj}$ ) and (2) the individual importance of each brand association within a consumer's purchase situation (e.g., visiting or not-visiting a place;  $I_{aj}$ ).

In the final *aggregation stage*, researchers combine the individual maps by aggregation rules as shown in the article by John et al. (2006, p. 555), building a so-called consensus map. With the enhancements of Schnittka et al. (2012), the advanced-BCM approach can differentiate between 'good' and 'important' brand association networks and 'bad' and 'unimportant' ones, because it offers a standardized approach for quantifying a network's overall favourability. It also substantially enhances the applicability of the original-BCM approach since it can quantitatively compare networks between subjects and groups of subjects or over time.

Furthermore, with the implementation of the brand association network value (BANV) this method gives different information that reveals favorability (i.e.,  $E_{aj}$  = evaluative judgment of each brand association  $a$  stated by respondent  $j$ ; and  $I_{aj}$  = individual importance of that association for a purchase decision), strength (i.e.,  $L_{aj}$  = level of brand association placement in the network; and  $S_{aj}$  = strength of an association's direct linkage to its superordinate associations), and uniqueness (i.e.,  $m$ ) of brand associations, according to the following equation:

$$BANV_j = \sum_{a=1}^m E_{aj} * S_{aj} * I_{aj} * L_{aj}. \quad (14.1)$$

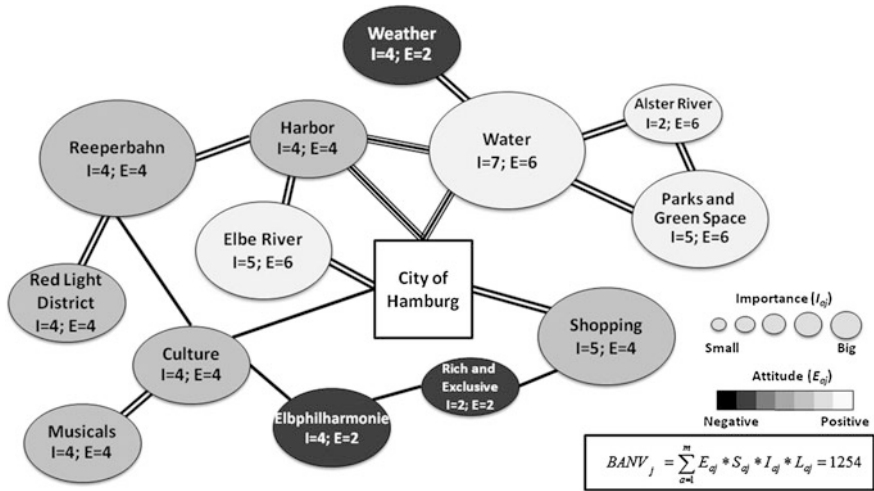


Fig. 14.4 Example of an advanced place brand concept map

The consensus map of an advanced brand concept map gives valuable information about the importance and strength of each association within a place brand network, as well as about the respondent’s attitude towards the association. By including the BANV, changes over time or between different brand maps can be evaluated. Figure 14.4 gives an example of such an outcome from an advanced brand concept map.

### Conclusion

As previously shown in the place brand perception model (Fig. 14.1), the perceptions of the audience are a strong determinant of positive or negative outcomes, and so measuring these perceptions in place of ‘real’ physical characteristics seems to be more valuable and meaningful—even though physical attributes are unquestionably a key driver of place perception. Measuring hard facts—like census data, for instance—will only expose the physical dimensions of the place, but cannot lead to a satisfactory understanding of a place brand (based on the definition of a brand as mental representation in the individual person’s mind). That said, a case study about the physical dimensions of the place would still aid the general understanding of a place brand, since these dimensions exert a strong influence over the perception of a place brand. Nevertheless, from our point of view, the current measurement metrics typically offer very inadequate information. One point becomes clear: a combination of different approaches is needed in order to measure a place brand.

Quantitative approaches like semantic scaling (Baxter and Kerr 2010) seem suitable for answering one part of the question (especially for quantifying aspects of the place that should be compared to other places). Qualitative methods on the other hand—like the collage technique used by Wagner and Peters (2009)—could be helpful in measuring intangible elements, such as unique place associations. Finally, the *evaluation* of a brand and its *impact* form an indispensable part of measuring place brands and are the most valuable for place marketers. A combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches is necessary for evaluating a place brand, since both common and unique place associations need a qualitative component in order to be measured and assessed. Additionally, research must measure the strength of associations with the place, for example, with the help of top-of-mind associations and network analysis, or the advanced brand concept map approach, as described earlier.

It must be noted that measuring all aspects of a place brand would be too complex and inefficient. Of course, research is always a trade-off between intricacy and feasibility. While models for complex constructs such as places can never be completely accurate, they must at least be fruitful for research and theory development. Ideally, this chapter will help professionals and researchers think about place brand measurement in terms of brand perceptions and discover the right degree of complexity for their place brand measurement.

## References

- Aaker J (1997) Dimensions of brand personality. *J Mark Res* 34:347–356
- American Marketing Association (2013) Dictionary American Marketing Association. [http://www.marketingpower.com/\\_layouts/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=B](http://www.marketingpower.com/_layouts/Dictionary.aspx?dLetter=B). Accessed 24 Dec 2013
- Anholt S (2006) Anholt city brand index—“how the world views its cities”, 2nd edn. Global Market Insight, Bellevue
- Anholt S (2010) Places—identity, image and reputation. Palgrave Macmillan, New York
- Anholt S, Hildreth J (2005) Let freedom and cash registers ring: America as a brand. *J Place Branding Public Dipl* 1(2):164–172
- Ashworth GJ, Kavaratzis M (2009) Beyond the logo: brand management for cities. *J Brand Manage* 16(8):520–531
- Avraham E (2000) Cities and their news media images. *Cities* 17(5):363–370
- Baxter J, Kerr G (2010) The meaning and measurement of place identity and place image. Paper presented at the 50th European Regional Science Association Congress, Jönköping, Sweden, 19–23 Aug
- Berglund E, Olsson K (2010) Rethinking place marketing—a literature review. Paper presented at the 50th European Regional Science Association Congress, Jönköping, Sweden, 19–23 Aug
- Braun E (2008) City marketing: towards an integrated approach. Erasmus Research Institute of Management (ERIM), Rotterdam
- Braun E (2012) Putting city branding into practice. *J Brand Manage* 19(4):257–267
- Calder BJ (1977) Focus groups and the nature of qualitative marketing research. *J Mark Res* 14:353–364
- Carroll JD, Green PE (1997) Psychometric methods in marketing research: part 2, multidimensional scaling. *J Mark Res* 34:193–204

- De Carlo M, Canali S, Pritchard A, Morgan N (2009) Moving Milan towards Expo 2015: designing culture into a city brand. *J Place Manage Dev* 2(1):8–22
- Eggers F, Sattler H (2009) Hybrid individualized two-level choice-based conjoint (HIT-CBC): a new method for measuring preference structures with many attribute levels. *Int J Res Mark* 26 (2):108–118
- Farsky M, Völckner F (2008) Entwicklung und empirische Anwendung eines neuen Instrumentes zur Imagemessung am Beispiel von Universitäten [Development and implementation of a measurement tool for brand image with the example of universities]. *Die Betriebswirtschaft (DBW)* 6(08):706–728
- Fazio RH, Olson MA (2003) Implicit measures in social cognition research: their meaning and use. *Annu Rev Psychol* 54:297–327
- Federal Statistical Office of Berlin-Brandenburg (2009) Berlin in Zahlen 2009 [Berlin in numbers 2009]. Federal Statistical Office of Berlin-Brandenburg, Berlin
- Gertner D (2011) A (tentative) meta-analysis of the ‘place marketing’ and ‘place branding’ literature. *J Brand Manage* 19:112–131
- Grabow B, Henckel D, Hollbach-Grömig B (1995) Weiche Standortfaktoren [Soft location factors]. Kohlhammer/Deutscher Gemeindeverlag, Berlin
- Grunert KG, Grunert SC (2005) Measuring subjective meaning structures by the laddering method: theoretical considerations and methodological problems. *Int J Res Mark* 12 (3):209–226
- Gutman JA (1982) Means-end chain model based on consumer categorization processes. *J Mark* 46(Spring):60–72
- Hamburg Marketing GmbH (2009) Discover Hamburg—the city on the waterfront. City of Hamburg, Hamburg
- Hankinson G (2001) Location branding: a study of the branding practices of 12 English cities. *J Brand Manage* 9(2):127–142
- Hankinson G (2005) Destination brand images: a business tourism perspective. *J Serv Mark* 19 (1):24–32
- Henderson G, Iacobucci D, Calder BJ (2002) Using network analysis to understand brands. *Adv Consum Res* 29(1):397–405
- Hildreth J (n.d.) The Saffron European city brand barometer. Saffron Brand Consultants website. <http://saffron-consultants.com/news-views/publications/>. Accessed 21 Dec 2013
- Insch A, Florek M (2008) A great place to live, work and play—conceptualizing place satisfaction in the case of a city’s residents. *J Place Manage Dev* 1(2):138–149
- Jacobsen BP (2009) Investor-based place brand equity: a theoretical framework. *J Place Manage Dev* 2(1):70–84
- Jacobsen BP (2012) Place brand equity: a model for establishing the effectiveness of place brands. *J Place Manage Dev* 5(3):253–271
- John DR, Loken B, Kim K, Monga AB (2006) Brand concept maps: a methodology for identifying brand association networks. *J Mark Res* 43:549–563
- Kavaratzis M (2008) From city marketing to city branding: an interdisciplinary analysis with reference to Amsterdam, Budapest and Athens. PhD thesis, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Groningen
- Keller KL (1993) Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *J Mark* 57(January):1–22
- Keller KL (2003) Brand synthesis: the multidimensionality of brand knowledge. *J Consum Res* 29 (4):595–600
- Kotler P, Haider DH, Rein I (1993) Marketing places: attracting investment, industry, and tourism to cities, states, and nations. The Free Press, New York
- Lee HJ, Jain D (2009) Dubai’s brand assessment success and failure in brand management—part 1. *Place Branding Public Dipl* 5(3):234–246
- Louviere JJ, Johnson RD (1990) Reliability and validity of the brand-anchored conjoint approach to measuring retailer images. *J Retail* 66(4):359–382

- Lucarelli A, Berg PO (2011) City branding—a state of the art review of the research domain. *J Place Manage Dev* 4(1):9–27
- Merrilees B, Miller D, Herington C (2009) Antecedents of residents' city brand attitudes. *J Bus Res* 62(3):362–367
- Morgan N, Pritchard A, Piggott R (2002) New Zealand, 100 % pure. The creation of a powerful niche destination brand. *J Brand Manage* 9(4/5):335–354
- Papadopoulos N, Heslop L (2002) Country equity and country branding: problems and prospects. *J Brand Manage* 9(4–5):294–314
- Schnittka O, Sattler H, Zenker S (2012) Advanced brand concept maps: a new approach for evaluating the favorability of brand association networks. *Int J Res Mark* 29(3):265–274
- Stedman RC (2002) Towards a social psychology of place: predicting behavior from place-based cognitions, attitude, and identity. *Environ Behav* 34(5):561–581
- Supphellen M (2000) Understanding core brand equity: guidelines for in-depth elicitation of brand associations. *Int J Market Res* 42(3):319–338
- Trueman MM, Cornelius N, Killingbeck-Widdup AJ (2007) Urban corridors and the lost city: overcoming negative perceptions to reposition city brands. *J Brand Manage* 15(1):20–31
- Vanolo A (2008) The image of the creative city: some reflections on urban branding in Turin. *Cities* 25(6):370–382
- Wagner O, Peters M (2009) Can association methods reveal the effects of international branding on tourism destination stakeholders? *J Place Manage Dev* 2(1):52–69
- Wansink B (2003) Using laddering to understand and leverage a brand's equity. *Qual Market Res Int J* 6(2):111–118
- Zenker S (2009) Who's your target? The creative class as a target group for place branding. *J Place Manage Dev* 2(1):23–32
- Zenker S (2011) How to catch a city? The concept and measurement of place brands. *J Place Manage Dev* 4(1):40–52
- Zenker S, Beckmann SC (2013) My place is not your place—different place brand knowledge by different target groups. *J Place Manage Dev* 6(1):6–17
- Zenker S, Braun E (2010) Branding a city—a conceptual approach for place branding and place brand management. Paper presented at the 39th European Marketing Academy Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1–4 June
- Zenker S, Eggers F, Farsky M (2013a) Putting a price tag on cities: insights into the competitive environment of places. *Cities* 30(February):133–139
- Zenker S, Petersen S, Aholt A (2013b) The citizen satisfaction index (CSI): evidence for a four basic factor model in a German sample. *Cities* 31:156–164
- Zenker S, Gollan T (2010) Development and implementation of the resident migration scale (ReMiS): measuring success in place marketing. In: Witte EH, Gollan T (eds) *Sozialpsychologie und Ökonomie*. Pabst Verlag, Lengerich, pp 156–172

# Chapter 15

## Rethinking Brand Equity—Possibilities and Challenges of Application to Places

Magdalena Florek

**Abstract** The aim of the chapter is to explain the brand equity concept in the context of places. It has been assumed that consumer-based brand equity is an appropriate approach to evaluate the results of the brand strategy employed for places. The fundamental premise behind consumer-oriented brand equity is the fact that a brand's power lies in the consumers' awareness, their knowledge of the brand and brand experience. In the case of place marketing, its aims accompanied by the complexity of a place product and the diversified groups of brand's stakeholders, seem to justify this approach. For place brand equity to fulfil its strategic functions, it is imperative to identify the sources of brand equity and its results as well as to identify how the results (and possibly the sources) change over time. The sources indicate the components of brand equity while the evaluation of brand equity reflects the mode in which brands actually provide consumers with value added.

### Introduction

The latest literature on the place marketing includes several publications (Gertner 2011a, b; Hanna and Rowley 2011; Zenker and Martin 2011) dedicated to an analysis of the existing theoretical divagations and empirical studies of place branding. The intention has been to identify areas which may contribute to the development of the theory of place branding. Zenker and Martin (2011) suggest that the major area related to place brands should now pertain to the impact and evaluation of branding application in administrative units; the task is anything but easy due to the complexity of place branding and the problems accompanying brand equity measurement in general. This is why the authors postulate a need for highlighting place brand equity, at the same time emphasizing that the related shortages result from non-existent standard indicators and measurements. If places

---

M. Florek (✉)  
Poznań University of Economics, Poznań, Poland  
e-mail: m.florek@ue.poznan.pl

are already treated like brands they should enhance their equity like any other brand in order to attract consumer segments and more precisely their stakeholders.

This is why an increasing number of researchers ponder if it is possible to transfer the concept of brand equity and the methodology of measuring thereof, traditionally developed for products (and partly for services and organizations) onto places.

## Brand Equity Versus Brand Value

The idea of brand equity gained importance in the 1980s. It was popularized in the 1990s by Aaker (1991), Srivastava and Shocker (1991), Kapferer (1992), Keller (1993, 1998).

While literature on the subject includes numerous concepts and discussions of the definition of brand equity and its measurement, there is mutual consent that brand equity is related to the value added acquired by means of consumers' associations with the brand name (Winters 1991; Chaudhuri 1995) and some sort of utility in relation to competitive brands, as perceived by the brand's consumers (Boo et al. 2009).

At the same time, the notion of brand equity is hard to separate from the notion of brand value. While these notions are frequently used in an interchangeable way, their semantic similarity is well-grounded. For example, Leuthesser (1988) defined brand equity as a value for the consumer received in comparison with a no-brand product. Similarly, De Chernatony and McDonald (1998) defined brand equity as a sum of factors contributing to creating brand value in consumers' minds. However, this value is of a subjective nature. On the other hand, Aaker's (1991, p. 16) definition of brand equity is reminiscent of financial circles: "the set of assets (and liabilities) linked to a brand's name and symbol that adds to (or subtracts from) the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or that firm's customers". He also adds that brand equity is the "set of consumers' opinions, attitudes and behaviour". The American Marketing Association defines brand equity as "the value of a brand. From a consumer perspective, brand equity is based on consumer attitudes about positive brand attributes and favourable consequences of brand use" (AMA 2006).

According to Kim et al. (2003) usually two perspectives of brand equity are considered: the value of the brand to the firm (from a financial perspective), and the value of the brand to customers (in the decision-making context). The first appears to be built around brand equity outcomes such as price, market share, profit, and future cash flows and as such should refer to 'brand value', whereas the second appears to have attitudinal associations as its core (Montgomery and Lieberman 2005) and should refer to 'customer-based brand equity' (Keller 1993).

According to Temporal (2002), brand equity refers to descriptive aspects of a brand and is related to subjective and intangible opinions about a brand from the point of view of the consumers. On the other hand, brand value is a monetary

identifier, the total brand value as separate assets (a balance item) which is an estimate of future profits (the present net value of future streams of brand profits) (Feldwick 1996). Doyle (2000) claimed that brand value is the value of extra cash flows guaranteed by a product because it is identified with a brand. A brand is a company asset<sup>1</sup> while assets are financial resources controlled by the company (Kall et al. 2006, p. 252).

In their response to the above mentioned relations between financial and emotional elements, Motameni and Shahrokhi (1998, in: Kim et al. 2003) suggested an evaluation of “global brand equity” which consists of equity from the marketing perspective and from the financial perspective. Davis (1995, in: Wood 2000) restored order in the relations between these two approaches and claims that brand value is derived from consumer-based brand equity. Christodoulides and de Chernatony (2010) claim that the financial value of brand equity is only a result of the consumer’s response to a brand name. Therefore brand equity is deemed the driving force of the market share growth and brand profitability; it is based on brand perceptions (consumer-oriented brand equity). Wrona (2004) agrees by saying that “economic analyses prove that to a large extent, financial brand value depends on the consumers’ attitudes towards the brand. The consumer (emotion) related element of brand value is the source of financial value, it is a collateral for the present and future cash flows” (p. 447). Positive brand equity drives value for the consumer which in turn drives value for the shareholders (Barwise et al. 1990; Gupta et al. 2004) or stakeholders. The Marketing Science Institute (cited in Leuthesser 1988) points it out and has defined brand equity as “the set of associations and behaviour on the part of a brand’s customers, channel members and parent corporation that permits the brand to earn greater volume or greater margins than it could without the brand name”.

## Brand Equity as Consumer Oriented Construct

Bearing in mind the prospect of consumer behaviour, brand equity is viewed as the consumers’ response to brand marketing (Aaker 1996; Keller 1993) and is widely applied in commercial industries as a brand success indicator.

According to Faircloth et al. (2001), brand equity is a behaviour-oriented construct affected by the image and attitude towards a specific object. Also Leuthesser (1988) and Srivastava and Shocker (1991) understand brand equity as a set of associations, attitudes and behaviour standards. Similarly, Christodoulides and de Chernatony (2010) defined brand equity as “a set of associations and behaviours on

---

<sup>1</sup> In this context, Hall (1993, quoted in: Sinclair 2004) lists non-tangible assets including intellectual property (trademarks, patents, copyrights etc.), business secrets, contracts and licences, databases, generally available information, personal and organizational networks, “know-how” of employees, advisors, suppliers and distributors, product and company reputation, organizational culture (e.g. ability to respond to changes, challenges etc.).



the part of a brand's consumers that enables a brand to earn greater volume or greater margins that it could without the brand name and provides a strong, sustainable and differential advantage" (p. 9).

Hence the term introduced by Keller (1993), namely *customer-based brand equity* which revolves around the associations and attitudes of prospective and existing brand users. Erdem et al. (1999) take a step further and consider brand equity as the differentiating influence that a consumer's knowledge of a brand may have and the response to it compared to responses to an equivalent marketing mix yet related to a no-brand offer or a fictitious brand name. Therefore, as long as there is no difference in the consumer's response to an offer marked with a specific name and an equivalent no-brand offer, we do not really deal with brand equity.

Understood in this way, the meaning of brand equity can be traced back to mental processes (coding, storing information in memory, recovering information from memory, developing preference etc.) leading to a different perception, preference and consumer behaviour. Keller (1993) emphasizes therefore the role of brand awareness, familiarity and image (knowledge of a brand) in consumers' response and their decision-making process.

Farquhar (1989) suggests that brand equity should result in: (1) subjective information processing of information, (2) permanent attitudes or opinions which are resistant to changes and (3) behaviour affected by these opinions. Since every consumer has his or her own perception of the importance of the promised brand benefit and brand functioning, brand equity needs to be a construct on an individual level. What is more, consumers' perceptions may vary i.e. they may affect the details level (e.g. single brand attributes) or general brand impressions (Broniarczyk and Gershoff 2003).

Here, consumer-based brand equity needs to be differentiated from company based brand equity. According to Strebinger et al. (1998), while the former (also considered a bottom-up approach, Fetscherin 2010) is most important, it is not the only source of brand value to a company. On top of market sales, a brand may also bring about significant benefits on other markets. Companies whose names are associated with a well-known and popular brand enjoy an advantage on the labour market. Other advantages may be offered for example on capital markets or in agreement with political decision-makers. In this context, Ambler (2000) considers creation of value a dispersed process focusing primarily on the value created by a brand for its numerous stakeholders; Ambler refers to it as a "total brand equity" (p. 49). Jones (2005) even suggested adopting the stakeholder theory to brand equity which should result in a better understanding of monitoring of brand operations with respect to specific stakeholders. In the case of place brands, this approach may be of special value owing to the number of groups affected by a brand. Due to the process of building a place product and further on a place brand (which necessitates involvement on the part of many groups which are at the same time consumers of that place), the company-based approach comes closely to the consumer-based approach and thus these two are hard to separate.

Bearing in mind the combination of the above trends, Lassar et al. (1995) claims that five important elements need to be taken into consideration when defining brand equity. Firstly, brand equity refers to the consumers' perceptions rather than objective indicators. Secondly, brand equity is related to the global value associated with a brand. Thirdly, that global value stems from the brand name and not only the physical aspects of a brand. Further on, brand equity is not an absolute category but is relative to the competitors. Finally, brand equity positively affects financial performance.

## Brand Equity Measurement

According to Aaker (2000, p. 9) brand equity is "strategic asset that can be the basis of competitive advantage and long-term profitability" (Aaker 2000, p. 9). Therefore, it needs to be analysed, measured and monitored in order to facilitate managing a brand and further its development.

In the literature on the subject, the basic sources of brand equity (in a general rather than place-related context) include two dimensions: the perceptual (measured by means of brand awareness, brand associations, brand image, perceived quality etc.) and the behavioural (operationalized by brand loyalty, willingness to pay a premium price, recommendations etc.).

According to Keller (1993, 2003), consumer-based brand equity should rely on a high level of brand awareness and knowledge as well as strong, favourable and unique brand associations. On the other hand, Aaker (2000) indicates brand awareness, perceived value, brand associations and brand loyalty as dimensions of brand equity. This is the most commonly adopted approach to brand equity.

The measurement of customer-based brand equity has become a subject frequently discussed by academics and within industries (e.g. 'Brand Asset Valuator' Young and Rubicam, Total Research Corporation's 'Equitrend', Landor Associates' 'Image Power' quoted in: Kartono and Rao 2005). The dimensions of brand equity are at the same time regarded single measurements. In empirical studies where different measurements of brand equity are compared, Agarwal and Rao (1996) claim that a majority of measurements (except for spontaneous brand recall) defined by Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) demonstrate a similar credibility therefore they are suitable for measuring brand equity.

Jones (2005) emphasizes that measurements of consumer-based brand equity may encourage brand managers to focus on the brand's "surface" rather than on how the brand creates value for its consumers over a long time. Jones says that a growing awareness of the need for considering a general brand experience encompasses not only direct brand relations but also those created through other channels (e.g. sales force's experiences, media).

## Brand Equity Rethought in a Place Branding Context

Based on the concept of brand equity, the literature on place marketing first reflected the term country equity (Shimp et al. 1993) which, according to Kotler and Gertner (2002, p. 250) indicates “the emotional value resulting from consumers’ association of a brand with a country”. This interpretation strongly relies on the effect of the country of origin—a frequent approach in literature, originally associated with place (country) brand equity or value. In this context, the image of a country may affect the key dimensions of brand equity of products (like associations or perceived value) as a differentiator. Shimp et al. (1993) even claim that a country’s brand equity “explains the equity included in a product’s brand” (p. 328). The reference of product brand images to countries and in general to places have become important with respect to devising effective strategies and competitive advantages, for products and territories alike (Baker and Cameron 2008). However, the above approaches fail to fully explain the brand of place brand equity; they are only a source of the relevant considerations.

Papadopoulos and Heslop (2002) were the first to justify the application of the notion of place brand equity from the point of view of investors by transferring the idea of country brand equity in the context of products origin onto the country’s brand equity for the investors (in the context of foreign direct investments). However, it was Papadopoulos (2004) who suggested a definition closest to the nature of brand equity in a place context; by resorting to the definition of brand equity coined by Aaker (1991), he perceives place brand equity as “real and/or perceived brand assets and liabilities linked to a place that differentiate it” (p. 43). On the other hand, Cervellon and Chailan (2013, typescript) interpret place brand equity as a potential to build a brand derived from the place name.

## Place Brand Equity Studies Review

Despite some notion-related analogies, literature on the subject provides very few surveys of the similarities between product brand equity, place brand equity and measurements thereof. To date, there has been hardly any discussion on how (place) brand equity should be interpreted and how it should be measured irrespective of its scale.

The first article devoted strictly to place brand equity and its measurement was written by Konecnik and Gartner (2007). They put forward a model of place brand equity resorting to the example of Slovenia (it was later on used by Zanfardini et al. 2011 to measure the brand of the Patagonia region in Argentina). This work relates to destination brand equity i.e. a place brand in its tourist aspect (aimed for the target group of potential and actual tourists). In their considerations, Konecnik and Gartner (2007) follow Aaker’s path by including awareness, image, quality and loyalty as the proper dimensions of destination brand equity, at the same time

emphasizing the importance of image and its function in the process of forming brand equity. Konecnik and Gartner (2007) accept Cai's (2002) thesis that image is the core of branding while different dimensions affect specific components of the model. This is quite a popular approach in empirical research where emphasis is placed mainly on the image-related element of place brand equity.<sup>2</sup> This approach is exemplified by the method of evaluating the strengths of tourist destinations introduced by the Tourist Destination Brand Analyzer (Hakuhodo Tourist Business Development Project 2005), measurement and ranking of brands of 76 Lithuanian cities and towns and how they are perceived in Lithuania (Brencis and Stancika 2011). Konecnik and Gartner (2007) made an attempt at testing whether image may be the only and sufficient measurement of destination brand equity to represent destination evaluation or if the other dimensions can also be identified and measured. Since brand equity (including place brand equity) is generated by reinforcing its specific dimensions (Aaker 1991; Yoo et al. 2000), it is important to apply the entire range of equity dimensions even if their impact on that equity may be diversified.

The results of research conducted by Konecnik and Gartner (2007) demonstrate relations between the four suggested dimensions of destination brand equity; they are all important in evaluating a destination brand and they can be expressed through the concept of consumer-based brand equity.

Other articles on place brand equity also revolve predominantly around destination brands. For example, Boo et al. (2009) put the consumer-based brand equity model to a test by means of online research on a sample of individuals visiting Las Vegas and Atlantic City in the US. These cities were selected due to the fact that they are within the same destination category: they offer similar products and services based on entertainment and gambling. This selection is in line with Crimmins (2000) who claims that brand equity may be measured in comparison with other brands in the same brand category.

The model tested by Boo et al. (2009) consists of brand awareness (in fact it refers to brand knowledge), brand image, brand quality, loyalty and brand value. The latter is defined in the context of cost to the consumer, chiefly as good value for money and is not related to the formerly discussed brand value in a monetary approach. The authors assumed that a destination brand value is affected by awareness, brand image and quality while brand loyalty is affected by image and quality. On the other hand, brand value affects brand loyalty which is some sort of a last link in the model (the final result). Research allowed to verify the assumptions on the relations of specific dimensions and ultimately the authors presented an alternative model. A confirmative factor analysis also demonstrated that it was justified to include a new dimension, namely brand experience as a new emerging

---

<sup>2</sup> In the case of consumer products, a majority of them offer tangible, material attributes therefore images are based on actual and measurable information. According to Konecnik and Gartner (2007), this does not hold true for products based on experience as it is the case in tourism where the products are produced and consumed simultaneously. The difference between the tangible and the intangible is highlighted in studies of destination image and the main emphasis is placed there.

dimension of brand equity in the context of destination. This dimension positively affects the value of destination yet it does not impact directly destination brand loyalty. On the other hand, brand awareness affects directly brand experience (with brand image and brand quality as contributors to brand experience).

Studies conducted by Pike et al. (2010) are another development of significant importance to research into place brand equity. The authors resorted to the example of Australia as a tourist destination and tested a four dimensional model: brand salience, brand image, perceived quality and brand loyalty. Brand salience indicates more than just brand awareness. It is the basis for a dimension hierarchy and is the power of a destination's presence in the target market's mind in a specific situation.<sup>3</sup> The concept of brand salience is oftentimes identified with the ability to differentiate (Guido 1998) and is perceived as equivalent to being *top of mind* (the first indicated brand) in a specific product category. Romaniuk and Sharp (2004) interpret this dimension as a brand's inclination to being noticed or recalled in purchasing situations. Brand image represents perceptions related to destination; the authors limited the construct of image to social image and self-image. On the other hand, brand quality is related to perception of quality in the destination structure i.e. services and amenities like accommodation and other. Brand loyalty represents the extent of involvement in a destination. It may also be interpreted in a context of recurrence of visits, intended visits or word-of-mouth. As a result of analyses, the positive relations between brand image and perceived quality was confirmed together with a direct positive relation between brand salience and brand loyalty.

In further research, Pike (2010) tackled operationalization and the level of specific dimensions of consumer-based brand equity for the same destination (Coral Coast region) in a time interval (2003 vs. 2007). The research pertained to the so-called short break trip taken by car defined as a non-business trip involving 1–4 days out of home (White 2000). Pike (2010) follows the approach by Aaker (1991, 1996), Keller (1993, 2003) and takes advantage of Lavidge's and Steiner's hierarchy of effects (1961). Destination brand equity consists therefore of dimensions like brand salience, brand associations, brand resonance and brand loyalty in a specific hierarchy of effects. Therefore Pike applies the perception and the behaviour approaches alike. A new dimension introduced by Pike is brand resonance i.e. the consumer's tendency to respond to a brand and brand interaction. Pike interprets brand resonance as willingness to involve in a destination which may be measured with respect to behaviour by e.g. the visits paid but also by attitude to a brand, e.g. by an intention to visit. Resonance precedes destination brand loyalty which is top-most in the hierarchy.

Pike (2010) concludes that marketing efforts should focus on developing desired brand differentiation (brand salience) and brand associations over a long time (Keller 1993). A combination of brand attributes and consumers needs will lead to

---

<sup>3</sup> This may indicate that the importance of the same brand varies depending on the choice situation, e.g. a destination has a different importance if the purpose is a family trip or if it is related to medical treatment. This approach is directly related to the brand category.

an increase in brand resonance (willingness to involve in a brand). On the other hand, effective delivery of the brand promise may result in an increase of brand loyalty, in particular in the examined market of short-term trips when the consumers have their favourite places to which they keep returning.

Florek (2012) adds to this discussion composing a model of city brand equity. Based on the exhaustive literature and research review on the particular brand equity dimensions, by integrating different elements and categories with the intention to test new solutions, the four main dimensions were tested as hypothetical for the two Polish cities equity: perception, preference, satisfaction and attachment.

The results of two-stage research conducted on a representative sample of 300 inhabitants of Poland (stage one was aimed at selecting the variables explaining destination brand equity for further research) and 800 inhabitants of Poland (at stage two with the goal of arriving at more precise dimensions of brand equity and identifying brand equity for two cities within the same category: Poznań and Wrocław) suggest that important dimensions of city brand equity include: attachment, renown, recommendation and value for money. Therefore, comparing the initial assumption regarding the dimensions that build city brand equity (perception, preference, satisfaction and attachment) new dimensions revealed. Preference dimension was replaced by recommendation that initially assumed to be in attachment dimension. In the satisfaction dimension those related to value for money revealed to be the most important. In the perception dimension renown-related items were the strongest. In addition, the regression analysis provided information about the importance of the above dimensions—attachment dimension was the strongest (the dimension's impact on the dependent variable—83.51 %), then image (9.47 %), recommendation (4.18 %) and value for money (2.83 %) (Florek 2012).

As the above short review of studies shows, researchers dealing with operationalization of a place brand are most experienced with tourist destination brands. The approaches presented above have been included in Table 15.1.

The authors in general agree about the dimensions building up destination brand equity and are the basis for measurement thereof although they tend to introduce different terms describing related categories (e.g. brand awareness vs. brand salience, associations vs. image, loyalty vs. attachment). Pike (2010) puts more emphasis on the aspects related to building up brand relations, suggesting as many as two relevant categories: brand loyalty and resonance. This is reminiscent of Florek (2012): recommendations and brand attachment. On the other hand, Boo et al. (2009) highlight the prerequisite of brand experience (rather than only perception thereof) which affects brand evaluation in the context of its financial value to the consumer. They also identify certain limitations of research into evaluation of destination brands. They assume that a destination brand may be measured by means of the consumer-based brand equity concept. However, on the basis of a review of literature on the subject, they have made certain assumptions:

**Table 15.1** Key studies for the development of the place brand equity concept

Studies	Dimensions
Konecnik and Gartner (2007)	Awareness
	Image
	Quality
	Loyalty
Boo et al. (2009)	Awareness
	Brand experience (incl. image and quality)
	Brand value (functional, in the context of price)
	Loyalty
Pike et al. (2010)	Brand salience
	Perceived quality
	Image
	Loyalty
Pike (2010)	Loyalty
	Resonance
	Associations
	Brand salience
Florek (2012)	Attachment
	Renown
	Recommendation
	Value for money

Source Own compilation

- destination brands should be evaluated by means of comparison with other competitive brands within the same category of destination brands,
- destinations needs to be well known and popular among tourists (consumers),
- tourists need to have experience with the destination brand.

One of the most important conclusions from an analysis of the existing studies of place brand equity (in most cases, tourist destinations) is the subordinate role of image. In the last four decades, interest in the destination image has grown and has prevailed in the research area in tourism, especially in the cognitive aspect (i.e. putting it simply, it was based on juxtaposing attributes of destination). While the above developments are not yet compliant in the ultimate list of dimensions, they are evidence of the importance or even the superiority of the other dimensions (especially of behavioural significance). However, it is worth noting that so far only two empirical developments have tested relations between dimensions.

Apart from the discussion of brand equity in connection to tourism destinations, only Jacobsen (2012) suggests a model of place brand equity in an investment context and analyses it from the point of view of an investment process. The author has developed a theoretical model of investor-based place brand equity which potentially measures the effectiveness of place brands and the influence on preference of the target location of foreign direct investment (FDI). The model makes it

possible to identify the “driving force” which affects place brands from the point of view of a foreign investor. Jacobsen (2012) assumes that the behaviour of a place brand consumer (e.g. a decision about an investment in a specific location) depends on the evaluation of the place’s brand value which in turn depends on the mode of perceiving the place’s resources. The major relations regarded by Jacobsen as imperative to make an empirical verification are relations between place brand resources, place brand values and brand equity as well as between brand equity and preference in the BIZ location selection. However, this model requires empirical verification.

To sum up, the existing publications and research into place brand equity differ with respect to the scope (a city, a region, a country), context (tourism, investments) and the method applied. They are also relatively scarce and therefore in-depth analyses and multi-aspect studies are a priority. As Lucarelli (2012) sums up the literature on the subject, while several articles on place marketing touch upon the issue of brand equity, even fewer of them relate directly to this area of deliberations and research.

By resorting to a review and classification of literature for the past 20 years, including the latest relevant publications, Lucarelli (2012) presents a theoretical model of a city’s brand equity. It consists of three dimensions resulting from the issue’s interdisciplinary nature, namely: elements of a city brand, measurement of a city brand and a city brand’s influence in various areas. This is how Lucarelli (2012) related to issues connected to the general complexity of city brands and their evaluation presented in literature on the subject.

The first dimension is the “city brand elements” which the author interprets as a set of a city’s resources (tangible and intangible alike). With reference to an analysis of literature, Lucarelli classifies them as history and heritage, artefacts and spatial plans, events and activities, processes and institutions as well as symbols. The other dimension is “city brand measurement” which relates to measurement methods and tools adopted from the existing studies in order to evaluate the impact of a city brand. Lucarelli (2012) as well as Zenker and Martin (2011) concluded that a majority of research into evaluation of a place brand was based on case studies and to a lesser degree on comparative analyses. As for the research methods, qualitative research is most popular in comparison with quantitative methods or studies based on a combination of many methods. The last dimension: “the city brand impact/the city brand impacts” refers to the measurement of the effects of efforts aimed at building up a city brand. In this dimension, Lucarelli emphasized the type of effects (divided into image-related and identity-related, social and political and economic) rather than measurement methods and tools reflected in the former dimension (“city brand measurement”).

The first area of brand impact—“identity-image” contains those directly affecting a city brand when it comes to a city’s identity or its image. The social and political impact refers to social, political and cultural effects as the result of a city brand’s impact while the economic impact refers to results based on economic ratios. The model suggested by Lucarelli is an attempt at a comprehensive approach



to the process in line with the following scenario: what builds up brand equity—what is its impact on the areas of a city's operations—how to measure that impact.

From the point of view of place brand management, it is crucial however to identify the elements of brand equity (also interpreted as sources of equity) which can be affected and measured. Another issue is an approach to brand equity in one final category (expressed by means of an index, indicator etc.) which allows to compare brand equity over time and equity of many different brands at the same time. Moreover, Zenker and Martin (2011) claim that in order to evaluate place brand equity, variables relevant to specific groups need to be identified. Therefore they agree with the approach based on a consumer/groups of consumers as an option of brand equity relevant to place brands.

## Conclusions

While place brand equity slowly attracts interest, the literature on the subject (chiefly in the context of countries and cities) does not provide a definition of this notion. The existing academic accomplishments related to place brand equity are modest and in most cases, it comes down to indicating the need for embarking on the subject.

Adoption of the appropriate perspective of understanding place brand equity is of key importance. The authors who instigated studies on these issues clearly indicate that a consumer-based approach works for place brands. This opinion is justified in the light of the ultimate profit in the form of welfare of the owners of a place brand (the residents) who at the same time are consumers of the place product. The locals are not the only group of consumers or stakeholders of a place brand; this notion increasingly often replaces consumers, customers or target groups of administrative units. In this context, the prospect of a brand being evaluated by a consumer is most adequate because at the same time it allows for a detailed analysis of the brand with respect to relevant groups.

One can therefore assume that place brand equity (consumer/stakeholder groups-based) is a differentiating effect of a set of associations and attitudes as well as behaviour patterns in relation to a place brand. However, this definition necessitates further discussion; the same holds true for the possibility of measuring place brand equity.

Meanwhile, brand equity provides important information for place management. Evaluation of place brand equity informs which elements of brand equity may reinforce the brand of a specific place and what possible relations may occur between these components. Moreover, these results are the basis for comparative analyses of places (benchmarking analyses). According to Lassar et al. (1995, p. 13) “brand equity is not absolute but relative to the competitors” and is a concept which “may be measured only by comparison with other brands in the same category”. On top of that, as Abela (2003, p. 348) concludes: “brand equity measured in order to trace down how it alters in response to changes to the marketing mix and

competitive activities as well as what is the original point of interest to identify a brand's changes over time rather than its absolute value".

These two—time and reference—aspects, make place brand equity a practical and highly cognitive category. In the long run, brand equity makes it possible to evaluate marketing efforts of places and wider, to evaluate the marketing management approach to places.

## References

- Aaker DA (1991) Managing brand equity. Capitalizing on the value of a brand name. The Free Press, New York, p 4
- Aaker DA (1996) Building strong brands. Free Press, New York, p 150
- Aaker DA (2000) Brand leadership. The Free Press, New York
- Abela A (2003) Additive versus inclusive approaches to measuring brand equity: practical and ethical implications. *J Brand Manag* 10(4):342–352
- Agarwal MK, Rao VR (1996) An empirical comparison of consumer-based measures of brand equity. *Mark Lett* 7(3):237–247
- AMA, American Marketing Association (2006) Marketing definitions: a glossary of marketing terms. AMA, Chicago
- Ambler T (2000) Marketing and the bottom line: the new metrics of corporate wealth. Financial Times/Prentice Hall, London
- Baker MJ, Cameron E (2008) Critical success factors in destination marketing. *Tour Hosp Res* 8(2):79–97
- Barwise P, Higson C, Likierman A, Marsh P (1990) Brands as separable assets. *Bus Strateg Rev* 1(2):43–59
- Boo S, Busser J, Baloglu S (2009) A model of customer-based brand equity and its application to multiple destinations. *Tour Manag* 30(2):219–231
- Brencis A, Stancika K (2011) Measuring brand equity of Latvian cities and towns. In: New values in tourism and society development, proceedings of the international conference Riga, Latvia, School of Business Administration Turiba, Riga, pp 20–25
- Broniarczyk SM, Gershoff AD (2003) The reciprocal effects of brand equity and trivial attributes. *J Mark Res* 40(5):161–174
- Cai LA (2002) Cooperative branding for rural destinations. *Ann Tour Res* 29(3):720–742
- Chaudhuri A (1995) Brand equity or double jeopardy? *J Prod Brand Manag* 4(1):26–32
- Christodoulides G, de Chernatony L (2010) Consumer-based brand equity conceptualisation and measurement: a literature review. *Int J Mark Res* 52(1):43–66
- Crimmins J (2000) Better measurement and management of brand value. *J Advert Res* 40(6):136–144
- De Chernatony L, McDonald M (1998) Creating powerful brands. Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford
- Doyle P (2000) Value-based marketing: marketing strategies for corporate growth and shareholder value. Wiley, New York
- Erdem T, Swait J, Broniarczyk S, Chakravarti D, Kapferer JN, Keane M, Roberts J, Steenkamp JB, Zettermeyer F (1999) Brand equity, consumer learning and choice. Marketing letters. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Norwell, pp 301–318
- Faircloth JB, Capella LM, Alford BL (2001) The effect of brand attitude and brand image on brand equity. *J Mark Theor Pract* 9(3):61–75
- Farquhar PH (1989) Managing brand equity. *Mark Res* 1(3):24–33

- Feldwick P (1996) Defining a brand. In: Cowley D (ed) *Understanding brands by 10 people who do* (p 20). Kogan Page, London
- Fetscherin M (2010) The determinants and measurement of a country brand: the country brand strength index. *Int Mark Rev* 27(4):466–479
- Florek M (2012) Measurement of city branding equity. *Actual Probl Econ* 2(7):130–139
- Gertner D (2011a) A (tentative) meta-analysis of the ‘place marketing’ and ‘place branding’ literature. *J Brand Manag* 19(2):112–131
- Gertner D (2011b) Unfolding and configuring two decades of research and publications on place marketing and place branding. *Place Brand Pub Dipl* 7(2):91–106
- Guido G (1998) The dichotic theory of salience: a framework for assessing attention and memory. *Eur Adv Consum Res* 3(3):114–119
- Gupta S, Lehmann DR, Stuart JA (2004) Valuing customers. *J Mark Res* 41(2):7–18
- Hakuhodo’s survey of brand strengths of international tourist destinations with Tourist Destination Brand Analyzer (2005). <http://www.hakuhodo.jp/pdf/2005/20050131.pdf>. Accessed 9 Nov 2013
- Hanna S, Rowley J (2011) Towards a strategic place brand-management model. *J Mark Manag* 27(5):458–476
- Jacobsen BP (2012) Place brand equity: a model for establishing the effectiveness of place brands. In: *International place branding conference special edition: roots—politics—methods*, Utrecht, The Netherlands, 20 and 21 Jan 2012
- Jones R (2005) Finding sources of brand value: developing a stakeholder model of brand equity. *Brand Manag* 13(1):10–32
- Kall J, Kłeczek R, Sagan A (2006) *Zarządzanie marką*. Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków
- Kapferer JN (1992) *Strategic brand management*. The Free Press, New York
- Kartono B, Rao VR (2005) Linking consumer-based brand equity to market performance: an integrated approach to brand equity management. Working paper. No. 11. <http://www.zibs.com/techreports/Linking%20CBE%20Market%20Performance.pdf>. Accessed 13 Dec 2013
- Keller KL (1993) Conceptualizing, measuring and managing customer-based brand equity. *J Mark* 57(1):1–22
- Keller KL (1998) *Strategic brand management: building, measuring and managing brand equity*. Prentice-Hall International, Hemel Hempstead
- Keller KL (2003) *Building, measuring and managing brand equity*. Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River
- Kim H, Kim WG, An JA (2003) The effect of consumer-based brand equity on firms’ financial performance. *J Consum Mark* 20(4):335–351
- Konecnik M, Gartner WC (2007) Customer-based brand equity for destination. *Ann Tour Res* 34(2):400–421
- Kotler P, Gertner D (2002) Country as brand, product and beyond: a place marketing and brand management perspective. *J Brand Manag* 9(4/5):249–262
- Lassar W, Mittal B, Sharma A (1995) Measuring customer-based brand equity. *J Consum Mark* 12(4):11–19
- Lavidge RE, Steiner GA (1961) A model for predictive measurements of advertising effectiveness. *J Mark* 25:59–62
- Leuthesser L (1988) Conference summary: defining, measuring and managing brand equity. Report No. 88–104, Marketing Science Institute, Cambridge
- Lucarelli A (2012) Unraveling the complexity of city brand equity: a three-dimensional framework. *J Place Manag Dev* 5(3):231–252
- Montgomery J, Lieberman M (2005) A compendium of brand measurement. *World Advert Res Cent* 464:45–47
- Papadopoulos N, Heslop L (2002) Country equity and country branding: problems and prospects. *J Brand Manag* 9(4/5):294–314
- Papadopoulos N (2004) Place branding: evolution, meaning and implications. *Place Brand* 1(1):36–49

- Pike SD (2010) Destination branding case study: tracking brand equity for an emerging destination between 2003 and 2007. *J Hosp Tour Res* 34(1):124–139
- Pike SD, Bianchi C, Kerr G, Patti Ch (2010) Consumer-based brand equity for Australia as a long-haul tourism destination in an emerging market. *Int Mark Rev* 27(4):434–449
- Romaniuk J, Sharp B (2004) Conceptualizing and measuring brand salience. *Mark Theor* 4(4):327–334
- Shimp TA, Samiee S, Madden TJ (1993) Countries and their products: a cognitive structure perspective. *J Acad Mark Sci* 21(4):232–330
- Sinclair R (2004) A brand valuation methodology for nations. *Place Brand* 1(1):74–79
- Srivastava RK, Shocker A.D. (1991). Brand equity: a perspective on its meaning and measurement. Working paper. Marketing Science Institute, Boston, pp 91–124
- Strebinger A, Schweiger G, Otter T (1998) Brand equity and consumer information processing: a proposed model. *Facultas Verlag, Viena*
- Temporal P (2002) *Advanced brand management. From vision to valuation.* John Wiley & Sons Pty Ltd, Chichester
- White A (2000) Travelling tips. *Leis Manag* 20(3):30–34
- Winters LC (1991) Brand equity measures: some recent advances. *Mark Res* 3(4):70–73
- Wood L (2000) Brands and brand equity: definition and management. *Manag Decis* 38(9):662–669
- Wrona S (2004) Wartość marki – marketing a finanse. In *Zarządzanie produktem w warunkach globalizacji gospodarki (materiały konferencyjne – recenzowane)*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej w Poznaniu, Poznań, pp 443–449
- Yoo B, Donthu D, Lee S (2000) An examination of selected marketing mix elements and brand equity. *J Acad Mark Sci* 28(2):195–211
- Zanfardini M, Tamagni L, Gutauskas A (2011) Costumer-based brand equity for tourism destinations in Patagonia. *Catalan J Commun Cult Stud* 3(2):253–271
- Zenker S, Martin N (2011) Measuring success in place marketing and branding. *Place Brand Pub Dipl* 7(1):32–41

# Chapter 16

## Sketching Futures for Place Branding

Gary Warnaby, Gregory J. Ashworth and Mihalis Kavaratzis

**Abstract** This concluding chapter revisits the major questions that were articulated in the introduction in order to capture the contribution of the volume in advancing the theory and practice of place branding. Going through the individual contribution of each chapter and the answers that the book as a whole has provided to these fundamental questions, the chapter discusses the significance of place brands, their components, the agents that construct them and the way in which place brand management should be understood.

### The Three Tasks of This Book

In the introductory chapter to this volume we articulated the premise that place branding is ripe for a rethinking in terms of its origins, theoretical underpinnings, conceptual development, practical applications and expected outcomes. This claim imposes upon us three tasks which together are the purpose of this book. First, to demonstrate the necessity for rethinking, secondly to identify and explore what needs to be rethought, and thirdly not just begin this rethinking process but advance it sufficiently, through the contributions presented here, for the new directions identified to prompt new questions. These three are the criteria upon which we hope and expect this book will be judged.

---

G. Warnaby  
School of Materials, University of Manchester, Manchester, UK  
e-mail: Gary.warnaby@manchester.ac.uk

G.J. Ashworth  
Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, Groningen, The Netherlands  
e-mail: g.j.ashworth@rug.nl

M. Kavaratzis (✉)  
School of Management, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK  
e-mail: m.kavaratzis@le.ac.uk

The necessity for such rethinking has become increasingly apparent in the last few years in a need, felt by many, and not exclusively academic, observers for a more grounded, theoretical framework to what began and initially developed as a wholly practical activity. This need has become manifest in weaknesses in conceptual thinking and even a growing imprecision in terminology. Above all, and the most serious misgiving surrounding what remains a practical activity devised to achieve practical results, is the growing doubt that much official place branding is actually effective in attaining its often only vaguely delineated outcomes. The absence of much retrospective monitoring of the impacts of place branding initiatives by those responsible for their development leaves a doubt that the objective of much place branding is more to be seen to be doing it, rather than to achieve specific desired outcomes and impact on the place.

There are a number of immediate explanations for this situation. One is the comparative recentness of the application of marketing—and especially branding—to places and their management and the very rapid dissemination of these ideas and possibilities over little more than a decade. We have been too busy doing it to reflect upon what we are doing and the demands of application have even encouraged a certain sense of frustrated impatience of practitioners with the academic reflection on their activities. The result of a few years of fevered activity around the world has been a mass of case examples, but few tools have been shaped for their comparative evaluation, assessment or synthesis allowing lessons to be learned that would be of value elsewhere. Secondly, the novelty of the approach and the absence of an existing body of practice or established schools of thought regarding its study have inevitably drawn in scholars and practitioners from a wide range of academic disciplines and management backgrounds. This is not conducive to the evolution of a consensus of agreed theory, application of concepts, or even common nomenclature.

A call to rethink prompts the immediate question “What is there to rethink?” This we have attempted to answer by posing four further general questions, namely:

Why and to whom are place brands important and why do places, whether self-consciously or not, create and promote place brands in the first place?

What are the different components of the place brand? How are these related, and what resources are used in their construction?

Who are the agents active in place brand formation, who actually construct place brands or influence their construction and why do they do this?

How should place brand management be understood and effectively undertaken, for what ends and what influences this?

The book was intended not just to pose, but to answer, these questions however tentatively and certainly not definitively. Thus, in response to the first question relating to the importance of, and rationale for place branding, it is clear at one level that it is motivated by the solving of practical and functional place-related problems. However at another level we suggested that the motivation for engaging in

place branding can often be found in a growing awareness, often amounting to anxiety, of inter-place competition at various spatial scales. Place branding can also be seen to be contributing to the planning of broader place *management* strategies in that the processes of place branding could provide a basis for cooperation between disparate place stakeholders to envision an aspirational ‘imagined future’ for the place that they can work towards in a coordinated way.

In terms of the second question, relating to the means by which place brands are constructed from their various contributory elements, we suggest that place brands could comprise promotional tactics and identity claims, associations with place making elements (in terms of attempting to create some form of ‘sense of place’ for an individual location), and also in terms of place narratives and the collective construction of meaning about a place (emphasising that such processes are *social*).

In answer to the third question, relating to the identity of the agents of place branding (and the factors influencing them), we suggest the possibility of two broad perspectives. This first of these could be described as ‘organisation-centric’, in that responsibility for place branding rests with institutions that undertake place branding projects (from the public, private and voluntary sectors, or combinations thereof in the case of the partnership approach that typifies much place branding activity). An alternative perspective takes a more socially-oriented, user perspective in terms of identifying those individuals and groups who construct the place brand through their experiences of the place. Thus, we suggest that agency in place branding can also be ascribed to individual place consumers who make place-related decisions, and these individual decisions can be aggregated, suggesting that place brands are actually constructed by individuals as groups. Moreover, because these individuals and groups act within particular social/cultural contexts, it could be argued that place brands could also be seen as the creations of a wider society.

The final question, relating to the practice of place branding, and the factors influencing it, we suggest could be answered in various ways. Thus, the place brand could be considered primarily in terms of promotional activities aimed at attracting place users or in terms of attempting to manage the image and reputation of the place in question. Alternatively, a more critical perspective in answering this question would regard the place branding process as an exercise in power (given the potential complexity of organisational mechanisms for place branding that arises from the existence of multiple stakeholders with different objectives), or as a community building exercise (where consensus and collective action are paramount in the construction of the place brand).

Inevitably, these questions are interrelated and the answers are not only complex, but also the answers to one question have a bearing on the answers to all the others. A key question, for the conclusion of this volume, is to what extent does its content elucidate this complexity or at least advance on the tentative answers suggested in the Introduction, even to the point of suggesting further and different questions? We will thus conclude by considering the contribution of the book in answering each of these questions in turn.

### ***Why Are Place Brands Important and Why Do Places Attempt Branding in the First Place?***

Competition between places at a variety of spatial scales and for different reasons (i.e. for inward investment, and to attract tourists/residents etc.) is potentially inevitable even if the people involved are unaware of it. This is regarded by many as a zero-sum game in which the pool of potential residents, tourists, investors and the like is fixed so that if one place captures more, the others will capture less. This may not be the case for two reasons. First, the size of the pool to be shared may not be indifferent to the branding impacts but may be subject to an increase or decrease in response to the branding efforts. For example, a campaign to influence the decision to visit or even invest in a particular place may evoke the idea of taking a holiday or making an investment that previously did not exist. Secondly, place branding may have social objectives as well as economic ones. Community building, local awareness, the shaping of local identities and even supporting local self-confidence and *amour propre* are frequently encountered as goals or side-effects. In these situations there is no zero-sum gain as all places may benefit simultaneously.

Less easily quantifiable or even noticeable, in many places, those responsible for their management feel that they have to be seen to be players in a wider arena (i.e. participants in extra-local events, whether sporting, or cultural), or recognised as prominent in leagues, networks and groupings at the appropriate competitive scale, which may range from the local to the global. The intention is to send appropriate signals to other players as to the relative positioning and aspirations of their particular locality. Indeed, such motivations behind place marketing and branding are well-attested in the existing literature, almost from the inception of place promotion and branding as a subject of study. The chapter by Hankinson outlines the antecedents of place branding, and specifically the underlying motives for undertaking it prompted by its wider marketing and branding contexts.

However, it could be argued that inter-place competition is not only intensifying, but is assuming new dimensions and new methods of communication. Thus, such competition becomes increasingly 'virtual' as places seek prominence on a world wide web, which is assuming ever greater importance in terms of the means through which information about places (on which perceptions and decisions as to whether to visit/invest etc.) are made. The chapter by Govers is explicit in describing place brands as 'virtual phenomena', both in the sense that the brand is ultimately a mental experience, an emotion evoked as a spur to action, but also virtual in its integration of new communication media into their marketing communications activities, if they are not to be bypassed or excluded in an increasingly connected world. In this context, Hanna and Rowley propose a '7Cs' framework (Channels, Clutter, Community, Chatter, Communication, Co-creation and Collaboration) as a mnemonic to facilitate the effective management of place brands from a more strategic perspective.

The potential of place brands to unify a range of disparate place stakeholders in cooperating together to help envision—and hopefully achieve—some imagined,



aspirational future is also highlighted in this volume. The importance of inclusive, collaborative approaches to place branding activities is a key theme in the more recent literature, and this issue is highlighted by Stubbs and Warnaby who outline how such planning approaches can result in more effective place branding initiatives in a chapter drawn from the first author's place branding practice over a number of years.

The general literature on branding highlights the importance of place brand equity in achieving branding objectives and/or addressing branding problems and issues. Brand equity, which can be thought of in terms of the value-added accruing as a result of the associations made by consumers with the brand, is considered in the context of places in the chapter by Florek. With regard to the notion of 'added value', an associated question relates to the measurement of the effectiveness of place branding activities. The means by which the effects of place branding activities can be effectively measured is considered in the chapter by Zenker and Braun.

### ***What Are the Components of Place Brands, and What Resources Are Used for Their Construction?***

Relationships between products and their brands are covered extensively in the wider marketing and branding literature, which suggests that brands can, amongst other things, be thought of as products that have been given a particular identity and/or set of associations that differentiate them from competitors. An important theme in the place marketing/branding literature is the homogeneity of the result of much marketing and branding activity, and in particular, the fact that very different places are rendered ultimately as almost indistinguishable by their promotional activities. Thus, understanding what constitutes the place 'product' and the importance of differentiating it from competing 'products' is clearly a fundamental aspect of place branding.

From its earliest days, the place marketing literature presents various conceptualisations of what constitutes the place 'product', incorporating both tangible, material elements as well as more intangible aspects. It is arguably time for rethinking the notion of a place product, especially when product attributes may be communicated via new technologies, as noted above. In this volume, Warnaby and Medway consider the nature of the place 'product' from the perspective of the service-dominant logic of marketing, a concept which has been very influential in terms of how marketing is conceptualised, notwithstanding the fact that it has not been accepted uncritically. In this respect, they draw from the resource-based view of strategy to consider how the various types of place resources are integrated in a consistent way in order to develop place brands, and also contribute to the creation of place identity in this context. The chapter by Kerr and Oliver addresses the issue

of place identity in more detail and how this might form the basis for a place branding strategy.

Returning to early conceptualisations of places as products, consisting of a holistic product comprising a variety of constituent elements, places can be thought of as collections of resources that can be selectively combined to help create a place brand. Various components of place products/brands, or place 'resources', are considered in this volume. The chapter by Evans considers the various roles of the built environment in contributing towards and expressing the place branding and Kavaratzis and Ashworth discuss the variety of ways in which culture can be used in place branding and the resulting consequences of doing this. Such resources are represented to target audiences primarily through visual means (as discussed in the chapter by Warnaby) but this should not neglect the potential of the other senses for conveying the essence of place brands in a more overtly experiential way (as discussed by Medway in this volume).

### ***Who Are the Agents of Place Brand Formation, and Who Actually Constructs Place Brands or Influences Their Construction?***

Who actually plans and implements place marketing/branding is another important theme in the extant literature, and of course, there are many ways in which the organisational structures can be configured to plan and implement place branding activities. The potential multiplicity of stakeholders from public, private and voluntary sectors and the possible tensions between them, arising from different worldviews and *modus operandi* further complicates this issue, and detailed studies of how place marketing/branding activities are planned and implemented, and by whom, are a staple of the existing literature. More recently, various authors have debated the relative merits of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches to planning place marketing. In contrast to the more stereotypical, very structured approaches to planning place marketing/branding activities typified by a 'top-down' approach, the 'bottom-up' approach emphasises collaboration between all place stakeholders to co-create a place brand, as opposed to the imposition of the place brand from 'on high'. Ultimately, of course, a place brand is reduced to the experience of an individual place user, whether that user is adopting at that moment the *persona* of resident, visitor or investor. The agencies, whether operating in the public interest or in pursuit of private profit, who believe they are 'creating' the brand are of course doing no such thing. They are merely attempting to influence, often less effectively than they think, the characteristics of the brand being formed in the imagination of individuals and the audibility, intelligibility and, above all, credibility of this influence is ranked by the individual far lower than many other such influences, especially personal experience and the related experiences of friends and acquaintances.

Indeed, the topic of planning and organising place branding activities is demonstrably ripe for re-thinking, and this volume makes a contribution to this in a number of chapters. Stubbs and Warnaby highlight the wide range of stakeholders with potential influence and input into place marketing activities and suggest ways in which their inputs could be better integrated into the development of more effective place branding. This increasing emphasis on collaboration, as stakeholders integrate their resources to co-create value associated with a place is consistent with the perspective from the service-dominant logic of marketing outlined by Warnaby and Medway and such collaboration, in terms of creating and pursuing a dialogue with place consumers, is also highlighted by Therkelsen.

Places cannot be conceived other than through the people who inhabit and use them. More recently, residents have been identified as a relatively neglected constituency for place branding activities, both in terms of a potential audience, and also as co-creators of the place brand itself (as discussed in this volume by Stubbs and Warnaby and Warnaby and Medway), and also as contributors to place brand identity (as discussed by Kerr and Oliver). There is also a wider community and societal context for place branding in terms of shaping a sense of place, as discussed in this volume by Campelo. The creation and communication of a unique sense of place could, of course, be an obvious way of creating place differentiation in an increasingly competitive spatial environment, as discussed by both Campelo and Kerr and Oliver.

### ***How Should Place Brand Management Be Understood and Undertaken and What Influences This?***

The discussions relating to all of the above questions inevitably link to a final, fundamental question of how should place brand management be understood and undertaken. Arguably the answer to this question encompasses all the tentative answers to the previous questions as argued above. Thus the marketing and promotion of the place and its attributes is inevitably a part of place branding, with a key aim of managing the image of the place, its reputation among its actual or potential consumers, whoever they may be. As Therkelsen shows this is better understood as a dialogue. However, if the resulting marketing communication activities and the accompanying associations in the minds of place users could be seen as the 'output' of place branding activity, then the process by which that output is generated will, given the diversity of potential stakeholders who may influence this, highlight the reality that place branding is inevitably an exercise in power that will reflect the nature, characteristics and interests of the communities whose place is being branded. One factor that this volume does highlight is the necessity for this process to be as inclusive and consensual as possible if the proposed place brand is to be accepted by those for whom it is intended despite the costs in efficiency and focus that such consensual approaches inevitably incur.

Thus in conclusion, any answers to these fundamental questions cannot, of course, be definitive, and are perforce tentative as the subject of place branding continues to evolve, driven mainly by its practical application but also increasingly by academic study. We hope that this volume provides some stimulus and direction to this evolution of place branding, by attempting to rethink some of its existing tenets, continuing and sharpening the associated debates and ultimately guiding them into new, as yet unforeseen, possibilities and pitfalls.