

THE CITY BRAND AND THE IMPACT ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Irina Olimpia SUSANU^{a*}, *Nicoleta CRISTACHE*^b, *Tiberius STANCIU*^c

^a "Dunărea de Jos" University, Romania

^b "Dunărea de Jos" University, Romania

^c "Ovidius" University, Romania

ABSTRACT

The attractiveness of a city is determined by people's desire to live, work, visit and invest in it, closely related to the identity and the perceived value of the city's brand. This paper presents an analysis based on a questionnaire made in the city of Galati. The aim of this research is to highlight the people's awareness in choosing this city as a tourist destination. Studying the opinions of the interviewees will highlight whether the city brand influences or not in the process of choosing the tourist product.

KEYWORDS: *brand, branding, city brand, country brand*

1. INTRODUCTION

As noted by Al Ries and Laura Ries, in their book *The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding*, the most important objective of the marketing process is the branding. Marketing means building a brand in the mind of the potential buyer. Marketing means branding. Most products and services today are bought, not sold. The sale is made by the brand. In this era of multimedia, the verbal confirmation of a product, its warranty, is represented by the brand name rather than the seller's personal recommendations. There are other examples in this perspective, of which the most eloquent is that of sales ... or Internet shopping. "Buyers purchase products from the web without seeing or testing them." (Paymal, 2007). By creating a strong brand, a tourist destination can influence the perception of a global public asset, gaining notoriety and interest from potential tourists (Pike, 2005).

2. CURRENT STATE OF RESEARCH

According to Simon Anholt expert in branding, the aspects that shape the brand of a city are: presence, potential, pulse, place, people, and basic needs. Together they form the Hexagon of the City Brand (Anholt, 2005). It takes into account the international status of the city: how familiar are people with certain cities, visited or would like to visit, what are the reasons why some cities are recognized worldwide, what is the contribution of these cities to the development of science and culture at the international level in the last 30 years.

The first step in building the city brand lies in answering the following questions (Richins, 1991):

- What do we want to promote at a national and international level?
- How can we differentiate from other cities?
- What does the name of our city suggest to the tourist?
- What makes it unique, valuable and attractive for business development and attracting tourists?

* Corresponding author. E-mail address: irinasusanu@gmail.com.

Galati owns essential elements in this perspective: the Cliff, the Roman Castrum, the houses and monuments of the interwar period, the legends, customs and traditions, the history and culture of these places, the geographical area, etc. Town brands are inseparably linked to the history and destiny of each geographic space. Thus, Paris represents love, Milan style, New York energy, Washington power, Tokyo modernity, Lagos corruption, Barcelona culture, Rio fun, Sibiu culture loaded with history.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM, OBJECTIVES AND THE HYPOTHESES OF RESEARCH

Studying the opinions of interviewees will highlight whether the city's brand influences. Starting from the identified problem, this research sets out the following objectives:

- It has to determine if more than 70% of the respondents visited Galati.
- It has to determine how often Galati was visited.
- It has to determine if the most visited tourist destination in Galati is the Danube cliff.
- It has to find out how satisfied the tourists were with the tourist attractions in Galati.
- It has to establish the opinion of the tourists regarding the allegations made by question number 8.
- In the course of 5 years, following the opinions on question 8, an airport and a port can be built (although the port may vary depending on certain criteria: dock size, dredging etc.).
- A promotion of the city of Galati can be organized in 6 months.
- Within one year you can get the city brand of Galati.

Formulation of general assumptions

- Most people who visited Galati made so as tourists.
- Much of the tourists who visited Galati are dissatisfied with the existing infrastructure.
- A large number of tourists preferred accommodation at a hotel.
- Most tourists were satisfied with what they found in the accommodation units, in terms of prices.
- Most tourists consider that there is a need for a city brand to attract tourists to Galati.

Formulation of statistical hypotheses:

H0: Less than 60% of the tourists who visited Galati have made it for tourism purposes.

H1: More than 60% of the tourists who visited Galati have made it for tourism purposes.

H0: Less than 60% of tourists are dissatisfied with the infrastructure in Galati.

H1: More than 60% of tourists are dissatisfied with the infrastructure in Galati.

H0: Less than 65% of tourists preferred hotel accommodation.

H1: More than 65% of tourists preferred hotel accommodation.

H0: Less than 50% of tourists were satisfied with the prices of accommodation.

H1: More than 50% of tourists were satisfied with the prices of accommodation.

H0: Less than 60% of tourists believe that there is a need for a city brand to attract tourists to Galati.

H1: More than 60% of tourists believe that there is a need for a city brand to attract tourists to Galati.

4. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH RESULTS

The population surveyed consists of individuals using Facebook social networking. Aged between 14 and over 37, of both sexes, with an income below 1000 Rons and over 1600 Rons, who have completed secondary school, high school, university or postgraduate schooling.

In the case of random sampling, to determine the sample size we considered the following: tolerance error and confidence interval. We considered an acceptable error level of $\pm 5\%$ for a confidence level

of 95%, which corresponds to 1.96. Using these data we determined the n-size of the sample to the percentage by applying the standard formula.

In our situation, we do not have previous information about "p". We therefore adopt the maximum that it can achieve: $p = 50\% \Rightarrow q = 50\%$.

$$n = \frac{1,96^2 \cdot 50 \cdot 50}{5^2} = 384 \quad (1)$$

We could not consider a sample of 384 people and chose a fixed sample size of 193 people. In this case the error will be:

$$E = \sqrt{z^2 \cdot p \cdot q / n} = \sqrt{1,96^2 \cdot 50 \cdot 50 / 193} = 7,05 \quad (2)$$

The confidence interval will be:

$$p \pm z(\sqrt{p \cdot z / n}) = 0,5 \pm 1,96(\sqrt{0,5 \cdot 0,5 / 193}) = 0,5 \pm 0,20 \quad (3)$$

In order to obtain the most accurate results for the researched theme, we chose a non-random method, technical sampling which implies the ignorance of the possibility of including the individuals of the community.

The selection has a subjective, arbitrary character and is based, first of all, on the personal judgment of the researcher, assuming a "reasonable choice". In order to form the final sample, we used the sampling from near-close (snowball). This method consists in initially choosing by random methods of a relatively small number of people who will be in the sample. Then these people get information about other people who have the same feature surveyed from this information on other people's identification, until the sample is drawn to its pre-established size.

- Have you ever visited Galati?

Of the 193 respondents, 155 (80.3%) responded affirmatively to this question and 38 (19.7%) responded negatively.

- What was the purpose of the visit?

As can be seen in the frequency table, 154 people answered the question. 34.4% of respondents said that they visited Galati for tourist purposes; 25.3% were visiting relatives; 18.2% have done it in order to relax; 11.7% visited Galati for business purposes, and 10.4% visited Galati for entertainment purposes.

- How often did you visit Galati?

The frequency table shows the following: 153 people responded to this question, of which 35.3% said they had visited Galați once a month; 34% visited it once every 3 months, and 30.7% visited it less than once every 3 months

- How much did you like Galati?

According to the table, the respondents liked the city of Galati on an average of 3.88. The median value is 4.00 and the modal value equals 4. It can be seen here that: 4 of the respondents (2.6%) did not like the city of Galati; to 5 of the respondents (3.2%) did not like the city of Galati; 32 of the respondents (20.6%) liked the city so and so; 79% of the respondents (51.0%) liked Galati, and 35 (22.6%) liked Galați very much. The modal and the median are equal and take the value 4. The

obliquity is negative, so the distribution has long tail to the left. The casting is positive, so it's a leptokurtic distribution.

- What places in Galati have you visited?

Asking them to indicate which places they visited in Galati, out of 155 valid answers, the respondents indicated as follows: most of them, 137 (23.6%), visited the Danube cliff, this being also the most popular tourist attraction; 99 of the respondents (17.1%) visited the Botanical Garden; 68 of the respondents (11.7%) visited the TV Tower; 62 of the respondents (10.7%) visited the Zoological Garden (Garboavele); 60 of the respondents (10.3%) visited Lake Brateş; 51 of the respondents (8.8%) visited the Museum of Christian Spirituality in Lower Danube; 41 of the respondents (7.1%) visited the Biserica-Precista Church; 36 of the respondents (6.2%) visited Houses and monuments during the interwar period, and the least of the respondents, 26 (4.5%) visited the Roman Castles.

- How satisfied were you with the value-for-money ratio of the tourist destinations?

According to the table, respondents are satisfied with the value-for-money ratio of the tourist attractions in Galaţi, averaging 3.73. The median value is 4.00 and the modal value is equal to 4. From the frequency table it can be seen that: 5 respondents (3.2%) are very dissatisfied with the quality-price ratio of the visited touristic objectives; 7 respondents (4.5%) are dissatisfied with the quality-price ratio of the visited touristic objectives; 33 of the respondents (21.4%) say they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the quality-price ratio of the visited touristic objectives; 89 of the respondents (57.8%) say they were satisfied with the value-for-money ratio of the visited touristic sites and 20 of the respondents (10.4%) are very satisfied with the quality-price ratio of the tourist objectives. the median are equal and take the value 4. The publicity is negative, so the distribution has a long tail to the left. The bolt is positive, so we have a leptokurtic distribution.

- How much do you think the existence of a city brand in Galati could attract tourists?

Of the 151 respondents, most of them, 76 (50.3%) consider that Galaţi needs a city brand for attracting tourists, but there are also 4 respondents (2.6%) who consider the existence of a brand of Galati is of very little important.

- Genre of respondents. Of the 156 respondents, 108 (69.2%) are female and 48 correspondents (30.8%) are male.

- Age of respondents

As can be seen, most respondents, 53 (34.0%), are over 37 years old, and the lowest respondents, 5 (3.2%), are aged 14-19.

- Monthly income of the respondents

Out of the 154 respondents, most 64 (41.6%) have an income of over 1600 Rons, and the lowest respondents, 13 (8.4%), have an income of 1001-1300 Rons.

- The last graduate studies of the respondents

From what can be absent, most of the respondents, 84 (54.5%), have university studies, and the smallest of the respondents, 5 (3.2%), have gymnasium studies.

5. TESTING STATISTICAL HYPOTHESES

H0: Less than 60% of the tourists who visited Galaţi did it for tourist purposes.

H1: Over 60% of the tourists who visited Galaţi did it for tourist purposes.

Significance level Sig. (2-tail) is less than 1, so the alternative hypothesis is that over 60% of the tourists who visited Galati made it a tourist destination.

H0: Less than 60% of tourists are dissatisfied with the Galati infrastructure.

H1: Over 60% of tourists are dissatisfied with the Galati infrastructure.

Significance level Sig. (2-tail) is less than 1, so the alternative assumption is that more than 60% of tourists are dissatisfied with the Galati infrastructure. Trusted level analysis is another method of making decisions. The ends of the interval are both positive so that the range does not contain the value "0", and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H0: Less than 65% of tourists prefer hotel accommodation.

H1: Over 65% of tourists prefer hotel accommodation.

Significance level Sig. (2-tail) is less than 1, so the alternative hypothesis is that more than 65% of tourists prefer hotel accommodation.

H0: Less than 50% of tourists were satisfied with accommodation prices.

H1: Over 50% of tourists were satisfied with accommodation prices.

Significance level Sig. (2-tailed) is less than 1, so the alternative hypothesis is that more than 50% of tourists were satisfied with accommodation prices. Trusted level analysis is another method of making decisions. The ends of the interval are both positive so that the range does not contain the value "0", and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

H0: Less than 60% of tourists believe that a city brand is needed to attract tourists to Galati.

H1: More than 60% of tourists believe that a city brand is needed to attract tourists to Galati.

Significance level Sig. (2-tailed) is less than 1, so the alternative assumption is that only about 60% of tourists believe that a city brand is needed to attract tourists to Galati.

As a result of the research we can say that the majority of the respondents visited the city of Galati for tourist purposes once a month. Most of those who answered the questionnaire in this research liked Galati, and the most preferred tourist destination was the Cliff. Although the city was pleased with the majority, they were all dissatisfied with the infrastructure they encountered during the visit. Thus, in order for Galati to be perceived as a tourist town, among those who answered the questionnaire, the majority believe that an appropriate promotion could place Galati among the tourist towns in the country through a tourist port, an airport, the number tourists can grow. Most of the respondents preferred the hotel accommodation, and were satisfied with both the prices of these accommodation units and the services they provided.

The most important thing after all of the above is that most of the respondents believe that the existence of a city brand, of Galaț, could be very important for attracting tourists and I think the city must have such a thing. Respondents were more female than male, over the age of 37, with a salary of over 1600 Rons, with the last graduations being university.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The brand of the city has become an imperative necessity. A successful city brand can make a major contribution to improving the image of their country. There is, therefore, a breakthrough in the benefits of the space brand: moving from brand to top of the country's brand. Many countries have achieved this process and have a strong brand based on their strengths:

- New Zealand is positioned in the "virginity of life and nature", highlighting wine, pure wool and tourist destinations.
- Great Britain said in the concept of "Cool Britain", a campaign that eliminated the perception that English is boring and bad.
- Malaysia and Croatia have focused on tourism.
- Portugal, highlighted as a country of good quality and craftsmanship, to which Wally Olins also worked.

City firms are strategies to improve their image. They are effective tools for modernizing and developing the city. And after implementation, the best-known brands have brought more understanding and contributed to their development.

Following the implementation of the brand, New York recorded the largest number of immigrants and an annual increase in the number of tourists. Paris was visited by 23.5 million tourists, San Francisco, with 17 million tourists a year and Berlin with 60 thousand people. Tourism generates 82,000 jobs. All these examples show the importance of a city brand and its impact on tourism.

Following the analysis I made a series of proposals regarding the development of tourism potential in Galati:

- Rehabilitation of historical centers, heritage buildings and the Danube Cherub in the Old Town
- Introducing the city into the cruise ship circuit
- Setting up tourist information points and a souvenir magazine
- Promoting national and international tourism in a professional way
- Restoring recreational tourism on the Danube with "passenger" vessels on the Galati-Braila route and return, with the possibility of stopping in both cities and visiting tourist attractions
- Exploitation of coast for tourism purposes
- Capitalization of the Roman Castles
- Establishment of a museum of "Danube, Navy and River Navigation" on a floating vessel or identification of a suitable building and its transformation into a museum (ex "State Fisheries", historical monument)
- Organizing an international stock exchange for honey and apiculture products
- Establishment of a "counselor and vice consulate" to develop tourism and investment
- Creation of a joint tourist portal, with the neighboring town Braila, in order to promote the regional brand Danube Pole Galați Braila.

REFERENCES

- Anholt, S. (2005). Nation brand as context and reputation. *Place Branding*, 1(3), 224-228.
- Pike, S. (2005). Tourism destination branding complexity, *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 14(4), 258
- Paymal, M. (2007). *How brands can succeed in generating loyalty by stimulating customer sentiments?* Masters degree, Dublin City University.
- Richins, M. L. (1991). Social comparison and idealized images of advertising. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 1(1), 71-83.
- Ries, A., Ries, L. (2004). *The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding*, Bucharest: Publishing House Brandbuilders