

Building Destination Image Through Events: The Impact of events on city image

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Abstract: Regions and cities are continuously branding and rebranding as a result of achieving a competitive position in the market, to stimulate visits, investments and economic advantages. The environment is actively in move and competition is becoming constantly more powerful. Thus, in order for cities to distinct from each other, it is of great importance to create a good image of it. There are various products and strategies for building a destination image. However, cities are intensively adopting “events and festivals” as an approach of enhancing their image, encouraging city development and attracting investments and tourists. Hence, this paper addresses the impact and effects of events in branding, rebranding and building city image.

Key words: Brand Image, Events, Event’s Impact

Introduction

Regions and cities are continuously branding and rebranding as a plan to gain a competitive position, to stimulate visits, investments and economic benefits. The aim of cities to establish a unique image and identification has gain a critical attention, which is achieved usually from beautiful attractions, unique traditions and cultures, friendly people, as well as from breathtaking landscapes.

Building a destination image rely upon a range of determinants, such the society, the businesses, as well as financial agents that have a critical impact on developing a destination. Nowadays, visitors, which are encouraged by the growth of leisure time, as well as the increased levels of available incomes and more organized & productive systems of transportation, have the opportunity to choose and select between the greater diversity of destinations. Thus, a destination image is considered to have a critical role in the decision of a tourist regarding their visits and that the satisfaction or unsatisfaction of visitors depends greatly on the comparisons between the expectations regarding a destination with the actual given experience of the visited place.

Thus, destination marketers are attempting to share awareness and position their destinations through building positive precipitations in the minds of visitors, as to make visitors choose their destination among other cities. In this way, appropriate positioning policies, the proper branding strategies, as well as suitable marketing activities are the principal ways in attempting to distinguish a place from competitors. On the other hand, the most important determinant on establishing a positive brand image is the involvement on continues marketing activities. Therefore, destination marketers seek to spotlight and place cities as brands, by advertising them to various groups of

visitors. . Not long ago, events and festivals have been considered as to be as one of the quickest developing tourism adventures and experiences, and one of the most successful catalys for developing tourism. Hence, destinations are intensively adopting events as an approach of enhancing their image, of encouraging municipal development and attracting investments and tourists.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Tourism

Nowadays, tourism is considered to be one of the biggest and quickest growing industries, identified with immanent requirement for continued variety of products (Daniloska et al. 2015), as well as one of the quickest sector for economic development (McKercher,1993).It attains a huge role for providing benefits in cultural, social and environmental areas (Poon, 1993).

Appropriate tourism is determined as a tourism that esteems the regular life of residents, the local cultural heritage and most important, it shows consideration and care for the environment, as well as it makes sure to provide a suitable rest and attractive entertainment for tourists which visit the territory (Dziuba, . 2016). The position and capacity of tourism in the modern community led to the growth of a large number of touristic products and to excessive networks, techniques and connections (Wang, 2009).

Based on guests’ place of origin, there are two different forms of tourism : a.) National tourism: which results by the travels of a country's population inside the state borders; and b.) Global tourism, which is an outcome by the trips that people make out of their country or state (Dumitru and Bengescu, 2016). On the other hand, there is a

comprehensible distinction between international and excursionists tourists: the international visitor, which is considered to be a short-term tourist remaining at minimum for 24 hours in an overseas country and those who travel because of leisure, a mission, for business and family; while on the other hand excursionists tourists are considered to be voyage passengers, or same day visitors (Palamalai and Kalaivani, 2016). Yet, regardless of the classification of tourists, the services provided make the difference and they should be diversified based on the analysis of each group of tourists and services (hospitality, transport, leisure, etc.), providing various opportunities to tourists (Tuta and Micu, 2015).

1.2. Events and Festivals

Cities are intensively adopting events as an approach of enhancing their image, of encouraging municipal development and attracting investments and tourists (Fredline et al. 2003). Not long ago, events and festivals have been considered as to be as one of the quickest developing tourism adventures and experiences, that have made places to instantly assimilate all their strategies and objectives to touristic present demands. Events are a crucial stimulator of the tourism, which figure positively in the progress of a destination and marketing goals of the majority of destinations (Shen, 2013) and are organized for region image establishment, brand improvement and for market positioning (Wang, 2009).

Furthermore, events are the ideal opportunity when a region attempts to capture the attention of tourists (Herțanu et al., 2012). Nowadays the concept of events has gained different shapes, from what it was used a long time ago, just as “mega or unique events”. The concept of “event” now is used to describe and determine also conferences, meeting creations of a service or product, presentations, shows, exhibitions, publicity events fundraisings, competitions, as well as destination attractions (Andersson and Wesslau, 2000; Glasmacker et al., 2004). Nonetheless, the concept of events has been recently presented in the name of “unconventional communication”. This term presents other shapes of events, such as road events, social reunions, meet-ups performances and sports (Morgeson et al., 2015; Zarantonello et al, 2013). In addition, festivals and events have a crucial role and capacity in the improvement of a community's life. However, according to Shone and Parry, (2001), in order to develop a good event it is essential to arrange it on time and in particular to

hold good relations between all actors that are engaged in the event creation.

1.3. Brand/ Destination Image

Transmitting a city/brand's image to an aimed audience has extensively been considered as a crucial marketing activity. Nowadays, societies are attempting to boost the interest of many tourists because of the great rivalry in today's environment (Wang, 2009). Cities are being considered as compound products that are in need to be traded and publicized among advanced strategies of marketing, in order to distinguish from others (Hertanu et al ,2012.). Furthermore, for many visitors selecting a place for holidays has become more than just a destination, namely a determinant of visitors' lifestyle (Popescu et al,2012), Thus, Chematony and McDonald (1992), state that managers who are responsible for branding are under a great pressure to provide effective brands, which are required to make remarkable changes in a destination (Chematony and McDonald, 1992),

The definition of brand image from the American Marketing Associations is considered to be as the most communicative concept, which explains brand image as a picture and estimation that tourists have over a particular product, organization business and community (MarGomez, 2015). However, the most important attributes for a successful brand are proper advertisement, natural resources, political and economic structures, infrastructure and last but not least the society welcoming spirit (Samiel and Jalilvand, 2012).

1.4. Impacts of Events

In these last decades, events and festivals have gained the power and potential to bring different cultures in one place, to share social and cultural experiences, bring new employment possibilities, as well as boost investments and partnerships. Thus, it is fundamental for the managers and organizers of events to consider all the possible aspects that events could affect the host society and its country, such as economic, environmental, socio cultural and political impacts (Schulenkorf,2012).

The most common impacts of an event can be: social impacts on locals, income production, infrastructure inheritance, publicity and visit returns (Jones,2001). On the other hand, regardless of the huge effect that events have on boosting local pride, still the biggest effect is the economic ones (Daniels et al.,2003). In particular, events have principal economic functions, such as stimulating interest for investment, generating employment

and improving the standard of living (Wang, 2009). Considering all these positive effects, there is no contradiction that successful events improve the quality of the residents' life by a higher level.

However, events can impact the community's economy not only in a positive way but also in a negative one. Positively, it can boost incomes, as tourists will leave money in tickets, accommodation, souvenirs, meals, etc. It also increases employment in various fields, specifically in construction, transport, infrastructure, tourism and so on (Hertanu et al., 2012). On the other hand, it may cause negative effects on pollution and environment damage (Ritchie et al, 1984). Yet, events affect societies in other aspects as well, such as increasing local spirit and pride, reinforcing values and traditions, application of new social forms or cultural patterns through manifestation at the event, and they can provide marketing advantages such as branding (Getz, 1997).

In order to attain these impacts it is needed to enhance the event, to offer quality of services, to increase the amusement of the attendants and to decrease costs (Popescu et al, 2012). It is reported that events contribute to the transformation of the community and to the development of the

destination, since it creates job opportunities (Prentice & Andersen, 2003), stimulates the development of social infrastructure and contributes to raising local pride (Bachleitner & Zin, 1992). Moreover, events add value to the quality of life by empowering interactions among various cities even distinct countries, improving recognition of diverse societies and cultures, as well as behaving as a source of local pride (Wang, 2009).

Apart from economic effects that events bring on cities, recently for countries or regions, cultural and social effects have taken a great attention as well. As reported by Roberson and Knight (2007) socio-cultural effects have the biggest impact on the host country. In spite of their complicated and intricate character when examining, since they crave for detailed data selection, analysts have determined a number of claims for why socio-cultural impact have to be evaluated. While Chalip et al. (2003) report that events are of critical matter to locals for refreshing customs, generating region dignity, boosting cultural aspects, projecting the traditions through events and education, Schulenkorf et al (2012) states that other crucial impacts have to do with universal learning, such as the ability to monitor region development, improvement of behaviors, and values.

Table no.1 : Impacts of Events

Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
<p>Positive Social and Cultural Impacts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shared experiences 2. Revitalizing traditions 3. Building community pride 4. Community validation 5. Introducing new and challenging ideas 6. Expanding cultural perspectives 	<p>Negative Social and Cultural Impacts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community alienation 2. Manipulation of community image 3. Bad behavior 4. Substance abuse 5. Social dislocation 6. Loss of amenity
<p>Environmental Positive impacts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Showcasing the environment 2. Providing models for the best practice 3. Increasing environmental awareness Infrastructure legacy 4. Improved transport and communication 	<p>Environmental Negative Impact</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environmental damage 2. Pollution Destruction of heritage 3. Noise disturbance 4. Traffic congestion
<p>Positive Political Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International prestige Improved profile Promotion and investment Social cohesion Development of administrative skills 	<p>Negative Political Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of event failure Misallocation of funds Lack of accountability Propagandizing Loss of community ownership and control Legitimation of ideology
<p>Positive economic and touristic impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destination promotion and increased tourist visits Extended length of stay Higher yield 	<p>Negative economic and touristic impacts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community resistance to tourism 2. Loss of authenticity 3. Damage to reputation

Increased . revenues Jobcreation	Exploitation Inflated prices
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(Hertanu et al.,2012).

As presented in the table, events can have various effects, starting from the socio-cultural ones: Events can generate more connection between the societies, build national pride, exchange traditions and culture of a community, open new business possibilities, as well as make the residents feel more relaxed and appreciate more their culture and each other. Otherwise, even though events can produce pollution, noise or event traffic congestion they still can generate positive effects on the environment through friendly practices, such as applying renewable energy to minimize energy and transportation usage, taking responsibility for land maintenance, increasing environmental awareness, educating customers, recycling and so on. Furthermore, events also provide important political impacts; Governments can gain negative effects from events which fail, such as loss of community control, propagandize, misallocation of donations and so on. However, they still invest a great number of funds for generating successful events, because it can enhance the profile of the state, can attract investments to the hosting city and can support on establishing administrative skills. Finally, yet importantly, events have economic impacts as well. Inflated prices and opportunity costs can have negative effects on the community, but the positive economic results than may be achieved from events exceed the negative ones. Increase on job opportunities, namely in the field of construction, tourism, infrastructure etc., boost incomes and thus provide a better life standard.

CONCLUSION

Not long ago, events and festivals have been considered as to be as one of the quickest developing tourism adventures and experiences, that have made destinations to instantly include events as part of their branding strategies. Events are a crucial stimulator of the tourism, which figure positively in the progress and marketing aims of the majority of destinations and are organized for region image establishment and brand improvement . In these last decades, events and festivals have gain the power to bring different cultures in one place, to share social and cultural experiences, bring new employment possibilities, as well as investments and partnerships. Thus, it is fundamental for the managers and organizers of

events to understand the impact that events have on the economy, environment, society, culture and politics of a country.

Reccomandations

The following reccomandations are suggested in order for destinations to attain the positive impacts of events evaluated in this paper:

1.Promotion of events

It is of crucial suggestion to make Investments on promotion of events in global online newspaper and websites, as well as to sponsor posts on social media that can reach thousands of people worldwide. But for this to happen, except that is required financial support, also mangers should hire a great designer to make the video posts as much interesting as possible

2.Tour operator should increase their activities. Tour operators should work more on offering interesting and low package prices for tourists, and managers of events should cooperate with them.

3. Establish a project for support.

Governments should establish budget for events which have as objective and target tourists in order for them to gain the benefits of events.

1.Enhance infrastructure

The weak infrastructure should be improved,in particular the roads and transportation ways in order to make the relation between different countries easier and more favorable.

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