



Università della Basilicata  
L.M. Natural & Cultural Resources Economics

## Destination Branding and Positioning

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# *Tourism Destination Marketing & Management*

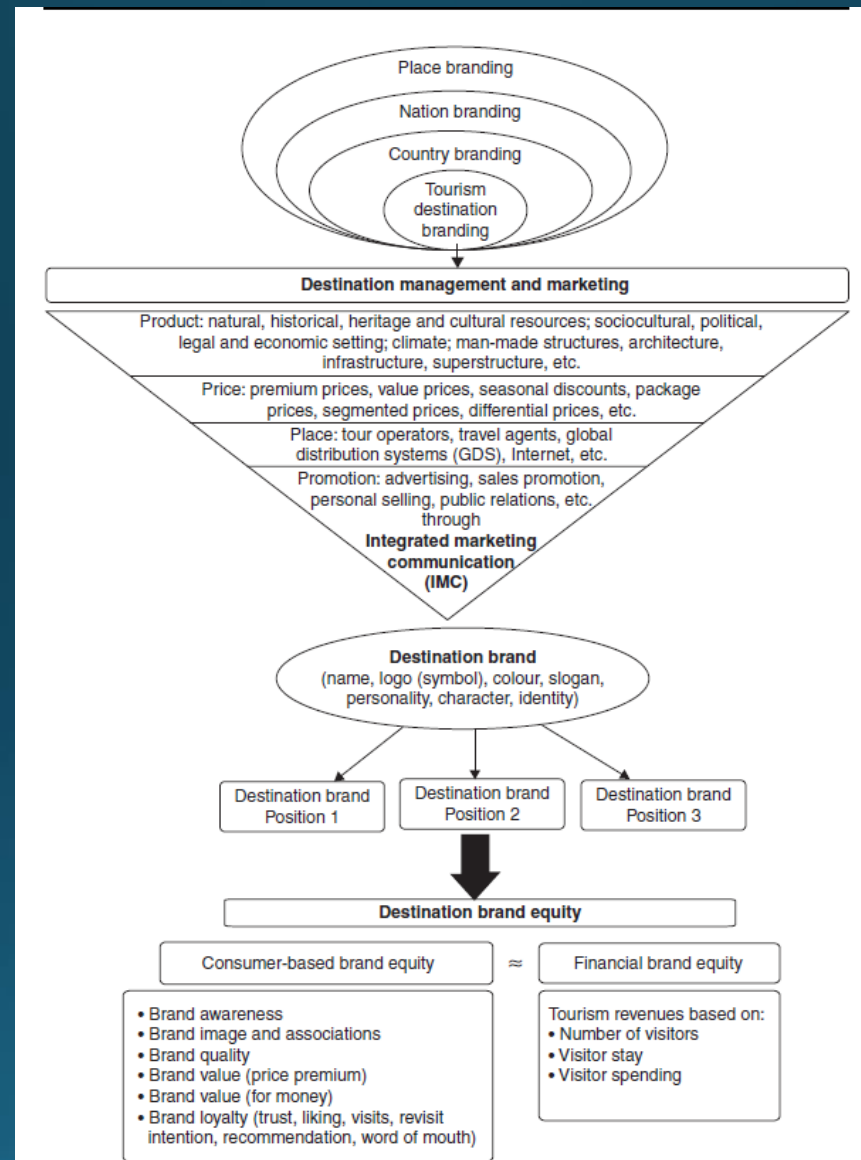
*Proff. C. Rossi e R. Micera*

# Introduction

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- ➔ The most strategic way of attracting consumers is considered to be **distinguishing a product by branding**, thereby differentiating the product among many similar others.
- ➔ A brand is a **shortcut for consumers**, a symbol that identifies products in a differentiated way.
- ➔ Branding is a **strategic business choice** rooted in ancient times, manifested as such actions as burning (marking) livestock and marking crafts and guilds.

# A framework of concepts relevant to place branding



# Different Terminologies of Place Branding

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To create a competitive vision for the future of the nation and country

Tourism destination branding is relatively easier than both nation and country branding because it is more focused on the purpose of increasing **tourism revenues**, and dealing with **more controllable factors** through the **management and marketing of a destination** (Laws, 2002)

**Competitive, unique and strong brand**

**Strategic option** for destination marketing organizations

Name, logo and colour, which encompasses identity, character and personality directed at one or more target markets, with a **distinctive position** that translates into strong consumer-based brand equity and, thereby, high tourism revenues

# Different Levels of Destination Branding

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Destination branding is already a **complex matter** to apply and manage, with different levels of **destination accentuating** this complexity even further.

# Destinations defined at multiple layers of geographical entities



The **branding of operational-level** tourism products such as hotels, restaurants and resorts can both influence and be influenced by the branding of encompassing layers of geographical entities.

The **branding of individual layers** is consistent and integrated, the result is assumed to be a synergy, with 'the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.'

# Destination Brand Management

A destination as a product to brand is different from tangible consumer products in many ways.



Destination marketing authorities have to use this capital and gain leverage by applying appropriate strategies in their marketing mixes, particularly in promotions aiming to develop a successful (strategic, different and strong) position in target markets.

# Destination Brand Management

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## Management of Destination Brands



Comprehensive research



Attraction development



Event management



Integrated Marketing Communication



Continuous Monitoring



# Stakeholders in destination branding

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**Stakeholder involvement** and support in **all phases** of research, brand idea development, implementation, evaluation and control



Governments need to act as **facilitators** and to use a **bottom-up approach** instead of a top-down approach to reveal authentic brands truthful to **local identities**

# Stakeholders in destination branding

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- ❑ The **attitude of the public** is an important factor that needs to be **managed strategically**
- ❑ Public diplomacy should be utilized to increase **awareness and support among the general public** through the news media, training programmes, festivals and conferences

# Positioning



A favourably distinctive place in the minds of target market segments that sets the destination apart from others.

Market Segments

Image of the destination  
brand in different segments

Strong Destination Brand

# Positioning

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The **assessment of the image of destination attributes** in current and potential target markets, preferably in comparison with close competitors.

Destination Brand can have multiple positions because a tourism destination usually receives **visitors from multiple tourist-generating markets with different characteristics, needs and motivations.**

For a long-term brand vision, a multi-product branding strategy needs to be coupled with the **parent brand name of the country**, all products being associated with this parent brand name.

# Positioning



*Destination position should be ...*

...desirable, important, relevant, memorable and believable for the target segment;

...distinct, superior, unique, special and pre-emptive within the competitive set;

...deliverable, affordable and profitable for the destination marketers

...can be based on reasons for the visit

# Promotion

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Promotion is significantly important in **establishing, maintaining, reinforcing and changing a destination brand** and its **position(s)** because promotional efforts represent the destination until the actual visitation takes place.



A myriad of promotional sources with verbal and visual messages are used in destination branding

# Promotion

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In promoting a destination, information sources are:

- public relations
- lobbying activities
- media campaigns
- roadshows
- tourism fairs
- events
- celebrity testimonials
- international media trips
- direct mailing
- personal sales
- advertising (videos, posters, roadside boards, direct mailing),
- online advertising (websites, podcasting, photo sharing, travel blogs, newsletters, e-mails)
- window displays of tour operators and travel agents
- brochures of hotels
- co-branding and brand partnerships with other products such as airlines or credit card.

**Integrated  
Marketing  
Communication**

# Destination brand monitoring

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Destination brands are **living entities**



High potential to **change** and **evolve** over time

Changes in the  
environment



Destination Brand



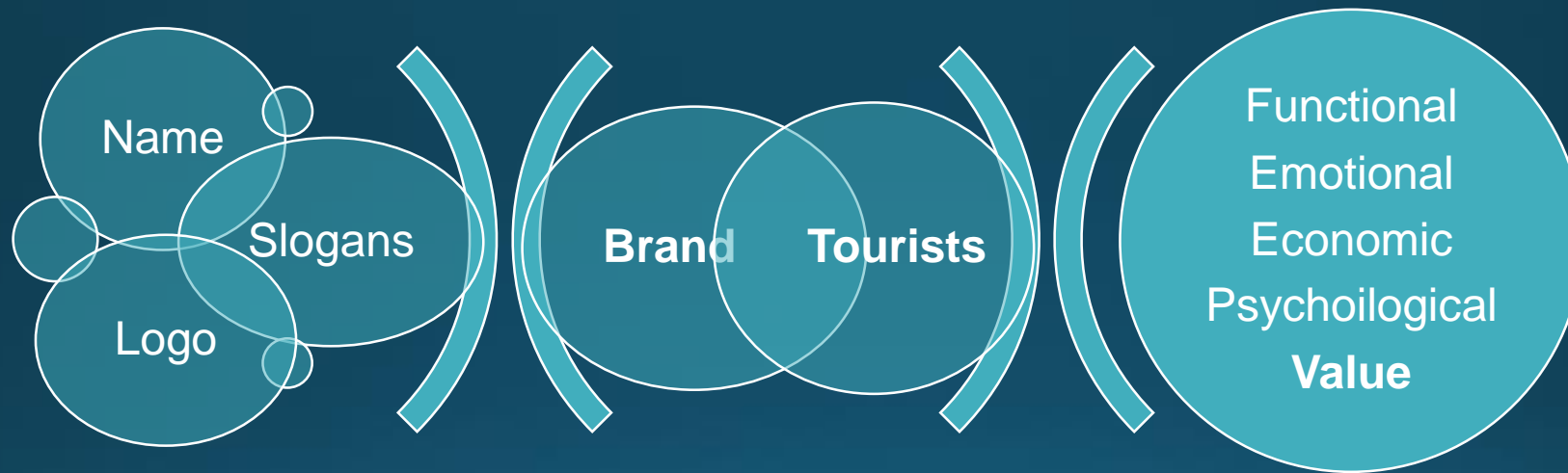
# Destination brand monitoring: facilitators

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- (i) **Developing marketing messages** that build on core destination values that include community pride, environmental stewardship, progressive thinking, and innovation and quality;
- (ii) **Providing data, guidelines and resources** to the private sector, to businesses or to regional tourism marketers – rather than by forcing a branding campaign with rules and regulations that can be perceived as restrictive and bureaucratic;
- (iii) **Staying the course** to achieve success in establishing brand name recognition, awareness and image development, rather than making changes frequently;
- (iv) **Coordinating local initiatives and programmes** rather than enforcing them, and acquiring reasonable funding and commitment from a variety of stakeholders

# Destination brand monitoring

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# Destination brand logos

Some countries use  
the colour of their **flags**



Some destinations end  
up using the same  
**symbol**, either  
accidentally or  
purposely

Some destinations  
have a recognizable  
and readily **available**  
**symbol**

# Destination brand slogans

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## Brand Slogan



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graph LR; A[Brand Slogan] --> B[Uniqueness and difference are prerequisites in destination branding, but they are not warranted just by articulating them in slogans or messages.]; A --> C[Brand slogans have to deliver clear messages as to how a destination is unique and different.]; A --> D[Destinations attract multiple tourist markets with different expectations and characteristics, they use different slogans for different target markets.];
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**Uniqueness** and **difference** are prerequisites in destination branding, but they are not warranted just by articulating them in slogans or messages.

Brand slogans have to deliver **clear messages** as to how a destination is unique and different.

Destinations attract multiple tourist markets with different expectations and characteristics, they use **different slogans for different target markets**.

# Benefits of Strong Destination Brands

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## Successful Destination Brand

- To increase the value
- To improve the quality
- To support the trust
- To evoke anticipation, expectation and emotions
- To incite beliefs
- To prompt behaviours
- To reduces costs and perceived risk for consumers

# Benefits of Strong Destination Brands

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- 1. Awareness and familiarity** about the destination.
- 2. Associations and images** comprising knowledge about destination attributes and feelings generated by this knowledge.
- 3. Quality** of service and tangible aspects of the destination
- 4. Value** in terms of the difference between costs and benefits of visiting the destination.
- 5. Brand value** in terms of price premiums that can be charged for the destination products compared with competitors who have similar products.
- 6. Loyalty** manifested in not only behavioural indicators such as repeat visitation but also in attitudinal indicators such as desire and intention to revisit the destination, and word of mouth.

# Directions for Future Research

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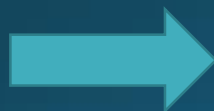
**Co-branding**



**Critical element:** the human component, namely, the labour force in the tourism industry



Influence of current and previous **marketing activities** on the success level of the destination brand



Branding a destination through research, development and communications usually results in **high marketing-related expenses**, which calls for questions related to return on investment (ROI)