Preface

As a consequence of globalization, cities or nations have engaged in competition for attracting potential consumers, investors, tourists, media and governments of other nations and increasing their share of mind, income, talent and voice. In this global competition, their ability is considerably determined by the power of their brand image. A favorable and strong place brand provide a key advantage for attaining competitiveness. A city or nation cannot achieve competitive advantage in the international arena without standing for something meritorious, special and distinct. Branding is one of the most powerful tools that governments or policy makers can utilize for developing effective differentiation strategies and achieving strong competitive advantage. Governments tend to work with industry groups and individual firms to enhance the image of their countries, cities and destinations. These three key groups attempt to utilize certain country/city/destination branding strategies. The nature of the hyper-competitive global marketplace and the easiness of product imitation with new technologies are gradually forcing firms, industry groups and governments to consider the brand images of their cities and destinations, and develop strategies to manage them successfully. While competing nations or practitioners can imitate products, tourism services, technologies and processes, they cannot copy well-managed and differentiated nation/city branding strategies and place image. However, many governments and policy-makers do not have a broad and thorough understanding of the concept of place branding and the strategies and methods that they can utilize for promoting destinations, cities and nations.

Strategic Place Branding Methodologies and Theory for Tourist Attraction examines place branding theories and strategies from an international perspective and introduces the concepts, instruments, and methods that local, private sector, regional, national and international actors can use for re-evaluating and re-presenting destinations, cities and nations, developing lasting brand value for them and enhancing their position in attracting tourism and investment. In order to discuss the philosophical, theoretical, and practical nature of place branding, this volume brings together scholars from various disciplines such as marketing, hospitality and tourism, public relations, communications, economics, health management, architecture, geography, and urban planning and design. As the founding father of social-psychology, Kurt Lewin aptly observed “there is nothing so practical as good theory”. It is our hope that this book contains significant managerial and practical implications for governments, industry groups and individual firms that seek to achieve world-wide competitiveness for attracting potential consumers, investors, and tourists. In addition, it can be a guidebook and an essential reference source for researchers in various fields such as marketing, tourism and hospitality, public relations, communications, economics, public administration, urban planning and design, and international relations.

This book consists of 15 chapters organized into three main sections. Section 1 introduces the concepts of place image and identity and discusses the theoretical approaches for developing sustainable
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place brand communication and marketing mix strategies. Section 2 introduces place branding tools and methods that local, private sector, regional, national and international actors can use for promoting destinations, cities and nations. Finally, Section 3 presents various place branding strategies for attracting tourism and investment to destinations, cities, and nations such as place branding through cultural and sacred places, movies, and health tourism. A brief description of each of the chapters follows:

Chapter 1 attempts to conceptualize place image, outlining the inconsistencies in the literature and clarifying the terminology. Furthermore, it develops research standards for the conceptualization of place image through a conceptual model. Based on a review of the literature and interviews with place marketing and attraction practitioners, the chapter presents a framework of five concepts of place image: brand (the intended message of the place), visual image (the symbolic knowledge of a place), reputation (specific knowledge about a place), sense of place (subjective experience in a place), and identity (the extent to which people are willing to associate themselves with a place). After discussing each component, the chapter offers a model outlining the concepts of place image.

Chapter 2 examines the personification of places and its linkage to place representations in place marketing and branding. The theme of place brand personality is further developed and critiqued with reference to traditional theories associated with brand personality. The chapter concludes with proposals for further research in this area and suggestions for further embedding the notion of personality in place branding practice.

Alongside the theoretical framework of city branding, Chapter 3 seeks to contribute to the literature by examining “Multilateral Symmetrical Communication Model,” which has been developed to meet the requirements for city brands. The chapter mainly focuses on the effect of stakeholders’ interaction on brand image, the influence of ensuring multilateral communication between both parts, and the presentation of the applicability of them.

Chapter 4 introduces a city marketing mix that takes into account the complexity, functionality and structure of the city. It also presents a measurement instrument of the city marketing mix that can be used as a sophisticated tool to satisfy the needs of city residents who are considered to be the most valuable assets of the city.

Chapter 5 attempts to advance a scholarly perspective on place branding and seeks specifically to understand how place branding is situated in theory and what methods have been used to analyze it. The chapter introduces a thorough review of the literature from many disciplines that have contributed to the creation of knowledge in the domain of place branding, attempting to move beyond the conventional literature on branding, and specifically privileging the themes and perspectives concerned with the role of and influence on city design, image, and identity. Furthermore, it contributes to the literature by bringing urban design analytical methods to bear on the question of how branding manifests itself in physical and social environments.

Chapter 6 discusses urban governments’ attempts to adopt city branding as a strategy to attract investment and tourists, and the importance of the strategy of branding cities as “green” by reviewing branding theories, concepts, and case studies. The chapter explores composition, status, ecosystem services and challenges related to green infrastructure and its management, especially in India. It presents a case study of Pune city with quite a few city level suggestions and possible interventions that can be taken up by local authorities to successfully integrate city branding and green infrastructure.

Chapter 7 demonstrates how Geographical Information Systems (GIS) can be utilized to promote cities by tourism development based on the case of the suburban hilly area of Taichung city, Taiwan.
This chapter proposes that tourism potential can be combined into city marketing as a promoting tool. The site criteria in this research for tourism potential are based on estimating raster cells that are most suitable, and include the layers of elevation variation, slope diversity, proximity to water, accessibility and service facilities for the area.

Chapter 8 presents the use of a new geospatial methodology to formulate, collect data and analyze and visualize business, architectural and entrepreneurial data at the resolution of individual street addresses. The study uses on-site street address data collected for downtown business areas in Barcelona, Spain, Portland and Eugene, Oregon, and Jersey City, New Jersey. It introduces a new understanding of methodology to compute and communicate understandings of business fabric and also initial affirmations of geospatial relationship between business activities and benefits of nearby urban design amenities such as open space, third-space and affordability.

Chapter 9 examines the challenges and opportunities of the use of online social media brand communities in influencing and managing place brand image. The chapter seeks to answer whether networked users and their online social practices pose more threats or opportunities in building and sustaining brand image. Furthermore, it attempts to determine the factors that are considered threats and opportunities.

Chapter 10 discusses the use of Internet and social media as international marketing communications techniques for cities and destinations. The chapter provides insights to city branding practitioners on how online city branding is carried out. It emphasizes that city branding practitioners should evaluate social media as an opportunity to get closer to customers, instead of a mechanism to be controlled. It incorporates social media and Internet into the city branding literature, and presents implications for policy-makers and practitioners. The chapter also contributes to the city branding literature by introducing the use of netnography in city branding research.

Chapter 11 discusses the role and importance of culture in city branding. The chapter seeks to explore what the cultural presentations, values and resources are and how they can be used in city branding. It also introduces various cities that have become successful brands with their cultural presentations, values and resources. It concludes with recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners.

Chapter 12 focuses on faith tourism, which is a significant source of income for the tourism industry. The chapter examines the influence of religion on tourism via social and economic dimensions. After introducing faith tourism, the chapter highlights the importance of religion-based attractions and the influence of religious elements on places. Furthermore, it discusses how religions can contribute to the images of destinations, cities, and nations. The chapter also presents various cases from different countries around the world.

Chapter 13 discusses the effect of TV series and movies on the development of destination, city or nation brands. It presents scores of films and TV series and their potential effect on the number of visitors and tourism revenue. It also introduces various films and TV series that have negatively influenced the images of destinations, cities, or nations.

Chapter 14 discusses the concept of county of origin effect, and explores how linkages between place and product may impact upon it. The chapter seeks to answer how geographical associations may assist the marketing of certain products and protect brand images from negative place-based associations by examining the existence of branding spillovers in the opposite direction (i.e. from product to regional image). It also explores the resulting implications for city branding practitioners and policy-makers, and speculates upon how the observed linkages between place and product can also lead to broader insights in terms of city branding in the international context.
Chapter 15 focuses on health tourism-based place branding. The chapter introduces the history of health tourism and discusses its importance as a tourism sector, highlighting its economic value. It presents the types of health tourism by illustrating various examples around the world. Finally, it discusses the health tourism policies of successful countries in the health tourism sector.

We hope that this volume will help policy-makers and practitioners have a broad and thorough understanding of the concept of place branding and the strategies and methods that they can utilize for promoting destinations, cities and nations. We also hope that it will be a guidebook and an essential reference source for researchers, professionals, and students from a wide range of disciplines. If so, you may also want to consider enjoying the accompanying volume on Place Branding Campaigns and Cases (also from IGI Global) as well. Happy reading!

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