



DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v7.2\(14\).15](http://dx.doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v7.2(14).15)

Development Prospects of the Brand of Tomsk

Olga Sergeevna KEKSEL

National research Tomsk Polytechnic University⁷, Russia

kos161076@mail.ru

Alena Aleksandrovna IVCHIK

National research Tomsk Polytechnic University, Russia

alyona.ivchik@gmail.com

Marina Aleksandrovna SHTANKO

National research Tomsk Polytechnic University, Russia

nikam_mara@tpu.ru

Svetlana Valerievna AZAROVA

National research Tomsk Polytechnic University, Russia

svetazara@tpu.ru

Elena Valerievna SUKHUSHINA

National research Tomsk State University, Russia

elsukhush@inbox.ru

Suggested Citation:

Keksel, S.O. *et al.* (2016). Development prospects of the brand of Tomsk, *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, (Volume VII, Summer), 2(14): 306 - 312. DOI: [http://dx.doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v7.2\(14\).15](http://dx.doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v7.2(14).15). Available from: <http://www.asers.eu/journals/jemt/current-issue>

Article's History:

Received January, 2016; Revised March, 2016; Accepted May, 2016.

2016. ASERS Publishing. All rights reserved.

Abstract.

The importance of territory branding is connected with the necessity of elaboration of new strategic approaches to brand creation of a country, a region, a city, along with the restatement of existent types of territory positioning in a view of harden competition between the cities for attracting of investments, opportunities and tourists. Creation of a strong, sustainable brand which can represent the city not only in Russia, but also abroad becomes topical. The modern reality is such that economic and demographic crisis reduces the amount of available financial and human capital assets. Under such conditions, the territories compete severely for any available resources. The winner of the competition is the one which can adapt to the changing situation and apply maximum tools for it. The territory branding is the main instrument for visitors' attraction and most significantly for investors' attraction as well as it is an important way of people's loyalty forming. An increasing number of countries, regions and cities use territory branding. This way of attractiveness forming is especially developed abroad, but Russian cities and regions are mastering actively the territory branding. They don't always succeed. The efficiency of this marketing instrument depends on many factors. The main issue the brand developers face is that they are mistaken in the understanding of territory brand as a beautiful image for tourist attraction. Tomsk is one of those cities which have enough peculiarities to be distinguished from others by means of creation of a strong and sustainable brand for representing the city outside it.

⁷ Russia, 634034, Tomsk, Lenin Avenue, 30

Keywords: brand, city branding, territory branding, marketing

JEL Classification: M31, M37.

1. Introduction

The article deals with the results of the analysis of stages of Tomsk city brand creation. The ways of its development are suggested in several directions: the development of interlocutory environment in Tomsk, seeking new ways for promoting city's wooden architecture, development of creativity in city residents, increasing of city informative representation in the Internet and strategy development of brand-building.

There is no exact and unique definition of notion "brand" in the modern world, but this word is used rather often in the business communication, in mass-media and every day. It is possible to observe that this notion is used in respect of almost everything what people have to face daily: countries-brands, goods-brands, institutions-brands, persons-brands, etc. The most "legitimate" definition is that by American Marketing Association, where brand is "a name, a term, a sign, a symbol or design, or a combination of all mentioned, assigned for identification of goods and services of one seller or seller group, as well as for distinction between own goods and services from goods and services of the rivals" (Gregory *et al.* 1997). This definition is a law term and appears in the legislations of most countries.

Territory branding is the main object of the research, while technology and way of how brand would be introduced is the main topic.

The purpose of this work is to develop full functioned brand and find out about all the required criteria.

2. Methodology

Methods of analysis include: analyzing theoretical sources of the research, collection of empirical evidences such as interview and content analysis, synthesis of theoretical and empirical materials. This information is based on a number of sources including books, periodicals, live seminars, personal experience, word-of-mouth, residents, advertising, and interviews with economists.

Results

There are reasons why people choose particular cities to live. Some cities can revive even when the industries they were built on have become obsolete. Brands evolve, and cities that survive have managed to evolve. Progress and technology have become both friend and foe. If you doubt that a new market for city brands is emerging, consider the loyalty a city can command. Strategists and planners are working at a feverish pace to re-brand cities or to brand a city that never had a strong brand in order to create a community where people will wish to live. City planners are spending millions of dollars in brand investing to bring their cities to life, or in some instances, back to life. Volume breeds mediocrity, and the sheer scale of today's cities prevents them from excellence in all.

Existing brand ways were analyzed on the basis of high quality research such as content analysis, then identifying problem in their functioning, and finally suggesting ways to tackle them.

Project recommendations and conclusions would be able to solve the remaining issues and generate the concept of the brand.

3. Discussion

A specific branding kind which grows in popularity in recent times is a territory branding or a city branding. This issue is actively studied by Russian researchers such as Ataeva (2012), Brusovaya *et al.* (2010), Vazhenina (2006), Malkova and Tishkova (2012), Meshcheryakov *al.* (2011), Rudaya (2010), Shalygina *et al.* (2013) and others. One of its definitions suggested by Keith Dinnie (2013) in his book reads as follows: "city branding is an instrument permitting to keep and attract residents, visitors and investors". Such famous marketing and territory branding researchers as Keith Dinnie and Simon Anholt (2007) distinguish substantially between territory branding and goods and services branding, and also point at some difficulties in connection with branding territories. So, Simon Anholt says that the territory branding is connected with the most difficult philosophic issues have ever emerged in humans: with biology of perception and reality, with relations between objects and understanding of them with phenomenon of crowd psychology, with secrets of national consciousness, leadership, culture and social relations and many others (Dinnie 2013). It is known that the notion "nation brand" is interpreted as "a unique multidimensional composition of elements providing a nation differentiation based on

the cultural context and conformity for all target audiences” (Dinnie 2013). This definition can be extrapolated to the notion “city brand” and used for the further research (Anholt 2010).

According to Vizgalov (2011), an author of “City branding” and a marketing and territory branding expert, who refers to the words from Simon Anholt’s study, travel companies were the first to begin using the expression “the city brand”. After the statements of both specialists, it is not surprising, because tourism as an industry in conjunction with tourist marketing is closer than other areas to the corporate environment where the notion “brand” has originated. In spite of that, the detailed meaning or in other words correctness of term “brand” borrowed from marketing cannot be considered true *a priori*. It is known that the “official” definition by Philip Kotler (Dinnie 2013) is considered canonical among marketing experts and expressed as follows: “brand is a name, a term, a sign, a symbol or design, or a combination of all mentioned, assigned for some goods and services from other goods and services”. However, this definition describes brand of goods and services exactly and clearly, but it is not ultimately suitable for a place brand and a city brand in particular. D.V. Vizgalov emphasizes, that neither a recognizable name, nor attractive symbols, nor any other unique features mean the existence of brand of the city. This idea is proved by the fact that there are a lot of cities in Russia distinguished by their remarkable features, with favorable names from the image-making point of view, with visually attractive flags and coat-of-arms, but substantially there are no cities which can be named “branded”. It is necessary to feel the difference between famous cities and brand cities. An additional point is that it should be remembered that the city image does not always correspond to the real life of the city or the target audience’s vision of the city. So, it may be concluded the city brand is much more than a name, a logo and elaborated associative array.

There are some examples of Russian brands, such as: The Nenets Autonomous District. The branding of this territorial entity of the Russian Federation was developed by experts of interactive agency “Notamedia” which deals with the site development, logo design promotion and other activities. The concept of new brand is expressed by expression “the Nenets Autonomous District is a North-European treasury of Russia. This slogan underlines the European and northern location of the region and displays the substantial deposits of strategic resources and mineral wealth. Guide of Nenets Autonomous District was created and the region is actively implementing the state program “Development of international, foreign economic and interregional activities for 2014-2020”. The program aims at securing the interests of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District in the international and inter-regional level, the creation of favorable conditions for long-term development of the region (Buryak 2014).

Perm. The main task set by local authorities in perspective is in the fact “the region is to become a leader by introduction of science-based technologies, by development of progressive manufacturing at the level of advanced countries” (Rodkin 2011). A minimum task for achievement of such particular goal is city’s popularity outside it. To attract investors, the city should differentiate from others, represent its advantages, develop opportunities, prospects of interactions, etc. Brand of Perm was developed by a designer from Moscow Artemiy Lebedev in 2009. The chosen slogan is “Simply, clearly, repeatable”. One of the main factors of Perm project success is brand integration into real communication and everyday life.

Vologda holds itself out as a “soul of the Russian North”. This brand is mainly promoted through social networks and souvenirs. Other variants of city brands: Birsik is a tasty city; Murmansk is an outpost of Russia in Arctic Regions and so on (Britvin Eds. 2012).

Analysis of Russian cities branding permits to draw the following conclusions:

- In the present time city branding is a national project. Mostly, the strong support of different social groups is guaranteed for such a project. Anyway, it will be accepted in a positive way by the local and regional authorities. Moreover, the local private sector will reliably support this initiative, because any brand will be effective for the whole local production. By proper strategy and promotion, the broadest strata of population will be involved into the process, providing civil legitimacy.
- By development of the idea “cities are the national brands”, some challenges important for government and society can be met. And namely, to show not only on the national but on the international level that Russia is not limited to Moscow and St. Petersburg, and to dismantle set stereotypes of many foreigners. The idea of city brands can become the foundation for state regional politics and concept of strategic development of regions and cities. Another meaningful result of this idea realization is increase of competitive ability of goods and services both in the domestic and external markets.
- The correct branding strategy is not only a logo or some other figure. City branding is a principally emotional factor, which often dominates over the rationalism, but does not substitute it. Emotional

components of brand very often enable to take a leading position. An important item by the developing of brand conception is a distinct position focused either on the conservation of values and traditions of the city, or on development of modern infrastructure, etc. Also, the brand of the city affects the formation of a national brand and image of the state as a whole (Shtanko 2013).

Here are the stages of Tomsk city brand creation. The first talks about positioning of Tomsk and Tomsk brands occurred during the preparation to the 400th anniversary of the city. Even then it became clear: it is necessary to create a conceptual idea containing Tomsk's unique features and reflecting its main peculiarity – it is a point of science, education, culture and enlightenment concentration. In the absence of other variants, it was decided to keep the unofficial brand appeared in the late nineteenth century, after the opening of the first university in Siberia – “The Siberian Athens”. As one of the on-line encyclopedias tells, “Siberian Athens is unofficial name of Tomsk, which is often used in relation to its special civilizational position in Siberia comparable with real Athens, the capital of Greece”. (Aranovskaya *et al.* 2013) This name was taken on, and is often used: a literary anthology named “The Siberian Athens” appeared, business center “Technopark” announced a self-titled competition, the mineral water has the same name, as well as the chess team. So, the first try to distinguish Tomsk brand can be defined as “Tomsk is Siberian Athens”.

The next try to rebrand Tomsk was not successful: brand “smart city” has provoked a lot of blames in tendentiousness, but later defended its right to exist. The notion of “brand” was used more in the context of goods and services, but in the latest years, as it was remarked by “Expert” journal, the city leaders decided to create the brand of urban environment (Shalygina *et al.* 2013). It was decided to fundamentally change the approach: to put aside the creation of beautiful images, logos, signs and instead of it to go into the complex external positioning of Tomsk. This work was done by progressive stages. First, “The concept of tourism and hospitality” was introduced, where the cultural and educational tourism is the basis for external positioning of the city. In 2010, the strategy of city development until 2020 was adopted. It reserves one more attribute for Tomsk– the creative city. The main condition in the context of this development strategy is to give an opportunity to residents to express themselves creatively.

In July 2015, Tomsk Administration announced a contest for the best concept of visual and verbal style for Tomsk Region territory brand (Investment portal of the Tomsk region 2015). The contest was organized by the “Fund of territory development assistance” in association with Tomsk Region Administration, by sponsorship of joint stock company “The corporation of Tomsk Region development”, “Tomskvodokanal” and “Tomsk beer” companies. The experts in graphic design and branding were invited to participate in the contest for presentation of their own vision of the brand, which main purposes were: to represent the peculiarities of Tomsk Region and distinguish it from other regions of Russia, to transmit the values of the Region to the target audience; to provide the awareness of the Region; to satisfy the global trends in design.

All projects will be presented on the contest website for public discussion and voting, they also will be estimated by a jury.

Analysis of existing branding aspects of Tomsk allowed drawing the considerations on their updating. Doingso requires the development of dialogue in Tomsk, search for new ways for revival of wooden architecture, support of creative activity of city residents, widening of informational presence of city in the Internet and elaboration of brand promotion strategy.

Let us consider these development directions of Tomsk brand in detail. For construction of modern Tomsk image and creation of its brand, sustainable and topical at the modern stage of city development, it is necessary to conduct a complex research. To develop elaborated city brand and further process of branding, to keep it current, to provide vividness, all society groups should successfully communicate. It is possible via debating technologies, which are currently absent not only in any city or region, they are not enough advanced in the whole country. The ground for starting such mechanisms can be a creation of interlocutory environment in the city, where: the authorities are ready to discuss issues with people interested, people express their civil position, every Tomsk resident contemplates an urban identity.

It can be said, currently the old style wooden buildings suffer a period of stagnation; there is no fresh approach to wooden architecture, there are no young people who could not so much see the beauty of wooden buildings to demonstrate intention and inventiveness to save them. So, for maintaining wooden buildings, many of which are located in the convenient city districts, there is a variant of transfer of the buildings from municipal property to private property: to hand over wooden houses to people, businessmen for retail/services. Another

variant to consider is to put down the rent payment for such houses in exchange for their renovation and maintenance. It allows attracting interested people, and most significantly, hastening the recovery process and further preservation.

In order to “fit” wooden architecture into the modern urban environment, it is required to set its center, its encampment site. As an example, the 130th district in Irkutsk can be considered, where all historical buildings are accumulated and lost buildings are rebuilt. All valuable houses were taken from other districts. The scatter of solitary houses over Tomsk territory cannot create the whole perception view. Moreover, there is a problem of disturbed (or displaced) perception because of generalization process when people take negative all wooden buildings, their impressions are painted with grave tones. This situation is typical for the local residents. Taking into account the fact that many badly socialized people live in old wooden houses the reputation of such buildings is extremely unfavorable.

Therefore, the absence of house centralization is a cause of negative generalization attitude to all wooden buildings with the use of such notions as “pieces of wood”, “sheds”, etc. But by the creation of united area where all wooden houses can be placed, these risks could be minimized. The second step for attraction of attention to this kind of brand is a generation of positive emotions, images which could be shared by people. The majority of Tomsk population is students, young people in general and their teachers (because there are a lot of universities in the city), and it is possible to target this community, interested in novelties in entertainment, education and culture. So, to bring wooden architecture out of the “dead”, sleeping condition, it is necessary to organize different public places in some of these houses. It can be a café where people will spend their time with friends or come alone to read a book. Or in the opposite, it can be a time club, a kind of guesthouse becoming more popular in present time, where for some admission charge they will play table games, work or communicate with other visitors. It also can be a book shop with literature of high quality and not very expensive literature in foreign languages.

One more Tomsk brand development aspect is support of creativity of city residents, especially of young people: development of their feeling, potential and values. In December 2012, a drawing competition “Tomsk, Moleskine and me” was held. The competition aim was a stimulation of creativity in all of its aspects, and the topic concerning the native city was chosen for participants’ demonstration of love to Tomsk, for reminding of their unforgettable moments in Tomsk. This competition was called not only to develop a creative potential of Tomsk residents but also to support a cultural diversity and to strengthen intercommunication between different cultural communities. These multifaceted organizations are considered to be the future. It is the future not only of our city but also of the whole world. Marketing and branding experts tell about experience economy aiming at the creation of consumer positive impressions about service or goods, and the organizations mentioned above can become a new development round. Now, it is necessary to make a lot of efforts and work in all aspects of activity to attract attention of people.

In the Internet sources the following information can be found: “In the sphere of economics, rather remarkable brand project has become brand “Made in Tomsk”, a result of collaborative work of Tomsk business community, society and local authorities, which was born at the first “Investment seasons” (Mikhailov 2011). There is an opinion, that brand is targeted at the promotion of companies and technologies from Tomsk, and concentrates the best that was invented and created by Tomsk residents in various spheres from mechanical engineering to culture. The high publicity is given to the site with the same name – www.madeintomsk.info, but its functioning can be called into a question. It was developed in 2011, but stopped at the start point. At the moment, we cannot say with certainty that “Made in Tomsk” project is a true brand which can give information about Tomsk outside it. In the case of right modification, this project can successfully continue its work, but some changes, novelties and widening of goods and services list are necessary for it. The site reanimation can be conducted by regular update of news, the number of columns expansion and attraction of wide audience to the site. It can be done via banners on different sites out of Tomsk, for example on the weather sites or sites for free downloading of music or films: their traffic is very high and users see information quickly. It is also possible to create publics in social networks. At the present time SMM-marketing is very popular. As a platform for Tomsk popularization in the Internet, the following sites can be considered: <http://tic-tomsk.ru/>– Tourist Information Centre and <http://rgotomsk.com/>– Information center of Russian Geographical society.

Sites are the basic and the most popular and necessary tool for territory branding. Sites help to increase the recognizability of a place, to improve knowledge about it and finally to build its image. The main site function is a transfer of city brand identity through relevant information. Communication can be in the form of passive date

transfer (general information, gallery of photographs, booklets, projects and plans of local authorities). There is also a form of interactive communication, information sorted upon the users' request, consultations, feedbacks, calendar of events, interactive maps, virtual tours and hotel booking.

Conclusion

A city must have good qualities in order to brand itself successfully, but a plenty of factors are involved. Cooperative efforts between residents and municipal government are one of the key factors in determining the branding potential of a city.

To succeed, the city administration must complete a strategic examination of trends in the social and economic environments; identify where the opportunities, skills, resources, and capabilities lie within the city; what core values, attitudes, behaviors, and characteristics have enabled the city to achieve these; and then figure out what combination of these provides a differentiated appeal to its various target groups. Based on this examination, an integrated brand strategy and implementation must be developed and, from these, an integrated brand communications strategy and implementation: one brand position based on the city's core values, attitudes, behaviors and characteristics. Administrators can then look at this and identify the best blend of those skills, resources, and capabilities that can be expressed as relevant benefits to each of the targeted groups.

In conclusion, it should be mentioned, that at all stages of city brand development and updating, it is required to involve the city residents into the process, because they are at the same time both the city identity carriers and future brand consumers. Right developed city brand allows increasing the loyalty of the residents and becoming the ground for positioning of outer target audiences attracting visitors and investments.

References:

- [1] Anholt, S. 2007. *Cities and Regions*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [2] Anholt, S. 2010. *Places: Image, Identity and Reputation*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [3] Aranovskaya, M., Neyaskin, G. 15 regional brands in Russia. *Slon.ru – business news and blog*. Available at: http://slon.ru/economics/10_territorialnykh_brendov_rossii-820899.shtml
- [4] Ataeva, T.A. 2012. Marketing areas as a factor in the development of infrastructure in the region. *Marketing – reality and projections into the future. Conference materials, Varna, 28-29 June 2012*, 106-108.
- [5] Britvin, A.M. (Eds.) 2012. *Branding of small cities and towns of Russia: experience, problems and prospects: Proc. Scientific and Practical part-zaoch. Conf.* Ekaterinburg: Publishing House of the Urals University.
- [6] Brusovaya, A.S., Shchepina, I.A. 2010. Formation of the brand in the region as a basis to ensure balanced socio-economic development of the subjects of the Russian Federation (On an example of the Ivanovo region). *Regional Economy: Theory and Practice*, 14: 34-42.
- [7] Buryak, A.O. 2014. Features of foreign trade activities of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District. *Young Scientist*, 21: 283-285.
- [8] Dinny, K. 2011/2013. *City branding: Theory and Cases*. Moscow: Mann, Ivanov, Freber.
- [9] Gregory, J.R., Wiechmann, J.G. (1997). *Leveraging the Corporate Brand*. Chicago, CHI: NTC Business Books.
- [10] Malkova, V.K., Tishkova, V.A. 2012. *Culture and Space: the historical and cultural brands and images of areas, regions and locations*. Rostov-on-Don: SSC RAS.
- [11] Meshcheryakov, T.V., Okolnishnikova, I.U., Nikiforova G.U. 2011. Brand as a communicative capital. *The problems of the Modern Economy*, 1: 149-153.
- [12] Mikhailov, V. 2011. City where creative environment is grown. "Expert online" – a project of the media holding "Expert" together with the magazine "Russian Reporter". Available at: <http://expert.ru/siberia/2011/32/gorod-v-kotorom-vyiraschivayut-kreativnyuyu-sredu/>
- [13] Rodkin, P. 2011. Russian cultural thaw. Perm – better territorial brand. What's next? *Prdesign*. Available at: <http://www.prdesign.ru/text/2011/perm.html>.

- [14] Rudaya, E.A. 2010. *Fundamentals of Brand Management*. Moscow: Aspect press.
- [15] Shalygina N.P. et al. 2013. Branding and its role in increasing the competitiveness of region. *Scientific Journal ITMO. A series of Economics and Environmental Management*. Available at: <http://www.economics.ihbt.ifmo.ru>
- [16] Shalygina, N.P., Polyakov, M.V., Kurach, E.V. 2013. On the role of branding in the formation of the tourist attractiveness of the region. *Basic research*, 8: 1165-1168.
- [17] Shtanko, M.A. 2015. National brand as the basis of state image. *International Research Journal*. Ekaterinburg. 7 (38).
- [18] Vazhenina, I.S. 2006. The image and reputation of the area as a basis for promotion in a competitive environment. *Marketing in Russia and abroad*. 6: 82-98.
- [19] Vizgalov, D.V. 2011. *City branding*. Moscow: "Institute of Urban Economics" Fund.
- *** Investment portal of Tomsk region. 2015. Available at: http://www.investintomsk.ru/konkurs/o_konkurse/