

They continued a patronage mission of Gilzen and annually paid a large sum for the maintenance of the students at schools and monasteries in their estates. Thus, the largest Byelorussian fund was created in Osveya, which financed the development of education during a long time, until patronage activities were ceased by Russian government, who did not support Catholic confession.

In 2007 Osveya received the status of town. According to the data of 2010 year the population of the settlement reached 1,3 thousand of residents.

Currently, historical objects GP Osveya are under state protection. In the Cultural Properties of Belarus introduced: the former monastery hospital (code 212G000224, category 2), and park ensemble (code 213G000225, category 3), a mass grave of the Great Patriotic War (code 213D000226, category 3) [6], the ruins of Gilzen Palace.

Thus, Osveya and many other small towns in Belarus (for example, Druja, Lintupi) seem unremarkable, but they have an amazing past that we must study to preserve and recover the historical, cultural and architectural heritage of our country.

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### THE ROLE OF DESTINATION BRANDING IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

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*Destination branding is relatively new marketing concept which demands special attention of the marketers who study progressive ways of building and promoting brands. Consequently, special attention is paid to tourist destination branding.*

No discussion of marketing is complete without some discussion of branding.

Today's modern concept of branding grew out of the consumer packaged goods industry and the process of branding has come to include much more than just creating a way to identify a product or company. Branding is used to create emotional attachment to products and companies. Branding efforts create a feeling of involvement, a sense of higher quality, and an aura of intangible qualities that surround the brand name, mark, or symbol.

Successful branding efforts build strategic awareness where people not only recognize your brand, but they also understand the distinctive qualities that make it better than the competition. Branding is more important today than ever due to ever-increasing advertising clutter, media fragmentation, the commoditization of products, and the seemingly limitless choices we are offered in just about every product category. Marketers need to work hard to ensure that they are offering customers strong brands that are clearly differentiated and that offer clear, real value and unique benefits.

The need for branding has never been greater. This fact defined the relevance of the paper work.

The practical importance of the work consists in its disputable nature. There is a great field for discussing the various approaches and research findings in the area of brand marketing.

#### THE THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF BRANDING

Thus the aim of the paper work is to characterize the role of destination branding in the sphere of tourism.

The word "brand" comes from the Old Norse "brandr", meaning "to burn"– recalling the practice of producers burning their mark (or brand) onto their products, and from these origins made its way into Anglo-Saxon. It was of course by burning that early man stamped ownership on his livestock, and with the development of trade. Buyers would use brands as a means of distinguishing between the cattle of one farmer and another. A farmer with a particularly good reputation for the quality of his animals would find his brand much sought after,

while the brands of farmers with a lesser reputation were to be avoided or treated with caution. Thus the utility of brands as a guide to choice was established, a role that has remained unchanged to the present day.

Some of the earliest manufactured goods in "mass" production were clay pots, the remains of which can be found in great abundance around the Mediterranean region, particularly in the ancient civilizations of Etruria, Greece and Rome. There is considerable evidence among these remains of the use of brands, which in their earliest form were the potter's mark. A potter would identify his pots by putting his thumbprint into the wet clay on the bottom of the pot or by making his mark: a fish, a star or cross, for example. From this we can safely say that symbols (rather than initials or names) were the earliest visual form of brands.

The wide scale use of brands is essentially a phenomenon of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The industrial revolution, with its improvements in manufacturing and communications, opened up the western world and allowed the mass-marketing of consumer products. Many of today's best-known consumer brands date from this period: Singer sewing-machines, Coca-Cola soft drinks, Kodak film, American Express travellers' cheques, Heinz baked beans and Prudential Insurance are just a few examples.

Hand in hand with the introduction of these brands came early trade mark legislation. This allowed the owners of these brands to protect them in law. The birth of advertising agencies such as J Walter Thompson and NW Ayer in the late 19th century gave further impetus to the development of brands.

Around 1900, James Walter Thompson published a house ad explaining trademark advertising. This was an early commercial explanation of what we now know as branding. Companies soon adopted slogans, mascots, and jingles that began to appear on radio and early television.

But it is the period since the end of the Second World War that has seen the real explosion in the use of brands. Propelled by the collapse of communism, the arrival of the internet and mass broadcasting systems, and greatly improved transportation and communications, brands have come to symbolize the convergence of the world's economies on the demand-led rather than the command-led model. But brands have not escaped criticism. Recent anti-globalization protests have provided a timely reminder to the big brand owners that in the conduct of their affairs they have a duty to society, as well as customers and shareholders [1, p. 13].

Manufacturers quickly learned to build their brands' identity and personality such as youthfulness, fun or luxury. This began the practice known as "branding" today, where the consumers buy "the brand" instead of the product. This trend continued to the 1980s, and is now quantified in concepts such as brand value and brand equity. Naomi Klein has described this development as "brand equity mania" [2].

In today's dynamic marketing landscape where publishing and message distribution are no longer limited to media entities brands have a wide range of uses for businesses, products and individuals.

The widespread usage of brands provokes numerous discussions and therefore different marketers define brands and branding in their specific way. According to the American Marketing Association "A brand is a customer experience represented by a collection of images and ideas; often, it refers to a symbol such as a name, logo, slogan, and design scheme. Brand recognition and other reactions are created by the accumulation of experiences with the specific product or service, both directly relating to its use, and through the influence of advertising, design, and media commentary".

Phillip Kotler, one of the world's leading authorities on marketing, in his book "Marketing Management" defines brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of the competitor"[3].

Brands typically comprise various elements: a) name; b) logo; c) tagline or catchphrase; e) graphics; f) shapes; g) colors; h) sounds; i) scents; j) tastes; k) movements[4].

The most important element of the brand is the name as its use in language provides a universal reference point. The name is also the one element of the brand that should never change. A brand is more than a logo, name or slogan – it's the entire experience that the prospects and customers have with a company, product or service.

Brands serve several valuable functions. At their most basic level, brands serve as markers for the offerings of a firm. For customers, brands can simplify choice, promise a particular quality level, reduce risk, and/or engender trust. Brands are built on the product itself, the accompanying marketing activity, and the use (or non-use) by customers as well as others.

Brands thus reflect the complete experience that customers have with products. Brands also play an important role in determining the effectiveness of marketing efforts such as advertising and channel placement. Finally, brands are an asset in the financial sense. Thus, brands manifest their impact at three primary levels – customer-market, product-market, and financial-market.

#### **THE PECULIARITIES OF BRANDING IN THE SPHERE OF MARKETING**

Branding is the foundation of marketing and is inseparable from business strategy. It is therefore more than putting a label on a fancy product. Nowadays, a corporation, law firm, country, university, museum, hospital, celebrity, and even people in their career can be considered as a brand.

As such, a brand is a combination of attributes, communicated through a name, or a symbol, that influences a thought-process in the mind of an audience and creates value.

As branding is deeply anchored in psycho-sociology, it takes into account both tangible and intangible attributes, e.g., functional and emotional benefits. Therefore, those attributes compose the beliefs that the brand's audience recalls when they think about the brand in its context.

Branding can't exist without marketing. Five basic topics that align with the brand management decisions and tasks frequently performed by marketing executives are the following:

1) **Developing brand positioning.** Brand positioning sets the direction of marketing activities and programs – what the brand should and should not do with its marketing. Brand positioning involves establishing key brand associations in the minds of customers and other important constituents to differentiate the brand and establish competitive superiority.

2) **Integrating brand marketing.** A variety of branding and marketing activities can be conducted to help achieve the desired brand positioning and build brand equity. Their ultimate success depends to a significant extent not only on how well they work singularly, but also on how they work in combination. In other words, marketing activities have interaction effects among themselves as well as main effects and interaction effects with brand equity.

In recognition of the value of brand as intangible assets, increased emphasis has been placed on understanding how to build, measure, and manage brand equity. There are three principal and distinct perspectives that have been taken by academics to study brand equity: a) Customer-based. b) Company-based. c) Financial-based.

3) **Assessing brand performance.** To manage brands properly, marketers should have a clear understanding of the equity in their brands – what makes them tick and what they are worth. Two interesting sub-areas of this topic are the measurement and valuation of brand equity at different levels – customer, product market, and financial market – and the relationship of customer equity to brand equity.

4) **Growing brands.**

5) **Strategically managing the brand.** Brand strategy defines what a company stands for, a promise it makes, and the personality it conveys. To promote a brand successfully it is essential to create a defined brand strategy [5, p.2].

There is a spectrum of opinions what is branding and what is marketing. Nevertheless, they are interconnected and complement each other when the product needs to be sold or just presented. Marketing is actively promoting a product or service. It's a push tactic. Branding should both precede and underlie any marketing effort. Branding is not push, but pull. Branding is the expression of the essential truth or value of an organization, product, or service. It is communication of characteristics, values, and attributes that clarify what this particular brand is and is not. A brand will help encourage someone to buy a product, and it directly supports whatever sales or marketing activities are in play.

#### **THE ROLE OF DESTINATION (PLACE) BRANDING IN THE SPHERE OF TOURISM**

A place-brand strategy is a plan for defining the most realistic, most competitive and most compelling strategic vision for the country, region or city; this vision then has to be fulfilled and communicated. In all cases, it is fundamental to ensure that the vision of the place is supported, reinforced and enriched by every act of communication with the rest of the world. This coherence of communication is necessary because in the globalized world in which we now live, every place has to compete with every other place for share of mind, share of income, share of talent, share of voice.

The acts of communication in which places commonly engage may include: a) the brands which the country exports; b) the way the place promotes itself for trade, tourism, inward investment and inward recruitment; c) the way it behaves in acts of domestic and foreign policy, and the ways in which these acts are communicated; d) the way it promotes and represents and shares its culture with other places; e) the way its citizens behave when abroad and how they treat strangers at home; f) the built and natural environment it presents to the visitor; g) the way it features in the world's media; h) the bodies and organizations it belongs to; i) the other countries it associates with.

Place branding aligns as many of these “channels” as possible into accomplishing and communicating the development strategy of the city, country or region.

Places have always been brands, in the truest sense of the word. Of course, branding places is different from branding products [1, p.213].

The point is that tourism branding and promotion cannot be conducted successfully without consideration of the context for tourism, which is the state of the country itself.

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) sees local tourist destinations as central contributors to the process of development and delivery of tourism products. Therefore, tourist (or tourism) destination is identified as a fundamental unit of analysis.

Recently, destination branding has gained much attention in tourism research for its role in tourism marketing and destination management. Ritchie & Ritchie adopt the Aaker's definition of brand and, based on it, propose the following destination “brand” definition: “A Destination Brand is a name, symbol, logo, word, mark

or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination; furthermore, it conveys the promise of memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience”.

Destination brands can be developed using the unique regional features that provide with the distinct attractors and touristic assets, which form the basis for building a brand “identity”.

The brand identity as defined by Upshaw (1995) is the total perception of a brand in the marketplace (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998). Building a destination brand identity can, thus, be seen as one of the central tasks of a destination branding process. Destination branding is seen here as a broader marketing concept, which includes but is not limited to creating destination brand (as defined by Ritchie & Ritchie), and is defined as a set of marketing activities aimed at creating, maintaining and promoting a distinct image of a tourist destination on the market.

Regional cultural, historical and/or natural assets are important touristic attractors and can, therefore, form the platform for destination branding.

Destination branding is a powerful tool for tourism providers to improve their appeal to consumer markets. Branding a tourist destination, based on regional assets, is likely to create controllable expectations of potential inbound tourists, because then the touristic offer is based on something that the region can offer [6, p. 9].

Destination or place branding is about creating value. It is the value that products and businesses receive through direct association with a brand, or the additional value that potential visitors attribute to a place because of its brand image. Moreover, destination branding is a continuing process to create unique tourist experiences and build a sustained image that emotionally bonds with the host community stakeholders and resonates with its targeted markets.

In developed economies consumers have an astonishing – often bewildering – array of choice. The diversity of choice puts pressure on those making or selling products or services to offer high quality, excellent value and wide availability. It also puts pressure on them to find more potent ways of differentiating themselves and securing competitive advantage.

In the twenty-first century, branding ultimately will be the only unique differentiator between companies. Brands allow the consumer to shop with confidence, and they provide a route map through the variety of choices.

The real power of successful brands is that they meet the expectations of those that buy them or, to put it another way, they represent a promise kept. As such they are a contract between a seller and a buyer: if the seller keeps to its side of the bargain, the buyer will be satisfied; if not, the buyer will in future look elsewhere.

Marketing primarily involves the study of demand in a market and creating a response in the form of supply. In the field of marketing, branding plays an important role, as it helps the people to promote the brand name and its merits quite easily. Apart from that, it also becomes possible for the marketing people to generate intelligence information about the brands popularity, and also what people exactly want from the company.

A strong brand provides added value, brings a powerful identity, drives consumer’s behavior, influences their perceptions of reality, opens doors, creates trust and respect and raises expectations of quality and integrity. It is in fact the basis for strong place reputations. In the sphere of tourism strong destination brand must deliver distinctive, compelling, memorable and rewarding experiences to its target audience. Destination marketers can use a brand as a quick and cohesive way to convey key messages to potential tourists.

There was a time when brands were relatively static in nature. Marketers invested a great deal of time and resources in defining a brand strategy and identity, put it out in the market and let it alone for years.

But today, thanks to the new media technologies as well as the overall nature of modern economy, brands are dynamic and ever-evolving.

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