

CHALLENGES OF THE BRANDING PROCESS OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS – TOURIST DESTINATION HERZEGOVINA

Abstract

We are witnessing a moment in time that many treat as a “time of change.” Truly this is a time characterized by new economic relations, digitalization, the Internet, the economy of experience, etc. The trends of this time and of this kind of economy are, therefore, so dynamic and changeable that one logical question arises: should they be observed, researched and apostrophized as rules with some longer-term meaning?

The world is on top of the fourth industrial revolution. All those who have started the processes of digitization must urgently bring it to an end, and those who have not will not be on the relevant maps of global processes very soon.

The global trends at the top of the global pyramid are quality and flexibility, and success is guaranteed only to those who manage to create a products/services with innovation and creativity that will be marked and become both complex and flexible, taking on qualities of disruptors who already became the most powerful stakeholders in global economic processes.

Branding a tourist destination has long been one of the crucial components of a strategy to gain a competitive advantage in increasingly challenging tourism markets. The modern holistic approach to leading the process to the set goal implies process management at three levels, the level of strategic management, the level of marketing management and the level of brand management. It is quite clear that the branding of a tourist destination does not stand out from the whole process, especially considering the complex interactions within each tourist destination.

For emerging tourist destinations, such as the tourist destination of Herzegovina, it is crucial to have the right vision, define the mission, set goals and manage the processes of creating a unique identity of Herzegovina as a tourist destination, bearing in mind

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the proper establishment of vertical and horizontal coordination between carrier and actors in the branding process. On this path, all stakeholders face a number of challenges that we will point out in this paper, and based on available scientific literature, how the branding process of a tourist destination Herzegovina has a form of scientifically based and practically accepted work that will ultimately serve to map this tourist destinations on the world map of tourist destinations and become a tourist desired destination.

Keywords: *brand; branding process; tourist destination; challenges; management; marketing; communication.*

Introduction

Many destinations strive to gain the best possible reputation and improve their international image in order to create a competitive advantage through the branding process. However, this whole process is very complex. This is evidenced by a large number of works, interpretations, tips and recommendations on how and in what way to brand a destination, to make it competitive, more authentic, and more creative. Numerous authors of textbooks, books, papers of academic and professional level try in various ways and through different models to explain the branding process and thus “reveal the secret” of the destination brand.

Successfully designing and positioning a destination means setting up the structure in the right way and leading a process in which the focus will be on the tourist. Proper connection with the focus of this structure and process is a continuous job of defining the vision and mission and setting goals in order to properly shape the strategy that will adequately guide the processes, horizontally by stages, strategic management, marketing management and branding, and which will be interdependent and interconnected.

In the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is almost no scientific approach or study of modern methods of brand creation based on strategic processes for the purpose of branding tourist destinations, with the aim of achieving market advantage - competitiveness. A large part of the tourism sector lacks a basic strategic approach, a realistic vision acceptable to both the stakeholders of the destination and the external public, the mission is not defined, occasions and opportunities are not recognized and available resources are not used. Resources are, in fact, insufficiently identified and not adequately valorised. There is a lack of effective innovation as one of the key

elements of ensuring competitiveness. There is too much improvisation and leaving certain processes to chance. The vertical flow of information according to the principles of the management hierarchy is expressed, which is in direct contrast to the holistic proactive approach of process, multidisciplinary team management with horizontal flow of information. The Bismarck way of command (up-down), which has long been abandoned by modern and successful organizations, is still present here. We need to be aware that today Baby Boomers and Generation X are “at the end of their careers” and that Generation Y, Generation Z and upcoming Alpha kids are on the scene, generations who make great use of modern technologies, have information, are proactive, used to teamwork and simply are “adapted” to today’s dynamics of modern man. They are the ones who are motivated to get involved in the processes that will determine the future of the tourism sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and they must not be left out of these processes. Moreover, they need to be enabled to grow into leaders who will encourage all stakeholders and steer processes.

At the end of this introduction, it should be noted that, in addition to all these shortcomings, there is a lack of market research in terms of segmentation and identification of target groups and discovering their motives, needs and desires to properly understand the tourist - destination relationship.

1. Tourist destination branding

Brand is an English word, and means “a broad term that covers a name, design, symbol, legally protected identity elements, etc., used to distinguish products, services, and manufacturers from others.” Branding has recently become the epicentre of marketing processes, but most authors who write about management trends in marketing are still not in pace with modern trends in the field of branding. However, some of the authors (Kotler et. al., 1998; Aaker, 2001) have realized that branding is currently the most dynamic field of marketing processes, and recognize and draw attention to continuous monitoring of changes, their anticipation and final shaping.

However, despite the growing literature in this field, there are still many misinterpretations of destination branding or equating this concept with the concept of promotion. Therefore, some authors such as Simon Anholt,

(Morgan et. al., 2011: 20) draw attention to competitive identity, the way of forming a perception of a place, and the relationship of policies and strategies with competitive identity. Philip Kotler and David Gertner, on the other hand, focused on the correlation of country of origin and brand of place emphasizing the link: tourism marketing - home country - economic development (Morgan et. al., 2011: 35). A third group of scientists, including Vally Ollins and Jeremy Hildreth, claim that branding is actually a manifestation of identity and that anyone involved in creating a place's reputation and management must consider historical changes, the subtle psychological side of human perception and that place's identity. (Morgan et al., 2011: 37)

1.1. The need and importance of branding a tourist destination

Branding has in the past been considered a fashionable and luxurious activity in the market. However, in today's time of market globalization, branding is considered a necessity because with this process, destinations can fight faster and more efficiently for greater competitiveness. A brand is not a slogan or a logo. Namely, it is not enough to make a design with information where the logo should stand just to be different. The goal is not to follow the working principle of another, but to design own creative way of presenting the information and messages we want to convey to the user.

A brand is, in fact, the answer to the question of what a certain destination represents, what makes it unique and recognizable. It is a special challenge to behave in accordance with the brand. These words are, indeed, some of the key ones in real branding language: Creativity. Imagination. Influence. Positioning. Stories. Impressions. Image.

Research shows that over 80 % of bookings in the global hotel industry are made because of a particular brand. In modern tourism, not only hotel brands are enough, but also brands of destinations where they operate. Tourists need a product of a wider spectrum, in the formation of which various entities in the destination participate. Today, the destination is treated as a tourist product that will compete in the market with its attractive and quality features. The destination brand expresses its location, activities and contents within its borders. Due to all the above, it is necessary to establish a long-term vision of the destination brand based on knowledge, in agreement with all stakeholders in shaping the tourism product.

1.2. *The process of branding a tourist destination*

By creating the international recognition of the region, the tourist brand attracts investments and skilled labour force, and indirectly acts to increase exports. The brand incorporates values that should attract the attention of domestic and foreign tourists, or values attractive enough to bring them to visit the destination. These should be realistically grounded values.

The tourism brand enters the market in two ways: *indirectly* - through other products that participate in the formation of the tourist product, and *directly* - as a destination product. The tourism brand in tourism inevitably primarily associates with world-famous hotel chains that have managed to guarantee quality with their standards to guest. These are the merits of great hoteliers, who are the founders of these standards, such as Cezan, Ritz, Conrad, Hilton and others.

The goal to be achieved is a brand recognizable to consumers in the hope that they will accept it and choose among related products, services or tourist destinations. In recent times, when we talk about processes, it is necessary to look at everything in a complex and interdependent way, so we can freely say that holistic approaches dominate in economics and marketing. When it comes to a brand in marketing in the field of branding, it becomes the main interest because the company meets consumers who increase its value with their loyalty, and thus increase the value of the company (Pavlek, 2008: 21).

Branding strategy can be successfully defined as the choice of common and specific brand elements that a company applies to different products and services (Keller, 2003: 78). The right strategic plan cannot be devised and cannot be effective without an initial situational analysis, whether it is a new or existing brand.

Modern and successful companies prefer a consumer-oriented process. These are organizations dominated by teamwork where managers become true leaders by encouraging and accelerating processes. Branding, marketing, brand management... these are all individual processes that are incorporated into a unique model of strategic management. Accordingly, three levels of process can be set:

- *value chain creation process - business*
- *process of creating value for the consumer - marketing*
- *identity creation process - brand and branding*

Strategic management is the essence of modern management and is functionally a process that creates a vision and mission, sets goals and takes care of strategy. Therefore, successful management must act proactively with the main task - to influence the environment and provide answers to its possible changes (Aaker, 2001: 12). In this process, initiatives, creation of changes and a view towards the future are encouraged. Given that the real reality is turbulent and difficult to predict, the strategy is formulated in the way of a “protective umbrella” from sudden and unexpected turbulences and “open doors” through which opportunities and the possibility of their use can be clearly identified.

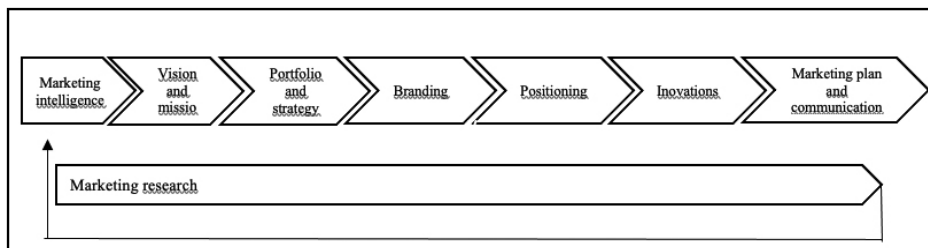
This process includes the development of mission and vision, goal setting, SWOT analysis, confrontation of resources with the environment, evaluation of individual opportunities and finally the implementation of defined activities (Fred, 2004: 84). In this process, there is mutual communication between the destination and the segments - selected target groups whose needs and desires the destination seeks to understand in an adequate way. This is followed by the creation of an offer. It is an offer in which the benefits in relation to the competition are emphasized in the way that the selected target groups understand it, and this approach encourages the creation of formal and informal communities that are ready to follow this idea.

The marketing process is best represented by model which was created by Armstrong and Kotler, which is often in the national practice referred to as a model of key customers.

In its original form, the term *create value for customers and build customer relationships* appears within this model. Marketing is by its nature multifunctional, and at the same time it advocates creativity in shaping ideas, strategies, products, then systematic analysis and precision in market research. In the bloodstream of marketing planning, the starting point is information, final results, and this becomes new knowledge and data needed for new inputs, thus shaping *marketing intelligence* - the starting point into which new information flows, position, situation and possibilities are assessed (Pavlek, 2008: 51). Marketing intelligence is placed at the beginning of the branding process model.

By creating an identity or a kind of diversity that will be accepted as value, the branding process begins. It is not and cannot be separated from the vision, the mission, nor from the marketing processes. Branding is one of the stages

in the all- encompassing process of a destination and all its functions, which aims to create desirable differences.



Picture 1. The branding process

Source: adapted from Pavlek Z. (2008). *Branding- How to build the best brand*, M.E.P. Consult, Zagreb, p. 52.

We have already talked about how all business processes start from a vision. After the vision comes designing a mission that should be the basis for creating a destination identity. Then the actors who form the portfolio, set goals and form the strategy “come on the scene”. All this is followed by the process of creating a destination and its management - branding. This is followed by a positioning process that directs the value of the destination identity, followed by innovations that should maintain and strengthen the destination identity in order to finally shape the marketing plan and create a connection with consumers through communication. This would in short be a destination branding process, a model in the stages that are connected and none stands out from the process nor can it exist on its own. This process is continuous and does not end because all feedback is treated as a new input for a new beginning.

2. Challenges of tourist destination branding

All entities that in some way deal with marketing and branding of tourist destinations are constantly faced with certain challenges. Surroundings with uncertain markets and crisis and recession periods is full of challenges that must be answered by the actors who manage processes in tourist destinations. At a time when service users are increasingly creating a brand of a tourist destination, those who manage tourist destinations are less and less able to control the entire process related to destination branding.

Therefore, for the purposes of this paper, we will briefly look at the eight key challenges of destination stakeholders responsible for the branding process and the control, preservation and improvement of the tourist destination brand itself (Morgan et al., 2011: 93-217).

2.1. Ethical challenges

In branding destinations actors who manage processes face numerous ethical challenges that arise due to the large number of individuals, formal and informal groups who, in representing their beliefs and attitudes, have legitimate claims to be part of the process of creating a brand destination. There are three key ethical challenges in the process of branding destinations: *commodification of the destination brand, mapping of actors and citizen involvement, and sustainable development.*

Commodification is “the process of turning a material object or personal art into a commodity on the market (Peračković, 2008: 107).¹ To a large extent (but not exclusively) the process of commodification, when it comes to tourism literature, is viewed as an unwanted negative phenomenon. Viewed in this context, the process of destination branding for some is a simple exploitation process by which the fund of cultural and historical treasures of a particular destination is reduced to the level of a product available in the mall.

Some authors warn that the commodification of the culture of the area leads to a decrease in the authenticity and reduces the value of the destination, bringing down the local population to leisure facilities, while at the same time the presentation of the culture moves away from reality. However, here it should be noted that some authors problematize the concept of “authenticity” itself, considered that is, without an objective quality, authenticity socially constructed and variable in regards the attitudes related to tourists. In their text *Fictional Traditions*, Hobbsbawm and Ranger (Morgan et al., 2011: 96) claims that traditions, while they may seem old, are often of more recent date and originate from a single event. Opinions are also that there is almost no destination that has not experienced the “fabrication” of tradition. In any case, the ethical justification of such an invention of tradition is always open for

¹ In the second half of the 20th century, the process of commodification covered the field of services, ideas, entertainment, personality, feelings and meaning, while today, in the 21st century, access, information, knowledge, health, adventure, experience, event, cultural production and even human life which Mills calls the personality market.

discussion, although the activities of actors involved in destination branding processes whose activities include inventing or enhanced communication of tradition are introduced into the perspective.

However, Abram (1996: 198) refutes the thesis of the unethical nature of commodification, claiming that commodification can be experienced as “part of a positive process in which people reassess their history and free themselves from the shame of peasant origins”. Likewise, Cole (2007: 951) believes that “through understanding from the perspective of the local population, the commodification of culture can be positive”. She states that the local population does not feel belittled or exploited because of the commodification of their place, but on the contrary, she claims that “tourism brings dignity and self-respect to the local population when it comes to their beliefs”. The peculiarity of the commodification of the brand of the area is reflected in the increasingly frequent organization of festival events, as a tool for promoting places, cities, regions. In their study of KDF (Kangnung Dano Festival), Jeong and Santos (2004: 640) come to similar conclusions as Cole, stating that “the debate over the promotion and commercialization of the area can empower groups on the margins of social events because their represented values in terms of commercialization, such as innovation, are more successful than the values of the dominant groups and fit better into the views on the importance of KDF”. McClinchey (2008: 251) conducting a discussion on the political dimension of four urban ethnic festivals in Toronto, defined that “key elements such as politics and image, social identity and reputation, cultural authenticity and differences among neighbours are of interest for festival promotion and marketing areas”. Therefore, if commodification is a *commodum publicum* (common good), it is certainly, welcome.

All stakeholders with the legitimacy of participation should be adequately involved in the process of branding a tourist destination. Giving arguments, a systematic approach to *mapping in stakeholder involvement* was given by Currie, Seaton and Wesley (2009: 41) noting that in the process of project planning and implementation, with the aim of creating balanced and sustainable tourism development more actors should participate. Yet one of the greatest contributions to the need for mapping and involving multiple actors in branding processes in their study is made by Rocha and Miles (2009: 445) claiming that “the sustainability of inter-organizational communities depends on how rich the set of assumptions about human nature is. ... For the

development and maintenance of collaborative capacity in inter-organizational communities is necessary to see own and other people's preferences as equal in order to avoid any instrumentalization of cooperation which would be an objective in itself". Actor mapping can be used not only within one but also between areas. It is not uncommon for destination branding to have opportunities for collaboration of multiple early areas (usually adjacent areas, but they don't have to be). One such international cooperation was a project of co-branding four countries, tourism organizations of Slovakia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands called "European Quartet one melody", which aimed to encourage tourists to visit all these countries, but also to stimulate tourism of Central Europe. Involvement of citizens, regarding their public engagement, is cited in the literature as one of the preconditions for a successful destination branding process. Authors such as Lane, Arnstein, and Pitner state that "...public engagement has become a central feature of the branding process" (2005: 283), "there are different stages of the process in which the public can be involved" (Arnstein, 1969: 216), "... a large number of situations in which the public can be involved: creating programs, collecting data, defining problems, choosing possible options, etc.". (Paitner, 1992: 24). However, one more thing to keep in mind, the local population is not always a homogeneous group that has different views and opinions about tourism. Sometimes there may be a deliberate decision to exclude certain groups from the destination brand development process.

Supporting the approach to sustainable tourism development is perhaps one of the biggest ethical challenges of today in the context of destination branding. Modern tourist trends include activities related to areas such as the Arctic or the Amazon, etc. Tourist experiences of this type, which are characterized as eco-tourism, if extended to more guests can lead to the emergence and worsening of environmental problems. (Hjalager, 1999: 4)

It is obvious that the process of branding a tourist destination is full of ethical challenges that respect local cultures, stimulate local participation, avoid campaigns that benefit certain groups and not the destination as a whole, and that the branding process turns to sustainable development. This burden of responsibility lies with policy makers who, faced with all these challenges, must take care of how this complex branding process can have a significant (positive or negative) impact on people who work, live, invest or use tourism services of tourist destination.

2.2. Leadership challenges

Brand leader is a common term when we talk about brand development and management. Here, in the first place, we mean the brand that is the market leader, but it also applies to brands that are creative and innovative. This is a relatively new concept in the context of the destination as a brand, and describes its development and management of the key actors of that destination, often in partnership with others.

Destinations should be led by leaders chosen by key actors, relevant and legitimate stakeholders who work together to realize the potential of the destination and create the destination brand itself. (Morgan et al., 2011: 107). In recent years, there has been a growing interest in destination leadership. All relevant sectors that should be involved in corporate brand development management should be instructed in the value of leadership. This type of leader is called “heroes” by Campbell (2008: 119). Joint leadership is indispensable in the efficient destination branding process and requires a high degree of cooperation between different sectors. Nye strongly advocates the use of “soft power” (let’s agree so that everyone benefits) versus “expressed power” (we will do as I say), concluding that “soft power” is much more effective and that it attracts others to your goal so it creates a common goal and purpose. It suggests the positive use of “soft power” through consultation and respect, which would lead to the engagement of other key stakeholders (Nye, 2004: 91). Leadership by destination should in no way mean the power of one leader, but on the contrary, the reciprocity of mutual relations and common capital and their proactive interaction.

In such a system, leaders face a whole range of different challenges, such as: identification of appropriate staff, successful negotiation policy, management of available strategy, efficient and practical brand presentation, monitoring and control. In order to cope with these challenges, they need to master new skills and behaviours, including: the ability to apply “soft power”, ambition and creativity in thinking, the ability to actively listen to others, preparedness and willingness to align private goals with other key stakeholders, the ability to collect and upgrade resources and the ability to live the brand and/or in accordance with the brand of the destination. Finally, leadership is not just the business of the public sector, but is a partnership of key stakeholders and

in that sense it should be formed by mobilizing and focusing on knowledge and resources in order to create their synergy effect.

2.3. Partnership challenges

Regardless of location, size or type, destinations are a kind of mix of numerous services. As such, they are, in themselves, a major challenge and difficult to manage. Therefore, cooperation and partnership, the factors that provide the foundation of the partnership structure, corporate approaches in branding and new ideas for joint destination management are very complex challenges facing the destination management.

In the literature, we do not encounter major disagreements about what needs to be done when managing destinations, but the bigger challenge is the ways in which it needs to be done. The need for cooperation, the creation of partnerships or joint business are not exclusively related to the tourism sector. However, what is special about tourism is the interdependence of different stakeholders, the relatively small volume of companies and market fragmentation (Soisalon-Soininen and Lindorff, 2006: 187). Thirty years ago, the power of joint action was recognized, and socio-economic changes have strongly encouraged an understanding of the importance of interdependence and joint engagement in decision-making in the tourism sector as well. A partnership approach to destination management certainly brings a number of benefits. Due to the larger number of stakeholders, the risk is reduced, the connection within the destination and between the two destinations is increased, the efficient and effective exchange of resources with the aim of mutual benefit. However, despite all the benefits it brings, partnerships between destinations are not common. There are certain limitations and obstacles to partnerships both within the destination and between the two destinations. Some of these limitations and obstacles are related to general mistrust, suspicion among partners, different approaches to management, differently set organizational structures, inability and/or unwillingness of different stakeholders to cooperate for economic, interpersonal and even political reasons. Taking into account all these obstacles and limitations, cooperation models should be considered, if for no reason, then due to the extreme complexity of the tourist destination (both supply and demand) exclusively free market mechanism alone is almost never sufficient as a *modus operandi* for destination management. This is supported by Wang's and Fessenmayer's study, which confirms the view of the

continued need for "...a significant degree of cooperation and coordination between a number of different actors in the destination's natural response to fragmented tourism markets" (Wang and Fessenmayer, 2007: 86). In order for the partnership to be successful in the long run, it is crucial to continuously develop and adopt management mechanisms and processes for the welfare and benefit of the destination and to achieve effective cooperation between stakeholders. When it comes to stakeholders, the partnership most often refers to the public and private sectors in order to use the opportunities of both sectors. Management options are numerous and different (eg "up-down", "down-up", combining, etc.), but it should also be noted that there is no single solution for each destination. However, in order to achieve long-term competitiveness, destinations are increasingly seeking to distance themselves from the government sector and address the needs of stakeholders, while creating stronger partnerships accepted by all stakeholders. Destinations find a common starting point in the gradual adoption of more "corporate" branding and destination management techniques (Morgan et al., 2011: 128). There are a numerous similarities number between corporate and destination branding such as: high-level governance, reliance on effective internal coordination and external compatibility, inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders in management processes and adequate communication between them. This, in turn, is the result of recognizing the maturity of the branding process as well as the need for a more professional linking of visions.

2.4. *The challenge of authenticity*

The term "authenticity" originates from the Latin word *auctor*, which means founder or - one who encourages growth. It shares the etymology with the Greek term *poeters* which means creator, author of the verb *poein* - to make, assemble. Thus, authenticity is what arises - and continues to exist - from the original act of creation (Morgan et al., 2011: 135). Authenticity is a new concept of modern research motivation of tourists which is in sociology tourism introduced by MacCannell. In socio-cultural research, authenticity is used in the context of meaning, originality, credibility and truthfulness (Vukonić and Čavlek, 2001: 27).

Following global processes, i.e. processes in which importance is given to the global in relation to the local, authenticity is observed with a certain dose of scepticism. However, authenticity is still of vital strategic interest, especially

considering the fact that there is a huge offer of destinations in the large tourist market today. In this sense, authenticity becomes one of the trump cards that emphasizes the difference between monotonous and unique (Pine and Gilmore, 2007: 41). Authenticity has two interrelated dimensions. The material dimension of authenticity refers to physical reality, and the intangible dimension of authenticity to the socio- cultural aspects of the destination.

The very challenge of authenticity is a strategic task of placing information about the lasting and specific qualities of products, people and destinations. It is based on a kind of obsession with the historical origin of things and the way in which that origin is constantly interpreted. The assumption that the original is better, encourages the idea that if tourists manage to get interested to experience the authenticity, there is an opportunity for their permanent use of the resources of convincing stories about the destination - performativity of authenticity (Morgan et al., 2011). The strength of the performativity of authenticity, in the first place, lies in the hint of overcoming less important and interesting everyday experiences.

The performativity of authenticity is tied to a unique and concrete object (historical monuments and buildings) which is in itself a proof of authenticity. Material objects and the way they are made, architecture, design are put in the forefront of the strategy of authenticity, manipulation of the physical environment becomes one of the key strategic instruments and finally, understanding the physical dimensions of the destination as the story of them become the key strategy (Graham et al., 2000: 157).

It is clear that authenticity strategies certainly have the potential to combine and harmonize the tangible and intangible aspects of a destination, and in this context, the challenge requires focusing on the performativity of authenticity. Although authenticity is often a contested term, when applied to destinations with a long tradition and rich history, it becomes an effective instrument of communication.

2.5. Aesthetic challenges

Experience tourism, lately, is moving this industry from traditional to tourism in which tourists are willing to pay a higher price for a service that has certain qualities.

Often aesthetic issues, even in public discussions, are viewed solely in the context of the appearance of things. However, they are not limited only by the

external qualities of the object, but there is also the so-called a deeper aesthetic that is essentially a truly aesthetic quality of life associated with feelings of satisfaction.

Aesthetics and the external environment have an impact on a number of elements that are considered as the source of competitiveness: (Morgan et al., 2011: 148) human well-being, regional feeling, reputation, quality of living environment, identity, image, and everyday happiness.

The goal of destination appearance management is to increase competitiveness by the very aesthetic appearance of the destination. This combines topography, general impression, presentation and management. The urban aesthetics developed by destination design management creates a foundation for differentiation and becomes a factor of competitiveness.

2.6. Challenges of communication tone

When it comes to challenging the tone of communication, it is expressed in the effort to ensure that brand strategies provide a framework for successful communication with the internal and external public. Destinations have a wide range of both positive and negative characteristics. Tourist organizations can have very little influence on the so-called “non-tourist factors”, which, in part, determine the overall appearance of the destination. However, there is always space and ways to neutralize, at least part, the negative aspect of the destination’s reputation which should go in the direction of strengthening and emphasizing the positive aspects of tourist experiences in order to more easily neutralize elements and phenomena that damage the destination’s reputation. The strength of the image, the superior identity, the good reputation, are some of the strongest trump cards used against the negative elements that damage the overall reputation of the destination.

Destination plan for tourism, in addition to all the essential elements of brand analysis, market observation, understanding the brand market and users, should emphasize the importance of the tone of communication and the content placed on market segments. It is necessary to take into account what is said and how it is said. Messages should sound natural, accessible and sincere. Interpretation should be in short sentences that stand out, e.g., a humorous tone aligned with the brand personality. Marketing communication should highlight the personal and specific and highlight all the real aspects of the brand. Finally, the brand strategy itself should provide the preconditions

for the success of marketing communication in terms of the smooth flow of real information to the internal and external public. It is necessary to develop clearer guidelines and the story of the brand in order to make it clearer for all actors.

The communication of the brand needs to be directed towards external markets as well as internal actors, without whose help they will not be able to promote the brand with quality.

2.7. Challenges of digitization

Thanks to digital channels and their development, revolutionary changes are taking place in relations with consumers, especially in their attitude towards the brand, communication with the brand and in the creation of the brand. As the media platform changes, so do the relationships of the brand's co-creators. This is all the more so because it is often necessary to reposition your place on the Internet in order to maintain a positive trend of brand competitiveness. Opportunities are in highlighting essential professional information and listing what web site users enter.

The literature detects four key areas of the challenge of digitization: (Morgan et al., 2011: 175-181)

- Content - The Internet provides a collaborative environment and ways need to be found in what way to strengthen and mobilize destination resources and meet marketing goals. Significant, quality and adequately networked content certainly increases the number of searches. Certain forms of integrated marketing communication should ensure that customer experiences are adequately presented and that the entire network of destination content adequately monitors the demand for destination services.
- Socialization - the process of getting acquainted with one's culture and way of life in it and acquiring knowledge about habits and skills necessary for functioning within the observed society. Increasingly, innovative ways are being found to attract tourists through private (own web-site), allotted (more community-oriented) and leased media (all those you pay to ensure greater attendance).
- Integration - The opportunities for tourists to come into contact with certain destinations, whether in the real and digital world, are almost countless today. The fragmented tourism market is always a complex challenge when it comes

to coordinating all activities and partners. The development of social media has resulted in revolutionary changes. Yet the conversations used by marketing professionals must be based on a strategic plan approach that implies a strategic approach to creating an integrated digital marketing communication.

- Measurement - new ways of functioning in the tourist markets imply new ways of assessing and measuring results. Internet communication measures the number of visits to the site, the amount of content viewed and the conversion on the site. Success depends on the quality of the network content and the type of conversation within the target market segments.

The primary goal is to adapt marketing strategies in a way that is responsible and sensitive to market changes, and to enable the organization to be flexible and to respond quickly and adequately to opportunities and threats.

2.8. The challenge of measurement

The end results of the destination branding process are to become better known for various specialties, to become more attractive and appealing to tourists and to attract more tourists. However, the destination branding process should be accompanied by observation, monitoring and evaluation activities.

When it comes to the brand, it is necessary to emphasize that the level of its recognisability is determined classic approaches:

- recognition - consumers are required, without suggestion, to name a brand in a category they are familiar with, and spontaneous brand recognition is expressed by the percentage of surveyed consumers who listed some of the brands
- dominant brand - asking the same questions, brand awareness is expressed by the percentage of respondents who list the brand that first comes to mind
- brand recall with assistance - respondents are introduced to a number of brands and this assisted brand information shows the percentage of respondents who stated (with assistance) how familiar they are with that brand (Laurent et al., 1995: 170)

Testing, i.e. research of the tourist market and target groups gives feedback and answers on the progress of target groups, but also on the progress of the destination, but it will certainly be useful for planning actions in the future. The tested audience, i.e. market segments should be both relevant and as broad as possible, and the ways of conducting research should be guided by the principles of openness and simplicity, reality and accessibility. Surveys should

not be boring, and even elements of education are desirable. Respondents should be left enough time for the survey. It is not out of place to set up a survey in a way that examines certain hypotheses. Market research is a process and therefore, it is not necessary to evaluate a set of results, but to unify the process. It is desirable to be imaginative, creative, innovative and set up research in a way that you use it directly for promotional purposes.

Reckless research is unnecessary, and too much of it is even meaningless and makes sense if it is necessary. Active and passive research, if conducted in an adequate manner and thoughtfully for sure, shows whether the ideas of the set strategy lead to results and how much the opinion of tourists about the observed destination is in line with the wishes and expectations of key stakeholders.

Conclusion

In the modern market environment, on the supply side there are various tourist destinations, and on the demand side there are a large number of different types of tourists - potential users of these tourist destinations with their motives, desires, preferences and even prejudices.

Destinations seek to attract potential users of their services, future tourists, and tourists try to create relationships with tourist destinations - a brand, rather than with anonymous geographical areas. In this effort to become successful, to be accepted by potential service users and the desire for profit are some of the more important goals of the destination. Tourist destinations should be able to create a product more acceptable than the products of competitors, create value for the user and even create a new market. Those who succeed in creating added value, uniqueness through their brand, offer something new that will not only satisfy the needs of users, but also arouse their enthusiasm and desire for experiences.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country with a very complex organizational structure and constitutional competencies, which are often an obstacle to political and economic development. When trying to enter the branding process of individual regions in the context of a tourist destination, in the very creation of this process and its implementation, key actors, relevant and legitimate stakeholders of the destination are faced with numerous challenges. The two

entities, the district, ten counties, the lack of legislation in the tourism sector, the lack of DMO, are part of the challenges facing key actors in the tourism industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina. When it comes to attempts to brand Herzegovina as a tourist destination, geographical location, climate, natural attractions, gastronomic offer, cultural and historical heritage, are a great pledge for a serious approach to creating a branding process. However, in addition to all the aforementioned obstacles, the lack of vision and mission, as well as unclearly set goals and the absence of adequate strategic goals, resulted in the absence of the destination branding process itself. The only right way, on the way to creating a brand of Herzegovina as a tourist destination, is to set a project task that will: identify key actors, objectively look at the reputation, identity, international image of the destination, shape its vision and mission, realistically and transparently set goals, devise a strategy and create a branding process. The process itself, in addition to the eight key branding challenges identified in this paper, is likely to identify some more specific challenges that will need to be overcome for the branding process to succeed and as such be the basis for adequate management and desired commercialization. In addition, it is necessary to take into account the contemporary context in which today's destination branding processes are located. Democratic processes, globalization, regionalism, and the Internet have radically changed the historical context. People move a lot more today, they get information easily, they are more curious and they are looking for something new again. All this leads to an increase in demand for tourist destination branding programs incomparably more than before.

Successful branding should create a strong sense of belonging to the branded destination by the internal public and produce creative and innovative ideas to the external public, which will certainly result in a positive perception of Herzegovina as a tourist destination.

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IZAZOVI PROCESA BRENDIRANJA TURISTIČKIH DESTINACIJA – TURISTIČKA DESTINACIJA HERCEGOVINA

Sažetak

Svjedoci smo vremena koje mnogi nazivaju „vremenom promjena“. Ovo vrijeme karakteriziraju novi ekonomski odnosi, digitalizacija, internet, ekonomija iskustva itd. Trendovi ovoga vremena i ove vrste ekonomije toliko su dinamični i promjenjivi da se postavlja logično pitanje treba li ih promatrati, istraživati i apostrofirati kao pravila s nekim dugoročnim značenjem.

Svijet je na vrhu četvrte industrijske revolucije. Svi oni koji su započeli procese digitalizacije moraju je hitno privesti kraju, a oni koji to nisu, vrlo brzo neće biti na relevantnim kartama globalnih procesa.

Kvaliteta i prilagodljivost nalaze se na vrhu globalne piramide trendova, a uspjeh je zajamčen samo onima koji inovacijama i kreativnošću uspiju stvoriti proizvode, odnosno usluge koje će biti obilježene i koje će se prilagođavati i poprimati kvalitete ometača koji su već postali najmoćnijim dionicima globalnih ekonomskih procesa.

Brendiranje turističke destinacije dugo je bilo jedna od presudnih sastavnica strategije stjecanja konkurentne prednosti na sve izazovnijim turističkim tržištima. Suvremen holistički pristup vođenju procesa do postavljena cilja podrazumijeva upravljanje procesima na trima razinama: na razini strateškoga upravljanja, na razini marketinškoga upravljanja i na razini upravljanja robnom markom. Sasvim je jasno da se brendiranje turističke destinacije ne izdvaja iz cijeloga procesa, napose ako uzmemo u obzir složene interakcije unutar svake turističke destinacije.

Za turističke destinacije u nastajanju, poput turističke destinacije Hercegovina, presudno je imati pravu viziju, definirati misiju, postaviti ciljeve i upravljati procesima stvaranja jedinstvenoga identiteta Hercegovine kao turističke destinacije vodeći pritom brigu o pravilnu uspostavljanju okomite i vodoravne koordinacije između prijevoznika i sudionika u procesu brendiranja. Na tom putu svi se sudionici suočavaju s nizom izazova na koje ćemo ukazati u ovome radu na temelju dostupne znanstvene literature. Proces brendiranja turističke destinacije Hercegovina ima oblik znanstveno utemeljena i praktično prihvaćena rada koji će u konačnici poslužiti mapiranju ove turističke destinacije na svjetskoj mapi turističkih destinacija i postati turistički željenom destinacijom.

Ključne riječi: *brend; postupak brendiranja; turistička destinacija; izazovi; upravljanje; marketing; komunikacija.*