

Chapter 1

The Building and Management of the Nation Brand: The Example of Poland

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ABSTRACT

The primary goal of this chapter is to analyze the issue of building and management of a brand based on the example of the nation brand of Poland. This chapter consists of two complementary parts: theoretical and empirical. The starting point for a theoretical discussion is to show the specificity of the nation brand in relation to the corporate brand. The above-mentioned issues are presented through the key theories and models based on the literature studies. The second part of this chapter is empirical and was based on the case study of building the brand for Poland. Poland, as one of the first countries in Central Europe, took on the challenge to build the nation brand. This program, although modified several times, has been carried out since the beginning of 1990s in the last century to the present day. The empirical part of this chapter focuses not only on describing the actions taken but also on showing their effects.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization manifested, inter alia, in: the uniformity of consumption patterns, technical standardization of products, dynamic flow of funding for the commencement and development of business activities, transferring of the direct investment flow towards the highly developed nation and regional markets and the increase of scale of cross-border mergers and company buyouts, the nation brand is becoming particularly important.

The starting point for a theoretical discussion is to show the specificity of the nation brand in relation to the corporate brand. The specificity is a result of:

- The need to build correlated and mutually supportive, though not identical, images of a country addressed to different target groups (e.g. external recipient: tourist vs. investor vs. the government representative, internal recipient)

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- The complexity of the areas on which the brand is based,
- The need to consider objective variables, such as a country history, its geographical location, size and terrain, climate, natural resources, etc., as well as variables that are uncontrolled or difficult to control, such as the behavior of politicians,
- The collective character of a brand, which is to support corporate and regional brands (regions and towns), and which, on the other hand, draws from these brands.

The purpose of the case study is to present the objectives of the nation program of building the nation brand, to discuss the process and results of the research on the image of Poland and the Polish people, to present the action plan in this area, including the determination of the key idea, to develop basic identification logos to identify Poland in various areas (tourism brand, promotional emblems, visualization of the state institutions and key events, such as The Chopin Year, Presidency of the EU and Euro 2012), to carry out primarily the manner of communicating the brand and the distribution of responsibilities, and finally to control the results allowing to assess the current brand image.

BACKGROUND

The concept of building and the management of the nation brand appeared in the literature at the turn of the 20th and 21st century. As early as in 1990, M. Porter conducting discussions on building the nation competitive advantage, saw the country brand as a tool for building and supporting such advantage (Porter, 1990). This concept raised further interest in Europe no sooner than after Anholt and Olins' publications, (Anholt 1998; 2002) and Olins (1999; 2002). The first of the above-mentioned authors is considered the creator of the nation brand concept. In his view, the necessity to think

in terms of the nation brand and its management is the result of the globalization processes that force countries, regions and towns to compete with one another for the limited resources in the form of investment, tourists and well-educated employees (Anholt, 2002). Countries that fail to build a strong and positive reputation will gradually be marginalized because they will not be recognized by the international buyers and will not support the activities of commercial entities. Therefore, the priority for the further development of a country is the development of its strong and attractive brand. (Akotia, et. al., 2011).

There are many definitions of a country nation brand. Their analysis allows to distinguish two perspectives: the perspective of the addresser and the perspective of the recipient. From the addresser's point of view the nation brand is a manifestation of the nation identity.

From the recipient's point of view, the nation brand is synonymous with the image of the country in the eyes of its own citizens and the groups of stakeholders from the outside. The authors advocate an approach based on both of these perspectives, because only such a holistic approach to the subject allows for a comprehensive analysis of the issue.

According to Anholt (2000) the nation brand is well understood by consumers around the world, has long-established identity and can work just as effectively as an indicator of product quality, a definer of image and target market. According to Olins "the nation brand is a contemporary cultural phenomenon of a great importance and power, it absorbs and includes, as in a nutshell, a wealth of achievements, actions and promises that a country and the nation offer to their recipients (Olins, 2004, p 250). Delorie defines a country brand as the nation identity that has been pro-actively distilled, interpreted, internalized among the citizens and projected for international recognition to construct a favorable nation image, and enhance a nation's competitiveness (Akotia, et. al., 2011). According to the Institute of Pol-

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