

Chapter 5

Culture and the City: Rebranding “Tough Cities” Through Arts and Culture – The Case of Matera 2019

Marta Massi

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Italy

Chiara Piancatelli

SDA Bocconi School of Management, Italy

Sonia Pancheri

IULM University, Italy

ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on the case of Matera, one of the less developed cities in the South of Italy, known as the “shame of Italy” for many years, which has recently been selected by the Council of European Ministers to be the European Capital of Culture in 2019. Matera 2019 has been chosen to illustrate how arts and culture can be particularly critical drivers of rebranding and repositioning of “tough” cities. The chapter emphasizes how the contribution of the city private and public stakeholders has played a crucial role in the rebranding process. Through in-depth interviews with two of main stakeholders involved in the development of the Matera 2019 concept (i.e., the Director of the Matera 2019 Committee, Paolo Verri, and the Mayor of the city, Raffaello De Ruggieri), this chapter will provide practical insights for arts and culture-based rebranding aimed at repositioning a place that has a reputation of “tough” city.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7253-4.ch005

INTRODUCTION

Place branding has long been recognized as a win-win strategy allowing for the creation of competitive advantages for many stakeholders, including public managers, businesses, institutions, and citizens. While the promotion of places has always been used by public administrators as a source of profit, the systematic application of marketing strategies, and particularly branding, to places and the development of “a philosophy of place management” can be regarded as a recent phenomenon (Ashworth & Voogd, 1994, p. 39; Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008; Kavaratzis, 2012; Govers, Kaefer & Ferrer-Roca, 2017).

Owing to the global increasing competition for inward investment, the falling cost of international travel, and the rising consumer spending power, places and territories are more and more conceived of as brands to compete in an increasingly competitive marketplace (Kotler & Gertner, 2002).

Due to its ability to change individuals’ perceptions about a city, place branding can be particularly effective to reposition cities that have not been traditionally perceived in a positive way by tourists and visitors. In this process, arts and culture can represent extraordinary resources to rebrand places that have traditionally been perceived as ‘tough’ cities by tourists. Indeed, ‘tough cities’ with a record of violent crimes, delinquency and unemployment can particularly benefit from place branding strategies based on arts and culture (Jenkins, 2014), i.e., a universal language that speaks of authenticity, beauty and heritage. A language that almost anybody can relate to and understand. The immediate connection that arts and culture can create with individuals is more powerful than any other codes and can allow for an immediate identification with universal values.

An institution that allows cities to reposition themselves based on arts and culture, and “drive social legacies, job creation and civic repositioning” is the European Capital of Culture (Aquilino et al., 2018). Launched in 1985 by the European Council of Ministers, the European Capital of Culture provides European cities with the opportunity to display their cultural dimension for one year. Several European cities have taken advantage of this institution to completely transform their cultural base and have benefited from participating in this initiative, especially in terms of international image. Thus, the European Capital of Culture has proved to be a very useful initiative to focus on in order to examine how culture can reshape the brand of a place.

There are plenty of examples of European Capitals of Culture that have benefited from rebranding processes that leveraged arts and culture. Glasgow, Scotland, is probably the most evident example of the evolution from a ‘city with problems’ - with “a history of long-term economic and industrial decline” and issues of unemployment, poverty, deprivation and slum housing– to a ‘vibrant’, ‘post-industrial’, ‘fashionable’

22 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/culture-and-the-city/220101

Related Content

Developing and Implementing a Selection Model of Brand TV Commercial Script for a Real Estate Agency

Pi-Fang Hsu, Hung-Yu Chuehand Chia-Wen Tsai (2017). *Advertising and Branding: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 528-548).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/developing-and-implementing-a-selection-model-of-brand-tv-commercial-script-for-a-real-estate-agency/175237

Facebook eWOM: Self-Shared Versus System-Generated Credibility Cue

Payal S. Kapoor, K R. Jayasimha, Srinivas Guntaand Ashish Sadh (2019). *International Journal of Online Marketing* (pp. 23-48).

www.irma-international.org/article/facebook-ewom/231832

Evaluating the Success of the Economic and Premium Private Labels in Retailers Positioned at the Opposite Ends of the Price-Quality Axis

Önder Kethüda (2020). *Improving Marketing Strategies for Private Label Products* (pp. 83-109).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/evaluating-the-success-of-the-economic-and-premium-private-labels-in-retailers-positioned-at-the-opposite-ends-of-the-price-quality-axis/236004

Service Quality Dimensionality in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): An Analytical Approach from Students' Perspective

B. Shanmuga Priyaand M. Jeyakumaran (2015). *International Journal of Technology and Educational Marketing* (pp. 60-77).

www.irma-international.org/article/service-quality-dimensionality-in-higher-education-institutions-heis/129775

An Empirical Examination of Saudi Consumers Attitudes Towards Online Shopping

Raja Yahya Alshariefand Felwa Al-Saadi (2017). *International Journal of Online Marketing* (pp. 57-80).

www.irma-international.org/article/an-empirical-examination-of-saudi-consumers-attitudes-towards-online-shopping/181558