

# Chapter 60

## Steps toward a City Marketing Mix and Its Perception Measurement

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### ABSTRACT

*Cities compete for limited resources and face various challenges. Changing conditions have increased awareness and interest in city marketing. However, in order to achieve a competitive advantage in the acquisition of investments, tourism and community development, change in the city marketing mix is most important. Marketing experts transferred general marketing concepts to be within the scope of cities, but due to the complexity of the structure of the city, the best model in the context of marketing mix has still not been found. Any attempt in this direction is therefore theoretically and practically relevant. This paper aims to encompass various perspectives and introduces a city marketing mix, which takes into account the complexity, functionality and structure of the cities. It also presents a measurement instrument of city marketing mix that can be used as a sophisticated tool to satisfy the needs of city residents, who are considered to be the most valuable assets of the city.*

### INTRODUCTION

Cities on a global market compete for limited and valuable economic, human, social and cultural resources. Simultaneously there are challenging changing demographics, the ageing of their populations, with the vanishing urban-rural divide and a limited capacity for absorbing an influx (rapid urbanization) of new residents (Anholt, 2007; Kotler et al, 1999; Hoornweg et al, 2006). Although every city wishes to assert their uniqueness and pursue various economic, political or socio-psychological objectives (Kavaratzis

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-2469-5.ch060

& Ashworth, 2005) it is very hard to manage this due to their complexity denoting diversity of culture, interest, and kaleidoscopic fuzzy nature.

This rapidly changing context for cities has increased awareness of and interest in city marketing. Specialists from different areas of marketing have seen a void in the field of city marketing and have redesigned their general marketing concepts in relation to regions and countries. Currently city marketing literature considers how cities as social units market themselves and how target markets make their choices in designing and distributing a place's image. It also evaluates and utilizes the most critical success factors in city marketing becoming an effective tool of local economic development and competitiveness.

But the critics in city marketing literature have shown that only a few authors have given much thought to the cities themselves or most of the theoretical ones and the practitioners have just considered the city as spatially extended products that require little special attention as a consequence of their spatiality (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005). According to Berg et al. (1990, p. 5), city marketing cannot be unreservedly compared with other forms of marketing due to the complexity of cities, their attributes and characteristics. Criticisms related also to politicians who seem to consider city marketing to be, first and foremost, a tool to promote the attractiveness of a locality for tourism purposes (Hospers, 2011). Consequently, a lot of attention is paid to the visual representation of the city by means of pictures, logos and slogans. But we must be aware that this "promotion perspective", as Hospers defines it (p. 370), is only a fraction of the whole city-marketing exercise. In addition this promotional view often ignores the fact that the greatest ambassadors for a city are the residents themselves. That is why we argue that more attention should be dedicated to mechanisms which can help us to evaluate the perception of the city by its residents and to discover how the image of the city is created or changed (Sainz, 2012).

The basis of these mechanisms are distinctive and essential elements which need to be identified and taken into account. Identifying those elements that can be managed and combined within a marketing program is the first and essential step within the whole marketing effort for the cities. These elements are an integral part of the marketing mix. Identifying these elements can help significantly in the process of creating a vision and goals for the individual city and also for achieving co-operation and agreement from as broad a range of stakeholders as possible (Kavaratzis, 2008).

The determination of what the city marketing mix should be and what its elements are is a necessary, difficult and complex task (Kavaratzis, 2008). And according to Rainisto (2003, p. 17) the best practice has not yet been attained and in current literature there is no attempt to be seen to create a measurement instrument that would evaluate the residents perception of the city marketing mix. There is a still need for additional discussion and modelling in this regard.

There are several disciplines that focus on cities, such as Cultural Mapping and Planning (Bianchini, 2004; Bianchini & Ghilardi, 2007); Urban Planning (Davidoff, 1965); Urban and Regional Studies (Ward, 1998; Hayden, 1997); Urban Sociology (Wirth, 1938; Simmel, 1971); Philosophy (Speller, 2000); Environmental Psychology (Proshansky, 1978; Giuliani, 2003; Lalli, 1992; Uzzell et al, 2002); Humanistic Geography (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1974); Tourism and Destination marketing & branding (Lew 1987; Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Gunn, 1988; Lumsdon, 1997; Wall & Mathieson, 2006) and city marketing (Berg et al, 1990; Kotler et al, 1993, 1999; Metaxas, 2002; Rainisto, 2003; Kavaratzis, 2004, 2008; Braun, 2008; Deffner & Metaxas, 2008; Ashworth & Voogd, 1990). All of these disciplines are very important in order to understand the city as a living organism, especially for marketing purposes.

The first part of the paper introduces an overview of the literature on city marketing mix, followed by an introduction of a new conceptualization of a city marketing mix, proceeding from the city itself and of what the city consists, considering all the functions that city offers. The forth part is dedicated to

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