

# The Development of an Evaluative Framework for Place Branding

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## Abstract

Today, cities, regions and even countries across the entire world develop strategies for the development of their competitive advantage against others but very often their success is being judged by public or media so it has become important to measure the effectiveness of such activities. The primary aim of this study is to justify the need for the place branding evaluation as well as describe the development of the tool for this task. Despite the existing literature, there is a lack of a coherent model to evaluate place brands and sparse guidance on how to create one, therefore the success or failure of a brand is generally left open to interpretation. Branding models presented in academic papers to date are development and descriptive models. Furthermore, it is not clear what to measure (which variables) when analysing branding; the existing models for place branding do not provide such suggestions and authors describing branding examples do not propose any methodologies on how to evaluate success of branding initiatives. They are currently based on open criticism, thus there is a need for an evaluative framework. Similar fields like place marketing, destination branding, corporate, services and product branding were reviewed along with destination case studies. Based on this review, a framework for evaluation of place branding in the context of city was formulated. It is suggested to be implemented as soon as a new brand for a place is created or it can be possibly used as a consultation tool when preparing to design a new brand. Successful branding of places is dependent on several inter-related components, which are discussed. The paper highlights key issues in place branding and provides a platform for future research.

**Keywords:** place branding, evaluation of place branding, success of branding

## 1. Introduction

Each place, be it a country, region, city-region, town or district, performs many different domestic and foreign objectives: these include investment attraction, international competition, attractive internal services, etc. According to Moilanen and Rainisto (2009) there are more than 300 cities in the world and more than 500 regions and 100,000 various communities in Europe aiming to stand out from competitors and developing appropriate self-promotion strategies. “Each place needs its own solutions to be successful” (Rainisto, 2003). One such tool is place branding. “An improved “brand” perception, reinforced by visual evidence of improvements within the city” (Trueman *et al.*, 2004) (pp317), can increase its overall attractiveness as well as performance in relation to other cities. In terms of place, branding helps to differentiate and promote the place as well as compete with other places (Bennett and Savani, 2003), enhance civic pride if used effectively (Williams, 1994). Very often post-industrial cities use branding to re-launch themselves. Williams (1994) claims that “cities have lost their sense of industrial identity” and are “taking lessons from the growing success of national branding”. Bennett and Savani (2003) cite West (1997) that “almost every” major post-industrial town or city in Britain (e. g., Manchester, Leeds or Newcastle), “...has attempted to reinvent or reposition itself by adopting marketing techniques lifted straight from the brand manager’s handbook” (pp71).

Place branding as a new phenomenon has its associated problems and areas for development. One of them is the growing need for the evaluation of branding initiatives for places including cities. It has become important to measure and justify the effectiveness of such activities. There is currently a lack of a coherent model on how to evaluate brands as well as sparse guidance on how to create an evaluative framework for place brand; it is not clear what to measure.

The purpose of this study is to describe the development of an evaluative framework for place branding in the context of city branding. This publication aims to provide technicality of brand development and evaluation. It starts by exploring the need for an evaluative framework, and continues by describing the development of a framework for evaluation of place branding. The framework model is finally presented.

## 2. The need for an evaluative framework

Over recent years, businesses as well as cities have recognised the importance of intangible assets in addition to their functional features. In other words, understanding what products (services) mean to customers is as important as what they can do for them. According to literature, the most common measurement for the branding of companies is financial value. However, Haigh (2007) states that investors account for only under 25% of a business as tangible assets, while intangible assets represent 75%. The metrics for place branding are more complex because of the intangible variables. The vast number and changing nature of variables in branding makes this task even more difficult. One event, such as riots (e. g., the Oldham riots in North Manchester in 2001) can dramatically change people’s perceptions over night. Furthermore, according to Balakrishnan (2009) “a destination

brand name is an intangible asset with unique attributes and must be protected and managed strategically to maximize value” (pp622). More too, places are constantly evolving and are looking for innovative ways to express themselves and inform the world, with branding being one of them. In both cases, corporate and place branding evaluation should inform its developers whether it is successful enough which then would help to decide on future strategies. Haigh (2007) describes the branding process as the transformation of essentially functional assets into relationship assets by providing the basis for a psychological connection between the brand and the customer. Relationship between the brand and the customer is the core in place branding and is the topic of this thesis. Furthermore, Rainisto (2004) claims “in order for the branding in place marketing to succeed, branding must be the responsibility of the top management and involve all the levels and stakeholders of a place” (pp218).

Today, cities, regions and even countries across the entire world develop strategies for the development of their competitive advantage against others but very often their success is being judged by public or media. Currently, the success or failure of a brand is generally left open to much interpretation. For example, in Danish city Randers the anti-branding logo was produced as the outcome of misunderstanding between citizens and Municipality about brand values and personality (Jensen, 2005). In contrast to Randers, New Zealand and New York seem to have long-lasting and very strong brands that are known worldwide. Manchester has changed radically throughout the decades and has developed so many different branding initiatives but still does not have clear image and in particular is a complex case. At the same time New York or Coca-Cola, for example, have enjoyed successful, long-lasting and well-known brands with only minor changes throughout years, whilst Manchester has still not found its base yet. The question is: why? What determines/ influences the success of such initiatives? It is a difficult question to answer because each place is unique with its own vision and complex of constantly changing branding variables. More too, places are constantly evolving themselves. Evaluation should inform brand developers whether the branding initiative is successful enough to be implemented, however there are no clear methodologies on how to do this.

There is a growing body of literature on place branding (Hankinson, 2001, 2004; Rainisto, 2003; Trueman *et al.*, 2004; Moilanen and Rainisto, 2009; etc.). However, empirical research and critical discussion is needed to support the place branding approach. Despite the existing literature, there is sparse guidance on how to create an evaluative tool for place branding, therefore the success or failure of a brand is generally left open to interpretation. There are some branding models presented in academic papers (for example, see de Chernatony and McWilliam, 1989; Cai, 2002; Hankinson, 2004; Trueman *et al.*, 2004; Virgo and de Chernatony, 2005; Tasci and Kozak, 2006), however, these are development and descriptive models, and there is generally no one comprehensive and universally accepted model. They do add value to the existing knowledge base, as each of them, provide a unique perspective on branding but the question that remains is: is there a comprehensive way to measure the success of place brand? The existing models do not provide any suggestions on what to measure. Thus, a need for a new framework emerges – a framework which would address this issue. Thus, there is a lack of a coherent model to evaluate brands – thus, this is the focus of this study. Branding initiatives are currently based on open criticism and do not relate back to their original objectives. Furthermore, authors describing branding examples (Cai, 2002; Trueman *et al.*, 2004; Jensen, 2005; Hospers, 2006; Kavartzis and Ashworth, 2007; Florek and Insch, 2008; Greenberg, 2008; Chan,

2008) do not propose clear methodologies on how to evaluate success of branding initiatives; they do not evaluate if brands have achieved their aims. Hence there is a need for evaluative framework.

The literature review highlighted the lack of social capital in the existing branding models which is probably the most important factor in branding. Merrilees *et al.* (2008) state that city branding is targeted at the residents of the city (and potential residents) as well as businesses to inform them that it is a place to live and invest. “People are a key driver of services and destination marketing and brand perception” (Balakrishnan, 2008) (pp83). Despite the fact that Hankinson (2004) and Haigh (2007) recognised this issue and analysed brands from the relationship between the brand and the customer point of view, Merrilees *et al.* (2007) argued that residents’ perspectives have been overlooked in literature. For example, in the Manchester case, Mancunians were not involved in the development of the latest branding campaign for Manchester despite AGMA (n. D.) claims that people are at the heart of the vision. This occurrence raises all sorts of questions, such as: do people really matter, what is their role in branding, can they influence/ contribute to the success of place brand, how success can be measured, etc.

The brand evaluation framework could be used by clients/ designers to evaluate the success of the newly designed brand idea and will help to address the plethora of rhetorical questions raised. I believe that this study would help the Council and other bodies involved in decision making related to the branding of the city to develop more targeted campaigns.

### **3. The development of the framework**

The brand evaluation framework (Figure 1) is proposed to measure the success of place brand. It has three constituent components: vision, brand elements in the literature (in the context of the city) and people’s perceptions.

The brand evaluation framework adopts a similar structure to Andy Neely’s performance prism (Neely and Adams, 2002) which represents five perspectives on performance and guides which metrics to measure in business performance. Similarly as the performance prism, the brand evaluation framework demonstrates the complexity of brand elements and is designed to help understanding what could be measured. It also incorporates the idea of the feedback after the brand is developed in de Chernatony’s (2001) model “Process for building and sustaining brands” (pp34) and Balakrishnan’s (2008) figure “Key components for destination branding” (pp67). This is important in order to sustain brands which is the aim of any place practicing such activities.

The framework could be implemented as soon as new brand for a place is created or it can be used as a consultation tool when preparing to design a new brand. It can be used by anyone involved with the new branding initiative but it is primarily targeted as a tool for the brand client/ designer. It is anticipated that the brand evaluation framework will assist the client/ designer in assessing whether the newly created brand is successful; whether it is recognised and relevant. By auditing the new brand using this model, the client/ designer can better appreciate its strengths and weaknesses. From this analysis they can start to consider how this brand can better protect its market position and realise

the appropriateness of created strategies. It should help to establish whether people performing different roles in the place (e. g., living or visiting) have the same understanding of newly created brand for it. The brand evaluation framework is valuable for its ability to take views of various groups of customers in terms of age, gender, their status in the city, etc, and to help these users, whom will have very little or varied knowledge on what to measure in assessing brands.

## 4. The framework elements

The framework to evaluate place branding for cities (Figure 1) consists mainly of four elements: brand, vision, brand components and people's perceptions.

Place brand is the subject of this research, the starting point of which is vision because each place needs to know where it is going and what aims has. Place brand consists of a number of different variables and various authors suggest using a combination of them. As a brand name, as stated by Tasci and Kozak (2006), emerges from the level of satisfaction, past visits and word-of-mouth recommendations (this is especially important for tourist destinations), people's perceptions need to be observed as well as they might provide useful insights into brand development. The framework elements are explained and described in detail in the sections below.

### 4.1 Brand

Brand is the key component in the proposed framework. Any place, be it city, region or country aspiring to be successful within today's environment must have a clear picture of what it wants to achieve and how it wants to be perceived, which is reflected in place brand. This should be done in a unique and memorable way in order to leave good impression because the main aims of branding are to increase attractiveness and inform the world, for example, the branding initiative for Aalborg was criticised for being too generic, with broad values and no future actions (Jensen, 2005) while "Medicon Valley" for the Oresund region associates with "Silicon Valley" for knowledge region in the US (Hospers, 2006). According to De Chernatony (2001), brand essence or its core can be derived from brand promise using the brand pyramid: personality traits (on top of the pyramid), emotional rewards and values, benefits and attributes (at the bottom of the pyramid).

Brand creates the identity for the city. It can be expressed in various formats, such as logo, slogan, strategy document, and other graphics but has to differentiate, create memorable experience, enhance emotional connection and positively influence consumer (Blain *et al.*, 2005). The key stakeholders and target markets should be able to recognise this brand. For this reason, brand evaluation framework has been created. It is aimed at gaining people's perceptions on the brand which will provide then brand developer with an insight whether people can recognise and accept it. The framework should be used when a new brand has been developed (or perhaps prior to it as a consultation measure), whether in draft form or final version. Each brand needs to have a vision which is the subject of the next section.

## 4.2 Vision

Vision is a key parameter in brand. Vision for the place is fundamental in the branding process and competitive environment. Each place must clearly know which direction it is going to. Balakrishnan (2009) argues that a vision is starting point of designing a branding strategy. A vision dictates the strategy for a city and is the starting point in city development as well as the marketing process. Without a coherent vision, it is impossible to develop a brand for the place as well as define its aims and strategies. It can be described as a long-term goal which translates into the brand promise (Balakrishnan, 2008). A vision for a city describes its aspirations and is very often aimed to be attractive depending on the target market. The “vision must embrace existing culture and work to balance any negative effects” Balakrishnan (2009) (pp621). A strong vision incorporates history and geographic areas and makes it more accessible by building infrastructure (Balakrishnan, 2008), for example, the branding of the Oresund region was praised for building upon unique regional assets and symbolised by visible objects such as the Oresund bridge (Hospers, 2006).

According to (Balakrishnan, 2008), the vision must balance all stakeholder needs “to make the destination branding strategy a success” (pp76) (for example, idea of Bradford as “city of culture” was not supported by local businesses (Trueman *et al.*, 2004)). Balakrishnan (2008) argues that people need to own the vision because they are the key drivers of the place brand, but this seems to be a challenge for many places. Furthermore, when developing a vision, Balakrishnan (2009) suggests that governing bodies should consider what relationships they want to develop with customers (internal and external) and what products /services they want to offer, identify key target customers (for example, Kavartzis and Ashworth (2007) criticised “I Amsterdam” for not reflecting all the selected target groups as well as not expressing the core values). Relationship with customers was also mentioned in de Chernatony’s and Segal-Horn’s (2003) model as well as in Muzellec’s and Lambkin’s (2009) model proving to be important part of the branding process. Jensen (2005) suggests describing clearly consumers of city brand and receivers of the branding message to avoid “anti-branding” campaigns as happened in the city of Randers. Virgo and de Chernatony (2005) argue that the brand values of brand steerers must be incorporated and acted on in a co-ordinated manner in order to succeed. In case of product branding, de Chernatony (2001) suggests auditing corporation, distributors, customers, competitors and microenvironment in order to create more powerful strategies. The same idea should obviously be applied to place branding.

Sometimes a vision can also prompt ideas for the brand of city (logo, slogan, symbol). Destination limitations must be considered in the vision (Balakrishnan, 2008) as well as practical problems and critical issues as suggested by Jensen (2005). Hankinson (2004) suggested that the core brand may be the vision and it represents “a place’s identity, the blueprint for developing and communicating the place brand” (Hankinson, 2004) (pp115).

De Chernatony (2001) describes three components of brand vision which obviously can be adopted to place vision as well: envisioned future (assumptions for the future), brand purpose (considers how the place is going to be better because of the brand), brand values (drive people’s behaviour). Every brand also has its objectives. De Chernatony (2001) divides them into long-term and short-term. Balakrishnan (2009) summarised the literature on vision in table 1:

Table 1: Vision in the Literature (Balakrishnan, 2009)

<i>Component</i>	<i>Sub-categories</i>	<i>Author</i>
<i>Vision</i>	<i>Vision, mission, heritage and culture, people and values, philosophy</i>	<i>Balakrishnan, 2008; Rangan et al., 2006; Wong et al., 2006; Aaker, 2004; Trueman et al., 2004; Davis, 2002; Javalgi and White, 2002; Balmer, 2001; de Chernatony, 1999; de Chernatony and Riley, 1998</i>
	<i>Country of origin/reputation/credibility of brand (destination) name, tourism quality</i>	<i>Balakrishnan, 2008; Eraqi, 2006; Rangan et al., 2006; Trueman et al., 2004; Thakor and Lavack, 2003; Beverland, 2001; de Chernatony, 1999; Herbig and Milewicz, 1997</i>

The table above lists sub-categories of vision which gives a sketch of what could be included in it. Obviously this list could be used as a guide when developing a vision for a place. These elements put in context could be incorporated in any vision.

After examining various destination case studies and academic articles, Balakrishnan (2009) outlined six key drivers which motivate vision: economic, services, transit hub, retail, trade, tourism. These drivers outline the character of a vision. They can be inter-related and can be used as a guide when choosing the trend of the vision. In other words, a vision of any place can look at these drivers for its branding strategy.

Virgo and de Chernatony (2005) and Balakrishnan (2008) recognised the importance of vision in the branding process and analysed it in detail providing practical examples of Birmingham and Dubai. Virgo and de Chernatony (2005) proposed using the Delphi process to create a single brand vision which enables to define future for the city, brand purpose and values. It was tested on Birmingham; the vision for Birmingham was defined as well as some gaps and areas for improvement discovered, for example, the gap between the poor image and the reality of an economically sound, forward looking and positive city needs to be eliminated, value to employment in the city added (Virgo and de Chernatony, 2005). Dubai has a strong vision but needs to integrate and balance the pace of progress of all components of its vision.

### 4.3 Brand components

It is difficult to evaluate place brand because of the number of different variables associated. There are more variables that are not only the symbol, logo and slogan for creating the place brand. All of them, according to Gnoth (2002), contribute to the determination and shape of the identity.

Furthermore, it is not clear what to measure. People's opinions differ on how important each element is. A thorough review of the literature can provide guidance. Brand components found in literature and in the context of the tested city will only be suggestive and will serve as a guideline for the interviewer and the interviewees in the survey. A list of elements can also be used by brand client/designer as a guideline what can be incorporated in vision and brand itself.

In the literature review, the broader spectrum of brand elements (term used by Ashworth and Voogd, 1990) or attributes (term used by Hankinson, 2004; Merrilees *et. al.*, 2007) and general brand strategies were analysed and should be considered when defining place brand. Various authors suggest using combinations of attributes when creating brands, for example, Balakrishnan (2008; 2009) suggests choosing a combination of brand components for attracting customers, the components that would help customers make a decision to visit and create loyalty. Trueman *et al.* (2007) proposes using an integrated "warts and all" approach because local communities, the built environment, heritage and infrastructure – all form the image of the city. According to Hankinson (2001) any place brand should be designed to reflect the physical or tangible experiences of the location (visual triggers like symbol, logo, slogan, name) as well as the intangible and value-based attributes (place image). Kotler *et al.* (1999) describe four marketing factors for the place: attractions, infrastructure, people and image and quality of life which comprise, in essence, the brand of the place.

Based on literature reviews, Balakrishnan (2009) groups brand components into tangible and intangible attributes as well as functional and symbolic. According to Hankinson (2005), it is important to understand these associations as they influence the brand strategy. For example, the new brand for New York represented the real and symbolic transformation as well as the restructuring of political and economic relations (Chan, 2008). Hankinson (2005) distinguishes two more categories: experiential associations and brand attitudes. Caldwell and Freire (2004) suggest that cities should concentrate on branding their functional aspects because they are perceived from a functional point of view, so the researcher felt that distinguishing functional attributes in the brand evaluation framework adds more clarity and best suits the task. The list of elements from literature could be grouped as in Figure 1.

#### **4.4 People's perceptions**

People's perceptions are of no less importance. They reflect their personal satisfaction perspective on brand performance; notably for example, citizens of Randers created an "anti-branding" logo in their protest against the new branding campaign. People's opinion is important because they are "a key driver of services and destination marketing and brand perception" (Balakrishnan, 2008). As discussed, "I love New York" was described as a successful campaign because local talent was used to design the logo. De Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2003) in their model for successful service brands suggest communicating brand's promise together with service vision and customer expectations internally to staff through training and other organisational processes because this contributes to the success of the brand. Brodie (2009) analyses brands in the context of customers', stakeholders', organisational and employees' perceptions. Ugglå (2006) explains that corporate, partner (internal and external) and institutional associations contribute to brand image. Trueman *et al.* (2004) tried to apply



the AC2ID test of corporate identity management to city brand in an attempt to compare official city strategies and stakeholders' perceptions by using 5 dynamic identities: actual identity, communicated identity, conceived identity, ideal identity and desired identity, where conceived identity refers to perceptions of the company held by stakeholders. In contrast, the existing place branding models do not observe people's perceptions and attitudes; they do not suggest that local people may influence the brand. Only the most recently developed place branding models have included the peoples' factor, for example, Merrilees' *et al.* (2007) and Balakrishnan (2009). These authors realised that people need to recognize the brand of the place where they live or work, so can support and possibly inform the world about it. Admittedly, the general public is not necessarily aware of official vision. Furthermore, it is important to identify the issues, be it crime or deprivation, and deal with them respectively in this way securing consistent development of the city. This would give a chance to re-think or amend the brand.

In brand evaluation framework, the "people's perceptions" section gives an insight into people's opinions and attitudes towards the brand identity and strategy for the city which might be different from the desired. Merrilees *et al.* (2007) highlighted this issue by focusing on city brand attitudes of residents in a structural model for city branding. They state that a city has to be attractive to its local residents in the first instance in order to be attractive to external visitors and argue that there is a need to develop a comprehensive approach to understanding the attitudes of residents to their own city brand. Similarly Balakrishnan (2008) argues that branding must start with people of the destination which together with positive associations and experience strengthen the brand image. "People (through the social capital construct), not structures, that make the biggest difference" (Merrilees *et al.*, 2007). According to Balakrishnan (2009), destinations must start focusing on people besides the service experience and all customer touch points because they help deliver the experience. Trueman *et al.* (2007) suggests using a stakeholder perspective to identify and differentiate city from its competitors while Hankinson (2004) looking at place branding as a relationship with consumers and other stakeholders.

Balakrishnan (2008) describes stakeholders as internal (people/ citizens, business/ governing bodies, etc.) and external. Jensen (2005) uses term brand consumers: city inhabitants, commuters, city users, business people or tourists. In this study, a stakeholder perspective has been chosen to be used representing various groups of people: who live and work in the city, visit and have never visited; people from different age, sexual and ethnic groups. These groups of people are important because they represent the masses of the city. As mentioned in previous sections, branding should start with residents in order to be attractive to visitors. People, who have never visited the city, will also provide some interesting and valuable insights which should be considered.

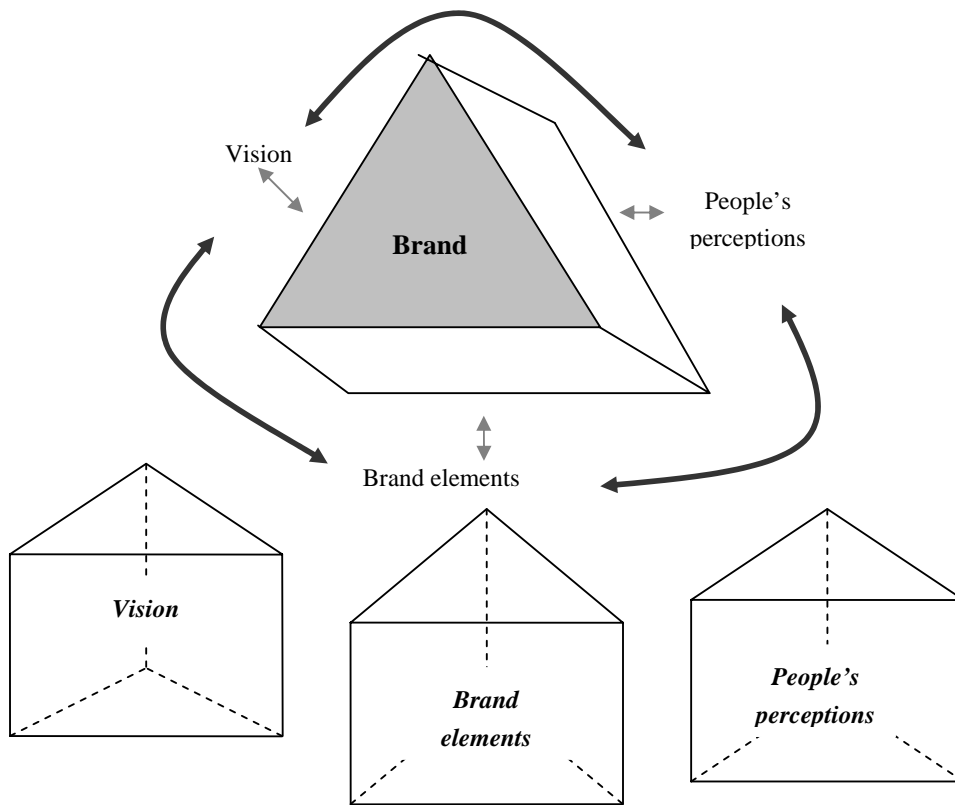
## **5. The place brand evaluation framework model**

The place brand evaluation framework model is illustrated in Figure 1, a prism with three vertical facets, each of them comprising of a number of variables and the middle facet being the core of this framework. The level of detail each facet depicted helped to provide clarity what can be measured and how. The researcher felt that this method of modelling the framework best suited the task. Further, it

added more detail and clarification of how to design place brand evaluation measures and addressed the lack of guidance in the literature.

In theory, those cities (i. e. their brand developers) aspiring to be successful in the long term in today's world must have a clear picture of their stakeholders and customers. This should be reflected in the vision and strategies in order to deliver value as well as gain success (Figure 1). As suggested by de Chernatony (2001), brand vision could incorporate future, purpose and values as well as elements from literature as in Figure 1. The brand must be designed to leave a clear and unique image in the target customer's mind but it should not dictate the measures (brand elements) as people might see other issues as well. Measures should only help to establish if the target will be reached as set out in vision. For this reason it is suggested to look at the broader list of brand elements in the literature. The elements from the literature send client/ designer or people messages suggesting what they should consider and what can be measured. The elements' list is only suggestive and may assist when describing people's perceptions which will be then compared to vision elements. If the vision and the brand itself are consistent with people's perceptions, it means that brand initiative can be communicated and implemented, otherwise it would give an opportunity to analyse why it is not working. The consistency also reflects the degree of success and recognition which are necessary in any branding campaign. However, it is not clear how to measure success. In the context of place branding, each place has to decide itself what effectiveness of branding initiative means for them. In this research, success means if people can recognise and accept the newly created brand. It is up to client/ designer to decide what quantitative value they will regard as success.

The satisfied stakeholders can contribute to the brand by being loyal (for example, return visits), supporting and recommending the brand, informing the world about it, etc. They also expect that brand would ensure certain values which drive people's behaviour, such as stability (for example, economic), safety (physical and social), quality (of life, services), would acknowledge their presence and contribution, and guarantee values (Randall, 1997).



For example:

- Future
- Purpose
- Values

- Vision
- Mission
- Heritage and culture
- People and values
- Philosophy
- Country of origin/  
reputation/credibility of  
brand (destination) name
- Quality

**Drivers motivating vision:**

- Economic
- Services
- Transit hub
- Retail
- Trade
- Tourism

▪ **Visual triggers:**

- Symbol
- Logo
- Slogan
- Name

▪ **Potential functional attributes:**

- Urban residential services
- Social services and relations (interpersonal relationships)
- Museums, art galleries, theatres, concert halls and other cultural services
- Leisure and sports activities and facilities
- Conference and exhibition facilities
- Natural environment, public spaces and recreational services
- Hotels, restaurants, night clubs and entertainment
- Architecture and quality of the built environment
- Transport infrastructure and access
- Hygiene facilities (car parks, toilets, baby-changing facilities, street cleaning, etc.)
- Vibrancy (business vibrancy including growth of jobs)

▪ **Potential symbolic attributes:**

- Place symbolisms, souvenirs and

- Vibrant
- Cultural
- Youthful
- Etc.

▪ **Potential experiential attributes:**

- How the city make residents/ visitors fell (relaxed, excited, fascinated,etc.)
- Descriptors of the built environment (historic, modern, green, spacious, etc.)
- Descriptors related to security and safety
- Quality of life
- The physical characteristics of air
- Sound, smell and taste
- Colours
- Relationships/ interactions

▪ **Other:**

- Benefits
- Values
- Personality
- Users
- Patents

Figure 1: Place brand evaluation framework model

## 6. Case study

It is proposed to use single case approach to examine the applicability of the evaluative framework as well as test its effectiveness through applying it to Manchester due to the complexity of issues in one case. Multiple data collection methods will be used in order to ensure construct validity. Semi-structured interviews will be invoked to describe the vision for the city. They will also help to understand the purpose of the existing Manchester branding initiative. A self-administered survey will be used to gather people's opinions and perceptions on the city of Manchester's branding initiative. Data will be triangulated in order to achieve reliability.

## 7. Conclusions

This study aims to evaluate the success of new branding initiative for place in the context of city. It has been identified the growing need for measurement of place branding initiatives and highlighted that there is a lack on guidance how to evaluate place brand. This study combined all the findings thus far in this research to develop a framework that helps to assess the effectiveness of a new brand for the city. The framework methodology consists of four elements: brand, vision, brand elements (in the literature) and people's perceptions.

The proposed brand evaluation framework should help to answer some of the rhetorical questions raised. The brand evaluation framework acts as a guide for anybody concerned about place branding but is primarily targeted at place brand clients and possibly the designers to evaluate the success of the newly designed brand idea or could be used as a consultation measure before designing a new brand. This framework was designed as comprehensive and adaptable to any place, allowing greater levels of detail if needed. It analyses people's perceptions and can further help cities in developing/ improving their branding initiatives. The framework could obviously be applied to a number of other places in order to thoroughly test its workability and efficiency in the field. It is anticipated the framework will help designing more targeted campaigns.

The next stage in this research is to apply the developed framework to Manchester and to test its applicability by using multiple sources of evidence.

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