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CREATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE “ADRIATIC” BRAND: A COMMON OPPORTUNITY?

STVARANJE “JADRANSKOG PROIZVODA” I UPRAVLJANJE
NJIME: ZAJEDNIČKA MOGUĆNOST?

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ABSTRACT

The document has been organised first and foremost with the aim of examining best practices with regard to branding, and secondly with a view to using the knowledge thus acquired to consider the possible creation of a tourist location, territorial and geographical *brand* for the Adriatic Area. The research and application of the results have been carried out in the PADMA-LAB (Pan Adriatic Destination Management Laboratory) Project, under the EU framework Interreg III A Programme.

The paper is a contribution to the development, through a process of capacity and institution building, of an InterAdriatic “Territorial Brand” shared strategy, encouraging evolution of interregional and local organisational models.

Our contribution intends to provide the basis for joint discussion on these topics, to establish a common language, the essential prerequisite for application of the concepts to the real-life case of the Adriatic Area developing in *Adriatic* brand. The methods of research, analysis, exchanging of experiences with the aim to involve institutions are based on the action learning process, applying the learning international laboratories.

A brand capability for providing unified representation of the components of a geographical area’s supply package will therefore depend not only on the appropriate choice of the elements which make up the brand, but also on the

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choice of the appropriate means of conveying the brand to its target and ensuring its appropriate reception by them. From the point of view of the design and creation of the geographical area brand, the distinction must first be made between fake and genuine brands. In the case of fake brands, they are not actually created and managed, but for intentional brands this does occur, and there are various activities involved. All geographical areas have “historic brands” of varying degrees of strength, created by the events and history of the area itself. One further comment must be made on the properties of a geographical brand. Unlike corporate and network brands, which are privately owned and can be managed by private players, geographical brands are “public assets” and so they must be managed by the relevant institutions in the area of reference.

In our Project several opportunities and options have been evaluated and for each one the feasibility is defined of repositioning the *Adriatic* from a mass-market seaside holiday destination to a destination for “authentic tourism”. This work and research are still in progress, but it is possible to anticipate some results. One of the common, historical and original assets which identify *Adriatic* brand is: the use of organic and natural products coming from the country and from the sea and how these products could be prepared (oenology and gastronomy).

Key words: “territorial brand”, *Adriatic* brand, organic and natural products.

SAŽETAK

Rad je prilog procesu razvoja strategije *InterAdriatic* “*Territorial Brand*” s ciljem potpore razvoja interregionalnog i lokalnog organizacijskog modela. Istraživanja i aktivnosti oko primjene izvedeni su u PADMA-LAB (*Pan Adriatic Destination Management Laboratory*), projekt u sklopu EU mreže *Interreg III A Programme*. Glavni cilj istraživanja bio je postupak stvaranja ‘proizvoda’ i korištenja stečenog iskustva za stvaranje turističkih lokacija, koje bi bile zemljopisna marka Jadranskog mora.

S tim u vezi željeli smo stvoriti temelje za zajedničku diskusiju i usklađenje stavova, što je preduvjet za stvarnu primjenu slučaja Jadranskog područja razvijenog u ‘Jadranski proizvod’. Korištenjem međunarodnog laboratorija,

primijenjene metode istraživanja, analiza, razmjene iskustava između dvije stvarnosti, temelje se na procesu učenja.

Sposobnost ‘proizvoda’ da predstavlja cijeli paket komponenata geografskog područja ovisit će ne samo o odgovarajućem izboru elemenata koji čine ‘proizvod’, već i o izboru odgovarajućeg načina prijenosa ‘proizvoda’ do njenog cilja, i osiguranje odgovarajućeg prijema na cilju. S gledišta kreacije treba razlikovati dva tipa ‘proizvoda’: zanemareni i namjeran. U slučaju ‘zanemarenog proizvoda’ on stvarno niti nije stvoren, naprotiv ‘namjeran proizvod’ postoji i uključuje raznolike aktivnosti. Sva geografska područja imaju ‘povijesni proizvod’ različite značajnosti, koji je stvoren događajima kroz povijest područja. Još je jedno značenje ‘geografskog proizvoda’ važno. Dok su ‘korporacijski’ i ‘mrežni proizvodi’ u privatnom vlasništvu i mogu se privatno upravljati, ‘geografski proizvod’ je javno vlasništvo pa stoga njime moraju upravljati odgovarajuće institucije područja.

U našem projektu je razmatrano više mogućnosti i za svaku je procijenjen izbor i izvedivost zamjene ‘jadranske forme masovnog usputnog turizma’ u određite autentičnog turizma. Iako je ovaj rad u tijeku moguće je zamijetiti neke rezultate. Jedna od zajedničkih, izvornih karakteristika koje se odnose na ‘Jadranski proizvod’ je: korištenje ekoloških prirodnih proizvoda iz okolice i mora, te način pripreme tih proizvoda (enološki i gastronomski).

Ključne riječi: ‘područni proizvod’, **Jadranski** proizvod, ekološki i prirodni proizvodi.

INTRODUCTION

This paper, entitled “Creation and Management of the “*Adriatic*” Brand: a Common Opportunity?” is a contribution to the development, through a process of capacity and institution building, of an InterAdriatic “Territorial Brand” shared strategy, encouraging the evolution of interregional and local organisational models.

In the process, carried out within the PADMA – LAB (Pan Adriatic Destination Management Learning Laboratory) Project, using the sector of the Tourism, several regional public organisation, Universities and representative organisations of entrepreneurs of the Adriatic Geographic Area are involved.

The PADMA – LAB Project aims at promoting collaboration among public organisations involved in planning and promoting tourism of Italian Adriatic regions and Eastern Adriatic Countries (Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia Herzegovina, Albania) and at standardising methods of work and planning through knowledge sharing.

The development of PADMA – LAB Project actions will allow each area to focus their own identity qualities, to identify their strengths and weaknesses in key tourist areas, to analyse them in a “vision” (system) to move up their transformation into “effective” tourist resources and use them as a starting point for the definition and introduction of a “*Brand territory*”.

The integrated action of PADMA – LAB Project will also establish the feasibility of a tourist destination strategy in which the *Adriatic* area can be promoted as a *single region* on international market.

The Project involves the use of methods and tools to facilitate knowledge sharing through the implementation of networks, communities of practice, laboratories, all supported by implementing an e-learning platform.

Important strategic results are expected from the Project:

- the definition of a *tourism destination* strategy in *Adriatic* for domestic and international market,
- the establishment of pilot labs on “*territorial brand*” (“*The Adriatic*”) concept and next generation information centres,
- the creation of a web portal for the *Adriatic tourist destination* to use as knowledge and sharing platform on the management and enhancement of Adriatic “experiential” tourism.

Inside the framework of PADMA – LAB Project plan, our contribution has the aim of examining best practices with regard to branding, and secondly with a view to using the knowledge thus acquired to consider the possible creation of a tourist location, territorial and geographical **brand** for the *Adriatic* Area.

This material is intended to provide the basis for joint discussion on these topics, to establish a common language, the essential prerequisite for application of the concepts to the real-life case of the Adriatic Area developing the *Adriatic* brand.

After an analysis of the literature in economics and managerial studies setting out to define the concept of the brand, its components and its functions on the basis of the successful creation and management models adopted by industrial and service companies, the tourist-corporate literature was examined in the attempt to understand how these best practices could be transferred to tourist industry, to tourist location, to geographical systems, mainly to the sustainable economy as eco tourism.

This document concludes by drawing attention to the aspects which, in our view, are the key areas that are actually in progress for discussion and analysis between the participants to the PADMA – LAB Project.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. What is a brand? Some definitions

According to the American Marketing Association definition, a brand is “a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers”¹.

Kotler (2002) states that a brand is “a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or combination of the same, used to identify the products or services of a seller or group of sellers and distinguish them from those of their competitors”, while Aaker (1991) maintains that a brand is a “a set of assets or liabilities linked to an identifying feature (trademark, name or mark) which add to (or reduce) the value generated by a product or service”.

French researcher Séquéla suggests the concept of the brand-person, as brand takes on not just the name but above all the “soul of the product”; the brand name can be linked to tangible characteristics, while the soul refers to the universe of closely connected values.

Pratesi and Mattia (2006) state that “a brand has its own expressive meaning; it is therefore a combination of tangible and intangible signs and symbols which create its face and personality, as for a person”.

According to Fiocca, Marino and Testori (2007) “For firm and consumers, the brand is a point of attraction and contact between what the firm is able to offer and what the consumers perceive and want”.

¹ Kotler P., Scott W.G. (2002), *Marketing management*, Isedi, Turin.

According to the approach of Pratesi - Mattia (2006) a brand's expressive capability lies in:

- brand identity;
- brand image;
- brand positioning.

Brand identity depends on “the combination of expressive elements which the company uses to communicate a brand's credentials”², while the brand image is created by how consumers perceive the brand. Brand positioning refers to the actions taken to promote the brand's distinctive attributes in the eyes of potential purchasers³.

2. The brand's main functions

The components which enable a brand to be visually distinctive, recognisable and identifiable include:

- the brand name⁴;
- the brand mark⁵
- the pay-off⁶.

² Van Gelder S. (2003), quoted in Pratesi and Mattia (2006).

³ A brand may be positioned on the basis of:
attributes;
benefits;
value for money;
problem solving;
opportunities for use.

While Pratesi and Mattia (2006, pp. 29-34) maintain that “positioning defines the perimeter within which the brand operates”, according to Pastore and Vernuccio (2006, p. 111), brand positioning is a process which positions the brand in consumers' minds compared to competitors.

⁴ The name (Valli, 2003) must have a series of vital characteristics including recognisability, memorability, distinctiveness, attractiveness, emotional meaning, creativity and legal defensibility.

⁵ The mark, defined by Pastore and Vernuccio (2006, p. 152) “as the combination of typographical, figurative and plastic elements” is the main component of the iconic brand.

⁶ The pay-off, motto or slogan is the final phrase in an advertisement and usually appears after the brand (e.g. Nokia “Connecting people”).

Achenbaum (1993)⁷ maintains that “what distinguishes a brand from its unbranded commodity counterparts is the consumer's perceptions and feelings about its characteristics, its name and its meaning, and the company associated to the brand”.

In the marketing literature, various authors (Cozzi and Ferrero, 2004 and Lambin 2004) underline that the functions performed by the brand vary depending on whether the customer or the producer is taken as reference.

For the final customer B2C, the brand's functions are (Pastore and Vernuccio, 2006; Kapferer and Thoenig 1991, 1995):

- identification and personalisation;
- guarantee and guidance;
- symbolism;
- playfulness;
- convenience;
- relationship.

For the seller B2C (Cozzi and Ferrero, 2004), the brand's functions are:

- protection against imitations;
- competitive positioning;
- product enrichment;
- strengthening of market power;
- capitalisation;
- influence in internal (employees) and external (stakeholders) relations;

According to Codeluppi (2000) the brand has more functions in addition to these, since “the brand exercises its relational nature in various directions:

- towards the company and its products, i.e. the subjects which generated it;
- towards the consumers, functioning as a bridge between the product and the consumers;
- between consumers and consumers, i.e. in the everyday relationships between individuals;
- in relation to the other brands on the market and to the social imagination”.

⁷ Quoted in Kotler P., Scott W.G. (2002), *Marketing management*, Isedi, Turin.

3. Brand management

In view of the brand's importance, its fragility⁸ and the characteristics of today's socio-economic context, it is increasingly necessary to manage a brand correctly to ensure that its potential can be fully exploited and enhanced. Each company manages its own brand or brands by adopting the branding policy it considers most appropriate on the basis of the goods or products it sells, the context and the image it intends to promote.

By the term branding Pratesi and Mattia (2006, pp. 36-37) refer to the “process by which the brand is laden with meanings, transforming it into a “living” entity with its own expressive capability by means of which a complex combination of actions are planned and carried out in compliance with a single strategic intent: to aid the lasting growth of the business by consolidating the brand's reputation and distinctiveness”.

In our opinion, branding activities essentially consist of:

- conception and design;
- creation, publication and management;
- protection of property rights and legal safeguarding of the brand;
- “fuelling” – support in economic terms and through activities;
- monitoring and control.

Brands can be classified as **intentional**⁹ or **default**¹⁰ on the basis of the level of planning and formalisation of the process by means of which the brand has originated and been consolidated over time.

⁸ Pratesi and Mattia (2006, p. 13) maintain that brands' fragility is due to their difficulty in supporting themselves independently without the need for continuous measures to prevent losses of value and credibility in relation to consumers.

⁹ “Intentional brands are the outcome of a formal, planned process, intended to induce a precise perception associated with one or more selected cognitive symbols in the minds of all the stakeholders in the territory” Pastore and Bonetti (2006, pp. 83-84).

¹⁰ “Default brands are the outcome of a spontaneous cognitive process which induces a synthetic, uniform perception of the brand in the minds of all the stakeholders in the territory” Pastore and Bonetti (2006, pp. 83-84).

4. Brand types and levels

Corporate experience reveals that any organisation must decide which brands to use and how many of them in order to establish the architecture of its brand or brand system¹¹.

In other words, the problem is always to decide whether to use the corporate brand to identify the product range and the different lines and products (for some types or for all the products placed on the market)¹² or create different brands for different businesses (brand portfolio).

The different types of brand which make up the brand system¹³ are:

- The *corporate brand* which represents and identifies the company as a whole (its history, values and culture);
- the *range brand*: the company uses this brand, usually an alternative to the corporate brand, for the sale of products in different categories;
- the *line brand*: this is placed, together with the corporate brand, with the products belonging to the company which are perceived by consumers as to some extent complementary;
- *product brand*: identifies the specific nature of each type of product in the company's range.

When deciding the brand architecture, it must be remembered that according to the empirical evidence provided by corporate experience, people are able to perceive, associate and memorise **no more than three brands**¹⁴: corporate or range – line - product.

¹¹ According to some authors [Kotler, Phoertsch (2006, pp. 73-75, 178-181); Pastore, Vernuccio (2006, pp. 154-155); Pratesi, Mattia (2006, pp. 40-43)] the expression brand architecture refers to the qualitative and quantitative hierarchical relationship between one or more brands belonging to a company, regardless of whether or not they belong to the same category of goods or services. Other authors [Corti (2005, p. 181) and Keller, Busacca, Ostillio (2005, pp. 299-300)] prefer the term "brand hierarchy".

¹² On this topic see also Fiocca, Marino, Testori (2007, pp. 25-33); Kotler, Pfoertsch (2006, pp. 79-91); Pastore, Vernuccio (2006, pp. 154-155); Pratesi, Mattia (2006, pp. 38-50); Collesei, Ravà (2004, pp. 15-19); Cozzi, Ferrero (2004, pp. 354-356).

¹³ On the brand system, see Pratesi and Mattia (2006).

¹⁴ Keller (2003), quoted in Mattia and Pratesi (2006, pp.307).

RESULTS

Brand portfolio management policies

If they use the **Corporate brand** as an “**umbrella brand**”, firms use their own names to identify their whole array of products, thus transforming them into genuine brands and maximising their brand extension¹⁵. If this policy is implemented, the organisation tends to exploit its positive image as providing guarantees and credibility for the various stakeholders, achieving economies of scale in communications and also in distribution. However, it should be made clear that if just one brand is used, the negative effects due to changes in demand or a weakening of the brand’s positioning will inevitably affect the whole of the company’s array of products and its business overall.

As an alternative to the umbrella brand strategy, a multibrand policy can be implemented, in which a company creates, uses and manages a combination of brands which identify and differentiate the various products and services it offers, within a single category. From the operational point of view, the management of a brand portfolio¹⁶ is quite complex, since each brand must be considered both as a separate entity and in relation to the others, if the concrete benefits of the company’s policy are to be enjoyed.

The adoption of a multibranding strategy reduces the risks related to a monobranding approach, since negative performance by one brand does not affect the performance of the other brands in the portfolio. However, there are other positive aspects which lead companies to opt for the multibrand solution.

In the final analysis, brand portfolio management policies all lie some where along a continuing scale, with the brand house at one end and the house

¹⁵ Corvi (2007, p. 201) maintains that brand extension refers to all the products offered under a single brand identity. For further discussion on this topic see also Fiocca, Marino, Testori (2007, pp. 57-68); Pratesi, Mattia (2006, pp. 65-73); Collesei, Ravà (2004, pp. 21-23); Marphy (1992, pp. 5-7).

¹⁶ The expression “brand portfolio” is used as referring to the group of brands belonging to a company by Kotler, Pfoertsch (2006, pp. 188-191), Collesei, Ravà (2004, pp. 15-23), Cozzi, Ferrero (2004, pp. 354-356). Other authors [Keller, Busacca, Ostillio (2005, pp. 40-42), Pratesi, Mattia (2006, pp. 39-40 and pp. 49-54)] use the term to describe the company’s group of brands within a single category. In this article, we will use this second definition of the expression “brand portfolio”.

of branded at the other¹⁷. At the first extreme, all the products in the portfolio have the same brand identity and depend on the corporate brand, while at the second extreme, the various brands in the portfolio are independent both of each other and of the corporate brand.

DISCUSSION

From traditional brand to the tourist location and geographical brand

Before we attempt to transfer the branding concepts described for the corporate context above to the tourism sector, it is first of all important to remember that a firm operating in the tourism industry is a system (Golinelli, 2000) which, due above all to the specific features of the tourism product¹⁸, always works within two types of larger systems:

- the tourism services supply the system¹⁹ combining the co-produce²⁰, the holidaymaker's travel and stay experiences;
- the system of the geographical area²¹ in which it is located.

When we turn to consider the complex tourist industry system²², if we are to understand the dynamics of brand interaction and management, we must examine the role of the brands used to identify tourism sector network or systems, and geographical brands (or destination brands)²³.

¹⁷ For more detailed discussion of this subject see Kotler, Pfoertsch (2006, pp. 188-189), Pratesi, Mattia (2006, pp. 49-51) and Mauri (2004, p. 200).

¹⁸ Pencarelli and Forlani (2002 and 2005); Forlani (2005).

¹⁹ For more detailed discussion see: Pencarelli and Forlani (2002, 2005); Della Lucia, Franch, Martini, Tamma, (2007), Cerquetti, Forlani, Montella, Pencarelli, (2007), Martini (2005); Della Corte (2000); Brunetti (1999); Rispoli and Tamma (1995).

²⁰ On the ways in which tourist sector products are co-organised between players on the demand and supply sides see, amongst others: Rispoli and Tamma (1995); Pencarelli and Forlani (2002); Forlani (2005).

²¹ For further details see Forlani (2005); Golinelli C.M. (2002); Vesce (2001); Gallucci (2003); Valdani and Ancarani (2000); Caroli (1999).

²² For an analysis of the relationship between those working in tourism, the holiday industry and the tourism system, see Pencarelli (2003) and Pencarelli (2003b)

²³ For an analysis of the concept of destination see: Pencarelli and Splendiani (2008) and Pencarelli, Bellagamba, Brunetti, Vigolo (2007).

A supply system is a network of operators (structure) linked together by a complex of relationships (form of organisation) which are activated (process) for the purposes of achieving a common purpose and objectives.

Supply systems may be recognised or unrecognised, intentional or defaulting, formal or informal, but in general they use a brand to give tangible expression to their identity when their constituent components (subsystems) are aware of the existence of the network and their aims and strategic intents.

If it is to be managerially managed, a supply system must (Golinelli, 2000) have the organisational form of a living system²⁴, so if a system brand is to be its catalysing element it must have the following specific features²⁵:

- a cultural and value system, and a combination of graphic features which specify its **identity**;
- a mechanism for the selection of the structural elements (quality charter or membership requirements) which make it possible to **draw the boundaries of the system** (decide who is in and who is out) and a control (certification) mechanism allowing the adjustment of the system (negative feedback);

²⁴ The living system approach requires:

- The presence of a leader;
- The formalisation of the operating structure (definition of the structural elements which make up the system – drawing of the boundaries), specification of the roles of the individual components (specification of the structural components and the relationships between them), and implementation of a monitoring mechanism (negative feedback);
- A process of formation by default.

²⁵ The systematic approach is also outlined in the case histories presented at the congress “Prospects for the formation of a food and wine network for the Adriatic areas” held at Cattolica (08/11/2007) (organised as part of the PadmaLab project). In particular Pollarini underlined that:

- a) In order to function, cooperative systems must have the following features:
 - leadership;
 - coordinated participation of the players;
 - role of each player clearly defined;
 - system for the monitoring of results in the short and long term.
- b) Cooperative brands operate around three principles:
 - a value system;
 - a system of *input* (quality charter, rules for membership of the network, certification and monitoring);
 - a system of output (implementational tools such as application of the brand, communications, the sale of products).

- a living system and the outputs it generates to which the brand is to be applied and by means of which it acquires substance and becomes tangible. The process of formation of the system identified by the brand generates a complex of activities and services for elements belonging to subsystems (internal outputs such as the application of the brand to individual members) and larger external systems (external outputs such as the products in the networks with which products are shared).

Therefore, the brand of a supply system or network is a brand on a larger scale than that of a corporate system (brand sharing mechanism) which can also act as umbrella brand (at the range or line level) for all the sub-system components.

A geographical brand can be defined as “a name and/or symbol (logo or trademark) which identifies an area and differentiates it from competitor areas, by representing the synthesis of the objective, cognitive, value-based and emotional characteristics of the products and services offered” (Pastore and Bonetti, 2006). The brand representing a geographical area is thus “the outcome of a continuous, dynamic process of construction in the mind of the user of the area, who is therefore influenced by the experiences, memories and comments of other users with whom he comes into contact” (Pastore and Bonetti, 2006)²⁶. A brand's capability for providing unified representation of the components of a geographical area's supply package will therefore depend not only on the appropriate choice of the elements which make up the brand, but also on the choice of the appropriate means of conveying the brand to its target and ensuring its appropriate reception by them (Deutsch, Real, 2002)²⁷. However, there are a number of critical factors involved in the attempt to apply the concept of a brand to a geographical area. These mainly relate to²⁸:

- the difficulty in establishing precise boundaries for the area to which the brand refers;
- the co-existence of different levels of government in the area;
- the experience-based nature of the use of the geographical area considered;

²⁶ A territorial brand is therefore “a promise to the potential users of the area, an expectation of performance and a sign of integrity and reputation (Travis, 2000).

²⁷ Work quoted in Pastore and Bonetti (2006).

²⁸ For a full list of the critical factors related to the application of the brand concept to geographical areas see Pastore and Bonetti (2006, pp. 81-83).

- the difficulty of summarising a portfolio of widely varying products and services by means of a single brand;
- the different degrees of importance of the various features of the area in defining the geographical brand.

The model of the “experience” applied to the tourism makes an evolution of the tourist customer, represented as in the following table.

Table 1. From the traditional *brand* to the territorial *brand* (*brand essence*)

	Generalist tourism (traditional)	Late – modern Individualism	Post – modern Communities
The social function of holidays (vacation)	The holiday (vacation) like a recreation a “suspended” dimension of the human existence	The holiday like opportunity for development of a proper individual identity of “personal value”	The holiday like a (necessary) occasion to meet and stay with similar “group of people”
Action of tourism	Tourism like indicator of “status” (profile)	Tourism like “experience” and indicator of cultural belonging	Tourism like instrument to share the emotions
The profile of tourist customer	He/she returns to the same place	He/she speaks about the experience to the friends	He/she recognises himself in a community
How to use the territory	Modular cluster	Networking cluster	Large – places (Hyper places)

Just as for companies, for geographical areas, while giving due consideration to the complexity of the array of products and services offered, a single brand capable of identifying, distinguishing and promoting the area can be used, or a family of brands²⁹, may be preferred, although this considerably increases the management complexity, and may lead to confusion on the part of the target consumer markets. In particular, for any given area various strategical approaches to brand management can be adopted, as follows:

- single brand strategy, in which just one brand is used to promote the image of a whole area in relation to all the targets and/or all marketing themes;

²⁹ For a more detailed discussion on brand portfolio management see Aaker (2004).

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- single brand strategy, with variants in which a single brand is adapted for the various sub-zones within the area, or the main marketing themes;
- individual brand strategy, with the promotion of specific, different brands linked to a single, unifying brand for the area as a whole;
- individual brand strategy, with the promotion of specific, different brands for each of the area's sub-zones and/or marketing themes.

CONCLUSION AND REFERENCES

From the point of view of the design and creation of the geographical area brand, the distinction must first be made between default and intentional brands. In the case of default brands, the brand is not actually created and managed, but for intentional brands this does occur, and there are various activities involved:

- identification of the structural characteristics of the area;
- identification of the *brand's* geographical boundaries;
- identification of the supply systems which produce tourism products and services;
- identification of the current and potential demand segments;
- definition of the *brand concept*, the basic idea on which the geographical area brand is to be founded.

It must also be remembered that all geographical areas have “historic brands” of varying degrees of strength, created by the events and history of the area itself. For example, Rome and Florence are famous all over the world both for their structural attractions (monuments, museums and works of art) and their history. This reminds us that history and geography books are the main source of promotion of geographical brands. One further comment must be made on the properties of a geographical brand. Unlike corporate and network brands, which are privately owned and can be managed by private players, geographical brands are “public assets” and so they must be managed by the relevant institutions in the area of reference. During the workshops held in Brac (June 2007), Urbino (October 2007), Cattolica (November 2007) and Kotor (February 2008) the partners involved in the PADMA LAB Project discussed the feasibility of repositioning the *Adriatic* from a mass-market seaside holiday

destination to a destination for “authenticity tourism”. This work and research is still in progress.

Several opportunities and options have been submitted and planned (from the wine roads, to the gastronomy and food specialties, from the cultural to the emotional tourism, from the holy to the environmental sources) and the finalised and operative proposals are actually submitted to the stakeholders and institution building entities, with the aim of launching a real and original “territorial brand”: *Adriatic*.

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