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Articles and essays

Municipality-Brand: a critical review

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Abstract

The little information that exists about the concept of municipality-brand and its construction process justifies this critical review. In this sense, the document is based, on its conceptual framework, on brands linked to geographical areas such as country-brand, destination-brand, place-brand and territory-brand. The previously exposed tackles the objective of this article: to delimit a conceptualization and propose a construction methodology for the municipality-brand. The methodology used for this research was based on the Delphi method, which contributes to this document an analysis from the point of view of a group of five experts, who give opinions in the applied instrument about their perceptions and knowledge related to the municipality-brand. Therefore, the different conceptualizations of geographical brands as well as their construction models were also analyzed. In the conclusions, note that Mexico does not have a brand-municipality and this is a comprehensive planning tool, which protects the identity of the municipality and seeks to support the territorial and endogenous development of the municipality, therefore, its construction methodology must be based on a totally inclusive process.

Keywords: Brand-municipality; Geographical marks; Identity.

Resumen

Marca-municipio: una revisión crítica

La poca información que existe sobre el concepto de marca-municipio y su proceso de construcción justifica la presente revisión crítica. En ese sentido, el documento versa, en su marco conceptual, sobre las marcas ligadas a espacios geográficos como marca-país, marca-destino, marca-lugar y marca-territorio. Lo anterior abona al objetivo del presente artículo: delimitar una conceptualización y proponer una metodología de

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construcción para la marca-municipio. La metodología propia para esta investigación se valió del método Delphi, que aporta al presente documento, un análisis desde el punto de vista de un grupo de cinco expertos, los cuales emitieron opiniones en el instrumento aplicado sobre sus percepciones y conocimiento relacionado con la marca-municipio. En ese sentido, también se analizaron tanto las diferentes conceptualizaciones de marcas geográficas como sus modelos de construcción. En las conclusiones, se destaca que México no cuenta con una marca-municipio y esta es una herramienta de planificación integral, que resguarda la identidad del municipio y busca abonar al desarrollo territorial y endógeno del municipio, por lo tanto, su metodología de construcción debe estar fundamentada en un proceso totalmente inclusivo.
Palabras clave: Marca-municipio; Marcas geográficas; Identidad.

Resumo

Marca-município: uma revisão crítica

A pouca informação que existe sobre o conceito de marca-município e seu processo de construção justifica esta revisão crítica. A esse respeito, este artigo trata, conceitualmente, das marcas ligadas a áreas geográficas, como marca-país, marca-destino, marca-lugar e marca-território. Isso embasa o propósito deste artigo: definir um conceito e propor uma metodologia de construção para a marca-município. A metodologia utilizada para esta pesquisa incluiu o método Delphi, que contribui para este trabalho uma análise do ponto de vista de um grupo de cinco especialistas que opinaram no instrumento aplicado sobre suas percepções e conhecimentos relacionados à marca-município. Nesse sentido, também foram analisadas as diferentes conceituações de marcas geográficas e de seus modelos de construção. As conclusões salientam que o México não tem uma marca-município e esta é uma ferramenta de planejamento abrangente, que resguarda a identidade do município e procura embasar seu desenvolvimento territorial e endógeno; portanto, sua metodologia de construção deve ser baseada em um processo totalmente inclusivo.
Palavras-chave: Marca-município; Marcas geográficas; Identidade.

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, there has been a standardization of particular needs at the same time that the offer of products and services has been homogenized (Palafox Muñoz, Zizumbo Villarreal, Arriaga Álvarez & Monterroso Salvatierra, 2012). Tourist destinations do not escape this globalizing effect and, if they want to attract visitors, they must offer singularity and visibility. As a result, identity tourism is analyzed nowadays as a product creation and differentiation strategy, in which the ultimate purpose is to avoid folklorizing and fossilizing (Canoves, Villarino Pérez, Blaco-Romero, De Uña Álvarez & Espejo, 2014). Culture should not be trivialized, but rather the opposite effect should be created. We need to keep the way of living, thinking and acting of the local population, while preserving the authenticity of the people and the territories where they interact (Cuenca, 2001; Diputación de Lleida, 2007; México, 2013).

However, the production and consumption of tourist services has from its origin a major problem: its intangibility (École Garçon, 2009; Entorno turístico, 2016; Nicolau, 2011; Paguay, 2012; Romero Amado, 2010). The brand is precisely aimed at responding to this need of making the mentioned service visible and

identifiable, while making the image of that physical space recognizable among the receiving public (Cuéllar Bernal & Rojas Barragán, 2008; Echeverri, Estay-Nicular & Rosker, 2012; González Oñate & Martínez Bueno, 2013; Lodos, 2011; Obiol Menero, 2002).

In this context, developing a brand requires delimiting a product, conceptualized as anything that can be offered to a market for the attention, use or consumption that could fulfill a desire or a need. A product can be a tangible good, a service, an idea, an event, an experience, a place, an organization, information, or a property (Promonegocios, 2012).

In the case of tourism, it refers to the set of goods and services (tourist attractions, tourist resources, tourist facilities, complementary services, means of transportation, and basic infrastructure) available to the user at a particular destination. It is also conceptualized as a set of tangible and intangible components that include tourist resources or attractions, infrastructure, recreational activities, symbolic values and images to satisfy motivations and expectations, being perceived as a tourism experience (Kotler & Armstrong, 2003; Nicolau, 2011; Perú, s/a; Perú, 2014). Thus, once defined the product, the brand is created, which will serve to position that good or service and specially to add identification and identity values.

However, the municipality-brand, from its conception, has some conceptual and construction gaps; there is little information about the concept that defines the term municipality-brand and, hence, there is also no construction methodology that allows to describe the steps that support the design and implementation of a municipality-brand. Accordingly, this paper is aimed at delimiting a conceptualization and proposing a construction methodology for the municipality-brand, and to that end we analyzed different territory-brands that currently exist and applied the Delphi method to a group of five experts, who expressed opinions in the applied instrument regarding their perceptions and knowledge concerning the municipality-brand.

In this content, the findings show that geographical brands fall under country-brand (national sign and symbol), destination-brand (perceptions of tourists and logo of destination), city-brand (idea to make the city visible), and territory-brand (shows benefits beyond tourism). Therefore, it should be highlighted that the contribution of municipality-brand in Mexico is not necessary only as to having a definition but to build a scheme of application that differentiates it from the attempts of some states and particularly municipalities such as Chihuahua, Saltillo, Othón P. Blanco and Arroyo Seco, respect the inclusion schemes, and contribute to local development, either of tourist destinations or simply of the municipalities.

Thus, the paper is organized into introduction, where the role of the brand is highlighted particularly in products, and in the case that concerns us in tourism products; next, the conceptual framework is presented, which contextualizes and examines the geographic brands and some supposed examples of municipality-brands in the case of Mexico. Subsequently, we describe the methodology to be followed in order to build a concept of municipality-brand and at the same time design a proposal to implement the municipality-brand in a given territory. Therefrom derives the third section, which refers particularly to the results of the Delphi panel, with which the definition of municipality-brand is built. Finally, we present the conclusions, emphasizing that Mexico has no municipality-brand.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A country or region, even if limited, has multiple elements that distinguish it from others, such as its products, services, art, education, resources, economy, and tourism. A brand can cover these elements, since it can be considered as an emblem that emanates difference, identity, valuation and culture, but it is also a device of territorial management (urban, environmental, social, among others) and, therefore, should not be understood only by its capacity of projecting a positive image of a geographic space; neither can it lack refinement, it is not a brand to promote a season or a combo (Chaves, 2014). This is why the economic prosperity of the territories and their people is included in the list of priorities to be achieved by location-brands. For this reason, the association and study between brand and place recommends the incorporation of disciplines such as sociology, economics, urban planning and geography; but, in addition, the nature of public good of the territorial brands requires teamwork at three levels: government, private organizations, and citizens. All the abovementioned for correct operation of the brand and for its significance and success (De San Eugenio Vela, Fernández-Cavia, Nogué & Jiménez-Morales, 2013).

With this approach, tourist brands seek to make profitable a concept of differentiated image and product, which responds to the values and desires of a market segment. That is why they are vital and intangible in a product, an undoubtable added value of it and the symbol showing the fundamental attributes of the tourist product. Its function is to identify the place and, in addition, to promote that added value, the distinctive trait, that attribute that establishes the difference to other competitors (Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005; Cuenca 2001; España, s/a; Hellín Ortuño & Pérez, 2011; Memelsdorff, 1998; Obiol Menero, 2002).

Accordingly, the brand should confer life to the tourist destination and product, but above all must sell it. Brands have to be promoters of tourist synergies and generators of favorable attitudes toward the trip. In addition, they should be built as observatories and showcases where the demand and competition are observed and which reflects the basic profiles of the tourism industry that receives it (Obiol Menero, 2002).

For this reason, tourist brands should be revised periodically, depending on their degree of implementation, to adapt to a continuously changing environment and to a demand that is also variable. Depending on the implementation processes, the adjustments should conform to circumstances, since tourist brands have to be always up to date (Obiol Menero, 2002, p. 87); moreover, they must be easy to distinguish, remember, and evaluate.

Accordingly, a trend of brands associated with geographical spaces and somehow linked to tourism has emerged, such as country-brand, destination-brand, city-brand, place-brand, and territory-brand; however, in the case of Mexico there is no conceptualization for a municipality-brand, so the objective of this work is to build it through the analysis of these brands (see Chart 1).

Chart 1 – Geographic Brands

Type of brand	Author/year	Characteristics
Country-brand	Chaves (2015)	-Nation Brand or country-brand coined by Simon Anholt in 1996. Highest institutional sign. Univocal symbol of nationality. Socially transversal it represents everyone and survives all governments. -It is not a tourism brand.
Destination-brand	Organización Mundial del Turismo (2015)	-Dynamic interaction between the core values of a destination. -Sum of the perceptions of visitors, their feelings and attitudes towards the destination.
	Ritchie & Ritchie (1998)	-Name, symbol, logo, or other graphic design identifies and distinguishes a destination. -Strengthens and reinforces the emotional connection between the visitor and the destination.
	Blain et al. (2005)	-It brings together characteristics of a geographical area that identify and differentiate it.
City-brand	Jalisco Cómo Vamos,(2016).	-Toni Puig creator of the brand-city concept, an idea to make the city visible.
	Calvento & Colombo (2009)	-Tool that promotes and covers the need for cities to have new signs of identity. -Territorial marketing, promotes the identity or tool that acquires significance if it is part of strategic plans.
	Fernández & Paz (2005)	-Element that enhances the possibilities of competitive inclusion into the global urban system.
Territory-brand	González Oñante & Martínez Bueno (2013)	-Show benefits beyond tourism and constitute a decisive factor in the social, cultural and economic development of a place.
	Huertas (2011)	-Has a broad and holistic scope, including the spheres of tourism, investment, trade, housing, education, etc.
	López Lita & Benlloch Osuna (2005)	-It comprises from legal commercial enterprises to deeply existential manifestations. It becomes a cry of a community that claims its identity.

Source – Prepared by the author

Earlier brands, although associated with territories, put aside a local demarcation, which in the case of Mexico is known as municipality; which, from the administrative point of view, deals with the provision of public services, and from the political point of view, gathers and organizes families in a given territory, resolving the collective needs; both functions of the municipality (Barrón Ponce de León, 2007, p. 15). Nevertheless, these concepts will serve as background to understand the case of municipality in Mexico, particularly for the proposal of municipality-brand; which understands the municipality based on a social, geographical, political, economic, and cultural context, that is, based on a complex and holistic approach; not from the purely administrative or political perspective. Thus, for this study the municipality-brand is proposed for entities with lower

populational density and located in rural areas, in order to enhance and preserve the dynamics of organization, economic activities, natural and cultural heritage, even if they still have not been much contaminated by global processes.

In this vein, the country has seen the emergence of attempts of tourist brands associated with municipalities, which seek to gain recognition of tourists through a simple logo, disregarding the inclusion of actors and integral planning for their development.

In the republic of Mexico, we found four examples of so-called municipality-brands, which are summarized in Chart 2; highlighting that in Mexico the real meaning and significance of building a brand associated with a territory and specifically with a municipality is still not acknowledged. While for administrations municipality-branding is only focused on devising a logo. This shows the lack not only of a proposal of conceptualization about municipality-brand, but of a proposal for its construction. Hence the importance of this critical review on municipality-brand.

Chart 2 – Municipality-brands in Mexico

State and municipality	Brand name	Description
Chihuahua	**Source –** Meza Rivera (2014)	Municipal Administration and Municipal Council of Tourism of the State of Chihuahua presented the "Chihuahua Brand," the result of a work of graphic design, with the purpose of being a hallmark of the tourist products of the capital of the state (scope of city-brand) (Meza Rivera, 2014).
Arroyo, Querétaro	**Source –** Voz de la Sierra (2014)	Project "Design the Municipality-brand of Arroyo Seco, Querétaro." Objective: obtain a graphic image that expresses the identity, nature, and cordiality of the people and territory. Call for students. (Voz de la Sierra, 2014).
Saltillo, Coahuila	**Source –** Voz de la Sierra (2014)	The Saltillo Brand should transcend the municipal administration, at the same time it has to be an exercise that has to have an inclusive process. It is important to have a solid logo, an enduring representative image, a visual identity that constitute a functional and attractive city-brand. (Saltillo, 2016)

(continues...)

Chart 2 – Continuation

State and municipality	Brand name	Description
Othón P. Blanco, Chetumal, Quintana Roo.	chactemal AQUÍ INICIA MÉXICO **Source –** Othón P. Blanco (2016)	"Chactemal, Mexico starts here." Brand registered in the National Institute of Industrial property and a project of the 2013–2016 Municipal Administration, whose objective is to position the municipality of Othón P. Blanco at the national and international level. (Othón P. Blanco, 2016).

Source – Prepared by the author based on Meza Rivera (2014), Othón P. Blanco (2016), Saltillo (2016), and Voz de la Sierra (2014)

As observed with these examples, the brands or their construction processes are not inclusive, nor follow a strategic plan, their approaches are more focused on tourism, although some proclaim to address other objectives and in general it is observed that the brand is restricted to a graphic image.

METHODOLOGY

We reviewed and analyzed several authors (Alameda & Fernández, 2012; Anholt, 2010; Blain et al., 2005; Calvento & Colombo, 2009; Chaves, 2015; Fernández & Paz, 2005; González Oñate & Martínez Bueno, 2013; Huertas, 2011; Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998) who focus on brands associated with geographic spaces, among those highlighted country-brand, as established by Simon Anholt in 1996 (apud Chaves, 2015); destination-brand of the WTO (Organización Mundial del Turismo, 2015); city-brand by Toni Puig (2008 apud Jalisco Cómo Vamos, 2016); place-brand; and territory brand, among others. At the same time there was a compilation of processes that enable building brands associated with territories, based on this selection an analysis was conducted to design a methodology for the construction of a municipality-brand.

At the same time we conducted a qualitative approach to the object of study (municipality-brand) through the Delphi method, which provides an analysis from the point of view of a group of five experts, which expressed their opinions and knowledge in the applied instrument with 21 questions, concerning the municipality-brand. As mentioned by De San Eugenio et al. (20130, De San Eugenio (2013), Fernández-Cavia and Huertas (2013), and López Lita and Benlloch Osuna (2005), a problem for the construction of the municipality-brand is the insufficiency of data and/or knowledge. A situation that is eliminated when considering the authoritative opinion of the experts, thus avoiding speculation; this is the structuring of a group communication process which is effective when enabling a group of individuals, as a whole, to address a complex problem (De San Eugenio et al., 2013).

In addition, the characteristics of the municipality will be examined so as to propose a holistic view based on a social, geographical, economic, and cultural context, beyond the administrative perspective. Subsequently, we will describe the peculiarities of the so-called municipality-brands present in some states of the country.

In the Delphi panel, we will address the themes of the municipality brand conceptualization; the municipality-brand as element of management or communication tool and the objective of the municipality brand, among others. Based on its analysis it is established that the municipality-brand is conceptualized as a strategic-tourist instrument, a graphic sign, a positioning and differentiation process, or a project dissociated from institutions that enables promoting, advertising, informing, and communicating about the characteristics and attributes of a region.

The objective of the brand ranges from the projection of a space where people live a simple life to an instrument to attract tourism, investment, and foster trade. That is why its target audience can be internal and external, that is why there is an appeal to its society to raise awareness and sensitize and then show these values to other municipalities, provinces, or countries. The target audience is always the 'other,' who should be convinced to travel, invest, live, or consume products. However, a "target" audience may also not exist.

The municipality-brand should have some raw material in order to be built, ranging from heritage to ancient icons. This Brand can be built outside urban contexts, since a municipality is composed of people, and wherever they live, have values and customs, essential in the construction of this type of brand, in addition this enables rural communities or groups to access a part of the alternative economic system. Thus, a municipality-brand can be an element of management or an instrument to communicate values and/or attributes; although perhaps what is currently being worked as location-brand, municipality-brand, or territory-brand has a fierce tendency towards economic compensation, globalization, circulation, and, therefore, consumption.

However, do these territory-brands commercialize the space? The territory-brand reflects a society with its characteristics, but can also modify what is said or thought of a society and, in the process, change this very society. The society is not static and the brand has a key role in the construction of "that which we are." Although the effort to achieve this identity of "good place" or "purified" spaces has triggered a problem of simulation and paradox; pretended places and municipalities, with false main streets but with real businesses, with water shortages and scarce public services and at the same time contemporary restaurants and hotels.

That is why we should strive for interdisciplinarity to carry out significant projects, which have to do not only with business and tourism, but also incorporate ethical principles, revalue and strengthen cultural heritage (Saldaña Ortega, Serrano-Barquín & Palmas Castrejón, in press) and natural heritage under the perspective of sustainability (Serrano-Barquín, 2008).

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY FOR BUILDING THE MUNICIPALITY-BRAND

We analyzed several processes and stages carried out in the construction of tourist and geographical brands, employing stages of these processes and

building a methodological model for designing the municipality-brand. The authors consulted include: Calvento and Colombo (2009), Peralba (2010), Anholt (2010), Huerta (2011), and González and Martínez (2013) with territory-brand; Conrad Llorens, founder and CEO of SUMMA Branding España, and Lleïr Daban i Hurtós with city-brand; Amadeus (2008) with destination-brand; and Alameda and Fernández (2012) with country-brand.

Under this dynamics of brand building, it is necessary to begin by raising awareness, of the community, politicians, governments and responsible institutions, of the necessity of creating a municipality-brand, which is understood not only as a tourist element, but as a collective asset of the whole community (Huertas, 2011 apud Alameda and Fernández, 2012) and which should be based on the principles of sustainability (Serrano-Barquín, 2008). These internal audiences are those who initiate, manage, and direct the process of creating the municipality-brand.

First phase

In a first phase a diagnosis must be conducted, which will enable the collection of data on the current situation of the municipality as to the economic, social, cultural, ecological, and tourist aspects for subsequent analysis and interpretation, which will allow assessing the current conditions in these sectors. After this and with the diagnostic information there will be analysis and definition of the identity of the territory complemented by surveys, focus group, and personal interviews with the local public, who will be the only ones to participate in the management, construction, and communication of the municipality-brand, since the municipality-brand will not be the representation of how it is perceived by potential or current visitors, but rather this construction is based on the perceptions of the people who has lived in this territory, namely local population, institutions, businesses, and public administration, among others. From this perspective, the municipality-brand will not become a link between visitor and destination, as occurs with the destination-brand, but will rather be instituted as the symbolic representation between the municipality and its inhabitants.

Thus, four sectors should be taken into account (Alameda and Fernández, 2012), on which all efforts for creating the municipality-brand are based:

1) The public sector: governmental institutions as catalysts of the activity, promotion and, therefore, image of a region. They are responsible for promoting local competition, public policies, R&D, promotion, funding, fostering talents, promotion of training, investment, among other actions.

2) The social sector: organizations with a role of public interest, universities, associations, media, athletes, artists, professional organizations, social groups, and specially the original community.

3) The economic and business sector: companies or brands located in the territory in question, which compete or are trying to compete in other markets. They are the "ambassador brands" of a territory that constitute the image of that territory and that have impact on issues

of employment, economy, markets, internationalization, innovation, exports, and tourism.

4) The cultural sector: conduct standards, values, history, tangible and intangible heritage, etc.

In addition to these sectors, the geographical space and natural resources that distinguish the municipality should be considered.

Second phase: Graphic image

Focus group, interviews and surveys

- Interviews will be held with local influencers of the municipality
- The surveys will be conducted with outstanding representatives from the economic, political, social, cultural, and institutional areas.
- The focus group will be conducted through a nonprobabilistic intentional sample of the following sectors: economic, social, cultural, and institutional by projection of 15 images about the municipality; these must represent not only the tourist aspect but the social, economic, cultural, political, and religious dynamics. Each focus group must choose five images and justify the choice. With this material a group of graphic designers with experience in the subject will build the graphic image and municipality brand manual; also using the information from the diagnosis and the support of an Interdisciplinary Committee of municipality-brand, composed as much as possible of sociologist, anthropologist, economist, psychologist, architect, marketer, tourism professional, communication profession, and geographer, all of them from the municipality.

Third phase: Integral document of the municipality-brand

The Interdisciplinary Committee must develop a guidelines document presenting a Strategic Plan (SP), through which the municipality-brand will foster the territorial and endogenous development of the municipality. This stage must have active participation of the current administration, which will provide a framework for action and implementation of the SP.

In addition, each new administration must meet with the Interdisciplinary Committee of Municipality-Brand to listen, propose, and support the strategies of the Brand. This Interdisciplinary Committee will be renewed when decided by the local people in a meeting.

Fourth phase: Media plan

It is based on designing the media plan and the activities to publicize the new image. The communication of the municipality-brand should focus on its essence, on the strengths and emotional values that constitute the core of the brand. And these should always be present in all communications. This plan will be developed and implemented by the Interdisciplinary Committee of Municipality-Brand with participation of the abovementioned sectors.

PROPOSAL FOR MUNICIPALITY-BRAND

Conceptualization

Based on the analysis of the conceptualizations of several authors as to geographical brands and on contributions from the Delphi panel questionnaire we developed the conceptualization of municipality-brand, defined as: a tool for comprehensive planning and symbol of identity, which fosters the territorial and endogenous development of the municipality. It communicates benefits beyond those strictly related to tourism, since it seeks to activate the local economy, revalue and promote the natural and cultural heritage, the latter on their various forms, both tangible and intangible. At the same time, it highlights the competitive, unique, and real characteristics of the municipality, not with a commercial purpose but as a sign of authenticity and valuation that should be admired by locals and strangers.

Therefore, the municipality-brand should not consider in its creation the external public, that is, tourists and visitors as well as external merchants and investors, since that municipality-brand should be the representation, the image of those who reside in the territory. A municipality-brand should be true to its environment and society, consistently with a focus on rural tourism, in which nothing is changed and everything is authentic. And what is offered is the very essence of the community or municipality.

Accordingly, the proposal of municipality-brand should be founded on these concepts:

- In addition to being useful, the brand has to express that there is a unique culture that should be safeguarded and valued. Nowadays this element should be defended against global homogenization.

- The municipality-brand should be true to its history, values, identity, and receiving community, rather than to tourists themselves.

- The design of the municipality-brand should ensure: high graphic quality, local emblematic capacity, and institutional consistency.

- The municipality-brand should do something for the surroundings, for the nearby municipalities[1].

- This brand also has to foster or cultivate cultural relations, activities, and actions.

- Combine the positive assets of a municipality, supporting and revaluing its exportable aspects.

- The municipality-brand should be autonomous. However, it should be a project from and for all its inhabitants, where the empowerment of the project is the common denominator for those from the municipality,

1. Calomé Menendéz, 2014.

because they should not only participate but be protagonists in the project of municipality-brand.

- The municipality-brand should be a brand that fosters and covers the need of these municipalities of revaluing its identity.

The municipality-brand can be an element of management or instrument to communicate values and/or attributes, although perhaps what is currently worked as location brand, municipality brand, or territory brand has a fierce tendency towards economic compensation, globalization, circulation and, therefore, consumption. However, the municipality-brand is proposed to be implemented in semi-urban and rural municipalities, due to the dynamics of their territories but also because the characteristics of these geographical spaces still retain the essence of their peoples.

Thus, the objectives of the brand can range from a space where people work and live a simple life to attracting tourism, investment, and fostering trade. Therefore, we should strive for interdisciplinarity to carry out significant projects, which are not only related with business and tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis we developed a conceptual approach for the municipality-brand considering that the conceptual foundation should be that the municipality-brand is a tool for comprehensive planning, which protects the identity of the municipality and has as one of its goals fostering territorial and endogenous development of the municipality. Its construction methodology is based on a process of inclusion that reflects not only a graphic image, but also an interdisciplinary project that have impact on improving the quality of life of the population by promoting local development through tourism.

Concerning the supposedly "municipality" brands of Saltillo, Chihuahua, Arroyo in Querétaro, and Othón P. Blanco in Quintana Roo, the first lacks an inclusive process, as from the beginning it was only a contest with participation of professionals from the field, that is, graphic designers, and from this perspective we can neither consider it an inclusive process nor an identity that represents the population. A similar case occurred with Arroyo in Querétaro, where the brand was only limited to a graphic image acquired from a state competition of designers. In turn, the "Chihuahua brand" was presented as a municipality-brand but its scope was eminently of city-brand, as shown by its logo and from a tourist focus with a result of graphic image. Finally, Othón P. Blanco, Quintana Roo with the Chactemal brand, even though it has a project that aims to position the municipality of Othón P. Blanco at the national and international level under a master plan of integral and sustainable development, was not inclusive but restricted only to the staff of the current municipal administration.

Thus, these brands do not follow the principles of municipality-brand proposed in this research, which provides a strategic view of territorial development, of a permanent and inclusive process, which avoids commodifying the territory and prioritizes its assets to continue valuing its own characteristics and dynamics.

Therefore, the methodological process for developing a municipality-brand is structured in four phases that consider, first and foremost, inclusion, identity, territorial and endogenous development, interdisciplinary participation, and preparation of a Comprehensive Strategic Plan without expiration date but rather with changes and adjustments proposed by the local community as a whole.

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