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# ЦИФРОВОЙ БРЕНД-МЕНЕДЖМЕНТ ТЕРРИТОРИЙ: ГЛОБАЛЬНЫЙ И ЛОКАЛЬНЫЙ АСПЕКТЫ

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Кафедра социальных коммуникаций

# FROM CITY BRANDING TO IMPLEMENTATION. AVOIDING GREEN WASHING AND ADOPTING SUSTAINABLE URBAN TRANSFORMATION

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The slides that you see on the screen are from my previous university. I worked at Delft University of Technology for twenty years. But just on the 1st September I made a move, and now I work for Erasmus University, the Rotterdam School of Management and the Erasmus School of Law. However, the presentation I'm giving here is still in the style of Delft because I was invited to give this talk by one of the students who came from Tomsk to Delft.
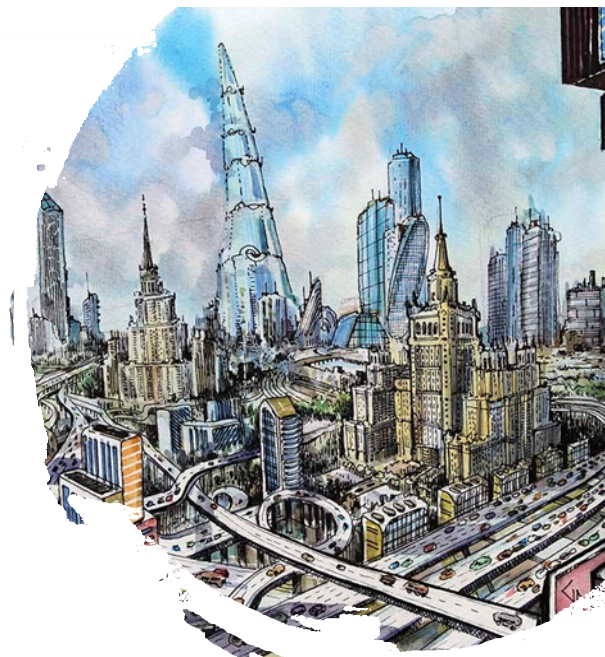


If cities want to promote themselves, they basically do, they can ask others to give positive comments on them. For instance, many of my examples are based on China. One of them, for instance, is Xiamen. And South Korean engineer called Won Ho Moon with us says: "I think Xiamen is one of the most attractive cities for foreigners who work in China. The city is very nice and wonderful, and this place is a very safe place for foreigners and their families." And, of course, that's what you want people to say about your city. Now, another example: Qingdao, a coastal city in China, possesses a very good quick-developing infrastructure, which is combined with a beautiful architecture landscape ensemble and nature color. I can see Qingdao City as a fine place for realization of creative projects, business, and rest." Actually, word of mouth promotion is among the most effective ones.

## A great many new terms for attractive cities

- Grenoble Eco Quartier
- Tianjin Eco City
- Melbourne Knowledge City
- Amsterdam Smart City
- Guangzhou Knowledge City
- Songdo Ubiquitous Eco City
- Ningbo Smart City

- Smart growth and ecological modernization

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Now, in this era of ecological modernization, basically a lot of cities clobber themselves in a green image. We have: Grenoble Eco Quartier; Tianjin Eco City; Melbourne Knowledge City, but also Green City; Amsterdam is a Smart City; Guangzhou is a Knowledge City; Songdo, the new city in South Korea close to its capital, is a Ubiquitous Eco City; and Ningbo, less known but not far from Shanghai, is a Smart City, it was the first Smart City in China. So, what you see in all these terms, they are just a number of examples, but there are many more; for their promotion they have to be economically attractive, smart, and high-tech, but they have to mix this with the green image, especially in the times of global warming and all air quality problems, as they appear especially in developing countries, it's vital to include that.

| Categories of urban regenerative sustainability | Number of articles retrieved |
|---|---|
| Sustainable city | 546 |
| Smart city | 222 |
| Digital city | 166 |
| Eco city | 133 |
| Green city | 105 |
| Low carbon city | 93 |
| Knowledge city | 82 |
| Resilient city | 47 |
| Intelligent city | 33 |
| Ubiquitous city | 29 |
| Liveable city | 26 |
| Information city | 23 |

**What is a:**

Sustainable city
Eco city
Low carbon city
Green city
Liveable city
Resilient city
Knowledge city
Ubiquitous city
Smart city
Intelligent city
Information city
Digital city?

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Now, what we see here on this slide is simply a list of possible terms: sustainable city, eco city, low carbon city, green, liveable, resilient, knowledge, ubiquitous, smart, intelligent, information, digital … there are also many more, like compact, slim city, and many more. What we did in our research was that we investigated in the literature how many times various terms appeared. And that was a lot.

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Until 2013-1014 it was the sustainable city worldwide, that was basically the most popular term, and it's a kind of umbrella term. But here you see that more recently, the smart city has overtaken the sustainable city as the most popular term. If you take the figures, which are not shown here until 2016-2017, then you would see that the smart city is really gone through the roof and that all the others are there but remain far behind.



**Evolution in frequency of 12 urban categories**

- Eco city
- Smart city
- Knowledge city
- Sustainable city
- Resilient city
- Low Carbon city
- Green city
- Ubiquitous city
- Intelligent city
- Digital city
- Information city
- Liveable city
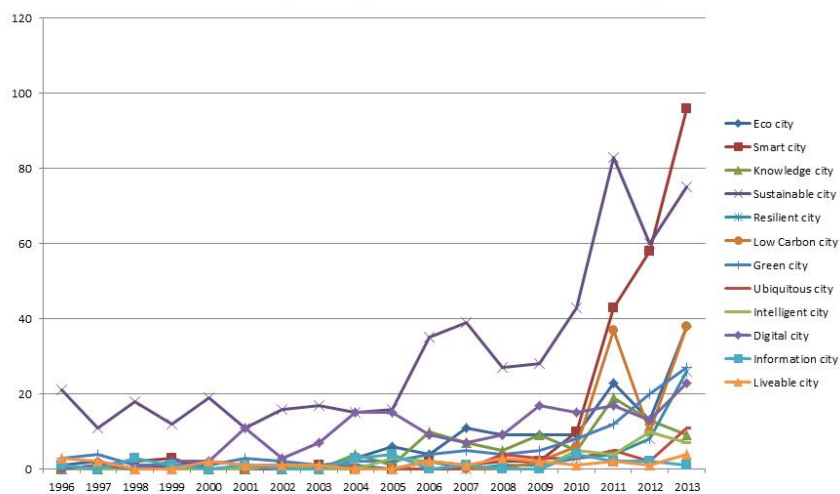
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So, apparently *the smart city* has sort of won the game, if you wish, and the reason is presumably that with "environment" you can't really make money. Of course, it's nice to appear green, but making yourself green with more parks or interventions in the industrial structures you spend money rather than earn money, that is not really what cities or the industry wants. The smart city helps that by proposing a technological approach to environmental problems, whether that really works is a different matter, but this is attractive to government and industry, and this is presumably the reason why global warming, air quality, another forms of pollution have been changed into the smart city concepts.
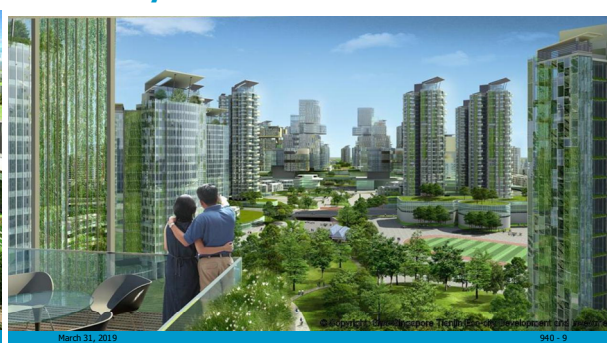
## Co-occurrence of 12 categories
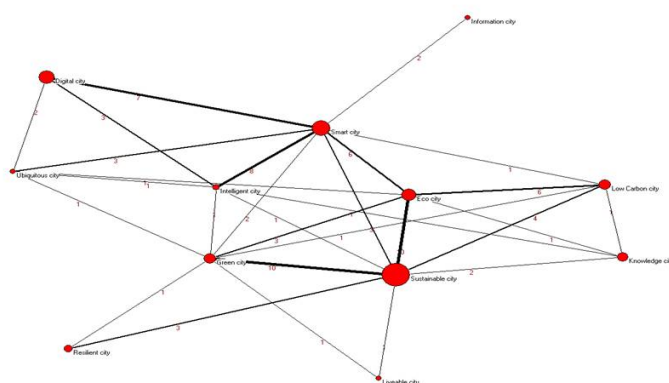
We also see here that many of those city types are related, the sustainable city is here, eco city, and smart city. In the most recent work that we have not published yet, you will see that basically the smart city is at the center, and the sustainable city has been moved a little bit to the periphery.

## Sustainable city

## Eco city

*The sustainable city* is a kind of general concept. Sustainability has now a quite many different meanings. It is good for the environment, but there is also social sustainability, economic sustainability, I've even read about cultural sustainability, so basically that has become the catch-all term that is never wrong to use. Nobody is opposed to sustainability, but its meaningfulness has declined over years.

*The eco city* started out as a concept, which was really environmental. There were communities living especially in North America with a very natural return to nature lifestyle, but over time, it has basically been adopted in a country like China, for instance. Basically, now the eco city is simply a green place. When in Western countries in 1970s the report of the Club of Rome appeared and gave a shock to Europe and North America about the depletion of natural resources, and the pollution of environments. At that time, China, for instance, was in the middle of the Cultural Revolution. I have to think what Russia was like in early 1970s, but I think there must have been other problems in Russia also at that time. So, the eco city concept, when it appeared in Europe, it was not as powerful in communist countries as it was in capitalist countries. And now, finally, when it got adopted, for instance, in China, it acquired the meaning of an attractive place for people to live. You can give all kind of indicators – environmental, economic, social, but it doesn't mean that peo-

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ple want to live in nature anymore; it's not a lifestyle, when you completely live in harmony with nature. It means more something like an attractive green place, not much more.

**Low carbon city**



**Green city**



*The low carbon city* is more specific, but a low carbon city is specifically about reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Sometimes it is kind of in the row with eco, but the original meaning is different. *The green city* has little meaning. Here, for instance, you see a lot of trees, but if you have so much car traffic in your city, in reality it is not environmentally friendly at all.

**Compact city**



**Liveable city**



*Compact cities* are advantageous to the environment, because a lot of activities for many people are put in a small place. So, it means that you consume less energy; it also means that you consume less space, which is generally good. On the other hand, if you look at the city like Hong Kong, and perhaps also Moscow, and Saint Petersburg, which are very densely populated, the air pollution in such cities tends to be higher, because a lot of people pollute in a small place.

**Resilient city**



**Knowledge city**



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I could give a few more examples like *the liveable city*, and *the resilient city*, which are obviously more about protecting yourself against flooding, and *the knowledge city* which is more about promoting knowledge at the interplay of university, government, and industry, but they all have their own specifics, and they are not the same.

Often, if a city wants to be popular, it looks at those different terms and uses them almost interchangeably, because the myth is that if you do less industry, less manufacturing and more knowledge creation – this is good for the environment. However, partly this is a myth, because the production has to take place somewhere anyway. If we invest more in knowledge, but we still consume as many products as before, it simply means that the pollution happens elsewhere. But that is not the problem of the cities that promote themselves, if they promote themselves as smart cities; this gives them a better, more modern and environmentally friendly image, even if, actually, the use of computers is not so environmentally friendly. I don't know if you ever managed to dispose of your computer equipment, but, believe me, it is not good for the environment. So, partly you can say that services industries are perhaps slightly more visibly polluting, but they are not necessarily better for the environment.

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Then we have *creative cities; information cities; digital cities,* beginning with Amsterdam, which is now posing itself as a smart city; *intelligent cities*; etc. So we have many, but partly this view of city labels is a way for cities to promote themselves. However, it's partly branding if you wish, but it's not the whole story. The whole story of city branding is broader. It also involves, according to the literature, for instance, establishing the city brand identity, and perhaps promoting yourself to different target groups in different ways.



**The world's first zero-carbon city in the UAE desert**

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In the world of urban greening, there is this very famous example, which is called Masdar City. Masdar City was supposed to be the world's first zero-carbon or negative-carbon city in Abu Dhabi. The Arab world, living in a desert and then building up a new colony there, creates a great strain on the environment. You have relatively little water there, relatively little greenery. So, if you promote yourself there economically as Abu Dhabi and Dubai in Emirates, and even Saudi Arabia have done, it is difficult to do this in an environmentally friendly way. In fact, those nations have among the largest carbon footprints in the world, and also ecological footprints. But in this new world economy, you cannot afford to have such a bad environmental image anymore.

So, what Masdar City did in the past – put the whole amount of money into the new techno-logical city called "Zero-carbon city Masdar", and it hoped that it would attract new industries, new green industries to make this city basically living in the world of green technologies. And it had massively branded itself worldwide, almost everybody has heard of it somehow, of course it is famous in the Arab world, but also, if you look on Wikipedia or other channels, global channels of information, then you come across Masdar city.

The problem is, however, that in spite of good intentions relatively little has happened since the early days, it is still a small place, it is still relatively far away from the capital, Abu Dhabi, like 25 or 27 km away, in the middle of the desert, and it hasn't grown much since. And the investments there stopped, and private investors have not believed much that it would be meaningful in the future. So if you go to the exhibition hall there, you'll see that the number of initiatives over time has shrunk more. But, still the brand name "Masdar City" is strong. A lot of people know about it, and those who have not been there still stand for this concept. This shows that, actually, branding can be a very strong tool. However, if the brand image is strong, but people start testing it, then you have to be sure that you can really deliver what you promise. That is maybe the core of my presentation here: *long-term viability of a brand can only work if you have followed it up by action.*

## Features of city branding

- Cities wish to attract investors, industry and visitors
- Place branding originates from private sector marketing
- Cities have are variegated and have multiple aspects
- Branding goes beyond marketing and advertising: LOYALTY and POLICY STRATEGY. They should:
- Refer to past & present, and reflect future wishes
- Be distinct and ambitious, but realistic
- Be developed with stakeholders and locally embedded
- Be expressed in phrases and logos

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That brings me to the idea what typical features there are in city branding. And the line is at-traction of industry, visitors, and investors. In the case of Masdar it was especially for investors. It was the concept that was derived from the private sector, but it had to be adopted in the public sec-tors, which has a more complex set of tasks. Government work is actually more difficult than com-pany work, because you have many more goals coming to play, you have many more stakeholders to satisfy, and a city is not a brand. A city has so many features, and it means so many different things to different people, that it is difficult to take them into account all together in one brand. However, something can be defined as its essence if you wish. The goal of branding goes beyond

marketing or promotion. It should have more profound consequences, it should lead to policy action, and it should lead investors, visitors, and industry to loyalty. It should be like they have this brand in their head all the time. It is almost like you are really branded. So, it has this loyalty aspect, and it has a policy aspect.

Now, according to me and also many people in the literature, basically, to be a good brand, it has to connect with the history. Even if it's a short history, it should have a connection with the history. So, very ancient cities in Russia can refer to the history, at least make use of it sometimes. If there are only industrial cities that appeared a few decades ago, then they have to emphasize other things, but ignoring the past is difficult. However, you can do this in a creative way, and you have to take into account present features, what population you have got, what industries are prevalent, and, of course, it has to reflect future wishes, branding is also for the future. So, it has to be a mixture of that: it has to formulate future wishes but be based on present situation and historical heritage.



## Layers in city branding

1. City brand identity

2. City brand position

3. City brand image
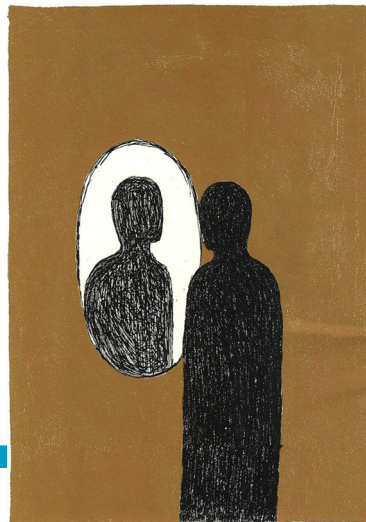
March 31, 2019

At the same time not everybody can have the same brands, in fact, every brand should be unique. So, it should be different from other cities, it should have something distinct. It should be ambitious but not overly ambitious. If everybody can tell that this is possibly not going to happen if you are an industrial city and you are posing yourself as a historical capital, or the greenest city in Russia – nobody is going believe you. So, in fact, you have to formulate them in an ambitious way, but realistic, something that people can believe. At the same time, it is often claimed in the literature, it should be developed with stakeholders, so it is locally embedded.

## City brand positions - Randstad

| Category / City | Smart | Sustainable | Eco | Low-carbon | Knowledge | Green | Resilient | Livable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amsterdam | +++ | +++ | | | | + | +++ | ++ |
| Utrecht | + | +++ | | + | +++ | + | | + |
| Almere | +++ | +++ | | | | + | + | |
| Haarlem | | +++ | | +++ | | | | |
| Amersfoort | | +++ | | +++ | + | +++ | +++ | + |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Rotterdam | + | +++ | | +++ | ++ | ++ | +++ | ++ |
| The Hague | + | + | | +++ | | ++ | + | |
| Leiden | | +++ | | | +++ | + | + | + |
| Zoetermeer | | +++ | | | + | ++ | | + |
| Delft | | +++ | | | +++ | ++ | ++ | + |
| Dordrecht | | +++ | + | | | + | + | ++ |

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What we did is we collected a number of city brand identities, cities in the Netherlands, Randstad, for instance, the city of the Hague, where I am now located, is a world city at the sea, but also a city of peace and justice, because all the international courts for justice are here, they basically lean on that image.

Well, using those identities that overweigh certain positions like their labels. Amsterdam, you see, emphasizes the 'smart' very much. Almere, which is close to Amsterdam, does the same. All the cities find sustainability attractive, so all the cities call themselves 'sustainable'. The Hague a little bit less, but the Hague focuses more on 'low carbon' and 'green'. University cities, perhaps Tomsk does that, also Delft and Leiden, normally would emphasize that they are 'knowledge' cities.

| City | Brand identity |
|---|---|
| Shanghai | **Comprehensive global city**, international economic, financial, trade, shipping and technological innovation center, and an international cultural metropolis by 2040 |
| Nanjing | **Famous ancient capital**, Jiangsu provincial capital, important regional center city.<br>National historical and cultural famous city, national comprehensive transport hub, national innovation base, regional modern service center, YRD advanced manufacturing base, eco liveable city |
| Yangzhou | National historical and cultural city, scenic tourist city with traditional characteristics, regional central city, a historical and livable city, through the development of advanced manufacturing industry. |
| Changzhou | An economically strong city with an advanced manufacturing industry, cultural city, regional hub city, and ecological city. It aims to be an innovative and entrepreneurial city |
| Suzhou | National historical and cultural city, scenic tourist city, national high-tech industrial base, and important central city in the YRD. It is an advanced manufacturing base. |
| Nantong | **Modern international port city in the China's eastern coast**, economic center and gateway city in the north wing of Shanghai, and a liveable entrepreneurial city, historical and cultural city in China |
| Wuxi | One of the most important central cities in the YRD, and also an important scenic tourist city. It aims to be an international manufacturing base, worldwide tourist resort and ecological city |
| Hangzhou | **Oriental city of quality.** Central city in YRD, national historical and cultural famous city, and scenic tourist city. It has the following functions: YRD Regional Financial Services Center, modern logistics center and transport hub, national high tech industrial base, economic information center and innovation center, International e-Commerce Center and Tourism Leisure Center. |
| Ningbo | **Important port city in China's southeast.** Coastal, economic center in the south wing of the YRD, national historical and cultural city. It has following functions: International Trade Logistics Port, advanced manufacturing industry base in East China, an important foreign trade port in the YRD south wing (UMP). It strives to be a smart city |
| Huzhou | Central city on the South Bank of Taihu Lake, a provincial historical and cultural city, an industry and trade city, as well as the ecological tourism city in the YRD. It has the functions as the advanced manufacturing base in the YRD, modern service industry base, urban agriculture base .... It aims to be an eco-city |
| Jiaxing | YRD innovative strong economic city, eco-cultural Jiangnan water city, Hangzhou Bay liveable coastal city, modern network type; garden city |

In China it is similar: Shanghai has everything, so big, it calls itself a comprehensive global city. I think it's a claim that is realistic. But not far from Shanghai is Nanjing, an ancient capital, now it's the capital of Jiangsu province. It calls itself a famous ancient capital, it also emphasizes that it's good in industries. Whereas Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang province, also not far away, is the oriental city of quality, along with Jiaxing makes, for instance, China's capital of innovation, IT is very strong there, so they emphasize that they are oriental, and quality that tends to be attractive. It emphasizes aspects that they want to have. I must add to this, cities that are already strong, also have easier job in doing their branding. If you are unpopular or nobody knows you, it is really a tougher job to do the branding right, and also more interesting and more challenging.



- City branding is a promising entry point for ecological modernization; eco and smart city are particular entries
- It is practiced increasingly, and quite professionally by some
- Connecting with developmental pathway is key
- But it is not city advertising without policy commitment
- Brands/visions require translation into strategies and implementation; else credibility is lost
- Municipal organization should be aligned with the brand
- Identity, policy action and public image may converge over time
- Uniqueness of each city can be preserved

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And then I would like to conclude by saying that city branding, as it is done now, is a promising entry point for ecological modernization. People, who say that city branding is basically greenwashing, are wrong, or at least potentially wrong. Eco and smart things can be used as a beginning of transformation, but this transformation is not automatic. If you start the branding it doesn't mean that the policy implementation will follow. So this branding is practiced increasingly, and some cities nowadays do this in very sophisticated ways, but it has to be connected with how you want to develop it. If you want to go through a sustainable urban transformation, it basically means that policy makers have to show commitments. So, this branding doesn't have to stay just in a tourist department, or in a promotion department, no. It must be shared by the leader of the city, and the heads of the various departments. It must be a policy commitment that they all make, and that they are all engaged in their own ways. So they have to see the ramifications of this commitment for their own departments to make sure that everybody recognizes this brand and acts on it.

So brands and visions require translation into strategies and implementation. If you don't do that long-term, credibility is lost. People eventually see what you're doing, it may take 5 years, it may take 10 years, eventually, it will come. So the municipal organization should be aligned with the brand in order to make it effective. And then, identity, a city's anthem, policy action and public image – they will converge gradually. At the same time, if they have done the job right, uniqueness of the city can be preserved, and that is basically the definition of a stronger city.