Conceptualizing Residents' Destination Brand Ambassador Behavior

Abstract | Although destination branding has become increasingly popular throughout the last decades, the role of the biggest destination brand stakeholder has scarcely been researched: the local inhabitants of a destination, commonly called the "resident" stakeholder. Only recently scholars have speculated that residents could be a brand's most valuable advocate through showing "residents' destination brand ambassador behavior" (RDBAB) and enhancing brand equity. However, what this concept really means has hardly been investigated. This research employs content analysis of related destination branding literature in order to conceptualize the notion of RDBAB. Findings have shown that a general distinction between planned/spontaneous, and promotion/development-related RDBAB can be made. Offline and online word-of-mouth, personal use of promotional material, as well as participation in promotion and development-related events and activities are given as behavioral examples. Finally, a definition of RDBAB is offered based on the findings and suggestions for future studies are given.

1. Introduction

While residents have largely been acknowledged as a destination brand stakeholder, their precise role in the branding process has not been sufficiently researched (Eshuis & Edwards, 2012). This has not only caused a significant lack of related literature, but also the belief that residents often hinder the destination branding process through public indignation and dissent (Braun, Kavaratzis, & Zenker, 2010; Pike, 2009).

Only recently there has been awareness among scholars and practitioners to consider resident-targeted internal branding efforts for tourist destinations. This notion comes from the idea that by satisfying and fulfilling employee motivations, they will be more motivated in enhancing external customer satisfaction and loyalty (Ahmed & Rafiq, 2003). In other words, satisfied employees will be more willing to fulfill the brand promise. Nonetheless, as residents and other internal destination brand stakeholders are not paid for, their relationship with a destination brand is not regulated by contracts but by brand communication (Sheehan & Ritchie, 2005). It is therefore of utmost importance for destination managers to not only follow-up their brand perception from a tourist point of view, but also residents should be assessed and monitored (Sartori, Mottironi, & Antonioli Corigliano, 2012).

At first sight, it seems that residents are a bigger threat than benefactor for destination brands. Past studies have often shown residents and destination marketing organzations (DMOs) as

having diverging interests (e.g. Holcomb, 1999), and the consideration of residents in the brand development and implementation was largely as an ethical and socio-cultural issue. Several examples of destination branding gone bad due to residents' indignation have emerged throughout the last years. Branding literature has been picking up a few of these notorious examples. Counter-branding campaigns led by residents, such as Amsterdam's 'I AMsterdamned', Hamburg's 'Not in our Name', and Birmingham's 'It's not shit' have attracted the attention of marketers and scholars alike. In extremis, Manchester's 'We are Up and Going' brand was forced to shut its function due to the resistance of residents (Braun, Kavaratzis & Zenker, 2013).

Only most recently another viewpoint on the role of residents as a destination brand stakeholder has emerged. They are believed to also hold the potential to be a brand's biggest promoter (Kavaratzis, 2004). As the brand's largest stakeholder, residents' are believed to be able to help with the development and promotion of a destination brand, ultimately acting as destination brand ambassadors (Konečnik Ruzzier & Petek, 2012).

Indeed several branding authorities have asked and encouraged residents' contribution in the branding process. The 'Be Berlin' brand was cited as one successful example by Braun et al. (2013), managing to express residents' feelings within the brand by connecting the latter to their personal lives. However, literature on the field seems still to be scarce (Andersson & Ekman, 2009). Considering the potential which residents have for the success of a destination brand by acting as brand ambassadors, it is deemed of utmost importance for both, academics and practitioners, to investigate "*residents' destination brand ambassador behavior*" (RDBAB) further.

Although several scholars have mentioned RDBAB (e.g. Braun et al., 2010; Propst & Jeong, 2012), there is no unique sound definition for the concept found in current literature. For this study, it is therefore deemed necessary to give a theoretical contribution through conceptualizing the notion on RDBAB, analyzisng how it has been used in literature and ultimately, offer a defintion of the concept for the use of future research.

2. Theoretical framework

Relationships between residents and destination brands are multifold. Targeting residents as an external destination brand target group is to encourage or discourage certain segments of society to visit or move to a designated destination. Ths is commonly called "cold" marketing (Hospers, 2010). When considered an internal target group of a destination brand, the goal has been identified as causing positive resident attitudes towards a destination brand (Eshuis &

Edwards, 2012; Zenker & Petersen, 2010) and ultimately to lead them towards RDBAB (Braun et al., 2010; Chen & Dwyer, 2010; Choo, Park, & Petrick, 2011; Freire, 2009; Kavaratzis, 2005; Propst & Jeong, 2012). At the core of this concept lies the thought that residents can enhance the equity of a destination brand through positive brand related behavior, i.e. RDBAB.

In a rare attempt, Konečnik Ruzzier and Petek (2012, p. 469) offer a singular and fairly direct statement on the relationship between residents and destination brands, namely 'Residents can be treated as an internal stakeholder of the country, as this is the largest group that constitutes and lives the brand. Their active participation in the process of formation and especially in the process of brand implementation is precious. In this way, they act as ambassadors of the country brand.'

On the core of this concept lies the thought that residents can enhance the equity of a destination brand through positive brand related behavior. Kavaratzis (2004), states that there are three ways to communicate a destination brand. The first (1) is by primary means, namely through real place offerings such as architecture. The second (2) is through secondary marketing efforts by the DMO. The last (3), is through tertiary means. These include not directly controllable ways of communication such as word of mouth. In the latter the residents play a particular role because they are both, 'at the same time the most important target audience of city branding and the most important city marketers' (Kavaratzis, 2004, p. 69). If done intentionally or unintentionally (Chen & Dwyer, 2010), these actions are potentially cost-effective (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008), reach the targets better than traditional advertisements, and ultimately appear as the least biased and most authentic form of branding (Andersson & Ekman, 2009; Braun et al., 2010; Kemp, Childer, & Bordelon., 2012). Andersson and Ekman (2009) state that DMOs have recognized this potential and there are several examples of organized ambassador platforms and networks for residents to contribute to a destination brand. Braun et al. (2013, p.3) mention the 'Be Berlin' branding campaign as a successful example, because residents could 'express their views on their city through the telling of personal stories that connected them to the city; some of these personal stories have been used in the city's promotional campaign'. Cai (2002) had suggested earlier that RDBAB can be summarized as an effective tool to build a stronger destination brand identity. Later studies have reinforced this idea by the fact that modern tourists do not want to be only involved with sightseeing, but look for an emotional link and a deeper contact to the local culture, which finally exposes them more to the residents (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007). Along the same lines, Gowreesunkar, Cooper and Durbarry (2009) state that in modern tourism the residents deliver the brand promise made by the DMO through their behavior when they effectively meet the guest.

Nonetheless, this kind of effective residents' support for the promotion of their own destination brand has up to date hardly been investigated (Choo & Park, 2009). Braun et al. (2013, p. 7) mention the importance to connect residents' BAB to their other roles of citizens, target group and integrated part: 'Getting it right is no easy task, however, especially if policy makers do not see the relationship between this ambassador role and the other roles discussed. In other words, satisfied residents may become the most valuable ambassadors for their place, but dissatisfied residents will almost certainly become ambassadors against their place.'

Although the concept appears in earlier studies, a first empirical evidence for residents acting as destination brand ambassadors is given by Schroeder (1996). According to this study, a positive destination image and awareness about the destination are able to lead residents to both, supporting and promoting behavior. Ultimately this is believed to 'impact both the organic and induced image that nonresidents have' (Schroeder, 1996, p. 73). As mentioned earlier, his study does in any case not consider the brand as a deliberate construct and therefore related the causes of this behavior more to a general context than to the marketing efforts of a DMO.

Since then, several studies have mentioned the importance of residents' support and involvement in tourism planning (e.g. Dinnie & Fola, 2009; Nichola, Thapa, & Ko, 2009; Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007) but they do not succeed in connecting this behavior to the branding efforts of a DMO. Only recently, some studies have made this connection (e.g. Eshuis & Edwards, 2012; Kemp, Childers et al., 2012; Kemp, Williams et al., 2012; Konečnik Ruzzier & Petek, 2012; Propst & Jeong, 2012; Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013; Scott & Clark, 2006), and although limited in number have shown some related empirical evidence.

3. Methods

Kolbe and Burnett (1991, p.243) define content analysis as "an observational research method that is used to systematically evaluate the symbolic content of all forms of recorded communications". Content analysis aims at describing what is said on a certain subject in terms of place and time (Lasswell, Lerner, & de Sola Pool, 1952). This process should be objective, systematic, and is mostly quantitative (Berelson, 1952).

Camprubí and Coromina (2016) highlight in their review on the use of the method in the tourism field that most articles do not mention their method of sampling; which results in a lack of understanding how certain information has been obtained. Accordingly, websites, images and brochures are often included in the analyzed material.

This research only employs academic articles and conference papers as data source. The reason therefore is that primarily, an academic conceptualization of RDBAB is sought for. In order to

obtain the desired results, destination-branding related articles have been collected on "Google Scholar", "SCOPUS" and the library database of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Keywords used are "residents", "destination brand", "ambassador", and "destination marketing" among others.

A collection of over 200 academic papers only resulted in less than 20 papers concerned or related with residents as destination brand ambassadors: most of them mentioning the lack of empirical data in regard. The limited number of articles has made common methodological steps of content analysis, such as "determination of sampling method", "reliability testing", and "judge training" (Camprubí & Coromina, 2016) unnecessary. Finally, articles were summarized and compared in the qualitative research Software Nvivo, resulting in two sub-dimensions and several second-order codes.

4. Results

Although several scholars have mentioned RDBAB (e.g. Braun et al., 2010; Propst & Jeong, 2012), there is no unique sound definition for the concept found in current literature and research on the topic is generally scarce (Andersson & Ekman, 2009). While there are several empirical studies which are related to the subject starting from Schroeder (1996), there is not much coherence in how the concept has been used in past research. Looking at studies which have been concerned with the subject, several reflections of BAB have been identified (see Table 1).

Table 1. Past Studies related to Residents' Destination Brand Ambassador Behavior

Year	Author	Type of study	Type of brand ambassador behavior
1996	Schroeder	Empirical	Support for tourism development, recommendation
2006	Scott & Clark	Empirical	WOM
2007	Merrilees et al.	Empirical	Use of tourist facilities
2008	Simpson & Siguaw	Empirical	WOM
2009	Andersson & Ekman	Empirical	WOM, brand development
2009	Gowreesunkar et al.	Empirical	Influence tourists' experience
2009	Pike & Scott	Empirical	WOM, participation, loyalty to local attractions
2009	Choo & Park	Empirical	WOM, activities for visitor satisfaction,

			participation
2010	Braun et al.	Conceptual	WOM, positive brand related behavior
2010	Chen & Dwyer	Empirical	WOM, participation, in-role citizenship behavior, retention
2010	Zenker & Petersen	Conceptual	Intention to leave/stay, citizen behavior, WOM
2011	Choo et al.	Empirical	WOM, activities for visitor satisfaction, participation
2012	Konečnik Ruzzier & Petek	Empirical	Brand development, brand promotion
2012	Kemp, Childers et al.	Empirical	Brand advocacy, WOM
2012	Kemp, Williams et al.	Empirical	WOM
2012	Eshuis & Edwards	Empirical	Brand commitment
2012	Propst & Jeong	Empirical	WOM, active participation
2013	Rehmet & Dinnie	Empirical	Participation

As a result, three core distinctions within the studies of residents' destination BAB have been identified in literature, namely (1) planned versus spontaneous behavior and (2) promotion versus development related behavior. The following section will explain these concepts more in-depth and identify reflections of RDBAB which will be relevant for this specific research.

A first general distinction which has been found is between planned and spontaneous RDBAB. The first considers the behavior as planned, i.e. channeled over appropriate platforms and networks provided by a DMO and therefore as directly stimulated by branding authorities. The second deals with spontaneous and highly informal RDBAB, such as first-hand word of mouth or other not directly triggered brand-related behavior.

Regarding planned RDBAB, Andersson and Ekman (2009) succeed in giving an overview of different purposely-appointed ambassador typologies for a destination brand. There are four main dimensions and four identified types of destination brand ambassadors. The first (1) dimension is split into 'local' and 'external'. While local networks usually promote local pride and commitment, external networks focus on communication with other networks outside of the given destination. The second (2) dimension is divided into 'inclusive' and 'exclusive' networks. The first has a wide target group, targeting also private people with the aim to extend the reach of the brand. Exclusive networks, on the other hand, aim at invited members, creating a more intimate atmosphere and are more effective for scarce resources. The third (3) dimension explains that both of the former dimensions are not mutually exclusive and networks can be

'multi-dimensional', including both of the former. Finally, the last (4) dimension deals with the number of destination brand ambassadors. Larger networks are more effective, but also more costly and difficult to manage (Andersson & Ekman, 2009).

In addition to these four dimensions, Andersson and Ekman (2009) also identify four types of destination brand ambassador networks (see Figure 2.4.). The first (1) is resident-oriented. Appealing to the pride and commitment of the citizens, it is the norm that everybody is allowed to represent the destination through these network typologies. The second (2) network is business oriented. Invited members who usually are restricted in numbers mainly aim at attracting investment and business opportunities for a destination. The third (3) is focused on well-known and famous people. Normally these kind of ambassadors are expected to enhance the destination image, and generally to create awareness about the brand. Finally, the last (4) type of network is a niche one. An example therefore can be academic networks, trying to attract conferences and events (Andersson & Ekman, 2009).

Although helpful in defining residents' as destination brand ambassadors, Andersson and Ekman (2009) entirely approach the concept from an organized network point of view and do not consider spontaneous informal brand related behavior in a private context. From the same planned perspective, Propst & Jeong (2012) propose the creation of a 'brand ambassador program' for the 'New Michigan' brand. With the help of this network, residents would be able to be 'ambassadors to represent Pure Michigan in public events, organize and participate in the campaign's promotional activities, and express citizens' opinions or concerns to the campaign agency' (Propst & Jeong, 2012, p. 31). On the same line, Rehmet and Dinnie (2013) conduct a qualitative case study in order to determine motivations and perceived effects of Berlin residents participating in the 'Be Berlin' city brand ambassador program. Contrary to Anderson and Ekman's (2009) previous study, this study actually takes the perspective of the residents. Altruistic motivations, such as social values and civic pride were found significant, as well as benefit-driven motivations such as personal and business advantages (Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013). Although used in practice and widely manageable by a DMO, these networks do not have the advantage of seeming as unbiased and informal as spontaneous brand related communication and would fall more into the secondary brand communication category (Kavaratzis, 2004).

Concerning spontaneous RDBAB, literature has suggested that residents' have a particular importance in promoting a destination brand through unorganized communication, such as first-hand word of mouth (e.g. Braun et al., 2010; Chen & Dwyer, 2010; Choo & Park, 2009; Choo et al., 2011; Kemp, Childers et al., 2012; Pike & Scott, 2009; Scott & Clark, 2006; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008; Zenker & Petersen, 2010). Because this initiative is not directly managed by the branding authorities, spontaneous RDBAB is likely to seem more unbiased and unorganized

than its planned counterpart.

Another twofold distinction among different types of RDBAB is found in literature, namely promotion related and development related behavior. In its most simple, the first can be described a communication possibility for the destination brand while the latter is a valuable resource for further destination brand improvement (Andersson & Ekman, 2009).

When speaking of promotion related residents' destination RDBAB the most frequently mentioned in relevant literature is unquestionably brand word of mouth (WOM). Generally defined as a 'positive, informal and non-commercial person-to-person communication between two parties' (Mazzarol, Sweeney & Soutar., 2007, p. 1483), WOM is widely recognized as an effective tool to spread information about an object of interest and has been deemed as the ultimate success for promotion efforts (Day, 1971). Contrary to planned marketing campaigns, WOM is usually transmitted in a familiar environment or atmosphere (Simpson & Siguaw, 2008) and is therefore a good alternative to controlled brand communications (Chen & Dwyer, 2010). Recalling the notion of planned RDBAB, WOM has been anyhow shown to be spread over organized ambassador networks such as ambassador programs or in an online context (e.g. Andersson & Ekman, 2009; Propst & Jeong, 2012). While traditional WOM is believed to be an effective tool due to the high level of confidence among sender and receiver (Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991; Hogan, Lemon, & Libai, 2004), ambassador networks create a more distant atmosphere but are still able to seem relatively unbiased and not interested in profit (Andersson & Ekman, 2009; Braun et al., 2010; Kemp, Childers et al., 2012). According to Andersson & Ekman (2009), ambassador networks can also extend WOM to a larger audience than traditional communication.

Braun et al. (2013, p.10) furthermore mention that 'the online world also provides enhanced opportunities for place marketers to engage with all stakeholders and form essential relationships with them', suggesting the importance of online word of mouth (eWOM). Although frequently overlooked in RDBAB related research (Choo et al., 2011), scholars have acknowledged WOM and eWOMs' enormous importance in the tourism context due to the high level of intangibility of destination brands (Mazzarol et al., 2007). In this specific case of interest, it has been suggested that residents are able to act as verbal ambassadors to both, internal and external stakeholders (e.g. Braun et al., 2010; Chen & Dwyer, 2010; Choo & Park, 2009; Choo et al., 2011; Pike & Scott, 2009; Schroeder, 1996).

In addition to WOM and eWOM, two more promotion related behaviors have been identified in relevant literature. Only mentioned by Konečnik Ruzzier and Petek (2012) is the residents' personal usage of brand related promotional merchandise. The using of these would help residents to become 'actively involved in promoting and living the brand' (Konečnik Ruzzier &

Petek, 2012, p. 481). Unfortunately, the distribution of these items is only given as a recommendation for DMOs in the study and no empirical follow-up is found in literature.

Lastly, willingness to participate in brand related promotional events has been identified as promotional RDBAB. This can be done against a final retribution or purely as a voluntary act. Propst and Jeong (2012, p. 31) specify that 'paid and unpaid interns and volunteers might be employed as ambassadors to represent Pure Michigan in public events, organize and participate in the campaign's promotional activities.' Attending events is also mentioned by Andersson and Ekman (2009) as an important feature of residents' as being part of an organized ambassador network. This study suggests, similar to Eshuis and Edwards (2012) that if residents feel connected to their destination brand, they will not feel forced to participate but rather see it as a duty of their brand co-ownership. Regrettably, there is no empirical test of this concept found in literature up-to-date.

Table 2. Types of promotion-related residents' destination brand ambassador behavior

Types of promotion-related RDBAB	Authors
Word-of-mouth (traditional)	Braun et al., 2010; Chen & Dwyer, 2010; Choo & Park, 2009; Choo et al., 2011; Kemp, Childers et al., 2012; Pike & Scott, 2009; Schroeder, 1996; Scott & Clark, 2006; Simpson & Siguaw, 2008; Zenker & Petersen, 2010;
Word-of-mouth (online)	Andersson & Ekman, 2009; Braun et al., 2013; Propst & Jeong, 2012
Personal use of promotional material	Konečnik Ruzzier & Petek, 2012
Participation in brand related promotional events and activities	Andersson & Ekman, 2009; Propst & Jeong, 2012; Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013

In addition to promotion related ambassador behavior, residents' destination brand development related RDBAB is found in literature (see Table 2.3.). On the core of this concept lies the idea that residents are not only willing to take an active part in the destination brand promotion, but also in its further implementation and development (Konečnik Ruzzier & Petek, 2012; b). This behavior can be manifested in expressing concerns to the branding agency or DMO (Eshuis & Edwards, 2012; Propst & Jeong, 2012), joining ambassador network related activities (Andersson & Ekman, 2009) and other brand development programs (Scott & Clark, 2006).

Table 3 Types of development-related residents' destination brand ambassador behavior

Types of development-related RDBAB	Authors
Participation in future brand development (suggestions, meetings, comments)	Andersson & Ekman, 2009; Eshuis & Edwards, 2012; Konečnik Ruzzier & Petek, 2012; Propst & Jeong, 2012; Rehmet & Dinnie, 2013; Scott & Clark, 2006

5. Conclusion

The goal of this study was to conceptualize the notion of residents' destination brand ambassador behavior (RDBAB). A content analysis of pre-existing literature in the field of destination branding and destination marketing has resulted in several dimensions of the concept.

RDBAB was found be (1) planned or spontaneous and (2) promotion and/or development-related. Promotional RDBAB includes traditional WOM, online WOM (eWOM), personal use of promotional material and participation in brand related promotional events and activities. Development-related BAB was conceptualized as participation in future brand development, which can manifest itself in suggestions, meetings, comments related to the destination brand. Earlier studies had furthermore mentioned that residents as should function as brand ambassadors with the ultimate goal of enhancing destination brand equity (Braun et al., 2013; Kavaratzis, 2004; Konečnik Ruzzier & Petek, 2012). Based on this, a definition of RDBAB is offered, namely '*residents' planned or spontaneous destination brand promotion-related or development-related behaviour, which has the aim to enhance the equity of a destination brand*'.

However, this study has to acknowledge several limitations in regard. Firstly, findings are only based on secondary data. No primary data was collected. Second, an experts' point of view could have considered through focus groups with destination brand stakeholders, such as residents and marketing experts. Future studies should aim at overcoming the limitations of this research and gather opinions of related destination brand stakeholders in order to re-affirm or amend the given conceptualization.

References

Ahmed, P. K., & Rafiq, M. (2003). Internal marketing issues and challenges. *European Journal of Marketing, 37*(9), pp. 1177-1186.

Andersson, M., & Ekman, P. (2009). Ambassador networks and place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development, 2*(1), pp. 41-51.

Berelson, B. (1952). *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, pp. 1952.

Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2010, August). My city–my brand: The role of residents in place branding. In *50th European Regional Science Association Congress*, Jönköping (pp. 19-23).

Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2013). My city–my brand: The different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development, 6*(1), pp. 18-28.

Cai, L. A. (2002). Cooperative branding for rural destinations. *Annals of Tourism Research, 29*(3), pp. 720-742.

Camprubí, R., & Coromina, L. (2016). Content analysis in tourism research. *Tourism Management Perspectives, 18*, pp. 134-140.

Chen, N., & Dwyer, L. (2010, November). The construction of place citizenship behaviour from a resident perspective. In *ANZMAC Annual Conference Proceedings*, Christchurch, New Zealand. (pp. 1-10).

Choo, H., & Park, S. Y. (2009, July). The influence of the resident's identification with a tourism destination brand on their behavior. In *International CHRIE Conference-Refereed Track*. Paper 5.

Choo, H., Park, S. Y., & Petrick, J. F. (2011). The influence of the resident's identification with a tourism destination brand on their behavior. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management, 20*(2), pp. 198-216.

Day, G. S. (1971). Attitude change, media and word of mouth. *Journal of Advertising Research*.

Dinnie, K., & Fola, M. (2009). Branding Cyprus – A stakeholder identification perspective. In *7th International Conference on Marketing*, Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER), Athens, Greece: July (pp. 6-9).

Eshuis, J., & Edwards, A. (2012). Branding the city: The democratic legitimacy of a new mode of governance. Urban Stud. DOI: 10.1177/0042098012459581.

Freire, J. R. (2009). 'Local People - a critical dimension for place brands. *Journal of Brand Management, 16*(7), pp. 420-438.

Gowreesunkar, V. G. B., Cooper, C. P., & Durbarry, R. (2009). The role of internal marketing (IM) in sustainable destination management: A case study of Grand Bay, Mauritius. *The International Journal of Environmental, Cultural, Economic, & Social Sustainability, 5*(5), pp. 141-160.

Herr, P. M., Kardes, F. R., & Kim, J. (1991). Effects of word-of-mouth and product-attribute information on persuasion: An accessibility-diagnosticity perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, pp. 454-462.

Hogan, J. E., Lemon, K. N., & Libai, B. (2004). Quantifying the ripple: Word-of-mouth and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising Research*, pp. 271-280.

Holcomb, B. (1999). Marketing cities for tourism. *The Tourist City, 54.*

Kavaratzis, M. (2004). From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Branding, 1*(1), pp. 58-73.

Kavaratzis, M. (2005). From city marketing to city branding: Towards a theoretical framework for developing city brands. *Place Branding, 1*(1), pp. 58-73.

Kemp, E., Childers, C. Y., & Williams, K. H. (2012). Place branding: Creating self-brand connections and brand advocacy. *Journal of Product & Brand Management, 21*(7), pp. 508-515.

Kemp. E., Williams, K. H., & Bordelon, B. M. (2012). The impact of marketing internal stakeholders in destination branding: The case of a musical city. *Journal of Vacation Marketing, 18*(2), pp. 121-133.

Kolbe, R. H., & Burnett, M. S. (1991). Content-analysis research: An examination of applications with directives for improving research reliability and objectivity. *Journal of Consumer research, 18(*2), pp. 243-250.

Konečnik Ruzzier, M, & Petek, N. (2012). Country brand 'I feel Slovenia': First response from locals. *Ekonomska istraživanja, 25*(2), pp. 465-484.

Lasswell, H. D., Lerner, D., & de Sola Pool, I. (1952). *The comparative study of symbols: An introduction* (Vol. 1). Stanford University Press.

Litvin, S. W., Goldsmith, R. E., & Pan, B. (2008). Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. *Tourism Management, 2*9(3), pp. 458-468.

Mazzarol, T., Sweeney, J. C., & Soutar, G. N. (2007). Conceptualizing word-of-mouth activity, triggers and conditions: An exploratory study. *European Journal of Marketing, 41*(11/12), pp. 1475-1494.

Merrilees, B., Miller, D., Herington, C., & Smith, C. (2007). Brand Cairns: an insider (resident) stakeholder perspective. *Tourism Analysis, 12*(5-6), pp. 5-6.

Nicholas, L. N., Thapa, B., & Ko, Y. J. (2009). Residents' perspectives of a world heritage site: The Pitons management area, St. Lucia. *Annals of Tourism Research, 36*(3), pp. 390-412.

Paskaleva-Shapira, K. A. (2007). New paradigms in city tourism management: Redefining destination promotion. *Journal of Travel Research, 46*(1), pp. 108-114.

Pike, S. (2009). Destination brand positions of a competitive set of near-home destinations. *Tourism Management, 30*(6), pp. 857-866.

Propst, D. B., & Jeong, E. (2012). Evaluation of the Pure Michigan campaign: Policy implications and the importance of empowering residents. *Institute for Public Policy and Research at Michigan State University.*

Rehmet, J., & Dinnie, K. (2013). Citizen brand ambassadors: Motivations and perceived effects. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management, 2*, pp. 31-38.

Sartori, A., Mottironi, C., & Antonioli Corigliano, M. (2012). Tourist destination brand equity and internal stakeholders: An empirical research. *Journal of Vacation Marketing, 18*(4), pp. 327-340.

Schroeder, T. (1996). The relationship of residents' image of their state as a tourist destination and their support for tourism. *Journal of Travel Research, 34*(4), pp. 71-73.

Scott, N., & Clark, S. (2006). 26 The development and tracking of a branding campaign for Brisbane. *Managing Tourism and Hospitality Services, Theory and International Applications*, p. 300.

Sheehan, L. R., & Ritchie, J. R. (2005). Destination stakeholders exploring identity and salience. *Annals of Tourism Research, 32*(3), pp. 711-734.

Simpson, P. M., & Siguaw, J. A. (2008). Destination word of mouth: The role of traveler type, residents, and identity salience. *Journal of Travel Research, 47*(2), pp. 167-182.