

The role of advertising design in nation branding (With applying to India branding campaign in 2002)

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Abstract:

This paper aims at summarizing the concept of nation branding and the elements that consists of. The research aims at finding the importance of nation branding, as it became a popular phenomenon that used by countries to attract attention of the tourists, skilled students, professional workers, investors, governments of other nations and the loyalty of its people. There are a vast number of countries that brand their nations in order to manage the way that others around the world see them. It is crucial as it affects the nation' s image, reputation and position in the global stage that eventually will increase its competitive advantage and boost its opportunity as a destination to be visited. The research demonstrates the nation branding as a kind of place branding and how is branding being applied to places and nations. It illustrates the stages of nation branding and how do nations use advertising as a tool of communication to present itself in the international arena. The research will use the qualitative method, as it is the study that is used to explore a phenomenon to reach the mentioned points. Then it will analyze the visual elements of real example of national advertising campaign that have been already launched in the recent years in India in 2002. It will see different kinds of advertising that used in this campaign. It will find the results of the fundamentals and basics of using advertising in nation branding. It will reach the precautions that nations must put in consideration while branding the nation.

Keywords: Branding - Nation branding – Place branding.

Research problem:

Advertising may be an important factor in nation branding and positioning the nation positively in the world stage, so research problem is illustrated in answering these questions:

- 1- How is branding concept applicable to nations?
- 2- What is the importance of nation branding?
- 3- How is advertising used by nation to position itself positively?

Reasons for choosing the research problem:

- 1- Globalization era leads to the increasing competition between nations.
- 2- Explaining the importance of advertising and its role in nation branding.
- 3- Nation branding could provide a way to re-establish and communicate the nation's true culture, social and historical identity and carve out a positive and helpful place for itself in the global community.

Research aims:

- 1- Demonstrating the application of branding to nations, its elements and stages.
- 2- Illustrating the fundamentals of nation branding.
- 3- Identifying the rules and the basics of advertising as a communication tool to brand the nation.

Research hypotheses:

The research hypothesis is well designed advertising increases the positive perception towards the nation and its brand.

Research methodology:

The research will use the qualitative method as it is the study that is used to explore a phenomenon by collecting data and images and analyzing them using the grounded research.

1- Introduction:

Nation branding is one of the most salient concepts in today's world.¹ As a consequence of globalization, all countries compete with each other for the attention, respect and trust of investors, tourists, consumers, donors, immigrants, the media, and the governments of other nations. The application of branding techniques to nations is a relatively new phenomenon.²

Many researches reported that nation branding could attract tourists, stimulate inward investment, boost exports, and attract higher education students and skilled workers. It could also increase currency stability, help restore international credibility, increase international political influence, stimulate stronger international partnerships and enhance nation building.³ Moreover, a powerful and positive nation brand provides a crucial competitive advantage.

There is growing number of countries showing interest in investing in nation branding. Using advertising as an act of communication with the world can be a powerful agent in the imaging, re-imaging and the branding of the nations.⁴ It is essential for countries to manage how they are seen by publics around the world, how their achievements and failures, their government, their people and their products are reflected in their brand image. From this point the research looks at the importance of advertising in nation branding illustrating the positive impacts.

¹ Dennis F. Kinsey, Ph.D. & Myojung Chung - NATIONAL IMAGE OF SOUTH KOREA: IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY - The Journal of Public Diplomacy – 2013 – P.1

² Simon Anholt – What is a Nation Brand? – Superbrands – 2002 - P.186

³ Keith Dinnie - Nation Branding Concepts, Issues, Practice – Elsevier – 2008 – P.17

⁴ Brendon Knott, Alan Fyall and Ian Jones - Leveraging nation branding opportunities through sport mega-events – emeraldinsight – 2016 – P.106

2- Nation branding:

Nowadays academic researchers are paying more attention to nation branding concept, as it is more exciting, controversial and complex than corporate branding. The excitement emerges as a result of the limited theories that the academic community has been able to produce and validate. The controversy materializes from multitude viewpoints and opinions due to the strong influence of countries. The complexity results from the multiple levels, dimensions, and disciplines contributing to nation branding.

Fetscherin⁵ explained this complexity of the concept when he stated in his definition that it includes multiple levels, components, and disciplines. It entails the collective involvement of the many stakeholders it must appeal to. It concerns a country's whole image, covering political, economic, social, environmental, historical, and cultural aspects. This multidimensionality is ensured by Fan⁶ when he defined it as a process by which a nation's images can be created, monitored, evaluated and proactively managed in order to improve or enhance the country's reputation among a target international audience. It is concerned with "a country's whole image on the international stage, covering political, economic and cultural dimensions".

Gertner⁷ described it from another approach by defining it as the sum of beliefs and impressions that people (foreigners) have of that place. The image represents a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with a place. They are the product of mental processes to choose the essential information in a lot of information there. Ying⁸ stated that nation branding concerns applying branding and marketing communications techniques to promote a nation's image. Gudjonsson⁹ took a similar perspective by declaring nation branding uses the tools of branding to alter or change the behaviour, attitudes, identity or image of a nation in a positive way.

From all of these definitions it is clear to say that applying branding techniques in the form of continuous and organized efforts and strategic vision to create or enhance or modify the country's image that will affect its reputation positively domestically and abroad including all the political, economic and cultural aspects is called nation branding.

3- Nation branding as a kind of place branding:

Nation branding is a kind of place branding which has been approached from a variety of perspectives with different aims and intentions. As Gertner¹⁰ has emphasized, there is no agreement on what place brands are and what the process of place branding is. Braun, Govers,

⁵ José I. Rojas-Méndez - The nation brand molecule - Emerald Group Publishing Limited - Journal of Product & Brand Management – 2013 – P 462

⁶ Brendon Knott, Alan Fyall and Ian Jones - Leveraging nation branding opportunities through sport mega-events – Emerald Group Publishing Limited INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CULTURE, TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY RESEARCH - VOL. 10 NO. 1 2016 – P.106

⁷ José I. Rojas-Méndez - ibid – P 462

⁸ Ying Fan - Branding the nation: Towards a better understanding - Macmillan Publishers Ltd. - Vol. 6 – 2010 – P.98

⁹ Hlynur Gudjonsson – Nation branding - Henry Stewart Publications – USA - Vol. 1 – 2005 – P.284

¹⁰ Stella Kladou, Mihalis Kavaratzis, Irini Rigopoulou, Eleftheria Salonika - The role of brand elements in destination branding - Journal of Destination Marketing & Management – Elsevier – 2016 – P.2

Hankinson and etal.¹¹ see that it deals with the application of branding principles to places and the adjustment of such principles to the specific conditions under which places undertake their branding. The most usual aim of place branding is to trigger positive associations with the place and distinguish it from other places. Ritchie and Ritchie¹² simply substituted the terms 'goods' and 'services' with the term 'place' to define the place brand as it is a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that identifies and differentiates the place. This symbol or logo also makes the promise of a tourism experience that will be memorable and that it will be associated with the particular place only. Later on Blain and Levy¹³ agreed with this assumption supporting their opinion with that place branding is commonly understood as the communication of a distinctive and unique place identity in order to differentiate it from its competitors.

Simon Anholt¹⁴ concluded it in a definition as the process of building a brand for a place that is based on the place's identity and on the formation of a positive image in the minds of stakeholders. Nation branding is a way for country to re-establish and broadcast its true cultural, social and historical identity, and carve out a positive and helpful place for itself in the global community.¹⁵

4- Importance of nation branding:

There is a growing competition between countries domestically and externally which drives them to do great efforts in the nation branding. They apply branding techniques to nations to:

1. Attract tourists, entrepreneurs and foreign consumers of a country's products and services.
2. Stimulate inward investment.
3. Boost exports.
4. Attract higher education students, and skilled workers.
5. Increase currency stability.
6. Help restore international credibility and investor confidence.
7. Reverse international ratings downgrades.
8. Increase international political influence.
9. Stimulate stronger international partnerships.
10. Help erase misconceptions about a country and allow the country to reposition itself more favourably
11. Enhance nation building by nourishing confidence, pride, harmony, ambition, and national resolve.

¹¹ Stella Kladou, Mihalis Kavaratzis, Irini Rigopoulou, Eleftheria Salonika – ibid – P.3

¹² Ritchie B.R. & Ritchie R.J.B. - The branding of tourism destination: Past achievements and future trends in destination marketing – scope and limitations – 1998 - P. 91

¹³ Blain and Levy S.E – Destination branding: Insights and practices from destination management organizations - Journal of Travel Research – 2005 – P.329

¹⁴ Simon Anholt - Definitions of place branding, Working towards a resolution - Place Branding and Public Diplomacy – 2010 – P.2

¹⁵ Simon Anholt - What is a Nation Brand? – Superbrands – 2002 – P.187

5- Elements of nation branding:

The nation brand is the unique, multi-dimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences.¹⁶ The nation brand is the sum of people's perceptions of a country across six areas of national competence. Together, these areas make what is called the Nation Brand Hexagon illustrated by Simon Anholt¹⁷ in the figure below.



Figure No. 1: Anholt nation brand hexagon¹⁸

Anholt nation brand hexagon:

It is a pattern of measuring a country's good reputation and in establishing its place in nation brands index. The Anholt's theory is known as the Hexagon of branding. It consists in the representations, preferences and synthetic views that occur to an individual when he/she thinks of a specific nation. It is composed of the areas: exports, governance, investments and immigration, culture and heritage, people and tourism.¹⁹ Simon Anholt explains that he has found that what makes a difference to the images of countries is when they become dedicated to develop new ideas and make investments in innovations.

The following table demonstrates the elements of nation brand and what it measures as Simon Anholt analyze them:

¹⁶ Keith Dinnie – Nation Branding, concepts, issues, practice – Elsevier – USA – 2008 – P.15

¹⁷ SIMON ANHOLT - What is a Nation Brand? – SUPERBRANDS – 2002 – P.186

¹⁸ <https://www.slideshare.net/jcarleton/a-brand-like-no-other-nation-branding> 6/12/2018

¹⁹ Simon Anholt – Branding a nation – Romania and Simon Anholt - Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines vol. I – 2009 – P.57

Table (1): The elements of nation branding as explained in the hexagon

The dimension	What it measures
1. Exports	The specific kinds of products at specific standard that put under the labels “Made in.....”
2. Governance	The public image of the political life. Ranking the country regarding the trust in the government, the competence and fairness of the governance, its attitude towards poverty reduction, global peace or environment preservation.
3. Investments and Immigration	The attractiveness of a country such as the willingness to live and work in a country for a substantial period, the desire for a diploma issued in a specific country.
4. Culture and heritage	The perceptions and knowledge of the cultural heritage of the country such as sports.
5. People	The persons of the country and their popularity abroad.
6. Tourism	The attractions for the foreign tourist of the country. ²⁰

6- Stages of nation branding:

The stages involved in the nation branding process are multiple:

1. Investigation through document research, stakeholder (internal and external) interviews, workshops, and audits (communications, behaviour, brand architecture, and competitors).
2. Identification and articulation of the core brand idea—what it stands for, what it does, how it does it, and what its vision for the future is. Based on this driving idea, a strategic, integrated branding programme must be developed.
3. The design and creation of the identity is based on the core idea. The logo design and all aspects of how it should be portrayed across communications, literature, advertising, sponsorships, co-branding partnerships, 3-D environments, and signage.
4. The final stage is implementation: developing comprehensive guidelines and artwork to help manage the rollout of the new identity. This covers the flexible logo system, colour palette, typography, imagery (photography and illustration), tone of voice, design principles, templates, and applications.²¹

7- Advertising and nation branding:

Nations compete with each other to describe themselves with values and characters they adopted to distinguish themselves among others. For this reason they use advertising campaigns as they become increasingly influential in re-establishing and broadcasting its true cultural, social and historical identity, and carve out a positive and helpful place for itself in the global community such as the campaigns that maintained by many nations such as “The Great Britain”, “Germany Land of ideas” and “Incredible India”. The nations use advertising to express and brand themselves and to manage how they present their image among the international audience.

The reason behind choosing India’s branding campaign specifically is that there is too large gap between the visual image that was presented in their advertising and the real image of the nation that may affect negatively in the campaign’s feedback.

²⁰ Based on Görel Englund - Nation Branding A Brand New Marketing Tool on the Global Arena - STOCKHOLM SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS - June 12, 2012 – P.39

²¹ <https://landor.com/thinking/rebranding-the-city-of-melbourne> 23/1/2019

“Incredible India” campaign that maintained by the [Government of India](#) since 2002, was to promote tourism in India to an audience of global appeal. The "Incredible India" title was officially branded and promoted as the slogan and the name of the campaign by the ministry of tourism. In 2002, the ministry of tourism made a conscious effort to bring in more professionalism in its attempts to promote the nation as a destination to visit. The campaign was done by Ogilvy & Mather India.²² They used different kinds of advertising media during this campaign as means of communication. These means are:

A) The logo:

The logo of the campaign is presented in figure 2.



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Figure 2: Incredible India campaign's logo

The exclamation mark forms the ‘I’ of India is used creatively compliments the meaning behind the word “Incredible”.

The reason behind maintaining this campaign is despite India is a nation with the second highest population, largest democracy in the world, the world's third largest army, most number of graduating engineers, doctors and professionals, a prosperous nation growing in the field of services industry, information technology and global business and a lot of Indians these days becoming global CEO's, India has not been able to improve its tarnished image of being a backward society of snake charmers and slum dogs. So the government found that they are in bad need of branding campaign government to showcase to the world the unity in diversity and culture of India.

B) Printed advertising:

Ogilvy team identified by conversations with travellers from around the world, and an extensive study of travel blogs that there are several different kinds of travellers - some want adventure and romance, others are keen to explore the culture and learn its history, and some want to travel her to soak in India's offering of peace and tranquility. So the team needed to showcase that India has a fitting offering for every kind of traveller. They presented the length and breadth of the country through pictures that evoked wonder and curiosity about the country. The used slogan in this campaign “Find what you seek” was based on the insight that India can be what any traveller wants it to be.

The ads contained pictures of the natural landscapes in India such seas and mountains as shown in figures 3(a+b)

²² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incredible_India 8/3/2019

²³ <http://advertisementfeature.cnn.com/2018/incredible-india/adventure/terms-and-conditions.html> 8/3/2019



Figure 3(a)



Figure 3(b)²⁴

They also advertised about their famous monuments as shown in figure 4 or used tourists' favourite destinations such as Taj Mahal as it is the one of the world's most beautiful buildings as presented in figure 5



Figure 4

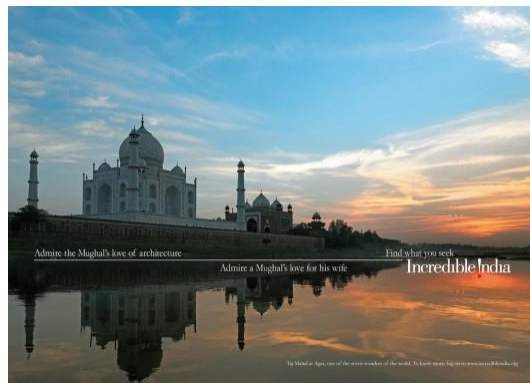


Figure 5²⁵

They used pictures of huge colors festivals they are famous of as festivals in India are too unique and are not seen or experienced anywhere as shown in figure 6(a+b).

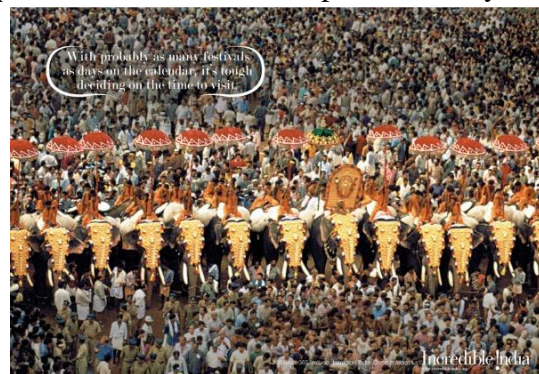


Figure 6(a)²⁶



Figure 6(b)²⁷

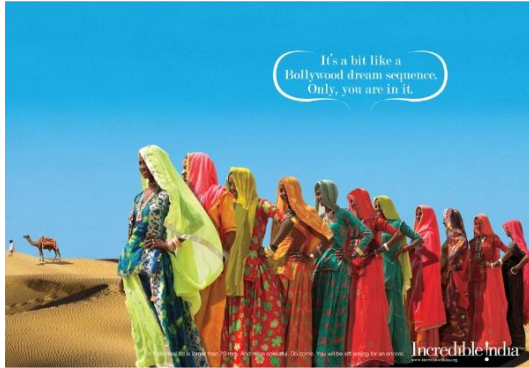
²⁴ <http://www.campaignbrief.com/asia/2013/09/ogilvy-mather-delhi-stirs-curi.html> 9/3/2019

²⁵ https://www.afaqs.com/advertising/creative_showcase/index.html?id=44118&media=Print&type=Indian 9/3/2019

²⁶ <https://breathdreamgo.com/top-10-incredible-india-moments/> 9/3/2019

²⁷ https://www.afaqs.com/advertising/creative_showcase/index.html?id=44116&media=Print 9/3/2019

They usually used women models with unique features that include their long hair, and their skin color wearing different colors and costumes that are considered Indian folklore as presented in figure 7. Also they used in their ads different animals they are famous of such as the tiger as shown in figure 8.

Figure 7²⁸Figure 8²⁹

C) TV. and internet advertising:

They used TV and Internet video advertising extensively. The ads contained their unique music while shooting their unique places.

D) Transportation advertising:

The campaign was integrated campaign as they made ads in the different means of transportation around India as showcased in Figure 9(a+b).

Figure 9(a)³⁰Figure 9(b)³¹

E) Website:

The campaign includes a website that portrayed India as an attractive tourist destination by showcasing different aspects of Indian culture and history such as spiritual and heritage destinations and museums. The website also contained information about different kinds of Indian arts, music, dance, cinema and theatres. The website is still working till now.

²⁸ <https://breathdreamgo.com/top-10-incredible-india-moments/> 9/3/2019

²⁹ <http://www.ummid.com/news/2015/November/01.11.2015/incredible-india-vs-make-in-india-ad-campaign.html> 9/3/2019

³⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLTguntabmU> 9/3/2019

³¹ <http://larissamac.com/portfolio/incredible-india-campaign/> 9/3/2019

F) Global conferences:

Global conferences were conducted, so as to present India in a beautiful packaging to the world to promote [tourism](#).³²

The results of the campaign:

The campaign was conducted globally and received appreciation from tourism industry observers and travellers alike. In 2006 India has emerged as the fastest growing market in the Asia-Pacific region in terms of international tourist spending. Travelers too appeared to find the campaign interesting and informative, going by favourable comments on blogs on travel websites regarding powerful visual impacts and creating a perception of India.³³

However, the campaign also attracted criticism. Some observers felt that it had failed to cover several aspects of India, which would have been attractive to the average tourists. Another important criticism was despite the fact Incredible India campaign has promoted India as a royal, luxurious, relaxing destination for tourists, it has failed to change India's image. Lack of infrastructure, poor facilities, poor standard of living are the first and only things that tourists visiting India see. Unhygienic food, poor drinking water facilities, frequent electricity cuts are the various factors, which are visible to every traveler coming to India. Visiting popular global destinations like the Agra, Delhi, Goa, and Mumbai have substandard facilities, poor communication with tourists etc. Despite one of the finest architectures and cultures in the world, what India manages is a bad **word of mouth** and negative publicity. Moreover, debacles like terrorist attacks, internal security issues, corrupt government and more recently, the Commonwealth Games disaster in Delhi 2010, further corrodes the image of India on the world scene.³⁴

8- The research results:

- 1- The good visual representation in the nation branding advertising must meet the true improvements in the real life to improve the consumer's experience with nation.
- 2- Improving the word of mouth about the nation and its reputation worldwide will eventually affect the nation brand positively.
- 3- Every nation must do awareness campaign for the its people synchronizing with the nation branding campaigns about the effects of building the nation brand and its positive impacts as the people is considered a main element that plays an important role in maintaining the national brand.

9- Conclusion:

The research used the qualitative method to explore the phenomenon of the nation branding concept by collecting data and different points of views of many researchers and images of real national advertising campaign and analyzing them using the grounded research to reach the fundamentals and basics of using advertising as a means of communication in nation branding campaigns. The research analyzed previous advertising campaign held in India in

³² <https://www.mbaskool.com/business-articles/marketing/234-incredible-india.html> 8/3/2019

³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incredible_India 9/3/2019

³⁴ <https://www.mbaskool.com/business-articles/marketing/234-incredible-india.html> 9/3/2019

2002 and is still continuous till now. The research reached to crucial results that must be put in consideration if the national advertising campaign will be applied.

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