How to build successful city brands? – Case Zurich, Geneva, Stockholm, Helsinki

Sonja Hyytiäinen
Jenna Renko

Rabin Gauli
Susanna Järvisalo
Kumarsingh Nadan

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This thesis surveys the success of the branding processes in four case cities. It aims at finding successful managerial competences needed in city branding. This thesis is a portfolio that consists of theoretical framework and an empirical section. The theoretical framework is divided into three parts. The first part talks about the concept of branding. The second part focuses on brand management and the last chapter discusses about the concept of place branding.

This thesis is part of a larger study that consists of 14 separate case studies. In this thesis’ empirical part four separate case studies are presented. These case studies represent an overview of branding in Zurich, Geneva, Stockholm and Helsinki. In each case study the current brand of the city is presented and the planning, implementation and monitoring processes are viewed. In each city the respondents also discuss about key competences required in place branding.

Finally, the results are analysed in the comparison section. The main similarities and differences in all four cases are compared to each other by demonstrating with tables.

The study was based on qualitative research method. First, an interview was conducted to eight decision makers responsible for the branding in the case cities. All the interviews were collected within three years, during 2011-2013. The interviews were collected by travelling to the destinations and using structured pre-prepared questionnaire. Second, the results were transcribed, coded and analysed. Finally, a case study for each city was written based on the interviews and already existing relevant data.

Mostly the cities differed from each other but some similarities between all of them could be identified and it was possible to even make generalizations. Two competences (creating right strategy and finding key persons) and one challenge (taking many stakeholders’ opinions into account) were mentioned by all the cities.

Keywords: city branding, place marketing, brand management, Zurich, Geneva, Stockholm, Helsinki
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1 Introduction

In this modern era, like everything else, cities are facing a huge competition from each other’s. Place marketing is promotion of a place by its ability to offer something totally different from other places. It is a process of creating an image which is very attractive but realistic in a visitor’s mind. (Gilmore 2002, 4-5)

Brands are crucial. They increase attractiveness. (de Chernatony, McDonald & Wallace 2011, 19) Branding is not just a logo, a slogan or a symbol. It is all the perceptions that come to customer’s mind when thinking about a certain brand. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 6)

Place branding is a relatively new concept which has many challenges in it. Building a brand for place is different from branding consumer goods. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 19) Moreover, there is not much research done. There is a need to study more about place branding.

This thesis is a portfolio thesis that consists of separate sections. The first part is the theoretical background written by Susanna Järvisalo in 2012. Continuously, the second part consists of four different case descriptions written by Sonja Hyytiäinen and Jenna Renko. Finally, at the end there is a comparison of all the four case cities and a conclusion of the results.

This thesis aims to find success factors of branding a city. It is part of an international research that is directed by Dr. Teemu Moilanen. This thesis group that consists of seven persons has all in all 14 cities to survey. However, in this particular thesis only four of them (Zurich, Geneva, Stockholm, Helsinki) are introduced. In the entire research there are now 25 cities but new cities are taken into the research all the time.

The objective of this thesis is to find out the organizational and managerial competences necessary for successful city branding. Interviews taken with the key
informants in the cities are analysed in order to find out what works and what does not, while building a successful city brand.

This thesis starts with the theoretical framework of which chapters 2-4 were written by Susanna Järvisalo. The second chapter discusses about the concept of brand. Correspondingly, the third chapter focuses on brand management whereas the fourth chapter of the theoretical framework concentrates on place branding.

The fifth chapter of this thesis introduces the brand management paradigms which will be applied also in the case descriptions. Continuously, the qualitative research method is introduced in the sixth chapter. Moreover, this chapter deliberates validity and reliability of the researches. These chapters were written by four authors: Rabin Gauli, Sonja Hyytiäinen, Kumarsingh Nadian and Jenna Renko.

The rest of this thesis consists of four case studies, their comparison and a final discussion. These parts are written by Sonja Hyytiäinen and Jenna Renko.
2 Concept of a brand

Brands and branding have a long history. In Greek and Roman times branding was used as identification or trademark for shops and craftsman signs. (Riezebos 2003, 2.) The etymology of the word “brand” originate from old Norse word “brandr”, which means to burn. It refers to branding of cattle and marking one’s property. (Lindberg-Repo, Mehra, Gubta, Dube & Gaul 2009, 5.) Management started to pay more attention to brands in the mid 1980’s because of globalization and increased competition. Brands became the most important asset of a company. A new concept called “brand equity” emerged to indicate the future income potential of a company. (Hankinson 2004, 111.)

Brand equity is an intangible asset that can be measured from three perspectives: consumer aspect, brand extensions and financial aspect. With consumer aspect the goal is to increase consumer’s awareness about a brand and manage perceived quality and brand loyalty. Brand extensions can increase brand awareness and enhance the core brand. Brand extensions help to launch related products when the brand is used as a platform. Multiple products can have just a single brand identity if separate identities are used for each product. Brands can also work as an umbrella when all brands are under the same brand or multi-brand categories when different brands are used for different categories. Financial perspective can be used to determine the price for a branded product over a generic product that the consumer is willing to pay. (NetMBA 2012.) With high brand equity companies can capture consumer’s loyalty and preference which enable to build strong and profitable customer relationships (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 260–262.) High brand equity is a result of positive reputation and image. It represents the company’s ability to keep doing business successfully as long as its brand image stays intact. (Anholt 2007, 6.)

2.1 What is “a brand?”

How are “brands” and “branding” defined nowadays? According to Grönroos (2009, 384) brands are used to separate products and services from other ones available in the market. Different literary sources have various definitions for brands. For example
Branding is a necessary process in order to build and manage a company’s reputation. It consists of designing, planning and communicating the brand’s name and identity. (Anholt 2007, 4.) Branding is a constantly adapted process that includes marketing and delivering value to consumers. It is essential to understand that this value is also defined by consumers. (Randall 1997, 3.) De Chernatory and Dall’Olmo Riley (1998, 428) have described brands continuous relationship between a company and its customers (figure 1). Brands exist and are created in the minds of consumers. Brands represent consumer’s impressions and feelings about a product or service. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 259–260.) Accordingly, brands are judged by their visibility, advertising and actions. Therefore brands are results of organizational behavior. Everything a company does can potentially have an impact on brand image in customer’s mind. (Miller & Muir 2004, 5.)
Figure 1. A brand’s relationship between a company and its customers (de Chernatony & Dall’Olmo Riley 1998, 428)

A brand is born when enough people see and think the same about a brand’s personality (Moilanen & Rainisto, 2009, 7). The core function of a brand is traditionally seen as their ability to work as identifiers of a company’s products via the use of slogans, logos and names. Yet brands are not just a set of identifiers. Above all brands are providers of experiences. (Schmitt 1999, 30–31.) Brands represent strategic and financial value for the company (Riezebos 2003, 8). The value of a brand comes from its ability to gain meaning in the minds of consumers. It is all the features and elements that the consumer thinks of when he or she sees or thinks about the brand. These are tangible and intangible attributes of a product or service. Intangible attributes can be psychological or social. (Kapferer 1997, 25.) A brand stands for everything that a product or service means to consumers (Schmitt 1999, 30–31). For example car labels like BMW or Mercedes Benz mean as brands something more to the consumers than just a name or logo.

Usually brands are associated with products. Kotler and Armstrong (2010, 248) define a product as something that is offered to trade for purchase, consumption or use and satisfies the customer’s feeling of need and craving. However, in the 1990’s branding started to apply also to services and places (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 4). A service is an intangible activity or benefit that one party can offer to another. A service does not result in the ownership of anything. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 248.) They are consumed at the same time as they are purchased and cannot be separated from their providers. Usually services are experiences that cannot be sensed before they are bought. This is one of the reasons why buyers try to look for signs of service quality. (Kotler & Armstrong 2010, 269–270.) Brands ease the customer’s decision-making by helping
customers to select products and services they prefer. (Dibb, Simkin, Pride & Ferrel 2001, 270.) The indicator of good quality is the consumer’s perception of the service. Therefore the management and creation of perceptions becomes crucial. One could say that people consume brands, not products or services. (Kornberger 2010, 19.)

Place branding is a combination of techniques that enable a place to build on its existing strengths, make sense out of its current identity and build a future identity. These techniques are adapted from commercial branding and leadership and partnership development practices. Communication is a method for telling the world about a place and making the world aware of the actions a place performs. These actions represent the nature of a place. Successful place branding ensures that the place gets equity from the recognition of known strengths and positive actions. (Placebrands 2012.)

2.2 Identity & image

Identity and image mean different things. Image is consciously given perception of what something is. This reflects the generalized notion of the object. (Virtanen 1998, 9.) Brand image reveals how the brand is perceived by customers and others (Aaker 2010, 71). According to Kapferer (1997, 95) image is on the receiver’s side. An image indicates how the various signals of the brand are interpreted by the public. These messages and signals produce a meaning for the brand. These signals can be for example brand name, symbols, products, services and advertisement. The signals are transmitted from the sender’s side, in other words from brand identity. Image is thereof both the interpretation and result. (Figure 2.)

Brand identity indicates what a brand stands for: its history, purpose, principles and ambitions. There are no two brands alike with same core values, roots and visual identity. (van Gelder 2003, 35.) Brand identity is what companies transmit to the marketplace (Randall 1997, 6). Brand identity is set of associations that the brand strategists aim to create. Brand identity expresses how a company wants the brand to be perceived. (Figure 2.) These unique associations are a promise to the target group from the company. A brand identity specifies self-image, meaning and objective for the brand. It is crucial to a brand’s strategic vision. (Aaker 2010, 68–71.)
Figure 2. Image and identity (Kapferer 1997, 95)

Desired image needs to be analyzed and planned before projecting it to the public. Brand image focuses more on brand's appearance rather than essence. Brand identity reflects the brand’s innermost substance. Several companies try to harmonize the messages their brands convey and make them coherent. They use different tools to define the standards for the brand’s visual identity. However, what really matters is the key message and the brand identity: what companies want to communicate to the consumers. The brand’s external signs of recognition must reflect the brand’s values. (Kapferer 1997, 90–93.)

Brand image, however, may turn out to be something entirely different as the planned identity, because image is subject to perception. The brand identity can be confusing or something entirely different than planned. This is called “the perception gap”. Perception gap must be avoided by ensuring that the target audience sees and relates to the brand identity and acknowledges what is offered. (Temporal 2002, 38.) Target group’s perception of the brand image provides necessary background information when a company is developing a brand identity. In the “perception gap” resources and expertise are lacking. In this case the brand image becomes the brand identity. (Aaker 2010, 69.) The brand identity is a crucial concept because brands need to be realistic, send out coherent signs and to be durable. (Kapferer 1997, 99.) Identity precedes image in proficient brand management. Brand management needs integrated and consistent vision and strategy. The central concept is brand identity. This identity is the core of brand management and it must be defined and managed carefully. (Kapferer 1997, 15–18.)
3 Brand management

The concept of brand management was born in the 1950s (Seth 1998, 197). Today brand management is at the core of any business activity because all companies try to manage the reputation and values linked to their brand and seek for competitive advantage. Brand managers role is to persuade other company functions to focus on the brand and enhance it through a mix of different marketing activities. (Nilson 1998, 25.)

3.1 How can brands be managed?

Brands are living and evolving organisms and change over time; their consumers change from purchase to purchase and year to year. Management is responsible for creating a culture where improved understanding of the consumer is the driving force behind the entire team entrusted with the management of the brand. Teamwork and strategic commitment are key issues in order to make the right consumer judgments and take the right brand decisions. This permits the protection and enhancement of brand equity. It is an evolving task, because techniques to generate relevant consumer knowledge are improving. In brand management it is not only one person, one team, one function or even one board’s task to manage the brand: it is the task for the business as a whole. (Seth 1998, 201–204.) Brand management can be seen as a process that controls everything concerning the brand; what a brand does and says how it is perceived by different target groups (Temporal 2002, 37).

In order to be successful brand management need to set specific targets (figure 3). Brand building requires the reviewing of three levels of targets. The business objectives cover elements such as profits and growth. The marketing objectives refer to what the marketing function has to achieve and aspects directly related to the market such as brand share, position in defined market segments. The communication objectives are related to what the brand communication can influence, such as awareness and attitudes. For brand management to be cost-effective the communication objectives need to be consistent with the marketing objectives which in turn must fit the business objectives. (Nilson 1998, 28–29.)
3.2 Planning & positioning

Brand planning is an important but time-consuming activity. The objective is to achieve a company-wide discussion and well-grounded consensus about how resources can be best employed to sustain the brand’s differential advantage. Brand strategy development must involve all levels of marketing management and stands a better chance of success when all the other relevant internal departments and external agencies are actively involved. (de Chernatony & McDonald 2003, 53.)

Strong branding is impossible without powerful positioning. Positioning is vital to brand management because it takes basic tangible aspects of the product and actually builds the intangibles in the form of an image in people’s minds. It focuses on the chosen target audience and influences their thoughts about the brand in relation to other brands. (Temporal 2002, 37.) Positioning a brand means emphasizing the distinctive characteristics that make it different from its competitors and appealing to the public. It results from an analytical process based on the following questions: A brand for what, whom, when and against whom? (Figure 4.) “A brand for what?” refers to the brand promise and consumer benefit aspect. “A brand for whom?” refers to the target aspect. “A brand for when?” refers to the consumption of the product. “A brand against whom?” refers to today’s competitive context. (Kapferer 1997, 97.)

Figure 3. Three levels of targets (Nilson 1998, 29)
Positioning is about creating a perception of difference, and brand managers use a variety of strategies to convince people that they are both different from, and better than the brands of the opposition. (Temporal 2002, 38.) A brand position is the part of the brand identity and value proposition that is to be actively communicated to the target audience (Aaker 2010, 71). Positioning is a crucial concept that reminds us that all consumer choices are made on the basis of comparison. Positioning is a two-stage process. First, it needs to be indicated to what category the brand should be compared. Secondly, it needs to be indicated what the brand’s essential difference and reason for being is in comparison to other brands of that category. However, positioning focuses more on the product itself. Positioning becomes difficult in the case of a multi-product brand. Positioning does not reveal the entire richness and meaning of a brand nor reflect all of its potential. (Kapferer 1997, 98.)

David Aaker (2010, 78) has created a “Brand identity planning model” to help ensure that the brand identity has more texture and depth. In many cases brands have a focus on existing brand images, brand position and influencing customers. However, the focus needs to be more extensive. With this model companies can broaden the brand concept to include other dimensions and perspectives. The heart of the model is the brand identity system, where the brand identity provides a value proposition to customers or credibility to other brands. (Figure 5.) The ultimate goal of the system is a strong brand-customer relationship. Companies should consider its brand as a product, an organization, a person and a symbol. All of these perspectives are different and they help to consider different brand elements and patterns that can help to clarify and differentiate an identity. A more detailed identity will also help with implementation. (Aaker 2010, 76–79.)
Strategic brand analysis provides the necessary inputs to the planning model. (Aaker 2010, 77.) The brand strategy needs to be viewed from three perspectives: customer analysis, competitor analysis and self-analysis (figure 5). The objective is to create a business that resonates with customers, avoids competitor’s strengths, neutralizes its own weaknesses and exploits its own strengths and competitor’s weaknesses. (Aaker 2010, 190.) Brand identity consists of core identity and an extended identity. The core identity represents the timeless essence of the brand. The extended brand identity includes elements that provide texture, completeness and add details that help portray what the brand stands for. (Aaker 2010, 85–87.) A brand may support other brands by providing credibility. A good brand identity provides a value proposition to the customer. Value proposition is a statement of the emotional, functional and self-expressive benefits that provide value to the customer. (Aaker 2010, 95.)

Figure 5. Brand Identity Planning Model (Aaker, 2010, 79)
3.3 Implementation & monitoring

When identity and value propositions are in place, implementation begins (figure 5). Communication objectives need to be established and execution planned and implemented. Brand position is the part of the brand identity and value proposition that is to be actively communicated to the target audience and that demonstrates an advantage over competing brands. (Aaker 2010, 176.) The final step is tracking (figure 5).

Visions, strategies and plans are useless until they are effectively implemented. The planning team needs to convene at regular intervals to review the company’s progress towards its goals. (Kotler, Asplund, Rein & Haider 1999, 121.) Continuous tracking and the assessment of the effectiveness of a brand against the competition is vital. There are many items that can be tracked to help brand managers assess how their brands are doing in the marketplace, and what effect certain market interventions are having on brand equity. (Temporal 2002, 241.) It is highly desirable to invest in monitoring the brand position and other elements of the brand over time. Tracking can be based on quantitative surveys or qualitative research which allows the assessment of how customer perceptions have been affected by the brand positioning effort. (Aaker 2010, 189.)

Research has a vital role to play in the life of a brand, both at the initiation phase when the brand is brought to life and in the ongoing process that is involved in successfully maintaining a strong and relevant brand. Successful brands are frequently supported by a sound knowledge base. Researching brands is a multifaceted process, involving all aspects of what constitutes the brand in the minds of the consumers. Monitoring the performance of a brand is often necessary in order to justify budget expenditure levels. The real measure of a brand can be considered to be the total net impressions of the brand in the minds of the consumer. This is hard to measure. One must choose techniques and methodologies, the market place characteristics and the company that suit the brand. (Campbell 1998, 56–57.)
4 Place marketing

Cities all over the world have actively started to build their city brands. The question is how can a city create a brand? Is it the same as a product brand or service brand? In many cases cities are seen as too big and complicated “products” and it is difficult to create designed brands for them. (Virtanen 1998, 158.) Cities face a fierce competition and number of important choices when they begin the task of place marketing. Europe consists of over 100 000 communities competing over potential place-buyers. By projecting a strong and relevant image cities can gain competitive advantage. (Kotler et al. 1999, 51.)

Place marketing means designing a place to satisfy the needs of its target markets. It succeeds when citizens and businesses are pleased with their communities, and the expectations of visitors and investors are met. (Kotler et al. 1999, 125.) Place branding includes several different trends and forms of branding: nation branding, place of origin branding, destination branding, culture and entertainment branding and place and city branding. Place and city branding uses branding as an approach to integrate, guide and focus place management. (Warnaby 2009, 413.)

Place marketing in its more organized form is a relatively recent activity. Unfortunately it is quite common that most marketing efforts start and finish with promotional activities and most city branding efforts start and finish with the visual elements like logos and slogans. Branding needs to be thought of as a complete and continuous process interlinked with all other marketing efforts. (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009, 522.) According to Kotler et al. (1999, 125) place marketing embraces four activities:

- Developing a strong and attractive positioning and image.
- Setting attractive incentives for current and potential buyers and users of services and products.
- Delivering a place products and services in an efficient and accessible way.
- Promoting the attractiveness, benefits and distinctive advantages of a place.
Techniques from the commercial sector are used to promote cities and their governments. Marketing helps with promotion and strategy and is needed to get more effective results in today’s competing marketplace. Building a successful city brand has an effect onto a wide range of difficult fields including the development and promotion of national and regional tourism, inward investment, recruitment and trade, the branding of exports, international relations and foreign policy, social and cultural policy, urban and environmental planning, economic development, sport, media management and many more. (Anholt 2007, 15–16.)

According to Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005, 510–512) city’s brand should operate as a form of umbrella that covers several stakeholders and audiences. This means that place value propositions are created by the various actors responsible for the marketing of a particular place. The complex and kaleidoscopic nature of activities and facilities available in a place may require segmentation, so that a city brand becomes a multitude of brands, a brand line similar to a product line. (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2005, 510–512.)

Ashworth & Kavaratzis (2009, 525) suggest that it is possible to adopt a branding philosophy for the management of cities and to use tools and principles of corporate branding. However, it is necessary to adapt these tools and models to the characteristics and demands of cities. Brand management of places is based on the fact that location brand resembles more a corporate brand than a product brand. Corporations share the same way the conflicts of interests and political agendas of a location, and yet need to manage the corporate brand effectively. Corporations, like locations and places often have many unrelated industries, products and different cultures. (Kerr 2006, 278.) Only a handful of the principles of commercial branding actually apply to places (Anholt 2007, 23). Cities are neither products nor corporations in the traditional meaning of the terms and therefore a distinct form of branding is needed (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009, 525).
4.1 Different ways to build an image for a place

Cities have always been brands. Usually people think about cities in terms of qualities or attributes, a promise or some kind of story. “Paris is romance, Milan is style, New York is energy, Washington is power, Tokyo is modernity, Barcelona is culture, Rio is fun. These are the brands of cities, and they are inextricably tied to the histories and destinies of all these places.” (Anholt 2006, 18.) The image of a place defines the way citizens, visitors and businesses respond to that place. Therefore, a place must try to manage its image. A place’s image is the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of that place. Different people can hold quite different images of the same place. (Kotler et al. 1999, 160–161.) Image’s mission is to individualize a city, separate it from other cities and give it its own identity. A city’s image reflects how people experience it and what the city is known for. An image highlights disparity and individuality. (Virtanen 1998, 9–12.)

Traditionally brand images are created with advertising and marketing. The reputation of places is usually more complex and is built in a more random way than the brand image of products or companies. (Anholt 2007, 9.) Cities do not have one clear message to communicate. A city’s image can be based on various attributes which are usually unplanned. Many cities have an image based on issues and facts in which planning has nothing to do with, for example historical incidents. With different actions and functions it is possible to build an image for a city. A city’s image is at its best when it comes in to existence as a spinoff of a city’s natural development. A city’s image should reflect what the city is. (Virtanen 1998, 158–163.)

Place image marketers can draw three tools to implement an effective image of a place: slogans, positions, themes and visual symbols or events and deeds. Typically image-makers develop a slogan to unify a specific campaign. A slogan is a short catchall phrase that embodies an overall vision of the place. Another tool is image positioning where the place positions itself in regional, national and international terms as the place for certain type of activity or as a viable alternative location or attraction to another place that may have a stronger or more well-established position. For example Berlin is the “Capital of the New Europe” and Munich is the “Insurance City Number One in
Europe”. (Kotler et al. 1999, 169–170.) Also the “country of origin effect” creates a brand image in consumers’ mind. The country of origin effect is an appeal and value adding factor to exports made in certain place or country. A good example is German engineering. (Anholt 2007, 10.) Germany has a rational and technical image. This image is generated and sustained by brands including Bosch, Siemens, Porsche, AEG, BMW and Mercedes. (Anholt 2007, 91.)

Visual symbols have figured prominently in place marketing. For example Berlin has Brandenburg Gate and New York the Statue of Liberty. When used in a systematic way, these visual symbols appear on official stationery, brochures, billboards, videos, prints and dozens of other places. Images can also be communicated through events and deeds. (Kotler et al. 1999, 171–172.) Cities can have unforgettable historical events that brand their exact locality. Places can remain branded for centuries by just one event. (Anholt 2007, 64.) Some cities have gained popularity because the city district has been divided in the past in an abnormal way because of war and politics. One classic example of a city with this kind of situation is Berlin. Berlin was in 1961–1989 a city divided by a wall. The dramatic history became an important part of Berlin’s image. (Virtanen 1998, 130–131.)

Many cities are renowned for their culture, festivals and traditions. One of the main objectives of these events is to create a better image for their host cities. When an event is known all over the world it is an important part of the city’s image and brand. For example the Oktoberfest is a popular event with millions of visitors and it is an important part of Munich’s brand. (Virtanen 1998, 100–102.) The Olympic Games is also a good example of how even a onetime event can have a significant impact on a destination’s brand. They become the basis for images, stories and emotions. The challenge is to find the best ways to use event images, stories and emotions to capture the consumer’s attention and build the brand. (Brown, Chalip, Jago & Mules 2002, 180.) The Olympic Games has close association with the host cities and achieve global attention. (Anholt 2007, 109.) The Olympics organization provides an excellent vehicle for branding at a local level using both local and international funding. (Virgo & de Chernatary 2005, 381.) According to Hankinson, the success of cities in building successful
brands through key sporting events was based upon the development of strong relationships between stakeholders whom would benefit from that success. (Hankinson 2004, 114.) Many sports clubs and sports teams are renowned for their domiciles and they also market the city (Virtanen 1998, 120).

4.2 Placemarketers and placemarkets

Place marketing is a continuous process that involves all citizens (figure 6). However, the marketers of a place can sometimes be difficult to identify. Different local, regional, national and international actors participate in place marketing. Below are listed the most active place marketers according to Kotler et al (1999, 67):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local actors</th>
<th>Public sector actors:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mayor and/or city manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business development department in the community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban planning department of the community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourist bureau</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Conventions bureau</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Public information bureau</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local actors</th>
<th>Private sector actors:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leading enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real estate developers and agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial institutions (banks, insurance companies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electricity and gas utilities, telecommunications companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chamber of commerce and other local business organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hospitality and retail industries (hotels, restaurants etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Labor market organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Architects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport companies (taxi, railway, airline)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Organizing a program to develop and market a place requires a thorough grasp of target markets (figure 7). According to Kotler et al. (1999, 67) the four main target markets of place marketers are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>Residents &amp; employees</th>
<th>Business &amp; industry</th>
<th>Export markets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Business visitors</td>
<td>- Professionals (scientists etc.) &amp; skilled employees</td>
<td>- Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>- Other localities within domestic markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Non-business visitors</td>
<td>- Investors &amp; entrepreneurs</td>
<td>- Heavy industry</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teleworkers</td>
<td>- High-tech, service companies etc.</td>
<td>- International markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Wealthy individuals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Unskilled workers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pensioners &amp; senior</td>
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Figure 7. The target markets of place marketers (Kotler et al. 1999, 67)

4.3 **Strategic market planning for cities**

A place’s desire to secure a unique position and positive image in the huge market is crucial part of strategic place marketing. Each place must formulate a combination of offerings and benefits that can meet the expectations new businesses, investors and visitors. (Kotler et al. 1999, 16.) In order to market city brands effectively there is a need to take an integrated approach, since local communities, the built environment,
heritage and infrastructure form a constituent part of image and identity as well as a facility for differentiation and rejuvenation. (Trueman, Cornelius & Killingbeck-Widdup 2007, 21.)

A fairly common European model is to organize a planning group made up of local and/or regional officials from the public sector. In order to be successful the planning group should involve representatives from the local business community from the very beginning of the process. (figure 8.) Sound planning requires the inclusion of commercial knowledge from early on because collaboration between the public and private sectors is prerequisite for future success. (Kotler et al. 1999, 25.) Place marketing can be thought of as a form of relation between local authorities and local wider audiences. In fact it is as much about communication between citizens as clients and public authorities as service providers as about attracting exogenous investment, employment or customers (figure 8). (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009, 522.)

![Figure 8. Levels of place marketing (Kotler et al. 1999, 27)](image)

Strategic market planning starts from the assumption that the future is largely uncertain, but on the other hand, the future of a place can be influenced by strategic actions and plans. This means that the community must establish information, planning, implementation and control systems that enable to monitor the changing environment
and respond constructively to changing opportunities and threats. Through the strategic planning process, places can create a unique selling proposition. Certain attraction factors are encouraged while other factors may be de-emphasized. (Kotler et al. 1999, 103–106.)

Many communities publish great volumes of facts and figures without classifying their impact. SWOT analysis is needed to catalogue and classify the characteristics of a place into major strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats. What is needed is a clear and sufficient long-term strategy where major strengths are levered to maximum and where there is time enough to improve certain weaknesses. All the attraction factors are not equally meaningful to different target groups. It is necessary to choose the factors of importance to each target group and assign importance weights to these individual factors. When combining performance ratings and importance levels, four possibilities emerge (figure 9).

![Figure 9. Performance-importance matrix (Kotler et al. 1999, 111–113)](image)

A place does not have to correct all its weaknesses or promote all its strengths because factors vary in their importance to different target markets. The place must probe deeply into which strengths and weaknesses most affect the perception and behavior of target markets. The resulting analysis becomes a major basis for laying place marketing plans. (Kotler et al. 1999, 111–113.)

The challenge is that visitors would truly experience the promoted brand values and feel the authenticity of a unique place. Cities and destinations often promote their his-
tory, culture and their beautiful scenery in marketing, but many destinations have these attributes and it is critical to build a brand on something which uniquely connects a destination to the consumer. For example only Paris is the city for love and romance. Whatever proposition is used it must also be right, have the potential to last and evolve in long-term branding campaign. The point of differentiation must reflect a promise which can be delivered and which matches expectations. Originality needs to be sustainable, believable and relevant. (Morgan & Pritchard 2002, 19–21.) The development of statements of what the brand should stand for and its promise to customers is a strategic decision. Thus a strategic perspective is needed. Brands need to be selecting markets and building assets for the future. The brand strategy needs to be viewed from three perspectives: a customer analysis, a competitor analysis and a self-analysis (figure 10). (Aaker 2010, 190.)

![Strategic Brand Analysis Diagram](image)

**Figure 10.** Strategic brand analysis (Aaker 2010, 190)

A customer analysis can productively involve an analysis of customer trends, motivations, segmentation structure and unmet needs. Competitor analysis looks at the brand image and position and the strengths and vulnerabilities of the major competitors. An important input to the development of a brand identity is a careful self-analysis of one’s brand and organization. Areas of inquiry include: the current brand image, the brand heritage, brand’s strengths and weaknesses, the soul of the brand and the organization and links to other brands. (Aaker 2010, 190–196.)
4.4 Challenges with place brands

Building a brand for a place has several unique features and possible problems. Cities and destinations are seen as multidimensional and complex entities. Several actors participate in the production and they have different resources and objectives. Due to several participating actors, the same place is marketed as a place product with different arguments by different organizations. A place product is a series of products and services, combined with the physical features of the place. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 17–19.) Places are multifunctional because different consumers assemble their own product from the range of spatial levels offered by the place. The inherent product complexities make the branding and marketing of places difficult. (Hankinson 2004, 112.) The lack of product control and internal and external pressures pose unique challenges for destination marketers (Morgan & Pritchard 2002, 21).

The place brand and place product are managed by a complex organization of private and public sector stakeholders. Therefore it is difficult to present a consistent brand proposition. Place branding is more a coordinated process rather than a managed activity. (Hankinson 2004, 112.) Marketing a city brand for multiple purposes and multiple stakeholders leads to tension due to conflicting objectives. Branding cities successfully relies on achieving consensus between partners. (Virgo & de Chernatory 2005, 382.) The fortunes of places depend on the collaboration of the public and private sectors. Teamwork is crucial. Place marketing requires the active support of private and public agencies, interest groups and citizens. (Kotler et al. 1999, 27–28.)

Closeness to politics has also an effect on decision-making. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 22). The public sector place marketers are affected by a variety of political issues. The public sector has to reconcile a range of local and regional interests and promote an identity acceptable to a range of constituencies even though the brand’s lifespan is a longer-term proposition than the careers of most politicians. It takes many years to establish a brand image, name recognition and develop strong awareness of a destination. (Morgan & Pritchard 2002, 14–15.) The politics and branding efforts affect also the residents of the city. The inhabitants of the city are living in a branded space. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 20–22.) It is important that place marketers remember that
the residents participate in creating the atmosphere of a city. Therefore a place brand is reliant on city’s inhabitants. (Virtanen 1998, 153.)

Cities aim to increase foreign direct investment with their place brand. A successful place brand brings value to several different sectors and actors in a city. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 110). Local authorities, whom operate on low budgets and are subject to political control and interference, usually work as coordinators. This makes the task of brand management even more difficult. (Hankinson 2004, 112.) Many places have limited financial resources because the public sector has more limited resources to invest. In most cases the public sector participates in financing the city brands. (Moilanen & Rainisto 2009, 20–22.)

One important difference between product brands and place brands is that people are, to some extent, willing to change their minds about product brands as a result of good advertising and marketing. When the brand image of a heavily promoted city does change for the better, it is not because of marketing and advertising. It reflected a real change that was taking place in the conditions, the policies and the opportunities of the city. Marketing and advertising helps the world to realize those changes a little faster and a little more fully than perhaps they would have done otherwise. What advertising and marketing cannot ever do is to make a bad city look good. (Anholt 2006, 30–31.)

The key point about destinations and places is that positioning and values have to be rooted in the fundamental truths about the destination and its culture. There can be no brand makeover for a destination. A brand must be based upon truth and amplify the existing values of the natural culture, not fabricate a false promise. (Gilmore 2002, 65.)

4.5 Relational network brand

A distinct form of branding is needed because of the distinctive nature of cities. Cities are neither products nor corporations in the traditional sense of these terms. (Ashworth & Kavaratzis 2009, 525.) Graham Hankinson has developed a model of a place brand that reflects the reality of branding a city. The model is based on a brand as a relationship with all the stakeholders. (Figure 11.) It concentrates on behavior and real-
ity and not so much in communications and image. Hankinson states that marketing networks are vehicles for integrating stakeholders, producers and employees in a collaborative partnership of value enhancement. Network marketing consists of a complex web of relationships and organizations. In best cases organizations manage to combine resources and create relationships and value. (Hankinson 2004, 112.)

![Diagram of relational network brand]

**Figure 11. The relational network brand (Hankinson 2004, 115)**

Graham Hankinson’s place brand model consists of core brand and four categories of dynamic brand relationships: consumer relationships, primary service relationships, media relationships and brand infrastructure relationships. (Figure 11.) These relationships extend the brand reality and brand experience and strengthen and evolve over time through a process of progressive interaction between the networks of stakeholders. (Hankinson 2004, 114.) According to Hankinson (2004, 115–116), “The brand core represents the brand’s identity, the blueprint for communicating and developing the place brand. It may be the vision of one or number of organizations and can be defined by three elements: personality, positioning and reality.” Brand personality con-
sists of functional, symbolic and experiential attributes (Hankinson 2004, 115). The components of the relational brand personality are shown below in figure 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential functional attributes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>transport infrastructure &amp; access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conference &amp; exhibition facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>museums, art galleries, theatres &amp; concert halls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hotels, restaurants, night clubs &amp; entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sport &amp; leisure activities and facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential symbolic attributes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>profile of typical visitors (age, interests, income)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>character of the local residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descriptors of the quality of service.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential experiential attributes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>destinations feel, city experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>character of the build environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>descriptors related to security &amp; safety.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12. Components of the relational brand personality (Hankinson 2004, 116)

Positioning defines the brand’s point of reference with attributes which make it unique. The third element of the brand core is reality. Both personality and positioning need to be based on reality so that the promised experience is true and promises can be redeemed. Successful branding is reliant for imaginative marketing which is supported by investment in the key services and facilities required to deliver the experience on offer. Invested sufficient funds secure the reinforcement of the core brand values and consumption. However, place brands are reliant on effective relationships. The ultimate success is dependent on effective relationships with stakeholders, which extend and reinforce the reality of the core brand through communication and delivery of services. (Hankinson 2004, 115–116.)
References in chapters 2-4


NetMBA 2012. Marketing. Brand equity. URL:


Placebrands 2012. Place branding. URL:


5 Brand management paradigms

Brand management constitutes a central organizational competence, understanding of which is vital (Louro & Cunha 2001, 850). Brand management paradigms may ease that process. Each paradigm clusters a specific set of theories, premises and practices regarding the value of brands and nature of brand management (Louro & Cunha 2001, 850) as seen in figure 14. The brand management paradigm may be defined as following:

A deep-seated way of seeing and managing brands and their value, shared by the members of an organizational community marked by a common culture. (Louro & Cunha 2001, 853)

The four brand management paradigms are affected by the two dimensions; the role the consumer plays in the branding process (the customer centrality dimension) and the extent the brand holds a strategic position in the company (the brand centrality dimension) as demonstrated in figure 13. In unilateral dimension consumers are per-
ceived as passive recipients whereas in multilateral perspective they are viewed as active contributors. (Louro & Cunha 2001, 855)

Figure 14. Brand management paradigms: structure and content. (Louro & Cunha 2001, 857)
5.1.1 Product Paradigm

According to Heding, Knudtzen and Bjerre, “the product paradigm reflects a product-centered approach to the brand management. The product and its functional benefits are central to the profitability of the organization in the product paradigm. The brand holds two primary functions: the statement of legal ownership, and as a communicative tool upholding visual identification of differentiation in the marketing of the products of the company. In this brand management paradigm, brand equity is seen as something created by having the optimal marketing mix; the right price, right product, placement and promotion.” (Heding, Knudtzen & Bjerre 2009, 252).

5.1.2 Projective Paradigm

When the brand is kept at the centre for the overall strategy of the organization, but with same conception of the customer, Louro and Cunha have labelled it as the projective paradigm. The projective paradigm focuses on the usefulness of the brand on a strategic level as opposed to the tactical approach to branding reflected in the product paradigm. The brand is seen as a strategic entity that should be used as a template for the overall business model. Thus, the brand reflects purpose, ethics as well as core competences in an organization and vice versa. The projective paradigm is a resource based concept because of which the value and the brand meaning are found internally. In this paradigm, competitiveness of the business is based on the organisation’s ability to find its internal strengths and cultivate them with the purpose of creating a unique business culture and unique competences which are difficult to imitate. The idea of creating a unique concept based on the sender identity is the nerve centre of the projective paradigm in brand management. (Heding, Knudtzen & Bjerre 2009, 253)

5.1.3 Adaptive Paradigm

The adaptive paradigm is a total opposite approach to the projective brand management paradigm. This approach emphasizes on the role of the consumer as central conductors of the brand’s meaning. It says that the brand is the result of consumer’s reaction to the product, and the consumer is the most important player to create and sus-
tain a certain brand. Thus, according to this idea we can assume that a brand identity will change depending upon the consumer’s reaction. (Louro & Cunha 2001, 863)

In this paradigm the competitive advantage for a business is conceptualized as a result of its ability to satisfy its consumers in a particular competitive context like changes in market trends and opportunities of new market. (Louro & Cunha 2001, 864)

5.1.4 Relational Paradigm

The relational paradigm provides possibilities that can tackle the weaknesses in both the projective and the adaptive paradigms. For example, the projective paradigm is criticized in failing to describe the active role of consumers in the development of the brand meaning. Relational perspectives describe brand management as a continuous active process, without a clear beginning and ending, in which brand value and meaning is co-created through interlocking behaviors, collaboration and competition between organizations and consumers (Louro & Cunha 2001, 866).

Within the relational perspective, brands are interpreted as characters that evolve in the context of consumer-to-brand relationships. Fournier (1998) structured her studies’ analysis and arguments based on four core conditions:

- The brand as a relationship partner
  One important relationship for many brands is a friendship link identified by trust, dependability and caring (Aaker 1996, 160). It is worth to perceive about the brand as not just a passive object of marketing transactions but as a dynamic, contributing member of the relationship process. One way to justify the brand-as-partner is to highlight ways in which brands are animated and somehow personalized. (Fournier 1998, 344).

- Relationships: Providing Meanings in Psycho-Socio-Cultural Context
  Relationships are purposive, involving at their core the provision of meanings to the person who engage them. They create a purpose and structure a meaning in a person’s life. Three important sources of meaning - the psychological, the sociocultural, and the
relational- are identified each serving as a context that shapes the significance of the relationship for the person involved (Fournier 1998, 346).

- **Relationships as Multiplex Phenomena**

  The relationships range across several dimensions and take many forms, providing a range of possible advantages for their participants. They provide socio-emotional benefits which involve psychosocial identity functions like reassurance of self-worth, announcement of image, and social integration (Fournier 1998, 346).

- **Relationships in Dynamic Perspective**

  “They evolve and change over a series of interactions and in response to fluctuations in the contextual environment” (Fournier 1998, 344). Relationships are comprised of a series of frequent exchanges between two known parties (Fournier 1998, 347).

There is an ongoing process of interaction between a company and consumer within the relational perspective (Louro & Cunha 2001, 866). Berthon, Hulbert and Pitt (1999) suggest the designation of a customer-management structure, whereby customer-portfolio managers would be responsible for managing relationships with individual customers and brand/product managers would perform a supporting role as brand experts helping the maximization of customers’ lifetime value through product/brand development (Louro & Cunha 2001, 867).
6 Research Methods

6.1 Research process

This thesis is based upon the qualitative research study. The aim of the research is to find out the best practices in managerial and organizational arrangements and discover required competences in successful city branding. The thesis is directed by Dr. Teemu Moilanen. As part of the data collection, the students and employees from Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences interviewed the key informants for the branding process in 14 different cities around the world.

The process of data collection started by contacting the persons responsible for the brand management of each city. The persons were chosen either because they were recommended by other informants or suggested by Dr. Moilanen. Their positions and titles were also looked for in the internet in order to guarantee they are qualified. Once they accepted to attend the research, the interviewers travelled to the case cities, asked questions based on a pre-prepared questionnaire and recorded the interviews.

The qualitative research was chosen because the thesis asks qualitative questions such as “why, what and how”. Quantitative technique would not be capable to answering such questions and does not reveal the ideas of the people. Qualitative research, instead, is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. The qualitative research collects all the answers and presents them in an order. (Bryman & Bell 2011, 386-388)

After the interviews were collected, they were transcribed and coded in order to make them more clear. Subsequently they were analyzed. Finally, the case studies were written based on the interviews and information available in the internet and books.

6.2 Validity and reliability

The questions in the questionnaire were set by Dr. Moilanen. The interviews are relevant since the interviewees are the source of information themselves as they are ex-
experts in their field of work. The interviewers tried to minimize the biasness as much as possible. They were neutral to the interviewee and their views.

The qualitative research method requires understanding the respondents’ point of view. It has to be neutral and should not react to their opinions. The respondents should not feel pressured as this might influence their trustworthiness. Several factors such as researchers and the respondents’ moods, language skills, the environment on which the interview took place as well as time, affect the answers. Moreover, this research has multiple researchers working on it. The results are subjective.

In order to minimize errors, the analysers carefully read through each other’s codings and finally the entire case studies. The analysers’ skills and understanding affect the results and hence it was relevant to see that the analysers agree on what is important and what should be dismissed. Furthermore, the time frame between the interviews affects the reliability. The interviews have been collected 2011-2013 and in some cities the branding projects and processes might already have progressed.

7 Case studies and results

From here begins the second part of the thesis written by Sonja Hyytiäinen and Jenna Renko. As stated before, the analysis of the case studies was done by using the interviews and already existing relevant data.
7.1 CASE 1: Zurich

The capital of Switzerland, Zurich, is renowned for its central location in Europe, knowledge of technology and multiple conferences. Many companies place their headquarters in Zurich. It has an easy access anywhere from Europe. Zurich has a population of over 380,500. One third of them are non-Swiss, coming from multiple different countries of origins. Accordingly, Zurich is known for its cultural knowledge. (Stadt Zurich 2013)

7.1.1 The brand of Zurich

There have been two efforts in order to build a city brand for Zurich from a couple of participating organizations. The focus has been in a tourism sector. Zurich is aiming to be perceived as economically important city (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.) but also as vibrant holiday paradise destination of Switzerland which is very close to nature. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.) Innovativeness and openness for other nationalities have been emphasized. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

The brand of Switzerland is much stronger than that of Zurich. A brand “Swiss made” is broadly recognized since Switzerland is a small country which has a distinctive country brand. Stakeholder organizations in Zurich want to form a city brand for Zurich as well. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

Zurich is broadly known as a financially important city. That is not sufficient, since it does not attract tourists. The image of Zurich as a financial centre has changed with time. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

Because if you look further back we were really in the eyes of people just a finance center with all people in grey suits that go working in banks and earn a lot of money. And… I think this has changed quite a lot that people see Zurich also an innovative city and creative city and also as a city of party and nightlife. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)
Zurich is nowadays seen as an open and international city due to Google, Microsoft and IBM offices, for instance. Instead of having merely contractors from Mediterranean area as immigrants, nowadays also numerous highly qualified people move to Zurich. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

Zurich’s branding is strongly associated with the role of consumers as central constructors of Zurich’s brand meaning. Zurich has moved from the product paradigm more to the adaptive paradigm. The stakeholders stress highly Zurich’s brand image and their role is to “listen” the consumers who are mainly tourists in this case. The brand image of Zurich is clear to stakeholder organizations due to monitoring activities. Instead, building a strong brand identity for Zurich is somewhat in process.

Deputy Director of Urban Development defined “a brand” as following:

What is the content of your brand, what do you want to communicate under, under your brand.... I mean that’s the most important one. Then I think you need some logo, style, something like here (pointing at a brochure of Hong Kong on his table) Hong Kong with flames… and then the next question is do you need something like that so we have now … A slogan. Maybe you don’t even need one. But I think we, you need some logo that is painted on all stuff and always the same. So that would be one thing. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

CEO of Swiss Travel System AG emphasized brand being a promise.

The brand for me is the label on the bottle. Brand is label on a bottle where you don’t always see what’s inside. Maybe the label on a carton box… when I go to the shop and I see ten different rice or ten different pastas or it doesn’t matter what. And the brand says to me, if you choose me, you get this, this, this and this. And… this promise to be fulfilled, to be confirmed and to give me a good feeling is important in the, in the branding. And that is what the brand stands for me. The brand is for me a promise that I like that must be fulfilled. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)
7.1.2 Organizations behind brand management

In Zurich’s case, there are six participating stakeholder organizations getting together a couple times a year in order to advance branding: canton of Zurich, city of Zurich, Greater Zurich Area, Zurich Tourism, airport and universities (ETH and University of Zurich). They communicate about how Zurich is positioned abroad, projects and issues faced. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.) The participating organizations have their own views how Zurich’s branding should be conducted. Nonetheless, they are afraid to make decisions. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

Zurich Tourism is a private non-profit organization taking care of tourism marketing (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.). It is the engine behind branding. Internationally Zurich Tourism operates under the umbrella of Switzerland tourism organization. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.) Together with Zurich Tourism city of Zurich promotes sustainable tourism. (Stadt Zurich 2013) Zurich Tourism has launched a clear vision of the brand: Zurich Downtown Switzerland.

So Zurich Tourism decided in the year 2000 to start with the brand Zürich downtown Switzerland and... the core meaning of this identity means in the holiday paradise destination Switzerland there is a vibrant city centre which is called the downtown of Switzerland. That’s the meaning of our brand. We are not working together yet with the government neither the city neither the canton ... and... it’s a brand for marketing and not for politics. Politics, the politicians they do not like this brand... because it’s not very diplomatic to say that Zürich is the vibrant, is the downtown of Switzerland even if it’s the largest city, the most vibrant city, ... business centre, whatever. But it’s not politically correct... to say it and Geneva... think that Zürich is a little bit arrogant. So this is the political view of this brand... but we do marketing and we do need a brand for positioning and that’s why we have chosen this one. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

Greater Zurich Area has been an ambassador of Zurich’s branding, talking about the brand in international conferences. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.) It focuses on finding new companies to settle in Zurich and expanding their businesses to Switzerland. (Greater
Zurich Area 2013). According to Mr Seiler that does not fit in branding since they market Zurich from another point-of-view.

Greater Zurich Area is an organization with eight cantons of Switzerland whereas Zurich Tourism is working in the area of Zurich. Also the size of their scopes worries Seiler.

So the Greater Zurich Area is an organization with eight cantons of Switzerland that are members there. And… if you now create a brand with a logo that is just Zurich as I would imagine it’s the strongest brand we have would be Zurich… then I don’t know who the other cantons in the Greater Zurich Area would react to a logo that is not Greater Zurich Area but only Zurich or kind of that… And, so…. Then Zurich Tourism… the area of Zurich Tourism is the region of Zurich, also a bit outside of the canton as well as if we go in this direction, the canton stops but still it belongs to the area of the city of Zurich. So Zurich Tourism is also working with institutions there. So that is one of the problems I think (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

Even though many participating organizations are involved in branding of Zurich (figure 15), it is mainly inspired by a few key persons. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.).
7.1.3 Brand planning process and implementation

The city branding process has been under conscious development since the beginning of 21st century. Projects called Downtown Switzerland and Themenwelt Ausschluss were the first attempts to build a brand. Downtown Switzerland was launched in 1999 and Themenwelt in 2003. Before them there had been some slogans for Zurich’s tourism and marketing purposes; e.g. “Zurich, metropolis made in Switzerland” in the 1980’s and “Zurich, little big city, little big country” in 1993. Also slogans “Live it, love it” and “Living Zurich” were in use for a while but they were forgotten since “Live it, love it” was copied from other cities and “Living Zurich” was only made for the 2008 UEFA European Football Championship. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

Themenwelt Ausschluss was a project that introduced theme words with which Zurich was internationally marketed. “Themenwelt Ausschluss” translated in English means
“limited theme worlds” or consequently “theme scheme”. It created a common way for all the participating organizations to communicate about Zurich but did not include implementation. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

It’s kind of a guideline, what content are we communicating about the city of Zurich. Erm… this type of Machine in the Garden how it’s called there that we are communicating that we are economically an important city but also a very green city and very close to nature and stuff like that. And we are stressing that all the time so these are things that we are following since this process. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

However, the different contents of Zurich’s city brand were defined by Themenwelt project.

… yeah I think one part that is needed by brand is what we did in this Themenwelt Ausschluss. That you really formulate different or a content, different lines, content, what is the content of your brand, what do you want to communicate under, under your brand…. I mean that’s the most important one. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

The project Downtown Switzerland, instead, was an attempt to create a brand for Zurich by Zurich Tourism. The organization believed Zurich would get more over-nights if it was marketed as “the heart of Switzerland” which has a great access to all over the country. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

The goal was... to.... get Zurich image in the holiday destination Switzerland. It’s a touristic brand and we wanted to... positioning Zurich as the heart of Switzerland in many ways. So... but as a vibrant city, so that means Zurich is the downtown of Switzerland...here it happens, but on the other hand from here you can go with very short distances to all the other important sights of Switzerland to the mountains, to the lakes, to the valleys, to the other cities and come back the same day. So you have one base for all your holidays in Switzerland (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)
With this brand Zurich Tourism wanted to emphasize country’s role since Switzerland already has a strong image.

You see we call ourselves “the Downtown of Switzerland”. So we know that is a bigger brand… that is at the moment more positive than negative. So if the country brand is that is positive for your city, use it. If your country brand doesn’t help you at all or your city, don’t use it. As we do marketing for tourism and Switzerland is holiday dream destination… we must use the brand. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

The problem faced with Downtown Switzerland was that it was not locally recognized. Zurich Tourism is aiming to get a common brand agreed with the city, the canton and the Greater Zurich Area (Stadt Zurich 2013). Thereafter they are ready to forget Downtown Switzerland and market a new brand broadly locally as well (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.).

Zurich is recognized internationally rather well (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011). The problem is how to do branding inside Switzerland. The participating organizations find branding locally as important as outside Switzerland.

Yeah I mean the funny thing is that we are really struggling in this brand issue inside Zurich but if you look at outside I think it does not work that bad. So I think in the outside… erm, the recognition or the view from the outside towards the city of Zurich quite good. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

You promise something with the brand and then people need to see and feel the fulfilling of this promise. So you can’t outside communicate a brand and locally this brand is not visible, is not… you don’t feel it anymore. This is why we very strongly work on it to get both. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

The way Zurich is marketed is observed by a market manager. He works on getting more stakeholders involved in the branding process in order to broaden the use of the brand.
Our market manager has to go to every of these tour operators to check is the right picture there, is the right message there. And if it’s written, it’s the financial metropolis of Switzerland, has nothing to do with tourism, then our market manager has talked with the product manager to give them new pictures, to give them new text that fits to the image we want. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

At the moment city of Zurich, the canton, Zurich Tourism and the Greater Zurich Area are working together on the new city brand. The process is called “Integrated destination marketing”. The aim is to gain stronger international position for the brand of Zurich with a clear profile. The objective is that Zurich’s image would become a cultural and creative city. As a consequence, the four stakeholders are emphasizing international conventions, special events, high quality of public spaces and rail and air connections. They are participating in international exhibitions and trade fairs in order to gain visibility. (Stadt Zurich 2013) The interviewee is aware that the new branding process requires a lot of thoughtful planning before proper implementation.

Who, how the structure could be afterwards, how the organisation of the brand should be afterwards, who will use this brand afterwards, for what... What, how could it look like or how could it be and now this is all made but now we have to turn back to question number one: what is our strategy? What do we need it for? And these questions have to be answered otherwise you really can’t start into the doing. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

7.1.4 Challenges

During the branding process of Zurich the following issues have been faced.

- Participating organizations have agreed the overall picture of the brand but not an action plan. Nobody is willing to do decisions when it comes to implementing. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

- Many questions about the brand of Zurich still need to be answered
• Who, how the structure could be afterwards, how the organisation of the brand should be afterwards, who will use this brand afterwards, for what... What, how could it look like or how could it be and now this is all made but now we have to turn back to question number one: What is our strategy? What do we need it for? (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

• Branding Zurich inside Switzerland is minor activity and found fairly difficult.

  Yeah I mean the funny thing is that we are really struggling in this brand issue inside Zurich but if you look at outside I think it does not work that bad. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

• Dividing the power between stakeholder organizations.

  One question is should we have a new institution that is leading this brand and… If so, who pays for the new institution or what do the existing institutions lose or is it one of these institutions that is the leader of the brand, then the others say “Yeah, what about us?” (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

• How to divide financing branding activities equally – who will benefit the most. At the moment Zurich Tourism covers half of the expenses of the “Integrated destination marketing” branding process even though canton has the most resources. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

• Different institutions involved in branding do not cover the same geographical area - different opinions in which areas and institutions should be included in branding Zurich.

  So the Greater Zurich Area is an organization with eight cantons of Switzerland that are members there. And… if you now create a brand with a logo that is just Zurich as I would imagine it’s the strongest brand we have would be Zurich… then I don’t know who the other
cantons in the Greater Zurich Area would react to a logo that is not Greater Zurich Area but only Zurich or kind of that... And, so.... Then Zurich Tourism… the area of Zurich Tourism is the region of Zurich, also a bit outside of the canton as well as if we go in this direction, the canton stops but still it belongs to the area of the city of Zurich. So Zurich Tourism is also working with institutions there. So that is one of the problems I think. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

- Other same-sized cities with Zurich are not performing significantly better in branding. There is lack of pressure to enhance branding activities.

  I mean I see most of the cities that are smaller than we are or same size than are spending much more money in all these issues than we are. But on the other hand they don’t perform better than Zurich so… maybe that’s also the problem we have. So the pressure is not… not, maybe it gets bigger but right now the pressure is not that big to do more in the marketing, to do more in the economic development because if you look outside, everybody is ok. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

- Lack of coherent appearance of stakeholders.

  But I think you need some logo that is painted on same colors and always the same. So that would be one thing. We have now a logo of the city of Zurich, one of the canton of Zurich, one of Zurich Tourism, one of the Greater Zurich Area so that’s…. not really ideal, I would say. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

- Finding a leader for the project – who is in charge of the decisions and monitoring. Nobody wants to lose their power but nobody either wants to decide all by himself.

- Politicians do not understand how important branding internationally is for Zurich, their decisions should fit the way Zurich is branded – Zurich cannot be
marketed as “a city full of life” if politicians decide that during the World Cup open-air restaurants cannot have sound on the television in the evening games.

- Targeted people may find Zurich in a completely different way than intended.

So, for example, I am responsible for the Arabian markets. The only thing I change is the pictures and now I only have pictures with Arabian people. And... So I was the first, Zurich was the first to do marketing in the Gulf countries with brochures, with only Arabian people in it. And this was for the market very good. They looked it, “aaah, here feel welcomed, oh there are other people as well”... And they, they found themselves in the brochures as they don’t do here so you can have the best brand and the best thing if the people don’t find themselves in the communication and if they are not approached, then... then this is not a goal. That’s why we never ask question about our brand. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

7.1.5 Monitoring branding performance

Monitoring Zurich’s branding performance is seen as an issue. There has been a tentative effort to monitor Zurich’s image with a questionnaire.

We had coming out of this Themenwelt and this committee of Themenwelt, we tried to do monitoring of the image of Zurich. So… there was an online tool established through the web and gathering information about how Zurich is seen internationally in the web. But we stopped it because almost all the institutions involved did not really trust the method of gathering this information in the Internet. So we were not really sure if the feedback we get with this instrument is really true and worth paying for. So we stopped that but I think we surely need something again. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

The informants find observing other cities and learning from them as an efficient tool for monitoring. Therefore city of Zurich has been forming better connections to other European cities in order to be in contact with them and observe. (Seiler, B. 22 June
The interviewees are aware that those are still not enough. Monitoring is seen as a difficult and expensive practise. It has not been one of stakeholders’ priorities. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.) Nevertheless, monitoring is found relevant and necessary. Ideal monitoring would be done in a professional way and thoroughly. For example, there will be questions that arise: If the image of Zurich has changed, how has it changed and why? Also these questions have to be answered. The city has many influencing factors which make monitoring costly and hard to control. At the moment there is no monitoring of branding performance in Zurich. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

We did not make it because the world is too big and our brand is so small. And our influence at the moment – even though we have 10 million Swiss francs- we do marketing all over the world, then 10 million francs is nothing and several markets we do only with 50 000 Swiss francs a year... So this is... this is nothing and we don’t think that people even realize our brand. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

The stakeholder organizations are afraid that targeted people find Zurich in a completely different way than intended. Therefore they never ask questions about their brand. Instead, they focus on visitors’ expectations, preferences and Zurich’s biggest competitors. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

According to Mr Seiler the only way to manage monitoring is to get all the communicating institutions play together for the common brand. In terms of monitoring the participating organizations find managing own activities doable.

More monitoring for me is check your own activities all the time, maybe through a third part... is do we still are on the right way. Do we do the right things to reach our goals? This could be monitoring as well to make sure not to get off the track. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

And for me a very good example is St Moritz, they’ve made it for many many years and there you find the same logo than… If you get a letter from the city you have the same logo than if you get a letter from the tourism board. This makes sense and … the guy who cleans the streets on his car is the same logo than you have in the brochure. And that makes sense, this is for me perfect. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

7.1.6 Competencies

When asked about the core competencies needed in place branding, the interviewees in Zurich pointed out the following attributes:

- Trust between different institutions

  So I think one of the cornerstones surely is that they have a good collaboration, they can work together and there’s trust between these different institutions. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

- Trustworthy key person

  Cos you need someone with credibility and trust who can be the one stands in front of the crowd. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

- Willingness to co-operate and build one brand

  So if only Zurich Tourism changes the brand to do marketing outside of Switzerland but nobody of the municipality, of the city or of the canton uses this brand, then we are not willing to change anything. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

- Holistic approach to branding

  You create a common institution that… leads that brand and all the others are like below that. So you have a common institution like Zur-
ich Marketing, and you have under that umbrella you have Zurich Tourism, then you have the location marketing or businesswise.

Because there are role models that have worked out quite well… Hamburg, for instance… I suppose it’s also a city you are looking at. They have Hamburg Marketing that is like overall organization for the marketing. So there are cities that do the things we want to do. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

- Ability to present network as unified whole to external audiences

- Ability to convey coherent brand messages through all marketing communication channels

If you get a letter from the city you have the same logo than if you get a letter from the tourism board. This makes sense and … the guy who cleans the streets on his car is the same logo than you have in the brochure. And that makes sense, this is for me perfect. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

- Ability to disseminate knowledge and information internally to the network of local actors.

Our market manager has to go to every of these tour operators to check is the right picture there, is the right message there. And if it’s written, it’s the financial metropolis of Switzerland, has nothing to do with tourism, then our market manager has talked with the product manager to give them new pictures, to give them new text that fits to the image we want. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

- Delivery on product

- Ability to brand the city inside Switzerland
You promise something with the brand and then people need to see and feel the fulfilling of this promise. So you can’t outside communicate a brand and locally this brand is not visible, is not... you don’t feel it anymore. This is why we very strongly work on it to get both. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

- Ability to make strategic decisions and stick on them

There are many many different ways and I don’t know now which the right way is but then if you decide, we want to go to this direction, this is our enterprise philosophy, our enterprise strategy, then do everything to get there. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

where do we want to go, what do we want, what is our strategy, what does the brand has to stand for... and process is afterwards as well to do everything that supports the brand’s idea and the strategy. And to avoid everything that has a bad influence of your strategy... that you really take care of what do you want... that you know what you want and you do everything to reach that and to support that... And you do everything to avoid that you get off the track. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

- Consistency

And the goal has to be that the brand is used as well in the market where you tell something and then you confirm this by getting in contact again with the message and the brand when the people are in the area itself. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

- Ability to divide the power

Responsible delegation or organization needs power. If you don’t give them any power... they will not be able to influence really the processes of your brand. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)
• Being honest for the brand strategy and fulfilling the promises.

I think one important thing is you if you look at the content of your brand it has to be true. So you should not invent something that you cannot fulfil it. So I think very important is to really look at what you have, what is your city and then… you can, like… involve, involvement from there you can make but you cannot just skip all the things you have and then establish a brand and say “Ok, from now on we want to be this and this city”. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

• Ability in keeping the branding process alive.

You have to have someone who cares for the brand also. So that’s a problem maybe we have. Who, who does this work then? (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

7.2 CASE 2: Geneva

Geneva is a city situated in the western Switzerland. It is renowned as headquarters of many international organizations such as the United Nations and Red Cross, for its lakefront. It has a water fountain and an airport which is served by multiple carriers. The canton of Geneva has approximately 458 000 inhabitants. The most spoken language in Geneva is French. (Geneva Tourism 2014)

7.2.1 The brand of Geneva

For stakeholders “the brand” indicates the meaning of Geneva as a destination. The emphasis is on tourism.

I think it’s the same for company or for brand of a city, the brand is the heart. And the brand for Geneva, or our brand for the tourism office, it has a meaning
Geneva’s brand identity is stressing mostly the nature, traditions and simplicity. The decision-makers in Geneva find honesty important when building the brand.

You know our brand is grey and blue. We are not Barcelona with red and yellow, which are hot colors, you know. We are not Mediterranean city, so we don’t have to lie about the destination. Grey and blue, blue because of the lake, the water, whatever. That’s right. Grey, yes, because … reformation, something very traditional, but the grey is also the color of the technology… So it’s right to have, I think, it’s right to have the good colors, the good typography to reveal the destination, and not to lie. The media, when they saw the brand, they said, oh wow, it’s not so funny. Yes, of course, but Geneva is not so funny as well. Barcelona is a fun city to, with the festivals and so on, but in Geneva it’s not the same. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

The stakeholder organizations would like Geneva to be seen as an exceptional destination. They prefer name “Genev” since it is international and unique. Moreover, Geneva is represented with different attributes to people from different countries.

And so, we are not talking about Geneva with the same assets. If we are in Spain, we will talk about culture, about gastronomy. … If we travel to France to meet the French market, we will not talk about gastronomy, because they have good exceptional gastronomy. We will talk about something else, about sports, nature, shopping, clocks, watches, and so on. So we have so many assets, so we can choose what fits. We have also the international organizations with the Red Cross, the UN and so on. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

In 2005 two surveys were carried out in order to declare Geneva’s brand image. They revealed some directional information about tourists’ views. (Bodi, M. 2011.)
We did some research of the personality of Geneva. So Geneva is shy but also open-minded, spontaneous, traditional but modern… So most of the time all and the contrary. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

The interviewee defined “a brand” as following:

The brand, as it was said by Saatchi & Saatchi I agree with them, the brand is the heart of everything. The brand of our company has changed also. We changed our logo, we, our name was Geneva tourism and convention bureau, and we changes for what, it’s not a revolution, but we changes to Geneva tourism and conventions. And we did a new logo to become sexier. And I think it’s the same for company or for brand of a city, the brand is the heart. And the brand for Geneva, or our brand for the tourism office, it has to, has a meaning about the company or about the destination. It fits with the meaning. If you want to become something very technological, it has to be like that in the design. (Bodi, M 2011)

The interviewee refers to “a brand” repeatedly when talking about a logo, a slogan or a video clip.

I asked them if they agree with this brand, if they agree with the baseline “a world of its own” with the creation designed artwork, because it’s gray with blue with the water fountain and the logo, and I asked the tourists. And they agreed with the brand. … And the launch was made with a press conference and a clip, video about the baseline. It was something to show that the baseline “a world of its own” is a good baseline for Geneva. And how the clip, I will give you a cd, for you. This is the brand. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

Therefore the brand of Geneva strongly indicates product paradigm. The brand is construed as logo which designates firm-centred brand role. Stakeholders in Geneva use brand to emphasize ownership, support product communication and visual differentiation. That way Geneva intends to differ from competitors.
7.2.2 Organizations behind brand management

Multiple organizations have been involved in the brand building process for Geneva. The process was initiated by the city of Geneva. Thereafter a steering committee was formed to perform the brand building. The committee included city of Geneva, canton, Geneva tourism and conventions foundation, Palexpo and president of the hotel society in Geneva. They hired an advertising agency called Saatchi & Saatchi to help them. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

Geneva Tourism and Conventions Foundation’s mission is to promote and sell Geneva as a destination, welcome tourists and support and organize events. They have about 50 people working in different departments such as convention bureau, marketing and tourist services. (Geneva Tourism 2014)

Moreover, the president of the hotel society in Geneva is involved in the branding activities.

The president of the hotel society in Geneva was involved in the project, he was in the committee. So it was, that’s good for us, because he’s the director of three hotels in Geneva, who were the first three to use the brand, of course. So the other hotels saw that ah okay, he's using the brand, I will use as well. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

Palexpo is the place where the most important exhibition and conventions are held. It is located near the airport. Also the city of Geneva belongs to the committee.

Yes, there is a department of the state in Geneva, who is working on the economic development of Geneva. We are very close to them and they were involved in the process of the brand. And they use, they use it. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

Saatchi & Saatchi is an advertising agency who calls themselves as “the lovemarks company”.

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Lovemarks thinking is the unique way we look at the relationships people have with products, services and entities. Lovemarks are the future beyond brands because they inspire Loyalty Beyond Reason. Lovemarks transcend brands. They deliver beyond your expectations of great performance. They reach your heart as well as your mind, creating an intimate, emotional connection that you just can’t live without. (http://saatchi.com, 6.1.14)

The committee works in co-operation with Switzerland tourism. (Bodi, M. 2011.) Switzerland tourism is a national marketing and sales organization for the country. (Switzerland Tourism 2014.)

Location near the Alps increases the amount of tourists in winter time. The participating organizations find that as a positive thing since the tourists might spend some time shopping in Geneva. Therefore they co-operate with skiing resorts nearby. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

The respondent would prefer one person to be in responsible for building a brand since the process is time-consuming with many stakeholders involved. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

Figure 16. Network of actors in Geneva
7.2.3 Brand planning process and implementation

Geneva’s brand has been under conscious development since 2005. Two surveys were carried out in order to clarify Geneva’s brand image. The questionnaires were given to visitors. Inhabitants’ point of view has not been stressed. The questions comprised tourists’ perceptions of Geneva’s assets and weaknesses. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

While clarifying Geneva’s image the city of Geneva launched a project called “the Vision 2015”. The aim was to create a strong identity for Geneva. At that time slogan “Geneva, more than you imagine” was planned to be used but it was founded to be already in use by some other city in Portugal. The process “the Vision 2015” initiated Geneva’s brand building process. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

Subsequently the steering committee was formed. The committee selected an advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi to create logo and slogan for Geneva.

The work of Saatchi & Saatchi to develop the brand is special. They have a philosophy, which is to create a love mark. For them, the brand is more than a brand, it is a love mark. It’s from the heart. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

The biggest challenge with the committee was trying to find an advertising company that can create logo and slogan that respond every stakeholder’s expectations. Everyone had their own opinions and Saatchi & Saatchi tried to combine them.

They worked on, I don’t know, twenty different logos before to find something which fits with our ideas. I think it’s too long, they had to change our creative in the company, because they didn’t understand what we wanted. I think it’s very important to choose the good person, good people, the right people in the committee and the right agency. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

Eventually the outcome Saatchi & Saatchi created was agreed with the committee. The slogan for Geneva was “A world of its own” and the logo represented Geneva with blue and grey colors. The process took three years. (Bodi, M. 2011.)
Directrice Communication summarizes the brand building process in the following steps.

1) Defining the personality of the city

The first step is to make a definition of the personality of Geneva. If it’s a man, if it’s a woman, shy or open-minded and so on. So we did a workshop in the summer with the summer representatives of the company, the Saatchi & Saatchi and from Geneva export and we did some research of the personality of Geneva. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

2) Researching the city image

They went on the street and they ask the tourists did you visit Geneva, how do you feel in Geneva, and all people answered “I went to see something in Geneva and I discover something else”. So it’s the discovery of Geneva. You come to see the fountain, and you will see something else. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

3) Developing differentiated brand identity

This step is to… It’s very important, because the idea is to give to Geneva the meaning of a unique destination. To be different as the other destination, this is the goal. The challenge is, you are coming to see something in Geneva, and you will see something else. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

4) Testing stakeholder commitment

Before the launch of the brand we did teasing campaign, but before the teasing campaign we had to present the brand to economic actors in Geneva to be sure that the use, because the, we wanted that all actors of the economic develop in Geneva use this brand as a label. … And it was okay, they were okay with the brand. (Bodi, M. 2011.)
5) Testing consumers’ opinion of logo and slogan

And before the launch to the public, I made a survey to tourists: leisure tourists and congress tourists, convention tourists. I asked them if they agree with this brand, if they agree with the baseline “a world of its own” with the creation designed artwork, because it’s grey with blue with the water fountain and the logo, and I asked the tourists. And they agreed with the brand. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

6) Preparing teasing campaign

So afterwards we did the teasing campaign. The teasing campaign was a countdown with posters and web banners and a web site. Join us, we did with some partners in Geneva, with special offers, free tickets, free drinks and it was made thirteen days before the launch. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

7) Presenting logo and slogan

And the launch was made with a press conference and a clip, video about the baseline. It was something to show that the baseline “a world of its own” is a good baseline for Geneva. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

At the moment the committee is trying to get more companies using the logo. If a company decides to become involved in branding process, it receives an USB with all the logos and instructions how to use it. It is free of charge.

The idea is that they are actors of the economic development of Geneva. If they become partners, they will join the community of the partners. It’s good for them, because it gives credibility to their companies, to have the label. And for us, for the brand it’s better to be seen everywhere. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

7.2.4 Challenges

During the branding process of Geneva the following issues have been faced.
• The branding activities are so recent that the consequences have not been faced yet

• Other responsibilities result in lack of time since nobody is working only for branding

    It’s because I’m alone to do this work, and I’ve other things to do at Geneva export… I don’t have any time to do all I have to do, it’s difficult. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

• The lack of a common leader

    But if you have one person in charge of the brand, it’s easier and easier for the partner to have one person. And that physical, the brand is something literal and if there’s one person in charge of this project, it gives more credibility and something real. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

• Every stakeholder had their own opinion how Geneva should be promoted

    The most important problem was to create a brand which fits with all the participants of the committee and will be accepted from all the huge companies in Geneva. This was something very touchy. Because everybody has his own ideal Geneva. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

• Reasons to use logo and slogan by different stakeholders differ

    Yes, the committees, with the public and private sectors. This is important, because it was something difficult. Because they have not the same meaning of the brand, the same… I don’t know… The hotels, for example, they wanted to have a brand to use the brand and to become a partner of Geneva. The state of Geneva! This is already the
state of Geneva. So now we have some, perhaps a little difficulties to, that they use this brand. (Bodi, M 2011.)

- The canton of Geneva covers bigger geographical area than city of Geneva and lacks motivation in branding process

Interviewer: Okay, so the canton on area is not that interested? Interviewee: Yea. But they are in the committee. So they said “Okay, we are okay with the brand, but to use it, well… We’ll see… Perhaps, I don’t know… Someone has to decide, but I can’t decide, someone else can decide…” You know. (Bodi, M 2011.)

- It is challenging to get companies involved in using the logo

So sometimes I look at the website of partners, if they use the brand, and ask them why don’t you use the brand on the whole page on your website? Yes, later, they said, some of them said well yes yes, tomorrow, tomorrow, but it’s not the older case. But some of them, they already use. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

7.2.5 Monitoring branding performance

There has not been monitoring activities regarding Geneva’s branding performance since the branding activities are so recent. The participating companies are planning to survey not only tourists’ opinion of the brand, but also inhabitants’ opinion. Furthermore, the people working on tourism industry will be also taken into account.

So, Geneva people, you have to do survey on Geneva people. On tourists, in Geneva. When they come in Geneva at our desk, what do you think about Geneva, “Genev, a world of its own”, is it correct? Is it a lie? And also, I think we have to do surveys on professionals on tourism, as travel agencies, but in Russia, in Spain, all around the world, but it’s too new. We did this brand this year, I think last, next year we will do something. Because if we ask now if they know the brand, they will say no. (Bodi, M. 2011.)
The interviewee finds surveys as a best way to monitor the success of Geneva’s brand. Also analysing statistics, especially visitors’ countries of origins, is seen as a doable practise for monitoring. As the biggest competitors for Geneva she mentioned Zurich, Lyon and Lausanne. Regarding the conference visitors they compete with Vienna and Berlin. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

7.2.6 Competencies

When asked about the core competencies needed in place branding, the interviewee in Geneva pointed out the following attributes:

- Developing a branding strategy that fits the city and all the stakeholders

  For us, the success of the city brand is that it fits the all the people in Geneva. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

- Finding right organizations and right people in the committee

  I think it’s very important to choose the good person, good people, the right people in the committee and the right agency. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

- Sustaining relationships with the stakeholders and the community

  So you have to have good relationship with the community in Geneva to be sure that it would be a success. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

- Brand identity development competence

  And a good vision what we want to do with the brand. It’s easy to create a brand and what for? What for? (Bodi, M. 2011.)

- Understanding the needed resources for branding process
Other than that, are there any specific skills or knowledge or resources that you must have? (Bodi, M. 2011.)

- Being honest about the brand, delivery on product

So it’s right to have, I think, it’s right to have the good colors, the good typography to reveal the destination, and not to lie. The media, when they saw the brand, they said, oh wow, it’s not so funny. Yes, of course, but Geneva is not so funny as well. Barcelona is a fun city to, with the festivals and so on, but in Geneva it’s not the same. (Bodi, M. 2011.)

7.3 CASE 3: Stockholm

Stockholm was founded in the 13th century by Birger Jarl, the ruler of the time (Nykänen Andersson 2009; Time out Stockholm 2008). Nowadays, it holds more than 2 million inhabitants (norden, 2013). This capital of Sweden is known for its beauty, green spaces, architecture and especially for its proximity to water (Stockholms Stad report 05/2013). Before its successful work among branding, it used to be called “Beauty on water” and “Venice of the North” in reference to the water areas.

According to the Stockholm’s annual report 2012, Stockholm is a modern, one of the fastest growing major cities in Europe. It is all the time attracting more and more tourists and investors. During the year 2012, the number of visitors was close to eleven million commercial overnight stays. However, if Stockholm wants to remain as attractive and interesting tomorrow as well, they need to continuously develop towards their goal: “To become Europe’s leading sustainable growth region”. (Stockholm’s annual report 2012)
7.3.1 The brand of Stockholm

The conscious work of branding Stockholm started in 2003, after the city had suffered dramatically from the dot-com crash in 2001/2002 and the problems of Ericsson, the telecoms giant. It is said that Stockholm suffered more than many of its Scandinavian neighbours. Until the branding process started in 2003, Stockholm’s marketing focus had mostly been domestic and introverted but due to increasing globalization it had to reconsider the objective. (Stubbs 2012, 138-142) Nowadays the main objective is mostly to attract the international market:

But it’s not actually targeting to the inhabitants, it’s for the international market. That’s why it’s in English, otherwise we could have it in Swedish. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

And the Stockholm brand what we did, it was mostly focused on an international audience. It was, that was really the key objective, to attract international tourism, to attract international business. So it wasn’t really the domestic focus at all. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Even if the brand is directed for the people outside Stockholm, one objective has also been to make the people of Stockholm more proud of their city. The characteristic of Swedes is that they tend to detract and slightly underestimate themselves and one objective of the brand was to take this another way round. (CEO of Stockholm Business region. 6 Nov 2013.) One implementation action was to place pictures of famous people, like Abba and Björn Borg on the walls of the airport. It was a reminder of how many great people come from Stockholm. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Nowadays, after various different slogans, Stockholm has come to conclusions to call itself as The Capital of Scandinavia. After some research an important finding was come up with: Stockholm is the most important city in Scandinavia for business and for tourism. They though that if Scandinavia was a country, Stockholm would be the capital. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.) The positioning is a keyword when thinking of
the Stockholm’s brand. It is important to decide where you want to be and then stick with the decision even though some people objected.

…this is not the most central place in Europe, it’s a quite remote place actually. But if you’re looking at Scandinavia for business or leisure or whatever, then you should start with Stockholm. So we position ourselves as the biggest city and the, with the biggest economy and the middle of what the rest of the world regard as Scandinavia. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

When positioning Stockholm, the planners had to come up with arguments that support the Stockholm brand. In the case of Stockholm the arguments are based on three legs that are called The Central capital of Scandinavia, The Culture capital of Scandinavia and The Business capital of Scandinavia. The legs are explained below:

- **Central**: The city lies at the heart of Scandinavia as its biggest city and natural centre point. It is easily accessed by air, rail and sea.
- **Culture**: Stockholm is the culture capital of Scandinavia. Nobel prizes are given there every year and it has more than one hundred museums. The food culture is international and the area has a number of world class academic institutions. What is more, the city stages hundreds of events every week.
- **Business**: Stockholm has the largest stock market in Scandinavia, it has the most multinational companies and is known as a world leading innovation region.

When coming up with the slogan, the perception in people’s minds became an important issue. Scandinavia is believed to represent health, beauty, design, safety and environmental concern, whereas for example The Nordic Region awakes a perception of polar bears walking on the streets. (Stubbs 2012, 162-164; 172-173)

Stockholm’s way to manage the brand is the same as in relational brand paradigm. The planning process was both, internal and external. The relationships and feelings are important in Stockholm’s brand, as well as in the relational paradigm.
7.3.2 The concept of a brand

The respondents were asked to define the concept of a brand which seemed to be relatively easy for both of them. They agreed that a brand exists in the mind of a consumer and is more than only a logo or slogan. They claim the brand to be top-of-the-mind images, positioning and telling the world what you are:

It’s not just a tagline, it’s not a logo. A brand stands for something more because it’s a kind of… You’re telling the outer world something more; what your positioning is. I think that the word “positioning” is key here actually. You want to tell the world that you are something and you are here and you are and perform this. Moreover, it’s not about the typography or it’s… Much more that you would send out some kind of feeling or sense that you are this brand. So brand in my mind is much bigger concept than logos and taglines. (CEO Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

Simply it’s what people think just on top of mind. And so we do this thing in our workshops where we ask people define a brand in one word. And we show them different logo types, and whether it’s, I don’t know, Virgin or Burger King or McDonald’s or Coke, the fact is, we encapsulate those brands in one word, of how we feel about it. And however we feel about it, is our truth of what that brand is all about. So, you know this, you’re at marketing collage, brands exist in the mind. So you say Stockholm to people, they think about something, and the question is, is that the right thing? Is it correct, is it what we want them to think and the job of the marketer is to try to get them to the right place so they’re thinking the right things. And that’s a hard job. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

7.3.3 The organization behind the brand management

The brand of Stockholm was not designed with numerous different organizations. Only the brand strategist with help of a business partner came up with The Capital of Scandinavia slogan. The process was financed by Stockholm Business Region. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.) The brand strategist is not a native Swedish and he believes he was selected to the process because he brought a truly international and external per-
spective. There would have been a number of professional local agencies as well. (Stubbs 2012, 3)

On my side, it was me, there was an account director, who was a planner at the agency at the time, called ---. Moved to Australia a couple of years later. There was my creative business partner, called ---. He got involved and that was more of the creative side, and I did most of the writing. So really on the planning side, there were two of us, we were the key people. Just two of us. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Okay. So no big companies or anything like that? (The interviewer)

No, that’s what we did. That’s what we do. Planning, brand planning. So you don’t need hundreds of people to do that work. So it was really two of us driving it, we were the people behind the planning. And then I got involved with the writing and took it into the creative phase along with Eric. And that’s when we started creating the creative brand platform. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Later more people got involved to the brand management. Nowadays the brand is under control of Stockholm Business Region. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.) However, Stockholm Business Region is part of Stockholm Business Alliance which is a partnership between 51 municipalities. The entire alliance uses the same brand while aiming at its main objective: trying to get investments from abroad into the region. (Investor – Stockholm’s official business guide. 2013.) Even though all the members of the alliance use the same brand, logo and slogan the alliance is not the one making decisions concerning the brand.
7.3.4 Brand planning process and implementation

As mentioned before, the branding of Stockholm started in 2003. First, there was a need to identify all the stakeholders of the city and then to start to communicate with them. All the stakeholders (e.g. taxis, ferry lines) in addition to the city officials needed to be clarified. Short workshops were run to find out their views about Stockholm. Also some on-street research was done to find out the citizens’ opinions about Stockholm. The result was that the citizens of Stockholm, Oslo and Copenhagen were not sure, which of the Scandinavian capitals was the biggest. Followingly, the already existing data was studied: benchmarks, market shares etc. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.) Consequently, a business proposition was developed. This was not yet the slogan but it was about the essence of what they were putting on offer when it came to Stockholm. (Stubbs 2012, 150). Finally after placing the business proposition, the next step was to use creativity to express it effectively. The slogan was invented by simply writing on a napkin that “If Scandinavia was a country, what would be the capital city? – Stockholm”.

Figure 17. Network of brand actors in Stockholm
Figure 18. The brand planning process in Stockholm

This process is described as challenging. Always when taking a step somewhere, all the stakeholders (ferry lines, city officials etc.) must be informed of what was done and why. Moreover, before putting the slogan up in the air there was a need to find arguments that support the statement. Then, a brand book was written and all the arguments were put there. Because of that the book is actually called an argumentation book. In the book the brand positioning is justified. (Brand Strategist 5. Nov 2013.) In the case of Stockholm, the arguments are based on the three legs that are the key strengths for positioning. As introduced also earlier, the legs are called Central, Culture and Business. (Stubbs 2012, 172-173)

After writing the book, the brand was launched and used in different campaigns and events. One example of a concrete implementation action happened in Cannes, the MIPIM. Two magicians marketed the Stockholm brand with an eventful show where they were tricking with Ipdas. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

7.3.5 Challenges

Some difficulties in the branding process were brought up during the interviews. The major challenge according to both interviewees has been that the brave, slightly provocative position they have taken has created discussion and objection among inhabitants in Scandinavia. The public view has not been as supportive as it could be:
But to give, you know, the public view always been you know… That could be more supportive actually. So that has been a problem. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

It is impossible to attract everybody and once you have taken a position, you have to stick with it and believe in it. However, the consumers must be listened carefully and their opinions cannot be disregarded:

But the thing you have to do, when you take a position, you won’t please everybody, but when people object, you do have to listen to what they’re saying and respond to what they are saying. Don’t ignore them. Because what they’re saying comes from the heart, they believe it. And you just have to tell them what you’re doing, why you’re doing, you didn’t mean to offend them or, you know, annoy them, but the fact is, you believe you’re right and its right for the strategy. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

In addition to the problems of positioning, saying “the capital of Scandinavia” may awake questions among people who do not know which countries actually belong to Scandinavia. In some tourist websites Finland is included to the expression “Scandinavia”. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

Communication has also been a challenge. Every stakeholder must all the time be informed about the decisions made:

And again one of the challenges for place is you have to keep everybody informed about what you are doing. Now if it’s an organization that’s relatively easy, you know who all your employees are and you can send them mails or talk to them. With a city, you’re gonna try to keep everybody in the picture, so we had to continually go back and tell people why we were doing what we were doing and what we’re gonna do. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

A remarkable challenge has been that the city authorities must suddenly step into a field they are not comfortable with. Before their tasks have been completely different compared to building of a brand:
I think there’s a challenge with city authorities having to become marketing and branding experts. And I think that’s one of their challenges, they’ve never had to do that before, they just have to make sure that the rubbish was collected and the schools are running, the police was there and the city and the roads work, to sell a place is a different idea, I think. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Important is also to remember, that no-one owns the city but there are numerous people who have different opinions. No-one cannot just decide what they want to do, and then do it without asking other people first. Many decision makers’ opinions need to be taken into account.

The most difficult thing I think in city branding is nobody owns the city. You can’t decide just to do what you wanna do, because there’s a bunch of other people who’ve got very important interest in the city. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

And the trouble is with the city, there’s so many of them, it’s a constant job of communicating with them internally to tell them what you’re gonna do, why you’re doing it, listening to if it’s working, playing back the measurements, showing them when it is working, adjusting it when it isn’t working. So I think it’s a continuous process of talking, listening, adjusting. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Financial issues are also seen as a challenge. More research in the beginning would have been valuable but it always requires more money as well.

Firstly, more research is always valuable and it costs money to do that. So you’re really struggling always to find the cost efficient way of doing it. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Money becomes an issue also when talking about measuring the brand.

Yeah, because more distinct surveys to, to notify how people are attracted by it, for example. So but that’s cost a lot of money. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)
Also one technical viewpoint is seen as a challenge. Since all the companies have their own brands and slogans, co-branding has not always been easy. Stockholm has co-operation and alliances with other organizations (Stockholm Business Alliance) which hence makes the issue important. Lately, the slogan “The Capital of Scandinavia” has been turned to black and white so that it would be easier to use together with other logos. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

7.3.6 Brand performance and monitoring

Both of the respondents feel that the brand of Stockholm has been successful. It stands out, it is unique, brings out a clear message and starts discussion.

But generally we feel strongly that it’s worked very well and then that it summarized, so to say, our position in Scandinavia, in Europe. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

...the Stockholm brand has done the work, so to say. That you are putting yourself up on the map and saying “yes you are the biggest city and the biggest economy in Scandinavia”. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

I think we’re the number one brand in Scandinavia. And that was always our objective. So if you take the four Scandinavian Nordic capitals, I think we are the number one city, for tourism and inward investment. I think we’re there. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

When the respondents’ opinions about the best city brands in the market were asked, both mentioned IAmsterdam. It was described as a very strong brand that brings people together in a good way. I love NY was also mentioned (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.) and Liverpool pointed out as an impressive work. Also what is going to happen in Oslo is going to be remarkable. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

The respondents were also asked to give examples of features that differentiate a good from a bad city brand. It is stated that all the brands that compare themselves to some
other brand and hence don’t position themselves to be the number one, are bad brands. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.) The book of Stubbs also states the following: “Be number one in your own chosen category …” (Stubbs 2012, 231)

…here in Sweden there is a lot of, you know, cities branding themselves and as I mentioned for example, Venice of the North, you know, Gothenburg used to claim themselves as Little London, or you know a lot of… all those brands that are putting themselves to be number two or three or something else, I think is very bad. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

Any destination brand has to have a payoff, for example a measurable increase in tourism. Clear and measurable results must be identified before any campaigns or actions. (Stubbs 2012, 178.) The performance of Stockholm brand is measured in several different ways. There is a department in the city administration that measures and monitors different statistics. They, for example, measure bed nights which is linked to the performance of tourism. Also investments are followed as well as the movement of international companies. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.) Stockholm has done fairly well in many statistics. The bed nights and investments have increased and it has been, among other things, named as Number One Intelligent Community in 2009 by the Intelligent Community Forum and as the first ever European Green Capital by the European Commission in 2010. (Stubbs 2012, 180)

Yes, Stockholm business region… They provide all of these results of how they’re doing and how they’re performing, so commercial bed nights, they measure against their competitors, commercial bed nights, market share in the Scandinavian capitals to see how it performs against all the others, inward investment to see how they’re doing there and then look at some of the benchmarks and some of the… and there’s lots and lots of benchmarks of most livable cities and happiest cities and all of that, and they decide which ones of those are appropriate as well. So they have a department for all of that. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)
According to a respondent measuring the performance of Stockholm brand is not so easy and simple. Surveys and inquiries do not tell the whole truth. It is important to also see how the brand functions together with other things done in the city, and that it is not in contradiction with those.

Very complicated I would say to monitor and see the entire result of it. We could, of course, measure by surveys or inquiries to public, you know, do you know the brand, what do you think about the brand… and we have done so but it doesn’t really say, does it work, or you know. You have to consider how the brand is functioning together with all the other things that you’re doing in the city or a region and how you promote the region. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

7.3.7 Competences

The respondents mentioned several competences needed in the brand management process:

- Patience when dealing with network of stakeholders

  I think you’ve gotta be incredibly patient, you’ve gotta be, dealing with the stakeholders, you really do have to listen to what they’re saying. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

- Listening to the people who do not agree

  But when people object, you do have to listen to what they’re saying and respond to what they are saying. Don’t ignore them. Because what they’re saying comes from the heart, they believe it. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

- Overall understanding of the city and its functions

  I mean you must know how the industry functions, how your society functions or city administration… and the, you know, welfare, day cares… You must
know everything, how your city or region performs. Otherwise you can’t build
the brand. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

You have to consider how the brand is functioning together with all the other
things that you’re doing in the city or a region and how you promote the region.
(CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

• To be able to identify competitors

So we had to consider who do we compete with. That was very important.
(Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013)

• Ability to identify the target audience

We had to consider what sort of target audiences we’re trying to attract. So who
are we talking to. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

• To be analytical and have clear understanding of what the stakeholders need

You’ve gotta be analytical, you have to understand what they really need. (Brand
Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

• To understand the importance of positioning and have courage to create some-
ting different and unique

Yea in my mind, I think the trap a lot of cities fall into, is coming up with very
general statements. And the trouble is, when you put them all alongside each
other, they all look and sound the same. Then you don’t stand out. And I think
what cities need to do is considering like how do we stand out, what’s our posi-
tion? (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Some of those have been very successful, like you know, I love New York, for
example, which is one that I think… Julian mentions in his book. But mostly I
would say that a lot of those city brands are not, you know… people forget
them. Because they are, you know, tend to be very the same all over. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region, 6 Nov 2013.)

- To find the right people who are able to interpret and develop materials etc.

  I think that’s the job of the person who run the branding, to constantly listen and interpret and then develop the right materials, approach, whatever that is. So I think that’s the kind of people you need running it and I think it’s somebody more from a commercial background than a city administration background. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

- To be able to find an umbrella that connects the messages for different audiences

  When we got involved, that was in 2003, you know, there was some promotion of Stockholm. But importantly it was promoted as a tourist destination with one set of messages and then as a business destination with another set of messages. And where that leads to is to two different places! And, you know, tourists are business people and business people are tourists. And so, that leads to mixed messages. And we think it has to be improved, we think you should have an umbrella from a place that can support both the tourism messages as well as the business messages. And so we were looking for an umbrella. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

- To be able to do the actions that the taken position requires

  We have been more interested in what’s happening in the rest of the Scandinavia also. If you position yourself as capital of Scandinavia, you must interest yourself for what’s happening in Copenhagen. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region.)

- Having sufficient resources (time & money)
Because now if you wanna gather people and you wanna look what others have been done and avoid others’, you know, earlier failures then you have to start it of course and that needs time and money. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

- To be able step out of comfort zone

I think there’s a challenge with city authorities having to become marketing and branding experts. And I think that’s one of their challenges, they’ve never had to do that before, they just have to make sure that the rubbish was collected and the schools are running, the police was there and the city and the roads work, to sell a place is a different idea, I think. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Both also described actions that would make the brand planning process ideal. Firstly, more value should be given to the research part:

I still think too little money is spent on the research side, understanding what you need to do. If you get that right, the other ninety percent becomes more valuable… then gathering the information, gathering research and then understanding what that means and then coming up with the right approach, is the key thing. So personally on the brand planning side I think more input would be ideal and I don’t think enough cities spend enough money on that. I think they tend to ignore that, they want to jump straight to the promotion and saying something. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Secondly, discussion among the stakeholders is emphasized. In his opinion more people should be taken into the planning process and discussion should be increased:

I don’t think there is any ideal but of course we could have that stage, you know, planning for the brand, taking in even more companies and other stakeholders… (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)
7.4  CASE 4: Helsinki

Helsinki is the capital of Finland with slightly more than 600 000 inhabitants. It was founded in the 16th century by the king of Sweden and built to compete for trade with Tallinn. Nowadays it is highlighted that Helsinki is a verdant city with a lot of culture and seaside. In 2000 Helsinki was chosen as the culture capital of Europe. (Helsingin kaupunki 2013.) Lately, in 2012 it was also chosen as the world design capital.

7.4.1 The brand of Helsinki

Despite the different titles Helsinki has gained, there is no common conclusion of what the brand of Helsinki is all about. In other words, the city has marketed itself with several different strengths but no common branding work for the entire city is done. Nevertheless, such work will be started during this year, 2014. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.) Helsinki has also made a strategy program for the years 2013-2016 (Helsingin kaupunki 2013.) where some concrete goals can be identified that might help also in creating the brand. According to (Helsingin kaupunki 2013.) among other things, they want the city to be internationally known and attractive and aim at restructuring competitiveness. They also want Helsinki to be the most positive entrepreneurial city in Finland.

There are various reasons why the branding work hasn’t been done before but will start in the near future. Maybe the main reason, however, is that Helsinki necessarily doesn’t grow and attract tourists anymore without doing anything and hence there may not be enough people to pay taxes in the future. The world has changed, globalized and the cities have started to compete.

The main duty of the city is to provide the citizens with certain services, whether they are related to education or health care. Whatever it is... And the city has grown, there have become different boards and agencies that still, kind of, serve the life of the citizen. Whether it is traffic or urban planning. But now we are at that stage and several cities have been many years at that stage that the possibilities the city offers need to be told. So that people would understand to be proud
of the city they live in, and that we would get more people to stay in Helsinki. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

One reason can be that Helsinki has grown naturally. Helsinki has never had to work hard to grow inside Finland. All the time people have just flown to Helsinki from other parts of Finland as well as from abroad, and all the time more companies have come here. Now we are at that phase that the situation won’t necessarily be so easy in the future. Finland is, if not in a depression, in a deep downturn. Helsinki doesn’t necessarily grow anymore without doing anything. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

The interviewees already have their opinions about the meaning of the becoming brand:

The core meaning of the becoming Helsinki brand is the same as the core meaning of any other brand. It helps both, the people and the city to perceive entities and it makes Helsinki more interesting, attractive and compact to communicate. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

In my opinion the core meaning of the Helsinki brand is to increase the vitality of Helsinki. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

To awake the thought and proudness, now that people travel a lot and whether it is because of work or during leisure time… that these things are well back home. We have… that these are the things we can be proud of and these are worth telling. Like that we are allowed to be happy and proud and we don’t always have to be as humble as we are used to. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

It is considered that it would be ideal to build the Helsinki brand around the real competences of Helsinki, those that are not easily copied and those that make the city unique. Helsinki is not the capital of the Nordic countries, nor even the fourth largest city, but if it built the brand around something that made it unique and it would have to compete at most with Tallinn, the situation would be good. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)
It is also relevant to see what other cities have done in their branding processes but no copying is going to be done. Every city must look like their own.

Absolutely yes. No copy paste system is done in any circumstances but everyone certainly has something in the process or in the way of doing the process that we could think… would this work in our case. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

Since Helsinki brand is not ready yet, only interpretations can be done from the becoming brand paradigm. It will most likely be something between projective paradigm and relational paradigm. Helsinki will presumably make logical decisions what comes to brand management. This refers to projective paradigm. However, they will probably do branding also externally involving citizens to the process which hence refers more to relational paradigm. They also consider branding as an ongoing process, since according to the interviewees you need to be able to also look back and work with the errors.

7.4.2  The concept of a brand

The interviewees were asked to tell their opinions about what the concept of a brand means. For everyone it was fairly easy to define. Even though they gave diverse answers, it was still agreed that it is not just a slogan or logo. The brand is seen as an image, a mental perception and a backrest for actions.

According to Machere a brand is merely the image and the first things that come to people’s minds. It is also the advantage that differentiates you from the competitors:

Well, it is strongly the image, the mental perception… It is even a feeling that awakens inside a person when something… let’s not talk about Helsinki, it can also be a product… it awakens immediately the own idea, the first reactions, it is a brand in its best. It is also a competitive advantage when the feeling is positive and warm. Let’s say it is the balanced symbiosis of an image, a feeling and the activities and it is how you differentiate from others… other similar sized cities. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)
In the interviews also a different view came out. An image and a reputation can be seen as separate concepts. An image is something that occurs without having to build it:

I think a brand is… to some product or can be an issue also, like related to city or organization or enterprise… like a mental perception how it basically is. And it is at least partly built consciously and it has a certain feeling. Image is something that I think is born accidentally. That you can give an image but you don’t build it but a brand is at least partly consciously built and it aims at certain benefits. It is like more close to trademark. Image is born from the functions and essence. Brand differs so that we actively try to sell it with certain actions and build it to a certain direction. I don’t know if I can define it more clearly… an image, a reputation and a brand – these three concepts mix up with each other easily. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

One of the interviewees mentioned there is not only one correct definition for a brand. Nevertheless, a brand can be considered as the backrest that leads actions in the organization.

Maybe I understand it as a consistent, logical backrest that leads actions and communications and gives support to all the choices that are made in the future. It comes from the organization’s own strategy and the way it’s seen… but the brands roots must strongly be in the authentic identity. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

7.4.3 The organization behind the brand management

According to the interviewers’ observations there is no hundred percent clarity about the management of the becoming brand. Until now there have been several different actors selling Helsinki’s different strengths. Most likely from now on, the city of Helsinki and the Office of Economic Development will start the planning process and then include more people if needed (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013). It is believed that Machere will be the one in charge of the brand and its processes:

Well, Machere is in charge of the city marketing, so probably she will lead the
7.4.4 The planning process and implementation

There are yet no decisions made of the structure of the Helsinki brand but it is agreed that three peaks would be ideal to concentrate on. Von Bruun states that whether the citizens help making the brand depends merely of the character of the brand. If the brand is built around large-scale industry, not many citizens are needed in the process but if Helsinki will be marketed as a pop-up city with a lot of events made by citizens, the inhabitants are the key. According to Machere it is a certainty that the brand is not built internally in one office. It would be ideal to get companies and citizens to the planning process as well. Aalto strongly agrees:

Well, yet there are no final decisions made but I strongly believe, or at least hope, that Helsinki will make it with a process that includes people, like, in everything we do starting from the leader of the city, we speak about an open Helsinki that encourages people to participate. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

One important issue is also that when something is chosen to the brand, Helsinki must be able to show that such things truly occur there:

When we make the brand we must make the choice, so that behind the brand there convincingly are those issues that really happen. We can’t market ourselves as a centre of expertise of cleantech and green economy if we don’t have evidence that issues related to such things happen here a lot. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

It is hard to say how the Helsinki brand is executed because no decisions have been made yet. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.; Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.) However, some long-term actions and decisions need to be made so that the brand remains convincing. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.) Aalto believes that everything starts with small things: how people are served in hospitals, how customer servants answer to the phone and so on. Machere agrees so that according to her, the ideal implementation process should
be diverse and the brand should be noticed from everything: from the things and decisions people make as well as in the visual world.

Well it is… it starts from every encounter. It’s like, who answers to the phone in the switchboard of the city of Helsinki, like how customers are served in thousands or hundreds of health-care centres or wherever. It’s like the communication of the core of the brand… it is… a very big communicational project for an organization as big as this. It is not enough to just communicate and build common visual rules, it is, above all, to make it alive. However it will work… how Helsinki will work in relation to its citizens and how will it build the services or with which perspective it… it will listen to the citizens or communicate with the citizens and organizations and with different groups. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013)

7.4.5 Challenges

The interviewees mentioned several problems that most likely will occur during the planning and the implementation process:

- Money

Well the first one is easy… it is money. It’s usually an issue in everything you do… (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

I think that an assumption is that building a brand costs couple hundred thousand… but if we think how much money is honestly needed when building a global brand… in my opinion there should be included one zero behind the amount. Or two or even three zeroes if we wanted to make a really strong Helsinki brand… That will, most probably create some discussion… (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

- Will the given promises work?

- Time
On the other hand giving promises is a part of the brand work… that we are this kind of city… then these promises authentically have to work. There are many issues which then need to work and live with the brand. It will take time, for sure. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013)

• The difficulty of making choices everyone is ok with (Helsinki is so diverse that the core peaks may not be found easily)

Finding the common will and common strengths might be complicated. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

• Everyone do not agree that the branding work is important, and for some people it is self-evident

Even only that can be an issue that for some people this is not so important, for some it is self-evident and some think that ”damn, how do we start this only now…” (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

• Will there become feasible operations

Where the next problem comes from will be that do we find for the brand… will there occur feasible operations… (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

• There are strong traditions in the boards of the city of Helsinki, and now people have to learn new and digest courage to change the traditions

Well that might be the biggest challenge to Helsinki since it’s a huge organization with 40 000 employees and with remarkably strong traditions… for like… to autonomous boards and their position, so I think that will be even more difficult process than even making the brand. So like the implementation… What I know about the operations of the boards in Helsinki… I think it will be a relatively long road. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)
• The organization behind the city of Helsinki is so big that it has been difficult to be able to get through larger issues. Smaller cities have done better

In my opinion Helsinki hasn’t been so good in taking large things through the whole organization… like in a linear way. What comes to my experience, in smaller cities getting the whole organization behind one thing is way easier. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

• Finland’s municipality structure makes it difficult to create a consistent brand

In principle you can think that independent Espoo and Vantaa belong also to that one brand, so that I would prefer to talk about Helsinki region brand. They are not parts of Helsinki, they are independent cities, but they also know that Helsinki is all that is seen in abroad. It is like politically favorable to talk about Helsinki region. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

Well I think our biggest problem is that Helsinki would be able to make the choice, or even these three big cities; Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa could together make the choice because there is no point that Helsinki decides the brand and then those northern and western districts tell that we have a different brand… So that if we tell about Helsinki, or Helsinki region by using different arguments, it will look only ridiculous. In the whole region we should have a strict consensus about the things we want to sell. And well… this slightly unfortunate municipality structure confuses this design. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

7.4.6 Brand performance and monitoring

In one workshop it came out that Helsinki can be seen as “a six start city” referring to the overall life quality:

So there the life quality steps into picture: the size of the city enables that we have room to move and breathe. Yet we don’t have similar traffic problems as some massive capitals do. We are a nature capital along seaside. Helsinki is safe, we don’t have remarkably big social problems. And not any nature… weather problems. And then we have pretty easy bureaucracy. Of course bureaucracy
always exists but it is very easy for us to get in contact with the city officials. And the most important factor is the people, very easy-going city. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

In Finland people are also hospitable and want to take care of each other. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.) These issues might be an advantage when creating the brand. However, how the performance of the brand is going to be measured, is still a big question mark. All of the interviewees believe that the indicators have to be decided when the actual brand is ready. There are numerous ranking lists that can be followed and issues that can be measured:

- The number of tourists
- The number of students
- The number of enterprises
- Mental images of cities (What first comes to your mind…?)
- PR values
- Investments

Even though there are more than a few issues to measure, clear targets for measuring need to be set. Everything cannot be measured at the same time. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

A different thought is that measuring a brand can roughly be divided to two different ways of measuring. Either the performance of the brand should be assessed directly by asking people whether they know the brand or not, or indirectly by evaluating if, for example, the number of investments have changed as a result of branding work. An ideal situation would be that the Helsinki brand would be extremely unique without any competitors so it didn’t have to be measured.
The interviewees were also asked to mention what they think are best brands in the city brand market. All of them mentioned Copenhagen. It is very often at the top of the ranking lists. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.) A good city brand can be seen as a brand that has a clear competitive factor which is summarized and clarified. This explains why Copenhagen has done so well.

I think Copenhagen is a good example with its brand functioning, or actually the city strategy goes this simply: "Urban life before urban space. Urban space before buildings." And this in a way leads all the actions; planning, communication and everything begins with urban life and strengthening the urban life. And you can see it so well from how the city has developed… so that the brand is actions. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

I Amsterdam and Eindhoven are mentioned by two of the interviewees. A feature of a successful brand is that the entire city network knows the brand and uses it and this is exactly what happens in Eindhoven:

I have actually been in Eindhoven, Holland couple of times. It has done branding and city marketing already for a long time. And so long that they have already made some correction actions. And it’s of course, a smaller city but there the inhabitants powerfully got involved and everything that is done is mirrored from the city strategy to the brand and I think it was very impressive work. There the citizens starting from the taxi driver were talking about the city’s strengths. It was extremely impressive. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

Von Bruun mentions also Chicago and smaller cities like Västerås and Delft. Still, he more or less agrees with the others of what a good city brand is about:
In my opinion a good brand is very clear even if there would be much to do behind it, it should be able to say in one sentence and not even in a very long sentence because the best brand is not the one you sell in brochures or power points. It is sold so that people tell it and hence it should be easy to understand. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

7.4.7 Competences

During the interviews the respondents mentioned several competences needed in the branding work. Some of the competences they mention can also be found from the chapter 7.4.5. They tell what the ideal situation would be but seem also to be nervous whether it will work in Helsinki. For example:

Cornerstones of success are that... what I also said earlier, that if we in a future want to be a certain kind of city, that we also have aimed at with branding, or we are a certain kind of city that we want to be in the future as well, we all the time have to develop and maintain the quality in our actions, because it is awful if it doesn’t match the reality. It kind of is a double sized drawback. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

One important competence is to find the right people to do the job. After the key people have been found, everything else in the future will be easier. You also must be able to make a strict strategic choice and have a clear message of what you are doing:

So someone must find good people for the project and make them to product good ideas, that’s like the first stage when building a brand. I believe that many things are done correctly after the key people have been found... and there should, in a way, be this person in charge of the project who makes talented people to make successful things. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

So if for example an environmental brand is chosen, the actions behind it must be very strict. Like a very strong message of the actions you are performing. (von Bruun. 18 Nov 2013.)
In addition, knowing about marketing is relevant:

Of course we need a lot knowledge about marketing, not so much in building the brand but when it is marketed to different segments. So it depends… who we want to attract with the brand. (von Bruun, S. 18 Nov 2013.)

Abilities like openness, overall understanding and ability to listen are also emphasised:

… I kind of seek for the ability to understand the issue from the perspectives of different groups… That it is… In a big picture it is kind of customer-oriented or user-oriented or citizen-oriented or how you say it… thinking. The cities have much to learn. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

But well… I think openness and people involvement is extremely relevant… also the listening process…(Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

As already mentioned earlier, a valuable competence is to be able to efficiently summarize and communicate the city’s strengths.

How the city has been able to summarize and communicate its competitive factor. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

Finally, it is also important to have the courage to adapt to new situations and admit mistakes.

And then you must have the courage to change. I mean, the environment changes and the society changes. Maybe first time when you do this kind of thing, you have to be prepared for errors. You have to be able to say that this didn’t work out, we must think what went wrong and then change it. Kind of, admitting the failures and correcting them, there’s nothing to be ashamed of. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)
8 Comparison

In this chapter the four case cities are compared to each other’s. The cities are in very different phases regarding branding processes. Therefore, the comparison was challenging at times. This comparison gives directional information about the core competences needed or challenges faced in city branding process. Some respondents might have found even more competences and challenges but they did not mention them in the interviews.

8.1 Definitions of “a brand” and successful city brands

The respondents of Geneva and Zurich clearly emphasize the importance of logo and slogan when it comes to defining a brand. Nonetheless, they find also the values communicated with the brand important.

Brand is label on a bottle where you don’t always see what’s inside. (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

According to the interviewees in Helsinki and Stockholm a brand is much more complex entity than logo and slogan. They highlight the image, mental perceptions and feelings.

It’s not just a tagline, it’s not a logo. A brand stands for something more because it’s a kind of… You’re telling the outer world something more; what your positioning is. (CEO of Stockholm Business Region. 6 Nov 2013.)

When asking about the best city brands in the market Hamburg, Paris, London, Barcelona and St. Moritz were named in Zurich. The interviewees in Stockholm mentioned Amsterdam, New York and Liverpool. Oslo’s brand was pointed out as a quickly developing city brand. The interviewees in Helsinki pointed out Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Eindhoven, Chicago and smaller cities like Västerås and Delft. The respondent in Geneva did not mention her opinion about the best city brands in the market.
## 8.2 Branding processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Zurich</th>
<th>Geneva</th>
<th>Stockholm</th>
<th>Helsinki</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conscious brand building started from</strong></td>
<td>app. 2000 (some slogans already before)</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slogan/tagline</strong></td>
<td>Downtown Switzerland (by Zurich Tourism)</td>
<td>Geneva – a world of its own</td>
<td>The Capital of Scandinavia</td>
<td>Not yet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core meaning</strong></td>
<td>nature, multiple nationalities</td>
<td>nature, traditions, simplicity</td>
<td>key positioning, being the capital of Scandinavia</td>
<td>No common view yet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Branding processes

A common feature for all the cities is that there have been several different attempts to build a brand. In Geneva, Stockholm and Zurich there have been slogans that do not exist anymore. In Helsinki the branding has been much more small-scale. Different organizations have tried to sell Helsinki by using its different strengths. There is also a brand for the tourism sector of Helsinki which, however, is not in use for the entire city. Besides Helsinki all the branding processes have started within five years.

The slogans like “Zurich, metropolis made in Switzerland”, “Venice of the North” and “Geneva, more than you imagine” have been rejected for different reasons; either the
same slogan already have been in use in some other place or the authorities have found the slogan to be somehow weak.

Surprisingly, Zurich and Helsinki are very similar when concerning the branding processes. Both of them have had possibilities to create a strong brand. Zurich had projects like Themenwelt and Downtown Switzerland and Helsinki has got titles such as the World Design Capital. However, they have not seized the opportunity. Below the similarity of the situations is presented in detail:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Zurich</th>
<th>Helsinki</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No strong and clear brand yet</td>
<td>Yes, current situation</td>
<td>Yes, current situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Until now the focus has mostly been on tourism sector</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There have been 2 opportunities to create a brand</td>
<td>Themenwelt, Downtown Switzerland</td>
<td>In 2000 chosen to be the culture capital of Europe, in 2012 chosen to be the World Design Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People already have a strong perception of the country which may make city branding more complicated</td>
<td>Yes (mentioned during the interviews)</td>
<td>Yes (mentioned during the interviews)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Similarities in Zurich and Helsinki branding processes

Stockholm’s branding process differs from all the others in many ways. Firstly, it was planned by only two persons with help of relevant research. Secondly, it had clear steps (as presented in figure 18) which were completed in a short amount of time. Finally, the positioning was seen as the most important issue. The logo and the slogan came after the position was decided. In Geneva, however, two surveys were carried out but citizens’ opinions were not taken into account. Also a lot of value was given to creating a logo and a slogan. Even a marketing agency was hired.
Differences between Stockholm and Geneva can be concluded in the brand paradigms. Geneva’s projective paradigm and Stockholm’s relational paradigm tell that different kind of value is given to the consumers.

Zurich has moved from the product centred view more to the adaptive paradigm. Lately, customers have become more important. As mentioned before, Helsinki’s way of manage the brand will most likely be something between projective and relational paradigm. From this point of view, Helsinki and Zurich differ from each other.

Both Swiss cities had a bigger group of stakeholder organizations involved in the branding processes. Stockholm instead has had only two persons planning the slogan. Geneva is implementing their brand by making the logo known. Stockholm does the same but also more. The brand is marketed by different campaigns and events. Zurich instead does not have logo and slogan yet.

Communicating with residents is deficient in Zurich and Geneva. They find getting locals involved relevant but do not know how to succeed in that. Stakeholders in Stockholm have taken locals’ opinion into account while planning the logo. Nowadays, however, Stockholm Business Region works with other companies in Stockholm but not with the inhabitants anymore.

8.3 Monitoring

Monitoring the brand performance differs between every of the four cities. Every city has done different activities related to monitoring or correspondingly, is still in a process of planning the monitoring activities.

In Zurich visitors’ opinions about the city brand has been surveyed with a questionnaire. The focus of the questionnaire was not on brand performance but on visitors’ expectations, preferences and Zurich’s competitors. Also observing other cities is used as a tool for monitoring. Citizens’ opinions have not been taken into account.
In Geneva there has not been implementation on monitoring. The decision-makers are aiming at surveying tourists’, residents’ and also professionals’ views about the brand. They will also analyse the amount of visitors.

Stockholm has been monitoring its brand performance. In addition to statistics and questionnaires the respondents want to view how the brand functions together with other things done in the city, and that it is not in contradiction with those.

There are different reasons why monitoring has not been implemented or emphasized in Zurich, Geneva and Helsinki. The stakeholder organizations in Zurich are afraid that Zurich’s image would differ from the intended brand identity. In Geneva, instead, the brand is so recent that the interviewees do not see the need to monitor branding performance yet. Helsinki does not have a city brand yet so naturally there is no monitoring either. However, the respondents in Helsinki have opinions how the monitoring could be conducted. They believe the indicators have to be decided when the actual brand is ready. Carrying out surveys for visitors and residents as well as analyzing statistics is found doable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Zurich</th>
<th>Geneva</th>
<th>Stockholm</th>
<th>Helsinki</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surveying tourists’ opinions about the brand</td>
<td>Done with a questionnaire (Focusing on visitors’ expectations, preferences and Zurich’s biggest competitors)</td>
<td>On-street research done (before launching the brand)</td>
<td>Done with a questionnaire</td>
<td>Found relevant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Surveying inhabitants’ opinions about the brand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No information available</th>
<th>Not done yet, planning to</th>
<th>On-street research done (before launching the brand)</th>
<th>Found relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Analysing the amount of visitors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No information available</th>
<th>Not done yet, planning to</th>
<th>Done</th>
<th>Found relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Observing other cities’ brand performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Done</th>
<th>No information available</th>
<th>No information available</th>
<th>Done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Surveying amount of investments/enterprises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No information available</th>
<th>No information available</th>
<th>Done</th>
<th>Found relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 3. Monitoring activities

#### 8.4 Challenges

All the interviewees admitted there are several problems and challenges when planning and implementing a branding process. Some similarities could be identified but mostly every city named different challenges.

The single commonly seen challenge for all the cities was that several organizations’ opinions need to be taken into account during the process. One organization cannot just decide something before asking the others first. This was seen as a challenge even in Stockholm where there is clearly only one organization managing the brand. The trouble is that no-one owns the city so everyone must be able to tell their views and ideas.

The most important problem was to create a brand which fits with all the participants of the committee and will be accepted from all the huge companies in Geneva. This was something very touchy. Because everybody has his own ideal Geneva. (Bodi, M. 2011.)
One question is should we have a new institution that is leading this brand and… if so, who pays for the new institution or what do the existing institutions lose or is it one of these institutions that is the leader of the brand, then the others say “Yeah, what about us?” (Lauber, M. 18 June 2011.)

Finding the common will and common strengths might be complicated. (Aalto, L. 5 Dec 2013.)

The most difficult thing I think in city branding is nobody owns the city. You can’t decide just to do what you wanna do, because there’s a bunch of other people who’ve got very important interest in the city. (Brand Strategist. 5 Nov 2013.)

Below, there is a table that identifies all the subjects the key cities had troubles with. However, these challenges mentioned below are only headings which comprise more than one problem. Some cities might have mentioned several issues under one heading. Many questions which have not been answered yet in Zurich are classified as “fears of future”. Also Helsinki had several fears of future, e.g. whether the given promises will work and will there occur feasible operations. This is logical since Helsinki’s brand is not done yet and no decisions have been made. On the contrary, Stockholm’s respondents concentrate on challenges they already faced years ago. Stockholm’s brand seems to be the strongest, since also Zurich and Geneva have several fears of future. The interviewees in Zurich mention that several questions without answers still exist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Zurich</th>
<th>Geneva</th>
<th>Stockholm</th>
<th>Helsinki</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial issues</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicational issues, keeping stakeholders updated all the time</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues related to time</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different opinions about the importance of the brand</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. Challenges

Stockholm was the only city mentioning that taking a certain position has created problems. They have had to handle criticism and opposition. The other cities haven’t taken as provocative position as Stockholm, so positioning wasn’t seen as a challenge.

Some differences in challenges between Switzerland cities and Northern cities could be identified as well. Zurich and Geneva Mentioned they have confusion about the leading organization that should take responsibility. There are many different decision makers who all participate to the branding process. For example, in Zurich there are canton of Zurich, city of Zurich, Greater Zurich Area, Zurich Tourism, universities and airport. In Stockholm there is only Stockholm Business Region and in Helsinki there is the Office of Economic Development who have the major responsibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other organizations using the same brand, co-branding</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Different opinions among stakeholders</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion of the leading organization, (E.g. who is responsible?)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fears of future</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking a provocative position</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The city authorities must step in an unfamiliar field, traditions must be changed</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties in decision making</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branding the city is seen difficult</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of motivation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The citizens do not agree with authorities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.5 Core competences

Core competences needed in city branding are a relevant part of the research. They can be perceived as cornerstones of success in city branding. Therefore the interviewees were approached several times during the interviews by asking about core competences. The respondents were asked to describe ideal types of branding processes as well as mention examples of successful city brands. Furthermore, a straightforward question “what are the core competences needed in branding?” was included in the interview.

Several competences were stated by the interviewees. Again, many similarities and differences could be identified but surprisingly two competences were mentioned by all the cities. In all the cities to find the right people or the key person is seen as an extremely significant competence. Also to be able to implement correctly and create a right strategy were found valuable. There were two competences which were mentioned by three cities: honesty about the brand and communication skills.

I think very important is to really look at what you have, what is your city and then… you can, like…involve, involvement from there you can make but you cannot just skip all the things you have and then establish a brand and say “Ok, from now on we want to be this and this city”. (Seiler, B. 22 June 2011.)

Cornerstones of success are that… what I also said earlier, that if we in a future want to be a certain kind of city, that we also have aimed at with branding, or we are a certain kind of city that we want to be in the future as well, we all the time have to develop and maintain the quality in our actions, because it is awful if it doesn’t match the reality. It kind of is a double sized drawback. (Machere, S. 29 Oct 2013.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Zurich</th>
<th>Geneva</th>
<th>Stockholm</th>
<th>Helsinki</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to find money and time for branding</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty/ Consistency/ the brand must</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirement</td>
<td>Column 1</td>
<td>Column 2</td>
<td>Column 3</td>
<td>Column 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be what it promises</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to divide power</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening/ discussing/ communicating in between the stakeholders</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to understand the city functions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to understand the stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to identify competitors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to understand the importance of being unique</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to find the right people</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to cooperate</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to create an umbrella for combining messages for different facets</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to act right/ create right strategy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to sustain relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to identify the brand identity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability brand the city inside a country</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to maintain the brand</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to adapt new situations/ admit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9 Conclusion and discussion

9.1 Conclusion

The objective of this thesis is to find out cornerstones of success when discussing about the concept of city branding. The research was conducted by interviewing key informants about city branding in four case cities. The comparison of the case cities was done by making tables and analysing them. Mostly the cities differed from each other but particular similarities between all of them could be identified and it was possible to even make generalizations. The following four competences were the most commonly stated by the respondents: creating the right strategy, finding key persons, communications skills and being honest about the brand. Consequently, the most common challenges were taking several stakeholders’ opinions into account, fears of future and financial issues. The interpretation concerning monitoring branding activities was that only Stockholm has conducted thorough implementation.

9.2 Discussion

The validity and reliability of this research is thought over. As already mentioned the information in the comparison section is directional. Even though some of the cities have not concentrated on certain abilities, it does not necessarily mean they are not seen important. It could be that a specific challenge or competence did not occur in the respondent’s mind at the moment.

Also the interviews have been collected within three years. Therefore, in some cities the process might have progressed and various attributes might have changed. However, the respondents are key informants of the case cities’ branding processes meaning that they have been fully aware of the situation at that time.
The case studies were conducted individually but the comparison was done in pairs. Also the analysers’ abilities and understanding affects the reliability. In order to minimize the errors, the analysers went through each other’s interview “codings” before the analysing was started. Detailed dedication to different cities’ branding processes was educational. For both of the authors this research was the first time to use qualitative research method so the thesis became a broadening learning experience in that sense as well. The objectives of this research were successfully fulfilled.

There is not much research done about place branding because the concept is relatively new. The interviewee’s opinions and views differ quite a lot which implies that this kind of research is relevant and there is a need to study more. The analysers agree that similar kind of researches would be significant, for instance comparing the same cities and their progress after a couple of years. This research could also be enlarged by finding new case cities to compare. Similarly, comparing extremely successful cities to those that are remarkably less successful would be useful.
References


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