The ROCK Advanced Seminars on Innovative City Branding

Synthetic report

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Regeneration and **O**ptimization of **C**ultural heritage in creative and **K**nowledge cities

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As a distinctive feature, ROCK is pioneering in including the communication dimension as part of the integrated approach for cultural heritage-led urban development. This is a noticeable novelty, and the way to do that is by connecting cultural heritage to innovative place branding. In this perspective, a number of advanced seminars were organized with the aim to provide a sound approach to city branding, while emphasizing cultural heritage as a driver to brand and market the contemporary city. In other words, the ROCK vision of a broader understanding of cultural heritage led to the need for re-framing cultural heritage within city branding & marketing practices.

The agenda was conceived as an itinerary across the state of the art on innovative city branding, covering a number of main pillars such as city narratives and imageries, brand toolkits, audience segmentation and mix of communications. The final session was shaped as an exploration on how to make the most of heritage to branding and marketing the contemporary city and subsequently how to tell stories that connect heritage to future-oriented issues – e.g. contemporary art and creative industries, entrepreneurship, innovative workplaces, technology, social innovation, etc. In a way, a kind of small workshop on storytelling.

7 seminars were organized - Vilnius, Cluj-Napoca, Bologna, Lisbon, Athens, Skopje and Torino – plus an exhibition in Torino jointly curated by Torino Urban Center Metropolitano and TASO. The seminars mobilized over 200 participants from around one hundred stakeholder entities. Participants were mostly senior officers involved in destination management and investment promotion agencies as well as their main stakeholders, Mayor´s cabinets staff, City Council units in charge of culture and heritage management, dirComs from major cultural entities and events and professionals involved in design and visual arts.

The ROCK seminars on innovative city branding proved to be rather useful:

- To provide a sound approach to place branding, closer to integrated urban development than just conventional marketing.

- As an opportunity to discuss about what´s going on in the host city and confront with other practices and trends at international level.

- To raise awareness on the instrumental role of place branding in urban regeneration (in the perspective of the target areas in the replicator cities).

- To organize a discussion on cultural heritage as a driver to brand & market the contemporary city.

Linking cultural heritage to city branding

The seminars

Side events

Key messages delivered

ROCK

Stressing the value of communication in CH-led urban regeneration

ROCK is the acronym of Regeneration and Optimisation of Cultural heritage in creative and Knowledge cities. It is an EU-funded Innovation Action on historic city centres as extraordinary laboratories to demonstrate how cultural heritage can be a powerful engine for regeneration, sustainable development and economic growth for the whole city. To that aim, ROCK brings together a unique consortium of 32 partners, including 10 cities, 2 city networks, 7 Universities and a number of knowledge partners, technological firms and business associations.

The ROCK vision includes the **communication dimension** as part of the integrated approach for heritage-led urban development, which is commonly shaped by governance, financing, planning tools and legal frameworks mainly. And the way for that is by connecting heritage to modern city branding & marketing, which is a novelty in projects of this kind.

To that purpose, a specific task within the ROCK work plan was organized in order to tackle two main activities: i) the organisation of advanced seminars on innovative city branding in those ROCK partners cities (replicators or role models) requiring capacity building and/or wanting to organize a serious discussion in this field with the involvement of a significant number of stakeholders; ii) the elaboration of a toolkit for branding CH-led

urban development (D5.6) as an assemblage of insights aimed to embed CH-urban development into the existing city branding practices.

What it comes to the seminars, they focused on a twofold goal:

- **Re-learning city branding.** City branding is relevant more than ever. Its reason for being is just giving support to the strategies and operations carried out by the teams and entities in the city who are targeting specific audiences, from tourists to investors. Fortunately, most practitioners increasingly agree place branding is much more than simply a matter of logos and campaigning. Nonetheless, the field still is under the influence of both the rhetoric of commercial branding and the urgency of the short term. As a result, one can still see many short-sighted practices ending in lack of consistency, low impact in the long term and poor empathy with local stakeholders and citizens.

The ROCK seminars were conceived as a re-learning exercise or just an introduction to innovative city branding, not strictly from a conventional marketing perspective, but above all from an integrated urban development approach.

ROCK

Stressing the value of communication in CH-led urban regeneration

Additionally, the growing importance of a sound communication strategy in urban regeneration processes, where innovative place branding can provide a right framework and techniques was another motivating factor.

The foundations for that came from the URBACT II CityLogo project, which was a pioneering large-scale research/action experience led by the city of Utrecht and technically supported by TASO.
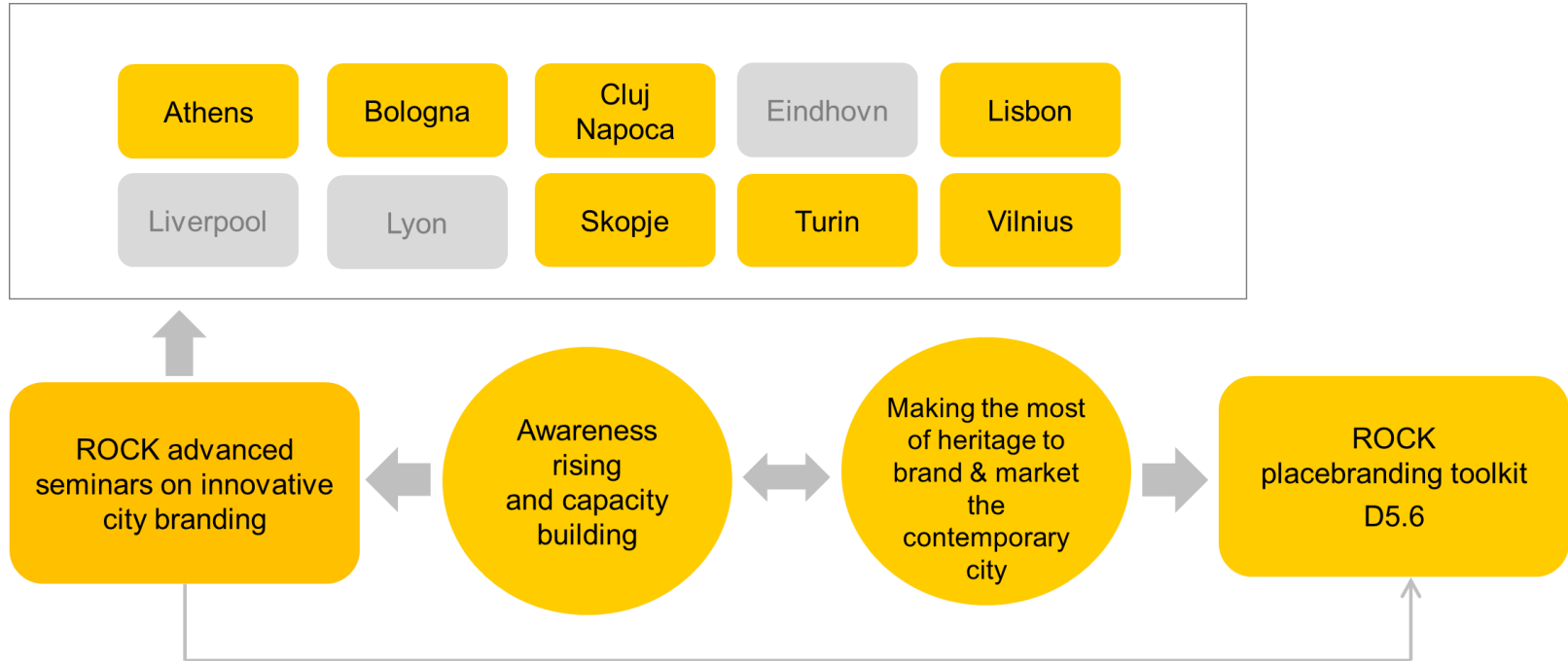
- **Rising awareness of the potential of cultural heritage to branding & marketing the contemporary city**. A high number of cities have massively invested or are investing in their built heritage. However, the capitalization of cultural heritage in terms of branding and marketing is often constrained to the city of the past and the visitor economy sector. Otherwise, there are a number of angles associated to cultural heritage-led urban regeneration, not always visible enough, which turn the heritage into a driver to brand & market the city of today and the city of tomorrow. They ranges from emerging technologies and smart city solutions applied to heritage management to built heritage as new urban workplaces.

The ROCK seminars were also designed as an opportunity for

city marketers and their partners to get aware of this potential and test how the adaptive reuse of cultural heritage, which links to urban futures, can be translated into unique stories and compelling images to draw the interest not only of visitors but also investors, innovators and the local population.

In other words, cultural heritage is absolutely a distinctive feature that makes the urban experience in Europe unique. We mean heritage not as a relic of the past but something naturally connected to the contemporary city. This gives Europe an unbeatable positioning in the global tourist market on urban destinations. Nevertheless, beyond the visitor economy, it would be also rather beneficial connecting heritage to other emerging dynamics related to the digital economy, low-carbon prospects, creative economy, social innovation and son on. We mean connecting from a communication point of view. That is, expanding the role of cultural heritage when branding the contemporary city and targeting other audiences different to tourists and visitors.

# Stressing the value of communication in CH-led urban regeneration

| Athens | Bologna | Cluj Napoca | Eindhovn | Lisbon |
| Liverpool | Lyon | Skopje | Turin | Vilnius |

ROCK advanced seminars on innovative city branding

Awareness rising and capacity building

Making the most of heritage to brand & market the contemporary city

ROCK placebranding toolkit D5.6

ROCK task 5.2 "Linking CH-led strategies to innovative city branding"

ROCK

The agenda

Building and communicating
competitive local identities

AN ADVANCED SEMINAR ON INNOVATIVE CITY BRANDING

Athens, June 7th 2018

ROCK
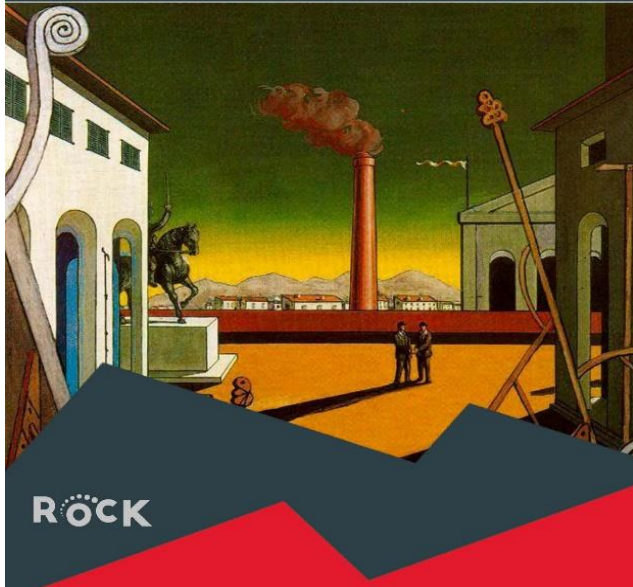
A standard agenda was designed with the idea to be duly tailor-made according to the specific conditions and needs from the host cities. Hence, there were significant variations between the different seminars. That agenda was a one-day or one and half day programme conceived as **an itinerary across the state of the art on innovative city branding**, covering a number of main pillars such as city narratives and imageries, brand toolkits, audience segmentation and mix of communications. Additionally, a session was devoted to discuss about the **state of play in the host city**, bringing together a number of main local stakeholders in the discussion.

The final session was shaped as an exploration on **how to make the most of heritage to branding and marketing the contemporary city** and subsequently how to tell (as much brilliantly as possible) stories that connect heritage to future-oriented issues, such as contemporary art and creative industries, entrepreneurship, new urban workplaces, technology and emerging sectors, social innovation, etc. In a way, a kind of small **workshop on storytelling**.

ROCK

E.g. the **Athens agenda**:

09:30 – 09:45 Welcome words by Mr. Alexis Galinos, CEO of ADDMA. *Who are we here today? Round up of self-introductions.*

09:45 – 10:30 Session 1. Meaning and scope of city branding: reacting to most common gaps. *Content and governance perspectives to place branding - The 7 most common gaps - De-brandization of city branding?*

10:30 – 11:10 Session 2. Setting the local scene. Branding and marketing Athens: current work and expectations. Introduction by Mrs. Lilian Moschidou, Marketing Director of the Athens Tourism Partnership.

Q&A and discussion.

11:10 – 11:30 Coffee break.

11:30 – 12:20 Session 3. Cultivating uniqueness: from city narrative to city brand. *Narrative as the first and most fundamental - Brand toolkits and filters - The new frontier: crowdsourcing the city story.*

The perspective from Mrs. Amalia Zeppou, Athens Vice Mayor for Civil Society and Innovation and founder of SynAthina. Discussion.

12:20 - 13:15 Session 4. Communicating Athens visually, ¿are we extracting the best of our city?

Word & image: a semiology for the city - Enhancing city´s visual culture – Role, if any, of logos & mottos. Interactive exercise and discussion.

13:15 – 14:15 Lunch buffet.

14.15 – 15.15 Session 5. Mix of communication actions: all time formulas revisited and new paths. *The power of (good) advertising - Expanding the concept of communications - Sign up! let´s keep in touch - Experimenting new ways of place representation.*

A carrousel of short videoclips to be critically reviewed by participants.

15:15 – 15:30 Pause.

15:30 – 16:30 Session 6. Making the most of cultural heritage to brand & market contemporary Athens.

Ignite by Miguel Rivas: Linking heritage to urban futures. What storytelling?. Dr Stavros Alifragkis´ perspective, Athens Citylab. Mrs. Erifili Maroniti´s perspective, Coordinator of the City of Athens Culture Net.

Discussion on Athens-based stories.

Meaning and scope of city branding — S01

Setting the local scene: **Athens** — S02

City marketing
Segmentation & targeting, action planning, from outside-in, more operational

Big narrative: the city proposition → City brand toolkit: messaging, imagery, city representations — S03 S04

→ Governance and management: the collaborative model

Audiences segmentation: visitors, business, talent, locals…

Communication actions: all time formulas revisited and new paths — S05

City branding
Identity & image, from inside-out, more strategic

Making the most of **Cultural Heritage** to brand & market the contemporary city — S06

ROCK

The ROCK seminars on innovative city branding was a team work, involving different entities with different roles:

- **TASO** took the lead on the overall organisation, and in particular with regard to design and facilitation of the seminars.

- The **host cities** provided full logistic support. A first step was identifying the right body with the capability to involve the target participants and offer a qualified counterpart to TASO – e.g. the Marketing Strategies Department of the City of Cluj-Napoca, or Go Vilnius and Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency in the case of the Lithuanian capital.

- **ICLEI** network (Local Governments for Sustainability) contributed in connecting the seminar agenda to sustainable urban development. As work package leader, ICLEI also offered financial support to cover eventual running costs of the seminars, upon request.

- **EUROCITIES´** continuous follow up and occasional participation were much appreciated. It build a bridge between the discussions and findings resulting from the seminars and related fora and working groups of the network.

- A number of ROCK cities were invited to contribute to some seminars as case studies to discuss about - e.g. Torino attending the Vilnius seminar and vice-versa, Liverpool and Bologna attending the Torino seminar, Urbasofia and Aries contributing to the seminar in Cluj.

The post-seminar was also an active period, since the idea was taking advantage of the seminars for TASO to start a one-to-one conversation with a number of stakeholders from the different host cities aimed at crowdsourcing the ROCK place branding toolkit as much as possible.

The series ROCK advanced seminars on innovative city branding was labelled as European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 event.

Participation and impact

7 seminars were organized - Vilnius, Cluj-Napoca, Bologna, Lisbon, Athens, Skopje and Torino - mobilizing **over 200 participants from around one hundred stakeholder entities**. Attendance was by invitation and limited to 25/35 participants per seminar in order to ease high quality interaction and discussion.

Participants were mostly senior officers involved in destination management and investment promotion agencies as well as their main stakeholders, Mayor´s cabinets staff, City Council units in charge of culture and heritage management, dirComs from major cultural entities and events in the city, Universities and professionals involved in design and visual arts.

Vilnius 28 registered participants from 18 entities

Cluj-Napoca 42 registered participants from 23 entities

Bologna 32 registered participants from 14 entities

Lisbon 22 participants, from 2 entities (City Council)

Athens 35 registered participants from 17 entities

Skopje 30 registered participants from 12 entities

Torino 34 registered participants from 18 entities

The seminars proved to be rather useful:

- To provide a sound approach to place branding, closer to integrated urban development than just conventional marketing.

- As an opportunity to discuss about what´s going on in the host city and confront with other practices and trends at international level.

- To raise awareness on the instrumental role of place branding in urban regeneration – e.g. in the perspective of the ROCK target areas.

- To organize a discussion on cultural heritage as a driver to brand & market the contemporary city.

ROCK

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Linking cultural heritage to city branding

The seminars

Side events

Key messages delivered

ROCK

Vilnius

February 1 2018. Vilnius Tech Park

" We do have the heritage city with long lasting traditions and we do have a young & contemporary, smart & innovative Vilnius. Today we are looking forward to find a synergy between these "two different cities"

Aušra Sičiūnienė, Vilnius City Municipality

ROCK

Vilnius Tech Park, which is inner city located at the heritage site of Sapiegos, was the venue for the first ROCK advanced seminar on innovative city branding. It was a one-day agenda designed and facilitated by TASO, who worked in close collaboration with Vilnius City M15151515unicipality, the destination management organization **Go Vilnius** and **Vilnius Old Town Renewal Agency.**

The seminar brought a new look at city branding from an integrated urban development perspective, beyond conventional marketing. At some point, a focus was put on how to make the most of heritage to branding/marketing the contemporary city and subsequently how to tell stories that connect heritage to urban futures brilliantly. In this respect, Torino´s director of culture Stefano Benedetto gave, as invited contributor, a highly appreciated insight about heritage and culture as a driver to (re)positioning the city internationally.

Over 25 local stakeholders were invited to join the working day and according to Aušra Sičiūnienė, from the local organization team, "the participation of these people from various sectors (public, NGO, business, culture, creative industries, heritage management, events…) made the discussion sharp and fruitful".

Getting a unifying and compelling city narrative was agreed as the first and most fundamental. A kind of common ground serving the

different storytelling and sector-focused city marketing practices in the city - those targeting more specifically visitors, business and investment, talent, students…). Vilnius actually has a good handful of key assets and emerging dynamics that, as far as possible, would need to be smartly linked each other to create outstanding stories leading to a truly distinctive positioning of the Baltic capital. As Dalia Bardauskienė, advisor to the Mayor of Vilnius, said, "the achievement of that big narrative for Vilnius is a priority for us". On this matter, ICLEI shared some insights on how the sustainability issue might feed today´s city narratives.

The City of Vilnius is certainly doing a good job in the field of place branding. Go Vilnius was established in May 2016 as an agency wholly owned by the Municipality, with the mission to market the city as tourist destination and business location. In this context, **the ROCK seminar worked as a catalyst** in this process leading to a more consistent city branding practice in Vilnius, in particular with regard the making of a sound collaborative model aimed at co-producing city brand content and subsequent initiatives. In this sense, the idea to organize a follow-up working event (extending the range of stakeholders to involve) was greatly supported by the participants.

Cluj-Napoca

February 20 2018. Centre for Urban Culture

" The discussion marked a turning point in getting more cohesion in the way Cluj tries to communicate itself as a dynamic city, including cultural heritage as city´s main asset"

Diana Apan, Head of Marketing Strategies, City of Cluj-Napoca

City of Cluj-Napoca´s Marketing Strategies Department took the opportunity to gather over 40 local entities and participants with a stake in building up a more compelling narrative of Cluj, which offers a unique urban experience, "in the heart of Transylvania", and joins a good handful of distinctive assets and growing dynamics. The 2nd city in Romania is the most innovative one. It´s a University town which is home to the most powerful IT cluster in Eastern Europe. According to Ștefan Teișanu, Director of Cluj Cultural Centre, "Cluj has quality of life as a central mission, University, Innovation and Participation as the main pillars and **Culture as a transversal key factor**".

However, such dynamism remains hidden to many outside Romania. There is a need to buzz on Cluj, and the ROCK seminar set the basis for that. It provided a framework in order to create more unity, coherence and appeal in the way Cluj´s main stakeholders talk about their city.

The seminar was attended by a variety of necessary contributors, namely: the largest cultural events in the city (Transylvania International Film Festival, Untold Festival, Electric Castle Festival and Jazz in the Park), main cultural institutions like Cluj Cultural Centre and The Paintbrush Factory, Babes-Bolyai University, the Art and Design University, the Romanian Architects Chamber, business clusters, social digital platforms like cluj.com and ClujLife, as well as representatives of the civil society.

Those participants were engaged in different discussions and interactive exercises, e.g. how to get the best of their city from a visual point of view, how to tell stories that link heritage to future-oriented issues, etc. At some point, the discussion was fed by ROCK partners Urbasofia, who linked to the Integrated Development Strategy for Cluj-Napoca Metropolitan area, and Aries IT cluster about how they promote Cluj as a business and innovation ecosystem. It´s also worth mentioning the valuable input from Dan Clinci, from the Architects Chamber of Romania and a local innovator himself, who shared an unconventional view for making cultural heritage more "touchable, accessible and interactive" for the people.

The ROCK seminar definitively marked a turning point. The Municipality of Cluj-Napoca committed to follow-up the discussion and provide stronger coordination and leadership to the process. As Emilian Dan Cartis, from Romanian Design Council, said "city Branding is complex in so many regards, given the variety of factors: technology/industry and business, geographical positioning, heritage vs future vision, multi-cultural diversity and the many continuously changing elements that form a dynamic and fast growing city such as Cluj-Napoca".

ROCK

Bologna

March 22 2018. Museo Internazionale e Biblioteca della Musica di Bologna
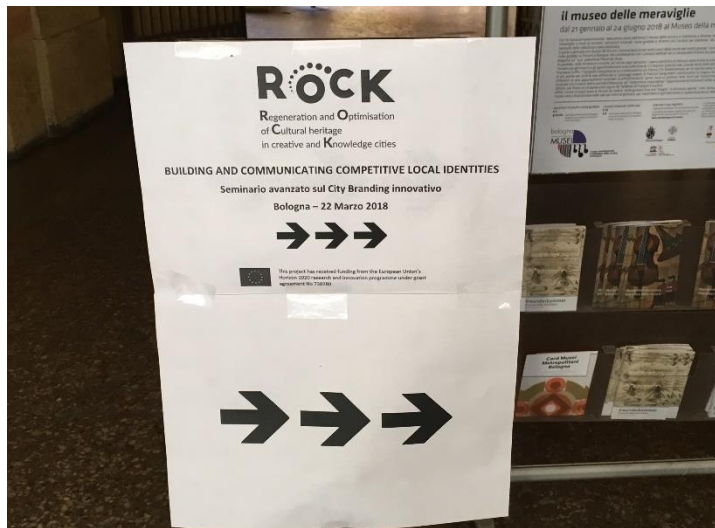
" We want to guide the visitor to discover Bologna in the most natural and instinctive way possible. We want to suggest random immersion, not a prearranged itinerary, and not even a priority choice. We do not want to be the ones to tell him/her what is important for us; we want him to discover the details that are of interest to him/her. We do not want to tell him/her about Bologna, but rather it must be he who offers us his/her personal story.

Roberto Grandi and Michele Pastore

A good number of stakeholders joined a lively discussion at the amazing International Museum and Library of Music. Among them **Bologna Welcome**, which is the destination management organization, the Foundation for Urban Innovation (former Urban Center Bologna), Fondazione Rusconi, Teatro Comunale, Academy of Fine Arts, Fondazione Alma Mater, as we all events like Itacà (festival of responsible tourism) and Bologna Design Week plus a number of professionals in the fields of communication and culture.

President of Bologna Museums Roberto Grandi and designer Michele Pastore set the ground describing the efforts made by the city in constructing a more compelling urban identity. It reached to a peak in 2014 with the launch of a ground-breaking visual identity, which is an alphabet indeed rather than a conventional logo. Nonetheless, as in many other cities, this is still a work in progress, and there is much to do concerning branding and communicating Bologna more efficiently.

At that point the discussion was focused on the **Zamboni area**, which is Bologna´s target area for the ROCK project. Everyone convened that the right way is not so much creating a specific district brand, but fully activating the area as a main contributor to Bologna´s brand content. Having agreed that, it´s also clear that urban and district regeneration is a match that should be also played in the arena of communications, through a conscious, multi-target communication strategy. To that purpose, innovative

place branding can provide useful approaches and techniques. In fact, the growth of place branding has been closely linked to urban economies that have reacted to stagnation and decline, and therefore undergoing transition and regeneration.

Those techniques were introduced at the seminar by TASO. In this regard, one of the key messages from Miguel Rivas is that place branding is basically a matter of building up a compelling narrative to then crowdsource and spread good stories consistent with that "big narrative". Stories not only about "who we are" but most importantly on "who we want to be". That is, real stories from and about Zamboni as an area in transition, envisioning the vibrant cultural and creative district we want to achieve. In this respect, the **ROCK living lab U-Lab** can be instrumental in order to unveil, promote and gather compelling stories of that kind - along with another communication-oriented platforms like La Via Zamboni.

Two brilliant presentations by Cécile Houpert from Eurocities and professor of cultural economics Michele Trimarchi were particularly useful to feed a broader understanding on the meaning of culture and cultural management in modern urban societies.

Lisbon

May 30 2018. Marvila library

" Thanks for this great seminar. It gave me a new perspective in the way I look to my work about the city of Lisbon and my thinking when working in the development of communication design projects. As a designer I will keep in mind finding ideas and develop projects that reflect the city identity without forget its history and heritage, telling stories about Lisbon inhabitants its a way to opening new boundaries and create different and unique experiences to the visitor"

Paula Guimarães, MUDE Museu do Design e da Moda

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The discussion in Lisbon was focused on place branding as a tool to promote more unity and cohesion among the "many cities" that co-exist in Lisbon, like in any other big city, and in particular how the ROCK target area of Marvila should be "re-connected" to the brand Lisbon in terms of identity, values and stories.

There are many cities in Lisbon. The city of residents looks at the city of tourism as a troubling issue and the conflict caused by the skyrocketing touristification of Lisbon over the past few years is getting higher. Moreover, city districts out of the most iconic, downtown Lisbon do not recognize themselves as part of the overall city narrative. To face these issues **place branding can work as a cohesive force**. We mean place branding understood as an updated and compelling city narrative, in which as much "different Lisbons" as possible can feel that they are part of it.

The Municipality of Lisbon (Cámara Muncipal de Lisboa) is doing a good job in sector-focused marketing through Visit Lisbon and Invest in Lisbon. However, the organization of a common work field upstream, in terms of a more unifying narrative, is still a gap. This type of city branding unit might be shaped as a strategic platform to work on synergy creation and serve the different city marketing practices and entities in the city who interact more frequently with international audiences. An initiative of this kind should reconcile outward Lisbon with the local population.

Therefore, the need for an integrated approach for branding Lisbon is currently a hot issue in the city and the ROCK seminar arrived just in time to feed the debate.

The seminar was mainly approached as a capacity building initiative on the real meaning and scope of place branding targeting Lisbon City Council staff, in particular personnel from 5 units: Brand and Communications department, which belongs to the General Secretary, Culture Department, Urban Planning Department, Invest in Lisbon, and the task force Mission Lisbon-Europe 2020 - "The discussion has been very useful for my work because clearly showed the power of communication to shape desires, dreams, future, and how a good message/story can strongly help to promote a City whatever it may be the issue or the target. Célia Milreu, Urban Planning Department, Cámara Municipal de Lisboa.

Athens

June 7 2018. SERAFIO Sports, Culture and Innovation Center

" The ROCK seminar on city branding provided motivating food for thought and helpful guidelines and case studies for steering away from unsuccessful communication paths, proposing incentives to revisit traditional tools and use cultural heritage as a vehicle for innovation"

Maria Pantelous, Region of Attica's Directorate of Tourism

For obvious reasons, Athens is quite focused on tourist marketing and the ROCK seminar´s main goal was therefore to introduce city branding as a more comprehensive working field embracing other target groups, such as business, talent and the local population. This issue was particularly introduced as an organizational challenge. An in this regard, Athens´ current distinctive capacity on stakeholder and citizen involvement should be duly exploited in the field of city branding. Not in vain, their capabilities in community-led local development led the city to be awarded European Capital of innovation 2018.

Increasingly, city branding is about promoting and curating a flow of good stories from selected stakeholders and an active citizenship. And SynAthina has much to do with this. It´s a digital platform created in 2013 as a response to the economic crisis in Greece aimed to collect ideas from citizens of how to improve the city. Its founder and now Athens' Vice Mayor for Civil Society and Innovation Amalia Zeppou attending the ROCK seminar and gave valuable insights on **crowdsourcing the city narrative**.

In fact, through "This is my Athens!" campaign, the Greek capital is at the forefront in promoting and gathering compelling stories on contemporary Athens to catch the attention of visitors, and involving the locals in it.

A significant gap in terms of multi-level governance emerged at the seminar with regard to Athens as a destination. We mean to lack of effective articulation between the Attica region (Directorate of Tourism) and the city of Athens. Some ideas were discussed, like focusing "This is Athens" platform on stories and experiences while keeping Attica on practical information, or focusing the former on the capital and the latter more centred on the surroundings. Anyhow, the seminar opened a debate and got very positive endorsements from participants – "This was a most enlightening insight into the cutting edge of what building a unique, engaging and unifying narrative and identity for our destination should be. The ROCK seminar on city branding provided motivating food for thought and helpful guidelines and case studies for steering away from unsuccessful communication paths (…)", Maria Pantelous, Head of Tourism Promotion at Region of Attica's Directorate of Tourism.

The seminar was organized by ADDMA, the Athens Development and Destination Management Agency, along with City of Athens Convention & Visitors Bureau. The exchange involved 35 participants from 17 entities.

Skopje

July 5-6 2018. MoCA Museum of Contemporary Art

" Thank you very much for your impact at the Seminar on Innovative City Branding. For me, it was a very interesting approach and a way of thinking, since I am an architect and I make stories for urban developments and buildings, but not for the city as a whole. It was an amazing experience to learn about city branding and what does it mean"

Erina Filipovska, Faculty of Architecture Skopje

For many, Skopje is an unknown city from a relatively new independent country, though with a long history, also with an imperious need for building up a more inclusive narrative serving a multi-cultural local population and emphasizing the "who we want to be". Moreover, its image has been distorted somehow by the so-called Skopje 2014 project – kind of megalomaniac attempt to re-build the city centre as a new iconic space, which many find kitschy and disconnected to the real city.

In this context, city branding, in particular a sound approach of it, can be rather instrumental to start building a stronger city identity and narrative, more inclusive and based on Skopje´s own uniqueness and real and potential assets. And this was the main goal of the ROCK seminar, which no doubt made an impact in the sense of raising awareness of the usefulness of (high quality) city branding for Skopje.

The Mayor of Skopje Mr. Petre Shilegov was in charge of the opening with a motivating speech, which led to a navigation across the state of the art on innovative city branding that was much appreciated by participants, some of them coming from the branding and creative field – "Thank you for your inspirational and educative speeches/presentations that offered new vision how to communicate with and about the city! It became clearer

that not only classical branding is important, but even more important is the communication and emotional links that we create with the city, people, tourists, business community… Very useful!", Nebojsa Gelevski (Bane), creative director and founder of Koma Design Studio.

After the ignite effect of the ROCK seminar, the City of Skopje agreed on starting a process with second workshop, this time aimed at co-creating a roadmap for branding Skopje, setting solid foundations of the process and engaging the right pool of necessary contributors. The initial idea is to organize four different groups for an in-depth discussion devoted to stakeholder involvement, city narrative (and in particular the role of cultural heritage on it), visuals and crowd engagement, and governance and monitoring.

It´s worth noting the **Skopje ROCK Urban Lab** is called to play a primary role in a process of this kind, as a platform for engagement and discussion, since city branding is explicitly one of the lab´s work strands.

Torino

October 22-23 2018. Talent Garden Fondazione Agnelli

" Thank you so much for your lessons, ideas, motivations and inputs. I would like to thank you, all the contributors and Torino Urban Center Metropolitano for the very interesting workshop and experience"

Maria Cristina Strati. Blog Filosofia Pop, Torino

City branding practice in Torino and subsequent international marketing reached a peak in Torino right after the Winter Olympics in 2006, through the agenda carried out by Torino Internazionale. Since then, such a strategy has been fading away till today.

In a way, the purpose of the two-day ROCK seminar was to ignite a discussion on the need for Torino to **re-take a meaningful agenda on city branding & marketing** (and making the most of cultural heritage for it). It was organized by Torino Urban Centre Metropolitano at the inspirational Talent Garden Fondazione Agnelli, and gathered a variety of participants from both the culture and tourism sectors, young architects and members of the local creative community, who were invited as a result of a call for expressions of interest to attend the seminar – the applicants were asked for sending a CV along with a city story linking cultural heritage to urban futures - in the form of 1 page text, 1 minute video or 3-5 images plus tagline.

The conversation first focused on the most common gaps in creating a branding strategy for the city, to then talk about narrative building, visual communication, city brand toolkits, city´s target groups and sector-focused city marketing, and

communication channels and actions. At this point, the discussion took benefit from the four national and international invited contributors, namely:

- Vilnius and their efforts to institutionalize city branding by bringing together, under the same roof (Go Vilnius), two seemingly different worlds, tourism marketing and inward investment attraction.

- Liverpool, which is a benchmark in many aspects, in particular with regard to stakeholder alignment and the use of big events.

- Bologna and their achievement in getting more unity and a smart solution for a new visual identity of the city: É Bologna.

- #Cuoredinapoli, as a design-driven civic initiative aims at raising sense of place and re-building Naples´ local identity.

The exchange on innovative city branding didn't stop with the end of the seminar. On 23 October, the exhibition "Brand New City" was inaugurated at the premises of Torino Urban Center Metropolitano, with a panel discussion moderated by Miguel Rivas.

Linking cultural heritage to city branding

The seminars

Side events

Key messages delivered

ROCK

Brand New City - Exhibition in Torino

Torino Urban Center Metropolitano in collaboration with TASO organized the exhibition "Brand New City", which was inaugurated on the 23th of October 2018 with a panel discussion moderated by Miguel Rivas and including Suzanne Jameson (Liverpool City Council), Inga Romanovskiene (Go Vilnius), Alfredo Capuano (#Cuoredinapoli), Michele Pastore (Fondazione per l'Innovazione Urbana Bologna) and Valentina Campana (Torino Urban Center Metropolitano). About 100 people attended the opening event.

This exhibition documented a set of case studies on place branding, bringing together relevant methodologies in storytelling urban identities. Inside the Torino Urban Center premises, the exhibition focused on six **ROCK partner cities** (Athens, Bologna, Eindhoven, Liverpool, Lyon and Vilnius) which are experiencing place branding initiatives often associated to cultural heritage-led urban regeneration, while outdoor, under the porticos of piazza Palazzo di Città, other European branding experiences (Amsterdam, Berlin, Genoa, Naples, Oslo and Porto) were showcased likewise.

Curated by Giulietta Fassino, Chiara Lucchini and Miguel Rivas, this is likely the first exhibition in Europe dedicated to city branding.

Brand New City - Exhibition in Torino

Rijeka 2020 European Capital of Culture – The Classroom

RIJEKA 2020 European Capital of Culture organized a 3-day **International Conference on Culture Branding**, from 28 February to 2nd March 2019, as part of The Classroom, a local community and cultural sector capacity building programme. ROCK partner TASO was entrusted to give the lecture Branding Cities Through Culture and run the workshop "Branding the City: Real Meaning and Scope", as an early **capitalisation** of the ROCK advanced seminars on innovative city branding.

The exchange with participants was organized into four slots: Why city branding matters?, Cultivating uniqueness, Communicating Rijeka visually, and Mix of communications. A spotlight was put on new perspectives on cultural heritage to make the most of it when branding and marketing the contemporary city.

In Rijeka, TASO joined the stage together with some renowned brand designers and cultural management teams like Erik Kessels (I´m Amsterdam), Boris Ljubičić (Croatia's visual identity), Kai Amberla (Finland Festivals) and MUZE.

Linking cultural heritage to city branding

The seminars

Side events

Key messages delivered

ROCK

Meaning and scope of city branding

istanbul inspirations

İstanbul. The most inspiring city in the world.

EDINBURGH
INSPIRING CAPITAL

BARCELONA
A
CAPITAL
THAT
INSPIRES

Does this make sense? The need for **re-learning city branding**

"Even today, many governments, most consultants and even some scholars persist in a naïve and superficial notion of place branding that is nothing more than ordinary marketing and corporate identity" - Simon Anholt (2010) *A Political Perspective on Place Branding*. In Go, F. and Govers, R. Ed. International Place Branding Yearbook - Place Branding in the New Age of Innovation. Palgrave Macmillan.

Logo&motto-based conventional place branding seems to work homogenizing places instead of promoting distinctiveness and differentiation. Brand is only a metaphor when applied to cities. It is actually about building up and communicating compelling local identities. In this perspective, a broader understanding of culture and cultural heritage can work as a "back to basic" to cultivate uniqueness.
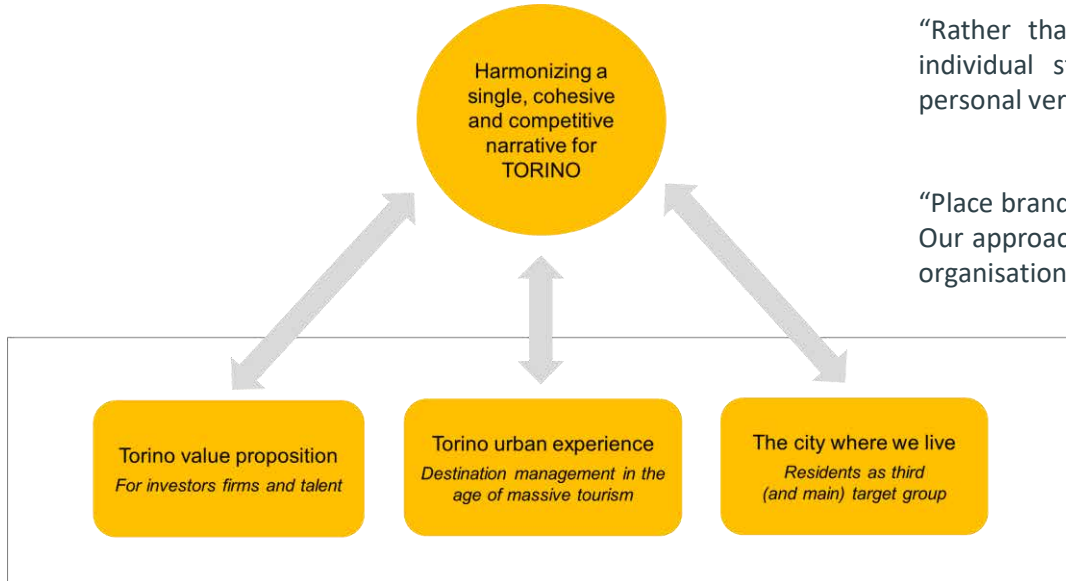
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Meaning and scope of city branding

City branding is just about building up a unifying narrative of the city. It´s about **creating more unity** and exploiting synergies between the different city marketing practices. In this view, city branding is basically an **organisational challenge.**

"Rather than having businesses and individuals tell their own individual story about the city, everybody should have their personal version of a common narrative"

Aarhus citybranding team

"Place branding can never be the responsibility of one organisation. Our approach is to develop and provide a strategic platform for all organisations in the city that are promoting Liverpool

Peter Smith, Marketing Liverpool

Harmonizing a single, cohesive and competitive narrative for TORINO

Torino value proposition
For investors firms and talent

Torino urban experience
Destination management in the age of massive tourism

The city where we live
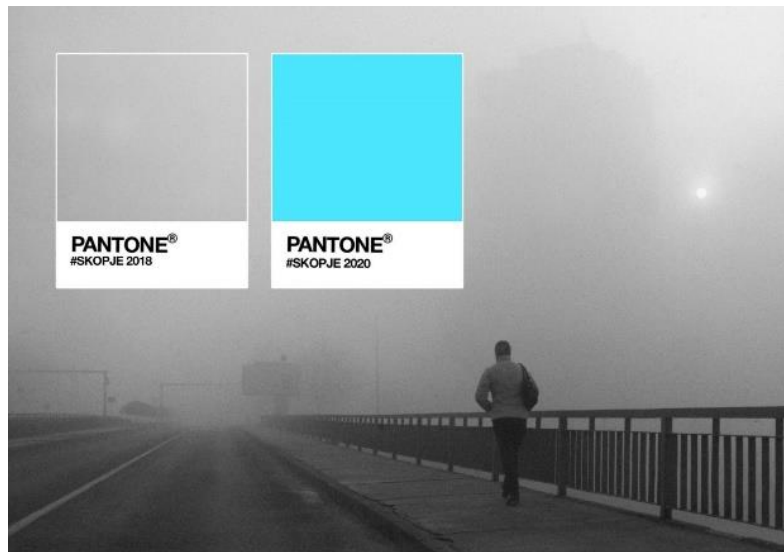*Residents as third (and main) target group*

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Meaning and scope of city branding

Hence, city branding doesn´t come to replace the different sector-focused city marketing practices. On the contrary, its reason for being is to give support to the operations carried out by the entities working in destination marketing, cultural events, inward investment, etc. Those specialized marketing teams targeting specific audiences will keep a vital role for sure, now within a new context where **synergies** can be fully exploited and the set of city messages and stories will gain in consistency.

Visitor economy | FDI/Business | Talent | Community-led urban development

- Tourists and visitors
- Conferences & exhibitions –MICE
- Events
- Clusters
- TNCs *global players*
- Investors & funders
- Talent & creative people
- Start-ups
- Research & knowledge
- Skilled workforce
- Global diasporas
- Expat community
- Students
- Locals
- Commuters and other city´s users

Skopje 2020 – the best AQI on Balkans

City´s purpose wonderfully expressed by the local creative Nebojsa Gelevski (nickname Bane) at the ROCK seminar on innovative city branding

Narrative is the first and most fundamental - "Our mission is to tell London's story brilliantly", London & Partners (Mayor of London's official promotional agency).

But, what city when branding the city? It´s not only about who we are, but who we want to be as well.

That´s why city branding is so instrumental to urban economies and places in transition, and in urban regeneration processes.

City narratives

Crowding together the city story

(And the big challenge of curating that). E.g. #MeetSkopjans "We interview and photograph people in different settings and from different backgrounds, ages, groups in order to learn their stories, desires and ideas"

Cultivating uniqueness

E.g. Heritage + Good design. Entrance hall of Skopje Museum of Contemporary Art. Design recalling the earthquake that destroyed the city in 1963.

City imageries

Marco Pierre White:
"Very few places stun me…"

Liverpool's Pier Head

it's liverpool

Pete Townshend:
"The quintessential music city of Britain…"

The Blackout play Liverpool Sound City

it's liverpool

The art of linking messages (narrative power) to images (symbolic power).

The photographic image lacks of narrative power. On the contrary, it holds symbolic power. "The function (of photographic images) is not to make the story clear, it is to make it real" – J. Szarkowski (1980) The Photographer´s Eye, Museum of Modern Art. New York, originally published in 1966. That is why, in place branding, text and image alignment is so crucial. None of them has enough communication power by itself, both need each other.

"Today, images already express more ideas than facts"

Joan Fontcuberta, photographer

City imageries

Fascination as "emotional multiplier" of local real assets

Theatrical scenography for the new Hamburg, by ©Herzog & de Meuron Architects.

Are we extracting the best of our cities?

Fun Loving
Life Affirming
Easy Going
Always Buzzing
it's liverpool

Placing people at the front row

Liverpool´s representational strategy is quite focused on people. Not only local innovators but ordinary people too.

City imageries

Images should tell a story anyway

Two images taken from the Club Liverpool toolkit (Liverpool Convention Bureau) portraying the same setting - Liverpool´s historic waterfront. The picture from the left is just a postcard, while the one from the right is which is actually telling a story about live & work in today´s Liverpool.

City imageries

Logos can play a role, but not always, and never the main role.

Logos & mottos attract the spotlight so powerfully that the more strategic side of city branding often remains overshadowed and underestimated. From a visual communication point of view, promoting a more appealing city´s visuality can be much more effective and durable than visual identities and logos.

Indeed, "No-logo" can be a good way in city branding.

City imageries

Promoting new visualities

Two images selected at the interactive exercise on urban semiotics – ROCK advanced seminar on innovative city branding in Athens. (Right) Evita Kalogiorga, Not all is the Acropolis: Lycabetus, the second landmark of Athens. (Left) Maria Lambri selected this picture under the motto "Constructing at a new".

Role for cultural heritage

The mainstream, conventional approach of heritage is to qualify the city as a destination. The **new approach** is making cultural heritage work as a driver to a broader range of audiences and city marketing practices. That is, **promoting stories that connect heritage to future-oriented issues**, such as contemporary art and creative industries, entrepreneurship, innovation spaces, technology, social innovation, etc.

The image shows Viabizzuno (Mario Nanni)´s lighting project for Fendi´s new HQ at Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana in Rome. The built heritage re-framed to tell a story combing the growing fashion industry and lighting design in Italy.

Role for cultural heritage

Vilnius Technology Park.

Vilnius Tech Park is located at the fully renovated 19th century complex of Sapiegos. A unique site where cultural heritage meets the future.

The buildings are more than 200-year-old former military hospital that is renovated and upgraded to the innovative, comfortable and inspiring place. The Campus has become the biggest technical hub in the capital, attracting local and international talent in the gaming, big data, cyber security, and visual graphics sectors.

Role for cultural heritage

Telling stories that link heritage to future-oriented issues.

What stories?

	Urban Futures							
	Contemporary arts	Creative and culture industries	Other industries	Entrepreneurship	New innovation spaces and workplaces	New technologies New emerging sectors	Civic uses education, public markets…	Social innovation
Cultural Heritage	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories
Industrial Heritage	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories
Intangible Heritage	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories	stories

Role for cultural heritage

Telling stories that link heritage to future-oriented issues.

What storytelling?

- How to tell this kind of stories in a way that cultural heritage really works as a distinctive driver?

- What attributes of heritage are being re-activated again? Memory, architecture…?

- What future-oriented issue the story is working for? Some kinds of stories seem to happen more often or are more visible than others. Why?

- The art of producing catchy titles, taking compelling images, testimonials…

- Who from the story would be capable and available to enhance/update the story according to a specific grammar/storytelling?

- Any training needs in this respect? This is about content marketing, the capability to tell good stories.

- Is he/she aware of the city´s brand values and current strategy? Framing the stories into the city´s big narrative.

This research was largely fed by many of participants at the ROCK seminars on innovative branding, who were rather helpful in gathering good stories to work on – see examples in pages 47 and 48.

See **ROCK Placebranding Toolkit**, with a focus on storytelling. Available at http://branding-toolkit.rockproject.eu

Role for cultural heritage

From ROCK Placebranding Toolkit http://branding-toolkit.rockproject.eu

Feel your city. Cluj-Napoca.

Can just a group of teenagers change the way a city is felt? Yes, they can. Some students from the Onisifor Ghibu high school in Cluj realized that not every citizen or visitor could enjoy properly the most visited city in Romania, and decided to change this. How? They installed a panoramic board in braille on the Cetățuie Hill - the belvedere spot of the city.

This was just the beginning. Then they decided the next step was to install information boards in braille at the touristic points around the main square in town. The money for this project is coming from a festival they are organising every year in their high school: called Ghibstock, a nod to Woodstock.

The teenagers also organises a «treasure hunt» to discover cultural and historical spots in the city centre, and different campaigns aimed at highlighting how prejudices affect the way people interact and experience the city.

So they go on and on, creating a whole *Feel your City* movement. That's how from an apparently small initiative is possible to change things, and making the city more accessible for everybody, more enjoyable. A fairer place.

Role for cultural heritage
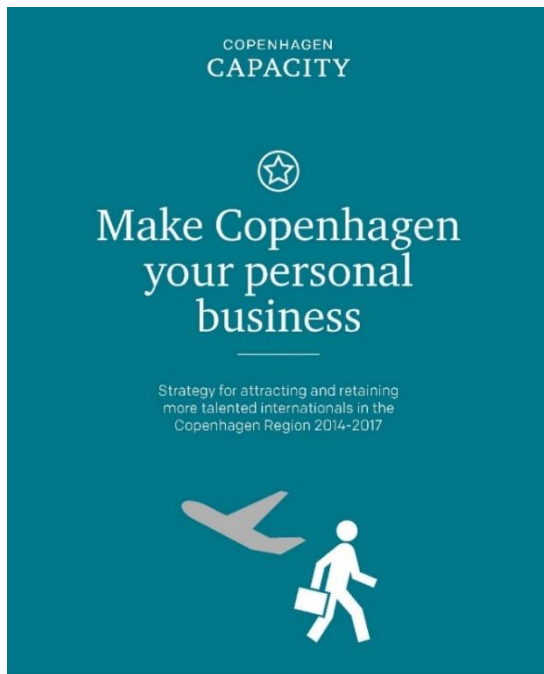

From ROCK Placebranding Toolkit http://branding-toolkit.rockproject.eu

Glimpses of beauty. Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Centre, Vilnius

Lithuanian émigré heritage is just amazing. Just mentioning the names of George Maciunas and Jonas Mekas then you just know Lithuanian creativity is at the top of contemporary art and cinema. So Jonas Mekas Visual Arts Centre is the way of recovering that heroic past to be used as a propeller for the new creativity to come. A way of reuniting a "dream team". It is not a museum but a platform. It should carry the flag of the avant gardes of all of the arts.

Fluxus, the avant-garde movement in the mid-20thth century, defend the idea of an impossible separation between life and art, both so fluid, so interconnected that there is no way to imagine them being apart - Life might be seen as a piece of Art and Art might be felt like a piece of Life.

With that in mind, breaking down barriers and frontiers, this centre should be just a place for working creatively and aesthetically; for living, producing art and making fun. For moving ahead seeing glimpses of beauty. And some beauty is more than enough for making life valuable.

COPENHAGEN
CAPACITY

Make Copenhagen
your personal
business

Strategy for attracting and retaining
more talented internationals in the
Copenhagen Region 2014-2017

Investment, business and innovators

Inward investment attraction is evolving rapidly as many cities and regions are not so focused on the "war for jobs and dollars" but in the fight for knowledge and talent. Individuals are now targeted, alongside firms and organizations.

In this context, the arguments to seduce the entrepreneurial creative class, as well as firms and innovators of the knowledge economy, are different to those from a recent past. Consequently, a **new promotional language** has emerged, closer to B2C rather than a B2B logic, where the emotional connection matters to attract.

For instance, this includes career opportunities and lifestyle, in addition to the usual location factors related to cost of living, taxation, etc. The city has now to be communicated as a functional business place alongside a unique urban experience (cityscape, cultural agenda and amenities, environmental quality...), which unavoidably leads to a more integrated approach in the way cities market themselves, and that´s precisely the city branding field. In this view, culture and heritage have a broader role to play.

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Audiences

Visitors

Dichotomy between the host and the guest is getting blurred, since increasingly visitors (do not call them tourists!) wish to experience the city as locales and therefore want to be targeted as such – e.g. they are more interested in the ultimate painting exhibition in the city or the music weekend agenda than in conventional tourist circuits and attractions.

In this view, **some communication initiatives targeting visitors also may work for residents and vice-versa** – e.g. around 40% of VisitOslo´s Facebook followers by 2915 were residents, who are also constantly feeding Oslo destination brand with their tips and contributions. This trend opens kind of "fast track" to city brand teams to consider the local population as a main target group as well.

Left: This is my Athens! campaign aims to engage locals to tell the city, on the basis that crowdsourcing the city story it´s more credible than official tourist material.
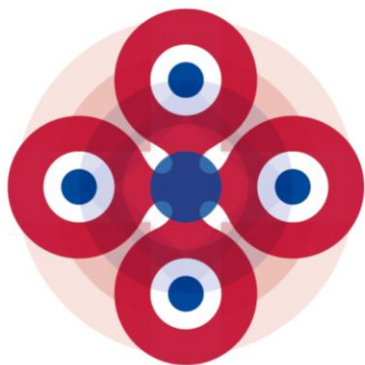http://myathens.thisisathens.org/about/
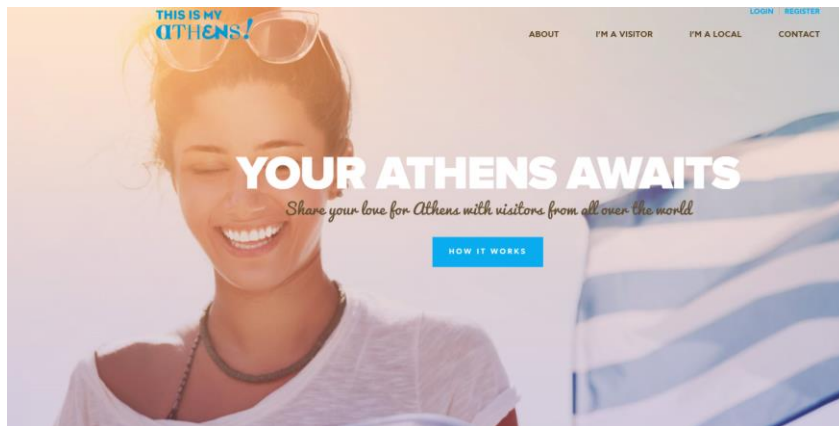
Locals

Branding the city should not be something disconnected to the local population. Place branding can be a question of internal marketing too, and place branding techniques can be helpful to enhance social cohesion and raise sense of place (where culture and cultural heritage have a wider role to play indeed)

Likewise, innovative place branding approaches and techniques can be supportive in **urban regeneration** projects and to socialize flagship projects and emerging processes in the city that need to be installed in the collective imagination. It´s simply about internal marketing, which is a very political issue.

Left: #CUOREDINAPOLI, a grassroots movement driven by a team of local creatives in Naples aimed at strengthening local residents´sense of place. It also fills a gap, which is the lack of any initiative from the local administration in the field of strategic communications or city branding.
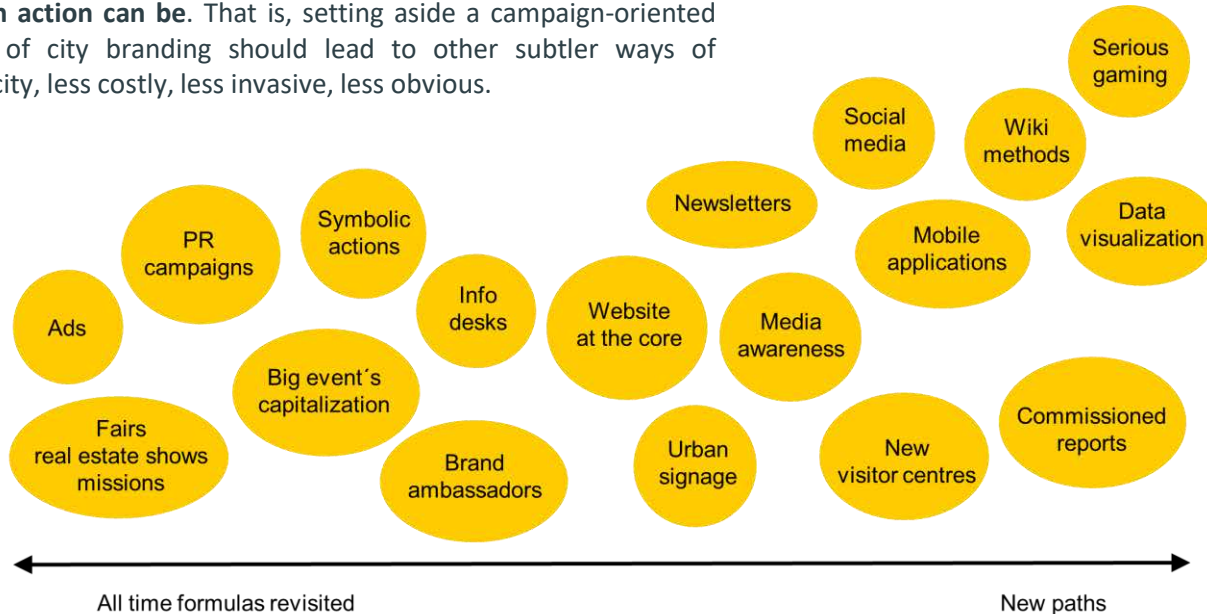
Audience segmentation.

Big city narrative steering different detail storytelling, to give greater coherence to the whole – e.g. Eindhoven´s big narrative around "Creative Innovation" feeding the city´s four explicit target groups: Bright talent, City explorer, Tech starter and "Our residents"

www.eindhoven365.nl

Destination
is Bologna

City of Motors
is Bologna

City of Music
is Bologna

City of Experience
is Bologna

City of Culture
is Bologna

City of Food
is Bologna

Communications

Addressing the question of communication channels & actions in today´s city branding & marketing is not only a matter of migrating to digital-based initiatives. A first step for cities is to make a conscious choice on their particular mix of tools, which may include **all-time formulas duly revisited**, along with others resulting from a **wider conception of what a communication action can be**. That is, setting aside a campaign-oriented understanding of city branding should lead to other subtler ways of marketing the city, less costly, less invasive, less obvious.

All time formulas revisited — New paths

Communications

Nobody knows where it is, but when you find it it's amazing.

VILNIUS, THE G-SPOT OF EUROPE

VILNIUS

The communicative power of (good, creative) **advertising**, not necessarily ending in a big campaign.

Left: spot created by Jurgis Ramanauskas and Skaistė Kaurynaitė as an academic exercise at The Atomic Garden School, Vilnius.

ROCK

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Communications

As the main entrance gate to the city, **airport terminals** should be furnished accordingly.

Below: Athens international airport Eleftherios Venizelos, one of the best in working as a *de-facto* visitor centre, by displaying a stunning new visuality of the Greek capital.
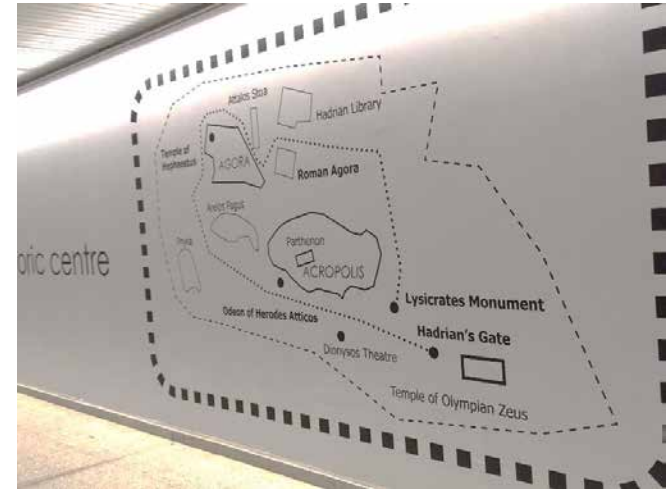
New generation of visitor centres

A new kind of visitor centres is emerging, different to the ones just focused on the what to see and where to sleep. This time showcasing the contemporary city and the most significant urban transformations underway. A good example is the Italian model of "Urban Centres".

Left: the Urban Centre Bologna was primarily aimed to both raise awareness on the urban changes and promote citizen´s involvement in urban development issues. At its central located venue, the Centre displays a free-entrance, permanent exhibition. Against this background on communication and participation, by end of 2012 the Centre was commissioned to organize Bologna´s city branding.

Communications

Refreshing the city merchandising and visitor info

Lisbon is one of the most active cities in Europe in promoting high-quality visitor merchandise, which may be seen as a communication action itself or at least an attempt to enhance a better city´s visual culture. Turismo de Lisboa, along with EGEAC, the public body in charge of culture, promote and welcome new design proposals from creative firms every year, which are then traded at the official "Lisbon shop" and other gift shops of museums and visitor attractions.

In this way, Lisbon takes advantage of its vibrant local creative ecosystem in order to continuously renovate its tourist merchandising and related stuffs representing the city, which usually are associated to a kitschy style.

Communications

Bologna. Merchandising collection for Palazzo Poggi made by industrial design students from UNIBO.
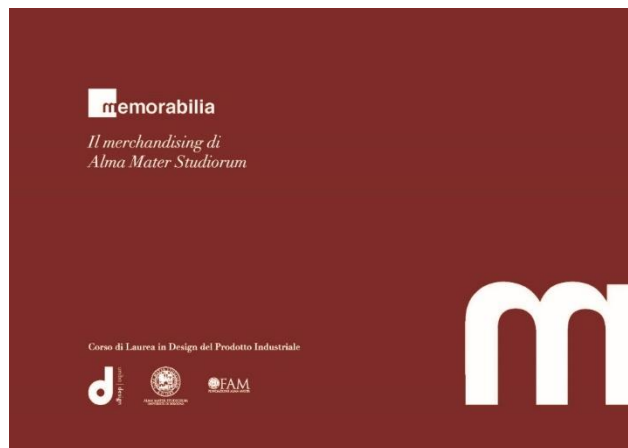
Communications

New AR city apps

Augmented Reality will have an impact in the way we may showcase the city and live the urban experience, as a visitor or resident.

Left: new Apple AR platform ARKit for the iPhone, introduced in 2017. A powerful source to upgrade city apps targeting city explorers

Miguel Rivas is partner at TASO. Over the past years, he has disrupted the city branding field from a view closer to integrated urban development rather than conventional marketing. From this perspective, Miguel has provided leading expertise to large-scale transnational projects like CityLogo and AT.Brand, giving support to over 20 cities in promoting or upgrading their city branding strategies, such as Oslo, Aarhus, Dublin, Liverpool, Genoa, Utrecht and Bogota.

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