THE APPLICATION OF THE 4P, 5P, 6P, 7P AND 8P MODELS IN CITY BRANDING

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City branding is regarded as a comparatively new field: although it has been dealt with in practice for a long time, scientific literature is only catching up with it nowadays. Several models have appeared in the past years which state that a city can be interpreted and developed as a brand. This article presents the 4P, 5P, 6P, 7P and 8P models briefly, and discusses their advantages and disadvantages. We may easily think that it is all about just one model, the famous 4P, that is, marketing mix with its extensions. However, as we will see later, the notions behind the letters P are often very different; therefore, 5 completely different approaches will be discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays there is a competition not only between products, but cities as well. They compete for tourists, investors, customers of local products, talented workforce, etc. – that is, they compete for money. This competition takes place in the market and people's minds at the same time – moreover, the latter comes first in chronological order as people's thoughts, opinions and emotions have an effect on competition as well.

It is important to point out that city branding is not about a catchy slogen, a nicely designed logo, and not even about an advertising campaign. It is about a strategic focus for the city that facilitates its development of the marketing mix and communications. Therefore the models mentioned below are based on this notion, too.

If we examine the bibliographical background of the field, the first person to be mentioned is Philip Kotler, "the Pope of marketing". Kotler and his co-authors, Haider and Rein, published their book titled "Marketing Places" in 1993. Dutch authors Ashwort and Voogd can be considered the first outstanding European experts of the field, having published "Selling the city: marketing approaches in public sector urban planning" in 1990 (Hungarian version published in 1997). Hungarian authors also started to discuss city marketing in the nineties: the scientific magazine Tér és Társadalom devoted its issues 1-2. (year 1995) to this topic with essays by prominent university teachers and researchers such as György Enyedi, János Rechnitzer, Mária Törőcsik, Gyula Szakál, Antal Tóth, and Gábor Kozma. Kozma also published the book "Regional and city marketing for students studying for a master's degree in geography or a degree in teaching geography" in 2002. "Regional and city marketing" by István Piskóti, László Dankó and Helmut Schupler was published in the same year. The latest edition of this book was authored by Piskóti alone and published in 2012 with the title "Regional and city marketing – Marketing-focused development and branding". As we can see from the latest example, the concept of city branding appears in Hungarian literature, too.

Experts often discuss the differences between city marketing and city branding, and there is also a disagreement on which term is narrower or broader (for example, see Kavaratzis, 2008).

This article will not take a position on this issue for reasons of brevity, but it is important to understand the usefulness of the models mentioned below, no matter if we refer to the idea as city marketing or city branding.

The 4P model: Product, price, place, promotion

The 4P model may be the most well-known marketing method – it is an idea usually mentioned by the instructor during the very first session of any marketing course. Although many people would associate the term with Kotler, the original father of the concept was actually Professor Jerome McCarthy back in 1960. The 4P model is more than 50 years old, but it is still a useful tool, especially in the case of products, for which the term was originally used. This is also represented by the word behind the first P: product. However, adapting 4P for cities is not easy at all:

- Product: There is a product in the case of a place or city, too, including its own objective characteristics, geographical location, built environment, and the name of the product. However, a city as a product is much more complicated, and has more 'layers' than a soft drink or a vehicle.

- Promotion (Marketing communications): This can also be easily applied for cities. Messages that are communicated by the local government to tourists, investors, locals, the press, etc., and the tools that are used for the communication of these messages.
- Price: In the case of cities price cannot really be interpreted in a complex way; it is more practical to see it in the context of the target group. Regarding tourists, price can be the cost of accommodation for a night (or, say, a week), the price of a lunch at a restaurant or a coffee at the main square of the city. For investors, however, price means the cost of establishing a specific greenfield or brownfield development, or how much tax they have to pay, what discounts or refunds the local goverment provides, etc.
- Place: What does place mean? If we consider a traditional product, it is the place where it can be purchased, that is, the channel of selling. And what is it in the case of a city? Of course the city itself (but the city is also the product at the same time). In this sense the place can also be a point where customers do not buy the city itself, but they do buy related services and products, e.g. tourists book trips to the city at a travel agency or a website. People can also buy products from the same origin: e.g. csabai sausage from the city of Békéscsaba, or quality onions from the city of Makó.

All in all, the advantage of the 4P model is that the method was introduced more than fifty years ago; it is well-known and widely used by marketers.

The disadvantage of the 4P model is that while product and promotion (marketing communications) can be well used in the context of a city, price and place are less adaptable.

The 5P model: Presence, purpose, place, personality, power

As pointed out in the introduction, models including one (or two, three, four) more P's do not serve as an expansion of the classic 4P model as specific models for city brand measurement and development purposes were also created.

One of these models is 5P, introduced by Trueman and Cornelius (2006), developed for the brand development of Bradford, a city in the UK. According to them, 5P is some sort of a "place branding toolkit", that is, its dimensions must be considered and measured, and at the same time they also indicate fields to be developed.

The details of 5P are as follows:
- Presence: It includes the built environment with its iconic symbols characterizing the city, the multidimensional identity of the locality, and the visibility of the whole in the outside world.
- Purpose: Factors such as owning the brand by local citizens, multicultural society, and clear communication supporting the main message.
- Pace: The pace at which the city is able to respond to external and internal challenges.
- Personality: A 'soft' factor of city branding, which cannot be measured objectively, but provides the city with more emotional characteristics.
- Power: This means that locals must be involved in the development of the brand; it must have a social aim in order to be credible and mobilize people.

All in all, the advantage of the 5P model is that it is a method developed specifically for the measurement and development of city brands.

The disadvantage of the 5P model is that the selection of these P's seems somewhat random. It also does not provide exact parameters and methods for the measurement of each dimension.

The 6P model: Presence, place, potential, pulse, people, pre-requisites

The 6P model was also developed for cities. It was created by Simon Anholt, who laid the foundations of country branding (also referred to as nation branding). Later he wrote a number of books on branding, and "Places" (2010) is the most relevant of these. Anholt's city brand hexagon defines six dimensions through which people can judge cities. The six dimensions are as follows:

- Presence: Its meaning in 6P is different from the one in the 5P model. In this context presence means the global popularity of the city resulting from the international status of the city. On the one hand it incorporates the image of the city among people, and on the other hand it includes the influence of the city in the fields of culture, science, and politics. It particularly focuses on the achievements of city in the past 30 years, and its presence in the world during that period.
- Place (Most important city characteristics): This explores the physical appearance, atmosphere, weather and cleanness of the city, and examines how attractive its buildings are. All in all, its focus is on the atmosphere of the city.
- Potential (Opportunities): This dimension includes economic and education opportunities, e.g. how easy it is to get a job, or enter higher education.
- Pulse: It indicates city life and its bustle, that is, how many exciting things the city offers to tourists or local citizens, with a special focus on ones representing the attractiveness of the city.
- People: It means how friendly and welcoming the inhabitants of the city are, including their community spirit and cooperation.
- Pre-requisites: It considers basic city services, and factors of living and settling in the city. (For example what kind of housing and public amenities – schools, hospitals, transport, etc. – the city offers).

As the author of this article pointed out in an earlier study (Papp-Váry, 2011), the six P's mentioned above can actually be divided into two major groups:

- While place, potential and pre-requisites can be exactly measured with concrete statistics,
- Presence, pulse and people can be assessed more subjectively.

However, it is also true that regarding image, all of the six dimensions are subjective, and the image basically depends on what an individual thinks of the specific city. Anholt cooperates with the research company Gfk Roper Public Affair & Media to perform regular tests to measure and assess the image of 50 big cities worldwide.

All in all, the advantage of the 6P model is that it was specifically developed for cities by one of, if not the greatest expert of place branding. The six dimensions provide a good view of city brands.

The disadvantage of the 6P model is that is was developed for big cities, therefore it can be mostly adapted to them. It does not measure all aspects; e.g. the famous products of the specific city are not included in any of the questions. Rather, it can be applied to get a snapshot of the city brand, but it does not tell much about what to do further in city branding.

The 7P model: 4P + People, Process, Physical evidence

The 7P model is traditionally regarded as a services marketing term first used by Booms and Bittner. This expands 4P, the product marketing mix, by 3 items usually mentioned in the context of services. Let us see how it can be adapted to a city.

- People: It is no coincidence that this element appears in the case of 6P and 8P too, as the judgement of a place or city heavily relies on the character of its inhabitants: how hospitable, friendly and receptive they are, or just the opposite.
- Process: In the case of services it is very important to set out a standard procedure to ensure standard quality for each performance as well (even if they cannot be identical due to the human factor). In the case of a city a possible interpretation of process is that most tourists would like to know in advance what their experiences will be during their travel, and investors would like to know who they have to meet (and when), how much tax they have to pay, etc. if they bring their money to the city. Even if they come for a first preparatory visit, it needs a 'choreography' as well.
- Physical evidence (Material environment): It shows what the place providing the service is like. It can be applied for banks easily by presenting the characteristics of the bank branch visited to place a deposit or get a loan. In the case of a city it also describes the characteristics of the place. Nevertheless, this can also be included in product or place.

All in all, the advantage of the 7P model is that it is a well-known marketing method that can be used to analyse and develop services besides the 4P model. It adds important dimensions to 4P.

The disadvantage of the 7P model is that it is less applicable for a city in a complex way; but it can be applied for the products of the city such as tourism products and services.

The 8P model: 4P + People, Packaging, Programme, Partnership

It is interesting that the 8P model is not an extension of 7P, but still includes 5 of its elements: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People. 8P was first mentioned in a study by Morrison published in 1989, then it was applied by Deffner and Metaxas (2006) among others. Let us see the additional three P's that they recommended, not included in any of the earlier models:

- Packaging: A product must be packaged, and cities are no different either. They do have objective features, but it is important to package them properly. Uniform visual appearance, logos, etc. may all serve this purpose, facilitating the distinction of the city.
- Programme: The city must provide programmes in order to make itself interesting to both tourists and locals.

– Partnership: Building a city brand is a joint task that should include efforts by municipal authorities and local citizens as well. It is especially important to involve opinion leaders from the beginning of the city branding project.

All in all, the advantage of the 8P model is that points out important dimensions that are not included in other models. It indicates the areas that must be developed and facilitates branding.

The disadvantage of the 8P model is that is does not provide a systematic framework for the measurement of its eight dimensions, therefore it is less applicable for the analysis of brand status.

CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen above, there are several different attempts to model city brands and city branding. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages. Some facilitate the assessment of the status of the brand; others provide useful help in concrete branding tasks. However, it is also possible that there are better tools for city branding than any of the "P models". Therefore it is expected that new methods for the interpretation of city brands will be devised in the future.

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