

## Expert Insights on Branding Places

*The following are thoughts from a variety of people who have had extensive experience in branding places and travel products. Their views provide some valuable insights into creating and managing sustainable brands for cities, regions, and countries.*

“Tomorrow’s tourism marketing environment will be one defined by ever-increasing competition, greater product parity and consumer choice in which intangibles such as brand values, experiences, emotional benefits and celebrity will be the key differentiating factors.”

*Nigel Morgan & Annette Pritchard  
“Destination Branding”*

“Many politicians and statesmen – like many lay people – don’t understand what is meant by branding, and believe that it’s simply a matter of designing a new logo and possibly a slogan to go underneath it. And this is not helped by communications agencies who pander to this misconception by simply selling them logos and slogans (.... and not a strategic solution).”

*Simon Anholt  
“Brand New Justice”*

“*A destination brand* is the totality of perceptions, thoughts, and feelings that customers hold about a place.

*Destination branding* is an organizing principle that involves orchestrating the messages and experiences associated with the place to ensure that they are as distinctive, compelling, memorable, and rewarding as possible. Successful destination brands reside in the customer’s heart and mind, clearly differentiate themselves, deliver on a valued promise, and simplify customer choices.

The brand’s value is built at every point of contact with customers through exceptional experiences, not by relying on the physical characteristics of the place alone. Each experience before, during and after the visit has a vital role in

defining and delivering the promise that is inherent within the brand.”

*Bill Baker  
Total Destination Management*

“Place images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with the place. They are a product of the mind trying to process and prioritize huge amounts of data about a place.”

*Prof. Phillip Kotler  
Northwest University*

“There’s an ocean of difference between a *brand* and a *slogan*. And, yet, we’re seeing that body of water crossed with alarming regularity by firms that are jumping on the bandwagon and showering unsuspecting destination markers with overblown promises of Nike-like brand awareness.

Sure, every DMO pro dreams of developing a brand that resonates. But so many of the recent concepts we’ve seen from some of the “brand-houses” out there are nothing more than catchy slogans that could be interchanged

between destinations as easily as changing your shirt.

Of course, nobody wants to admit that what they’re holding in their hand is a slogan ... so the dirty little secret continues to hide under wraps. But it’s there all the same: these aren’t brands.”<sup>1</sup>

*President Bill Geist  
Zeitgeist Consulting*

“There is only one reason why people have ever bought from you in the past, and why they will ever buy from you in the future, and that is because they want to change the way they feel. Its that simple!..... For a brand to take off and fly, it must first deliberately and single-mindedly set about acquiring and owning a little piece of the minds of millions of people.”

*Geoff Ayling  
WAM Advertising*

“If your identity is going to convince anyone outside the area, it has to be believed by the people living in it. It takes time to change perceptions.

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<sup>1</sup> Zeitgeist Consulting Newsletter Summer 2006

Research shows that one-off initiatives have very little impact on attitudes. The basic message needs to be continually reinforced using different media in different contexts.”

*Mark Leonard  
“Britain. Renewing Our Identity”*

"A brand is a living entity - and it is enriched or undermined cumulatively over time, the product of a thousand small gestures."

*Michael Eisner,  
Former CEO, Disney*

“Success means never letting the competition define you. Instead you have to define yourself based on a point of view you care deeply about.”

*Tom Chappell  
Tom’s of Maine*

“(Our people) know what needs to be done and they do it. Our culture is our true competitive advantage.”

*Herb Kelleher,  
South West Airlines*

“The success of Brand Australia is not conveyed by our advertising alone,

but through all encounters and experiences with Australia and its people. To achieve this we are transforming the brand from being presented as a trip, vacation or destination to becoming a wholly immersive, aspirational and engaging experience."

*Rod Harrex  
General Manager UK / Europe  
Tourism Australia*

“All great brands are built on the bedrock of trust derived from customer’s experiences sold under the brand name. Brands create customer value because they reduce both the effort and the risk of buying things, and therefore give owners an incentive to invest in quality and innovation.”

*Prof. Patrick Barwise  
London Business School*

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*Our name reflects our mantra. Quite simply, we believe that successful destination brands are built around the customer’s total destination experience - before, during and after their visit.*

*We work with ambitious cities, counties, and regions to establish them as compelling destinations for visitors, new businesses, talented people, and to generate community support and pride.*

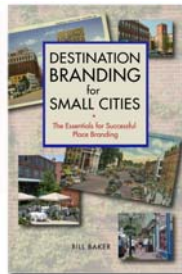
*The guiding principle of our proven 7A approach is that it takes local people to breath life into a community's brand and to take responsibility for the its ongoing vitality. We create customized strategies, designs, educational programs, and tools to ensure that each city brand has a 'soft*

*landing', is well received, endorsed, and adopted by key partners and residents, and increases the marketing performance of all brand partners.*

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**Bill Baker** is the founder and President of ***Total Destination Management***. He is recognized internationally as an expert in developing brand strategies for destinations and communities. TDM is a team of destination branding, tourism planning and marketing specialists.

[WWW.DestinationBranding.com](http://WWW.DestinationBranding.com)



*Destination Branding for Small Cities* by Bill Baker is a must read primer that demystifies branding and provides affordable, proven tools, templates and checklists to build a successful destination brand. Available Summer 2007.

Available from [DestinationBranding.com](http://DestinationBranding.com) and  
[Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

