Citybranding: A new start for Dutch city centres?

A Research of the attractiveness by Hoorn and Roermond

Citybranding

Citybranding is a new marketing strategy to set out the city with a brand. City branding is based on the city’s identity, how the city wants to radiate to different target groups, thus their self chosen vision, mission and identity. “I AMsterdam” is one of most familiar slogan of Dutch cities to express their brand. Nowadays more cities make use of citybranding to distinctive itself from other cities and to make the city more attractive for consumers, tourism and businesses.

Research Question and hypotheses

Does citybranding offers medium-sized city centres new impulses of attractiveness?

Hypothesis:
Citybranding is giving medium-sized Dutch city centres a new impulse for attractiveness

Hypothesis Hoorn
Hoorn is not being more attractive in recent years.

Hypothesis Roermond
Roermond have a more attractive city centre by the use of citybranding.

Explorative research method

Roermond has made use of citybranding since June 2007 and the results of the citybranding process are observable. Hoorn does not have a developed Citybranding marketing plan. Both cities are tested quantitatively and qualitatively on twelve variables of attractiveness.

Variables of the attractiveness of the city centre

1. Quality supply
   - Number of shops
   - Variety of shops
   - Number of leisure functions
   - Source
     - Location
   - Source
     - Municipality

2. Mobility
   - Number of parking places
   - The rate of parking places
   - Accessibility of the centre
   - Source
     - Municipality

3. Performance
   - Lack of occupancy
   - Employment
   - Rent level of shops
   - Source
     - Location
     - LISA
     - DTZ Zadelhoff

4. Policy
   - Marketing policy
   - Improvements of the attractiveness of city
   - Organisation structure
   - Source
     - Municipality

Problem description and conceptual model

The Dutch city centres are declining and it is therefore important to attract visitors. The decline of city centres could be regarded as an immediate threat to the liveliness, and hence competitiveness of a city’s economy, which would lead to the erosion of the competitiveness of each city. Important is that cities should stop the decline of city centres by setting up strategies to avoid the possible erosion of cities. Citybranding could be the marketing strategy which stop the declining and which will attract visitors.

From this study, citybranding seems to be a new start by looking at the attractiveness variables. Ultimately, was not the brand providing for the cities attractiveness. So, any other marketing strategy could be made this progress of attractiveness. Doubtful is that every city will have an impulse of attractiveness by the use of citybranding.

Confirmed from this study is that consumers do not know the identity that a city wants to radiate. Citybranding is a comprehensive phenomenon on which everybody reacts in different ways. There is not a uniform approach to use this term. Nowadays, the strategy named citybranding and this will probably change in the future to another fashionable (trendy) term.

In this research, I tried to make the term citybranding with the additional factor attractiveness operational by researching two cities on factors of attractiveness.

Research of:

Randy Dijkstra (1386654)
Real Estate and Housing
Lab: REM – Retail and Leisure