

Tourism branding and its contribution to overall investment success

Selling to the individual to influence corporate activity

It sort of makes sense – if you first persuade individuals that your location is different, exciting and the sort of place where you can find what you want – then it is quite likely, if the opportunity arises, that those individuals may very well in turn try to persuade their board or their employers that here is a place not only worthy of individual investment, but of corporate investment too. Even better, the individuals may just be the sort of serial, successful entrepreneur that you need to encourage, to support the development and growth of your economy.

Of course, it's not quite as simple as that and a compelling business case has as much to do with corporate decision making as fond reminiscences of recent holidays – but there is no doubt that successful marketing for tourism investment and effective tourism branding, when linked to its sister approach to corporate investment – as part of an overall place marketing strategy – can achieve strong impact on corporate perception of a location and its appropriateness for corporate activity.

Getting the sense of place right

Tourism marketing is very often at the forefront of establishing an external perception of a particular place. This is why it is so vital to develop a fully thought through strategy and one which understands that it is not only about increasing the number of visitors, but also establishing an identity which will resonate with investors of all types and influence all kinds of investment decisions.

There is no doubt also that a clear demonstration of a well thought through, joined up strategy – evidenced by linked / supporting messages across tourism and corporate investment activity is a significant selling point in itself. It says 'we have a plan, we know what we are doing and we would like you to share in it'. It can be a persuasive argument.

And the image, the identity, which the tourism marketing portrays, has to resonate with the people who live in your place. It has to say something about all of the people who live there and not get lost in a sea of glossy images that look good, but aren't sustained by reality. It has

to be persuasive, it has to be sellable, but if it isn't founded in reality it won't last for long. A strong sustainable image and identity must begin at home.

Making the right impression

First impressions count and a bad impression once created is difficult to overcome. In tourism marketing the support and the buy in of the people who live in a place and the tourism businesses in that place is essential to the successful delivery of the strategy – probably even more so than in the approach to new corporate investment. Commitment to delivering a service which ensures that the customer is both satisfied and will return is at the heart of a successful tourism strategy. Ensuring that happens however is easier said than done. All the more reason then to ensure at the outset support and acceptance for the approach and an acknowledgment that if it is going to work – everybody has a part to play.

New Zealand

In the 1990's New Zealand's approach to re defining and promoting its identity was strongly founded on the views of both its citizens and existing corporate activity. The new approach sought to address not only the attraction of individual visitors / investors – but to put forward a message which resonated with prospective inward investors and supported increased export performance for the national economy.

Many commentators agree that the subsequent campaign, based on an original well thought through set of objectives - and strategy to achieve them – has continued to grow in strength and impact. The current '100% Pure New Zealand' campaign demonstrates a belief in the product and a coordination of approach that gives confidence to both the prospective individual and corporate investor.

For more on the importance of linking tourism and corporate investment marketing and how The Place Marketing Company can help you more effectively promote and market your place, please contact us on:

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