DESTINATION BRANDING: THE CASE OF SPAIN

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Abstract

For many years Spain has been a touristic country attracting many people. In 2012, and compared to 2011, the number of visitors increased in one million getting to 57.7 million tourists, according to the Border Tourist Movement Survey (FRONTUR)², even outnumbering the population in Spain. Particularly from the 1960s the Spanish government has focused on Tourism, because it has been an excellent source of income. Since 2008 the situation has not been so good due to the economic crisis, which is why in order to improve the reputation of Spain, a new agency called 'Spain Brand' (marca España) was set up in July 2012 so as to improve Spain's image in front of the rest of the world. The purpose of Spain Brand is, the same as it happens with other destination brands, to attract customers from the rest of the world.

In this article we are going to focus on analysing several ways of branding and different marketing techniques as well as some advertising campaigns used in Spain throughout the years. We examine how Spain has become the fourth ranked country in the world, out of 140 countries, and how it has been recently rebranded. Nowadays things are changing due to the current economic crisis we are going through in this globalized world and we will analyse different branding strategies that have worked for Spain and that could be applied in other emerging countries as far as tourism is concerned.

Keywords: Brand building, country branding, marketing strategies, advertising techniques.

Introduction

Tourism has existed for a long time. According to Yeoman (2008), it is one of the world's major

economic success stories, a story that, like time, has no beginning or end. What all scholars admit is that

tourism has become a very important industry in many countries. Travel and Tourism is considered one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. In fact, in 2012 the Travel and Tourism Industry supported 260 million jobs and generated 9 percent of the world GDP, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council. According

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² This information is available at http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/IDIOMAS/9/ Gobierno/News/2013/20130122_tourism_data_2012.htm (Accessed 20 May 2013).

³ Information available at http://www.wttc.org/publications/pdf (Accessed 18 May 2013).

to the UNWTO Barometer (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2013) there were 1,035 billion international tourist arrivals in 2012, from over 983 million in 2011 (UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2012). Therefore, after the economic recession in 2008 and 2009, tourism has again experimented an important growth, which is something extremely positive for touristic countries, since tourism was recognised in the Manila Declaration on World Tourism (1980) as 'an activity essential to the life of nations because of its direct effects on the social, cultural, educational, and economic sectors of national societies and on their international relations.'

It is true that tourism is an industry that creates many opportunities for employment and also provides important amounts of income related to the goods and services associated to the tourism industry as there are many service industries directly related to tourism, such as transportation (airlines, taxis, coaches, cruise ships, etc.), hospitality services (accommodation in general), and other entertainment places (theatres, amusement parks, music venues, etc.). Therefore, it can be argued that tourism in itself is an important economic contributor.

Spain has always been a main tourist destination in the world. If we consider the World Tourism Rankings, reported by the World Tourism Organization, Spain has been ranked among the top ten most visited countries in the world since the 50s. Back then, Spain figured as the eighth most visited country in the world, but from the 70s to 2010 it has been the third country after France and the USA and for the last two years it is China which outranked Spain from the third to the fourth world position (UNWTO World Tourism Highlights 2013, July 2013), with 57.7 million international tourist arrivals. For a long time Spain has been attractive to tourists from all over the world mainly due to its summer resorts and beaches⁴, but it should also be noted that there are many other important aspects that make Spain famous and that attract locals and international tourists to its cities and coasts. In addition, the Spanish government has tried to promote Spain throughout decades. In 2012 'Brand Spain' was created in order to achieve a better promotion of tourism in Spain and to improve Spain's positioning in a global market.

In the following sections we are going to examine the importance of marketing and advertising, since they are two crucial aspects when trying to attract new tourists or customers in general. We will also analyse the importance of country branding nowadays and we will have a closer look at the case of Spain and the development of tourism there as well as the different strategies Spain has followed many years in order to be successful in the tourism industry and the problems it has faced throughout time as well.

Marketing and Branding in the Tourism Industry

Marketing is a very widespread concept all over the world in business. There are many definitions of marketing⁵. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA),

⁴ Pack (2008) states that already in the 1830s sea bathing became fashionable in Spain, which points to the long tradition in visiting beaches and summer resorts.

⁵ To see a large number of them, there is a good article by the actionable marketing expert Heidi Cohen that includes most, available at http://heidicohen.com/marketing-definition (Accessed 30 July 2013). ⁶ Available at www.marketingpower.com/AboutAMA/Pages/DefinitionofMarketing.aspx (Approved October 2007; Accessed 21 June 2013).

marketing is 'the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large'⁶.

Another definition to be taken into account is given by Philip Kotler (Kotler Marketing Group, 2001-

2012), one of the world's leading authorities on marketing: 'the science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market as a profit. Marketing identifies unfulfilled needs and desires. It defines, measures and quantifies the size of the identified market and the profit potential. It pinpoints which segments the company is capable of serving best and it designs and promotes the appropriate products and services'. Much earlier Kotler (1980) also referred to marketing as 'satisfying needs and wants through an exchange process.' Likewise, Kyle (2009) refers to the Merriam Webster's

Marketing definition as 'the process or technique of promoting, selling, and distributing a product or service'.

In these three traditional definitions, marketing is seen as a process. But we still have products, regions and countries to sell. It is a process in which companies or nations raise the interest of their potential clients/tourists in their products and/or services or regions or countries. Nevertheless, in the 21st century we can find slightly different definitions for marketing. Davis (2012: 30) defines marketing, at a minimum, as 'developing, building, and sustaining a positive reputation for a given offering so that it attracts support from members of a marketplace'. In his recent book, Davis deals basically with sports and how sports marketing builds strong brands. In fact, another new definition of marketing points to the brand, to positioning as well as to differentiation, since building the brand is the key⁶.

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines brand as a 'name, term, design, symbol or any other features that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers⁷, that is, a combination of characteristics intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition. Exactly the same that products have specific features associated with them, countries also have some unique values that make it different from the rest. We cannot ignore the fact that nowadays marketing is directly associated with branding. In tourism we can refer to Place Branding, a term that was introduced by the marketing guru Philip Kotler (Kotler et al.1993). As Kavaratzis (2007) states, in the last few years there has been a change from place marketing to place branding. Many pages have been written on place branding but one of the most prolific writers on

'nation branding' is Anholt (1998, 2003 & 2007 among others). Olins (2002: 247-8) argues that branding a country is similar to branding a product. It is true that a country is considered more complex than a product since it usually involves many more variables. It

⁶ A presentation by Triodos Bank (2010) is available at www.slideshare.net/bmmaShare/triodos-bank1980-kotlers-marketing-30-2010 (Accessed 2 August 2013).

⁷ Definition available at www.marketingpower.com/_layouts/dictionary.aspx?dLetter=B (Accessed 30 July 2013).

should be highlight that a brand is a mental schema or idea for consumers and countries get their brand identity by delivering a quality product in a consistent way.

According to Kalandides (2011), place branding refers to something strategic in order to improve a place's image, that is, it tries to change the perception that people have of that specific place. It is true that when a person tells you where they come from you immediately have a mental image of that place, which is what place branding attempts to do, that is, to influence the mental perception that tourists have. Certainly place image has always been important in many areas, and as Papadopoulos (2004: 36) argues, these areas include 'tourism, country positioning in international relations, the protection of local producers from imports through 'buy domestic' campaigns and the export promotion of agricultural and manufactures products.'

Regarding a country's image, Kotler & Gertner (2002: 253) examine how the image of a country influences the opinion about that country and its products as well as the capacity to attract tourists, and they state that strategic place marketing mainly refers to 'the enhancement of a country's position in the global market-place'. Marketing and branding are directly associated and country branding targets foreign visitors. This is related to the position of a country in the world, and in the potential tourist's mind. As Kotler & Keller (2006) state, 'positioning' is the act of designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market. The image plays a basic role but there are other aspects to be taken into account, such as quality and awareness, among others.

What is true is that every place has an image on the tourist mind. Nowadays there is a tendency to develop a 'place-brand strategy' (Dinnie 2004) to create the best image on the potential tourist perception. We should remember that the mental representation that tourists, and people in general, have of countries can be produced by different kinds of factors which are very influencing. Some of these factors can include from national stereotypes and advertising campaigns (word-of mouth), to personal experience or politics. An integrated marketing communications strategy is basic to get the perfect brand image. Thus, a brand image should create positive associations to the brand in the consumer's memory. There are many characteristics and values associated with a specific country but one of the important aspects, if not the most important one, in conveying a country's image is its people. As Papadopoulos (2011a) states, a

'place' could refer to many concepts, that is, a room, a house, a region, a country, etc. but not matter what it refers to, the important thing is that places are created by means of the people that live there.

Spain has an identity as a touristic country but we have to highlight that there is a difference between identity and image. According to Dinnie (2009), 'identity' refers to what something truly is, that is, its essence whereas 'image' points to something that is perceived. Therefore, there should not be a gap between these two concepts. Sometimes, we consider people from one country we tend to think of the stereotype that has become internationally famous (foreign people see Spanish people as bullfighters and flamenco dancers) but what governments should do is to try to reduce the identity-image gap, because the bigger this gap is, the more negative it is for a country's image.

For example, in accordance with a survey carried out by Dinnie⁸ and presented in Athens 2009, the perceptions of Brand Spain amongst Japanese students aged 18-25 are based on the question 'If Spain was a person, what kind of person would it be?'. The answers were the following:

- Spain is a cheerful girl, she always smiles for everyone, she makes everyone happy.
- Passionate dancer. It is because the image of Spain is passion.
- A girl, aged 25 years old. Beautiful and sexy. Likes dancing and singing. She has 5 boyfriends who are waiting for the day they can date her.
 - Man, 30 years old, wears red clothes. He is confident in himself.
 - A man in his middle age drinking and singing every day, all day long.

Whether you agree with these answers or not, after having read this article, your idea about Spain might change since clichés are on many occasions very different from reality. Therefore, in order to reduce the gap between the image people have of Spain abroad and its real identity, next we are going to go through a brief history of Spanish tourism.

Evolution of the Tourism Industry in Spain: How Spain has become Spain Brand

The commitment of the Spanish Government with the tourism industry comes from the administrative management of tourism in Spain over a century ago. Since then, many diverse organisations have been created for the public tourism management. The roles of such organisations have had several functions, competencies and objectives depending on the historical and economic context⁹. As far as the history of tourism in Spain is concerned, there is an excellent article by Pack (2008), in which he goes through the main organisations and institutions associated with tourism in Spain since its outset.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, in 1905, we find the origin of the touristic administration in

Spain when a group of Spanish deputies established a 'National Commission to Promote Artistic and Recreational Excursions of the Foreign Public'. The advertising campaigns they created reinforced the

already existing image of 'sunny Spain' but they also contributed to make people aware of Spanish culture and Heritage. A little later, the marquis of Vega-Inclan devoted himself to restoring historic sites (for example, Toledo, home of the famous painter El Greco). The marquis was the leader of a group in favour of the state getting involved in promoting tourism. Later on, during Primo de Rivera dictatorship (1923-1930), thinking of tourism, major efforts were made to improve roads and public sanitation so that people had a better access to remote resorts and to the coast. In 1928 the first Parador¹⁰ was inaugurated at Gredos by King Alfonso XIII, an exclusive mountain resort near Avila.

⁸ Dinnie is a professor at Temple University in Tokyo. Dinnie's powerpoint presentation 'Nation branding and country image: Opportunities and limitations of a media-centric approach' is available at www.gpsg.org.uk/athens/docs/GPSG_Athens_2009_Dinnie.ppt (Accessed 29 July 2013)

⁹ Information taken from Turespaña at www.tourspain.es/en-us/VDE/Paginas/HistoricoPTE.aspx (Accessed 25 June 2013).

¹⁰ Paradors are state-run hotels and they are special since most are restored palaces, monasteries and convents or Arab fortresses and can be found throughout Spain and the Canary Islands.

Some other Paradors opened in the subsequent years (e.g. Ubeda). From the beginning a state bureau, the National Tourism Patronate, was in charge of the management of Paradors. This Patronate substituted the Royal Commissariat in

1928. Later on, the Second Republic (1931-1935) managed to get Spain to be part of the League of Nations Tourism Committee in spite of being a relatively unimportant country in world tourism. In his article, Pack (2008: 660) refers to a 'blend of cosmopolitanism and exoticism' as something capturing the foreign tourist attention.

Later on, the Civil War (1936-1939) took place in Spain, which interrupted the intensifying trend of leisure travel to Spain. During the Civil War there was a revival of the cult of St. James the Apostle, having as a consequence an important rise in the number of 'pilgrim-tourists' (Pack, 2008: 661) to visit his shrine at Santiago de Compostela. After 1936, with Franco's dictatorship, some ideas of his government were in conflict with the reality of international tourism and there were important barriers to free travel in Spain those years. However, by the late 1950s some Spanish diplomats recommended the convenience of softening the restrictions on entering Spain in order to gain political benefits since Spain had been quite isolated for some years. When World War II finished, the twenty years after that represented a good opportunity to make true the idea of setting Spain as an important tourism destination. In the mid-1950s Spain thought that the revenue coming from tourism could compensate the Spanish commercial deficit. Historical sites and unique cultural features have always made Spain attractive for foreign visitors but the tourism boom in Spain really started in the mid 1950s. In the 1960s with charter flights the cost of a Spanish holiday dropped dramatically for European consumers and many tourists started to choose Spain as their tourist destination, mainly for its beaches and summer resorts. Moreover, as Albert-Pinole (1993) states, another factor that contributed to mass tourism in Spain was the introduction of low price package holidays.

On the other hand, being Manuel Fraga the head of the Ministry of Information and Tourism, the Parador project was much developed in the late Franco period so that between 1963 and 1977, 60 new Paradors were inaugurated, bringing the total number to 95. Most of them were usually far away from beach resorts and wanted to make a difference with all the buildings and apartments in Benidorm and Torremolinos.

The consequence was that the 2.8 million foreigners to arrive in Spain in 1959 became 19 million in 1969.

Some years later, in 1978, the Spanish Constitution was passed and that Constitution established a difference between two distinct periods¹¹. In the first period the Government wanted to promote tourism in Spain from a quantitative point of view. Later on, the competencies were transferred to the 17 Autonomous Communities existing in Spain and new policies are emphasized, based not on quantitative aspects but on other characteristics, such as quality, sustainability, knowledge and innovation. In this second period there are several national plans related to tourism and the last one is the Plan Nacional e Integral de Turismo 2012-2015 (National and Comprehensive Tourism Plan 2012-2015), which will be the basis of the touristic policies in future years and will be basic

¹¹ Information from Turespaña at www.tourspain.es/en-us/VDE/Paginas/HistoricoPTE.aspx (Accessed 25 June 2013).

for tourism in Spain, always taking into account changing needs and challenges. Substantially, the objective for the 2012-2015 period is to increase the real touristic expenses in 20%. Actually, in 1981 the first International Tourism Fair (FITUR) was born in Madrid and since then it has been held annually. In fact, at FITUR 2014 next January, the WTO Prizes to Excellence and Innovation in Tourism will be awarded over there.

Being aware of the fact that Spain has always been attractive for tourists from all over the world, in 1991 the Spanish Government, by working together with the *Ministerio de Industry, Energia y Turismo* (Ministry of Industry and Tourism) and the *Secretaria de Estado de Turismo* (Secretariat of Tourism) decided to create TURESPANA (Instituto de Turismo de España- Tourspain Spanish Tourism Institute), which is 'an organisation to promote Spain as a destination abroad'¹² (Tourspain 2012).

Tourspain promotes Spain as a tourist destination abroad by means of 13:

- Promotion and marketing of tourism products and destinations in international markets, in collaboration with the regional authorities (Autonomous Communities), local authorities and the private sector.
- Drawing up the bases of tourism policy, doing so in collaboration with other state organisations, public authorities and the private sector through the Sector-Based Tourism Conference (Conferencia Sectorial del Turismo), the Spanish Tourism Board (Consejo Espanol de Turismo) and the Interministerial Tourism Committee (Comision Interministerial de Turismo).
- Supporting Spanish tourism firms abroad and also expediting international tourism cooperation and relations.
 - Drawing up plans and programmes to foster innovation, quality, sustainability and competitiveness of tourism products and destinations.
- Driving the modernisation of the tourism sector, improving its scientific and technological capacity and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of management processes.
- Strategy and investment of Paradores de Turismo de España S.A. (the company running the state-owned hotel network).

Tourspain carries out its activity abroad through the network of Spanish Tourism Offices, which depend on Spain's embassies and consulates.

Once we have shown an overview of tourism in Spain, we are going to make reference to the different Framework plans that the Spanish government has put into practice in the last 20 years and the different changes achieved in order to adapt to a changing world.

FUTURES I: Plan Marco de Competitividad del Turismo Español 1992-1995 (Framework Plan of

Competitiveness of Spanish Tourism)

This plan was designed by the State together with the Autonomous Communities. Its main objective was to set the necessary strategies so that tourism became an important part of the Spanish economy. This plan started a series of programmes which meant an

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¹² Information available at www.tourspain.es/en-us/Conozcanos/Paginas/Organismo.aspx

¹³ Íbid.

important change in the analysis, definition and implementation of the touristic strategy. Such plans basically focused on quality improvement, human resources training, the introduction of new technologies and product diversification.

FUTURES II: Plan Marco de Competitividad del Turismo Español 1996-1999 (Framework Plan of

Competitiveness of Spanish Tourism)

After a detailed analysis of the efficient application of the first FUTURES plan, the second one goes on with the first one but it redevelops its approach by emphasizing the definition of a new model whose development criteria were based on coordination, sensibilization and co-responsibility and some other aspects such as sustainability are highlighted as well.

Plan Integral de Calidad del Turismo Español (PICTE) – Quality Comprehensive Plan of the Spanish Tourism

Unlike the previous plans, developed in the context of a deterioration of tourism in Spain during the 80s and the early 90s, the PICTE is framed within a period of recovery of the Spanish touristic sector and continues with the efforts previously made in search of such an improvement. Moreover, it coincides in time with the new programmes and initiatives of the European Union, in which we can include quality as a comprehensive principle, quality that refers to businesses in general, to destination management as well as to the application of environment sustainability criteria.

Plan del Turismo Español Horizonte 2020¹⁴ (*Plan Horizon 2020 for the Spanish Tourism*)

The first years of the 21st century meant an acceleration of the transformations that had started during the previous years. The geographical and economic changes and in particular the technological ones demanded a pace change in all agendas in the political as well as the business context. The 2020 Plan answered the new demands of the situation focusing on the new knowledge economy, the positioning oriented to the customer and to the model sustainability, always prevailing the maximum collaboration of the sector agents and also a long-term vision.

Nevertheless, tourism, as any other economic activity, is extremely influenced by some unpredictable external agents. The structural changes derived from the 2008 financial crisis have had a strong effect on the world economy and as a result on touristic activity. Such a situation, together with the end of the economic cycle of the touristic industry has demanded a quick answer to implement those measures that let us activate a new trend in order to go back to tourism growth so as to guarantee leadership and competitiveness of the Spanish touristic model. Here is when the Plan Nacional e Integral del Turismo 2012-2015 was born. It is precisely in 2012 when Spain Brand was created, which is what we are going to analyse in the next section.

La Marca España (Spain Brand)

Apart from all the above-mentioned organisations related to tourism in Spain, the Spanish government has implemented a marketing plan in order to help to improve the promotion of Spain or Spain Brand.

 $^{^{14}}$ To consult the original document visit www.tourspain.es/es-es/VDE/Documentos%20Vision%20Destino%20Espaa/Plan_Turismo_Español_Horizonte-2020.pdf

Tourspain's strategic Marketing Plan is a tool to improve the promotion of Destination Spain under the National Comprehensive Tourism Plan, which attempts to make the Spanish tourism revenue bigger and to help to increase the power of Spain's tourism brand. Within the Strategic Marketing Plan, five new product categories have been created in order to fulfill the different needs of visitors to Spain, five categories based on the criteria of competitiveness and attractiveness: relaxation, discovery, enjoyment, learning and meeting people¹⁵.

Spain's Tourism Institute, (*Instituto de Turismo de España*) has been implementing promotion campaigns abroad, progressively shaping the image of Spain's tourism product. In 1982 the famous Spanish artist Joan Miró, seven years after Franco's death, designed a logotype, which was then adopted and has prevailed since then as a common feature in all promotional campaigns and it should be noted that there is no country that has used the same graphic image for such a long time. Lee et al. (2012) highlight that a country's logo is extremely important when trying to attract new tourists to a country. A logo must be appealing and should attract new tourists. And Spain's logo has worked for a long time. Referring not only to its logo but to its whole image, according to figures released by Bloom Consulting¹⁶, a firm of consultants specialising in 'Marca España' (Spain Brand) and other country brands, Spain is ranked second in the world in terms of having the best tourism sector brand (with an AAA score – very strong), after the United States alone (with an AA score –strong). This ranking analyses brand efficiency in 160 countries in the tourism and trade sectors¹⁷.



In spite of this, and due to the world economic crisis from 2008, in 2012 'Marca España' (Spain Brand) was created. According to Kotler & Gertner (2002: 249), brands are considered 'a marketer's major tool for creating product differentiation', which is what any country is looking for when creating a brand for their country. Last year Spain worked a

¹⁵ www.tourspain.es/en-us/Marketing/Paginas/default.aspx

¹⁶ See http://es.scribd.com/mobile/doc/119568742 (Accessed 18 May 2013)

¹⁷ http://marcaespana.es/economía-empresa/turismo/artículos/332/spain-s-leadership-in-the-tourismindustry

lot in order to 'create loyalty among tourists', according to Jose Manuel Soria, Minister of Industry, Energy and Tourism. Soria underlined the strength of tourism, one of the drivers of the Spanish economy¹⁸. This is somewhat related to the non-correspondence between

Spain's image and Spain's identity. As the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Garcia-Margallo, affirms, 'The

Spanish reality is much better than the image that prevails abroad, 19 which is why Spain is trying to make an effort to again attract a higher number of foreign tourists. In the same line, in December 2012 Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros, High Commissioner for Marca España, affirmed that 'Spain's image abroad is

'very solid' and 'respected', adding that 'the negative impact of the economic crisis on the country's image are circumstantial and will not affect its permanent value.²⁰

But how is Spain Brand different from what there existed before 2012? Let us define 'Spain Brand'. The Ministry's webpage defines it as follows: Spain Brand is a state policy whose efficacy will be proven in the long term. Its objective is to improve the image of our country domestically and abroad since in a globalized world, a good country image is an asset that helps to support the international position of a political, economic, cultural, social, scientific and technological state²¹. Spain Brand attempts to promote all of Spain positive characteristics (history, art, culture in general, international fairs, religion, beach and sun tourism, sports, cuisine, etc.) at an international level, which will attract more tourists and will contribute to boosting exports, to attracting foreign investment, which in short will make a contribution to Spain's economic recovery, since as Kotler & Gertner (2002: 251), highlight, 'A country's image results from its geography, history, proclamations, art and music, famous citizens and other features'. On the other hand, Loo & Davies (2006: 198) relate countries with brands, as we can see as follows:

Every nation is a brand and most nations have had their brands made for them. The nation brand could have been developed deliberately or by default, formed from a myriad of different sources, such as word of mouth, education, mass media, travel, product purchases and dealings with its people'.

Even though Spain Brand was officially created in 2012, one of the most important newspapers in Spain, EL PAIS, in an article from May 2012, once Spain Brand was officially created, assures that 'If you look it up in the archives, the expression 'marca España', or Spanish brand, appeared in this newspaper for the first time in 1985, in a column written from the United States by writer, journalist and economist Vicente

Verdú²². The same article refers to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at that time trying to 'present a new marketing strategy aimed at polishing up Spain's tarnished image abroad.' Thus, marketing and branding are related and it is known that a good brand positioning is

See http://marcaespana.es/economía-empresa/turismo/artículos/332/spain-s-leadership-in-thetourismindustry

¹⁹ Taken from www.tumbit-com/news/articles/7477-foreign-minister-defends-image-of-spain-abroad.html (Accessed 4 August 2013).

²⁰ From http://marcaespana.es/en/espana-al-dia/61/spain-has-a-solid-respectable-image-abroad (Accessed 4 July 2013).

²¹ http://marcaespana.es/en/quienes-somos/que-es-marca-espana.php

Information taken from http://elpais.com/elpais/2012/05/13/inenglish/1336914979_545825.html (Accessed 6 August 2013).

extremely important for the successful promotion of Spain as a destination. So as to improve the image of Spain abroad the government should develop advertisements that have high-impact on people's minds so that they change the mental

representation they have and they create a desire to visit Spain and to invest in Spain. In order to understand how Spain has become a successful touristic country, in the next section we are going to analyse some of the important aspects promoted in several advertising campaigns as well as the different advertisements used throughout the years.

Advertising Campaigns to promote Spain throughout the years: Spain, something else than sun and fun

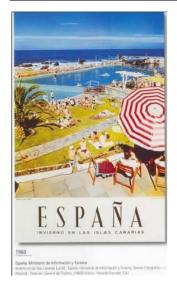
Advertising in tourism is not a recent phenomenon. Pack (2008) refers to the fact that in the 1860s some French and Swiss hoteliers started the first campaigns in order to attract international tourists, something that Spanish resorts imitated a little later. As Pack (2008: 657) goes on highlighting, 'Soon after 1900, Spanish elites began to conceptualize the tourism industry as a regenerative force for economically and socially stagnant regions, anticipating what would become an axiom of development economics worldwide by the end of the twentieth century'.

Some years later, during the 60s the well-known slogan 'Spain is different' emerged from an advertising campaign lead by Fraga Iribarne, the Minister for Information and Tourism between 1962 and 1969 - still under Franco's dictatorship. One of the main characteristics associated to a good slogan is the idea of being catchy and this slogan has proved extremely catchy and appealing since it has worked since then. In fact, when trying to rebrand Spain, the slogan is in 2012 'Spain Brand is different'. Slogans as well as logos and different kinds of advertising (advertisements, posters, slogans, etc.) usually try to influence the idea people have of a country.

In 1983 Miró designed Spain's logo following his style, he used many colours but every colour has one different meaning: Black and red refer to the skin and the blood of a bull; red also means passion; yellow points to the Spanish sun, and green (greeny Spain) to our fields and prairies, that is, the colours of Spain from north to south. And the asterisk is something that always tries to call your attention.

Spain has always been a very appealing tourism destination. Beach and sun tourism has been the most successful in Spain from the 60s onwards. This kind of tourism was the first to be developed in Spain because the country became very popular for British and French tourists as well as for people coming from Scandinavia and Central Europe, where the climate is not so warm. Sandy beaches and summer resorts are not only popular for Northern European citizens but for Spanish people as well. In Spain we can find many resorts in the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean as well the Canary Islands and the

Balearic Islands, which is why Pack (2008: 665) refers to the 'Spanish guarantee of virtually uninterrupted sunshine'.







It is crucial to highlight that Spain has an important place in the world as a leader and innovator in business, culture, sport. The current image of Spain is distorted and its identity is somewhat different from its image abroad. We should remember here that in the world ranking (10th country in the world) and 2nd getting revenue from tourism after the United States. Therefore, it can be said that the image of Spain or Spain Brand abroad is not a realistic one since, apart from summer resorts and beaches, which is one of the most popular kinds of tourism in Spain, many other types of tourism can be found as well:

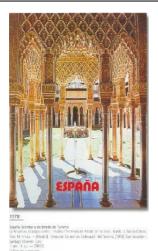
Business tourism is also crucial in Spain: different kinds of businesses and many international fairs are held every year; in fact, FITUR, the International Tourism Fair is being held in Madrid since 1981. In its last edition, January 2013, the number of participants reached 207,239 people, taking into account the tourism professionals (64,473) and other visitors (91,082) plus authorised journalists from all over the world²³. Other businesses in Spain are related to gastronomy and wine; for example, it should be noted that Spain is reported to be the second largest wine exporter in the world and to have the best restaurant of the world is in Spain²⁴.

History in Spain is another important asset because there are numerous historical cities (Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Salamanca, Valencia, Cordoba, etc.). It should be underlined that many Spanish cities and towns are recognised as World Heritage Cities (e.g. Segovia, Santiago de Compostela, Avila, Salamanca, Cuenca, Toledo, Ubeda & Baeza, among others). There are also 44 World Heritage Sites designated by UNESCO - ranking third after China and Italy-, which promotes cultural tourism in Spain.

For instance, the Alhambra Palace is considered one of the world's greatest buildings, and Spain is also considered for its art, culture, literature, etc.

²³ www.ifema.es/fitur_01/Informacion_general/datosultimaedicion/index.htm

²⁴ El Celler de Can Roca of the Roca Brothers in Girona, Spain, has been recognised as the best restaurant of the world in the World's 50 Best Restaurats Guide 2013, available at www.theworlds50best.com/list/150-winners/el-celler-de-can-roca/ (Accessed 10 August 2013).





In Spain we find much art and culture. Let us point to the Golden Triangle of Art in Madrid (Prado

Museum, National Museum 'Centro de Arte Reina Sofia' and the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum) or the ultra-modern Guggenheim museum in Bilbao. Many other museums could be mentioned, such as the

National Museum of Anthropology, the National Museum of Natural Sciences, the National Museum of Decorative Arts, the Museum of Lazaro Galdiano and we can also highlight CaixaForum Madrid, which is a post-modern art gallery in the city centre, where you can find many extremely interesting exhibitions throughout the year. For example, in 2013 The Reina Sofia Museum has offered from April to September a fascinating exhibition on Dalí's paintings²⁵, which has got a high number of visitors.



²⁵ There is a video about the exhibition available at the Museum website: www.museoreinasofia.es/en/multimedia/montse-aguer-about-dali-exhibition-todas-sugestiones-poeticas-todas-posibilidades (Accessed 1 July 2013).

Going on with culture in general, it should be noted that at their website, the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport has a section entitled 'Cultural Cooperation and Promotion Abroad'²⁶, since as they underline on their webpage, cultural action abroad is one of the most important elements of public diplomacy and has the objective of projecting an image of Spain or Spain Brand which corresponds to the country's multifaceted cultural reality. Like the Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism, the Ministry of

Education, Culture and Sport has implemented a General Strategy or Plan 2012-2015 (of the State Secretariat for Culture), whose priorities are:

- To promote Spain Brand by delivering all its cultural aspects, including diversity, creativity and cultural heritage.
- To promote the teaching of the official languages of Spain and their cultural-economic value.
 - To create unique exhibitions related to cultural events.
- To promote excellence in cultural tourism as a factor contributing to both the Spain brand image abroad as well as to its economic growth²⁷.

In fact, Victor Garcia de la Concha²⁸, the head of the Cervantes Institute -which tries to make foreign people aware of the Spanish language and culture- has commented that he has received many offers to open centres in many countries, although at the moment there already exist 44 centres in 77 countries. It should be noted here that in trying to promote a country, there are several approaches that can be adopted. We have referred to country branding above and the different aspects to be taken into account. As Kaneva (2011) stresses, when dealing with nation branding, she refers to technical-economic approaches, political approaches and cultural approaches. Country branding is a global phenomenon and if some strategies work in one country they could be applied to another, but always bearing in mind the possible differences between their audiences and the distinct possibilities both countries offer. As we have highlighted above, at the beginning, the main element to promote Spain was its sun and beach resort but it is true that Spain's cultural, political and economic global standing has improved dramatically over the past 25 years and maybe other emerging countries should pay attention to the different techniques used by Spain and try to apply them by getting the most of their own touristic resources, depending on the country.

Having to do with culture and tradition and among other popular aspects of tourism in Spain, we can refer to many traditional festivals which are held every year in different parts of Spain: one of the most wellknown ones is the Seville April Fair, the Rocio Pilgrimage in Huelva, the Holy Week in Seville, the famous Running of the Bulls in

²⁶ Information available at http://en.www.mcu.es/cooperación/CE/Internacional/Accion CulturalExterior.html (Accessed 6 July 2013).

²⁷ Íbid.

²⁸ Interview to Victor Garcia de la Concha, Head of the Cervantes Institute available at www.revistamercurio.es/index.php/revistas-mercurio-2012/mercurio-143/807-08entrevista-convictorgarcia-de-la-concha.

Pamplona every year in July, the Fallas in Valencia, the international Descent of the River Sella in Asturias, or the Carnival in the Canary Islands or in Cadiz, among others.

We can also mention The Malaga Spanish Film Festival or The Sitges Film Festival as well as the famous San Sebastian International Film Festival. Some examples of posters promoting this are shown below but we should notice the difference between the first one, which corresponds to 1962, and the second and third posters, which were included in the 'Spain marks' advertising campaign.







Many people think of Spain as far as international events are concerned: the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, The Universal Fair in Seville in 1992, the 2007 America's Cup in Valencia and the Expo 2008 in Zaragoza. Moreover, several Spanish cities have been or will be the European Cultural Capital, such as Madrid in 1992, Santiago de Compostela in 2000, Salamanca in 2002 and San Sebastian in 2016. The nightlife in Spain is also attractive for tourists, many people travel to Ibiza and Mallorca since they are known as major party destinations in the summer time and Madrid is also famous for its never-ending nightlife.

Religion is also important in Spain since Spain was for years a melting pot for Catholicism, Judaism and Islam. The city of Santiago de Compostela in the north-west of the peninsula became a place for pilgrims and currently it also attracts many tourists from all over the world. Easter time is also very important with many religious processions attracting tourists, who can also visit from gothic cathedrals (e.g. Burgos or Leon) and Romanesque churches (Fromista, Tamara, etc.) to Moorish baths, Mosques.

All these aspects are highlighted in Spain and had always been for a long time but during many years the slogan to attract foreign visitors had been 'Spain is different', pointing to its uniqueness²⁹. That was this first famous touristic slogan in Spain but it was really at the beginning of the 1980s when real and more modern tourist campaigns started to be developed. We can mention the following ones:

²⁹ Blain et al. (2005) refer to the fact that different destinations use branding techniques to emphasise that their product is unique, which is what this slogan intends.

- Everything under the sun, from 1984 to 1990, with Miro's logo. During this period the main advertised product in Spain is its beaches and sun but there are other products, such as its gastronomy or cultural tourism, which are also highlighted.
- Passion for Life, which lasted from 1991 to 1994. Here advertising in Spain starts to change and people begin to diversify touristic products but a new lifestyle is established having to do with the Spanish feeling and with people's mood on holidays, that is, passion.
- Spain By (1995-1997) was a peculiar campaign in the sense that different well-known photographers at an international level took pictures and showed their vision and idea of Spain; then, we can find 'Spain By Erwitt', 'Spain By Ritts', 'Spain by Leibovitz', among others.
- Later on, we can find the *Bravo Spain* Campaign (1998-2001), in which we can find apart from distinct destinations, the different touristic products, such as culture, golf and not so much sun and beaches.
- Spain Marks (2002-2003) was a very visual type of campaign trying to promote Spain's diversity and it showed a more conceptual kind of creativity, as can be seen in some examples³⁰.

Spain Marks tried to convey the idea that if you visit Spain, that will 'mark' you forever. In fact, Spain is the fourth on the list of highest number of visitors, the second in highest revenue coming from tourisn but it is the first country in repeated visits to a country, which probably means that Spain 'marks' every person that visits it since it has a strong personality as a country.

As Ekinci et al. (2007: 433) state, the 'host image has a positive effect on intent to return', which means that Spain's image is not so distant from reality.

- The *Smile! You are in Spain* campaign³¹ (2004-2009) tried to transmit the idea of happiness and the good feelings you get when you are in Spain (Tourspain designed 34 posters for this campaign). In this campaign, for example, Pot (2005: 41) analysed the 34 posters and the effect they caused in the Dutch market and she got to the following conclusions:
- o Spain suggests an own way of feeling and living life with its values of hospitality, taking care of, human warmth, slow pace of life rhythm, freedom and security, joy, relaxedness, enjoyment of life.
- o Quality and cultural proximity are also valued by tourists. These characteristics answer more rational motives. Spain differentiates itself with a high quality of infrastructure, a high quality of service, security, geographical and cultural closeness and the balance between traditions and modernity.
- oThrough the smile, a personalized offer is intended to be transmitted. A destination that knows the profile and tourist demands, knows how to make them smile by offering the right product and service.
- The rich diversity is the third aspect of Spain's offer which is highly appreciated by the market. So, diverse products are presented.

³¹ You can find some images of this campaign at www.tourspain.es/es/ TURESPANA/Ejes+operativos/ Imagen/Listado+imagenes+Publicidad+intern

³⁰ Some examples of this campaign can be seen at www.siteespagnol.fr/Spain%20Marks/index.html.

- Spain. 25 years beyond the sun is another campaign in which Tourspain wants to celebrate Miro's logo 25th anniversary. This campaign was very brief -it lasted only three months-, very specific, it tried to show that this country is much more than beaches and sunny weather and it was simultaneous with the generic advertising campaign.
- Finally, *I need Spain* is the slogan for the most recent campaign, which started in 2010.



In these campaigns we can highlight the emotional aspect of all of them, which is extremely important and something related to brand saliency, which has been defined by Pritchard & Morgan (1998: 215) as 'the development of an emotional relationship with the consumer through highly choreographed and focused communication campaigns'. All the words used in the campaigns mentioned are quite seductive and appealing: 'smile', 'marks', 'passion', 'bravo', etc., which also points to a certain extent to the Spanish way of living. In fact, in her study, Pot (2005: 69) refers to Spain's personality as a country -in this case for Dutch people- and it is described as 'being warm, outdoorsy and active'.

Going back to Spain's uniqueness, we should comment that *Spain is different* has been recently rebranded as *Spain Brand is different*. This is associated to changing the image that Spain has abroad, which does not always corresponds with reality. To a certain extent this change could be labeled as a

'cosmetic operation' (Kaneva, 2011: 118) when trying to change the image of a country, that is, this is made basically so as to change the perception of a country and its products.



It should be highlighted that the emotional creation of Spain Brand has again made use of 'emotional branding' since the building of 'Spain Brand' aims at maintaining and reinforcing the different campaigns in order to broaden its recognition and positioning at the international touristic market; at getting an evolution of the image of Spain as a touristic destination which overcome the main idea that people have of Spain mainly related to sun and beaches adding other assets linked to other kinds of motivation, that is, cultural, artistic, historical, etc. (even fashion & gastronomy), which is why regarding country branding Caldwell & Freire (2004: 59) point out that 'countries are so functionally diverse they should leverage the emotive or representational parts of their brand identity'. When dealing with destination branding, countries or regions are treated as brands. Countries are intangible products which could be defined as a group of different characteristics including history, culture, nature, people, food, products and the language used, etc.

Another important idea we should stress is that we are in the Internet era, which is why in order to reinforce Spain's advertising in newspapers, television and tourism magazines and other traditional media, in June 2011 Tourspain decided to start a new communication campaign in digital media as well. As it has been mentioned above, Spain is the first country to which people come back some time or another. In fact, 85% of all foreign visitors come back sooner or later, which made Tourspain think that a good idea could be to create an Internet platform called 'Spain Addicts –Ineedspain.com³²'. Through this campaign the main objective is that all visitors became excellent ambassadors of Spain Brand by means of their own and personal experience. In this sense, Juan Guerrero from Segittur (Tourism & Innovation) described the project 'Spain, a country to share³³', which tries to show the satisfied face of the tourists that have already visited Spain. Therefore, satisfaction is directly related to advertising since, as Simpson

& Siguaw (2008: 167) state, 'satisfaction and identity salience are significant in predicting word-of-

mouth promotions', which again points to the important role of the tourist travelling to another country.

Papadopoulos (2011b), at an interview, affirmed that branding campaigns, to be successful, should entail 'long-term commitment' and this is the way of attracting tourists.

Going on with new technologies, as far as Spain is concerned, in the last few years some online marketing has also been used to promote Spain Brand; for example, we can find Ipad and Iphone apps, a YouTube thematic channel and other online media, such as facebook Flickr –the best online photo management and sharing application in the world-among others.

So far we have seen the origin of tourism in Spain and how the image of Spain has gone through different stages, using several advertising techniques which were adapted to distinct situations in 50 years.

Conclusion

Tourism as a global phenomenon is not going to slowdown in the short term. On the contrary, as the UNWTO (Tourism Highlights 2012, UNWTO) stresses, travel is

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³² See www.ineedspain.com

³³ http://e-turismo.blogspot.com.es/2010/03/i-need-spain-la-imagen-del-turismo-de.html

something necessary so as to maintain international relations, which is reflected in the number of tourists recovering from 6.6% globally in 2009 growing to 8% in emerging economies.

As it has been mentioned above, tourism in Spain originated because citizens for Central and Northern Europe were looking for sunny weather and nice coastal areas, which they lacked and which Spain had at the moment. But many decades after that kind of beginning, different governments have made great efforts in order to attract tourists being aware of the fact that tourism is an important source of revenue.

Tourism has always been important to the Spanish economy (in fact, it is a pivotal industry to Spain's economy since it accounts for more than 10% of its GDP) and the government has recently tried to rebrand Spain by officially creating Spain Brand.

Brand positioning is highly important on an international level in a globalised world and the concept of positioning is crucial as for brand management and strategy. In the case of Spain, if branding is basically based on beach resorts and sunshine, the promotion is not going to work. Thus, tourism campaigns should emphasise other aspects, such as cultural, artistic, social, environmental issues, which is what Spanish governments have been doing for the last decades. Another important concept is brand awareness, which refers to brand recognition (that is, recognizing a country, Spain) as well as brand recall (recite from memory the brand in a product category, for example, Spain for wine). In an article by Vijay Krishna (2011), professor and coordinator of the advertising programme in Indiana University Southeast, he argues that a country must create brand awareness by repeatedly exposing the brand in the minds of the consumers for later recall. Spain could serve as an example as a country brand that has worked but it should also be noted that every country should develop its own original country branding strategy depending on the features and values that a specific country can offer.

It is admitted that leaders in the whole world have to always adapt to a changing world. By creating

'Marca España' (Spain Brand), the Spanish government has tried to use branding techniques so as to distinguish Spain from other competitors and to recover the image Spain used to have before the economic crisis and to improve its position on the global tourism stage, since to rebrand the negative image of a country is a huge challenge. It is generally admitted that a positive country image usually helps to bring back international credibility. And country branding does not only refer to a general image abroad but to many specific aspects, including economic, social, political, historical and cultural issues, among others, which is why currently in addition to beach and sun tourism, Spain is a major cultural destination. Spain is unique and beyond comparison as far as international meetings are concerned. Sports also account for an important aspect as well as shopping, wine and food tourism or simply studying Spanish is crucial since Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world.

As it has previously been stressed, in the 21st century there are many kinds of technologies available to governments so that they can make use of them in order to promote a country and the characteristics and values associated with it. Some emerging touristic countries should take the opportunity of creating their identity or brand to prove

their uniqueness³⁴ and competitiveness in a globalised world. Most governments promote travel and tourism since this is a top priorit; as in the case of Spain, new advertising campaigns should focus on boosting credibility and the positive aspects of one country since a positive image is crucial both to attract tourists and to get new foreign investment.

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³⁴ The Triodos Bank presentation (available at www.slideshare.net/bmmaShare/triodos-bank-1980kotlers-marketing-30-2010 and accessed 2 August 2013) refers to positioning the brand in the head of the client. The product/country has to be unique and relevant.

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