



**Summary of Dissertation:  
“Evaluation of Brand Strength for Destinations with the example of Spain”**

In his ‘System Tourismus’ (1986) Kaspar places the tourism subject in the centre. Hereunder the tourist will be understood as an individual as well as a group with their own decision making processes and behavioural patterns, both on a day to day basis, but also during the holidays. This means that the so-called tourism subject has the strongest influence in both the choice and the identification of the brand strength of certain destinations. Experts are agreed that brands are principally responsible for the knowledge and ideas which consumers have. The customer is at the centre of an increasingly intensive and international competition which by no means discounts the tourism market. The globalisation of the tourist industry paves the way. This also applies to holiday destinations: destinations are compelled to reorient themselves in order to survive in the international environment. This means that the necessity of thinking globally and of implementing this in local businesses has been recognised both at a company level, as well as at local, regional or national levels. The term ‘glocal’ has been coined to express this. In order to assess the success of destination’s brand policies, a brand assessment procedure will be developed within this dissertation.

Essentially, brand assessment procedures provide an assessment of brands, with regard to their economic value or psychological strength. As early as 1992, Aaker (1992, pp 30) pointed out that, in the future, it would be important to develop instruments which provide the possibility of assessing and exculpating brands as clients invest heavily in order to form strong brands. In contrast to Germany, the assessment of brands in other countries has become a firm component in the management of brands. There are basic differences between the brand value and the brand strength. Brand value is the financial value of the brand, under which capital and financial transactions are classified. The principal point of brand strength lies in the psyche of the consumer, that is to say the representation of the brand as perceived and imagined by the consumer. In Kaspar’s language, the tourism subject.

Altogether there are three types of procedure:

- Economic/finance oriented procedure (= brand value)
- Psychographic/behaviour oriented procedure (= brand strength)
- Hybrid procedure (= a mixture of the two)

On the basis of findings gathered, it was decided to use components of qualitative procedures in order to measure the brand strength of a destination. In order to create an instrument to assess brand strength, both general and destination specific criteria were



established in the selection of the brand assessment procedure, and applied to a multitude of procedures. As a result, six procedures or rather individual components of those procedures were selected.

To test the instrument it was necessary to have a destination which could act as an example region for successful branding. The holiday destination Spain was chosen as it is considered one of the best examples of a modern and ambitious branding policy and furthermore, plays a prominent role as a holiday destination for the German travel market.

Linxweiler's 'Brand Score Card' constitutes the basis for the survey design as well as the understanding of the brand chosen for this dissertation. His triangle with the brand at its centre was adapted. Further components of the triangle are: the destination itself, the competitors and the demand; the destination brand is the focal point. A complete survey of brand strength means, that in these individual triangles, data will be collected to ascertain the brand strength. This took place alongside a market survey (= general public) and also through interviews with experts in the three individual fields. Based on this, the distinction between the brand image and the brand assets in the following stages, were borrowed from ICON. The questionnaire conception was based mainly on consulting Aaker's approach, which was supplemented with components from other procedures. A basic questionnaire was created next, upon which the development of the questionnaire for the general public and the questions for the experts, were based. The analysis was carried out using SPSS.

The results showed that investigating brand strength is a significant means of handing destinations an instrument to steer and control their brand direction. Through the qualitative focus, a deep insight can be gained into the heads of the interviewees and therefore into the existing image of a destination. The combination of questioning experts with in depth interviews and group discussions is also considered relevant, as consequently, consumer's attitudes, opinions and inner images can be gathered, as well as those of the so called 'intermediaries' who unquestionably influence how a destination is perceived.

The developed instrument for evaluating brand strength can henceforth be adapted for practical application.

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