8TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS "MARKETING TRENDS"

PARIS, JANUARY 16-17 2009

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Place reputation management and leverage points. Rethinking cultural marketing for weak areas*

Abstract

Cultural marketing requires interventions of place marketing to better express its potential, particularly in the case of areas characterized by bad reputation. When territory negatively affects the cultural goods proper to a place, visitor attraction cannot be entrusted merely to traditional measures of destination image which, although widely supported in the literature, is totally inadequate for the purpose. In the event, an approach in terms of place reputation needs to be developed.

Inspired by the Italian situation, this paper suggests shifting the focus of analysis from destination image to place reputation. Focusing on place reputation means adopting an approach that leads to integrating cultural marketing and place marketing, so as to create favourable conditions for attracting visitors in places that host attractive cultural goods and, as a consequence, promotes the development of local economies.

The paper aims to identify leverage points on which to operate in order to influence the effective and behavioural dimensions of place personality capable to improve place reputation. The proposed model of driven-place reputation management facilitates the management of territory reputation where attractive cultural assets are placed; an operation which aims to create the conditions in particular, for total efficacy and the enhancement of cultural marketing efforts and for the development of the local tourism industry generally.

The model should not be considered simply an element or feature of academic study: the principles and tools of analysis, evaluation and decision it provides have significant practical implications. The management of place reputation involves profound innovations in terms of the profile and skills characteristic of the place communicator and attributes to the person entrusted with this role, far greater responsibility in governing the territory.

Key words: cultural goods, weak territories, place reputation, leverage points for reputation management

1. Introduction

Studies on cultural marketing and cultural goods management have experienced a huge development in recent years. The expression "cultural goods" is intended in a large sense and includes museums, archaeological ruins, theatres, libraries, etc. These assets have an artistic, historical, archaeological, ethno-anthropological, archival and bibliographic [...] value and claim evidence of the civilization of past generations¹.

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^{*} Although the views expressed in the paper belong to all of the authors, sections 1 and 5 are attributed to Alfonso Siano, section 4 to Maria Giovanna Confetto, sections 2 and 3 to Mario Siglioccolo.

The evolution of the concept of cultural goods is noticeable from the analysis of the Italian laws about cultural goods. The definition we refer to in this paper represents the endpoint of Italian legislation on cultural goods: Decreto Legislativo 22 gennaio 2004, n. 42, "Codice dei beni culturali e del paesaggio, ai sensi dell'articolo 10 della legge 6 luglio 2002, n. 137", *Gazzetta Ufficiale* n. 45 del 24 febbraio 2004. The totality of the cultural goods of a Nation constitute its cultural heritage.

The contributions in the field of cultural goods may be grouped in some specific streams of research: economics and management of institutions (Morelli, 2002) and of arts and culture organizations (Dubini, 1999); cultural marketing (McLean, 1997; Kotler and Kotler, 1998; Valdani, 1998; Colbert *et al.*, 2000; Troilo, 2002; Pilotti, 2003; Saltini, 2003; Luraghi and Stringa, 2006), museums' management and marketing (Moore, 1994; Lord and Lord, 1997; McLean, 1994; Suleiman, 1997; Galvani, 1998; Kotler and Kotler, 1998; Zan, 2003; Siano, 2006), theatres' management and marketing (Kotler and Scheff, 1997; Sicca, 1997); the study of specific departments or processes internal to artistic and cultural organizations, such as fund raising function (Kelly, 1998; Burnett, 2006), the development of new artistic products (Crealey, 1996); the cooperation between artistic and cultural organisations and organisational networks in specific sectors such as museum and theatre networks (Danilov, 1990; Salvemini and Soda, 2001). Further interesting contributions are linked to the definition of performance measurement systems of arts and culture organizations, in particular with regard to the identification of indicators of efficiency and effectiveness (Ames, 1994), control management (Dainelli, 2002), and customer satisfaction (Laws, 1998).

Although these studies have the value of applying the principles of business management to arts and culture organizations, they do not focus on the management of cultural goods placed in weak territories (i.e. characterized by a bad reputation). This situation characterizes several cultural goods placed in Italy (section 2); this represents the main reason why such topic deserves proper attention from Scholars.

Actually there have been some attempts to tie cultural goods to the territories of reference, in order to analyze jointly these two issues. Some contributions studied the potential positive effects of cultural goods on art cities (Mossetto, 1992; Scott, 2000) and on "factors of local development" (Grandinetti and Moretti, 2004; Paiola and Grandinetti, 2007). However, these study do not address specifically the issue of the "reputation" of territory and consequently do not highlight the implications of this factor on the flows of visitors and on the management of cultural goods.

The cross analysis of the cultural goods and of the reputation of the territorial system has a starting point in tourism marketing literature. For the purposes of our analysis are useful concepts of tourism and vacation/destination marketing (Heath and Wall, 1992; Laws, 1995; Pechlaner and Weiermair, 2000; Buhalis, 2000; Franch, 2002; Martini, 2005 and 2008; Franch *et. al.*, 2008) and of urban marketing (*city marketing*) (Ashworth and Voogd, 1988; Paddison, 1993; van den Berg, Bramezza and van der Meer, 1994; Golfetto, 1996 and 2000; Jensen-Butler C., Shachar A. and van Weesep J., 1997; Ward, 1998; Vicari and Mangiarotti,

1999; Kavaratzis, 2004). Additional functional contributions are represented by the studies on cultural and artistic districts (Santagata, 2001; Sacco, 2002) and those on tourist districts (Perrone, 2001). At last, a precious contribution is represented by the systemic approach to territory management (Golinelli, 2002; Golinelli, Tronfio and Liguori, 2006), as it helps to identify the factors improving a territory reputation, in order to provide benefits to local cultural goods and to develop local economic growth.

Based on these introductory remarks, this paper has the following objectives:

- provide some empirical evidences of the existence of weak areas in Italy (with regard to their bad reputation) in which attractive cultural goods are placed;
- abandon the approach that tends to regard cultural goods as not linked to a specific territory;
- shift the focus from destination image to place reputation;
- individualize the positive effects resulting from having a good place reputation;
- identify the factors on which is based the estimation of the public about place reputation;
- identify leverage points through which place reputation can be managed.

In the next section, we intend to analyze the most attractive Italian cultural goods, linking them to place reputation which characterizes the provinces in which they are placed, in order to have a "snap shot" of the varied Italian situation, with regard to the relationship between visitors of cultural goods and place reputation.

2. A cross analysis on Italian museums and provinces' reputation

Italy has nearly the 6% of world cultural heritage (Arosio and Cecchini, 2003). If traditionally Italian situation has represented a model, with regard to the richness of cultural goods and to the actions for their preservation, nowadays the gap between Italy and other countries, with regard to the enhancement of cultural goods, is quite evident. As predictable, the need for training persons for cultural goods management has increased in recent years².

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² Numerous training initiatives in the field of cultural management have been implemented in Italy over the last few years, aimed at a post-experience (employees already working in the sector) and at a post-graduate target (new graduates) (Argano, 1998).

While other more evolved - in terms of tourism - Countries (e.g. France and England) are usually perceived by people in an adequately homogeneous way and without evident differences, Italy's provinces are characterized by very different reputations.

The matrix shown in Figure 1 represents a tool for the cross analysis of Italian museums (artistic, scientific, historical and archaeological) appeal (expressed by the number of visitors), and of Italian provinces' reputation. Data on the number of visitors of Italian museums are provided by Table 1, while data about Italian provinces' reputations are derived from the results of a research conducted by the Sole 24 Ore, which classifies the 103 Italian provinces on the basis of the perceptions of a sample of Italian population about six variables (standard of living, business and work, services, environment and health, public order, population and leisure) indicative of provinces' quality of life and, at last, of their reputations.

Tab. 1 – *The thirty most visited Italian museums in* 2007

Museums (type)	Place	Number of visitors
Musei Vaticani (a)	Vatican City	4.310.083
Scavi di Pompei (sa)	Pompeii (NA)	2.571.725
Galleria degli Uffizi (a)	Florence	1.615.986
Palazzo Ducale1 (a)	Venice	1.548.676
Acquario di Genova (s)	Genoa	1.352.000
Galleria dell'Accademia (a)	Florence	1.286.798
Opera di Santa Croce (a)	Florence	927.976
Bioparco (s)	Rome	898.406
Museo Centrale del Risorgimento (sa)	Rome	880.000
Museo Nazionale di Castel Sant'Angelo (a)	Rome	843.792
Galleria Borghese (a)	Rome	711.678
Museo di San Marco (a)	Venice	551.000
Museo Nazionale del Cinema3 (a)	Turin	526.811
Musei Capitolini (sa)	Rome	522.785
Museo delle Antichità Egizie (sa)	Turin	510.174
Reggia di Caserta4 (a)	Caserta	432.506
Museo Arch. Reg. Villa Imperiale del Casale (sa)	Piazza Armerina (EN)	415.446
Palazzo Vecchio-Quartieri Monumentali (a)	Florence	412.144
Cappelle Medicee (a)	Florence	389.103
Museo Naz. Scienza e Tecnologia "L. da Vinci" (s)	Milan	384.347
Peggy Guggenheim Collection (a)	Venice	378.613
Tesoro di San Pietro (a)	Vatican City	370.870
Museo Archeologico Nazionale (sa)	Naples	357.032
Civico di Storia Naturale (s)	Milan	350.000
Gallerie dell'Accademia6 (a)	Venice	341.008
Cenacolo Vinciano (a)	Milan	330.678
Scavi di Ostia e Museo (sa)	Ancient Ostia (RM)	312.625
Palazzo Madama (a)	Turin	312.532
Templi di Paestum8 (sa)	Capaccio-Paestum (SA)	308.189
Scavi di Ercolano (sa)	Herculaneum (NA)	301.786

Artistic museums (a), scientific museums (s), historical-archaeological museums (sa).

Source: Centro Studi Touring Club Italiano (2008).

Fig. 1 - The thirty most visited Italian museums (artistic, scientific and historical-archaeological museums) and the reputations of their provinces: a cross analysis

Reputation ranking of the provinces where the museums are located*

	1° < ranking < 51°	52° < ranking < 103°
	THE SYNERGIC (I)	THE PENALIZED (II)
	Rome (Bioparco, Museo Centrale del Risorgimento, Museo Nazionale di Castel Sant'Angelo, Galleria Borghese, Musei Capitolini)	
	Vaticano City (Musei Vaticani)	Pompoji (NA)
> 500.000	Florence (Galleria degli Uffizi, Galleria dell'Accademia, Opera di Santa Croce)	Pompeii (NA) (Scavi archeologici)
	Venice (Palazzo Ducale, Museo di San Marco)	
	Genoa (Acquario di Genova)	
Number of	Turin (Museo Nazionale del Cinema, Museo delle Antichità Egizie)	
visitors to		
cultural goods (year 2007)**	Florence (Palazzo Vecchio-Quartieri Monumentali, Cappelle Medicee)	Naples (Museo Archeologico Nazionale)
	Venice (Peggy Guggenheim Collection,	Caserta (Palazzo Reale)
	Gallerie dell'Accademia) Vaticano City	Herculaneum (NA) (Scavi e Teatro Antico)
< 500.000	(Tesoro di San Pietro) Milan	Capaccio-Paestum (SA) (Templi di Paestum)
	(Museo Naz. Scienza e Tecnologia "L. da Vinci", Civico di Storia Naturale, Cenacolo Vinciano)	Piazza Armerina (EN) (Museo Arch. Reg. Villa Imperiale del Casale)
	Turin (Palazzo Madama)	
	Ancient Ostia (RM) (Scavi di Ostia e Museo)	
	THE ADVANTAGED (III)	THE STATIC (IV)

^{*} The place reputation is referred to Italian provinces. The data, for the year 2007, are provided by a survey annually conducted by the Sole 24 Ore. The survey classifies the 103 Italian provinces on the basis of the perceptions of a sample of the Italian population about six variables, indicative of the quality of life. Data available at the following link: http://www.ilsole24ore.com/includes2007/speciali/qualita-della-vita/scheda_finale.shtml.

Adapted from: Siano and Siglioccolo (2008a).

The matrix in the Figure 1 considers the cultural goods, which constitute a material evidence of human activity of each era and are only transferable over time (and not even in space), because of their size and their immobility, that makes them rooted in their territory of origin (Russo, 1997). The four scenarios individualized in the matrix indicate that provinces

^{**} Source: Centro Studi Touring Club Italiano (2008).

where are placed the thirty most visited museums in Italy are perceived strongly different by people; Figure 1 shows the existence of weak areas, in which are placed cultural goods of particular importance. The cross-analysis of the number of visitors to museums with the level of ranking of the provinces' reputation where the museum is placed, allows to identify different characteristics for each of the quadrants of the matrix. Each quadrant is named with a keyword that intends to express, from our point of view, the prominent feature of the museums.

The first quadrant (the "synergic" - top left) represents situations where strong appeal museums enjoy the good reputation of the provinces in which they are placed (Rome, Florence, Venice, Genoa, Turin). In this case provinces and cultural goods are able to generate favourable synergic effects, as they affect each other in a positive way. Synergies produce high tourist numbers and local economic development, especially for tourism and hotel industry.

In the second quadrant (the "penalized" - top right) is placed a museum (Pompeii archaeological ruins) characterized by a significant appeal but suffering the negative reputation of the place where it is located. The bad reputation characterizing this province does not help to express the full potential of this significant museum and does not enable triggering virtuous circles between the museum and other local organizations (hotels, bars, etc).

The third quadrant (the "advantaged") identifies museums which benefit from being placed in provinces positively estimated by people (Milan, Turin, Ancient Ostia).

The fourth quadrant (the "static") represents situations characterized by a strong immobility (Naples, Caserta, Herculaneum, Capaccio, Piazza Armerina). This quadrant expresses the vicious circles between cultural goods and territories individualized; in other words, the bad reputation of the provinces considered slows down the flows of cultural goods' visitors which, in turn, do not act as a mean for the development of local tourist industry. The archaeological ruins of Buccino and Villa Oplontis in Torre Annunziata in Campania represent other examples of cultural goods that are in this situation.

The cross-analysis of the two variables (number of visitors to cultural goods and provinces' reputations) shows the particular evident situation of "territorial weakness" of the cultural goods placed in the South of Italy, especially those in Campania region (five of the thirty most visited Italian museums). With regard to visitors' numbers, in Campania are placed both remarkable cultural goods, no doubt appeal (the archaeological ruins of Pompeii), and some other important museums, albeit with minor streams of visitors (National

Archaeological Museum of Naples, the Royal Palace of Caserta, the Ancient Ruins of Herculaneum, the Temples of Paestum).

The Campania case highlights the holding appeal of strong attractors, despite the action of local surroundings particularly detrimental to territory's image and reputation. The recent waste emergence occurred in Campania region (in particular the province of Naples) has severely damaged its image and worsened the already bad reputation of this territory, due to old established factors (problems of organized crime, environmental degradation in some areas of the region, low work opportunities, etc)³.

As shown by Table 2, waste emergency seems not to have had a negative impact on the number of visitors to cultural goods placed in the province of Naples. In January and February 2008, immediately after the occurrence of the waste crisis, the number of visitors to cultural goods in the province of Naples (including the excavations of Pompeii) is actually increased, though marginally, compared to the same period of previous years. These data, analyzed together with the average stay of the tourists would show, on one hand, the strong appeal of these cultural goods, and, on the other hand, the difficulty of these museums to create wealth to the benefit of tourism and hotel industry (Siano and Siglioccolo, 2008b).

Tab. 2 - Number of visitors of cultural goods placed in the province of Naples and average stay of foreign tourists

Months - Year	Number of visitors of cultural goods placed in the provinces of Naples*	Average stay of foreign tourists (days)**	
January - February 2004	1.097.223	2.48	
January - February 2005	1.100.128	2.52	
January - February 2006	1.146.822	2.59	
January - February 2007	1.156.865	2.86	
January - February 2008	1.202.906	2.62	

^{*} Source: Italian Ministry of Culture, Statistical Office. Data available at the following link: http://www.statistica.beniculturali.it/Visitatori_e_introiti_musei.htm.

^{**} Source: our elaboration of data provided by Campania Tourism Observatory. Data available at the following link: http://www.osservatorioturismocampania.it/x_doc/statistiche/1/Napoli%20anni%202002%20e%202007.pdf.

³ Waste emergency refers to an occurrence that happened in Campania region. Starting from the summer of 2007, garbage was left uncollected for weeks, leading frustrated residents to set fire to rubbish bags piled up in the streets, especially in the province of Naples. The uncollected waste and open fires posed serious health and environmental risks through the spread of disease and pollution of air, water and land. Waste emergency has lasted for more than one year (from June 2007 to September 2008).

The comparison in Table 2 between the first two months of 2007 and 2008 shows, in detail, a Percentual decline in the average stay of foreign visitors of the -8,4%. The data reverse the positive trend of steady growth in the previous period (from 2004 to 2007), and is assumed that the negative impact on local economic activities could be attributable to the impact of the waste crisis.

Not surprisingly, Campania region has long pursued the goal of increasing the average stay of tourists within its territory, through the Territorial Integrated Projects (P.I.T.)⁴.

The bad reputation of this place has a further negative effect: it does not merely push the public to experience closely the cultural goods - consumption behaviour known as a "see and flee" - and remain for a short time in the territory but also reduces the average daily spending of the visitors. In the Pompeii-Herculaneum area, where are placed cultural goods of considerable appeal, tourists prefer to keep low their daily costs (27 euro for tourists sleeping in this area, 100 euros for tourists not sleeping in this area)⁵.

3. From destination image to place reputation

For the cultural goods "penalized" and "static", the negative reputation characterizing the place where they are located makes inadequate the traditional visual communication actions for recovering estimation, credibility and trust. In this section, we will try to clarify why, in the case of weak areas (territories characterized by a bad reputation), an orientation to destination image is inadequate; in this situation, an orientation to place reputation should drive the activities of place marketing and communication and constitute their finality. To this aim, contributions of literature on corporate communication, which lead to resize the concept of corporate image and enhance the concept of corporate reputation, are much useful.

Destination image can be considered the sum of the perception that people have of a location in a certain time (Kotler, Haider and Rein, 1993; Baloglu and McCleary, 1999). Studies about destination image highlight the role of information sources and personal factors in determining people perception (Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997). While the first studies about destination image investigate mainly the role it can have in the process of choice of consumers/tourists (Hunt, 1975; Goodrich, 1978; Moutinho, 1984), recent contributions have

⁵ Nucleo di Valutazione e Verifica degli Investimenti Pubblici (ed.) (2003).

⁴ Nucleo di Valutazione e Verifica degli Investimenti Pubblici (ed.) (2003-2004-2005). A Territorial Integrated Project is a set of inter-sectoral actions, highly coherent and integrated with each other, which converges towards the same objective of territorial development and justifies a unitary implementation approach.

focused on identifying the factors determining destination image (Beerli and Martin, 2004) and the development of conceptual frameworks for tourist destinations' image management (Gallarza, Saura and García, 2002).

The various researches in the field of destination image neglect the role played by the reputation of the territory. Such limitation is confirmed in the studies that consider, in a hurried way, reputation as a simple attribute of the image people have of a place (Echtner and Brent Ritchie, 2003).

Table 3 summarizes the main differences between the orientation to the destination image and the orientation to place reputation.

Tab. 3 - From destination image to place reputation: the main differences

	Orientation to destination image	Orientation to place reputation	
Time required for people's assessment	Immediate	Immediate Time-frame enough long	
Perspective	Prevalently tactical and reactive	Strategic	
Focus on	Place brand and advertising	Place personality, performances, modalities of place communication on the whole	
Target of place communication activities	Tourists	Stakeholder groups (residents, tourists, investors, etc)	
Main objective	bjective Sales to tourists (tourists' attraction) Place reputation developme (stakeholdersì attraction)		

Unlike destination image, which is the result of people's perception of a location, developed at a given time following the receipt of messages involving the territory, people' assessment of a place reputation takes a broader time-frame, subsequent to several perceptions of the territory during time (Fombrun and van Riel, 1997; Bennett and Kottasz, 2000; Gotsi and Wilson, 2001; Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008). The valuation of a place reputation is the result of a long period of time, wide enough to allow people to learn in depth about the territory and to assess the degree of esteem in relation to concrete actions (e.g. quality of services offered *in loco*) (Hall, 1992; Fombrun, 1996; Fillis, 2003; Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008). The elements on which is based people's evaluation on place reputation have

structural and durable nature (history, conduct and actions realized over time, local culture, etc).

Assuming an orientation to destination image often means adopting a short-term tactical and reactive perspective, consequential to the necessity, for example, to respond to communication operations realized by other competitors, or to support targeted promotions' (discounts on hotel rates, transfer free, other types of incentives). Such approach may be unable to generate positive effects in a long term, as instead an orientation to place reputation tends to make.

Moreover, adopting an orientation to image means emphasizing aspects of visual communication (the place brand, first of all) and, consequently, to underestimate the factual and behavioral dimensions of place personality (Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008). The behaviours and the actions actually put into practice over time by people acting in a territory (residents, public administrations, organizations operating in the tourist sector, etc) represent the history of the territory and, as such, are a significant part of a place communication to which people tend to give particular attention. Corporate communication literature has rightly emphasized that the communication of an organization is not only based on visual signals (symbolism) but also on behaviours (Birkigt and Stadler, 1986; van Riel, 1995). This consideration also applies to the territory.

Even though an image can be developed in an remarkable way, if it is based on the aspects of visual communication only (the brand, first of all), it can always be imitated by competitors. Adopting an orientation to image may also mean to have an excessive attention to place appearance, with the risk of a separation between reality and appearance. Such orientation may lead to focus on tourists' perception, neglecting other stakeholder groups that relate with territory (residents, investors, opinion leaders, etc).

At last, while an orientation to image aims to develop sales in the short term (we refer to sales of travels to tourists/visitors), an orientation to reputation aims to develop place reputation as a strategic resource, whose sustainable development is considered necessary to achieve the objectives of the territory, with the support of all stakeholder groups.

Place reputation is based on the specific history of the territory (residents' behaviours, degree of commitment, actions and past performances of the territory), more than on efforts of visual communication (implemented through advertising). This dependence makes reputation a rare (place-specific) asset and, consequently, able to truly differentiate a geographic area, defending it from global competition between tourist and cultural destinations.

Recent developments in corporate communication literature show that the assessment of esteem and credibility, socially shared, based on past actions and performance of an organization (especially in terms of ability to satisfy the expectations of stakeholder groups), is increasingly decisive for engendering competitive advantage (Bennett and Kottasz, 2000; Fombrun and van Riel, 2004).

Similar interpretation also applies to territory. Because of its strategic value, developing a good place reputation must be a fundamental objective of tourism and vacation/destination marketing and of place marketing and communication activities. A good place reputation ensures several positive effects, including (Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008):

- increase of stakeholders' trust and cooperation;
- attraction of potential travellers, tourists and investors and their loyalty (including residents);
- opportunity of savings for acquisition of assets external to territory (not least those financial) and for investment in advertising (because of the less necessity of investment in visual communication);
- strengthening of favorable relations with public authorities, media and opinion leaders, who influence public opinion, as well as with tour operators and travel agents, who have a considerable influence on travellers' decisions.

The aforesaid considerations suggest shifting the focus of the analysis from destination image to place reputation. Such shifting helps overcoming many of the limitations regarding the orientation to destination image. This represents the reason why in the next section we'll focus our attention on place reputation management.

4. The leverage points for place reputation management

Using the metaphor of the territory as an organization, we can make use, with appropriate adaptations, of some fundamental concepts developed in corporate communication and corporate reputation literature to identify the variables on which is based people' assessment about a territory reputation. The starting point once again is represented by the researches in the field of corporate reputation. The translation of the model proposed for corporate reputation (Fombrun and van Riel, 2004) to the territory allows to identify the factors on which is based the opinion of the public about place reputation:

- the local governance;
- the local social environment;
- the local services, products and cultural goods;
- the local social responsibility;
- the local emotional appeal.

The factors are represented graphically in Figure 2. We have identified for each of them leverage points (Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008), which represent the variables that can positively influence the factors and, therefore, affect a favorable assessment about the reputation of a territory.

Furthermore, in order to provide operative actions, we have indicated, for each of the identified leverage points, some key activities for their improvement (Table 4).

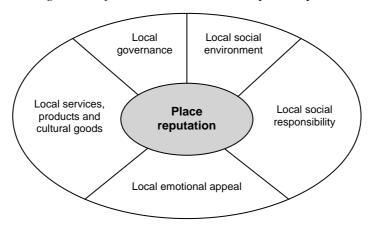


Fig. 2 - The factors on which is based place reputation

Adapted from: Fombrun and van Riel, 2004.

Local governance. The perception of the performance of the local decision-maker depends on whether or not this group is able to express a valid mission statement for the territory, a clear vision for the future of the territory, and from the development of effective strategies and systems for monitoring results for the evaluation of image and, above all, of the reputation of the territory. The hybrid nature of this decision-maker is characterized by a prevailing public participation (i.e. the local authorities) and other minority organizations and individuals located in the territory. In order to operate effectively, local governance, requires an adequate interaction and synergy between its components, because of its hybrid nature. The local decision-maker can involve contribution of local consultants for place development

and for marketing and communication planning (Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008). The local governance, together with other individuals, composes the governance group.

Tab. 4 - The leverage points for place reputation management

Leverage points for improving place reputation management	ors on which is based assessment of a place reputation
Vision and monitoring • place mission statement • clear vision for the future of the territory • strategy focused on the development of the territory • use of monitoring systems to control and evaluate destination image and place reputation • etc	 Local governance
Wide diffusion and sharing of adequate local values (values, beliefs, attitudes, habits and behaviour rooted in residents, with particular reference to a welcome culture) training for the operators of the local accommodations' (hotels, bed and breakfast, etc) improvement of driving discipline reduction of alcohol rate reduction of the number of unauthorized building etc.	Local social environment
Services and product planning • development of infrastructure and improvement of transports' services (roads, motorways, rail links, airports, hub connections, telecommunications networks, etc.) • development of accomodations (hotels, bed and breakfast,, restaurants, etc.) • improvement of the activities of conservation and enhancement of cultural goods • training of an adequate number of tourist and cultural guides • installing temporary exhibitions • creation of info points • development of leisure-time and wellness structure (theatres, cinemas, fitness centre, thermal baths, etc.) • enhancement of security services • improvement of waste collection and disposal • etc	Local services, products and cultural goods
Citizenship action projects projects and incentives for environmental protection (environmental sustainability: projects for alternative energy production, development of clean technologies, etc.) plans for the reduction of noise pollution plans and actions in favour of disabled individuals etc	Local social responsibility
Symbolism e place promotion planning creation of a place/destination brand and of other elements of place visual identity creation of slogan/tagline place/destination branding etc	Local emotional appeal

Local social environment. The local social environment is a variable difficult to manage. It refers to the complex social dynamics of a territory, that over time generate values, attitudes, habits and behaviours rooted expressed in the territory, giving rise to the gradual

development of a place culture. Those elements characterize the way of life and work of local residents. Place culture is an important differentiating factor (country-specific), which can hardly be imitated by other locations, because it derives from context-specific factors (Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008).

Governance group must manage as far as possible local social environment, through intervention for improving local culture, in order to affect attitudes and performances of the residents. In particular, those interventions must aim to advance the "welcome" culture of the local population. Those actions aim to change attitudes and conduct which could negatively characterize the territory and the local social environment. Concrete interventions could consist in training of the people working for local accommodations, reducing alcoholism and crime rates, improving driving discipline of residents, and etc.⁶

Because of the complexity that characterizes local culture, the interventions to change it can imply a long time, because of resistances to the change of no small account.

Local services, products and cultural goods. Local services, products and cultural goods have a broad potential impact on the reputation of a territory. We are referring to elements which compose local infrastructure, that have a material nature and can be planned and managed directly or indirectly by governance group (infrastructure and mobility services, facilities, etc), in order to enhance territory offer. We are not considering the "given" elements which characterize territory (geographical location, physical environment, climate, cultural goods, etc) which are not changeable and, excluding side aspects, cannot be totally managed by governance group (Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008). Unlike any other product, the territory-product is not quite changeable according to the expectations of tourists-consumers, since it has many more redefinition limitations of its elements that often limit deeply the degrees of freedom of local decision-maker (Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008). We must take into account these condition of rigidity when assuming decisions aimed at influencing and improving place reputation.

Cultural goods within a territory represents a capital to which associate a flow of services (Throsby, 2001) and, as such, is only relatively manageable, through the quantity and the quality of services associated to the use of the cultural goods (major maintenance and preservation of cultural goods, guided tours, temporary exhibitions, etc). These initiatives

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⁶ The 11.000 people interviewed associate spontaneously to Southern Italy a bad "welcome culture" (8,6% of the people interviewed), and, above all, an "high delinquency" (9,2%). The sample of people interviewed is composed of 2.000 persons coming from Italy and 9.000 coming from nine countries of the European Union (Germany, U.K., France, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium, U.S.A., and Japan). Salomon R. (2005).

represent the main ways through which it is possible to enhance cultural goods, in order to improve its fruition.

The restrictions due to impracticality, or the considerable difficulty, to change the given elements which characterize territory, influence the contents of the place communication. This must consider the current actual characteristics of the place and what can be realistically developed in the future. This implies a correspondence between place identity and place personality current and foreseeable, with obvious positive impact on place reputation (Siano, Confetto and Vollero, 2008).

Local social responsibility. Social and environmental impacts of activities performed by members of the territory have ethical implications to which stakeholder groups are increasingly sensitive (Carroll, 1991). We can identify two levels of social responsibility actions to improve territory "citizenship" and develop place reputation: those arranged directly by the governance group of the territory (actions in favour of disabled individuals, programs to protect environment, etc) and indirect, through which governance group tries to push people to assume ethical and socially responsible behaviours (through incentives to companies which reduce noise pollution and protect environment, to companies that use alternative energy and that reduce waste or promote recycling, etc).

Local emotional appeal. This variable expresses the degree of admiration, respect and trust stakeholders feel about a territory. Local social environment, the quality of services and products and the local social responsibility seriously impact on a location emotional appeal. Emotional appeal is based on associations of ideas and values with the symbolic elements of the territory: the place/destination brand (Ravazzoni, Cardinali and Bazzini, 2006; Vescovi and Gazzola, 2007), other elements of place visual identity (e.g. place signs), the slogan/tagline of the territory (e.g. "feel the Alps..." is Livigno slogan, "The Marche. Italy in one region" is the slogan of Marche region, "The Good of the World" is the slogan of Sicily region). Symbols have an evocative power and are used to express territory positioning with signs planned to enable the public to identify the location, and to recognize and distinguish it from other locations (Confetto and Camba, 2008). The use of a place symbolism to enhance emotional appeal involves planning of place/destination branding activities (Keller, 1998; Ritchie and Ritchie, 1998; Travis, 2000; Kotler and Gertner, 2002; Gyimothy, 2005; Keller, Busacca and Ostillio, 2005; Costabile and Raimondo, 2006; Pastore and Bonetti, 2006).

An example of construction of local emotional appeal is offered by the case of Spain. Until thirty years ago Spain was still suffering the effects of Franco dictatorship; nowadays, after effective actions of re-positioning it has become one of the most economically prosperous democracies and a required tourist destination. Spain re-positioning passes through branding activities in a strict sense (the sun by Joan Miro chosen as the symbol of rebirth in the country) and others to be considered in a broad sense (the Olympic Games in Barcelona, the reconstruction of large cities as Bilbao, whose notoriety also is based on the Guggenheim Museum; Almodovar films and even the popularity of actresses like Penelope Cruz) (Gilmore, 2002).

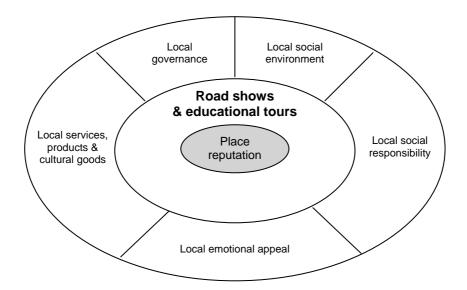
Southern Italy represents an example of geographical area where cultural goods, even if important, can not express its own emotional appeal. For this territory, people considered "food", "local products", "blue sea" and "beautiful beaches" the main attractions, expressing local emotional appeal⁷ (Salomon, 2005). It is evident, in this case, the need of targeted activities of place branding.

Leverage points management helps to determine the actual identity of the territory (place-personality). This represents the behavioural and factual dimensions of place communication (section 3); in the previous section it was said that place communication is not only based on visual elements (place brand), but also on behaviours (Birkigt and Stadler, 1986; van Riel, 1995). To be fully effective from a communication point of view, behaviours and actions that express concrete changes of improvement can not only be communicated through text messages or suggestive visual elements evoking these changes in an advertisement message. For an approach reputation-oriented, it is not enough to inform stakeholder groups about territory's features, through promises made by verbal/visual unidirectional communications. It is essential, as far as possible, to make "tangible" to people the territory standards of life and which facilities and services it actually offers to its users. This operation is necessary to modify previous convictions and negative assessments about the area and to stimulate a favorable word-of-mouth and influence communication.

Road shows and educational tours represent the remaining tools usable to support the development of place reputation (Fig. 3).

⁷ In particular, while people attribute a positive value to Italian cultural goods, only the 8,6% of respondents spontaneously associates the "Arts and Culture" to Southern Italy (despite the presence of important cultural goods in the south), while a much higher percentage of people associated voluntarily to South "cuisine and local products" (24.7%) and "blue sea and beautiful beaches" (20.4%). Salomon R. (2005).

Fig. 3 – The role of road shows and educational tours on the assessment about place reputation, based on the behavioural and factual dimensions comportamentali of the territory



Road shows are meetings which allow to contact *vis-à-vis* targeted stakeholder groups (opinion leaders, media representatives, cultural tourism consultants, operators of ranking agencies, tour operators, representatives of tourists communities, etc) that are unfamiliar to territory. Road shows are based on a set of itinerant meetings, preferably within institutions, or credited associations (category associations, government agencies, etc), at national and international levels. During these meetings leaders and skilled place communicators have the opportunity to talk to interlocutors, to argue on operations to recover territory, to submit *ad hoc* documents (press clippings, photographs, videos, etc), which can demonstrate concrete results achieved in improving the characteristics of a territory.

On the opposite, educational tours aim to attract those categories of stakeholder groups in the territory, in order to offer them a direct experience of the place. Such tours can be offered by the governance group or can be offered to particularly favorable prices.

In terms of methodology, road shows and educational tours represent the logical conclusion, of the management of the leverage points for place reputation management; they should be realised after the full implementation of the levers.

5. Conclusions

The previous considerations allow to distinguish the distinctive outline of a new stream of research, the "place reputation management", functional to a more effective approach to cultural goods marketing. The analysis of the latter must be joined to the analysis of the reputation of the local context of in which they are placed. The factual and behavioral factors (on which place reputation is based) move forwards to expand the concept of place identity beyond the purely symbolic dimension, allowing a more effective place and cultural goods management.

The joint vision of those two elements (place reputation and cultural goods) involves the integration of elements of cultural marketing and place marketing (Varaldo and Caroli, 1999; Valdani and Ancarani, 2000; Kotler and Gertner, 2002), setting up an approach particularly useful for weak areas. The combination "cultural goods-territory" is particularly suited to the Italian situation characterized, as is known, by a large number of cultural, disseminated throughout the national territory and by several weak provinces, in terms of negative reputation.

With a particular eye on the situation of our Country, illustrated by the matrix shown in Figure 1 (section 2), it is possible to identify some standard routes to provide guide decisions in the field of cultural goods, according to place reputation-driven management (Fig. 4).

With regard to the cultural goods strongly attractive, but penalized by the negative context in which they are located, the actions of place reputation management must aim to convert these goods from "penalized" to "synergic", to make them attractive together with the territory that hosts them.

With reference to the cultural goods less attractive, whose development is stopped by unfavourable local conditions ("static"), it is necessary to set in motion a longer and more articulated process. After the recovery of territory reputation, achieved through leverage points management, must follow more specific interventions of cultural marketing, to promote museums, archaeological ruins, historical buildings and so on, to improve their visibility and notoriety and turn them into "synergistic" cultural goods.

In both cases, place reputation management joins together elements of cultural and place marketing, to create favorable conditions that will enable the local territory and the cultural goods to be attractive to stakeholders' groups.

At last, specific cultural marketing initiatives are required for "advantaged" cultural goods which, relying on a good reputation of the territory where they are placed, need to be

supported by promotional measures to increase visitors' flows and, ultimately, to turn in "synergic" cultural goods.

Fig. 4 - Place reputation management and possible paths to develop into "synergic" cultural goods

Reputation of the place where the museums are located

Good Bad High "SYNERGIC" "PENALIZED" **CULTURAL GOODS CULTURAL GOODS** Place reputation Number of management visitors to (leverage points for reputation cultural goods management) Cultural goods "STATIC" marketing **CULTURAL GOODS** "ADVANTAGED" **CULTURAL GOODS** Low

The matrix in the Figure 4 represents an analysis tool for Scholars and does also have practical implications, since it is able to drive evaluations and decisions of cultural goods and place marketers.

Further effective implications concern the "place communicator": place reputationbased view implies a significant enrichment of knowledge and skills of the individual who is responsible for managing place communication and promotion.

The place communicator must not only have skills and expertise of visual communication and branding, but also the ability to identify and propose actions that can convert in tangible elements (mobility infrastructure, facilities, etc) and in social facts (principles, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours), significant for place reputation. This individual should also have expertise in planning specific instruments for the appropriate promotion of behavioral and factual dimension of the territory. Because of the value of its activities, the new and advanced figure of place communicator will increasingly be part of the local governance and become an essential component of this group.

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