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Innovative strategies of urban heritage management for sustainable local development

Gaia Daldanise^{a,*}

^aIRISS CNR, Via Guglielmo San Felice 8, Naples 80134, Italy; DiARC (Federico II University of Naples), Via Toledo 402, Naples 80134, Italy

Abstract

The research in progress addresses the issue of marketing for urban regeneration, according to the innovative management aspects which focus on the network of relationships among persons, groups of people and companies in a complex exchange of resources generating value. In this perspective, planning and evaluation instruments become effective when included in a wider resource management process of a city within the territorial system.

Environmental, historical and cultural resources of a territory are framed in a production-consumption cycle in which the network of tangible and intangible connections is a crucial point in both national and international debate.

Recently, with the crisis of the Fordism model and the progression of cognitive capitalism, the management strategies of urban heritage related to business and market mechanisms could gain importance. Through marketing strategies, the cities regeneration would take the value of both enhancement of existing territorial vocations and construction/production of a new identity.

The proposed methodological approach want to highlight the innovative management aspects that link marketing with the city management, emphasizing issues related to the perception of *genius loci* and those related to market logics in a resources co-production process.

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* Corresponding author. Tel.: +39-081-247-0968.
E-mail address: g.daldanise@iriss.cnr.it

1. Preface

In the current scenario of global competitiveness and deep crisis of the social and economic values, the change of the organizational model in the cities is needed in order to attract investments and create new value.

Recently the urban “regeneration” processes (Farrell, 2000; Imrie & Raco, 2003) attempted to be a possible solution of renewing the cities, being able to generate innovative mechanisms for social and economics activation. In this context, the business economic models have been applied to the regeneration models in order to increase their effectiveness and productivity. Within these processes, although in some cases the market-oriented strategic planning has preferred most attractive global models (*disneyization*), fostering the neo-liberal stereotype, the territorial marketing became often an instrument for local sustainable development. In order to enhance the city and the territory in a production-consumption system that is no longer the object of a capitalistic logics depending on standardization processes (Zukin, 2009), a community planning oriented scheme has become central to take into consideration local peculiarities (Esposito De Vita, 2013; Oppido & Ragozino, 2014).

This study in progress aims at relating territorial marketing to urban regeneration in a social matrix process, trying to promote those transformations that capture the true essence of places through a market-led strategy.

Starting from these premises, the following paper is structured on a series of steps which are integral parts of the research methodology. Each phase of the research creates an output which turns into the starting point of the next phase. In particular, the aim of the first paragraph is to build an overview of management and marketing aspects to understand the link between management and regeneration of resources. The second step concerns the research focus in which marketing and branding methodologies in the urban heritage management are examined.

Finally, the aim of the third paragraph is to illustrate the approach with the ongoing results which are addressed to demonstrate that place branding and territorial marketing processes could be drivers for sustainable local development. From the literature and a practices overview, the research aims to determine a suitable approach for a urban regeneration process that includes both improving existing territorial vocations and building a new local identity.

2. Marketing for the management and regeneration of resources: overview

Marketing exercises a very deep influence over strategic plan, be it economic or dealing with city planning.

The development of a strategic trend leading to the competitive choices of an individual or a group of people can be grounded in marketing, if considered as an approach able to develop a relationship between company (as a set of goals and resources) and environmental inputs (Caroli, 1999).

In considering marketing as a strategic management process (Lipparini, 2007; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997), the crucial issue of resources regeneration deals with the strategy used by the companies to achieve and keep unchanged the competitive advantage (Porter, 1985) in long terms. Competitive advantage depends on the efficiency of the value chain of company activities (such as planning, producing, commercializing, distributing products that generate value for the end user). In managing and regenerating resources the interaction and coordination of these functions gains a main role, as well as the relation with the community.

In this sense, marketing can be seen as a way to manage convenient relations with the community in which the marketing operator can understand the end users's needs.

From this point of view, marketing represents a social and management process in which a person or a group of people achieve, through an exchange of values and products, the objects of desire as strategy target.

In order to achieve these targets, marketing process can be schematized in five steps (Kotler, Armstrong, & Scott, 2009): 1) Understand market and end user's needs (targets); 2) define a market strategy addressed to end user (strategies); 3) develop a marketing plan (based for example on the 4Ps (*Price, Product, Promotion, Place*) of *marketing mix*) able to offer a higher value (tactics); 4) establish profitable relationships with the customer (actions) and guarantee the highest level of satisfaction (*customer relationship management*); 5) gain customers' value in order to generate profits and quality (actions) for the end user (*partner relationship management*).

The *customer relationship management*, increasing the end user satisfaction, deals with managing the detailed information on customer, aiming at optimizing his/her loyalty to the company. The higher value for the end user doesn't originate only from marketing, but also from the close connection with the other business functions (*partner*

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