

Shaping The Brand



A report by the
Digital Tourism Think Tank
as part of the

12 Stages of Transformation Series





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ABOUT THE DIGITAL TOURISM THINK TANK



The Digital Tourism Think Tank is the industry platform that promotes digital leadership in the tourism industry. Comprising a tightly-knit network of highly engaged marketers, thinkdigital.travel is a truly connected market place, where thought leaders share experiences and best practices. We've put together a team of experts in diverse and varied fields of the tourism industry and we've been connecting destinations worldwide, from the Faroe Islands to Cape Town.



INTRODUCTION

With an increasing demand for tourism and an expected annual growth of 4-5% in the number of international tourist arrivals, as forecast by the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer¹, there is no doubt that tourism is one of the major driving forces of the economy nowadays. The tourism sector is fragmented by definition, because it encompasses many different actors and players which form part of the tourism experience. But the role of the DMO is slowly shifting from a marketing-only perspective to a management perspective. This has fostered change in the sector and today many DMOs have already started their transformation journey to become the primary subject of reference for the coordination of the tourism players at the destination.

In fact, in order to be competitive on the market, destinations need to embrace the digital era and adapt to the ever changing needs of visitors, but starting a transformation journey for a DMO is not necessarily easy.

This is why the **Digital Tourism Think Tank** has developed a framework to help destinations to shift their role from *DMO* to *DxO*, where the “x” stands for the mathematical symbol.



The focus of this type of organisation nowadays is not marketing-only anymore, it can be experience, data, management, innovation, product, partnerships, storytelling, etc.

Transformation is not an exact science. We work with a thoroughly thought-through methodology and adapt it to the unique needs of each destination fostering collaboration, transparency and productivity within the team. The transformation journey in this sense is;

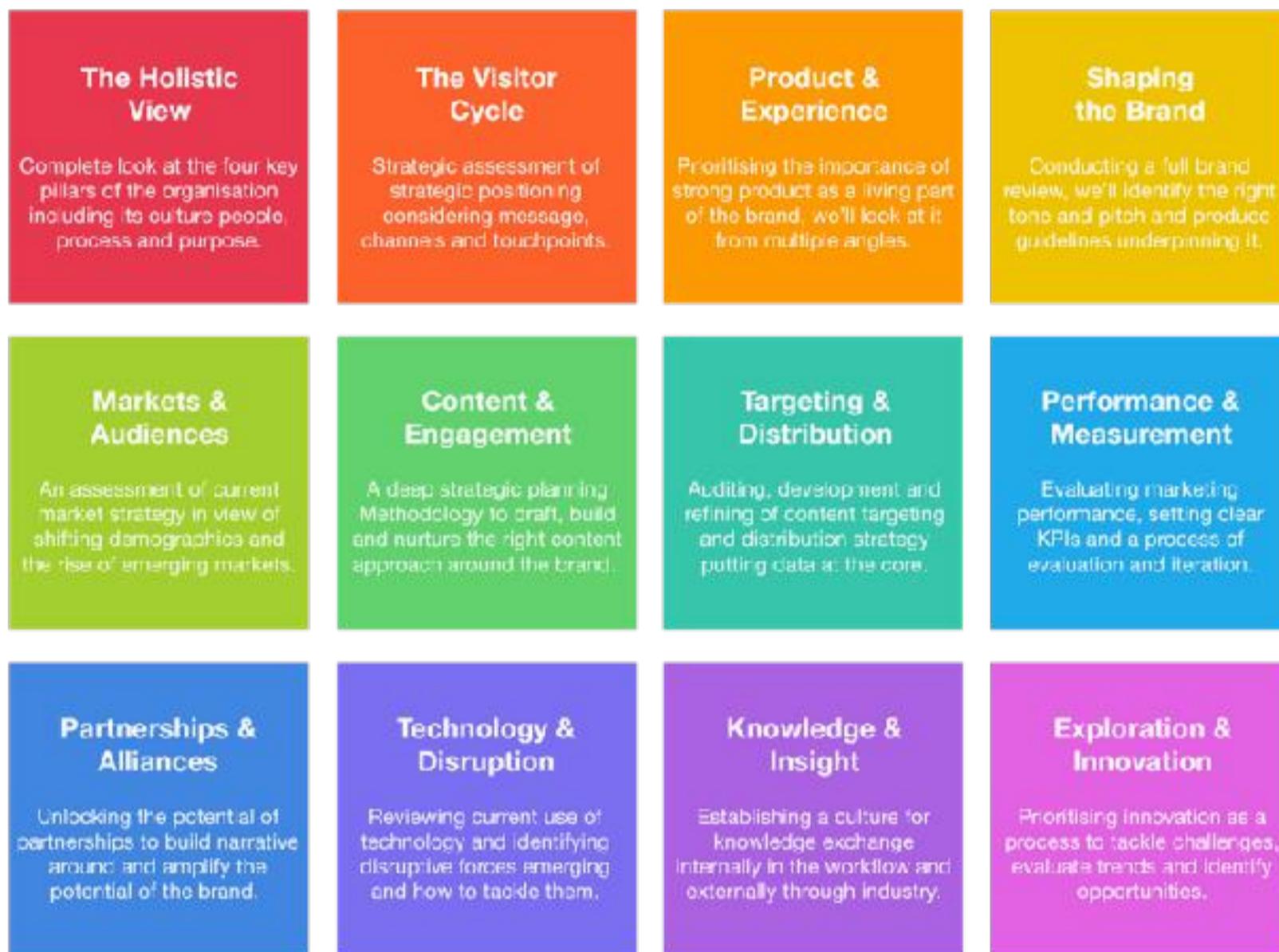


¹ <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2018-01-15/2017-international-tourism-results-highest-seven-years>



The **12 Stages of Transformation Series** is a comprehensive pack of resources created by the #DTTT Team which follows the Transformation Framework, a model built around 12 key topics that form the basis for the Destination Transformation.

12 Stages of Transformation



Each month we are launching a chapter of the series according to each stage of the model, including:

- Relevant Case Studies and Best Practices.
- Relevant Talks from the #DTTT events.
- A package of Templates with relative explanatory video on how to use them.
- An online learning course to understand and embrace the digital transformation with your team.
- An Asana project plan to integrate into your workspace.



SHAPING THE BRAND

Introducing Stage 4 - Shaping the Brand

In Destination Marketing branding is not about logos, it's a holistic 360 degree approach to crafting, developing and nurturing an identity for the destination. The destination brand has to be defined strategically according to the destination values and proposition and all the marketing actions aimed at promoting the destination and attracting visitors should be consistent with the brand.

In the last chapter, Product & Experience, we already talked about the brand and its values as fundamental behind the creation of great tourism experiences. Without a defined brand, which is the image of the destination, it is hard to promote all the assets and characteristics of the destination's tourism offer. The brand is therefore the basis of all the elements of the transformation framework and it continuously supports the strategies alongside it.

In this chapter we are going to focus our attention on the fundamentals or pillars of the brand, to understand how a brand is created and how important consistency is across all promotional channels. We will show how the brand is deeply connected with reputation, identity and perception of the destination as well as highly susceptible to external factors such as environment, politics, society and culture.

The brand is both tangible, as a graphic representation, as well as intangible as the sum of values and elements that reflect the destination. On the tangible level, the brand has to be defined by guidelines and follow a specific tone of voice and pitch, which allows it to be consistent with messaging across all channels and referring to specific target audiences. Brand ambassadors are key for the promotion of the brand.

We will also talk about measuring the impact of a brand through the use of different models aimed at identifying the index for nation branding, like the Anholt Nation Brand Index (NBI) or Bloom's Consulting Branding Wheel.

With many case studies and talks from the best DMOs worldwide, we will provide examples of destination brands that stood out for their innovation or strategic accuracy and we will then guide you through the identification of your destination brand pillars to help you identify the challenges and opportunities of creating a destination brand through the use of purposely built templates that you can use with your team.

Finally, access chapter 4 of the 12 Part DMO Transformation Course "Shaping the Brand" and learn about the brand through video lessons, case studies, templates and quizzes, then on your Asana workspace, import the purposely built Asana template with specific tasks to guide you through your rebranding process.



The principles of destination branding

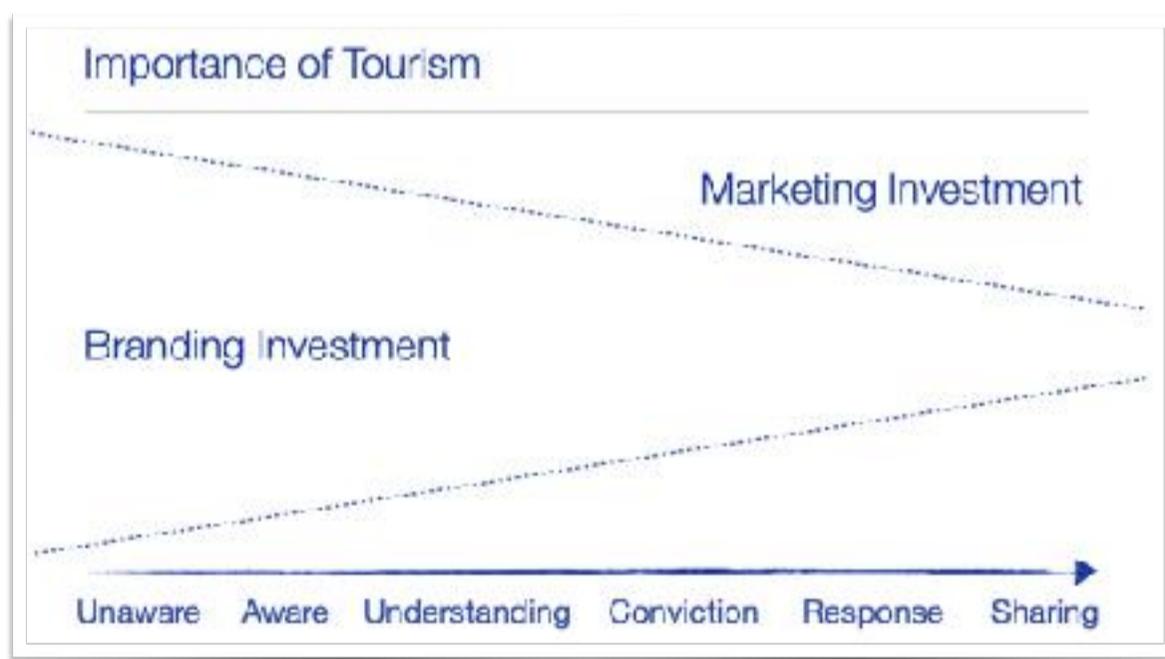
Destination branding is not a logo, it is not the graphical representation of a destination. It is important to acknowledge this concept before starting to talk about the brand because branding is not only about giving a name and a colour to a product or physical place, it is a sum of multiple elements all converging into a common idea or concept which we call the brand.

Destination branding is driven by three main factors, which represent the fundamentals of a destination brand: reputation, identity and perception.

- **Reputation** is the sum of the beliefs or opinions about the destination, it needs to be built, protected, maintained and changed -if needed- through time.
- **Identity** has to be driven by authenticity, unique selling points of the destination, consistency and strong personality.
- **Perception** is mostly made of immaterial experiences, even though material experiences matter as well, and it is subjective, in the mind of consumers.

Destination brands are different from commercial brands. Destination brands encompass a multiplicity of brands that co-live within it; they have a variety of stakeholders, a wider product range across different industries and they are highly susceptible to external factors such as economic, social, environmental, and political events.

Commercial brands, instead, have a single brand owner, they can have carefully designed sub-brands, they are mostly focused on a product range from the same industry and they are owned by firms who have a better control of external factors that have an impact on the brand.





Shaping the brand is not only marketing a place. The more you invest in the destination branding the less you have to invest into marketing investment if you collaborate with the destination as a whole. This means that the higher the effort a destination puts into branding, the less effort will be needed to market the destination.

The destination brand has multiple consumer touchpoints or, else said, can be seen and felt across multiple means and channels: media reports, product placement, Internet, advertising, people, opinion leaders, personal experience, and word of mouth. All these touchpoints with the consumers play a role in the creation of the destination's perception and reputation, hence its branding.

But how can destination branding be assessed? How do we know if a destination brand is powerful and effective? How is it possible to evaluate a destination brand?

The Simon Anholt Nation Brand Index

According to Simon Anholt, an independent policy advisor who works to develop and implement strategies for enhanced economic, political and cultural engagement among countries, the reputation of a country is similar to the brand image of companies and products, but it also has a direct impact on every aspect of its engagement with other countries and it plays a critical role in the economic, social, political and cultural progress of the nation. A country's reputation is built over time and it takes a lot of effort to change it, and often marketing is not enough to build a nation's image through communication². When this simple concept is acknowledged, the debate is if it is instead possible to improve a country's reputation by any means.

Simon Anholt in this regard speaks about Competitive Identity of a country instead of nation branding, to describe a “plan for mobilising the strategies, activities, investments, innovations and communications of as many national sectors as possible, both public and private, into a concerted drive to prove to the world that the nation deserves a different, broader and more positive image” (Anholt, 2009).

The Competitive Identity of a nation is formed through time by 6 areas of activity:

1. The tourism promotion and people's experience of the destination while visiting.
2. The country's products and services exported to other nations which act as ambassadors for the nation.
3. The policies of the nation's government that can affect the audience or which are reported in media.
4. The nation's actions to attract foreign investment, entrepreneurs, workforce, researchers and students.
5. The level of cultural exchange, exports and sport.
6. The country's people: citizens, politicians, media and sports stars.

These 6 areas are part of the hexagon of the competitive identity of a nation where the improved coordination among each point of the hexagon, together with a joint development of a national strategy; the sharing of resources and expertise; the encouragement of innovation; the establishment of common

² Handbook on Tourism Destination Branding, UNWTO/ETC, 2009



standards and quality measures, can lead to a more positive management of the country's reputation, hence the nation brand.

To evaluate a nation branding, a model was developed by Simon Anholt and GfK, the Anholt-GfK Nation Brands Index (NBI). This rating model measures the global image and perception of 50 developed and developing countries.

“Usually, global perception of individual countries is incredibly stable – but changes can and do take place. It is a country's perceived impact on the world that affects its global reputation, far more than its assets or achievements- – and this is what we are seeing here. Those countries that are perceived as being world influencers are suffering following a year of ongoing international conflict and humanitarian issues.”³

- Simon Anholt

“How a nation is perceived is a function of both long-standing attributes (such as stereotypes of its people or region and images of its natural and social environment) and short-term influences (such as positive or negative news coverage or dramatic events). Each nation has some ability to impact either of these areas, by promoting the nation's key positive assets to drive up inbound tourism and investment. But dramatic shifts in reputation can take time. Our study shows our clients where their nations stand in terms of their current image, momentum and potential – helping them to determine their best path to success: a strong nation brand.”⁴

- Vadim Volos, GfK's Senior Vice President of Public Communications and Social Science

Bloom Consulting's Branding Wheel

Bloom Consulting is a firm who established the measurement of the “Nation Branding” and created a model to explain the foundation of a country's brand based on different groups of interest. Nation branding is not about the logo of a country, since the logo is not the brand. There are countries with a high perception and reputation, like Japan or France, that are not directly renowned because of their logo, but because of other factors.

If a country does not manage its own brand, someone and something else do, but the process is not controlled by the state. This is why it is very important for countries to work on their reputation and perception because it has an economic and social impact on the country and building a good country reputation will create a competitive advantage for the nation itself.

Where traditional branding methodologies have always relied on data such as public perception, surveys, and interviews, Bloom Consulting's methodology to assess nation branding uses their own methods, such

³ <https://placebrandobserver.com/results-anholt-gfk-nation-brands-index-2016/>

⁴ ibid



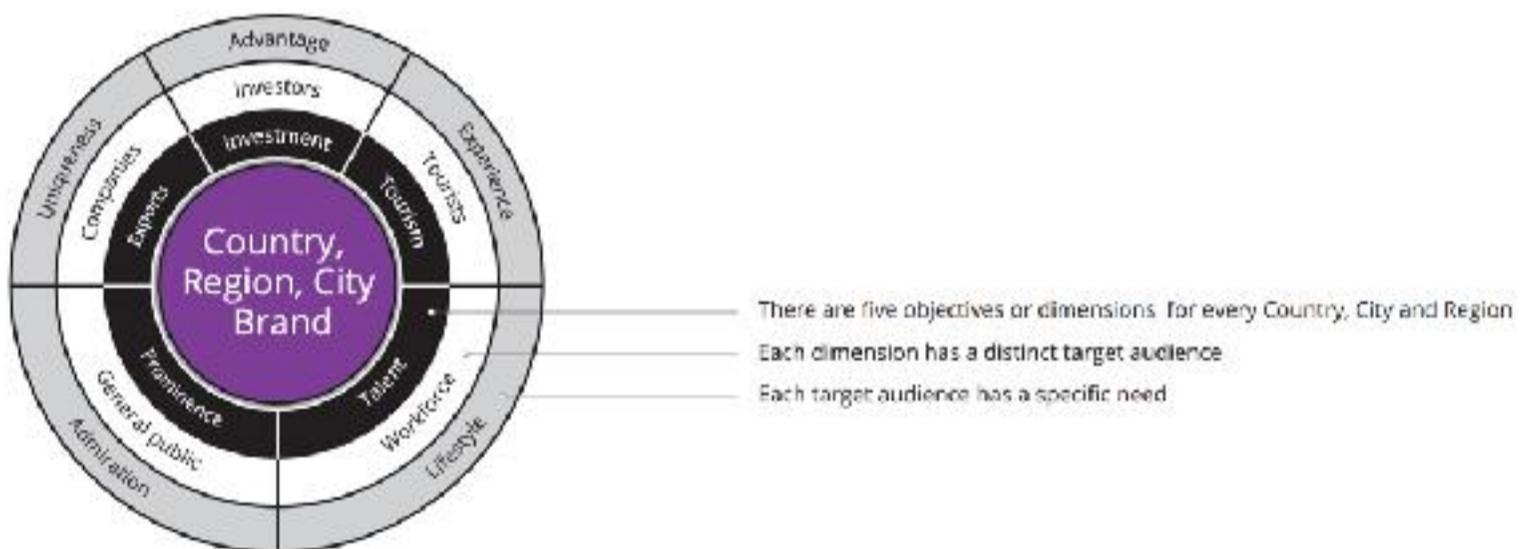
as the Digital Demand (D2©) tool, able to measure the online demand for a specific country by the target audience, as well as indicators of the economic impact⁵.

Every year the firm creates a Country Brand Ranking © related specifically for the tourism sector, assessing the online demand for tourism in a specific destination and tourism revenues of countries. In this way the firm is able to provide a valuation of the economic impact of tourism within a specific country and predict its future success in the industry.

The firm developed the model of the **Branding Wheel**, based on the concept that five groups of international stakeholders are affected by the country brand perception in five different spheres of interest. Three of them can be measured tangibly (Investment, Tourism, and Exports), while the remaining two sectors (Talent, and Prominence) are more non-transactional.

The 5 different Country, Region and City Branding objectives or dimensions shown in the image each represent the different groups of stakeholders with five specific needs for each target audience, who have an impact on a destination's perception and reputation, which makes the brand.

7. **Investors** are needed to attract investment and create a competitive advantage for the country, city or region.
8. **Tourists** are needed to boost tourism and enhance the destination's experience.
9. **Talent** is needed to enrich the workforce of people who choose the destination for the lifestyle.
10. **Prominence** is the general perception of the destination by public, which, if positive, creates admiration.
11. **Companies** are needed to generate exports and enhance the uniqueness of the destination.



Bloom Consulting's methodology focuses on isolating each objective or dimension to develop unique and tailored strategies for all five dimensions.

⁵ https://www.bloom-consulting.com/en/pdf/rankings/Bloom_Consulting_Country_Brand_Ranking_Tourism.pdf



So what is exactly a destination brand?

- A destination brand is the place's competitive identity. It makes the destination distinctive and differentiates it from all others.
- A destination brand refers to the enduring essence, or core characteristics, of the destination, which comprise its personality and make it distinctive and different from all its competitors.
- A destination brand exists in the eyes of the beholder: it is a dynamic relationship between the destination and how it is perceived by potential customers and visitors.
- A destination brand is the fundamental building block from which all marketing communications and behaviour should flow.
- To be truly effective, there must be harmony between the perceptions of both visitors and residents regarding the destination brand, in terms of the destination's key assets and the way in which it is presented in marketing communications.



Building the brand

Creating a destination brand from scratch, or even reinventing it, can be a tough process because it involves many stakeholders of the destination and it needs to identify the principles of the brand and the identity of the branded place.

First it is fundamental to set the objectives of the destination brand, which has to:

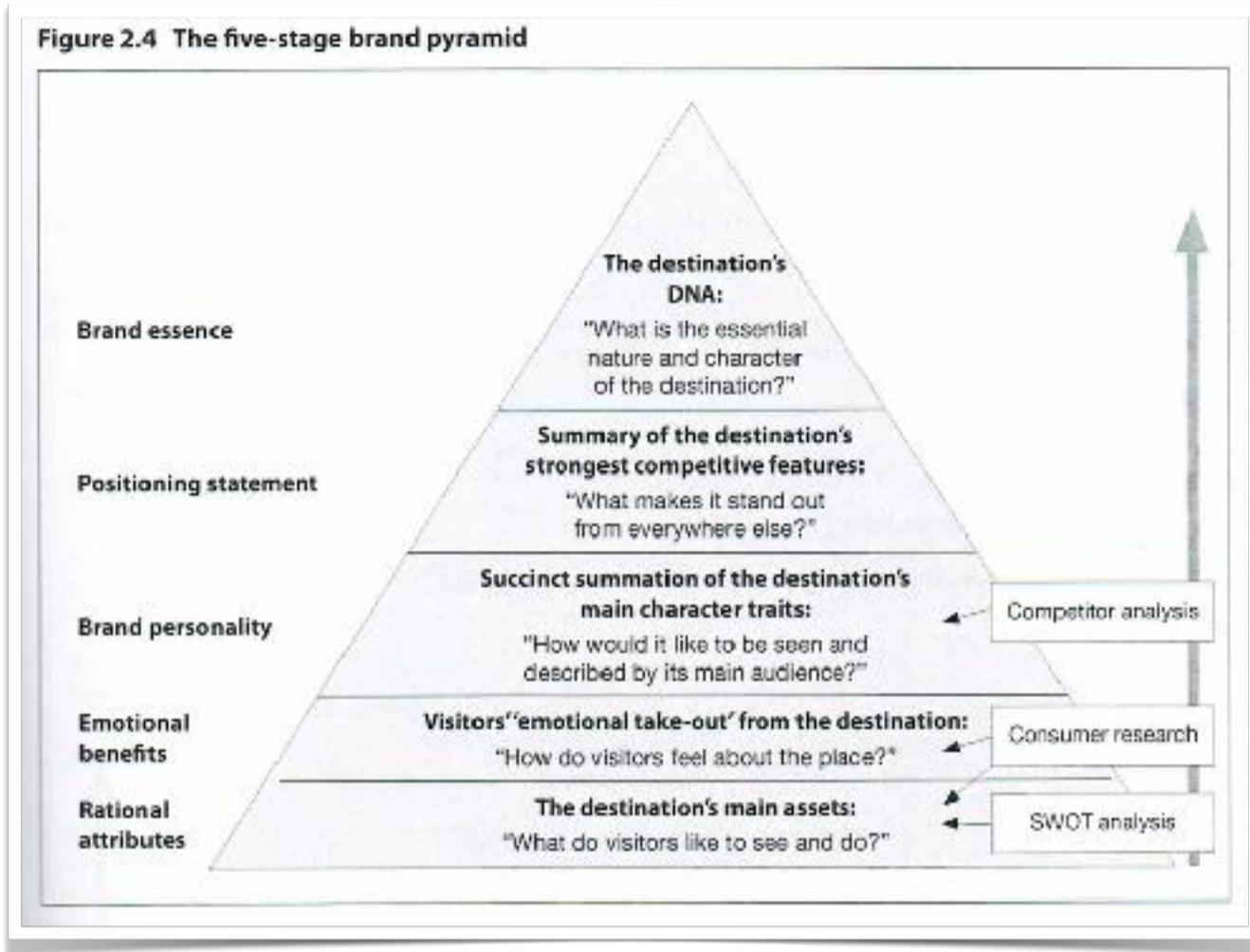
- differentiate the destination from its competitors;
- increase awareness and recognition of the destination over time to attract visitors;
- Create a positive image for the destination;
- Give the destination a strong and compelling brand identity⁶.

Building the brand requires a series of steps that start from the assessment of the destination's main strengths to a distillation of its essence. In order to do this, it is possible to use the Five Stage Brand Pyramid model or the Brand Wheel model, which identify the brand essence, values and personality, and help DMOs in the creation process.

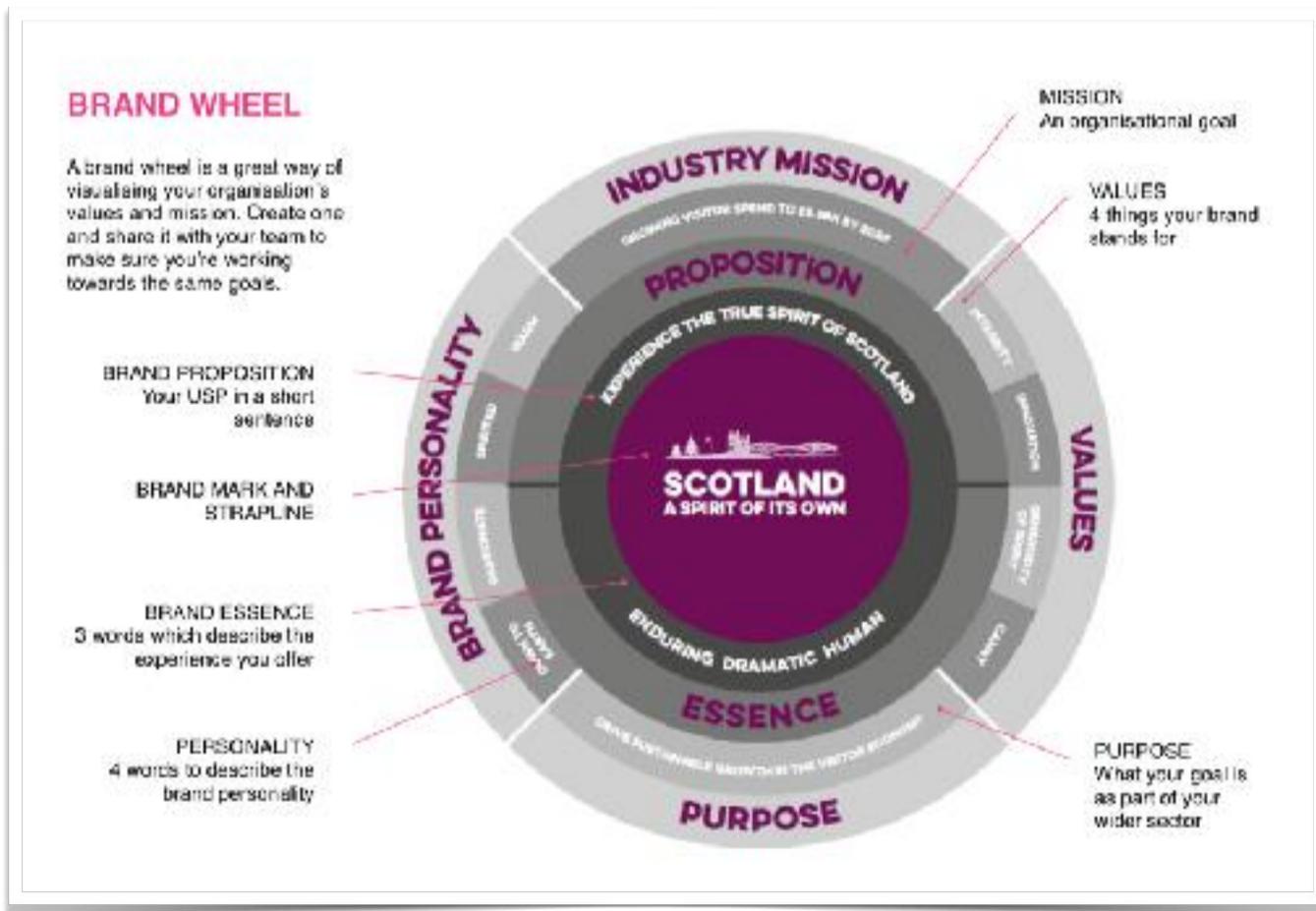
The Five Stage Brand Pyramid model is used to plan the branding process in an ascending identification of 5 elements.

1. The **first step** is the identification of the rational attributes, the destination's main assets or what the visitors like to see and do at the destination. This can be done through consumer research and SWOT analysis.
2. The **second step** is the identification of the emotional benefits, what visitors take emotionally from a destination or how visitors feel about a place.
3. The **third step** is the identification of the brand personality by answering the question 'how should the destination be seen and described by its main audience?'. This can be done through a competitor analysis.
4. The **fourth step** is the positioning statement, a summary of the destination's strongest competitive features and what makes it stand out from everywhere else.
5. The **fifth and last step** is the identification of the brand essence or the destination's DNA by understanding what the essential nature and character of the destination is.

⁶ Handbook on Tourism Destination Branding, UNTWO/ETC, 2009



The Brand Wheel model is another model used to understand all the core information about the brand, including the brand values, essence and personality. With an example from Visit Scotland you can see how the principles of the brand are tied to the identity of the destination.





As you will later see in the [Templates](#) section, we build a brand wheel template for your organisation. Create one and share it with your team to make sure you're working towards the same goals.

Tone of voice

Having a brand tone of voice isn't by any means a new concept. But in the modern day when your brand is communicating across a multitude of channels, it's more important than ever that it is consistent and recognisable.

The expectation of a common tone of voice and level of service, whether a customer picks up your brochure, reads your latest blog post by their Amazon Echo or interacts with you on twitter, presents a challenge. But as one of the most tangible and emotional layers of your brand, when done right it can build loyalty, engagement and perception on a deep level.

It's important to know the answers to the following questions:

- Does your brand voice have an accent?
- Does it use regional language?
- Is there sector specific jargon your brand would be expected to use?
- How formal is it?
- Would it ever use colloquialisms?
- Does it want to be seen as approachable?
- Is it sophisticated and elegant?

Fortifying your visual brand

When the brand is built and the tone of voice is set, it is time to fortify your brand.

Gather up all the information you have about your organisation's strategy, values and examples of your brand elements. But before knowing what to do, it is also important to know what you should not do.

5 Brand pitfalls to avoid:

1. Missing the mark

A weak, stock or generic identity mark can let your entire brand presence down.

2. Playing it safe

A dull brand reflects on you as an organisation. Think dynamic and creative.

3. Falling flat

2D brands feel dated. Bring yours into the future by seeing it as a living object.

4. Sending mixed signals

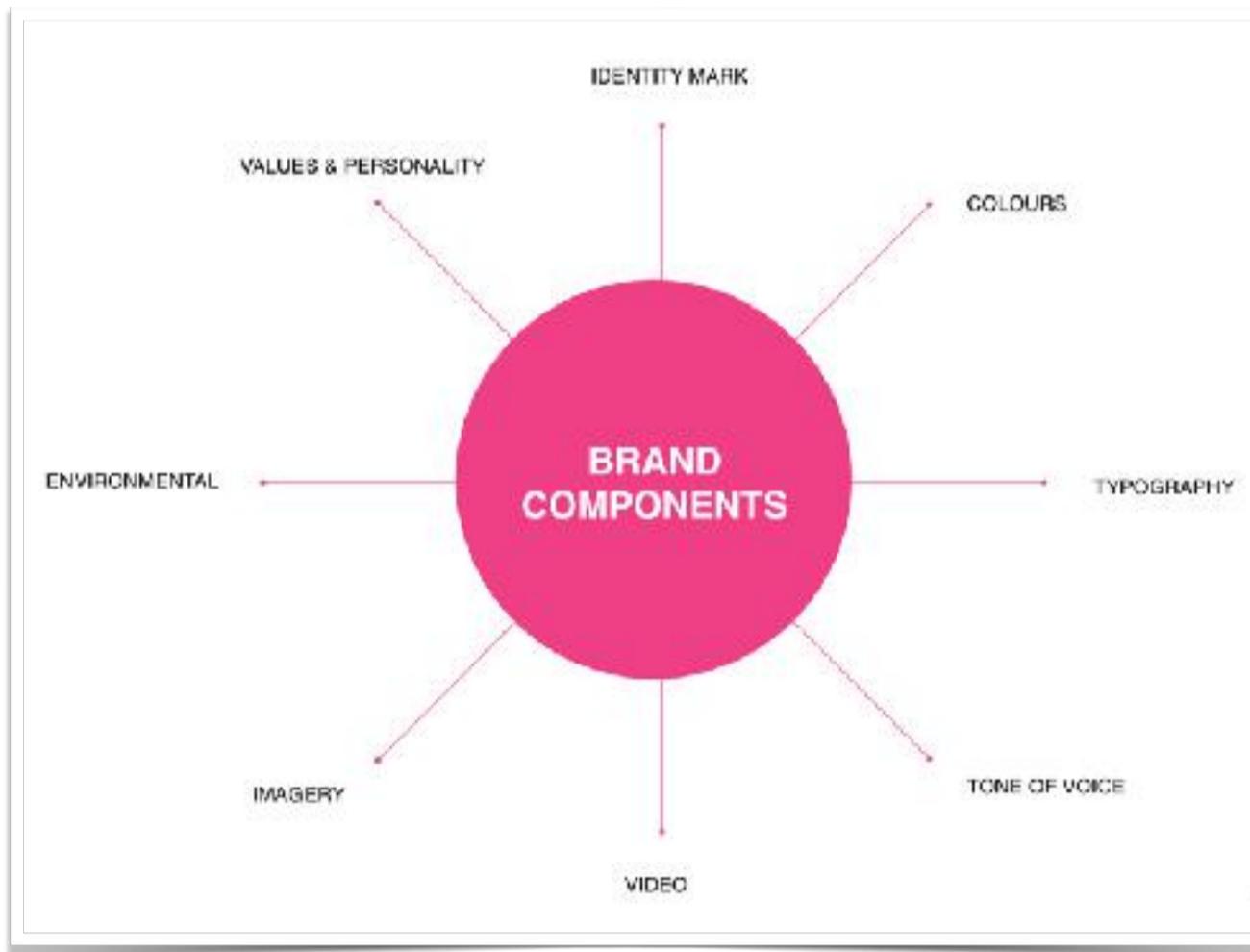
Inconsistency across materials and channels can be the undoing of even the most beautiful brands.

5. Identity crisis

Not knowing what your organisation stands for or what values it holds leads to unclear messaging.



The Brand Components



Values

To successfully communicate your brand it needs to be built on a strong set of values. They are the DNA of your brand and all marketing decisions should be made with them at the front of your mind.

Personality

Personality is the outward reflection of these values, it's the way your brand is put across through visuals, language and actions, and is ultimately the picture the general public builds of you. Creating your brand personality and knowing it inside out is key to consistent communication.

Purpose

What is your goal as part of your wider sector.

Identity mark

An identity mark is by far the most important element of any brand. It is the brand spearhead and guides the style for any other visual elements. It should be unique to your organisation. It should represent the values and personality of your brand in a graphics or type. It should be recognisable by your audience. Equally, your brand as a whole should be able to hold its own without the identity mark.



The most interesting marks, those that will stand the test of time, are generative or living ones that have been designed with digital applications in mind. They aren't static but adapt and change in colour, configuration and sometimes shape, making them perfectly suited to cross channel use.

The Visit Finland brand is a beautiful example of an identity mark that feels like its changing and evolving. Created by SEK Design, the mark represents Finland as something totally individual, unconventional and fresh.



Colours

It has been proven that colour increases brand recognition by 80% so it's vital to pick the right ones.

A great place to start is by looking into colour perception and the meanings behind them so you can aim to strike the right chord with your customers.

Red: energy, war, danger, strength, power, determination, passion, desire, love.

Orange: enthusiasm, fascination, creativity, determination, attraction, success, stimulation.

Yellow: happiness, intellect, loyalty, energy.

Green: growth, harmony, freshness, fertility, sincerity, trust, loyalty.

Purple: power, nobility, luxury, ambition.

Blue: trust, loyalty, wisdom, confidence, intelligence, faith, truth, stability.

Black: power, elegance, formality, mystery.

Typography

Great typefaces, when used well, can be the making of a brand and really boost its personality. A typeface often becomes relegated to being one of the less important elements in a brand project and it often doesn't get considered early on when decisions are made about the logo mark and colours. But it really should.

There are 2 vital roles typography and the typeface you choose fulfil:

1. Logo typeface

This is the typeface in which your organisation name is written. Some logos are type led where there is no logo mark and the typeface chosen has a pivotal role to play. But equally, in my opinion having the right typeface next to an identity mark can be the making of it.

2. Brand typeface

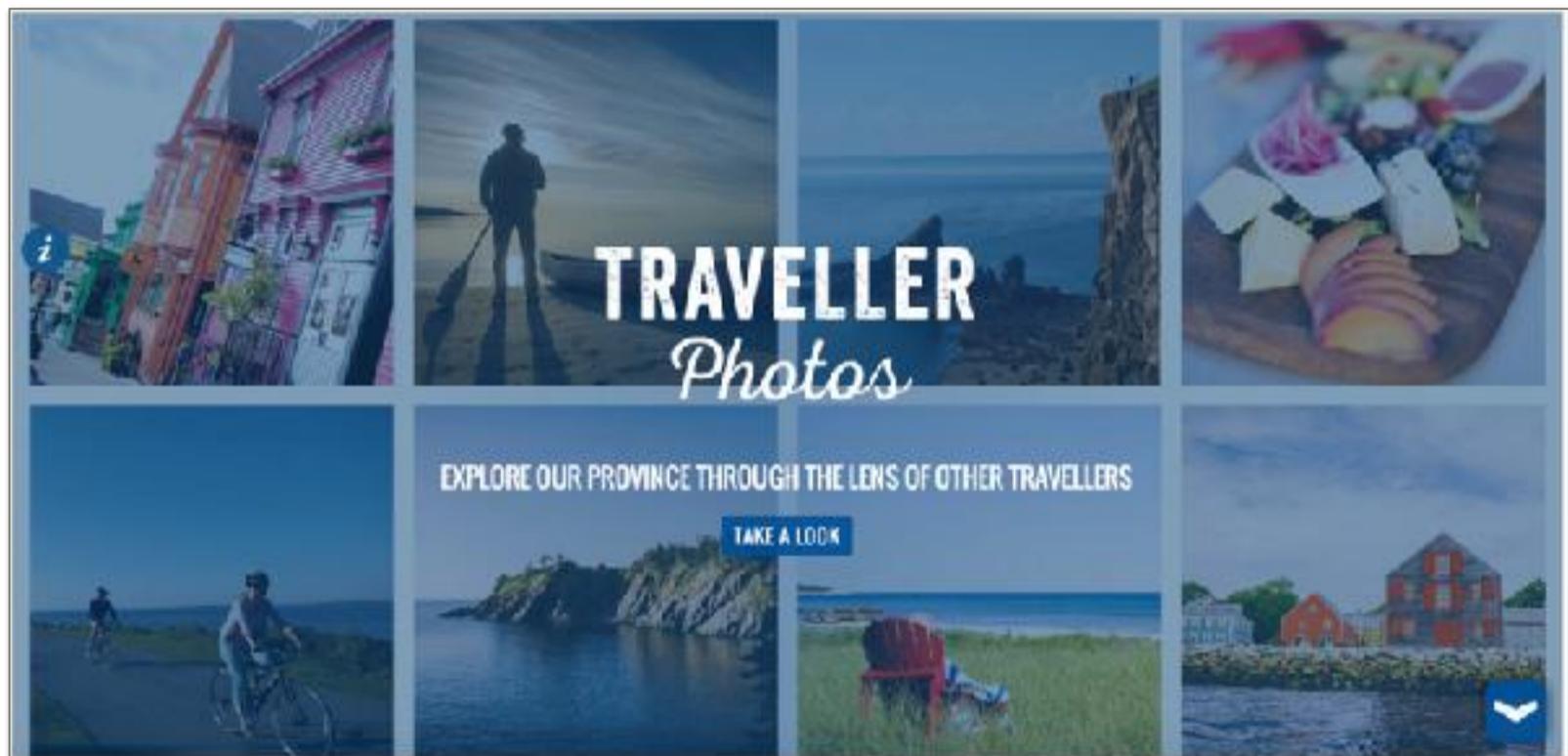
A typeface with character can provide a recognisable visual link to your brand when used across multiple channels and can be a great tool for communicating your brand values. These 2 typefaces might be one and the same.



Imagery

Imagery is an important part of a cross channel brand. Studies show an image paired with information helps people retain 65% of that information three days later so it's important to be presenting the right kind of visuals to make your brand memorable.

The [Nova Scotia tourism site](#) has eye-catching imagery throughout its pages. It uses user-generated imagery to show the many sides of Nova Scotia through the eyes of visitors. This adds a level of authenticity and visual interest because of the variety of styles. The signposting panels on the homepage use quirky images that feel closely aligned to the brand.



Using your brand

When your values and personality are strong, all elements are aligned and successfully reflect your brand and you've explored some new ideas to push your identity further, how do you get these component parts to work together?

When they're used across multiple channels it's vital that they form together into a cohesive brand that can be communicated internally to your team and externally to your customers and partners.

The best cross channel brands have the following attributes:

- consistency
- creativity
- common visual cues to link them
- personality
- purpose



Always keep your values and personality at the front of your mind as you make decisions for your brand and the way it will be used. If it fits with these guidelines then go for it!

The Eindhoven identity is an example of a truly cross-channel brand. It is a scaleable and recognisable visual identity system. The geometric brand mark, called the 'Vibes', were designed to represent the energy in the city. They align to the city's marketing strategy and its pillars of strength in Technology, Design and Knowledge. In 2016, Eindhoven launched a new campaign called 'Share the Vibe.' Artists from the city were asked to create a video which used the Vibes shape and captured the feeling of Eindhoven. It has been embraced by the people of Eindhoven who take it and play with it creating innovative imagery to share to their social media accounts. This creates positive energy and leads to some really interesting content. Eindhoven is considered to be the city of collaboration and across the different touchpoints the brand reflects this.

Read more about the Visit Eindhoven strategy in the Case Studies and Talks section, and watch the videos on the Launchpad!





Consistency

Consistency is one of the most important aspects of the brand. Every message sent has to be consistent with the brand.

The way in which you're communicating as an organisation needs to follow a set of rules so that everyone is speaking the same language. By replicating the internal language and communication style of your team and reflecting this externally, if appropriate to your brand, this will be easier to achieve.

Documenting the style of language your brand will use makes it easier to roll your tone of voice out across all your various channels. Write some sample sentences for writers to follow and explain what the brand does and doesn't sound like.

You should make sure you know your customer needs and try to match the language you're using, and the tone you're delivering it in, to their expectations. Ask your customers what they think your brand should sound like and what it should say.

The Brand Strategy

Consumers trust you more if you can rely on a strong, clear and aligned brand strategy. The future of your digital brand depends on how you act now. Despite what we used to believe, consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z, are paying a lot more attention to the brand. That's why you have to build a strong identity in order to raise awareness and establish a strong brand equity. We collected a couple of very good examples of destination brands that demonstrate consistency for the choice of messages, tone of voice, colours and identity.

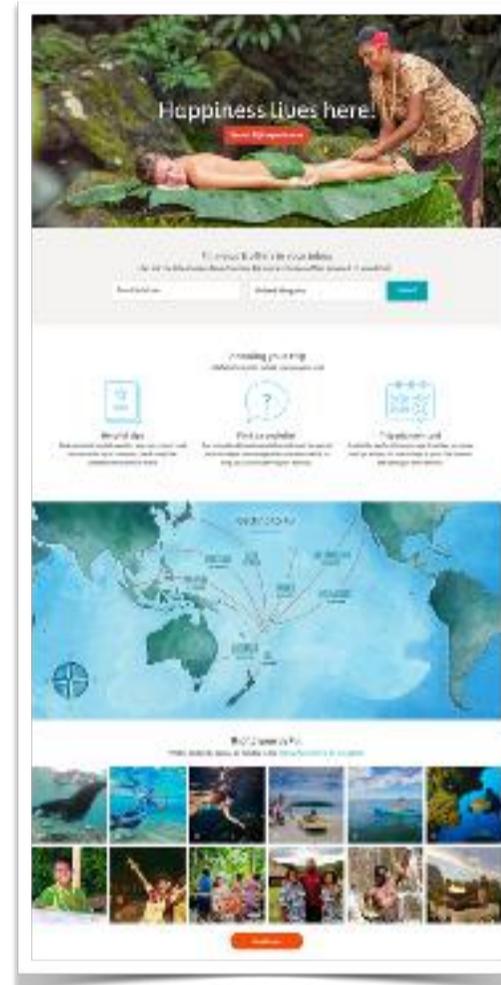
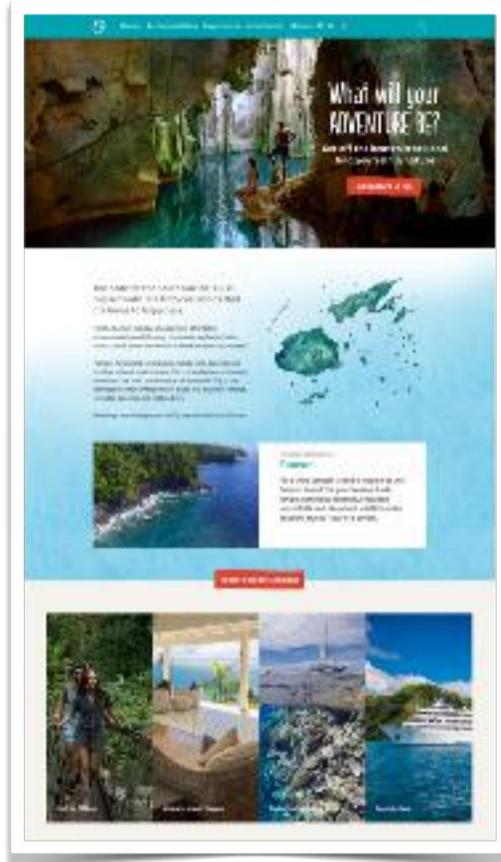


Costa Rica is renowned for its rich nature and the variety of environments it has. The promoted activities are mostly outdoors in nature and the brand consistently evokes feelings of stability and prosperity. Costa Rica has chosen a green colour palette, which they use throughout their website and social media channels. Green is a cool colour that symbolises nature and the natural world, while orange adds excitement without severity. It suggests vibrance and touches on playfulness.

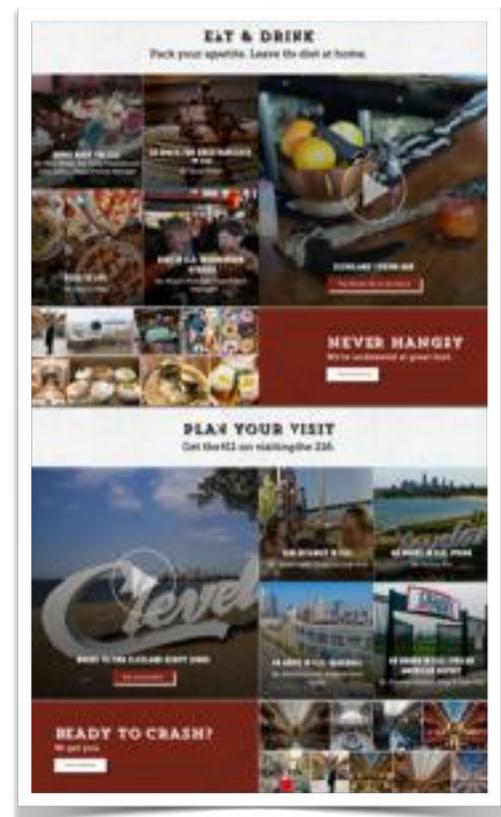
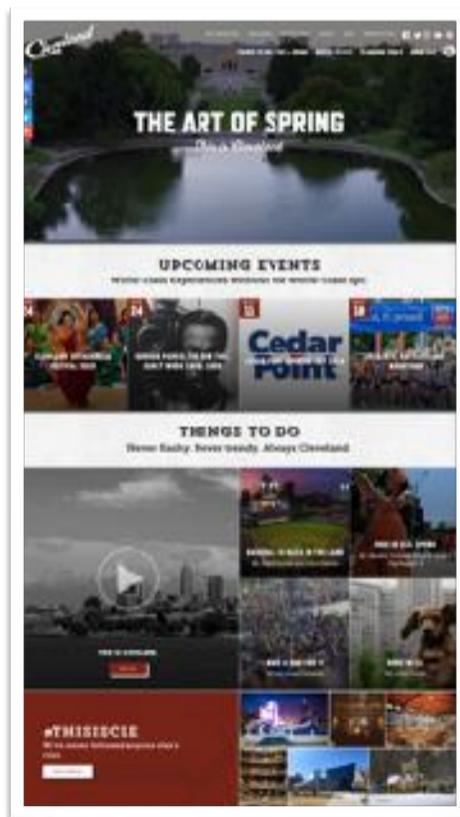
The website had white space, which is essential to a good design and to keep it open, fresh and modern. The visual identity is consistent with the strong brand and the content focuses on the niche traveller (eco-friendly, outdoor, environmentally and culturally conscious).



Fiji is famous for its sea, blue sky, outdoors and nature, and the brand it chose evokes feelings of calmness and serenity. The website makes good use of white space and attractive and clear calls-to-action allowing users to easily navigate the website to find the information they are looking for.



Visit Cleveland has a strong brand identity. We like the website because there is a great use of images, the font is consistent, bold and unique. Although much content on the homepage is UGC, the page looks focused and connected. All the relevant information is presented with images and short texts and the colour palette is really simple: black on white and burgundy features.





The Co-Creation Process

The city of Eindhoven that we already described as an example of a consistent cross-channel brand, went through a peculiar process for the redefinition of the brand. The city's goal was to become one of the world's top creative innovation regions and in order to achieve this a well-thought strategy was put in place to market the city and the region to attract talent in technology and design, to increase foreign investment and to attract tech companies to Eindhoven. In order to reach these goals, a rebranding of the city was necessary and the process to create the new brand saw the participation of different stakeholders, citizens included, in a co-creation effort aimed at discovering the perception and appreciation of the city's image inside and outside the city itself. 5,000 citizens were involved in the co-creation process and were invited to express their opinion through an online platform. Surprisingly, what emerged from this survey was that the inhabitants of Eindhoven thought the city to be ambassador of technology, knowledge and design, which eventually became the three most important pillars of the city shared by the community. These three pillars became the brand pillars and the basis for the new marketing strategy.

The creation of the new visual identity was also the result of a co-creation process that saw the participation of 15 from Eindhoven's best graphic design, architecture, fashion and industrial designers. A team of designers then worked together to produce the new brand identity based on the results of the citizens' survey. The new identity had to comprise a logo, a fitting typography, a photography style and a tone of voice but without a slogan. The values that inspired the new brand were challenge, vision and inspiration to underline the city's ability to reinvent itself. The logo that resulted, inspired by these elements, is represented by three 'zigzags' one on top of the other that were later called the 'vibe'.⁷

A unique characteristic of this brand is that the logo is free to use in any variation as long as it keeps the 'vibes' shape. It is used both by the council and the city marketing, underlining once more that it is the result of a co-creation process representing the opinion of every citizen.

The branding process of the city of Eindhoven is proof of the seamless integration with the creative, local mentality of the city, in search of inspiration and innovation.

Read and watch the [case study](#) of the Eindhoven co-creation branding process in the [Case Studies and Talks section](#) and download the template to co-create your brand in the [Templates section](#).

⁷ <https://placebrandobserver.com/how-eindhoven-uses-city-branding-strategies-for-economic-development-and-community-self-esteem/>



Working with Ambassadors

One of the best ways to promote your brand is working with Ambassadors, people who represent the brand and the destination and are willing to experience the destination to create content around it.

Today's travellers demand more creative content and in-depth storytelling, which focuses on deeper, more compelling stories. As visitors become overwhelmed with content, they don't want to be sold to. They are looking to instead learn, discover, and immerse themselves into a new experience.

But who are a destination's best storytellers? Local people who have an interesting story to tell and a genuine love for their home makes for some of the most inspiring, organic and authentic content. Authenticity is key. For destinations, there is a wealth of content waiting to be discovered, it's about uncovering these unknown stories and sharing them to the right audience. New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation⁸ has recently taken this one step further, by creating social content that appeals to both tourists and locals, uncovering stories that locals may not have heard of before and would be inclined to share themselves. This depth of content and level of distribution is not only cost-effective for DMOs, but it is instrumental in keeping destinations top of mind in a competitive market/

Micro-Influencers

Micro-influencers are influencers with a smaller following, but a high level of trust and authority with a highly engaged, niche audience. They might not have hundreds or thousands of social media followers, yet they have immense credibility with their audience. In short, micro-influencers tend to charge less and can deliver more value due to their niche focus.

Commonly defined as someone with 2,000 to 100,000 followers, micro-influencers are becoming more and more popular as partners for destinations and attractions, rather than their massive counterparts.

And with Instagram expected to overtake Facebook, in terms of users, by the end of 2020, the importance of Influencer Marketing, in particular the authority of micro-influencers, is more important than ever. Why? A 2017 study by L2 found an inverse correlation between the number of followers and the engagement rate in influencers. That is to say, a large follower size does not guarantee successful engagement anymore.

Micro-influencers tend to cultivate strong bonds with their audiences, and thus have higher levels of credibility when endorsing a destination or attraction. Meanwhile, and partly in response, the influencer market is becoming ever-more niche. Brands are hiring Instagrammers with ever-smaller audiences – even as few as 1,000 followers, dubbed nano-influencers. After all, word of mouth influences purchasing decisions through trusted relationships and personal networks, which don't require a huge audience.

Here are some destinations that have embraced micro-influencers in their own campaigns:

Tourism Toronto Social Ambassador Program

SeeTorontoNow created their own Tourism Toronto Social Ambassador program as a way to show off the city of Toronto through the eyes of locals. Ambassadors do a variety of things from Instagram takeovers, to writing blog posts for SeeTorontoNow and/or creating videos to share on social accounts. The idea is that

⁸ <https://www.thedrum.com/news/2019/02/05/new-orleans-rewrites-destination-marketing-creating-social-content-locals-share>



the local tells the Toronto story and acts as an extension of the Tourism Toronto social team – in essence they passionately share Toronto with the world.

The Ambassador program works with micro-influencers like @SeeUSoonTravel (IG: 3,579k) or The Curious Creature (IG: 15k followers). Both of these influencers regularly do Instagram Story Takeover's on the SeeTorontoNow Instagram page in an effort to show followers a backstage look at events that are happening in the city. For example, in Fall 2018, The Curious Creature, gave SeeTorontoNow followers a never-been-seen-before sneak peek at Toronto's 'We Are Happy Place Pop-Up' experience, which included photos, videos and an interview with founder Jared Paul.

Nordic TB – Collective of Digital Storytellers

The Nordic TB collective focuses on digital storytellers in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Although they are mostly made up of micro-influencers, as they work as a collective, they have the ability of increased reach as the whole group contribute through their own social media platforms to get a great reach and maximum results within the target market.

In January 2019, the collective partnered with Live Riga and airBaltic to promote the Riga Street Food Festival as part of their #CulinaryRiga campaign. The Collective sent four different influencers, two from Sweden and two from Denmark. Check out [this article](#) for an example of their work.

The collective has worked with numerous destinations on a variety of campaigns, from Montenegro (#ExploreHercegNovi), Visit Barcelona (#NordicTBinBarcelona), German National Tourist Office (#CitybreakGermany), Vorarlberg Tourismus (#InVorarlberg) to #ShortbreakinFlanders in collaboration with Visit Flanders and Brussels Airlines.

#MyHelsinkiResidence

Along with some bigger names, My Helsinki Residence has opened its doors to smaller influencers with a following of less than 100k followers.

The program offers influencers direct flights to and from Helsinki, 4-7 day residency for social influencers, key opinion leaders, podcasters, new media journalists and experts without tight schedules or strict itineraries, accommodation, a personalised Helsinki Survival Kit and much more.

The program is open all year-round, which allows for a steady stream of influencers that visit the city during all seasons of the year. This translates to year-round content that is produced by a variety of influencers from all over the world with a focus on different niches. Past influencers include Curb Free with Cory Lee (IG: 11.4K followers), an American travel blogger that focuses on accessible travel, Marko Tadic (IG: 93K followers), a fashion blogger from Serbia.

Working in partnership with millennial creatives and storytellers from across the globe, the Travel Project is an influencer-led storytelling platform, centred around various missions which explore the multitude of ways travel can create positive change.

The project focuses on creating a community of travel content creators – most of which are micro-influencers – who want to share their travel experiences on Conitiki's own storytelling platform, Six-Two.

Content curators are not paid for the submissions, but they earn travel, more specifically a Contiki trip of their choice in exchange of content and stories that are then published on Six-Two.



Influencer Marketing

Influencer Marketing focuses on targeting key industry leaders to drive brand message and awareness to a specific market of consumers.

Although often conflated with user-generated content (UGC), Influencer Marketing (IGC) is not the same thing as UGC. UGC can be seen as a gift from engaged consumers, who create free content around the brand and encourage online conversations. UGC is free, authentic and trustworthy as content comes from a genuine love for the destination. Nevertheless, the quality of the content is not always predictable and the brand message can be blurry – in short, it lacks brand control.

Influencer generated content (IGC), on the other hand, is a professional source of high-quality content directed to a targeted audience. The message is clear and aligned with the brand global communication. It often generates conversion as influencers have been established as a reliable source of recommendations by their audience. Whether an influencer's audience is small or large, an influencer can reach consumers via their blogs and social networks that your destination may not be able to.

Nevertheless IGC requires investment, usually in the form of free offers/products and/or payment of a fee. An all-inclusive press trip, for example, can include: flight, accommodation, restaurant/food, activities and payment of an influencer fee.

Statistics about influencer marketing suggest that:

- Marketers received \$7.65 in earned media value for every \$1 spent on influencer marketing – Influencer Marketing Hub.
- Marketing induced consumer-to-consumer word-of-mouth generates twice the sales of paid advertising – McKinsey.
- 92% of consumers trust online word-of-mouth recommendations, while only 33% of them trust online banner ads – Nielsen.
- The number of online searches for “influencer marketing” is growing by 5000% a month – Google Trends.
- Customers acquired via word-of-mouth have a 37% higher retention rate – McKinsey.

24 Hours in the UK

Designed to highlight the round-the-clock appeal of the United Kingdom, 24 Hours in the UK was a dynamic multi-destination campaign involving ten bloggers and social media influencers. Trips were held in all corners of the UK in summer/fall 2017 and the campaign's content was published in January 2018. A team of British and international influencers were selected for their reach in relevant target markets and video capabilities.

The influencers filmed their experiences across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These scenes were then edited to create 32 videos that were released during a 24-hour Facebook campaign.



Timed to coincide with so-called “Blue Monday”, supposedly the gloomiest day of the year, 24 Hours in the UK saw the release of hourly videos on the Visit Britain Facebook page throughout 15th January 2018, one hour at a time for a whole day. The aim was to invite both visitors and locals to discover the “mind-boosting” activities available in the UK. The influencers partnered with VisitBritain and partners to share the videos via their social media channels and drive engagement.

After the 24-hour campaign, fans were asked to vote for their favourite experiences. Voting videos were released asking fans to choose between two experiences at a time. The voting videos performed very well: the five voting videos received more than 150,000 views.

Results of the campaign, with its hashtag #LoveGreatBritain, generated Opportunities-To-See (impressions) of 119.4 million between 14th January – 12th February 2018. The campaign reached approximately 3 million people and drew 29,000+ engagements. This social media activity created an online AVE (advertising value equivalency) exceeding GBP 1.4 million.

Kerala Blog Express

Unlike other FAM trips, the process for selection, although controversial among some influencers, includes a voting contest that allows the public to cast their online votes for their favourite bloggers. This type of selection means that finalists often share their public profiles with their social media networks to garner more votes – thus creating an influencer campaign that has a high potential to become viral. Once voting closes, the top 30 travel bloggers – those with the most votes – win the FAM trip.

In 2018, Kerala Tourism published an article that stated that the region experienced a significant hike in tourist arrivals due to this model of online promotion. In the last 5 years, the Blog Express has welcomed around 100 brand ambassadors who have created over 400 blogs posts and curated thousands of social media posts. In 2018 alone, the Blog Express received 1727 entries.

The campaign has become so popular, that in 2019 Kerala Tourism announced two FAM trips, one for international influencers and another for Indian content creators, bloggers and social media influencers.

GoTo Louisville

When Louisville decided that they wanted to launch an influencer campaign, they specifically wanted to focus on promoting their four pillars that tend to attract the most visitors: the derby, the city’s southern-style culinary style, urban bourbon tourism – the city boasts 9 distilleries – and the destination’s uniqueness, which encompassed a variety of other experiences available only in Louisville.

They began focusing on influencers that were current followers but located in other destinations, like New York or Chicago. From there they started to find people with over a million followers on all of their social media platforms combined before reaching out to them with an offer of a tailor-made itinerary that showed off the best of what the city has to offer in their area of interest.

During these 48 to 72 hour trips, these influencers introduced their vast social followings to experiences that are unique to Louisville.

Between March and June of 2017 seven social influencers with specific expertise – from whiskey to architecture – were hosted by the destination. During their visits, the 48 social media posts they dedicated



to Louisville resulted in 113,500 unique web page views, 98,235 total likes on social media, 2,605 comments and over 6 million impressions.

#LetHawaiiHappen

Hawaii's Department of Tourism took advantage of micro-influencer marketing with their campaign #LetHawaiiHappen. Unlike traditional influencers, micro-influencers have a more modest number of followers – typically in the thousands or tens of thousands – but they boast hyper-engaged audiences. The campaign featured a mix of macro and micro-influencers. Along with partnering with top Instagrammer Jordan Hersel (@jordanherschel | 515K followers), the destination also partnered with enthusiastic brand ambassadors like photographer Rick Poon (@rick_poon | 84.7K followers), stylist and lifestyle blogger Lindsey Higa (@pineappleice | 22.6K followers), surfer/photographer Tara Binek (@ladyslider | 49.4K followers), and others to spread the word about the campaign and inspire followers to visit Hawaii and post on Instagram using the branded hashtag.

Results show the campaign generated 100K posts from both UGC and sponsored Instagram posts with top Instagrammers, reaching 54% of all U.S travellers through social media marketing, paid advertising efforts and direct public relations. In the end, 65% of people who saw the campaign say they plan to visit the Hawaiian Islands in the next two years.

Montreux Riviera - Switzerland - is another destination that decided to work with ambassadors and focus their branding strategy on local guides with their project “Be My Guide” which you can read and watch as a [case study](#) in the dedicated section. The basis of the strategy involves focusing on local people, and their stories and passions for the destination, and delivering this through effective digital strategies to inspire and engage the visitor. Consumer behaviour has shifted significantly from visiting a destination, to truly experiencing a destination, seeking a deeper connection with the people and the destination itself. For this reason, the Montreux Riviera offers a free service of local guides represented by local people who can be booked for a visit to the best locations and experiences of the region.





Applying the Brand

With a comprehensive strategy underpinning which takes into consideration the multitude of different factors at play in shaping the brand, you can then start to think about how to develop and apply the brand in a more tangible sense. As has been said many times, it's really important as a DMO to look beyond the logo or design elements at play and think about the brand in a broader sense.

Becoming Brand Custodians

For decades destinations have been obsessed with logos and strap lines and whilst a few may have resonated with audiences, such as "Malaysia, truly Asia", for the most part logos don't stick, have poor recall value and do little to shape or influence actual perception of the destination.

It is crucially important to remain conscious of the fact that DMOs alone cannot build and strengthen the brand of the destination, however they can assume the leadership role as brand custodians. Work to pull all the right levers and be instrumental in the overall strengthening of the destination's image is a key opportunity and role to be assumed by DMOs. This can be applied at different levels, for example working at National Brand level and also a City Brand level but of course it works even better where different destination brands build or play off each other to compliment rather than competing with each other, thus being distractive in nature.

A great example of taking a collaborative approach to brand custodianship is the Case Study of Eindhoven. Not only did they successfully create an identity and image which resonated with different sectors and stakeholders in the city but they did so collaboratively, by getting everyone around the same table to do so. Identity was a key factor.

As a small city there was amongst different key stakeholders a strong feeling that citizens, industry, business and visitors should be able to play with the brand in both form and depth and so it delivers excellently as a visual identity, adopted, interpreted and ultimately providing a strong reference and affinity for those with a relationship to the city. Eindhoven's brand is then built-up and strengthened through industry, academia, the visitor experience and residents, with each playing a role in shaping the brand along a consistent set of well defined brand pillars built upon the city's industrial design heritage.

Shaping the Brand with Content

Later in the series we give full focus to content, looking at strategy, technique, form and function. When thinking about the role of content in shaping the brand, it's important to understand that in today's digital world storytelling lives through the content we consume online. According to Google, visitors today have more than 300 different touchpoints in their so called 'path to purchase'. Yet if we zoom out and look at how an image of a destination is created, the timeframe and number of touchpoints is infinite. A brand can neither be built-up, nor destroyed, through single actions or overnight, rather it is the sum of information, content, experiences and knowledge which makes up the brand's image.



With that in mind, is content the solution? If you think about content as the manifestation of the brand through impressions, storytelling, opinions and understanding, content is hugely powerful. How much of this 'voice' however can be controlled by DMOs and what is the likely impact the efforts of DMOs on the brand's perception? In short, the answer is limited, but it is not inconsequential.

Shaping the Brand in a Digital World

With that in mind, let's break content down into three key areas, looking at how content lives in a digital world with varying degrees of direct and indirect impact, overall contributing to the shaping of the destination brand:

Content Shaped by Events & Fact

In a democratic society where free speech is one of our most cherished values, truth and information hold considerable authority and form our perception of the world around us. World events contribute to a wider perception and understanding, forming our impression of destinations themselves. Marketers often try to counterbalance 'bad news' with 'good news', a fundamentally flawed strategy, where failing to address the factors on the ground, which ultimately contribute to that image, will always outweigh efforts to create 'another image'. This is where multi-sectoral brand building is key.

Research consistently shows too, the resilience of tourism in adversity. In the event of a major crisis, whether it's an earthquake, terrorist attack. The reputation and perception of a destination is not created or brought down by single events alone.

Content Deriving from Shared Experiences

Every business should now be acutely aware of the importance of social media and the impact it can have on their reputation. This, in essence, is brand building (or degradation) through peer-led storytelling. As with 'fact', there are certain realities that businesses cannot possibly escape in today's digital world.

Transparency exists at every level, through awareness building right down to booking decisions and experiencing. Today, every experience is shared, good and bad, and just with destination image, businesses also need to work at the actual product and experience overall, where the biggest long-term wins will be seen in building the brand. An amazing Visitor Experience (VX) will pay dividends in the strength and desirability of the brand in the end.

At a destination-wide level, DMOs can play a pivotal role in helping all stakeholders to translate the essence of the brand's key pillars and values into real tangible product experiences which accentuate and strengthen that brand. They can also play a key educational role in supporting businesses to not only become better, more consistently aligned storytellers behind the destination brand, but encouraging their staff and visitors to do the same. Creating a 'social partnership framework' can play a key role in trying to achieve a more unified brand voice, across the many hundreds of thousands of content touchpoints in a totally fragmented digital content landscape.



Content Crafted by Brand Actors

Before digital, brand and awareness building relied heavily on creating advertorials, brochures and good PR. Today, it's all about content, storytelling, influencers and targeted messaging. A solid and comprehensive content strategy will alone only be a fragment of the brand development work, but if executed with a relentless commitment to strategic consistency it can really serve as a powerful catalyst and a prove a lynchpin in creating narrative behind the brand.

Here, we refer back to the need to adopt a 'Hero', 'Hub' and 'Hygiene' approach to content strategy. This should be supported by a clear set of tone guidelines helping to define the personality of the brand and a strong content framework, which considers how to translate the brand through stories, audiences, channels and touchpoints.

There's more on this in the Content chapter of this series, but in essence a good content strategy, supported with a good market, channel and targeting approach, can really deliver in shaping the brand's perception.

With a good balance of all of these points, DMOs can really make a difference and start to impact the brand at the core right through to the surface.

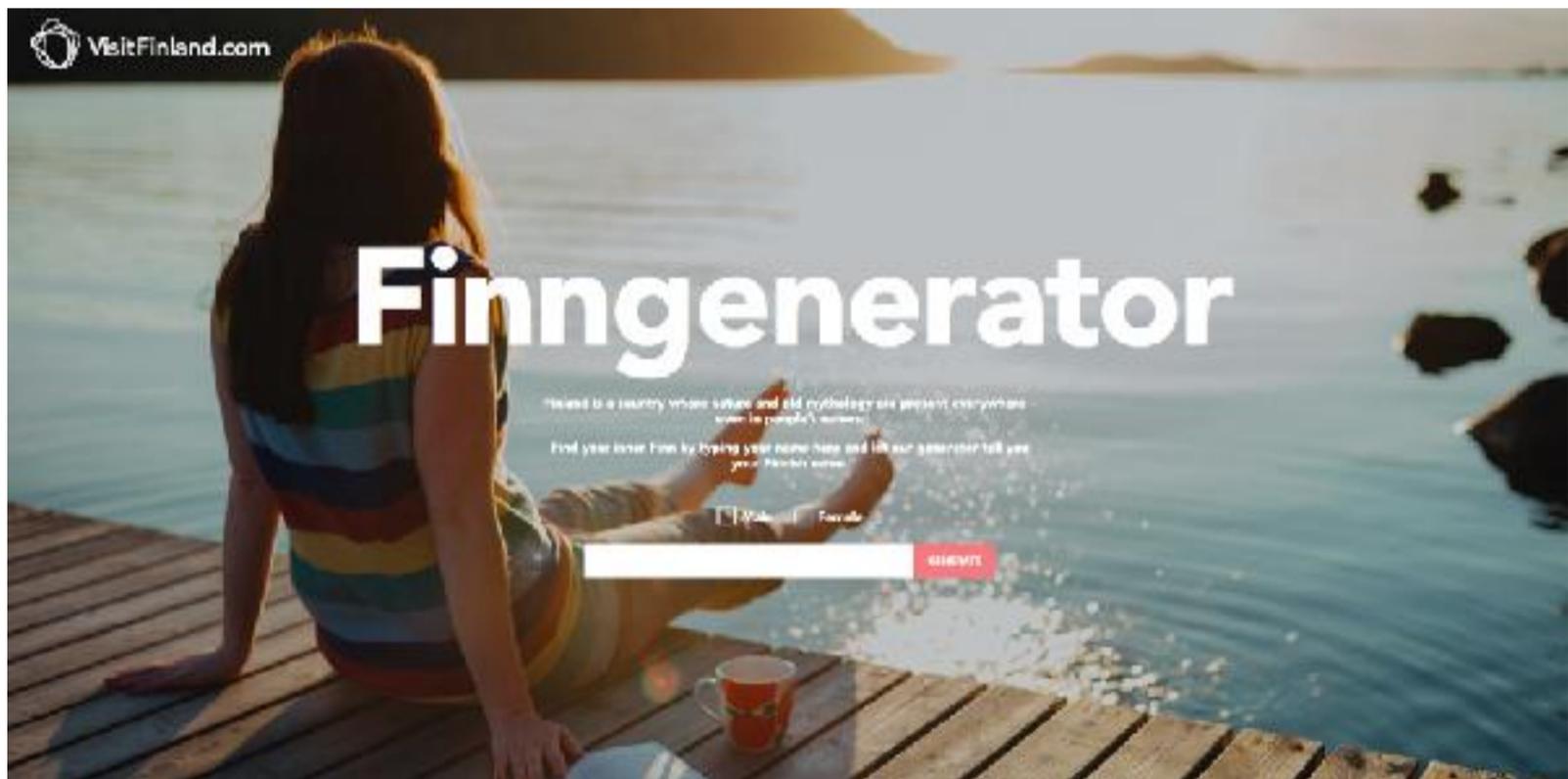


CASE STUDIES AND TALKS

Visit Finland's Destination Branding

Finland offers unique potential as a tourist destination. It has many strings to its bow - natural sights of outstanding beauty, a unique local culture and the famous Northern Lights. Yet despite its exceptional qualities, and perhaps because of its northern location and less than Mediterranean climate, the country was once considered a rather niche destination within European tourism.

Undeterred, the Finnish National Tourist Board has successfully translated the qualities associated with Finland into into a compelling and successful branding strategy. Its website has received the #DTTT Award 2013 for Branding, and is considered one of the best examples within the tourist industry of a visually engaging and inspirational website.



[Read the case study](#)



Simply Munich: Changing Perceptions

The brand and destination Munich is well established internationally, especially for things such as beer, beer gardens, and the annual Oktoberfest. However, the city's brand is not well positioned in areas such as innovation, design, art and creativity. Due to the growing expectations and needs of city travellers, cities have to deliver and offer an authentic experience, enriched by the opportunity to meet real people and participate in activities like a local. Target audiences are now much more sophisticated travellers than before, making it necessary for destinations to have a brand and offering that stands apart from other cities. A city has to be emotionally appealing and needs to have an attractive offering.

For München Tourismus, it is crucial to secure market shares in Germany and German-speaking markets as primary target markets due to their sound purchasing power and it being a stable market, relatively unaffected by any crisis. Visitors to Munich often have a high intention to come back for a repeat visit, so communication and marketing efforts need to strengthen the overall awareness of the more diverse, inclusive and year-round tourism offering.



[Watch the case study](#)



Eindhoven365 – Technology, Design, Knowledge

Eindhoven is a modern city located in the South of the Netherlands, being the fifth largest city in the Netherlands with around 225.000 inhabitants. Eindhoven365 is the organisation responsible for the city marketing that has the complex task to ensure visitors worldwide learn about and get to know the city. The city marketing organisation has set an ambitious

What we consider to be great about Eindhoven365, is the fact that the marketing team is creating a new and exciting tourism offering, enabling them to communicate a real passion for the city, uncovering all of the uniqueness and quiriness about Eindhoven. By 2020, the city aims to position itself in the top 10 most innovative regions in the world and to be in the top three in Europe.

To achieve these goals, Eindhoven365 is implementing a city marketing strategy in collaboration with the municipality, local businesses, creative institutions and other stakeholders, driving the city forward towards achieving its high ambitions in a co-creation process for the new city brand identity.



[Watch the case study](#)



Visit San Diego and the consistency of the brand

In spring 2019 the DTTT Team visited the offices of San Diego Tourism Authority, the DMO of the Californian city. We met Candice Eley, Director of Communications, who took us on an office tour and explained to us the role of the DMO and the current projects and campaigns. What stood out of their work is that the brand Visit San Diego is a true representation of consistency: the identity of the place is perfectly represented graphically and in all the messaging spread across the various channels. Visit San Diego was able to adapt the brand to digital and social media, using user generated content and tons of video footage transforming them into fun and playful pieces of content on the brand's platforms.

This case study is currently work-in-progress, so stay tuned for the publication on the Launchpad 😊



COMING SOON!



Colombia - Tackling Mistaken Identity on a Global Scale

People unfamiliar with Colombia tend to confuse the Andean country's name, both in spelling and pronunciation, with Columbia, the name of a university, a Canadian province, and a sportswear brand. High-profile spelling offenders include Starbucks, Disney, and even the CIA. Patriotic Colombians, and others who love the country, were becoming increasingly frustrated with these constant mistakes. After all, having one's entire national identity reduced to the level of a sportswear brand is rather discouraging.

The country decided to conceive a social media campaign called 'it's Colombia, NOT Columbia' with a serious mission, to educate the world on the correct way to spell their country's name. The campaign, launched on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, asks supporters to photograph themselves wearing specially designed T-shirts bearing the simple catchphrase 'It's Colombia, NOT Columbia', then post the photos to the campaign's social media channels. In addition to this, the campaign organisers gather examples of misspellings from around the world and post them to the social channels, complete with witty comments gently chastising the individual/group/organisation responsible for the error.

This is an example of how branding is a hard mission when a change of perception is needed.



[Read the case study](#)



Montreux Riviera: Local Guides as Central to the Brand Strategy

Montreux is an affluent district in Switzerland and as a DMO, Montreux Riviera Tourism benefits from a substantial marketing budget. Over the years, Montreux Riviera has developed a strategy that is dynamic, unique and most significantly, completely free! The first thing that comes to mind here at the #DTTT is, “the best things in life are free”, and in today’s experience market, this could not be more fitting.

Over the last few years, there has been a growing demand for truly local and authentic experiences which looks set to continue rising throughout 2019, and what better way to showcase a region than with those who love and live in the destination themselves. This is why the Swiss destination has decided to embark on a mission to enhance human contact and focus on local people, their stories and passions for the destination, and delivering this through effective digital strategies to inspire and engage the visitor.

Be My Guide is the name of this initiative that is central to Montreux Riviera’s brand strategy.



[Watch the case study](#)



Visit Finland and the Seamless Brand Experience

Visit Finland won the Digital Tourism Think Tank's 2013 award for Branding. They joined us in Barcelona in 2013 to share insights with the rest of the DMO community about the approach they were taking in creating a seamless brand experience, at all resolutions.

Successful in delivering a strong multi-resolution brand across mobile, tablet and desktop, Visit Finland really 'get it' when we speak about three-screen strategies and where their brand should sit on each.



[Watch the talk](#)



Eindhoven's Unconventional Success Story

With so many inspiring case studies and best practices on content, from working with bloggers to successful hashtag campaigns, as a DMO it's hard not to be inspired and follow suit. Eindhoven, however, is a city which has taken a different turn in its overall business strategy as a DMO and more concretely in how that plays out in its activities.

Peter Kentie shares insights on how he has led Eindhoven, a seemingly banal Dutch city, to becoming a serious contender amongst European city break destinations. With his leadership, Peter has taken an unconventional approach to its brand strategy, the inclusion of stakeholders, the triggers for great content creation and the factors behind real social ambassadorship. This may just make you rethink everything.



[Watch the talk](#)



Destination Brand Stories - Visit Wales

Bryn Halliwell and his content team at Visit Wales have been working on a full-scale transformation of their approach to content, with dedicated teams heading up each major social channel to create content, build a community and exploit real-time marketing opportunities as they arise. Working with new types of content and technology, Bryn and his team have been pushing the boundaries of what DMOs normally do with content. From working with a network of talented local content creators and building complex mapping solutions, Visit Wales are aiming to build an outstanding content which lives online with relevance.



[Watch the talk](#)



Ticino Tourism on creating a dynamic brand platform through collaboration

Manuela Nicoletti, Director of Marketing at Ticino Turismo, speaks about the evolution of the destination brand we see today, and how this new brand has been effective in communicating the many different elements that make Ticino unique.

Manuela also shares insight into the importance of content within the communication strategy, generating good video material and photo galleries, focusing on storytelling and inspirational content. As well as why traditional print media is still included in the strategy. Micro experiences are also part of the new strategy.



[Watch the talk](#)



Talking Branding, Happiness and Global Trends

Danish Farhan is the founder of a boutique brand consulting agency known as Xisché. Based in the UAE, Danish is heading all the way to sunny Kristiansand to talk about what makes a successful brand, why happiness is so important for the visitor economy and how to achieve desirability as a travel brand.

As part of this talk, Danish shares some thought-provoking ideas, getting under the skin of what drives a strong brand in tourism. With a wealth of experience and success in the destination branding of Dubai, Danish dives into the components of happiness and how Dubai as a city decided to change their approach in marketing the city worldwide. For destinations that are in the process of re-thinking their destination branding or for those that are looking to be inspired by an innovative approach, Danish shares some great thoughts and inspires us to innovate ourselves, thinking outside the box.



[Watch the talk](#)



TEMPLATES

1. Shaping the Brand - Sprint

This Shaping the Brand mural is one of our sprint murals designed to get your whole team working together to shape your brand!

This mural takes you through each aspect of your brand so you are able to get a holistic view of how your brand currently works with your organisation. It then walks you through identifying how you want to shape your brand from your communication to your key audiences.



[Download the PDF](#)

[Mural template](#)



2. Brand Identity Wheel

We have created this mural to help you pinpoint your brand Identity.

We are going to start by getting you to explore some of the more visual details of your brand, such as your brand strap-line, your brand's tone of voice, and the colours and typography you use to convey your brand on your online platforms.

We will then move over to the brand identity wheel in the middle of the mural, allowing you to explore your Brand Identity, how your brand works in action, and your brand values, and see how all three of these aspects can work together to create a strong brand.

Finally, we will get you to explore your brand values and your brand in action a little further as well as delving deeper to discover your brand essence.



[Download the PDF](#)

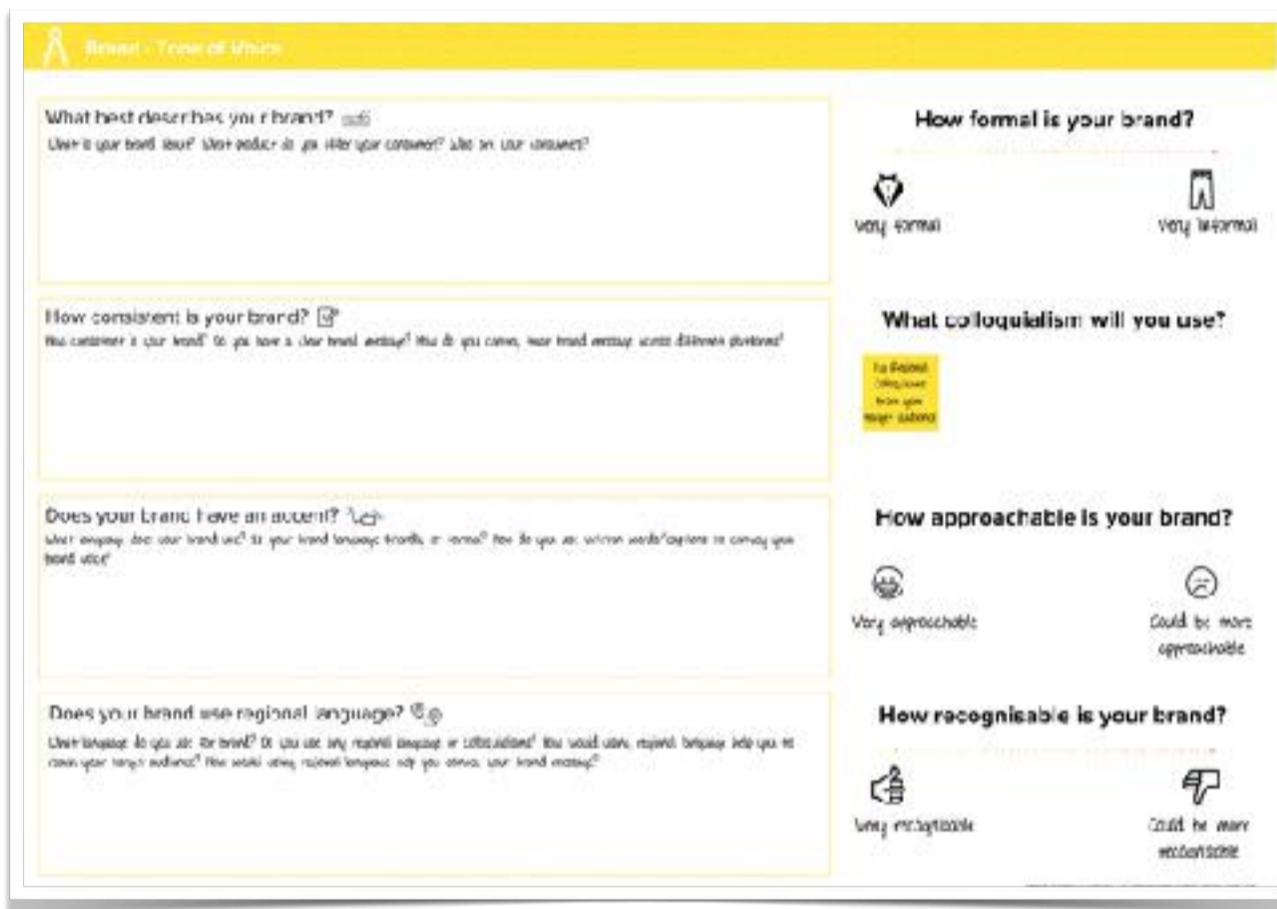
[Mural template](#)



3. Brand Tone of Voice

In this Brand Tone of Voice template, we will walk you through how to identify, shape and strengthen your brand's tone of voice.

We will look at what best describes your brand, how consistent is your brand, whether your brand has an accent, and what colloquialism you should use to fit your brand's tone of voice. This mural will also help you look at how formal/ approachable your brand is currently and whether this fits with the image you have for your brand in the future.



[Download the PDF](#)

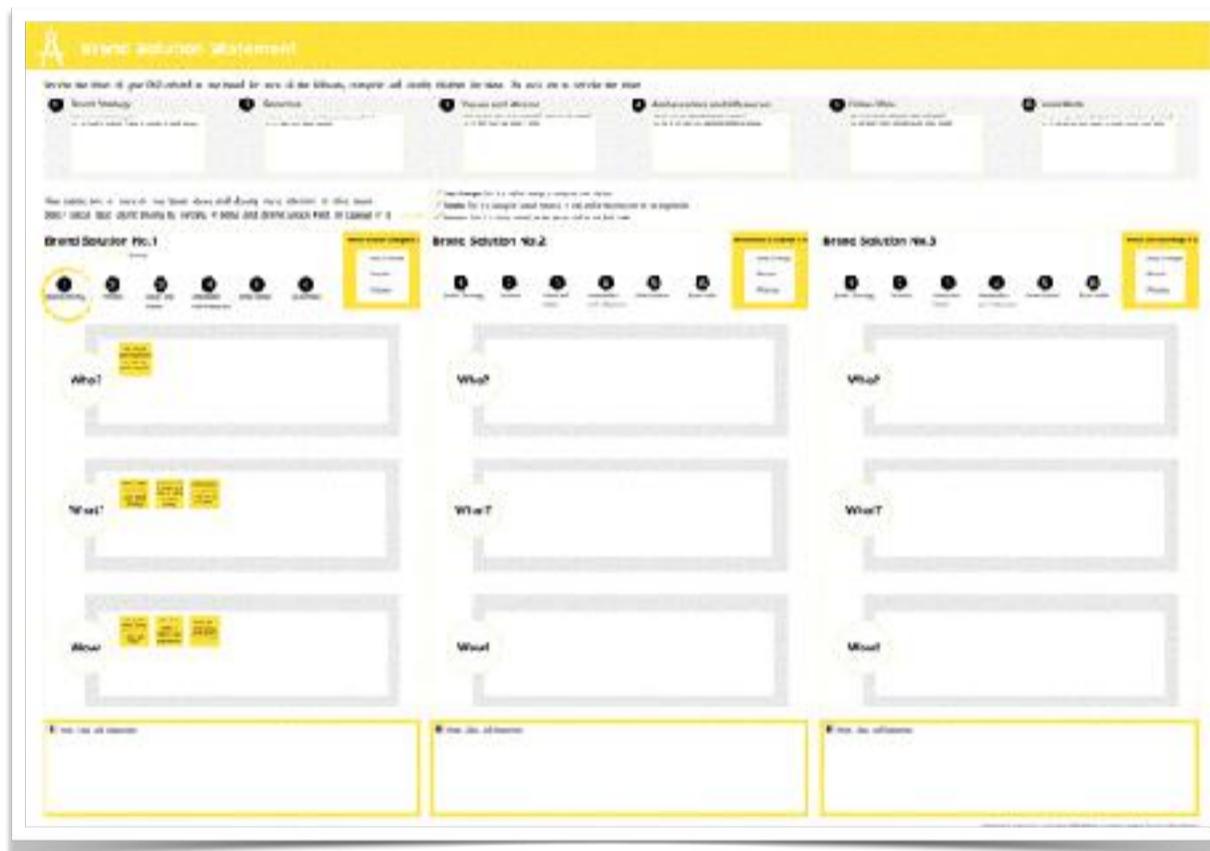
[Mural template](#)



4. Brand Solution Statement

The Brand Solution Statement template is one of our sprint murals, designed to help your team to work together to come up with brand solutions for your DMO.

This mural will guide you through identifying the issues you currently have with branding in your DMO. We will then walk you through creating dynamic solutions for the issues, helping you find your "who" (Who you will need on your team to help you solve this particular issue) your "what" (what your solution is, what modifications you need to make to your current brand strategy and what resources you'll need to make your solution happen) and your "wow" (How your solution is going to impact your brand!)



[Download the PDF](#)

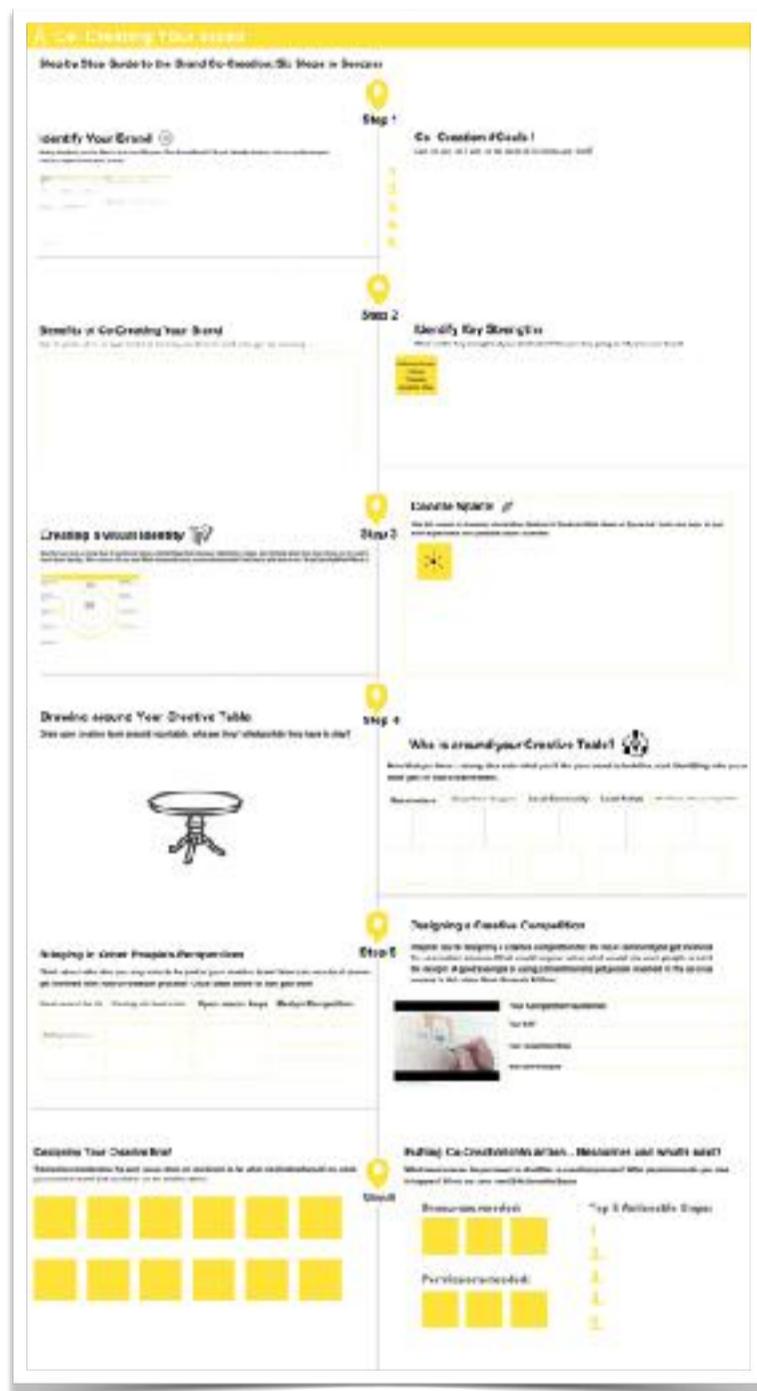
[Mural template](#)



5. Co-creating Your Brand

The Co-creating Your Brand template is designed to walk you through the process of co-creating your brand, inspired by Eindhoven's amazing approach to creating a new brand inspired and built by their local community.

This template helps you to consolidate your ideas for your brand and takes you step-by-step through the process of co-creating your brand, from identifying who you want to sit around your creative table, to creating a design competition so your local community can get involved.



[Download the PDF](#)

[Mural template](#)



6. Brand Benchmarking

In this Mural we walk you through the process of benchmarking your brand against other DMO brands you admire looking at aspects such as consistency, creativity, visual cues, personality and purpose.

Benchmarking is a valuable exercise as it allows you to pinpoint what your competitors are doing well and where you as a DMO are excelling against the competition giving you an accurate idea of your brand performance and allowing you to create clear actionable steps to improve your brand going forward.

Benchmark Areas	Your Brand	Example Brand 1:	Example Brand 2:	Example Brand 3:	Your Priorities
Consistency How do we ensure identity consistency?		Example: Visit DMO			
Creativity What inspired you about the creativity of our brand?					
Common visual cues to link channels How often are brand and channel visual cues in line with 'purpose'?					
Personality How often are brand and channel 'personality' representation consistent?					
Purpose What is the purpose of our brand identity?					

[Download the PDF](#)

[Mural template](#)

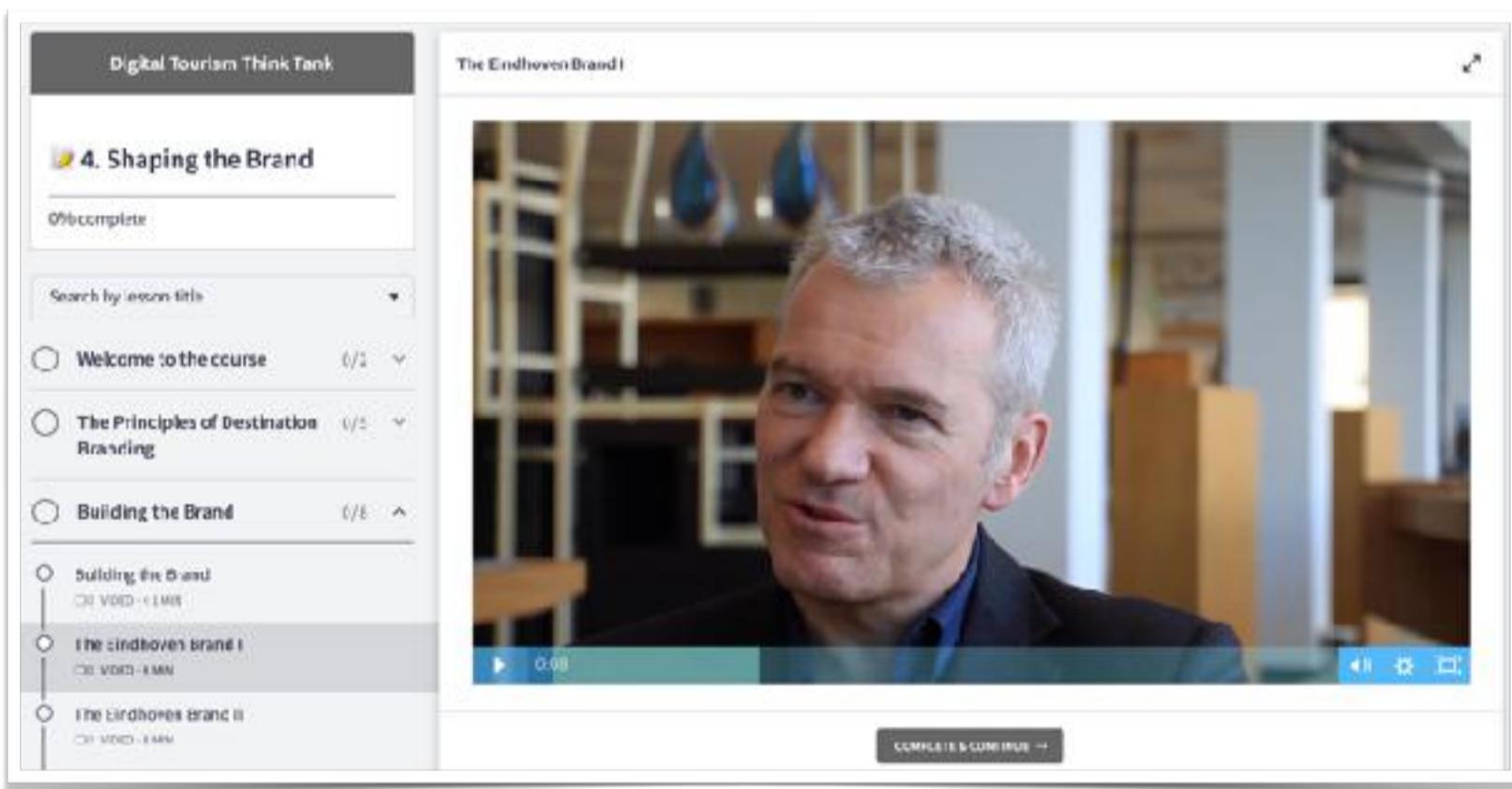


ONLINE LEARNING

As the previous chapters of the Transformation, we released the fourth module of the 12 Part DMO Transformation Course, Shaping the Brand, to guide you in understanding the topic through the **online learning course** with video lessons, quizzes and many case studies and examples related to this stage of transformation.

Once completed, you'll get a certificate which shows you are equipped to start changing your organisation with the #DTTT's seal of approval.

Click on the link below to join the course. If you are a #DTTT Member, ask the Launchpad Resource Manager of your DMO how to access the course, or contact the #DTTT Team through the chat on the Launchpad or by email at michela@thinkdigital.travel.



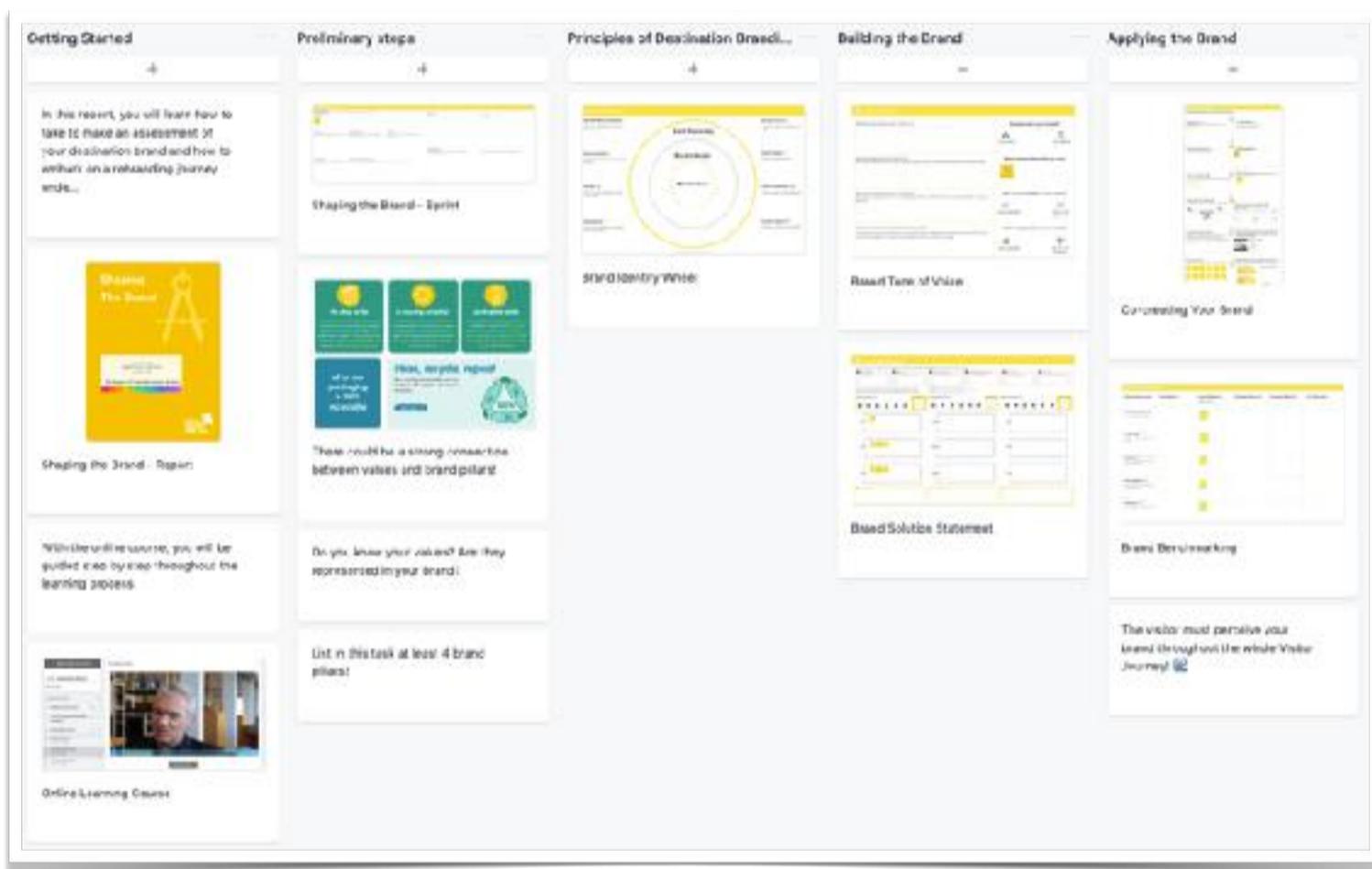
[Go to the online course!](#)



ASANA PROJECT TEMPLATE

Along with this report, templates and online course about Shaping the Brand, we created an Asana Project Template that you can import into your [Asana](#) workspace to start working on your branding strategies and be at the forefront of this fundamental aspect of tourism.

With this, you'll have a project with multiple tasks to plug-in and play, including the actions you need to take to understand your visitors' needs, the local industry's needs and offer and start creating memorable products and experiences for your visitors.



[Go to the Asana Project](#)

