



**How a new brand “Floating Garden 2050” has been established?  
An investigation of the branding implemented in the city of Szczecin.**



*"...being in possession of the truth is not enough. The truth must be sold"*

**Anholt. S.**

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**Abbreviation.**

**BNA** – Brand Nature Access

**CPC**- Corporate Profile Consulting

**UNWTO**-World Tourism Organization

**GUS** – Główny Urząd Statystyczny/Central Statistical Office

**PLN**- Polish Zloty (Polish currency)

**DKK**- Danish Krone (Danish currency)

**USD**- United State Dollar (United State of America currency)

## **1. Introduction.**

The branding is a well-known method to introduce new products or services to the customer. Brands such as Coca Cola, Sony, Heineken, Macintosh and Microsoft are well known to almost everybody around the world. The brands stop to be just markers which present the product. They became a part of pop-culture and even give some people something to identify with. For example, take the expression: “I am I-Person” which refers to the Macintosh corp. The sentence indicates that an individual is emotionally attached to the products provided by this specific supplier. One cannot imagine more successful strategy than this. The thing which makes brand so interesting is an ability to become something more; to live its own life, not necessary according to the intentions of their makers. What is more, in most cases additionally respond caused by a brand has positive consequences. Furthermore, the brand has even bigger importance with regard to the tourism industry. The tourism product is characterized by intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability. Those aspects make the tourism attraction very difficult to manage. For instance, take a tour made by some supplier is perceived in subjective way by the tourists. Every person has his own motivations and preferences which affect their judgment about the experience in which they participated.

The paper as a Master Thesis has to contain a research made in areas such as policy, organization, management and marketing. It has been decided to focus mostly on destination branding process. Those areas were chosen because they received an increasing interest over last three decades from both marketing academics and practitioners. The international market is much more competitive nowadays (HANKINSON 2001:127). Therefore, many countries such as India (Incredible India), New Zealand (100% pure Zealand), Scotland (Silicon Glen) and cities like Singapore (Live it up in Singapore), Paris (Paris is for lovers) and Copenhagen (wonderful Copenhagen) implemented new marketing strategies and brands to achieve their goals. The paper focuses on the tourism branding and marketing as a strategy and not only their promotional aspect.

The destination branding process differs from building brand of a regular product that can be touched, tasted and applied to a particular object. For instance, take Coca Cola that is presented above. To understand those differences one need to understand what the branding is.

There are many definitions which describe the brand. For the purpose of the paper two definitions were chosen. The first one states that *“The promise of the bundles of attributes that someone buys and that provides value ... The attributes that make up a brand may be real or illusory, rational or emotional, tangible or invisible”*(Blichfeldt 2003:11). In that approach the brand is a promise, something that is going to be given. It means the product or service gives a chance to gain something, but there is always a threat that the promise will not be fulfilled. It also emphasizes that the brand is combining separate attributes in one to make it more recognizable. Those issues are significant in the later discussion after the subject of the thesis is introduced. *“A brand is a simple thing, it is in effect a trademark, which, through careful management, skillful promotion and wide use, comes in the mind of customers to embrace a particular and appealing set of values and attributes, both tangible and intangible ... it is also much more than merely a label”* (2003:11). The definition underlines that the brand can be successful only when it is combined with the relevant strategies and actions. Overall, the goal of those accomplishment is to produce a specific emotional correlation in the customer mind.

The destination branding is different from branding tourism products because it requires involvement of many diverse stakeholders who supply the customers with various services. The branding gives a chance to connect all those suppliers under one brand “umbrella” and to produce strategy which enables them to follow the same direction. A destination requires many actions to implement a new brand because those actions mostly need changes in place’s policies and organization. If these actions are to be successful they have to contain the public and private stakeholders’ cooperation. The number of various stakeholders makes the destination marketing and branding very difficult to work with because a convincing-for-all-actors consensus has to be reached. In some cases it is very hard to achieve it or even it is impossible because of the differences in individuals aims. On the other hand, those aspects make the subject even more interesting to investigate.



All those features above are important when a person is going to make a decision where to go. The managers or other leaders to successfully manage the place branding have to first understand what factors drive the customers' motivations.

As with the other businesses, the first question always is what do I need?

Do I need a new car? Do I want this hat? What I need it for? What I can get in exchange?

The second question is how I am willing to pay for it?

It appears that there should not be any objections to relate those questions to a customer choice toward destinations.

For example, if somebody already has made the decision that he wants to travel, at first he surely considers where exactly he wants to go. And next - how much can he or is willing to pay for it? The second question certainly has an influence on the first and vice versa. For instance, if somebody wishes to go for his dream vacations he will spend more than a person who goes to an annual vacation just to relax.

Furthermore, the decision-making process is one of the areas that were deeply investigated by the researchers in the past (O'Fallon 2005:375). In academic literature the decisions made by the customers are based on two factors: pull and push. There are many definitions of them. However, in simple words the push factors answer to the question 'whether to go?'. The pull factors answer to the question 'where to go?' (Goossens 2000:301) In addition, the pull factors are responsible for the psychological processes that take place in the customer's mind such as needs, motives and drives. In that context those factors affect the tourist's decisions whether to make the trip or not. Of course, such a need somehow has to be fulfilled. Pull factors aid to make a decision "where to go?". Pull factors are for instance, Advertising, Services, Promotion, Attractions etc. The first group of factors are also called "consumer dispositions" the second "Marketing Stimuli". (2000:304) According to Klenosky (2002) "...*PUSH factors refer to the specific forces in our lives that lead to the decision to take a vacation, while PULL factors refer to those that lead an individual to select one destination over another once...*". The leaders and managers usually have bigger influence on the pull factors because it is possible to directly control and influence them, which gives a significant advantage in branding and marketing processes. As it can be seen the factors are called marketing stimuli not without the reason. They refer to the actions, which are directly provided by marketing decisions and strategies makers. In other

words, the marketing or branding management can have influence on how their product is presented, promoted and consequently, what is their product quality but they have a minimum influence on what the potential tourist have in mind. Nevertheless, Goossens (2000:302) argues that both factors should be important during the marketing process and involvement is what combines them. Klenosky (2002:386) claims that pull factors are more essential in choosing the destinations. However, both aspects are important to understand the tourist's decision-making process.

The pull and push factors example shows how many related and unrelated aspects are important as far as the tourism-decision-making process is concerned. How that knowledge is used to gain desired goals depends on people involved in marketing and branding strategies. As it is noted above, many countries and cities have their brand to interest potential investors and tourists. Most of them are well known by the general viewer. However, the novelty seeking is a key motive to travel (Goossens 2000:305). There are places very close to "The Western" world which still have something new to reveal. One of those places is Poland.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Poland was 18<sup>th</sup> most visited country in the world in 2008. Unfortunately, the researcher had no access to the newest data.

The Polish landscape can be divided into three parts: North, Central and South. The north of Poland has the longest coast along Baltic Sea and the land with “thousands” lakes in the north-east. The Central Poland’s landscape is characterized by lowlands whereas the South’s by highlands and mountains. The diversity of the land, 1000 years of history, rich culture and relatively new market make the place surely worth visiting. The biggest cities in Poland are

### Szczecin on the map



**Fig. 01)** from: <http://www.szczecinhotel.com> & <http://www.holidaycityeurope.com/polandhotels/> 22-02-2012

Warszawa, Krakow, Poznan, Gdansk, Lodz, Wroclaw and Szczecin. The goal of this paper is to focus on the new brand established by the last city.

Szczecin is situated in the north-west of Poland, close to Polish-German border where the river Odra meets the Baltic Sea (fig. 01). The city has a population of around 400,000. Szczecin has a reputation as a ‘green city’, and not without reason. There are few cities in Poland so replete with vegetation, water areas, and convenient climatic conditions for residence or tourism. Only an hour’s journey by car, rail or waterway divides the residents of Szczecin from well-known seaside resorts: Świnoujście (with its ferry services towards Denmark and Sweden), Międzyzdroje, Dziwnów, and Rewal.

## 2. Problem formulation.

In the 2008 the city hall of Szczecin presented a new branding called “Floating Garden 2050”. The main idea was to establish a brand of the town, which helps to distinguish the city from

others towns in Poland, Europe and the World. That leads the researcher to pose the following question:

**“How a new brand “Floating Garden 2050” has been established? An investigation of the branding implemented in the city of Szczecin.”**

The goal of this paper is to make an investigation regarding a new brand “Floating Garden 2050”. The researcher at first collected second-hand data such as SWOT analysis, brochures, articles, web sites etc. to build a general view of the place. That information is used to present the city and the brand, branding and marketing processes through answering on the three sub-questions.

The first sub-question is **“what was the situation in the city before the brand was established?”** The answer to that question is constructed through brief description of the destination with emphasis being put on natural aspects. Next, based on “Szczecin’s Development Strategy 2002-2015” and other material gained from the City Hall and articles from local newspapers the chapter presents Szczecin’s situation and the public interest in promotion and tourism by introducing the city mission stated in above-mentioned paper, promotion strategies and SWOT analysis. That gives an overview of the city’s past situation and enumerates targets and goals the public sector aimed to achieve before the “Floating Garden 2050” brand was established.

The purpose of questions presented in inquires is also to discover: **“what constructs the new brand of Szczecin and how it was implemented?”** Answering to above question is conducted by analyzing the information gained by semi-structured interviews with the director of Promotion and Information Bureau in the Szczecin city hall and with brand consultant, owner and founder the Brand Nature Access (BNA) Company, which was directly involved in brand creation. Both interviews are used as a primary data to which researcher frequently refers to. The responses from both interviews are also discussed and criticized relying on Destination Brand and marketing communication theory such as the 33 success factors in destination marketing by M.J. BAKER (2007) and Five guiding principles for management of destination brands by G.

HANKINSON (2006) and some more. Furthermore, the chapter will introduce and describe shortly the attributes of logo, motto and the philosophy according to the interviews and articles from various sources. The aim of it is to provide an understanding of what the new brand is and why it was even established.

The next step is to compare statistics before and after brand was established using the data obtained from the statistic bureau. That helps to investigate: **“how the situation change after the brand was implemented?”** Moreover, the last chapter based on the theory of tourism life cycle shows what kind of influence had the branding to the tourism development in Szczecin. (Butler 1980) Butler’s classification seems to be relevant because he shows the evolution of tourism industry in six described stages. Moreover, the theory might be applied to various destinations from resort to the whole cities and it is the most widely accepted model of tourism development (Andriotis 2006:1). The theory helps to identify what has been achieved during a short period of branding process in the city of Szczecin and what kind of threats the leaders have to be aware of in the near future.

The topic and main question of the paper has been chosen because of its novelty. Only recently in Poland the destination has become perceived as a product, which has to be traded to achieve a common good. However, as it was noted above there are many differences between what frequently is perceived as a product such as: refrigerator, TV, car etc. or even services such as: insurances, housekeeping, travel offices and a destination product. That aspect is described more deeply in the later part of the paper. Szczecin as a destination seems to be very interesting subject to investigate, especially if one takes into consideration the implementation of the new branding, which is one of the first made from the scratch in Poland based on totally new concept. Despite the fact that population of the city is similar to other big cities in the country the town struggles with many problems, which others cities seem to have solved much earlier. The new brand gives a chance to deal with those problems by giving the city a new perspective and guidelines to improve the town resources and interest more tourists and investors. That is reason why it is so important to investigate how and why was the new brand established and implemented.

### 3. Methodology

The following chapter presents methodology and methods which are used to investigate the question stated in the problem formulation, which is: **How a new brand “Floating Garden 2050” has been established? An investigation of the branding implemented in the city of Szczecin.** The description of the methods and their importance to the matter helps to build guidelines that have directed the researcher during the investigation process. The most important goal of this chapter is to explain clearly why particular methods were chosen instead of others. To make it more understandable the methods are compared with the opposite techniques. The process reveals those factors, which are the most functional for the purpose of the paper. The chapter begins with descriptions of basic and applied methods. Afterwards, two kind of reasoning are introduced which are used to investigate various subjects depending on the specific problems and factors. The next step is to present two methods of conducting researches that rely on two different methods of analyzing the data. Finally, the methodology part describes what kind of information is collected and which have the biggest importance to the paper.

#### 3.1 Basic and Applied Researches.

There are a few methods that enable to examine the subject. Firstly, the basic research is presented. The basic research is defined as one which “...reveals knowledge that will increase the understanding of tourism-related phenomena per se, and is not intended to address specific short-term problems or to achieve specific short-term outcomes” (WEAVER 2006:378) Applied method is an opposite way to conduct the research and is defined in the following way “*applied research is based on the intended end result of the investigation (...) Applied research is commonly associated with private corporations or government agencies charged with the task of addressing specific issues...*” (WEAVER 2006:379 & 381) The aim of this master thesis is to increase the understanding of some general and particular issues. The presented paper is investigating the branding established in the town of Szczecin. However, the purpose of the research is not to assess whether the brand is successful or not. The aim is to understand how the process of the branding and marketing strategies is implemented and why. Therefore, it had been decided to choose the basic research. The research is deeply investigating the whole branding

process since every beginning until present day, using the presented above method. That process helps to understand the destination branding and marketing better which is why that method had been chosen instead of others.

### **3.2 Inductive and Deductive reasoning.**

As it is stated in the problem formulation the paper answers to the question by conducting the investigation. There are two approaches that refer to the basic research and might be helpful in that matter: induction and deduction. The first method is described as “...*the repeated observation and analysis of data lead to the formulation of theories or models that link these observations in a meaningful way*” (2006:380). As a result of this technique, the researcher is slowly gaining the new information from what he has observed. At the beginning of the process there is no assumption what can be a result of those actions. While the data is analyzed, the examiner is getting a general knowledge about the subject. Consequently, it leads him to a general theory and conclusion. The presented-above type of reasoning is valuable if the researcher investigates some situation or pattern that appears in some destination. The goal is to formulate the model which can be helpful to solve particular problem or threat. On the other hand, it can facilitate the discovery of new opportunities, which may not appear at first but can help to develop a destination afterwards. The inductive reasoning is also known as “bottom up” approach. The understanding of the subject is conducted at first from not connected facts, which consequently leads to a general conclusion. The data are combined in one unified theory what might provide guidelines to solve the problems included in the problem formulation. The opposite method presents entirely different way to provide the basic researches. Deductive technique “...*begins with an existing theory or model, and applies this to a particular situation to see whether it is valid in that case*” (2006:380). The deduction, which is a result of the deductive method, is mostly known from criminal books such as Sherlock Holmes written by Arthur Conan Doyle. In a similar manner as the detective, the researcher is trying to investigate what actions caused the reaction. This reasoning enables to take apart the theory to deeply understand the actions, which is a result of some connected facts. The method is called a “bottom-down” technique. As it is mentioned above, the understanding is moving from the top (general knowledge) to more specific information. That helps to investigate all steps, which were used during the establishment and implementation of the brand in the city of Szczecin. The

investigator is aware of the fact that brand has already existed. There are no doubts about that. However, it is not clear what provoked the city hall's decision to undertake such an action and strategy. It is also unknown how the implementation was provided and also what kind of stakeholders were involved. What is more, that method helps to analyze how the new brand affects the town and inhabitants. The paper is not presenting any judgments about the strategy. Nevertheless, is important to describe what was the situation in Szczecin after the brand was launched and how it had looked before that moment. It presents the role of the brand in the modern tourism market. It is also a part of the conducted project. The threat related to deduction is that in order to investigate the matter it is necessary to contact with various actor and if they decline the cooperation it might be impossible to answer on the question stated in the problem formulation. However, the advantage is that through analyzing the secondary data it is possible to deduct some relevant conclusions and basing on other works still come up with satisfying results. Thus the researcher decided to follow deductive reasoning, which emphasizes reliance on the cause and effect during the whole investigation.

### **3.3 Quantitative and Qualitative researches.**

Following the deductive reasoning the researcher has to collect a relevant data to answer to stated question. In academic literature there are two kinds of data and two methods to gain them. This subchapter shortly presents those two approaches: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative approach is defined in a following way: *“Quantitative research uses methods adopted from the physical sciences that are designed to ensure objectivity, generalizability and reliability. These techniques cover the ways research participants are selected randomly from the study population in an unbiased manner, the standardized questionnaire or intervention they receive and the statistical methods used to test predetermined hypotheses regarding the relationships between specific variables. The researcher is considered external to the actual research, and results are expected to be replicable no matter who conducts the research.”* (WEINREICH 1996:53). The citation describes general factors that determine a purpose and implementation process of quantitative researches. Among scholars there is a heated debate whether this method is the only one which can be presented as a scientific or not (GOODSON & PHILLIMORE 2004:3). In the academic literature the strongest argument in support of that conjecture is that the hypothesis which can be measured and proved is the only scientific method.



Basing on that, the only technique to understand phenomena is by experiments and measurement as those guarantee objectivity. (HUNT 1991:33) That approach is very close to what in philosophy is called positivism. The positivism states that the only method to explore and investigate something is to observe and measure it. The goal of that process is to avoid situation when the data is contaminated with the researcher assumptions and pre-knowledge, what according to that approach make it irrelevant, questionable, subjective and consequently unscientific.

The qualitative approach is the opposition to that. The qualitative method has been broadly applied in social researches. The general definition states that “*qualitative methods are employed to collect data about activities, events, occurrences and behaviors and to seek an understanding of actions, problems and processes in their social context.*” (GOODSON & PHILLIMORE 2004:3) The method presents the point of view that the researcher by analyzing the data is basically seeking for patterns in social behaviors which enable him to understand the phenomena and formalize the theory or conclusion. The biggest difference between qualitative and quantitative method is following. The first one is mostly based on unstructured or semi-structured interviews, literature, open-ended questionnaires, unstructured observations. The second is based only on what can be represented by numbers. The weakness of the qualitative method comes from analyzing data process. There is always a threat that the researcher will present assumptions that can be hard to verify. However, in social and tourism researches the method is in common use. The qualitative method facilitates understanding of the phenomena from the perspective of its participants. According to that the social and tourism behavior are based on interactions and interpretation. The aim is to identify those behaviors and produce a theory that helps to understand and predict the actions of the participants in phenomena. In the tourism industry there is a need to identify how the tourists will use the product. That means a manager has to understand issues such as decision-making process, which is hardly measurable by numbers. The manager observes an interaction between some patterns of behaviors. That process helps him to administer a product better and consequently to avoid undesirable situations, for instance bankruptcy or being out of resources. Of course, qualitative research has much more implementations but that seems to be the most important one.

It has been decided that in order to answer to subject stated in the problem formulation, it is necessary to follow both approaches. The recognition of the situation before the new brand was established, during the implementation process and afterwards, requires collecting, describing and comparing statistic data published by Central Statistical Office (GUS – Główny Urząd Statystyczny). However, recognition of the situation requires using additional information, which cannot be analyzed by using quantitative method. Recognition of the brand and marketing process require observing and investigating the stakeholder, which were directly involved in designing and implementation an idea of “Floating Garden 2050”. In addition, the information about the brand distributed by independent publishers are compared and analyzed with presented sources to produce relevant conclusion. The qualitative method is also used to discuss the theory about the branding and marketing destinations to better understand actions, which have been implemented in Szczecin. Using both methods allows to produce outcome, which clearly presents the process mentioned in the problem formulation. Those two methods are combined in the paper because only both of them minimize the threat that the information stated here will not answer to the question introduced in the problem formulation. In social and tourism researches it is difficult to rely only on numbers because this field contains variable factors, which mostly depend on subjective interpretation on the object of studies and the researcher. For instance: non-structured and semi-structured interviews have to be interpreted before the publishing. However, the development and improvement process might be measured in some scope by statistical data and structured interviews that in convenient manner help to build a general view about the destination. Consequently, both qualitative and quantitative data are used in the paper.

### **3.4 Secondary and Primary Data.**

The quantitative and qualitative data is created from primary and secondary data. Both of them and their construction are briefly introduced below.

The investigation of the “Floating Garden 2050” requires collecting various data from many different sources. The information-gaining process was conducted before the problem formulation was made and continued during the whole procedure.

The research literature distinguishes two kinds of data: secondary and primary data. The distinction between those two types has been clearly explained by the scholars of social studies.

Therefore, it is evident how to classify the collected information nowadays. The secondary data is described as that information which has been collected by other researches. (WEAVER 2006:391) That includes Academic Journals, Academic books, Statistical Compilations, Newspapers and magazines and eventually the internet. All those sources are used in the paper and briefly described below.

### **3.5 Secondary Data**

#### *Academic Journals:*

The academic journals are a core source of secondary data (2006:392). The articles are broadly used in the paper because the double-blind reviewing process gives the certainty that the information is relevant and written by qualified author. The information gives a better view of the subject and is used to investigate, compare and discuss it. Besides that, the academic literature helps to understand and describe the theory on brand management process and marketing strategies. The literature was based on the articles used during the lessons at the university. Afterwards, relying on the list of references the researcher was seeking for extended data in the library and internet. The limitation process emphasized to choose those articles, which were published relatively recently to ensure that data is describing the current situation in the industry. However, in many cases it was not possible to get papers that were not published after 2007.

#### *Academic Books:*

The academic books were also important to explore and understand the matter stated in the problem formulation. The researcher used books when the issue required deeper investigation and knowledge. The books describe the problems extensively and give a perspective on the subject from many different angles what consequently facilitates discussion or comparison of the particular problem or theory. Similar to Academic Journals, the researcher firstly started from the books with which he worked at the university. That helps to develop starting point to explore the problem in more details.

#### *Statistical Compilation*

To get an overview of the situation before and after the brand was established the paper is using the statistical compilation published by Central Statistical Office. The statistics helps to measure whether the number of stays has increased or declined. That information also facilitates the comparison of Szczecin's destination with other destinations in the tourism field.

#### *Trade Publication*

The paper also includes a publication issued by stakeholders such as the City Hall, which are directly involved in the brand management of "Floating Garden 2050". That data helps to describe the city and brand. Moreover, the brochures and power point presentations and articles contain practical information such as SWOT analysis, which is discussed afterwards.

#### *Newspapers and magazines*

To construct "objective" results of the investigation the research has to contain sources that describe the matter but their authors are not directly related to the management. Therefore, it has been decided to use newspapers and magazines. For instance, one of the biggest newspapers in Poland made an overview of several Polish cities, including Szczecin. That source gives an image how others perceive the city as far as tourism is concerned.

#### *The Internet.*

On-line information is a convenient and an easy way to get the data. However, in many cases it is hard to check who the author of the publication is. Even if the source is to some extent identifiable there is no certainty if that data can be relevant to the subject and does not contain false assumption. As a consequence, in the paper the Internet as a direct source is limited to the minimum. Basically, the Internet has been used to find the articles but only from reliable websites such as: articles linked with the Aalborg Library Google Scholar. The paper also used the information published on the official website of the "Floating Garden 2050"

### **3.6 Primary Data**

The crucial part of the investigation presented in the paper is based on primary data. That means, the information is gained directly and it did not exist before (WEAVER 2006:385). According to that the researcher had an interview, which the goal was to better understand the establishing and

implementation processes. That method helps to collect a new data, which was not published before.

In the academic literature there are three types of interviews. Structured interview can be classified as a quantitative research as its questions are inflexible and highly structured. The questions follow a precise pattern that cannot be changed. The advantage of that solution is that the outcome can be easily compared with other responses, which facilitates reaching a specific conclusion. Non-structured interview is a completely different method. The interview does not use any specific questions before the interview is conducted. The researcher only writes a general scheme of the topic, which helps him to remain within the subject. The method is the best solution when the researcher has limited knowledge about the subject, which is investigated. However, there is a threat that the researcher will lose the aim of the interview and the gained information will not produce relevant answers. Finally, the third technique is called semi-structured interview. In that technique, the researcher prepares the questions. Nevertheless, there is still a possibility to ask additional questions while the interview is conducted. (KVALE 1996:125-128) According to that method, the interviewer can easily communicate with the interviewee and minimize a threat of losing the subject. Additionally, some of the questions can show up while the interview is conducted. The last technique has been chosen to guide the researcher during an interviewing process. The data was collected first by e-mail contact with the Promotion and Information bureau. After a short description of interview purpose the researcher got a chance to meet in person with Mr. Piotr Wachowicz, the director of the bureau in Szczecin City Hall. The interview was conducted during a semi-structured interview. From the interview the researcher got information concerning people directly responsible for the brand, including logo, philosophy, mission etc. To get better recognition of the brand, the researcher decided to contact also the Brand Nature Access Company (by e-mail), which was introduced by Mr. Wachowicz. The company has headquarters in Warsaw. Because of time limit, resources and distance it had been decided to send a request to make the interview via Skype. After a positive response, the researcher was directed to and eventually connected with MR. Mariusz Przybył, Brand Consultant, founder and owner of the company. BNA is widely described in a chapter dedicated to brand implementation process.

The goal of the paper is to get a deeper understand how the brand floating garden has been established. Before the interview was conducted the interviewer prepared the questions in the following way. Firstly, during secondary data collection process the academic articles, which clearly state what kind of factors are significant to establish a successful brand, were selected. In that context, the brand can be called successful when it will meet demands shaped by the managers. The questions are based mainly, but not only, on two articles: 33 success factors in destination marketing by M.J. BAKER (2007) and five guiding principles for management of destination brands G. HANKINSON (2007). The interview indentifies “Floating garden 2050” goals and collected data, which is used to answer on three sub-questions presented in the problem formulation.

The first question was constructed to minimize the distance between interviewer and interviewee. Those goals were accomplished by formulating personal questions about position, history and motivation of the interviewed person. Also the researcher presents the reasons of the conversation and introduces himself before the interview was made.

The paper contains two interviews made with the stakeholders directly involved in constructing and managing the brand. The first company - called BNA - was responsible for designing the brand and indentifying the aims and philosophy of new “product”. That information is mostly used to describe what were the reasons behind the choice of particular design and strategy to establishing the brand. The second stakeholder is the City Hall of Szczecin which has been involved in the branding management until nowadays. Also the city hall is an originator of the whole project. Those interviews are going to be compared and discussed during the whole process included in the paper. What is more, the interviews are the core of the whole process. They were made in Polish, however the parts that are used in the discussion, comparison or in different way, are going to be translated into English.

Both interviews were recorded and re-written to facilitate referring to them and to avoid losing important information.

### **3.7 The limitations**

Taking into account the time limitation, novelty and low number of publication regards the Floating Garden 2050” those methods appear to be the best to investigate the problem and produce relevant results. Consequently, the researcher has to be personally involved in the project and come up with the strategy that enables him to get closer to those who either are or were responsible for building the brand. There was a serious threat that primary data might not be possible to collect; in that case the researcher will have still chance to use those information, which were made by others researchers to answer to the problem formulation. All of those methods are presented in opposition to each other to guarantee flexibility in actions.

The methods presented above, as it was mentioned, are used to give relevant and satisfying answers to main question as well as sub-questions formulated in the problem formulation. To gain a better understanding of the subject of destination branding and marketing strategies. The methodology presented above guides the researcher during the whole process of writing the master thesis until the satisfying results is going to be produced.

#### 4 . Theories.

The following chapter presents an overview of various theories according to the destination branding. Referring to the deductive reasoning the hypotheses are presented from general to more specifics. The chapter at the beginning presents a general definition of tourism based on WTO definition of tourist as it enables to indicate the boundaries of the concept to which the paper frequently refers. The next subchapter provides a short introduction of tourism product and characteristic of destination in tourism. The comparison of those two aspects is made to present whether destination might be managed as a regular tourism product or is it a different challenge. Then, chapter again presents briefly the definition of brand, which is also stated in the introduction. The concept is compared with the destination image features to show the differences between those two aspects and their roles in branding. Afterwards, the pull and push factors are presented in more detail to indicate the resources upon which destination branding might operate to change the tourists' decisions toward a particular place. Next, the theories of Anholt (2003), Hankinson (2006) and Baker (2007) related to the destination branding give various guidelines that have to be fulfilled to accomplish successful strategy. Those theories are going to be used later in the paper to investigate the "Floating Garden 2050" branding and the role of stakeholder in the process. Finally, a tourism area cycle of evolution (Butler 1980) with its all evolution stages is introduced. That theory helps to investigate the changes, which the branding caused if any at all, in Szczecin.

"The tourism could be the world's largest single industry"(BRAMWELL 1993:04). Those words are included in enormous number of articles and books. However, there is no question that tourism has a huge importance for world's economy. Even in the time of crisis, people still have to travel. Despite the fact that the IT industry offers new and increasingly more advanced methods of communication there is still a need to meet in person. The general definition and discussion about it is conducted to present a clear explanation of the industry that the paper frequently refers to.

According to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) tourists are people who are "*...traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes*". The definition is supplemented also by an additional



requirement that the stay cannot be shorter than one day. This means that visiting one's neighbors cannot be perceived as tourism. Moreover, if some tourist is lucky or wealthy enough to have his vacations for more than one year in a row he loses his touristic status and becomes a resident of a particular place even if he does not take any job or other activity that is usually perceived as a part of everyday life.

According to what is presented above the researcher states the following definition of tourism which is used during the investigation:

Tourism is an industry or business that specializes in offering to the group or individuals who are staying for more than one day and less than a year away their usual environment or to those who are willing to travel or are already travelling, the products and services that are related to their travel such as: accommodation, transportation, transfers, tours etc.

The most important part of the definition is that tourism offers the services or product to those who are planning or already during their travel. Moreover, the tourism business is always related to a person or a group of people who travel. That means to those who have decided to change their usual environment in which they typically live. Many products and services are related to that industry. Some of them are described in the subsequent part of the chapter. The definitions of both tourism and tourist help to indicate the actions that are related to the business. That division might be difficult because there are many products, which offer services combining two or more different industries such as: restaurants, clubs etc. Furthermore, the entertainment and tourism industries commonly overlap.

Nevertheless, that issue is a case for a different debate. The definition of tourists stated by the UNWTO is in common use. This is the reason for referring to it to produce the definition of tourism for the purpose of this paper.

#### **4.1 Tourism Destination.**

The subject of the master thesis is directly aimed **at a** specific destination. However, it can be unclear what in general defines the destination. According to Baker (2007) *“a destination is a place that attracts visitors for a temporary stay, including continents, countries, states, cities,*

*villages and purpose-built resort areas, and thus is an amalgam of all the tourism services and experiences offered to consumer.”*

The description presents destinations as a kind of background for the tourism.

However, is it possible to perceive a destination itself as a product? It is necessary to explain the definition of tourism product to answer this question.

#### **4.2 Tourism Product.**

*“Tourist product, which can be defined as the combination of tourist attractions and the tourism industry”* (WEAVER & LAWTON 2006:128). According to Weaver and Lawton (2006) the tourism attractions are divided into natural sites, natural events, cultural sites and cultural events. The attractions are combined with one common aim: to convince potential tourists to visit a place. The attraction means a location which pull a person far from home in purpose to observe or to participate in some activity (LEW 1987:554). Furthermore, the paramount attribute of the tourism product is its intangibility. The product cannot be consumed in the same way as other commonly used products such as coca-cola etc. Following that, the tourism attraction is rather an experience than an object. For instance: if somebody is going to the theme park he does not buy a roller coaster, but the experiences that it offers. Of course that practice can be positive or negative but it depends on subjective reaction of the customer. In that context the tourism attraction can be basically everything that attracts people. Nevertheless, the tourism industry *“includes the businesses that provide goods and services wholly or mainly for tourism consumption”* (WEAVER & LAWTON 2006:151). The industry is composed of the following actors: Travel Agencies, Transportation, Accommodation, Tour Operators, and Marchendise. The tourism industry is indelible part of the tourism attraction. An example of natural site which *“... can be sub-divided into topography, climate, water, wildlife, vegetation and location”*(2006:130) provides a better understanding of tourism attraction concept. Yellowstone National Park in United States or Bialowieska Forest located in Poland are one of the most famous examples of tourism attraction.

The role of the industry is to get potential tourists interested in visiting the place and to gain the profit from them. To achieve this goal managers use a variety of marketing and branding techniques. Those two elements of tourism product are significant. The Yellowstone without

travel agencies and tour operators would stay a beautiful place known only for those who are interested in wildlife. Of course, tourists can organize the transport by themselves; however, most of the attractions need proper infrastructure to enable temporary stay such as accommodation which the industry provides.

On tourism market commonly appears a situation when the industry element becomes an attraction itself. For example, some of the hotels, which are defined as accommodation, might be seen as a point of interest. The tourism product is based on the tourists' experiences and is difficult to control because of its intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability.

As a consequence of what is presented above, the destinations are backgrounds for all actions of tourism industry and places where tourism attractions are located. The destinations are much more difficult to manage because of the number of stakeholders and attractions which they contain. In general, tourism product and tourism destination require the same actions to be managed. The only difference between those two notions is that the destination tends to be more complex and needs interaction and partnership to build a successful strategy. The destination can be perceived as a typical tourism attraction that has employees involved in their maintenance, support and management. In view of destination, the role of employees is taken over various stakeholders. The biggest difficulty is to convince those independent actors to work as one and direct them to achieve mutual benefits. Unfortunately, it is not the only problem that the leaders have to be aware of. According to Hankinson (2007) the difference between tourism product and regular product appears in the method of production. The brand or marketing strategy of tangible product can be made before or during the object is produced which applies also to some tourism attraction such as theme parks, amusement parks, shows etc. but most of the tourism attractions do not have that advantage. In that context the destination as tourism product shows its uniqueness. “...*place marketing begins with an old product, the design of which has had little or no marketing influence*” (2007:242) In fact, the cities or countries have their own heritage and history, especially in Europe the urban spatial planning is a relatively new concept. For many centuries the shape of the streets and buildings location have been spontaneously constructed. The cultural sights were not built to attract the tourists but for their own pragmatic purpose.

As a consequence, the leaders have to try to re-brand or re-market what already exists. It is a difficult challenge because most of attractions cannot be changed to fit to the present customers desires; or it may be that the scope of manipulation is very limited.

What is more, different consumers simultaneously consume the tourism destination and products. The interaction of those receivers can result in neither positive nor negative consequences, however the role of the manager is also limited in that matter. Furthermore, the experience of the product is subjective and varies depending on who the receiver of it is. Thus the destination is a multi-service practice and the managers have a very limited power over the suppliers. That makes managing the destination even harder. As it was mentioned above, there is only a slight chance that managers might influence subjective perceptions of their clients if they have direct control over specific destination, but it is very difficult when the attractions or suppliers are controlled by other actors and there is no cooperation between those who are in charge of the government and the private sector. According to Hankinson (2004:242) another threat with branding the destination is Administrative Overlap. Different government leaders can manage some part of natural or urban attractions. That produces unnecessary confusion among the tourists by giving them two different brands of same attractions. That is why, following the unification strategy is so important in destination marketing and branding; on the other hand, in the case of tangible single products such a threat rarely appears. The other aspects distinguishing the destinations from other products are their boundaries. The countries or cities cannot move to another place. Of course, some of the attractions can be built, however most of them cannot. Some of the places are unattractive for tourists because there is nothing there that distinguishes the destination from other destinations. That is why; Hankinson (2007:246) states it is so important to produce creative solutions to change the perception of the place. More often than not the inhabitants do not even know what their city has to offer. The branding managers' goal is to show that unknown uniqueness and market it by using various tools.

The tourism product and destinations are very similar. However, the multi-services, political boundaries, administrative overlaps, coproduction and rebranding make destinations very challenging to work with. As a result the destination branding has to be provided in different manner than a single tourism product. The biggest threat is destination complexity and lack in communication between stakeholders that might occur. The processes which were constructed to avoid those threats are presented later in the paper.

### **4.3 The brand**

The paper is focused on the branding processes and strategies implemented in the specific destination. In the introduction to the paper two definitions of the brand were presented. It helps to pay attention to the following description: the brand combines separate attributes of a product under one label, gives a promise to consumer that he is going to receive something more than what is consumed and the goal of the brand is to affect customer's emotions what can be achieved by certain strategies and processes.

That definition is applied in the investigation included in the paper. That description has been constructed because it refers to the destination branding processes, which are a focal point of the paper.

### **4.4 The destination image**

Before the guidelines for destination branding processes are going to be presented, one issue has to be explained. The brand and image might be perceived as part of the same factor. It is important to show the differences in order to avoid the misunderstandings as the thesis refers to those two different concepts and their role in the branding.

According to (MAZUREK 2008:33) *“image is a critical factor in promotion strategies, and all places have images... the concept of image is multidimensional with cognitive and affective spheres, and has been defined as an amalgam of the knowledge, feelings, beliefs, opinions, ideas, expectation and impressions that people have about a named location.”* As it can be seen, the description directly refers to the image in scope of the destinations. In the view of what is presented above, improving the image is a goal of branding process. All of locations have some image. The crucial thing is whether it is a positive or a negative one. Without the proper marketing and branding strategies the place might be perceived as unattractive in the potential customers' opinion. That of course affects the whole destination as far as economy, life standard and consequently tourism are concerned. The branding management might change undesirable image to attract the tourists, investors and transform the place into something with positive connotations.

In view of the fact that brand is a factor, which role is to affect the destination image. The image might affect the brand in the same manner as the brand image. The positive image is a goal of the branding implementation and the brand is a tool to achieve the goal in the process. The branding has to change the emotion toward destination, which produce the image. Adequately proceeding branding might change a location from undesirable and unknown to eagerly visited tourism place.

#### **4.5 The push and pull factors and their role in destination choice.**

The introduction of the thesis briefly presents the concept of push and pulls factors in view of Klenosky's analysis (2002). The following subchapter discusses those issues to investigate which factor has bigger importance to the subject included in the problem formulation and on what resources the managers might rely to influence the tourists' decisions toward destinations. Prayag and Ryan (2010) in their paper illustrate few divisions of the decision-making process. Nevertheless, they present a various descriptions that investigate concepts of push and pull factors at greater length.

Dann (1977:186) divides the push factors into "anomies" and "ego-enhancement". The first notion refers to the subjective feeling of isolation. Dann (1977) states the people quite often are simply tired of everyday life, they cannot bear a routine and consequently they are seeking for excitement and something that helps them to experience themselves from different perspective and escape from their regular environment. The second notion delineates that the motivation of travelling is driven either by a strong need of people to belong to some group or by a need to self-develop. For instance, Australian backpackers are frequently seen in Europe travelling for a few years before they decide to go home. That trip is a way to prove oneself and for some it is perceived as a first step toward adulthood.

As noted above, the pull factors are strongly related to the emotions and in some manner come from internal drives and needs, which are usually influenced by culture, social relationship and previous experiences of the individuals. Based on the academic literature Pryang and Ryan (2010) present a few frequently described push factors such as: escape, novelty, social interaction and prestige. All those factors indicate a huge importance of creativity and novelty as far as constructing of the new brand of destination is concerned. In other words, the tourists want to feel changed due to the travel and the places that enable to experience it should be promoted.

The push factors are described as those that refer to customers' drives to initiate the travel. That first thought is just the beginning of the decision-making process. The next step for all tourists is to decide when, where and how to go? (Mill & Morrison 1985)

Pull factors are responsible for those decisions. Those factors are related to the features, attractions, or attributes of destination itself. Furthermore, the authors (Pryang & Ryan 2010:122) divide those factors into four categories that are of crucial importance in destination choice such as: "social opportunities and attractions", "natural and cultural attractions", "physical amenities and facilities" and "night life and ambiance". Brand managers have to be aware of the subjective perceptions of the place. The image has been the most dominant way of assessing pull attributes (2010:123). In this context, the image and place evaluation are constructed in the framework of three components. Those components are: cognitive, affective and conative described as:

*"The cognitive components refers to an individual's own knowledge and belief about a destination, affective appraisals refer to the individual's feelings toward a destination, while conative refers to intended behavior as a result of the previous components"* (2010:123)

Holistic impression of the place, in other words an overall perception about the destination, cannot be separated from those three components.

Accordingly, the pull and push factors in view of Pryang & Ryan (2010:122) have mutual importance in decision-making process. However, the push factors are mostly provoked by previous experience and social relationships such as: family, friends etc. It is impossible to directly control those factors. That is why the literature is mostly focused on the pull factors, which from that perspective are easier to manage. (2010:122) The attraction might be changed, the staff can be better motivated and the destination policy can be more flexible to adjust to respond to challenges. People's drives and motives cannot be directly modified. The managers through the pull factors aim to convince the potential tourists that the trip will give them a chance to find an escape from misery of everyday life and that it is possible only at their place due to their tourism attractions and services. The destination branding seems to be a magnificent tool to reach that goal.

Therefore, the destination branding is largely directed to change the overall perception and the image by changing the opinion about resources represented by the pull factors. Of course the process also affects the push factors but it is an indirect consequence. In other words, the

branding managers are focused on branding the services, attractions and other features classified as pull factor.

#### **4.6 The branding processes.**

The paper investigates the new brand of Szczecin in the view of branding strategies. The goal of the subchapter is to presents three approaches, which are related to that process. Those theories indicate factors, which have to be achieved to implement effective branding process. The first theory published by Simon Anholt (2003) was chosen because the author was frequently introduced by Mr. Wachowicz and Przybył during the conducted interviews and presented as the authority in the field of destination branding. Those guidelines are compared with two other theories. The second theory presents five guiding principles based on the most recent developments in corporate branding literature. The last article presents 33 critical factors presented in four groups that lead to the accomplishment of a successful destination marketing. All of them are based on recent destination marketing literature. Those principles and guidelines help to investigate the branding process in more detail. Moreover, they are used as examples in the light of actions that were implemented in the city of Szczecin.

#### **4.7 Anholt: The eight principles of place branding.**

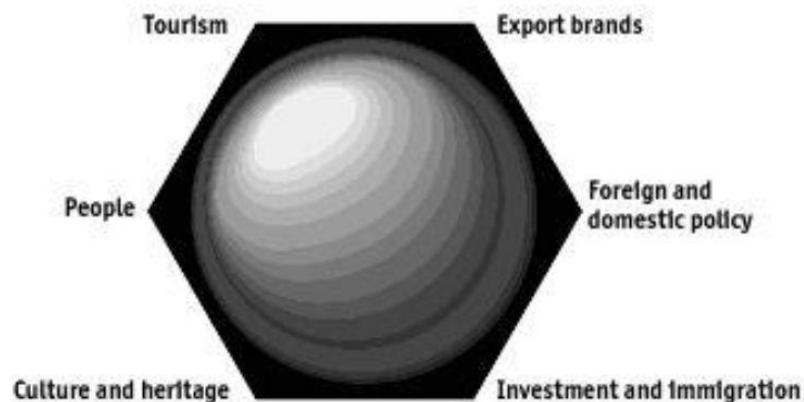
Following his subjective analysis of the branding and its role on the present tourism market, Simon Anholt (2003) introduced eight principles of place branding. Some of them overlap with the factors presented in subchapter that was devoted to destination. The Anholt (2003:216) states, similarly to Hankinson (2007:240), that the place has its own brand and consequently an image before the branding was even established. This image derives from the fact that people usually have some prejudice and presumption about particular place relying on who lives there, what the place is famous for or what historical event took place there as well as on other facts or opinions. In addition, the author emphasizes that the branding of places is different from the product branding. In that context, Anholt distinguishes a few differences between those two terms. Accordingly, it is unreasonable to try branding the place and tangible product in the same manner.



What is more, Anholt (2003:213) shows that branding and marketing might be perceived as a science, which has a huge influence on the people's minds. That makes them a strong tool for the countries, cities and other destinations to reach their goals.

In addition, writer implies that the brand has an ability to express itself in terms of tourism, export brands, foreign and domestic policy, investment and immigration, culture and heritage and – finally - by people. Those are forms of communication throughout the place interact with others and what consequently creates its image. Additionally, those channels enable to distinguish destinations from each other, the only threat being that distinction might produce negative results. For example, Chinese products are perceived as cheap and unreliable. It is not because a particular company that makes them has an undesirable image, but because the product was made in a particular country, which has an image of producing cheap and unreliable products. The image of the country is directly linked to the activities, which take place within its borders. All of those factors are included in the place branding hexagon (fig. 02). Anholt (2003:215) emphasizes that it is necessary to include all those channels to come up with relevant strategy and eventually achieve the goals, which the place aims to.

### **The place branding hexagon**



**Fig. 02)** Anholt (2003)

Anholt (2003) in his analysis presents few aspects of the branding of which managers have to be aware.

It is a fact that people mostly rely on their beliefs about something or somebody rather than on evidenced facts. That is a part of human nature. In many cases it helps to make a decision based only on limited number of facts - in real life circumstances those behaviors facilitate to make a choice. However, from the branding managers point of view that shallow perception is a serious threat. Unlike journalists, the manager cannot just present the pure information and wait for the results. The information needs to be processed to produce desirable emotions on the target. Next, it is crucial to realize that people "... are less interested in your (product) than you are..."(Anholt 2003:217). In consequence, the message has to be introduced in an understandable pattern whereas still presented in captivating form. For example, a potential customer would not get deeper in the subject if the message is unclear and does not evoke any relevant emotions.

The last warning seems to be the most important one because of the risk that it presents. In order to gain the highest available profit some of the managers are not completely honest about their product or simply lie about it. For instance, the descriptions or pictures of some places do not show exactly what the product truly is about.

For instance, in Poland there were many cases of people being simply cheated by attractive brochures with fake images and descriptions of luxury facilities. Unfortunately, when the people arrived at the place the reality was far from the customers' expectations.

Of course, those practices have nothing in common with the branding and marketing goals. The branding and marketing simply tries to reveal the truth about the product and show it from the best possible perspective. That is why, it is so important to keep balance between those two aspects: maximizing profit and being truthful. The product should be presented as attractive as possible; however it cannot show the product as something that it is not. The consequences can cause that the cheated customer will never buy the same product again and surely would not recommend it to anybody else.

Those three important aspects have to be put into consideration by anybody involved in the branding process.

Furthermore, Anholt (2003:214) emphasized that it is crucial to understand that the brand is not a logo. The brand has to be perceived as a strategy or process.

Moreover, Anholt states that branding is often perceived as a very expensive way to distinguish the product through simple picture, name or some unspecified symbol. Those people cannot be more wrong. The branding is a process, which the goal is to change the perception of some place not by covering it under picture, but through specific actions and planning. The aim of those strategies is to reveal the potential hidden in branded product, service or place. The branding is not about lying, it is about telling the truth. The present tourism market like many other markets is overloaded by enormous number of products and information. Nowadays, it is not enough to have the best resources in the destination to have tourists or investors interested in it. The strong sides have to be linked with the emotions and sold to the world.

Furthermore, Anholt (2003:217) proves that people make their choices relying on simple messages.

Most of people perceive reality in a black and white perspective. Something is bad or good. For instance, customers are driven by thoughts such as: I am using it because it satisfies me, so I would recommend it.

That bears very significant consequences. In view of the destinations, many places struggle with unfair and out-of-date images. Even after the place had solved its problems and the economy improved, safety increased etc. still the number of tourists and investors did not change. The reason of that is difficultness in changing peoples' prejudices that they have already acquired about something. There is a simple explanation of this process: if somebody has been harmed, he does not want to suffer again. The brand's role is to shift that impression; but it is very complicated and difficult process that often takes a lot of time.

The author relying on that assessment has constructed eight principles of place branding.

The first one is called "purpose and potential". Its main conviction is that the role of branding is to show the hidden potential of a destination. To achieve this purpose it is important to construct a powerful and distinctive strategic vision (Anholt 2007:224). It has to be something that enables to present the place as a special and unique. In many cases the goal is very hard to achieve especially if the marketing target is located in short distance to the branded destination. It is also crucial to use the resources that the place already possesses. Maybe it can sound as an obvious

assumption, however there is always a danger that the place branding is going to produce or try to use the resources that are impossible to reach; or which the place cannot offer.

Anholt (2003:224) presents an opinion that the branding managers should encourage the local citizens and companies in the process. Also it is important to involve them in the vision creation as well as to convince them that their actions are crucial to change the place for better.

The final conclusion stated in the first principal instructs that the place branding managers should create a new distinctive “face” of the destination, which would be easily recognizable on the international market. The recommendations to achieve it have to be clearly constructed and involve all stakeholders in building the brand.

The second principle is “truth” (2003:224). It is a crucial aspect of all branding strategies. As it was noted above, the tactic cannot be based on untrue information. Cheating to some extent might gain a profit but only in a short-term. Furthermore, it is always harder to get positive image back than work on it constantly. All brand managers should bear that in mind, a failure in that matter might be irreversible.

The third set of important guidelines for the destination branding are aspiration and betterment (2003:225). The goal of the branding is to promote the place and improve its situation. However, all actions have to be taken for the good of future generation. To put it simply, not always ‘more means better’. The principle puts emphasis on importance of sustainable development and all actions made by the managers have to be reasonable and well discussed in the view of possible threats. Some ideas would appear as promising as far as economy is concerned but they might be harmful for the natural environment.

The fourth principle (2003:224), inclusiveness and common good, shows that implemented place branding strategy will surely give more advantages to particular groups or individuals. For instance: if the goal is to improve the tourism sector there is a chance that tour operators will receive more benefits than other businesses in the area. It is significant that those which are favors be aware that they have debt to pay back to others members of community and they might lose a privileged position in the name of the common good.

The fifth factor shows that branding must focus on creativity and innovation. In the light of Anholt's (2003:225) theory, those aspects are of paramount importance in place developing and branding. The role of people involved in branding process includes indentifying, educating and encouraging the talents of inhabitants that would be beneficial to the place. The leaders and place branding managers have to realize that their goals might be achieved only if all stakeholders and employees are well trained and aware of the branding philosophy, culture and aims. The most important thing is to let people be creative and facilitate them constructing innovative ideas and plans. This is a huge challenge but if implemented effectively it surely brings a lot advantages to the place.

The sixth principle (2003:225) shows how crucial the communication in the place branding process is. Complexity and simplicity are the opposite terms. The place branding is a complex process and only if it is managed in the most possibly clear, direct and simplistic manner brings desired profits. In that process the communication is of significant importance. Firstly, it enables interaction between the public and private sectors. Furthermore, it facilitates to organize the task between the stakeholders, and consequently internal relations in the companies and organization. In other words, if there is a lack of communication and the goals are not clearly presented or exclude each other, the branding process might be hard or even impossible to achieve. In this context, simpler means better.

The seventh rule is related to the sixth principle. The connectivity of all stakeholders is crucial and only if all of them co-operate a new place-branding goal will be achieved. As it was presented before, the place branding is ruled by the same factors as companies and organizations but on a bigger scale. In this view, an analogy between stakeholders and employees may prove useful. Their actions might be both beneficial and devastating to the place. In term of entrepreneurs, all employees have to work in the name of same goal or the company will bring minor profits. The same applies to the place branding; the process has to include the stakeholders, which are working in strong relationship. It is hard to accomplish it because some of the actors are competitors.

The last principle stresses costs and time line. The branding is a process, and as such it requires leadership, planning and work force. Furthermore, to implement the strategy a significant amount of various recourses are needed. Consequently, those factors make branding quite expensive. Moreover, the effect of branding might be and often is not visible at first. Especially, in the context of destination the change needs time. Referring to that, Anholt recommends patience and puts emphasis on the necessity of proper recognition of the market before the implementation of strategy. In other words, it is better to prevent problems than fix ones.

#### **4.8 Hankinson: The five principles**

Hankinson (Hankinson 2007) in his article indicates five principles crucial for the accomplishment of a successful place branding. Those principles are based on recent literature in the area of place marketing. Moreover, Hankinson overviews the theories in the general branding and extends it across several academic domains including: geography, urban planning, tourism and retail marketing. All those areas are building blocks for the statement of the following guidelines.

The first Hankinson's (2007:246) principle shows an importance of strong leadership in place branding. 'Strong' means that the authority of the leader is undeniable and its decision have power to affect all major stakeholders in the destination. Furthermore, Hankinson (2007:248) distinguishes stakeholders in two categories: public and private. The author states that, commonly branding leaders are represented by Destinations Marketing Organizations (DMOs), which are classified as a part of public sector. The private part consists of hotels, restaurants, entertainment, retailing and other tourism industry actors.

The strong leader has to have enough authority to convince the actors to follow his vision of how to develop the destination. The vision is another factor, which is also paramount in branding. The leaders without clear and ambitious ideas cannot - in satisfying manner - create a good brand, which consequently will have a chance to accomplish positive image and can be recognizable among the other brands in the market. However, the huge weakness of public sector is that DMOs hire only a small number of core stuff and operate with tightly controlled budgets. The other aspect is that the public sector can use only negotiations to convince stakeholders to the

branding and development plan. This is the reason why the vision has to be strong and convincing.

Another DMOs or other leaders' responsibility is to build an internal brand culture. It means that vision has to be linked with the *"beliefs, values, and behavioral, norm associated with the destination brand"* (2007:247). To persuade the stakeholder in private sector to the new strategy the leaders – first and foremost - have to convince the closest employees, which are directly involved in the process. The Hankinson (2007) introduces a few examples how to encourage and convince the administration staff to the brand or vision. For instance, the managers may award the employees who show a positive attitude to the brand and then their actions will serve as an example to the others.

The branding, in general, is an effort to build a positive image in the customers' minds. It would not be accomplished if the DMO's employees do not have a strong positive attitude toward the vision. However, if it is not possible to convince the closest co-workers to the idea it might suggest that the branding has to be improved before the decision about launching it is made. That difficulty can stop unnecessary and expensive actions and direct the manager to the right path. Hankinson states that in many situations managers can use his employees as<sup>5</sup> "test subjects" what might help to indentify obstacles in the vision and strategy.

The third principle (2007:248) focuses on coordination and process alignment. The beliefs and values are coordinated internally by the DMO's managers who have to establish a clear procedure of actions, which will help to implement the brand and build strong relationship among all departments and not only among those employees who are directly connected with the branding. The public sector such as local governments, city halls etc. are divided in various numbers of bureaus, departments and therefore lack of communication among them is a serious threat. It is an important aspect because branding is a complex process and requires actions from all possible resources. The public sector have to involve and persuade all departments that the implemented brand is the only correct one and will guarantee a benefits for all sectors.

That goal might be achieved throughout arranged meetings. For instance: city hall departments send their representatives for a consultation and discuss the procedures, which have to be followed to achieve the recommended goals.

The biggest difficulty in obtaining private sector's commitment to branding is that the companies have their own brands in their center of attention and then at a pinch the place brand. That is why it is so important to arrange committees and frequent meetings to coordinate all the actions and discuss the current situations on the market. That might help public sector to be perceived as both a partner and a leader.

The communication is of paramount importance in branding but also it might cause various complications. The only way to prevent those problems is to identify them before they make co-operation impossible. The place branding affects all aspects of society and the society affects the place branding. Consequently, the leader has to be aware of the current situation and facilitate stakeholders' development in sustainable manner.

The fourth principle (2007:249) shows that without partnership among all stakeholders the place branding might be difficult or even impossible. As it was noted above, following the DMO's vision is not mandatory. The place's brand manager cannot force the stakeholder to follow a particular strategy. Obviously, such a practice is not feasible in democratic country. The stakeholder has a right to refuse the cooperation what can have negative consequences for the whole process. The partnership relation among public and private sector can neutralize such a threat. If the independent entrepreneurs are aware of their influence on the branding implementation and they are able to notice benefits, which the process brings, then they should realize that the following the strategy is in their best interest.

According to Hankinson (2007:249) the DMO's leadership main role is to solve the conflicts that might appear among the private stakeholders. However, to have that position, the leader has to prove that the actions are targeted to bring mutual benefits for all stakeholders. It is another hard task because on the free market many stakeholders have the same tactics to gain profits and very often it is not in their interest to cooperate with the competitors. The understanding can be achieved by splitting the benefits between particular companies and promote them as a part of the same segment etc. For instance, hotels might be promoted on the same brochures as the city accommodation. In that situation it is in the best interest for the hotels to cooperate with the DMO to gain a free advertisement.



The five principles (2007:250) presented by Hankinson are mostly focused on leadership. It shows that the place branding cannot be made if there is no strong “person” in charge. In other words, the body needs head. In the case of the destination branding the situation is more difficult than in individual companies’ management because the other actors in the market have their own management and their goals. The role of the leader is to build a strong relationship and implement a strong convincing vision that convinces others that proposed tactic is the best to improve the destination. Moreover, the leader has to monitor the situation and respond accordingly to the changing circumstances. Flexibility is vital to meet market demands in fast and successful manner.

#### **4.9 Baker: Critical Success factors**

The present tourism market is characterized by a huge competitiveness. It is crucial therefore to distinguish one’s product from others. Even if the product quality seems to be the best possible, without a proper promotion it might still remain unrecognizable, what in consequence can lead to the lack of profitability. On the whole, good promotion is a key to success. Baker (2007) suggests that the image and identity plays a significant role in destination marketing. In a similar vein like Hankinson (2007) he based his theory on an overview of academic literature. However, Baker mostly focuses on destination-marketing approaches. This investigation helps him to develop thirty-three factors, which in his view are significant in establishing a successful marketing plan. Those thirty-three guidelines are segmented into four categories and the follow subchapter introduces them shortly. Those principles also might be used as a chronologic agenda for the place development that clearly states what should be done firstly and what kind of actions have to be implemented after the brand was successfully established.

Baker (2007) indicates specialists in the field of destination marketing such as: Morgan & Prichard, Johnson, Scholes, Budhalis, Curtis, Prides, Ritchie and Ritchie. Following those authors he constructs the following four guidelines for successful destination branding.

Baker (2007:92) states that the first step in destination marketing has to be a proper and clear “strategic orientation”. It presents that the DMOs should not take any actions before they investigate and analyze the local market. After having done so, the situation is known and the

leader is aware of the weaknesses, threats and resources of the place, thus he can produce strategic recommendation to promote the product. What appears often as an obvious fact stops being relevant after a deeper investigation. For example, the segmentation of tourists might be quite different after analyzing the statistical data than it would appear at first. The leader should find the way to recognize the circumstances in which he is going to work. The one method to gain the recognition of the situation is to employ an external company, which makes the research.

The data will help to produce a strategy, which aim is to:

*“Enhance the long term prosperity of local people; delight visitors by maximizing their satisfaction; maximize profitability of local enterprises and maximize multiplier effects; optimize tourism impacts by ensuring a sustainable balance between economic benefits and social-cultural and environmental costs.”* Baker (2007:92) In the above-cited principle Baker, similarly to Anholt’s third principle, indicates the necessity of marketing the destination in sustainable manner. The goal is to improve the overall life of the inhabitants by enhancing the scope of investments, attracting the bigger number of tourists and improving the infrastructure and the overall life quality in the region. However, all those aspect cannot be achieved in satisfying and responsible manner if the leaders will focus only on short-term tourism perspectives. In developing countries there is a serious threat that the priority will be given towards gaining fast and big profit even if in longer period of time the destination resources are going to be spoiled and eventually permanently lost. Sustainability is significant to preserve the destinations and enable the inhabitants to gain profits and improve their lives in the long-term perspective.

Another aspect that Baker (2007:92) presents is a necessity to produce or be aware of destination identity and image. The identity concerns the issue how the place wants to be perceived. The public and private sector are trying to build unique set of brands that are going to be used to promote the place. Of course, the destination marketing would be only successful if the stakeholders were cooperating within the same strategy. Furthermore, the image might be seen as a side effect of the identity. The actors have no direct influence on image because it is characterized by a sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that people have of a particular place. In view of that, *“brand represents an identity for the producer and an image for the customer”*.

(Baker 2007:92) The role of marketing communication is to be a bridge between those two factors.

The third aspect indicates that the successful marketing strategy cannot be done without involvement of the stakeholders. That principle is also shown as vital by two previous authors presented in the paper. Baker (2007:93) gives emphasis to the fact that all stakeholders related to the tourism industry should be included in the destination branding even if their influence or importance at first seems to be invalid. It helps to be aware of the weaknesses that appear in the market and to build a unified brand and strategy in the whole branded area. That is hard task especially if DMO's has to include a big number of actors.

The last part of branding process is implementation and monitoring (2007:94). Each task needs to have a time constraint. That facilitates sending a clear message to all stakeholders what has been done during each period and consequently enables to assess the results. Furthermore, the leaders have constantly monitoring the situation and being flexible in their recommendation. Often, that what is looking good in the paper leads to terrible consequences in practice. The monitoring helps also to be aware if the implemented actions are produce the satisfying or minor effects and has to be changed immediately. There are various methods of monitoring the situation. As in the strategic orientation process, they might be made by internal or external company. For instance: DMO's might do surveys during an important events or interviews with the tourists visiting the city. Same as with the other products if the branding and marketing manger will not adjust to the current situation it is a serious threat that the destinations lose it position on the market, what will have terrible consequences to the destination profitability.

#### **4.10 A tourism area cycle of evolution.**

The previous subchapters present various theories that might be used as guidelines in the destination branding process. The theory of tourism life cycle (fig 03) has been chosen to present what kind of influence has the branding on the tourism development. (Butler 1980) The Butler qualification seems to be relevant because he shows the evolution of tourism industry during six well-described stages. Moreover, the theory might be applied to various destinations from resort to the whole cities and it is the most widely accepted model of tourism development (Andriotis

2006:01). This theory helps to identify what has been achieved during a short period of branding in the city of Szczecin and what kind of threats the managers have to be aware of in the nearest future.

The Butler distinguishes seven stages that occur in the tourism evolution process: exploration, involvement, development, stagnation and decline or rejuvenation.

### A tourism area cycle of evolution.

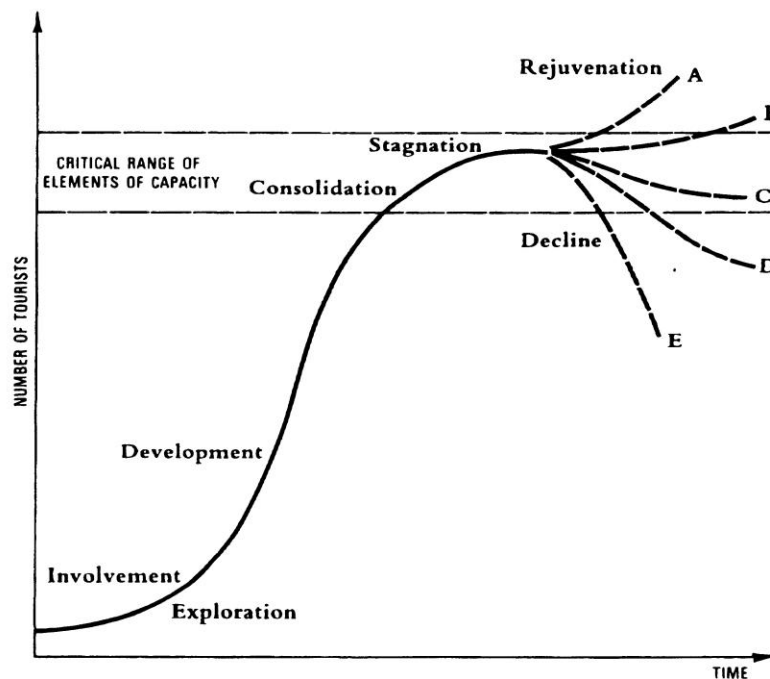


Fig. 03) Butler (1980)

The exploration (Butler 1980:7) stage, as indicated by its name, refers to the destination that is barely known to the tourists and has yet to be explored. There are no specialized facilities to enable travelers to accommodate or to move around the area in comfortable manner. However, the place has some natural attractions, interesting cultural heritage or is known by some attraction, which was not intentionally made for a tourism purpose. The local people have mostly positive attitude toward the tourists and offer them various nonprofessional services. For instance: not registered guides, private cars for the transport, rooms at the inhabitant houses instead of hotels etc.

The second in the evolution cycle is involvement stage (1980:8). At that point some of the local residents starts to realize that tourism might be a great opportunity to gain profit. The number of tourists is increasing while the contact between inhabitants and visitors remains high. Most of the accommodation and services is still provided by nonprofessionals but a small “pioneer” hotel might be established. The private sector is slowly pressing on a local government to invest in infrastructure, which might enhance communication with other places for example, direct roads to the bigger cities etc.

The development (1980:8) is a stage when the tourism industry starts to change the destination itself. The infrastructure is built to link the most attractive sights in the area. The control over the development declines. The tourism business shifts from small private local companies to the external small and mid companies. Therefore, the local residents become less involved in the tourism and start perceiving the visitors as necessary evil. The improvement in the landscape is noticeable and to some extent not willingly welcomed by inhabitants. At this point the first tensions between priorities of the all locals’ people and industry might appear.

In the consolidation stage (1980:8) the problem related to the tourism industry and its influence on the destination is much more noticeable. The number of tourists exceeds the number of locals. The number of complaints concerning the tourists is rapidly on the rise from the local people, especially from those whose businesses are not directly related to the tourism industry. The tourism becomes the major issue for the local economy. The inhabitants have less access to the territory because the hotels and resorts are built on the best locations and thus limit the access to the focal points (beaches, hot springs, etc.) to inhabitants.

The stagnation stage (1980:9) occurs when the peak number of tourists is reached. From that point the destination is not able to interest and accommodate more tourists. The destination is well known in the market but is no longer perceived as fashionable. Another place is *à la mode* where most of the people are planning to be. The uniqueness of the place has been lost. The destination is toward the tourists and tourism industry. There is a threat that the lack of new attraction might cause a decline in the number of tourists.

The stagnation level is the last stage of the evolution, it occurs when number of tourists ceases to increase. From that point the destination can go in two different directions: decline or rejuvenation.

Both stages are related to each other. The decline stage (1980:9) is when the resort or destination management is not able to meet tourists' demands and the place becomes unfashionable. The lack of action might cause that the tourist will choose other places: less-crowded and with better facilities to fulfill tourists' desires. In an extreme situation an irresponsible management might cause restoring the situation before the tourism industry was set up in the area. It would be a very undesirable consequence, as it would affect the local economy and society as a whole. The rejuvenation is a chance for the destinations in post-stagnation stage. However, it can only be applied to those places where management is constantly monitoring the situation and can respond to changing demands in fast and proper manner. Butler (1980) in line with Baker (2007) put an emphasis on flexibility in destination management. The destination could be changed by adjusting the local policy or marketing plan and branding to the market demands. In the example given by Butler (1980:9) Atlantic City illustrates this point as the city enhanced investments to the gambling industry what consequently brought interest of the new kind of tourists. Of course, there are places where such a change cannot be produce because of the country law.

Butler's (1980) tourism area cycle evolution is an important tool to predict the possible threats for the destination development. It helps also to realize how the place will change and what those changes might cause. The tourism industry is a great opportunity for the less wealthy places to improve their economy and gives the local residents a possibility of self-development and better prospects for the future. Nevertheless, without proper management tourism might be a devastating force. Through uncontrolled deployment of resources and unplanned constructions even the most wonderful places might be changed to the unpleasant "concrete jungles". That is why the Butler's hypothesis is included in the paper. It shows on which stage the city Szczecin already is and what threats it might meet during the branding development process.

## 5. “Pre-brand” Szczecin

The aim of the following chapter is to answer **to** the first question stated in the problem formulation. **What was the situation in the city before the brand was established?**

Firstly, the broader description of the destination is given to introduce an importance of the natural resources located in the area. Secondly, this chapter presents missions, directions and priorities included in “Szczecin’s Development Strategy 2002-2015” published in 2002 that includes a strategy till year 2015. Afterwards, the statistical data related to the tourism industry is given to show the past situation in that matter in the city. What is more, the SWOT analysis, which was made a couple of years before ‘the floating garden’ is presented to show how the city government perceived then the city position on the market.

Szczecin is a capital of the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship. The city covers an area of 300,8 km<sup>2</sup>, of which 41,8% are green areas, while 23,8% is water. The largest reservoir is Dąbie Lake, the only lake in the country where the sea going boats can moor. It covers an area of 65 km<sup>2</sup>. The average Szczecin elevation is 25 m above sea level, and the highest of Szczecin hills are Bukowiec and Veleti Hills which are 147 m and 131 m above the sea level respectively and are the highest points in the Szczecin’s Lowland. This special diversity creates a distinctive landscape, which accurately used might bring enormous number of benefits to the place.

On 6<sup>th</sup> May 2002 the City Hall presented “Szczecin’s development strategy 2002-2015” which included steps and recommendation for town improvement. The document emphasized good location, natural surroundings, water reservoirs and cultural heritage of the city. The strategy mission states:

*“Szczecin have the potential to become the center of region, European integration and interregional center of South Baltic. A community, which is using a historical heritage, natural environment and location near the Oder River for sustainable and constant development.”*

In the mission an opinion is presented that Szczecin - as the biggest town situated near the border - has a significant chance to be *the center of the region* in the field of international relations,

education, culture and MICE industry. The Szczecin is described as a place where Western and Eastern Europe meet each other: that is why the town should be also a *center of European Integration*. Furthermore, the goal of the strategy is based on historical tradition and emphasizes that people build this city for other people. Thus the *community* of the local residents and their cooperation is of crucial importance in the destination development. Moreover, the document states that there is a need to provide all investments and improvements with regard to the sustainability. Finally, the biggest described city's assets are natural environment and location near the Oder River, which might bring benefits in terms of economy, transport, tourism and recreation.

As it is noted above, the mission is mostly focused on what was observed in the city at that time. The document emphasizes relationship, sustainability, cultural and historical heritage and natural environment.

Based on researches provided in the destination and social consultation, five strategic aims were established.

Improving the infrastructure, communication and facilities to enable the city gain status of interregional center were chosen as the primary goals. It also points out an importance of investing in education, culture and local economy improvement.

The second goal was to increase the economy's diversity and effectiveness through improvement of local's economy competitiveness: distinction of the town's economy by tourism industry development and investment in high technology and advanced services. An improvement of public transportation by modernization of existing infrastructure was also stressed.

The third aim shows an importance of enhancing the scope of residents' self-development through setting up a system of constant solution in the field of education and profession practice; enabling access to the IT solutions; enriching cultural, touristic, sport and recreation offer etc.

The fourth goal focused on the improvement of local life quality by enhancing the social safety; investment in new infrastructure and technology; and the actions that prevents the crime in the city.



The final goal refers to the natural environment and a need for sustainable development. In this respect the importance of referring to the cultural and historical heritage in building the city's identity and a necessity to improve the condition of natural resources is presented. In this point the paper also shows benefits of the middle-Oder area, especially in field of tourism development. That shows how many challenges the city hall were to achieve at the beginning of the century and how big a need for a change of the situation in the city was.

### **5.1 Statistical data.**

The paper shortly presents the statistical analysis "Polish Touristic in 2007. The major cities" published by Bożena Radkowska from Tourism Institute in 2007. The aim of it is to present the past situation in the field of tourism in Szczecin. That data is going to be used in the comparison with the information gathered in 2011 in the third chapter related to the situation in the city after the brand has been established.

In 2007 the overall number of international tourists was estimated as 500 thousands. The number of domestic tourists was slightly bigger and was estimated as 600 thousand. The most popular reason to visit the city was leisure and sightseeing (29%), followed by business (27%). The domestic tourists' average stay last 3,2 days. The international length of stay was estimated between 2 to 4 days. The most popular accommodation chosen in Szczecin were hotels accounting for 76% of domestic tourists' and 88 % of international tourists' accommodations. Although less number of international tourists visited Szczecin in comparison to domestic ones the amount of money that they spent (app. 159 million USD) in the city was more than nine times higher than that spent by domestic visitors (app. 17 million USD). Most of the foreigners registered in the city's accommodations were from Germany (73.6 thousands), than Denmark (37.2 thousands), Sweden (10.4 thousands) and others. The average age of tourists was established to be 24 years old.

The statistical data presented above helps to come up with the following conclusions. Despite the fact that the number of domestic tourists is higher than international ones, the foreigners spent much more than the first group of tourists. It clearly shows that the industry should put more attention to attract the tourists from Scandinavia (mostly Denmark and Sweden) and Germany because the tourists from those countries are the ones most interested in visiting the town. Most

of the tourists chose Szczecin because they wanted to do sightseeing and leisure what can be interpreted as a very positive trend. The second most commonly presented reason to visit the town was business. That gives a huge opportunity to develop MICE industry in the town starting from proper infrastructure such as conference centers etc. Moreover, the average tourist visiting Szczecin is a young person in the age of 24 years old. That shows the necessity to organize proper infrastructure to attract that tourism segment such as: entertainment, cultural facilities and other point of interest directed to the youth.

## 5.2 SWOT.

In the “Szczecin Development Strategy 2002-2015” SWOT analysis (fig. 04) was presented relying on which the strategy’s mission and priorities were based. In short, the following part presents and discusses some of those points that are important for brand and tourism development.

Strength	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transit location of the city</li> <li>• The center of Euroregion Pomerania</li> <li>• Goleniów Airport and possibility of construction the new city in Dabie District.</li> <li>• Advanced rail infrastructure.</li> <li>• Sea and River Port with transshipment and transfer capability.</li> <li>• Water reservoir.</li> <li>• The local residents entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Well-established accommodation resources</li> <li>• Well-developed IT academic network</li> <li>• High level of financial credibility</li> <li>• Well educated human resources</li> <li>• Large and varied water resources connected with European water routes</li> <li>• Huge possibility of tourism product creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak communication with the rest of the country</li> <li>• Inefficient infrastructure connecting two sides (Right &amp; Left) of the city and Port</li> <li>• High cost of maintaining the water lane between Swinoujscie and Szczecin</li> <li>• Not enough number of investments in diversification the local economy</li> <li>• <b>Low</b> number of companies which apply high technologies</li> <li>• Lack of financial headquarters</li> <li>• Unsatisfactory development of water resources</li> <li>• Weak knowledge of foreign languages among the local residents</li> <li>• <b>Inefficiency</b> in acquiring the external financial resources</li> <li>• Problem of emigration of more wealthy and talented residents to other destinations</li> <li>• Lack of city’s touristic attraction</li> <li>• Lack of promotion and touristic information system</li> <li>• Lack of city’s positive image</li> <li>• Inadequate number of international connections</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joining the European Union</li> <li>• Location close to Baltic Sea basin</li> <li>• Proximity with the German <b>capital</b> and Scandinavian Countries, which gives a chance of future partnership in investments and development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak connection with the rest of the country as threat of declining of the importance in the market.</li> <li>• High competitiveness of <b>German</b> economy in the field of marine industry</li> <li>• Inadequate number of high-ways and low quality</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location near the country border</li> <li>• Location on the transient area between west and east sides of Europe</li> <li>• Investment in port improvement</li> <li>• Water touristic</li> <li>• Increasing potential of tourism industry around the world</li> </ul>	<p>infrastructure such as roads etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bad condition of water lane between Swinoujście and Szczecin</li> <li>• <b>Inadequate</b> condition of water lanes along the Oder river and Dabie Lake</li> <li>• Unattractive and restrictive taxes system</li> </ul>
Fig. 04 from: Szczecin Development Strategy 2002-2015	

According to the “Szczecin Development Strategy 2002-2015” a few aspects might be significant to better understand the situation before the brand of “Floating Garden 2050” has been established and its influence on the tourism industry.

It is important to keep in mind that Poland joined the EU in 2004. The paper was published two years earlier. That is why upcoming membership in the union was presented as a huge opportunity for the city. It was assumed that EU membership would improve the communication with the West European countries as well as with other EU members. It was expected to bring enhancement in cooperation with international partners in various fields, including tourism. The tourism sector was indicated as a huge opportunity for development. The focus in that sector was put in business and leisure segments. The paper also suggests that Yachting might be a good chance to encourage the tourists and visitors. However, the lack of infrastructure did not enable to use that strong point. The document also shows that the water resources are a huge advantage for the city but without proper planning and investments it cannot be used in satisfying manner. A high rate of unemployment in the region was perceived as a huge threat. The SWOT analysis also shows that tourism products need to be created and promoted. Of course, the town had a various interesting points but to use all of the town advantages the investments in the infrastructure were required. The lack of proper infrastructure was indicated as the biggest threat and weakness as well as the lack of investors, lack of positive image, and lack of distinguishable tourism attractions, unsatisfactory level of knowing foreign languages, weak connection with the rest of Poland and inefficient infrastructure connecting the two sides of the city divided by the river. Those aspects directly and indirectly affect the business industry and the perception about the city.

The strength factor that has a positive impact on the tourism and the city’s image is transit location of the city that gives an opportunity to interest people who travel to other destination. The town was presented as the biggest city in the Euroregion Pomerania. According to GUS

(Central Statistic Office) this is a huge advantage because tourists visiting Poland are first and foremost interested in the biggest cities. The airport and developed rail infrastructure certainly help tourists to access the destination in easy and comfortable manner. The port with proper development strategy can be a positive aspect as far as tourism attraction and brand identity are concerned. Water reservoir gave the opportunity to improve the recreation and leisure industry and the advanced accommodation infrastructure might bring benefits from MICE industry. Well-educated human resources are a huge benefit for destination and branding development presented in fifth principle by Anholt (2003). The opportunities and threats mostly overlap with the issues presented above.

### **5.3 The promotion**

“Szczecin’s development strategy 2002-2015” included the promotion aspects, which the city had plans to achieve during indicated period of time. The goal was to strengthen the city’s overall and regional position. Another aim was to put an emphasis during the promotion on the fact that the city is the biggest Polish city located in such a short distance to the border. The promotion’s international targets were Germany and Scandinavia. The process of EU accession was also indicated as being important in promotion of the city during various events and meetings with the local residents related to EU accession. The necessity of maintaining the relationship with East European city partners was also shown as crucial factor. Furthermore, the improvement of infrastructure related to the MICE tourism was also presented as significant in city promotion. In addition, that aspect was given as on, which might increase the number of tourists visiting the city with business purpose. The lack of brochures and other information in foreign languages had been noticed and the need to increase the number of those materials had been stated. The necessity of participating in international trade fairs and conferences related to the economy and culture was also included in the promotion strategy.

As it can be seen above, quite surprisingly there is no mention of promotion of the tourism industry and brand creation.

With regard to the promotional aspects some steps to build a brand for the city were taken in 2005. The branding strategy called “Open Szczecin” was created to give a new image to the city. However, “Open Szczecin” project was limited to the choice of the brand colors (blue and red) and slogan. (KISZLUK 2009) The method of choosing those colors is unclear because both of

them were used in the local heraldry since early 50's of XX century and the impertinence of brand novelty stated by Anholt was not included.

On the other hand, that action builds fundamentals for the “floating garden 2050”, which is continued till nowadays.

The situation in the city was unclear. The city struggled with lack of resources in various fields. However, the strategic plan was to give the utmost importance to attracting the new investors who would invest in the infrastructure to improve the communication with the rest of the country and both sides of the city. The water reservoir was presented on one hand as significant to the further development, but on the other hand it was not included in the promotion plan. It might have been caused by the lack of water infrastructure. The reason why the tourism sector is not included in the promotion strategy is unclear. The main focus is directed to the economical and cultural aspects. Yachting which is mentioned in the development strategy also does not appear in promotion part. The reason why the government at first shows tourism as an important factor in development and nextly totally ignores it in the promotion strategy is unknown.

## 6. Implementation process

The previous chapter presents the situation in the town of Szczecin in the field of tourism and promotion before the current brand has been established. The following chapter is focused on the new branding strategy which was launched in the beginning of 2008 as the project “Floating Garden 2050” and tries to answer to question **“what constitutes the new brand of Szczecin and how it was implemented?”**. The first step is to present why the public sector even decided to proceed with a new brand. The second subchapter focuses on the implementation process, the actors who took part in the branding and the reasons why the branding was made in that manner. Afterwards, the brand and slogans and others attributes of new brand are presented to give recognition about the topic. The fourth, the SWOT analyzes which had been created by the city hall shortly before the brand was launched is shortly introduced. All those subchapters are based on secondary data and two interviews which were made to investigate the subject.

As it is noted above, most of the information relies on primary data obtained from the two interviews. The first one is with Mr. Piotr Wachowicz a director of information and promotion bureau in the city hall of Szczecin from whose initiative the new brand was conceived. The second person is Mr. Mariusz Przybył, Brand Consultant, owner and founder of Brand Nature Access (BNA) the company responsible for creation of “Floating Garden 2050” for the city.

### 6.1 How it began?

*“Polish cities have begun to put emphasis on promotion, which can be observed by the growing number of national campaigns and slogans. Cracow, Gdańsk, and Wrocław are the best examples of consequently-implemented brand strategy”*(szczecin.eu 2012). Those words are presented on the official Floating Garden 2050 web-site. In the case of Szczecin the same need has been identified. That is why the process of new branding was proceeding.

According to Mr. Wachowicz there was a need to change the undesirable image of destination and give the town a new attractive identity for many years. The only question was how to achieve that goal. The beginning of a new brand is kind of prosaic. Mr. Wachowicz after he took the office in year 2005 in the City Hall has found out that in the city’s budget the amount of 500 thousands PLN (app. 1 MLN DKK) is reserved for branding. The only problem was that nobody

in the city hall had an experience in destination branding. An overall knowledge about the subject was very blur and unclear. Afterwards, it was decided to use the amount for signed purposed. The idea met with a broad criticism from society and media when it became a public knowledge that the city hall has a plan to spend half of million PLN for the logo or slogan. As it is emphasized by the Mr. Wachowicz the common perception of the branding was related to those two matters.

Despite the criticism it was decided to use the aforementioned amount of money and the creation of a new brand began. At first a new department was set up to supervise and manage the process. The first brand manager in the Szczecin's city hall was Mr. Krzysztof Adamski who became one of few brand managers in the country. Till nowadays lots of the cities have nobody in that position. (Unfortunately, Mr. Adamski does not work in the City Hall anymore as he decided to choose the different path of career. That is why it was not possible to interview him). Mr. Wachowicz and Mr. Adamski after many days of negotiations and discussions concerning the new brand creation realized that it is necessary to recognize in the first place the town's situation, its resources and market openings. At that point both Mr. Wachowicz and Adamski knew that the goal is not to build a new logo and slogan but to create a new development and promotion strategy. Furthermore, it was a need to initiate the new way of speaking about the city, new communication tactics, philosophy etc.

The turning point for the branding was a festival of the cities and region promotion organized by Steuer. The festival took place in April 2007.

According to Mr. Wachowicz, Szczecin then did not exist in the marketing awareness. It means specifically that the city was not perceived as an attractive in view of investments, tourism and in other important areas. Consequently, Szczecin was not included in any ratings or trade papers. That is one of the reasons why it was decided to focus on new branding - to change that negative image.

The new promotion and information department had gone to the festival with a huge anxiety. The festival influenced the branding in three important ways. Firstly, the goal of new department was to catch up with other big cities in the country in field of economy. However, it turned out that the differences were bigger than it was expected. Secondly, the city president Mr. Piotr Krzystek personally participated in the festival what facilitated to convince him to the new strategy. Thirdly, the courses provided by Mr. Simon Anholt (2003) gave a theoretical

background in destination branding, which helped to build fundamentals of a new destination brand.

Those three benefits brought from the festival were crucial in the process of Floating Garden 2050 creation.

After the festival Mr. Wachowicz and Adamski knew that the new brand has to be innovative, daring, concrete and followed by long-term strategy to give the city a positive image. In addition, the president of the city was convinced to the idea and became personally involved in the branding process. That was a huge support in creating the brand and gave the branding strategy a strong leader.

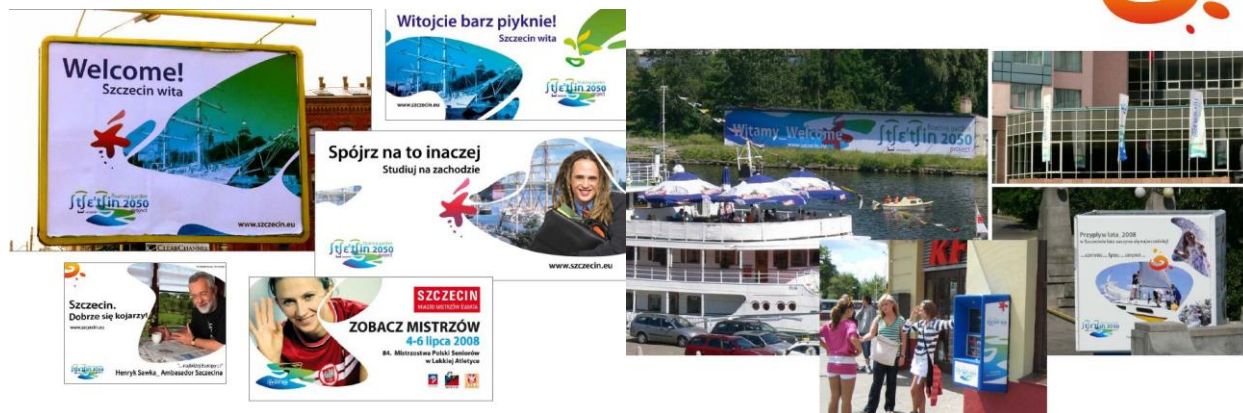
## **6.2 Launching the brand.**

The promotion and information bureau had a lot to accomplish. According to Mr. Wachowicz it all began in September 2007. After the festival it was clear that the recognition of the resources, the opinion of the residents, media and tourists visiting the city have to be collected and analyzed before it will be possible to proceed with branding. It was a necessity to base the new brand on solid data and research. To achieve that goal a consortium consisting of three companies was established. Priofiel that was responsible for PR and marketing communication during the creation process till 2008 when the brand was launched. Corporate Profile Consulting (CPC) – this company was involved in the collection of the data and research, which goal was to recognize the situation in the city and the perception of its image. Finally, the third one is Brand Nature Access (BNA). BNA's responsibility was to find the best possible way to change negative perception of Szczecin and give it a new "face".

The CPC divided the research into two elements: An internal and countrywide research. The examination contains quantitative and qualitative data. The respondents were not only the local residents but also tourists from Poland, Germany and Scandinavia countries who are Szczecin's main international target group. Additionally, the CPC organized conferences and meetings with the people who had the biggest authority in the city starting from newspapers, television, radio and other media, which opinion might be functional in Szczecin image and identity recognition. Mr. Wachowicz emphasizes that all those information are used till nowadays and were an important guidelines to recognize the direction which new brand has to take.



## Outdoor campaign



**Fig. 05** from: Wachowicz. P (2008) Szczecin\_Floating Garden strategy from the beginning till the implementation. Szczecin City Hall

BNA based on the data to create a new destination brand. The brief introduction to the brand history and the process of its selection helps to understand the motives behind the choice of a particular company that had a paramount influence to the brand itself.

Mr. Wachowicz reminds that according to Polish law, the company that is involved in cooperation with the city hall has to be chosen during auction process. The same procedure was applied to the BNA. According to Mr. Przybył BNA was established in 2001. Both founders Mr. Przybyła and Mr. Mierowski were born and raised in Szczecin. Currently they live in Warsaw where the headquarters of the company are located. BNA was involved in creating the brand for Tyskie, Żywiec (two of the biggest brewery companies in Poland) and Empik (book store, also the biggest in the country) but the company was responsible for marketing communication too. (WACHOWICZ). Moreover, the company creates the brand for Poland, the capital city Warsaw, Lublin City and Mazowsze Voivodeship (PRZYBYŁ). As it can be seen, BNA had enormous experience in the field of destination branding. Mr. Wachowicz mentioned that the fact that owners of the company were from Szczecin was of importance because that gave a serious possibility to people emotionally linked with the destination to create the new image. That supposedly facilitates to form the brand related to the hidden identity known only to those who lived in the place.

## Gifts & Website



**Fig. 06)** Wachowicz, P (2008) Szczecin\_Floating Garden strategy from the beginning till the implementation.  
Szczecin City Hall

According to Mr. Przybył the company had to present methodology, which included the methods of creating the brand, to participate in the auction. Also the methodology had to meet demands, elicited in CPC research and internal discussion among employees and managers of Promotion and Information bureau, in the best possible manner. Mr. Przybył agrees that it was not an easy task. The problem with Szczecin was that it did not have visible and distinguishable attributes. The brand methodology was based on theory constructed by Simon Anholt and Wally Ollins. The idea was to find a hidden identity of the city and next construct relevant metaphors. The BNA representatives organize an enormous number of meetings with people who ,in their opinion, might give some sensible information. Mr Przybył refers to the Anholt's (2003) theory: the power of the place can be measured by the scope of its influence to the surroundings. BNA employees had noticed that there is no distinctive attraction, which enables to pull the potential tourist to the destination. It was a lack of them that made the process of building the brand very difficult. It appeared that there was no sensible answer to the question: "why visit Szczecin and what for"?

## Public transportation



**Fig. 07)** Wachowicz. P (2008) Szczecin\_Floating Garden strategy from the beginning till the implementation.  
Szczecin City Hall

Finally, BNA find something what makes the place special. It was its geographical and geopolitical location. It was decided that the new brand should be based on three attributes: ecology, water reservoirs and transborder location. Szczecin is a unique city, which in its history belonged to different countries: firstly Poland, then for most of the time to Germany, for a short period of time to Denmark and after The Second Great War again to Poland. That shaped the city in its present form. However, its full potential is still unexploited. According to Mr. Przybył BNA realized that the time of Szczecin have not come yet. That is why it has been decided to build a starting point for the city, which gives it a chance to be reborn and follow a new direction. The new brand should not be something what appeared at that moment but something what might come in the future. That is how the idea of Floating Garden 2050 came into existence.

### 6.3 The logo

This subchapter focuses on the visible features of the brand. In addition, it appears that the branding is nowadays based rather on pictures than on storytelling (Salzer-Morling & Strannegard 2004). That is why it is so important to shortly introduce the logo of “Floating Garden 2050”.

## Logo of Floating Garden 2050



**Fig. 08)** from: Szczecin.eu

The picture presented (fig. 08) above is an official logo of Szczecin since 2008. The logo presents the motto Floating Garden and the name of the city written in English, Polish and in the international alphabet ITA. The date of 2050 is also visible in the logo. The colors emphasize natural resources visible in Szczecin: green as a forests and parks, and blue as the water reservoirs. According to Mr. Przybył logo was designed to be perceived as created for some huge event. The goal was to produce logo that will call for attention and look appealing on the documents and might be used in various places around the city and during the events. The name of the city is written in phonetic system I.T.A. Mr. Przybył said that it derives from the fact that the city's name is really hard to pronounce for the foreigners, so BNA decided to write it in the system. As it ends up the name written in the system has also a really interesting look (fig. 07). It was decided to use it in logo to make it look more futuristic and innovative. The presented colors in the logo are much different than those which were used in the past (blue and red). It was intentional action, which aim was to present a new identity of the town: its openness to the daring initiatives and huge eager for a change. Mr. Wachowicz and Przybył both stated that the number 2050 is a sign of promise. The floating garden is not something that currently exists but the goal at which the brand and the project aim.

The "Floating Garden 2050" the town, which was mostly known from close location to the border, Baltic sea, port and shipyard might be hard to being perceived as a such. According to Mr. Przybył the concept of "Floating Garden" is not new. The brand was based on the plans of

the German architect, which were stopped because of the Great War. Now the vision is back and that ambitious strategy is constructed again. Unfortunately, the research was not able to prove that statement. However, it is interesting that the new branding might continue the visions of previous settlers.

#### **6.4 The vision.**

The author presented above how it happened that the brand was constructed and what were the reasons and causes to create it. The following subchapter presents the vision, mission and philosophy of the new brand.

The mission of the brand states:

*“Szczecin will combine dynamism and creativity of metropolis. An open space and peacefulness of the destination, which is friendly to people and nature.”* (szczecin.eu 14-01-12)

The mission is focusing on the sustainable development, which often was presented as an important factor by Mr. Wachowicz and Przybył during the interviews. During the research process conducted by CPC and BNA the following values were identified, which are included in the branding process:

Openness: Szczecin is and should be perceived as a cosmopolitan city with kind and open-minded people, which worship otherness and tolerance.

Freedom: In that context, being free means living in the open space and all the residents' have an opportunity to live in the suburbs and in fast and comfortable way get to the center. It emphasizes an importance of self-development.

Respect to the people and the nature: That values shows how important for the local residents and consequently branding is sustainable development.

The vision is introduced and based on 10 points that derive from the previous research provided by CPC. Those points emphasize the necessity to build city identity from the scratch, 'change' is a significant factor in the vision. Furthermore, it had been noticed that city have no attractions that would distinguish the place on the international market. However, the natural advantages are bigger than it was expected before. Those strong sides need to be promoted and improved through new investments. The potential of the town is seen from the air. The Oder River builds an

amazing landscape, which might be used as a recreational area. Those areas give a chance to develop an infrastructure, which bring new investments in Yachting and Ecology. The vision's goal is to enable the city to become the biggest and the most important marina along the Baltic coast. However, it is not the end of the vision. The vision has to be brave to build Baltic Neopolis. To be more specific, the city that uses metropolis potential but still is close to the nature. The vision laid importance on urban planning. All the urban actions have to be directed to create the vision in sustainable manner. It cannot be achieved without investment in people and education. The city has to create two or three innovative architectural structure, which distinguishes it from other destinations. The vision is directed to the investors who can play a crucial role in changing the city for better.

In the branding strategy becoming the center of the Pomerania Region is presented as the most important objective.

The actions were divided into three stages presented in the chronological order:

Stage one: 2008-2009: "Discover the vision".

During this period the local residents, media and decision makers are convinced to the new brand and vision.

Stage two: 2010-2015: "See the vision". During those five years the vision finally is accepted and shows how it might change the destination.

Stage three: 2015+: "Touch the vision". Since the year 2015 the vision will have become finally implemented through new investments related to the strategy. People will see around the consequences of the new brand implementation.

The features presented above are outcomes of actions provided by CPC, BNA and Profile and Promotion and information bureau.

## **6.5 SWOT**

Short before the strategy was launched the city hall had created the SWOT analysis to sum up all the factors and to prepare for the new challenges.

The SWOT had been related to the long-term strategy in city's development. Presented strengths emphasized local residents' openness to novelty and foreigners. The location close to the border again was indicated as the huge advantage of Szczecin. Szczecin in the SWOT analysis was also presented as the destination with development potential due to its water reservoir and green areas around and in the city. Moreover, the lack of image boundaries was strength to create better identity for the city. The biggest weakness of the city was a lack of cooperation and a unified strategy and vision to create a better place. The low standard of high education also had been indicated as the factor that influences negatively opinion about the city. As it was noticed, the city did not use the recreation and economical advantages of the Oder River. As it is described the city turned back to the River. What is more, SWOT analysis presents that there was no clear reason why to visit Szczecin; consequently, once again lack of distinguishable factors was presented.

The big potential, becoming the center of Euroregion, investment and improvement of the education, unified vision of development those all are attributes which were the opportunities for the city. The vision that would not meet the city's needs was the biggest threat indicated. There was also a possibility that somebody builds similar brand what would eventually destroy branding novelty.

## **6.6 In Sum**

The information presented above show the brand foundation and the goals that are fundamental to the new strategy of the city. The brand was build relying on the social research and expectation of the local residents. The company designed "Floating Garden 2050" indicating understanding that the branding have to be directed into the future. Creative and innovative brand, which cuts off from the previous promotional tactics have the aim to distinguish the city on the market and concentrate people's attention on the attraction, which slowly but steadily are going to be created or improved, especially if related to the water resources, ecology and green areas. Yachting is an activity that the town leaders described as the factor, which has the ability to change the city's indenting and consequently the image.

According to Mr. Wachowicz the brand implementation provided during the first stage - called "Discover the vision" - was mostly focused on exhibitions and conferences with the media, town representatives and local residents. Personal involvement in the project of the Szczecin's

president was also important factor in the implementation process. It facilitated the access to the resources and gave the support from the public sector and what is even more important it gave a strong leader to coordinate the whole process. Mr. Wachowicz and Przybył states the “Floating Garden 2050” because of its novelty and long-term ambitions was strongly criticized by the local media and the residents. However, the undesirable pattern changed shortly after first tangible and visible effects of the new brand were implemented in the city infrastructure. This shift is going to be presented in the next chapter.

Since 2008 the city has used unified logos, colors etc. The brochures, magazines, billboards and also commercials are made to put an emphasis on ecology and Yachting. The city’s strategy was directed again toward water resources what led to the investments in those areas (wastewater treatment plant, re-building River waterfront, building olympic swimming pool, investments in building the marina in the Lake Dąbie etc.)” The events made by the city constantly remind about the brands missions and values. The new public buses and trams are using the brand colors which is a good PR strategy to show people that the brand have the objective of improving their lives. Those and other actions are made to attach the brand to the city’s reality. Furthermore, Mr. Wachowicz also said that all new city hall officers during their training have been presented the main branding requirements what in fact has an aim to convince those people to the brand for which they are responsible. That is how the new brand was created and implemented in Szczecin.



## **7. What have been changed?**

The new brand surely affects the city image. The following subchapter introduces what kind of changes appeared in Szczecin after the brand implementation. It is hard to estimate which changes are directly or indirectly caused by the Floating Garden 2050 project. However, the city's situation presented through statistical data in 2011 gives overview of trends in local tourism industry. Next, the chapter analyzes and compares the changes presented in both chapters 5th and 6th with the theories given by Anholt, Hankinson and Baker. That should give a possibility to recognize if all the aspect of successful branding were implemented. Finally, the researcher tries to classify the Szczecin in one of the tourism place life cycles. All those aspects should give the answer to the new brand's influence on the city and what changes had been noticed after it implementation.

### **7.1 The changes in numbers.**

All the information are based on "Research Report September 2007" provided by the city hall of Szczecin.

In 2010 the overall number of tourists was estimated for app. 365000 tourists 40 % of which were international tourists. The change is significant. In 2007 overall number of tourists was 4 times higher. However, according to GUS (central statistical office) the number of visitors decline for the whole country. The tourism sector is very sensible to the changes and was badly affected by the economical crisis. However, since 2009 the number of visitors have increased by 2 percentage points. Szczecin was more willingly visited by domestic tourists, however the number of international visitors have declined by app. 10 percentage points. The international tourists are still mostly from Germany, Denmark and Sweden. It is caused by a small distance and good connection with those destinations, by land or ferry. Both international and domestic tourists nowadays stay shorter than in 2007, domestic ones on average 2,11 days while international ones only 1,75. It is very undesirable pattern because it affects the local economy and consequently tourism. As it might be perceived Szczecin became more of a transit destination, not a target of travel itself. Commonly given purpose of visit was still sightseeing (domestic 54,5 %, international tourists 39,7 %). However, the second most important purpose of visit appears to be different than presented in the previous statistical outcome. Instead of

business reasons in 2010, it was a purpose of visiting friends and family. The business purpose became less relevant despite the fact that the infrastructure for MICE tourism improved considerably (domestic 10,7% and international 1,5%). The average age of tourists was 34 years old. It might be perceived as a change for better because it gives a chance to develop wider offer of tourism product not only focusing on clubs and entertainment for youth.

According to those data it might be suggested that new branding failed in the field of tourism. However, as it is noted above, the decline of tourist had been noticed in the whole country. Moreover, it appears that slightly more visitors decided to visit the city after the brand was launched in 2008. Unfortunately, at the moment of writing of the paper it is not possible to prove that statement.

## **7.2 Floating Garden 2050 project in view of Anholt, Hankinson and Baker**

The concept of Floating Garden 2050 is an innovative strategy, which the first aim was to interest the investors to the city. The innovation and creativeness in the branding is strongly emphasized by Anholt (2003), Hankinson (2004) and Baker (2007). They mostly focused on how the branding should be managed. "Floating Garden 2050" gives a new "face" to the destination and gives the promise of better future by promoting a hidden potential of Szczecin. That strategy might be perceived as risky. The brand after its launching met with criticism because it is not based on the attraction, which were existing but on those, which might be created in the long-term strategy. The strong vision, patience in branding and the truth are factors enumerated as significant to obtain a successful strategy by Anholt (2003). The branding as a chance of creating the new identity and image is also presented by Baker (2007). Anholt (2003) presents an opinion that the biggest challenge is related to changing undesirable or out-of-date image. Mr. Wachowicz and Przybył pointed out that the branding is an answer to the negative opinion of the town and lack of interest in the city on the local market. Floating Garden 2050 fulfill all those requirements. It is not without the reason that the whole strategy is based on that author's studies. The only problem might be recognized according the principle of truth (Anholt 2003). As it was mentioned above the new branding is based on that what place might become. That is why the date in the name of the brand is an important part of it. It indicates to the people that the vision is a promise and not a fact. The role of sustainable development is shown by all the three authors. Anholt (2003) and Hankinson (2004) also emphasize creating a strong mission

and philosophy, which helps to convince and guide people involved in the process and also the local residents and private stakeholders. Those factors were implemented in Szczecin by arranging frequent conferences and exhibitions before the brand was launched. BNA presents a philosophy related to the natural resources of the town such as vast green areas and water reservoirs. Moreover, all the public officials are trained about the brand aims and its culture before they obtain the position in the city hall, which is also crucial according to Hankinson (2004). That includes not only those, which are directly responsible for the brand but all the officials from all departments. As it was presented before, the branding process mostly focuses on increasing the number of investments. The tourism was not an only sector, which the brand aims at. That is why, the communication with the tourism stakeholders currently is far from being perceived as the relationship and cooperative, which is shown as paramount by all the authors. However, the city and the whole project have a strong leader. That is the main factor that guarantees a successful branding according to Hankinson (2004). The president of the city is the leader of the whole project as he gives a personal support to all of its actions. The other aspect, which is significant in destination branding, is a communication and simplicity in action (Anholt 2003). The first step toward destination branding in Szczecin was to create a separate department involved in promotion and information. Approximately in April 2012 the tourism department is going to be connected with the promotion and information bureau. The aim of this is to finally focus on the tourism sector, which was not put in the serious consideration even though it was frequently presented as vital to the local economy. That might give a serious advantage to develop a new tourism product number of which is currently very limited. According to Baker (2007) and Anholt (2003) a proper recognition in the situation on the market might facilitate to avoid the misunderstanding and unnecessary problems in the future. Baker (2007) and Anholt (2003) also emphasized the necessity to base the branding on the truth and demands of the private sector and local residents about the destination. The city hall had ordered a research made by CPC to find what Szczecin has to offer and what are local residents' expectations to its development before the brand was established. Furthermore, the festival made by Steuer gave a first view of how to manage the new branding, which was consequently continued by the BNA. Finally, a serious lack of monitoring of how the brand is perceived has been noticed. This feature is significant according to the Baker (2007). Last studies were provided in 2009. Mr. Wachowicz also states that the researches according to the brand are

provided during the biggest events in the city. The reason why the monitoring of the situation is not made more frequently is that the branding is divided into three steps. The next (second step) is due to be over in 2015, and shortly before the year a new detail studies about brand perception will be conducted.

### **7.3 Where is the city now? Szczecin in Butler tourism life cycle**

Butler (1980) presented the evolution of the tourism destination which is presented in sub-chapter 4.10.

According to this and the situation of the city before and after the brand was established, the researcher has reached the following conclusions.

Szczecin reached the stagnation stage in 2007. The accommodation infrastructure was well developed, however, the lack of the distinguishable tourism product directed the destination toward decline stage. The number of tourists suddenly declined and reached app. four times less tourists than in 2007. However, the new branding, which the main aim was to increase the number of investments appears to give the town a chance to switch to the rejuvenation stage. The main idea of Floating Garden 2050 is to promote the Yachting and ecology what emphasizes importance of water resources in the city. The new image and identity might bring a huge economical benefits in the tourism sector and create a various number of the new tourism products. However, the biggest threat is that long-time strategy might meet enormous number of difficulties during such a long period. The biggest opportunity is a new attention towards tourism sector paid by the public sector. Previous lack of thereof has been noticed for many years in the destination. The switch to the rejuvenation stage is still uncertain, but the city appears to be in a much better condition than it was previously. The number of the investments including the water infrastructure is the highest in the whole country. They have also improved the infrastructure and created a new attraction, which the goal is to sustain the interests of the new tourists. (mmszczecin.pl 2012)

## 8. Conclusion

The paper - by conducted investigation - attempts to answer to the following question.

**“How a new brand “Floating Garden 2050” has been established? An investigation of the branding implemented in the city of Szczecin.”**

As it was presented, the branding has been created on request of public sector represented by City Hall of Szczecin. At the beginning of the process the lack of experience and knowledge concerning the destination branding resulted in an unsuccessful brand strategy called “Open Szczecin”. However, as the director of the promotion and information bureau presents it: it helps to notice that Szczecin has to base the new strategy on more scholastic approach. The turning point was a participation of the city hall representatives at the Steuer festival where the basic theory and the main approaches related to the topic and problem were obtained. Furthermore, both the city hall and BNA based the strategy on the theory stated by Simon Anholt and his lectures given during the aforementioned festival. The BNA used the previous experience and the personal knowledge about the Szczecin to respond to demands, which were previously elicited by CPC research. Moreover, the strategy based on Anholt theories paid the highest attention to innovation and creativity. In spite of the problems in local economy the branding was accepted by the city hall. At first, the Floating Garden struggled with lack of trust from the local residents and some media representatives. However, according to the studies conducted at the end of first stage of branding implementation among the internet users (Wachowicz)(Brand at HEAD) the opinion promptly increased the level of trust and became recognizable not only by the locals but also on the national market already in 2009. As it is noticed in the comparison with Anholt, Hankinson and Baker theories the branding followed most of the stated by them guidelines, which goal is to allow the destination brandings become a successful strategy. The biggest weakness of the city is a lack of communication with the stakeholders, especially those involved in the tourism industry. As it is stated in the interviews, the reason for it is that the branding was created mostly to change the undesirable out-of-date image, give direction to the farther development as well as a promise of using the hidden city potential in development process: the natural resources such as vast areas of water reservoir, forest and parks focused strategy on Yachting and ecology. However, those local advantages are not presented as the

opportunities for improvement of tourism industry but only as the attributes, which might be encouraging for the investors and potential immigrants. Surprisingly the tourism was indicated as the potentially positive to the local economy years before the Floating Garden 2050. However, although the necessity of promoting that sector was noticed, the local leaders never put it into serious consideration. The strong leadership is also an advantage of the city - the personal involvement of the city president into branding, facilitates to conduct the changes. Furthermore, there are concrete plans to merge the tourism department with the promotion bureau what might suggest that tourism sector finally is going to be improved and used for the destination betterment. The investigation shows that a lot have to be done to enable the city to compete with the biggest cities in Poland and Europe; however it appears that the situation in the destination is following the good path toward successful branding. Consequently, it has been suggested that the city soon might switch from Butler declining stage to more desired rejuvenation stage. Nevertheless, that date of 2050 to create the Floating Garden, Baltic Neopolis and the biggest Marina along the Baltic Coast in the destination seems to be relevant because of huge change, which must be done.

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## Appendix 1.

Below is presented an interview with Mr. Piotr Wachowicz, the director of promotion and information bureau.

The interview might be translated into English upon request.

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- 1. Zarówno w broszurze informacyjnej, jak i w treści wywiadów przeprowadzonych z prezydentem P. Krzystkiem pojawiła się informacja, iż strategia marketingowa koncentrująca się na Yachtingu i Ekologii była poprzedzona badaniami i analizą. Czy mógłby Pan/Pani mi powiedzieć, kto przeprowadzał te badania? Czy istniałaby możliwość wglądu w ich rezultaty?*

Badania były prowadzone, na etapie projektowania nowej strategii marketingowej dla miasta. Proces został rozpoczęty we Wrześniu 2007 roku. Konsorcjum, które przygotowywało strategię składało się z trzech podmiotów. Pierwszym podmiotem była firma BNA (Brand Nature Access), czyli agencja zajmująca się szeroko pojętym Brandingiem. To jest agencja, która pracowała m.in. dla marek komercyjnych takich jak Tyskie, Żywiec, Empik i kilka innych znanych i łatwo rozpoznawalnych marek w Polsce. Warto podkreślić, że firma zajmuję się zarówno kreowaniem marki jak i całą komunikacją marketingową. Dla nas równie ważne było to, że właścicielami są dwie osoby ze Szczecina. Ten aspekt był również ważny, dlatego, że oprócz technokratycznego podejścia do procesu właściciele firmy mieli osobiste, emocjonalne odniesienie do tego, czym jest Szczecin. Mówiąc kolokwialnie – czuli Szczecin jako miejsce im bliskie. Oczywiście tego typu argumenty nie mogą być brane pod uwagę z cyklu zamówień publicznych. Aczkolwiek dla nas zajmujących się całą strategią było to ważne.

Drugim podmiotem tego konsorcjum była CPC (Corporate Profile Consulting). Trzecim zaś podmiotem była firma specjalizująca się w Public Relation „Profile”. Ta firma głównie odpowiadała za komunikację.

Role tych firm były podzielone w następujący sposób: BNA odpowiadało za kreację i design całego projektu. CPC z racji profilu konsultingowego odpowiadało za segment badań i podejście biznesowe nowej strategii. „Profile” zaś, zapewniały bieżącą komunikację w trakcie trwania wdrażania tego projektu aż do momentu odpalenia w roku 2008.

Badania były realizowane podczas procesu budowania strategii. Projekt był tak wymyślony, że zanim w grudniu 2007 roku pokazaliśmy już „Floating Garden 2050” Dochodziliśmy do niego poprzez badania ogólnopolskie na temat postrzegania Szczecina oraz badania wewnętrzne. Wyniki tych badań zostaną Panu udostępnione. Do tych badań odnosimy się po dziś dzień. Bowiem są one wielowątkowe. M.in. Czy lubimy Szczecin? Dlaczego? Co wyróżnia nasze miasto? Jak już mówiłem było to robione w grupie wewnętrznej, ogólnopolskiej, jak i wewnętrznej czyli na mieszkańcach Szczecina. Dodatkowo były realizowane badania na turystach. Zostały wybrane dwie grupy turystów. Pierwsza grupa składała się z turystów z zagranicy, a w szczególności Niemców i Skandynawów. To jest nasza najbliższa destynacja, nasz najbliższy krąg naszego oddziaływania. Po trzecie były prowadzone bardziej szczegółowe (fokusowe) badania realizowane podczas warsztatów z grupami opiniotwórczymi, które sobie wyznaczaliśmy w mieście. Takie jak media, dziennikarze i liderów opinii. Przedstawiciele sportu i turystyki, przedstawiciele kultury oraz innych działalności ważnych dla rozwoju i promocji miasta. To wszystko jest dokładnie opisane w dokumencie, do którego Pan będzie miał wgląd. Badania, które były prowadzone przez CPC były to

badania jakościowe i ilościowe. Pogłębiane poprzez badania prowadzone podczas fokusu z w/w grupami. To wszystko dała nam materiał do dalszej analizy i stworzenia tego, co jest esencją marki, tzw. klucz Szczecina. Pozwoliło nam to określić, jaki jest stan Szczecina na przełomie 2007 i 2008 roku.

W oparciu o to wytyczaliśmy kierunek naszej strategii. Nie tylko koncentrując się na wyglądzie Szczecina, ale także kierunek w myśleniu, rozwoju i filozofii miasta. „Floating Garden 2050” jest dobrą strategią, ponieważ jest to pierwsza strategia w Polsce, której plan rozwoju miasta bazuje na tym, iż Brand wyznacza filozofię, odpowiada na pytania - jak myśleć o mieście? Czym jest miasto Szczecin? Jak chcemy, aby o nim mówiono? Po zrealizowaniu i analizie tych badań stworzyliśmy strategię działań i dokument na którym opieramy nasze działania i nad, którym cały czas pracujemy. Tzn. to nie jest dokument, półkownik, w sensie 40 tomów ustawionych na półce, do których zaglądały od czasu do czasu. To jest rzecz, którą wykorzystujemy, na co dzień, cały czas nad nim pracując. Bardzo często w samorządach mówi się tak – „Przyjmujemy strategię, po jakimś czasie ta strategia nabiera wymiaru górnolotnego, a dokument swoją stroną nabiera rangi wiedzy dla wtajemniczonych”.

Strategię, którą my przygotowaliśmy, mimo, że nazywa się długoterminowa, mimo tego, że termin docelowy jest datowany na odległy rok 2050 to ten dokument, który tu Panu przedstawiam zawiera określoną liczbę slajdów, które określają jak i co konkretnie mamy robić, jak postępować tu i teraz by realizować plan, który jest w nim zawarty. Bardzo często do tego dokumentu się odwołujemy i jest bardzo często w użyciu. Stanowi swoisty przewodnik po marce i strategii, ale również jest cały czas rozwijany. Cała strategia określa jak powońmy mówić o sobie, jak powinniśmy odnosić się do marki. Nawet tak z pozoru niepowiązane czynniki jak mój wygląd ma świadczyć, iż marka jest nastawiona na innowacyjność, otwartość, kreatywność. To nie jest marka sztywna, to nie jest marka sformalizowana.

*2. Kiedy i w jakich okolicznościach pojawiła się idea stworzenia marki dla Szczecina? Co było tego powodem? Kto wyszedł z tą inicjatywą?*

Zacznę od tego iż przed rozpoczęciem pracy w Urzędzie Miasta pracowałem dla spółki skarbu państwa Zakłady Chemiczne Police. W tej firmie byłem odpowiedzialny za szereg działalności aczkolwiek głównie koncentrowałem się na działaniach z zakresu Public Relation i marketingu. Byłem zaangażowany w Re-branding zakładów chemicznych. Z początku firma posługiwała się mało wyróżniającym się logo jak i strategią. Moim zadaniem było odświeżenie tego wizerunku i nadania mu nowych cech i wymiaru. Później byłem zaangażowany w tworzenie Brandingu dla całej kapitałowej spółki, a następnie wprowadzaliśmy spółkę na giełdę. To jeden z tych osiągnięć, z których jestem osobiście dumny. Przechodząc z zakładów chemicznych Police do Urzędu Miasta natrafiłem na zapis w budżecie miasta, który brzmiał „marka miasta”. Zapis ten w budżecie opiewał na kwotę 500 tys. Złotych. Dzięki pomocy i inicjatywie Arka Pawlaka szefa komisji promocji i rozwoju wywalczyliśmy pieniądze, które de facto były już zarezerwowane na ten cel. Problem polegał na tym, że tak naprawdę nikt nie wiedział, w jaki sposób podejść do tego zagadnienia. Tak naprawdę nikt nie wiedział, co oznacza marka miasta. Jest wiele definicji, czym jest marka miasta, aczkolwiek pozostawało pytanie jak tworzyć markę miasta. Najprościej... zrobić logo. Świadomość marki, jaka panowała u nas tu w urzędzie była świadomością znaku nie ponad to. Dlatego też napotkaliśmy na krytykę, która głównie koncentrowała się na tym, iż miasto chce wydać pół miliona złotych na logo. Niezważająca na

krytykę postanowiliśmy rozpocząć działania na tym polu. Do tego celu była konieczność utworzenia biura/oddziału koncentrującego się na tych założeniach tudzież celach. Tworząc biuro myśmy zaproponowali nowoczesną i nietypową strukturę organizacji jak na warunki samorządowe. Dzięki temu Szczecin jako nieliczne z miast miało głównego specjalistę ds. marki (Brand manager). Na dzień dzisiejszy ustanowienie takiej pozycji jest w miarę oczywiste, aczkolwiek w 2007 roku było to niekonwencjonalne jak na polskie warunki rozwiązanie. Po dziś dzień w wielu miastach nie ma nikogo, kto by obejmował podobne stanowisko.

Następnie, z ówczesnym Brand managerem miasta Krzysztofem Adamskim, który niewątpliwie jest kluczową osobą dla tego procesu, ale niestety już z nami nie pracuje albowiem wybrał inną ścieżkę kariery. W tamtym okresie jednakże ja z Krzysztofem rozpoczęliśmy dyskusję, w jaki sposób ten proces poprowadzić. Doszliśmy do wniosku, że tu nie chodzi o logo. Logo to każdy może wymyślić lepsze lub gorsze. Naszym celem powinno być stworzenie całej strategii, w jaki sposób mówić o mieście, jak powinny wyglądać jego programy, jak powinno ono się komunikować itp. itd. Tak sobie to wytyczaliśmy i tak szliśmy coraz głębiej, aż w końcu doszliśmy do takiego wniosku, iż wprawdzie trzeba zacząć od podstaw. By utworzyć fundament pod całą strategię niezbędne było oprzeć ją na odpowiednio zrealizowanych badaniach. Była konieczność zinventaryzowania stanu na czas obecny. Tak też to się rozpoczęło.

Kluczowym momentem dla całego tego procesu był nasz udział (biura) w festiwalu, który organizowała firma Steuer, czyli operator automatów w Polsce i Niemczech, posiadająca niemiecki kapitał. Firma ta jako pierwsza w Polsce zorganizowała festiwal promocji miast i regionów. To był kwiecień 2007 roku, nasze biuro wybrał się tam z wielkimi obawami i kompleksami. Spowodowane było to krótkim okresem, jaki upłynął od jego utworzenia. Trzeba pamiętać o tym, że w tamtych latach Szczecin nie istniał w świadomości marketingowej, promocyjnej na mapie Polski. Mówiło się wtedy jedynie o takich miastach jak Wrocław, Warszawa, Kraków. Szczecin nie był uwzględniany w żadnych rankingach itp. itd. Szczecin jako miasto oczywiście istniał aczkolwiek jego komunikacja marketingowa nie była widoczna. Kontynuując, wybraliśmy się na ten festiwal i tam doszło do dwóch kluczowych momentów.

Po pierwsze, uświadomiliśmy sobie jak wielki dystans dzieli nas do wszystkich dużych miast w Polsce, z którymi do celowo chcieliśmy się równać. Albowiem naszym celem było zarówno pod względem promocyjnym jak i gospodarczym wejść do „pierwszej Ligi” miast Polski. Uświadomiwszy sobie jak duży dystans nas dzieli spowodowało, że wyzwanie, jakiego się podjęliśmy sprawiało wrażenie, iż nas przerasta.

Po drugie, istotnym wydarzeniem mającym miejsce na tym festiwalu był fakt, że brał w nim udział prezydent miasta Szczecin Piotr Krzystek. Organizatorzy byli nad wyraz zdziwieni, że osoba zajmująca tak istotne stanowisko w mieście była bezpośrednio zaangażowana w proces promocji miasta. Oczywiście udało się to pod namową biura rozwoju i promocji miasta. Prezydent uważnie wysłuchał i brał czynny udział w znacznej większości, a i można powiedzieć, że w prawie wszystkich wykładach, które odbyły się na festiwalu.

Prezentacje innych miast oraz wykłady takich osób zajmujących się „Destination Branding” jak Simon Anholt oraz poparcie prezydenta miasta sprawiły, iż od tego momentu wiedzieliśmy, na czym oprzeć naszą strategię brandingową i marketingową innymi słowy, od czego zacząć.

Uświadomiliśmy sobie po tym wydarzeniu również, iż musimy iść w stronę konkretnej strategii, długoterminowej strategii. Co ważne, mieliśmy świadomość tego aby ta taktyka miała sens musiała być ona odważna i nowatorska. Było to spowodowane tym, iż uznaliśmy, że celu, którym było dogonienie innych miast nie byliśmy w stanie osiągnąć inną strategią.

Pan prezydent dzięki temu, że osobiście brał udział w tym wydarzeniu był w stanie zaakceptować nasz plan działania w oparciu o to, co zaobserwował na festiwalu.

Mogę nawet powiedzieć, że w innych realiach mógłbym utracić posadę po zaprezentowaniu takiej strategii. Natomiast dzięki osobistemu zaangażowaniu „głowy Szczecina” stało się inaczej. Należy podkreślić, iż później prezydent brał udział na każdym etapie tego procesu. W takich jak warsztaty oraz objął stanowisko szefa zespołu projektowego Brandu.

3. *Czy mógłby Pan się odnieść do samego logo “Floating Garden 2050”? Czy nie obawia się Pan, iż data obecna w logo może sugerować mylne skojarzenia typu: „W Szczecinie Floating Garden będzie dopiero w 2050 roku, a teraz nie ma sensu tam jechać.” Co oznacza i w jakim celu powyższa data została umieszczana w logo miasta?*

W kontekście, o którym Pan mówi, czyli w kontekście typowo turystycznym zgadzam się, iż tego typu niekorzystne skojarzenia mogą występować. Jednakże głównym celem tego logo i hasła było zaciekawienie odbiorcy. Niestety osiągnięciami z zakresu turystyki najmniej na dzień dzisiejszy możemy się pochwalić. Jest to spowodowane wieloma względami, o których wolałbym nie mówić. Rok 2050 został dodany, aby zaznaczyć wagę długoterminowego rozwoju, na którym cały projekt się skupia.

By to wyjaśnić pozwoli Pan, że wróć do badań. Badania m.in. wykazały, iż szczecinianie mają fatalne zdanie o sobie jako mieszkańcach tego miasta jak i o samym Szczecinie. Jednakże, mają również ogromne oczekiwania i wymagania, co do rozwoju i przyszłości miasta. Dlatego też ta strategia jest odpowiedzią na te dwa czynniki. Poprawę wewnętrznej opinii poprzez ukazanie potencjału i możliwości miasta. Jednocześnie było ważne, aby, poprzez Brand i nową strategię uświadomić mieszkańców, iż satysfakcjonujące ich zmiany nie mogą być przeprowadzone natychmiastowo, w dwa czy trzy lata. Dlatego z początku nasza strategia była tak trudno akceptowalna. Ludzie oczekują efektów tu i teraz. Często spotykaliśmy się na początku kampanii, iż to, co my przedstawiamy jest nierealną bajką.

Naszym celem było ukazanie, iż miasto posiada tak duży potencjał, że w pełni zagospodarowanie jego atutów takich jak wyspy, woda itp. itd. wymaga w pewnej mierze stworzenia Szczecina od nowa. Tak olbrzymie wyzwanie niestety to nie jest proces na pięć czy dziesięć lat. Jest to proces wieloletni i trzeba mieć tego pełną świadomość. Innymi słowy, ta data określa długoterminowość całego przedsięwzięcia. Jest to bardziej symbol aniżeli konkretny dead line. Wiele czynników związanych ze strategią zmienia się często i gwałtownie, aby mówić o konkretnym

planie, szczególnie na tak długi okres czasu. Rozmawialiśmy o tych obawach z firmą BNA. Oni jednak zaznaczali, iż ta data musi się pojawić. Jeśli logo opierałoby się jedynie na samym „Floating Garden” to wtedy dopiero by była bajka. Zazaczyli oni potrzebę określenia ram czasowych dla nowej strategii. Na dzień dzisiejszy mogę z całą pewnością potwierdzić, iż BNA miała rację. Teraz już mało, kto kwestionuje idee „Floating Garden 2050” jak i samo logo. Z jakiego powodu? Otóż w międzyczasie pojawiły się dokumenty pod tytułem: Rozwój Przestrzenny Polski. Polska 2030. Nie dalej jak dwa tygodnie temu swoją strategię Brandingową ogłosiło miasto Łódź. Jeśli się przyjrzeć ich strategii to w wielkiej mierze jest oparta na „Floating Garden 2050”. Bo odwołuję się między innymi do transkrypcji nazwy miasta w innym alfabecie i wyznacza perspektywę rozwoju miasta do roku 2020. Uważam, iż jest to nic innego jak inaczej podana kalka. Nie ukrywam, iż daję nam to satysfakcję, że nasze pomysły i inicjatywa jest wykorzystywana przy strategiach innych miast.

Jeśli chodzi o sam Brand ma on na celu zainteresować potencjalnych odbiorców, turystów, ale głównie inwestorów. Natomiast, co do „Floating Garden” jest to w pewnej mierze dalekosiężna obietnica, która odwołuje się do potencjału miasta tu i teraz. Albowiem Szczecin w swoich granicach administracyjnych to jest 1/3 wody, 1/3 terenów zielonych i kolejne 1/3 przestrzeni zurbanizowanej, miejskiej. Dlatego ta strategia mówi, iż dzisiaj, niezależnie, do czego zmierzamy w długoterminowych założeniach to jest miasto, które łączy w sobie zalety metropolii z warunkami miejsca do dobrego do życia. Mówiąc metropolia mam tu na myśli funkcję szkolnictwa podstawowego, wyższego, szpitali, teatrów oraz innych miejsc rozrywki i ogólnie rozumianego rozwoju. Z drugiej jednak strony w ciągu nie więcej niż pół godziny można się przenieść z miasta i pływać kajakiem na śródozdrzu. Można udać się do jednej z otaczających miasto puszczy lub w jakikolwiek inny sposób wykorzystać zalety lasów, rzek i jezior dostępnych w pobliżu jak i w samym Szczecinie. Istnieje możliwość szybkiego udania się nad morze drogą wodną inne rodzaje atrakcji wykorzystujące naturalne atuty regionu.

#### *4. Czy został określony konkurent miasta Szczecina? Co jest powodem tej kompetycji?*

Nie. Powodem jest tego to, iż my bardziej koncentrujemy się na tym aby ewentualnie porównywać się do innych miast. Nie budujemy tzw. konkurenta. My pokazujemy miasta, przy których nas należy stawiać. W szczególności miasta Polski. By to wyjaśnić odwołam się do tzw. Terenu Naturalnego Oddziaływania Szczecina. Jest to Pomerania, Południowy Basen Morza Bałtyckiego. Szczecin również oddziałuje w pewnym stopniu na fragment Niemiec. Niekoniecznie na Berlin, bo nie mamy na ten moment planów na oddziaływanie na stolicę Niemiec. Granice naszego oddziaływania po niemieckiej stronie określamy na połowę drogi między naszym miastem a Berlinem. Na południową Skandynawię i na region województwa zachodniopomorskiego.

My nie określamy jako naszego konkurenta miasta np. Poznania, bowiem trudno nam tu konkurować. Każde z miast ma swoją spuściznę, jest indywidualne i tak my do tego podchodzimy.

#### *5. Jako, że większość turystów udających się w okolice Naturalnego Terenu Oddziaływania Szczecina” ma na celu wypoczynek nad morzem. Czyli poza Szczecinem, jako, że miasto oddalone jest ponad 100 km od wybrzeża. Czy poczynione zostały jakieś konkretne kroki by przyciągnąć właśnie tych odwiedzających?*

Tak, są plany, aby przyciągnąć tego typu turystów, aczkolwiek na dzień dzisiejszy te plany nie są jeszcze w pełni rozwijane. Strategia skupiająca się na tego typu założeniach koncentruje się głównie na Event'ach. Ponieważ, głównym czynnikiem przyciągającym turystów jest morze. Nasze miasto głównie przyciąga osoby z miast takich jak Koszalin, Świnoujście, Poznań, Zielona Góra, Wrocław na Katowicach kończąc. Jest to nasz naturalny klient z punktu widzenia turystów. Niestety mamy świadomość tego, iż ten potencjalny klient jest średnio zainteresowany Szczecinem. Jego głównym priorytetem udania się do naszego regionu jest morze. Dlatego, też my jesteśmy w stanie przyciągnąć go do naszego miasta generując ofertę taką jak „Festiwal Ogni Sztucznych”, „Dni Morza z Żaglowcami”, „Tall Ship Races”, to są te Event'y, które wykorzystują nasz naturalny potencjał, które dobrze promowane powodują, iż do miasta przyjeżdżają ludzie z miast, o których mówiłem wcześniej albo ci, którzy w danym momencie wypoczywają nad morzem. Aczkolwiek na ten moment jest za wcześnie by mówić o jakiś konkretnych. Strategia będzie się rozwijała w kierunku ujednolicenia oferty turystycznej z miastami partnerskimi takimi jak Świnoujście, Stargard Szczeciński, Międzyzdroje, Rewal i Goleniów. Na dzień dzisiejszy mamy świadomość, iż Szczecin sam w sobie nie jest atrakcyjny. Nie ma tak bogatej oferty kulturalnej jak chociażby Warszawa czy też Kraków. Ma dobre swoje Eventy wydarzenia, jednakże jak to często bywa nasze działania są ograniczone przez nieporównywalnie niższy budżet na tego typu działania, niż inne większe miasta. Np. nasz budżet na komunikację marketingową wynosi trzy miliony złotych gdzie w Poznaniu wynosi on około dwudziestu milionów. Żeby zachęcić turystów z innych miast do przyjazdu na wydarzenie odbywające się w Szczecinie trzeba dysponować odpowiednimi środkami, aby wypromować je w miejscach dysponujących swoją ofertą. Dlatego naszą siłą może być integracja ofert z innymi miastami w naszym regionie i wspólna promocja. Co za tym idzie większe środki przeznaczone na ten cel i większy obszar promocji. Np. osoba lądująca w Goleniowie wie, że albo może się udać do Świnoujścia nad morze lub też do Międzyzdrów, które mają nieco inny klimat. Będzie on miał także świadomość, że może udać się do Szczecina na zakupy lub, co innego, co oferują tylko większe miasta. Taki jest nasz wstępny plan, aczkolwiek jest on na etapie planowania i konsultacji.

*6. Czy Urząd Miasta pod względem turystyki nawiązał jakąś konkretną współpracę z miastami niemieckimi?*

Nasza promocja w miastach niemieckich odbywa się przy okazji event'ów. Jest to spowodowane z racji niskiego budżetu. Dlatego, też tego typu promocja odbywa się głównie przy promocji wydarzenia „X”. Wtedy też, tego typu komunikacja z miastami niemieckimi i nie tylko, zachodzi. Mamy również tzw. miasta partnerskie, z którymi ściślej współpracujemy. Niestety nie w takim stopniu jak ja osobiście bym tego chciał czy wyobrażał. Niestety na dzień dzisiejszy nie mam ściślej współpracy z miastem niemieckim w kontekście turystycznym, aczkolwiek nie ukrywam, iż tego typu działania są brane pod uwagę do wdrożenia w niedalekiej przyszłości.

*7. Czy zanotowano już jakieś następstwa obrania tej strategii marketingowej? Sukcesy np. wzrost inwestycji, liczby turystów, rozpoznawalność marki w innych rejonach polski i zagranicą itp. itd. Za pomocą, jakich narzędzi lub instytucji jest monitorowany postęp wdrażanych strategii?*

Głównie, jeśli chodzi o tego typu monitorowanie, to badania są przeprowadzane również przy event'ach. Jeśli chodzi o ruch turystów dane są dostępne w Głównym Urzędzie Statystycznym. Jeśli chodzi zaś o następstwa,

które są pośrednio lub bezpośrednio związane z naszą działalnością i marką „Floating Garden 2050” to Np. przedstawiony niespełna dwa tygodnie temu program inwestycyjny miast Szczecin do roku 2020. To, że w tym programie znajdują się rozbudowa przystani kajakowych na jeziorze Dąbie. To bezpośrednio bierze się z założeń naszej marki.

Następnie, to, że jest rozbudowa portu jachtowego Szczecin na wyspie Grockiej i wyspie Łasztowni i że obecnie w Szczecinie są przebudowywane nabrzeża, to również jest częścią naszych długofalowych działań. To, że miasto Szczecin kupiło od Skarbu Państwa 100 % udziałów Żegluga Szczecińska, która jest właścicielem nabrzeży Wałów Chrobrego, to również bierze się z naszej strategii Brandingowej. To jeszcze nie spełnia naszych priorytetów, aczkolwiek każdy krok przybliża nas do naszych założeń. Bardziej konkretnym przykładem jest to, iż w 2007/08 roku miasto Szczecin nie było opisywane w żadnych przewodnikach. Duże firmy publikujące przewodniki nie interesowały się miastem Szczecin. Pytałem Szymona Jeża, z którym ten przewodnik później wydaliśmy, dlaczego tak jest?

Stwierdził on, iż jest to w pewnym rodzaju koło zamknięte. Oni wydają przewodniki tam gdzie mają ruch turystyczny, aczkolwiek z drugiej strony przewodnik ma bardzo istotny wymiar promocyjny i zachęcający turystów. Niestety większe wydawnictwa nie podejmują się takiego projektu, jeśli nie będzie on gwarantował zysków. Co w wypadku mało znanych miast nie jest tak oczywiste. Dlatego też, aby przerwać to błędne koło postanowiliśmy wydać własne przewodniki. Wzorem były przewodniki wydawnictwa Pascal, które to są wzorowane na ogólnie znanych przewodnikach wydanych przez Lonely Planet. Część tychże przewodników zostało dystrybuowanych przez nas samych, a część przez pośredników m.in. sieć sklepów Empik. Przewodniki zostały wydane w trzech językach, polskim, niemieckim i angielskim. Również z naszej inicjatywy powstał pierwszy przewodnik kajakowy po Śródnadrzu. Tego typu działania wydawnicze zostały zainicjowane w ramach „Floating Garden 2050”.

8. Yachting i ekologia. Jakie flagowe inwestycje, które wpisujące się w te hasła są planowane, a jakie już realizowane?

Jeżeli chodzi o Yachting to m.in. Centrum Żeglarskie w Dąbiu. Jest to potężna inwestycja o charakterze edukacyjno-rekreacyjnym. Dawna przystań Pałacu Młodzieży jest przebudowywana. My jako miasto jesteśmy właścicielami tej przystani oraz jednostek pływających, które są tam zlokalizowane m.in. „Dar Szczecina”. Kolejną inwestycją jest Port Jachtowy Szczecin. Jest to inwestycja, która jest obecnie przygotowywana i niedługo zostanie zainicjowana. Budowa odbędzie się na Łasztowni. Cała inwestycja ma być ukończona w 2013 roku. Kolejną inwestycją jest wydarzenie „Tall Ship Races”. Mimo tego, iż jest to Event ma on ogromne znaczenie promocyjne dla miasta. Jeśli natomiast mówi o ekologii to mogę powiedzieć, że wszelkie nasze działania i inwestycje mają na celu współdziałanie i współgranie z zasadami ekologii. Myśmy inicjując „Floating Garden 2050” w 2007 roku od samego początku stawialiśmy na zrównoważony, ekologiczny rozwój. Co również na owy czas dawało nam przewagę nad innymi miastami pod tym względem. Albowiem, inwestycje i potrzeba ekologicznego rozwoju miast dopiero od niedawna jest ważną dziedziną w kontekście funkcjonowania miast. Jeśli chodzi o inwestycje w tym zakresie na dzień dzisiejszy są to autobusy, których emisja spalin spełnia nawet najsrozsze wymogi emisji spalin, wcześniej były zakupywane używane autobusy. To jest promocja i inwestycje w cały segment rowerowy jak np.

ścieżki rowerowe i ich integracja, które wcześniej prawie w ogóle nie były obecne lub było ich mało. Poza tym spalarnia, którą realizujemy w układzie metropolitalnym. Jest to również ogromna inwestycja, która niebawem będzie realizowana. Trzeba ponad to zaznaczyć, iż strategia „Floating Garden 2050” obejmuje to, iż podczas jej planowania, rozwój miasta, czyli cała infrastruktura, która się z nim wiąże jak np. dźwigi i wszystko związane z budową, ma być realizowane tak, aby miasto nie utraciło naturalnego atutu, jakim jest środowisko naturalne. Ten punkt jest bardzo istotny dla całej strategii i stanowi jej kwintesencję. „Floating Garden 2050” ma być sygnałem, iż tak, chcemy mieć inwestycję, ale te inwestycje mają być przemyślane, zaplanowane uwzględniając wymogi ochrony środowiska i zrównoważonego rozwoju.

9. Yachting jak i cała marka Floating Garden kojarzy się bardziej z atrakcjami na letni sezon tudzież wiosenny. Co do zaoferowania ma nowa marka, jeśli chodzi o inne sezony?

Muszę przyznać, iż pod tym względem nasza marka nie była analizowana. Oczywiście nasza marka i cała idea jest skoncentrowana na okres wiosny i lata. I dlatego też na dzień dzisiejszy nie jestem w stanie niczego panu przedstawić, co w kontekście turystycznym obejmowałoby zimowy okres. (wyciąg na ...) Muszę przyznać, że to jest pole do rozwoju kreatywności czyli poniekąd tego na czym opiera się cała idea „Floating Garden” i sądzę, że ten punkt jest godny uwagi do zrealizowania w najbliższej przyszłości.

10. W jaki sposób nowa strategia jest przedstawiana pośród pracowników bezpośrednio związanych z jej budowaniem? (np. urzędnicy w Urzędzie Miasta) Jak proces informacji/szkolenia w tym zakresie wygląda?

Najistotniejsze w inicjowaniu tego typu projektów jest to, kto go prowadzi. My mieliśmy o tyle łatwiej, iż był to Prezydent Miasta Szczecina. Nie tyle z urzędu, co z przekonania do całego przedsięwzięcia. Jeżeli projekt ma lidera w postaci prezydenta miasta to automatycznie oddziałuje na cały urząd. Czyli daje nam to dwa istotne zalety. Pan prezydent i mój zespół uczestniczący w projektowaniu sprawił, że łatwiejsze było zintegrowanie założeń i strategii marki. Ponad to założenia marki są propagowane pośród urzędników, którzy brali udział w procesie kreowania, czyli badań, warsztatów itp. itd. Był to zespół składający się z około 20 osób. To byli przedstawiciele różnych wydziałów, którzy uczestniczyli podczas budowania projektu i przekazywali swoją wiedzę na ten temat dalej. To były początki uświadamiania urzędników o nowej strategii i marce. Ponad to jako pierwsi w Polsce wprowadziliśmy Branding, oraz cele nowej strategii do obowiązkowego szkolenia Urzędników Miasta Szczecin. Innymi słowy urzędnicy, którzy rozpoczynają pracę w mieście mają trzymiesięczny kurs przygotowawczy gdzie poznają podstawy i zasady pracy w Urzędzie Miejskim. Jednym z punktów szkoleń jest Branding miasta gdzie tłumaczone jest m.in. jak zachowują się inne miasta, na czym polega „Floating Garden”. I to działa. Jednakże najbardziej ludzie integrują się z projektem, kiedy doświadczą go na własnej skórze. Jak to było w przypadku wydziału ochrony środowiska gdzie ta marka dała im możliwość uzyskania większych nakładów dla obszaru ekologii. Również nowa marka pomogła uporządkować system informacji miejskich zwany SIM. Kiedy korzyści związane z wprowadzeniem marki stały się zauważalne wzrosło poparcie i wiara w markę oraz zaangażowanie urzędników w jej prowadzeniu.

11. Jakie środki są wykorzystywane do promocji marki? Które są używane najczęściej?



Do promocji destynacji jak już mówiłem głównie używane są Event'y. Trzeba zwrócić uwagę na to, iż nie można patrzeć na tą strategię tylko w jednym ujęciu. To jest strategia marki miasta, marki miejsca. To nie tylko turystyka, to również inwestycje, plan rozwoju, zachowania ludzi. Istotne jest to, aby cały czas patrzeć na wielowątkowość, dlatego jeśli mówimy o Event'ach to nie mówimy tylko o destynacji. „Floating Garden 2050” jest to większe przedsięwzięcie, działa o wiele szerzej. To jest cała publikacja bezpośrednia, czyli realizowana na dużą skalę akcja w latach 2008/09 polegająca na przedstawianiu mnóstwa prezentacji, komunikacja do studentów, mieszkańców do innych miast w liczbie około czterdziestu rocznie. Ponad to do promocji miasta jest używana strona internetowa [www.szczecin.eu](http://www.szczecin.eu). Muszę podkreślić, że na tej stronie również trudno znaleźć turystykę. Jednakże nacisk na ten sektor będzie powoli zwiększany, albowiem okres związany z budowaniem ogólnego wizerunku już zakończamy, ponieważ został już utwierdzony na tyle, że możemy teraz przejść w dół do poszczególnych segmentów, w tym do segmentu turystyki. Podsumowując, jeżeli chodzi o „Floating Garden 2050” i sposób promocji tego Brandu w odniesieniu do turystyki to są Eventy organizowane u nas, udział w targach i imprezach turystycznych i nie tylko, to jest obsługa cruise'ów, które przyplływają do Szczecina. Przyplływają do Szczecina z tego m.in. powodu, że organizujemy im przywitanie. Jest orkiestra, są materiały, są autobusy podstawione, dzięki którym ludzie mogą dostać się do miasta itp. itd. Ponad to promocja marki w zakresie turystyki dobywa się poprzez promocje on-line, czyli strona internetowa, facebook itp. itd.

12. Kto z działu promocji odpowiada za bezpośredni kontakt z mediami? Jak ten kontakt wygląda i czemu on ma służyć?

Za to odpowiada zespół prasowy Urzędu Miasta. Biuro promocji i informacji składa się z dwóch podmiotów. Jeden z podmiotów jest to zespół promocyjny odpowiadający za planowanie kampanii, za planowanie Event'ów, obsługę Event'ów oraz realizacji później tych kampanii itp. Zaś drugi zespół jest to grupa odpowiedzialna za kontakt z prasą i mediami i działaniami on-line. Czyli grupa odpowiedzialna bardziej za komunikację. Zespół prasowy składa się z pięciu osób. W tym trzech specjalistów odpowiedzialnych za trzy typy różnych działań takie jak kwestie społeczne, sport i kulturę, następnie drugi specjalista odpowiada za kwestie gospodarczo-komunalne i funkcjonowanie urzędu, kolejna za inwestycje. Nad tym jest kierownik biura, który koordynuje całość, ale również spina wszystko w całość. Zatem dziennikarze regionalni, którzy chcą uzyskać poszczególne informacje dzwonią do osoby, która jest za to odpowiedzialna. W momencie, kiedy to jest temat, który przechodzi przez wszystkie poziomy to kontaktowani są z kierownikiem. Do tego jest jeszcze rzecznik biura prezydenta, który odpowiada za wszelkie pytania i informacje związane bezpośrednio z prezydentem. Model tej organizacji jest również nietypowy i poniekąd innowacyjnym sposobem zarządzania. Z reguły sposób zarządzania i komunikacji jest organizowany tak, że rzecznik prasowy jest bezpośrednio pod prezydentem, biuro prasowe jest albo pod rzecznikiem albo też pod prezydentem albo jest też podporządkowane jakiemuś wydziałowi organizacyjnemu. Natomiast wydział odpowiedzialny za marketing jest nieusystematyzowany i podlega różnym wydziałom np, turystyki. W naszym modelu głównym założeniem jest to, że wszelkie założenia związane z komunikacją marketingową zamykają się w jednym biurze czy też oddziale. Wszystko jest ze sobą powiązane i ze sobą współgra. Odkąd realizujemy ten projekt, czyli od blisko pięciu lat, mimo tego, że jesteśmy jednym zespołem, największym wyzwaniem jest koordynacja działań. 57:32

13. Czy Urząd Miasta ściśle współpracuje z prywatnymi firmami w celu rozwijania marki? Jak ta współpraca wygląda, na czym się skupia i czemu ma służyć?

Tak współpracujemy. Są to między innymi cruiser'y, o których już wspominałem. Jest to kooperacja z portem Szczecin, który ma interes w tym a by te statki wchodziły do portu, bo są z tym związane opłaty portowe. Następnie współpracujemy Polsteam Consulting, czyli ze spółką od PŻM'u (Polska Żegluga Morska), która zarządza nabrzeżami. Oni również mają interes w tym, aby Cruise'y weszły do portu, bowiem dostarczają wodę, paliwo i inne zasoby, które są niezbędne do pływania dla statków. Współpracujemy również z jednym z biur na terenie miasta, a konkretnie z biurem Agnieszki Fader „Centrum Wynajmu i Turystyki. Urząd Miasta, a co za tym samo miasta ma z tego takie korzyści, iż rozwijana jest gospodarka, a po drugie są to rzeczy, które pozytywnie wpływają na wizerunek miasta oraz jego promocje. Innymi słowy, coś się dzieje w mieście.

To jest jeden obszar naszej współpracy z prywatnymi firmami. Drugi obszar obejmuje kooperacje m.in. z wydawnictwami oraz innymi podmiotami, które zajmują się wydawaniem przewodników, albumów itd. Kolejnym rodzajem współpracy jest to kooperacja z hotelami. Polega to na tym, iż osoby z naszego biura jadą na określone targi i zabierają osoby reprezentujące hotele w naszym mieście np. Radisson czy też Hotel Panorama. Lub otrzymujemy od nich materiały promocyjne i na tego typu targach prezentujemy je innym miastom.

14. Z jakimi organizacjami, jeśli w ogóle urząd miasta współpracuje w celu promowania i wprowadzania marki i jak ta współpraca wygląda? Czy są one podporządkowane decyzją urzędu miasta w tej materii czy działają indywidualnie bez nadzoru? (np. ZART)

ZART akurat jest spółką prywatną, podmiotem komercyjnym. Jest jednak coś takiego jak ZROT (Zachodniopomorska Regionalna Organizacja Turystyczna). I to jest już organizacja samorządowa. Urząd Miasta jest jego członkiem. Jednakże z ZART'em też współpracujemy. Z ZART'em realizowaliśmy akcję, którą będziemy również kontynuować w przyszłym roku, i Międzynarodowymi Targami Szczecińskimi zwaną „Piknik nad Odrą”. Jednakże, nas nie interesował sam Piknik, a jedynie okazja wypromowania akcji pod tytułem „Zostań Rodzinnym Przewodnikiem”. Z ZART'em mieliśmy wynajęte autobusy i zapraszaliśmy do określonych miejsc w mieście i te osoby mogły zwiedzać miasto z przewodnikiem. Akcja miała na celu spowodowanie takiej sytuacji, żeby Szczecinianie umieli w sytuacji, kiedy do nich przyjedzie oprowadzić i zainteresować tym, co Szczecin ma do zaoferowania. Osoby te również dostali od nas przewodniki i różnego typu inne materiały promocyjne. Frekwencyjnie akcja okazała się sukcesem, mieliśmy wielu zainteresowanych, dlatego też mamy zamiar tą akcję kontynuować w przyszłości.

15. Czy są przeprowadzane badania wśród mieszkańców Szczecina na temat postrzegania marki? Jeśli tak to, kiedy ostatnio? Jakie były ich wyniki i czy mógłbym mieć w nie wgląd?

Takie badania oczywiście mamy. One były przeprowadzane na przełomie lat 2009/10. Dlaczego w tych latach. Albowiem w założeniach strategii nasze działania są podzielone na trzy etapy. Pierwszy etap to był rok 2008/09 i w tym roku naszym głównym celem była komunikacja z mieszkańcami i z grupami, poza Szczecinem. I ta komunikacja miała przede wszystkim mówić o tym, że jest taki Brand jak „Floating Garden 2050” po co on jest oraz co się pod nim kryje. Badania, które realizowały jak już wspomniałem, były to badania, które realizowaliśmy na

przełomie roku 2009/10. I było to niejako podsumowanie tego etapu implementacji. Te badania pokazały bardzo ciekawą tendencję. Ponieważ one z jednej strony są optymistyczne, a z drugiej strony też pokazują charakter Szczecina. Bo jeśli Pan zapozna się z tymi badaniami, to zauważy Pan, że poparcie dla idei marki sięgnęło 70-80 %. Bardzo wysoki współczynnik. Natomiast stopień akceptowalności samego Brand'u wynosi 49%, co i tak jest wynikiem zadowalającym, jeśli spojrzeć na dwa lata nieustającej krytyki. Broniliśmy tej marki pokazując kolejne wdrożenia jak nowe autobusy i tramwaje z logo i kolorami marki. Dlatego też po tak krótkim okresie blisko 50% poziom akceptowalności Brand'u uważam za wynik zadowalający. Oczywiście po drodze zrobiliśmy kilka błędów, czego nie ukrywam. Tych badań jeszcze nie powtarzaliśmy. Niedawno gazeta wyborcza przeprowadzała badania poziomu akceptowalności. Od czasu do czasu prowadzimy badania jednostkowe przy wydarzeniach. W ten sposób określamy czy narzędzia, które użyliśmy w komunikacji marketingowej, aby zaprosić ludzi do udziału w imprezie, są dobre czy też nie. Często też wtedy pytamy jak ludzie rozpoznają znak itp. itd. To się dzieje przy okazji „Dni Morza”, „Konkursu Sztucznych Ogní” gdzie wykładamy większe niż zwykle jak na nasze miasto pieniądze. Jest to konieczne by monitorować czy nasze działania są efektywne.

16. Nie da się nie zauważyć, że ogromna część informacji zamieszczonych na portalu szczecin.eu, poświęconych marce Floating Garden jest datowana na 2009 tudzież 2010 rok. Co oznacza ten brak aktualizacji? Kiedy można oczekiwać nowszych informacji?

Ma to miejsce z trzech powodów. Na ten moment nie ma osoby, która by tylko i wyłącznie zajmowała się aktualizacjami na stronie. Druga rzecz to, to, iż spora rzecz związana z „Floating Garden 2050” jest realizowana na poziomie ogólnej działalności miasta, więc ukazana ona jest w aktualnościach. Przyznaje, iż zastanawiamy się czy nie zrobić z osobnej strony „Floating Garden 2050” zakładki odbiegającej od głównej strony miasta. I ograniczyć stronę do informacji na temat, czym jest strategia, prezentacji i jej celów, a aktualności przenieść do strony o ogólnej działalności miasta. W tej chwili jeszcze nad tym się zastanawiamy. Przez to, że ta strona jest mniej aktualna można odnieść wrażenie, że się mniej dzieje. Jednakże, w rzeczywistości jest odwrotnie. Ja jestem bardziej zadowolony, kiedy rzeczy związane z wdrożeniem tej strategii wchodzi na poziom ogólnego mówienia o mieście, bo to pokazuje, że miasto absorbuje tą strategię. Innymi słowy, jeśli wprowadzamy coś nowego np. nowe autobusy z logo „Floating Garden” i z inicjatywy nowej strategii ta informacja pojawiała się na stronie związanej z Brand'em, jednakże każde nowe zamówienie autobusów, które oczywiście również było z nowym logiem miasta, trafiało już na ogólną stronę miasta. Bowiem nie było to nic nowego, co wiązało się z marką, a jedynie informacja o polepszeniu warunków komunikacji w mieście. Następną informacją, która się pojawi na stronie, będzie to informacja na temat Systemu Informacji Miejskiej (SIM) (opisz), który to system jest już wdrażany.

17. Mimo na pozór idealnej lokalizacji miasta zarówno inwestycje jak i życie kulturowe jest mniej rozwinięte aniżeli w innych miastach jak Gdańsk, Poznań czy też Wrocław? Czy zgadza się Pani z tą opinią? Jeśli tak, co Pani zdaniem może być tego powodem?

W Szczecinie dzieje się bardzo dużo i Szczecin szczególnie na przestrzeni ostatniego półtora roku zaczął się drastycznie zmieniać. Mam nadzieję, że jest to zauważalna zmiana. Jest to fakt nie zaprzeczalny. Cytując gazetę jest

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to w pewnym stopniu powielanie stereotypów, że Szczecin jest to wioska z tramwajami, że tu się nic nie dzieje, że tu jest generalnie mało interesująco. Ja wole patrzeć z tej perspektywy, iż ta sytuacja powoli się zmienia. Ten stereotyp przestaje być aktualny. Jeśli spojrzeć na fakty to są one na dzisiaj zupełnie inne od tego, co ogólnie mówi się mieście. Łatwiej jest powtarzać to, co utarło się na naszą niekorzyść w opinii o Szczecinie, nie dostrzegając tego ile pozytywnych zmian ma miejsce. Ile jest imprez, ile jest inwestycji. Naszą zasługą jest to, że jeżeli by Pan spojrzał na to, co działo się w naszym mieście w roku 2007 łącznie pięcioma wydarzeniami, wokół których można by było budować komunikację marketingową. 73:00 Na dzień dzisiejszy obecność cyklicznych imprez zwiększyła się ponad dwukrotnie. Co do inwestycji, są to inwestycje o których mówiłem już wcześniej oraz te które widać na każdym kroku takie jak nowe drogi, biurowce, obiekty rekreacyjno-wypoczynkowe jak np. Parki czy Basen Olimpijski. Inną kwestią jest to czy jako miasto jesteśmy mniej rozwinięci aniżeli Poznań czy Wrocław? Nie zaprzeczam, że tak jest. Bo jeżeli te miasta wykorzystały czas, który my niestety nie wykorzystaliśmy z różnych względów m.in. politycznych. Albowiem był okres w Polsce, kiedy panował bum inwestycyjny, były na to środki m.in. z Unii Europejskiej. I ta szansa w wielkiej mierze została zmarnowana. W tym momencie nie oceniam ludzi, oceniam sytuację faktyczną panującą w mieście. Z tego powodu, że Np. w jednej kadencji prezydent zmieniał się trzy razy. Również koalicje polityczne było przez dłuższy czas niestabilne. W samorządzie niezwykle ważna jest kontynuacja. Obecny prezydent jako pierwszy od 89 roku został wybrany na drugą kadencję. Dlatego też naszym celem jest kontynuowanie i rozwój naszych założeń i celów w długo terminowej perspektywie. Niestety nie jesteśmy w stanie my jako biuro zabezpieczyć się przed negatywnymi czynnikami politycznymi. Naszym celem jest, aby nasza strategia stała się integralną częścią miasta, aby każdy, który by chciał w nią w jakiś sposób negatywny ingerować musiał się liczyć z konsekwencjami i niepochlebnymi opiniami mieszkańców. Będzie to możliwe jedynie, jeśli nasza marka „Floating Garden 2050” będzie dawał namacalne pozytywne skutki, co nie ukrywam jak to przedstawiłem wcześniej ma już miejsce i stanie się integralną częścią świadomości mieszkańców. Tak, potwierdzam, przed nami jest jeszcze wiele do zrobienia jednakże teza, iż w Szczecinie nic się nie dzieje na dzień dzisiejszy nie jest już aktualna.

*18. Szczecin uczestniczył w staraniach o miano Europejskiej Stolicy Kultury w 2016 roku. Czy mogłaby Pani skontaktować mnie z osobą odpowiedzialną za ten proces? Czy posiada Pani materiały, które byłyby pomocne w analizie tych starań?*

Za ten projekt było odpowiedzialnych kilka osób natomiast docelowo za proces aplikacji odpowiadała instytucja, która nazywała się Szczecin 2016. Była to instytucja kulturalna, która kierowała staraniami, aby Szczecin mógł stać się Europejską Stolicą Kultury. Nie jestem pewien, ale był to chyba jeden z wymogów konkursowych, aby utworzyć tego typu instytucję. My wspieraliśmy ten projekt na poziomie komunikacyjnym, tam gdzie trzeba było organizowaliśmy kampanie. Niestety nasze miasto nie uzyskało tego tytułu, jednym z głównych powodów, które zostały ogłoszone w uzasadnieniu było to, iż Szczecin posiada za mało doświadczenia w organizacji większych imprez. Jednakże uważam, że mimo tego, że nie udało nam się pozyskać tego miana, sama aplikacja pozwoliła na to, iż zwiększyła się aktywność w obrębie kultury w Szczecinie. Na dzień dzisiejszy aktywności kulturalne związane

z działalnością tej instytucji nadal są organizowane, jednakże sama instytucja jako taka została zlikwidowana. Szefem projektu był Marek Szpak.

*19. Często się mówi, iż celem marki jest stworzenie emocjonalnego związku pomiędzy klientem, a marką. Czy był by Pan w stanie określić, jaki symbol, lub inaczej, co jest ikoną, lub, jakie emocje mogą być kojarzone ze Szczecinem? Czy jest to brane to pod uwagę?*

Tak jest to oczywiście brane po uwagę. Naszym naturalnym symbolem są Wały Chrobrego, a ponad to Stocznia Szczecińska, Pogoń Szczecin i paprykarz szczeciński. Problem z punktu widzenia naszej strategii polega na tym, że te symbole przebrzmiały. Jest to spowodowane tym, że wszystkie te symbole poza Wałami Chrobrego już nie są aktualne. Stocznia Szczecińska już nie istnieje, a paprykarz Szczeciński nie jest produkowany w mieście. Dlatego też praca nad nową marką miasta w oparciu o te symbole nie miałaby sensu ani też siły przebycia na obecnym rynku.

*20. Co odróżnia Szczecin poza Jachtingiem i Ekologią?*

Odróżnia między innymi Szczecin to, że posiada ogromne obszary wody i zieleni. O ile wszystkie duże miasta są obszarami zagospodarowanymi to Szczecin ma jeszcze duży potencjał rozwojowy. Według mnie takiego potencjału nie ma żadne miasto w Polsce, a może i nawet w Europie. Bo jeśli spojrzeć na Szczecin w perspektywie lewego i prawego brzegu i śródo-drza, które znajdują się między nimi. Wiele terenów, a szczególnie śródo-drze jest mało wykorzystane pod względem inwestycyjnym. W którejś z kampanii politycznej była mowa o sercu miasta, którego brak w Szczecinie. Śródo-drze w dalekosiężnej perspektywie może stać się tym sercem, łączącym dwa brzegi (strony) miasta. Nasza strategia mówi, iż to nowe ekologiczne, zwrócone w stronę wody miasto ma powstawać właśnie tam na śródo-drzu. Oczywiście nie w ciągu pięciu czy dziesięciu lat. Nasza strategia była porównywana do strategii Amsterdamu czy też Rotterdamu, sam Amsterdam był dla nas wzorem niedościgłym. Na dzień dzisiejszy nasze relacje z Amsterdamem, są to relacje partnerskie i od czasu do czasu współpracujemy z Hans'em Dominicus'em managerem odpowiedzialnym za marketing miasta. Aczkolwiek oba te miasta są znacznie bardziej zaawansowane, jeśli mowa o Brandingu i komunikacji marketingowej. Ponad to, te miasta są już na tyle zaawansowane pod względem urbanistycznym, że nie mają zbyt dużego polu manewru, jeśli chodzi o inwestycje i rozwój. Szczecin pod tym względem jest inny. W naszym mieście dopiero wszystko zaczęło się zmieniać. Kolejną rzec odróżniającą Szczecin to jego trans-graniczność. Fakt, że część Polaków mieszka w Niemczech i dojeżdża do Szczecina do pracy i ma łatwiejsze lub porównywalne połączenie jak z prawego brzegu jest niewątpliwie wyjątkowe. Nie ma takiego drugiego dużego miasta w Polsce o takich możliwościach. Są to nie wątpliwie atuty naszego miasta, które je wyróżnia aczkolwiek mam świadomość tego, iż trudno je przekształcić w proste atrakcje turystyczne. I to jest nasz następny krok na następne kilka lat. A mianowicie cały nasz Branding, cały ten proces przekuć na proste komunikaty, na proste symbole, które spowodują to, że marketing zacznie funkcjonować w aspekcie turystyki. To jest przed nami.

## Appendix 2.

Below is presented an interview with Mr. Mariusz Przybył, the founder, owner and brand consultant in Brand Nature Access a company responsible for creation of Floating Garden 2050 logo, slogan and philosophy.

The interview might be translated into English upon request.

*1. Czy mógłby Pan powiedzieć coś o sobie? Czym się pan zajmuje, wykształcenie, doświadczenie itp. Itd?*

Mariusz Przybył. Brand Consultant. Współwłaściciel oraz założyciel BNA.

*2. Zostałem poinformowany, iż założyciele firmy pochodzą ze Szczecina. Czy to prawda?*

Tak jak najbardziej. To w tym przypadku jest informacja znacząca. Po pierwsze, powodowało to specyficzne nastawienie oraz pasję. Po drugie, dało to naszej firmie przewagę. Mój partner biznesowy Wojciech Mierowski, który jest dyrektorem kreatywny. Również pochodzi ze Szczecina. Razem przyjechaliśmy do Warszawy. Zatem to była inicjatywa, która robiliśmy dla naszego rodzinnego miasta.

*3. Jak doszło do tego, iż Państwa firma zajęła się tworzeniem nowej marki dla Szczecina? Jak do tego doszło?*

Braliśmy udział w Know how w zakresie uprawiania branding'u miejsc i regionów. Jednym z naszych pierwszych prac w Warszawie było pracą nad logo Polski dla ministerstwa spraw zagranicznych to było tak duże wyzwanie, że musieliśmy rozpoznać ten temat na poziomie teoretycznym. Czyli postudiować morfologię marki i systemu brandingowego. Jak to się robi, jakie są best practice na świecie. Potem zrobiliśmy logo i system identyfikacji dla miasta stołecznego Warszawy i to jest drugi przykład naszego doświadczenia w tym polu. W związku z tym już się czuliśmy mocni i ciągle niespełnieni. Jako, że w międzyczasie pracowaliśmy dla Lublina to był trzeci temat stanowiący o sile naszej firmy. W tym okresie również stworzyliśmy system identyfikacji dla Mazowsza. Zatem nasza firma miała już porządne fundamenty pod tego typu projekty. Dzięki temu doświadczeniu zdaliśmy sobie sprawę, że na obecnym rynku nasza firma ma silną pozycję jeśli chodzi o destination branding. Te wszystkie projekty były zadaniami robionymi dla dużych ośrodków. Wcześniej na rynku było kilka innych firm, które hurtowo robiły tego typu zlecenia powielając Know How, aczkolwiek ich projekty były robione dla nieco mniejszych miast.

*4. Czy to Urząd Miasta Szczecin bezpośrednio skontaktował się z Państwa firmą, czy to z Państwa inicjatywy doszło do współpracy?*

Nie, to jest dość ciekawe, albowiem był rozpisany przetarg. Przetarg był niezwykle profesjonalnie przygotowany. Nasza firma dowiedziała się o tego typu zapotrzebowaniu z mass mediów. W przetargu wzięło udział kilka firm, naszej firmie udało się ten przetarg wygrać. Przetarg polegał na tym, iż należało przedstawić metodologię, sposób myślenia itp. itd. To co BNA zaprezentowała przekonało urząd miasta do naszego projektu.

##### 5. *Na czym bazowała wspomniana metodologia?*

Myśmy stosowali myśli Wallego Olinsa i jego doświadczenia w tym polu. Ponad wiedze o marketingu terytorialnym przede wszystkim Anholta. Z tego utworzyliśmy mechanikę tego projektu. Która zakładała bardzo warsztatowy udział w projekcie klienta. Mianowicie w wyniku warsztatów będzie możliwość odkrycia tożsamości miasta. Głównym założeniem projektu było odkrycie tożsamości tkwiącej ukrytej w mieście, a następnie zmetaforyzowanie go. Na tych podstawach chcieliśmy zbudować tą markę. Rzeczywiście robiliśmy cykl warsztatów związanych z narzędziem do pozycjonowania pochodzącym z naszej macierzystej sieci DBD. Zrobiliśmy warsztaty Brand Foundation, na które to byli zapraszani ludzie reprezentatywni dla środowisk opiniotwórczych oraz kręgi intelektualne, co do których mieliśmy nadzieję, że będą w stanie w konstruktywny sposób się wypowiedzieć na dane tematy. Z tych spotkań staraliśmy się wywnioskować, co jest tożsamością Szczecina czyli jakie są jego benefity oraz z czego można ulepić markę, żeby nie była ona wyszana z palca, żeby była charakterystyczna, reprezentatywna i żeby pozycjonowała Szczecin strategicznie w stosunku do konkurentów.

##### 6. *Czy były jakieś wątpliwości lub obawy, aby zająć się tym projektem? Jak przebiegał proces budowania Brand'u? Na co zwracano Szczególną uwagę? Od czego zaczęto? Co było jego celem?*

Nasza firma nie miała żadnych obaw jeśli chodzi o podjęcie się tego tematu albowiem jak wspomniałem wcześniej mamy na tym polu duże doświadczenie z markami zarówno miast jak i innych produktów. Nigdy nie jest tak, że nie daje się dotrzeć do sedna. Nasza firma stara się nie przejmować tym jak klienci będą reagować naprawdę, co bardzo ułatwia wspomaga kreatywne myślenie. Co do Szczecina jak się okazało miasto było bardzo silne jeśli chodzi o team. Osoby zajmujące się współpracą z nami jak i samym projektem byli bardzo zaangażowani, posiadali odpowiednią wiedzę, to byli mądrzy ludzie, którym bardzo zależało aby to dobrze wyszło. Ponad to byli bardzo autokrytyczni więc jakby poziom patriotyzmu lokalnego nie miał nic wspólnego z nadwrażliwością na krytykę. W związku z tym, że niestety, co było do przewidzenia nie udało się odkryć, żadnych realnie istniejących, szczególnych atrybutów miasta czy tak zwanych atrakcji, które to by miały charakter znaczący z punktu widzenia przyszłościowej turystyki. Powracając do Aholta, według niego siłę miejsca mierzy się siłą jego promieniowania terytorialnego. Kiedy się zadaje pytanie kto do Szczecina miałby przyjechać i po co? W jakiej odległości? To nie pojawiły się takie rzeczy, które by jakoś szczególnie miałyby przyciągać. Jako że bardzo serio podchodziliśmy do wydawanych pieniędzy i do tego, że jest to projekt który ma być długofalowy i, że widzieliśmy, że to co jest cechą tożsamości miasta to jest jego specyficzne położenie geograficzne, które czyniły coś z niego atrakcyjnego. To była pochodna trzech rzeczy: ekologii, akwenów oraz charakteru nadgranicznego. Po wstępnej analizie zobaczyliśmy, że trzeba w to iść. Szczecin jest specyficznym miastem albowiem w swojej historii przechodził z pod władz jednego państwa do drugiego. Szczecin jawił się nam nieodkrytym, nie zagospodarowanym miejscem. Zdaliśmy sobie sprawę, że jego czas jeszcze nie nadszedł. Zobaczyliśmy wyraźnie, że to miejsce dojrzewa do tego aby dokonać

takiego skoku. Dlatego też skupiliśmy się na szukaniu katalizatora, swoistej sprężyny, trampoliny, która by mogła ten proces rozpocząć.

#### *7. Marka koncentruje się na Yachtingu i ekologii. Dlaczego?*

Zauważyliśmy, że synteza tych trzech elementów czyli Szczecin jako nadgraniczna metropolia, specyficzne ukształtowanie terenu oraz duże połacie wody. Jezioro Dąbskie i Zalew Szczeciński, bliskość morza, Berlina oraz Skandynawi to jest coś takiego na wielką wizję. Zobaczyliśmy, że to miasto woła o taką wizję urbanistyczną. Wyciągnęliśmy z tego wniosek, że to co może być znakiem rozpoznawczym Szczecina to taka ambitna wizja. Zaliśmy sobie sprawę, że miasto może być tylko międzynarodowe, tylko kosmopolityczne co również wynika z jego historii. Z tego jak przechodziło z rąk do rąk, i że trochę ci powojenni osadnicy byli trochę jak tacy wbici na granicy słupy graniczne. Żywe słupy, które miały odgradzać jedną część Europy od drugiej. To były takie słupy na których miała zawisnąć żelazna kurtyna. Jako, że byli to żywi ludzie to mogli widzieć więcej (pierwszy Empik w Polsce). Szczecin za czasów PRL był bardziej otwarty na zachód aniżeli reszta kraju również poprzez jego status miasta portowego. To właśnie przekłada się na międzynarodowy charakter Szczecina. W pewnym sensie miastu bliżej do Europy Zachodniej aniżeli do Polski. Jego ciężenie do Europy jest większe niż do reszt kraju.

#### *8. Co ma oznaczać data umieszczona w nazwie marki? Dlaczego rok 2050?*

Data ta przedstawia bardzo śmiałą, prawdziwą wizję. Z budowanie marki jest jak z budowaniem domu, marka musi być oparta na projekcie, który musi być konsekwentnie budowany. Jesteśmy przekonani, że marka miasta powinna pracować do wewnątrz. Rajcować, kręcić i być interesująca, ambitna. W momencie budowania Brandu mieliśmy świadomość, że mieszkańcy miasta tacy właśnie są. Robią swoje, nie marudzą. Nie mówię oczywiście o czynnikach ekonomicznych, bo zdaję sobie sprawę, że nasza wizja była trochę nad wyraz. Dlatego, że warunki panujące wówczas w Szczecinie związane z kryzysem gospodarczym, upadkiem głównego pracodawcy w mieście, jakim była Stocznia Szczecińska nie zachęcały do podejmowania tak ambitnych działań. Propozycja z mojego punktu widzenia powinna zostać odrzucona, a nie została. To był w pewnym stopniu dziura. W obliczu doraźnych problemów nie było, linku pomiędzy wizją, jaką przedstawiliśmy, tym czymś, co ma nas definiować, co ma wynikać jakoby ze Szczecina wprost z jej atutów a bieżącą sytuacją. Dlatego też wielu ludzi, którzy mieli świadomość, że należy przeciwdziałać i coś robić miało skłonność, żeby całą tą naszą pracę zdeprecjonować i ośmieszyć.

To było niesamowite, że decydenci w Urzędzie Miasta posiadali głód sensownej roboty. Nasza firma samą ideę wywiodła z pierwotnych koncepcji urbanistycznych Szczecina. Ogród na wodzie, to była idea architekta, który nazywał się Kaufman. Osoba ta miała ideę miasta ogrodu. Z tej inicjatywy powstała duża ilość terenów zielonych w mieście. W momencie, kiedy Niemcy rozwijali Szczecin i cała koncepcja urbanistyczna to, że miała takie szerokie aleje, że ma dużą ilość parków, to było konsekwencją tejże idei.



Nasza marka do tego powróciła. Zatem sam pomysł nie jest nowy albowiem wynika z tego, co było jakoby ukryte w historii tego miasta. Niestety nikt do tamtej pory nie był w stanie opowiedzieć wewnątrz. Nikt nie potrafił tego uzasadnić.

Aczkolwiek w momencie, kiedy podstawowa infrastruktura w mieście nie napawała optymizmem, wyjście z inicjatywą tak ambitnego projektu nie uchodzi za mądre posunięcie. Na początku podkreślaliśmy, że ta cała wizja ma tylko sens, kiedy będzie się aktywnie realizowała, co w niej jest zawarte. Na przykład poprzez rozpisanie konkursu urbanistycznego jako Floating Garden 2050.

Logo zostało tak pomyślane, jako logo imprezy. Samo logo jest stworzone na wzór logo robionego na jakieś wydarzenie, event. Ono ma taką konstrukcję jakby to było logo olimpiady. W wizji miasta myśleliśmy o tym, aby to logo było zachęcające np. na materiałach przetargowych. Czy takich materiałów, które by zapraszały do takiego konkursu urbanistycznego, żeby to fajnie wyglądało, że jak dostanie to japoński urbanista i urbanista z Kanady czy innych krajów. Żeby zrozumiał to jako wyzwanie utworzenia miasta na wodzie. Takie slow city i takie trochę inne.

9. *Z początku proponowali Państwo czerwone i zielone kolory jako kod kolorystyczny. Dlaczego w efekcie końcowym to barwy białe, zielono i niebieskie zostały wybrane, aby reprezentować markę? Co było powodem tej zmiany?*

To nieporozumienie, nigdy z kolorami nie manipulowaliśmy. Z jednej strony odnowiliśmy godło Szczecina. Następnie, kolory FG jakie przedstawiliśmy uznaliśmy za odpowiednie do komunikatu, które one mają przekazywać. Służyły ku temu aby tą markę upostaciwić. To były naturalne kolory, dosyć modne i wyróżniające. Owszem odważne bardzo ale miasto weszło w to bardzo otwarcie.

10. *Dlaczego uznano, że marka powinna posługiwać się zapożyczeniami z języka angielskiego? Czy nie obawiano się posądzenia o Ponglish? Dlaczego język angielski, a nie niemiecki?*

Jak najbardziej. W związku z tym, że to miasto miało być kosmopolityczne z założenia. Bo takie jest. Dlatego też uznaliśmy, że angielszczyzna jest w tym momencie uzasadniona. I zastosowana intencjonalnie, pomysł na to żeby zapisać fonetycznie brzmienie miasta też wziął się stąd, że wiedzieliśmy, iż Szczecin jest nie wymawiany, że taki pomysł to coś ciekawego, ale szczerze mówiąc i to też wielokrotnie mówiliśmy to co nasz urzędnik to to w jaki sposób ten zapis fonetyczny wyglądał. Dla nas zupełnie było drugorzędne jak to będzie i czy to będzie dekodowane. Czy ludzie będą w stanie to przeczytać? Grafika tego alfabetu fonetycznego i to, jaką to tworzyło formę, zobaczyliśmy, że to genialnie oddaje założenie takiego miasta przeszłości. To wyglądało jak rysunek jakiegoś urbanisty, typu Leonardo Da Vinci. To jest matematyczno fizyczny zapis formuły, tej wizji. Myśmy chcieli, aby to było nowoczesne bardzo. Żeby to nie było taka ekologia papierowa, naiwna albo nie atrakcyjna. Stąd ta wizja urbanisty w tym literństwie. Wydawało nam się właśnie, że to jest tajemny kod urbanisty, który jest technologiem, nowego miejsca jakby przyszłości. Z założenia miało to być futurystyczne.

### *11. Czym według Pana odróżnia się produkowanie marki dla miasta od innych produktów?*

Jest ogromna różnica. Wynika to głównie z tego iż miasto jest owiele bardziej skomplikowanym bytem, wieloaspektowym, że próba sprowadzenia go do jakiejś jednej idei jest gwałtem na naturę tego miasta. Nie ma znaczenia czy chodzi o miasto region czy kraj. Czym wyższy poziom, tym bardziej skomplikowane. Kiedy mamy doczynienia z brandingiem produktu no to jest to w miarę proste, bo label pojawia się na tym produkcie i jest to tożsame z produktem, jest to namacalne. W przypadku już korporacji jest to o wiele bardziej skomplikowane bo firma jest taka nieciągła. Jednakże, również da się ją obradować. W przypadku miasta ilość nośników identyfikacji jest tak wielka i trudno myśleć o mieście jako o czymś co daje się opakować. Branding jednakże jest swego rodzaju opakowywaniem, czy tworzeniem takich symbolicznych elementów, które mają komunikować jego istotę. Myśle, że jest to problem pracy z dobrze rozumianą architekturą marki. Czyli z portfolio produktowym danego miejsca. Aby dobrze wykonać taką pracę to myśleć w kategorii portfolio. Stosować polityki stosowania poszczególnych znaków. To jest przedsięwzięcie związane tyle z designem co z pozycjonowaniem oraz z zarządzaniem systemami identyfikacji. Oczywiście czym lepiej dotrze się do istoty miasta tym niższe ryzyko, że ten znak który metaforyzuje to istotę będzie dysfunkcyjny w różnych sytuacjach, które są nieco obok tematów, który został uznany za ten wiodący. Więc jeśli chodzi o samą pracę związaną z pozycjonowaniem no to jest ona trochę bardziej skomplikowana bo trzeba więcej danych przewalić i jak to Anholt w swoim indeksie Anholta pokazuje, trzeba ogarnąć kilka wymiarów. Które należy je połączyć i jakoś stworzyć z tego syntezę.

To jest również dobre rozumienie funkcji tego znaku, modyfikacji brandingu, który ma się pojawić. Np. Jak się zajrzy do manuala to inaczej wygląda deska surfingowa a inaczej wygląda system identyfikacji tramwajów, a inaczej wygląda system identyfikacji taksówek. To jest kwestia tworzenia całej swery języków graficznych, które umożliwią nam tu funkcjonowanie bierzące.

Ja mam osobiście poczucie gwałtu, jeżeli chodzi o Szczecin. Myśmy proponowali kilka logotypów. Miasto jest na tyle skomplikowane, że niedaje mu się narzucić jednego kostiumu. Inaczej ludzie ubierają się do opery, a inaczej na kort tenisowy. Dlatego, też repertuar kostiumów musi być stosunkowo duży. Tak naprawdę taki projekt jest tylko początkiem potem niezwykle ważna jest kontynuacja projektu. Trzeba strzec się, aby nie spowodować monolitycznego, nudnego i niepasującego do typu okoliczności sposobu prezentacji. To jest wyzwanie wiążące się z miastem.

Na drugim końcu jest to, że nie ma żadnego panowania na kwestie tego, co dzieje się w mieście. Bo każdy oddolnie na każdą imprezę tworzy znak i system identyfikacji jakiś Branding. Przez to wszystko jest jedną wielką kakofonią. Dlatego tak ważna jest jednolitość.

Dlatego też dla miasta pewnym rozwiązaniem jest system identyfikacji grupowej. Który jest konceptem pasującym do różnych aktywności miasta.