

INTERNATIONAL FAIRS AS A BRAND EXPOSURE MEDIUM IN DESTINATION BRANDING: IZMİR (SMYRNA) CITY CASE AND IZFAS INTERNATIONAL FAIRS

Res.Ass. Nahit Erdem KOKER- Prof.Dr.Aylin GOZTAS*

ABSTRACT

Making a study of historical process it is evident that the conscious marketing activities targeted at the unique embodiment of national, regional or civic management identities and at the presentation of these identities to the markets for approval goes back to many years prior to the present day. Just as in the past, the destinations standing at the core of tourism activities make huge efforts to get a share from the current market or to increase their market shares, to make a difference in accordance with economic, political and socio-psychological motives. Similar to any other product, a destination is required to thoroughly explicate its components and to settle and direct the meanings of them in order to succeed in its marketing activities. In this paper the relationship between tourism and destination, destination marketing, destination resources which create value in marketing, international fairs as the elements of attraction for destinations, the impact of fairs and destination brands on tourist loyalty will be analyzed through the case of Izmir and the fairs organized in Izmir. Izmir's marketable equities and the positioning of International Izmir Fairs will also be mentioned.

Key Words: Trade Fairs, Destination Branding, Brand Exposure Mediums, Marketable Equities, Izmir City Case.

DESTINASYON MARKALAŞMASI SÜRECİNDE MARKA YAYICI OLARAK ULUSLARARASI FUARLAR: İZMİR ŞEHİR ÖRNEĞİ VE İZFAŞ ULUSLARARASI FUARLARI

ÖZET

Tarihsel süreç incelendiğinde ülkesel, bölgesel ya da kentsel yönetimlerin, kimliklerini kendilerine özgü olarak şekillendirmek ve bu doğrultuda, pazarlara sunarak kabul görmesini sağlayabilmek için giriştikleri bilinçli pazarlama çalışmalarının günümüzden çok önceye dayandığı görülmektedir. Geçmişte olduğu gibi, günümüzde de turizm faaliyetlerinin odak noktasında bulunan destinasyonlar, var olan turizm pazarından, kendilerine düşen payı alabilmek ya da bu payı arttırabilmek, ekonomik, politik veya sosyo-psikolojik nedenler doğrultusunda öne çıkabilmek için

* Ege University Communication Faculty Public Relations

yoğun çabalar sarf etmektedirler. Herhangi bir üründe olduğu gibi, bir destinasyonun da turizm pazarlama faaliyetleri kapsamında başarılı olabilmesi için, öncelikle ürünü oluşturan öğelerin iyi irdelenmesi, ürünle ilgili neyin ne anlam ifade ettiğinin bilinmesi ve bu anlamların yönlendirilmesi şarttır. Hazırlanan bildiri kapsamında, turizm ve destinasyon ilişkisi, destinasyon pazarlaması, pazarlamada değer yaratan destinasyon kaynakları, bir destinasyon çekim unsuru olarak uluslar arası fuarlar, fuarlar ile destinasyon markasının oluşumunun turist sadakatine olan etkisi İzmir ve İzmir'de düzenlenen fuarlar üzerinden irdelenecektir. Ayrıca İzmir'in pazarlanabilir destinasyon marka değerlerine ve İzmir için bir değer unsuru olan Uluslar arası İzmir Fuarlarının konumlandırılmasına değinilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Fuar, Destinasyon Markası, Marka Yayım Araçları, Pazarlanabilir Özellikler, İzmir Şehir Örneği.

INTRODUCTION

Essential component of marketing mix is product. Product fulfills various functional necessities desired by the consumers(Jobber,2004:260). Consumers cover their different necessities through using the product. The necessities can either be concrete or abstract. The functional requirements expected from the product within the marketing karma are satisfied through these concrete and abstract components. In some products concrete specifications are major whereas abstract specifications are major in some others. In tourism business of the day, the abstract specifications of products are at the forefront as much as the concrete specifications. Considering the products in the business it is clear that concrete specifications are perfectly constructed in presentation of most products to their target audiences. Most hotels, airlines or beaches which can be handled as concrete specifications are at certain standards to satisfy their target audiences. However in tourism business, the value and reputation of concrete specifications in the eyes of target audiences is in direct proportion with the success achieved in the construction of abstract functions. Highlighting the abstract specifications is a hard process; especially in a service based product like tourism it is hard to gain a product advantage in the eyes of consumers and to keep it consistent(Storey,Easingwood,1998:336). For this reason, marketing the products under the roof of tourism business and achieving the approval of them by consumers can only be possible through the planning of active marketing strategies constructed with an effective preparation process.

Handled as a product, tourism destination is a center of attraction for visitors with its various tourism resources and a holistic output consisting of direct or indirect tourism services supplied by enterprises or organizations which are frequently visited by tourists. Due to these specifications within the holistic structure, destinations not only stand as one of the most important

element of tourism activities but also as the hardest tourism product to manage and market. For the effective management and marketing of destinations within tourism activities, it is of vital importance to understand the components that form the holistic structure of destinations and the links between them and to accurately establish the destination identity which is defined in other words as “a group of human characteristics related to a tourism destination (Hosany, Ekinci,Uysal,2006:638-642)”.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Destination Branding and Marketable Destination Equities:

Regarding the tourism destinations which are classified as places subject to tourism activities and attractive for their various specifications, Tinsley and Linch presents the definition of “a geographical location or region where tourist community takes place in local community(Tinsley,Lynch,2001:367-378)”.As clarified in the description, tourism destination is considered as a system in which there are input, output, community, services and many different fields of profession. There are many elements that relate people and locations to each other in destination level within the borders of system. Tourism destinations are complicated structures consisting of a whole made from tourism attractions, tourism enterprises, local public and local administration. The complicated nature of this structure makes it difficult to present the destination to its target audience through tourism activities, get it accepted by them and to market it. In this sense destination branding is handled as a separate concept which has its own unique specifications.

Regarding the concept Rainisto(2003:12) brings the definition that “destination branding is to raise the attractiveness of a destination identity established in accordance with a place’s unique specifications by means of effective communication activities addressed at target audience”. Destination branding at this point is a kind of marketing activity which is executed by the individuals and institutions which have expectation from the destination. Within the context of destination branding, in order to differentiate from the competitors one needs to provide fast and creative solutions and to develop strategies considering possible crisis to take place. Destination branding is also reflected to practice in regions which are rather local in sense of scope than other types. The core of product, its basic and assisting functions, the knowledge and awareness level of consumer, purchasing procedure, the local opportunities and threats to come out during the process should be determined beforehand.

Destinations need to continuously overview themselves for the maintenance of an effective beginning and consistent improvement in destination branding. They must be able to benefit from their histories and cultural values in

a way that fits to current conditions and must meet their target audiences after a process of differentiation based on a new identity and vision. Tekeli(2001:18-19) states that to make a difference in intense competition atmosphere, destinations should do what has not been done and they should access into small niche markets with a significant potential but rare access. Destination branding at this point bares different specifications than other types of marketing and gives noteworthy chances to regions, areas and cities in sense of tourism development.

Marketing is defined as a management function that undertakes the duty of determining what product should be produced when in what quantity and how it should reach to its target audience(Dogan,1995:365). Moving from this definition, destinations are obliged to highlight the basic benefit or value they present to their target audiences and to develop policies which will increase their power to compete. As valid for all other products subject to marketing, brand has a major role for a destination in its process of achievement as it fulfills important duties. Because destinations are tourism brands which are represented by the brand name of the geographical area they are located on. The expression of basic value presented by a destination and the introduction of its difference from the others seem possible only through branding.

The competition between the destinations trying to get a share from tourism income has recently gained a global characteristic. All destinations in this process develop new specifications and try to underline their distinctions in order to survive in the market. Most destinations arrange and apply new communication strategies especially for the aim of changing their negative image. In order to become a brand and create a difference from the others, the destination subject to marketing activities should direct the attention to its marketable equities in tourism means, in other words its elements of attraction. "Destination attractions are resources which are managed and controlled for pleasing the customers, letting them have fun and educating them (Gianna,Bill, Eric,2000:57)". Marketable destination equities are the basic reason of tourism activities and movements. Having these equities has the major role in destination branding and in the creation of a destination brand. Marketable destination equities can be classified in three parts being the places to be seen (historical places, natural beauties), events to be joined (fairs, festivals, ceremonies) and experiences to be gained (important sports games, shopping). This trio lies on the base of destination branding and brand strategies.

The fresh existence of destination branding in literature, the rising number of academic studies about it and the intricate structure of destination brand creating process make it necessary to melt in the same pot various concrete or abstract products related to destination brand like culture,

environment and economy and to turns researchers' attention to focusing on interdisciplinary studies(Gnoth,1998:759). Besides these specifications about destination branding strategies, market conditions and the factors influencing them also forces tourism entrepreneurs to develop different strategies in accordance with the equities and the markets they are located in(Icoz,2001:194). Positioning in marketing activities is made according to the equities owned and the competitors; successful positioning includes being different than the competitors and also the creation of fronts in time(Borca,2004:161). At this point, brand becomes the basic tool for marketing experts to distinguish between products as "the differences about product can easily be copied (Kotler,Gertner,2002:249)". Brand studies that provide differentiation are frequently used by service sector in which abstract products are intensely found as well as it is used for concrete consumer goods(Douglas,1990:398).

Destination Branding: The most important function of brands within contemporary marketing strategies is to distinguish the products and services of a company than that of the others. "Brand enables consumers to make healthy choices by displaying the difference between the products(Ozkan,2002)". Brand urges the beliefs, arouses the feelings and provokes individuals to move (Kotler,Gertner,2002:1). Due to brand's function of displaying the difference between the products, managements try to produce more qualified goods to turn their brand into a popular and preferable one. One of the vital functions of brand here is the image it cultivates over the consumer. Image of the brand is a considerable capital for its owners. "Image can both be the trails left in mind about something perceived with senses or a mental fiction constructed by a person. Brand image which is frequently used in marketing is management's identity which it tries to get it accepted by the public(Grand Dictionnaire Encyclopedique Larousse,1983). "Destinations can be branded just like any other product(Killingbeck,Trueman,2002:1-22)". The brand to be created for destinations and its image over the target audience would reflect destination's identity. Considering the components of destination marketing process "cultivating a positive image in regional scope is more comprehensive and harder than creating an image for a product(Gunlu,Icoz,2004:84)". Destination image is the total of images perceived by a tourist mass existing under the title of target audience. Perceived destination image can be understood better through the "communication life curve" experienced by the tourist. "Tourist will perceive images of destination related to the communication life curve level he is at. (Lack of knowledge, realization, understanding, acceptance, response) (Batchelor,1999:183-198)". Main component of destination image at this point is the communication process constructed. Creation and management of image is

based upon active communication. The image desired to be cultivated on target audiences should be directed through correct communication channels with correct strategies.

Creating an international brand image and identity and alluring the investments and capital in circulation have become an economical development strategy for the destinations of the day. The desire of destinations to be an international brand is rooted at economical reasons(Paul,2004:572)". "The way to have an international destination brand for a city by benefiting from tourism for economical gain purposes is to underline the supporting identical specifications and relating them in a way to empower each other(Rainisto, 2003:12)".

In the very beginning of destination brand creation process stands the necessity to establish a regional identity. Constituting a brand for a tourism region is the process of bringing its differences from other tourism regions to foreground, in other words calling an identity into being. "Brand positioning necessitates the creation of a well known brand with positive, strong and unique brand connotations. This can be done both with the choice of brand identity in the beginning and with the support given to the uniting of brand identities within marketing program(Uztug,2003:55)". Being able to think globally during destination's brand establishment and strategic marketing process, to plan its future with its current resources and abilities, to take environment into consideration, to constitute a brand identity with inner consistency and harmony with outer elements and to spread this identity to target audiences through different communication channels underlie as important points within tourism activities.

Another requirement to constitute a successful and strong destination brand and to position it in the minds of target audiences is to make it "different" than its competitors. Positioning is the placement of product or enterprise into the most appropriate place in accordance with the chosen market divisions, competition facts and company abilities. It is a process devoted to determine consumers' perceptions, approaches and consumption habits(Burnet,1988:35-37). Along with the establishment of brand awareness, brand positioning is the element that determines which "personality and identity" components of the brand will be remembered by the consumers(Kapferer,1992:96)". The goal of destination brand positioning is to place the brand in the minds of its target audience in a level different than its competitors with a feeling of superiority in competitive structure. Because a successful brand positioning includes a distinctive differentiation from the others and the "added values" consisting of positively perceived qualifications or connotations. The added value to be created by the destination especially in the process of establishing a destination

brand should be meaningful to the existing and potential visitors. Destinations are positioned upon the added values in the minds of their target audiences. Brand make a destination different in sense of the basic value it has and this value represents the pledge of brand. The superstructure of a destination can be differentiated through physical qualifications such as architecture however the physical specifications are far from motivating the consumer adequately and consistently as they can easily be copied and imitated. The value presented by destination branding is considered as the most powerful force of contemporary destination marketing experts holding a place in global competition (Hannam, 2004:258). However, the points that need utmost attention in differentiation of civic brands must be functional and performance specifications, life styles and internal experiences(Palomar,2007). In this sense, considering the historical and geographical facts of Izmir, many marketable brand values can be offered on the way to establish a destination brand for the city. Tourism, Izfas International Fairs, Port of Izmir, Monuments/ Architectural Equities, Districts/ Public Spaces/Social Fabric, Local Celebrities, Educational Institutes, Sports/Sporting Events/Clubs, Cultural Events/Facilities, Culinary Culture, Regional Agricultural Products represent some of the most important starting points in the marketing strategies to be adopted for the creation of a destination brand. Within the borders of this paper, Izfas International Fairs (Izmir International Trade Fair and Izmir International MARBLE Fair) will be analyzed as destination brand equity.

Trade Fairs in Destination Branding: Fair concept born out of various commercial necessities is influential in tourism business as well as in other sectors. Fairs which are generally described as exhibitions aimed at improving production and trade by attracting consumers' of visitors' attention and displaying the contemporary developments in production technologies are also events where companies present their products and services to the consumers, sellers and buyers meet and contact directly. Fairs according to Okay(2002:202) are events where sellers meet buyers to whom they furnish their products and services. They are important communication tools enabling the face to face meeting of the participants in communication complexity and the watchers of it. Moving from the definition that highlights the communicative side of fairs, fairs create a communication atmosphere in the locations they take place and an interaction is established between the participants within this atmosphere. Durmaz(1985:4) who defines fairs in a general scope considers them as "organizations aimed at the union of economic, social and political activities" and widens the extent of fair concept within the limits of social processes. According to Durmaz, a social and political integration takes place between the participants in the locations where fairs are

organized. This integration had major supports to many sectors, especially to tourism standing first on the list. Another opinion claims that fairs are “large bazaars arranged periodically at a fixed dated in a fixed location where goods are sold and bought(Faralyali,1985:27)”. In this definition that resembles fairs to large bazaars; fair locations are the common meeting point of sellers and buyers. Considering in tourism basis, people primarily targeted at buying or selling indirectly collect information about the location fair takes place, live in that location for a while and experience it by means of the fair organization.

Social and commercial influences of fairs have been subject to an increase within historical process of development. “The tradition of fair opening for exchange of goods at fixed dates and locations is certainly an old established facility. It is a well known fact that caravan traders participated in the most important religious festivals in Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia and Egypt in a period of 2000 years B.C. The course of trade can also be tracked on documents after the invention of writing. (The New Caxton Encyclopedia, 1997:2335)”. In this trade oriented fairs focused only on exchange of goods, many tradesmen used to come to the fair location and involved in trade activities. The locations where fairs take place became economically, socially and culturally awakened during this exchange along with the existence of various festivals, theatres and entertainment activities. The best examples about the union of trade and festivals can be seen in Greek and Roman civilizations. In these civilizations, both political and commercial centers are united in a location named agora(bazaar)(Pehlivan,1996:6). Regional and national managements who apprehended the importance of fairs took various political and economical precautions beginning from the end of Middle Ages in order to foster fair organizations and avoid their arrangements in competing cities and countries. “An example of this tendency is the banishing of Italians from Lyon by French King I. François and the fairs organized by The King on the field of Duke of Parma in Piacenza(Weintraub,1991:171)”. Significant developments started to take place with the industrial revolution in Europe and the development reflected in the increasing number of fairs. Fair sector at the present day is subject to a rapid growth and rising importance in social life. This growth is not only based on the service function of fairs to producers and consumers but also on the creation of brand equity to countries and destinations. Considering especially Far Eastern countries which have a meaningful share in electronics and automobile business, it can be monitored that these companies pay utmost importance to these sectors and increase their brand recognition in international arena by focusing on marketing strategies and benefiting from the fairs. Far Eastern countries make huge efforts to efficiently benefit from fairs in order to

publicize their sector development to the world and to establish destination brand equity. These countries increased their interest and participation in fairs in order to publicize their countries' and cities' which resulted in a significant development in fair business. People's Republic of China has taken major steps in fair business by taking the organization right of EXPO 2010 which is accepted as a significant fair organization bringing advantages to the country in economic, social and cultural means along with a bright chance of publicity. Expo 2010 is regarded to be the 3rd biggest organization in the world after Olympic Games and World Cup. "They state that the income expected from this fair which is supposed to be visited by more than 70 million people is more than 10 billion dollars(Fuarplus,2007)". Examining fair business from Far Eastern scope, it can be claimed that the leading country of the sector is China however Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia also occupy important shares.

According to a research by the Institute of Fair Industry and Distribution Researches of Köln University regarding the increasing importance of fair business, field capacity of fairs had been subject to an undeniable increase between the years of 1990-2000. The research furnishes that fair fields in Germany and in the world had been subject to an increase of 2.3 million square meter(+35%) and 15 million square meter(+50%) respectively. The expansion of fair fields also reflected in fair organizations and exhibitions which increased in number during 10 years period. The research states that the number of fairs and exhibitions had been subject to an increase of more than 700(+40%) in Germany and more than 12.000(+100%) all over the world(Kalka,2000).

The Socio-cultural Impact of Fairs on Their Locations: Fairs have a huge potential in supporting and developing tourism. Currently, around **30.000 fairs** are organized all over the world with approximately **3,2 million participant** companies/ institutions and around **350 million visitors**. In other words, **1 of every 20 people is a fair visitor**. For this reason fairs are not only functional in trade and exchange means. They also perform an important task in creating centers of tourism attraction and turning target audiences into loyal customers for the destinations which establish marketing strategies according to their available resources in order to constitute destination brand equity. Fair organizations supplement not only their organizers and participants but also the city, region or country they are located in socio-cultural and economic means.

Tourism is a cultural interaction. 37% of international tourists travel for culture reasons according to World Tourism Organization(Du Cluzeau,2000: 37). The nature of interaction between the cultures is shaped by the profile and expectations of tourists, the specifications of interaction location and the role of people marketing culture such as tourist guides(Lea,2001:79). Cultural attraction

points of a destination determine the nature of interaction at this point. These attraction points include events related to prehistoric and historic actions in science, religion and fine arts, sports and entertainment, festivals, exhibitions, celebrations, sound and light shows, fairs, competitions and sports games (Boret,1989,Swarbrooke,1999). Fair organizations in historical process of development have been a generator of cultural attraction for the locations they are organized in and made important contributions to the social and cultural development of these places' inhabitants. Fairs supports the destinations in tourism means by gathering people from different regions and cultures together, giving them a chance to know each other and the location, establish communication between them and take place in a cultural interaction.

Examining the contemporary fair examples, it can be stated that fairs bring a significant economic bounce to their locations with the flow of visitors and movement in trade activities. During the fair period fair location becomes commercially and economically active even for a limited period due to huge number of participants and visitors in the region. The income of many managements acting in accommodation, food, beverage and other related businesses significantly increase in the fair location. "On the other hand fairs make it easier to publicize the company or city they are located in and the economy develops in international scope. They are closely related to the publicity of a destination as they enable the exhibition of a country's culture, folklore and history. The communication environment and visits taking place in fairs and fair activities play a fundamental role in changing and overcoming negative thoughts in tourism means(Cildir,1991:42).

General fairs are usually organized for the publicity and sales of products and services but they also provide esteemed chances to a county to develop its tourism activities and create new opportunities. Along with the fairs where international publicity is provided, the fair locations started to be introduced to target audience as well as the publicity of fair itself. In order to attract more participants and visitors to the fairs organized, publicity and communication activities executed in national and international scope focus on appealing to many different target audiences in accordance with the location and indirectly publicize the destination. These activities results in the increased awareness about the destination in the minds of its target audiences. "As a country publicizing itself as the "country of fairs" in international tourism market, %41,9 of Spain's tourism income consists of the gain from international fairs(Akbay,1997:76)". The participants or visitors of fair are also visitors of the city of country who experience the destination within the borders of their opportunities. Fairs create a chance to execute target audience oriented

experimental marketing within the marketing arranged made for tourism. The chance of experimental marketing not only establishes an emotional link about both the participants and the destination but also act as the message transmitters in the process of word of mouth activities to be used in the publicity of destination to its target audiences. In this way the opinions and thoughts are transmitted to different parties; in fact this is the voluntary accomplishment of “word of mouth”, one of the most important marketing strategies of the present day. Specialized trade fairs multiply the volume of international business tourism and enable the destination to gain reputation in accordance with the scope and success of the fair organization.

In the United States great importance is attached to the organization and development of fair organizations in the cities leading especially in sectors like industry, trade and tourism. Paralel with this importance, some cities in the United States are better known in fair business and the advantage they gain in fair sector in international arena turns out to be destination brand equity as a marketing strategy for the tourism activities. “A research made by the Center for Exhibition Industry Research-CEIR states that %50 of fairs organized in the United States are accumulated in 16 cities. According to this result, Orlando, Las Vegas and Toronto share the top three of the list by hosting 625, 589 and 582 respectively(Weintraub,1991:9)”. Especially Germany, the locomotive country of European Union in economical means started to adopt destination brand creation strategies which can develop business through raising tourism activities in cities not as developed in economics as the others. In these activities executed for the establishment of a destination brand, the most important strategic resource that can establish a brand is fair activities. The cities where fairs are organized in, especially the ones in Germany started to be mentioned in international arena with the name of the fair.

METHODOLOGY

Information furnished in the chapter has been provided from literature research and from the consultation with executive management of IZFAS about fairs and destination brands through semi-structured interview method.

Research method: Research method was based on a qualitative approach. The research action was taken in cooperation with IZFAS. Semi-structured interviews were made with the authorities at executive stage under the title of General Manager and Assistant General Manager about Izmir destination brand, Izmir fairs, contribution of fairs to regional tourism, the position of Izmir fairs in the world, the contribution of fairs to city’s publicity, the opinions of visitors about the city and other successful fair organizations in international scope.

Data analysis: Observation data of application process was recorded by tape and noted down by the researchers. The summary of findings about the research and interview are furnished under the current title and evaluated by the researchers.

FINDINGS

“City of Fair: Izmir (Smyrna) City”: Being a tourism brand is a wish shared by any destination however only a few holds the necessary specifications. Considering from the basis of brand establishment and success, brands are like people; a tourism destination with distinguished merits is always remember and preferred(Gotta,2004). According to a common result provided from the interviews, an inventory on destination attractions which can help develop brand identity should be arranged for Izmir. Hundred millions of people all over the world are potential customers of tourism business; hence destinations need to determine their most attractive side and their best service field in order to have a say in such a giant market. The establishment of city of Izmir(Smyrna) is rooted back to 5000 years and it has been in forefront during the historical process with its various specifications. Named as a “port city” in its first years of its establishment due to its geographical and demographical facts, Izmir is located in the meeting point of sea and the trade road known as Silk Road. In process, Izmir gained various civic identities such as the city of culture and art, city of tourism and city of entertainment. Analyzing the historical and geographical facts of Izmir, many marketable equities can be listed in the process of establishing a destination brand for the city. These equities represent the starting points for the marketing strategies to be followed in order to establish a destination brand. Izmir’s marketable equities are following as per the common opinion provided from results of interviews: Tourism, Izmir International Fair/IZFAŞFairs/EXPO-2015, Port of Izmir, Monuments/Architectural Equities, Districts/ Public Spaces/Social Fabric, Local Celebrities, Educational Institutes, Sports/Sporting Events/Clubs, Cultural Events/Facilities, Culinary Culture, Regional Agricultural Products.

The most important action to be taken on the way to establish a destination brand is to determine what makes a place unique and different for customers among its historical, cultural and natural beauties. This unique specification should be impossible to be copied by competitors. There may be many romantic cities all over the world however there is only one Rome and its romantic existence can never be replaced by any other city(Morgan,Pritchard, 2004:65). As the result of the case analysis about the marketing activities to be taken for creating a destination brand in Izmir, it is stated that the best strategy for brand establishment is Izmir Fair and International Marble Fairs held by IZFAS among all other

equities mentioned above considering the nature and structure of tourism business, branding destinations, destinations gaining brand quality, geographical and economic abilities of Izmir. With the laying of Izmir International Fair's foundation in 1920's, Izmir started to be mentioned as a city of fairs.

Izmir is the first fair town of Turkey which means the first fair organization was held in Izmir. The 76th Izmir International Fair which is going to be held this year is the first international fair organization of Turkey. Izmir is a city, having international fair standards, which 35 trade fairs are organized in annually. **On the other hand, MARBLE takes notice as the most acclaimed trade fair in Izmir. At the same time, MARBLE is the first UFI approved sector fair in Turkey.** Hence, Izfas International Fairs (International Izmir Trade Fair and Izmir International Marble Fair) will be analyzed in detail within the paper.

IZFAS: Izmir Fair Services, Culture and Art Affairs Trade Inc. was founded on the 7th of February, 1990 in Izmir. Company's main purpose is maintaining the notion of "the City of Fairs", started with First Economic Congress in Izmir. İZFAŞ, dealing with the organization of the Izmir International Fair, is among the leading fair organization companies of Turkey.

Today with approximately 80 employees, IZFAS is a local government –private cooperation. Its Administrative and Auditing Committee is mostly composed of the members from Municipality of Izmir, while the rest of the members is from The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, Chamber of Aegean Region Industry, Izmir Chamber of Commerce, Izmir Commerce Exchange, Izmir Chamber of Craftsman and Artisans, Aegean Exporters Associations one each.

IZFAS aims to support culture and art in Izmir aside from organizing fairs and congresses. That's why we relatively assist the enterprises and various activities. UFI- Association of International Fair Industry approved İZFAŞ attracts notice with its leading organizations. The company which holds the organizations at Kulturpark also organizes 'National Participation Organizations' abroad. By 2007, İZFAŞ as the organizer of MINEX - Mining, Natural Resources and Technologies Fair, AYAKKABI / SUMMER - Izmir Shoes, Bags and Accessories Fair, IF WEDDING FASHION - IF WEDDING FASHION İZMİR - Bride, Bridegroom and Night Dresses Fair, MARBLE - International Natural Stone and Technology Fair, Mother and Child Fair, İZMİR BEAUTY EXHIBITION - Cosmetics, Aesthetic, Coiffeur and Beauty Equipment Fair, VINOLIVE - Wine, Olive, Olive Oil and Technologies Fair, İZMİR MOTORSHOW - Automobile and Light Trade Vehicles Fair, AYAKKABI / WINTER - Izmir Shoes, Bags and Accessories Fair, İEF - Izmir International

Fair, İzmir Natural Gas Fair, İzmir Tourism Fair at home, also organizes Turkish National Participation in China/Xiamen Stone Fair and Italy/Marmomacc.

Table 1
FAIRS AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

Name of Fair	Date	Number Of Exhibitor	Number of Visitor
2ND MINEX - Mining, Natural Resources and Technologies Fair	1- 3 February 2007	116	3186
21ST AYAKKABI / SUMMER - İzmir Shoes, Bags and Accessories Fair	15-18 February 2007	228	14.522
1ST IF WEDDING FASHION İZMİR - Bride, Bridegroom and Night Dresses Fair	01 - 03 March 2007	75	4864
13TH MARBLE - International Natural Stone and Technology Fair	28 - 31 March 2007	1038	49.578
4th Mother & Child Fair	19 - 22 April 2007	66	18.786
1ST İZMİR BEAUTY EXHIBITION - Cosmetics, Aesthetic, Coiffeur and Beauty Equipment Fair	19-22 April 2007	71	21.323
4TH VINOLIVE - Wine, Olive,Olive Oil and Technologies Fair	26 - 29 April 2007	133	11.687
4TH İZMİR MOTORSHOW - Automobile and Light Trade Vehicles Fair	15 - 20 May 2007	62	40.037
22ND AYAKKABI / WINTER - İzmir Shoes, Bags and Accessories Fair	5 - 8 July 2007	192	9.153

International İzmir Trade Fair: The process for the establishment of İzmir International Fair started on February, 17, 1923 with the 1st Congress of Economics held in İzmir. First exhibition after the congress was organized in Mithatpasa Institute of Art under the title of “9 Eylül Local Exhibition” on 4th– 25th of September in 1927. 71 official institutions, 195 domestic companies and the products of 72 companies of 9 countries were exhibited in this organization which was visited by 80.744 people. The second “9 Eylül Exhibition” was held in international scope at the same location on 4th-20th of September in 1928. The exhibition was attended by 515 companies 155 of which are foreign participants. İzmir 9 Eylül Fair held in 1935 was visited by 311.000 people. The foundation of İzmir fair was laid in its current location on January, 1st in 1936. It was planned to turn the field of 360.000 square meters into a “Kulturpark” and establish an international fair on it during a fixed period of each year. In September, 1st of 1936, İzmir Fair took its place in civic life with a magnificent ceremony held at Lozan Gate with the participation of 48 foreign companies from Egypt, Greece and Soviet Union, 32 city booths and 45 domestic companies. İzmir International Fair in 1937 was represented by 104 foreign and 424 domestic companies. The fair held in 1938 was attended by 140 foreign companies, 46 official institutions and 527 domestic companies. 60.000 square meters was added to the fair field in 1939. 574 foreign companies and 27

official institutions and 333 domestic companies participated in the fair. Izmir International Fair became a member of UFI (The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry) in 1947. Depending on the developments and changes in fair business, Izmir International Fair started the applications for specialized fairs in the end of 1970's as they began to be wide spread. First specialized fair is YAPI ISTANBUL which was held in 1978. At the present day, International Izmir Fair hosts many foreign and domestic fairs on 22 different sectors from food to automobile, from tourism to health. In 2006, 217 foreign companies from 60 different countries and 812 domestic companies participated in the fair in a field of 81.128 square meters and a visitor number of 1.370.322. Izmir Trade Fair held for the 76th time this year under the theme of health and organic products is a motivating power for Izmir as one of the nominees for EXPO. The fairs held since 1990 are organized by İZFAŞ (Izmir Fair Services Culture and Art Affairs Trade Inc.) in Izmir which is taking the steps of being a city of fairs and congresses.

International Marble Fair: MARBLE is an international fair on Natural Stone and Technologies which has been annually organized by İZFAŞ in Kulturpark since 1995. The parallelism between Turkish natural stone export and this fact led MARBLE to make such a magnificent advance in fair sector.

From now on MARBLE - International Natural Stone and Technologies Fair being Turkey's biggest and most effective export fair is "a real global brand". It is the glory of İZFAŞ that the dates of other essential natural stone fairs all around the world are set by taking MARBLE into consideration.

MARBLE, first held in 1995 with 47 exhibitors at a 2.600 sqm place, has attained a significant success in a short time. This year the 13th MARBLE (28 – 31 March 2007) was organized with 1038 exhibitors (251 of them are foreign) at a 40.000 sqm venue with 50.000 visitors. The next MARBLE is between the dates 26-29 March 2008 and the preparations have already begun. It is expected that rise of this fair will go on in the following years since MARBLE and natural stone export of Turkey increase in direct proportion.

Table 2
IZMIR MARBLE FAIRS-PARTICIPANT AND VISITOR PERCENTAGES

Fair	Dates	Number of companies	Foreign participants	Domestic participants	Total	Visitors	sqm
Marble 2000	30 March - 02 April	20	124	226	251	7.625	8.634
Marble 2001	29 March - 01 April	21	145	278	423	10.644	10.887
Marble 2002	28 - 31 March	26	179	310	489	17.480	15.205
Marble 2003	03 - 06 April	28	212	444	656	19.386	15.205
Marble 2004	01 - 04 April	31	182	569	751	25.432	29.260
Marble 2005	31 March - 03 April	33	212	688	900	39.954	33.356
Marble 2006	29 March - 01 April	37	238	714	952	45.558	38.060

MARBLE has turned into a global trade and communication centre with its gradually increasing foreign exhibitor number. It has similarly adopted a critical role for Turkish natural stone export. MARBLE is developing in parallel with natural stone sector. Export volume of Turkish natural stone sector that was 77 million US\$ in 1995 has surpassed 1 billion US\$ in 2006.

Table 3
NATURAL STONE EXPORT VOLUME BETWEEN 1995 AND 2006

Year	Export Volume (Million \$)
1995	77
1996	96
1997	119
1998	128
1999	150
2000	189
2001	224
2002	303
2003	430
2004	630
2005	826
2006	1.070

Table 4
NATURAL STONE EXPORT VOLUME BEFORE MARBLE

Year	Export Volume (Million \$)
1989	32
1990	40
1991	34
1992	46
1993	48
1994	60

International Izmir Marble Fair has significant contributions to the civic economy of the city. An enormous financial income is provided during the fair periods through the influx of participants and visitors to the city.

Table 5
ECONOMIC VALUE CREATED FOR
IZMIR ECONOMY BY MARBLE 2005

ECONOMIC VALUE CREATED FOR IZMIR'S CIVIC ECONOMY BY MARBLE 2005				
Estimated				
DATA: Total 900 companies from different cities and countries participated in the fair.				
HYPOTHESIS: %50 of participants are from other cities and each company has 4 representatives who will be accommodated 5 nights. Bed+ breakfast accommodation charge per day: 75 USD				
Number of participants	Average number of representatives	Accommodation period	Expense	Total expense
900 companies	4 people	5 nights	75 USD/day	270.000 USD
HYPOTHESIS: The wage paid to approximate by 113 people as temporary staff hired by IZFAS for 5 days				
Number of staff	Wage per capita	Working period		Total expense
113	20 USD	5 days		11.300 USD
Hostess and personel hired by participants				
Number of staff	Wage per capita	Working period		Total expense
100	30 USD	4 days		20.000 USD
DATA: Number of participants is 900.				
HYPOTHESIS: 25 % of booths constructed by participants are private booths.				
Number of participants	Average cost per participant			Total expense
250	10.000 USD			2.500.000 USD
DATA: Total number of visitors is 39.954				
HYPOTHESIS: 33 % of visitors are from outside of Izmir, they accommodate for 3 days, bed+ breakfast accommodation charge per day is 75 USD				
Number of participants	Average number of representatives	Accommodation period	Expense	Total expense
13.000	13.000	3 nights	75 USD/day	2.925.000 USD
Average food and transportation expense of participant and visitor per capita during fair period : 100 USD				
Number of people	Average expense per capita			Total expense
39.954	100			3.995.400 USD
Total expenses covered by IZFAS for Marble 2005 (national-international advertisements, fair participation, etc.)				
				300.000 USD
Income provided from booth sales and accessories during MARBLE 2005				
				1.800.000 USD
GENERAL TOTAL				11.821.700 USD

CONCLUSION

According to the foresights of WTO the capacity of tourism business will rise up to 1 billion tourists and 1,5 trillion dollars in 2010 and 1,5 million tourists and 2 trillion dollars in 2020. Tourism destinations will have to compete with other destinations in order to market their products and services. Destinations which can not accord with competition and changing conditions will move backward in tourism sector which will cause them income loss, unemployment and loss of reputation. The most important competition strategy for destinations at this point is to establish a unique destination brand which will let them become different in competition atmosphere.

Destinations can become brands only through choosing their most appropriate marketable equities considering their resources in order to differentiate from the competitors and through using these equities in the most efficient way. Fairs which take place among the events to be participated have great contributions to destinations on their way to become brands. Many countries at the present day arrange fairs in different periods of the year in order to develop the regions not much improved in fair business and to raise such regions. These fairs result in huge influx to the region by the visitors and an arousal not only in regional trade activities but also many other businesses from hotels to taxi drivers. This movement develops the regional economy and increases the wealth of local people. Local managements and companies acting in fair industry arrange various socio-cultural activities in the fair location for the entertainment of fair visitors, too. The contact between local people and visitors coming from many different regions and cultures turns out to be an element that enriches the regional culture.

One of the resolutions commonly agreed on during the interviews is the fact that fairs have significant contributions to the publicity of Izmir destination both in domestic and international scope. The general and specialized fairs held in different periods of the year in national and international scale publicize the fairs through different media channels and while doing this Izmir is also publicized to target audiences as the place fair is located in. Many mass communication channels like newspapers, magazines, radio and television publicize Izmir indirectly while transmitting the details about fairs. The participants and visitors of fair also have the chance to stay in Izmir and get to know about the city.

Another result provided from the interviews is that fairs bring a significant movement to the trade life of the city. Fairs directly or indirectly contribute to the incomes of many different actors of trade life including hotels, taxi drivers, restaurants, clubs and producers and turn the city into a center of

attraction. Besides, the participants and visitors of MARBLE fair which is held only in Izmir and 4 other centers all over the world stay not only in central hotels but also in surrounding town hotels far from the city center up to 100 km such as the ones in Cesme, Foca and Manisa. The research also proves that some participants rent apartments for 7 days in order to overcome problems about hotel reservations.

The common opinion suggested by interviewed parties is the impact of fairs over employment. The employment percentages in the destination increase during fair periods. 1038 companies to participate in MARBLE 2008 are expected to work with more than 2000 booth staff. IZFAS will also hire additional staff for different divisions during MARBLE 2008. In addition to a staff of 350 people which will be chosen from university students, the company responsible for the security and cleaning of Kulturpark will hire an additional staff of 250 people. On the other hand, many social and cultural activities are organized in order to enrich the fair and make it more attractive to its visitors. The interviews with the architect of International Lines Terminal of Izmir Airport about the usage of natural stones in his creations and marble sculpting exhibitions during 13th MARBLE Fair are some examples to these social and cultural activities. Concerts and festivals held in fair area are also among the other examples.

According to the results of interviews, MARBLE 2005 can be set as an example to the question of how much a fair can contribute to a region's economics. Foreign and domestic visitors of MARBLE Fair which lasts for 4 days bring a significant income resource as well. The accommodation, transportation and miscellaneous expenses (decoration expenses of booths constructed by participants, logistic costs of fair management, food and drinks offered in the booths, etc...) reach to an approximate amount of 70 million dollars.

Despite its tourism supply potential and the high performance it recently reached in tourism business, Izmir still has a small share in the market. The city needs to position itself as a destination brand in order to increase its market share. Considering the semi-structured interviews and literature research on Izmir's history within this research, it is stated that the most important marketable equity that can turn Izmir into a destination brand is Izmir International Fair. At this point, government, local managements, non-governmental and private organizations should work in coordination to position Izmir as a destination brand in the world and direct the destination branding activities under fair concept as a common idea of positioning.

REFERENCES

- Akbay,H.O.(1997).Uluslararası Pazarlamada Önemli Bir Promosyon Aracı Fuarlar, Ankara:İgeme.
- Batchelor,R.(1999).Strategic Marketing of Tourism Destinations. Vellas F., Becherel L.(Eds), *The International Marketing of Travel and Tourism: A Strategic Approach*,(pp. 183-198). London:Macmillan Press..
- Bir,A.A.(1998).Mamul Nasıl Konumlandırılır, *Pazarlama Dünyası, V.7*, pp35-37.
- Borca,G.(2004).*Bu Topraklardan Dünya Markası Çıkarmı?(Marka Olmanın ABC'si)*, İstanbul:Mediacat Kitapları.
- Boret,A.(1999).Itinéraires de Tourisme Avec Annales, Malakoff-France:L.T. Lanore, J., Swarbrooke, J.(Eds.)*Sustainable Tourism Management*, Wallingford: CABI Publishing.
- Cepni,S., Kucuk,M.(2002).Science Teachers Learning in a Collaborative Action Research Group, *First International Conference on Education: Changing Times, Changing Needs, Faculty of Education Eastern Mediterranean University*. Gazimagusa, TRNC, May 8-10,2002.
- Cildir,N.(1991).Fuar Çalışmalarının Turizm Açısından Değerlendirilmesi, Ankara:Anatolia, Doruk Ofset.
- Doğan,M.(1995).*İşletme Ekonomisi ve Yönetimi*, İzmir:Anadolu Matbaacılık.
- Douglas,T.(1990).The Power of Branding. Enis,B.M., Cox,K.K., Mokwa,M,P.(Eds.)*Marketing Classics:A Selection of Influential Articles (8th edition)*,(p74). New Jersey:Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Du Cluzeau,C.O.(2000).*Le Tourisme Culturel*, Paris:Presses Universitaires de France.
- Durmaz,M.(1985).Fuar Kavramı ve Önemi, *İzmir Ticaret Odası Dergisi, V.12*, p.4.
- Faralyalı,E. (1985).Fuarlar Öncelikle Tanıtım Açısından Önemlidir, *İstanbul Ticaret Odası Dergisi, V.4*, p.27.
- Gnoth,J.(1998).Conference Report: Branding Tourism Destinations, *Annals of Tourism Research, V.25*, pp.758-760.
- Gotta,M.,(2004).Tourismus Management Club, Retrieved:15.11.2004, from: <<http://tmc.suedtirol.org/jeder-moechte-eine-touristische-marke-und-nur-wenige-haben-eine-wunsch-und-wirklichkeit.htm>>.
- Grand Dictionnaire Encyclopedique Larousse (1983).Paris:Larousse.

- Gunlu,E., Icoz,O.(2004).Turizmde Bolgesel Marka Imajı Yaratilmasi ve Turizm Istasyonlari Icin Markanin Onemi. Yuksel,A., Hançer,M.(Eds.), *Turizm: İlkeler ve Yonetim*, (p.84). Ankara:Turhan Kitapevi.
- Hannam,K.(2004).Tourism And Development II: Marketing Destinations, Experiences And Crises, *Progress in Development Studies, V.4,N.3*, pp.256-263.
- Icoz,O.(2001).*Turizm Isletmelerinde Pazarlama İlkeleri ve Uygulamalari*, Ankara:Turhan Kitabevi.
- Jobber,D.(2004).*Principles and Practice of Marketing (4th edition)*, London: The McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Kalka,R.(April 2000).*Fairs*[Seminar]. University of Cologne, Institute of Fair Industry and Distribution Research.
- Kapferer,J.N.(1992).*Strategic Brand Management*, New Jersey:The Free Press.
- Killingbeck, A.J., Myfanwy, M.T.(2002).Redrawing The Perceptual Map Of A City, *Working Paper, Bradford University School of Management, No. 02/08*, pp. 1-22.
- Kotler,P., David,G.(2002).Country As Brand, Product, And Beyond: A Place Marketing And Brand Management Perspective, *Brand Management, V.9,N.4-5*, pp.249-265.
- Lea,J.(2001).*Tourism and Development in the Third World*, London:Routledge.
- Morgan,N., Pritchard,A.(2004).Meeting the Destination Branding Challenge. Morgan,N., Pritchard,A., Pride,R.,(Eds.),*Destination Branding: Creating the Unique Destination Proposition* Amsterdam:Elsevier.
- Moscardo,G., Faulkner,B., Laws,E.(2000).*Tourism in the 21st Century: Lessons from Experience*, London:Thomson Learning.
- Okay,A.(2000).Kurum Kimligi, Istanbul: MediaCat Yayinlari.
- Ozkan,M.,(2006).Marka Hakkinda, Retrieved: 12.07.2007, from: <http://www.bilgiyonetimi.org/cm/pages/mkl_gos.php?nt=72>.
- Palomar,J..(2006).City Tourism, Retrieved: 14.06.2007, from: <http://www.turizmpusulasi.com/viewpage.php?page_id=149>, 12.08.2007
- Paul,D.E.(2004).World Cities As Hegemonic Projects: The Politics Of Global Imagineering In Montreal, *Political Geography, V.123*,pp.571-596.
- Pehlivan,A.C.(1996).Turkiye ve Avrupa Fuarciligina Karstılastırmalı Bir Bakıs, *Graduate Thesis, Istanbul University, Department of Public Relation, Istanbul*, p.6.

Rainisto,S.K.(2003).Success Factors of Place Marketing: A Study of Place Marketing Practices in Northern Europe and the United States, *Doctorate Thesis, Helsinki University of Technology, Institute of Strategy and International Business.*

Sameer,H., Yuksel,E., Muzaffer,U.(2006).Destination Image and Destination Personality: An Application of Branding Theories to Tourism Places, *Journal of Business Research, Vol.59, Issue 5, pp. 638-642.*

Storey,C., Christopher,J.E.(1998).The Augmented Service Offering: A Conceptualization and Study of Its Impact on New Service Success, *Journal of Product Innovation Management, V.15, pp.335-351.*

Tekeli, H.(2001).*Turizm Pazarlamasi ve Planlamasi*, Ankara:Detay Yayıncılık.

The New Caxton Encyclopedia,(1994).*Fairs*, London:The New Caxton Publishing, V.7, p.2335.

Tinsley,R., Lynch,P.(2001).Small Tourism Business Networks and Destination Development, *International Journal of Hospitality Management, V 20,N.4, pp.367-378.*

Uztug,F.(2005).Markan Kadar Konus, Marka İletisimi Stratejileri, İstanbul:Mediacat Kitapları.

Weintraub,D.,K.(1991).*Trade Show Exhibiting The Insider's Guide for Entrepreneurs*, USA:Liberty Hall Pres.

...../....., (2004).Dünyada Fuar Sektöründen Haberler, Retrieved:10.06.2007, from: <<http://www.fuarplus.com/tr/haberlerdunya/id/456>>.