

DESTINATION BRANDING

Case Study: The “New Bali” Brand After Covid-19 Era

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ABSTRACT

As the world is changing, the principles of, and approaches towards, branding have changed and will continue a need for constant adaptation. Although challenging, these changes can also bring about great opportunities to re-address one's brand in order to be prepared for future challenges. This paper firstly outlines some basic information with regards to branding principles for a company, product or service. Secondly, I have chosen for this the paper to touch upon destination marketing, destination branding and on brand design specifically. Looking broadly at the region and specifically at Bali as a tourist or visitor destination, with challenges ahead in light of a 'post-Covid-19' era, some ideas for growth are included here as a conversation starter for a possible 'new Bali' brand. I have elaborated on a few points as to how best approach a branding exercise, from the big idea to the development of visual identity to implementation of visual brand identity guidelines. The information is compiled over a period of time from various resources and from my personal experience as a brand design specialist over a period of over 30 years.

Keywords: branding, destination, tourism.

INTRODUCTION

After his most recent position as Principal Design Manager at Procter & Gamble Beauty in Guangzhou, China, Ton has established a brand and design consultancy in Hong Kong. He is currently living in Ubud, Bali. As a high calibre, entrepreneurial and multiple award-winning Dutch design professional with an international career of 35 years, of which 25 years in Southeast Asia, he has a track record of delivering outstanding solutions in brand identity design for small organisations and large international corporations alike. Ton worked, with his partner, at his own design studio in Kuala Lumpur for 23 years. He worked as Senior Art Director at Philips Design in Hong Kong from 1998 to 2000 and was retained as design consultant for Philips for the following 16 years. Ton has a bachelor's degree in graphic & communication design from Avans University of Applied Sciences (St. Joost Academy of Fine Arts) in the Netherlands.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BRANDING

1. What is Branding?

A brand is the proprietary visual, rational, emotional and cultural image associated with a company, product, service, ideology or a place. The purpose of having an audience (the user, visitor) remember and have positive associations with a brand, is to make their product or service selection easier and enhance the value and satisfaction they get from it once they use it (the experience). “Branding is what people say about you when you are not in the room”.

2. The Value of Power Brands

The power is calculated based on three main factors: Brand Equity: a set of assets or liabilities in the form of brand visibility, brand associations and

customer loyalty that add or subtract value to or from a current or potential product or service driven by the brand. Brand Value: the financial worth of the brand. To determine brand value, businesses need to estimate how much the brand is worth in the market e.g. how much would someone purchasing the brand pay? Brand Strategy: the plans the brand has for the future (e.g. business strategy).

Additionally: How meaningful is the brand: does it appeal, is it able to generate 'love' and meet the consumer's expectations and needs? How different is it: what unique features does it have? How salient is the brand: does it spring to mind as the consumers' brand of choice? (A great brand image delivers 'brand recall').



Figure 1. The Value of Power Brands

Source: prophet.com/2016/09/brand-equity-vs-brand-value/, 2020

					China		China		
					Coca-Cola		Disney	Toyota	McDonald's
amazon	Google	Apple	Microsoft	SAMSUNG	ICBC	facebook	Walmart	PINGAN	HUAWEI
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
\$220 B	\$160 B	\$140 B	\$117 B	\$94 B	\$59 B	\$79 B	\$77 B	\$69 B	\$65 B

Figure 2. The Power Brands

Source: visualcapitalist.com/ranked-the-most-valuable-brands-in-the-world/, 2020

3. The Power of Design

A strong brand mark needs to be simple and easy to remember to stay 'top of mind' with the consumer. Consistent usage of the mark on all brand identity expressions is critical.

4. Unique Selling Point

To create a unique identity for a company, product or service, which differentiates it from the competition, it should have a USP. Brand image and reputation are the result of the positioning process.

5. Brand Positioning

Positioning is responsible for projecting the brand and driving the perception and image of the brand in people's minds. It makes the brand appear to be

different (and better!) than all competing brands. Consumers make brands famous (by endorsement) when they come to trust brands as friends.

6. What Makes a Brand Tick?

Brand building is a complex process that needs to be approached holistically. There are a number of aspects, ranging from logo design, social media campaign and wayfinding design to pricing and level of customer service. All these need to be taken care of in order to devise a “360” brand experience for the consumer e.g. the visitor.



Figure 3. The Reason to Make a Brand Tick
Source: prophet.com/2016/09/brand-equity-vs-brand-value/, 2020

DESTINATION MARKETING

1. What is Destination Marketing?

Promoting a city, region or country in order to increase the number of visitors. Educating people about a location before they book a trip. Improving the wellbeing of locals and visitors alike.

2. A Look at the Region

Even though Bali is a place like no other, in order to develop a brand strategy, it is critical to take a look around and establish what the 'competition' e.g. the tourism boards in the region are doing in terms of destination marketing and branding. Where do visitors go and for what reasons? What can Bali offer what Thailand cannot? What does the prospective tourist or visitor want in terms of experience and how to attract more high-quality tourists and visitors from China for instance? And what do visitors take back home and what are they going to say about their experience?

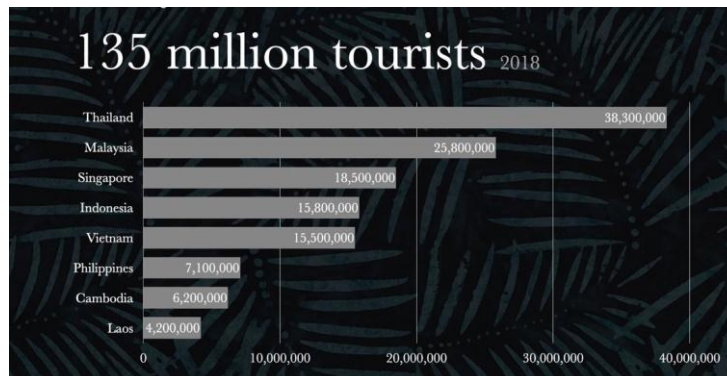


Figure 4. Total Number of Tourist in 2018 abd where they went
Source: <https://data.aseanstats.org/>, 2020

Within the Southeast Asian region, the Chinese tourist mainly went to Thailand 2019.

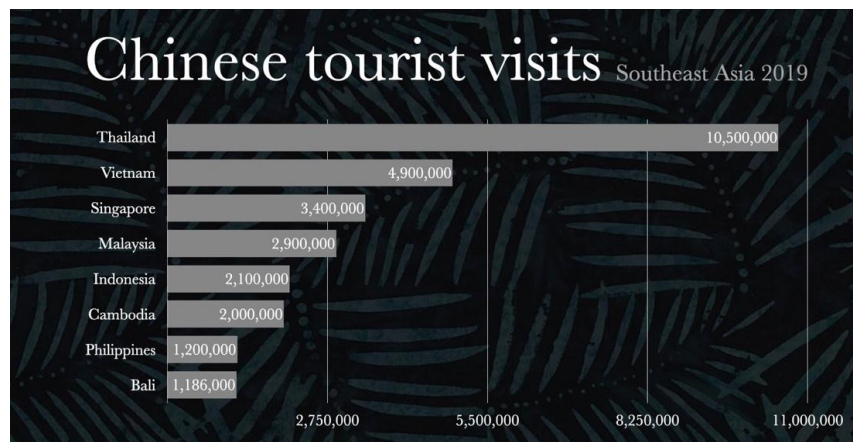


Figure 5. Chinese Tourist Visits Southeast Asia 2019
Source: balitourismboard.or.id, 2020

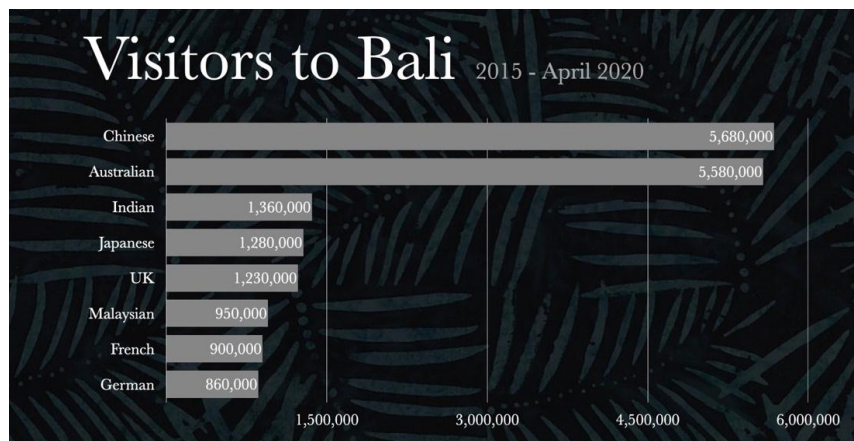


Figure 6. Visitors to Bali from 2015-April 2020
Source: balitourismboard.or.id, 2020

THE POWER OF AN EXPERIENCE

"I am on Bali now. What a divine place, constant fine weather, constant sunshine, never too hot... very picturesque, beautiful trees, beautiful mountains, beautiful beaches, beautiful temples and nice people. In short, a delightful place, a small paradise." - W.O.J. Nieuwenkamp, Dutch writer and Illustrator – 1903

1. The Island of Gods

The uniqueness of its Hindu culture is ubiquitous in day-to-day life; in the temples and palaces, the arts and crafts centres, the countless ceremonies, the festivals, the traditional dances and the distinctive tune of the gamelan. "There is only one Bali".

2. Tri Hita Karana

This is a traditional philosophy for life on Bali. The literal translation is roughly the "three causes of well-being" or "three reasons for prosperity." The three causes referred to are derived from Balinese spirituality and beliefs:

- Harmony with God - manifested in rituals and offerings to appease deities.
- Harmony among people - communal cooperation and promoting compassion.

- c. Harmony with nature - to conserve nature and promote the sustainability and balance of the environment.

Tri Hita Karana is credited for the islands' prosperity as a whole, its relatively stable record of development, environmental practices and the overall quality of life for its residents. The principle of *Tri Hita Karana* guides many aspects of Balinese life, from daily rituals, the communal 'gotong-royong' cooperation practice, to spatial organization in Balinese architecture as well as in the natural irrigation system (subak).

3. The Tri Murti

Representing the continuous cycle of creation, 'destruction' and preservation: Brahma (the creator - red colour), Siwa (the 'destroyer' - white) and Vishnu (the preserver - black). The three stages of nature (*Bhur, Bwah and Swah Loka*) and the three stages of life (birth, life, death)

SOME IDEAS FOR GROWTH

When embarking on a (re-)branding exercise one must assess and understand the audience, look at the competition and establish your own unique set of offerings. From there an overall strategy and specific actionable points can be established.

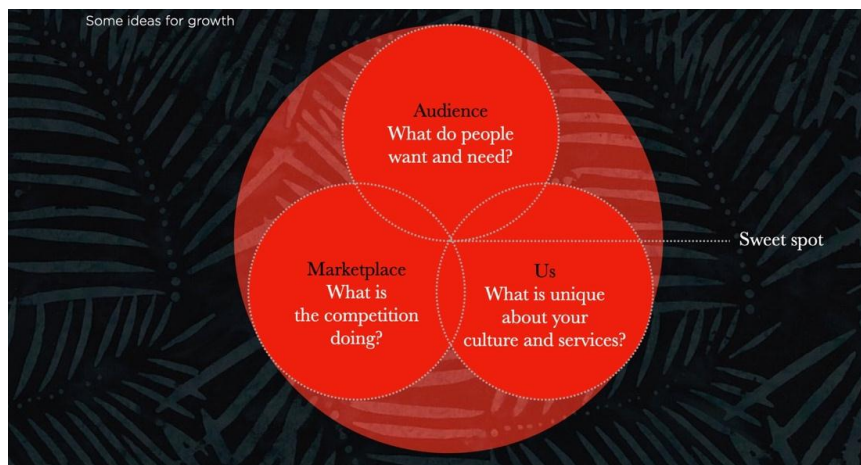


Figure 7. Some Ideas for Growth
Source: Bragt, 2020

Following here are a few suggestions:

- a. **Redefine** and amplify Bali as a safe, healthy, spiritual and sustainable destination.
- b. **Encourage** medium to long term visitors, promoting 'work from Bali' for students, digital nomads and 'quality of life' for retirees etc.
- c. **Diversify** tourism by tapping into new potential locations, hence reducing congestion in over-visited areas.
- d. **Establish** high-quality customized tours about spiritual exploration and in-depth learning about Balinese culture in the broadest sense.
- e. **Revive** high quality art and souvenir design and production and art education and appreciation.
- f. **Provide** experiences over 'things'. People look for experiences that they'll remember for a lifetime.

BRAND DESIGN

1. The Big Idea.

Communication based on one central concept that drives all visual and verbal brand articulations. This is often expressed in a tagline (e.g. 'The Island of

Gods'). All partners and stakeholders will have to speak with one voice for the brand (destination) to be successful.

2. The Visual Style

Visual and verbal articulation of the big idea should be complementary and reinforce the brand together. Quality and consistency of brand expressions require comprehensive brand identity guidelines and should be adhered to at all times. This will drive a strong image forward into the minds of visitors and reinforce brand recall.

3. Go Digital

'Old school' mass communication is becoming increasingly irrelevant in the digital age. Social media is a great way to reach more people with a personalized experience based on data-driven information. Once you hit a 'viral sweet spot' you will increase 'talkability' and promotion of your destination at no cost to you.

4. The Brand Pyramid

This is a simple tool to help a brand team devise a strategy and to get everyone focussed on the same direction. To establish the pyramid the brand team and design agency will sit together and work out where the brand should go. Below an illustration only.



Figure 8. The Brand Pyramid
Source: Bragt, 2020

BRAND DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

1. Beyond the Logo

As stated before, brand building is a holistic and concerted effort. This also applies to brand identity design. Besides a powerful logo, there are many applications that will need good design. This includes a (unique) font and specific typographic specifications, a color palette, beautiful images and illustrations. The Visual Identity System should be documented in comprehensive Brand and Visual Identity Guidelines that will be followed by the various designers and agencies that take care of the implementation.

2. Brand Applications

The development of elegantly designed and engaging marketing communication materials for on- and off-line, smart tourism apps with on-site educational information utilising interactive QR codes, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology. (the Chinese visitor in particular is very familiar with these).

3. #balideestination

Building experiential communication via website, Instagram, Facebook etc. by engaging key opinion leaders (KOLs), bloggers and vloggers can help take Bali destination beyond the 'selfie at Kelingking beach' if channeled properly.

4. Wayfinding Design System.

Beautifully designed signages integrated into the natural environment using local craftsmanship and materials can provide a visitor to have an enhanced experience as they navigate the island.

5. Sustainability

As Bali has already made such great strides towards taking care of the environment driven by the Tri Kira Hartana philosophy ('Bye Bye Plastic Bags', beach clean-ups etc.) it would be a strong and unique selling point. The design and production of packaging using recyclable materials could be expanded and promoted even further.

BRIEFING, SCOPE AND BRAND MOOD BOARD**1. Preliminary Briefing**

"Develop a (re)branding of 'Destination Bali' with a refreshed and focussed positioning strategy: A Safe, Healthy and Spiritual place to be" (note: core values and strategy tbc and specific reassuring communication with regard to Covid-19 could be included where relevant).

2. Targeted Audiences

One specific group could be the affluent visitor looking for a beautiful, safe, healthy, spiritual place to find peace and are willing to pay for this experience.

3. Stakeholders

Get wellness retreats, producers of organic food, beauty and health products, quality batik and giftshops, world class healthcare facilities on board with your marketing and branding exercise, possibly using incentives.

4. Deliverables

Logo and tagline, visual identity system, '360' brand applications, marketing communication design system and brand identity guidelines.

5. Visual Brand Mood board and Design Elements

The following illustration shows a very schematic concept of a visual brand identity using a variety of elements such as 'logo', tagline, imagery, type, illustration and texture.



Figure 8. The Schematic Concept of a Visual Brand Identity
Source: Bragt, 2020

CONCLUSION

As we gradually move to a new way of tourism, destinations will continue to face challenges. It is important to understand attitudes, behaviours, and preferences of prospective tourists and visitors in order to find new opportunities and provide positive experiences to them (brand and consumer audit – e.g. SWOT).

In this light there is an opportunity to assess the existing image in the minds of people (brand equity) and address it by amplifying the strength and appeal of Bali as a destination (brand positioning).

In order to communicate and promote a 'new Bali' and welcome visitors, a comprehensive brand identity refresh would establish, from a visual perspective (brand design), that Bali is safe and more beautiful than ever and "ready to welcome you back again" (marketing strategy).

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