

# Inclusive place branding

## What it is and how to progress towards it

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1. Jernsand, E.M. and Kraff, H. (2015). Participatory place branding through design: The case of Dunga beach in Kisumu, Kenya. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 11(3), 226–242. DOI:10.1057/pb.2014.34
2. Jernsand, E.M., Kraff, H. and Mossberg, L. (2015). Tourism experience innovation through design. *Scandinavian Journal of Tourism and Hospitality*, 15:sup1, 98-119. DOI: 10.1080/15022250.2015.1062269
3. Jernsand, E.M. (forthcoming). Engagement as transformation: Learnings from a tourism development project in Dunga by Lake Victoria, Kenya. Accepted for publication in *Action Research Journal, special issue on Development, Aid and Social Transformation*.
4. Jernsand, E.M. and Kraff, H. (forthcoming). Democracy in participatory place branding: a critical approach. Accepted for publication in M. Kavaratzis, M. Giovanardi and M. Lichrou (Eds.) *Inclusive Place Branding: Critical Perspectives in Theory and Practice*. Routledge Critical Marketing series.



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## **Inclusive place branding** What it is and how to progress towards it

In recent years, scholars have called for a reconceptualisation of place branding. Due to the complex nature of places, the involvement of multiple stakeholders, not least residents, is critical. There is a need for several disciplines, researchers and practitioners to collaborate in order to achieve a more responsible development of the field. A more holistic and integrated perspective is required, lest place branding be used as a political tool that imposes the views of urban elites.

The purpose of this thesis is to define and conceptualise inclusive place branding, to explore and demonstrate how inclusiveness in place branding can be enhanced, and to reflect upon what an inclusive approach implies for the development of place branding theory and practice. Five characteristics of inclusive place branding are outlined: an evolutionary process, transformation, participation, multiplicity and democracy. Inclusiveness in place branding is then explored through experiences of a tourism and community development project in the fishing village of Dunga by Lake Victoria in Kenya. A qualitative, reflexive and action-oriented methodology is used and the empirical material consists mainly of observations and interviews. The practical results of the field study are, among other things, waste collection and signage systems, improved guided tours and the formation of a county-wide tour guide association with male and female representation.

The thesis opens up the potential for learning and critical reflection between research fields which are subject to participation in the public sphere. In addition to marketing, these fields include design, architecture, public administration, development studies and education science. The findings of this thesis show that place branding builds social, cultural and symbolic capital, and that it positions the place in relation to internal and external stakeholders and audiences. Inclusive place branding is thus part of the broader discourse of place development and management, where it contributes social and cultural glue. However, to be inclusive, place branding research and development practice need to combine critical and pragmatic perspectives, and to allow for bottom-up, small-scale and long-term processes. Learning across borders is dependent on individual and collective engagement and requires multiple levels of participation, both of which can be enhanced by context-based and visual methods and tools. Having an inclusive approach also means that conventional modes of evaluation may not be relevant or must be combined with other approaches.

**Key words:** Inclusive place branding definition, evolutionary place branding, participation, multiplicity, democracy, transformation, destination development, community development, transdisciplinary research

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