

Destination Branding Through Sports

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Abstract

A brand is 'an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique added values which match their needs most closely. Success results from being able to sustain these added values in the face of competition'. Added values may be functional and non-functional and take on meanings where consumer awareness is triggered consciously or intuitively. The main aim of destination marketing is to convey a positive image of itself, in such a way that is not only more attractive for potential visitors and tourists but also for the local people to feel identified with the territory and satisfied with their life quality. The development of the destination image must be carried out emphasizing its personality to avoid going unnoticed in this increasingly globalized and saturated market. Destination branding is one of the latest trends in tourism marketing but the major question is whether branding is the best option for all the destinations. The role of sports events has been evolving over time. While sports events are still planned to bring people together and to generate economic benefits, they are increasingly used as marketing strategies to help promote, position, and brand destinations in a similar fashion that events contribute to corporate brand development through sponsorship activities. The purpose of this paper is to examine how sports can contribute to a region's or a country's marketing and branding strategies. More specifically, the paper proposes to study the potential of branding Kenya as a sports destination with objectives centering on existing images/perceptive, tourism dynamics and brand leadership.

Key Words: Destination branding, Sports tourism