

How to develop destinations as brands

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Destinations aren't different from tomato sauce, fabric softener or any product for that matter. Just like products, destinations have their own "flavour" and identity that make them different. Therefore, just like products, destinations need logos, straplines and ads to establish themselves in the market place.

"Branding makes a destination leap from a map into the minds of consumers. Tell people why you're different. If you have a nice logo - even better," said Carmen Lerm, CEO of integrated marketing strategy agency, FusionDesign.

It starts with a logo

Often a logo makes the first impression. With the help of clever design, the essence of the destination can come across in the blink of an eye. City Sightseeing - Cape Town's "moving destination" - has a logo featuring an open-top bus and headphones establishing it as a tour operator offering commentary in multiple languages on a bus with a spectacular view.

Taglines stick

City Sightseeing's open-top bus makes it unique differentiating it from all other tour operators in Cape Town. That's a precious marketing commodity emphasised in City Sightseeing's strapline, "The best way to see Cape Town". Now who wouldn't want to hop onto a bus with that line?

Consistency is vital

Consistency in design, tone of voice and offering across all media builds trust. Consumers like to know their favourite brands are confident in who they are. City Sightseeing is known as the red bus so their advertising is mostly red. Every year they offer great specials consumers have come to expect and support.

"Branding gives a destination substance. Through effective design and branding destinations come alive, making them not only desirable, but irresistible," said Carmen Lerm.

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