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INSTRUMENTS OF PROMOTION USED IN TERRITORIAL MARKETING

MOŻLIWOŚCI PROMOCJI OBSZARÓW PERYFERYJNYCH Z WYKORZYSTANIEM INSTRUMENTÓW PUBLIC RELATIONS

Key words: peripheral areas, public relations, promotion, image

Słowa kluczowe: obszary peryferyjne, public relations, promocja, image

Abstract. The aim of the article was to present the tools used in territorial marketing. Recently the issues related to promotion of the areas that were categorized as peripheral, have become a popular subject of many studies. The paper provides an analysis of available promotion tools which could be applied in areas defined as peripheral, presents some of public relations instruments and an approach to the creation of promotional campaign programs.

Introduction

In the 21st century the way a promotional campaign is carried out counts overwhelmingly more than just a decision to initiate it. Promotional actions in Polish cities were not uncommon already 100 years ago. The difference lies in the choice of tools. 100 years ago, a promotional campaign relied on print advertisement. From the communist era we all remember posters informing about and promoting e.g. the workers' holiday fund. Also the use of magazines, brochures and other forms of publishing promotion were popular. The 21st century offers new opportunities. Beside the traditional forms a variety of modern instruments using new media are available. The key is the proper approach to the object of promotion. When it comes to peripheral areas it is advisable to consider their uniqueness and possibilities to exploit local resources.

Defining the concept of the peripheral

The literature provides many approaches to define a peripheral area. It can be defined as an area distant from economically developed centers and hard to access. Another approach refers to the economic criteria, mainly the level of economic development.

In the EU's cohesion policy, the primary criterion for determining what area can be defined as peripheral is the low level of economic development measured in GDP below 75 percent of the EU average per capita (based on purchasing power parity). Other definitions refer to the characteristics of weak economic growth, including specialization in agricultural and forestry commodities or raw materials economy, production based on cheap labor and labor-intensive, low level of infrastructure development and management (including public institutions) and low level of innovation and entrepreneurship. Some definitions refer to the economic dependence of peripheral areas on economic and political centers. It can be implemented by e.g. exploiting the resources of the outermost regions (such as labor, raw materials, the market), including the flow of the most valuable part of human capital from the peripheral areas to the centers. Simultaneously, peripheral areas are dependent on public assistance and the transfer of investment funds from the central regions. Other dimensions relate to cultural, religious or political distinctness of people from the peripherals [Grosse 2004].

The peripheral can be discussed with regard to many aspects: geography, economy, culture and politics. Geographical remoteness is defined by a weak position in the transport network and high costs of accessing a given region. Peripheral economy is primarily characterized by a weak system of production, lack of entrepreneurial attitudes and thus manpower export and import of finished goods. The problem is the lack of internal initiatives, poor or lack of representation in the central institutions. The outermost regions have unfavorable characteristics in relation to other regions known as central. A. Olechnicka distinguishes the following categories of characteristics [Olechnicka 2004]:

- causative characteristics – directly related to the peripheral: high transportation costs as a result of remoteness from the main centers of population and major areas of economic activity, low quality of technical infrastructure, lack of benefits associated with the operation of an agglomeration such as external benefits of scale;

- relative characteristics resulting directly from the causative characteristics: the high cost of supply of services, little impact on the decisions of the government, weak R & D sector, low levels of innovation and entrepreneurship;
- concurrent characteristics – indirectly related to the causative characteristics: low population density, the dependence of the economy of the region on the primary sector, weak local infrastructure and weak institutional linkages with the external environment.

The document “Poland 2030. Development Challenges” points to the peripheral location, lower level of human capital, limited access to transport and communications infrastructure, public services and the dependence on one sector of employment (mono-functional towns and villages) as the main source of developmental differences in the territorial dimension. These factors – particularly reinforced by the demographic and migration processes – may cause a further increase in inequality.

The aim of the article was to present the tools used in territorial marketing.

Stages of preparation of promotional campaign program

The work on each program should begin with a thorough analysis of the starting position. Understanding the opinion of the public is a starting point for further planning. The initial phase is based on publicly available data from the statistics, opinions and reports on current promotional activities conducted by e.g. local governments. It is equally important to obtain the feedback from the local community. It is a fount of knowledge about the region and its possibilities. The most popular method is a diagnostic survey research. Extremely valuable data are provided by in-depth interviews with representatives of specific groups. In the phase of the analysis of the starting position it is indispensable to determine the basic information needs of the public, identify the potential partners, discuss action opportunities, the budget and appoint the steering committee. After analyzing the available secondary and primary data the goals of the promotional campaign can be established.

Very often, setting goals too easily and in an ill manner results in a failure of the campaign. The goals should be primarily:

- precise,
- measurable,
- realistic.

The campaign program must be constructed for specific target audiences. Apart from the local community, local authorities, future recipients (e.g. residents of primary urban centers in the region) it is crucial to differentiate a group of both traditional and new media representatives. The division into groups may distinguish entities from:

- internal environment,
- external environment,
- social environment,
- priority entities.

For each of these groups different goals will be established and accomplished. These partial goals put together will constitute the main, coherent goal of the promotional campaign. The process of defining objectives should be consistent with the following hierarchy [Duda 2010]:

- strategic (long-term of fundamental importance),
- tactical (with medium-term period of implementation),
- operating (relating to short-term tasks).

When formulating a strategy it is advisable to reflect on the messages targeted at specific audiences. In order to properly formulate the main messages one must answer three fundamental questions [Duda 2010]:

- what is the main point we want to convey?
- who do we want to reach?
- what are the opinions, doubts, expectations and concerns of the target audience?

Selected public relations tools

To build and implement a promotional strategy it would be advisable to engage various local groups, politicians, organizers of events, travel agencies, local media, local authorities, local government, local patriots, social activists, individual leaders and bloggers.

The promotion of peripheral areas can bring into play a variety of tools used for this purpose by businesses and local governments. Thinking about promoting a region one should not forget about its individual, specific character and its biggest potential – the residents.

One of the most effective instruments from traditional repertoire now enjoying a revival in popularity is the event. It has become a dynamic tool for marketing and public relations used by companies of all sizes. Today, the advanced forms of business events include, among others [Allen 2009]:

- individual training seminars, including emotional and physical challenges,
- meetings of the management outside the company,
- gala events connected with raising money,
- award ceremonies,
- right to the name (the rights transferred by the owner to give name to a facility, building, place, event, etc. in exchange for financial reward or investment),
- promotional events to launch products,
- product placement,
- a special event.

At the local level events are aimed at a narrower more targeted audience. Examples include various types of anniversary celebrations, the days of the city, the fest of the potato, garlic, etc. It is impossible to list all potential themes of events. Events can have different grounds: cultural, religious, economic, scientific or, recently very popular, culinary. What counts is the originality and the ability to give the event an individual character consistent with the region. It is worth considering to involve professionals in the organization of the event and, in particular, ensure appropriate media publicity. Professional approach to media relations is the key to effective use of funds for promotion.

Each region has a media environment that must be properly identified. They include: trade press, regional press, women's and men's magazines, radio stations, television, etc. It is not enough to contact media representatives once and invite them to an event. The effectiveness in this area requires a systematic approach and strong commitment. It is advisable to plan press conferences, briefings and press tours. Appropriate publicity will be ensured by professional texts-press releases sent to the media identified as target media for the promotional activities of the region. They should be professionally constructed, attractive not only for the journalist but also and above all, the ultimate recipient – the reader. The most popular media relations instruments include [Tworzydło 2005]:

- press releases,
- press conferences,
- interviews,
- press tours organized for media representatives,
- informal contacts with the media,
- inviting journalists to events,
- others, e.g. a correction.

Establishment of a website to communicate with journalists via an Internet press office is one of the first and most frequently used sources of information for the journalists.

The Internet will help to inform the population of young people about the events and the region. Social media prove to be particularly effective in the communication process. These portals are not just for building private relationships. They are now becoming an increasingly popular tool to reach local communities. The potential of Twitter and Blip could be used in everyday work. They are particularly important when the target audience are young people. Additionally social media enable two-way communication. [Duda 2010].

A city placement has recently become an extremely popular tool. The idea is that a feature film or a TV series is shot on location in a particular region or a town who than may benefit from its popularity. In Western Europe and North America this instrument has been successfully used for a long time. In Poland, it has been popularized in the last several years with such Polish serials as „Father Matthew”, „Ranch”[Picture1], „Majka” and „Stiletto” on Giewont”. The authorities of Sandomierz have been particularly successful in promoting their town with the use of Sandomierz series „Father Matthew”. The city is experiencing a real invasion of the serial fans. A special route „Follow the Footsteps of Father Matthew” was created. The county police introduced a distinction „Be like Father Matthew” awarded to people who have helped the police.

Restaurateurs and hoteliers in Sandomierz benefit from the town's popularity and use the famous image of the priest. There is a little hotel named “Father Matthew's Manor” [Picture 2].

It turns out that the idea of city placement is used not only by region but also representatives



Photo 1. View of “Ranch”

Foto 1. Kadr z serialu “Ranczo”

Source/Źródło: www.static.wirtualnemedial.pl



Photo 2. View of the hotel "Father Matthew Manor"

Foto 2. Zdjęcie przedstawiające hotel "dworek Ojca Mateusza"

Source/*Źródło*: www.dworekojcamateusza.pl

of the state and public institutions. The Agency for Restructuring and Modernization of Agriculture has decided to support the production of one of the series "Ranch" because of the possibility to provide information about the Rural Development Programme for the years 2007-2013. The power and influence of the heroes of television series are huge and promotional opportunities for regions may be found in checking the origin of an actor playing a role in a popular serial.

Also the visual identification system is considered to be one of the highly effective instruments in regional promotion.

Each of the available instruments of promotion will be effective on condition the local community accepts it and is ready to get involved. This can be achieved by implementing a comprehensive communication campaign which will create social awareness, convince and encourage people to act and support the undertaken initiatives. Without their help and engagement the peripheral area remains peripheral.

Conclusions

Any promotional campaign, in particular of the areas facing many economic problems, requires deep reflection and multi-faceted plan. The undertaken actions should be socially consulted and supported by residents. The strength of the regions lies in their atmosphere, which is created by local people. In Poland we have examples of good and effective promotional campaigns which could serve as models. More and more professional advertising agencies are willing to create promotional strategies for regions and assist in their implementation. Local awareness, sense of identity and pride in belonging to a particular culture are enjoying a revival and can be used in creating positive images of the peripheral regions.

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Streszczenie

W artykule przedstawiono niektóre z instrumentów public relations i podejście do tworzenia programów kampanii promocyjnych. Zagadnienia związane z promocją obszarów, które zostały sklasyfikowane jako peryferyjne stały się ostatnio popularnym tematem wielu badań. Przedstawiono także analizę dostępnych narzędzi promocyjnych, które mogą być zastosowane na obszarach określonych jako peryferyjne.

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