

## Exploring City Branding Potential of Malang as Differentiation Method in Promotion

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### Abstract

Marketing communication and promotion is the most essential thing in brand development. As a brand, Malang should apply it in order to compete with other cities, more particularly in terms of economic, social, cultural and tourism sector. Malang has potentials that will attract both visitors and investors. City branding should become one of the government's focus to build its brand. It is the manifestation of city marketing in which objective is to highlight its strength. Based on the researchers' observation, Malang has yet had attracting city branding composition. The objectives of the research were to collect and analyze all potential assets Malang had to strengthen its identity as a tool to form city branding. It provided a suggestion to Malang City government in a form of tagline positioning and promotion strategy. The researchers developed a city branding concept for the city and came up with a tagline associated with Malang. The study used qualitative approach and in-depth interview. Based on the analysis, the researcher suggests a tagline "Your Home Sweet Home" as a part of Malang city branding. In addition, the researchers also proposed minor and major proposition. The minor proposition was education sector was the biggest asset Malang had. Therefore, there should be integration between the sector and other activities more particularly ones related to the culture, history and local wisdom of Malang. Furthermore, the major proposition was every city should explore its differentiation that will attract visitors and investors.

**Keywords:** city branding, differentiation, promotion

### INTRODUCTION

Marketing and advertising communications are important factors for growth of a brand. Similar to a brand, a city also needs the role of marketing and advertising communications in order to compete with other cities, especially in terms of economic, social, cultural, and tourism sectors. In order to excel the competition, a city should develop a strategy to explore all potentials it has in order to attract visitors and future investors. City Marketing may become one of the methods to achieve the goal. Kavaratzis and Ashworth explains the definition of City Marketing as follows:

"City Marketing is a process that includes a wide set of activities. It starts with a careful analysis of the city's current situation through extensive research on the city's assets, opportunities and audiences (Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2007). The second step is identifying and choosing a certain vision for the city and the goals that should be achieved with the cooperation and agreement of as broad a range of stakeholders as possible. What comes next is

the phase of planning specific projects that will collectively achieve the goals set and allocating clear roles for the participating bodies. This is followed by the phase of active implementation of city marketing measures that can be spatial/functional, financial, organizational and promotional," [1]

Based on the definition of City Marketing above, the researchers conclude that in order to be able to market itself, a city should be able to identify, analyze and later use all potentials it has.

The implementation of marketing philosophy and methodology, or at least of marketing techniques that were easy to adapt and use in the practice of city governance, has been mirrored by the increasing interest of academics from various fields, who believe that the principles of marketing are, with the necessary modifications, applicable to cities and their operational environment. Attribute the theoretical emergence of place marketing to three developments within the marketing discipline that paved the way, by solving the difficulties of transferring marketing knowledge from its initial field of industrial goods and services to places [2] These are the development of marketing in non-profit organisations, of social marketing and of image marketing, all of which

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contributed to the liberation of traditional marketing thought from goals and practices attached to this initial field of application. The development of the concept of non-profit marketing has freed the application of marketing from its connection to direct financial profit making, while the concept of social marketing introduced the possibility to use marketing in order to alter or reinforce sets of attitudes held by targeted individuals or groups, with the final goal being the good of society at large. [3] The notion of image marketing stems from the realisation that images can be effectively marketed while the products to which they relate remain vaguely delineated, a notion that was warm-heartedly accepted by city administrators faced with the complex and intricate city product.

In fact, there are many substantial common characteristics of marketing and branding corporations and cities, a fact recognised by several commentators who point to the relevance of the 'metaphor of place as corporate brand'. They both have multidisciplinary roots, both address multiple groups of stakeholders, both have a high level of intangibility and complexity, both need to take into account social responsibility, both deal with multiple identities, both need a long-term development. In this sense, corporate branding does seem to offer a multitude of lessons for implementing branding within cities. The corporate marketing mix and its elements are fundamentally relevant to cities and their marketing conditions (obviously more so than the four Ps of the traditional marketing mix) and it could serve as a basis for the refinement of city marketing theory. The above stated similarities have encouraged researchers to test corporate branding tools on cities [4]

Nevertheless, it is not clear in what ways cities could be thought of as corporations and, therefore, whether city brands can be treated as corporate brands. It could be argued that the complexities involved in city branding are even greater than corporate branding and the difficulties are more acute. For example, the adoption and projection of a single clear identity, ethos and image by cities is deemed more, if desirable at all. 'Cities have many similarities with large commercial corporations but unless these similarities are more important than the dissimilarities of political responsibility and public interest, places cannot be branded in the same sense [5]. Applying corporate branding to places

demand a treatment of the place brand as the whole entity of the place products, in order to achieve consistency of the messages sent, which might be trickier than in the case of corporations [6]. At the same time it demands associating the city with 'stories' about it that need to be built in the city by planning and design interventions or infrastructure development, both of which demand meeting conditions that do not seem to be evident in the corporate marketing environment.

City marketing and city branding are two inseparable concepts. In other words, city branding facilitates city marketing. Both of these things are different in terms of both definition and function. City marketing is derived from willingness to identify what is needed and expected by the market while city branding is derived from an effort to create vision, mission and develop identity that is expected to create more value and attracts the visitors and future investors.

Branding is added to the list of developments that bring marketing theory and practice closer to the nature and characteristics of places. It provides a base for identifying and uniting a wide range of images intended for the city and meanings attributed to the city in one marketing message, the city's brand. The framework to understand a city's brand is provided by the recent development, within the marketing discipline, of corporate branding. A branded product requires a brand identity, a brand differentiation and a brand personality. These are not so much separate attributes as re-statements of the same feature from different perspectives. Identifying and clarifying the brand identity, or the core identity, is in itself an instrument of differentiation of one product from another and recognising its brand positioning, that is its relationship to competing products within a defined competitive arena. The process of product branding is both creative initiation and careful maintenance. This brand management is thus both strategic and tactical although disproportionate attention in the literature is generally paid to the former. The objective of the process and method of measuring its degree of success is the increase in brand equity which is the extra benefit enjoyed by the consumer above the bare utility value of the product. Such equity in turn is composed of the two elements of brand value and brand awareness (the strength of the recognition of such associations).

But the important question is: in what ways is a city a brand, or if, indeed, a city can be seen as a brand? The following definition of brands might assist in answering this difficult question: 'a brand is a product or service made distinctive by its positioning relative to the competition and by its personality, which comprises a unique combination of functional attributes and symbolic values [7]. The key to successful branding is to establish a relationship between the brand and the consumer, such that there is a close fit between the consumer's own physical and psychological needs and the brand's functional attributes and symbolic values [8]. This definition of brands and branding shows the relation of branding to the goals of city marketing and managing the city's image as identified in the literature. Like brands, cities satisfy functional, symbolic and emotional needs and the attributes that satisfy those needs need to be orchestrated into the city's unique proposition [9]. Branding provides a good starting point for city and a solid framework by which to manage the city's image. If it is indeed the city's image that needs to be planned, managed and marketed, then city branding would be the right theoretical and practical approach. [10]

As the second biggest city in East Java after Surabaya, Malang has abundant resources that may be developed into assets to support marketing communication strategy. The government of Malang should focus on city branding as the manifestation of city marketing. The goals of city marketing are to market potentials a brand (city) has and develop emotional bond between targeted consumer and the brand (city). It is in line with Gronroos' idea that brand is currently defines as a factor that separates one goods or service from others [11]. Branding is important considering fierce competition in city marketing communication. At the moment, in tourism sector, Malang (city) should compete with Batu and Municipality of Malang.

Based on the researchers' observation, Malang (city) has yet had attracting city branding composition. The composition is one of the main factors in generating all potentials to attract targeted visitors and investors. The city has yet had memorable positioning or tagline that represents its potentials. City branding for Malang, should match the goals, vision and mission of the city, which had been established previously. "Tri Bina Cita" is the goal of the city; it may be used as foundation to start exploring city

branding potential as differentiation method in promotion. It is pivotal in the process of identity formation.

The researchers would identify and list all potentials Malang (city) has and use them as the main reference for analyzing the identity of the city. The identity is then used to develop city branding for Malang. The last part of the study is to develop tagline that represents competitive advantage or distinctive characters of Malang as well as some promotional strategies.

SWOT analysis is the method to analyze strength, weakness, opportunity and threats Malang (city); the result of the analysis becomes the reference for the researchers to run in-depth analysis of the city. The following step is to collect primary data through in-depth interview. The researchers prepare a set of questions consisting of one related to education, industrial, tourism, sport and recreation, cultural and religious sector. The design of the study is descriptive qualitative considering the focus of the study is to explore the potentials of the city and the data are opinion of several key informants. Purposive sampling is the sampling technique to select the informants. The informants are those directly involve in several strategic sectors that become the focus of the city development such as education, industry and tourism.

#### **MATERIAL AND METHOD** (Calibri 10 Bold, Left, Capslock)

The study was a qualitative study of which objectives were to explore city branding potentials of Malang (city) and turn these potentials into differentiation in promotion. The descriptive qualitative study also involved SWOT Analysis that identified internal and external elements of Malang (city). The setting of the study was Malang (city) because the focus of the study was to identify city branding potentials Malang (city) had and turn the potentials into differentiation in promotion.

#### **Data Collection**

The data of the study were:

1. Data taken from the informants. The first was representative from industrial sector and mass-media. The researchers selected "Radio Kencana Malang," an influential radio station in the city that represented entertainment and lifestyle. Another source of data was representative from "PHRI Perhimpunan Hotel dan Restoran Seluruh Indonesia Cabang Malang," an association for hotel owners and restaurateurs in Malang. The following

informants were staffs of the Department of Tourism of Malang (city) and tourist ambassador of the city from “Paguyuban Kakang Mbakyu.” These informants represented tourism sector and paid close attention to the culture and characteristics of the city. In city branding, one element that attracts visitors or investors is the locals and their culture. Therefore, some humanists, people understand the culture of the city well also became the informants;

2. Efforts and activities the informants and the institutions/ organizations they were associated with conducted were one of the primary data. The data were obtained through observation;
3. Secondary data from several related documents.

To select who the informants were, the researchers used purposive sampling or criterion-based selection. Furthermore, the data collection method was in-depth interview. The interviewees were practitioners from education, industrial and tourism sector in Malang (city). The unit of analysis was individuals with expertise in the education, industrial and tourism sectors. As an addition, the focus of the study was to explore several different potentials and local characteristics that may become the reference for city branding and facilitated differentiation in promotion. Having identified the potentials and the characteristics of the city, the following step was to analyze how much these elements were able to become differentiation elements in promotion.

The data analysis method was descriptive qualitative, interpretative and explanative to get meaning that suited city branding in marketing and advertising communication. The result of the data analysis would match the statement of problems and objectives of the study; the result of the analysis was formal and informal one.

In qualitative research, validity test begun since the researchers went to the setting of the study to collect and interpret the data. Triangulation was the method to ensure the validity of the data; triangulation is process of data analysis in which subject's responses are cross-checked with other empirical data (other sources of data) such as documents. Those running the analysis (triangulation) were experts and practitioners in marketing communications from Malang.

## RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### Malang (city) as a Brand

The following section discusses the relationship between brand identity and brand image of Malang:

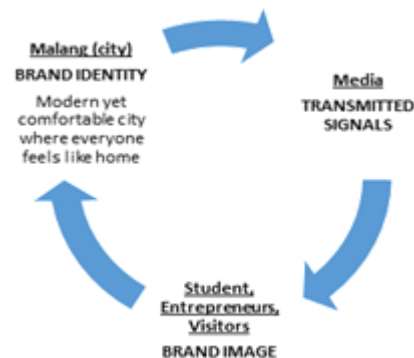


Figure 1. Brand Image and Identity of Malang (city) Flowchart

The figure describes about how brand identity, media and brand image work. Brand identity is personally formed by the brand itself. It consists of brand's vision and mission which will be delivered through the media. Brand builds its brand identity through logo, tagline, color, symbol and many more. Moreover, brand identity relates to what brand wants its market to understand, how they see the brand and how they must be interacted to each other.

Meanwhile, brand image is related to what market or audience perceive and understand the brand itself. The role of media is very important to build brand identity of a brand to its market. In other words, a good concept of a brand identity supported by a good media will create a good brand image.

The researcher suggests the concept of the brand identity and brand image of Malang in the following discussion. First of all, as a brand, the researcher suggests that Malang must be focused on the modern yet and comfortable city where everyone feels like home to leave. It is very possible and logical since Malang has a lot of facilities that categorizes it as a modern city like a universities, shopping mall, cinema, coffee shop, apartment and many more. Besides that, Malang is still has a fresh and healthy air, green area and many more.

Meanwhile, the brand image of Malang is supposed to be integrated with what its market needs and wants. The researcher suggests that, the potential market of Malang city is students, entrepreneurs and visitors. By analyzing the market of the city, the brand will know better about the strategy that will be implemented

through the promotion and media that will be used.

To form a good positioning as a tool to create a strong brand identity and brand image, a brand needs a good elaboration of all potentials. Elaboration of 3 (three) essential elements to be paid attention to in brand management process, more particularly one related to Malang (city) is discussed in the following chart:



Figure 2: Brand Management of Malang (city) Flowchart

Positioning was another vital element to support the three essentials in brand management above. Positioning was related to brand identity, one of the major elements in the growth of a brand. The researcher views that positioning should be based on the three objectives related to a brand, especially for the city itself. They are, business objectives, marketing objectives and communication objectives.

Business objectives relates to all potentials that the city has. For example, how to create a potential of business in education, tourism, small industry, culture and many more. By analyzing all of business objectives, a city will be possible to have a good opportunity to build its brand and make a benefit for its welfare. Marketing objectives is also needed in forming a city positioning. Marketing is one of important thing in branding. Marketing objectives relates to create and maintain targeted potential market, its potential and its development. In other words, marketing objectives will help a city to drive all of its potentials to its segmented market effectively.

The last objectives that a city should be considered is communication objectives. It will

help a city to maintain its brand performance clearly. Communication objectives relates to consistent evaluation by regional government and independent institution. By evaluating all of strategies in business and marketing objectives, a city will know how its brand work in targeted market's point of view.

Brand positioning is one important way to create a good brand identity and brand image. To form a good brand positioning, a city needs to analyze all of its targeted market as the following:

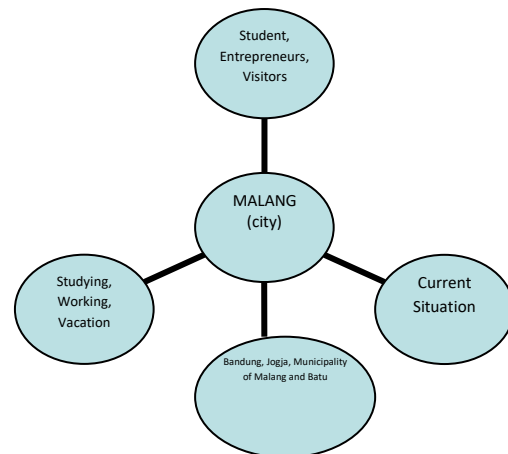
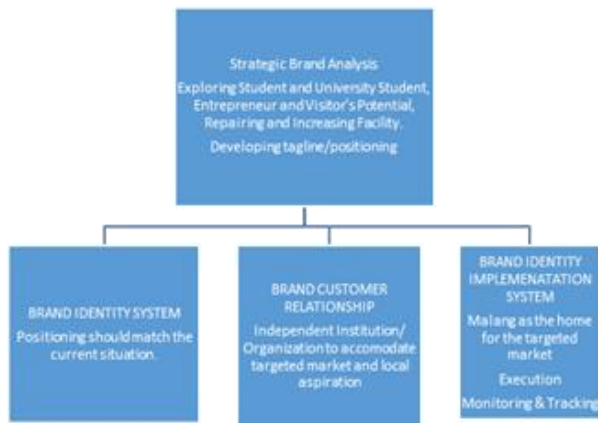


Figure 3: Brand Positioning of Malang (city) Flowchart

A concept that must be understood in determining the positioning of a brand is, convincing the target market that the brand we manage is different and better than the competitors. Brand managers must be able to communicate that to the target market. Meanwhile, according to Aaker, brand positioning is part of the brand identity and value creation that must be communicated actively to the target market,

The flowchart above helped the researchers identifying the positioning of Malang (city). Using the following flowchart, the researchers formulated the positioning analysis of the city, one of the process in designing the city branding.

In 2010, David Aaker proposed a model that he expected helped brand managers identifying their brand. The model was called Brand Identity Planning Model [12]. Using the model as reference, the suitable composition for brand identity planning model for Malang (city) was as follow:



**Figure 3: Brand Identity Planning Model of Malang (city)**

Implementation that is applied continuously to brand identity formation model above is expected to make brand grow strong and able to compete competitively. The above model will also be applied in this research, especially in answering the question of what steps should be done in order that Malang City can become a strong brand and ready to carry out the process of city branding as an important element of the process of marketing communication and advertising. The consistent process of brand identity formation is expected to also lead the brand image of the target audience to fit the expectations of brand managers. To analyze the things that play a role in the strength of a brand, the study of brand equity is presented in this study.

To be successful in becoming the top of mind of consumers, a brand must go through the following processes:

1. Unaware Brand.

In the early stages, consumers would still not so understand and aware of a brand. This can happen because the brand is still new or the brand is already a long time of birth but the process penyampaian information or publication is not running optimally. At this stage, the brand is in an unsafe condition because it is completely unknown so that the sales process will not happen. To be able to enter a higher level, brand recognition, a brand must have comprehensive management through promotional activities either ATL / BTL (Above The Line / Below The Line).

2. Brand Recognition.

At this level, a brand is already known to consumers but has not guaranteed consumers to be able to buy the brand. When consumers recognize a brand, they just know and do not really understand the reason why the brand must be purchased. Therefore, it is necessary to have a specific strategy for the brand manager so that each brand excellence can be known and understood by consumers. This will help the consumer to understand how big the brand can solve the problems they are facing so as to increase the chances of purchasing.

3. Brand Recall.

Brand recall is a condition where the brand is already capable of automatically appearing in the minds of consumers when they are faced in a problem. However, at this stage consumers still have some references to other similar brands, so there is still a chance for them to drop the choice to other brands. Under these conditions, brand managers must be more aggressive in communicating their superiority and positioning to the consumer so as to compete with the competitor's brand.

An example that can be observed in the world of marketing communications in Indonesia is the competition between Mie Sedap as a new player in the fast food industry instantly aggressive against Indomie. Carrying a more fresh taste as offered in advertising, Mie Sedap with bold, aggressive and consistent promotional activities in almost all electronic and print media. In addition, some below the line activities are often held. Rangkaian marketing communication activities is slowly but surely able to lift the brand Mie Sedap to lined head to head with its predecessor, Indomie.

4. Top of Mind.

In brand awareness studies, this level is the highest point that a brand can achieve. When a brand has reached the top of mind, the consumer is sure that the brand is the number one solution that can help them in solving the problems or meet the needs. This can be observed from several examples such as: Yogyakarta is the main destination for tourists who want to feel a touch of strong Javanese culture with the familiar atmosphere of the inhabitants. Another example is, consumers often refer to Aqua as mineral water in packaging and Honda for



motorcycles when not necessarily the intended is the 2 brands.

Above was the summary of the the brand identity development of Malang (city). It was expected that the city branding development of Malang (city) discussed in the study developed Malang into a modern yet comfortable city where everyone felt welcome; the concept would attract the targeted market. Several important things to conduct to develop the Malang (city) into attractive brand were:

- **Perceived Quality**  
Perceived quality is a description of customer's overall response to the quality and advantages offered by a brand. Perceived quality can reinforce the consumer's reasons for making the purchase and the study also focused on quality and benefits a brand could offer such as differentiation and price. The result of the perceived quality of Malang (city) was within the 'safe' category, since most informants mentioned a lot of positive information about the city and it was not deviated too far from the three main elements the city wanted to optimize, education, industry and tourism.
- **Brand Associations**  
It discusses every thing customer remembers or associated about a brand involving tangible and intangible product as well as benefit, lifestyle, competitors and many others [13] Brand associations depends upon elements outside the brand yet still relevant to the value of the brand. As an example, listening to the word James Bond, the first things coming across our heads are Britain and secret agent. Listening to Paris, the first thing coming across our head is the Eiffel tower. Brand association of Malang (city) was categorized as 'safe' since most of the informants associated the city with cool weather, delicious food and its re-known football team, 'AREMA.' What the researchers should do were summarize all the positive brand associations and highlight several tangible and intangible assets of the city as much as possible and develop better brand association.
- **Other Proprietary Assets (patents, trademark, other channel relationship).**  
Patents and trademarks are important elements that protect brand from any imitation or plagiarism and maintain the integrity and strength of the brand. Once the

city branding of Malang design has been approved, it is critical for the government of Malang (city) to register for its patent in order to get the proper rights recognition and validity. It is important to protect the assets from the claims of others.

In the study, the researchers conducted in-depth analysis towards the aspects that would increase the strength of Malang (city) as a brand using brand identity as the method. The brand identity involved exploring some potentials that may be turned into distinct characteristics and/ differentiation that would facilitate more effective promotion.

#### **City Branding Design of Malang (city) as Differentiation Method in Promotion**

Based on the analysis towards city branding potentials of Malang (city), the researcher came up with the following concept.

#### **Malang (city) in City Branding Design**



**Figure 4: Malang Your Home Sweet Home Logo  
The Background:**

Amidst fierce competition between cities, Malang (city) keeps on developing using its potentials. The city branding design aims at creating brand awareness for the city among its targeted market in order that the city becomes the top of mind for the most current standardized urban living.

The Brief:

The main objectives of the city branding of Malang (city) are:

- Increasing the public welfare through the city branding to explore all potentials the city has,
- Increasing targeted market awareness to gain new, different experience when they visit the city,
- Defining uniqueness of the city compared to other cities,
- Developing "sense of belonging" and "love" towards the city for both the locals and targeted market.

Besides the four factors above, the researchers also formulated some goals the city can achieve when it applies the city branding design successfully. The objectives are:

1. Introducing Malang as intellectual, creative, young-spirited-based city,

2. Increasing the differentiation of the city as modern city with cool, fresh air,
3. Increasing the differentiation of the city as modern, safe city with warm locals,
4. Increasing the differentiation of the city as modern city where everyone feels right at home,
5. Increasing the differentiation of the city as modern city with affordable, competitive price,
6. Increasing the differentiation of the city as modern city with wide range of entertainment and culinary centers,
7. Introducing and improving the brand awareness of the city as SMEs center especially one in culinary (dried fruit chip, meatball and tempeh chips).
8. Introducing and improving the brand awareness of the city as HUB and MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Conference, Exhibition) spot.
9. Increasing the top of mind of the targeted market that Malang is a modern city where everyone feels right at home.

Furthermore, the city branding the design of Malang (city) being developed in the study was as follow:

Brand Positioning:

“Malang, Your Home Sweet Home”

Brand positioning in English is used for means of promotion to the areas outside the city.

“Malang, Iki Omahmu Rek”

Brand positioning in Javanese language was used to develop critical concept of people living in the city, either the natives or non-natives who have been living in the city for a while. It is important for the people to develop responsibility and work hand in hand to develop a city into a comfortable, developed one.

Philosophy :

1. Malang (city) is your home sweet home. The brand positioning refers to anyone living and visiting in Malang; these people should consider the city as their own home.
2. Home is a place where people can do as they like.
3. Home is a place where people feel comfortable and do not have to worry about anything else.
4. Home is a place people always miss.

#### Table Integrated Communication System in the Implementation of Malang City Branding

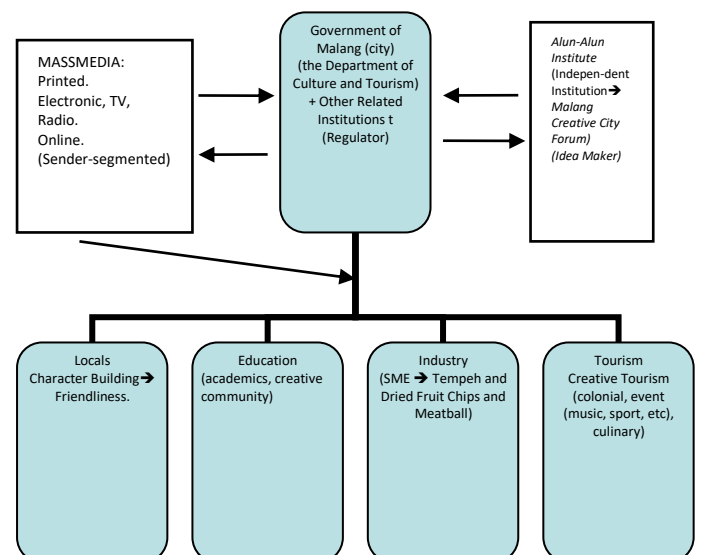
The researcher proposed an integrated communication system in the implementation of Malang city branding so that the government, stakeholder and people living in the city actively participate involved to succeed the branding program as mentioned previously in thstudy. The findings of the study showed that the greatest potential of the city was education; there should be an integration between education and other creative activities as means of promotion for other sectors such as industry and tourism.

The use of mass media in the communication system of Malang city branding was considered effective because they resulted in synergy and togetherness.

“Togetherness refers to togetherness between people living far away from communicator and each other.....togetherness is important for selection and message interpretation”, [14]

The mass communication theory above reiterates the researchers’ statement about the importance of mass media as communication system in the city branding. The mass media can spread information effectively to a large number of audiences even though these audiences are not connected to one another. Mass media is effective tool due to its ability to channel information appropriately and directly.

The following was the communication system the researchers developed to succeed Malang city branding.



**Figure 5: City Branding of Malang (city) Communication System**

The figure showed line of coordination between different institutions and individuals in



Malang (city) to apply the city branding concept optimally.

The responsibility of the government of Malang (city) was become a regulator for all types of decree and regulator related to the implementation of the city branding. At the same level as the government, an independent organization, 'Alun-Alun Institute' was an idea maker carrying out various types of creative activities of which purpose was to elevate the potentials of the strategic sectors the city had (education-based industry and tourism). Mass media were independent institutions actively participate to spread information related to the implementation of city branding in the city. The entire mass media in the city were involved so that all segments of the society know the information from the teenagers, adult, to SES A, B and C. Uniform information is critical for successful implementation of the city branding of Malang (city).

The communication system above also involved the local participation. Public participation may be implemented through community empowerment. It is expected that education sector contributed through scientific breakthrough and creative sides of the students. Meanwhile, industrial sector would develop production that highlighted the characteristics of Malang (city) for instance dried fruit chips, tempeh, and meatball. Tourism sector should conduct various creative programs that highlighted tourism spots in Malang (city) such as historical heritage from colonialism era and culinary.

The communication system above was implemented through discussion forum once a week either through a weekly discussion the researchers proposed (cangkrukan wengi) or radio and television talk show.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the findings of the study, several strategies related to successful branding of Malang (city) are:

- Since education is the major asset of the city, Malang (city) should be able to explore creative sides of students and university students living in the city to create potentials that attract the targeted market.
- The education sector should become beacon of regional development and help improving other sectors such as industry and tourism through integration between the sectors. However, the integration

should not be taken literally combining university and tourism resulting in edutourism. University is not the most suitable tourist attraction.

- Collaboration between education and other sectors (industry and tourism) refers to methods the students and university students used or programs they conducted to create potentials that will attract the industrial and tourism sector in the city. The researchers suggests 'Festival Boso Walikan,' because 'Bahasa Walikan' comes from Malang (city). The industry should be participate in the event by giving voucher for buying the meatball, dried fruit and tempeh chips, for example. During the event, a bazaar where all SMEs in Malang (city) participate is a suitable medium to introduce the characteristics of the city and improve their sales. The event will automatically increase potentials for tourism. The main principles of tourism stated that visitors are attracted to unique, distinctive features a city has.
- Differentiation is the principles a city needs to optimize to attract more visitors and future investors. Speaking of differentiation, all cities have their own distinctive features and therefore, can develop their own strategy for differentiation. Malang has unique building, culture and culinary that sets the city apart from other cities. According to the researchers, differentiation principle is simple, 'maximizing what you have.' For example, Malang, currently, has cooler and fresh air compared to Surabaya dan Jakarta; these potential should be maximized by planting more trees and building more city parks. Similar principle works for other potentials such as historical building and culinary.
- The finding of the city is a city branding design with the positioning "Malang, Your Home Sweet Home." It is expected that the targeted market feel welcomed and enjoy doing any activities they want to in the city.
- A forum is needed for the creative assets of the city. 'Alun-Alun Institute' is a forum one of the informants, Bapak Vitra, and the researchers started. It is expected that the forum encourages community groups in the city to take active participation to develop all potentials the city has.
- Weekly discussion between the government and the locals should be conducted to

discuss various issues they encounter and share creative ideas for development of the city.

Furthermore, the researchers described proposition related to the city branding:

**Minor Proposition**

- Education sector is the biggest asset Malang has. Therefore, there should be integration between the sector and other activities to improve the brand awareness of the city.
- Education-based activities may become element of differentiation in promotion once they are combined with culture, heritage and characteristics of the city.

**Major Proposition:**

- Every city should explore its differentiation that will attract visitors and investors. Thus, government, stakeholders and locals should work together and develop a synergy to use these potentials as foundation to optimize its marketing communication strategy.

**SUGGESTIONS**

Here is a suggestion given to the Malang City Government and the next researcher who is interested in discussing city branding:

**Suggestion for the Government of Malang (city)**

The government of the city should invite younger generations, their creative asset, to develop the city. According to the researchers, Malang can be developed into a dynamic and developed city by conducting creative activities frequently because these activities are able to accommodate education, industry and tourism sectors. The activities should be dynamic and in accordance with the current trends. Participation and creative ideas from the younger generations are useful in conducting such activities.

**Suggestion for Future Researchers**

There are few studies discussing city branding in Indonesia. Future researchers should discuss the concept more specifically to prove whether or not the integration between creative activities and education sector to promote the industry and tourism sector can improve brand awareness of Malang (city).

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