



# Branding of Uttar Pradesh as Potential Tourist Destination

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**Abstract:-** Uttar Pradesh is India's largest state in terms of size and population located on the northern area of Indian subcontinent. However UP position in foreign tourist arrivals was third and second position in domestic tourist arrivals in India. This blistering increase in UP's tourism mainly attributed to the affordable heritage and cultural image. But the UP is much more than just pilgrimage, culture and heritage destination. In this study the role of destination image will be explained with the focus on information through the supply side. Thus in this research branding of destinations is discussed along with its importance. In the past two decades a substantial percentage of research in travel & tourism has been dedicated to destination image. Considering this it is apparent that destination image is a valuable concept which facilitates the "Destination Selection Process" and has thus contributed tour understanding of tourist behavior.

**Key Words:-** Tourism Branding, Heritage, Destination Marketing.

**Introduction:-** Branding is a method that helps a particular destination to create a distinguished and desired image and therefore destination branding is becoming an essential topic for the tourism industry of Uttar Pradesh. Destination branding represents and distinguishes a particular place from several competing places. Also destination brands are quite often used as a marketing instrument to attract potential tourists in a particular place and increase awareness of that destination. Therefore there is a need for destinations in UP to switch from simple marketing to destination branding.

In the past two decades a substantial percentage of research in travel & tourism has been dedicated to destination image. Considering this it is apparent that destination image is a valuable concept which facilitates the "Destination Selection Process" and has thus contributed tour understanding of tourist behavior. Because of this the image concept has gained immense attention not only from researchers and academicians but also from industry practitioners and destination marketers. Hence it is of most importance for marketers to develop a competitive position among tourism destinations.

UP is India's largest state in terms of size and population located on the northern area of Indian subcontinent. However UP position in foreign tourist arrivals was third and second position in domestic tourist arrivals in India. This blistering increase in UP's tourism mainly attributed to the affordable heritage and cultural image. But the UP is much more than just pilgrimage, culture and heritage destination. In this study the

role of destination image will be explained with the focus on information through the supply side. Thus in this research branding of destinations is discussed along with its importance.

### **Objective of the study:-**

- To study the way UP is projected as an international tourist destination on the internet.
- To analyze the destination image of UP.
- To assess the importance and benefits of marketing of UP in the virtual space an important tourist spot.
- To present suggestions and recommendations for the promotion of tourism in UP in the international market.

### **Research Methodology:-**

Different researchers have proposed various ways of carrying out the study. However it is not possible to apply all the techniques in this study and hence a combination of structured and unstructured methodologies should be used to measure the dimensions/attributes of destination image. For their study they applied a combination of qualitative & quantitative tools to measure these dimensions. This study will use a combination of content analysis & interviews to ensure that the findings are reliable.

### **Role of Destination Branding for UP Tourism:-**

Branding is possible the most powerful marketing weapon available to all kinds of marketers. Now a days branding is used most commonly by the destination marketers. Branding is one of the ways to create uniqueness. Branding is the process of communicating the benefits of the product & creating an overall superior impression about the product. Brand managers brand a product in a way so that it gets positioned in product by stressing on the attributes they declare will match their target markets needs more effectively & closely. Thus a strong brand should be developed which holds unique associations for the consumers. Thus in this research branding of destinations is discussed along with its importance.

Branding is one of the ways to create uniqueness. Branding is the process of communicating the benefits of the product & creating an overall superior impression about the product brand manager's brand product in a way so that it gets positioned in product by stressing on the attributes they declare will match their target market's needs more effectively & closely. A destination brand much like that of a consumer product brand can offer customers many benefits including providing potential tourists with pre-trip information that allows them to identify a destination differentiate it from its competitors and build expectations about the likely holiday experience offered by a destination. Brand in a summarized form means:-

- A brand is a competitive identify. It makes a destination distinctive and differentiates it from all others.
- A brand refers to the essence or core characteristics of a product or destinations which comprises its personality and make it distinctive and different from all its competitors.
- A brand is not a logo, a slogan, a product or a marketing campaign.
- A brand exists in the eyes of the beholder it is a dynamic relationship between the product and how it is perceived by the potential visitors.
- A brand is the fundamental building block from which all making communications & behavior should flow.

In this research the term brand is used as the core spirit of a destination that makes it different from all other destinations in the eyes of its potential customers. This bestows a product with a personality. Which makes it:-

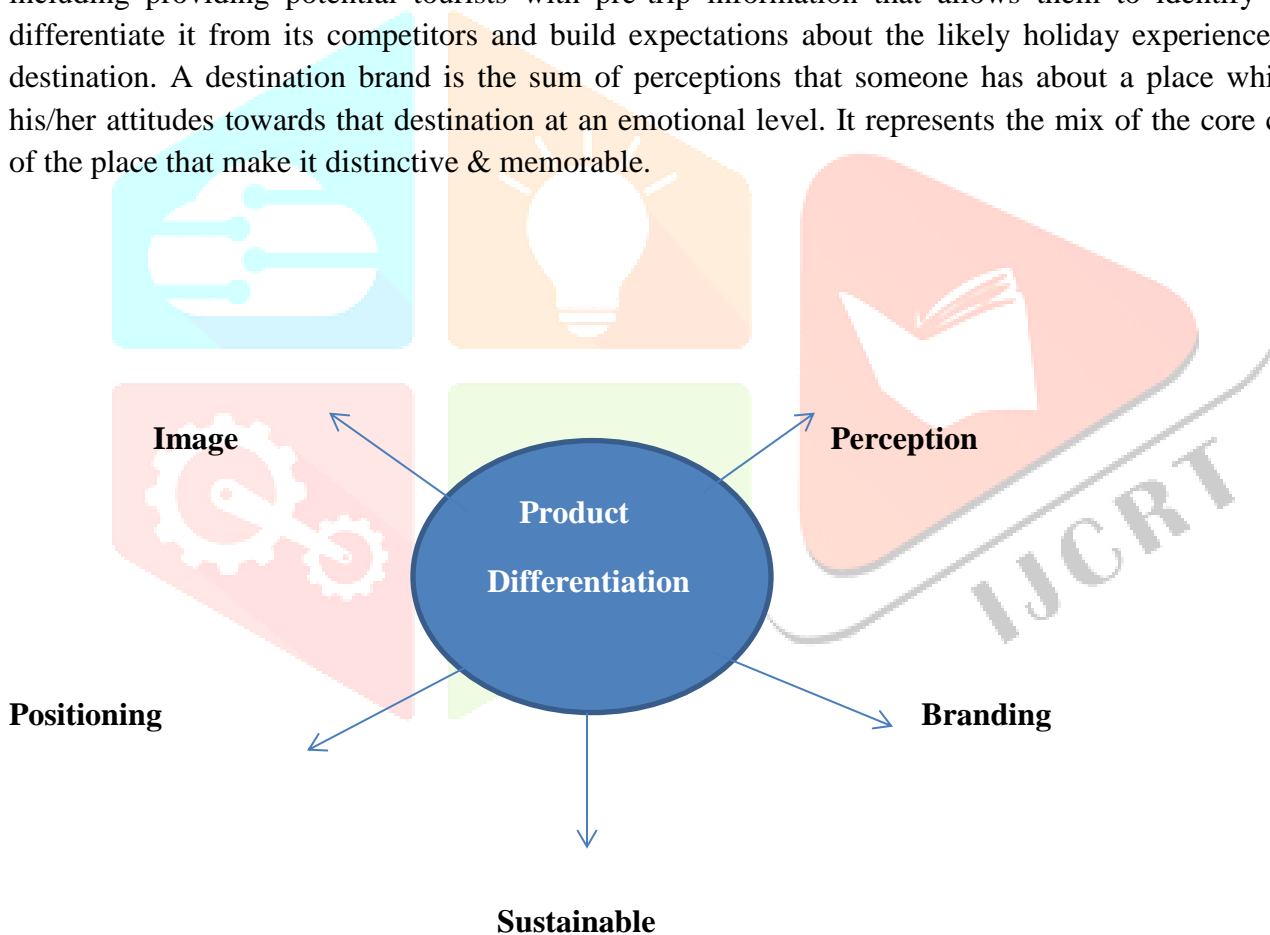
- Unique
- Memorable and important & relevant to specific market segments.

## Destination Brand:-

Destination branding is a process used to develop a unique identity & personality that is different from all competitive destinations. Countries are competing worldwide not only for tourists but also for export markets, business investment, skilled migrants etc. therefore places are being branded to convert their unique selling opportunity into a unique selling proposition. The success of branding products has translated the practice of applying branding principles & technique to places.

Branding UP is all about identifying the places true identity. Thus destination branding is all about combining all the attributes associated with the place under one umbrella that establishes a unique identity of the place & differentiate from that of the competitors for attracting more & more tourists. Destination branding is the process of developing a unique identity or personality for a tourist destination and communicating the same to visitors using a name, a tagline, a symbol, a design or a combination of these to create a positive image.

A destination brand much like that of a consumer product brand can offer customers many benefits including providing potential tourists with pre-trip information that allows them to identify a destination, differentiate it from its competitors and build expectations about the likely holiday experience offered by a destination. A destination brand is the sum of perceptions that someone has about a place which influences his/her attitudes towards that destination at an emotional level. It represents the mix of the core characteristics of the place that make it distinctive & memorable.



## Importance of Branding Destinations:-

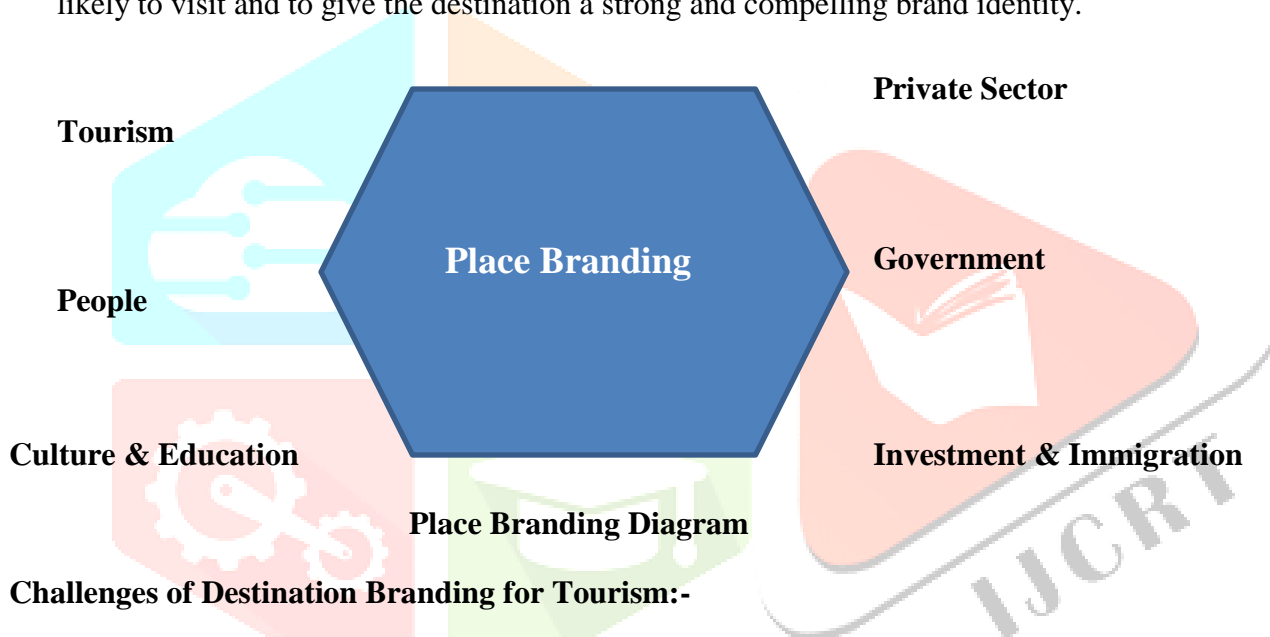
If a destination has to attract tourists, it has to give its visitors reasons to visit that destination. Through branding a destination has to express that how it is different from the other destinations. The process of differentiating one destination from another is actually about destination branding. It is about identifying what makes a destination unique and communicating these differences consistently in order to encourage potential visitors to understand the distinctive appeals of the destination so that they visit it. Following are some of the key reasons explained by Simon Anholt regarding the importance of branding destinations:-

- In the globalized world in which we now live, every place has to compete with every other place for share of mind, share of income, share of talent, share of voice.
- Unless a place can come to stand for something it stands little chance to being remembered for long enough to compete for any of these precious reasons.

Thus destination branding is required for the following reasons:-

- Countries are competing worldwide not only for tourists but also for export markets business investment, skilled migrants etc.
- The success of branding products has translated the practice of applying branding principles & techniques to places.
- Place branding impact has been widespread & is needed to advocate stimulated tourism.
- To overcome negative & inaccurate image and perception about the place.

There is also a need to increase awareness, recognition & memorability of the destination over time amongst potential visitors. Also to create a positive image for the destination that would enable people more likely to visit and to give the destination a strong and compelling brand identity.



#### Challenges of Destination Branding for Tourism:-

Whether a destination is successful in bringing high rate of tourism or not, whatever destination is, it will face a number of marketing challenges:-

1. **The Challenges of Politics Destination:-** are highly affected and hampered by political pressure. Destination marketers are extremely affected by short termism of the tourism organizations political heads. Bureaucratic red tapism can also affect branding. One example of a destination which has seen its destination branding activities getting weak & shaken due to political changes.
2. **The Challenge of External Environment:-** Destination are affected greatly by external environment like International politics, terrorism, disasters, economics etc. are some of the recent crisis that wrecked the destination branding & image.
3. **The Challenges of Destination Products:-** Destinations are not a single product but composite products consisting of a bundle of different components including accommodation, tourist attraction, arts, entertainment, culture, natural environment etc.
4. **The Challenges of Creating Differentiation:-** Most destination have some uniqueness that can be converted into a unique selling proportion. Uniqueness should be such that can be converted into the unique selling proportion.

## **Phases of Destination Branding:-**

There are five phases of destination branding.

**Phase1:-** Market investigation, analysis & strategic recommendations.

**Phase2:-** Brand identity development.

**Phase3:-** Brand launch and introduction-communicating visions.

**Phase4:-** Brand implementation.

**Phase5:-** Monitoring, evaluation & reviews.

## **Factors Influencing Destination Image:-**

Because tourism are intangible the images hold in the minds of potential travelers becomes more important than reality and the tourism destinations images. Destination image is composed of various attributes that can be divided in controllable attributes (Destination Product, Price, Place & Promotion) and uncontrollable ones (Destination Characteristics). Destination image is influenced by the environmental/atmospheric attributes (Landscapes, historical attractions, infrastructure, accommodation and facilities) and service attributes. Tourism managers can use these attributes to manipulate the perception that potential tourists have of a destination.

It is essential for destination marketers to not only have a through understanding of traveler image of their respective destination but also be aware of the image traveler's hold of competing destinations. Furthermore it can also be recommended that to develop a positioning strategy, destination marketers should know the perceived strength and weakness of their own & competing tourist areas.

**Identity:-** As a place and people of possibility.

**Information:-** Key to visitors attraction and decision making.

**Insights:-** A round the destination's spirit & offering.

**Invitation:-** Welcoming travelers to come, see, feel & enjoy the destination.

## **Showcasing the Destination's Uniqueness in:-**

**Offering:-** Places, Attraction, Experiences.

**Spirit:-** Culture, Pride.

**Identifiers:-** Images, Sounds, Look & Feel.

## **Tourism Potential in Uttar Pradesh:-**

To establish Uttar Pradesh as a potential tourism destination in India and achieve country's highest tourist arrival & tourism receipts, driving employment generation & ensuring best visitors experience. Uttar Pradesh with its strong & diverse culture is home to many events & festivals. To promote Uttar Pradesh as a preferred tourism destination, U.P. Tourism Department organizes many events & fairs at National and International level like Ayodhya Deepotsav, Rangotsav Barsana, Dev Deepawali, Ballon Festival, UP Trade Mart etc.

As the U.P. tradition Arc has been added by Department of Tourism, it's attaining appreciation from all-round India. Varanasi, Agra and Lucknow the three most essential tourist hubs are attached in Department of Tourism, India. Its miles certain to boom travel industry/tourism industry because its wraps the actual soul of the state, through imparting a extent of traditions, non-secular & historical past travel/tourism property. The delicacies of the state are simply as numerous as its topography. The state is likewise to wealthy fabrics, dexterities, drama/dance & heritage of choir including to the beauty of travel/tourism industry offering inside it.

### Findings:-

It can be concluded that destinations need to be branded because there is a need to differentiate the destination from its competitors. There is also a need to increase awareness, recognition & memorability of the destination over time amongst potential visitors. India is a developing nation striving hard to attain the position of a developed nation is derived by the inclusive growth & development of all its sections & sectors. Tourism is a sector or industry which has potential impacts on various other sectors of an economy & different sections of the country. Its economic contribution cannot be ignored in India with the help of destination branding the tourism industry can be taken to great new heights contributing to nation building. This will develop India economically, socially as well as culturally.

The researcher in this suggested the development of a positioning strategy that includes-

- i) Identifying the perception of the image of potential travelers in the target segment.
- ii) Comparing these images with these of competitors.
- iii) Highlighting the destination attributes that meet the requirements & wants of travelers and differentiate a destination from its competitors.

Therefore to attract more tourists during the low-season, the prevailing marketing strategies should be altered. Attracting the reduction of seasonality as special theme offering like Pilgrimage tourism, Spiritual tourism, luxury tourism, adventure tourism, art tourism, food tourism etc. as well as festival and events will enable UP to increase its demand during low season.

Finally tourism planners of UP should learn from past mistakes & appreciate that their strategic management & marketing up till now, destination have suffered because they wrongly assumed that the higher the volume of tourists the more benefits they can achieve.

Despite several challenges many destination brands have not only survived but continue to make a distinguishing mark on the global map. However it is necessary to educate the masses regarding the importance of destination branding for a better future to the tourism industry.

To summarize will one brand positioning theme meet the needs of all market segments suit the business interests of all local tourism operators and encapsulate the community sense of place.

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