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# TERRITORIAL BRANDING AS A PROMOTION TOOL FOR GASTRONOMY TOURISM AND TERRITORY DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract.** In modern society, positioning of any region is a key issue of the territory development and a basic element of attracting investors. In this regard, creating a territory image and promotion of its brand is important part of the territory development and competitiveness in an effort to attract potential entrepreneurs and tourists. Building a successful tourist image has an informational and emotional-psychological impact on tourists, contributing to a positive image of the region. Within the framework of this article, the essential characteristics and comparative analysis of the terms: "image", "brand", "territory branding" were determined. In addition, a concept of "gastronomy brand" was analyzed as an independent form of a territory promoting. The goal of the research is to study gastronomy tourism as a socio-cultural form, a tool for territory branding. This article highlights the research of territorial branding in the aspect of gastronomy tourism and promoting the Far Eastern cuisine, as well as the formation of a structural model of a territorial brand. The work is based on the axiological structural-functional methods, methods of analysis, as well as deduction, classification and comparison. The scientific novelty of the research lies in the definition of the following concepts: gastronomy brand, territorial brand and the territorial image, highlighting the fundamental difference between the concepts of "territorial image" and "territorial brand". The authors also examined the structural model of the territorial brand and consider the factors of the "Far Eastern cuisine" brand formation.

**Keywords:** gastronomy tourism, territorial branding, territorial image, Far Eastern cuisine.

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# ТЕРРИТОРИАЛЬНЫЙ БРЕНДИНГ КАК ИНСТРУМЕНТ ПРОДВИЖЕНИЯ ГАСТРОНОМИЧЕСКОГО ТУРИЗМА И РАЗВИТИЯ ТЕРРИТОРИИ

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**Аннотация.** В современном обществе позиционирование любого региона является центральным вопросом развития территории и основным элементом привлечения инвесторов. В связи с этим формирование имиджа и продвижение бренда территории являются важной частью развития конкурентоспособности региона в борьбе за предпринимателей и туристов. Построение удачного туристского имиджа оказывает информационное и эмоционально-психологическое воздействие на туристов, формирует положительный образ региона. В рамках данной статьи были определены существенные характеристики и сравнительный анализ терминов: «имидж», «бренд», «брэндинг территорий». Помимо этого, было рассмотрено понятие «гастрономический бренд», как самостоятельной формы продвижения и развития территории. Целью исследования является изучение гастрономического туризма как социокультурной формы, инструменты брендирования территории. Особенностью данной статьи является исследование территориального брэндинга в аспекте продвижения гастрономического туризма и продвижения бренда «Дальневосточная кухня», а также формирование структурной модели территориального бренда. В работе использован аксиологический подход, структурно-функциональный метод, методы анализа, дедукции, классификации и сравнения. Научная новизна исследования заключается в определении понятия гастрономического бренда, территориального бренда и имиджа территории, а также выделении принципиальной разницы между понятиями «имидж и бренд территории». Авторами также рассмотрены факторы формирования бренда «Дальневосточная кухня».

**Ключевые слова:** гастрономический туризм, территориальный брэндинг, территориальный имидж, дальневосточная кухня.

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### ***Introduction***

Nowadays, there is a highly expressed competition between different destinations, many of which try to demonstrate their most advantageous competitive characteristics, to acquire a positive image and form a brand that contributes to the territory recognition, attracting investors, tourists, and new residents. In this regard, there is a growing interest in branding territories.

The relevance of our research is determined by a number of factors, but, first of all, by the fact that until now there is no recognized scientific understanding of the essence of the terms "brand", "brand of places", "branding". Moreover, the discrepancies in the definition of the concept of "brand" are so significant that Kotler suggested 81 definitions of it [11]. Meanwhile, when defining the concept of "brand of place, territory", specialists, most often, rely only on the essential characteristics of the "brand" concept and, accordingly, take into account only the economic, commercial or political characteristics of the promoted object.

In our opinion, the concepts of "territorial brand" and "branding of the territory" are much broader and more multifaceted than the concept of "brand". This fact has determined the relevance of our study. Moreover, it has not only theoretical but also practical orientation and is dedicated to gastronomy tourism as one of the tools of territorial branding.

The economic, political and social development of any region is based on the analyses of material and non-material resources. Thus, there is an obvious connection between the economy and culture and within the framework of this interaction there is a long-term development of the regional socio-economic system, determined by the formation of a favorable socio-cultural environment. This system is aimed at maintaining the potential of the territory, which is necessary for finding new factors of production, based on non-standard approaches, increasing the rate of economic growth of the regional economy, and, ultimately, improving the quality of life.

When considering the region in the context of the perception by its inhabitants, the leading role should be given to the issues of the community social life, including health care, education, environment and culture. And in this matter, we can agree with the author M.P. Badluyeva, who considers the "region" as an open economic system, which results in the

material, socio-cultural and spiritual benefits necessary to meet the people's needs [3].

Meanwhile, culture is a basic factor for socio-economic development, especially in the regions with a high potential of cultural, historical, natural, gastronomic and ethnic heritage. Therefore, it is advisable to consider the role of culture in the processes of territorial image-making and branding.

It should be noted that the success of any territory is primarily determined by the effectiveness of its image created for positioning. The use of brand technologies is reasoned by the effectiveness of modern tools for improving the economic climate and investment attractiveness of territories [22].

Considering the "branding of territories" concept it is necessary to note the opinion of the researcher S. Anholt, who first used this word combination as a professional term in 2002 [2], although this phenomenon appeared long before the 21st century. For example, in the "Baudolino" novel, the medievalist Umberto Eco wrote: "Baudolino understood that decent relics could change the status of the city, make it a goal of countless pilgrimages, and transform the parish church into a mausoleum" [7].

However, before referring directly to the concept of brand and eventually correlating this term with the definition of "image", since they are often used as synonyms, one should take into account the approaches to defining the essence of the territorial image. Thus, D.V. Vizgalov noted that "... the image of a city is a set of stable ideas about the territory existing in the public consciousness, but not necessarily the systemic and stable ones" [26]. Moreover, he highlighted the multidimensional nature of information sources about the territorial image, and stated that the image is formed on the basis of information about the really existing characteristics of the territory, as well as subjective information sources determined by the personal opinions and ideas, as well as stereotypes and rumors spread about the territory.

In our opinion, this definition by D.V. Vizgalov requires clarification, since the really existing characteristics of the territory determine its internal image, the so-called territorial identity, which has many aspects: geographical location, natural, architectural and other internal features. Meanwhile, image is an external and assessed representation of a territory formed by all those audience representatives for whom this region is significant and attractive in terms of tourism, investment, new residence, etc.

In this connection, B.Yu. Erdyntsev believes that the image of a region is an effective tool for managing socio-spatial relations, on the one hand, for the entire population of the region, and on the other, for each individual member [8].

Analyzing the term of image, T.N. Gordeeva focuses on the need to form a perception of a territory and by a territorial image she implies a complex of features created by the interested subjects in order to construct an idea of a territory that evokes the required associations, as well as an assessment of the territory by various key groups [9].

An analysis of definitions related to the territorial brand and territorial image showed that a number of researchers A.P. Pankrukhin [17], D.V. Vizgakov [26], I.S. Vazhenina [25] suggest their contradictory interpretations of these concepts.

However, T.N. Kuchinskaya emphasizes the fact that the brand of the territory is a broader concept. In particular, considering the issues of regional modernization, she emphasizes a special aspect of the territory, its transboundary nature. She highlights that certain factor of foreign cultural influence in addition to the standard socio-cultural components of regional development are important for such territories especially in the conditions of increasing globalization. The researcher justifies her point of view by the poly-nuclear nature of such regions where the core centers are national cultures of the neighboring countries [13].

Domestic researchers I. Muromkina [15], L.S. Zakharychev [28], E.A. Rudaya [20] note the complexity of the concept and talk about a set of various functional and emotional elements for its presentation.

In some studies, the brand is directly associated with the image and is believed to be "formed on the basis of a prominent positive, advanced image of the territory" [27], which is fair, according to the authors.

Meanwhile, V.K. Malkova states that the historical and cultural image-brand of a territory is a wide range of its real characteristics and potential capabilities, which has historical and cultural-psychological significance for the past, present and future of the region and its inhabitants, as well as for "external consumers" [14].

In our opinion, territorial branding is defined quite correctly by E.V. Stepanycheva, saying that, on

the one hand, this is an area of knowledge, and on the other hand, the directions of activities to create and maintain positive associations about the territory, its citizens and products. It is to contribute to the identification, formation and management of the reputation of countries, regions, cities. Such activities refer to a special technology of marketing places, which is a mechanism for coordinating marketing efforts and managing long-term relationships with external target audiences, as well as communication of internal subjects interested in its development [21]. E.V. Stepanycheva stated that the goals of branding are: promoting territorial events outside; the presence of a territory brand in the information network; its recognition and maintaining the influence of the territory and the flow of financial resources.

It is noted that A.P. Pankrukhin once mentioned that both foreign and Russian specialists among all "four Pis" of territorial marketing got attracted only by the "third Pi" - promotion, marketing communications and, especially, branding. He stated that before engaging in branding, it is necessary to carry out marketing research aimed at analyzing the perceptions of the territory among the target audiences for whom it is significant as a product. It is also necessary to identify what they mean by "the price of territory", since people have to pay for their choice of residence place, work, temporary staying not only with money. Moreover, it is necessary to analyze what is needed to "sell" the territory and how to "pack" it for this purpose [18]. Only by solving all these issues, it is possible to develop a marketing strategy for promoting the territory, which should become the core of its socio-economic development. He also mentioned the importance of crowdsourcing for creating consumer value of the territory, as a technology for attracting intellectual potential and knowledge of a large number of people interested in this process and united by network innovation systems in the process of positioning and promoting territories.

#### **Materials and Methods**

Considering the urgency of building a competitive economy in the region and the possibility of using socio-cultural aspects for this purpose, this topic can be considered relevant.

The goal of the research is to demonstrate gastronomy tourism as a socio-cultural form of a terri-

ry branding and attracting new stakeholders to the region.

#### Objectives:

- To determine the essential characteristics and carry out a comparative analysis of the concepts: "image", "brand", "branding of territories";
- To analyze the functions of the territorial brand;
- To develop a structural model of a territorial brand;
- To justify the role of gastronomy tourism in territorial branding and promotion of the "Far Eastern cuisine" brand.

The work uses an axiological approach, according to which we consider the territorial image and brand as cultural forms contributing to the formation of a territory as a value for its residents, investors, tourists and others, for whom the territory becomes attractive both in the emotional and rational attraction aspects.

The structural-functional method made it possible to state the structural model of a territorial brand and its functions, to demonstrate gastronomy tourism as one of the tools of territorial branding.

#### Results

The research showed that in the modern scientific community, some authors consider the concepts of "image" and "brand" of a territory to be synonymous [20], which, in our opinion, seems to be incorrect.

Derived from English, the term means: "representation", "statue" (idol), "likeness", "metaphor", "icon", but most often in English it is used in the meaning of representation [16]. The English word "image" comes from the Latin "imago", which means "drawing", "picture" [1].

Many reference sources interpret the concept of "image" as a "deliberately formed representation" aimed at giving an emotional and psychological impact on someone in order to promote, advertise, etc. [4].

The authors define the image of a territory as a set of beliefs about territorial characteristics, which is subjective and may vary depending on the information received, personal experience and stereotyped beliefs. Moreover, the image can be based not on the real characteristics of the territory, but created by mass media and has little to do with reality.

As for the term of "brand", this concept is more often viewed as a trademark and is sometimes

equated in its meaning. In our opinion, such definition of brand does not fully reveal the complexity of this concept.

Until now, there is no consensus on the issue of determining the brand of territory, however, there are many serious and diverse studies [6]. The study showed that the essence of "brand of territory" is based on the idea of attracting the attention of a wide range of people to the unique resources that are inherent only in a certain territory, are highly competitive and create a holistic image of the place. Moreover, the territorial brand is a tool for attracting investors, required professionals and tourists, as well as for creating a tourist destination, which contributes to the promotion of the territory in the external environment, attracting potential consumers of its goods and services, its economic, natural, socio-cultural and other features.

It can be concluded that the brand of territory is a deliberately formed socio-cultural form which becomes objectively and rationally existing eventually, which ensures the attraction of attention to the territory of those subjects in which it (the territory) is interested. Thus, the brand of territory is inextricably linked with the improvement of the territory itself and its image.

If we talk about tourism, it is due to the brand that the territory becomes attractive for visiting, it serves as an economic and socio-cultural value worth the time and material expenses spent on travel.

We suggest a scheme that reflects our vision of the relationship between the brand and the image of territory (Figure 1).

The brand of territory and the image of territory are inextricably linked. It is obvious that the brand is formed from many components, one of which is the image. The brand acts as one of the ways to demonstrate the image, to ensure the popularity of the territory and as a tool to increase its attractiveness.

According to the scheme suggested by S. Anholt, the brand of a place includes foreign and domestic policy of the government, culture and heritage, population, business investment, export and tourism [2]. In addition to the above-mentioned objects of the brand system, one can also include the image of territory as a separate category. One should keep in mind that the elements involved in a territory brand developing are multidimensional and complex.

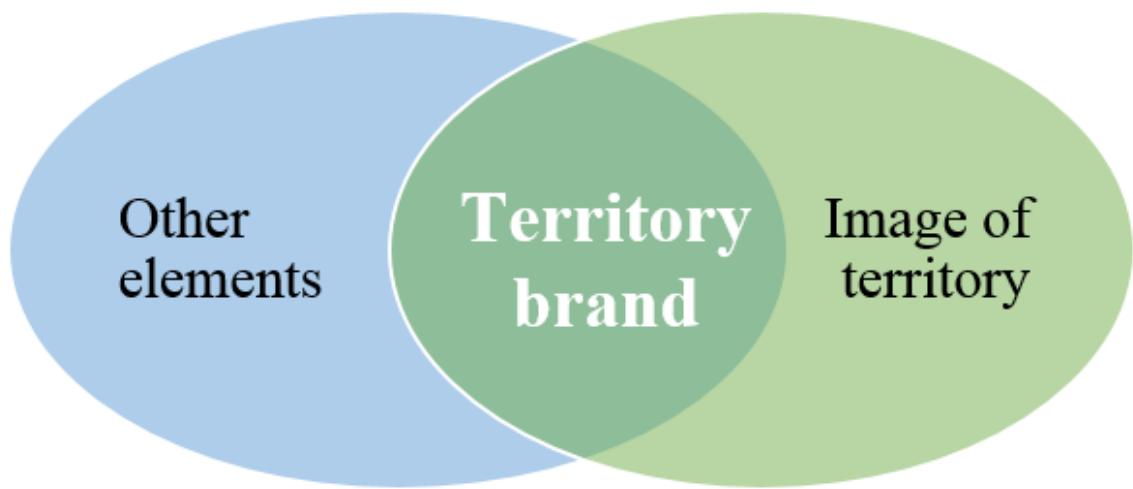


Fig. 1. The relationship between the brand and the image of territory

Branding as a process aimed at the development of the region should include a number of functions and goals:

- 1) Supporting local production and promoting regional brand products;
- 2) Development of human resources;
- 3) Supporting the region as a tourist destination;
- 4) Attracting representatives of business environment and potential investors.

Considering the functions of brand as a way to promote a tourist destination, K.A. Kuzmina and M.V. Matetskaya [10] interpret a brand as a tool that implements the functions of identification, that is, the allocation of territory among the similar ones as well as their differentiation. The ultimate goal is to communicate significant differences and uniqueness of a particular destination to a consumer.

Thus, branding of destinations, being a way of communication with consumers, is based on the unique identity of the territory and its difference from other places of tourist attraction, acts as a mean of differentiation, and allows the tourists to choose the most attractive travel destinations.

In the structure of territorial branding, one of the leading roles, in our opinion, is played by culture and heritage, since they fully reflect life values, priorities, the way of everyday life of the local population, traditions and customs of the given territory.

At the same time, gastronomy, as the most important factor of the region's daily culture characterized by ethnic authenticity is a significant attractive element for visitors in terms of territorial brand con-

cept. It is notably that culinary traditions are associated with geographical location. Thus, regions with unique natural, cultural and ethnoculinary resources will make it possible to develop a truly effective gastronomic brand.

Modern researches show that natural resources are the gastronomic brand of almost every region. It means that any region of Russia can attract a tourist with its gastronomic delights. [24].

Analyzing the composition of factors and tools [6] included in gastronomy branding, it is important to study the ethnocultural nutrition characteristics of the peoples inhabiting the territory. The cuisine of local indigenous people, as custodians of culture, customs and traditions of cooking reflects the true gastronomy brand of the region, which will be unique and of particular interest to tourists. Thus, a type of entertainment called a "lunch with local residents" is especially popular today.

It should be noted that the Russian Far East has great opportunities to promote the Far Eastern cuisine gastronomy brand. This is facilitated by the diverse ethnic composition of local population of the region, rich natural, cultural and historical heritage, as well as demand and a supply market. However, the gastronomy brand requires growing awareness of the population its advertising and promotion to the international level.

The Far Eastern cuisine is a fundamental factor that demonstrates the uniqueness and originality of the territorial gastronomy brand of the region. Its

elements can gain public widespread recognition outside the region.

The use of brand technologies is explained by the effectiveness of modern tools for improving the economic climate and investment attractiveness of territories [22]. According to the General Manager of the "John Hancock", "A brand is more than advertising or marketing. This is all that a person thinks about a product when he sees its logo or hears its name" [5].

In general, the process of territory branding can be divided into the following stages [23]:

1) Strategic planning - it is necessary to analyze the development strategies of the branded territory, to determine the goals, objectives and desired results from the brand mechanism, as well as to develop indicators on the basis of which it is possible to assess the effectiveness of the brand. At the same stage, the terms of reference for the research work is drawn up.

2) The research stage allows to obtain information about the awareness of the target audience about the sights, history, economic level, advantages, characteristics of the territory and the attitude of target groups to the territory. The research shows the level of brand development, allows to describe the target audience and identify the most effective communication channels with it.

3) Development of the platform – the brand platform implies general semantic field of the brand and the description of its unique properties. At the third stage, the correspondence between the real brand and the desired one is analyzed, the essence of the brand is formulated, and its key components are described.

4) Formation of identity or brand visualization is the fourth stage, at which the logo and other elements of brand identification are developed, as well as the rules of the brand visualization use.

5) Development of a creative strategy involves the creation of a key promotional goal, the development of a communication message and a key visual image. In order to achieve strategic goals, the stages of communication with the consumer about the brand is reviewed.

6) The result of the media strategy development stage is a media plan which defines the necessary audience coverage, frequency of contact with the advertising message, the procedure for interact-

ing with promotion platforms, periods and format of advertising campaigns.

7) Promotion and monitoring are the last stage associated with the adaptation of the visual image, production and distribution of advertising products, brand promotion and performance monitoring, as a result of which it is possible to make adjustments to the strategy and tactics of the territory's brand development.

Thus, the mechanism for branding the territory is multi-stage and multitasking process, it allows to create a system for promoting the region and, if successful, to improve foreign economic relations and the socio-economic state of the territory.

In addition, at the regional level, coordination with the state authorities is also necessary, which includes joint stating of goals and objectives for branding the territory (municipality (city district), region), development of regulatory documents governing the use and distribution of the brand, approval of the brand components.

When developing and promoting a gastronomy brand, a systematic, integrated approach is required. The implementation of brand technologies should be carried out on the basis of the socio-economic and marketing potential of the territory, a thorough assessment of the current state and highlighting the advantages of the region, which makes it possible to identify and position the territory.

### **Discussion**

An important condition for the success of a territory in the modern world is not only the creation of a holistic image, but also the promotion of its brand and reputation. All of these components are closely interrelated and affect each other.

Image positioning of a region should become an integral element of the target state policy and authorities of the territories interested in the formation of national and territorial branding. This is especially true for the Primorsky Territory, as a region with natural-geographical, socio-cultural, gastronomic and ethnic resources.

### **Conclusion**

As a conclusion, we can state that a territorial brand is an economic and socio-cultural form, which, due to its identification with the territory and self-identification, uses the territory's cultural and historical features, natural, geographical and resource potential, as well as, creates positive images of the region, which leads to popularization of the destination and an increase in the tourist flow.

In our opinion, the natural and cultural heritage play the leading roles in the formation of the territory brand. Gastronomy, in its turn, is an important motivating factor and one of the main factors for visiting a tourist destination.

Gastronomy branding acts as an innovative technology for promoting the territory. An effective brand contributes to the competitiveness of the region, the growth of affection and attractiveness among tourists, entrepreneurs and investors, the prestige of study, work and life in the given territory.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in defining the concept of a gastronomy brand, territorial brand and image of the territory, as well as highlighting the fundamental difference between the concepts of "image of the territory" and "brand of the territory" in the context of the development program for gastronomy tourism. The authors also developed a structural model of the territorial brand and reviewed the factors of the "Far Eastern cuisine" brand creation.

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**Территориальный брэндинг как инструмент продвижения  
гастрономического туризма и развития территории**

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