



# Creating places for the new era

Powered by **WHERE**



Welcome

# Building places for the new era



The places we go shape a big part of the experiences we have. When we extend that to the travel industry, this impacts many points of the traveler's experience: from airports, to destinations, to hotels and much more. What will they talk about after their trip? How did it made them feel? What comes to mind when they think about a specific place? We can all agree that physical spaces play a strong role in shaping the experiences travelers have.

Much has been said about the need to market your brand and attract new customers and leads, but the challenge also lies in how to provide travelers with an outspoken experience. People are always on the go, part of a fast-paced society with ever-faster cultural changes, added to the pressures for environmental, social and economical issues. These are the clients we are trying to attract and impress.

This accelerated lifestyle often leads us to understand the present day as being full of responsibility in any industry. We are living in

privileged times with enough tools available to make the world a better place. Brands have a key role in making this transformation tangible and passing on messages that educate and unite people around new values and social patterns, providing new experiences that resonate with this ever-faster culture.

A brand is much more than a nice logo and a combination of colors. A brand is what people say, feel and think about a certain thing. When we talk about *places* or *destinations brands*, we assume that this is what people say, feel and think about a certain place.

When we talk about Place Branding, it refers to a strategic process of creating and managing perceptions, thoughts and feelings about a certain place.

Good news: for places that seek to attract tourists, investors and talent, and increase the sense of belonging, quality of life and pride of the local population, having a strong place brand can be a game changer.

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## Think

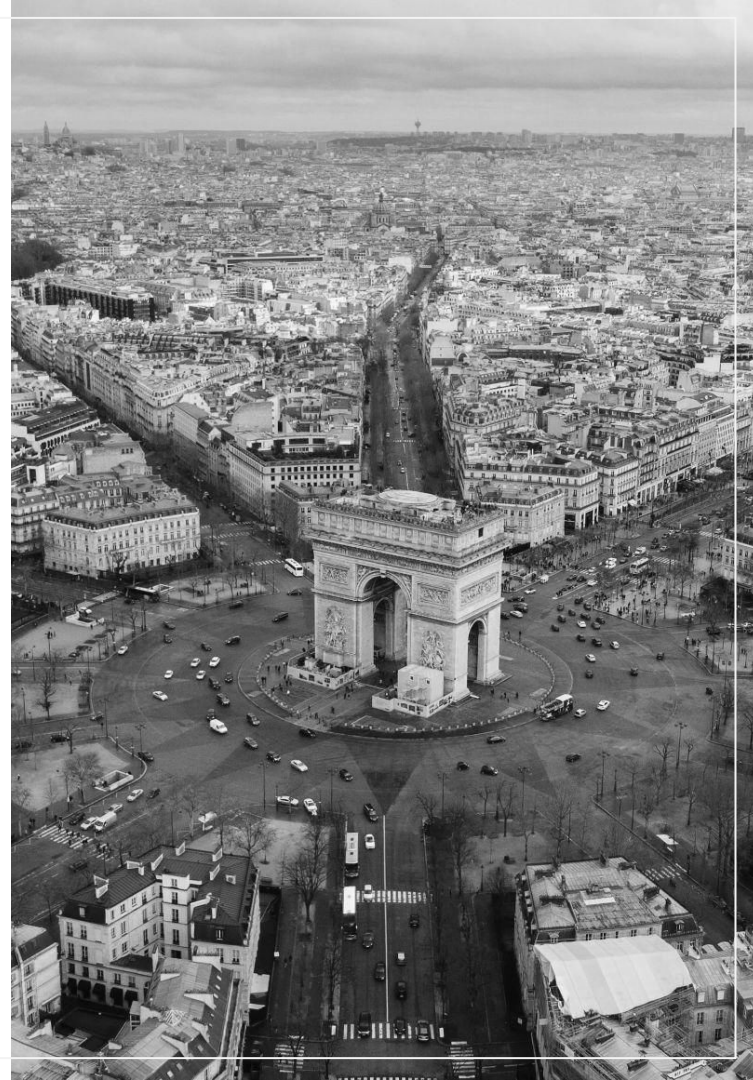
A great brand is a powerful asset to any destination, attracting tourists, investors and corporations.

Creating brands for places and destinations should at once reflect a shared vision whilst resonating with cultural change. This process starts with a blank canvas, yet to be explored, engaging locals with their physical spaces in order to bring forward their essence. The challenge is then to shape powerful and assertive messages, communicating it to tourists and investors, and making space for stronger brand communities around valued places.

Spot on

## Every place is unique.

Cities usually reflect the people who live in them, making 'places' no different than products or people when it comes to the need to have a compelling brand. The power of Place Branding lays on helping a place to express *all* its essence and potentials in the construction of a solid, authentic and unique narrative. This is a very powerful way to define a confident direction for the teams who manage and communicate the place and generate connection with the people who use it - and attract new attention.



## Other cases

# Great places, great brands.



When thinking about places that have built brands with powerful narratives (and managed to consolidate these brands through experiences), it's not a new phenomenon. Older examples come to mind, such as the city brands of Las Vegas, New York and Barcelona. More recent cases such as Porto and Helsinki, show how branding is extremely relevant today. Porto, for example, uses its brand intensively throughout the city's strategy and management and has been awarded the [World's Leading City Break 2020](#),

Having a great brand can be a valuable international asset to a city, but this is also true when applied to smaller structures especially focused on tourism and services. The pandemic crisis gave the travel industry an opportunity to rethink concepts and define new business models. In many cases, finding ways to leverage a demand for differentiation and the creation of unique concepts for key places on the travel ecosystem.

That's what happened to ANA Aeroportos de Portugal. Francisco Vieira Pita, Chief Commercial Officer, said: "We want each airport in our portfolio to have its own identity, for these not to be just a crossing point, but a place where passengers feel comfortable".

An older but more symbolic example of how great place brands can transform places and help strengthen communities is The High Line park in New York City. What became Manhattan's most hyped park was once an elevated railroad structure that was saved from demolition by a non-profit organization that advocated for its preservation and reuse as a pedestrian promenade.

After the High Line revitalization was approved by the city of New York, a team of designers and selected architects developed all signage and environmental graphics for the park, following its own brand identity.



## Starting Point

# Places as Brands.

A prominent brand can be a valuable international asset to any destination, as well as for smaller structures such as parks, airports, commercial centers and other venues.

To start building a great place brand, it is essential to know and involve everyone (and everything) that are part of this story now and in the years ahead. After a deep understanding of the place, the process counts on co-creating a shared future vision and a strategy that consolidates the potentials of the place in a powerful narrative. When that is set, it is time to define a face and a voice to represent that brand, sharing the storytelling and shaping these ideas into experiences.

## What is Place Experience?

Place Experience combines the vision of urban planning with the potential of marketing approach to develop iconic places and destinations brands from experiences strategies.

This framework turns the traditional way of designing and communicating places upside down, where creating the ideal and highly-customized outcome is the last step.

Here is an outline on what the process usually looks like:

The first step is to map the audiences and identify their needs. Once that is identified and mapped out, it's time to develop the destination narrative (also called the place story).

With the place story already set up, the pillars of the experience and place identity start to get in shape, while considering the main factors and developing the brand strategy forward.

As a final step, when the experience has been lined out, it's finally time to create the perfect combination of place strategy and branding that better suits that specific place.



Check out

## Next steps



Using Place Experience can be a powerful way to assign new functions for old buildings, public places and cities, creating business strategies for revenue diversification while developing outstanding experiences and strong brand identities.

When creating powerful place brands, the challenge is in considering four strong attributes during the process: relevance, singularity, connection and presence. We can unfold this by saying that the outcome should be **relevant** to its audience and context, **unique** in concept, while capable of creating strong **connections** (with users and among them) and holding a market **presence** that goes beyond their physical site, transcending the nature of their brand to other products and services.

The process of designing and implementing Place Experiences helps us to improve destinations. By developing strategies and brand identity for all kinds of places as well as promoting the competitive positioning of parks, hotels, cities and regions by creating powerful narratives, brands and experience guides aligned to engage communities in building shared values.

It is by creating strategies that correspond to the demands of the new times and connecting the culture, desires and needs of people with the new brand values, which we aim to create a new generation of place brands.

With more immersive brand spaces, more versatile and sustainable buildings, and more competitive and remarkable cities. In other words, places where the generation of positive impact is happening for anyone who invests, uses and is closer.

**It's time to create **place brands** with relevance, singularity, connection and presence.**

# WHERE



**WHERE** is a Brazilian-based strategic consulting agency that thinks of places as brands, considering their overall potential.

Our workframe counts on a deep understanding of cultural change and market insights to shape narratives, identities and tools that will guide the creation, evolution and transformation of places - of all types and sizes.

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