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Published version

KLADOU, Stella and KEHAGIAS, John (2014). Assessing destination brand equity: An integrated approach. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 3 (1), 2-10.

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Assessing destination brand equity: an integrated approach

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Abstract

Commonly, when referring to destination brand equity, four dimensions are taken into consideration; namely awareness, image, quality and loyalty. Building on product and corporate brand equity and the definition of destination branding, the present paper includes a marketing approach towards developing a structural model incorporating a fifth dimension; that of cultural brand assets. The proposed model, focused on cultural urban destinations, was tested from the perspective of international tourists visiting Rome. Findings indicate that the five dimensions are interrelated and important for the customers' evaluation of a cultural destination. Consistent with place and destination branding literature, the significance of specific cultural brand assets is emphasized. The study provides practitioners with a better understanding of the dimensions which may lead to favorable brand evaluations. Finally, it describes the structural relationships which are developed between assets, awareness, associations and quality, and links them with the intention to re-visit and recommend as outcomes leading to destination loyalty.

Keywords: brand equity, destination branding, culture, model, Rome

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