THE COMPETITIVE IDENTITY OF ISTANBUL:

A CITY BRAND MANAGEMENT MODEL

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The Competitive Identity of Istanbul:

A City Brand Management Model

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Thesis Abstract

Doğan Levent, "The Competitive Identity of Istanbul: A City Brand Management
Model"

Cities have an important place in today's world economy. Due to globalization,
many options exist for selecting a city to invest in or visit. As a result, cities
continuously compete with each other to be able to increase their gains. The
literature indicates that the image is very influential in the process of destination
selection. Therefore, the image management is a very crucial task for Istanbul, which
is trying to achieve a long term advantageous competitive position among major
cities of the world.

The main objective of this study is suggesting a brand management model for
Istanbul based on evaluation of attributes stressed in the formal communication of
Istanbul in the light of the views of visitors. For this purpose, a content analysis was
done on the communication materials used in European countries and a survey was
conducted with 274 Europeans, who have been to Istanbul. For the statistical analysis
of data, frequency, t-test, one-way ANOVA and the factor analyses were employed.
Attitude-Toward-Object Model of Fishbein (1967) was used for overall attitude
evaluation and the Competitive Identity Model of Anholt (2007) provided the basis
for strategy formulation.

The findings reveal that Istanbul's image among European visitors is
generally positive and the communication of Istanbul for European countries
highlights proper attributes. However, it is detected that some areas necessitate
progress. In the light of the findings, some ideas were developed and a management

structure was proposed for maintaining the positive image of Istanbul among visitors and carrying it to the upper league in the competition of cities.

Tez Özeti

Doğan Levent, "İstanbul'un Rekabetçi Kimliği: Bir Şehir Marka Yönetim Modeli"

Kentler günümüzün dünya ekonomisinde önemli bir yere sahiptirler. Küreselleşmenin bir sonucu olarak, yatırım veya ziyaret amaçlı kent seçimi yapmak için çok fazla seçenek bulunmaktadır. Bu durumun bir sonucu olarak kentler kazanımlarını artırabilmek için birbirleriyle sürekli rekabet etmektedirler. Literatür, imajın destinasyon seçimi üzerinde oldukça etkili olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu sebeple imaj yönetimi, dünyanın büyük kentleri arasında uzun vadeli avantajlı ve rekabetçi bir pozisyon elde etmeye çalışan İstanbul için can alıcı bir mesele durumundadır.

Bu çalışmanın esas amacı İstanbul'un resmi iletişiminde vurgulanmakta olan unsurların ziyaretçilerin görüşleri ışığında değerlendirilmesine bağlı olarak İstanbul için bir marka yönetim modeli önermektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, Avrupa ülkelerinde kullanılan iletişim materyallerinin kapsam analizi yapılmış ve İstanbul'da bulunmuş olan 274 Avrupalıyla bir anket çalışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Verilerin istatistiksel incelenmesinde frekans, t-test, tek yönlü ANOVA ve faktör analizleri kullanılmıştır. Genel tutum değerlendirmesi için Fishbein'ın (1967) Objeye Yönelik Tutum Modeli kullanılmıştır. Anholt'un (1997) Rekabetçi Kimlik Modeli ise strateji tasarımı için bir temel olarak kullanılmıştır.

Sonuçlar, İstanbul'un Avrupalı ziyaretçiler nezdinde genel olarak pozitif bir imaja sahip olduğunu ve İstanbul'un Avrupa ülkelerine yönelik iletişiminde uygun unsurların öne çıkarıldığını göstermektedir. Ancak bazı alanların geliştirilmesi gerektiği de tespit edilmiştir. Bulgular ışığında, İstanbul'un ziyaretçiler nezdindeki

pozitif imajını sürdürmeye ve İstanbul'u kentsel rekabette üst lige taşımaya yönelik bazı fikirler geliştirilmiş ve bir yönetim yapısı önerilmiştir.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my grandfather David,

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Today's city is more than a residence for its inhabitants. It is a significant domain for various kinds of tourism, culture, international trade, finance, sports, events and festivals (Girardin, 2008; The Mori Memorial Foundation, 2009; Gokcen Dundar, 2009). Cities compete with each other to attract more visitors, to get higher rates of investment, to host international organizations in terms of politics, culture, fashion and sports (Kotler et al., 1993; Anholt, 2007; Vanossi, n.d.). They take this challenge with the aims of enhancing their potential, becoming more famous, thus, getting a larger slice of the gains pie. In this environment, city marketers struggle to make the cities have better images in the minds of their target audiences, because the image of a city is very influential in the decisions of visitors, businessmen or organizers (Goodall, 1988; Kotler et al., 1993; Jenkins, 1999; Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; Andersson, 2007; Hospers, 2008).

Istanbul, as an important destination in terms of culture, tourism and business, (Worldwide Centers of Commerce Index, 2008; EuroMonitor, 2008; Sahin, 2008; PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2009; Travel and Leisure, 2009; Istanbul Governorship, 2009; Tasbasi, 2009) has already taken its place within this competition. Significant amounts are budgeted into the communication of the city by different governmental organizations in order to develop its position in the international sphere. However, it is a question of debate how separate attempts of different organizations affect the image of Istanbul or if the actions taken for Istanbul are sufficient for using the potential of the city (Terzi, 2008).

This study proposes an image assessment and city brand management model for Istanbul obtained through the sample of Europeans who have been to Istanbul. The first step of this model consists of research on the current perception of the city among visitors. Through the research, Istanbul's image among the European visitors is measured, visitor preferences and tendencies are explored and the efficiency of communication done for Istanbul is evaluated. With regard to the research results, some ideas developed for fulfilling the visitor demands in a better way and for a further use of the city's potentials. Lastly, a model was proposed as a basis for implementation of these suggestions and sustainable brand management of Istanbul. This model which highlights the cooperation of the stakeholders of the city can be used as a long term action plan for Istanbul rather than a one-shot trial of image change.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The city, as a concept far from being in the dominance of a single discipline, is

handled through different viewpoints in the literature by scholars from various

disciplines. Therefore, this study analyzes the city from a multidisciplinary viewpoint

incorporating the literature from the disciplines of management, marketing,

consumer behavior, sociology and tourism.

City's Potentials and Place Marketing Framework

As the world gets smaller and becomes a "global village" (the term first invented by

Wyndham Lewis in 1948) - cities, especially the global ones, are not only gaining

more and more importance in the context of fast transformation of the world system,

which we have been experiencing since the second half of the twentieth century, but

also being the catalyzers of this transformation. Global cities are considered both

challenging structures with the nation states and their boundaries being the new tools

of nation states through which they try to defend their positions against multinational

companies (Sassen, 1991). Regardless of where the city is between these two

extremes, it is a fact that cities have a very crucial place in the context of world

economy and finance. Therefore planning its future and taking actions for bettering

its position within the global competition through strategic marketing is now very

significant for the city (Kotler, Haider, Rein, 1993).

Cities, besides hosting numerous potentials within their boundaries, are also

the primary objects of the tourism sector which has become one of the most

important international trade categories. Tourism is one of the largest and fastest

growing economical sectors in the world. The overall export income generated by

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touristic arrivals in the world exceeded one billion US Dollars in 2007 and with this value, tourism follows fuels, chemicals and automotive as the fourth biggest sector (UNWTO, 2008). Just in 2007, 903,000,000 people changed their locations for touristic purposes (UNWTO, 2008). What this sector promises naturally gives hope to every country, every region, and every city to expand their shares from this huge and growing cake. When all countries are evaluated in terms of their tourism potential, it is obvious that Turkey's prospective gains necessitate special interest. Turkey stands in ninth place among all countries in the world in terms of international tourist arrivals and in tenth place in terms of international tourism income (UNWTO, 2008). Former Minister of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, Bahattin Yucel (2009), shows tourism as a sector having a determining effect on Turkish economy. The figures prove the former minister correct as the tourism sector generated 17.3% of 2007's total export income (TURSAB, 2008) and 4.2% of the gross domestic product of Turkey in 2006 (TURSAB, 2008).

Despite the great value the cities possess in terms of tourism, their appraisal cannot be reduced only to their tourism potential. Cities originate value for themselves not only through tourism but through history, culture and arts, landscape, wealth, safety (Girardin, 2008), economy, development, livability, nature and accessibility (The Mori Memorial Foundation, 2009). Events, festivals and meetings organized might also be added to the list (Gokcen Dundar, 2009). The concept of tourism does embrace some of these but it is far from being an umbrella covering all items creating value for the city. Use of the place marketing framework rather than the concept of tourism is more appropriate for value assessment of the contemporary

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cities. Thus, this study will prefer to focus on where Istanbul is situated within the global competition of places through this broader framework.

<div align="center">Why Istanbul?</div>

Istanbul is selected as the subject of this study because it functions as Turkey's most important city for competing within the areas of international trade and tourism, although it is not the capital of the country. The capital city of Turkey, Ankara, where the revolutionary decisions of the new republic were taken, without doubt, is the location from where power of the central authority is directly reflected. Istanbul, on the other hand, holds in its hands the privilege of being the strongest hub of Turkey between the international and domestic markets. Thus it is able to substantiate itself as Turkey's only candidate for being a global city in the real sense by the twenty-first century. Istanbul's claim for becoming a global city is based on strong ground as the city has been ranked sixty-fourth among the seventy-five top cities included in the MasterCard's Worldwide Centers of Commerce Index 2008 (MasterCard Worldwide, 2008). For the first time in 2008 Istanbul had a place in this index, which is designed by MasterCard every year through an evaluation in terms of seven dimensions -legal and political framework, economic stability, ease of doing business, financial flow, business center, knowledge creation and information flows, livability- consisting of a number of indicators (MasterCard Worldwide, 2008). It is also projected that Istanbul, evaluated as the thirty-fourth largest economy among all cities within the globe, will climb to the twenty-eighth rank by 2025 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2009). In terms of tourism arrivals, Istanbul is the tenth "leading and most dynamic city" (EuroMonitor, 2008). Istanbul bettered its position, compared to previous year's rankings, which was twenty-six, leaving behind tourism

champions such as Rome, Barcelona and Amsterdam (EuroMonitor, 2008). Istanbul is also appreciated by the readers of Travel and Leisure Magazine, being selected the third top city of Europe and fourteenth of the world in 2009 (Travel and Leisure, 2009). The future seems more promising for Istanbul when increasing direct foreign investment rates, plans of the Turkish Government for moving the financial organs from Ankara to Istanbul, increasing coverage of the city in the international media and its title of European Capital of Culture 2010 are taken into the consideration.

Marketing the City

The promotion activities for places is not a new phenomenon as it goes back to the agricultural colonization phase in seventeenth century (Karavatzis and Ashworth, 2008). However, places entered into the domain of marketing through the aim of selling particular features of places beginning around the 1980s (Karavatzis and Ashworth, 2008). It is followed by endeavors of bettering local physical and economic conditions of the place as well as urban regeneration practices in the 1990s, and lastly, work related to the image of the place as a consequence of competition among destinations (Karavatzis and Ashworth, 2008). Therefore, today, marketing is not within exclusive possession of commercial goods and services anymore. Various studies prove that place marketing has developed into a specialized part of the marketing field (Gotham, 2002) and its importance is growing as the number of works on place marketing is increasing day by day.

In order to understand better how marketing and places are related, it is necessary to start from the concept of marketing. According to the formal definition, "marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers,

clients, partners, and society at large." (American Marketing Association, 2008, p.1).

Starting with this definition, it could be revealed that a successful marketing action

becomes possible if the created value meets the expectations and needs of customers,

clients, partners or society (which can be collected under the term, source of

demand). Therefore, the source of demand should be studied well and a bond must

be created between the organization and this source (Kotler and Keller, 2008). This

bond necessitates designing a product intended for a specific need which can be

defined through a good understanding of the target market (Kotler and Keller, 2008).

However communication and delivery are also very crucial steps for the formation of

this bond as well as creating the value (Kotler and Keller, 2008). When the notion of

marketing is adapted to the places, nothing changes about the core requirements. Still

there is a source of demand and understanding the needs and analyzing the

expectations reflected from this source are the essentials.

As organization and commercialization play an important role in today's

configuration of the world, the marketing discipline uses different types of

applications in the process of persuading and leading masses towards goods and

services offered (Anholt, 2007). Place marketing is an interesting and broad concept

among these applications. Different terms are used in the literature for marketing

countries, cities and regions. Some scholars use tourism marketing (Chang and Lim,

2004), some use place promotion (Gold and Ward, 1994), some others call it "selling

places" (Philo and Kearns, 1993) and some prefer place marketing (Kotler et al.,

2002). According to Chang and Lim (2004), the core structure of a place and an

identity that catches the interest of the public are proposed by "tourism marketing".

They also stress the importance of creating "strategic place imaginings" as a part of

promotion activities of places for gaining the attention of media, investors and tourists and creating a "civic pride" in the society (Chang and Lim, 2004). Gold and Ward (1994) describe place promotion as selecting particular images that belong to a place and communicating them to the target market through marketing and publicity. Philo and Kearns (1993) portray the concept which they call "the idea of selling places" as the ways created by public and private agencies aiming to catch the attention of wide variety of actors including economic enterprises, tourists and inhabitants through highlighting the image of a place. Kotler et al. (2002), on the other hand, briefly mention that place marketing necessitates a design of "a place" with the basic aim of fulfilling the needs of the targeted customers. The design will be successful, if the internal elements of a place (citizens and businesses) are satisfied and if it provides what the external elements (visitors and investors) are waiting for.

It could be mentioned in the light of literature that the mechanisms of design, delivery and communication operate differently in place marketing than marketing of other consumer goods. For instance, the Scottish Development Agency had much more constraints in terms of designing the city of Glasgow (Gomez, 1998) compared to the barriers for Mercedes when designing a new model. Similarly the delivery and communication mechanisms could be completely different. Thus marketing a place differs from marketing consumer goods as a result of the scope of stakeholders, a place's being geographically, culturally and politically defined, the fragmented character of the source of demand and so forth. However, what is at the core of the notion of marketing is relevant both for a place and a consumer good--understanding what the customer (the visitor, investor, etc.) needs and expects.

The Battle of Cities

Kotler et al. (1993) underline that places are forced to plan their futures more than ever, and to act like businesses because now tourists, visitors, investors and conventioneers have too many options from which they are able to choose the place for a vacation or conducting meetings, thanks to the globalization. Vanossi (n.d.) similarly highlights that "today's globalized world" force countries, regions and cities into a competition and he expands the scope of competition to include not only tourism but also investment, aid, membership to supranational organizations, buyers of products of services and talent. Anholt (2007) also talks about the competition of places at the very beginning of his famous book on place branding, *Competitive Identity*, through mentioning that with the fast progress of globalization, countries, cities and regions have no other choice than going war against all other places in order to have some gains. Anholt (2007) defines the content of the "gains pie" as consumers, tourists, investors, students, entrepreneurs, international sporting and cultural events, attention of the international media, governments and people living in other countries.

Statistics clearly display the harshness of competition between places as a result of the diversification of the visitor preferences. While in 1950, the top fifteen destinations were hosting 98% of international tourists traveling around the world, this ratio decreased to 57% in 2007 as a result of the appearance of new actors coming mainly from the developing world (UNWTO, 2008). The literature and statistics obviously demonstrate that if a city would like to benefit from the economical and social yield of mobilization of people, it has no other way than managing its destiny which is only possible through establishing itself as a brand.

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Dinnie (2008) shows nation branding as an effective tool for benefiting from the rewards counted by scholars above. Moving along with a branding understanding makes a place able to analyze its past and current situation through evaluating its position compared to other places. Thus, the place can draw a suitable strategy fitting both internal requests and external goals and becomes able to progress in a more controllable manner by foreseeing change and preparing its position accordingly. Otherwise, it will become the victim of change and will be driven to the opposite direction of where its future dreams exist.

<div align="center">The Place Branding Philosophy</div>

According to the definition of the American Marketing Association (1995) a brand is "a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition". Although this formal definition of brand defines well the explicit features of a brand, it cannot embrace the invisible traits the concept holds. In fact, a brand is beyond its basic characteristics such as its name or its logo and it has to do a lot with the meanings attached to it by whom the brand addresses. As Macrae, Parkinson and Sheerman (1995) state, a brand stands for a unique mixture of both functional and non-functional traits and added values having relevant meaning that is attached to the brand. Lynch and De Chernatony (2004, p.404) use a similar perspective of the concept and underline that a brand includes not only functional values but also emotional ones in itself and these values form a basis for "a unique and welcome experience between a buyer and a seller". "A successful brand" is also posited in the same way as such: a brand has the victory when the buyer or user becomes able to differentiate some of its added values among other brands and when

his/her needs are best satisfied by it (De Chernatony and McDonald, 1992). The definition suggested by Anholt (2007, p.4) includes as well both explicit and implicit characteristics of a brand and summarizes the concept as "a product or service or organization, considered in combination with its name, its identity and its reputation". It should be specified that Anholt (2007) usually employs the concept of reputation identical with the concept of image. Therefore, the concept of brand is clearly related with the concepts of brand image and brand identity which will be detailed within the scope of this study. Dinnie (2008), on the other hand, carries the concept of brand to the context of places and keynotes nation brand's "unique and multi-dimensional" character as well as its functions such as differentiation of the nation on a cultural ground and relating it to the target audiences. Dinnie (2008) also highlights that a brand is located and shaped within the mind of the consumer and it cannot completely be controlled through marketing decisions without considering the consumer's role. Although this definition is specific for nations (Dinnie, 2008), it is also applicable to the cities or regions since cities and regions, like nations, compete on cultural grounds with their rivals. It is seen that the concept of brand consists of both physical and emotional characteristics. However emotional characteristics are invoked more frequently when the concept is related to places compared to when it is used for consumer products.

The practice of branding is described as the communication of brand values to consumers and understanding the consumers' perceptions of brands (Skinner and Kubacki, 2007). A similar definition is given by Anholt (2007) describing the process of branding as building or managing the reputation of the brand through designing, planning and communicating the name and the identity of the brand.

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Nworah (n.d.) suggests that branding is a search of identity of a place which should be distinctive and competitive contributing to its perception as a good location by both domestic and foreign tourists, traders and investors. Rainisto (2003) also affirms that the main concern of the place branding process is creating a brand identity for that place and increasing its appeal.

It is clear that in the context of place wars and in a field where the emotional perceptions are more important than the self-definition of the place, without an understanding of branding, a place will not be able to survive and keep its destiny in its own hands. Morgan and Pritchard (2002), indicate that reaching uniqueness and differentiation became much more important for places in today's world. Only through process of branding, a place will be able to define itself distinctively and in a competitive manner. As a result the place will have a chance to touch, change or re-create its appearance in the minds of its target audiences. It is also stressed in the literature that the process of branding does not give big rewards in the short term, rather, necessitating long-term dedication to get results (Aaker and Joachimsthaler, 2000). Therefore a place should not expect to be easily perceived by the targeted audiences within the framework it designed for itself right after developing a brand strategy. Designing a brand strategy is just the beginning of the process, followed by management of the brand which is another challenge that must be faced in order to reach long term goals. On the other hand, when it is considered that execution of a dedicated branding strategy becomes influential in the long term, it is clear that if a city operates through independent marketing actions of different parties without a branding philosophy it cannot create its image and has no other choice than to be remembered as a stereotypical one (Anholt, 2007; Dinnie, 2008).

The City Brand

When the literature on place branding is reviewed, it is seen that the nation brand is analyzed in a more detailed manner compared to the works on city branding. There exist detailed works and models developed on nation branding (O'Shaughnessy and Jackson, 2000; Twitchell, 2004; Mihailovich, 2006; Anholt, 2007; Dinnie, 2008) while the branding studies dealing with the cities and regions have mostly remained at the level of case studies.

Johnston (2008) talks about "a brand architecture" illustrating the relationship between the umbrella brand and its sub-brands while illuminating the branding process of South Africa that started in 2002. Within this approach, the city can be accepted as a sub-brand of the nation, which is the umbrella brand, along with products originating from that country, famous people of the nation and sports teams. As an alternative approach, the city can be treated as a separate brand itself. Anholt (2007) defines the city as a distinct brand and mentions that it has different characteristics than the nation brand developing separate models for nation branding and city branding: the Nation Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2003) and the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007). The city brand is considered a simpler one compared to the nation brand and not affected by the political issues as much as nations (Anholt, 2007). According to Anholt (2007) a city usually shares the culture of the country it is in and the products originating in a city are generally ascribed to the nation rather than the city itself. Skinner and Kubacki (2007), as well, accent that there is a strong bond between the identity of any place with the cultural identity of the nation which encloses that place. Without doubt, while drawing a general picture for the city brand, the scholars put aside exceptions such as Barcelona having a

strong political characteristic shaped by Catalan Nationalism which makes the city different from other Spanish cities, Jerusalem, which has a strong Orthodox Judaic culture which is different than the general cultural environment of Israel, Hollywood with a very strong ascription of the movie industry on its image or Rio de Janerio's perceptual ownership over the carnival concept. Anholt (2007, p.59) specifies that the main attributes that are taken into account when a city is considered are more "practical" ones such as "climate, pollution, transport and traffic, the cost of living, leisure and sport facilities, law and order, and the cultural life of the city". Correspondingly, Caldwell and Freire (2004) cite that cities, together with regions, are usually perceived through their "functional" characteristics as opposed to the countries which are assessed on the basis of their "representational" attributes. Another point which is also worth accentuating is that sometimes the power of the city brand can overshadow the nation brand when a city brand is as powerful as Paris or Amsterdam (Anholt, 2007). If the two different understandings of the city brand are melted into a single pot, it might be appropriate to define the city as a simpler unit under the strong effect of its home country. The city shares the cultural, commercial or any other aspects the country holds, but at the same time has its own space. In this space, the city most of the time detaches itself from the political etiquettes but on the other hand it contains unique characteristics, that can be totally unlike to the ones the home country has. While evaluating the "Brand Istanbul", the city of Istanbul should be considered both in relation to Turkey, and at the same time through taking into account the characteristics that are unique to the city, irrespective of the boundaries of the "Brand Turkey".

Identity versus Image

A very significant point, which is seen through the discussion on the concepts of brand and branding, is that there exist two different concepts (they may intersect or may stay discrete) in which the brand circulates within during the process of branding: How the brand defines itself and how it is defined by the perceivers, in other words, the identity and image.

Cupach and Imahori (1993, p.113) call identity as "a self-conception; one's theory of oneself". It can be adapted to the world of product and services as the basis on which a company's attempts to position itself and its products and services (Jaffe and Nebenzahl, 2001). The positioning, on the other hand, can be explained as shaping the image of a company as well as what a company offers with the aim of residing in a unique space in the minds of the customers that are targeted. (Kotler and Keller, 2008). Aaker's (1996) definition of brand identity includes brand connotations that are created by the brand strategists and stresses on these connotations' functions such as relating the brand with its reason of existence and implicitly giving particular promises to customers. Anholt (2007) underlines that the identity is the essence of a product, apparent to the customers and unique to the brand. For places nothing changes: the place identity is delineated as "the who we are" of the place and it holds in itself associations of the place such as design, assets, people (Kotler et al., 1993). So in the light of the literature the identity of a place can be portrayed very briefly as the self-definition of the place. For the case of Istanbul, it is a self-definition of the city which appears as a common product through the communication done by various channels such as the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Istanbul 2010

European Capital of Culture Agency and the Investment Support and Promotion Agency of Turkey.

Giannantonio and Hurley-Hanson (2007, p.156) describe image as "the totality of an individual's personal appearance, one's persona, or the way one is seen". Kotler (1997) brings a more detailed definition as the collection of what a person believes an object to be, his/her ideas about it and impressions of the object in the person's mind. The tricomponent model bases the evaluation of an object on three components which are cognitive, the information about the object that might be obtained through personal experience or other sources, affective, emotions and feelings the person attaches to the object, and conative, tendency to behave or take action about the object (Shiffman and Kanuk, 2003). In the literature, usually the affective character of the image is stressed and the image is identified as an output of emotional interpretation of an individual (Dichter, 1985; Oxenfeldt, 1974, 1975; Lawson and Baud-Bovy, 1977; Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990). Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995) relate the concept with associations circulating between the perception of the individual and the object and define these associations as the physical attributes of the object, the affect the object creates and the benefits it provides for the individual. It is added that these associations are not stable; on the contrary they are continuously constructed (Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1995). It is worth noting that the concept of image does not embrace the "true attributes of the object", it is all about how the "true attributes" are reflected in the mind of the person (Jaffe and Nebenzahl, 2001). Therefore the product or brand image stands as a picture within the mind of the customer (Kotler, 1997; Riezebos, 2003). Anholt (2007) also accentuates that the brand image sits in the mind of the customer and he

appends that it is a composition of what the customer relates the brand with, remembers about the brand, expects from and feels about it. When the concept is carried into the framework of places, the definitions do not differ much from the brand image. The place becomes the object and the place image is designated as the embodiment of "all objective knowledge, impressions, prejudice, imaginations, and emotional thoughts" about the place (Lawson and Baud-Bovy, 1977) or the picture of the place existing within the mind of the individual (Jaffe and Nebenzahl, 2001). Smith (2005) also draws attention to image's unstable character and mentions that not only the target audience of destinations but also the media, the destination governors unremittingly construct the destination images. To sum up, if the place identity is a self-definition of a place, the place image is then the form that the definition takes after being distilled during the perception process of the consumer.

Dinnie (2008) lists the factors affecting the image of a country as the personal experience through visiting a country or working in a country at the first place and in the absence of a first-hand experience, word of mouth and already existing stereotypes about the country. Other significant aspects are revealed as the sportive achievements of the country, political occurrences, expositions in movies and media, the performance of the brands originated from the country as well as the famous people who can be related to the country (Dinnie, 2008). All these factors are more important than the communication a country does (Dinnie, 2008). Without dispute, the implication behind this is the burden on places for going on a challenging and long path for image formation and change. The factors that are specified for the country image can also be translated to the sphere of cities because all of these are as relevant for shaping the image of a city as for that of a country.

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Gomez (1998) points out that executives give high level of importance to the image enhancement activities for developing the economic conditions of a place. Truly, in today's integrated economy, the image of a place is being noticed by countries more than ever (Dinnie, 2008). Their increased attention is very understandable because in our day the image, or the reputation as Anholt (2007) names it, is very influential on the social, economic and political development of a country. Such power of image certainly stems from its relation with the decision making process. Kotler et al. (1993) shows the image as a very influential factor on the purchase decision of the customer and Andersson (2007) talks about country image's influence on the decision making process of various actors such as investors, business people, skilled labor, students and tourists. Hospers (2008) also touches on the power of a place image on people while choosing the places for working, living or traveling and emphasizes that the choice criteria is the subjective thoughts of people rather than the existing features of a place. If the focus is specifically on tourism, it is demonstrated that image plays a very crucial role when travelers decide about the destination they will visit (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001). Moreover the travel agencies, tour operators are also under the strong influence of image while specifying the places they will market (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001). Jenkins (1999) goes a step further and claims that besides the process of decision making, image is effective also on the satisfaction level of travelers and adds that the image of a place might be more powerful than the personal experiences of travelers. In this parallel, it is not surprising that a place having a strong positive image among the public carries a significant competitive advantage (Rainisto, 2003).

It is worth zooming in a little on the mechanism between the image and process of decision making. Rather than having a direct link with the decision making process, the image is connected with the fundamentals of the decision making process and through this connection it becomes an intermediary between the motivations of the decision maker and the object of choice (Goodall, 1988). According to Kotler (1997) the image of an object shapes attitudes of people towards that object. Shiffman and Kanuk (2003, p.253) define attitude as "a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way with respect to a given object". Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995, p.362), on the other hand, call it very briefly as "an overall evaluation". Fishbein (1967) opens up the content of such "evaluation" through his "attitude-toward-object model" by exerting that a consumer's attitude towards a product or a brand comprises of the evaluation of the product's or brand's performance in terms of particular attributes and the importance given to those attributes. "Attitude-toward-object model" (Fishbein, 1967) is significant in respect to showing that how the attributes related to the image of a product or a brand are influencing the formation of the attitude towards that product or brand. Besides, Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995), relate the attitude with the behavior by revealing that consumers usually prefer purchasing the products they assess as the most favorable, therefore the consumer behavior is affected very much by the attitudes. As a contemporary view, it is shown that the attitudes have a direct effect on the behavioral intentions which lead to the actual behavior (Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1995). The importance of a place's image within the decision making process of tourists, business people and various actors, obligates the place administrators to study, understand and control the reflection of the place in the

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minds of the target audience. Another important aspect of image is its long-lasting character: the image stands for a long time even if the context within which it is formed changes and that brings the imperative for creating and securing a positive image (O'Leary and Deegan, 2005). So, managing its image must be one of the most essential tasks in the agenda of place executives if they wish to use the potentials of their place to its full extent. Further, Anholt (2007) views developing a strategy for managing the image as a responsibility of authorities to their people.

At this point, it is vital to discuss how the image of a place can be dealt with especially when it is considered that where the image stands is quite far from the place marketers. The main action domain for the marketers is the identity as they can shape and present the identity in a way they wish. The requirement of creating a place identity that is unique to the place and shaping it accordingly with special characteristics of the place has been stressed in the literature by many scholars (Morgan and Pritchard, 2002; Kotler et al., 1993; Speake, 2007; Dinnie, 2008). Morgan and Pritchard (2002), for instance, touch on the importance of production of "a unique identity" and interpret this as the main prerequisite for a place to be able to endure in the very aggressive environment within which very similar images circulate. In such an environment where generic tourism campaigns are communicating the similar aspects (Dinnie, 2008) and the course of progress for urban spaces itself is prone to decrease diversity (Speake, 2007), not having a negative image is far from being a solution. In fact, lack of uniqueness, in other words, being mentioned in the same way with the competitors is quite similar to having a negative image. In order to reach a unique identity, a place should provide its own strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats (SWOT) analysis through a

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detailed evaluation of its own attributes and draw a competitive position for itself in a realistic sense (Kotler et al., 1993). Trying to look like the most popular and the most visited places can be considered a wrong strategy. The identity of a city should be based on its own strengths and opportunities. However, it is also essential, especially when the place is posited as a brand, to consider that including every information related to that place within the place brand identity is impossible (Dinnie, 2008). The target audience could easily reject this bulk of information (Dinnie, 2008). Therefore, the identity should be composed of particular attributes which have the power to represent the competitive advantages of that place. To sum up in the light of the literature, it might be revealed that creating a unique brand identity which relies on the distinctive and strong characteristics of a place gives the place marketers a more effective tool to manage the image of the place. However, it still is only a tool and the image still exist in a "remote" direction so the marketers' efforts to mold the identity do not guarantee success (Anholt, 2007). Still the perception of the target audience can be different from what a place really is and how it is presented, in other words, there may exist an "identity-image gap" (Dinnie, 2008).

<div align="center">"Competitive Identity"</div>

Enormous amounts are budgeted into communication and promotion activities by supranational or international organizations, states, city councils in order to be able to shape and improve the image of regions, nations or cities. Around the issue of place image there exists a large sector including public enterprises, tourism agencies, advertising and consulting firms, universities and so forth. Authorities continuously seek various ways for promoting their places however only a few of them do it in a

coordinated manner (Anholt, 2007). As a result of this lack of coordination, the

identity envisaged for a place takes different shapes among different groups (Chang

and Lim, 2004). When different parties, which take part within the promotion

activities of a place, work independently and send contradicting messages about the

place, it becomes impossible to create a consistent picture (Anholt, 2007). The works

of Chang and Lim (2004) concerning the image building process in Singapore and

perception of "New Asia-Singapore campaign" among visitors and residents can be

considered as an example. Tourism marketers, who specified the content of the

campaign, emphasized the changes occurring in Asia, whereas the entrepreneurs

acted independently and they continued to communicate the "trans-cultural Asian

identity" which has been a dominant concept within the publicity of the country in

the past years (Chang and Lim, 2004). When the perception of the campaign among

tourists and Singaporeans is measured, it is detected that most of the target audience

are confused about the messages circulated regarding the campaign and are not

aware of the slogans mentioned (Chang and Lim, 2004). Anholt (2007) indicates that

through a process of communication in which every distinct party draws its own way

in an independent manner, only partial success can be obtained, if any. However if

the parties move in a coordinated way under a shared brand purpose the

accomplishments become superior (Anholt, 2007). Smith (2005, p.400) also

underlines the importance of coordination in this regard and points out that the most

benefiting results for a place image can be taken by "growth coalitions" which he

defines as "informal governing alliances made up of private-sector, community

leaders and government officials". The literature is very rich in cases exhibiting

image formation or image change endeavors. The common issues pointed in the

success cases are coordination between parties that are involved in image shaping practices in addition to relevance of communication activities with the context and reality of the place. Starting from the 1980's, Barcelona has undertaken many initiatives under the leadership of the City Council to eliminate attributes such as political disorder, corruption, being an industrial place and poverty area, and the result of these attempts can be defined as a definite success when taking account of the fact that the city is considered today as "one of Europe's most fashionable" touristic destinations (Smith, 2005, p.406). According to Smith (2005) what brought success for Barcelona case is progressing accordingly with the context and exemplifies Gaudi's monuments as one of the main aspects employed in the image formation of the city. The case of Glasgow, as well, shows how the cooperation of various actors under a newly established body -first named as Glasgow Action, then Glasgow Development Agency- ends in a successful image change (Gomez, 1998). An Italian city, Turin also followed a similar path as a strategic plan was constructed and executed for the city under the association of *Torino Internazionale*, in which "public and private bodies, economic, social and cultural operators" joined their forces and led the city to enjoy a high level of global attention (Rizzi and Dioli, 2009). During the image formation practices of Barcelona, Glasgow and Turin the innovations such as city center planning, organizations and fests, restoration projects, cleaning activities, etc. preceded the communication activities (Gomez, 1998; Smith, 2005; Rizzi and Dioli, 2009). Similarly, Anholt (2007) highlights that marketing and advertising should not be seen at the center of the image change. Rather, they function as letting people know about what happens in a place (Anholt, 2007). He ranks the success factors for a place as innovation in first place, coordination in

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second and communication last (Anholt, 2007). Another significant point Anholt (2007) points out together with the harmony between different parties is requirement to transform brand management into a policy for the place. As a corresponding case in this manner, although it's quite minor, Herbert (1995) underlines the role of the teamwork between municipalities, tourism offices and voluntary groups as well as policies they drew in small towns in France while denoting successful promotion activities which were conducted with the aim of relating the places to the artistic heritage they hold.

The literature embodies various branding models for organizing the marketing attempts devoted to places. Kotler, Haider and Rein (1993) advise "strategic market planning" defined as "a proactive method" through which places strengthen themselves and become able to fight with their rivals in an environment that becomes more competitive every day. The model necessitates a detailed examination of the place, designation of offerings towards the target audience the place can make, research of the target audience and formation of a place image (Kotler, Haider and Rein, 1993). Olins (1999) suggests a "seven-step-model" for nations' branding challenges including the phases of formation of working groups, understanding the perception of the nation, evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the nation, creation of a main idea, visualization, coordination of messages and, lastly, starting a communication system. Gaggiotti, Cheng and Yunak's (2008) "City Brand Management" model also includes an analysis of the current situation that is followed by evaluation of alternatives relevant for that place, the target selection and the implementation process through which all stakeholders' attempts are channeled to the common goal. Anholt (2007), on the other hand, proposes "the competitive

identity approach" which enables places to understand their actual outlook and their future, to coordinate the agendas of their stakeholders. The model has six broad categories (every category as a point of Anholt's hexagon) for creating and upholding a competitive identity which fulfills the needs of all stakeholders. This approach contains two separate models: The Nation Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2003) and The City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) for nations and cities.

All models insist on a detailed analysis of the current situation, or the place image, and in bringing the stakeholders of the place together. However, Anholt's (2007) competitive identity approach differentiates itself as a model perceiving the image change as a slow process and placing all parties within a system through which a place can continuously progress and pursue its long-term goals rather than being a one-shot trial of image formation. It brings the innovation to the foreground rather than being a communication proposal designing place branding as a policy that can be adapted by places (Anholt, 2007). Up to now, places usually employed ways that were essentially conceived for consumer products (Caldwell and Freire, 2004). Yet, Anholt's (2007) model has been specifically designed for places. Therefore, this study uses the Competitive Identity Theory by Anholt (2007) and within the framework of this model it aims to make suggestions intended for a branding process for Istanbul through the findings about the city's perception among visitors.

Cooperation takes place at the heart of the competitive identity approach (Anholt, 2007). That is to say, every action of all stakeholders must be considered as having an influence on the place image and the stakeholders should plan their activities in accordance with the common goals of the place (Anholt, 2007). In a corresponding manner, Jafari (2009) suggests places to form an observation

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commission consisting of cultural and religious leaders and centers, ethnic minorities, public agencies, private interest organizations, academic institutions and citizens for their sustainable progress. Anholt (2007) sees such a formation as a long-running project for a place and through this aim designs two distinct hexagon models for nations and cities: The hexagon for nations consists of tourism, brands, policy, investment, culture and people channels and every channel can be considered a significant space for communication of values related to a nation. The hexagon (Anholt, 2007) for cities contains more practical terms such as the presence, the potential, the people, the prerequisites, the pulse and the place, the overall evaluation of which locates the city to a place within the competition (The hexagon designed for cities is exhibited in Figure 1). The identity building phase should take place within the common space of six points (Anholt, 2007). During the implementation phase, when a decision is taken about a single point, not only the yield related to that single point but also its contribution or damage on the big picture should be taken into account (Anholt, 2007).
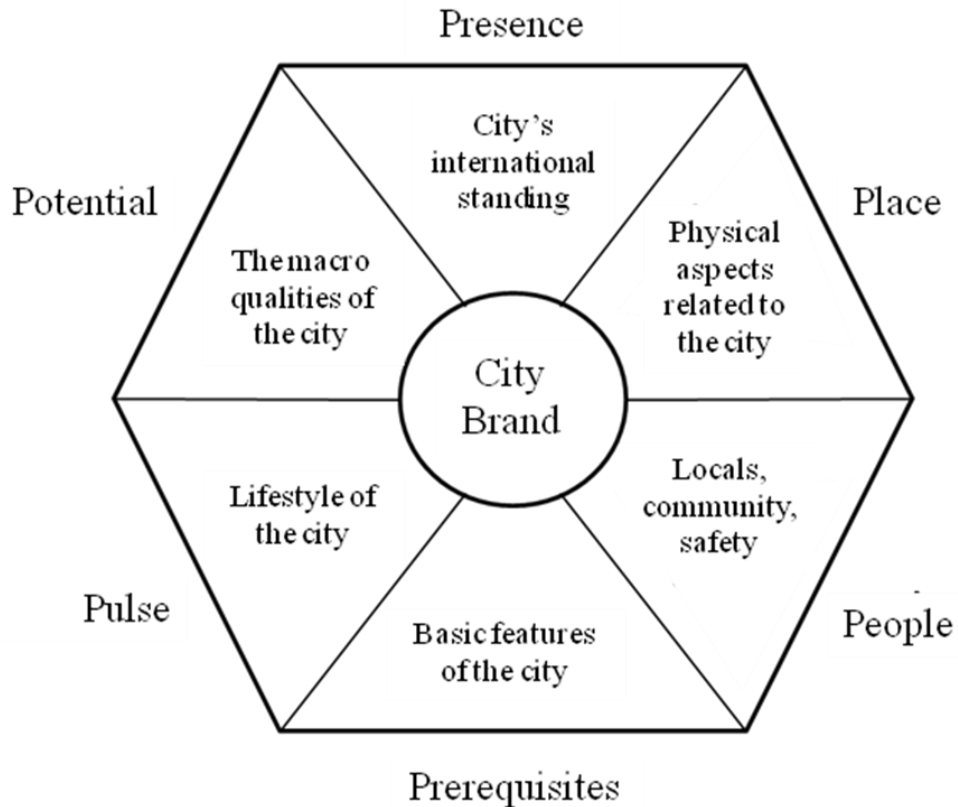
Figure 1: The city brand index hexagon (Anholt 2007)

Istanbul and Competitive Identity

Istanbul is defined as "the showcase of Turkey" (Sahin, 2008). This is a justifiable definition especially when it is considered that the city of Istanbul stands as the host of many significant international events. Significant international meetings such as the United Nations Habitat II Conference in 1996, which is associated with the Istanbul Declaration of Human Settlements, The Organization for Security and Cooperation Conference in 1999, the NATO Summit in 2004, the World Association of Newspaper Congress in 2004, the International Union of Architects Congress in 2005, World Economic Forum in 2008, the Worldbank/IMF Governors Meeting in 2009, the Fifth World Water Forum in 2009 and the Ecocity World Summit in 2009

all took place in the city within the last fifteen years. Istanbul claims itself as an important political and business center through these organizations as well as the various international fairs organized in the city. The city's attempts at being an important center are relevant not only for the areas of politics and business but also for culture and arts, as it welcomed and continues to welcome important festivals, art events and contests such as the Eurovision Song Contest (2004), the International Istanbul Film Festival, the International Istanbul Theater Festival, the International Istanbul Jazz Festival, the International Istanbul Music Festival, the Rock'n Coke Festival, the Istanbul Biennial and many more that are organized by museums and art galleries such as the Istanbul Modern Arts Museum, the Koç Museum and the Sakıp Sabancı Museum. Besides those, sports events world-wide known such as the UEFA Champions League Final in 2005, 2009 UEFA Cup Final, which is also known as the last final of this competition, the Euroleague Final Four in 1992 and the EuroBasket 2001 Final were hosted by the city in addition to events done on a regular basis such as the Formula 1 Turkish Grand Prix, the F1 Powerboat Racing Turkish leg and many other. Moreover activities such as Istanbul Fashion days or the Fashionable Istanbul Organization (2009) contribute to the association of Istanbul with fashion. Gokcen Dundar (2009) defines these kinds of organizations as "short-lived" happenings which have "long-lived" effects during 'before and after periods' of their actualizations. Besides the organizations mentioned above, Istanbul celebrates having the title of "the European Capital of Culture" (ECOC) by 2010. High level of importance is given to that title by the Turkish Government as reflected in the budget of ECOC which is the highest amount of all times allocated to culture and tourism (Oner, 2009). What aimed through the ECOC project is revealing the heritage assets

of the city, urban renewal, bettering Istanbul's position in UNESCO World Heritage list, making the city a unique metropolis of culture and arts, promoting the city as a place with significant cultural heritage and as an important cultural tourism destination having a cultural and artistic energy as well as increasing the number of visitors to Istanbul (Ozkan Yavuz, 2009). In line with these aims various innovative projects are planned by the ECOC Agency (Ozkan Yavuz, 2009).

As being a very important international destination, Istanbul was able to pull 6,500,000 visitors (26% of total incoming to Turkey) by 2007 (Istanbul Governorship, 2009) and it, alone, elicited 25% of foreign currency entry to Turkey in 2008 (Istanbul Governorship, 2009). It is also mentioned that Istanbul has gained a very significant acceleration in urban scale since 2000 and it achieved exceeding the eight million visitors target by 2008 (Tasbasi, 2009). Moreover the city is considered as having great potential for taking its place among major cities of the world such as Paris or London, especially when the foreign demand towards the city and organizations it hosts are taken into account (Tasbasi, 2009).

As a result of its international fame and appeal, the city naturally owns a privileged position within the tourism promotions conducted by the state. But before touching on this issue, it is worth to focus a little on the publicity attempts of Turkey in recent history. At the beginning of the 2000s, the Turkish Ministry of Tourism (currently it is called the Ministry of Culture and Tourism) started a promotion attack, which is defined as the first integrated communication campaign in the sphere of tourism in Turkey, after aligning the attempts regarding tourism promotion on a strategy (Mengi, 2000). Tasbasi (2009), The Chief Executive of General Directorate of Publicity of Turkey, defines the year of 2000 as a milestone in the publicity

process of Turkish tourism and utters that by this date a systematic publicity policy replaced the previous publicity works. It was achieved through coordinating the tourism sector, publication of urban brochures and maps, participation in international fairs and proliferation of tourism services in terms of accommodation, shopping, dining and entertainment (Tasbasi, 2009). When the year of 2000 is taken as a starting point it is seen that Istanbul has excessively been accentuated in the general promotion campaigns of Turkey in addition to communication activities conducted for the city in particular (Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism Promotion DVD 2009). The Ministry of Tourism communicated Turkey in general and Istanbul separately through the campaigns it carried out until 2008, after which they started to monitor a destination-focused regional strategy but Istanbul secured its privileged position in this term (Terzi, 2008). The promotion campaigns for Istanbul has not been limited only with the works of the ministry, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency have also taken part in the official communication campaigns for Istanbul (Web sites of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality 2009 and Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency 2009 provide many links to the promotion activities they conduct on behalf of Istanbul). It is also worth mentioning that the Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture process, which started in the early 2000s, is also considered to be significant in terms of introducing a city focus to the general culture and tourism policy of Turkey (Oner, 2009).

Parallel to the promotion attack of the Ministry of Tourism, the figures of visitors to Turkey indicate a significant upward trend from 1999 onwards (TURSAB, 2008). An increasing trend is also relevant for tourist entries to Istanbul since 2005

(Istanbul Governorship, 2009). The numbers display a picture of success for tourism. However the execution phase of the campaign has still been an issue of criticism. One of the main criticisms is about determination of the campaigns' goals and strategies without assessing the current situation perception and understanding which areas need to be worked on (Terzi, 2008). Additionally, it is mentioned by Zeynep Gogus, President of TR Plus-Centre For Turkey, that before communication, the quality issues of the product should be handled and campaigns would not work unless the presented product matches with the actual one (Terzi, 2008). Another criticism directed to the communication of Turkey is by Canan Konuk, a communication strategist, according to whom the communication strategies show differences with respect to the agencies in charge (Terzi, 2008). Dinnie's (2008) thoughts on place branding supports this argument as he mentions that without embracing and representing the identity of a place, the communication has no way to be influential.

In the light of the views on communication of Turkey and place marketing literature it can be mentioned that embedding the communication attempts within a place branding model would maximize the gains for Istanbul. In this regard, Anholt's Competitive Identity model (2007) shows the importance of research about place perception, product improvement before communication and cooperation of every place stakeholder in the regularization process of the place including strategy design and communication. In order to progress accordingly with this model, points of the Anholt's City Brands Index Hexagon (2008) (the presence, the potential, the people, the prerequisites, the pulse and the place) should be ornamented through identification of particular attributes belonging to Istanbul. Then the perception

towards Istanbul among visitors should be studied along these attributes and a long term brand management roadmap based on the stakeholders' cooperation should be drawn for the city.

<center>Understanding the Image</center>

Understanding the perception of the place by the target audience before taking marketing actions, is stressed a lot by the place marketing authorities and this has been specified as the first step of the models developed for place marketing and branding (Olins, 1999; Anholt, 2007; Terzi, 2008).

There exist a number of works in the literature that deal with measuring the image of a place. The most preferred techniques for the research on image are quantitative and structured ones (Riley and Love, 2000; Pike, 2002; O'Leary and Deegan, 2005). However Jenkins (1999) remarks that quantitative and structured methods are based on a pre-determined attribute list and if the specification of the attribute list is completed without caution, there exists a great risk to ask irrelevant attributes to respondents and to exclude the attributes that are significant for the place. In order to abstain from such a risk, what is suggested is collecting the attributes that will be used for measuring the image from the population itself through qualitative methods rather than using a standard structure and in this regard qualitative methods such as content analysis, free elicitation, triad elicitation and photo elicitation are recommended (Jenkins, 1999). Besides those, in-depth interviews with authorities taking place in the image formation process of a destination (Chang and Lim, 2004) or focus groups with those from the target audience of the place (Chen and Kerstetter, 1999) are also preferred approaches. Baloglu and Mangaloglu (2001), as well, stress that unstructured techniques should

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accompany the structured methods in order to be able to evaluate the image correctly. This approach is generally named as "the two-phase destination image research model" (Jenkins, 1999). Among the unstructured techniques, the free elicitation, which is described as "a form of word association", is mentioned to be a useful one for reaching top of mind attributes related to a place and its ability to predict relevant attributes is proved (O'Leary and Deegan, 2005). Another technique, the content analysis is delineated as very effective for especially the analysis of any type of communication (Abrahamson, 1983). The content analysis is defined as "any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages" (Holsti, 1968, p.608) and shown as a method through which significant and true information about the place, image of which is planned to be researched, can be obtained (Jenkins, 1999).

It is seen that "the two-phase destination image research model" (Jenkins, 1999) has been applied to the area of place image by various scholars and reliable results have been reached. Chang and Lim (2004), while studying the functioning of the new campaign in Singapore, have made a content analysis of speeches done by government members and materials published by government and then measured the attitudes of locals and visitors about the campaign. O'Leary and Deegan (2005) also have combined the qualitative methods such as free elicitation and content analysis with the quantitative survey method in order to measure Ireland's image as a tourism destination. As a quite different study, Govers, Go and Kumar (2007) employed the computerized content analysis technique on the expected experiences of the respondents regarding particular places which are written in a story format and supported it with classical survey questions.

Fishbein's Attitude-Towards-Object Method

In terms of the quantitative phase of an image research, Jenkins (1999) points out that the image measurement should be done through breaking it into the attributes and the process of measurement consists of two phases which are the evaluation of a place's performance regarding a particular characteristic and the significance attached to a particular characteristic of the place. The analysis of "attitudes", which can be thought of a single measure which brings these two phases together, enables one to understand the actual image of a place residing in the minds of the individuals as well as to comprehend how much influence each place attribute holds for the total image of the place (Jenkins, 1999). As it was mentioned in the previous sections, the image of an object is also what shapes the attitude towards that object (Kotler, 1997), so it is reasonable to posit measuring the image through an attitude analysis. Fishbein's (1967) "attitude-toward-object method" can be a good model for measuring the image of a place. The model is exhibited as such:

$$\textit{Attitude towards an object} = \sum_{i=1}^{k} b_i e_i$$

where b_i is the strength of the belief that the object has the ith attribute according to the person, e_i is the subjective importance level of the ith attribute in the evaluation process of the object which is specified by the person and therefore the attitude towards the object is a "global measure for person's combined thoughts and feelings for or against the given object" (Hair, Bush and Ortinau, 2003, p.415). According to this model an image change can be possible through changing the belief towards particular attributes of a place, changing the significance level attached on particular

attributes for the evaluation of the object by the individuals as well as adding or, if possible, removing particular attributes from the extent of an object (Sheth and Mittal, 2004).

<div align="center">A Tailor-made Model for Istanbul</div>

A number of studies exist concerning the image of Turkey and Istanbul in the literature. Baloglu and Brinberg (1997), analyze the image of Turkey in relation to ten Mediterranean countries and place Turkey among countries with negative affective images. In parallel, according to Anholt and Global Market Insite (2005) Turkey's "international brand image" is not good and it affects the country's position in a negative way within the sphere of international relations, compared to other countries in Nations Brand Index. Kemming and Sandikci (2006) show the main reason of Turkey's weak image as the bad administration of its nation brand and underline a conflicting situation in the country's positioning as an exotic place which feeds the tourism image of the country while at the same time damages the political dream of Turkey of being a part of the European Union. The research additionally gives some clues about Turkey's touristic image among foreigners, main attributes of which are being cheap, good value for money, exotic and a sun and beach country (Kemming and Sandikci, 2006). In another study where the image of Turkey among US-based tourism agents is measured in a comparison with Egypt, Greece and Italy, the strongest attribute of Turkey is found to be offering "good value for money" again, whereas the characteristics that should be improved are "infrastructure, cleanliness and entertainment" (Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001, p.7). Correspondingly with other scholars, Sonmez and Sirakaya (2002, p.185), too, designate the weak image of Turkey by showing that the country's position is far

from being positive among USA target audience and according to their findings the decision of visiting Turkey is influenced by the perception of such factors as "Turkey's overall appeal, its safe and hospitable environment, general mood and vacation atmosphere, travel experience, relaxing effect, local attractions and hospitality, authenticity of experience, social and personal communication channels, comfort/safety, and tourist facilitation". Besides those, Alvarez and Korzay (2008) focus on the relationship between the political views about Turkey and its perception as a destination and they suggest that political views about Turkey indirectly affect its image as a "host community". Other than that, the most influential sources about the image of the country is detected as word of mouth and experience, followed by television and written press (Alvarez and Korzay, 2008). Yarcan and Inelmen (2006), through the sample of American cultural tourists, show that Turkey is evaluated as a beautiful cultural tourism destination by those who visited Turkey. Therefore, in the light of the literature it might be stated that Turkey has a weak image in the minds before the visit whereas, after the visit is actualized the perceptions of the country turns positive.

When the focus is turned on studies concerning Istanbul in specific, it is seen that Istanbul's position regarding the competition of the cities is within "the cluster of young and trendy cities" as a destination having high level of "pulse", but low figures for "variety of tourist experiences offered, significance of core resources and city's presence at the international level" (Minghetti and Montaguti, 2009, p.16). Despite the indicated weaknesses within the city image, the study respects the potential of Istanbul through its non-tourism attributes which presents it as a candidate for becoming in the future one of the "ultimate cities" such as London,

Paris and Barcelona (Minghetti and Montaguti, 2009). Sahin (2008), through his study which deals with image attributes and personalities of Istanbul among different target groups consisting of those who visited the city, supplies more insight about the city's strengths and weaknesses. The strengths of the city are explicated as "its unique historical, cultural, and natural attractions, friendliness of locals, lively and exotic atmosphere" whereas the weaknesses are shown briefly as poor infrastructure in terms of urban requirements and tourism, low level of cleanliness, misusage of service and product providers and poor service given by touristic personnel (Sahin, 2008, p.91). Furthermore, a higher evaluation of the city's image and a higher level of intension for a positive word of mouth by visitors from the USA is detected and in terms of personality traits of the city, it is posited that various perceptual differences exist among different target groups through which a segmented marketing approach is suggested (Sahin, 2008). In parallel to the study of Sahin (2008), Altinbasak and Yalcin (2009) also find that the stronger attributes of Istanbul are its being a historical and exotic city, having a different culture and atmosphere, attractive palaces and museums in addition to being entertaining and a brand city. The study of Altinbasak and Yalcin (2009) also confirms that the image of Istanbul is more positive among those who visited it compared to those who had no firsthand experience with the city.

The literature clearly manifests that Turkey has a weaker image when it is analyzed in a comparison with various other countries. It can also be deducted that after the visit to Turkey or Istanbul, the neutral or negative perceptions towards them usually become positive. So at this point, the communication practices intended for bettering the pre-visit image that is shaped in the minds of travelers entail a little

more interest. Despite the scholars' respectable and useful attempts to show the strengths and weaknesses of images of Turkey and Istanbul as well as the components of those images, to demonstrate key points for success and to make administrative suggestions, it is still necessary to complete some missing points such as making a comparison between the attributes stressed through the communication and those found to be significant by visitors or working on a complete image formation bringing together the attributes attached to the place and attributes which are evaluated as being more important for visiting a place by visitors. Moreover, collecting the brand management recommendations for Istanbul under an umbrella of a long-term model seems critical for a more controlled future image of the city.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study is about research on Istanbul's image. The research was designed as exploratory followed by a descriptive research with a model application. The research objectives, details of the exploratory research, questionnaire development and the measurement and sampling process are detailed in this chapter.

Research Objectives

The research objectives of the study can be outlined as such:

→ to understand the image of Istanbul in the minds of European visitors

→ to figure out important attributes in the decision process for visiting a city

→ to understand how evaluations change in relation to demographic variables

→ to understand the attribute-specific performance of Istanbul

→ to examine the importance-based attitude towards Istanbul among European visitors

→ to evaluate the efficiency of formal advertising of Istanbul through attribute based importance-performance analysis of the city

→ to form an opinion about visitor characteristics and tendencies

On the basis of the findings provided by the empirical research some suggestions will be made for rendering the image of Istanbul more positive. Following this, a place branding model will be proposed for the image management of Istanbul through implementation of ideas suggested and continuous reproduction of similar ideas.

The Preliminary Research and Questionnaire Development

In order to identify the attributes that represent Istanbul, four main sources were combined: the communication done by formal institutions, top of mind image of the city in the minds of visitors, news about Istanbul in travel magazines and the literature regarding the image of Istanbul. Through this the most relevant attributes for Istanbul were specified. One of the aims of this study was comparing the perception of the attributes used in the formal communication with the perception of other attributes. Therefore attributes in the formal communication were also separately posited (They are exhibited in Table 1, under the heading of formal communication).

Content Analysis

The attributes in the formal communication of Istanbul were identified through a content analysis of the communication materials. These materials were published and distributed by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, the Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency and the Investment Support and Promotion Agency of Turkey which are institutions responsible from the publicity of Istanbul. According to the tourism authorities of Turkey, the year of 2000 was a turning point in Turkey's tourism communication (Mengi, 2000; Tasbasi, 2009). Therefore the coverage of content analysis was set between the years of 2000 and 2009. Materials used in the European countries between these years were analyzed. Television commercials, newspaper, magazine and billboard ads designed by the institutions were collected through:

→ Dünyada Türkiye Catalogue (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2008)

→ The Tourism Strategy of Turkey 2023-Action Plan 2007-2013 Catalogue (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2007b)

→ 2006 Annual Report of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2007a)

→ The Promotion DVD of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2009)

→ Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture 2009 Programme Booklet (Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency, 2009)

→ Invest in Turkey Booklet (Investment Support and Promotion Agency of Turkey, 2009)

→ Web sites of Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism (www.kulturturizm.gov.tr), the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (www.ibb.gov.tr), Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency (www.istanbul.2010.org) and the Investment Support and Promotion Agency of Turkey (www.invest.gov.tr).

The content of the articles about Istanbul and Turkey in travel magazines were also reviewed. The articles were reached through Dünyada Türkiye catalogue (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2008) and news about Turkey in the world press which are linked by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism General Directorate of Publicity (2009) web site. The content analysis of these materials was completed by the author a marketing academician and two PhD students from Bogazici University.

During the content analysis, it was observed that different channels present different identities for Istanbul in an uncoordinated manner.

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The Top of Mind Study

In the second phase of exploratory research, a short survey was designed in order to

identify the attributes from the visitors' point of view. Respondents were asked to list

the attributes that came to their minds when they thought of Istanbul. As the aim was

to collect only top of mind characteristics of the city in visitors' minds, nothing about

Istanbul other than its name was recalled to the respondents. Other supplementary

information such as the number of visits to the city, purpose of the visits and

demographics were also collected. In line with the sample structure of the main

research, the questionnaires were distributed to the European visitors. The surveys

are delivered by hand and by e-mail through the use of convenience sampling

method. The questionnaires were answered by forty-two respondents from various

European countries, who have been to Istanbul at least once. The attributes

mentioned in the questionnaires, were grouped under broader concepts and added

into the attribute list of the study. The top of mind survey is exhibited in Appendix

A.

The Final List of Attributes

The attributes gathered through the content analysis and the exploratory research

were incorporated with those mentioned in the literature concerning with the image

of Turkey and Istanbul (Baloglu and Brinberg 1997, Baloglu and Mangaloglu 2001,

Sonmez and Sirakaya 2002, Kemming and Sandikci 2006, Sahin 2008, Altinbasak

and Yalcin, 2009). As a result, the final list of image attributes for Istanbul was

formed. Table 1 shows the final list of the image attributes which are classified

according to the sources.

Finally, with the aim of relating the analysis to the model of the study, the attributes in the list were placed under six components of The City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) which are presence, place, people, pulse, potential, prerequisites. It was detected that the components of the "Competitive Identity model" (Anholt, 2007) are relevant for the attribute list of Istanbul. Table 2 presents the classification of the city image attributes according to the components of The City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007).

As a last step of the questionnaire development, expert opinions and pilot interviews were used. In the light of the feedback from academicians, marketing researchers and European visitors to Istanbul, some questions were rephrased, some were relocated and the design of the survey was rearranged in order to make the survey more bias-free and flowing.

Table 1: The Final List of the Image Attributes for Istanbul and Their Classification according to the Sources

	Formal communication	Preliminary research with European visitors	Travel magazine articles	Literature
Beauty in terms of scenery, natural attractions	x	x	x	x
Basic facilities in the city such as transportation, accommodation for every budget	x	x	x	x
Hospitability and friendliness of local people	x	x	x	x
Health services		x		
Heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions	x	x	x	x
Economical stability	x			
Cleanliness and tidiness		x		x
Culture & arts	x	x	x	x
The destination's popularity in the world	x	x	x	x
Salespeople's being insistent towards tourists		x		
Events and festivals in terms of politics, culture, fashion, sports	x	x	x	x
Unique geographical characteristics	x	x	x	x
Value for money spent		x	x	x
Political stability	x			
Attractiveness of places, squares, streets to visit	x	x	x	x
Religious lifestyle		x	x	
Local cuisine	x	x	x	x
Variety of shopping opportunities	x	x	x	x
Energy and dynamicity of daily life	x	x	x	x
Importance of the destination in terms of business	x	x		
Safety and security		x	x	x
Coexistence of modern and traditional	x	x	x	x
Variety of sports attractions	x	x	x	
Level of service quality and attitude of the staff and other service providers	x	x	x	x
Honesty of local tradesmen		x	x	
Historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings	x	x	x	x
Climate	x	x	x	x
Multiculturalism/cosmopolitanism	x	x	x	x
Calmness and quietness	x	x		x
Ease of communication with locals through a common language		x		x
Entertainment activities, the quality and variety of restaurants, cafes and night life	x	x	x	x
Museums	x	x	x	x
Traffic		x	x	x
Environmentally friendliness		x		x
Threat of terrorism		x		x

Table 2: The Classification of City Image Attributes according to The City Brand
Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007)

People
Having hospitable and friendly local people
Having salespeople who are not insistent towards tourists
Being safe and secure
Having honest local tradesmen
Being free from the threat of terrorism
Being a place where it is easy to communicate with locals through a common language
Place
Being beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions
Having attractive places, squares, streets to visit
Having significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings
Having unique geographical characteristics
Having heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions
Being a place where modern and traditional coexist
Having museums that are worth seeing
Having good climate in every season
Potential
Being in an economically stable country
Being in a politically stable country
Prerequisites
Being a place with good/ usually low-density traffic
Being environmentally friendly (a green city)
Being calm and quiet
Having good quality basic facilities in the city such as transportation, accommodation for every budget
Having high level service quality and good attitude of the staff and other service providers
Being clean and tidy
Having developed health services
Presence
Being a popular touristic destination in the world
Being an important culture & arts destination
Hosting important and famous events and festivals in terms of politics, culture, fashion, sports
Having various and outstanding sports attractions
Being an important business destination
Pulse
Being outstanding in terms of entertainment activities when the quality and variety of restaurants, cafes and its night life are considered
Being a place where religious lifestyle dominates
Having a distinctive local cuisine
Providing high variety of shopping opportunities
Having an energetic/dynamic daily life
Being a multicultural/cosmopolitan place
Providing good value for money spent

Measurement

The final questionnaire consisted of the parts of the attribute-importance while selecting a destination to visit, the attribute-based performance of Istanbul, the general image and the liking level, the affective image components, the intention to revisit and recommend, the visit details, the information sources, the entertaining questions and the demographics. The final questionnaire is presented in Appendix B.

Importance-Performance Measurement

In the first part, in accordance with Fishbein's (1967) attitude-toward-object model, respondents were asked to mention the level of importance they attach on each place image attribute while choosing a destination to visit. It was followed by the second module of the model (Fishbein, 1967) through which the interviewees were asked to evaluate the performance of Istanbul in terms of each place image attribute. For the both modules seven-point scales were used. In the first module the respondents were asked to evaluate each attribute in the list respectively by using the seven-point scale, where +3 means "very important" and -3 means "not important at all". For the second module, through which the performance of Istanbul is measured, one extreme of the seven-point scale (+3) was defined as "I definitely agree", the other (-3) as "I definitely disagree". The respondents were asked to rate the performance of Istanbul in terms of each attribute using the template, "Istanbul is a city ...". The scales used in these two questions are offered by Shiffman and Kanuk (1994) and Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995). However, it was not strictly adhered to the suggested model while designing the endpoints of the scales. The endpoints of the first module, where the importance levels of place image attributes are questioned, were specified in accordance with the works of Jenkins (1999) and O'Leary and Deegan (2005).

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The endpoints of the city performance agreement scale were inspired from another multi-attribute consumer behavior study by Alakavuk and Helvacioglu (2007). Thirty-five city-brand attributes were probed for each module.

General and Affective Image Measurement

Direct evaluation of the attitude towards Istanbul was measured through seven-point "evaluative scales" and the respondents were asked to assess Istanbul between bipolar adjectives. Four pairs of these scales (good-bad, positive-negative, pleasant-unpleasant, appealing-unappealing) were borrowed from Shiffman and Kanuk (2003) whereas the other four pairs (pleasant-unpleasant, arousing-sleepy, -relaxing-distressing, exciting-boring) were taken from Baloglu and McCleary (1999) and used with minor adaptations. The level of like or dislike towards Istanbul was also measured by employing another seven-point scale, the extreme points of which were specified as "like very much" and "dislike very much". Overall image towards Istanbul and Turkey were assessed through overall image scales of Sahin (2008) where endpoints were stated as "very positive" and "very negative". These scales, which originally consist of ten points, were adapted to this study as seven-point scales in order to make them compatible with the rest of the survey.

Revisit and Recommendation

Another important variable identified in literature related with place image was word of mouth communication. Intention to create a word of mouth about Istanbul was measured through a seven-point scale where 7 means "I would definitely recommend" and 1 means "I would not recommend at all". Additionally two five level Likert scales from "I will definitely visit" to "I will definitely not visit" were used for the measurement of other behavioral intentions such as the attitude towards

visiting Istanbul again and the attitude towards visiting another place in Turkey in the future.

Descriptive Questions

Besides the questions about the image measurement, the main channels through which the visitors get information about Istanbul were also questioned. With the purposes of comparing Istanbul with other cities and making the survey more entertaining, the participants were asked about which city they would prefer to visit if they would win a free-travel pack and which cities Istanbul resembles the most. Lastly, questions regarding the details of their visit (the time of last visit, purpose of the visits, number of visits to Istanbul, duration of last stay in Istanbul and the place of accommodation in the city) and the demographical information of the respondents (age, gender, education, profession, nationality, the residing country, frequency of travel in a year and yearly household income in US Dollars) were also included in the questionnaire.

Sample

The study's target sample was specified as the European people who have been to Istanbul. Being European was defined as having the citizenship of or living in a European country. Europeans who visited Istanbul with all kinds of purposes such as touristic, cultural, business, academic, education, etc. were included within the scope of the population. In addition, Europeans who reside in Istanbul or resided in the past such as businessmen, international students in Istanbul were also considered as a part of the population. Convenience sampling was used as the sampling method. To be able to decrease the non-randomness level, age, gender, level of income, nationality and resident-visitor breakdowns were controlled as much as possible during the

fieldwork phase. Various internet channels were used to contact tourists as well as those residing in Istanbul. Also face to face surveys were done in popular touristic destinations.

The survey was designed as a self-administered one in English. The copies were distributed face to face and through the internet. Face to face distribution of the surveys was carried out at the gates of Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia Museum, Yerebatan Cistern, Topkapi Palace Museum, in Cemberlitas Faros Restaurant, which is a popular restaurant among tourists, Grand Bazaar, Istanbul Ataturk Airport International Departures Section and Beyoglu World House Hostel. Also, some copies were distributed through the members of the Independent Tour Guides Platform. Regarding the distribution through internet, Bogazici University Office of International Relations delivered the surveys to the Fall 2009 international students in Bogazici University. Additional copies were sent to other various online student platforms such as the mail groups of international students in the Middle East Technical University and graduate students in John Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Bologna. Besides, the Europeans in the Facebook groups, where visitors to Istanbul and international residents in Istanbul are clustered, were identified and asked to fill out the questionnaire. It was observed that stressing the fact that the research is an academic study influenced the response rate positively.

Sample Characteristics

A total of 274 usable questionnaires were collected. The margin of error for this sample is plus or minus 5.92 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

55.1% of the respondents were in Istanbul when they answered the survey. 25.5% mentioned that they visited Istanbul less than a year ago and 19.4% stated that

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their last visit to Istanbul was more than a year ago. 28.5% of the sample were residents in Istanbul whereas 71.5% were tourists (A respondent was considered as a resident in Istanbul if mentioned duration of stay is equal to or more than 60 days). More than half of the tourists (51.5%) were first-comers to Turkey.

Gender distribution of the sample is 44.5% males, 55.5% females. 31.8% of the sample are at 15-25 age group, 38% are between the ages of 26-35, 23% are between the ages of 36-55 and 7.3% of the sample are 56 or above. Regarding the level of education, 90.9% of the sample have a degree above high school (college, undergraduate, graduate or postgraduate). 40.5% of the respondents mentioned that they earn less than $30,000, 28.1% between $30,000-$59,999, 18.2% between $60,000-$119,999, 10.2% $120,000 or more. 2.9% of the sample did not want to express their level of income. In terms of the frequency of traveling to foreign countries, 42.3% revealed that they travel twice a year or less, 39.4% between three and six times a year and 18.2% mentioned that they travel seven times a year or more. The sample characteristics are exhibited in Table 3.

Table 3: Sample Characteristics

		n=274	%
Gender	Male	122	44.5
	Female	152	55.5
	Total	274	100
Age	15-25	87	31.8
	26-35	104	38.0
	36-55	63	23.0
	56 and above	20	7.3
	Total	274	100
Education	Secondary School	2	0.7
	High School	17	6.2
	Vocational School	6	2.2
	College	18	6.6
	University (Undergraduate)	91	33.2
	University (Postgraduate; Masters, PhD)	140	51.1
	Total	274	100
Frequency of travelling abroad	Less than once a year	17	6.2
	1-2 times a year	99	36.1
	3-6 times a year	108	39.4
	7-12 times a year	37	13.5
	More than 12 times a year	13	4.7
	Total	274	100
Yearly household income (in US Dollars)	Less than $30,000	111	40.5
	Between $30,000-$59,999	77	28.1
	Between $60,000-$119,999	50	18.2
	$120,000 or more	28	10.2
	No answer	8	2.9
	Total	274	100
Status of presence in Turkey	Resident	78	28.5
	Tourist	196	71.5
	Total	274	100
Frequency of visits to Turkey	Only once	101	51.5
(Reported only of tourists)	2-5	60	30.6
	More than 5	35	17.9
	Total	196	100
Last visit to Istanbul	Currently in Istanbul	151	55.1
	Less than 1 year ago	70	25.5
	1 year ago-less than 2 years ago	23	8.4
	2 years ago-less than 5 years ago	18	6.6
	5 years ago or more	12	4.4
	Total	274	100

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The data was analyzed with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). As a first step, descriptive statistics are presented. Secondly, importance factors in destination selection are specified. These analyses are followed by the importance-performance and attitude analyses for Istanbul.

In the descriptives section some findings are studied in detail in relation to various demographic variables such as age, gender, income, status of presence in Istanbul and travelling frequency. The categories specified as 15-30, 31-45 and 46 and above for age, male and female for gender, low income level (less than 30,000 US Dollars annual household income), middle income level (between 30,000-89,999 US Dollars annual household income) and high income level (90,000 or more US Dollars annual household income) for income, tourist (duration of stay is less than sixty days) and resident (duration of stay is equal to or more than sixty days) for status of presence in Istanbul, light travelers (traveling to different countries one or two times a year or less), frequent travelers (traveling to different countries three to six times a year) and very frequent travelers (traveling to different countries seven times a year or more) for travelling frequency. T-test and ANOVA, which are widely used in similar place image studies (Chen and Kerstetter, 1999; Baloglu and Mangaloglu, 2001; O'Leary and Deegan, 2005; Sahin, 2008), were employed in order to identify the significant differences between the means of the categories. The significant results at the levels of 0.05 and 0.10 were highlighted.

In terms of the importance factors in destination selection, thirty-five place image attributes were narrowed down to its underlying dimensions by using the

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factor analysis which is employed very frequently in the place image literature (Chen and Kerstetter, 1999; Beerli and Martin, 2004; Lee, Lee and Lee, 2005; Fuchs and Reichel, 2006; Sahin, 2008)

For the importance-performance analysis the quadrant chart of O'Leary and Deegan (2005) was borrowed. Regarding the attitude analysis, the attributes were grouped under the components of the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007). In order to calculate the attitude scores the method suggested by the attitude-towards-object model (Fishbein, 1967) was used.

<center>Istanbul versus Other Destinations</center>

When the respondents were asked to select a city to visit in case of a free travel pack win, it is seen that mostly overseas cities have been mentioned. Tokyo comes first and it is followed by New York, Istanbul, Sydney, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro in the list of top mentioned cities. Although this question was asked to draw the respondents into the questionnaire and attract their attention, it is apparent that the target audience wishes to use such a gift for the most expensive option according to their personal evaluations. It is also seen that Istanbul is the only European city in the top five. However, some bias might have existed in selection process of Istanbul. 55.1% of the respondents were in Istanbul while answering the survey and their memories about this city were still fresh. This might have made people recall Istanbul easier than other places. The list of top fifteen cities is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Top 15 Destinations to be Selected in
Case of a Lottery Win

	n=251	%
1.Tokyo	31	12.4
2.New York	30	12.0
3.Istanbul	26	10.4
4.Sydney	14	5.6
5.Buenos Aires	13	5.2
6.Rio de Janeiro	11	4.4
7.Rome	10	4.0
8.Havana	9	3.6
9.Barcelona	8	3.2
10.Paris	7	2.8
11.London	6	2.4
12.Bangkok	5	2.0
Cape Town	5	2.0
Hong Kong	5	2.0
15.Beijing	4	1.6

Respondents were also asked to name the cities they thought Istanbul resembled the most. As can be seen in Table 5, more than one third of the European visitors revealed that this city is unique. When the results are examined in detail, it is seen that Istanbul was associated with top touristic destinations in Europe such as Barcelona, Paris or Rome as well as famous Arab cities such as Cairo and Beirut. Istanbul is also mentioned to resemble East European cities such as Sarajevo, Budapest, Prague to some whereas some others mentioned that it looked like New York. Briefly, although Istanbul strongly displays its unique character, it also appears to have something from every culture. It holds the Western, Eastern, Balkan and Mediterranean identities at the same time.

Table 5: Top 15 Destinations Istanbul Resembles

	n=274	%
1.Istanbul is unique	101	36.9
2.Barcelona	17	6.2
New York	17	6.2
Paris	17	6.2
5.Athens	15	5.5
Cairo	15	5.5
Rome	15	5.5
8.London	14	5.1
9.Berlin	12	4.4
10.Lisbon	10	3.6
11.Beirut	9	3.3
12.Mexico City	8	2.9
13.Prague	7	2.6
14.Sarajevo	6	2.2
15.Budapest	5	1.8
Naples	5	1.8
Venice	5	1.8

Purposes of Visit to Istanbul

Regarding the purpose of their visit (respondents cited more than one reason) to

Istanbul, the most frequently mentioned one is the culture indicated by 58% of the

European visitors. It is followed by leisure with 39.1% and visiting friends and/or

relatives with 37.6%. The purposes of business and education come after these. It

might be beneficial also to glance at these findings in detail for tourist and resident

breakdowns. Top three reasons the tourists reveal for visiting Turkey are parallel to

the general picture: cultural, leisure and visiting friends and/or relatives. The

residents in Istanbul, on the other hand, show cultural purpose at the top which is

followed by business and education. It is worth underlining that the motivation of

experiencing a foreign culture was found to be as determining as the utilitarian

motivations such as business and education in the decision to reside in a foreign

country. Besides these, shopping, conference/ exhibitions and events such as

concerts, arts, festivals appear to be the other purposes for visiting Istanbul. Table 6 exhibits the purposes of visit mentioned by the European visitors.

Table 6: Purposes of Visit to Istanbul

	n=274	%
Cultural	159	58.0
Leisure	107	39.1
Visiting friends /relatives	103	37.6
Business	65	23.7
Education	62	22.6
Shopping	40	14.6
Conference /exhibitions	27	9.9
Events such as concerts, arts, festivals	22	8.0
Religious	21	7.7
Other	10	3.6

Sources of Information about Istanbul

When the findings about the sources of information (multiple answers were possible) are examined, it is observed that the most preferred information channel for being informed about a city is "word of mouth". 75.9% of Europeans who have been to Istanbul indicated their friends, family or colleagues as a source of information about Istanbul. Besides that, 59.3% mentioned that they surfed on the internet to collect information about Istanbul and 47.4% revealed that they benefited from travel magazines or travel books. Regarding the official communication of Istanbul, 13.5% mentioned the newspaper or magazine ads about Istanbul or Turkey, 9.5% said that they watched the TV commercials about Istanbul or Turkey and 5.5% mentioned the outdoor advertisement about Istanbul or Turkey as a source. Table 7 shows the ranking of the sources from which those visiting Istanbul get information about the city.

Table 7: Sources of Information about Istanbul

	n=274	%
Friends / family / colleagues	208	75.9
Internet	162	59.3
Travel magazines / travel books	130	47.4
Previous visit	82	29.9
Newspaper / magazine articles about Istanbul/Turkey	64	23.4
Ads on newspapers, magazines about Istanbul / Turkey	37	13.5
Television commercials about Istanbul / Turkey	26	9.5
Travel agencies	18	6.6
Billboards / other outdoor advertisement about Istanbul/Turkey	15	5.5
Other	8	0.4

Stay in Istanbul

The information about the duration of stay in Istanbul is exhibited in Table 8. A European tourist's average stay in Istanbul was found to be 7.3 days. This indicator was not calculated for European residents in Turkey as the duration of stay changes a lot depending on the residing purpose of the person. Hostels or motels, three star hotels and four star hotels are seen as the most three popular accommodation preferences among European tourists. These accommodation options are followed by the houses of friends or relatives. The details about the accommodation of European tourists are given in Table 9. The Europeans who reside in Istanbul were not asked about where they have been staying in Istanbul.

Table 8: Duration of Stay in Istanbul

n=274	Frequency	Average stay duration in days	Standard Deviation
Tourists	196	7.3	5.7

*A person was not considered as a tourist, and accepted as a resident if his/her duration of stay is equal to or more than 60 days.

Table 9: Accommodation Information

	n=196*	%
5 star hotel	19	9.7
4 star hotel	39	19.9
3 star hotel	45	23.0
2 or 1 star hotel	6	3.1
Hostel / motel	50	25.5
Holiday flat	3	1.5
Friends/relatives	34	17.3
Total	196	100

*Only those who have been to Istanbul as tourists were asked about their accommodation information.

Post-visit Consideration

The respondents, all of whom had an experience in Istanbul either as a tourist or a resident, were asked about their evaluations and thoughts about their level of liking towards Istanbul, the general image of Istanbul and Turkey in their minds, their attitudes towards visiting Istanbul again and towards visiting places in Turkey other than Istanbul in the future and their attitudes about recommending Istanbul to others. All these measures are collected under the heading of post-visit consideration and presented in Table 11.

Liking Level of Istanbul

In order to measure the liking level of European visitors towards Istanbul a seven-point scale where 1 means "dislike very much" and 7 means "like very much" was used. The overall liking level score for Istanbul was found as 6.2, which can be considered as high. No significant difference has been detected between different demographic characteristics.

General Image

The European visitors were asked about both Istanbul's and Turkey's overall image using a seven-point scale where 1 meant "very negative image" whereas 7 meant "very positive image". In this picture, Istanbul's overall image score appears as 6.2, which is very close to the positive end of the scale. On the other hand, the general image score for Turkey is 5.3, which is significantly lower than the general image score of Istanbul at 0.01. It is also worth mentioning that European women who visited Istanbul view the city slightly more positively than the male visitors. The same thing is relevant also for the general image score of Turkey. The general country image of Turkey is slightly more positive among female visitors compared to male visitors. Moreover, it is also observed that the image of Istanbul is more positive among visitors whose purpose of visit is cultural or leisure (6.3 for both groups) compared to the visitors with the business purpose (5.9).

Future Visit

Two post-visit consideration questions were about revisiting Istanbul and visiting another place other than Istanbul in Turkey in the future. For measuring the attitudes about future visits two five point Likert scales, where one represented "will definitely not visit" and five "will definitely visit", were used. Correspondingly with the general image scores, Istanbul got a significantly higher (significant difference at 0.01 level) future visit score (4.5) when compared with the score of visiting other places in Turkey (4.3). However, it might be beneficial to add that both scores are at the positive sides of the scales. The comparison between the attitude scores for visiting Istanbul and other places in Turkey is exhibited in Table 10.

When the means are analyzed for different demographic categories, it is seen that those under the age of forty-six are significantly more willing to revisit Istanbul or visit another place in Turkey in the future. It is also found that purpose of presence (resident or tourist) created a significant difference regarding the intention toward future visit. Europeans currently residing in Turkey want to visit Istanbul again and other places in Turkey in the future significantly more than the Europeans who visited Turkey as a tourist. Additionally, the attitude towards visiting Istanbul again is significantly more positive among very frequent travelers compared to others.

Table 10: Attitude Scores for Revisiting Istanbul and Other Places in Turkey

	Attitude towards visiting Istanbul again	Attitude towards visiting other places in Turkey
Mean	4.5	4.3
Significance	0.00	

Word of Mouth

It was stated above that word of mouth was shown by the respondents as a major source of information they benefited from before coming to Istanbul. But the respondents were also asked to answer if they would create positive or negative word of mouth about Istanbul. This was assessed through a seven-point scale where 1 represented "would not recommend visit Istanbul at all" and 7 "would definitely recommend visiting Istanbul". The results seem very positive for Istanbul as the mean recommendation score among the European visitors is 6.6 which is very close to the positive end of the scale. The ratio of those who mentioned that they would be neutral or negative is only 1.8%. Besides, the male visitors are a little bit more reluctant to create positive word of mouth about Istanbul compared to their female counterparts.

Table 11: Post-visit Consideration Dimensions with T-test and One-way ANOVA Analyses

	Male	Female	Resident	Tourist	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	15-30 age	31-45 age	46+ age	Light Travelers	Frequent Travelers	Very Frequent Travelers	Overall
n=	122	152	78	196	111	108	47	156	75	43	116	108	50	274
Like or dislike towards Istanbul														
Mean	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2	6.2	6.2
Significance	0.20		0.44		0.67			0.99			0.83			
General image of Istanbul														
Mean	6.1	6.2	6.0	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.0	6.1	6.3	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.2
Significance	0.08*		0.15		0.48			0.47			0.22			
General image of Turkey														
Mean	5.2	5.4	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.3	5.5	5.3
Significance	0.10*		0.80		0.69			0.37			0.51			
Attitude towards visiting Istanbul again														
Mean	4.5	4.5	4.7	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.7	4.3	4.4	4.5	4.7	4.5
Significance	0.38		0.00**		0.20			0.03**			0.08*			
Attitude towards visiting other places in Turkey														
Mean	4.3	4.3	4.7	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.3
Significance	0.65		0.00**		0.14			0.06*			0.39			
Level of recommendation for visiting Istanbul														
Mean	6.5	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.6	6.7	6.4	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6
Significance	0.07*		0.32		0.17			0.60			0.74			

* The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.05
** The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.10

Affective Image Components

Istanbul has been evaluated generally in the positive direction in terms of affective image components. Affective image of Istanbul was measured through seven seven-point scales. The overall mean scores for the city are 5.9 for the appealing-unappealing, 5.8 for arousing-sleepy, 6.1 for exciting-boring, 5.8 for good-bad, 5.5 for pleasant-unpleasant, 5.8 for positive-negative and 4.0 for relaxing-distressing component. Therefore it could be posited that when the European visitors were asked to assess Istanbul in terms of a number of emotions in comparison with other cities, they depicted it as appealing, arousing, exciting, good, pleasant, positive, and neither relaxing nor distressing. It could also be mentioned that Istanbul has a better affective image among women. Female visitors found the city more appealing, more pleasant, more arousing, more exciting and better compared to male ones. Significant differences were also noticed between the evaluations of European residents in Istanbul and European tourists. Residents considered the city as more appealing, more arousing and more distressing than the tourists. Overall mean scores and mean scores in each breakdown for affective image components can be seen in Table 12.

Table 12: Mean Scores for Affective Image Components with T-test and One-way ANOVA Analyses

	Male	Female	Resident	Tourist	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	15-30 age	31-45 age	46+ age	Light Travelers	Frequent Travelers	Very Frequent Travelers	Overall
n=	122	152	78	196	111	108	47	156	75	43	116	108	50	274
appealing/unappealing														
Mean	5.8	6.1	6.1	5.8	5.9	6.0	5.9	5.9	6.0	5.9	5.8	6.0	6.1	5.9
Significance	0.02**		0.05**		0.80			0.76			0.17			
arousing/sleepy														
Mean	5.6	5.9	6.1	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.8	5.9	5.6	5.8	5.8	5.9	5.8
Significance	0.02**		0.01**		0.56			0.22			0.76			
exciting/boring														
Mean	6.0	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.0	6.2	6.0	6.0	6.2	6.1	6.1	6.1
Significance	0.02**		0.12		0.30			0.17			0.70			
good/bad														
Mean	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.8	5.9	5.7	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8
Significance	0.09*		0.16		0.41			0.56			0.85			
pleasant/unpleasant														
Mean	5.2	5.7	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.5	5.3	5.6	5.4	5.3	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.5
Significance	0.00**		0.52		0.22			0.37			0.37			
positive/negative														
Mean	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.8	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.8	5.8
Significance	0.16			0.19	0.49			0.29			0.55			
relaxing/distressing														
Mean	3.9	4.0	3.4	4.2	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.1	4.1	3.8	4.0	4.0
Significance	0.31		0.00**		0.53			0.66			0.35			

** The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.05   * The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.10

Factors in Destination Selection

The respondents were given 35 place attributes and asked to evaluate the degree of importance they attach to each one while deciding about visiting a city. The attributes were evaluated on a seven point scale where +3 represents "very important", -3 "not important at all". A factor analysis was performed with the aim of uncovering the important broad dimensions (factors) playing a role in the decisions of the visitors and to see if 35 attributes can be grouped into synthetic variables. The varimax rotation method was preferred in the light of Kass and Tinsley's (1979, p.134) suggestion according to which it "redistributes the variance among factors more evenly" and decreases the complexity of the factors that were created. The sampling sufficiency was based on the Kaiser-Myer-Olkin measure and it was found as 0,881 which is considered as "meritorious" (Kaiser, 1974). Also it was seen that Barttlet's test of sphericity was also significant at 0.01 level so it was understood that correlation adequacy level between variable was sufficient for the analysis. After the factor analysis was run, attributes were grouped under nine main factors. 61.8% of the variance was explained through these factors. The factor loadings were not below 0.40 for any attribute so, as a next step, a reliability analysis was applied for all main factors. All factors except one had Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.6. The dimension with lowest loading value was removed from the factor with insufficient Cronbach's Alpha value (this factor was consisting of attributes of "being beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions" and "having unique geographical characteristics", the latter was removed).

The factors were named as "basic facilities and security", "tranquility, convenience and environment", "dynamism and colorfulness of daily life", "history,

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arts, places to see", "value for money and service quality", "city's popularity and special interest potentials", "friendliness of the locals", "climate" and "scenery, natural attractions". Basing on the reliability test "being a popular touristic destination in the world" attribute was manually relocated under the "city's popularity and special interest potentials" factor through taking it out of the "basic facilities and security" factor as it was causing a decrease in the Cronbach's Alpha value of its original group while at the same time increasing the Cronbach's Alpha value of its new umbrella factor. The factors that were produced can be seen with their loadings, Cronbach's Alpha values and descriptive values in Table 13.

"Scenery, natural attractions", "friendliness of the locals" and "history, arts, places to see" have appeared as the most important factors with mean scores of 2.0, 2.0 and 1.7 consecutively for Europeans while selecting a place to visit. "Dynamism and colorfulness of daily life" and "value for money and service quality", both with 1.0 mean score, were also found important. "Basic facilities and security" got a mean score of 0.7 and it also took its place within the set of important attributes. "Tranquility, convenience and environment" and "climate" factors were considered as neither important nor unimportant with the mean score of 0.1. Lastly, the only attribute below the zero point has been "city's popularity and special interest potentials" with -1.0 mean score.

Table 13: Factor Analysis of Importance of Place Branding Attributes

	Cr. Alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Mean	St. Dev.
Basic facilities and security	0.862										0.7	1.2
Being safe and secure		0.8										
Being in an economically stable country		0.7										
Being clean and tidy		0.7										
Being in a politically stable country		0.7										
Having developed health services		0.6										
Being free from the threat of terrorism		0.6										
Having good quality basic facilities in the city (transportation, accommodation for every budget)		0.5										
Tranquility, convenience and environment	0.733										0.1	1.2
Being environmentally friendly (a green city)			0.8									
Having good/ usually low-density traffic			0.8									
Being calm and quiet			0.7									
Being a place where it is easy to communicate with locals through a common language			0.4									
Having salespeople not insistent towards tourists			0.4									
Dynamism and colorfulness of daily life	0.763										1.0	1.1
Being a multicultural/cosmopolitan place				0.8								
Having an energetic/dynamic daily life				0.7								
Coexistence of modern and traditional				0.6								
Hosting important and famous events and festivals (politics, culture, fashion, sports)				0.6								
Being outstanding in terms of entertainment activities (restaurants, cafes and its night life)				0.6								
History, arts, places to see	0.738										1.7	0.9
Having significant historical monuments (mosques, churches, palaces, bridges, etc.)					0.8							
Having museums that are worth seeing					0.7							
Being an important culture & arts destination					0.7							
Having attractive places, squares, streets to visit					0.6							
Having heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions					0.5							
Value for money and service quality	0.715										1.0	1.1
Providing good value for money spent						0.7						
Having honest local tradesmen						0.6						
Having high level service quality and good attitude of the staff and other service providers						0.6						
Having a distinctive local cuisine						0.5						
City's popularity and special interest potentials	0.709										-1.0	1.2
Being a place where religious lifestyle dominates							0.7					
Being an important business destination							0.6					
Having various and outstanding sports attractions							0.6					
Providing high variety of shopping opportunities							0.5					
Being a popular touristic destination in the world**							0.4					
Friendliness of the locals	n/a										2.0	1.1
Having hospitable and friendly local people								0.8				
Climate	n/a										0.1	1.7
Having good climate in every season									0.6			
Scenery, natural attractions	n/a										2.0	1.0
Being beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions										0.7		

Importance-Performance Analysis of Istanbul

In this part the performance of Istanbul in terms of place image attributes is examined in relation with the importance ascribed to these attributes. The top five attributes European visitors attach importance while deciding to visit a destination are "being beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions", "having hospitable and friendly local people", "having attractive places, squares, streets to visit", "having significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings" and "having heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions". On the other hand, top five attributes in terms of which the target audience find Istanbul successful are "having significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings", "having heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions", "having attractive places, squares, streets to visit", "being an important culture & arts destination" and "having an energetic/dynamic daily life". Thus it is noticed that Istanbul shows top performance for three of the top importance level attributes. In Table 14, the importance level of each place image attribute in destination selection and the performance level of Istanbul in terms of each attribute are exhibited side by side.

Through relating Istanbul's perceived performance to evaluation of place image attributes in terms of their importance in destination selection, it became possible to glance at Istanbul's place in the eyes of visitors through a broader viewpoint. In order to do this, a quadrant chart which clearly presents this relation between importance and performance was used (O'Leary and Deegan, 2005). In this chart (O'Leary and Deegan, 2005, p.250) four different importance-performance areas are specified as low importance-low performance, high importance-low

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performance, low importance-high performance, high importance-high performance, while the first one is named as the "low priority" area, second one as the "concentrate here" area, third one as the "possible overkill" area, fourth one as the "keep up the good work" area. Through this chart which is presented in Figure 2, it becomes possible to evaluate each attribute accordingly with the importance-performance areas in which they stand.

The results indicate a pleasing picture for Istanbul as twenty-four attributes of the city take place in the high importance-high performance area. Istanbul has been considered as successful also for six other attributes but these attributes were labeled as unimportant ones. Two attributes exist in the low importance-low performance area which is considered as not necessitating high priority. Aside from these, three attributes which are "being free from threat of terrorism", "having salespeople not insistent towards tourist" and "being environmentally friendly" stand in the high importance-low performance area which requires urgent attention.

Another point that is worth mentioning is that the evaluation of Istanbul's performance in terms of some particular attributes differs depending on the purposes for visiting the city. The performance score of Istanbul for "being an important culture & arts destination" is higher among those who visited the city with the purpose of culture (2.4) compared to the general performance score for this attribute (2.3). Similarly, the performance score of Istanbul for "being an important business destination" is higher among the visitors coming to Istanbul for business (1.7) in comparison with the overall score (1.0).

Table 14: Importance of Place Branding Attributes while Selecting a Destination to Visit and Istanbul's Perceived Performance in terms of These*
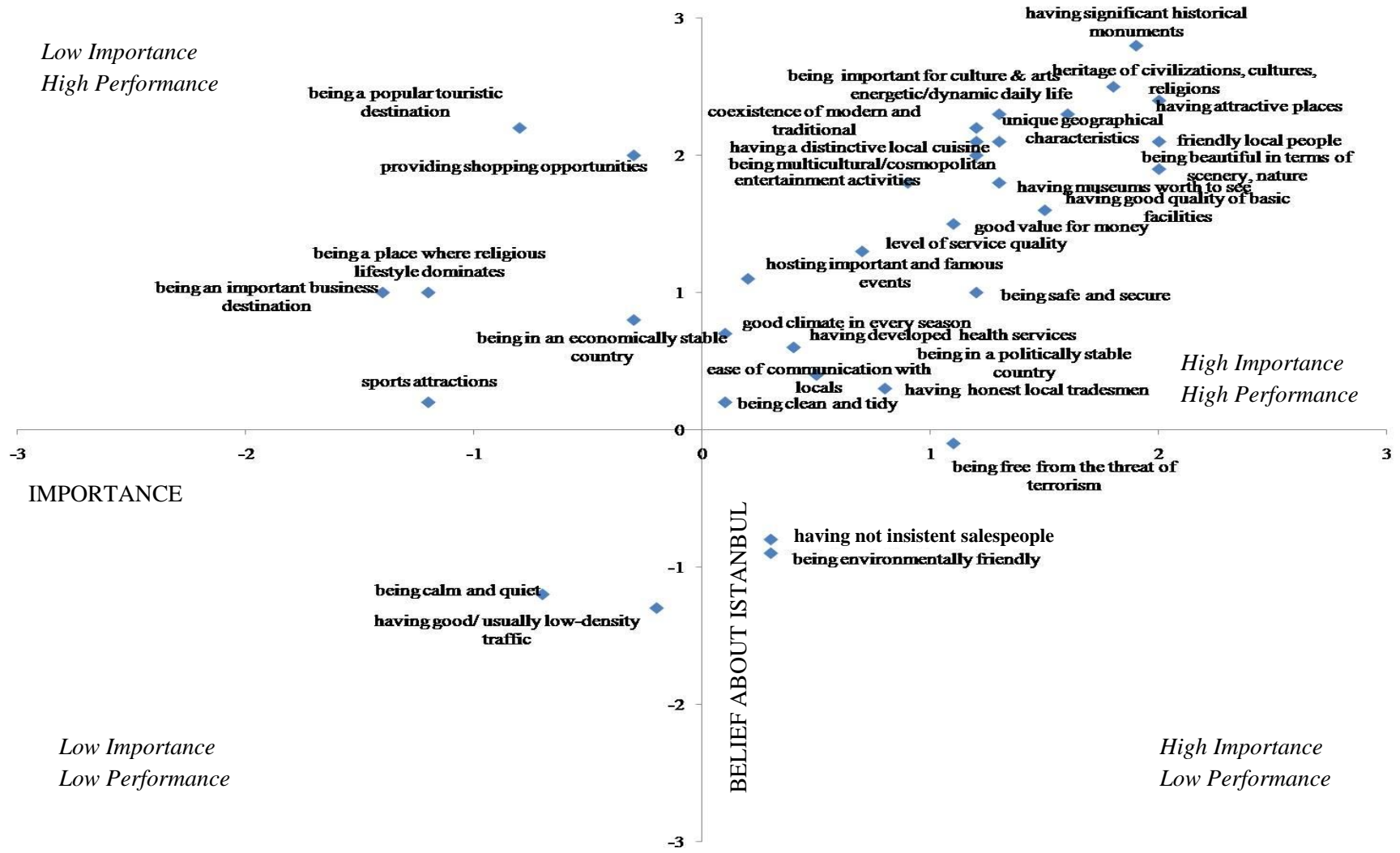
n=274	Importance of each attribute while selecting a destination to visit**		Belief about Istanbul's possession of each attribute***	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std.
Being beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions	2.0	1.0	1.9	1.3
Having hospitable and friendly local people	2.0	1.1	2.1	0.9
Having attractive places, squares, streets to visit	2.0	1.2	2.4	0.9
Having significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings	1.9	1.1	2.8	0.6
Having heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions	1.8	1.4	2.5	0.9
Being an important culture & arts destination	1.6	1.3	2.3	1.0
Having good quality basic facilities in the city such as transportation, accommodation for every budget	1.5	1.3	1.6	1.3
Having a distinctive local cuisine	1.3	1.4	2.1	1
Having an energetic/dynamic daily life	1.3	1.5	2.3	0.9
Having museums that are worth seeing	1.3	1.5	1.8	1.2
Having unique geographical characteristics	1.2	1.5	2.1	1.2
Being safe and secure	1.2	1.4	1.0	1.3
Being a place where modern and traditional coexist	1.2	1.5	2.2	1.0
Being a multicultural/cosmopolitan place	1.2	1.4	2	1.2
Providing good value for money spent	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.2
Being free from the threat of terrorism	1.1	1.8	-0.1	1.5
Being outstanding in terms of entertainment activities when the quality and variety of restaurants, cafes and its night life are considered	0.9	1.5	1.8	1.2
Having honest local tradesmen	0.8	1.5	0.3	1.5
Having high level service quality and good attitude of the staff and other service providers	0.7	1.6	1.3	1.3
Being in a politically stable country	0.5	1.7	0.4	1.4
Being a place where it is easy to communicate with locals through a common language	0.5	1.7	0.4	1.7
Having developed health services	0.4	1.6	0.6	1.2
Having salespeople who are not insistent towards tourists	0.3	1.7	-0.8	1.7
Being environmentally friendly (a green city)	0.3	1.5	-0.9	1.6
Hosting important and famous events and festivals in terms of politics, culture, fashion, sports	0.2	1.7	1.1	1.2
Being clean and tidy	0.1	1.7	0.2	1.5
Having good climate in every season	0.1	1.7	0.7	1.5
Being a place with good/ usually low-density traffic	-0.2	1.6	-1.3	1.7
Being in an economically stable country	-0.3	1.7	0.8	1.1
Providing high variety of shopping opportunities	-0.3	1.9	2.0	1.1
Being calm and quiet	-0.7	1.6	-1.2	1.5
Being a popular touristic destination in the world	-0.8	1.9	2.2	1.0
Being a place where religious lifestyle dominates	-1.2	1.6	1.0	1.3
Having various and outstanding sports attractions	-1.2	1.6	0.2	1.3
Being an important business destination	-1.4	1.7	1.0	1.2

*Sorted by mean importance while selecting a destination to visit score
**For measurement, a 7-point scale was used where +3 means "very important", -3 means "not important at all"
*** For measurement, a 7-point scale was used where +3 means ""I definitely agree", -3 means "I definitely disagree"

Figure 2: Importance-performance chart

Low Importance
High Performance

having significant historical
monuments

being important for culture & arts
energetic/dynamic daily life

heritage of civilizations, cultures,
religions

having attractive places

coexistence of modern and
traditional

unique geographical
characteristics

friendly local people

being a popular touristic
destination

having a distinctive local cuisine
being multicultural/cosmopolitan
entertainment activities

being beautiful in terms of
scenery, nature

providing shopping opportunities

having museums worth to see

having good quality of basic
facilities

good value for money

level of service quality

being a place where religious
lifestyle dominates

hosting important and famous
events

being an important business
destination

being safe and secure

being in an economically stable
country

good climate in every season
having developed health services

ease of communication with
locals

being in a politically stable
country

High Importance
High Performance

sports attractions

having honest local tradesmen

being clean and tidy

IMPORTANCE

being free from the threat of
terrorism

having not insistent salespeople
being environmentally friendly

being calm and quiet

having good/ usually low-density
traffic

BELIEF ABOUT ISTANBUL

Low Importance
Low Performance

High Importance
Low Performance

-3   -2   -1   0   1   2   3

3

2

1

0

-1

-2

-3

Attitude towards Istanbul and the Hexagon

After focusing on Istanbul's perception in the eyes of European visitors, evaluating

their attitudes towards Istanbul through a place branding model might be beneficial.

As Jenkins (1999) remarks, the attitude analysis, as a single measure, brings together

the stages of the attribute importance determination and the attribute performance

evaluation. As a result, it becomes possible not only to assess the place image but

also to understand the relative influence of each place attribute (Jenkins, 1999). As a

model, an application of Fishbein's "attitude-toward-object model" (1967) was used

in this study. This model was accompanied by another model, the City Brand Index

Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) with the intention of assessing the attitude towards Istanbul

through a place branding model. Anholt (2007), summarizes the contents of the

hexagon points, which he defines as the managerial fields of a city, as such: "People"

factor is about the perception of the local people of the city and the level of safety the

community of the city provides; "place" factor stands for the physical characteristics

of the city; "potential" is related to macro indicators such as economic and

educational possibilities the city offers to the companies, visitors, immigrants;

"prerequisites" field is an evaluation of the city in terms of fulfilling the basic

necessities; "presence", references to the place and recognition of the city within

international sphere; lastly, the factor of "pulse" implies an assessment of the

lifestyle of the city. So, rather than weighing up each attribute in itself, each attribute

was placed under the most relevant one of these six fields and evaluated in relation

with other attributes in that category.

As it was mentioned in the methodology section, in the light of the literature

(Fishbein, 1967; Shiffman and Kanuk, 1994; Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1995;

Jenkins, 1999; O'Leary and Deegan, 2005; Alakavuk and Helvacioglu, 2007) two seven-point scales (from -3 to +3, where +3 indicates "very important" for the importance scale and "definitely agree" for the performance scale, -3 indicates "not important at all" for the importance scale and "definitely disagree" for the performance scale) were used for measuring the attitude. The mean scores coming from the importance and performance scales were multiplied and an attitude score was calculated for each single attribute. Then each attribute was placed under the most relevant category of the hexagon for itself. In this process, the factor analyses results were also taken into consideration. Then a reliability analysis was run on the new categories and it was ensured that the categories were reliable measures as none of them had a Crombach's Alpha score below 0.6. The range of Crombach's Alpha scores is between 0.629 and 0.812 for the categories of the hexagon. A summary of the attitude scores and Crombach's Alpha values of the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) categories are presented in Table 15. Mean scores for each category was calculated by taking the averages of attitude scores for the attributes within that category. Also an overall attitude score for Istanbul was estimated through by taking the average of the attitude scores for thirty-five place image attributes. The attributes having both negative importance and performance scores were not included in the attitude score calculation. Because a positive attitude score arises from the multiplication of two negative values and it would be erroneous if an attribute which is unimportant and in terms of which the city is unsuccessful has a positive attitude score. Importance and performance means and attitude scores of the attributes and categories as well as the overall attitude score for Istanbul are shown in Table 16.

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When all the hexagon points are taken into consideration, the 'place' factor comes into the picture with the highest attitude score which is 3.29. The factor of 'pulse' appears as the runner up with an 1.36 attitude score. The other points of the hexagon stand below the general average (1.36), respectively, 'people' with 0.92 attitude score, 'prerequisites' with 0.64, 'presence' with 0.06 and 'potential' with 0.02. In general, it could be revealed that the Europeans who had been to Istanbul have a positive attitude towards it.

'Presence' Field

The low attitude score of the 'presence' field does not really stem from the performance of Istanbul. The European visitors agreed that Istanbul more or less reflects the attributes in this category. Being a popular touristic destination in the world, having sports attractions and being an important business destination are not taken into consideration that much during the destination selection process. They rather attach importance on the recognition of the place in the world in terms of culture as well as the events and festivals. In terms of cultural recognition, Istanbul already had a 2.26 mean score out of 3.0 which can be considered quite high. However, the attribute of famous events and festivals can be seen as a progress area with 1.14 attitude score.

'Potential' Field

In terms of the 'potential' field, it is observed that the political stability is more important in destination selection process compared to economic stability. Although it is above the zero point, Istanbul's perception as being in a politically stable country (0.43 mean score) is not sufficient for increasing the attitude score in this field.

'Prerequisites' Field

The 'prerequisites' field is very close to the neutral attitude level. A better attitude towards this field can be possible if the quality of basic facilities such as transportation, accommodation for every budget (1.57 performance mean score), which was pointed out as the most significant attribute in this field (1.50 importance mean score) is driven up even more. Furthermore, being environmentally friendly is an attribute in terms of which Istanbul was considered as unsuccessful (-0.95 performance mean score). This attribute together with having developed health services (0.57 performance mean score) flash as other progress areas. Besides these, although the performance of Istanbul in terms of the service quality and the attitude of the staff is not low (1.32), it also seems as an attribute that should be focused on having the second highest within group the importance score (0.67).

'People' Field

When the field of 'people' is examined in detail, it is seen that the low performance scores of two attributes, having salespeople who are not insistent towards tourists (-.080) and being free from the threat of terrorism (-0.10) pull down the attitude score of this factor. It is also worth mentioning that being free from the terrorism risk comes third (1.09 importance mean score) in the top importance attributes ranking for this dimension. All attributes in this category have importance scores above zero (0) but no attribute except having hospitable and friendly local people (2.15 performance mean score) can be considered as being definitely identified with Istanbul.

'Pulse' Field

Regarding the field of 'pulse' it can be revealed that if more importance had been attached to the attributes under this category by the target audience, it would be able to contribute more to the general attitude of Istanbul. Because Istanbul's performance in terms of the attributes under this field can be considered as relatively high compared to others.

'Place' Field

As the last but not the least, the 'place' appears as the most influential field on the general attitude towards Istanbul when compared with other fields of the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007). The performance of the city is relatively higher in this group. But at the same time the importance levels are higher for the attributes under this field compared to other fields. As a point that might be beneficial to signify, the attribute having highest importance level (2.04) for the destination selection within this group is being beautiful in terms of scenery and natural attractions. However this attribute is one of those with the lowest performance scores (1.89) when compared with other attributes under this field. Although this score cannot be considered low especially when it is compared with the place image attributes under other fields, a higher attitude score is possible due to the high importance ascribed to this attribute if its performance evaluation reaches at least the level of the group average.

Table 15: Attitude Scores for Istanbul in terms of The City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) Fractions and Crombach's Alpha Values of Fractions

	Mean Attitude Score	Crombach's Alpha Values for Importance Section	Crombach's Alpha Values for Performance
General	1.36		
People	0.92	0.722	0.629
Place	3.29	0.655	0.660
Potential	-0.02	0.728	0.711
Prerequisites	0.64	0.812	0.735
Presence	0.06	0.674	0.675
Pulse	1.36	0.718	0.659

Table 16: Attitude Scores for Istanbul in terms of Place Branding Attributes and The City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) Fractions

	Mean score of importance of each attribute while selecting a destination to visit*	Mean score of belief about Istanbul's possession of each attribute**	Attitude score
General		(Mean Score)	1.36
People			0.92
Having hospitable and friendly local people	1.96	2.15	4.21
Having salespeople who are not insistent towards tourists	0.34	-0.80	-0.27
Being safe and secure	1.24	0.97	1.20
Having honest local tradesmen	0.85	0.31	0.27
Being free from the threat of terrorism	1.09	-0.10	-0.11
Being a place where it is easy to communicate with locals through a common language	0.54	0.43	0.23
Place		(Mean Score)	3.29
Being beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions	2.04	1.89	3.86
Having attractive places, squares, streets to visit	1.96	2.39	4.68
Having significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings	1.93	2.77	5.37
Having unique geographical characteristics	1.25	2.10	2.62
Having heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions	1.84	2.54	4.66
Being a place where modern and traditional coexist	1.23	2.23	2.74
Having museums that are worth seeing	1.27	1.84	2.34
Having good climate in every season	0.11	0.74	0.08
Potential		(Mean Score)	-0.02
Being in an economically stable country	-0.32	0.77	-0.25
Being in a politically stable country	0.50	0.43	0.21
Prerequisites		(Mean Score)	0.64
Being a place with good/ usually low-density traffic	-0.25	-1.29	-
Being environmentally friendly (a green city)	0.31	-0.95	-0.30
Being calm and quiet	-0.69	-1.17	-
Having good quality basic facilities in the city such as transportation, accommodation for every budget	1.50	1.57	2.35
Having high level service quality and good attitude of the staff and other service providers	0.67	1.32	0.89
Being clean and tidy	0.09	0.19	0.02
Having developed health services	0.45	0.57	0.26
Presence		(Mean Score)	0.06
Being a popular touristic destination in the world	-0.81	2.24	-1.83
Being an important culture & arts destination	1.56	2.26	3.53
Hosting important and famous events and festivals in terms of politics, culture, fashion, sports	0.23	1.14	0.26
Having various and outstanding sports attractions	-1.21	0.22	-0.26
Being an important business destination	-1.36	1.01	-1.38
Pulse		(Mean Score)	1.36
Being outstanding in terms of entertainment activities when the quality and variety of restaurants, cafes and its night life are considered	0.86	1.76	1.52
Being a place where religious lifestyle dominates	-1.18	0.96	-1.12
Having a distinctive local cuisine	1.27	2.12	2.69
Providing high variety of shopping opportunities	-0.28	1.99	-0.56
Having an energetic/dynamic daily life	1.27	2.33	2.96
Being a multicultural/cosmopolitan place	1.21	1.96	2.37
Providing good value for money spent	1.12	1.50	1.68

Importance-Performance Evaluation in Different Demographic Groups

In the last part of the findings chapter, the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) fields were analyzed in terms of mean differences of importance and performance scores in gender, age, income, status of presence in Istanbul and travelling frequency categories. The average scores of the attributes under each field in the hexagon were taken and a mean score was calculated for each field both for importance and performance sections. The significant differences have been detected through conducting T-test and One-way ANOVA. The differences between the categories were reported only if they were found to be significant at the levels of 0.05 or 0.10. Table 17 demonstrates the significant differences between the mean importance scores of the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) fields in terms of different variables. The performance version of the similar findings can be seen in Table 18. For a more detailed look, the significant differences on the basis of breakdowns for each of the city image attributes are presented in Appendix C.

It is seen that the field of 'people', which includes factors related to the locals, community and being safe, is found to be more significant in destination selection by European tourists compared to European residents in Istanbul, by those who are older than 46 compared to the younger visitors as well as by the light travelers compared to the visitors travelling more frequently.

The 'potential' field under which the political and economical stability attributes take place and the 'presence' field which is about the international recognition of the place were found significantly more important by the older visitors. Additionally, the field of 'potential' was attached more importance by middle and high income visitors compared to those with lower income level.

Moreover, 'prerequisites' factors, in other words the basic characteristics, were evaluated as important in the destination selection process significantly more by the visitors that are older than forty-six years old as compared with younger visitors and light travelers as compared with more frequently travelling visitors.

With regard to the performance of Istanbul, it is observed that the city was identified with the field of 'people' significantly more by tourists and light travelers. It is also seen that the performance score of Istanbul in terms of this field among younger visitors is significantly lower. Another finding is that tourists evaluated Istanbul in terms of 'potential' and 'prerequisites' factors significantly more positively compared to the European residents in Istanbul. In terms of the 'prerequisites', the assessment of Istanbul by the light travelers also was more positive compared to that of frequent and very frequent travelers. On the other hand, the performance mean score of Istanbul is significantly higher for the field of 'presence' among the European residents compared to tourists. As the last by not the least, the 'pulse' score of Istanbul, which expresses the city's performance in terms of its lifestyle, is significantly higher among the female visitors compared to males.

Table 17: Importance of the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) Factors while Selecting a Destination

	Male	Female	Resident	Tourist	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	15-30	31-45	46+	Light Travelers	Frequent Travelers	Very Frequent Travelers	Overall
n=	122	152	78	196	111	108	47	156	75	43	116	108	50	274
People														
Mean	0,9	1,1	0,7	1,1	0,9	1,1	1,2	0,9	0,9	1,6	1,2	0,9	0,8	1,0
Significance	0,16		0,00**		0,29			0,00**			0,03**			
Place														
Mean	1,4	1,5	1,4	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,4	1,4	1,5	1,6	1,5	1,4	1,3	1,5
Significance	0,52		0,61		0,70			0,11			0,13			
Potential														
Mean	0,1	0,1	-0,2	0,2	-0,2	0,3	0,4	-0,1	0,1	0,8	0,1	0,2	-0,2	0,1
Significance	0,69		0,07*		0,01**			0,00**			0,33			
Prerequisite														
Mean	0,3	0,3	0,1	0,4	0,2	0,3	0,6	0,2	0,3	0,7	0,5	0,2	0,0	0,3
Significance	0,74		0,49		0,12			0,00**			0,02**			
Presence														
Mean	-0,2	-0,4	-0,5	-0,3	-0,5	-0,2	-0,2	-0,5	-0,3	0,2	-0,2	-0,4	-0,5	-0,3
Significance	0,08*		0,11		0,17			0,00**			0,29			
Pulse														
Mean	0,7	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,7	0,6	0,6	0,5	0,7	0,6	0,4	0,6
Significance	0,38			0,81	0,90			0,76			0,40			

** The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.05   * The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.10

Table 18: Istanbul's Perceived Performance in terms of the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) Factors

		Male	Female	Resident	Tourist	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	15-30	31-45	46+	Light Travelers	Frequent Travelers	Very Frequent Travelers	Overall
	n=	122	152	78	196	111	108	47	156	75	43	116	108	50	274
People															
	Mean	0,5	0,5	0,3	0,6	0,4	0,6	0,4	0,4	0,6	0,8	0,6	0,3	0,5	0,5
	Significance	0,88		0,03**		0,09*			0,01**			0,04**			
Place															
	Mean	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,0	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,0	2,1	2,2	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,1
	Significance	0,47		0,20		0,43			0,15			0,38			
Potential															
	Mean	0,7	0,5	0,4	0,7	0,6	0,6	0,5	0,7	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,7	0,5	0,6
	Significance	0,11		0,03**		0,71			0,28			0,39			
Prerequisite															
	Mean	-0,0	0,1	-0,4	0,2	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,3	0,2	-0,1	0,0	0,0
	Significance	0,18		0,00**		0,61			0,18			0,04**			
Presence															
	Mean	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,3	1,3	1,4	1,3	1,4	1,4	1,4	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,4
	Significance	0,20		0,03**		0,40			0,88			0,41			
Pulse															
	Mean	1,7	1,9	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,9	1,6	1,8	1,8	1,7	1,8	1,8	1,7	1,8
	Significance	0,04**		0,62		0,07*			0,44			0,70			

** The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.05   * The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.10

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

This study has two main objectives. The first one is evaluating the current image of

Istanbul among the European visitors. The second one is suggesting a brand

management model for Istanbul. The first part of the conclusion discusses issues

related to the perception of Istanbul and some ideas for progress based on the

findings are presented. It is followed by the recommendation of a brand management

model for the city.

Going Beyond the Culture: the Experience Factors

The review of the official communication materials since 2000s indicates that culture

has been the cornerstone of the marketing communication policies of the formal

bodies responsible for Istanbul's promotion. As Aksoy (2010) expresses, through the

cultural heritage discourse, culture became a major consumption area for Istanbul

which has been used for branding the city as a touristic destination. The context of

the ECOC also can be shown as a reinforcing factor for the domination of culture in

Istanbul. European visitors pointed the main purpose for visiting Istanbul as

"cultural". It seems that a mutual feeding mechanism exists between what is

promoted and what is demanded. The results for the importance factors for

destination selection of tourists and Istanbul's performance in terms of place

attributes prove the culture's significance among the visitors and Istanbul's wealth in

terms of cultural heritage. Therefore, the emphasis on culture can be regarded as a to-

the-point promotion action for the city.

Moreover, through the purposes of visit mentioned by the visitors, Istanbul

can be evaluated as a multi-purpose destination. It is clearly seen that the city has the

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ability to provide more than one theme to the visitors. Even those coming to the city with a specific reason such as business, conference or education are able to benefit from the offerings of the city other than what they came for. Yet, there still exist areas for progress. Richards (2010) talks on a shift in the demand for the tourism industry from the tangible sources such as the built heritage, museums, monuments towards the intangible ones such as the image, lifestyle of the city and mentions that tourists of our day prefer to be a part of the game rather than being passive in the city visited. Stressing the experience factors such as shopping or events and festivals, which came up as the secondary purposes for visiting Istanbul in the study, might be useful for the city to design a strategy accommodating such a shift in the sector. It is true that Istanbul has been hosting innumerable worldwide events since the 1990s. Nevertheless the city is not identified with a single event like the *Oktoberfest* and Munich. The city is evaluated as successful in terms of shopping attractions. However, only through becoming an important fashion center it would be able to mobilize people to come for shopping. Therefore, as a suggestion, specification of key areas and key events for branding and insisting on these might be helpful for increasing the "multi-purpose" character of Istanbul and making it less vulnerable to the changing trends in the tourism industry.

<div align="center">Communicating the Identity</div>

Friends, family and colleagues were shown as the main source for getting information about Istanbul by the European visitors. Alvarez and Korzay (2008) also point out that word of mouth (WOM) is a major source for the image of Turkey. Sahin (2008), as well, indicates that WOM is the most used source by the Europeans visiting Istanbul in order to have knowledge about Istanbul. The power of WOM has

been accentuated in the literature frequently, it is shown as "far and away the most effective tool in the marketplace" (Silverman, 1997, p.32). This power mainly results from the consideration of WOM as a "more credible" and more attention-getting source (Cheung, Anitsal and Anitsal, 2007). WOM's being shown as the most important information source propounds that what the tourists experience in a city and transfer of information about that experience to other people have a deterministic effect on the destiny of the city. The advice of friends, family and colleagues is followed by the internet which was illustrated as a second most important source of information. When considering that the internet includes the reviews of travelers in traveling web sites, and other kinds of informative articles about places which are written by independent people, this source also can partially be defined as a sphere of electronic WOM. So, there exists enough proof for the necessity of causing a positive word of mouth about Istanbul and managing it for the sake of a better Istanbul image. A vast majority of the European visitors mention that they will recommend others to come to Istanbul. However, there can be done a lot more to transform this positive attitude to a sustainable advantage for Istanbul. A tourism understanding shifting from product focus to experience focus would definitely make the visit more memorable and facilitate sharing of information. Strategies should also be designed for engineering the positive WOM. In this framework, all kinds of tourist reviews in travel magazines and books, related web sites should be tracked, brand ambassadors for Istanbul should be created and the perceptions of the tourists should be continuously monitored. Innovative projects for viral marketing, which is defined as "creating entertaining or informative messages that are designed to be passed along in an exponential fashion, often electronically or by email" (Word of Mouth

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Marketing Association, 2006, p.3), could be designed. As a viral marketing idea, a web site through which tourists all around the world can share their experiences in Istanbul, download interesting pictures or videos related to their Istanbul experience might be designed. Besides managing the WOM, this kind of a marketing action would cause extra benefits which are designated by Couret (2009): the visitors' bringing home back more than souvenirs and having a relationship with the city through experience.

Other than WOM and internet, printed materials, like articles about Istanbul or Turkey in travel books, magazines, appear to be another important source of information among European tourists compared to the official communication done for Istanbul. What can be deduced from this is that making a third party talk about your city is better than what you say about yourself. This finding might also be a result of the inadequacy of the coverage of the official communication. It is known that the formal institutions have been involved in many public relations (PR) activities including articles in travel books, magazines and newspapers (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2008). And increasing the coverage of the official advertising might not be possible due to the budgetary barriers. Then, increasing the share of PR activities in the marketing budget of Istanbul as opposed to the official advertising is suggested in the light of the findings. Moreover, taking actions in non-tourism fields might also induce tremendous effect such as encouraging worldwide known authors to write about the city, using Istanbul as a background in significant movies and so forth.

Europeans' Search for New Destinations

When Europeans are asked to name their favorite destinations, it is observed that mostly far-away places were mentioned. Despite the biases that were accentuated in the findings section, still we can talk about the European search for new destinations. Speake (2007) talks about the fact that Europeans seek "new" and "authentic" destinations which differ from the West European cities resembling each other. Istanbul's existence in the top-five cities of this list as the only European city might be the result of this trend. Istanbul's position in this list can also be taken as a clue about the city's increasing popularity and success in terms of answering the European search of new destinations. Istanbul's popularity as a tourism destination clearly indicates an increasing trend as the city was one of the outstanding top ten cities in terms of tourism arrivals in 2008 (EuroMonitor, 2008), and it was shown as the third in the ranking of best cities of Europe and the fourteenth in the world in 2009 (Travel and Leisure, 2009). Being chosen as the European Capital of Culture could also be counted as a reinforcing factor behind this trend.

When the results regarding the cities that Istanbul resembles are analyzed, the uniqueness of Istanbul in the eyes of European visitors as well as its being attached with various identities are reflected. Istanbul can be considered as the European, the Western, the Eastern, the Balkan and the Mediterranean, all in the same time. Therefore, the city is able to present itself to the European visitors as a unique location which contains a combination of different cultures. It is gratifying to have the perception of a unique city as uniqueness is designated as the sine qua non of a successful image (Kotler et al., 1993; Anholt, 2007; Speake, 2007). However, the current position of Istanbul might be studied carefully because it is not guaranteed

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that the city always will protect this advantage. As it was in the Prague case, "unspoilt, must see" cities of some era can become "familiar" in a short period of time (Speake, 2007) and might be taken outside the boundaries of "the European search for new places".

<p style="text-align:center">Rendering the Image of Istanbul More Efficient</p>

After the evaluation of Istanbul within a global context, now the issues related with the image of the city will be evaluated. High liking and general image scores of the city among the European visitors show that Istanbul has been able to provide the visitors with a satisfactory city experience. Through this, it could be claimed that the quality of the city as a tourism product has been certified among the Europeans who visited Istanbul. Yet, despite this positive picture, an evaluation without relating the image of the city to the country might be insufficient. The image of Turkey is lower compared to that of Istanbul among European visitors in spite of the fact that it cannot be considered as negative. When this finding is supported with the literature, Turkey appears as standing at a quite weak country image level according to research conducted with different samples (Baloglu and Brinberg, 1997; Sonmez and Sirakaya, 2002; Anholt and Global Market Insite, 2005; Kemming and Sandikci, 2006). One way or another, it is seen that Istanbul stands at a place that is higher compared to where Turkey as a country stands. Another significant point denoted by Altinbasak and Yalcin (2009) is that the image of Istanbul is more positive among the visitors to the city compared to those who did not see Istanbul. Apart from this, Caldwell and Freire (2004) mention that the countries usually undertake the "representational" image attributes and cities are mostly evaluated on "functional" basis. Additionally, according to Skinner and Kubacki (2007) the identity of a place

is strongly related with the identity of its home country. Therefore, in the light of the literature it can be inferred that the perception regarding the "representational" attributes of a country might be attached on the city as well especially if a person did not have a first-hand experience in that city. In other words, Turkey's country image might be reflected on Istanbul among those who did not visit Istanbul. Such a situation would always mean a threat for Istanbul in terms of not being able to use the advantage of its high image level especially when Turkey's strategical position at the heart of hot political debates, the indirect relationship between the political views about a country and the place image (Alvarez and Korzay, 2008) are taken into account. Elimination of such a risk might be possible for Istanbul through becoming a separate powerful brand. Anholt (2007) reveals that a city might be evaluated independent of its home country if it transforms into a powerful brand and exemplifies this through the cases of Amsterdam and Paris. Such a position will enable Istanbul to enjoy the yield of its high image level. But additionally, the city through its fame in the international arena might be able to upgrade the image of Turkey.

In terms of the affective image components, Istanbul is defined as having a somewhat positive, good, appealing, arousing, exciting, pleasant profile but at the same time it is close to an evaluation of distressing. Especially the distressing attribute is being ascribed to the city more by those spending a longer time in the city. As Istanbul is a big metropolis with a crowded population, it is not easy to detach itself from its distressing character. And because tranquility is not shown as an important factor in the destination selection process, it would not be wrong to base the city's communication on its colorful and entertaining character. However, at the

same time there still exist ways for making the experience more easygoing for the foreign visitors through the elements that we can control such as adequacy of tourist information offices or information boards in touristic sites (Sahin, 2008).

<div align="center">Spreading the Energy of Istanbul to Other Cities</div>

When the attitudes of European visitors towards re-visiting Istanbul are analyzed, we can see that Istanbul is successful in fulfilling the expectations of the visitors and Istanbul's multifunctionality might be another cause for a visitor to consider re-visiting the city.

Apart from this, another positive result of the research is the willingness of visitors to visit other places in Turkey. It is an encouraging evidence for spreading the touristic energy of Istanbul to other parts of Turkey, especially the nearby cities. Kotler et al.(1993) as a place marketing success case address Bradford in England, which was positioned as a "weekend get-away destination" near larger and more popular cities and enjoyed the tourist inflow coming from these cities. Offering short package tours to the cities which are easy to go from Istanbul might be functional for creating the chance for other cities to benefit from the touristic appeal of Istanbul as well as extending the duration of stay of the visitors in Turkey. Even Istanbul's perception as a distressing place could be used as an advantage when designing this kind of package trips through positioning some nearby cities as relaxing locations giving a short break to the fast Istanbul lifestyle. One day trips from Prague to Karlovy Vary or to Plzen, from Berlin to Dresden or to Wandlitz can be proposed as working examples for creating short-term travel opportunities from large cities to the nearby locations. In Turkey, as well, there exist day-trips designed with this aim, one of the best examples of which is Gelibolu (Gallipoli), Canakkale tours. Still,

increasing the number of destinations designed with such an understanding,

communicating them in a more emphatic way and finding alternatives to make these

options more efficient might produce great gains. It is detected that the attitude

towards visiting places in Turkey other than Istanbul is more positive among

younger, more frequent travelers and those who spend a longer time in Istanbul.

When all these breakdowns are considered together, the backpackers segment comes

to the mind. The backpackers segment, which is considered as indicating an

increasing trend in the visitor bases of many destinations, refers to a more

economical, self-designed, more participating and longer-term tourism kind (Ross,

1993). When the ratios of European visitors preferring more economic

accommodation options in Istanbul are examined, the significance of this segment

for Istanbul is better understood. If more opportunities are created to see other cities

in Turkey for those visiting Istanbul, it seems that this segment would lead the way

to catch them.

Progress Areas for Having a Better Image

Important Factors in Destination Selection

The European visitors have mentioned importance they give to each of thirty-five

place image attributes while deciding about a destination to visit. These attributes

were grouped under broader dimensions (factors) in order to make a more

manageable importance evaluation. The most important factors are stated as

'scenery, natural attractions', 'history, arts, places to see' in addition to 'friendliness

of the locals'. The results indicate also that a city should support these factors with

'dynamism and colorfulness of daily life' and 'service quality'. A city's

qualifications in terms of the 'basic facilities and security' are not regarded among

the most significant factors. However these factors should not be considered as unimportant. They rather should be viewed as complementary elements in a city. Cavlek (2002) mentions that it would be impossible for places to succeed in terms of tourism unless they guarantee a secure environment to the visitors. To open up a little more, if a city welcomes huge amounts of visitors, it is not because of having developed basic facilities and very secure environment. It is rather the result of factors such as history, arts, scenery. However the latter may not be able to attract visitors in the absence of the former. Sonmez and Sirakaya's (2002) research also endorses this for the Turkish context through showing factors making life easier and safer in the city together with the factors related to the traveling experience as aspects having effect in the decision-making process for visiting Turkey.

<p style="text-align:center"><u>Importance-Performance Evaluation</u></p>

After a discussion of factors having importance in the selection process of places to visit, Istanbul's performance in relation to city image attributes and importance factors can be analyzed. The attributes standing at the ideal importance-performance zone for Istanbul (the upper segment of the 'keep up the good work' area in the importance-performance matrix presented in Figure 2) are the historic character of the city, its monuments, the heritage of different civilizations, cultures, religions, having nice places to see, being an important culture and arts destination, the museums it has, its scenic and natural beauty and having unique geographical traits, containing traditional and modern characteristics at the same time, being multicultural, entertaining activities in the city, the food, local people's friendliness, offering good value for money spent and the basic facilities of the city. This picture explains well Istanbul's being an attractive touristic destination currently. Moreover,

it also can be asserted that the content of the communication strategy that has been

conducted for Istanbul since the start of 2000 was ornamented with proper attributes:

those both having importance in the eyes of the visitors and the ones that Istanbul

truly possesses. According to Kotler et al. (1993), a city should begin to build its

identity after the specification of the relevant characteristics for itself. The picture

above is sufficient to make a suggestion for Istanbul in this parallel: Istanbul's

identity should be based on the attributes which are placed within this ideal zone.

Those major attributes must be internalized by all bodies with the decision making

authority and responsible from the communication strategy of the city. They should

be placed at the center of all projects related to Istanbul in order to forge ahead in the

path of a sound branding process for the city. What is more, keeping performing well

in terms of these attributes is vital for the future of Istanbul and it necessitates

examining the content of each attribute in terms of the assets Istanbul owns, striving

continuously for raising the value of these assets as well as to increasing the variety.

Besides the attributes standing at the ideal zone, there exist some other

important characteristics in terms of which Istanbul's performance can be considered

successful. However there is still room for having a better perception (These

attributes are also in the 'keep up the good work' area but they stand closer to the

origin point). These are hosting important and famous events, human factors such as

service quality and attitudes of the staff, ease of communication through a common

language and honesty of local tradesmen, in addition to the factors which make

people feel safe, such as the safety level of the city, having developed health services

and political stability. All these attributes can be named as progress area attributes

and fixing the deficiencies in those areas and reserving a larger space for them in the communication process should be another priority.

On the other hand, the alarming attributes, which are situated at the 'concentrate here' zone are the ones that are considered by the European visitors as significant but low performance for Istanbul. These are waiting for the attention of the authorities. These are being free from the threat of terrorism, being environmentally friendly and having salespeople who are not insistent towards the tourists. The traffic problem which is very close to the zone of important attributes might also be added into the list.

When all the attributes that should be progressed are considered together, briefly the issues related to people, security, quality and the city structure show up. Focusing on these factors is necessary not only for having a strong basis on which tourism attraction factors such as history, culture and entertainment stand, but also for increasing the quality of life for the locals of the city. According to Jafari (2009) only "a nice place to live" can become "a nice place to visit". Moreover, these attributes which needs immediately to be touched on, cannot be fixed through tourism-related channels alone. A solution can be possible only through the coordination of various parties, including the government, municipalities, academicians and locals.

Attitude Evaluation through the Hexagon

Another approach for developing branding strategies for Istanbul can be through evaluating the attitudes of Europeans who have been to Istanbul within the framework of the City Brand Index Hexagon (Anholt, 2007) model. According to this assessment, it is proper to articulate that the general attitude towards Istanbul

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among European visitors is positive. The most contributing field to the general attitude towards Istanbul is the 'place', which implies an evaluation of the city in terms of the physical characteristics. The attitude towards the lifestyle of Istanbul (the 'pulse' field of the hexagon) can also be considered as good.

In order to reach a more positive attitude toward a particular field, two main strategies can be employed: increasing the level of importance attached to an attribute through communication or increasing the performance of Istanbul in terms of an attribute through working on the product. For instance, Istanbul is considered as successful in terms of being a popular touristic destination in the world and providing high variety of shopping opportunities however these attributes are not attached importance while deciding to visit a destination. Stressing the importance of these characteristics through communication activities might be beneficial for rendering the attitudes of visitors more positive. On the other hand, being environmentally friendly and having salespeople not insistent towards tourists are found to be important for selecting a destination to visit but Istanbul's performance in terms of these attributes was evaluated as low. In this case, a more positive attitude would be possible through making Istanbul a greener place, with the implementation of environmental policies and educating the salespeople around the touristic areas. An alternative strategy can be developed as decreasing the level of importance attached to the attributes, in terms of which Istanbul does not perform well, through communication.

Regarding the field of 'people', which is the consideration of the local people, their relations with visitors, the safety level within the local community, the warm and friendly profile of Turkish people seems the main strength of Istanbul. For

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bettering the attitude towards this field, the perceptions about safety, security, being far from the terrorism threat have to be increased and the local people of Istanbul should be equipped with a tourism-oriented understanding. In terms of the locals, first thing appears as a must is to deal with the images of insistent salespeople. The issues of honesty of tradesmen and local people's being able to communicate through a common language should also be ameliorated. To bring a solution to these problems, education of the relevant parties and supervision plannings which are specially designed for particular groups and extended over a long period of time can be suggested.

In terms of the 'prerequisites' field, in other words, "the basic qualities of the city" (Anholt, 2007, p. 61) it can be mentioned that through the progress in the areas of transportation (Istanbul metro, combination of old and new transportation hubs, transportation maps) and the hotel business in Istanbul (transformation of Talimhane to a cluster of accommodation, opening of world-famous hotel chains) a satisfactory attitude level is achieved. Sustainability of this progress is extremely important for the image of Istanbul. A further progress is also possible in this field through increasing the quality of service given by all kinds of service providers including restaurants, taxis, etc. as well as bettering the health services in the city.

Regarding another field, the attitude towards Istanbul in terms of the 'potential', which represents the economical and political prospects of the city, can be considered low. Economical stability has not been defined as a significant area by the European visitors, however in terms of the political stability Istanbul can advance through a better attitude through an intense communication directed towards this

issue with the initiatives of the relevant parties including the government and the non-governmental organizations.

Concerning the 'presence' field, in other words Istanbul's recognition, fame among the international community, it is faced with an attitude which is neither positive nor negative. Although Istanbul performs well in almost every aspect related to this field, the European visitors did not assigned much importance to these attributes. It is necessary to make attempts through communication for increasing the importance level of this field. Even if it is not indicated as an important field, the 'presence', indicators of which are touristic popularity, being famous in terms of culture, sports, politics and hosting significant events, might be regarded as the natural advertising of a place and therefore it still should be treated as a significant section of the branding agendas of destinations. When the findings regarding this field are analyzed in more detail, they clearly set forth the popularity of Istanbul as a tourism destination and as an important cultural place. It can be mentioned that culture, once again, appears as one of the strongest components of Istanbul's image. The title of ECOC might be thought as a reinforcing factor behind this. With respect to managerial actions related to this field, ensuring the sustainability of the city's fame in terms of culture seems crucial especially when thinking that it is the main motivation behind visiting Istanbul. According to Sjoholt (1999), culture can be marketed through two different strategies, one of which is "long term permanent efforts" whereas the other is "mega-events". Regarding the long term projects Gokcen Dundar (2009) designates "culture-led urban regeneration projects", significant museums and "iconic buildings". The first one is already being implemented in Istanbul. Keeping the current museums of the city alive through

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continuous projects, encouraging people for new museum projects is essential for maintaining the cultural wind of ECOC and sustainability of the culture in the city. In terms of the "iconic buildings" (Gokcen Dundar, 2009), it is not easy to build another Galata Tower but concerning the buildings having a symbolic value or a story, many more buildings under the shadow of the cosmopolitan past of Istanbul might be added into the culture agenda of the city as a contribution to the cultural image of Istanbul. Old synagogues in Balat, *konak*s of Levantines in Moda or the first apartment buildings of Istanbul in Kadikoy could be given as examples. Moreover, modern buildings such as recently built skyscrapers, stadiums (Sukru Saracoglu Stadium, new stadium project of Galatasaray) and shopping malls (especially Kanyon) can be communicated more.

With respect to the events, investing more in new and already existing culture events in the city such as the Istanbul Film Festival or the Istanbul Biennial as well as communicating them more loudly, and creation of recursive world-famous events which are branded under the name of Istanbul like *La Tomatino* (the tomato fest) of Bunol, Spain or *Oktoberfest* (the beer fest) of Munich, Germany might also be helpful for increasing the fame of the city among the international community both as an important culture center and as an entertaining place. Highlighting events such as the Istanbul Film Festival or the Istanbul Biennial would be helpful also for presentation of Istanbul as an important destination in terms of contemporary culture. Besides these, Evans (2009) points out the importance of presenting culture in a creative way and specifies examples from different places in the world which might be used as inspirations for Istanbul: Cultural clusters such as the Dallas Cultural District, film locations such as the Lost Island in Hawaii, popular pilgrimages like

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houses of authors, musicians, branded tours such as Gaudi and Barcelona and creative districts like Seoul Digital Media City.

<center>Accomplishing the To-Do List for Istanbul Through

the Competitive Identity Model</center>

Now the challenge is to be able to translate the suggestions presented in the above sections in the form of a to-do list into a branding strategy and process for Istanbul based on a sound model.

According to Anholt (2007) understanding what people think about the place, trying to find ways to drive them to think in a more positive way and managing the inferences that appear after these processes are necessary steps for developing a consistent strategy for the place. Accordingly, this study tried to show the perception of Istanbul within the European segment, to make suggestions for rendering their perceptions more positive and achieving sustainability in terms of a positive image, and lastly it recommends the model of Competitive Identity (Anholt, 2007) as a roadmap for the management of the image endeavor of the city.

The findings of the research, when they are considered in general, indicate a heartwarming picture for Istanbul in terms its perception among visitors: a positive attitude, by and large ability to answer the expectations of the visitors together with the perception of uniqueness. But also one should bear in mind that the cities compete with each other in a very harsh way in order to increase their shares in various spheres (Vanossi, n.d.; Kotler et al., 1993; Anholt, 2007) and each city is always in a danger to become exoteric and lose its competitive power (Speake, 2007) if it does not act like a business and leave its image into its natural flow (Kotler et al., 1993). Therefore, it is vital for Istanbul to plan its future like a company in order to

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reach a sustainable positive perception among its target audiences, maintain and take forward its unique identity traits and positive image. Besides, its position today should not be viewed as a peak for Istanbul which is a city with a great potential and which targets taking place among great city brands such as Paris, London or Barcelona (Tasbasi, 2009). This goal seems reachable for the city if correct steps are taken (Minghetti and Montaguti, 2009). The Competitive Identity Model might be able to place Istanbul's future plans on a safe path. Therefore the city can maintain its good deeds and prepare the way for reaching its objectives.

The recommendations aiming a better place image for Istanbul include a wide variety of items from drawing a roadmap regarding the identity formation of Istanbul to education of people through a tourism-oriented understanding. And these suggested actions address a range of actors which cannot be narrowed down into the sector of tourism. Branding Istanbul and being able to influence its image would only be possible through the participation of congregation of different parties. This thesis suggests a model with the aim of bringing together all stakeholders, whose participation is necessary for transforming Istanbul into a successful brand. Building the coherence and cooperation among the parties is the only way of designing a solid and long-term system.

The Competitive Identity Model (Anholt, 2007) brings the coordination to the foreground and it necessitates specification of a place identity which is in accordance with the interests of all stakeholders related to that place, assuring that stakeholders communicate with each other, meet, participate in the decisions taken for the place and consider the place identity and objectives even while acting in their own spheres. The brand management exists at the center of the Competitive Identity which borders

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three main aspects regarding the brand management, innovation, coordination and communication (Anholt, 2007). It requires taking innovative actions and building a proper communication strategy on the city brand identity through the collaboration of actors named "six rockets", consisting of:

→ the integral parts of the tourism sector such as agencies, tourist boards, tourism organizations, hotels and other service areas,

→ cultural bodies of the place such as institutes, firms in this sector, event organizers,

→ the businesses including companies and their products,

→ the government and its subordinates,

→ the people encapsulating the population of the place, institutions of education, alliances, community members living outside and famous people,

→ the public and private bodies, various kinds of agencies (Anholt, 2007).

To make a more solid definition for the context of Istanbul the "six rockets" (Anholt, 2007) might be specified as follows:

→ the tourism industry in Istanbul,

→ in terms of culture sector, museums, cultural and sports organizations including alliances of writers, artists, actors, federations, the administrations of big events such as Istanbul Film Festival, Formula 1,

→ non-tourism companies supporting and involving themselves in cultural events and tourism,

→ the government and governmental bodies such as the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality,

Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency and the Investment

Support and Promotion Agency of Turkey,

$\rightarrow$ universities, scholars, inhabitants of Istanbul (represented by the official

'mukhtar's: administrative heads of neighborhoods coming to office by

election) , minorities, famous figures such as Orhan Pamuk, Hidayet

Turkoglu, Turkish unions in other countries,

$\rightarrow$ advertising, public relations and marketing research agencies.

Linking up these actors and transforming this structure into an efficiently

processing body can only be possible through the establishment of a permanent

Istanbul Management Agency. This kind of a structure where all marketing practices

related to a place are centralized is seen in success cases in the place marketing

literature such as Barcelona, Glasgow, Turin (Smith, 2005; Gomez, 1998; Rizzi and

Dioli, 2009). A chamber of deputies consisting of the representatives of different

segments of the public which have been counted above might be constituted around

such an agency which contains professionals from different areas. The ideas like

those recommended as a to-do-list for Istanbul by this study might be produced and

implemented continuously by this agency. The actions to be taken by the

professionals within the agency responsible from execution will be reported to the

chamber periodically and evaluated by the chamber keeping in mind the objectives

specified for Istanbul and common interests of different segments of the public.

Additionally, in this structure the representatives of different stakeholders might try

to influence their spheres to act in line with the place objectives. The organization

scheme of the proposed structure is presented in Figure 3.

Constitution of this kind of a structure would also be beneficial for formation and presentation of a consistent identity for Istanbul. Today, various Istanbul identities are presented by formal organizations, namely, the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency and the Investment Support and Promotion Agency of Turkey. Generally speaking, the ministry stresses the touristic attractions of Istanbul, the municipality presents the multicultural identity of the city, The ECOC Agency highlights Istanbul's cultural wealth and the Investment Support and Promotion Agency shows the business, shopping attractions together with the level of economic development. Besides the formal organizations, tourism agencies, famous artists or writers are also demonstrating their own Istanbul pictures. The problem with presentation of Istanbul by various channels is that sometimes an identity can contradict with another one. For instance, the official communication of Istanbul by Ministry of Culture and Tourism contains exotic items. According to Kemming and Sandikci (2006) this might be harmful for Turkey's political objectives about the European Union. This model would enable bringing all stakeholders of the city together and the formation of a city identity which is in line with the objectives of different parties through their cooperation.

ECOC 2010 can also be considered as a training for the collaboration of and dialogue between different parties as academicians, cultural sector, firms and state organizations continuously come together for the first time around a project for Istanbul (Oner, 2009). Although many difficulties have been experienced as a result of the different perspectives and different objectives of the parties, this formation is considered by many people as a good starting point for a collaborative structure

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(Oner, 2009; Aksoy, 2010). Now Istanbul also has a chance to learn from the mistakes of the ECOC 2010 process. If such a collaborative structure is achieved through which the innovative projects and communication works for Istanbul are managed, then a more consistent strategy will be relevant for the city. Fluctuations in the strategy drawn for Istanbul depending on the changes in administrations (Terzi, 2008) will be eliminated, a long term and consistent identity expression together with continuous image monitoring will be possible. As a result, there will be more chances for Istanbul to stand where it dreams to be: among the "ultimate" cities (like London, Paris) as Minghetti and Montaguti (2009) call it.

Istanbul Management Agency (IMA)
- Professional staff with different backgrounds
- Operates permanently
- Development of innovative ideas
- Organization
- Implementation of the decisions taken

The Chamber of Deputies (CD)
- Voluntary representatives from different segments of the public (the six rockets)
- Meets periodically
- Discussion of issues related to Istanbul and new trends
- Development of innovative ideas and suggestions to the IMA
- Evaluation and approval of the ideas developed by the IMA
- Evaluation of the actions taken by the IMA

supervision

reporting

Lobbying in other spheres

Figure 3: The organization scheme

Limitations and Future Research

Limitations of the Study

Some limitations exist that should be acknowledged regarding this study. The first

limitation is about the sampling method. Due to the difficulty of having a full list of

visitors to Istanbul, convenience sampling was used to select the Europeans who

have been to Istanbul. Yet, age, gender, level of income, nationality and resident-

visitor variables were controlled during the phase of the fieldwork as much as

possible and various channels were used to recruit the respondents in order to

decrease the non-randomness level. However, the sample can still be considered

younger and more educated compared to the population of European visitors to

Istanbul and this might have influenced the results. Questionnaires' being available

only in English should be revealed as another limitation as non-English speaking

visitors could not be interviewed. Besides, due to the resource constraints, the

tourists, international students and foreign businessmen categories could not be

examined separately. These are evaluated under a broader category, visitors. This

thesis should be considered as a model study which sheds light on the current image

of Istanbul among European visitors and proposes an alternative for the brand

management of Istanbul.

Implications for Further Research

This study focused on Europe in order to evaluate the communication for Istanbul

and understand the current image of the city. Conducting similar image assessment

studies focusing on other regions would be beneficial for viewing the image of

Istanbul and evaluating the communication works regarding the city through a

broader perspective. Furthermore, it seems necessary to examine tourists,

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international students and foreign businessmen in the city separately as these groups might have different motivations, preferences and tendencies as visitors. Different characteristics of these categories alone might be an area of further research. The image studies focusing specifically on the foreign residents in Istanbul and Erasmus students are also suggested as further research fields. Besides, the results of this study indicate differences in terms of the evaluation of Istanbul's image depending on the purposes of visit. For a better understanding of Istanbul's image, it would be beneficial to handle different purpose groups separately in the future. Another further research avenue can be shown as focusing specifically on the presentation of Istanbul as a significant investment field and Istanbul's perception by foreigners in this respect. Lastly, this study provides a cross-sectional picture regarding the image of Istanbul. In order to manage the image of Istanbul, a continuous tracking of the city's perception among the visitors seems essential.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

A SURVEY OF ISTANBUL'S IMAGE AMONG FOREIGN VISITORS

Hello, thanks for your participation in this survey. My name is Doğan Levent and I am a graduate student working on my Masters thesis in Bogazici University Department of International Trade Management. Your response to this survey is of vital importance for the success of the preliminary phase of this research concerning Istanbul's image among foreign visitors. Answering this survey takes only 1-2 minutes. If you have any questions about the research project, please feel free to contact me at doganlevent84@gmail.com

1)Could you please list what comes to your mind first, when you think about Istanbul?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

2)How many times have you visited Istanbul?

☐ 1

☐ More than 1 (Please specify your _____ number of visit)

3)Could you please mention your purpose(s) of visit? (Multiple answers possible)

☐ Holiday

☐ Business

☐ Conference

☐ Studying

☐ Other _____ (Please specify)

4)Demographics&Information

Name&Surname	
Age	
Gender	
Nationality	
(If you are living in Istanbul) Since when have you been living?	
E-Mail adress	

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Appendix B

BOGAZICI UNIVERSITY

INTERNATIONAL TRADE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

MASTER'S THESIS QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Doğan Levent and I am a graduate student working on my Master's thesis in Bogazici University the Department of International Trade Management. This study concerns the image of Istanbul among foreign visitors. Your response to this survey is of vital importance for the success of this study. Answering this survey takes about 8-10 minutes. If you have any questions about the research project, please feel free to contact me by e-mail at doganlevent84@gmail.com or by phone at 00905326145855 or to contact my advisor, Assoc. Professor Elif Alakavuk, at alakavuk@boun.edu.tr . If you would like to be informed about the results of the study after it is concluded, please let me know through e-mail or phone. Thanks for your participation in this survey.

<u>A-CITY SELECTION</u>

A1. Suppose that you won a free-travel pack including your travel, accommodation and food expenses from a lottery and you are allowed to travel to any city in the world that you wish! Please keep in mind that you are allowed to visit only one city. In other words, going to multiple destinations is not possible. Which city would you choose? _____

A2. Using the scale below, for each attribute please select a value between +3(very important) and -3(not important at all) that best reflects the importance you attach to that attribute when making a decision about visiting a city.

(SINGLE ANSWER FOR EACH ROW)	+3 Very Important	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3 Not Important at all
Being beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having good quality basic facilities in the city such as transportation, accommodation for every budget	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having hospitable and friendly local people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having developed health services	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being in an economically stable country	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being clean and tidy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being an important culture & arts destination	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being a popular touristic destination in the world	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having salespeople who are not insistent towards tourists	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hosting important and famous events and festivals in terms of politics, culture, fashion, sports	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having unique geographical characteristics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Providing good value for money spent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being in a politically stable country	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having attractive places, squares, streets to visit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being a place where religious lifestyle dominates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having a distinctive local cuisine	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Providing high variety of shopping opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having an energetic/dynamic daily life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being an important business destination	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being safe and secure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being a place where modern and traditional coexist	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having various and outstanding sports attractions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having high level service quality and good attitude of the staff and other service providers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having honest local tradesmen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having good climate in every season	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being a multicultural/cosmopolitan place	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being calm and quiet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being a place where it is easy to communicate with locals through a common language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being outstanding in terms of entertainment activities when the quality and variety of restaurants, cafes and its night life are considered	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Having museums that are worth seeing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being a place with good/ usually low-density traffic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being environmentally friendly (a green city)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being free from the threat of terrorism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

B1. How many times have you been to Istanbul (including your current visit)? (SINGLE ANSWER)

Only once	☐
2	☐
3-5	☐
More than 5	☐

B2. When was the last time you have visited Istanbul? (SINGLE ANSWER)

I am currently in Istanbul	☐
Less than 1 year ago	☐
1 year ago –Less than 2 years ago	☐
2 years ago-Less than 5 years ago	☐
5 years ago or more	☐

B3. Could you please indicate the purpose(s) of your visits to Istanbul? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

Cultural	☐
Religious	☐
Health/medical treatment	☐
Cruise	☐
Business	☐
Visiting friends/relatives	☐
Conference/exhibitions	☐
Education	☐
Leisure	☐
Shopping	☐
Events such as concerts, arts, festivals	☐
Other (Please specify)……	

B4. How much do you like or dislike Istanbul in general on the basis of your experience(s) in the city? Could you please mark the score that best describes the level of your liking towards Istanbul, using the scale below?
1 means "I dislike this city very much", and 7 means "I like this city very much" (SINGLE ANSWER)

Like very much   Dislike very much

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

B5/B6. Using the following 7-point scale, how would you rate Istanbul and Turkey, separately, in terms of the general image they have in your mind?
1 means "very negative", and 7 means "very positive" (SINGLE ANSWER FOR EACH ROW)

		7	6	5	4	3	2	1
		Very Positive						Very Negative
B5.	Istanbul	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B6.	Turkey	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

B7a. Which of the alternatives below best describes your attitude towards visiting Istanbul again in the future ? (SINGLE ANSWER)

I will definitely visit again	☐
I will most probably visit again	☐
I have not decided yet	☐
I will most probably not visit again	☐
I will definitely not visit again	☐

B7b. Which of the alternatives below best describes your attitude towards visiting other places in Turkey in the future? (SINGLE ANSWER)

I will definitely visit	☐
I will most probably visit	☐
I have not decided yet	☐
I will most probably not visit	☐
I will definitely not visit	☐

B8. Could you please indicate to what extent you would recommend visiting Istanbul to your friends/ relatives/ etc. by using the scale below?

1 means "I would not recommend at all", and 7 means "I would definitely recommend" (SINGLE ANSWER)

I would definitely recommend   I would not recommend at all

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

B9. According to your opinion, which city/cities
does Istanbul resemble? Please name the ones that come to your mind.   _____

_____

_____

B10. Please select a single value between 1 and 7 for each row.

Compared to other cities, Istanbul is:

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Good	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Bad
Positive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Negative
Appealing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Unappealing
Pleasant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Unpleasant
Arousing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Sleepy
Relaxing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Distressing
Exciting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Boring

B11. Could you please indicate the source(s) you got information about Istanbul before you came to this city? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

Television commercials about Istanbul or Turkey	☐
Advertisements on newspapers, magazines about Istanbul or Turkey	☐
Billboards/other outdoor advertisement about Istanbul or Turkey	☐
Internet	☐
Travel magazines/travel books	☐
Friends/family /colleagues	☐
Previous visit	☐
Newspaper/magazine articles about Istanbul or Turkey	☐
Travel agencies	☐
Other (Please specify)…	

B12. We would like to know your opinion of Istanbul. Could you please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following statements about Istanbul by selecting a value between +3 (I definitely agree) and -3 (I definitely disagree)

Istanbul is a city ………………….	I definitely agree +3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	I definitely disagree -3
…that is beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…having good quality basic facilities such as transportation, accommodation for every budget	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…with hospitable and friendly local people	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…where health services are developed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that has heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is in an economically stable country	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is clean and tidy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is an important culture & arts destination	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is a popular touristic destination in the world	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…where salespeople are not insistent towards tourists	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that hosts important and famous events and festivals in terms of politics, culture, fashion, sports	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…with unique geographical characteristics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that provides good value for money spent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is in a politically stable country	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that has attractive places, squares, streets to visit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…where religious lifestyle dominates	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…with a distinctive local cuisine	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that provides high variety of shopping opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…having an energetic/dynamic daily life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is an important business destination	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is safe and secure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…in which modern and traditional coexist	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that has various and outstanding sports attractions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…with high level service quality and good attitude of the staff and other service providers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…having honest local tradesmen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that has significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that has good climate in every season	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is a multicultural/cosmopolitan place	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is calm and quiet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…where it is easy to communicate with locals through a common language	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is outstanding in terms of entertainment activities when the quality and variety of restaurants, cafes and its night life are considered	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that has museums that are worth seeing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…with good/ usually low-density traffic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is environmentally friendly (a green city)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
…that is free from the threat of terrorism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C-DEMOGRAPHICS

In this section, some demographic questions are asked. Please be informed that your answers will not be used on personal basis. The information requested in this section is necessary for analyzing the overall data.

C1. How old are you? (SINGLE ANSWER)

15-17	☐
18-25	☐
26-30	☐
31-35	☐
36-45	☐
46-55	☐
56 and above	☐

C2. Could you please mark the highest level of education you have completed? If you are still continuing your education, please mark the level you are currently in. (SINGLE ANSWER)

Primary school	☐
Secondary school	☐
High school	☐
Vocational school	☐
College	☐
University (Undergraduate)	☐
University (Postgraduate; Masters, PhD)	☐

C3. What is your gender?   ☐ Male   ☐Female

C4. What is your profession? (e.g. electrical engineer) _____

C5. What is your nationality? _____

C6. Which country are you living in currently? _____

If you have visited Istanbul more than once, please consider your last visit while answering the questions C7 and C8. If you are a resident in Istanbul please take the date you began to live in the city into consideration while answering the question C7 and then skip to question C9 without answering question C8.

C7. What is/was your duration of stay in Istanbul?
(Please fill in how many days, months or years you stayed in Istanbul)

_____ days

_____ months

_____ years

C8. Where did you stay/have you been staying in Istanbul?
☐I stayed at a 5 star hotel   ☐I stayed at a hostel/motel
☐I stayed at a 4 star hotel   ☐I rented a holiday flat
☐I stayed at a 3 star hotel   ☐I stayed in my friends'/relatives' place
☐I stayed at a 2 or 1 star hotel

C9. How frequently do you travel to different countries in a year for various purposes? (SINGLE ANSWER)

Less than once a year	☐
1-2 times a year	☐
3-6 times a year	☐
7-12 times a year	☐
More than 12 times a year	☐

C10. Could you please indicate your level of income (as yearly household income) in US Dollars? (SINGLE ANSWER)

Less than $30,000	☐
Between $30,000-$59,999	☐
Between $60,000-$89,999	☐
Between $90,000-$119,999	☐
$120,000 or more	☐

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Please do not forget to save this file and please kindly send it to *doganlevent84@gmail.com*

Appendix C

Table 19: Significant Differences among Breakdowns in terms of Importance Factors while Selecting a Destination

		Male	Female	Resident	Tourist	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	15-30 age	31-45 age	46+ age	Light Travelers	Frequent Travelers	Very Frequent Travelers
	n=	122	152	78	196	111	108	47	156	75	43	116	108	50
People														
Being a place where it is easy to communicate with locals through a common language	Mean			-0,2	0,8				0,5	0,3	1,2	0,9	0,3	0,3
	Sign.			0,00**					0,03**			0,04**		
Being free from the threat of terrorism	Mean	0,8	1,3	0,4	1,4	0,7	1,5	1,3	0,8	1,1	2,0			
	Sign.	0,02**		0,00**		0,00**			0,00**					
Being safe and secure	Mean			0,9	1,4	1,0	1,4	1,4	1,0	1,3	1,9	1,5	1,1	0,9
	Sign.			0,01**		0,07*			0,00**			0,05**		
Having honest local tradesmen	Mean	0,7	1,0						0,7	0,7	1,5			
	Sign.	0,08*							0,01**					
Having salespeople who are not insistent towards tourists	Mean								0,3	0,2	0,9			
	Sign.								0,06*					
Place														
Being beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions	Mean	1,9	2,2											
	Sign.	0,02**												
Having heritage of various civilizations, cultures, religions	Mean											2,0	1,9	1,3
	Sign.											0,02**		
Having museums that are worth seeing	Mean					1,1	1,2	1,7	1,0	1,3	2,1			
	Sign.					0,05**			0,00**					
Having significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches, palaces, bridges and other kinds of buildings	Mean											2,0	2,0	1,5
	Sign.											0,00**		
Potential														
Being in a politically stable country	Mean			0,2	0,6	0,2	0,9	0,6	0,4	0,4	1,1			
	Sign.			0,06*		0,02**			0,03**					
Being in an economically stable country	Mean					-0,6	-0,2	0,1	-0,6	-0,3	0,6			
	Sign.					0,03**			0,00**					

Table 19 (Cont'd)		Male	Female	Resident	Tourist	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	15-30 age	31-45 age	46+ age	Light Travelers	Frequent Travelers	Very Frequent Travelers
	n=	122	152	78	196	111	108	47	156	75	43	116	108	50
Prerequisites														
Being a place with good/ usually low-density traffic	Mean											0,1	-0,4	-0,7
	Sign.											0,01**		
Being clean and tidy	Mean			-0,4	0,3	-0,2	0,3	0,6	-0,2	0,2	0,9			
	Sign.			0,00**		0,01**			0,00**					
Having developed health services	Mean								0,3	0,3	1,0			
	Sign.								0,03**					
Having good quality basic facilities in the city such as transportation, accommodation	Mean								1,4	1,5	1,9			
	Sign.								0,06*					
Having high level service quality and good attitude of the staff and other service providers	Mean			0,3	0,8									
	Sign.			0,04**										
Presence														
Having various and outstanding sports attractions	Mean	-0,9	-1,4			-1,5	-1,2	-0,6						
	Sign.	0,01				0,01**								
Being a popular touristic destination in the world	Mean			-1,2	-0,6				-1,0	-1,0	0,3			
	Sign.			0,02**					0,00**					
Being an important business destination	Mean	-1,1	-1,6			-1,7	-1,2	-0,8	-1,6	-1,1	-0,8			
	Sign.	0,02**				0,01**			0,01**					
Being an important culture & arts destination	Mean								1,4	1,6	2,2			
	Sign.								0,00**					
Pulse														
Being a multicultural/cosmopolitan place	Mean					1,5	1,0	1,1						
	Sign.					0,05**								
Having an energetic/dynamic daily life	Mean								1,5	1,2	0,7			
	Sign.								0,01**					
Being a place where religious lifestyle dominates	Mean											-0,8	-1,4	-1,5
	Sign.											0,01**		
Providing good value for money spent	Mean	1,4	0,9											
	Sign.	0,01												

** The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.05   *The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.10

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Table 20: Significant Differences among Breakdowns in terms of Istanbul's Perceived Performance

		Male	Female	Resident	Tourist	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	15-30 age	31-45 age	46+ age	Light Travelers	Frequent Travelers	Very Frequent Travelers
	n=	122	152	78	196	111	108	47	156	75	43	116	108	50
People														
Istanbul is a city having honest local tradesmen	Mean								0,1	0,5	0,9			
	Sign.								0,00*					
Istanbul is a city that is free from the threat of terrorism	Mean			-0,4	0,0									
	Sign.			0,07*										
Istanbul is a city where it is easy to communicate with locals through a common	Mean			0,0	0,6				0,3	0,5	1,0	0,7	0,2	0,3
	Sign.			0,01**					0,06*			0,06*		
Istanbul is a city where salespeople are not insistent towards tourists	Mean	-0,5	-1,0	-1,1	-0,7	-1,1	-0,6	-0,5	-1,1	-0,4	-0,2			
	Sign.	0,02**		0,03**		0,03**			0,00*					
Istanbul is a city with hospitable and friendly local people	Mean	1,9	2,3			2,2	2,2	1,8						
	Sign.	0,00**				0,02**								
Place														
Istanbul is a city that has attractive places, squares, streets to visit	Mean	2,2	2,5											
	Sign.	0,00**												
Istanbul is a city that has museums that are worth seeing	Mean	1,7	2,0											
	Sign.	0,07*												
Istanbul is a city that has significant historical monuments such as mosques, churches,	Mean	2,7	2,8			2,8	2,8	2,6						
	Sign.	0,05**				0,04**								
Istanbul is a city that is beautiful in terms of scenery, natural attractions	Mean											1,7	1,9	2,3
	Sign.											0,05**		
Istanbul is a city with unique geographical characteristics	Mean	2,3	2,0	2,4	2,0				2,0	2,2	2,4	1,9	2,2	2,3
	Sign.	0,05**		0,01**					0,06*			0,02**		
Potential														
Istanbul is a city that is in a politically stable country	Mean	0,6	0,3	0,0	0,6									
	Sign.	0,03**		0,00**										
Prerequisites														
Istanbul is a city that is calm and quiet	Mean			-1,6	-1,0				-1,3	-1,2	-0,6	-1,0	-1,5	-1,0
	Sign.			0,00**					0,02*			0,04**		

Table 20 (Cont'd)		Male	Female	Resident	Tourist	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	15-30 age	31-45 age	46+ age	Light Travelers	Frequent Travelers	Very Frequent Travelers
n=		122	152	78	196	111	108	47	156	75	43	116	108	50
Istanbul is a city that is clean and tidy	Mean			-0,3	0,4									
	Sign.			0,00**										
Istanbul is a city that is environmentally friendly (a green city)	Mean			-1,7	-0,6				-1,0	-1,1	-0,4			
	Sign.			0,00**					0,07*					
Istanbul is a city where health services are developed	Mean	0,4	0,7											
	Sign.	0,04*												
Istanbul is a city with good/ usually low-density traffic	Mean			-2,3	-0,9							-1,0	-1,4	-1,7
	Sign.			0,00**								0,02**		
Presence														
Istanbul is a city that hosts important and famous events and festivals in terms of	Mean			1,6	1,0	1,2	1,2	0,7						
	Sign.			0,00**		0,06*								
Istanbul is a city that is a popular touristic destination in the world	Mean	2,1	2,3	2,4	2,2									
	Sign.	0,05**		0,04**										
Istanbul is a city that is an important business destination	Mean			1,4	0,9									
	Sign.			0,01**										
Istanbul is a city that is an important culture & arts destination	Mean	2,1	2,4											
	Sign.	0,01**												
Pulse														
Istanbul is a city having an energetic/dynamic daily life	Mean					2,5	2,4	1,9	2,4	2,3	2,0			
	Sign.					0,00**			0,03*					
Istanbul is a city that is outstanding in terms of entertainment activities when the quality	Mean			2,0	1,7	1,7	2,0	1,4						
	Sign.			0,04**		0,04**								
Istanbul is a city that provides high variety shopping opportunities	Mean	1,8	2,1			1,9	2,2	1,8						
	Sign.	0,05**				0,06*								
Istanbul is a city with a distinctive local cuisine	Mean	2,0	2,2											
	Sign.	0,07*												

** The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.05   *The difference between categories is statistically significant at the level of 0.10

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