
TRAVEL AND TOURISM

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Paper 3 Destination Marketing

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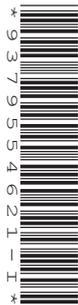
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Fig. 1.1 for Question 1

Finland recently made headlines with its release of 30 country-branding emojis, in a unique twist on regular promotion efforts. An emoji is a small digital image or icon used to express an idea or emotion in electronic communication. Said to reflect aspects of the Finnish national character, the list of country-brand emojis includes a sauna emoji and a woolly sock emoji.

The emojis appear on the 'This is Finland' webpage. The Finland Promotion Board (FPB), made up of communications and marketing professionals, is responsible for coordinating country brand communications. It brings together state-funded bodies carrying out country brand work and sets the annual themes for country brand communications.

FPB wanted to do something related to social media, to talk to young people about the Finnish brand. The emojis idea came up because there are some great emoji designers in Finland. FPB likes the fact that the emojis convey things of importance for the brand, e.g. digitalisation and being ahead of the market in the digital world. They also show the fun and unique characteristics of the Finnish people. However, there was a fine line between the humour behind the promotion and the danger of creating too much of a stereotype for the country brand.

Fig. 1.1

Fig. 2.1 for Question 2

Macedonia is located in south east Europe.

Three different destination branding campaigns have emerged, resulting from the Macedonian government's desire to raise the country's international profile, and to promote it as a land of business opportunities and tourist delights: 'Invest in Macedonia', 'Macedonia Tourism' and 'Macedonia Timeless'. These campaigns were designed to present a distinctive vision of Macedonia, based on the key objectives of attracting inward investment, to increase tourist numbers within the country. As a relatively new country, which declared independence in 1991, it is understandable that the government wants to communicate a range of different messages through these initiatives.

The campaigns were tied in with the Skopje 2014 project, a project financed by the government, with the purpose of giving Skopje, the capital city of Macedonia, a more classical appeal by the end of the year 2014. Much of the country's national heritage was destroyed in an earthquake in 1963.

The Skopje project consisted mainly of the construction of museums and monuments depicting historical figures from Macedonia. Around 20 buildings and over 40 monuments were constructed as part of the project. Stakeholders from the commercial sector as well as from the local community in the country opposed the Skopje 2014 project. They believed it could damage Macedonia's national image, and create significant disadvantages for the local people at economic, political and cultural levels, with its strong nationalist messages and estimated total cost of €560m.

The case of Macedonia highlights the need for coherent strategy in destination branding campaigns. It is important to ensure the coordination of key stakeholders and the full engagement from industry and tourism representatives to create, develop and maintain a strong national brand and to communicate it consistently.

Fig. 2.1

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