

**7th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE DEVELOPMENTS IN ECONOMIC  
THEORY AND POLICY  
Bilbao, July 1-2, 2010**

**1. TITLE:** *A Brand Image Analysis for Abu-Dhabi and Qatar.*

**2. ABSTRACT:**

The United Arab Emirates and Qatar both lack natural attractions, their system of governance is almost identical and their efforts at diversification are very similar. For this reasons, in order to compete with the rest of the world, the gulf countries are developing an assertive branding strategy focused on tourism targets, aviation, real estate and high class events and exhibitions in order to put their capitals (Abu-Dhabi and Doha) on the world tourism map.

**Purpose:**

The focus of the present study is to shed light on the key factors featuring in the strategic branding of Abu Dhabi and Qatar. The aim of this work is to see whether these factors are sufficient for the creation of a distinctive brand.

**Methodology:**

The aim of this document is to analyse the cases of Abu Dhabi and Qatar as models for the application of place branding policies, and to study the importance of the choice of the factors used for the projection of their image. To this end we will begin by describing the origins of place branding, its characteristics and its evolution. An overview of place branding with regard to economic development follows, bearing in mind the key factors for the implementation of a successful branding strategy. Then the concept of brand imaging is explained according to experts in this field. The second section focuses on a Comparison between the branding strategies of Abu-Dhabi and Qatar through an analysis of their ways of practising branding as well as analysis of the leading news topics concerning Abu-Dhabi and Qatar in Google News for the year 2009. To finish a series of conclusions is presented to reveal a clearer picture of the theme presented in the main body of the document.

**Findings:**

The key element in a successful branding strategy is not reflected by just the ambitious projects that Abu-Dhabi and Qatar are developing but it is, in fact, their image and their reputation that differentiate them from their neighbours. The branding factors developed by Abu-Dhabi and Qatar may appear almost identical, but those of Abu Dhabi can be differentiated through its concept of tourism which is centred in ecological, heritage and cultural themes.

**Keywords:** Place Marketing, Abu-Dhabi's Branding Strategy, Qatar's Branding Strategy, Tourism, Branding Success.

**3. AUTHOR:** Hanan Hazime

**Address:** Faculty of Economics. University of the Basque Country.  
Lehendakari Aguirre 83. 48015 BILBAO (Spain)

**E-mail:** [hanan85\\_h@hotmail.com](mailto:hanan85_h@hotmail.com)

**Phone:** +34 654966711

## **A Brand Image Analysis for Abu-Dhabi and Qatar**

### **Introduction:**

Competitiveness between regions is perhaps one of the greatest remaining challenges of the globalization process facing countries nowadays. A world of imperfectly related, multiple problems in which commercial exchange, financial flows, foreign investment and innovation, form an essential part of the strategies which have to be adopted by countries to promote economic growth and establish their position in an ever more global and competitive world.

Countries must, therefore, carry out projects and programmes which promote and contribute to their successful introduction into the international network, not only based upon internal policies, but also in the area of foreign policy. Therefore, they are obliged to implement strategies which contribute to the inclusion, promotion, and positioning of their attributes in the foreign markets.

Certain kinds of places are more likely candidates for place branding. Places that face intense and increasing competition and complex development challenges, such as areas of urban expansion, regeneration and transformation and which are undergoing a crisis and therefore need to reinvent themselves. These places are candidates because they need to sharpen their competitiveness in order to retain or improve their positions. One of the most obvious examples is Bilbao in Spain which has reinvented itself as a tourist destination after the collapse of its economic base<sup>1</sup>. *In Europe, competition between major cities has increased over the past decade and a city like Amsterdam finds itself competing with Madrid and Barcelona for visitors, investors, talent and events*<sup>2</sup>. Also countries such as Australia, Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, Spain, France, Italy, New Zealand, among others have managed to promote themselves. These countries have made the most of their authenticity and their geographic diversity in order to create an attractive national brand which transmits the essential characteristics of their culture, their people, their production systems and their

natural resources but, most important of all, they have integrated these strategies as specific actions within the foreign policy of the country.

The United Arab Emirates and Qatar both lack natural attractions, their system of governance is almost identical and their efforts at diversification are very similar. For this reason, in order to compete with the rest of the world, the gulf countries are developing an assertive branding strategy focused on tourism targets, aviation, real estate and high class events and exhibitions in order to put their capitals (Abu-Dhabi and Doha) on the world tourism map.

The purpose of the present study is to shed light on the key factors featuring in the strategic branding of Abu Dhabi and Qatar. The aim is to see whether these factors are sufficient for the creation of a distinctive brand. The purpose of this document is to analyse the cases of Abu Dhabi and Qatar as models for the application of place branding policies, and to study the importance of the choice of the factors used for the projection of their image. To this end we will begin by describing the origins of place branding, its characteristics and its evolution. An overview of place branding with regard to economic development follows, bearing in mind the key factors for the implementation of a successful branding strategy. Then the concept of brand imaging is explained according to experts in this field. The second section focuses on a comparison between the branding strategies of Abu-Dhabi and Qatar through an analysis of their ways of practising branding as well as analysis of the leading news topics concerning Abu-Dhabi and Qatar in Google News for the year 2009. To finish a series of conclusions is presented to reveal a clearer picture of the theme presented in the main body of the document.

### **The Place Branding phenomenon: state of the art and literature review:**

Countries, regions states and cities, have begun, just like large corporations, to rise to the challenge of expressing themselves persuasively. However, many continue to think that branding is simply a logo which changes with each publicity campaign. As long as this is the

case the brand will not be strengthened nor reach its potential. A definition of a brand was originally provided by the American Marketing Association as *a name, a term, a sign, a symbol, a design or a combination of all these which attempts to identify the goods or services of a seller or a group of sellers with the aim of differentiating these from others in order to achieve greater competitiveness*. Each country is unique, as are its circumstances and its situation. Part of the capacity of branding is to be able to recognize when to best identify the specific needs of a country and how to choose a focus that responds confidently to the challenges to be faced.

The complexity of the Brand concept has increased throughout the centuries and has evolved towards the concept of Place Branding which forms the backdrop for all the products, investment opportunities, culture, people and other characteristics which make a country unique. Country brands vary according to how the countries wish to position themselves in the global market. The majority attempt to put forward a convincing offer which sets them apart, although in many cases it is impossible to differentiate between them. In this sense the strategy of place Branding may be considered as one the strategic and complementary actions which governments must structure and manage; enabling them both to strengthen the productive sector and to promote the country and its potential abroad. Despite governments playing an important role when it comes to deciding how to manage the process, they rarely determine the final result. Numerous cases have demonstrated that the decision is influenced considerably by promotion agencies and the work of local authorities. And although important, it is worth pointing out that tourism alone will not solve a location's problems. On the contrary, the country must first sort out its own problems in order to then generate tourism<sup>3</sup>.

At this point it is therefore important to define place branding as a *set of efforts by national, regional and city governments, and by industry groups, aimed at marketing the places and sectors they represent*<sup>4</sup>. Numerous research articles draw attention to the close relationship between branding and tourism promotion, but a place brand is supported by the construction of a citizen composite, which not only involves tourism, but also embraces economic and socio-political areas as well as the historical perspectives of the place<sup>5</sup>.

Place branding is a group of initiatives with which to generate social and economic value through the reputation and perception of a country, as well as being a tool for integration and projection. So why is place branding so unique? Place branding enhances the development of a region or a place not only in terms of leisure and tourism, but also in terms of attracting inward investments, enhancing the existing facilities for local residents, and welcoming new residents, employees and skilled migrants<sup>6</sup>. Place brands provide *differentiation through propagation of logos, symbols and strap-lines*<sup>7</sup>. They also provide a competitive strategic vision not only for the city, but also for the region, or the whole country.

Place marketing strategy should bridge the gap between what a place really is (identity), how it is perceived by foreigners (image) and how the place itself wishes to be seen from abroad (the desired image or reputation). If these elements fit together, place branding is the highest common denominator between the different pillars (economy, education, infrastructure and culture) and the foundations (citizens, entrepreneurs, authorities) which make up an area<sup>8</sup>.

Place branding, both as a necessity and a phenomenon, is mainly inspired by globalisation processes where the market place for ideas, culture, reputation, in addition to products, services and funds are fused into a single global community<sup>9</sup>. A number of factors in the international arena have led to the extension of place branding and have also presented major challenges to all places and firms, in particular to those in less well developed regions. Featuring among these factors are:

- *The fall of communism between 1989 and 1991 and the opening of new emerging markets.*
- *The overall globalization of markets.*
- *Labour shortage in technology.*
- *The drop in international travel due to terrorism after the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>.*
- *Development in traditional sectors (agriculture) helped to direct attention to the important role of place image<sup>10</sup>.*

Among the conditions that may make a brand oriented approach necessary for places are:

*The spread of democracy; the increasing tendency towards government transparency; open relationships between state players; the need for more public awareness; the growing power of the international media; the falling cost of international travel; the pursuit of investors by a growing number of industrial and service locations; the need to build trust in both companies and country of origin; the intense competition for international funds, technology and skills transfer, inward investment, export markets and trade as well as skilled immigrant workers and the fact that the global marketplace is more open than ever for places to be able to communicate the real wealth of their society to ever more distant audiences<sup>11</sup>.*

The process of building a country brand starts by forming a working group and carrying out a SWOT-analysis to find the strategic challenges and its place marketing capacity. Then it is necessary to find out how the nation brand is currently perceived internationally by the target markets and within the country itself by its own residents. Research finding must be analysed and consulted on with experts, players and stakeholders. Then in the strategy building phase the core idea and the identity of the nation brand are formed, with the umbrella brand and sub-

brands. A good communication system during the whole process is vital. Success in place marketing depends on a mix of these factors<sup>12</sup>:

Success factors	Dimensions of success factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Planning group</li> <li>➤ Vision and Strategic analysis</li> <li>➤ Place identity &amp; Place image</li> <li>➤ Public-private partnerships</li> <li>➤ Leadership</li> </ul>	<p>These factors represent the core building bricks in place marketing practices as well as the ability to implement and the organising capacity of a place.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Political unity</li> <li>➤ Local development and Global marketplace</li> <li>➤ Process coincidences</li> </ul>	<p>The remaining three factors cover the challenges in the network and in the macro-environment where the place marketing practices are performed.</p>
<p>All the success factors are connected and interacting with each one supporting the process of successful practices.</p>	

The concept of brand imaging applied to countries, cities and regions:

The media revolution and the new international order have led nations to become ever more concerned about their image, how they are perceived and their influence in the international arena. Thus the imaging of a country as an attractive strategy was conceived. Many researchers (e.g. Papadopoulos and Heslop, 2002)<sup>13</sup> argue that every place has an image no matter what the source of that image is. There are many reasons why a country should foster its brand image and does so strategically within the framework of international globalization. Cities have always needed to set themselves apart, through the creation of an identity which is attractive to the various interested parties, be it for achieving economic, social or socio-psychological goals. One result of this need is the increase in competition between cities to

attract resources, business relocation, foreign investment, visitors, and new residents<sup>14</sup>. Cities such as Manchester, Lyon, Detroit, Shanghai, Dublin and San Francisco have proven to be able to attract existing companies and set up new ones due to the domestic and foreign investment, thereby augmenting the difference between themselves and their competitors<sup>15</sup>.

According to Anholt, there are *natural channels* through which the reputation of a country is transmitted: *tourist Promotion; export Brands; government policies (domestic or aimed at the foreign sector); the way in which investment is sought or which skilled workers are attracted; cultural exchange and the performance on the international arena of the countries leaders*<sup>16</sup>.

For, generally speaking, people form their own mental image of a place by means of three areas of contact: *perceptions and images obtained through the accumulated experiences; through various forms of place representation whether films, novels, paintings, news reports; and the impacts of deliberate policy interventions like planning and urban design*<sup>17</sup>.

Asworth describes three main tools related to place brand imaging: *Personality Association, Signature Building and Design and Event Hallmarking*. According to Asworth, for a place to stand out in terms of identity, the mental association which we make with its name must be associated with the qualities of the place in question and the elements which make it unique. In the case of Gaudi in Barcelona (or Elvis Presley in Memphis, Dali in Figueres or Mozart in Austria), the personality of the artists, so recognisable in their work, has led to their image becoming inseparable from that of their city. Furthermore, the visual qualities of the buildings, their design and even the city districts may become place branding tools. A country's brand image is shaped through historic and political events as well as individuals or physical structures such as buildings or bridges. However, positioning is not a simple matter, and to be successful it must be ambitious, inspirational, original and unafraid of the challenges. A third tool of brand imaging is that relating to events. Brand imaging of city events is more effective if it is combined with the place brand image, as is the case of the

Olympics, in which the complete array of political and social elements are involved and there is a general consensus of local support.

The brand image is *the perception of a brand in people's minds, it is a mirror reflection of the brand personality or product, and it is what people believe about a brand: their thoughts, feelings and expectations*<sup>18</sup>. This is a process that touches many areas (environment, domestic market, education, tax incentives, labour, safety ...), and which should include all the principal protagonists, such as government, citizens and business, all with the same mission.

Thus, to be competitive it is necessary to design a national marketing strategy. And for this to be effective, the desired image has to be matched by reality, that is, it should be attractive, plausible, simple and distinctive. As certain factors are beyond control (media opinion, climate, economic crisis, etc.), it is necessary to create new and positive associations in order to overcome negative ones<sup>19</sup>.

Among the factors that determine the image of a country are:

- Climate variables
- Products and services
- Companies and corporations offering products and services
- Institutions in civic society
- Economic Sectors
- Productive specialization
- Degree of internationalization of the economy
- Economic positioning
- Geopolitical framework
- Current international relations
- Anthropological, cultural, artistic, literary, festive, folkloric and gastronomic aspects etc.; as well as history, historic monuments and the social structure<sup>20</sup>.

However, and in spite of all the factors which could affect or build up the image of a country, the communication of this image must be aimed at creating a simple, clear and distinctive idea, based on emotional characteristics so as to be understood by all kinds of audiences and in differing situations<sup>21</sup>. The brand image requires continuous and effective management, and also that the various protagonists involved in the process offer their services in a coordinated fashion. A single tool, applied alone is rarely successful, and even a mixture of measures requires planned and suitably administered implementation and support. City branding provides, on the one hand, the foundation for a policy which pursues development and, at the same time, serves as a conduit through which the residents can identify with their city<sup>22</sup>.

There is a general agreement among marketing experts that a brand is more than a name, a logo, or a slogan that identifies and creates qualities which lend a new identity to the city. Certainly, logos and slogans are practical tools for marketing cities, but they do not shape the process of city branding, as a city brand encapsulates a whole conglomerate of beliefs and physical, cultural, economic, social and psychological attributes associated with the city and its identity<sup>23</sup>. Therefore, the brand embraces aspects of communication, of perceptual entity, value reinforcement and reference. These contribute to increasing the attraction effect and to generating links between the city and interested parties<sup>24</sup>.

A strong country brand not only attracts tourists and investment, but may also increase the sale of products. Products with country brands bear heavily on preconceptions about a country and may increase awareness, create image and influence opinions about the quality of the product. It is necessary to point out the importance of the concept Country of Origin as this has a great influence in the behaviour of the consumer. The concept product-country image refers to the image of the country (or place) with which a product is associated by sellers and/or buyers. A favourable image of the place with which a product is associated can give the product a competitive advantage; whereas, when the origin's image is weak, managers try

to hide the product origin<sup>25</sup>. The stronger a country brand is, the more advantages its products will have with regard to preference, price and loyalty.

For example, Mercedes Benz and BMW make reference to the effectiveness of the automobile technology in Germany, when we think about India, innovation and the software industry jump to mind; when we speak about Italy it is impossible not to allude to the latest fashion and design tendencies. Italian ties, French wines or Japanese technological products all boast a certain prestige which they have earned from the world's consumers and, this value may be added, therefore, to the final price of the product. This theory uses traditional concepts of marketing and branding applied to the image management of cities, regions and countries<sup>26</sup>.

#### Case studies:

Place branding management is practiced most in Europe. Place branding plans and image management for cities are far from uncommon and have been applied in various cities throughout the world.

Many tourism destinations around the world, including resorts, cities and countries, have launched branding campaigns to differentiate themselves from their competitors and to attract more tourists. Of countries, the examples of Thailand, Singapore, Australia and Denmark are the best known due to their successful branding efforts. The Australia brand is recognised as being one of the best strategies for country branding to date. Other examples are Canada, Germany, Ireland or Hong Kong which have all managed their country brand successfully.

External forces not under the control of the country, such as natural disasters or political instability may cast a shadow over some nation brands. For example, Colombia is automatically associated in the mind with drug trafficking. Currently Colombia is attempting to reposition its image through the brand *Colombia is Passion*, which may be considered as an example of place branding management or place branding applied to an entire country. In the

case of Spain, the success is in having managed to achieve so much in such a short time, and thereby proving that place branding can be carried out, and, what is more, successfully, maintaining a proactive attitude, despite the handicap of terrorist activity which has attempted to undermine the attraction of tourists. Careful coordination between the interested parties, including famous names from the world of culture such as Pedro Almodóvar, the Guggenheim Museum of Bilbao or business initiatives, such as the expansion of Telefónica to Latin America, contributed to a radical image change<sup>27</sup>. New York has also implemented a general city marketing plan with three principal objectives: to generate income for public finances through sponsorship; to integrate the actions of official bodies with regard to promotion and to increase the number of visitors to New York.

A strong place brand signifies higher tourist demand and more visitors, a better position with regard to global commerce and more possibilities to attract direct foreign investment, as well as protecting the conditions which go to form the brand of the nation. Such are the cases of India which has focussed its image as the world leader in Software development, Mexico which is the biggest South American recipient of international tourism and Costa Rica which is one of the most important Central American targets of direct foreign investment.

#### State of the art:

Nowadays, tourism is the most saleable aspect of a nation. Directly related to tourism is action in other governmental areas such as infrastructure, economy and governability.

Many countries use tourism as the principle tool of attraction in their branding strategies. Nevertheless, the strategy of place branding should also influence export growth and attract foreign investment, although there is no doubt that the primary promotion sector is tourism.

Business and political leaders in cities like New York, Bilbao and Shanghai have been persuaded that culture will restore a sense of distinction that will make them desirable and competitive<sup>28</sup>.

*Cultural attractions, especially museums are now the central part of urban development strategies, pursuing an important economic aim and representing the overall project as a flagship or icon. There are a small number of universally famous museums like the Tate Liverpool, the Tate Modern London, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB), the new Doha's Islamic Art Museum (Qatar), or the forthcoming Louvre-Lens (France), Pompidou-Metz (France), Guggenheim-Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates) or the Guggenheim-Hermitage (Vilnius), whose primary aim are the marketing of a city or a region and, through this, the reactivation of the economy of their territories, besides their obvious cultural aim<sup>29</sup>. Plaza (2010) calls these types of museum "Global Art Museums as economic Re-activators" (GLAMUR) infrastructures. The main purpose of any GLAMUR infrastructure is to become an effective economic engine, mainly through the generation of tourism. These global Art Museums are characterised by:*

- Global media visibility and sheer presence in the communications environment;*
- Outstanding architecture by a superstar architect;*
- Big blockbuster exhibitions and high visitor numbers;*
- Being magnets for tourists;*
- Requiring large capital cost investments and operating budgets;*
- Using expensive advertising and commercialisation strategies;*
- Having a huge operative risk;*
- A hope for substantial impact on the local economy<sup>30</sup>.*

In Bilbao, they have developed a cultural strategy of revitalization on the waterfront to achieve, retain, and expand a presence in global financial markets. Unlike most other cities, Bilbao had a broader, more ambitious strategy to modernize urban infrastructure by organizing public tenders for the design of subways, bridges, and airport terminals<sup>31</sup>. The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao was intended to be the core attraction for tourism, in a city not

known for its tourist attractions, to revitalize its economy<sup>32</sup>. The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao has been celebrated as a specific success with regard to the attraction of visitors and tourists, the creation of a new image and a structural change in the region. *Although all conditions for a favourable framework for the Guggenheim Museum to become an effective investment were fulfilled, the impressive and iconic building by Frank Gehry was the key element that brought global fame and success to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (GMB) and to Bilbao<sup>33</sup>.*

What began with the Guggenheim in Bilbao became a well consolidated tendency, museum franchises which are now key destinations in international cities. As well as having its own Guggenheim, designed by Frank Gehry, Abu Dhabi will also be the home of the first international expansion of the Louvre at the hands of the famous architect Jean Nouvel. Shanghai will also have a subsidiary of the Georges Pompidou centre in 2010.

Apart from oil, Qatar and its neighbours are all resource-poor and their efforts at diversification are very similar. The Gulf countries have an almost identical system of governance and they employ similar strategies to promote themselves on the world tourism map. To compete, these countries which are lacking in natural attractions need to undertake marketing investments in order to build attractions or to promote popular events that will attract tourists. These attractions and events must be supported by adequate infrastructure, safety and services; they must also be prepared to offer financial incentives<sup>34</sup>.

The following part of the study sheds light on the key factors featuring in the strategic branding of Abu Dhabi and Qatar by analyzing their ways of carrying out branding to see if these factors are sufficient for the creation of a distinctive brand.

### **The case of Abu-Dhabi:**

Abu-Dhabi is the largest of the seven Emirates that comprise the United Arab Emirates. Abu-Dhabi, the capital of the UAE with 1,493,000 inhabitants, accounts for 86.7% of the total

surface area of the state. The Emirate is home to the world's sixth largest proven oil reserves also it is the biggest oil producer in the UAE and owns 90% of the UAE's oil and natural gas. The emirate of Abu-Dhabi, through its Policy Agenda 2007-2008, the strategic Plan 2008-2012 and the Plan Vision Abu-Dhabi 2030 has recently re-branded itself and has made a series of assertive moves in order to boost its tourism development as well as to create a more diversified economy. These plans form the branding strategy of Abu-Dhabi. Formulated in 2007, the main objective of the Plan Abu-Dhabi 2030 is to achieve effective economic transformation of the Emirate's economy. This will be achieved by:

- Transformation of the Emirates and their economic base through: the diversification of economic activities, broadening the economic base and expanding their foreign markets;
- Fostering competitiveness;
- Improving productivity;
- Maximizing the participation of women;
- Attracting the best skills from abroad;
- Stimulating rapid economic growth in the regional areas;
- Importing and applying 'best practices' from abroad;
- Developing domestic resources focussing on infrastructures, transport and ITC;
- Improving human capital through education, training and other methods;
- Expansion of a number of strategic economic sectors: Energy, Petrochemicals, Metals, Aviation, Aerospace, Pharmaceuticals, Tourism, Healthcare Equipment & Services, Transportation, Trade & Logistics, Education, Media, Financial Services, and Telecommunication<sup>35</sup>.

The branding strategy of Abu Dhabi is based on all these elements. To achieve the objective, changes in areas such as economic growth, marketing strategies & tourism development,

event & business tourism, education and airport and airline expansion are necessary to bring about the radical transformation of the capital city Abu-Dhabi as well as branding the Emirate on the world tourism map.

According to the Abu-Dhabi Statistics Centre, Abu-Dhabi GDP has grown considerably over the period 2002-2008. The GDP growth rate increased from 0.7% in 2002 to 30.0% in 2008. Factors such as *the falling oil prices, a decline in real estate markets, the lack of bank lending and diminishing economic confidence*<sup>36</sup> have led to a decline of 7% in real GDP for Abu-Dhabi in 2009. In 2008, The GDP per capita<sup>37</sup> of the Emirate amounted to 88,500 \$. In 2008, the Abu-Dhabi Council of Economic Development issued its strategic plan 2008-2012. *The plan foresees the development of more liberal economic policies, the promotion of its industrial infrastructure and the provision of more support to small and medium scale business enabling them to play a more active role in the development of the Emirate*<sup>38</sup>.

*In an effort to rely less on its oil resources as a primary source of income, Abu-Dhabi is working to diversify and stimulate its economic growth through tourism development*<sup>39</sup>. Abu-Dhabi has been investing heavily in the development of its tourism facilities with many mega projects: Shams Abu-Dhabi, Saadiyat Island, Yas Island, Desert Islands, Al Raha Beach, Warner Brothers Theme Park, Souwwah Island, Capital Centre, Al Reem Island, Khalifa Port, Mina Zayed, Ferrari Theme Park and Masdar City.

Souwwah Island, Mina Zayed and Al Reem Island will form the new Abu-Dhabi Central Business Districts. Saadiyat Island is the star project of the Tourism Development & Investment Company. The island is divided into 7 districts: Saadiyat Retreat, Saadiyat Beach, Saadiyat Lagoons, Saadiyat Reserve, Saadiyat promenade, Saadiyat Marina and Saadiyat Cultural Districts.

The Cultural District includes five landmark museums each designed by a world renowned architect: the Louvre Abu-Dhabi (Jean Nouvel) and the Guggenheim Abu-Dhabi (Frank

Gehry), as well as the Sheikh Zayed National Museum (Norman Foster ) and a maritime museum (Tadao Ando) and performing arts centre (Zaha Hadid). Abu-Dhabi, through its high profile cultural projects, hopes that its strategy will raise the Emirate's international profile and establish it as a global tourism destination.

As well as the Cultural District, the Island includes 19 kilometres of beachfront, 29 hotels, three marinas, 8,000 residential villas and more than 38,000 apartments, three harbours, a park, a golf course and sailing club.

Economic impact is one of the most important aspects of the development of the Cultural District. The impact of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao is often cited as an example of culture being a primary factor in the economic rejuvenation of a city. Much like the Abu-Dhabi Tourism Authority, the Basque administration in Spain had significant funds for a revitalization plan with which it intended to strengthen its economy through tourism<sup>40</sup>. With the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, the city of Bilbao has marketed itself as a weekend destination for Spanish visitors and/or as an additional stopover for international tourists. The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao has reported a 10.9 percent average annual return on investment<sup>41</sup> and 11,758,465 million visitors from 1998-2009<sup>42</sup>. To recreate the success, the strategy of Abu-Dhabi Tourism Authority is based on: attracting other brands, choosing the best architects and acquiring the best team and skills. Tourism planning and marketing is the responsibility of the Abu-Dhabi Tourism Authority<sup>a</sup> (ADTA). Its main target is to increase tourist numbers from 959,500 in 2004 to over 3 million by 2015. In 2009, the annual number of visitors reached 1.5 million<sup>43</sup>. The main focus of the ADTA strategy will be on leisure tourism which accounts for only 20% of the total number of tourists. ADTA efforts are centred on hotels, airlines and destination management companies in order to promote the Emirate as a tourist destination as well as increase the leisure representation to 40% by 2015. During the period 2005-2009, the number of operational hotels increased from 55 hotels to

111. The number of hotels rooms also increased from 7,758 to 17,000 rooms over the same period. ADTA is also aiming to increase the hotel room capacity to 25,000 rooms.

[Insert Figures 1 & 2 about here]

The number of hotel guest arrivals increased from 959,562 in 2004 to 1.5 million in 2008. In 2009, Abu-Dhabi's hotel guest arrivals slipped by just 1% compared to the previous year. ADTA is targeting 15% growth in hotel guest arrivals for both 2011 and 2012. While Occupancy and guest night rates for July 2008-2009 showed a drop of 9%, average occupancy rates are still high 77%<sup>44</sup>. In 2008, hotel occupancy rate was 83.62% and they also generated 4,673,494 guest nights that stayed an average of three nights<sup>45</sup>. The opening of new offices in the UK, France, Germany, Italy, China and Australia and promoting Abu-Dhabi globally through international advertising campaigns is also part of the ADTA plans for targeting new markets and boosting tourist arrivals.

[Insert Figure 3 about here]

Nowadays airports are not only catalysts for economic development but are also becoming attractions themselves. The recent launch of the branding concept: Shop, Dine, Unwind by the Abu Dhabi Airports Company would appear to fit perfectly with the branding of Abu-Dhabi. A strong focus on transport in term of ports and airports, shipping companies and airlines is another key aspect in Abu-Dhabi's branding strategy. Abu-Dhabi airport is the second largest in the UAE, serving 9.02 million passengers in 2008, up 30.2% on 2007. The passenger volumes have also been increasing, especially since the launch of the Abu-Dhabi based national airline, Etihad Airways<sup>b</sup>. The second largest air carrier after Emirates is a key factor to enhance tourism to Abu-Dhabi in particular and the UAE in general. Etihad Airways currently flies to 57 destinations. The company aims to reach 70 international destinations by 2010. Etihad Airways also aims to increase its passenger numbers by 15 per cent to a total of seven million. A huge Midfield Terminal Complex is under construction at Abu-Dhabi

airport. The project is upgrading the capacity of the airport to 50 million passengers in the long term, with the first phase scheduled for completion by 2010.

Investment in the Exhibitions, Events and Conferences is another strand in the Abu-Dhabi strategy to position itself as a global centre of tourism and trade.

The following is a small representative selection of the many exhibitions that take place every year in Abu-Dhabi International Exhibition Centre (ADIEC): The International Hunting and Equestrian Exhibition (ADIHEX), also known as Abu-Dhabi 2008; The International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC 2008); The International Defence Exhibition and Conference (IDEX); Abu-Dhabi International Motor Show (ADIMS); Abu-Dhabi Yacht Show (ADYS); The World Future Energy Summit (WFES); Cityscape Abu Dhabi; Middle East Communications Exhibition and Conference (MECOM); Abu Dhabi Medical Congress; Roadex/Railex; Gulf Information Technology Exhibition (GITEX).

Investment in sporting activities is also a fundamental component of the branding strategy of Abu-Dhabi not only to increase their visitor numbers but also to position the Emirate as an international sports destination. After the success of hosting the 2003 FIFA youth world championship and the 2007 Gulf cup, Abu Dhabi hosted the FIFA world cup in 2009 and its first Formula 1 Grand Prix. Tournaments, such as the annual Tennis Championship at Abu Dhabi International Tennis Complex, part of the Zayed Sports City also provides an opportunity for Abu-Dhabi to promote sports tourism. International sport sponsorship is an effective brand advertising serving not only to further brand awareness but also to bring the Emirate of Abu-Dhabi to audiences around the world. Motorsports, is a particularly popular sport for sponsorship. Since 2007, the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA) has had a three-year partnership with the BP-Ford World Rally Team. In December 2007, Etihad Airways signed a three-year deal to become the title sponsor of the Formula One Abu-Dhabi Grand Prix, starting with the inaugural event on Yas Island in 2009. The F1 race will be

named the Formula One Etihad Airways Abu-Dhabi Grand Prix until 2011. In 2008, Etihad Airways signed a three-year sponsorship deal with the Ferrari F1 team, the current Formula One world championship holders. In September 2008, An Abu-Dhabi investment group (Abu Dhabi United Group for Development and Investment (ADUG), headed by the Mansour family bought the UK premier League club, Manchester City, spending over 210 million pounds on the purchase, quickly followed by a further investment of over 200 million pounds on players. The club sponsors are now Etihad Airways and plans have just been announced for a one billion pound property development project around the Manchester City stadium, ensuring a long term commitment.

Social and human development represents the final objective behind all the policies and initiatives pursued by the government of the Emirate of Abu-Dhabi. A world class higher education is a key element for the development of social and human resources of the Emirate. Successful international partnerships with the world's leading academic institutions enhance educational opportunities in Abu-Dhabi. Amongst these are:

- Paris Sorbonne University- Abu Dhabi (2006)
- New York University- Abu Dhabi (2007)
- European Institute of Business and Administration-INSEAD (2007)
- Strathclyde Business school

To guarantee its sustained development, Abu Dhabi investment in education must be sustained in the long term.

### **The case of Qatar:**

Just like Abu-Dhabi, Qatar set up a series of plans in an aim to promote the country as a high-quality leading leisure, business, sport, education and cultural destination in the global marketplace. Qatar, through its long term strategy and mainly through its Master Plan and its National Vision 2030, is trying not only to place its capital city, already renowned for its

international influence in the political, business and cultural arenas, on the international tourism map, but also aims to transform Qatar into an advanced country by 2030 mainly through human, social, economic and environmental development.

During recent years, Qatar has adopted ambitious policy initiatives with regard to investment in sports, education, infrastructures and tourism initiatives, among others. It has become a venue on the international sports circuit. After declaring independence in 1971, Qatar joined the Arab League and the United Nations. It was a driving force in the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and it is an active member of many Gulf, Arab, Islamic and international organizations. It has also served as a non-permanent member on the UN Security Council. *These policies seem to have been deliberately designed to put Qatar on the map*<sup>46</sup>.

The changes that Qatar has undergone in recent years shed light on the strategy that has been pursued to make Qatar regionally and globally significant. The branding strategy adopted by Qatar is not only based on international awareness, but it also involves economic objectives as well. The principle tools that guide the branding and the physical development of Qatar are based on: the Al Jazeera Broadcasting Network, economic growth, tourism strategies, investing in higher education, the expansion of Qatar Airways & the redevelopment of Doha International Airport and the establishment of the capital Doha as an international event destination.

The strength of the economy of Qatar is derived from its massive oil and gas reserves and from its economic diversification. A diversified economy enables the private sector to play an essential role in achieving the sustainable development of the country by: the expansion of its industries and services, the development of economic activities in which Qatar can specialize and an economy characterized by innovation, excellence in education, a world-class infrastructure and a transparent government.

Qatar with 1,638,829 inhabitants holds the world's third largest gas reserves. In 2008, Qatar ranked eleventh in crude oil exports among the 12 organizations of the Petroleum Exporting Countries<sup>47</sup>. The Qatari economy has undergone considerable growth in the last eight years and, according to the World Economic Forum 2009-2010<sup>48</sup>, the country is now the most competitive economy in OPEC, ranking 22nd worldwide. Due to a fall in world demand, oil prices, which averaged a high of around \$130 per barrel during July 2008, fell to \$40 per barrel by the end of the year. Despite the unfavourable conditions globally, according to Qatar Central Bank<sup>49</sup>, Qatar's GDP achieved a growth rate of around 11% in 2009, compared to 40.9% in 2008, with a GDP per Capita reaching \$ 57.936 for the year 2008<sup>50</sup>.

Furthermore, the creation of first Arab satellite news channel Al Jazeera Television network, in 1996, has since made Qatar a leader in the Arab world. The main company headquarters of Al Jazeera English are based in Doha, the capital of Qatar. In October 2008, the Al Jazeera Network entered into a partnership agreement with the Qatar Museum Authority to bring Qatar's cultural heritage to a wider audience. Qatar is taking steps to boost its image as a tourist destination, and was recently honoured for its efforts by the New York Times, which named the country Cultural Destination of the Year for 2009. Qatar tourism strategy is based on presenting the country as a world class destination, with high-quality services rather than that of a location for mass tourism.

Tourism is an important component of the modern economy of Qatar. A growing hotel industry is a key element in the tourism sector of any country. The Qatari hotel industry has made progress in the last few years. Data show an increase in the number of three, four and five-star hotels from 2008 to 2009, with an average of two hotels per category. Qatar Tourism Authority<sup>c</sup> (QTA) attributes this increase to *the surging demand for these categories of hotel facilities in the local market, as well as efforts by Qatari and foreign investors to attract reputable international hotel chains.*

[Place Table 1 about here]

In 2005, there were 3,503 rooms. That number rose to 8,495 in 2009. The total number of rooms increased by 25%, with 1,728 rooms added in 2009. Despite the high cost of rooms, occupancy levels were relatively high in 2008. According to the Qatar Tourism Authority, the Hotel occupancy rate fell by 6.3% in 2009 on 2008, and the revenues earned by four and five star hotels fell by QR33m and QR10m respectively. This decline in hotel revenues can be attributed to factors such as: the lower occupancy rates and the increased number of high-quality hotels which led to more competitive pricing than the previous year<sup>51</sup>. During the period 2006-2009, the number of employees in the Hotels & Restaurants sector increased from 15,010 employees in 2006 to 24,940 in 2009<sup>52</sup>.

Cultural attractions, especially museums, are now the central part of the urban development strategies of Qatar, and also pursue an important economic objective. The development of a number of world class museums has put Qatar on the map in the art world. Among these museums are the Qatar National Museum (designed by the French architect Jean Nouvel), the Weaponry Museum, Zubara Fort, the Ethnographic Museum, Al Wakrah Museum and Al Khor Museum. Additional projects that are currently in the planning or construction phase include: the National Library (scheduled to open by 2010 which will be designed by Arata Isozaki), the Museum of Photography and the Arab Museum of Modern Art (scheduled to open within the next three years). The Museum of Islamic Art opened in 2008 and designed by the celebrated architect I.M. Pei, is the flagship project of Qatar Museum Authority.

From 2004, the number of museum visitors<sup>d</sup> in Qatar increased from 12,469 to 31,903 in 2006. In 2008, the number of Museum visitors dropped dramatically to only 2,639 visitors. This huge decrease was due to the closure of Qatar National Museum for maintenance. In 2006, 16,284 visitors were attracted to the Qatar National Museum. This accounts for 51 percent of the total number of visitors.

Between 2004 and 2006, the number of visitors to Qatar increased by 113 percent<sup>53</sup>. According to the Qatar Tourism Authority, the number of visitors to Qatar increased by 2 percent in 2007 in comparison to 2006. In 2009, the total number of visitors reached 1.1mn. Due to the lack of attractions of international interest, Qatar is currently viewed as a destination for short-trip business travellers. 95% of travellers to Qatar come for business or to attend an international conference or an exhibition. In 2009, Europeans accounted for 33.1% of arrivals while its representation in 2004 was 16.1%.

Qatar is carrying out massive investments in infrastructure, tourism sites and Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE). Among the major infrastructure projects set to open in 2012 are the New Doha International Airport and two new exhibition and convention centres. The expansion of Qatar Airways & the redevelopment of Doha International Airport is also part of Qatar branding strategy. The New Doha International Airport is scheduled to open in 2011. As a new home for Qatar Airways, the new airport will be able to provide services for 12 million passengers a year and it is expected to become a major international gateway to the region.

Qatar Airways, the flag carrier Qatari airline, has been named the official airline of the Qatar Museum Authority to promote the state of Qatar as a global tourist destination. The airline is fast growing into a strong quality international carrier and regularly receives awards for its five stars service and premium offerings. Qatar Airways is one of only six airlines in the world with a Five Star ranking for service and excellence awarded by Skytrax, the independent aviation industry monitoring agency. In 2009, Qatar Airways was named best Economy Class Airline, moving up from the 2nd place that it held in 2008. Qatar Airways has a network of over 80 international destinations, including London, Manchester, Paris, Frankfurt, Rome, Johannesburg, Cape Town and New York.

Promoting a high-quality destination that aims to attract education tourism, is also part of Qatar's tourism strategy. Qatar has been investing heavily in higher education, mainly through world-class universities located in the 'Education City'. The 'Education City' was established by the Qatar Foundation<sup>e</sup> to make Qatar a leader in innovative education and research. The complex hosts Weill Cornell Medical College (2002), Georgetown University (2005), local branches of Texas A&M University (2003), Carnegie Mellon University (2004), Virginia Commonwealth School of the Arts in Qatar (1997). University and Qatar Science and Technology Park (inaugurated in March 2009). With this initiative Qatar aims to attract international companies and entrepreneurs to develop and commercialise their technology in Qatar.

The meeting and exhibitions market is another key element of Qatar's branding strategy. During 2008-2009, around 120 conferences and exhibitions were scheduled on topics such as oil and gas, finance, real-estate development and medicine. Doha also hosts a wide range of mainstream diplomatic and cultural conferences, for example the United Nations meeting, thereby achieving global recognition.

*Combining exhibitions and tourism under the some control of one authority, enables the Qatar Tourism Authority to create a unique tourism strategy, offering a business oriented destination, combined with leisure activities.*

Major events feature among the tools for promoting the country's image. Qatar has targeted itself as one of the world's leading sports destinations. In view of its successful hosting of the 15<sup>th</sup> Asian Olympic Games being hosted by Qatar in 2006, new sporting facilities are quickly being developed. With the hosting of the Asian Games Qatar, Doha became the first city in the region and the second in West Asia to host the Asian Games.

The country is currently home to a number of high profile sporting events such as the Qatar GP, the Qatar Masters Golf, the Qatar Tennis Open and the Qatar Airways Squash Challenge.

The country is now looking forward to staging the 2011 Asian Cup football tournament. Qatar is also planning to present its candidacy to host other world-scale events such as the 2020 Summer Olympic Games and the 2020 FIFA Football World Cup.

### **Level of Awareness of Abu-Dhabi and Qatar as an international destination**

Global visibility is a key condition for a successful branding strategy. Nowadays a global visibility is much easier to achieve due to the new Information and Communication Technologies. A simple 'Google News' search reveals the evolution of the presence of Abu-Dhabi and Qatar in the internet news between 1990 and 2009. In 2009, the term 'Qatar' shows up 93000 results while the term 'Abu-Dhabi' shows 54600 results. The analysis shows that Abu-Dhabi and Qatar were almost invisible for the internet until the year 2000. The overall images of Abu-Dhabi and Qatar have been influenced by their initiatives in recent years. For Qatar, these initiatives have had a visible impact not only on the country but also on its capital Doha as cultural capital with world class universities, hosting world-class conferences, forums, sports and cultural events. The Museum of Islamic Art, inaugurated in 2008, has given to Qatar and mainly to its capital Doha a global visibility.

Abu-Dhabi is also becoming well-known through its travel agents in a number of European countries which are promoting the Emirate as a sunshine destination, its cultural projects, the development of world class events and exhibitions, its Formula One Association, its investment in Ferrari as well as the increasing number of sporting events and its national airline Etihad Airways.

[Insert Figure 4 about here]

A random sample of 1,000 news stores in Google News.com was carried out to see what the main topics related to Abu-Dhabi and Qatar were during the year 2009.

The continuing measures and economic incentives developed by the Emirate to improve its investment environment has ensured that Abu-Dhabi's investment news appeared first on the

list of the top ten main topics in Google News. Abu-Dhabi efforts to promote itself as an international sport destination is reflected in the fact that sport news/events/sponsoring appeared as the second main topic in Google News. Tourism was third on the list followed by Abu-Dhabi energy/projects/companies that are the 5<sup>th</sup> main topic. Abu-Dhabi international Airport and Etihad Airways ranked only 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> in the list. Rounding off the list were Abu-Dhabi figures and economic indicators.

[Place Table 2 about here]

With regard to Qatar, their efforts to promote sport events and investment in sport infrastructure are clearly indicated in the fact the sports appeared as the first main topic in Google News. The major investments in infrastructure and the general economic growth of Qatar are also reflected in the list. Qatar energy& investment/news/projects were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> main topics in Google News. Qatar Airways, the fast growing carrier of Qatar was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> on the list.

[Place Table 3 about here]

### **Conclusion:**

Countries are increasingly aware of the growing importance of how they are perceived abroad. This perception affects purchasing, tourism, investment and commercial relationships. The image of a country depends on the correct handling of external communications, on government macroeconomic policies and on the individual behaviours of its leaders.

Places do not acquire a new identity because of a catchy slogan or a memorable. A place needs, first of all, to differentiate itself by means of a unique branding if it wishes, to be recognised; secondly, its qualities have to be perceived in the mind of the client as being superior to its competitors; and thirdly, these qualities and their perception must give rise to a corresponding consumer demand. A greater emotional experience is linked to the country only by virtue of its name, and it is not incongruous therefore that marketing experts in each

country seek to differentiate and position themselves in the global market with a series of attractions. The case of the Bilbao Guggenheim and its modern aesthetics leads the tourist to associate the city by default with what the museum represents, which is no less than modernity and social image. Potential investors, as a result, will be convinced, for the same reasons, that this is a potentially important market.

Branding has become a competitive factor in modern economies and a differentiating element in the relations between the various protagonists in the international system. A strong country brand can forge significant global competitive advantages; attract skills and investments as well as promoting sources of economic value and increase the sales of products associated with the country.

Implementing the process of place branding within a country, a city or a region requires the interaction of different sectors which must be coordinated and organized by a governing body which directs all the actions towards the pursuit of economic development, hence the essential role of the public administrations of each location.

The majority of countries approach tourism promotion as being the first step before subsequently moving to the positioning of other sectors. An analysis of the branding strategies carried out by Abu-Dhabi and Qatar indicate that these have also used tourism as one of the main tools of attraction. There are two major reasons for further developing the tourism sector of Abu-Dhabi and Qatar. The first is to create opportunities for their business communities; the second is to raise their profiles as destinations with global appeal.

As we said before the basis for a branding strategy is creating distinctiveness. Tourism is a key to Qatar and Abu-Dhabi's economic diversification policy. Billions of dollars have been invested in hotels, airports, sports stadiums, museums and marketing campaigns. Qatar and Abu-Dhabi branding strategies are quite similar. Project generated marketing such as: the Ferrari Theme Park, Formula 1 Gran Prix Abu Dhabi, Warner Brothers Theme Park, the vast

Guggenheim Museum Abu-Dhabi, The first Louvre Museum outside Paris, The Museum of Islamic Art by Pei as well as sporting events, Qatar Airways, and cultural and shopping festivals and many other projects in Abu Dhabi and Qatar are expected to raise the international profile of these countries to attract further investment and tourism. But these branding factors are not sufficient to create a brand that differentiates them from those of its neighbours.

With the creation of their own distinctive brand, Qatar and Abu-Dhabi become more than locations rich in oil and natural gas with modern buildings and shopping malls. For this reason, they must develop other branding factors that raise their profile and differentiate them from other areas in the region.

The branding strategy of Abu-Dhabi may at first appear identical to that of Qatar. Their cultural strategies create a sense of belonging and safety, but they can also be repeated and copied, therefore perhaps diminishing the distinctiveness of each city.

Qatar and Abu-Dhabi are spending such vast amounts on museum and gallery buildings that it will be crucial to discover if these museums will attract local and international visitors. Pei has already proven his importance in Doha. Some questions that may be raised are: Is it because the Museum of Islamic art was designed by a prominent architect that has established Doha as a cultural capital? Does the MIA redefine the cultural capital and convert Doha into a research and history centre? Will Saadiyat Island with its modern art museums become an architectural destination and be able to attract the huge number of visitors that Abu-Dhabi expects?

The rise of social networks has resulted in turning these into an ideal tool for the development of strategies and action plans which favour the promotion of a place. It would be interesting to analyse the brand image of Abu-Dhabi and Qatar on the internet to determine the effectiveness of their place branding strategy. To this end it would be necessary to use a

statistical and econometric analysis to examine the influence of this source of information through consumer research. For example a measure of visitor perceptions of the place before and after the visit is crucial to determine if the transmitted image is matched by the actual experience.

## References:

- <sup>1</sup>Plaza, B. (2000): “Guggenheim Museum’s Effectiveness to Attract Tourism”. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27: pp. 1055-1058.
- <sup>2</sup>Gelder, S. V. (2008): “How to improve the chances of successfully developing and implementing a place brand strategy”. Available at: [www.placebrands.net](http://www.placebrands.net).
- <sup>3</sup>Kotler, P. & Gertner, D. (2002): “Country as brand, product, and beyond: A place marketing and brand management perspective.” *Journal of Brand Management*, 9 (4/5): pg. 249-257.
- <sup>4</sup>Papadopoulos, N. (2004): “Place branding: evolution, meaning and implications.” *Place Branding*, 1 (1): pp. 36-49.
- <sup>5</sup>Hanna S. & Rowley J. (2008): “An analysis of terminology use in place branding”. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 4 (1): pp. 61–75.
- <sup>6</sup>Hankinson, G. (2004): “Relational network brands: Towards a conceptual model of place brands”. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 10 (2): pp. 109-121.
- <sup>7</sup>Hankinson, G. (2001): “Location branding: A study of the branding practices of 12 English cities”. *Journal of Brand Management*, 9 (2): pp. 127 – 142.
- <sup>8</sup>Hospers, GJ (2004): “Place Marketing in Europe. The Branding of the Oresund Region”. *Intereconomics*.
- <sup>9</sup>Anholt, S. (2005): “Some important distinctions in place branding.” *Place Branding*, 1 (2): pp. 116-121.
- <sup>10</sup>Papadopoulos, *Place branding*, 2004.
- <sup>11</sup>Anholt, *Some important distinctions*, 2005.
- <sup>12</sup>Rainisto, S.K. (2003): “Success Factors of Place Marketing: A Study of Place Marketing Practices in Northern Europe and the United States”. *Doctoral Dissertation, Helsinki University of Technology*. Institute of Strategy and International Business.

<sup>13</sup>Papadopoulos , N . and Heslop , L . ( 2002 ): “ Country equity and country branding: Problems and prospects”. *Journal of Brand Management* , 9 ( 4): pp. 294 – 314 .

<sup>14</sup>Kavaratzis, M, Asworth, G.J (2005): “City Branding: An Effective Assertion Of Identity or a Transitory Marketing Trick?” *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografic*, 96 (5): pp. 506-514.

<sup>15</sup>Kerr, G. (2006): “From destination brand to location brand”. *Journal of Brand Management*, 13 (4 – 5): pp. 276 – 283.

<sup>16</sup>Anholt, S. (2007): “Competitive Identity: The Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions”. *Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan*. Xiii, 134 p.

<sup>17</sup>Asworth, GJ (2009): “The Instruments of Place Branding: How Is It Done?” *European Spatial Research and Policy*, 16 (1): pp. 9-22.

<sup>18</sup>Rainisto, *Success factors*, 2003.

<sup>19</sup>Kotler & Gertner, *Country as brand*, 2002.

<sup>20</sup>Prado, F. (2007): “Marcas, Reputaciones y Territorios”. [Translated of sp]. Available at:[http://reputationinstitute.com/events/Marcas\\_Reputaciones\\_y\\_Territorios\\_Badajoz2007.pdf](http://reputationinstitute.com/events/Marcas_Reputaciones_y_Territorios_Badajoz2007.pdf)

<sup>21</sup>Jaffe, E. D., & Nebenzahl, I.D. (2001) “National image and competitive advantage: the theory and practice of country-of-origin effect.” *Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press*.

<sup>22</sup>Kavaratzis, M. (2004): “From city marketing to city branding: Toward a theoretical framework for developing city brands”. *Place Branding*, 1 (1): pp. 58 – 73.

<sup>23</sup>Kavaratzis & Ashworth, *City branding*, 2005.

<sup>24</sup>Hankinson, *Relational network brands*, 2004.

<sup>25</sup>Papadopoulos, *Place branding*, 2004.

<sup>26</sup>Kotler & Gertner, *Country as brand*, 2002.

<sup>27</sup>Gilmore, F (2002): “A Country- Can it be Repositioned? Spain- the Success Story of Country Branding”. *Journal of Brand Management*, 9 (45): pp. 281-293.

<sup>28</sup>Zukin, Sharon (2009): “Destination Culture: How Globalization makes all Cities look the same.” Conference on “Rethinking Cities and Communities: Urban Transition before and During the Era of Globalization”. Centre for Urban and Global Studies, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut.

<sup>29</sup>Plaza, B. and Haarich, S.N. (2009): “Museums for urban regeneration? Exploring conditions for their effectiveness.” *Journal of Urban Regeneration and Renewal*, 2(3): pp. 259-271.

<sup>30</sup>Plaza, B. (2010): “Valuing museums as economic engines: Willingness to pay or discounting of cash-flows?” *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, 11: pp. 155-162.

<sup>31</sup>Zukin, *Destination Culture*, 2009.

<sup>32</sup>Plaza, *Valuing Museums*, 2010.

<sup>33</sup>Plaza and Haarich, *Museums for urban regeneration*, 2009.

<sup>34</sup>Kotler & Gertner, *Country as brand*, 2002.

<sup>35</sup>Department of economic development (2008): “The Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030”. Direction URL: <http://dpeportal.adeconomy.ae>

<sup>36</sup>Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council (2010): “Abu Dhabi Real Estate Market Forecasts”. Direction URL: <http://www.upc.gov.ae>

<sup>37</sup>Statistics centre - Abu Dhabi (2009): “Statistical Yearbook of Abu Dhabi 2009”. Direction URL: [www.scad.ae](http://www.scad.ae)

<sup>38</sup>United Arab Emirate (2009): “United Arab Emirate Yearbook”. Available at: [http://www.uaeinteract.com/uaeint\\_misc/pdf\\_2009/](http://www.uaeinteract.com/uaeint_misc/pdf_2009/)

<sup>39</sup>Thompson, S. (2008): “Globalization, Economics and Museums: Saadiyat Island’s Cultural District.” *Journal of Art in Society*, 3 (3).

<sup>40</sup>Skylakakis, S. (2005): “The Vision of a Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao.”  
*Cambridge: Harvard Design School.*

Available at: <http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/people/faculty/pollalis/cases/BilbaoG-CaseA.pdf>

<sup>41</sup>Plaza, B. (2006): “The Return on Investment of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.”  
*International Journal of Urban and Research*, 30 (2): pp. 452-467.

<sup>42</sup>Plaza, *Valuing museums*, 2010.

<sup>43</sup>Statistics centre - Abu Dhabi, *Statistical Yearbook*, 2009.

<sup>44</sup>Al Mashni, Rima A. (5 october 2009): “Abu Dhabi's tourism industry in confidence  
upturn events and exhibitions seen as key opportunity drivers in coming year”. *AMEinfo*.  
Direction URL: <http://www.ameinfo.com/211256.html>

<sup>45</sup>Statistics centre - Abu Dhabi, *Statistical Yearbook*, 2009.

<sup>46</sup>Peterson, J.E (2006): “Qatar and the world: Branding for a micro state”. *Middle East  
Institute*, 60 (4): pp. 732-748.

<sup>47</sup>Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (2008): “Annual Statistical  
Bulletin”. Direction URL: [www.opec.org](http://www.opec.org)

<sup>48</sup>World Economic Forum (2009-2010): “The Global competitiveness Report”.  
Direction URL: [www.weforum.org](http://www.weforum.org)

<sup>49</sup>Qatar Central Bank (2009): “Quarterly statistical Bulletin”. 29 (3).  
Direction URL: [www.qcb.gov.qa](http://www.qcb.gov.qa)

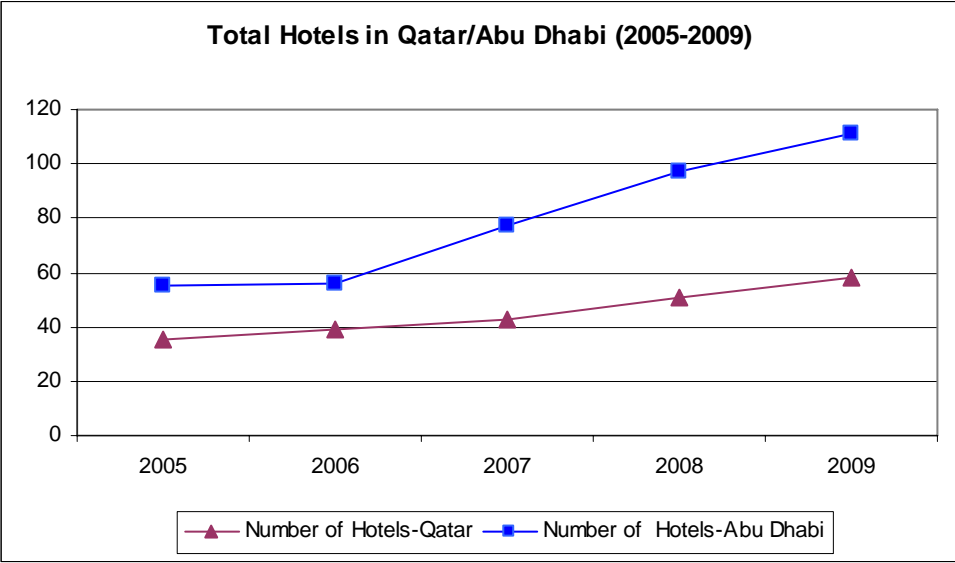
<sup>50</sup>Qatar Statistics Authority (2009, 2008, 2006, 2005): “Annual Abstract”.  
Direction URL: [www.qsa.gov.qa](http://www.qsa.gov.qa)

<sup>51</sup>Qatar Tourism Authority (Feb 07, 2010): “QTA reports on performance and progress  
in Qatar hotel sector for 2008-2009”.  
Direction URL: [www.qatartourism.gov.qa/press/index/1/52](http://www.qatartourism.gov.qa/press/index/1/52)

<sup>52</sup>Qatar Statistics Authority (2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009): “Bulletin Labour force Sample Survey”. Direction URL: [www.qsa.gov.qa](http://www.qsa.gov.qa)

<sup>53</sup>Supreme Council of Information & Communication Technology (ICT) (2009): “Qatar’s ICT Landscape Report”. Direction URL: [www.ict.gov.qa](http://www.ict.gov.qa)

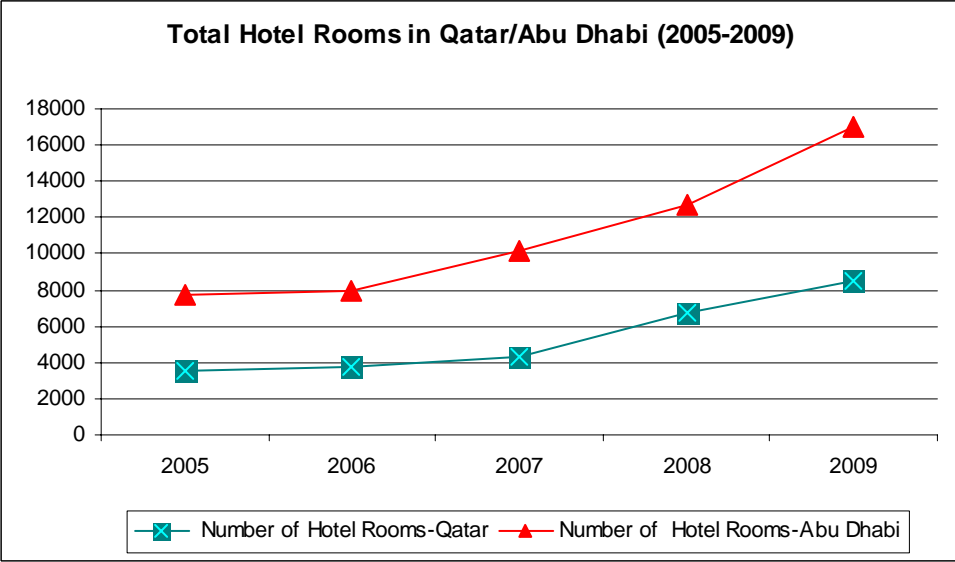
**Figure 1: Number of Operational Hotels in Abu-Dhabi & Qatar:**



Based on data from the Qatar Statistics Authority

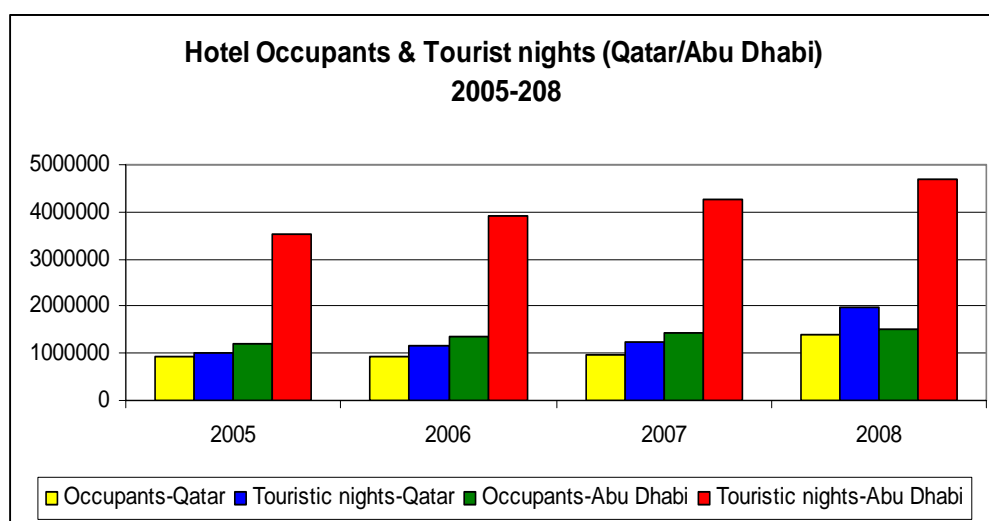
Note: Existing hotels for 2005 to 2008 sourced from Abu-Dhabi Yearbook 2009. Data for 2009 sourced from Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority.

**Figure 2: Number of Hotel Rooms in Abu-Dhabi & Qatar:**



Based on data from the Qatar Statistics Authority - Hotel Rooms for 2005 to 2008 sourced from Abu-Dhabi Yearbook 2009. Data for 2009 sourced from Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority.

**Figure 3: Hotel Occupants & Tourist nights (Abu-Dhabi/Qatar):**



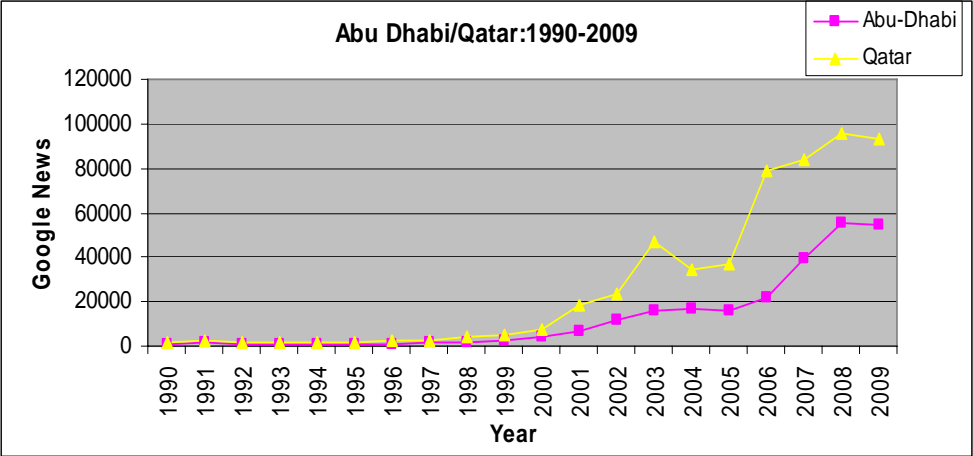
Based on data from the Qatar Statistics Authority - Hotel Occupants & Tourist nights for Abu-Dhabi sourced from Abu-Dhabi Yearbook 2009.

**Table 1: Number of Operational Hotels in Qatar**

Category	No of Operational Hotels					No. of Rooms				
	2005	2006	2007	2008*	2009*	2005	2006	2007	2008*	2009*
<b>1-star Hotels</b>	3	5	3	2	2	75	120	59	40	40
<b>2-star Hotels</b>	4	5	5	11	11	193	235	321	552	552
<b>3-star Hotels</b>	17	15	18	15	17	782	856	846	964	1084
<b>4-star Hotels</b>	7	8	10	11	13	1212	1063	1347	2155	2760
<b>5-star Hotels</b>	4	6	7	12	15	1241	1487	1783	3056	4059
<b>TOTAL</b>	35	39	43	51	58	3503	3761	4356	6767	8495

Based on data from the Qatar Statistics authority and the Qatar Tourism Authority\*

**Figure 4: Google news hits for Abu-Dhabi/Qatar during the period 1990-2009**



<http://news.google.com>

**Table 2: Abu-Dhabi: Top Ten Main Topics in Google News (2009)**

	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Number of Google News Items</b>
<b>1</b>	Abu Dhabi Investment News/Companies/Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)/Environment Investments(Masdar)	278
<b>2</b>	Sport news/events/sponsoring	232
<b>3</b>	Abu Dhabi Tourism	148
<b>4</b>	Abu Dhabi Bank news/ Business News/Investments/Injection/Financial Institutions/ NBAD/ADIB/ADCB	93
<b>5</b>	Abu Dhabi/Energy News/Projects/Companies	86
<b>6</b>	Abu Dhabi/Dubai News	62
<b>7</b>	Abu Dhabi International Airport	34
<b>8</b>	Etihad Airways	12
<b>9</b>	Abu Dhabi/Economic Indicators	9
<b>10</b>	Abu Dhabi University Campus	7
	Others	39
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>

<http://news.google.com>

Note: NBAD-National Band of Abu Dhabi, ADIB-Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, ADCB-Abu Dhabi Central Bank.

**Table 3: Qatar: Top Ten Main Topics in Google News (2009)**

	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Number of Google News Items</b>
<b>1</b>	Sport News/Events/Sponsoring	247
<b>2</b>	Qatar Energy News/Projects/Companies	202
<b>3</b>	Qatar Investment News/Companies	173
<b>4</b>	Qatar Airways	98
<b>5</b>	Qatar Bank News/ Business News/Investments/Injection/Financial Institutions	82
<b>6</b>	Vodafone Qatar	54
<b>7</b>	Qatar Telecommunication Company QTEL	46
<b>8</b>	Qatar Tourism	21
<b>9</b>	Industries Qatar	17
<b>10</b>	Qatar /Economic Indicators	15
	Others	45
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>

<http://news.google.com>

**Notes:**

<sup>a</sup> Established in 2004 by the government of Abu-Dhabi, ADTA is responsible for the development and promotion of the Emirate's tourism industry and international image as a world-class destination of distinction. ADTA works closely with the entire Emirate's tourism industry: stakeholders, aviation infrastructure and transport suppliers, airlines, destination management companies, accommodation providers and attraction operators as well as exhibition and conference organisers. A key tool in the inward investment strategy of ADTA was the creation, in 2006, of the Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC). TDIC is now the name behind some of the emirate's flagship projects including the transformation of Saadiyat Island and the development of Yas Island.

<sup>b</sup> Etihad Airways was named best Business Class Airline, moving up from the 5<sup>th</sup> place that it held in 2008. The airline figures also among the top 10 global airlines [Reference - Skytrax].

<sup>c</sup> Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA)'s role is to organize, enable, and supervise the tourism industry development in Qatar, as well as to represent and promote Qatar as a quality tourism destination for leisure, business, education, and sport.

<sup>d</sup> Data include: Qatar National Museum, Weaponry Museum, Zubara Fort Museum, Al Khor Museum and Ethnographic Museum.

<sup>e</sup> The non-profit organization, the Qatar Foundation, was founded in 1995 to develop the potential of the people of Qatar.