UDC: 711.4:339.13
DOI: 10.5379/urban-izziv-en-2014-25-01-001

Received: 13 May 2013
Accepted: 20 Jan. 2014

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Qualitative criteria of urbanism and brands: A comparative analysis

Interactivity, multidisciplinarity, synergy and interdependence are all concepts that are clearly intertwined with managing every responsible city and its leaders. Urbanism plays a significant role among the disciplines that affect the uniqueness and competitive position of a city. None of the cities that are successful in a competitive environment would be a noteworthy and powerful brand if they did not possess recognisable, singular and distinctive elements of urbanism that made them unique. This article proceeds from the hypothesis that urbanism with qualitative solutions helps shape a city's brand and that the criteria that demonstrate this are in agreement with the qualitative criteria of a brand. In reviewing the scholarly literature on urbanism as brands and branding itself, it is shown that qualitative urbanism criteria show great similarity with qualitative brand criteria, and therefore have a decisive effect on a city brand and its placement in a competitive urban market. Qualitative urbanism and brand criteria are closely linked and tend to be cast in the same mould, although they differ in formulation and level of implementation. These acknowledged similarities represent a step forward in integral operation, management, communication and urban marketing. They also enable more-or-less unconnected areas of urbanism and marketing to connect. The positive consequences of understanding the connection of both fields will be long-term and will build a recognisable, consistent and stakeholder-friendly reputation for a city. These findings are a golden opportunity for urban management and confirm the need for a comprehensive approach to urban management.

Keywords: brand, branding, city brand, urbanism, qualitative urbanism criteria, qualitative brand criteria, brand position.

1 Introduction

Comparative approaches in the social sciences are experiencing a renaissance of a sort. As Jan Nijman (2007: 1) suggests: "Comparative urbanism, as a field of inquiry, aims at developing knowledge, understanding and generalisation at a level between what is true of all cities and what is true of one city at a given point in time. It should not surprise us that each and every place is different or even unique in some ways – this is the idiosyncratic nature of place. What begs our attention is why separate places can be very similar in certain respects." Comparative approaches are increasingly gaining ground. In fact, they are pushing the boundaries even further and crossing the lines of specific study areas. Thus, it is no coincidence that this article compares two different areas of study and research: urbanism and marketing.

"Economic success and post-industrial vitality of a city depend especially upon the quality of surroundings, accessibility, safety, city image and cultural offer [sic]" (Roger & Fischer, 1992; Tibbalds, 1992; Gotlieb, 2007, cited in Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011: 7). A city's success is subordinated to the harmonious functioning of all its components, an aspect that Irene Bačlija (2011) believes urban management needs to address. The orderliness of an urban environment has a strong influence on the economic growth and boom of a city and, consequently, its status. Increasingly more successful cities in Europe as well as on other continents are aware of this (Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011). "Increasingly cities compete with each other for attracting tourists, investors, companies, new citizens and most of all qualified workforce or so-called talents" (Zenker et al., 2010: 4). These sorts of competition are a novelty and differ from global competition battles between national products and services. Cities are increasingly trying to be recognised as good investments (Nallathiga, 2011). While competing in attracting citizens, companies, tourists and manpower using knowledge economy principles, cities are utilising marketing techniques to attract attention and build a desirable image (Hospers, 2009). According to Janka Černe et al. (2012), this means acknowledging city users' views on matters, reflecting the relationship between environmental and real-estate characteristics and indicators of psychosomatic identity. Cities compete with one another for investments and try to convince potential investors to recognise their benefits and interests (Harris, 2002). Areas of competition vary significantly and stem from the fact that cities are heterogeneous formations with many different activities within which manifold forms and types of work, types of communication, uses of technology and interpersonal relations intertwine.

The idea that it is possible to market cities as products is very widespread (see Ward, 1998; Kotler, 1999; Clark, 2002; Rainisto, 2003; Braun, 2008; Hospers, 2009). Cities as products differ from one another, whereas the degree of distinction and uniqueness has an impact on where they stand regarding their competitive position and advantage. Thus, cities are becoming reservoirs of different types of capital (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2005) and skilled labour, especially in the service sector, the driving gear of employment, as well as educational, cultural, innovative, information and communication centres (Nallathiga, 2011). If cities want to be competitive they must prove their ability and thus define their economic relevance, which can originate and supplement itself from different areas (Gordon, 2011). Cecilia Pasquinelli (2013: 2) states that a "brand can provide for broader and clearer views, as it contains 'soft' components (that is faith, perception and values) which are the key to planning a collective strategy and mobilising local stakeholders to strive for changes." "Branding is a communication process which enables 'soft' components to become noticeable and distributed discourse" (Business Dictionary, 2013a). "Soft" strategic factors express the quality of the working and living environment, cultural opportunities and housing in a particular area, personal safety, visual attractiveness and speed and comfort of movement. Uniqueness is an image a city achieves when it attains the things listed above (Sitar, 2005). The more a city is capable of standing out in more than just one discipline, the stronger it is among its rivals. The more recognisable a city is for its competitive advantages, the stronger its brand is. Owing to this, the city not only enjoys a better reputation, but also creates a better image in the eyes of different users and stakeholders. Because of the competition between cities, they have started to incorporate marketing into their management system in order to increase their perception within targeted public. Creating a desired perception and mental picture of a city is possible with the help of city brand or, as Liz Moor (2007) states, branding is a "process that works to articulate, connect, enhance and represent the facets and cues embodied in brands in meaningful ways." An effective city brand is based on its soul (Northover, 2010), which is jointly created by its material and mental symbols (Vanolo, 2008). Building a city brand in its main features (physical, socio-economic, cultural and organisational) is an important compound of activities that have a strong influence on city marketing (Nallathiga, 2011). The city brand is a psychological marketing category that combines marketing and social characteristics of a brand; furthermore, it represents geographic designation (Pompe, 2013a). Metaphorically speaking, a brand embodies a city, expresses its character and communicates with its stakeholders through complete identity and ambient qualities. The concept of urban stakeholders covers a broad spectrum of people with similar principles, such as investors, non-governmental organisations, economy, designers, retailers, suppliers, tourists and citizens. It is often hard to integrate so many different interests into one solution (Henry & Paris,

2009). Cities are building an iconographic image of strong and positive characteristics (Nallathiga, 2011; Mavromatidis & Mavromatidi, 2012). A city portrait is multi-dimensional, so it is wrong to believe that it is confined to only urbanism (Luque-Martinez et al., 2007). Hypothetically, there is a connection between urban ambient quality (buildings, traffic, roads, quarters and undeveloped areas), identity (a city symbol or coat-of-arms, profile, content of communication and typical behaviour of its managers and citizens) and its brand (how stakeholders see the city). Ramakrishna Nallathiga (2011: 33) believes that the "physical level of urban structures, existent retaining infrastructure and simplicity of an operation all have a strong influence on building a city brand." A city image is created in human thoughts and is a consequence of influence on their perception of a city: it is almost a mirror image of the principle used with products/services and companies (Ashworth & Kavaratzis, 2009). Furthermore, this paper focuses on the link between urbanism (urban influence through ambient quality) and strategic branding (influence based on communications and knowledge), both of which exercise significant influence on a city brand. Each of them has its own professional goals and standpoints with both efforts resulting in city perceptions. It may seem, at least at first sight, as though they are not connected with one another, yet there are numerous similarities. The next section discusses qualitative elements of urbanism and brands.

2 Qualitative elements of urbanism

"Planners should attempt to shape the city so as to produce a public experience that is larger than all its constituent parts" (Lee, 2014: 152). According to Montserrat Pallares-Barbera et al. (2011), a good urban tissue can change the current adequacy of a residence. Therefore, it is a goal of urbanism to tamp down clashes of space, seek congruent spatial solutions and realise them as quality city ambiences; all that for a city to acquire its value, cosmopolitanism and appropriate thickening of what it has to offer and its charisma (Savitch, 2010). Špela Verovšek et al. (2013: 67) vividly describe the urban milieu as "being [the] 'stage and scenery' of human activity." To wit, a qualitative settled and shaped urban environment encourages greater creativity and thus is an important social and economic category (Faculty of Architecture, 2013). Accordingly, shaping the urban environment is basically a collaboration between art and technical sciences along with the physical organisation of buildings and open space, in order for a quality city arrangement to be achieved (see Cuthbert, 2007; Krieger, 2009; Marshall & Caliskan, 2011; Marshall, 2012). The urban environment co-creates a city's identity and positions the city in a competitive city environment. Urban planning incorporates two main aspects. The first one refers to the use of space and the relationship between developed and open spaces. The success of this part of urbanism is estimated by its quantitative criteria. To be specific, these relate to an extension of buildings and space as well as spatial unit use. It is a technical criterion of proper use and management of urban space, which is one of the many foundations of urban planning and spatial-architectural solutions. The second aspect refers to all those elements of urban space that affect urban life, its quality, its perceived value, its historical continuum, preservation of heritage and opportunities for future progress. A foundation for a complete approach to this part of urbanism is offered by the quality criteria based on Kevin Lynch's (1961) classification, adapted by Hamid Shirvani (1985) and Ian Bentley et al. (1985). These are: context, accessibility, diversity, readability, adaptability, vision adequacy and variety (Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011).

2.1 Context

Kaliopa Dimitrovska Andrews (2011: 43) states that "space context includes: historical development, current image and its impact on space perception, planning status and social and economic role (actual and potential) of location." Giliberti (2013) establishes that planners are also interested in the relationship between collective memory and space, and thus comprehension of the way the past is embedded in the present context, and they respond to a common need for heritage symbols. Therefore, urbanism treats an urban ground plan made up of different spatial patterns with different historical signs (i.e., culture, economics, social conditions and technology). It is about connecting types of constructions, shapes, architecture, local interpretations and functioning into a uniform urban organism. These are physical structures that can be divided between thematic (repeat urban patterns) and nonthematic (linking different patterns into the city entirety; Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011). Context, therefore, is a guiding star of design strategy, which is supposed to create and execute a complete and coordinated long-term city vision. This vision's aim is to make physical structures meant for orientation and readability and to help protect and create the cityscape and city silhouette. This creates a distinctive and perceptible character. Among other things, context is also defined as a "character and plan of an area formed by natural, as well as human/cultural history; formats of settlements, facilities and spaces; ecological and archaeological characteristics; individual locations and traffic infrastructures, including people living there and organising a discussed area" (Llewelyn-Davies, 2000: 19). A preliminary condition for forming recognisable urban spaces is to take the entire context of an area into consideration. "Judging context when preparing spatial plans or urban schemes also includes elements such as the opinion of a local community, line analysis of current planned documents, appreciation of environmental and regional qualities, traffic analysis and other economic infrastructures and assessment of supply and

demand" (Llewelyn-Davies, 2000: 113). This is a completely rational and practical view of urban context. When discussing his views of cultural urban texture, Rolf Linder (2006: 53) states that cities are not a tabula rasa and he therefore suggests they should not create their cultural codes only through physical structures, but also through surrounding stories that are a consequence of discourses of time. Because of this, some cities are like accounting books – logical and clear – whereas others are like contemporary poetry – freethinking and entangled – but most are simply drowning in mediocrity. All of these facts confirm the significance of context when perceiving a city. A good example of the contextual approach would be New York City, where the geometric congruence of vertical and horizontal street lines is cut through by Broadway, which instils life into unnatural geometric perfection as creative inspiration (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Contextual urbanism in New York City (source: Internet 1).

2.2 Accessibility

For residents and other users, accessibility is one of the key elements of the urban environment. This refers to efforts toward greater accessibility to facilities and the services they contain, as well to open spaces and their activities. Optimisation of accessibility leads not only to greater environment responsiveness, but also increases the selection of accessible pathways for residents (Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011). There are two accessibility viewpoints regarding existing connection pathways: a) location transitiveness seen from the city as a whole – connection and transitiveness of a certain location – and b) location transitiveness regarding other neighbourhoods and quarters. Moreover, the framework for planning good transitiveness also arises from space context analyses. One of the things they treat is how newly-planned traffic infrastructure will form a connection to an existing one, especially a better supply for all types of traffic, above all pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. Like many leading architects and spatial planners, Llewelyn-Davies Yeang (2000: 28) states, "well planned accessibility also enables a better space readability, that is, for example, stressed formation of entrances into locations at a particular characteristic area, and traffic road and public space hierarchy." In practice, accessibility being taken into account with urban spatial planning can be seen in Vienna's core, where right from the central St Stephen's Cathedral streets spread out to all four points of the compass and are linked with the

Figure 2: Accessibility in Vienna's core (source: Internet 2).

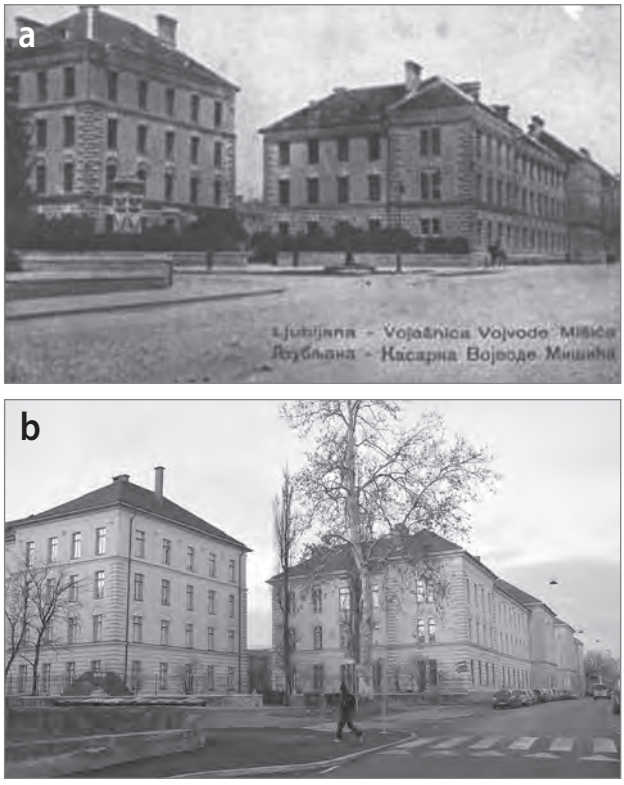

Figure 3: Different use and meaning of space: Metelkova City in Ljubljana then and now (photo: Andrej Pompe).

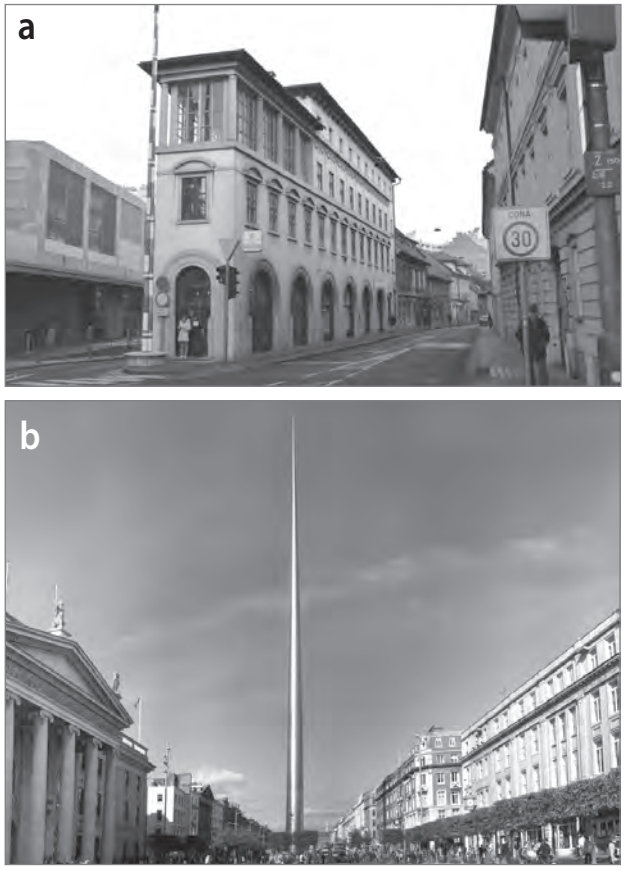

Figure 4: Architectural solutions contributing to greater city readability: a) the Flatiron Building in Ljubljana and b) the Spire of Dublin (photo: Andrej Pompe).

encircling street (i.e., the Ring). This enables optimal accessibility to all services in this area (see Figure 2).

2.3 Diversity

This refers to diversity of forms, uses and meanings of space. Diversity of uses of space also stimulates other diversities: a) a different typology of facilities and their forms, b) attractiveness for different groups of people at different times with different reasons and c) a perceptual blend is created – different people perceive the same object differently. According to Gordon Cullen (1961: 9), the "purpose of urbanism is to handle its elements in order to be able to break through to human feelings." The notion of diversity may be linked with creating a distinctive perception of an ambience, which entails bringing up certain sensations and feelings to the surface – in short, experiencing location. "People recognise and perceive certain locations as unique and attractive in its own way [sic], and that they cause indefinable sensations of good feelings which make them want to return" (Jackson, 1994: 158). Ambient perception is a consequence of the congruence between buildings, trees, nature, water, traffic and advertising. This is how space dramaturgy is created, converting the city or certain parts into a unique dramaturgical environment where a palette of manifold relationships evolve, or as Cullen (1961: 7) puts it: "[a] city is a dramaturgical event in our environment." For diversity as a qualitative criterion, Matthew Carmona et al. (2003) have come up with the term "vitality", which is explained as the degree to which settlement forms enable development of users' vital functions and satisfy their biological needs. A city is a conglomerate of diversity consisting mostly of unique forms, use and meanings of areas. For example, in Ljubljana there was once a closed area of barracks that acquired a completely different character and meaning after the collapse of Yugoslavia – afterwards it was flooded with culture in manifold forms, with a subculture such as the Metelkova City independent cultural centre being an example (Figure 3).

2.4 Readability

Space readability is determined by the degree of recognisability by users (Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011). It gives people a chance to find their position using "guidelines" formed by solutions of spatial design. Readability enables intuitive understanding of urban data (Chang et al., 2007) and has influence on a space speed command and mental perception of the city. Urban space is readable if it can be perceived by all five senses, or as Kevin Lynch (1960: 10) states, "A spatial planning system should be readable by distinguishable sensual cues." Readability is becoming one of the biggest problems of urbanism today; therefore, the semantics of urban environment is becoming more important in controlling the city (Wessel et al., 2009).

The City of Los Angeles is an example of poor readability because it is too vast, too populous and has a network of similar streets arranged at right angles and one can orient oneself only by street signs. The only two landmarks are the skyscrapers of downtown and the Hollywood Sign on a nearby hill. From a city readability standpoint, what is important are constructions that stand out and can be noticed from afar, and architecturally unique buildings that are easy to describe (e.g., The Flatiron Building (*Peglezen*) in Ljubljana; the Spire of Dublin, Dublin Tower; see Figure 4)

2.5 Adaptability

Adaptability is the degree to which shapes and dimensions of space around buildings and their exteriors satisfy the needs of residents and other users of the space, defined by their habits and frequency of activity (Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011). As a criterion, adaptability refers to three areas: a) accessibility from open areas to the buildings: as accessible and noticeable entrances and shop-windows as possible, b) room lightning; that is, a sufficient amount of light in public space for itself and neighbouring buildings and c) movement flow in public space. "Quality public spaces are shaped to be robust, enable social life, have active outskirts (e.g., shops, restaurants, bars and pubs), but also to have quiet spaces for leisure/rest, to enable *ad hoc* events and be public scenes" (Llewelyn-Davies, 2000: 99). Not only historically, but also today, buildings and bank circles in cities express their basic functions: trust. Monumental construction, expensive and durable materials, alluringly-regulated surroundings and a secured parking lot make people feel that their money is safe with a bank. The same goes for buildings that are owned by large-scale and powerful enterprises, with their appearance being a symbol of their philosophy and market power (see Figure 5). On the other hand, modern architectural studios with creative and bold exterior and interior solutions embody the character of future-oriented solutions.

2.6 Visual adequacy

Visual adequacy signifies the degree to which the detailed appearance of a facility enables users to be aware of all the choices in the area. It is conditional on readability – which is supported by space contextuality, diversity and suitability (Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011). The last two originate from the way the facility is used. Adequacy of vision refers to many contextual elements of physical structures: vertical and horizontal rhythm, roof closure, wall details (colour, texture and material), doors, windows and ground floor details. In this section it is reasonable to mention solutions by Hundertwasser and Gaudi, both of whom tried in their respective ways, yet with practically the same goal, to connect their architectural creations with nature;

Figure 5: The impact of adaptability on service perception: for example, a bank in Oregon (source: Internet 3).

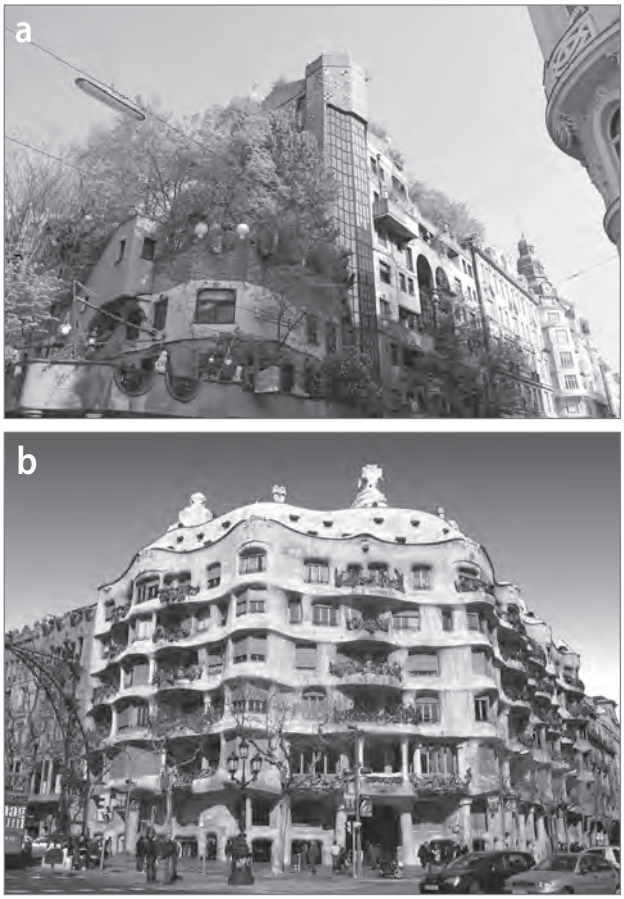

Figure 6: The influence of facility appearance on awareness of the connection between the urban environment and nature: a) Vienna (Hundertwasser) and b) Barcelona (Gaudi) (photo: Andrej Pompe).

therefore, they both introduced the natural environment into an urban space artificially created by man (Figure 6).

2.7 Variety / wealth / visual interest

Variety and wealth criterion refers to architectural expression of buildings and design solutions of details. It also expresses itself as "complexity, playfulness, visual satisfaction." Neil Smith

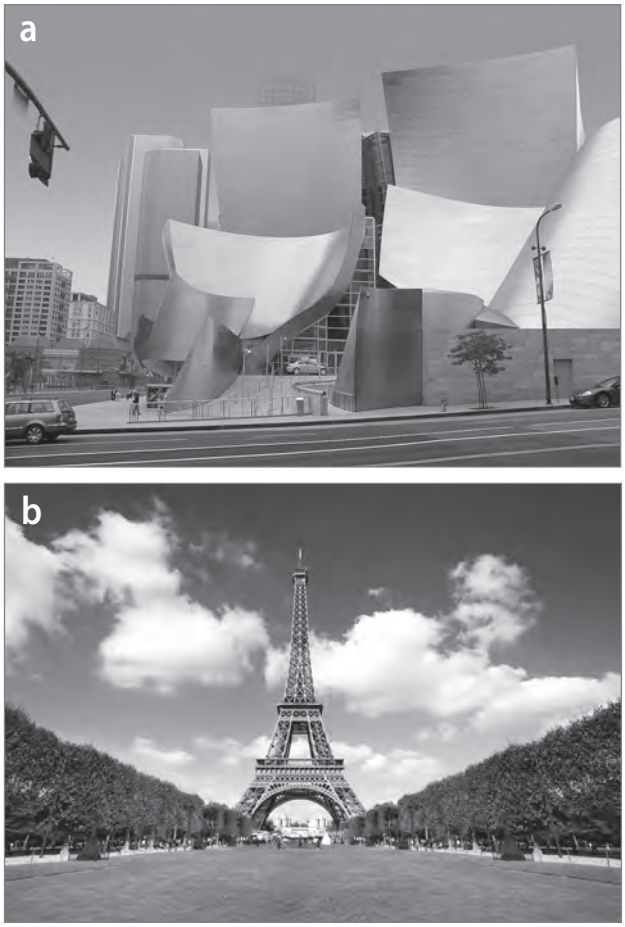

Figure 7: Complexity, playfulness and visual satisfaction: a) the Los Angeles Philharmonic Society and b) the Eiffel Tower in Paris (photo: Andrej Pompe).

mentions four typical components of aesthetic experiences of urban space: a "feeling of expressiveness and pattern, rhythm or visual satisfaction as a result of rhythmic repetition of certain components, recognisability of visual equilibrium and sensitivity to harmonic relationships" (Smith, 1996, quoted in Carmona et al., 2003: 131). It is about contrasts that upgrade the functionality of structures and space with character traits. Architectural design that is in the range of design standards refers to architectural style, front, details and choice of materials (Dimitrovska Andrews, 2011). A city brand standpoint that has an influence on city appearance must include wealth and visual interest individually, in connection with other elements. This is also logical from the city's point of view. Why? Because variety is not necessarily wealth (e.g., Metelkova City in Ljubljana) and visual interest is not necessarily varied and rich (e.g., the Rotunda office building in Ljubljana). One might just as well say that wealth stays on a level of absolute minimalism (e.g., the Walt Disney concert hall in Los Angeles) and that visual interest can be restricted to a single element (e.g., the Eiffel Tower in Paris, see Figure 7). Authenticity is also linked with wealth and variety as a qualitative criterion of urbanism. In addition to simply meaning that it is original and valuable for the sake of originality, it is necessary to emphasise that real authenticity is not always linked to value. Authenticity is not a value *per se*. Namely, only an individual or a community – that is, a society made up of individuals – give it a real value. Through time, they re-establish their own attitudes toward a specific facility and space, which is a consequence of their experiences with the space and its perceptual dimension. Visual interest is the result of visual impressions based on four methodological stages: image, space, character and *genius loci*. [1]

3 Brand equity

A brand is a strategic instrument (Ambler & Styles, 1996) that helps a company, product, activity, movement, person or any other similar form to position itself on a market. It also offers benefits that differentiate it from rivals and are desired by users. Competitive advantage is achieved through branding (Wood, 2001). Positioning a city by a brand answers the question, "How does this city compare to others?" (Avraham & Daugherty, 2010). A brand means additional product value as associations and perceptions triggered by brand name (Winters, 1991). Lisa Wood (2000: 667) defines it as a "mechanism of differentiation by which companies and institutions achieve competitive advantages." Brands are successful because they represent more than just useful values. Physical product qualities are upgraded with benefits meeting social and psychological needs (de Chernatony, 2001). Many authors in their studies deal with phenomena and activities influencing mental perceptions of a brand. This is "brand experience", which is a consequence of its influence on human senses and thus the mental picture of it and its branded products. The more influential the brand, the greater its equity. Brand equity[2] has many dimensions (Feldwick, 1996; Wood, 2000) and different authors define it differently. According to one interpretation, brand equity is a set of assembled behaviour and patterns of user behaviour, distribution channels and influential individuals that strengthen future profits and long-term money flow (Srivastava & Shocker, 1991). According to another interpretation, it is a set of associations and patterns of user behaviour, distribution channel activity and rival product comparisons enabling higher sales numbers or creating a greater price difference than would be possible without a brand (Leuthesser, 1988). In a concise definition, brand equity can be deduced from the following manifestations: a) brand identity, b) brand mental power and c) brand financial value. There is a connection between these called the "brand equity chain". The brand's financial value in this chain depends on the brand's mental power, which depends on brand identity (Wood, 2000). The focus here is on the first and second of these dimensions, which are both qualitative.

The third dimension refers to a financial value of a brand. It is placed among intellectual economic capital, perceived as a quantitative category, and is not discussed here because it is irrelevant to this topic. Brand mental power and identity are not only mutually dependent, but also connected with all users that attribute a meaning to a brand. Images circulating around a brand enable users to form a mental vision of what brands stand for and who they represent (de Chernatony, 2001). Thus brands offer products (and cities as well) a psychological yet intangible value. This is how brand power and identity influence the possibility to use it in a new, enlarged or other way, even in areas where it has not been used before. The psychological value based on brand perception builds a brand relationship. The better this relationship, the greater the brand's mental power (psychological value) and its image. Users enters a relationship with a brand the moment they are exposed to its occurrence and activities. The occurrence is related to the usage of branded products, its occurrence in the media and direct or indirect presence where users move or live. According to Vanita Swaminathan et al. (2007: 34), it is how direct and "group-level connections" are formed. It may be built on many levels and bases, whereas relationship processing may go sequentially or in parallel. Relationships are based on the associations the brand triggers in users' minds. Brand value in the making is linked to:

- Things that are not directly related to product benefits;
- Mostly intangible benefits exceeding the needs and expectations of a branded product;
- Creativity in all areas of communication, promises and identity design, identity, coding and behaviour and style expressed by a brand.

"Psychological value is an expanded value of a brand of an organisation (city too) that includes brand identity, reputation of an organisation and relations influencing its operations (for example, domestic capital and affection)" (McPhee & Wheeler, 2006: 40). All of these qualities also relate to a city brand, which through its identity affects the mental strength and thus its financial value. A city consists of everything made for and in it. City communications and activities are messages creating its image. All interventions or new activities within a city have functional and symbolic significance in the context of branding (Kavaratzis, 2004). The perceived image of a city is created by primary, secondary and tertiary communication. Primary communication encompasses landscape and urban structure, infrastructure and relations. Secondary communication is formed by news through marketing media and tertiary communication is oral tradition (Kavaratzis, 2004). A city brand cannot truly evolve if it is limited to a municipality. The involvement of all stakeholders is essential (Masayuki, 2010). Creating a city identity is a complex action of its components and plays a very special role among urbanism because it creates a living environment. Urbanistic solutions build relations between stakeholders and cities. Their relations are different, yet in certain respects consistent (Merrilees et al., 2011). This builds a relationship with a city brand.

4 Strong qualitative brand criteria

Brand power is reflected in its ability to deliver value to stakeholders while adding value to products and services where indicated (Ghantous & Jaolis, 2013). Due to the frequently proven connection between brand power and perception (with brands, this also affects a better financial outcome) brand managers are increasingly trying to strengthen brands in the areas affecting their mental picture. This created in the thoughts of the actual and potential users. This invigorates its influence, which reflects brand power as added value. The way users perceive a brand is very important for creating long-term relations between a business and its costumers (Fournier, 1998). A strong brand or the degree of its power is defined by qualitative factors based on perception and comprehension of it. These factors are (Pompe, 2013b):

- Number of associations with a brand;
- Number and quality of touchpoints;
- Speed of recall and identification;
- Speed of memorisation;
- Number of meanings for the stakeholder.

All of these factors enable people to perceive a brand and create a mental image of it. Thus actual or potential users also compare a certain brand with its rivals at the level of properties not arising from the product.

4.1 Number of associations connected with a brand

Knowledge of a brand is one of the most important market advantages users or buyers have. This knowledge is based on associations linked with a name and other brand qualities (Romaniuk & Gaillard, 2007). Associations referring to a brand are all elements that are associated with a brand or remind people of it in any way: everything deeply rooted in users' brains (Management Study Guide, 2013). These include images, symbols, gestures, events, stories, living creatures – in short, everything that can possibly be connected with a brand and its benefits. To develop positive associations, a branded product needs to be long-lasting, well-marketed and desired. There are three areas where associations are created: a) brand image, b) perceived product quality and c) attitude to a brand (Low & Lamb, 2000: 3). With systematic and properly adjusted communication and brand behaviour, multidimensional associations, which in the eyes of users create a strong

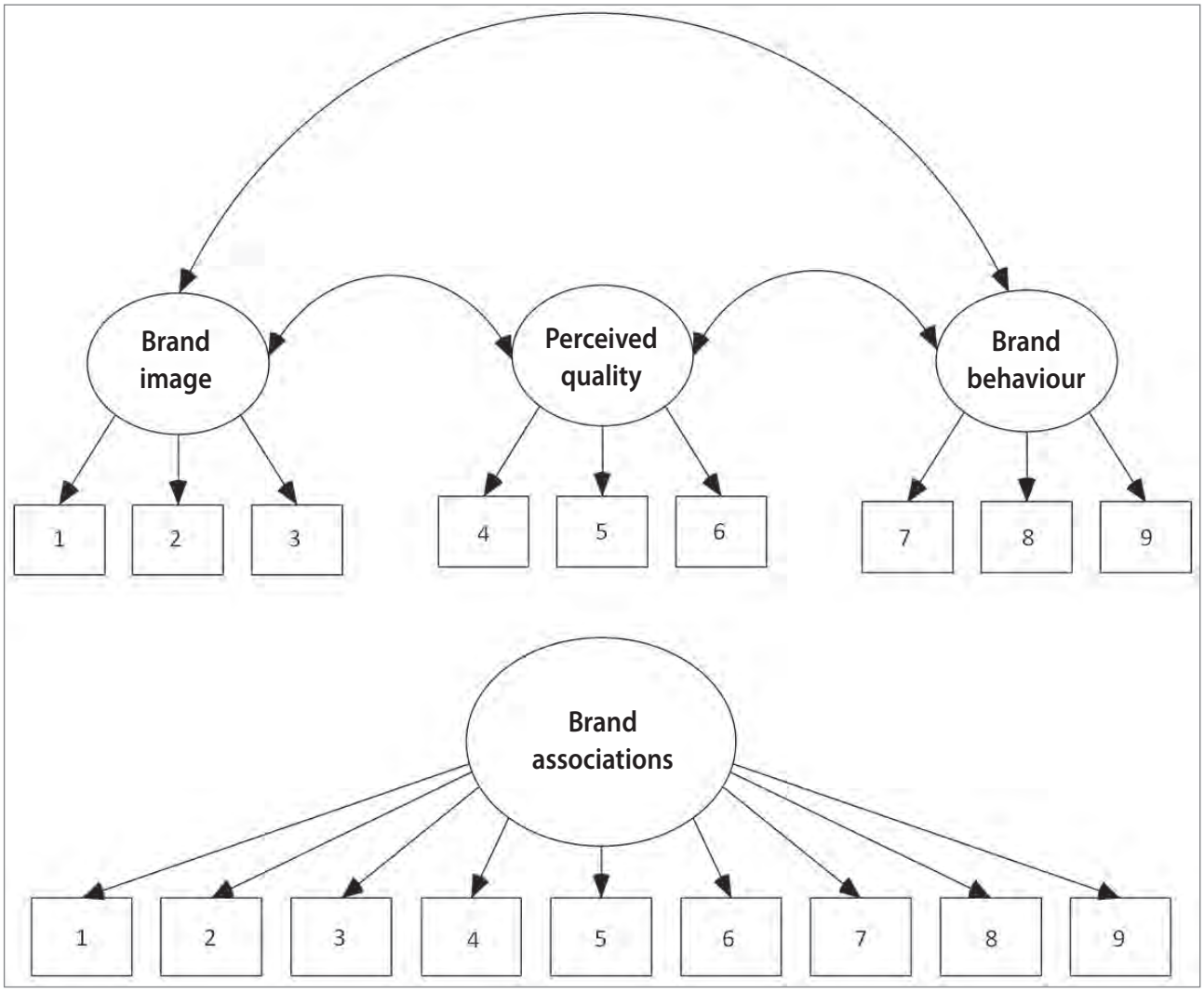

Figure 8: Brand association (source: Low & Lamb, 2000).

brand, are created (see Figure 8). The market is willing to shine more light and spend more energy on famous brands than on unknown or less significant ones. The more associations with a brand, the greater its power.

4.2 Number and quality of touchpoints

Angus Jenkinson (2007: 165) notes that "in general, it is true that touchpoint is the very moment of a contact or communication between organisation or brand and an individual user or buyer. Every touchpoint is defined as medium as everything that carries a message is." A touchpoint is an interface between a branded product or organisation (also a city) and buyers, visitors, employees, business partners and other stakeholders: before, between and after the purchase, use or experience. Touchpoints are the means through which attention to a brand and its benefits is drawn. In the context of a brand, the concept of "touch" is divided into perceivable (sensorial) and mental (rational or emotional) aspects. Among other things, Jenkinson (2007: 165) beautifully depicts that "touchpoint is often called the moment of truth," and so it is unquestionably important, both for brand success and for branding. A touchpoint can happen at a conscious or unconscious level. Every brand has an unlimited number of possibilities to create distinctive touchpoints; key in their selection is to pick those in which the brand is important for individuals; that is to say, its occurrence brings them benefit: a) in the form of basic needs, or b) those that fall within the higher sphere of human needs (i.e., aesthetics, self-image and social status).

4.3 Recall and recognition speed

Brand recall is a qualitative measure that shows how well users connect a brand name with a product or type of a product (Business Dictionary, 2013b). It is measured by questionnaires or interviews that establish two levels of recall: spontaneous and secondary recall (Zorko, 2011). If a brand can be recalled on the basis of a touchpoint that is not its name or its most recognisable visual element, then this brand already has solid recognisability.

4.4 Memorisation speed and retain

Brand memorisation is associated with the level of interest in it. There are many factors influencing the speed of memorisation, with brand incidence and related symbols and images being the basis of it. Another very important factor is the product bearing the brand, and its meaning and benefits for a user. The third factor influencing memorisation is frequency of brand incidence, and the fourth is selection of the most adequate brand touchpoints. The fifth factor is constituted of all the experiences associated with a brand: experiences before purchase, user experiences and experiences after purchase. The sixth one illustrates the degree of brand involvement in users' lives. The stronger the activity of all six factors, the longer the brand stays in the memory, even if it is inactive in communication for a certain time (Aravindakshan & Naik, 2010).

4.5 Number of meanings for stakeholders

Meanings are created by interaction, touchpoints, relations and experiences with a brand (see Batey, 2008; Brakus et al., 2009; Brodie et al., 2009; Payne et al., 2009; Palmer, 2010; Iglesias & Bonet, 2012). Meanings for stakeholders are divided into a) qualities ascribed to a brand that contribute to the users' quality of life and b) ascribed values of a brand users can relate or identify with. In brand meanings, users recognise affinity to themselves (with their values, viewpoints and personal traits) and establish a degree of usefulness for their activity. David Court et al. (2001: 1) states that "strong brands create value for its [sic] stakeholders with emotionally attaching to buyers and users." Building a meaning starts at defining the basic promise of a brand deriving from the key promise and benefit of it. Qualities and values assigned to a brand stimulate associations related to it.

5 Comparison of urban and brand qualitative criteria

Quality cities are habitats where social life can be stimulated. There is a need to improve the shape of public spaces and, consequently, the quality of urban life (Rogers, 2010). Identity is based on codified circumstances, traditional values and rules (see Deleuze & Guattaari, 1972; Gleason, 1983; Giliberti, 2013). Quality brand marking and giving identity to the products, services and organisations, as well as the cities promises to meet specific needs, enabling and encouraging better quality of human life in manifold ways. Urban life is marked by flows and circulations and is defined by different currents, networking, relationships, interactions and connections – each is in a certain relation and flow with others. Not only adapting construction to the landscape and improving communication and transport logistics, but also "soft" disciplines – sociology, economics, group and individual psychology, behaviour, art and the humanities – are poles that together form an urban environment and give it its special subjective qualities (Hanafi et al., 2013). All of these elements that are inseparably connected with urbanism and its quality rationally and emotionally determine the perception of a city and give it distinctive traits. By analogy, brand qualities derive from: a) properties and benefits of products, services or branded organisations and b) "soft" elements, which are the result of the subjective perceptions of everyone that comes into contact with a branded product, service or organisation. As the tangible and intangible features of a product, services or organisations define their brand, and a city's visible and invisible features also define its brand. Urbanism with its solutions and actions has a direct influence on tangible and indirect influence on intangible city qualities. This entails a certain city perception and brand. A city's image and brand reflect how its stakeholders perceive it. It is a mental picture of a larger group of people, an outcome of urban experiences and communications (in this case, meaning a message the city sends to its stakeholders). Both consequently affect an image of the city brand. This brand is based on human perception and is largely a consequence of influences of urban space sensory elements, where the most influential elements are visual ones (Wagner, 1981). These are particularly affected by architectural solutions, which are expected to be in harmony with urbanism. There was no border between architecture and urbanism until recently (Internet 1). Many world-famous architects (such as Antoni Gaudi in Barcelona) and prominent Slovene architects (Maks Fabiani, Jože Plečnik, Ivan Vurnik, Edvard Ravnikar and Edo Mihevc) were also urban space planners at the same time. It was long believed that a successful urbanist could only be an architect that managed to think outside the architectural box and added a broader understanding of urban space to architecture. Then there was a period when architecture was not able to solve the problems of rapid city development. Technical urbanism appeared. This separation has resulted in identity confusion, and so both disciplines are reconnecting today. Urbanism in conjunction with architectural solutions creates touchpoints and many associations that have a significant impact on the power and importance of a city brand. It co-creates its identity at a level of:

1. Physical evidence formed by a city's visual image and its communication in media;
2. Promises the city fulfils with its identity, behaviour, activity, offer, organisation, functionality, atmosphere and other values;
3. Properties stakeholders can attribute to a city.

Urbanism and branding share two common aspects: sociological (human contact) and marketing (managing a city).

Both have influence on the quality of urban life and its attractiveness. The sociological aspect is oftentimes in conflict with understanding of planning and managing urban spaces as spaces promoting the city image, prompting consumer activities and promoting economic growth, which should be emphasised (Hanafi et al., 2013). This is confirmed by the fact that city researchers frequently explore social life and space as an independent unconnected reality and do not see a link between the two phenomena; or more importantly: how closely the problems of social life are associated with the problems of urban space (Low, 2005). Contact with people in a city is also reflected in their attachment to a city and intentions to stay there, which is often a result of their local integration, their integration into the city's development process and taking into account their suggestions and doubts (Curley, 2010; Hays & Kogl, 2007). In fact, this is actually city loyalty, which is one of the main goals of branding: building brand loyalty. The perception of people living in a certain urban environment affects their social interaction with a city (Hanafi et al., 2013). This perception occurs every time stimuli from the environment enter people's brains through human instinct. It is much more than just a mechanical recording of sensory stimuli: there is a chance of creating a creative perception of reality (Arnheim, 1974). Urbanism is a strategic factor whose solutions have a long-term impact on the appearance and functionality of a city. Within brand management this kind of function belongs to strategic planning and brand welfare, which aims to develop a brand in line with the expectations of those for whom it is intended. From a sociological point of view, the brand has become an integral part of people's lives and is always in touch with them when they need or might need it. Its primary role is increasingly expanding: it connects individuals or groups of people, creates mental spaces and streams where similar people or those with similar needs and habits, as well as those with similar lifestyles and beliefs, meet. As a market subject, a brand builds new sociological and anthropological dimensions for people. Urbanism also connects, meets needs and creates an environment for people with similar needs and styles, and is an integral part of life. The marketing aspect is obvious because brands appeared from a desire for recognition of branded products. With a brand it is easier for a user to recognise the quality and origin of the products and services. However, there is one thing a brand does in marketing that is perhaps more important than identifying products: it adds value to the products and enables them to be sold at higher prices. In the last two decades, cities have found themselves in an environment in which they compete to attract investment, desirable residents and tourists, and quality companies. Urbanism is another important basis for competitiveness. Therefore, the comparison of a city brand and urbanism makes sense because unique urban solutions based on architectural principles enhance attractiveness, and thus the city's perceived value, which contributes to its higher psychological and actual value (e.g., this results in housing prices that are higher than in other comparable cities, or say in higher prices of certain consumer goods such as a cup of coffee in a cafe). All of these elements of urbanism (i.e., physical evidence, promises and attributed properties) are identical to those considered in strategic management of brands (i.e., trading, organisational and ideological). All of these parallels between urbanism and branding suggest the idea that there are similarities between city and brand qualitative criteria. The next sections compare the two sets of criteria.

5.1 Context as a brand qualitative criterion

Context in urbanism affects the development of a city's image and is a guideline for design strategy, which should be in accordance with city's long-term vision to create physical structures that will have orientation meaning, create readability and help protect and create the city's appearance and image. This compares with brand planning and its long-term role and influence on the formation of identity. Context is a complex concept that also unites other urban qualitative criteria and has a significant impact on city and brand perception. From a brand perspective, it can be imagined as the degree to which it blends into expectations of the city stakeholders, is in accordance with the long-term development expectations and meets the city's vision. Urbanism and its context form city and brand association with preserving, continuing and developing a city's architectural heritage, with the possibility of orientation, degree of readability and the creation of distinctive vistas. This creates potential memory records in the minds of stakeholders called *memes.*[3]

5.2 Accessibility as a brand qualitative criterion

Accessibility refers to the physical access to buildings, facilities, spaces, communications and services for residents and other users. Greater accessibility increases the responsiveness of an environment and the number of available pathways, which also raises the level of variety. At this level, comparison with brand comprehension means that the brand must be as accessible as possible as often as possible to those that need it and those to whom it matters. The more important branded products or services (or cities) are to the stakeholders, the more available must they be for them. Accessibility is understood from the time availability, financial value and vicinity point of view. Urban accessibility consists of two significant activities:

- Forming street blocks that represent an integral whole within a city (e.g., the Ledina "block" in Ljubljana, which serves different purposes). By analogy with the world of consumer and inter-organisational products in

which multiple products or services are under wing of one brand, a city block is a city sub-brand that includes several different but complementary ranges of services and products.
- Street typology and junction design have an immediate influence on the accessibility of services, facilities, spaces and urban communications, and so in comparison with the organisation of shopping centres a very high congruence can be found here. City brand and mall brand quality are in both cases strongly dependent on traffic flows, visual accessibilities and physical transitivity. Typology quality can be also be enhanced by unique solutions that become one of the perceptual cornerstones of a unique city brand (e.g., Barcelona with its "nipped off" octagonal junctions).

5.3 Diversity as a brand qualitative criterion

Urban diversity refers to diversity of shapes, uses and meanings of built-up and open space. By comparison with a brand it indicates its role at two levels: a) in one of its basic functions a brand denotes differentiation and a safe distance from rival brands, which consequently gives it a smaller market vulnerability and greater and long-term durability – so a city with all its peculiarities (on the condition that it has them) creates a unique environment, a composite of territorially separated or connected unique elements; in short, a dimension co-defining the city brand, b) a brand combines many different products so a company can produce a wide variety of products under its brand (e.g., Siemens and Gorenje) associated by business philosophy or ownership. Once such brand achieves power and gravity, this is transmitted to all of its labelled products. A brand adds value to a product, while desirability and quality of a product add value to a brand. It is the reciprocity of a brand and product that together creates brand and product power. If this is applied to a city, it becomes clear that most cities have built their brands on the basis of one or of their best products. Most cities build their brand on historical (e.g., Athens and Rome) or conceptual content elements (e.g., the university towns of Oxford and Heidelberg). On the other hand, "unrecognisable" cities build their brands with strong and unique products (whether permanent or temporary). Such an approach to building a city brand is called a "flagship project" (e.g., Bilbao with the Guggenheim Museum and Maribor as a City of Culture). City recognisability can be strengthened with the help of attention-grabbing events (e.g., the Barcelona Olympic Games in 1992; Maribor's Lent Festival, etc.).

Despite multifunctionality and variety as products, a city must make a decision about what will be making it unique and attractive for certain stakeholders if it wants to leave behind mediocrity or a generally unrecognisable zone. Compatibility is also one of the key components of diversity. Compatibility of diversity, also called semantic or different compatibility, comes strongly to the fore in installing selected products under a brand. Urban solution diversity is also created by ambient perception, which to some extent withstands comparison with branded product packing and its placement on a market (which shops sell it, its placement there, how it is presented in shop windows and how it is advertised in traditional media and e-media). If ambient perception is the result of harmony between buildings, trees, nature, water, transport and advertising, then it is said that it is consistent with an installation of a city brand in an environment, its communication, its accordance with the expectations of stakeholders, their values, global and local views and attitude towards the environment and fellow men. Diversity, by means of which easy-to-remember and recognisable touchpoints are created, is one of the most important qualitative brand criteria because it lifts products above the level of their rivals and helps them be installed in a unique market position. Diversity in urbanism helps create unique touchpoints of a city brand, its immediate recall and instant recognisability and the possibility of memorisation.

5.4 Readability as a qualitative brand criterion

Israa Hanafi et al. (2013) state that cities are like books: one can read them, but in order to do that one needs to understand their language. Using points of reference, space readability allows users to orient themselves in a space. It is defined by the degree of recognisability of users and their ability to manage space. Readability can be equated with the degree of brand recognisability: a) between rival products, b) in terms of recognising the expected benefits a customer wishes to acquire with a purchase and use and c) a logical occurrence of a brand where its presence answers the specific needs and desires of potential users (e.g., advertising painkillers at a marathon, or renovation of a preschool sponsored by a city brand).

Readability represents two aspects: a) the physical forms of a built-up and empty urban space and b) activities in/on these places. This is comparable to a) a typical physical form of a brand, its use with products and touchpoints and b) brand communication that involves it in the user's environment and life. Moreover, the physical form of a brand is its identity, which is influenced not only by its graphic expression, but also everything that makes associations related to a brand and causes brand recordings in the brain. Physical forms work as triggers and thus activate thoughts of a brand. At this point city readability connection strongly reflects the physical forms of a product because all city regimes are classified as city products. Those based on principles of diversity, accessibility and

context are those that stand out. From the branding[4] point of view these elements are comparable to brand installation:[5] the touchpoints and all forms used in communications by the help of a brand. Readability refers directly to and constructively influences two brand criteria: a) the possibility of memorisation and b) the possibility of recall and recognition.

5.5 Adaptability as a qualitative brand criterion

User needs regarding urban space change over time for various reasons, from those that relate to the development of technology and logistics, to those posed by trends and new forms of socialisation. Adaptability is the degree to which open urban structures (shapes and dimensions of the space around buildings and their exterior) meet the needs of residents and other users of urban space. From the perspective of time, adaptability is the most dynamic category of qualitative urban criteria. Adaptability is also a virtue of every brand because brand managers need to a) monitor market developments all the time and identify new opportunities for the brand – whether it is about connecting to other brands or expanding the brand portfolio by introducing new products under the brand umbrella, b) adapt to the trends and new ways of using the products and c) monitor the changing lifestyle. Adaptability in urbanism is also consistent with the principles of adaptability of shopping mall brands because they also deal with accessibility, light and fluidity of movement when creating good sales conditions. By its function, adaptability is closest to the qualitative brand criterion that refers to a brand's ability to have different meanings for different stakeholders. The key is the realisation that, with development, meanings are constantly changing for the stakeholders and so it is necessary to adapt to these changes all the time.

5.6 Visual adequacy as a qualitative brand criterion

Visual adequacy refers to the degree to which a detailed city look allows users to see what is at their disposal and what their choices are within the urban space. The visual adequacy criterion places urbanism in a relationship with architecture, wherein urban strategy is a content guidance and framework for architects when they are tackling specific architectural solutions in a city. The same applies to the relationship between the brand strategists and brand designers, wherein they first establish a strategic framework on which designers work together with experts in sound, smell, taste and touch to create a distinctive and recognisable brand identity. Visual adequacy of trade and organisational (including city) brands allows users to perceive them and shortlist them when deciding on their final selection between competitors. In the case of urbanism, this involved the visual adequacy of physical structures, whereas for product brands it is about visual adequacy of sales and transport packaging, and adequacy of brand use for communication through media, events, sponsorships, donors and other installations in users' lives. In urbanism, visual adequacy faces the problems of the coexistence of old and new and problems of coordinating the interests of satisfied and dissatisfied stakeholders. Similarly, in the world of product and corporate brands it comes to the question of identity adequacy regarding zeitgeist, development guidelines, product range and shifting target groups and stakeholders. Visual adequacy concerns and constructively impacts two qualitative brand criteria: a) the possibility of memorisation and b) the possibility of recall and recognition.

5.7 Variety as a brand qualitative criterion

As its name suggests, variety in urbanism emphasises the need for vividness and diversity that helps break up the monotony, uniformity and unambiguousness of a city in all dimensions. Variety in designing a brand and its communications is the key to recognisability and creation of the desired perception. Product variety depends on the nature of a product, its demand for installation on the market and levels of psychological and price value in the buyers' eyes. The same is true for a city and its brand. With solutions that lead to diversity in town arrangement, its buildings, roads, green "patches" and other forms of coexistence with nature, the city and thus its brand attain specificity and recognisability. On the other hand, it is the very variety of arrangements of the urban structures that creates recognisable touchpoints that should, by analogy with strong brand criteria, create what resembles the basic city brand qualities, its core promises and the direction in which it develops. The better the quality and larger the number of these touchpoints, the faster a strong city brand is created.

Urbanism co-creates city brand perception, and its visual image promises an experience with the city that is also associated with urbanism. Variety efficiency in a city is subject to perception of the environment and the ability to orientate oneself. For a brand, variety represents the possibility to increase the effective exit from mediocrity at the detectable level of human senses – it is an instant recognisability, recall of features, stories and other mental records related to the brand. Primarily it is about visual diversity and effectiveness, but no less important are the distinctive and specific effects on other senses (i.e., smell, touch, taste and hearing). These elements may prove as variegated the city with its brand, too. Variety refers to a) the associations with a brand and b) the number and quality of brand touchpoints.

5.8 Visual interest, equity and variety effectiveness as a brand qualitative criterion

There are also other terms in urbanism such as a) the visual interest, b) the equity and c) the variety effectiveness. If visual interest and equity are considered in terms of organisational and trade brands, then the first means above all is the attention a user pays to a brand, whereas the other focuses on the perception of a value that a brand and its identity reflects on stakeholders. It is a direct link between a) perception of brand value and b) creation and management of brand identity. Visual interest is the result of visual impressions and can be associated with visual brand identity. With its image, appearance or installation of products and communications, this creates impressions and embodies the character and core promise of the brand. Thus it is brand identity that already represents and promises experience with the branded product. From a city brand perspective, the visual image of the city illustrates the city brand as an entity that promises an experience and meets expectations. Urbanism affects the creation of visual interest and, the more it is incorporated, the greater the chance that it will make the city brand worthy and strong. Equity, as its name suggests, expresses an added value that affects the perceived value of a branded product or city. Variety effectiveness, both in urbanism and brand management, contributes to the uniqueness, recognisability and value of a city or product. For example, in the maintenance of urban heritage in the renovations of facades two things can happen: it can be restored to its original form and regain original value (i.e., the use of painting techniques that emphasise old ornaments on the front, like on the buildings along Tavčar Street in Ljubljana), or all the architectural richness is perceptually levelled (voided) with a single colour overlap of the entire facade relief. The impact of one or the other option on the visual interest, perceived equity, value and effectiveness is stronger in the first case because it leads to a higher perceptual value of the city as a brand.

6 Discussion

Analysis has shown that qualitative urbanism criteria achieve great congruence with qualitative brand criteria and thus have a decisive influence on a city brand. The practical comparison of the two sets of criteria gives the following results: a) the urban criteria context, variety and readability are consistent with the *number of associations with a brand* criterion, b) diversity and variety criteria are consistent with the qualitative brand criterion *number and quality of touchpoints*, c) visual adequacy, readability and diversity criteria align with the criteria *speed of memorisation* and *speed of recall and recognition* and d) the urban criteria accessibility, context and adaptability are consistent with the qualitative brand criterion *number of meanings for a stakeholder*. By comparing the urban qualitative criteria to a brand, it was established that it is possible to confirm the thesis that there is a strong content correlation between areas of urbanism and city brands (Figure 9). On this basis, it is clear that urbanism not only carries out its primary functions of urban planning – that is, enabling residents' and users' professional and private activities and living and working environment – but it also helps to create a city as a complex and attractive product that is marketable and suitable for investment. Qualitative urban criteria help establish urbanistic success and, because these criteria are comparable and consistent with brand criteria, it is agreed that urbanism co-shapes a city brand.

The findings indicate the possibility of a more up-to-date urban planning, one that is consistent with the long-term vision of urban development. In defining the foundations of future urban development, the Directorate General for Regional Policy of the European Commission (2011) emphasises a holistic approach to their management and development, including sector interaction, coordination of spatial and human necessities and involvement of the population. It also pays great importance to attractive spatial solutions, uniqueness and multimodality. These findings of the perceptual qualities of city brands allow urbanism a short-term trend adjustment, which is not only an opportunity for a successful installation of city brands in a competitive market, but absolutely a necessity. With the rapid progress of technology, materials, communications and human relations, trends are changing faster and faster or more are emerging. Trends have become the premise that should be taken into account with urban management (and thus urbanism). Municipalities will undoubtedly have to integrate their market strategies into their urban strategies, so that urbanists begin to consider principles applied in brand installation and branding, while at the same time city brand managers need to start thinking through the prism of urbanism and together with urbanists plan, build, enrich and change the city brand. This is only one aspect of contemporary urban management because it is becoming increasingly clear that the perception of a city brand is influenced not only by its marketing and urban solutions, but also by city policy, cultural diversity, educational establishments, tourist and economic stories, public utilities, organisation of leisure activities, connection of urban stakeholders and the opportunity for users of the city to co-design its development. It should be noted this is not only about an interdisciplinary view of urban management (cooperation between administrative domains), but a multidisciplinary one, which requires more than just narrow expertise in specific areas of activity from its urban co-architects. As established by Alenka Temeljotov Salaj et al. (2010: 141), "urbanism, too, needs to

Qualitative urbanism criteria		Qualitative brand criteria
Context, wealth, readability	⟷	Number of brand associations
Variety, wealth	⟷	Number and quality of touchpoints
Visual adequacy, readability, variety	⟷	Memorisation speed
Visual adequacy, readability, variety	⟷	Recall and recognition speed
Accessibility, context, adaptability	⟷	Number of meanings to the stakeholder

Figure 9: Connections between qualitative criteria for cities and brands (illustration: Andrej Pompe).

involve a broad spectrum of knowledge, skills, disciplines and sources." Francisca Márquez (2011) notes that "metropolitan space accepts all living space diversities of various habits and ideas about living," which confirms the idea that the modern orientation of city marketing means paying regard to users' needs and creating such city brands that make it possible to meet the needs of residents and visitors alike (see Kotler et al., 1999). Thus, this is no longer about sales, but to meet needs and expectations. An increased urbanist focus on what is important to residents will be required, which to some extent confirms findings of research in the Slovenian and Japanese markets, which suggest that there are important differences among potential homebuyers and those running the real estate policy of a city (Grum & Temeljotov Salaj, 2010). Branding is thus more about responsiveness than persuasion (Eshuis & Edwards, 2004) and this is important because only people give meaning to any solutions and services offered by the city. In this context neither a city brand nor urbanism is the exception.

It is becoming increasingly clear that a municipality's awareness of the importance of a brand as an integrative element of the urban management and the fact that urbanism has a strong influence on brand perception and mental comprehension is becoming a necessity. Today, it is the lack of understanding of brand significance and its integrative and communicational power at any given time that prevents cities from thinking more in communicational and integrative terms. Thus I believe that urban structures – and urbanism itself – should start thinking about the vision and plans for the future, primarily through the prism of the city brand because it will be easier for the cities to accomplish their essence. To enable this, it is necessary to involve residents and other stakeholders in design and redesign of the city brand, or as Jasper Eshuis and Arthur Edwards (2012: 1081) state: "Branding has the ability to increase a city's democracy by involving users, their expectations, emotions and stylistic preferences in urban planning and if the users are treated as co-owners of the city brand." It is therefore a combination of physical placement and social environment that allows urban experience (Warnaby, 2009).

Understanding the role of a brand for a city and its long-term installation in a unique position is the key tool for proper strategic planning of the city as a space dedicated to people: their residence, activity, relaxation, education and research, or as Erik Braun et al. (2013: 20) colourfully outline it: "People are the 'bread and butter' of the cities." A city brand is a form of organisational identity or capacity and not just visual identity based on the communication of aesthetic values. Although it is often created for marketing, the city brand is increasingly becoming a body that affects economic development policy and strategy (Pasqunelli, 2013). Considering that the key function of a brand is the embodiment of a product, service or organisation (as well as a city) it must be understood as a manifestation of current and future benefit of the product, service, organisation (and the city). Thus mayors in Bogotá, Naples and Chicago have found that a city brand highlights and illuminates the collective identity of the city, which illustrates its vision and inspires support from its stakeholders (Pasotti, 2010). In this context, it has the role of a signpost or a lighthouse in realising short-term and long-term development goals. Marjana Johansson (2012: 3613), who highlights the importance of building differentiation of destinations by branding and mental image, states that a "brand caters to a mental framework through which it is possible to 'select' a destination," supporting her statement with a quote from Guy Julier (2005: 872), who explains that a "brand represents tips to visitors and residents through which creates the perception of material properties of cities." As Simon Anholt (2010: 178) says, a "brand is based on clarity, simplicity, ability to memorise and diversity, and has the ability to symbolise various forms of behaviour." Branding is a strategy that helps people manage perceptions, and its mission is of a psychological and emotional nature that also relates to thinking and arguments. Its feature is not an impact on systematic information processing and

rational weighing of arguments, but fast and efficient recognition based in integrity (Eshuis & Edwards, 2012). Therefore, contemporary urbanism can no longer function constructively if it does not take into account planned character of a city and its future placement in a competitive environment. This way of thinking and acting perhaps seems like a contraction or restriction of creative freedom for urban planners and architects, but this is not the case. It is a challenge in which creativity within a given framework allows all spatial expressions that creates a city with a recognisable image and character for the long-term. In any case, because qualitative criteria of both urbanism and branding are similar in many ways, a new mind-set for urbanists and city brand managers is not heavy and painful. On the contrary, it allows quick and clear understanding of the reciprocal influence on the installation of the city in a competitive market and is constantly a compass of proper strategic operation.

7 Conclusion

Urbanism and branding have two common aspects: sociological (i.e., contact with people) and marketing (i.e., urban management). Both affect the quality of life in a city and its attractiveness. Urbanism in conjunction with architectural solutions creates touchpoints and a myriad of associations that have a significant impact on the power and importance of the city brand. It co-creates its identity at the level of a) physical evidence, b) promises and c) imputed properties. These elements are equal to those considered in the strategic brand management, and so comparison of qualitative criteria of urbanism and a brand is very sensible.

A city's brand is the embodiment of everything the city is and strives for, the values it advocates and everything it offers its users with its physical environment, ambience, atmosphere and development. In the eyes of its stakeholders a city brand is representative of the city. Its personality and character derive from: a) the harmony between built-up and open urban space and natural resources, b) all urban activities (including urbanism), c) people enabling and using urban activities and d) its attitude toward its environmental and historical heritage. A city brand is a psychological category affected by qualitative perceptual elements. Its strength is due to the quality of the activity of the elements and skills of city brand managers discussed here. It is measured by using qualitative brand criteria – the number of associations related to the brand, number and quality of touchpoints, recall and recognition speed, memorisation speed and number of meanings for a stakeholder. Urbanism has a very important part in constructing and ennobling a city brand. Its qualitative criteria are – although declaratively formed differently – content consistent with the qualitative brand criteria. Thus the context, in which urbanism is a synonym for the impact on the development of a city image and a guidance of design strategy, creates associations with the city and its brand, which seriously affects the perception of both. Accessibility, which in urbanism means physical access to urban structures, impacts on a city brand and gives the sense that the city provides access to its products. Results of urban diversity are uniqueness and distinctiveness of a city, something every brand strives for, and a city brand is no exception. Diversity in urbanism helps create unique touchpoints of a city brand, its immediate recall, instant recognisability and the possibility of memorisation. Readability of urban space can be equated with the degree of city brand recognisability and is connected with physical forms and a product's design. Those based on principles of diversity, accessibility and context stand out. Adaptability is the degree to which open urban structures meet the needs of stakeholders of the city, and according to its function it is closest to the qualitative brand criteria referring to the ability of a brand to have different meanings for different stakeholders. Visual adequacy of a city enables users to be aware of what is available to them within urban space, and visual adequacy of a brand allows users to detect it and short list it when deciding on final selection between competitors. Similarity is therefore large. Variety in urbanism implies the need for vividness and diversity, also important in the creation of brands, and its objectives are recognisability, creation of desired perception, quality associations related to a brand and the number and quality of touchpoints. Urbanism affects the creation of visual interest, and the more it is considered, the greater the chance that the city brand will be worth and strong.

By comparison, it was found that there is the significant urban qualitative criteria compliance with the brand qualitative criteria, which means that each of the brand qualitative criteria is associated with at least one or more urban qualitative criteria, and that each of these criteria affects the reputation and power of the city brand. Finally, regarding integration of qualitative criteria of urbanism and brand, it can be concluded that these criteria have a general content resemblance, but differ in formulations and levels of implementation. The identified congruences are a step forwards in integral activity, management, communication and urban marketing. They facilitate integration of the hitherto more-or-less unrelated fields of urbanism and marketing, and propose that experts in both areas a) first become aware that their efforts are complementary, b) try to understand the significance of the effects of the operation of both and c) finally, constructively cooperate with each other right from the strategic urban planning to the realisation of the set goals.

The positive consequences of understanding the association of these two areas will be long-term and will form a recognisable,

consistent and stakeholder-friendly reputation for a city. A representative of the established reputation will always be a city brand, whose main object is the identification of stakeholders with its personality. The more desirable the city brand is, the greater the identification with it and the stronger it will be.

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Notes

[1] The typical atmosphere or spirit that pervades a certain space; God as the protector/guardian of a certain space.

[2] Brand equity is a premium the company creates by using a well-known product/service compared with the generic equivalent. The company builds brand equity by creating products that are easy to remember, recognisable, of good quality and reliable (Investopedia, 2013). Simply put, brand equity is the value that a brand adds to the overall value of a product.

[3] A "meme" is a brain recording that contains ideas, mental associations, symbols and practices. It is transmitted from one mind to another by speech, gestures, customs or other imitable phenomena (Wikipedia, 2013).

[4] Branding is a process in which by consistent appearance in the minds of users and buyers, a unique name and image of a product or service are created. The aim of branding is to create a significant and different presence in the market, one that attracts buyers and potential buyers and ensures their loyalty (Business Dictionary, 2013).

[5] Brand placement.

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