

COMMERCIALIZATION OF HANDICRAFT PRODUCTS TO POPULARIZE TOURISM BRANDS BY INTRODUCING DIGITAL INFORMATION PLATFORMS.

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Annotation: This article analyzes the souvenir craft as a component of the tourism sector of the region. The article involves the study of the concept of "souvenir" and familiarity with handicraft souvenirs to popularize tourism brands by introducing digital information platforms in the regions. The Uzbek market of online services is growing at a rapid pace, which is associated with the introduction of digital technologies in the tourism sector. Digital technologies are also becoming the main direction of the strategy for the development of culture and tourism of the cities of the future, facilitating the integration of the tourist into the urban environment and allowing him to independently plan his trip.

Keywords: handicraft products, promotion of tourism brands, online services market, digital information platforms, tourism, souvenirs.

The relevance of the work is justified by the fact that experts, practitioners, government bodies, representatives of science in the field of tourism accumulate their theoretical knowledge and practical experience in an effort to integrate the best practices and ideas of souvenir crafting in all regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The introduction of new technologies is also reflected in the formation of a comfortable urban environment, contributing to the development of urban tourism. Directions for the introduction of digital technologies in the tourist urban environment include: online services with personal recommendations; wearable gadgets for simultaneous translation; sharing services; smart navigation system in the city, adaptive to foreign languages; free high-speed Internet in public places; the use of multimedia technologies and various guiding applications in places of interest. For the development of tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan at the regional level, it is necessary to develop tourism products for their implementation in a new digital environment, revealing the potential and opportunities of destinations.

The aim of the research is to propose a set of measures to increase the recognition of tourism brands in the regions of the Republic through the popularization of handicraft products for tourism purposes and to study the impact of digital technologies on the development of the tourism market and the formation of a comfortable urban environment for travelers.

The goal set required the solution of the following **tasks**:

- explore the phenomenon of territory branding as an effective tool for increasing the tourist attractiveness of the region, in a historical perspective and in our days;

- trace the influence of the image of the region's tourist brands on the social practices of commercialization of tourist souvenirs;
- analyze the practices of manufacturing and selling souvenir handicraft products in the territories of the Republic;
- identify problems and predict possible prospects for the commercialization of handicraft products to popularize the country's tourism brands;
- to analyze the market of souvenir products of the regions;
- propose a project aimed at the commercialization of handicraft and souvenir products for tourism purposes in the country.

The object of the study is the handicraft souvenir tourism industry of the regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The subject of the study is the territorial brands of the region, which are reflected in souvenir handicraft products.

The scientific novelty of the research is as follows:

- for the first time, the relationship between the promotion of tourism brands and the promotion of souvenir handicraft products for tourism purposes was studied;
- conducted expert interviews with those interested in the tourism and souvenir spheres of the regions, aimed at obtaining an authoritative opinion on the forecasts and prospects for the existence of souvenir handicraft activities;
- a project of a museum-shop of handicraft products was proposed to popularize tourism brands by introducing digital information platforms.

The practical significance of the work lies in the proposal of a project for an institution of a new format. It is assumed that the project is able to improve the current system for the sale of goods and services of craftsmen, to help move away from overly conservative and little-demanded methods of offering handicraft products to the population and tourists today.

The following methods of theoretical research are used in the work:

- **abstraction** is a mental activity aimed at obtaining abstractions - ideal (not existing in reality) objects, which can be individual representations, categories, concepts, theories, their systems, etc. This method is used on the example of a project proposal for the commercialization of souvenir crafts in the country;
- **analysis and synthesis** - literature that conceptualizes the phenomena of branding, souvenir craft, and general trends in the field of tourism is subject to analysis in the work;
- **induction and deduction** - judgment from the particular to the general and from the general to the particular, respectively. Thus, the influence of souvenir craft on tourism practices in the regions, as well as global trends in the branding of places, which are reflected within the country, will be analyzed.

Materials and research methods.

The source material was statistical data characterizing the development of digital technologies in the tourism sector, analytical reports from research on the market for online sales of tourist brands

of handicraft products in the country and the world. Theoretical and comparative analysis was used as a research methodology.

Promotion of artisan products in digital platforms is a necessary requirement of the time. The volume of the e-commerce market in Uzbekistan is currently growing.

Digital platforms can connect needs with resources (suppliers of service products with consumers, etc.) through various interaction formats: people-to-people, "people-to-machines", machines -to-machines". The concept of a digital platform includes both the technological design itself and the platform business model and ecosystem.¹

In the context of the scientific problem, the works of I.S. Vazhenina^{2,3,4,5}, D.V. Vizgalova⁶, A.K. Stasia⁷, Yu.V. Shapkina⁸ to interpret and track the phenomenon of territory branding from a historical perspective to the current state. Aspects of branding were also dealt with by researchers: O.V. Lysikova⁹, T.V. Cherevichko¹⁰, T.I. Chernyaeva¹¹, I.I. Bulygina¹², O.V. Korolyova¹³. On the

¹ Gelishanov I.Z. *Digital platform as an institution of the economy of a new technological generation // Lomonosov - 2018: materials of the International Youth Scientific Forum. Moscow: MAKSPress, 2018.*

² Vazhenina I.S. *Territory brand: essence and problems of formation / I.S. Vazhenina // Marketing in Russia and abroad No. 2, 2012, pp. 91–101;*

³ Vazhenina I.S. *Image and brand of the region: the essence and features of formation // Economics of the region, No. 1, 2008, p. 49-58;*

⁴ Vazhenina I.S. *Conceptual foundations for the formation and improvement of the reputation of the region // Regional Economics: Theory and Practice, No. 8 (47), 2007, p. 91-102;*

⁵ Vazhenina I.S. *Conceptual foundations for the formation of the image and reputation of the territory in a competitive environment / Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Economics, Yekaterinburg, 2008, 453 p.;*

⁶ Vizgalov D.V. *City branding: monograph. Moscow: Institute of City Economics Moscow, 2011, 160 p.*

⁷ Stas A. K. *New heraldry: how countries, regions and cities create and develop their brands: monograph / M.: IDT Group, 2009, 208 p.;*

⁸ Shapkina Yu.V. *City branding: features of city brand formation // Almanac of Theoretical and Applied Research in Advertising, No. 1, 2011, p. 46-53;*

⁹ Lysikova O.V. *Imageology and Public Relations in the Socio-Cultural Sphere: A Study Guide. M.: Flinta. MPSI. 2006. 168 p.;*

¹⁰ Cherevichko T.V. *Tourist territory brand as a competitive advantage / T.V. Cherevichko // Bulletin of the Saratov State Socio-Economic University, No. 5 (74), 2018, p. 118-121.*

¹¹ Chernyaeva T. I., Pokrovsky N. E. *Tourism: from social theory to management practice. Tutorial. — M.: Logos, 2008*

¹² Bulygina I.I. *Branding of territories as a tool for creating a tourist image of the Saratov region / I.I. Bulygina, I.V. Alekseev // Bulletin of the Saratov State Socio-Economic University No. 4 (68), p. 13-17*

¹³ Koroleva O.V., Milinchuk E.S., Cherevichko T.V. *Marketing and branding of tourist destinations: a textbook for masters of the direction of training "Tourism" - Saratov: Publishing house of the Saratov State University, 2016. - 160 p.*

conceptualization of the souvenir craft in the context of modern tourism, the works of N.A. Barabanova¹⁴, V.S. Burilova¹⁵ and N.F. Kuznetsova¹⁶.

The functioning of the modern world seems unthinkable without the existence of brands. Thanks to the work of marketers, advertising and PR specialists, each person can instantly name dozens of popular brands: Coca-Cola, Milka, Nesquik, Ford, Ferrari, Apple, Samsung, Chanel, Gucci, Adidas, D&G and many others. But how is the brand used in tourism and, specifically, in relation to territories?

A brand is a name and at the same time a term and sign, symbol or any other value that identifies the goods or services of one seller, distinguishes them from other goods or services of the same sellers. Territory branding is designed to increase the competitiveness of states, geographic zones, regions, cities and regions in order to conquer foreign markets, attract tourists, investors and new residents, as well as create a sense of pride and patriotism among local residents. Branding is based on the idea of conveying the idea of the uniqueness of the territory to the general public.

The term "brand" is very often used in the specialized literature, but the definitions of the concept have changed over time. It comes from the word "brandr", from the old northern Scandinavian language, which means "to burn"¹⁷. This refers to the practice of manufacturers to burn the brand on their products. In the English dictionary, the word "brand" originally referred to anything that was hot or burning, such as "fire brand"¹⁸.

So, looking back many centuries, evidence of the existence of the brand already in those days can be found in the territories where livestock sales were usually carried out, and in places where people painted certain representative symbols of these animals. Since ancient times, people have used various engravings to identify their cattle. For nearly 4,000 years, brands have been used to identify cattle, and this procedure began around 2000 BC. Rock paintings from Southwestern Europe from the Stone Age to the Early Bronze Age depict branded cattle, as well as paintings and Egyptian funerary monuments dating back some 4,000 years. Brands were originally painted with pine resin or primeval paint. Later, when huge herds of cattle were herded north to market, hot iron brands were used.

Brands were also used to identify product ownership. Chinese pottery, Indian, Greek, and Roman items had various engravings to identify the type of pottery, as well as information related to

¹⁴ Barabanova N.A. *The functional essence of a tourist souvenir* / N.A. Barabanova // *Scientific and methodological electronic journal "Concept"*, 2014, vol. 20, pp. 4126–4130

¹⁵ Burilova V.S. *Souvenir component as an element of the tourist complex of Vladivostok* / V.S. Burilova, A.V. Ilyina // *Territory of new opportunities. Bulletin of the Vladivostok State University of Economics and Service*, 2015, No. 2 (29), p. 159-165

¹⁶ Kuznetsova N.F. *Production of souvenirs as a resource for increasing the tourist attractiveness of the region* / N.F. Kuznetsova // *Azimuth of scientific research: economics and management*, 2018, vol. 7, no. 3 (24), p. 143-148

¹⁷ Khan, S. & Mufti, O. *The Hot History & Cold Future of Brands*. *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, vol. 1, no. 1, (2007), p.75.

¹⁸ Rajaram, S. & Shelly, C. S. *History of Branding*. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Research*, vol. 1, no. 3, 2012, p.100.

ownership, source of materials, and period of implementation. Some of the earliest examples of marked pottery appeared in China 4-5 thousand years ago. The signs applied to Greek vases could identify not only the manufacturers of these items, but also the merchant who bought them in bulk and then resold them to others in the market. Various other pieces of evidence that testify to the existence of the first stamped objects also appear outside the Roman Empire: in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) there were stamps on pottery dating back to 3000 BC. During the time of the pharaohs, in order to identify their own products, brick makers in ancient Egypt placed symbols on their products. Traces of quarries and signs of stonemasons have been found on materials used in Egyptian buildings as far back as 6,000 years ago. These marks and similar inscriptions on ancient buildings in Greece, Israel, Syria and Turkey appear to bear a closer resemblance to modern trademarks in terms of their function. Quarry signs indicated the source of the stones used in buildings, and stonemasons' signs, which could help the workers, proved their wage claims. Medieval masons in Germany developed a very complex system for creating individual signs that identified their work, but the goals behind these signs were the same. Bricks and tiles from Mesopotamia and Egypt were inscribed with the name of the monarch who commissioned the structure or who held power during its construction. In contrast, Roman builders stamped their bricks and tiles to indicate the source of the raw materials used, or to identify the person who either made the object or built the house in which it was used. Even the captions on paintings by famous artists such as Leonardo da Vinci can be seen as an early branding tool.

The problem of creating and developing a territory brand is relevant because the image of the state as a whole and its regions is an important indicator when choosing a tourist destination.

Consider some of the below:



Khan-atlas



Pottery



Products made of gold and silver



Skullcaps



Ceramic products



Clay toys and dolls



Wooden boxes



Carpets



Wine, Balsam



Samarkand paper Konigil



Dried fruits, honey and sweets

In Uzbekistan, crafts have developed from century to century, leaving a legacy of unique products of unknown masters, striking with the richness of artistic imagination and the perfection of forms. Throughout the 20th century, with changes in socio-economic conditions, handicraft production gradually faded into the background, giving way to local industrial products. Nowadays, much attention is paid to folk craftsmen in the republic. Digital information platforms are being created

in this industry¹⁹. Digital platforms are also being created to develop online trade in handicrafts. The prospects for using digital platforms give us advantages:

- introduction of cloud technologies, ensures the security of digital platforms;
- use of a number of electronic payment systems for the domestic market and foreign markets;
- integration of the digital information platform with other information support.

Modern world markets for goods and services can no longer function without online platforms, as they involve new goods and services in international trade. From the point of view of the international mobility of factors of production, online platforms have a number of advantages²⁰. Service approaches “everything-as-a-service” and convenient forms of pay-as-you-go used within platform business models help to expand the range and improve the quality of products provided to consumers and services. At the same time, a reduction in transaction costs and overhead costs for suppliers can lead to lower prices for consumers.

Respect for heritage, traditional cultural values, assistance to artisans have been elevated to the rank of state policy. The revival of the traditions of handicraft production has become a natural process, due to the desire to preserve the national culture.

In recent years, the government of Uzbekistan has adopted resolutions aimed at the revival of folk crafts and crafts. A number of folk craftsmen were elected academicians of the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan. The title of “Uzbekiston Republican Khalq Ustasi” was legally approved, the first nominee of which was the jeweler Fashitdin Dadamukhamedov. An association of folk craftsmen "Hunarmand" has been established at the "Musavvir" Research and Production Center, the divisions of which operate in all regions of the republic. The main task of these organizations is the restoration of forgotten crafts, assistance to artisans in the production and marketing of products.

In addition, artisans are assisted by international funds and organizations, which became possible thanks to an open state policy. It has become a tradition to hold handicraft fairs dedicated to holidays under the auspices of the state and various international organizations. These fairs stimulate the growth of handicraft production, promote the exchange of experience, and determine the marketing of the market. In 1995 The first big fair was held in Tashkent with the support of the UN.

This initiative was supported by international organizations interested in the development of tourism and the economy of young states. For a number of years, the UN project “Cultural Educational Tourism and the Development of Crafts” and the “Help for Craftsmen” project under the Counterpart Consortium have been operating in Uzbekistan, providing significant support to folk craftsmen.

¹⁹ Yuldashevna, J. M.(2022). *Problems of Tourism Development through the Creation of Digital Platforms for Sale of Craft Products*. *European Multidisciplinary Journal of Modern Science*, 5, 212–218. Retrieved from <https://emjms.academicjournal.io/index.php/emjms/article/view/250>

²⁰ Jumaniyazova Mukaddas Yuldashevna. (2022). *MODELS AND PROBLEMS OF USING DIGITAL PLATFORMS IN ONLINE TRADING*. *World Bulletin of Public Health*, 7, 36-38. Retrieved from <https://scholarexpress.net/index.php/wbph/article/view/533>

Folk crafts and crafts have been preserved in almost every region of Uzbekistan. Therefore, there is something to promote here. Using the potential of folk crafts and crafts for the development of tourism will bring real benefits to all stakeholders:

- ♣ travelers - new knowledge, vivid impressions, unique acquisitions;
- ♣ travel agencies - the opportunity to develop their business;
- ♣ handicrafts - an additional incentive for the development and expansion of production, strengthening the status;
- ♣ the region and the municipality - investments, image enhancement, socio-economic development, tax receipts and others;
- ♣ to the local community - the preservation and strengthening of traditions, the upbringing of the younger generation in the spirit of national self-consciousness and patriotism, new jobs, income growth.

Since ancient times, a person cannot do without impressions. From the psychological side, a person is arranged in such a way that each event or phenomenon in a certain way affects his consciousness. An impression is understood as a certain image left in the mind by something experienced²¹.

Souvenirs are directly related to the emotions of tourists, they always embody the memory of a place, events, impressions, people, weather, mood and much more. That is why a full-fledged tourist product is unthinkable without souvenirs, which are an element of the experience economy. After the trip, a souvenir is all that a tourist has left as a memory of the trip, not counting personal photographs. While a custom-made material photo is also a souvenir that remains for a person as a keepsake and will warm warm memories.

Conclusion.

For Uzbekistan, the branding of cities and regions is a relatively new phenomenon, but it is rapidly gaining popularity both in society and among city managers. This allows cities to find their idea - something fresh, valuable and unique that needs to be demonstrated to the country and the world. Where the number of quality products grows, a trained and educated audience appears, the number of interested people who want to imitate and create their own - future masters - grows.

Sociologist John Urry, in his work *The Tourist View and Globalization*, argues that powerful and ubiquitous global brands or logos are increasingly spreading around the world. In tourism, this directly concerns the branding of territories - the creation and maintenance of a positive image in order to attract more and more tourists.

The development of cultural space is possible through appropriation, including the issue of appropriation of souvenirs, since the acquired memorabilia participates in shaping the image of the cultural space of a tourist destination in the mind of a tourist. Moreover, a person who has been on a trip, demonstrating or giving the brought souvenirs, forms pre-images of the cultural space of

²¹ Komarova K.O. *The phenomenon of the economy of impression // International Student Scientific Bulletin, 2015, No. 4-2; URL: <http://www.eduherald.ru/ru/article/view?id=13481> (date of access: 04/20/2020).*

the tourist territory, among other people. Souvenirs with regional symbols are a tool for effective dissemination of positive information about the region far beyond its borders.

Projected global trends in the spread of mobile and other digital devices, increasing access to high-speed mobile Internet, the development of various digital technologies - artificial intelligence, the Internet of things (IoT), distributed registry technologies (blockchain), big data and many other technologies, as well as the unique features of platform business models create serious prerequisites for the rapid growth of the platform economy.

Currently, some of our digital platforms can compete with foreign digital platforms only in the Uzbek platform markets, while the level of their market influence in global markets is at an extremely low level.

In order to increase the competitiveness of the Uzbek economy, as well as reduce the risks of global platform companies dominating the Uzbek platform markets, which can lead to potential risks of obtaining uncontrolled access to personal data of citizens and manipulation of individuals, companies, industries and even the state, it seems necessary to ensure the development and introduction of a number of systemic measures aimed at supporting national digital platforms, including those focused on the implementation of activities on a global scale. Directions for further research are seen in the development of such measures and mechanisms.

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