



Stichting Marketing
Expertgroep Master Marketeers



Nation branding Belgium

Long-term strategy for the Brand image improvement of Belgium internationally,

For business audiences (the way Belgium solicits inward investment, recruitment of foreign talents and students, and expansion into the country by foreign companies),

Definition of a set of marketing and communication tools and processes necessary to implement this strategy.



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Nation branding Belgium

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Introduction

What is Nation Branding?

- **Nation branding** is a field of theory and practice which aims to **build, manage and measure** the reputation of nations.
- It applies some approaches from commercial **brand management** practice to nations, in an effort to build, change or protect their international reputations.
- It is based on the observation that the "**brand images**" of nations are just as important to their success in the global market place as those of products and services.



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Introduction

Why is Nation Branding so important?

- Nations are becoming more aware of the importance of defining how they want to be **perceived** by investors and other third parties; and the need to improve and leverage their unique assets.

While tourism is often the most visible manifestation of a country as brand, it is clear that the **image, reputation and brand values** of a nation impact its products, population, investments opportunities and even its foreign aid and funding.

- The **intensified competition under globalization** requires communicating a nation's uniqueness, values and advantages as a memorable brand.



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Introduction

The brief/Scope of the Marketing Manifest

- This Marketing Manifest was started by an expert group of the Master Marketeers on their own initiative. It is a **totally neutral and apolitical** initiative.
- The scope of this Marketing Manifest:
 - The outcome of this exercise will not be a finished Marketing campaign, but the **start of a process which can lead to a unique, consistent and successful positioning of Belgium as a Nation** involving the country's leading political and business society.
 - The approach will investigate what are the unique positioning points of Belgium as a Nation, which can be used **to build the nation's perception abroad**. We have voluntarily reduced the scope of the exercise to **a business audience** with the aim of soliciting inward investment, recruitment of foreign talents and students, and expansion into the country by foreign companies.



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Nation Branding: Theory and Practice

Case Studies on Nation Branding:

The International Marketing Council of South Africa

- Since nation branding is a long-term, cumulative effort, it must rely – like all commercial brands - upon an integrated marketing and communications campaign to stand any chance of success..
- A public private partnership with overall responsibility for the branding efforts, like South Africa's International Marketing Council, is a good example how to manage a nation branding.



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Nation Branding: Theory and Practice

Case Studies on Nation Branding:

The International Marketing Council of South Africa





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Nation Branding: Theory and Practice

Case Studies on Nation Branding: other examples

Germany
Land of Ideas
●●●●●●●●

Malaysia
Truly Asia



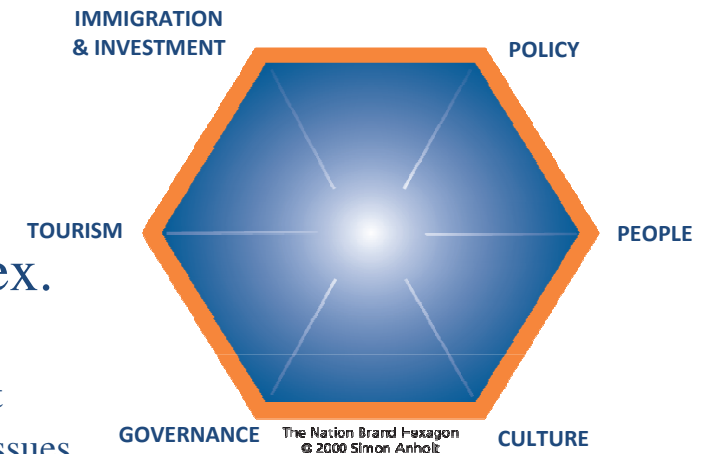


Brand « Belgium »

The current reality

Competitive position as defined by the
Simon Anholt (GfK Roper) Nation Brand Index.

- **Governance:** Public opinion regarding the level of national Government competency and fairness, as well as its perceived commitment to global issues such as democracy, justice, poverty and environment.
- **People:** Measures the population's reputation for competence, education, openness and friendliness and other qualities, as well as the perceived levels of hostility and discrimination.
- **Culture and Heritage:** Global perception of each nation's heritage and appreciation rights for its contemporary culture, including film, music, art, sport and literature.
- **Tourism:** Captures the level of interest in visiting a country and the draw of man-made tourist attractions.
- **Investment and Immigration:** Determines the power to attract people to live, work or study in each country and reveals how people perceive a country's economic and social situation.
- **Exports:** The public's image of products and services from each country and the extent to which consumers proactively seek or avoid products from each country – of – origin.





Brand « Belgium »

The current reality

Competitive position

- Belgium ranks only in Position 20 of the Anholt – GfK Roper Nation Brand Index for 2008. Iceland is the only Western European Countries scoring lower than Belgium:

1	Germany	11	Spain
2	France	12	Netherlands
3	United Kingdom	13	Norway (tie)
4	Canada	13	Austria (tie)
5	Japan	15	Denmark
6	Italy	16	Scotland
7	United States	17	New Zealand
8	Switzerland	18	Finland
9	Australia	19	Ireland
10	Sweden	20	Belgium



Brand « Belgium » The current reality

NBI: Evolution Belgium 2005 - 2009



Competitive position of Belgium

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Nr of Countries	35	38	36	50	50
Overall Ranking	16	17	19	20	18
Governance	8	-	12	15	13
People	15	-	20	21	20
Culture	21	-	26	26	24
Tourism	24	-	27	28	27
Immigration/ Investment	16	-	16	19	18
Export	16	-	18	19	18



Brand « Belgium »

The current reality

Competitive position

Source: “Country Brand Index 2008”

Among Belgium’s meager assets: its respect for political freedom, its cuisine, the feeling of security that is emerging. In short, very safe but unattractive...

Belgium ranks 7th in the category of "**political freedom**", dominated by the Netherlands, followed by New Zealand, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Canada. As for the food that is served, Belgium peak at the 9th place on 10, after Italy (No. 1), France and Japan in particular.

Belgium scores finally the 8th place in the category "**security**", leaving the top of the basket to Norway (No. 1), Switzerland and New Zealand. Belgium stays directly behind Monaco very safe, and good for its cuisine as well.

POLITICAL FREEDOM

Noted for democratic institutions and civil liberties



1. NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands' liberal approach to public policy and legislation — on drugs, euthanasia and a host of other civic issues — make it one of the most politically free societies in the world.

2. New Zealand		
3. Sweden		
4. Denmark		
5. Norway		
6. Canada		
7. Belgium		
8. Australia		
9. Switzerland		
10. United Kingdom		

FINE DINING

Superior culinary offerings and experiences



1. ITALY

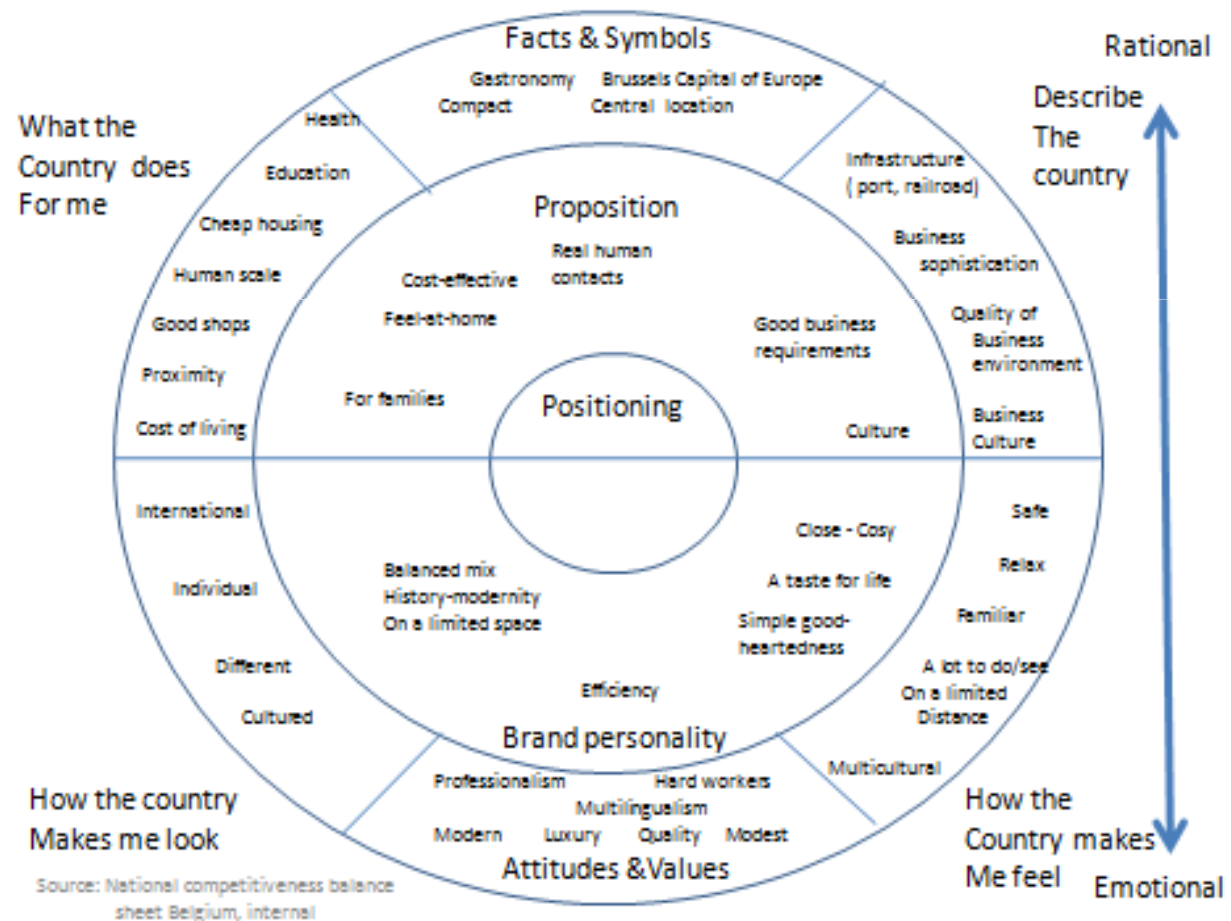
Italy's diverse regional ingredients, simple flavors and rich inventiveness create a culinary journey not to be missed.

2. France		▼ (1)
3. Japan		▲ (4)
4. Singapore		▼ (3)
5. Switzerland		
6. Austria		
7. Spain		▲ (9)
8. Monaco		
9. Belgium		
10. United Arab Emirates		▼ (7)



Building a Brand Strategy for Belgium

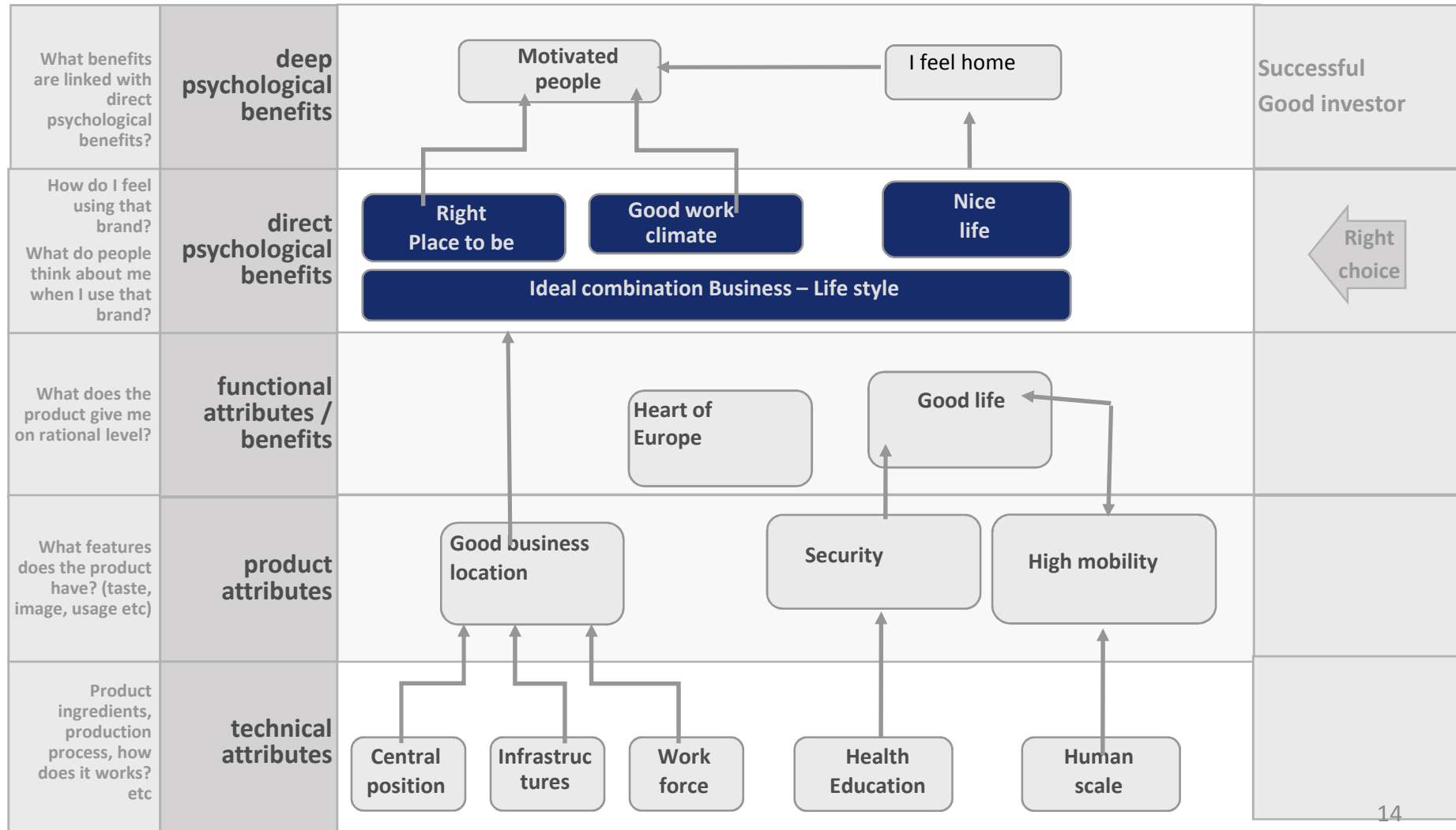
Brand Identity



Belgium has many elements in the intangible area, which compensates less distinctive elements in the tangible area.



Key Brand Benefit Belgium





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Building a Brand Strategy for Belgium

Key Brand Benefits and Brand Positioning

Based on the model a “slogan” has been defined:

“Business Comfort in the heart of Europe”



The Way Forward

Actual situation (courtesy of Duval Guillaume)





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The Coca-Cola-model



The Unilever-model



Unilever





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Building a Brand Strategy for Belgium Brand Architecture

Two options:

- The Coca Cola model: with the sub-brands strongly (e.g. Coca Cola Zero, Coca Cola Diet,..) strongly connected to the **Mother brand** Coca Cola.
- The Unilever model with the sub-brands (e.g. Axe, Dove, Omo, Magnum,..) individually **supported** under the Unilever **umbrella** and values.

Both options require a unique and positive image of Belgium towards foreign investors. If Belgium as a Nation is not considered as an option for business investment, the sub-brands (e.g. Regions) will not be considered.



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The Way Forward Brand Management

Brand Office

- A growing trend, indicating the importance of nation branding, is the creation of Brand Office, Brand Councils or other organizations that help govern and regulate established country brands.
- These groups often act as custodians of the brand, serve to drive investment and integrate marketing efforts. They also demonstrate the need for Nation branding to be an ongoing effort and not a limited-scope program that stops once a branding exercise is complete.



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The Way Forward Brand Management

Examples of Brand Office:

South-Africa

- The International Marketing Council is a public-private organization that was established in 2000 to coordinate various marketing initiatives in order to create a consistent, positive and compelling brand image for South Africa. Its mission is to establish Brand South Africa, create an integrated approach within government and private sectors toward the international marketing of South Africa and built national support for the brand within the country.

India

- India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) is a public-private partnership among the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Government of India and the Confederation of Indian Industry. The Foundation's primary objective is to build positive economic perceptions of India globally. It aims to effectively present the Indian business perspective and leverage business partnerships in a globalizing marketplace.

Abu Dhabi

- The Office of the Brand was created in 2007 to act as guardian of Brand Abu Dhabi. This office will assist public and private sectors in understanding the brand and its purpose, while providing guidance on its application in all activities that may have an impact on the reputation of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.



The Way Forward Brand Management

Branding program

- The working group will have to **create the core idea** on which the national brand will be based and from which the entire program should be developed.
- This must be visualized through colors, a **symbol**, and topography. Here a prominent artist could be commissioned to create the national symbol or Icon. Joan Miró's sun symbol for Spain is perhaps the most representative model of it.
- A **brand book** should be developed, illustrating and defining the national mood, personality and style. This book could be used as a model by different companies within the country which want to project an idea of them related to the nation imagery.
- **Messages** required for the very different but complementary sectors, should be **coordinated** and modulated so that they are appropriate for each audience, that they reflect the central Idea and that everything representing the nation should be readily recognizable.





Belgium Nation Branding : Conclusions/Recommendations

1. Perception of Belgium is steadily declining on all attributes
2. There is a clear opportunity/must to start “Nation Branding” for Belgium
3. We recommend the creation of a Brand Office to develop and improve the imago of Belgium (incl. logo, slogan, campaign and positioning towards various target groups)
4. Belgian European Presidency in 2010 is (was!) a first opportunity.



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BELGIUM:

Business Comfort in the Heart of Europe

“Come for Work, Stay for Life”