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City Branding and Museum Souvenirs

Towards improving the St. Petersburg city brand: do museums sell souvenirs or do souvenirs sell museums?

Introduction

The branding of a city is a complex task consisting of several elements (Zenker & Braun, 2017). Museums can be considered one of the elements which comprise the brand of a city. Museums possess their own unique brands which in some cases become a part of wider brand knowledge, one of the associations which help to form the overall brand of a place. Museums are particularly important for cities with an 'academic' image and for those with city brands based on cultural and historical heritage (Gordin, 2011).

Given the current conditions of the experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), postmodern consumption and the decline of interest in academic institutions, museum managers are forced to use an augmented or superior product in order to make museums more attractive to visitors. An augmented product may help museums to raise their brand awareness, promote their uniqueness and make progress in their mission (Aalst & Boogaarts, 2002; Mclean, 2012). One way of offering an augmented product is by creating museum shops with product ranges which include museum souvenirs (Mclean, 2012).

Museum shops and the souvenirs sold there can play a significant role in the branding process of museums. It is in these retail settings that masterpieces from museum collections are often incorporated into a variety of product ranges (Balash, 2014). For example, at the V&A museum in London, they offer an 'exhibition range' of souvenirs, which are products based solely on the pieces which visitors are able to see in the collections housed within the museum itself. Souvenirs are a means of communication with the visitor and they help to enhance the visitor's impression of his or her trip to a given place (Kent, 2009). From this perspective, souvenirs are not only an integral component of the museum brand, they also convey a strong message about the wider place (town/city/region/country) in which the museum is located. If a unique product is created by a museum shop it could have a positive impact on the brand of the place. This usually only occurs via souvenirs sold in traditional gift shops on the high street. Research which has been conducted in the field shows that such souvenirs are created mostly for profit gain and are of poor quality, being criticised as 'trashy kitsch' (Haldrup 2017, Nyffenegger & Steffen, 2010, Widmayer 1991). Moreover, it is our observation that the majority souvenirs represent Russian symbols reinforcing nationalism; such souvenirs do not support the tourist brand of St.Petersburg in its entirety. Taking these issues into account, there is clear potential for museum shops to address this gap by offering product of a superior quality which can contribute to the wider place brand of St.

Petersburg.

This paper argues that managers of museum shops should consider less commercial, place-related objectives, along with more straightforward profit oriented concerns, when creating their inventories (Mclean, 2012). Following an analysis of 76 museums in the St. Petersburg region of Russia, we present a series of detailed recommendations which could help museum managers use souvenirs to promote both their own brands, and those of the places in which their museums are located. This could have the effect of strengthening the city brand as well as generating the added benefit of increased visitor related income for both individual museums and the wider destination.

Our paper is structured as follows. First, we undertake a review of key studies on destination and museum branding and the role of museum souvenirs in this process. In the second section, we discuss the methodology employed. Finally, we describe the findings and give practical recommendations based on the results of the research. This work takes an exploratory approach to address the gap that currently exists linking the impact of museum souvenirs to destination branding.

Theoretical background

What is a destination brand?

The concept of the destination brand has been widely discussed by researchers in the field of place management (Braun, 2008; Dooley & Bowie, 2005; Govers & Go, 2009; Zenker, 2011; Zenker, Petersen & Anholt, 2009, Kavaratzis, 2004, Medway & Warnaby, 2014). According to Anholt (2010), a destination brand involves "competitive identity," that is, something that distinguishes one territory from another and makes it memorable. The idea of creating uniqueness in order to brand a place, is supported by research such as Kavaratzis (2004) and Ashworth (2009).

Destination branding is undoubtedly complex and academics such as Melodena et al, (2011) have attempted to formalise the concept by dividing it into a number of dimensions: 1) functional and 2) symbolic dimensions. Functional dimensions of a destination brand incompass tangible attributes whereas symbolic dimensions are about things which are intangible. Among functional components are places of interest, scenery, events, things to do, names and logos, postcards, buildings and architecture and numerous other components. Symbolic destination brand components include perceptions of various aspects of the destination by individuals, relationships among travellers and residents, 'experience that creates an emotions/mood/association with certain senses', etc. (Melodena et al, 2011).

However, there are components of city brands where these dimensions overlap and souvenirs represent a good example of this. Souvenirs are at the same time 'tangible reminders' but also have a 'symbolic association (memories) with the brand' (Human, 1999; Williams, 2006). It is crucial to deal with intangible issues surrounding souvenirs by commoditizing them and creating a

product, which can be purchased and consumed in order to give consumers a reference point from which to evaluate the destination associated with a particular souvenir (Melodena et al 2011; Swanson & Timothy, 2012).

Souvenirs and the branding process

Souvenirs are recognised as an important part of the visitor experience (Swanson & Horridge, 2006). About a third of total visitor spend comes under the label of 'various purchases' and most of the spend within that category is on souvenirs. American Tourists, for example, spend about 33% to 56% of their travel budget on shopping and a large part of that on souvenirs (Nyffenegger & Steffen, 2010). These statistics illustrate the importance of souvenirs for visitors.

Despite a plethora of research on souvenirs, previous studies have been limited to a number of key areas. As Jin et al (2017) rightly highlight key studies have focused primarily on souvenirs as gifts (Moscardo, 2004; Wilkins, 2011), they have looked at the factors influencing the purchase of souvenirs (Hu and Yu, 2007; Lin & Mao, 2015), examined attitudes towards souvenirs (Kim & Littrell, 2001), and studied perceptions of souvenir authenticity (Revilla & Dodd, 2003). There is some early research that looks at *types* of souvenirs (Gordon 1986; Littrell 1990; Love & Sheldon 1998) but these studies stop short of examining the inventory strategies museums adopt. Particularly scant, is the literature linking souvenirs to the branding process and indeed to the wider issue of destination branding specifically.

As established in the previous section, a destination brand consists of a series of tangible and intangible attributes. At the intersection of tangible and intangible attributes there are so called 'tangible reminders' – souvenirs. Most destination branding is moving towards symbolic imagery and souvenirs embody this idea (Melodena et al, 2011).

Souvenirs are used as a means to commoditize tourists' impressions and sensory experiences. They are a means of communication between the milieu and the tourist. (Swanson & Timothy, 2012; Hitchcock & Teague, 2000; Collins-Kreiner & Zins, 2011). What is more, souvenirs are an important part of the post-consumption tourist product and experience (whereby tourists prolong their experience and are able to take part of it home).

It has been asserted that souvenirs are an instrument to commincate the value of a destination, symbolically transmitting something about the culture and history of a place (Li & Ryan, 2018) At the same time, souvenirs are elements of the brand in their own right, a crucial association alongside other components. For instance, Mozart sweets are associated with Vienna, juniper figurines are affiliated with a trip to Tallinn.

What will be commoditized partly depends on who is distributing the souvenirs. Retailers of souvenirs vary a lot within destinations. They are different in terms of size, location and

management structure. In a broad sense, retailers can be divided into two groups: souvenir merchants for whom selling souvenirs is their primary activity and tourism services, for whom selling souvenirs is an additional source of income alongside other activities i.e. gift shops affiliated with museums (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Museums' rich collections and powerful architectural images provide a sound basis for creating souvenirs.

Nonetheless, regardless of their type all retailers face particular challenges. For example, they deal with such obstacles as 'undifferentiated product lines, highly-concentrated direct competition' etc. (Swanson & Timothy, 2012). Due to these more commercial pressures, often, the focus of souvenir retailers is not on the implications of their decisions for the city brand. However, as a minimum, souvenir retailers may be able to contribute to a destination brand in the minds of visitors by offering a clear competitive advantage via their product lines (Kent, 2009).

The role of museums and their collections in destination branding

There is widespread support for the idea *of museums* doing more than simply 'hosting artefacts' (Kirchberg, 2007). Indeed, it has been proposed that museums may provide "imagineering" in which museums act as a form of identity source and a reference point for the area and are pivotal in attracting visitors from far afield (Shaw et al, 2018; (Kirchberg, 2007). Miles and Miles (2004) support this idea by stating that in producing a large cultural centre a city is "putting its flag on an international culture-map to gain a global competitive edge".

Place branding manifests itself through various channels, primarily - architecture, urban design, infrastructure (e.g. transport) and museums (Johnson et al, 2016; Hanna & Rowley, 2015). The formation, promotion and renovation of a place brand requires the participation of various groups of stakeholders and implementation of different instruments (Braun et al, 2013; Andersson & Ekman, 2009; Ashworth, 2009). There are several examples of museums becoming a significant part of place brands because of their own well-established brands, such as The Louvre in Paris and the British Museum in London. The case of the Guggenheim in Bilbao is also frequently discussed (Plaza, 2000; Mathews, 2010; Evans, 2003). Therefore, it is important that the successful sub brands of museums be allowed to co-exist with wider place brands (Hanna & Rowley, 2015).

To a large extent, the creation of a destination brand depends on museum sub-brands and on the way in which these are developed. In this regard, development strategies and the promotion of museums play an important role in building destination brands. This is reflected in the observation that, "Iconic art museums can help reimage places for economic gains," "images of the museum ... spread around the world … giving the city a unique identity and whetting the appetites of potential tourists" (Jacobs, 2012). Museum shops promoting unique product closely associated with museums and their rich collections can be a powerful tool for that.

Indeed, a wide range of literature indicates that very often museums have powerful images and rich collections of artifacts (Plaza, 2000; Mathews, 2010; Evans, 2003; Johnson, et al, 2016) which might provide this competitive basis for product development. As previously highlighted, museums are one of many channels of souvenir retailing. They exist in an industry characterised by high levels of competition. Existing literature points to the 'importance of the museum shop' (Kent, 2009) and therefore it makes sense that museum shop employees should carefully develop their product range in order to compete with other retailers. We propose that it is only by adopting this type of deliberate strategy that they will be able to create souvenirs capable of contributing to the overarching destination brand.

Methodology

The methods employed for this study have been selected based on their ability to address the following research questions;

RQ1: What are the strategies used by museum shops to develop their inventory of souvenirs?

RQ2: How can these strategies influence and enrich the city brand of St Petersburg?

The aim of this research is thus to identify ways in which to develop product, which will possess competitive advantage, and to recommend what should be done in order to develop such product so that it has a positive impact on the city brand of St. Petersburg.

We used a purposeful sample of 76 museums located in St. Petersburg. The sample was chosen based on museum visitor numbers i.e. the most visited museums were selected from a list on the St. Petersburg Cultural Committee website. We were then able to narrow down this initial sample further, excluding those that could not be studied for reasons such as they were closed or being refurbished (12 museums). This left a total of 64 museums that were visited in person. In addition, the websites of 10 Russian and 10 foreign museums were examined in order to benchmark the functional structure of the inventories.

10 foreign and 10 Russian museums, which are characterised by a high attendance rate, were chosen based on information from appropriate internet resources in order to develop a basic classification of museum shop inventory according to items' functional characteristics. The museums that were studied are:

Foreign museums

- Louvre (Paris)
- National museum of Natural History (Washington, DC)
- National museum of China (Beijing)
- National Air and Space museum (Washington, DC)
- British Museum (London)

- Metropolitan museum of art (New York)

- National Gallery (London)

- Natural History museums (London, UK)

- American museum of natural history (New York)

- Vatican museums (Vatican)

Russian museums

- The State Hermitage (St.Petersburg)

- St.Isaac's Cathedral (St.Petersburg)

- State Museum of St.Petersburg history (St.Petersburg)

- Arts park "Museon" (Moscow)

- Museums of the State Kremlin (Moscow)

- The State Tretyakov Gallery (Moscow)

- The State Russian museum (St.Petersburg)

- The state historical museum (Moscow)

- The State museum of arts named after A.S.Pushkin (Moscow)

The rationale for this method of sampling is that almost all the leading museums have a museum shop. Additionally, these museums can play a significant role in the branding of the places where they are located, in part, thanks to unique souvenirs sold there. The museum shops of world-famous museums can be viewed as examples of best practice and therefore it makes sense to sample in the first instance by visitor numbers which effectively serve as a measure of what constitutes a 'leading museum'.

For further analysis only museums located in St. Petersburg were chosen. Museums that are located in the Leningradskiy district were not considered. Limiting the sample in this way has made the data more representative of the overall museum population. Museums in the suburban districts have their own specific characteristics and sometimes have idiosyncratic customer bases. Moreover, departmental museums were excluded from consideration since employees of museums of this type do not have the freedom to set and follow their own objectives, but follow the policy and strategy of the organisation they belong to.

To support our primary investigation we used a range of secondary sources including academic papers and books in order to find out how managers of museum shops should develop inventory in order to create product of the highest quality.

The process of data collection at the 64 museums visited occurred in a number of stages. First, the researchers examined the product range of each shop identifying patterns in inventory across the different museums. A toolkit matrix was used to aid this process of classifying inventory across a number of functional and topical characteristics. Goods were also classified and

categorised according to content.

The classification matrix was based on the analysis of previous research describing the process of product (inventory) selection for museum shops. Subjects were analysed in accordance with the aims which museum shops' management usually pursues and the policies that they follow. It is possible to judge if a museum's focus is on promoting its permanent collection and temporary exhibitions or on being profitable as its primary goal based on the content of goods at a given museum shop. The choice of museum goods that are not relevant to the museum or the wider geographical area is evidence to the fact that the museum shop is out of sync with the museum's mission. However, being in-sync with the museum is essential for a museum shop in order for it to meet modern standards and have a broader impact.

The aim should be to present a product that is different from those offered by existing gift shops and could potentially expand the overall city brand. Given the goals of the present study, the content of museum shop goods was classified in the following way:

- Souvenirs that represent artefacts from the museum collection;
- Souvenirs with an image of the museum (the building, logo, or interior);
- Other topics.

The data collected was presented in a table. Each table cell contains the percentage of goods that are relevant to a certain theme and have a given function. Therefore, for the purposes of data analysis, the table summarises the inventory and provides information on museums' inventory policies. We make the assumption that inventory which reflects the museums themes and activities is better able to support both the museum brand and the wider city brand.

Findings

Extensive data collection and analysis enables us to present our findings in two stages. The first phase of data was generated through content analysis of the websites of 20 world famous museums. This resulted in the finding that inventory at museum shops could be subdivided into several basic categories, which are:

- Books
- Reproductions
- Stationary
- Goods for children
- Other goods (including clothing and accessories, jewellery, goods for home).

---------Insert table 1 here----------

In table 1 it is clearly evident that overall there are 60% of souvenirs that depict the museums themselves and their collections in their inventories. However, there is still a large percentage of souvenirs, which arguably do not enhance the brand of the museum or the city because they are not connected thematically to the museum's collections or image (40%). Whilst the majority of museums' inventory is connected with the themes, collections and images of the museums themselves there is clearly still scope for improvement whereby museums could look to increase further the links within the 'books' and 'stationary' categories. There is also scope to increase the percentage of goods for children that are linked to the museums themes, as this category is currently minimal.

Another aspect, which is necessary to take into consideration, is the functional diversity of souvenirs offered by museums. Table 1 represents an overall pattern of functional diversity of inventory in museum shops in St. Petersburg. We can determine from the table that, in general, inventory is characterised by some sort of diversity. Most attention is given to stationery, both museum - and non-museum-themed. This could be explained by the idea that such types of souvenirs will probably be in demand among a wide range of audiences since the prices for these are fair and they can be easily transported. If we focus on the maximum percentage of goods with various functional characteristics and thematic scope we highlight that are cases when goods belonging to certain functional groups are 100% museum-themed. This suggests that there are museums in St. Petersburg that have inventory strategies with serious potential to enrich the city brand.

One further significant point to highlight is that a large number of items that are museum-themed are books. Such items are valuable tools to prolong visitor's experience and empower museums' educational missions as a whole. The analysis also demonstrates that some museums even have separate book shops. Such practices can increase the visitors' basic awareness about museums and diversify associations with the city. The State Hermitage Museum could be considered as a case in point. The inventory in the Hermitage is characterised by museum related goods from various functional groups. The artefacts of the museum's collection are promoted through stationary, books, some motives are reflected in jewellery, accessories and clothes. More to the point, there are even several separate stores in the museum, which correspond to the needs of different types of customers. These are stores where books are sold as a separate category, children's stores, and stores with luxury goods.

To add to the analysis within Table 1 reflecting functional diversity of inventory, there is evidence that although the percentage of books and stationary is large, other categories are underrepresented. This could possibly decrease the chances for museum shops to attract specific groups of customers and consequently reduce their levels of competitiveness compared to regular

souvenir shops. This is especially true for goods for children. There is very small percentage of them. The presence of such additional options in museum shops could be attractive for target audiences such as families. By avoiding goods for children, developers of shop inventory overlook a significant part of the visitor profile for whom high street souvenir shops where targeted goods are offered might be more attractive.

Data collected in the second phase was gathered via means of visiting 64 St Petersburg museums and examining the functional characteristics of their shops' inventory in person. The matrices populated during these visits have been summarised in table 2.

---------Insert tables 2 here----------

As we can see in table 2, more than a half of museums inventory space is given to souvenirs that are directly connected with museums' collections or images of the museums themselves. Among these museums are world-renowned ones like the State Hermitage and The Russian Museum as well as commercial museums like Faberge Museum, Contemporary Art Museum "Erarta".

These are museums whose shops meet western standards and who function at a high level of competitiveness. They promote works of art through their museum shop offerings, which contribute to supporting the educational functions of the museums and creating a brand for both the museums and St. Petersburg as a whole. In the Hermitage 80 percent of inventory reflect some museum themes.

The Hermitage shop and its strategy of product development could serve as an example for other museums' staff to follow. The shop is managed by external suppliers. However, the product is developed with direct involvement of museum staff. The strategies are developed with a consideration of the museums goals in mind.

To add to the list of organisations with successful product development strategies, the commercial museums (Faberge museum, Contemporary art museum "Erarta") and their stores are managed by specialists. These specialists know how to promote their collections as well as how to further their mission through the commodification of museum activities. These museums are relatively new and follow contemporary processes in respect of museum management practices.

Almost 15% of museums are judged as having a 'large share' of souvenirs that reflect the image of museum and its artefacts. Among these museums are Museum of History of Religion, Museum of Kirov, Museum of Toys and others. These museums can be considered progressive enough; they at least partly comply with the practices of the most modern museums. Nonetheless, they still need to decrease amount of souvenirs, which depict images of the city since these type of

souvenirs cannot always compete with souvenirs provided in ordinary souvenir shops. Such inventory does not enhance the brand of museum since tourists take home a reminder of their trip to the city but not the museum.

More than 18% of museums studied cannot be described as having a unique product inventory. These museums offer stock that is primarily concerned with themes not concurrent with either the museum collections or imagery. Inventory does not enhance the brand of the museum and does not make any contribution to brand of St. Petersburg except for supporting the existing one. Among examples are museums such as Yusupov Palace, Russian Museum of A.S.Pushkin, Museum of History of Printing. Some of these museums (for instance Yusupov Palace) are highly visited by tourists. However, the souvenirs sold there are lost among souvenirs that do not differ from those sold all around the city. As a result the potential promotional and branding opportunities for the city are muted.

14% of museums studied do not have souvenir shops at all. These are very small museums, which have quite low attendance rates. However, at these museums the creation of a museum shop might positively influence their tourist potential.

Discussion

Our first research question asks *what are the strategies used by museum shops to develop their inventory of souvenirs?* In a broad sense, we find that the strategic approaches to inventory development by museums in St. Petersburg are mixed. However, we have been able to identify the following specifics;

Strategies support the idea of balance between commodification and authenticity of culture

Considering the product inventory of museum shops via the literature review, it has been asserted that there should be balance between the authenticity of culture and its commodification (Mclean, 2012). It should be assumed for the purposes of this study that commodification entails adapting commercial activities for spheres that used to be non-commercial (Nash, 2000). Based on this definition, museum souvenirs can be conceived of as a way of commodifying museum activities.

With regard to this, it is important to mention that the majority of authors argue that museum shop activities should support the mission and goals of the museum itself. The museum inventory should correspond to the collections exhibited in the museum (Mclean, 2012; McIntyre, 2010). One powerful tool, for instance, is when the most well-known works of art are depicted on various common objects that are familiar to visitors in their everyday lives (Balash, 2014). The shop's inventory should contribute to knowledge that a visitor has acquired at the museum (Kent, 2009). It is possible to implement this principle by creating museum shop products that reimagine and reinterpret art works (Balash, 2014). All in all, managers responsible for development of museum

shops' inventory should orientate themselves on the artefacts of museum collections and museum imagery as a whole in order to create a product of high quality.

Our analysis of the broad picture indicated positive patterns in terms of the development of museum shops inventory in St. Petersburg. Tables 1 and 2 show that overall the themes of the majority of items are connected with the museums. This indicates that most museums appear to strike a balance between commodification and commercial objectives by providing souvenirs that also represent authenticity of culture.

Nonetheless, there is still a large number of museums in St. Petersburg that do not have a clearly defined strategy of product development. Museum staff do not influence the souvenir shop policy, and most of the store inventory is not related to the content of the museum exhibitions. They thus fail to promote the themes of museum exhibitions and the artefacts exhibited in the museum collections through the souvenirs sold in the museum shop. Souvenirs presented in these museums do not differentiate from those presented in the city's souvenir shops and would not be able to serve as examples of best practice.

Moreover, there is evidence that although the percentage of books and stationary is large among the items linked with museum collections and images other categories are not linked enough. This decreases the chance of museum stores attracting specific groups of customers and consequently the level of their competitiveness is diminished.

Overall, these findings lead us to argue that the assortment of museum shops inventory should be created according to strict rules, paying attention to the subject scope of items sold. Although inventory strategy of museums in St. Petersburg leans slightly towards associations with museum collections/images, the picture is mixed and there are still museums which do not promote these associations.

Museum shops inventory strategies are diversified in terms of their functional characteristics

10 foreign and 10 Russian museums, which are characterized by a high attendance rate, were chosen based on information from appropriate internet resources in order to develop a basic classification of museum shop inventory according to items' functional characteristics. There are several major museums whose shops meet western standards and who are highly diversified in terms of their functional characteristics i.e. The Hermitage Museum and The Russian Museum. In these museums the artefacts of museum's collection are promoted through stationary, books, some motives are reflected on jewellery, accessories and clothes. They may even be split into separate shops within a single museum by functional group. Some of these museums should be used as best practice examples for others to emulate. Overall, our research shows that many museums in St Petersburg are functionally diverse but they have the potential to improve in terms of how far the museum's collections and imagery is linked within these functional categories.

Our second research question links ideas around inventory strategies to the issue of the city brand asking '*How can these strategies influence and enrich the city brand of St Petersburg?'* We address this question primarily through a series of detailed recommendations linked to enrichment of the city brand.

The existing brand of St.Petersburg needs enrichment. A deeper examination into research conducted in the field of city's brand demonstrates that St.Petersburg has long-standing image and brand among tourists. As a result of research conducted by the Russian-German company Damm und Landl, a number of associations with the city have been outlined (Kopylova, 2013). Among foreign tourists St. Petersburg is associated with "history, heritage and white nights". Among Russian tourists – with "North capital, cultural capital and ice city"(Kopylova, 2013). Moreover, the city is compared to Venice, foreigners usually associate the city with the dome of the Church of the Spilled Blood. The image of St.Petersburg took its shape long ago but its refreshment and expansion might influence the city in a positive way attracting new types of tourists and additional investment.

The types of imagery mentioned above are reflected in the product created by souvenir shops, which exist in the city. An analysis of souvenirs in St.Petersburg has led us to the conclusion that the largest percentage of them are based on architectural and cultural symbols, that are the Church of the Savior on the Spilled Blood, St.Isaac's Cathedral, drawbridges and some of the most well-known monuments like griffins, Bronze man, rostral columns, etc. Experts and practitioners in the field confirm this and mention that when they create new product lines in the first instance they use the images of the Savior on the Spilled Blood and other most famous places of interest in the city (Trefilova, 2017). These issues show that there is a niche in the souvenir market for the powerful images and artefacts of museum collections which are numerous and could fill this gap.

Museum souvenirs created according to the principles described above will have a competitive advantage over other souvenirs and as a result will have an impact on the brand of the city enriching and expanding it. The more recognisable the work is, the more influence it has on brand of a city. For instance, the city of Figueres is strongly associated with the image of Salvador Dali and his paintings (Ashworth, 2009). The connections between cultural artefacts and places are reinforced through souvenirs, and this helps provide a form of 'cultural nourishment' to sustain the place brand. To sum up, well-known artefacts from museum collections might serve as a powerful tool of promotion for both museums and destinations if they are used effectively in the process of development of museum shops' inventory.

Experts suggest that it is a promising avenue to go beyond traditional understandings of souvenirs. One way of doing this is to think of new ideas for themes as represented in souvenirs. Currently the majority of practitioners involved in the sphere of souvenir production and retail do

not know how they can use museum collections and particular artefacts to greatest effect. A search for partnerships in the field will help to empower them and expand the city brand as well as positively influence museums themselves (Trefilova, 2017).

In general, the efforts to modernize the process of museum shop's product development should centre on establishing a dialogue between museums, cultural managers and the creative industry. Both the state authorities and other interested parties should work on cooperating with one another. Through maintaining these relationships, museum management personnel would improve their business skills, and as a result, the quality of products sold by museum stores would improve and the products sold would be more competitive. Our recommendations are as follows;

For museums and museum workers

Recommendations:

- Creation of restrictions on types and style of museum store goods sold inside the museum (brand book);
- Professional staff retraining, raising the staff's awareness regarding the mechanics of product development at museums' shops;
- Active cooperation with business communities in order to establish relationships with managers in the cultural sphere;
- Analysis of museum collections with the aim of creating marketable products based on them;

For regions, state and city authorities

Recommendations:

- Enacting a tax policy that stimulates the sale of goods with a museum theme;
- Development of educational programs in the field of museum marketing and support of existing ones (professional higher education, professional retraining programs), additional cash flows

For representatives of business (intermediaries and consultants)

Recommendations:

- Creation of a business association
- Monitoring trends in the development of the industry;
- Analysis of foreign practices and creation of proposals for developing museum store inventory in St. Petersburg on the basis of these proposals;
- Searching for cooperation between museums and representatives of creative industries, managers in the field of culture; creating alliances between these parties;
- Requesting advice from business consultants on how to improve museum store inventory.

For creative industries:

Recommendations:

- Participation in special events devoted to the commodification of museum activities in order to

establish connections with museum management and managers in the field of culture;

- Finding a profitable niche market for museum shop inventory products and creating competitive museum stores;

- Analysis of current trends in the production of museum goods and applying the results of this analysis to create competitive domestic museum shop inventory

Cities need new ways of creating and promoting their brands. Being subbrands, museums play a significant role in promoting the image of the city. In turn, souvenirs are an important tool for creating and cementing impressions about a museum in the visitor's mind. In order to serve as a vehicle for creating these impressions, a souvenir should be closely associated with the museum, its collection, building, and logo, and should be instrumental in communicating these. That is why museum souvenirs should be closely connected with museums' main mission and not simply for gaining as much profit as possible. Unique souvenirs should be created that differ from those sold in gift shops. This will effectively contribute to brand enrichment and refreshment rather than merely supporting the existing brand. Museum staff should think of a clear strategy of product development for their shops.

In St. Petersburg, the analysis of souvenir shops of all the museums has shown that only in some of these a clear strategy for product development is created which helps to promote the museum brand through souvenirs. Only the largest museums in the city (such as the Hermitage, the Russian Museum), or private museums (for example, the Erarta Museum) have these merits. Therefore, tourists perceive St. Petersburg as a home to only a small number of museums rather than as being home to a wealth of fine museum collections, open and available for tourists to visit.

Conclusions

Our work supports previous research that asserts the overall importance of the museum shop (Kent, 2009). The present study has shown that St. Petersburg museums have real potential to improve the ways in which they develop their inventory strategies in order to enrich the city brand. Namely, by integrating the extensive material in their collections into souvenirs production. There are a number of museums that do this successfully and who may serve as best practice examples for museums that either do not have museum stores or have poorly run museum stores.

This exploratory study has made a clear theoretical contribution by linking theory on souvenirs and destination branding which has previously been underexplored. Perhaps more significantly, we are able to make a number of practical recommendations to a range of stakeholders. These recommendations can be used in future to help enrich the city brand of St. Petersburg through cultural means. However, there are limitations to this work that present avenues for further research; for example, it has been beyond the scope of this study to examine direct

causality between souvenirs and enrichment of city brand. Future qualitative research could work towards establishing this link more strongly. Equally, there is potential to explore this issue in diverse geographical locations, which may enable a comparative analysis leading to generalizable recommendations across borders.

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Table 1.The general structure of the museum store inventory in St. Petersburg museums

%

	Books mus[1]	Reproduction mus	Stationary mus	Goods for children mus	Other goods mus
Average percentage of goods	18,30	7,78	23,50	0,10	10,75
Maximum percentage of goods	100,00	100,00	76,92	2,58	100,00
	Books not mus[2]	Reproduction not mus	Stationary mus	Goods for children not mus	Other goods not mus
Average percentage of goods	12,85	1,97	13,78	2,01	8,96
Maximum percentage of goods	58,62	30,74	64,07	70,87	59,69

Table 2. Percentage of museums with different types of inventory structures

Inventory structure of museum store	Percentage of museums studied	Examples
Majority of souvenirs (>50%) represent artifacts of the museum collection or with an image of the museum	53,06%	Museum of history of photography
		Faberge museum
		Contemporary art museum "Erarta"
Large share of souvenirs (>25%) represent artifacts of the museum collection or with an image of the museum	14,29%	Museum of history of religion
		Museum of Kirov
		Museum of toys
Majority of souvenirs with other topics (except the museum and its collection)	18,37%	Yusupov Palace
		Russian museum of A.S.Pushkin
		Museum of history of printing
Museums do not have stores	14,29%	Museum of bread
		Museum "The Germans in St.Petersburg and suburbs"
		Museum of retro motorcycles

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1 Souvenirs that represent artifacts of the museum collection or with an image of the museum (the building, logo, or interior).

2 Souvenirs with other topics (except the museum and its collection)