

City Placement: A New Element in the Strategy of Integrated Marketing Communication of Cities

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Abstract

Purpose: Explanation of the essence and features of the “city placement” strategy, while observing the changes in “classic” forms of marketing communications used by cities and regions, including main pros and implementation procedures.

Methodology: This paper is conceptual and relies on diagnosis and analysis of “city placement” strategy implementation in a chosen Polish city as well as on the author’s professional experiences. Analysis of scarce existing marketing literature, including the notion of “product placement,” allowed us to present model structures, variations, and rules that explain the role and pros of the “city placement” strategy in the promotion mix of places.

Conclusions: This paper comprises not only a set of notions and models structuring the “city placement” phenomenon but also many operational concepts related to the implementation of this strategy, which makes this paper a valuable point in the discussion on innovative changes in the “promotion mix” of cities and regions.

Originality: “city placement” is a novelty in promotion strategies of cities and regions. In the existing literature on place marketing, there are no in-depth conceptual works explaining the role, features, and forms of “city placement.” This paper is a new approach suggested by the author and is an attempt to explain the process.

Keywords: city placement, product placement, promotion mix, place marketing, city marketing, innovations in marketing, place management, city promotion

JEL: M31, M37, M39

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New Marketing Communication of Cities and Regions

In the marketing efforts of cities and regions oriented toward acquiring significant and relevant developmental factors, a suitable system of comprehensive, integrated, and coherent marketing communication pertaining to their assets is undoubtedly the most important of all known and available tools used for exerting an impact on target markets. It involves providing information about territorial units or groups thereof and obtaining information from specific stakeholders, both individuals and organizations. It amounts, in fact, to joint information efforts with market players operating within specific cities and regions (Laszczak, 2001).

Information about a territorial unit, generated by competent structures of local government, differs in the scope, nature, content, and technology used for transmitting it. Among the many types of communication activities of a city, the distinction based on the manner and the media used for transferring information deserves particular attention, i.e., the means provided by the city to the markets that allow them to acquire knowledge about a city or region (Gustowski, 2012). A review of communication efforts of territorial and administrative units suggests that, to a large extent, providing information about these units, their characteristic features and functional properties that shape specific market advantages for clients boils down to formulating suitable and formalized verbal messages that are well-established and therefore repetitive. Words and larger content structures are a primary and universal yet simple manner of providing information on cities and regions. This method is important valid thanks to the revolutionary development of mass communication systems, information technology, telecommunications, individual means of communication, and printed media (Raszkowski, 2011).

Presenting the advantages of a city or a region in terms of its social, investment, tourism, recreational, commercial, sporting, and other assets to market actors does not always amount to (verbally) recounting the characteristics of relevant products showcased in printed materials, recordings or complex agendas of meetings, conferences, and “reconnaissance” visits. The prevalent system of marketing communication of towns and regions encompasses an entire set of information projects, varying in intensity and scope of communication, nature, commercial purpose, content transmission cycles, technical means of recording and transfer etc. (Kalinowska, 2009).

The integration of verbal content with graphic and symbolic information describing cities and regions has created new opportunities for mapping these units in the minds of individuals, e.g., decision-makers seeking better standards of living, leisure, learning, and entertainment as well as various forms of conducting their business activities

(Gębarowski, 2007). When combined with access to new, universal, and commonly available technological means of information transfer (verbal and graphic), it allows a virtually unlimited – in time and space – promotion of territorial units, from small settlements and villages to entire countries and continents (Łopacińska, 2014). Promoting their own cities, which involves not only recounting their assets, advantages, and values, but also persuasion (i.e., encouraging businesses to come, operate, settle, or participate) has become one of the most important market goals of municipal managers (Trueman, 2004).

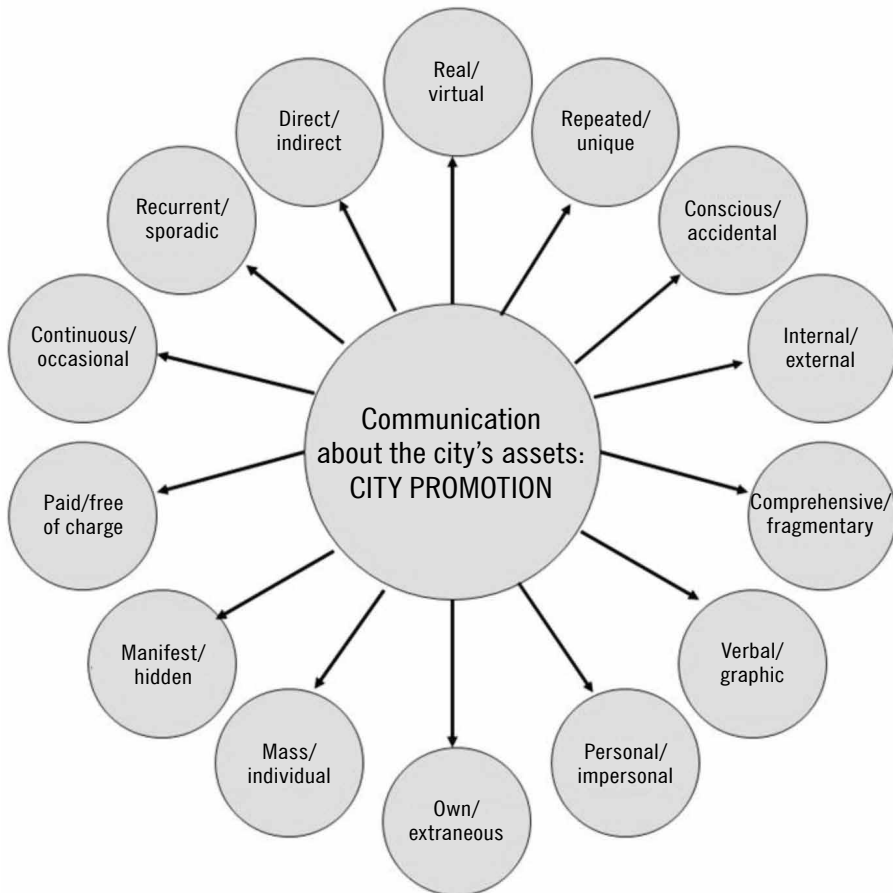
City promotion, which implies a conscious and deliberate process of showcasing the city's broadly defined resources and the opportunities it provides ("the offer"), combined with convincing arguments about their superiority over competitors (other cities) is today an omnidirectional yet consistent and focused activity aimed at promoting the city and generating interest, which is believed to be conducive to attracting individuals and organizations to settle in permanently. Thus, promotional information that reaches business operators, together with its justification and marketing support, significantly affects the perception of different elements of the city's identity and, as a result, its marketing image (Choliński, 2013).

The past few decades of marketing experience of territorial units confirm the significant changes in the scope, forms, measures, and communication techniques as well as the operational methods and approaches (see Figure 1). These changes, occurring at different speeds and affected by various circumstances, may be classified under the following trends:

- from verbal to graphic and symbolic promotion;
- from promotion based on a selected type of activity to comprehensive (multi-faceted) promotion;
- from multifarious yet inconsistent to integrated promotion;
- from simple and ad hoc to purposeful and steady promotion;
- from promotion carried out through the "economic system" to professional promotion handled by a specialist marketing agency;
- from general to specialist promotion;
- from "what-we-have" to "what-we-enable" promotion;
- from self-promotion to promotion based on messages transmitted by partners and friends of the city (individuals and institutions);
- from mass to individual promotion;
- from promotion based on reality (facts, figures) to one based on feelings (sensations, feelings, experiences);

- from one-directional to network promotion;
- from traditional to promotion involving the use of ICT tools (fixed and mobile);
- from direct to indirect promotion;
- from overt to hidden promotion;
- from fully paid for to free and partially free of charge promotion;
- from implemented to coordinated promotion.

Figure 1. Classification of forms of marketing communication (promotion) of city assets



Source: own elaboration.

The above paths toward effective and efficient forms and means of promoting cities, reflected by the trends in the implementation of relevant communication projects, have stemmed from a number of general changes – social, cultural, technical, and economic – predominantly of a global nature, including:

- increased marketing awareness of the general public, followed by the increasingly common “resistance to publicity”;
- ballooning information chaos of the media;
- increasing access to information;
- growing distrust towards commercial information;
- loss of confidence in expert opinion;
- increasing costs and prices of marketing services;
- decreasing efficiency and effectiveness of marketing.

Given the above circumstances and in conformity with the outlined tendencies and symptoms of social and economic changes, local marketing environments keep seeking appropriate means and channels of communication, which not only would be resistant to negative processes and phenomena – neutralizing or eliminating them to a certain extent – but also add a new dimension to the marketing communication of cities, thus increasing their attractiveness, trustworthiness, and, consequently, boosting public interest (Kowalska, 2007; Gębarowski).

The consistent orientation of city promotion strategies toward their efficiency and efficacy leads to the creation of increasingly innovative forms and means of promotion (Nowacki, 2012; Mazurek, 2008). In any case, a suitable and original concept of promoting a city should be in line with the implementation of specific and cyclically formulated objectives of communication projects.

A New Cycle of Implementation of City Promotion Strategies

A city promotion strategy, understood as a logical, coherent, and comprehensive concept of implementation of measures and methods aimed at transmitting a specific persuasive information to entities operating on the target market, and at imparting knowledge, thus persuading them to purchase territorial products, encompasses a variety of projects, actions, instruments, and resources. Their selection and application are logically arranged in a series of psychological, media, economic, organizational, and technical impacts.

A series of promotional activities based on various forms, measures, and techniques aimed at influencing selection decisions and the purchase of products offered by cities comprises several phases (execution steps). Not only are these traditional awareness-raising activities aimed at providing members of the target group with suitable information, but they entail much more. Their aim is to deepen the existing knowledge

and provide details regarding the city, its assets and advantages; information imparted is custom-made and based on the target groups' interests, identified information deficits and any needs in this regard (Kowalik, 2012).

In the framework of marketing activities, the simple provision of information, typical of the initial phases of exerting influence upon the city's target markets, is supplemented with selected information that possesses a unique cognitive value. It is primarily a message about the city's unique resources: unusual qualities and assets, remarkable features of the environment and the cultural heritage, and, above all, the inhabitants, with their distinctive traditions, customs, and behaviors. These elements are paramount for ensuring the city's attractiveness to visitors, as they capture their attention and seize their imagination.

A promotional message in a verbal or printed form, even if extensive in terms of content, should be complemented with a visual presentation of the city's assets. Graphic, photographic, and cinematic additions to the descriptive presentation are necessary, in accordance with the old rule "you buy with your eyes." Influencing the city's "clients" through images (i.e., visual information) enhances the power of the promotional message, in particular when verbal content – descriptions, comments, and explanations – are attractively presented through professional graphic design. Maps, diagrams, photographs, and videos have a tremendous informational value – a value far greater than hundreds or thousands of words. They ultimately shape the public image of the location's attractiveness and have a decisive influence on the final result, i.e., the choice made.

An appropriately formulated promotional message cannot leave out substantial chunks of clearly persuasive content. After all, authors seek to emphasize the superiority of their city as compared with similar places. A person or a team choosing a location generally juxtapose several or even dozens of places, analyzing, and balancing potential benefits of each of them. Promotional materials – representing different types, technologies, and communication channels – should encompass "comparative information." This information represents qualified facts and figures confirming the city's particular (greater) attractiveness compared with its rivals. As a rule, such information concerns the results of competitions, rankings, ratings, and assessments that prove the city's objectively verified superiority.

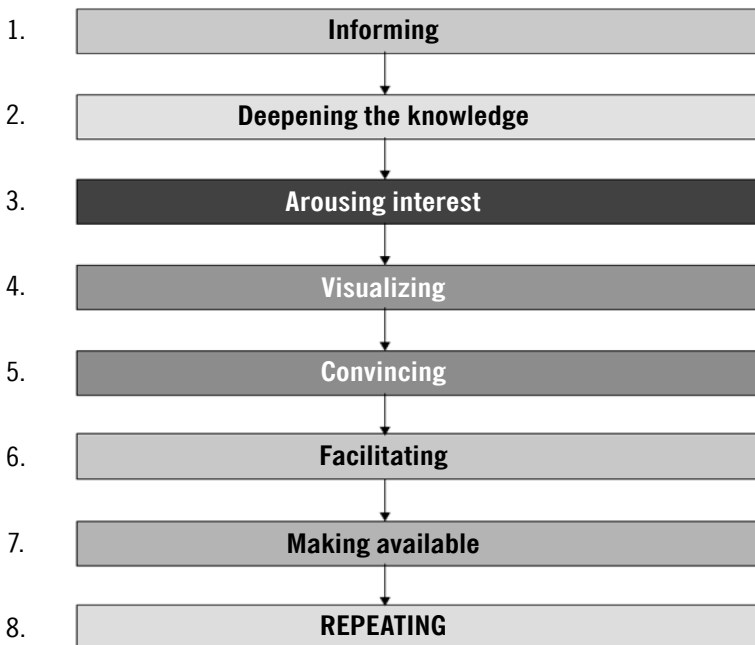
Among broadly defined promotional activities, the list of arguments and proclaimed advantages should also include those that take the form of additional support, bonuses, and implementation assistance. The ultimate choice of a city as a social, leisure, business,

recreational, educational, or commercial (shopping) location sought by market participants is dictated, to a certain extent, by the proposed subsidies, facilities, and rebates contained in respective proposals. It does not suffice, however, to make enticing declarations: the city has to prove its genuine readiness to provide services that facilitate the conclusion of the contract. Relevant information, which needs to be convincing and supported by facts, must be taken into account in a suitable promotional message diffused by the city.

An important component of any promotional strategy is information about the actual availability of a building or an area. It must be verifiable, convincing, and properly documented. It is equivalent to the physical acquisition (consumption or use) of a purchased product.

The presented implementation cycle of a city’s promotional strategy encompasses other phases. This cycle is extended and thus more adapted to the specificity of promotional activities pertaining to territorial units and the services or products that they offer (cf. Figure 2).

Figure 2. Eight steps in the city promotion strategy



Source: own elaboration.

To sum up, we should emphasize that the outlined implementation process of city promotion strategies is the author's own proposal based on his studies, observations, and the analysis of the actual situation. Depending on the strategy's orientation toward particular target markets – the city's main clients – the information cycle may encompass additional phases or may be shortened. The impact of information is, after all, quite diverse when it comes to identifying and persuading prospective settlers, entrepreneurs, tourists, and students as well as spectators and fans.

City Placement: Nonpromotional Promotion

In the marketing of cities and regions, just as in other types of sector (industry) marketing, a well-known and available set of tools used for impacting target markets is derived from the classical set of measures assembled into the marketing mix. Therefore, it is not uncommon to note in numerous works devoted to territorial marketing that this specific set of marketing tools, which is specific for the marketing of goods and services, is transposed and interpreted against the background of the particular market of territorial products: the market of territorial units.

The above approach does not always mean an absolute methodological error, an approach error, or an unspecified operational concept of territorial marketing. It should undoubtedly rely on its general philosophy, essence, objectives, functions, and tools necessary to achieve specific goals. Yet, it is impossible to accept a simple analogy between a city market and a consumer market, which, in practice, leads to simple assertions about the concept of 4P marketing mix in relation to the marketing strategy of territorial units. It does not allow to clarify the nature of a territorial product, the concept of prices and rebates applied by cities, or, even less so, the product distribution system, which forms the essence and the structure of market channels.

Despite these reservations, it should be noted that territorial marketing avails itself, to a relatively large extent, of achievements in the field of marketing communication, adapting it on numerous occasions and interpreting for the purposes of city marketing. This has led to a situation in which the published and implemented concepts of widely understood promotion of spatial and administrative units (mainly cities and towns) are based directly on considerations relevant to popular markets and their actors, related to consumer goods and services. This practice can be considered acceptable, especially when the “urban organism” is treated as a specific venture, as a mega subject of diverse product markets.

Against the background of these arguments, one's attention is drawn to the use, for the benefit of cities and regions, of theoretical and practical achievements of the "product placement strategy," which is of strategic importance and applied by numerous manufacturers of goods and services, in particular semi-luxury and luxury products (Choliński, 2013; Gmerek and Misztak, 2007).

The strategy of product placement consists in a purposeful placement of products (with their clearly visible brand), in films or other audio-visual products in order to indirectly advertise them (Urbaniec, 2009). This is nothing else than "a branded product within another product," thus a gadget, an exhibit, a prop, an object "playing" a cameo role in a film. A specific fee is paid for the product to be used in the film, just as it would be for any form of advertisement (Choliński, 2002).

The object of product placement is fully recognizable, and, although it seems to remain in the background, it draws the attention of viewers and creates a promotional effect. This method of product promotion defeats many barriers and restrictions. Without an unambiguous persuasive message or a standard presentation of the product's features and its usability, the strategy allows viewers to notice the product; it sparks their interest and desire to own or use it (Laszczak, 2003).

The main advantage of the product placement strategy is to present an item, or even a property, in a functional context (Wyrwisz, 2013). It is not confined to a supermarket shelf or a living room but is staged operationally and dynamically as an object actually being used. This method of promoting brands and products also benefits from added value: items are presented as objects that meet specific needs and are used by an eminent and admired person or group (film protagonists) (Sadowski and Szymaniak, 2008). These people, along with the objects they hold and use (consume), are observed and held in high esteem and, consequently, emulated. A surge in sales typically follows a product being featured in a film.

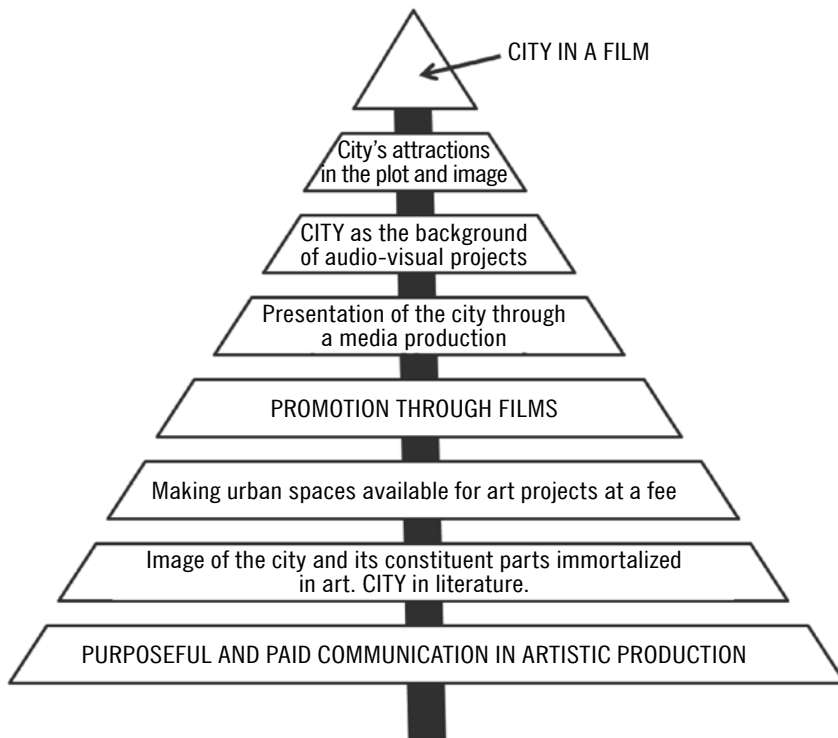
The success of the product placement strategy has been confirmed time and time again in the world of film and marketing and has resulted in shaping durable habits and behaviors (leisure time activities, eating habits, fashion choices, physical appearance); consequently, it has spread and universalized. This particular method of promoting products is now implemented in other areas of audio-visual production as well as in many areas of culture, literature, and art (Krzeminski and Ratajczyk, 2006).

Promotional potential inherent in product placement did not escape the attention of territorial marketing experts. They quickly realized that the modern marketing of cities

and their groupings (as well as other territorial and administrative units) could successfully apply new promotional strategies, thus complementing their typical, traditional marketing mix, or even replacing its less effective components (Czarnecki, 2002). The targeted market activity of audio-visual producers, label owners, directors, and specialized agencies (committees) that represent them also has had an impact on innovative marketing programs of cities and regions. It was them and their representatives who made local authorities in communes, municipalities, districts, and provinces aware of the manifold mutual benefits of the city placement strategy (Gołata, 2012).

City placement, as an integral part of a promotion mix of territorial units, means making a city, region, country, or other selected parts thereof (urban, architectural, or environmental) commercially available for artistic events – film, theatre, music, literature, sports, etc. – which are recorded in a reproducible form (medium) in exchange for direct or indirect promotion of these territorial units through ensuring their visibility to the public (cf. Figure 3).

Figure 3. City placement in a nutshell



Source: own elaboration.

In the above definition, “commercially available” calls for further elucidation. In the case of city placement, relationships between the city and the producer, the label or the artist are of a purely commercial nature, as they are intentional and premeditated, inspired by the anticipation of some sort of mutual benefit. Artistic production, in particular film production, always stems from a judicious and rational decision from a careful analysis of interests, competition, costs, and revenues. The choice of the country, region, area, or city (town, village) for a new project (recording, commercial, video, film, theatre play, etc.) is never accidental but indeed the outcome of a thorough analysis, comparison, and financial calculation carried out taking into account a number of possible variants. They are far more extensive than a simple estimate of the expected costs and proceeds during the preparation and actual production (creation of media or other products); they also encompass intangible profits, organizational, commercial, technical support, etc. Broadly understood financial revenues and free (partly free) benefits constitute the basis for making decisions in this respect (Saltik, Cosar and Kozak, 2011).

The above definition of city placement is relatively extensive and consists of several threads as its components. In the marketing practice, in popular media discussions and interviews, the in-depth definition of “city placement” is substituted with shorter, one-phrase descriptions denoting the essence of this concept, the most important characteristics of this form of promotion (Zawadzki, 2013). The following expressions – synthetic alternatives of the formal definition – are often encountered:

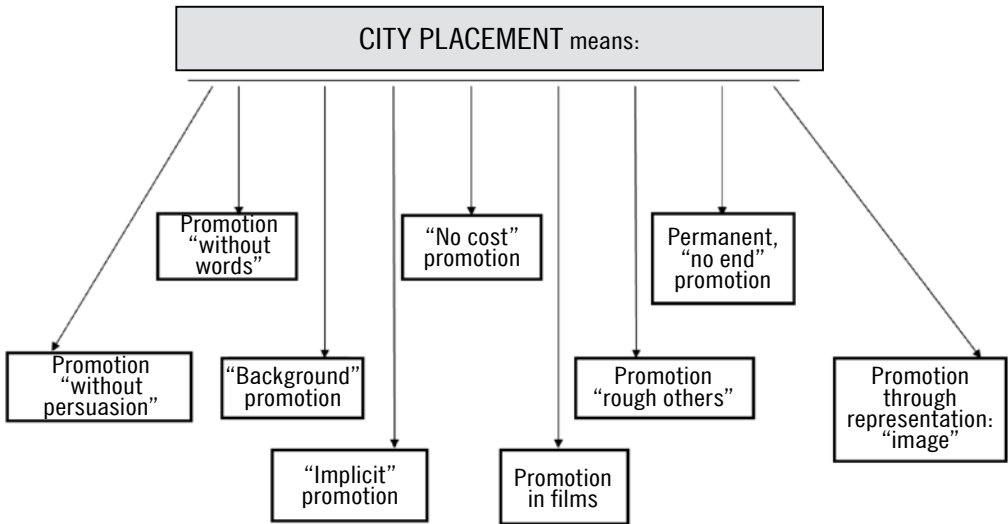
- city in a film;
- city’s attractions in the plot and on the screen;
- city as the background of audio-visual (or, more broadly, artistic) ventures;
- presentation of the city through an audio-visual production;
- promotion of the city through movies;
- image of the city and its components represented in art.

These are only a few concise explanations of the term of city placement, thus succinct phrases that can only be used conditionally. Synthetic as they are, they take no account of the numerous, important aspects of this strategy (cf. Figure 4).

When expounding the essence of the concept of city placement, we must not overlook other formulations, specific synonyms, which are even more simplified. Abridged to catchwords, they may prove useful in practice, in discussions and comparisons. They include such generalizations of city placement as

- silent promotion;
- recorded and recurrent promotion;
- free promotion (conditionally);
- implicit promotion;
- promotion without persuasion.

Figure 4. Selected alternatives to the term of city placement



Source: own elaboration.

Such expressions as “silent,” “without persuasion,” “implicit,” etc. for clarifying the specific characteristics of city placement indicate and announce the main benefits of the application of the city placement strategy to promote territorial units. They shall be expounded in detail further in the paper.

City as the Object of City Placement Promotion

City promotion through city placement, i.e., a specific equivalent of product placement in the audio-visual media, mainly in film production, does not mean “a city as a whole – a compact and coherent area with high population density and functions typical of urban settlements – becomes the protagonist of the film.” Studies and analyses of marketing practices of cities that pursue this strategy have highlighted various units and structural systems of cities that, in line with specific arrangements made with municipal authorities, were to be promoted in films (Kalinowska, 2011).

Promotional presentation in audio-visual products, assuming that a town would be represented in a film as a whole, was possible only in the case of small- and medium-sized units. These small (several or several dozen square kilometres) territorial and administrative units with a concentric, or even monocentric, functional structure, could easily be incorporated into a scenario. The task was more difficult in the case of large and very large cities (metropolis), which would lend themselves to presentation only to a certain extent, even in mega-productions.

First, “development complexes” within cities were singled out, i.e., those components of the city that, directly and indirectly, make up its specific assets: for example, historical heritage, science, culture, etc. It encompasses both material objects and people, movable and immovable property, permanent and temporary constructions, along with standards governing their potential and use aimed at allowing the city to perform its important functions (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006). Thus, for example, city placement may be oriented toward the city’s natural environment, its health sector, sports, higher education, retail, etc. City promotion in a film is then focused on its specific elements: the environment, universities, or the retail network.

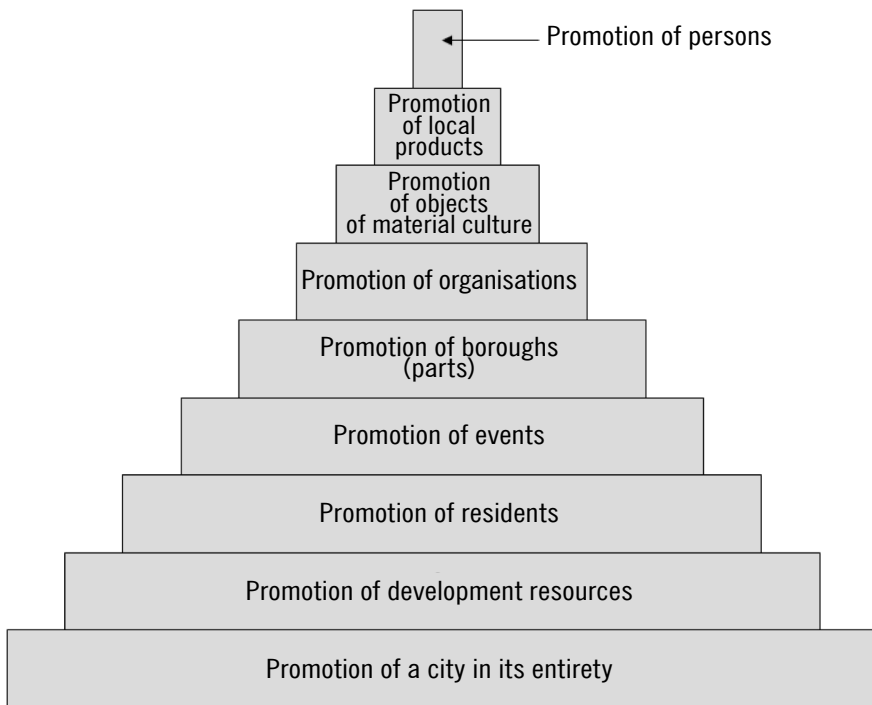
It is the people, i.e., residents and visitors, who make a city. Filmmakers do not focus their attention on “streets and buildings” but on individuals who walk these streets and live in these buildings. These people are depicted in various situations as a crowd, a random group, or an organised group; team or another institutional group; or as a family. In any case, they can be identified as residents of the city on the basis of their appearance, language, behavior, and other social identifiers. The promotional effect is achieved through the emphasis – in images, situations or scenes – on the positive and unique ethnographic, occupational, and behavioral features. They spark interest and desire to learn, participate and visit (Niemczyk, 2012).

The city’s notable attractions showcased in promotional programmes include much more than only people, buildings or elements of the natural environment; equally important are ventures, projects, and events (Odorowicz, 2003). One-off scientific, cultural, sporting, artistic, entertainment, or business events that are remarkable, eminent and unrepeatable prove to be of particular importance for city promotion. If such events can be immortalized as part of the city placement strategy, they provide a perfect promotional opportunity. It is through the repetition of specific media products that the “silent” promotional message reaches a wide audience over a period of many years (Bączek, 2011).

The city is a clearly defined administrative area, divided into a variety of smaller sub-areas with administrative, economic, social and urban planning functions. Not only entire

cities but also individual boroughs or districts can be objects of promotion through being featured in a film. These include various spatial “micro-organisms”: estates, city units, cadastral entities, including streets, market, boulevards, rivers, squares, etc. Captured on film, paper, canvas, in music, or in another form that allows reproduction and sharing with different social groups (target markets), their unique attractions and extraordinary features or assets may capture the attention of interested persons and groups, inviting them to visit the place (Hudson and Ritchie, 2006). The city placement strategy can therefore encompass a specific section of the city that is distinctive and recognizable (cf. Figure 5).

Figure 5. City placement as a means of promoting cities in audio-visual productions; thus, the hierarchy of promoted aspects



Source: own elaboration.

Not only is the city represented by individuals but also by the formal groups they form, such as organizations with their characteristic features. In order to capture a city in a movie, and entice viewers to visit or establish business links with it, the unique characteristics and achievements of organizations operating within its boundaries need to be showcased, with particular emphasis on prominent entities (including

companies) that enjoy national and international renown. It becomes, therefore, unnecessary to promote the entire city, as it may prove sufficient to simply register on film or tape a flagship organisation – one that is recognizable, esteemed, and boasts a remarkably positive reputation. The promotional effect will be fully achieved if the organization in question is “high-end” and prestigious, with a strong and positive presence in the media, or an institution with extraordinary achievements. This holds true in particular for cultural institutions of great stature.

In addition to boroughs, neighborhoods, urban complexes, social groups, events, or organizations (companies, clubs, theatres, museums, etc.), marketable products are also unique components of a city. These include various types of goods, i.e., traditional and regional products that are commonly identified with a particular city. They comprise common, everyday items and consumer staples, as well as souvenirs and gifts bearing clear and unambiguous geographical marks. Their origin and relation to a specific city is often indicated in their name. Such products, which serve as props in audio-visual productions, are used and suitably presented in films and other projects and, thus, testify to the application of city placement (in this case, there is a common area of marketing efforts) and product placement strategies.

A special case of city promotion in an audio-visual (or, more broadly, artistic) production is a deliberate and conscious introduction of a person into the main plot, the storyline, project content, or the artwork. In order to achieve a promotional effect for the city, this person must be specifically associated with it as well as universally recognized, famous, present in the media, a figure that evokes positive associations in terms of his/her views, attitude, and activity. This person would need to be an actual symbol of the city, and his/her positive traits would be consequently attributed to the city's inhabitants. Each major city, in particular regional centers and capitals, has such “leaders”: scientists, politicians, entrepreneurs, actors, artists, athletes, experts, representatives of central authorities, church leaders, etc.

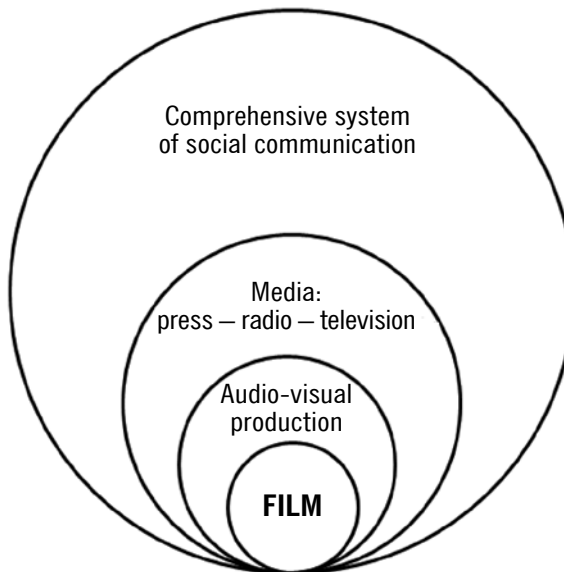
Films and Other Productions in City Promotion

The concept of city placement, which, in fact, refers directly to product placement, involves promoting a place in a film or, as defined above, in a film production. Films, owing to their content, audience, place, method of implementation, source of funding, time, characters, and message (target), may differ in terms of character and nature. In each case, a catalogue of methods of promoting props and shooting locations may be used. At this point, however, a question should be asked, to which a partial answer

has already been provided: can the city placement strategy be used in other sectors of media production, or even more broadly? (Gębarowski, 2012).

Even if we agree that film and film production are the primary areas of city promotion, in accordance with the objectives of a city placement strategy, it does not mean that we eschew the potential inclusion of other types of communication to promote territorial units. However, the main condition and the prerequisite is the possibility of the widespread, repeated, and unequivocal presentation of the city's assets, its parts, persons, institutions and even graphic symbols, sounds and other trademarks in the implementation of a specific project (cf. Figure 6).

Figure 6. From a film to the public transport system: city placement in social communication



Source: own elaboration.

In accordance with the formulated prerequisite, city placement, as a means of promotion of cities and regions, can be used whenever:

- the effect of the production enables the identification of the place of action, the location or the place where the media product is created;
- the audience (listeners, spectators, participants, visitors) can see and/or hear items, signs, images, sounds and individuals that represent the city; their impression is positive;

- the message about the place of action is transmitted in writing; even when expressed indirectly, it must be clear enough to be identified;
- the media through which the information is transmitted are publicly available and showcased.

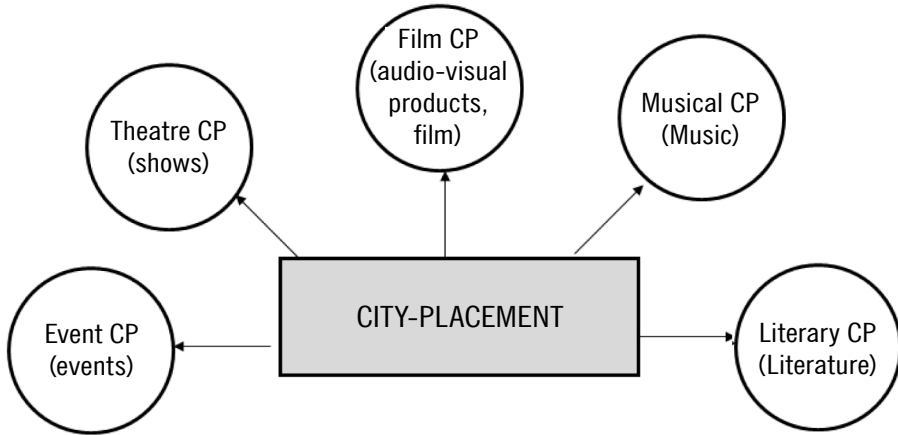
This means that, apart from the film, which is an important and standard medium for “silent” promotional messages, the following also represent typical city placement media:

- advertising spots (the city not being the main subject, but relegated to the background);
- rebroadcast TV programs;
- regular radio broadcasts;
- theatre shows;
- press articles (indirectly referring to the city);
- literature;
- music (recordings);
- works of art: sculptures, graphic art, paintings.

Taking into account the above audio-visual and artistic products, the concept of “city placement” based only on the standard production of feature films must be substantially extended to encompass other means and channels of mass communication of territorial units, whose role is only intermediate (in order to be distinguishable from films and programmes with a purely promotional purpose). In this way, other channels should be added to the main medium, i.e., film:

- channel of other audio-visual products;
- theatre channel;
- music channel;
- literature channel;
- event channel.

This new issue in the strategy of promoting territorial units requires broadening the horizons of promotional schemes involving city placement through the addition of other possible means, channels, and execution methods (cf. Figure 7). Therefore, the city must do whatever it takes to spark the interest of the entire media and artistic community, attracting its representatives and encouraging them to refer to the city in theatre pieces, novels and short stories, represent it in paintings and sculptures, compose music with local touches and write screenplays in which the city is featured.

Figure 7. Means and forms of city placement

Source: own elaboration.

Concluding Remarks

Owing to its specific nature, including the purpose, target market, the means employed and the manner in which marketing information is transmitted, the city placement strategy of promoting territorial units differs significantly from “classical” forms of market communication of towns and regions. Consequently, the conceptual and operational aspects of this strategy remain relatively unknown by both local governments and marketing institutions. As a result, only the largest cities and prominent metropolises engage in this form of “promotion without promotion.” The majority have already engaged in positive city placement endeavours and have the institutional capacity necessary for entering into negotiations and, subsequently, cooperation with film producers.

City placement is an innovative form of marketing communication of cities and regions; therefore, its implementation in specific cases can rely only to a small extent on the experience of other domestic or foreign territorial units. Each media product requires specific and custom-made conditions to be created (organizational, technical, and environmental); at the same time, each city or region has a limited capacity and resources determining their adaptability.

An important implementation issue of the city placement strategy is the cooperation between the marketing teams of cities and regions with the film community, in particular at the stage of contracting and negotiating bids submitted by competing urban

centres. In this regard, an important factor that boosts the negotiation capacity of small cities, towns, and villages are advisory services as well as the substantive and material support that can be provided by specialized departments and units operating on higher levels of territorial management: regional and national commissions or film funds.

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