

„Heilbronn-Franken – Home Of World Market Leaders“

The Regional Brand: Differentiation And Identity As A Factor

Abstract

In the course of the ongoing globalization and internationalization and in times of demographic changes, the competitive pressure of the regions among each other for investors and professionals increases. The challenge for the region consists mainly in bringing its identity and its image into line. A regional brand can be suitable to position the region distinctive and unique. Due to a clear construction of brand and image, the regional brand can promote the identification, identity and can establish trust and provide orientation for the target groups. This paper focuses on the regional target groups: businesses and citizens. Basis of this study is the example of the economic region Heilbronn-Franken, the perception of the regional brand "Heilbronn-Franken - Home Of World Market Leaders" by the citizens and businesses was analyzed by using a quantitatively survey. This investigation was conducted in two independent surveys because of the different levels of knowledge about the regional brand among the two groups of subjects. The companies got a written questionnaire to find out their opinion about the brand and marketing measures of the Wirtschaftsregion Heilbronn-Franken GmbH (WHF). The citizens were questioned about the brand, the marketing efforts of the WHF and the satisfaction with general and economic living conditions in the region Heilbronn-Franken. The research results show that the majority of managers, interviewed in this study, identify with the regional brand "Heilbronn-Franken - Home Of World Market Leaders". They also believe that marketing and events are successful. Clear deficits are seen in the prevailing sense of togetherness in the region. In general, there is a desire for more cooperation activities in winning professionals. In contrast to the companies, only half of the citizens know the regional brand. Also, the identification with the brand is rather low. Nevertheless, the presentation of the region as the "Home Of World Market Leaders" reaches a high approval. This result is relevant, because it implies that the branding efforts of the WHF start at the right strategic base. Action is necessary regarding the promoting of regional cohesion and the intensity of marketing.

Author

Maren Osterlitz

Institution

Hochschule Osnabrück / Wirtschaftsregion Heilbronn-Franken GmbH