Branding for cities: the case study of Baghdad

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Abstract. Cities pass through growth stages of distinction and deterioration. Many cities that have emerged distinctly in terms of their urban and economic characteristics may witness stages of deterioration and the loss of their competitiveness. This research clarifies the issues involved in the treatment of cities as brands used to gain competitive advantage and thus sustainable growth, unlike traditional development strategies that have proven no longer as productive as before. The research raises a question about the components of city branding and the most important sustainable strategies for branding a contemporary city as well as their impact on its competitiveness. To answer this question, it develops a comprehensive theoretical framework for the concept of city branding as sustainable development approach, and determines the most important strategies to achieve it. Four strategies are presented; differentiation, creative city, experience city and tourism city. Finally, indicators have been extracted that can be applied to make Baghdad a competitive city through the sustainability of its cultural branding.

Keywords: Branding cities, sustainable development, trademarks, competitiveness, Baghdad.

1. Introduction
Throughout history, cities have acquired a system of values and daily lifestyles. Place marketing has attracted many academic researchers from various disciplines, which has led to a shift in the concept globally and a focus on city branding. Indeed, city branding has become an urban policy recognized worldwide. The decline in industrialization and a decrease in public revenue has reinforced the search for new strategies to sustain investment sources in cities. Cities strive to market and represent themselves as centers of creativity, innovation, and culture to achieve sustainable competitive advantage [1]. A place trademark is like a family tree from which city branding, destination branding, national branding, and position branding derive. Further, many researchers have pointed out that marketing and branding places can include different places with different spatial scales that enhance the city sustainability [2].

The city marketing aims at attracting and integrating external growth factors such as investment, public support, production, and innovation [3]. City branding focuses on a comprehensive vision and aims at ensuring strong coherence between its identity and sustainable image. In contrast, city marketing is mainly related to meeting customers’ needs and expectations [4].

This research aims at building a theoretical framework for the concept of city branding and clarifying the strategies for achieving it as a sustainable urban development trend that calls for strengthening cities' identity and improving their competitiveness. Specifically, it defines the concept and its objectives in general and discusses the theoretical basis of the most important features, characteristics, and types. Finally, the city brand strategies and indicators are discussed and defined in the theoretical framework. The indicators used to develop a brand for the city of Baghdad to help restore and sustain its identity and competitive role.

2. Definitions and Goals of City Branding
Place branding covers some of the most difficult philosophical questions about the nature of perception and reality, relationship between things and their representation, and secrets of national identity, leadership, culture and social cohesion [5], as the brand is the foundation that helps make a place desirable as a business location, tourism destination or space to communicate. It is not an advertising campaign or slogan; it is a deeper vision that encourages participation in the city’s activities [6].

According to Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2009), place branding is a set of physical and socio-
psychological traits, distinguished in relation to competition that includes a unique blend of functional features and symbolic values. There are three types of place branding: the name of the geographical location as the brand name, the joint brand of the place and product, and the brand of the place itself [7]. Cities are similar to corporate brands because they are complex entities dealing with multiple identities and they have social responsibilities. Therefore, cities can be promoted in a manner similar to corporate branding. As in commercial products, different aspects of cities can be marketed; for example, a city can be combined as a place to live, work, visit and enjoy, because the city’s brand must operate in an integrated manner covering several areas of the vision. These areas include the strategy of the city’s future and development and the internal orientation of the city branding administration. The city’s brand must give priority to local communities and residents, synergize with all stakeholders, provide an adequate infrastructure (e.g., city square and gates), give opportunities to targeted individuals and communicate integrated branding [8].

Riza and colleagues (2012) considered city branding to promote the creation of a unique image of the city. They confirmed the existence of three basic approaches to promoting cities: mega-cultural events, heritage promotion and restoration, and the establishment of monuments [9]. Paliaga (2010) noted that city branding works by building the character and uniqueness of the city by establishing interconnected relationships with clients and providing a positive experience for visitors [10]. Vanolo (2008) stressed that city branding is a set of procedures used to build a positive image of the city and communicate it through visual images and events, locally and internationally, to obtain competitive advantage compared with other cities. The study identified that the most important goals of the city’s brand are to attract domestic investment and tourists, enhance the sustainability of local identity and introduce citizens to their city. Thus, the city brand is a way to improve the external and internal images of the city [1].

Sevin (2014) defined the brand as a social phenomenon based on the perceptions of the masses that may or may not be affected by the material and communication aspects of a city [11], as it is part of a new interpretation of the city that relies more on “foreign investment, corporate headquarters and commercial promotion, not major impacts and high culture” [12]. Nagaynay and Lee (2020) defined the brand as a key strategy to stimulate urban renewal processes for rebuilding an image of the city, focusing on its role in promoting urban identity and developing sustainable renewal strategies. They presented three common foundations for branding and urban renewal based on the awareness and knowledge of stakeholders [13]: (1) creating a place identity and using it as a tool for place promotion; (2) preserving the cultural and historical heritage in both the branding strategies and the concepts of urban renewal; and (3) creating a new infrastructure that supports the branding process. Branding improves a city by sustainable infrastructure projects and improving the ease with which tourists can access heritage buildings as well as historical and public places. It also encourages the organizational and administrative structure in terms of implementing projects related to sustainable construction and cultural heritage, developing partnerships between the public and private sectors, and establishing networks between institutions, NGOs and local communities. It also refers to leaders’ vision and the relations of the city authorities towards building heritage by adopting strategies to promote heritage, such as providing financial incentives to stakeholders to organize cultural events and incentives for rebuilding under the protection and preservation framework [14].

Dragicevic and Mihaljinac (2016) mentioned issues related to the role of culture during urban renewal and the creation of a new identity as well as in symbolic repositioning [15], as the image of the city can be considered as one of the main concerns of the identity of the city and its brand. According to Boyer (2011), the image of a city offers a sense of identity, luxury and belonging, as the primary factors for building memory for users and visitors, attracting their attention and making it an unforgettable place. The image of the city can be better explained at the intersection of the city’s brand and its identity because the image is an indispensable part of both [16], and the city must be integrated to obtain a good brand at the level of urban planning and development to achieve cohesion and diversity [17].

A policy of branding cities should adopt the following five objectives:
i. Enhancing competitiveness: Urban authorities adopt city branding as part of the city’s urban marketing and development to increase its awareness and attractiveness [3]. The city’s competitiveness is strongly influenced by the human, spatial and cultural elements of the city; it recognizes the needs of space in people’s daily lives and produces a hierarchy of the patterns of the three mentioned elements to form a unique core of the city called the “DNA of the city” [18].

ii. Stimulating economic growth: Prilenska (2012) emphasized that city branding aims to stimulate economic growth, improve all aspects of social and economic well-being and raise quality of life for local residents [19]. Hammouda (2019) put forward the importance of adopting brand strategies as an integral part of the sustainable economic development of a city and marketing it as a destination for visiting and living. Here, heritage, with its tangible and intangible physical characteristics, plays a pivotal role in creating the brand of the place, as it is a major factor in creating the brand from a marketing perspective [20].

iii. Defining a place’s personality: The city branding helps understand how people perceive a place so that the gap between the current and future situation can be assessed. As with any brand initiative, this is an important element in determining the current and ideal personality. Identity is the DNA of a place, namely, what is made of it and what is transmitted from one generation to the next; this is authentic and it indicates what makes the place different from others. [6]. Prilenska (2012) noted the role of the city’s image in attracting investors, companies and people as well as creating an attractive and well-known image locally and internationally. City branding has thus become an important tool for building and communicating an image by stimulating urban renewal in the city. Rebuilding images without tangible changes in the quality of the place within traditional development strategies shows that they are no longer as productive as they were in the past [19].

iv. Promoting cities’ internal investments: Florida (2003, 2005) and Markusen (2006) emphasized the importance of the city’s activity in attracting economic investment and creative talent, especially in the so-called knowledge economy. According to Clark (2007), there are three important levels for enhancing city investment and capacity [21]. Level 1 includes economic factors, innovation, creativity, human capital, and interdependence between real and virtual transportation and communication; Level 2 includes socio-political factors, economic diversification, quality of life, and decision-making; level 3 quality of premises, infrastructure factors such as housing as well as parks and green spaces.

v. Achieving communication and promotion: Kavaratzis (2004) proposed a framework for communication between city brands that distinguishes between intended and unintended communication [22]. Unintended communication relates to the communicative effects of city and marketing procedures when communication is not the primary objective. It is divided into four broad areas of intervention: natural space strategy, infrastructure projects, organizational structure and city behaviour (the vision of city leaders). Intentional communication is the formal communication that occurs mostly through well-known marketing practices such as advertising, public relations, graphic design and logos.

From the foregoing, the research defines the brand of the city as “a strategic process used to develop a sustainable long-term vision for the city, achieving coherence between the brand identity and its image over time and affecting the positive perceptions of the place, which include a unique mix of tangible and intangible sustainable features, thus enhancing competitive advantage”.

3. Characteristics of Sustainable City Brands
Each city has a unique identity that distinguishes it from others, consisting of images and memories, either negative or positive. Consequently, the sustainable brand identity that appears in a logo can distinguish the city from others and symbolize its intangible features. Accordingly, the main features in the sustainable branding of cities are classified into the following:
i. **Distinctive**: The concepts of the city’s identity and brand are worth highlighting given that the city’s image is an indispensable feature. The concept of institutional identity is another basic idea that distinguishes a city, especially because of its importance for branding. A strong identity is believed to be important to convey a clear internal and external image to stakeholders as well as create distinct value. The effective sustainable management of a city’s identity allows it to build an understanding of and commitment to the institution among its diverse stakeholders [23].

ii. **Memorable**: This highlights the role of the sustainability of culture and history in shaping the city’s identity, as it has a uniqueness that can be revealed as a force, which is reflected in typical city spaces. It demonstrates the unique ability to preserve its identities to date. Being able to maintain a good standard of living is more important than increasing productivity. Nowadays, improving the quality of life has become a basic function of a city [18].

iii. **Authentic**: The pillar of authenticity within cities aims to preserve their identity, understanding that rapid changes lead to chaos. Heritage cities capable of preserving their originality can independently demonstrate a clear development in their growth [14]. The role of heritage is as a unique symbol and a distinctive feature of the city’s brand, as it can create a distinctive location for the city in the accumulated symbolic sense over time. These phenomena can be understood in relation to the social concept of the “tourist view” presented by British sociologist John Urry, as cities invest in the built environment and physical heritage, especially in the brand, to enhance their attraction to tourists [20].

iv. **Place making**: An integrative branding strategy is needed to attract visitors’ hearts and interest. To provide an emotional bond to a place require a deeper emotional experience related to “feeling”, not just “gazing”. Another important factor of the place making process is the image sensing of the place, which is a deeper revelation of the elements disclosed in advance through traditional city restructuring, such as streets, paths, nodes, edges and landmarks [18].

In conclusion, it is still possible to identify the formation of new urban spaces within cities’ original uniqueness and identity, leading to an originality that other cities do not have. These features form the basis for creating positive community perceptions.

4. **Dimensions of City Brands.**

A number of dimensions can be identified as follows:

i. **Economic dimensions**: There are the common dimensions of cities’ marketing and branding institutions. Anholt (2002) pointed to several of them, represented by the importance of “borrowing a place as a brand” [5]. Both the brand and these economic dimensions deal with multiple groups of stakeholders, both have a high level of significance and complexity, both deal with multiple identities and both require long-term development [8].

ii. **Cultural dimensions**: Highlighting the city’s brand depends on the cultural values provided by the city, and the relationship between culture and marketing in the city stems mainly from (i) the city’s image relying on the past and the cultural present and (ii) the city’s brand relying on hidden identities and revealing them [24]. The identity of the city is realized through its cultural values in addition to the specialized crafts that participate in its construction [15]. Guzijan (2018) focused on the role of heritage in creating the city’s brand by analysing the possibilities of using architectural heritage and the spatial values of the urban fabric to create a distinctive brand [14].

iii. **Social dimensions**: These dimensions are represented by the people’s experience of the city, their perception and beliefs about the city, and the role of daily life in building an identity for the city’s brand regardless of the abundance of a city’s material heritage or financial success, which allows socializing (in everyday life) to be identified as a city trademark [17]. Residents embody the local culture of the city and represent the personality of the place. Therefore, the richness and diversity of the city inspires its business strategy for building a sustainable, attractive and credible identity in the minds of stakeholders [3]. Kavaratzis (2004) classified a city’s brand strategy into
tangible and intangible components. For business stakeholders, brand value has economic benefits. For city governments, the city’s brand value can also include developing the community, strengthening the local personality, enhancing citizens’ engagement with their city, and possibly even reducing social exclusion [21].

5. Types of City Branding
Ashworth (2009) identified three distinct or overlapping patterns of city branding [25]:

Type I: personality association, which depends on identifying the city’s unique personality.
Type II: signature building and design: distinct building and design can refer to major buildings and sites (e.g., Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House) and areas (Soho in London).
Type III: event hallmarking: the event feature refers to identifying places with specific events such as festivals (e.g., the Cannes Film Festival).

Nagayna and Lee (2020) identified a number of subordinate concepts based on Ashworth’s patterns. Their study evaluated the first style through the place name, the embodiment of city slogans as well as logos and symbols. The second style is defined by monuments, cultural buildings, famous museums as well as public spaces and squares. Finally, the third style is achieved through cultural festivals, conferences, exhibitions and encounters [13]. Winfield (2005) emphasized the second style by proposing that the presence of cultural and architectural landmarks as attractions that characterize the city strengthens its brand. Distinctive monuments help determine the image of the city or place as well as indirectly affect the well-being and satisfaction of residents and visitors [17].

Maheshwari & others (2011) pointed to the third pattern through the role of sustainable development of the place in building the city's brand, preserving the tangible assets of the city as well as its ability to improve assets, thus maintaining the momentum of progress. These sustainable developments help promote the place and thus create stronger brands for it; they are essential as drivers of sustainable growth, focusing on "quality" and "sustainability" as the main aspects of competitive advantage and place and brand marketing activities. [26].

Hospers (2011) emphasized three patterns in the concept of public art in urban spaces (the built environment, distinctive events and famous personalities), which can have intrinsic, symbolic and promotional value in building the brand of a place, which improves the photographic quality and tourist view of the city [27].

In conclusion, all these approaches intentionally create a city with an attractive extension of its identity, and the city brand can be considered as appropriate to characterize the personal bond through a set of strategies that promote the brand, as described next.

6. City Branding Strategies
Studies outline several strategies that can be adopted to build the brand of cities.

i. Differentiation strategy: Kavaratzis (2009) pointed out the values and emotions that the city symbolizes as essential elements of differentiation strategies. Such strategies treat urban brands as corporate brands and focus on the similarities between these two forms of branding, especially given its complex and multi-stakeholder nature and dependence on broad cooperation across a city or institution. The study explained the causes of the broad interest in brands through the following [8]:
- Differentiation: separating oneself to achieve a vision of the differences between products,
- Transparency and synergy: corporate brands create synergies between brands rather than promoting multiple brands separately,
- Conceptualizing and aligning: This provides a holistic framework for the various activities that express a city’s identity and acts as a mechanism for aligning organizational subcultures across functional and geographical boundaries.

ii. Creative city strategy: Many visual and invisible elements are used as stereotypes of creative cities. Winfield (2005) showed that the creative community in society is important and necessary for a city’s survival [17]. O’Connor & Lim (2020) put forward adopting creative city
policies around the world and translating them into a trend of aspiration to be "modern," and the effect of changing the creative city's discourse on its image after a radical rethinking of imagining modernization, building itself on a new concept of local potential, and thus its role in building its brand, in preserving and enhancing the city's creative image and reputation [28].

iii. **Experience city strategy**: The essence of the city’s brand includes the formulation of the concept of expertise; an insight into the characteristics of the place experience that visitors can expect. The value must match the identity of the place with the nature of the community that it trying to attract. In this sense, it demonstrates feeling the place, creating images of pre-visit places or stereotypes based on the used information. People often change their perceptions of a place, and therefore it is necessary to relate its brand to the concept of experience. Experiences involve interactions between the individual and the physical, virtual or social environment through [29]:
- Senses (vision, smell, hearing, feeling and tasting),
- People’s memories of past experiences (including imaginations and delusions),
- Generating emotions (impact),
- Actions (reactions), active participation or negative observation, and
- Social interactions.

iv. **Tourism city strategy**: Emir & others (2020) emphasized the importance of tourism in building a brand for the city to achieve a competitive advantage, and its role in promoting the city by emphasizing its possession of a particular symbol, feature, or prominent element, and the role of the city’s image rooted in minds in generating a unique sense of place and identities. The original, which enhance the attractions of the city. Thus, accepting the city as a successful brand [30]. Dril & others (2016) emphasized that city marketing is a basis for the development and implementation of a long-term integrated sustainable vision in the economic and social sphere, the gradual elimination of negative phenomena and the solution of social and economic problems, and concluded that the successful implementation of city marketing represents a tool to support sustainable development. By focusing on the city's competitive advantages to promote sustainable local development [31].

7. **Theoretical Framework**
In conclusion, it is important to build a comprehensive and unified brand to suit the needs of certain sectors such as tourists, businesspeople and creative talents. In this way, brand efforts enhance potential synergies. Table 1 shows the theoretical framework for the main themes and indicators of a city’s branding.

8. **Branding of Baghdad: A Case Study**
In the past 30 years, cities have faced competitive pressure and identity crises; therefore, they have begun to employ branding strategies to redefine and differentiate themselves. [32] Historic cities are distinguished by their moral values represented by prominent features that give each city its specificity and historical and geographical affiliation and represent cultural heritage. Baghdad is one of the cities characterized by its many historical centers at different historical stages, where construction began in 762 AD and ended in 766 AD. However, Baghdad's history is much older than that, as the name came in many ancient Babylonian, Chaldean, and Aramaic sources, the name was mentioned in the Islamic conquests and in the news of the Umayyad state. [33]
Baghdad is a famous historical centre that has influenced human civilization in various fields. It is a centre of culture, arts, entertainment and worship as well as an important commercial centre, which makes it a global tourist destination. The urban formation of Baghdad has been almost constant for long periods. However, this has been limited by the presence of the City walls. The compact fabric formed by residential buildings intersected by open courtyards and narrow and winding alleys. Public buildings are mostly religious, with some built in the past and some in modern times. The river serves as an important element in the city, as does the floating bridge that connects the two sides [34].
Table 1: Themes and indicators of a city branding

| Main theme               | Sub-theme          | Indicator                                                                 |
|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Characteristics         | Distinction       | The institutional identity (the place of the brand expresses the distinction of the place) |
|                         | Uniqueness        | The uniqueness in forming the identity of the city.                      |
|                         |                   | Embodying a unique and distinctive sense of the place.                   |
|                         | Originality       | The originality of the city can be defined mainly as the city's personality. |
|                         |                   | Its identity and its place in history                                    |
| Place making            |                   | Enhancing the bonds and emotional values generated by people's experiences. |
| Dimensions              | Cultural dimensions | The relationship between culture and marketing in the city stems mainly from the city’s image relying on the past and cultural present. |
|                         |                   | The city’s brand relying on hidden identities and revealing them.        |
|                         | Social dimensions   | People’s experiences, awareness of and belief about the city.            |
|                         |                   | The role of daily life and the socialization in everyday life.           |
|                         | Economic dimension | Achieving economic growth by providing new gains for the region as economic opportunities. |
| Types                   | Personality       | The presence of cultural and architectural landmarks as attractions.    |
|                         | Main building and design | The adoption of public art spaces and monuments as tangible assets of cities that show its strength. |
|                         | Distinctive events | Identifying places with specific events such as festivals to promote the branded city. |
| Strategies              | Differentiation   | The values and emotions that the city symbolizes as the basic elements of differentiation strategies, The identification of three main factors (transparency and synergy, and the visualization and alignment of different activities). |
|                         | Creative city     | The adoption of several key visible and invisible elements to provide stereotypes of creative cities to attract the creative talents of society. Identifying the three main categories of the built environment, distinctive events and famous personalities. |
|                         | Experience city   | Developing the empirical presentation of the sense of a place. The formation of images of places before visiting. Experiences involve the interaction between the individual and physical or virtual and social environment through different senses. |
|                         | Tourist city      | Identifying the city’s unique personalities by adopting cultural and architectural landmarks as tourist attractions. |

One of the essential elements that characterize Baghdad is its historical buildings. Their role appear in the different classification to achieve sustainable urban development, through their effect in the urban identity and distinction as elements that reflect the cultural and traditional aspects, to create a sustainable environment characterized by intellectual and physical continuity, while ensuring the requirements of the inhabitants. These buildings have cultural and historical links and intangible values in addition to physical values that can be translated and developed the brand of the city. Directed to the process of urban development as they act as points of attraction, associated with giving a kind of affinity that enhances the sense of place. Their architecture and fabric add a distinctive identity to the new elements added within the urban development plans. Historical buildings also contribute to strengthening and distinguishing the urban landscape and creating vital urban spaces [35].

Therefore, it is necessary to choose specific brand styles that enhance the historical buildings that the city is famous for. The cultural dimension is widely noted in Baghdad, which was known for its scholars' achievements, and was called (the capital of culture, the city of poets, and the city of scholars) in different periods. Baghdad won the title of the Arab Capital of Culture for the year 2013 because its historical spirit and ability to withstand and survive in the historical theatre are what
qualifies it to remain an ancient capital of culture [36]. Baghdad is famous for its distinction between a traditional center and harmonious, modern neighbourhoods, winding alleys with walls that are distinguished in colour and uniform shape, and in other parts of it there are straight streets and green gardens on either side, so division and difference was one of the characteristics of major cities in the Middle East. [36]

According to Dinnie (2011), to develop a strong brand, decision makers need to define a clear set of features that the city has through visual, economic, psychological and symbolic elements to distinguish the city from others [3]. Therefore, this research identified the elements that characterize the old city of Baghdad, represented by its coherent urban fabric including the bank of the Tigris River, public squares, and open areas, Al Rashid Street and the market system as well as the urban and cultural heritage, Figure 4. The most important features can be summarized as follows [37]:

i. Baghdad is a distinctive and influential city: it is famous for its nature, beauty and unique architecture. It has been called many names; the city of Mansour, the round city, Al-Zawra.

ii. Baghdad is a city of international political weight: It was the capital of the Abbasid Caliphate and was called Dar al-Khilifah, Ghurat al-Bilad, the eye of Iraq and City of Peace. The city has always boasted a harmonious and tolerant society of many religions and directions.

Figure 1: Baghdad’s main branding elements
iii. Baghdad is a city of culture and science: It was known for the achievements of its scholars who came from all sides to participate in the Islamic Renaissance and work in the House of Wisdom, until it became known as the City of Scientists.

iv. Baghdad is a city of worship and shrines: While Iraq is the cradle of the prophets, Baghdad and its surroundings include many shrines of imams, scholars and the righteous in addition to places of worship for different religions.

v. Baghdad is a city with a strong economy: The city is famous for its artisans and technicians in all fields and has a mastery of industry and of different professions.

We must also decide which the brand patterns of Baghdad and how can achieve this. These features form the basis for peoples’ positive brand perceptions. The tangible heritage associated with the intangible heritage (events, characters and time) of Baghdad plays a pivotal role in establishing its brand, which is present in every corner of the old city. Thus, the research makes several proposals:

- Investing in major cultural events will represent Baghdad as one of the most important cities throughout the ages that possesses common historical roots and a cultural heritage; this includes organizing cultural and entertainment events around historical monuments and symbols.
- Reviving lost historical sites will bring the historic gates of Baghdad back to life, enhancing tourism and stimulating the economy. The two gates on Al-Rashid Street, Bab Al-Mouadham and Bab Al-Sharqi, are long in Baghdad’s memory, as the region is still called by their names, and thus represents an important historical landmark for the city.
- Encouraging tourism for heritage places will attract tourists, creators and businesspeople in addition to adding cultural and economic values to stimulate the city. This can occur by generating positive images for the city reflecting its cultural and artistic values as well as organizing slogans for its brand.
- Creating a brand strategy including positive messages and emotional bonds with people is attractive and compelling. A good brand must possess specific, distinctive, easily identifiable properties and must cater to the needs of its residents through its cultural and artistic values. Baghdad is characterized by its ability to define the tangible and intangible elements of heritage, thus achieving growth compared with other cities.

Table 2 shows the most important elements for Baghdad's branding according to the themes and indicators in the theoretical framework.

9. Discussion and Conclusion

The development of the city’s trademark concept enhances its competitiveness and can attract the attention of investors, visitors, workers and creators. This is a strategic way to achieve competition advantage as well as economic, political, social and cultural goals. Therefore, a strong link is needed between the city’s identity and its brand. A city’s brand must include its basic values, characteristics and future aspirations stemming from the city’s original roots. That is, cities cannot create a successful brand unless they have a distinctive, authentic and unique identity; accordingly, the brands of cities vary in their social, cultural and economic dimensions. Hence, a city must focus on building the brand for all its elements based on its culture and history.

This research analysed the dimensions of the brands of cities and their strategies and brand patterns. The historical cultural heritage plays a vital role in establishing cities’ brand and enhancing its unique identity, while other cities focuses on highlighting an image that reflects comfort, luxury and modern development and embodies its vision of integrating eastern traditions with Western amenities with advanced technology within a local traditional environment. Thus, communication and promotion, which are the major goals of the city’s brand, have been achieved. Based on these patterns, the brand strategies of Baghdad were identified based mainly on its cultural heritage. Various strategies can be mixed in the future to achieve a strong brand in the long term.
| Main themes | Sub themes | Indicators |
|-------------|------------|------------|
| Characteristics | Distinction | Baghdad is famous for its rich heritage through the ages and its ability to adapt to the tangible and intangible elements of the heritage, thus achieving excellence and creativity. |
| | Uniqueness | Baghdad has been unique since its inception with its circular planning, in addition to the beauty of its heritage character, the cohesion of its elements, and its unique architecture to our time. |
| | Originality | Alignment with the identity of the place earned by originality with a coherent, strong and unique feeling as an important feature of the city of Baghdad. |
| Dimensions | Cultural dimensions | Cultural diversity is widely observed in the historical and modern scene of Baghdad. The city was known for the achievements of its scholars, as it was known as the capital of culture, the city of poets, and the city of scholars. |
| | Social dimensions | An integrated redevelopment that includes all joints and social services, due to the apparent absence of its historical position affecting daily social relations, material, moral and psychological impact. |
| | Economic dimension | The commercial city strategy contributes to providing economic support to the city through the promotion of the city and redefining it being famous for its precision, craftsmanship and artisans in all fields, until it was said that it is a country that has the mastery of industry and crafts. |
| Types | Personality | Its personality is derived from the city's history, present and future with sustainability as an integral part of its center. It has been given many names such as: Al-Mansour, Al-Madinah Al-Madawara, and Al-Salam. |
| | main building and design | Baghdad has many attractions, such as monuments, public spaces around them, and important symbols that can be invested in its brand. |
| | Distinctive events | The possibility of developing cultural events within and around cultural heritage buildings and historical paths, as in Al-Mutanabbi Street, as a vibrant cultural landmark, and constantly attracting intellectuals, creators, artists and writers from all over the city of Baghdad. |
| Strategies | Differentiation | Baghdad differentiated between a traditional center and adjacent modern neighbourhoods, far apart or twinning in its parts that have been subjected to increasing growth, winding alleyways with walls characterized by their colour and uniform shape, and in other parts of them there are straight streets and green gardens on both sides. So, the schism and difference represented one of the characteristics of major cities in the Middle East as a result of physical and social development. |
| | Creative city | The strengths of creativity were adopted with its architectural heritage elements in addition to attracting the creative classes of society. |
| | Experience city | Developing the living experience within its historical center to restore the pulse to its heart, which needs to be revitalized, which is felt by everyone who passes through the city center today through Al-Rashid Street, as a mixture of longing and nostalgia for the past. |
| | Tourist city | The city is distinguished by many religious, cultural, commercial and other tourist attractions, which contribute to enhancing its tourism capacity. |

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