



Modelling of the brand promoting process for a resort and recreation destination using IDEF methodology

del proceso de promoción de marca para un destino turístico y recreativo utilizando la metodología IDEF

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ABSTRACT:

The article explores the main postulates of the process of branding of the territory playing an important role in creating a unique image and developing the image of Russia and the subjects of the Russian Federation as a unique world tourism center. The paper deals with the main objectives within this context, namely, the existing approaches to the definition of the "brand" are systematized, the components are developed and the mechanism for promoting the brand of a resort and recreational destination is developed using IDEF methodology.

Keywords: Branding, management, globalization processes

RESUMEN:

El artículo explora los postulados principales del proceso de desarrollo de marca del territorio que desempeña un papel importante en la creación de una imagen única y el desarrollo de la imagen de Rusia y los sujetos de la Federación de Rusia como un centro de turismo mundial único. El documento trata los objetivos principales en este contexto, es decir, se sistematizan los enfoques existentes para la definición de la "marca", se desarrollan los componentes y se desarrolla el mecanismo para promover la marca de un destino turístico y recreativo utilizando la metodología IDEF.

Palabras clave: Procesos de branding, gestión y globalización

1. Introduction

The globalization processes of the modern economy transform the world into a unified system and force the development of information technologies and systems, internet and network technologies; it results in innovative economic activities. The trend of integrating transformations involves not only the economy, but also the politics, culture and social life. The positive effect of globalization is obvious; it is associated with a more rapid information exchange, improved solution support systems, opportunities for production cooperation, international investments, a free flow of goods and services, etc. Taking into account all the

positive aspects of the globalization processes we should emphasize that globalization may cause some problems in the tourism industry; yet nowadays tourism is one of the world economy sectors that has a significant potential for development. Here we can find some contradictions. The fact is the main outcome of globalization is blurring of distinctions and losing national features by economies. At the same time, the availability of such national features, as a rule, makes the grounds for tourism. In this context, the creation and promotion of brands of tourism destinations are rather relevant. The process of place branding may facilitate elimination of globalization impacts and development of awareness about the tourism destination peculiarities. It may improve the competitiveness of the destination and help meet higher requirements of potential clients in relation to their physical condition, tastes and interests.

2. Materials and methods

The creation of the brand of a tourism recreational destination is a starting point in gaining visibility, building a positive political image of Russia and the RF regions, raising investments. In this context, it is necessary to develop a model of brand promoting. The attainment of this objective implies studying the theoretic, methodological, practical grounds and, in particular, justifying and specifying the nature and the essence of the process under study, elaborating the definitions and concepts related to tourism destinations. The reason for this is that the correct understanding of the essence of any phenomenon or process ensures the successful solution of any problems arising from them. Therefore, within the development of the model of promoting the brand of a resort and recreational destination it is important to study the existing conceptual approaches to the notions of *brand* and *destination*.

In the tourism sector place branding is one of the new trends of development, therefore, it has no universal or approved technologies for creation and promotion. The notion of *place branding* has become common since 2000s (The Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands IndexSM 2009 Report, 2009). It should be noted that the term of *brand* appeared in the research works on marketing and place promoting rather late, though this tool was used already at the beginning of the 20th century. Even recently, the word combination *place branding* was a new and obscure term; and in the conditions of globalization it has become indispensable at the different levels of management (i.e. macro-, meso-, microlevels).

The literature review shows that there are different approaches to the definition of *brand*. During this study we analyzed the research works on creation and promotion of brands by D. Aaker, L. Chernatoni, M. McDonald, D.A. Shevchenko, J.R. Gregory, V. Pertsiiia, M. Mamleeva, and others.

The analysis of the classic definitions of *brand* given by the mentioned researchers has revealed the following approaches.

1. From the legal point of view, a brand is a name, term, mark, sign, symbol or design or a combination of these terms intended for identification of products or services of the same vender (or a group of venders) as well as for distinguishing their products or services from the products or services of their competitors (Pertsiiia and Mamleeva, 2007). This definition was introduced and approved by the American Marketing Associations (AMA). Its main drawback is the absence of interconnection with such an important element of a brand as a person who creates and uses the brand.
2. A brand may be represented as a mental structure and be considered as a person's total experience, their perception of a thing, a product or a company (Gregory, 1997). This approach emphasizes that brands exist as consciousness/mental elements of either people or a society.
3. A brand is an identified product, service, personality or place built in such a way that a consumer or a buyer perceives a unique added value that meets their needs in the best possible way (Chernatoni and McDonald, 2006). This lets us consider a brand from the point of its marginal utility for a person.
4. A brand is something more than advertising or marketing. It combines anything that

comes into a person's head when he/she sees a brand logo or a name (D'Alessandro, 2001). It is a set of perceptions in a consumer's imagination (Kotler and Bowen 2007). It helps identify, differentiate and define a consumer behaviour in the process of choosing a product or service.

5. A brand is a mark, sign, symbol, word or a combination of words that help consumers differentiate products or services of one company from those of another company. A brand is perceived as a well-known, positive and emotionally attractive trade mark or a company creating a special image in the mind and psychology of consumers' segments (Shevchenko, 2014).

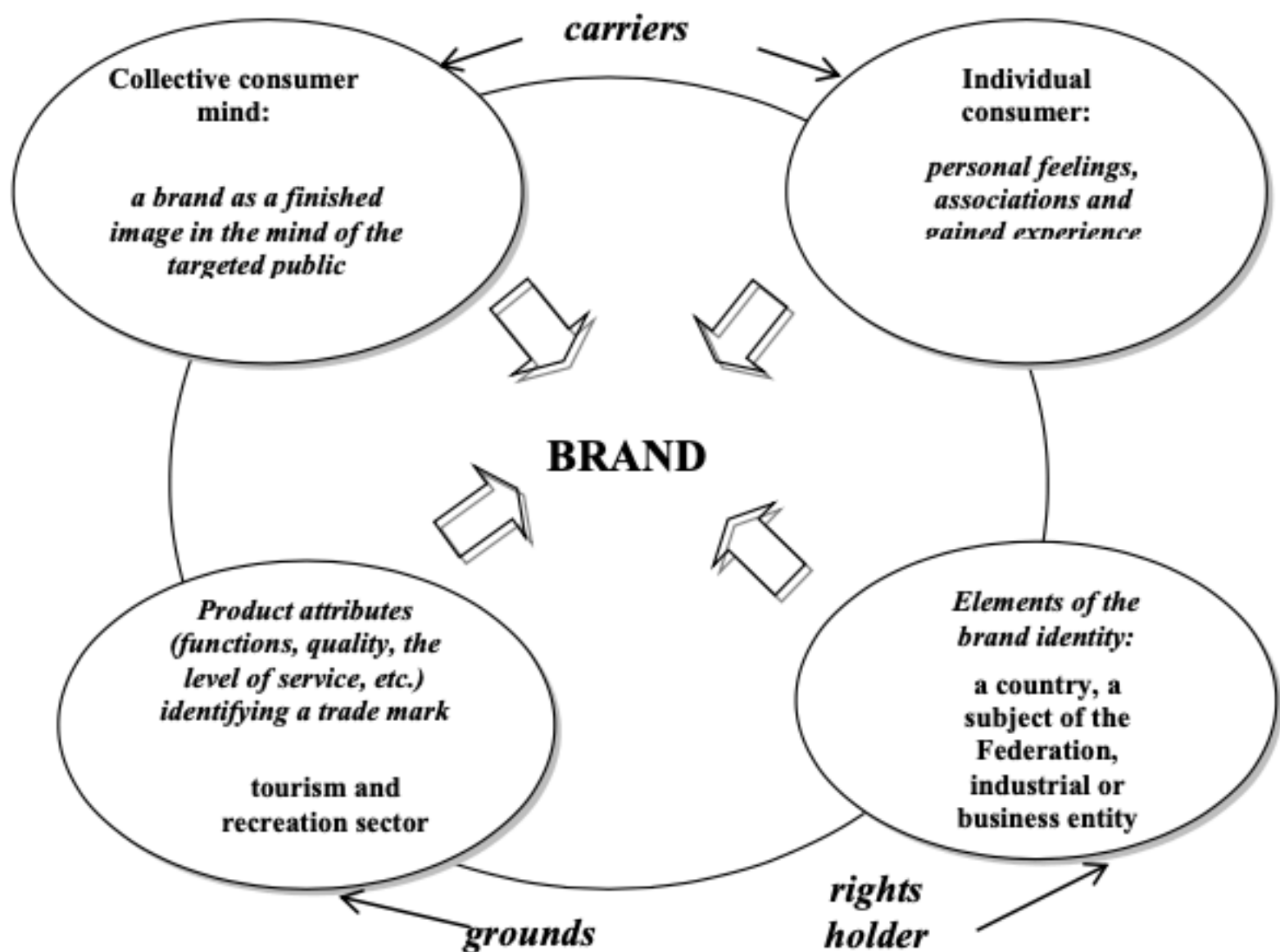
6. A brand is a word defining a position that the idea of the certain common product (item of goods) takes in the mind of an average consumer of a mass society. It is an idea of the product that has a number of unconditional characteristics; and only the presence of all these characteristics can allow us to state that this product is a brand (Bulanov, 2013).

7. A brand may be represented as a benefit (functional, emotional, psychological, social, etc.) that a person buys together with a product or service. Just for this additional benefit a person buying a brand is ready to pay more in comparison with the "non-branded product" (Strategy of development of tourism in the Russian Federation until 2020, 2014). The analysis revealed (i) the non-material essence of a brand and (ii) its multicomponence. As a non-material essence a brand is closed connected with a product (a base for the creation of a brand), a producer (invests into the essence), an individual consumer (building a brand image), a collective consumer mind (a carrier of a brand) (Figure 1).

From the point of view of its multiple nature, a brand includes complex information elements, ideas, quality features of products, which reflect a target-oriented vector of branding intended to create positive associations in a consumer's mind. In brand creating the opinion of a consumer and the features of a product being promoted are of vital importance. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a system for monitoring consumers' opinions and to give an objective and exact description of a product that, within this study, is a tourism destination. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), a tourism destination is a territory that is attractive for tourists for the purpose of journey or staying there for some time.

Fig. 1

A brand as a non-material concept



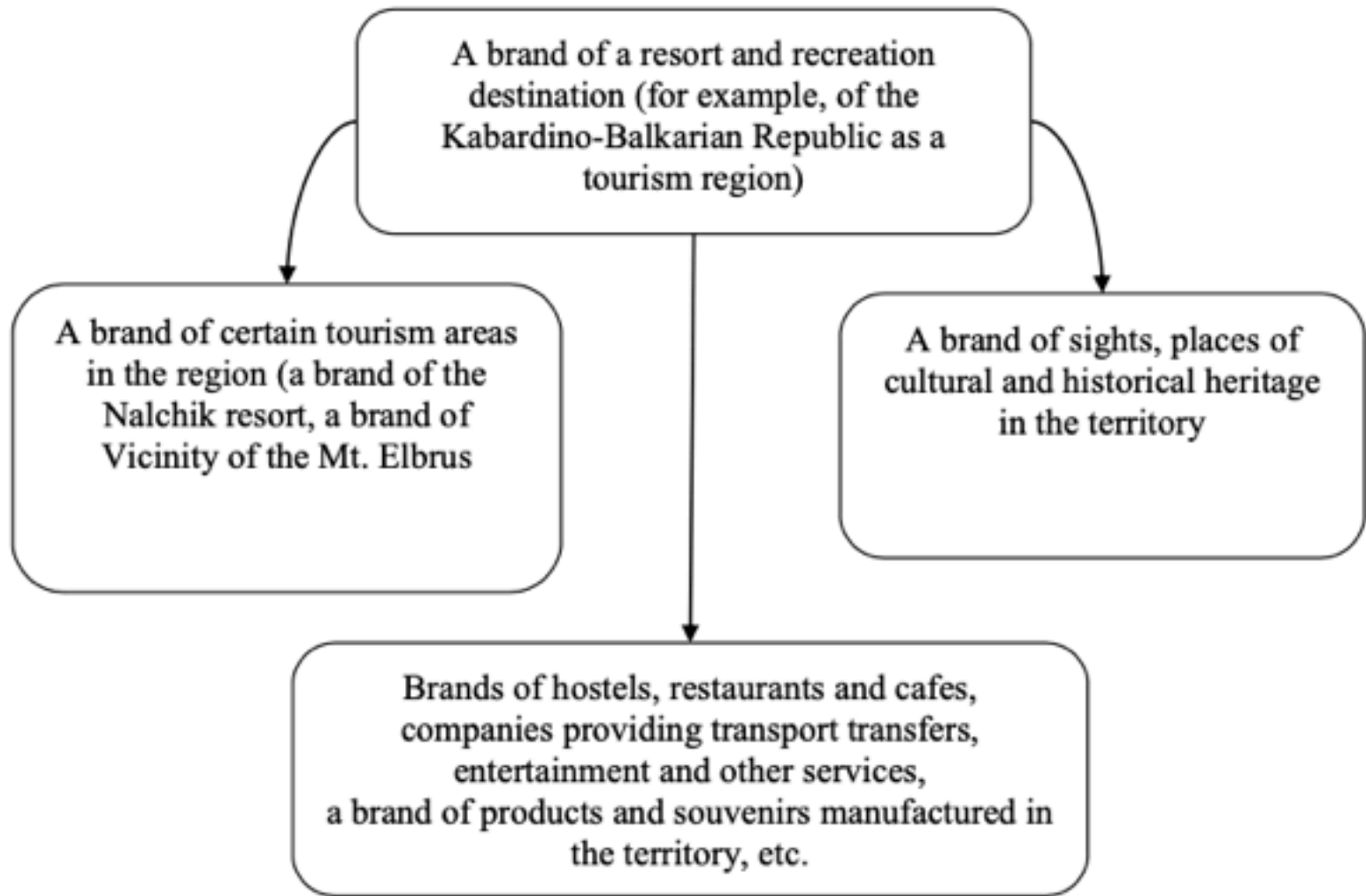
Such territories are to comprise not only nature places for recreation, cultural and historical monuments and tourist sights, but also the complementary servicing facilities like accommodation and catering, transfers, all possible tourism products and services. In other words, a tourism destination includes the most important and essential elements of tourism demanded by tourists. A region of a tourism destination is one of the most important elements of the tourism system as tourism destinations as they are and their images attract tourists, motivate their visit, and in such a way activate the whole tourism system (Kiryanova, 2015).

A destination may denote the territory from the continent to the city district. The definition of a tourism destination varies depending on the purposes of tourist visits (for example, awareness of the culture and values of some countries, cities or resort vocations) (Shchepakina, 2014). Therefore, for the purposes of the development of the brand of a tourism destination it is necessary to reveal the parameters of a territory that could be considered as a tourism destination. These parameters are as follows:

- 1) availability on the territory of sights and places of interest that have a special historical, cultural value or natural uniqueness attracting tourists (so-called attractions);
- 2) availability of tourism infrastructure including accommodations of different categories, cafes and restaurants, transport, access to information and communication systems, shopping centres, products and souvenirs for tourists, unique goods, etc. (any other infrastructure objects).

The brand developing for such territories significantly differs from the creation of a brand of a product or service; first of all, by its multicomponent and the multidirectionality of elements (Figure 2).

Fig. 2
The components of the brand of a tourism destination



Brand development is a time consuming process that requires continuous investments and objective monitoring. Brand holders should constantly support and maintain their brand, monitor the quality level and consumer satisfaction. In case of commercial products and services the quality of manufactured goods implies the personal interest of a manufacturer, but at the same time, monitoring has certain limits, it is easier to monitor and maintain the brand on the whole territory. It should be taken into account that a tourism destination includes a set of products and services produced or offered by different manufactures, and each of them contributed to the general idea of the region. Under such conditions we can either let the developing, monitoring and maintenance of the tourism destination brand be spontaneous (i.e. if to believe that a brand can appear as a natural result of the development of the infrastructure or the tourism service system) or reveal the mechanism of the territory development and control over its implementation.

3. Results

The issues of developing a model of the brand promoting process for a resort and recreation destination are related to the specificity and complexity of the branding object:

- 1) A resort and recreation destination is a system of interrelations between different economic subjects (like businesses, government, consumers);
- 2) The difference between the interests of a final consumer (a tourist) and an investor.

Table 1 presents objective and subjective factors identifying the brand of a resort and recreation destination. The objective factors are the parameters that immediately characterize the products and services being promoted; as a rule, such factors are easily quantified. The subjective factors include the parameters that do not directly characterize the products and services of the resort and recreation complex, but constitute the destination image. The examples of such subjective factors can be consumer preferences, positive feedback on the services rendered and other unmanageable and difficult-to-measure parameters.

Table 1
The factors identifying the destination brand

Objective factors	Subjective factors

Infrastructure	Associations related to the territory (events in the country or region attracting mass media attention)
Price	National and cultural stereotypes
Personnel skill level	Associations related to well-known fashion labels, food brands, etc. represented in the territory
Natural and climatic conditions	Advertisement, feedback
Tourist attractions	Psychographic factors
Safety	
Investments	
Political and economic stability	

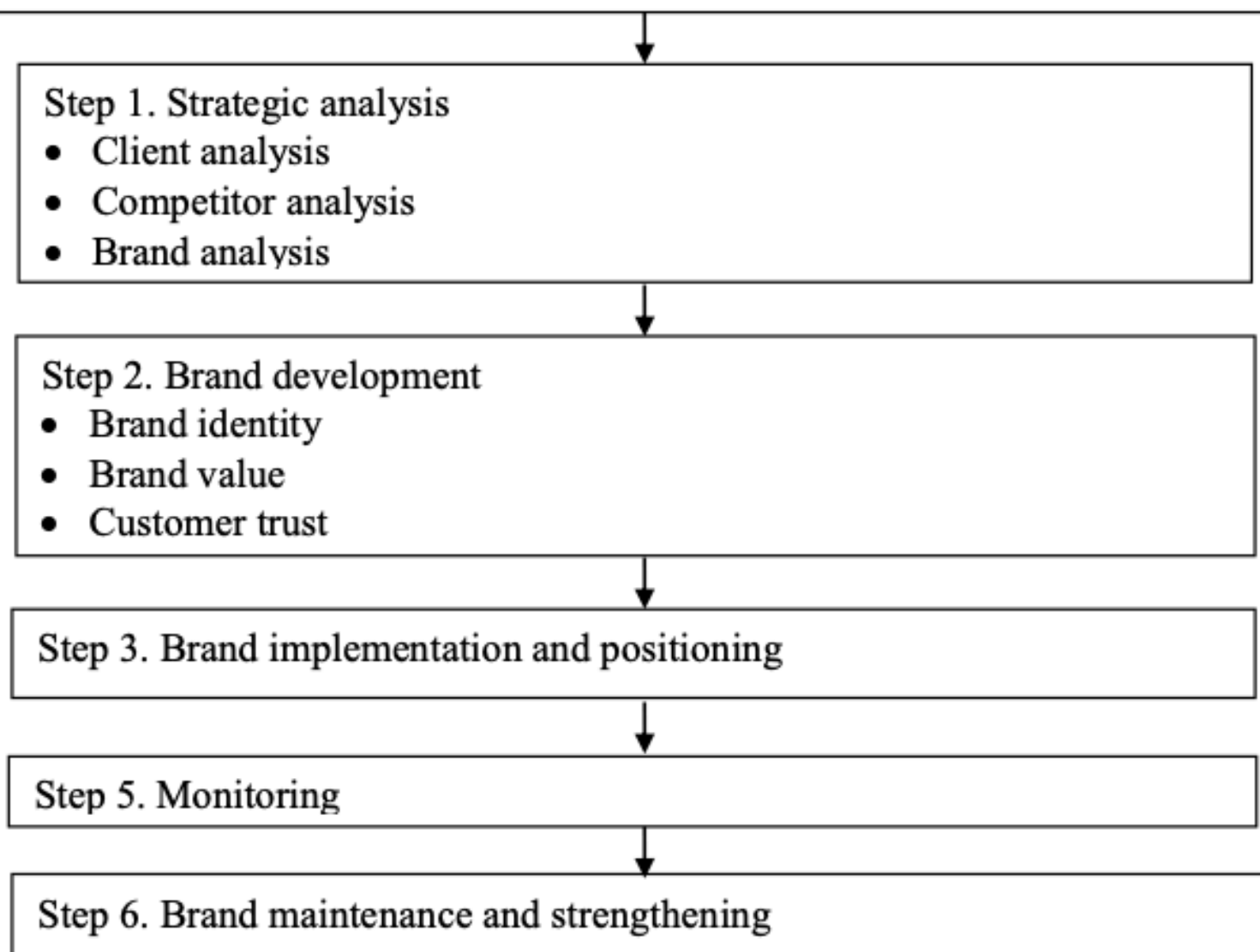
We can define the objective factors as the most important predictors affecting the brand. They are aimed at the positive alteration of associations and psychographic factors. Developing the infrastructure of the resort and recreation market, improving the personnel skill level, ensuring safety during recreation activities need some ready investment schemes and a constant objective monitoring of the market. These measures are necessary for building consumers' trust to the offered services and shaping a desire to visit the territory. For developing a model of the brand promoting process for a resort and recreation destination we suggest using a step-by-step methodological approach implying a consecutive movement from a strategic analysis, revealing the main significant components of the brand developing, implementation, positioning, monitoring to the brand maintenance and strengthening (Figure 3).

This approach takes into consideration the specificity, heterogeneity and similarity of resort and recreation destinations in the regions of Russia. The strategic analysis of the brand includes an analysis of a potential customer or tourist and the analysis of competitors working on the market as well as the analysis of the current state of the brand as it is. The analysis of clients is aimed at studying consumers' preferences, trends of taste changes, motives impelling to purchase; searching unmet needs; segmenting consumers into groups. One of the objectives of the destination brand development and promotion includes understanding of the mechanism of creating the purchase intention in a customer's mind and learning how to handle this intention.

Fig. 3

The steps of resort and recreation destination

Steps of resort and recreation destination branding



The competitor analysis is aimed at revealing the leading players on the market of resort and recreation services in the identical nature and climatic environment and socio-economic conditions, studying their images, strengths and weaknesses, vulnerable points. The revealed customers' needs that are not or cannot be met by the competitors should be included into the product and taken into account with the aim of developing additional functional and emotional benefits.

We need an own brand analysis in order to find out the starting point of branding, so-called a brand heritage. At this stage we study the existing image of a destination, the current national and global idea of the territory as well as its strengths, weaknesses and prospects. The basic components of the brand development include creating of the brand identity (a unique meaning of a brand, its main values, attributes and associations that the brand holder wants to elicit - a targeted perception of a brand image by consumers that should be attained) (Pertsiiia and Mamleeva, 2007); offering the brand value; gaining consumers' trust. While developing the brand identity it is necessary to define the fundamental elements (values, beliefs, ideas) and the supplementary ones. The fundamental elements make the ground for the territory brand identity and should be resistant to alterations, be least vulnerable to political and socioeconomic processes. The supplementary elements also play an important role in the branding and support the relevance of the created idea, consolidate the image, confirm the quality and significance.

The value of the destination brand can be expressed in benefits: functional, emotional benefits and a benefit from satisfying a need in self-expression. The effective offer of the value should result in emerging interrelations between a brand and a customer and manage a buying decision (Chernatoni and McDonald, 2006). The brand may not always induce a buying decision, sometimes it just complements an idea. The hotels of the global renown, cafes and restaurants of firmly established brands assure tourists' trust in the tourism destination.

It should be stated that the outcome of the destination branding is sustainable consumers' trust. The consumers' loyalty to the brand of a resort and recreation destination can

guarantee a constant flow of tourists, investments, and market expansion. The dynamic character of the tourism market, the variability of consumers' preferences, the extreme competitiveness require a constant monitoring over the situation and the measures on strengthening the brand positions. As the customers' trust is already gained their expectations should be met, while under conditions of varying tourists' needs the brand should be constantly reviewed and enhanced.

We believe that it is appropriate to use IDEF technology for graphic representation of the model of the resort and recreation destination branding. This approach helps clearly define the main process, sub-processes, incoming and outgoing information flows as well as controlling and controlled elements. The diagrams of functional modelling represent the structure and functions of the system as well as the information and material flows connecting these functions (The methodology of functional modeling of IDEF, 2000).

The system under study comprises the state (federal, regional and municipal authorities) enjoying a role of a controlling agent (Figure 4) and a resort and recreation destination as a controlled sub-system.

Fig. 4
The context diagram of a high level

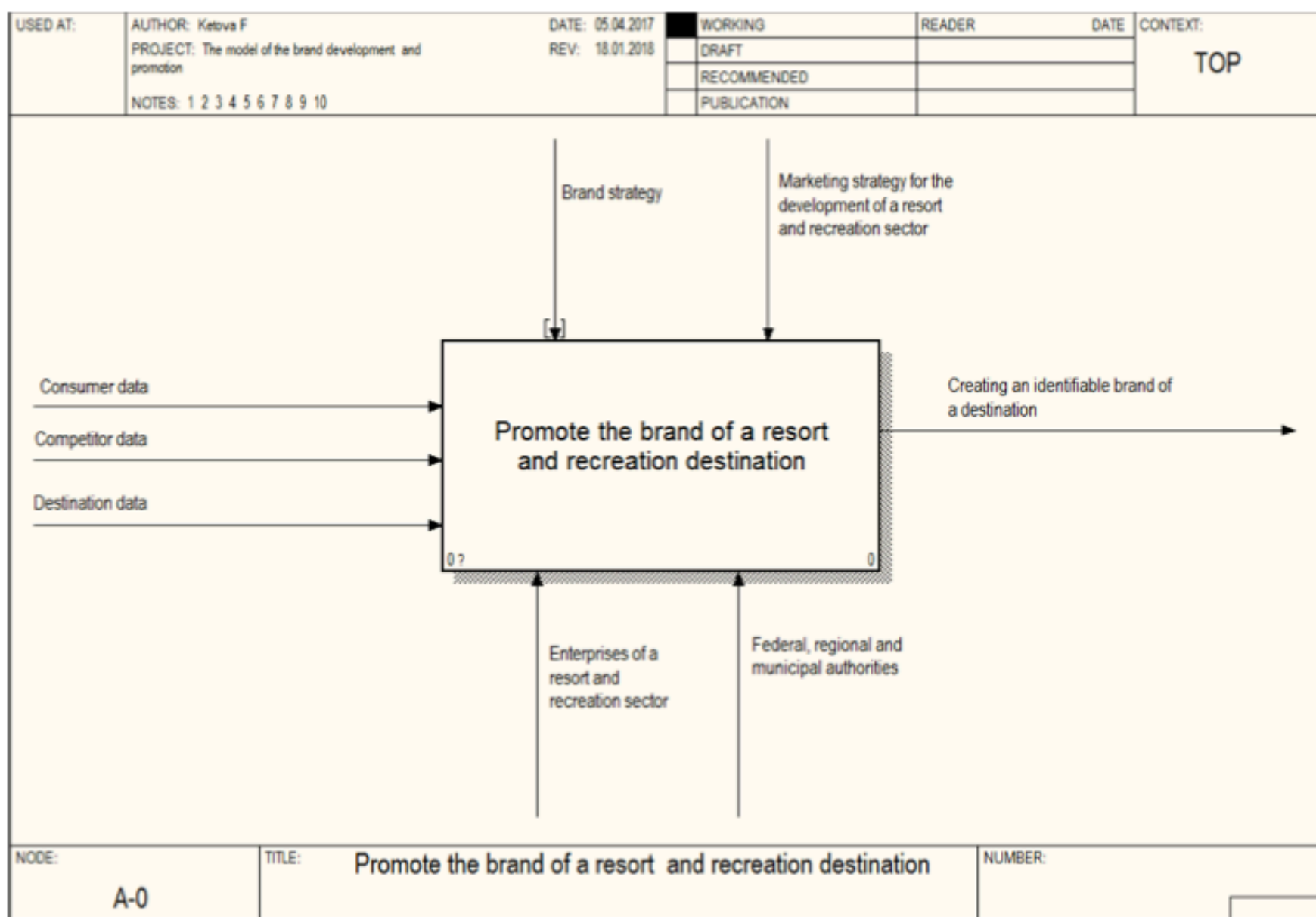
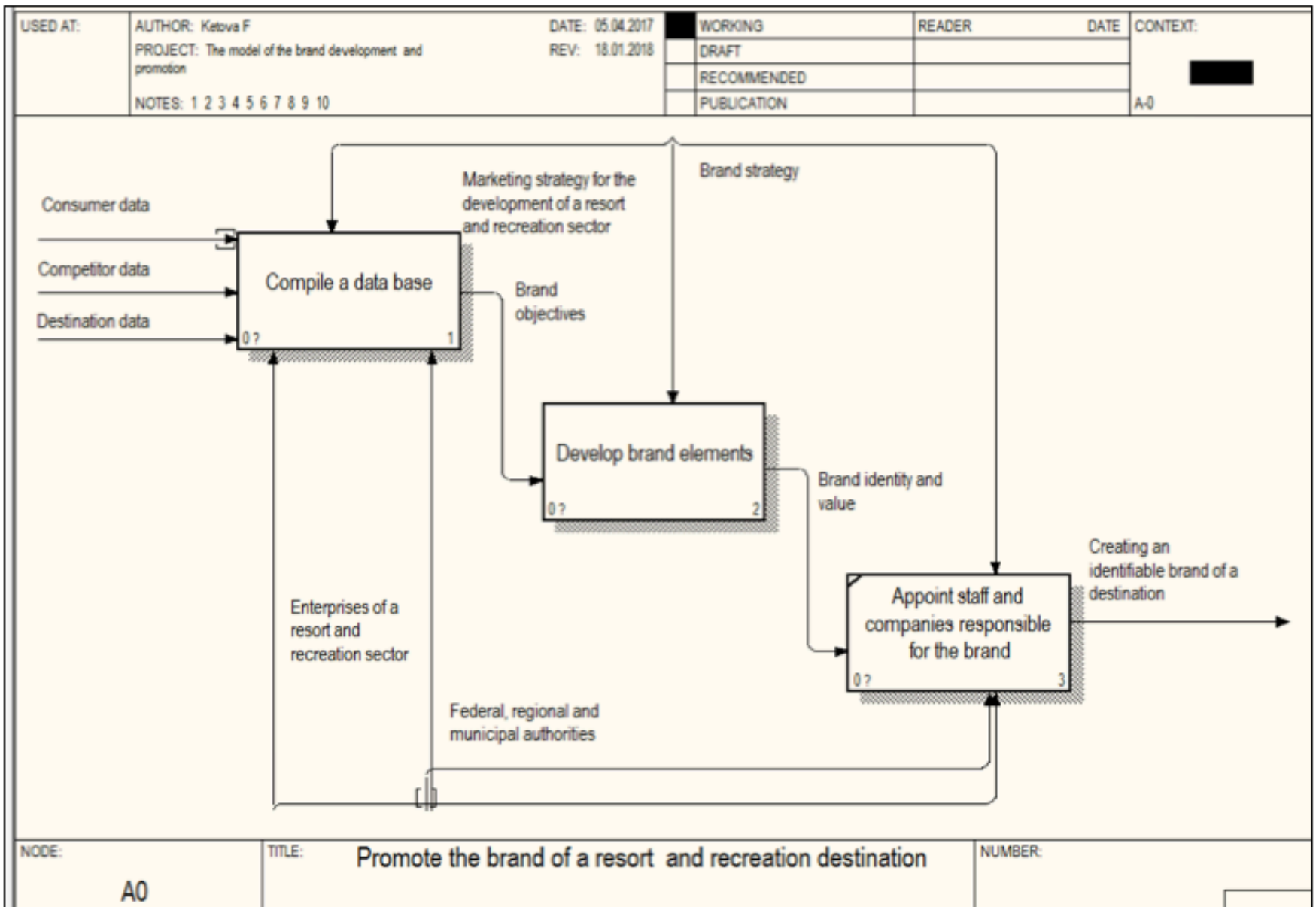


Fig. 5
The diagram of branding decomposition



The destination brand development and promotion imply a concerted strategy for the marketing planning of the integral tourism product of the territory. Such strategy should comply with the international quality standards and be implemented by the ministries and agencies together with entities of the resort and recreation sector.

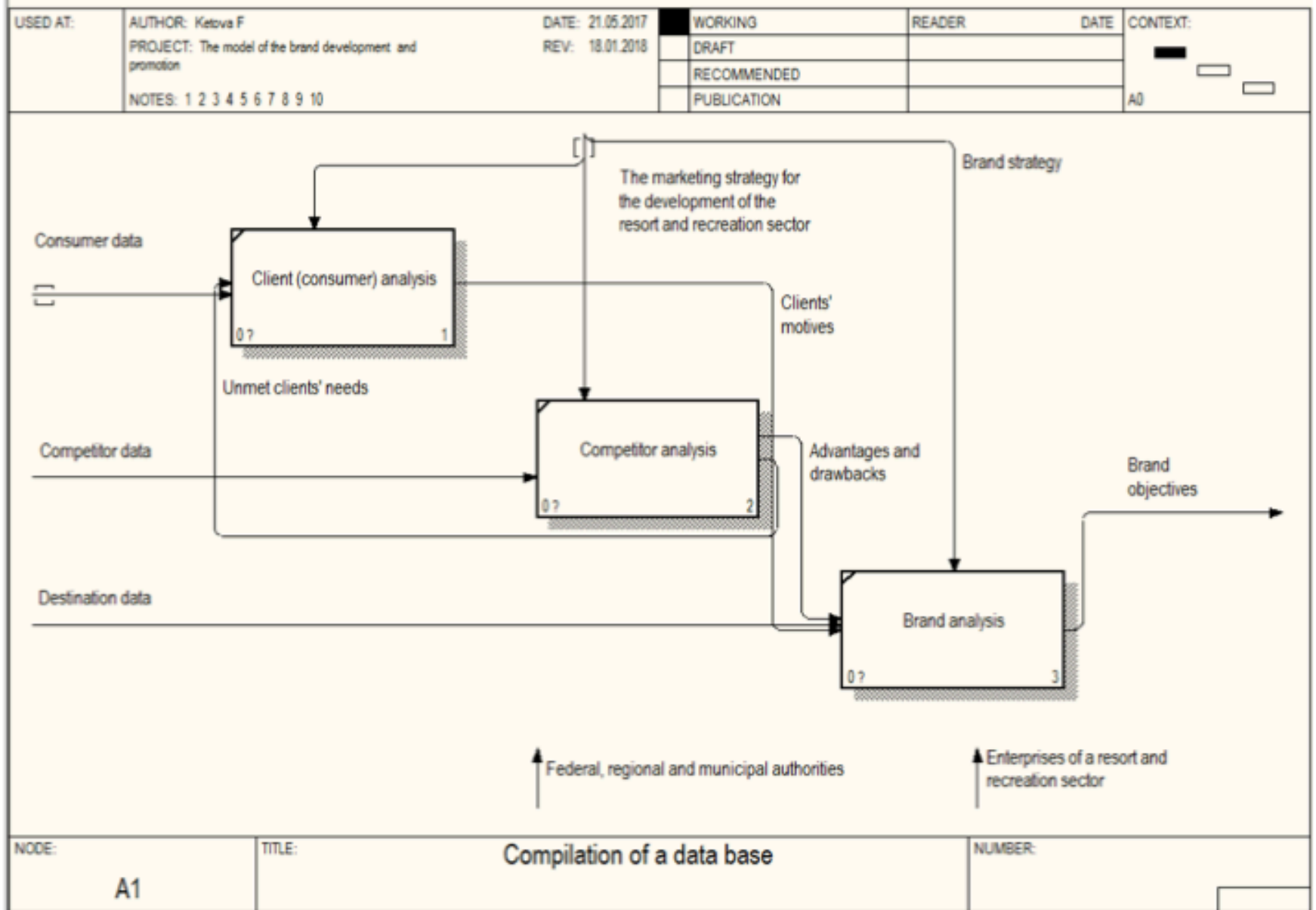
The offered model of the destination brand development emphasizes the main components of branding such as establishing an data platform; developing the brand elements; appointing the staff and companies responsible for the brand strategy implementation (Figure 5).

The basic prerequisites for establishing an data platform include the strategic analysis involving the investigation of clients, competitors and the current state of the destination and using statistical data, questionnaires, surveys, and marketing observations (Figure 6). This analysis reveals clients' motives for making their choice; unmet clients' needs; competitors' strengths and weaknesses.

The studying of the brand itself includes the assessment of the objective parameters of the resort and recreation destination and the current degree of the brand success. The study outcomes help define the targeted customers, competitive strengths and the resources employed. Thus, we can formulate the brand objectives.

Fig. 6

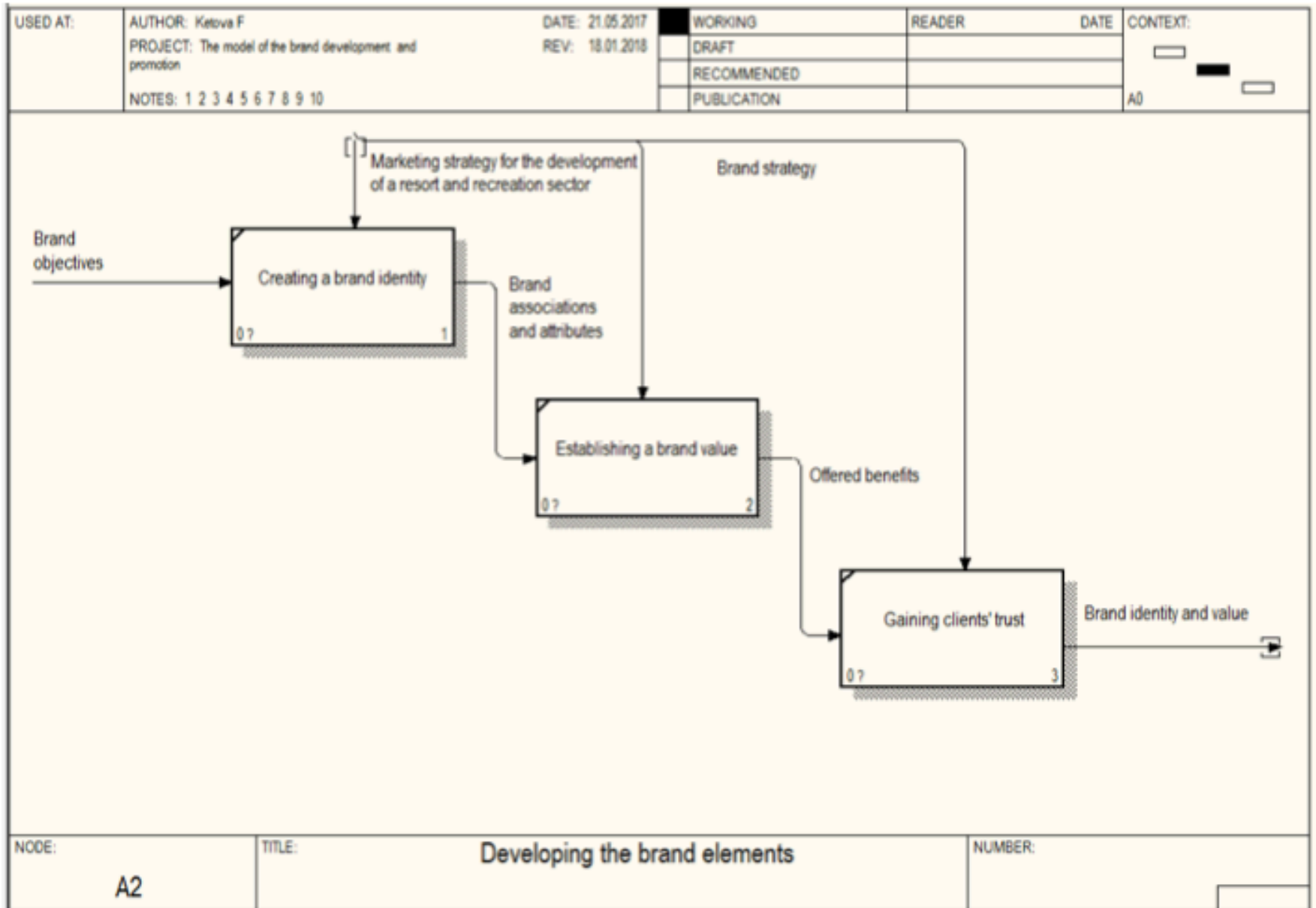
The diagram of function decomposition for the *Compile a data base* function



The developing of the brand elements includes creating a brand identity, establishing a brand value and gaining clients' trust (Figure 7). The objectives of the brand compose its uniqueness that can be described through the associations and attributes of the brand.

Fig. 7

The diagram of process decomposition for the Developing the brand elements process



The appointment of the staff and companies responsible for the brand helps systemize the whole process and avoid divergence of interests. As the destination brand development involves enterprises taking different places on the market and having their own purposes, there is a necessity to apply a general approach to the implementation of the brand strategy. The responsibility for the development and implementation of the brand strategy should be distributed among the brand managers, a brand committee, and external advertising agencies.

A correct arrangement of all the stakeholders' activities results in a successful elaboration of the positive ideas about the territory and the creation of the competitive tourist product.

Thus, we can argue that the development of a brand for a resort and recreation destination requires the following.

1. A board or a body planning and coordinating the marketing events. The best results in this sector can be attained through the public and private partnership. In this case an entity can be authorized to act as a governmental body and at the same time it serves the interests of the tourism industry.
2. Implementation of the marketing strategy. The action plan should include functions of all the market participants, its compilation should be agreed by all parties.
3. Respecting the interests of all the stakeholders of the tourism market such as the state, businesses, local people. The events and activities hosted should not induce any social or political conflicts.
4. Constant and objective monitoring over the situation. Surveying consumers' preferences, competitors' positions, revealing new opportunities.

4. Conclusions

Tourism as one of the fastest developing sectors of the world economy experiences a constant growth and diversification. The development intensity in this sector and a high multiplicative effect of the income and employment make the grounds for considering

tourism as the main factor of the area sustainable development. At the same time we should bear in mind that branding is one of the crucial elements of the tourism destination positioning. The efficiency of the development and promotion of the destination brand can be improved through modelling using the IDFE technology that emphasizes the main process, sub-processes, incoming and outgoing information flows as well as controlling and controlled elements.

It is appropriate to note that the model of developing the brand of a resort and recreation destination includes the following main components: building a data platform; development of the brand elements; appointment of staff and companies responsible for implementation of the brand strategy.

The correct decomposition of the main components of the branding mechanism makes it possible to formulate and consolidate positive ideas related to the territory, create a competitive tourist product, contribute to improving the efficiency of a resort and recreational sector and increase the competitiveness of Russia on the world market.

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