

City Image Management through Design (IMD) As a Path for Sustainability

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Abstract: *This present paper approaches the relevance of the city image management through design (IMD) as a path to achieve sustainability. An extensive literature review of these topics was made to determinate which are the roles of the different sustainable actors intervening in the perception on what a city image should evoke. For this issue, to address social responsibility and ethics in these different disciplines, allow to conceptualize a multi-disciplinary vision which permits an adequate management of the city image between government, society, and universities. This study contributes in a significant manner to consider a change of the perception in the construction of a sustainable city image management through design, in a way that produce a major impact in its visitors and inhabitants.*

Keywords: *Design, Sustainability, Management, Image, City.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The image of a city is represented from three different aspects, which are: 1) the public space, 2) the private space, and 3) the private space for public usage; among various architectonic styles within a proper mobility and space infrastructure. Likewise, a city image “is an effect of some diverse causes: perceptions, inductions and deductions, projections, experiences, sensations, emotions, and knowledge from individuals, which in one way or another -directly or indirectly- are associated between them (which generates the significance of the image) and the organization, as the inductive and capitalizing element” (Costa, 1999:53).

By speaking of a city image, it must be strongly considered the idea in which is the sum of the global attributes and attractions that are being offered in it, and those include all the different products and services provided by the city, along with all communication activities taken place inside or outside the city. Therefore, these communication activities mentioned cannot be managed in another way different from design, because design is the expert discipline in such field. Its management must be understood as the technique where all resources (human, material, technological and financial) will be administered pursuing the optimal results of the objectives, maximizing efforts in order to achieve the most productivity (Stoner, 2010). Because of the above mentioned, it should be considered that this addition, which provokes and evokes a city image, must be managed in a way in which is analyzed, mainly, by means of the consumers’ perceptions, for whom the pretended image was emitted.

Image management through design (IMD), is a fundamental element in all the marketing strategies being undertaken in any city. Nevertheless, is very important to consider that it must contemplate a series of several aspects, such as: the city quality, its geographical distribution, its communication messages, and the cost of living or visiting it. It is the only way that a competitive city image could be produced. In a city, to maintain, manage and control its image is less complex or complicated that in a whole country or nation, so IMD is the adequate strategy to arrange it, because by promoting and motivating visits to hit-places of leisure, recreation, business or history, its strength is achieved in a sustainable way (Fuentes, 2007).

Per the above mentioned, a few questions could be generated alongside the importance of a city IMD in order to achieve sustainability. This would suggest a posterior analysis of these topics through the following questions: 1) What is the role of design in a city image management?, and 2) How does IMD helps to achieve sustainability in a city?

II. THE PURPOSE OF DESIGN

It becomes complex to express in a single sentence what the term design means. Some authors define it as a mean to transform ideas into graphics, looking forward to a functional visual form of expression; expanding its conceptualization into an idea that involves everything surrounding, created by and for men. Its goal would end in satisfying the needs of humankind from a visual and graphic platform of expression, that could be identified as the definition which mainly fits the function developed by design. According to the stated by Gilliam (1992), “...design is every creative action that accomplishes its goal”. Design is immersed in all events taken place in daily life, in every single moment in which humans develop their activities for a pre-defined reason. Visual perception and its derived conceptualization produced by design is “an active, selective,

productive and creative operation, and its organization is configured through a group of sensations related between them; those groups could be formed and separated independently from all previous learning and knowledge possessed of a determinate situation” (Briseño& Gil, 2005:17).

In that sense, the idea where design could satisfy all human needs (material, spiritual and emotional) by creating objects which help individuals in their daily life could be affirmed. A proper design should part from a problem, and by precisely defining whom would be its final user (the problem bearer); without leaving behind the evaluation of the design proposal against the function for which it was created. In general terms, from its beginnings design was understood as part of arts and architecture; practiced by artists and artisans whom had practical knowledge and intuitive abilities. This activity was outside of all theoretical and technological capacity and studies. It was the Bauhaus school who institutionalized design and started to develop theoretical studies, which are present until today in the schools of design.

Acha (2001), widely explains the idea where men were always designing, since prehistoric times until nowadays. Is not far from reality the thought of first men on earth were unconsciously designing. And, same as human knowledge, design evolved through time as well. Design could be observed and identified in all the world’s cultures, since men created their weapons from stones, their clothing from animal skin, as well as garments, textures, goldsmith, jewelry, houses, transports, among others. Everything will always go through a process of design, generating in it an image and style reflecting the identity of every group or community.

In ancient times, the existing registered main data reveal that creations made by men were focused in architecture and engineering, considered as well as design. Engineering is the profession which applies knowledge and experiences, through design, so its models and techniques will solve problems affecting humankind. In that sense, design could be conceptualized as the previous process of a mental scheme in the search of a proper and according solution for a problem in any field. Chávez (2008) mentions in the field of relation between engineering and design that both disciplines, if well they are separated by their own spheres of specialization, they as well operate intimately articulated because they cannot jump into practice without each other. In other words, design is that conscious activity with acting capacity, following an order and rules, which allow it to achieve properly its planned objectives towards solving visual communication messages problems.

Nowadays, a large demand of products, along to an unmeasured sales competence and the creation of buying needs, could suppose a growth in design’s labor field. Among a globalized market, the influence of consumption, the programmed obsolesce of products and the labor force competitiveness, those situations have implied a defiant challenge to design’s development, mainly focused in marketing and advertising. In North America, is the transmitted message to society about the functions of design’s activities. Nevertheless, design could perform as an active actor in the reduction of social problems, where new preventions methods are being constantly developed. Design of everyday products, in addition to services, vehicles, and architecture, found a great potential in the application of new strategies designed for the continuous improvement of user-society-environment relation, through design’s vision and creations.

III. DESIGN AND THE SOCIAL PROBLEMATIC

Design has been present in the development of human being, marking ways of thinking and acting, as well in users as in social actors. As time went by, design areas began to expand rapidly with industrialization, and later with a technological growth focused in mass communication. Loaeza (1992), a Mexican writer, in her book *Compro y luego existo* (I buy and then I exist), refers how marketing and advertising create buying needs in people. Is important to notice how advertising agencies are capable to generate perceptions of acceptance in persons; what people like today, they long for it tomorrow, they need it afterwards, until they reach the point of an acquisition urgency. All as part of the consuming strategies’ job.

Per the above mentioned, those same strategies could be used to direct a design of a city image, in a way to provoke and evoke acceptance between locals and visitors; gaining with it a will in them to inhabit or visit the city. That becomes a challenge for design and designers to create newer and fresh ideas to be employed as arguments for positive perceptions and acceptance towards the city, a will to “consume” it (visiting and inhabiting) in a satisfaction environment. A city image “...could be manipulated in a direct way through communication techniques of commercial marketing, such as advertising, design and public relations” (Anholt, 2011:110). “In its visual aspect, a city is composed by images coming from innumerable human perceptions. All information obtained from that perception constitute the raw material to elaborate those images” (Briseño& Gil, 2005:12) through design.

It is true that technology nowadays have generated a challenge for designers, is also true the fact design’s market have extended its work field, from specific to general issues and vice versa. At the same time as technology evolve, design’s creativity acquires more importance into the different spheres of approach, not explored by it before. As an example: the development of a corporation includes a multidisciplinary direction covering an ample variety of products and services. That could be inferred also in a city. Design’s participation in social wellbeing, in daily life, is where the author’s value is minimized in order to bring more importance to

the user, local or visitor. “The resulting image from perception is determined by the possibilities brought by the perceived ambience” (Briseño& Gil, 2005:12).

Frascara (2000), mentions the fact that into design’s profession, creativity is what establishes the difference between a simple technical ability from the skillful manipulation of color, form, letters, and space. Bringing the possibility of being capable to develop communication strategies by interpreting society’s needs, when inhabiting or visiting a city. This incursion could potentially develop a profound study of the visual contamination problems and contradictions between social common perceptual values created by a social movement within its private and public contexts. Frascara also proposes a multi-disciplinary focus which include areas such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, administration or management and education sciences. That way, it puts major emphasis in how to produce a design than in how to conceive it.

IV. IMD AS AN IMPORTANT PATH TO CREATE A POSITIVE AND SUSTAINABLE CITY IMAGE

A city image is a reflex of its identity, and “...its management is a complex labor, in the long term, which implies an integral panning in order to attract investments, to increase cultural and political presence and to strength its competitiveness and productivity” (Fuentes, 2007:81). According to Kotler, Haider & Rein (1994:137), a city image could be defined as:

[...] “the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of it. Those images represent a simplification of a great number of associations and fragments of information connected to the location. They’re a product from the mind which intend to process and essentialize enormous quantities of information about a place. An image is more than a simple belief, is a complete set of beliefs from a site and the people’s images about a place do not reveal their attitudes towards it”.

Nowadays, is not frequently intended to design an urban form which consider all the elements that bring cohesion and models it. The whole problem in its entirety is overlooked or being put aside, only to consider the mere occasional application of the previewed urban variables stated in municipal zoning laws of the city, or in the territorial planning variables. Those have been demonstrated to be indifferent to the perceptive cohesion qualities of the image (Briseño& Gil, 2005). Spreirengen (1971:42) states: “...the design’s labor is to create necessary life conditions to allow all diverse activities of the human being, in reference to the physical form organization perceived from the city, having in account the permanent change they represent”.

This experience of generating satisfaction and usage pleasure by the means of IMD is expressed through graphic representations which reflect the essence of crafts, gastronomy, literature, music, among others. These artistic expressions represent the tacit manifesto of the city’s history, culture, and symbols. The city image gains enormous strength from the association of a product or brand of a city product with the needs satisfaction of visitors and inhabitants (Fuentes, 2007).

IMD allow visitors and inhabitants to live a total experience, “...which implies a global “sensoriality” of being, and emotions and playful or transcendental sensations when in case, mostly, appeal to the fantastic imagination of individuals. To live in person such type of experience is like living a game, a spectacle, and a rite. A great magnitude psychological gratification” (Costa, 2004:131).

Responsibility, ethics, and compromise, are values assigned to any profession, permeating the context in which any design proposal is generated. It will impact persons, and society afterwards, going beyond the objective of its accomplishment. For design, this responsibility is not excused from its work. At the moment in which it exists persuasive intention, design must have in mind the responsibility that falls upon it, because is working in the construction of “objects” that affect persons, emotionally or intellectually, within the context of a city.

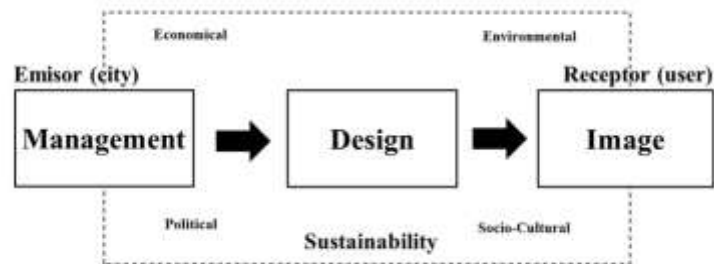
According to Newark (2002), a bad design has not harmed anybody. Maybe it does not do it directly or instantly; but that design will become part of a group, that group will become part of a community, and so forth it becomes easy to influence other persons’ behavior. It transforms, through time, in part of an entire society within a territorial demarcation, a city in this case. That is why the public (user) always must be in the mind of design, because is its receptor. For Press (2003), as he mentions Buchanan in his book *La Experiencia del Diseño* (The experience of design), it is important to consider the public context in which the design will be allocated, because the task is not anymore just to design for an audience or a consumer, but to help products become active participants in culture, searching for a meaning, coherence, and local cohesion. According to González & Cuevas (2015), a society seeks for a proper environment for their family activities and the existence of commercial practices ad hoc to their culture.

The term responsibility in design cannot be approached without considering the term sustainability in it. This kind of design proposes a review from a social, political, socio-cultural, and economical perspective. Macías, Valdovinos& Rogel (2015) mention: “...the action areas not only represent places where designers exercise their practice, but also represent project intervention opportunities, where a future vision, own quality of a designer, could have a relevant impact in contributing towards a sustainable culture”. In that sense of ideas,

is pertinent to assure that the sustainability produced by design is directly related to the resources generated by it (image, forms, colors, etc.) and to the response they bring to environmental, political, socio-cultural, and economical changing scenarios (González, Zizaldrá & Mercado, 2015). According to Briseño & Gil (2005:15), "...the developed image of a city is determined by a totality of experiences about an observed situation or object; that is why those experiences are constituted in references, preceding situations or perceptive experiences".

Diagram of Figure 1 correspond to the sum of various actors interacting as a background, where the basic structure of the communication process parts from.

Figure 1. Diagram of IMD for sustainability



Source: Own elaboration in 2016.

In it, sustainability performs as the reference of the four actors (politics, economy, environment and socio-culture) whom establish all changes, needs and interests, generated to determine what image should be managed, conceiving the city as the object of design. Society will interpret these signs, symbols or cryptograms received as the receptor subject (user), who will establish a feedback of what is perceived (image) through design. The complexity of this system lies in the consideration of the four actors above mentioned. That is the reason it is settled in a dynamic diagram, due to all those changes in design made as a result of every evaluation or measurement made by the user.

Design's responsibility and intervention in these areas involve, as previously stated, a close participation between government, society, and universities. Government, which has the legislative power to execute laws and ordinances, besides being the agent who represents management; society, which is the main receptor or user; and universities, which has the knowledge and power to research a sustainable environment. In that sense, the intervention of design in society is: the designer contributing in a way in which people interact and organize to satisfy their needs, through providing spaces, objects and information in a way interactions could be harmonic, fair, equitable, inclusive and promoting for an integral development of all society members. In the environmental sphere, design must orientate in a way society will interact with its environment, on how to preserve and use their resources: water, air, soil, among others, and all that comes from it, for the wellbeing of everyone. The designer should promote the preservation of biological diversity, ecosystems, and ecological cycles. Design should promote adequate and austere exploitation levels, and incorporate nature-harmless materials and processes in all design projects.

In the economic sphere, the designer will collaborate in a way where all wealth should be distributed and benefit all economic and commercial sectors of the society, in an equitable manner. Design has a relevant impact in the generation of consuming products, in promotion strategies for their usage, but as well in the development of a rational consumption culture, in the transformation into a fairer society with major productive capacity.

Finally, in politics the designer will collaborate in the development of more democratic structures, participating in social formation and development strategies, which allow the inclusion of all community members. Design will contribute with the orientation to transparent the economical and political powers enforcement. Will help the community inclusion and participation in all decision making. Will contribute also with the creation of laws and ordinances at all institutional levels to protect society and its environment.

As it can be observed, design's work becomes largely extended by considering all and every single one of these areas in order to be responsible, which implies to consider sustainability along with the participation of other disciplines. That is why design is not uni-disciplinary. In other words, it involves the participation of different disciplines to have a more assertive and responsible approach over its work. One of the most urgent needs for design must be its ability to proudly connect, in a prominent and participative way, with other disciplines, to do trade more effectively and with more prestige and distinction on those critical matters of goods, services, tourism, talent, ideas and culture (Anholt, 2011).

V. SUSTAINABILITY IN MULTI-DISCIPLINARY AREAS

Whitely (1993) questions: "If design were a person, would it be a grown adult taking responsibility over his actions or an insecure teenager fighting to be in good terms with the world?" After all, design could bring support in solving a problem, because design respond with an action. Therefore, a design problem could accept several effective responses. There are two areas in which the designer has relevance: 1) to help enable life, and 2) to help improving it. In this way, IMD will help to a correct administration of a city image.

There are some organizations occupied in helping design to be beneficial to society, helping all the persons who need it. As an example, there is the international humanitarian organization Design for the World, which is in charge of reuniting the skills of voluntary designers altogether with the expressed necessities by the most needed people. This organization is motivated by the thought where people who live in poverty, in war or handicapped, deserve equal access to solutions elaborated through sustainable design. Having the objective of bringing a better designed environment according to their limited conditions, to design everything needed for better life, work, studies, and recreation, in a city that brings satisfaction. Fernandez & Bionsepe (2008) mention that in Latin America as well in Mexico, design is an activity which produces cultural objects, and it changes with every environmental, political, economic, and socio-cultural event, which are part of any countries history, and in consequence, of its cities.

Culture could be defined in different ways, but basically refers to the group of knowledges that allow to develop a critical judgement. The group of ways of life and costumes, as well as the knowledge and development degree in a determinate era or social conglomerate. Culture allows men not only to adapt to their environment, but as well to make the environment adapt to them, their needs, and their projects. Since the end of the eighteen-hundreds, in sociology and anthropology, the concept of culture made reference to a global way of life from a community or social group with the purpose to preserve the accepted culture. In this thought, the presence of management can be identified. The topic of cultural reproduction is, at the same time, a creation process of collective memory and its experience control (Valenzuela, 2003).

The signs of an image perception are beginning a mixture with emotional experiences through culture and behaviors within the cities. If parting from the origins of the word culture, from the Latin term *cultivo* and its components *cultis* (cultivated) and *ura* (action), and its result is cultivated actions. Then, it could be determined that culture is a group of actions cultivated through time. Those actions are manifested in cities' traditional life, such as costumes, knowledge, and social development degree, in order to build and conform their cultural identity. If the concepts of culture and city are united, the importance of this component could be inferred towards the building of an image parting from its cultural identity definition (Fuentes, 2007).

Another conceptualization, also implicit into what culture is, is not only in the positive, sublime, and most notable of human creations, but also in what is considered negative to its own group interior (society) within a territorial demarcation (city). An example of it is identified in all the stereotypes and prejudices permeated in society and practiced by its members. These negative images are a cultural expression which emphasizes in a false identity of a country or a city. "A powerful and positive image make relatively easier and economical to attract immigrants, tourists, investors, talents and positive media coverage, as well to export products, services, ideas and culture. A weak or negative image, in general, means the necessity to invest more to gain less" (Anholt, 2011:110).

VI. HOW TO CHANGE A NEGATIVE IMAGE PERCEPTION OF A CITY WITH IMD

Explaining social and cultural behavior in Mexico becomes very complex due to its great mixture of conducts and ways of life, just as mentioned by Valenzuela (2003), culture is related to the way every social group give order to the past and live the present, fighting to preserve its ancestors' costumes, assigning aggregated value to them.

To Briseño & Gil (2005:15), "...perception is the breaking point to a cognitive synthesis elaborated by the subject, parting from stimulation provided by its surrounding world; is an active, selective, and also creative process. Allows to know the environment and act into it". According to Cerassi (1977), "...perception is an integrator mechanism in which, the energy that cause stimulation is presented where sensations conflux with a series of evaluative, structured, and organized data, coming from own experience".

The evolution of design has been directed from an individual's needs perspective, and, in other cases, design has been the creator of such individual needs. This has implied a challenge for all design generators, whom in North America mostly have been focused in advertising and marketing. Design, besides counting with a strong participation in the development of those disciplines, has found the task of having more responsibility into management, respecting social problematics. By contrast, in Europe design development takes in account all society needs, being considered as a social changes generator, where those changes could be in conduct, or, inclusive, cultural. Therefore, it must exist collective work between the three main actors: government, society, and universities, as mentioned before.

In the same way technology has been evolving, designer's creativity has been acquiring more transcendence between cultural schemes, assuming a growing important paper in all the different types of social-multidisciplinary development. Technological and digital advances open a path to a vast evolution for design, providing a bigger number of tools for innovative and original design creation. Therefore, design undertakes its activity very close to industrialization, surging what today is known as mass communication.

Social campaigns produced by design, intend to sensitize people about a public and general interest topic. This modality does not pursue a lucrative goal, as commercial communication, nor the relevance of an enterprise, as the corporative communication, but the effect produced by the strength in its message. Its goal is in a positive perception, and not in who promotes it. Most of the times, isolated institutions or official organisms are the ones who promote these types of campaigns. Although in these cases there is an ample acceptance within the people about the campaign's main topic, it does not always occur the same result in all designed campaigns. There are cases in which a great strongly radicalized division of postures is been produced. Some associations were acting as pressure groups who defend one or other options, recurring to social campaigns to spread and defend their opinion, convince the undecided and fight opponents.

It is worth mention that these efforts are still being very few. National television stations have been starting to get involved in this matter. Nevertheless, even when they help society economically, they don't seem to make conscious in people, nor cannot be observed the necessity of promoting it. Social campaigns have been few compared to the problematic they confront in most of the cities in the country. However, they have lacked from sufficient diffusion or coverage to corroborate they caused any impact on society.

Designer must make, primarily, an exhaustive research about the customer needs, the city in this case, and the problematic existing within it. An adequate research will always bring a better proposal. The correct management of a city image project and its generated cost are also related to designer's level. Nevertheless, beyond payment, and it does not mean payment is not important, is to him to be conscious about the benefit that a positive image will bring, in the short and long terms. Mexico is a country in which this focus of design would be an excellent way to pursue continuous improvement, because there are several different problematics affecting it. "The speed and velocity of all produced changes have configured an incoherent, fragmented and sometimes uncompleted image. In that sense, the form and image of a city, must be capable to respond to this changing dynamic in the course of time, especially in relation to all needs and values of its inhabitants" (Briseño& Gil, 2005:13).

To approach the idea of a deteriorated image and its consequent negative perceptions in a city, Valls (1992) highlights that any city has a created image, from very diverse sources, in the mind of visitors or inhabitants. A city image constitutes a key factor for its marketing if created through IMD, because the benefits of this design will be present in communicative actions policies of the city. It is an element which permits to decisively influence in all consumers expectative.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Strategic management of a city image becomes more adequate and efficient when all attributes composing it and the importance that every one of them has for visitors or inhabitants are known. Part of the deficient management of a city image problematics come from the law creation and enforcement toward urban regulations that do not observe qualitative factors, as the ones proposed by design. Instead, only stablish quantitative indicators such occupancy, density, heights, retreats, among others.

Nevertheless, the nature of a sustainable city image, all factors participating in its formation and all implies from the behavior of visitors or inhabitants are very important aspects, but they require a major effort in their research. Therefore, to efficiently design a city image, the sustainability actors must be taken in account, which are represented by natural, political, economic, and socio-cultural resources of the place (management), but also must consider emotions and feelings the image could evoke in the community (user). They all together would bring sustainability to that image.

Within all those participating factors in the conformation of perceptions in a city, the stimulation variables are to be highlighted, as proposed by Baloglu&McCleary (1999), because they are related to the quantity and variety of information sources people are exposed to, which include all information as well they acquired from a city as a consequence of visiting or inhabiting it. Those sources of information must be administered through IMD, because it possesses all necessary skills to create more adequate promotional visual messages in relation to all attributes and offerings of the city.

All institutions in charge of managing a city image, in name of its citizens, organizations, and businesses, must need to identify the real perception of the city, in the minds of all them, in order to develop a strategy to design it. For design, "...a key factor for its job is to intend the building of a fair, true, powerful, attractive, and genuinely useful reputation for its economic, political, environmental, and socio-cultural purposes that, in an honest way, reflect the spirit, genius, and desire of its people" (Anholt, 2011:111).

All difficulties that implies the image management for a city, is a matter of consideration and to be conscious about. In that same way, is in an equal plane of importance to be able to sell the managed image. Nevertheless, despite all those difficulties, is always important to protect the design image in a market in which the competence is bigger every day, with the appearance of new competitors penetrating market with newer and attractive products.

The perceptual aspects of a city image administered through IMD and its impact in the produced urban form, must take part of the beginning in the search of competitive designs oriented to achieve a sustainable city image. Highlighting all those perceptual qualities of a management through IMD which always take in account the sustainability actors, consequently augmenting its quality through time, allowing diversity within it.

The importance of a sustainable city image, among all definitions of image mentioned before, the one proposed by Baloglu & McCleary (1999) can be distinguished for its amplitude and precision. They consider image as the mental representation of beliefs, feelings, and global impression of an individual over a city, in relation to its economic, political, socio-cultural and environmental aspects. This definition must include all those rational evaluations, beliefs, and knowledge, possessed by an individual about the attributes of a city, such as the affective, represented by the feelings towards a city.

Images are considered as mental representations of those reality parts, which are known through a structure, grouping, and combining certain ambience components according to a stated regulation. Nevertheless, an image must be valid in order to achieve its purpose, or in other words, to correspond to reality. Besides, an image must be credible because, even though is valid, if is not credible it would not be effective.

Is of inestimable importance to study the differences between the images from a determinate city possessed by visitors and the ones possessed by non-visitors; that will allow to identify the most outstanding attributes perceived by consumers and non-consumers. That information will result essential for the strategic planning process in the city, as part of its management (Andrade, 2012). Because of that, is absolutely necessary to investigate all derived impacts from the relation between the perceived image and the projected image, in order to bring them closer as much as possible and direct them towards sustainability. "By walking through the city, a man is caught affected by the visual aspect of the space y all the things surrounding it. The architectonic and urban elements, which conform the most important references for the reading of the city, are unarticulated and negatively influence order and unity in its formal structure" (Briseño & Gil, 2005:12). To Lynch (1992), it is pertinent to remark:

[...] "is easy for people to use their senses, to smell, see, feel, and hear well. The received sensation must be sharp, descriptive, nice, and must be under the control of whom it captures it. To put the world within the reach of senses, to increase the profundity and finesse of sensations and to confer such immediate pleasure and wellbeing that accompany the experienced perception, are more positive purposes (not only cleaning the air, but to fill it with complex details to look, wonderful sounds to listen)".

Anholt (2011:19-110) mentions with accuracy: "The reputation of the cities and regions is very determinant for their advance and prosperity, same as the image of the product brand is for a business". Therefore, a city image must be managed in a way where it will harmonically interact with all those elements (physical-spatial and natural) conforming its surroundings, which are identified and conceptualized in the intellect of visitors and inhabitants. Image must be directly related to its cultural diversity and the social group inhabiting it; from this knowledge, will come the real action in the determinate place; which affirms the idea where the primordial condition of a city image centers in achieving a fully identifiable place.

A city image must be treated as a component of the management policy, not as a discipline by itself, nor as a "campaign" that could be separated from such conventional actions like planning, leadership, governability, or economic development within the strategic direction of the city (Anholt, 2011).

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