

**SCTMG 2020****International Scientific Conference «Social and Cultural Transformations in the  
Context of Modern Globalism»****SPECIAL EVENTS IN POSITIONING THE TERRITORIAL  
BRAND**

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***Abstract***

The article studies territory branding viewed as a linchpin of sustainable development strategy for Russian regions. The region is a research focus as a geographical, administrative, economic, cultural, historical and ethno-cultural unit. The article contains the research analyzing the opinions of experts and youth on Kuzbass territorial brand constructing and positioning. Contrary to widespread beliefs, it is gradually changing its image: developing, becoming more attractive for youth from other regions. The young population views the actual brand of Kuzbass as having advantages in various spheres beyond those of coal industry, metallurgy, and welfare programs. Kuzbass can also be positioned as a tourist region. A positive image of the regional entity conduces to attracting external resources (tourists, investments, labor, etc.), developing positive associations and emotional attachment to the region. Thus, constructing and promoting the territorial brand remains relevant for Kuzbass. Experts make a point that holding special events aimed at carving out the territorial brand of the region will contribute to finalizing the idea of it for Kuzbass, specifically in tourism, and developing a positive emotional perception of the territory through the participation effect. When determining the regional brand strategy, one needs to consider the following factors: the geographical position of the territory, its geopolitical status, natural and resource potential, national and cultural features. Unique landscape, natural, historical and archaeological characteristics of the Kemerovo region are highly promising for constructing and realizing the territorial brand of a centre for cultural and educational tourism.

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**Keywords:** Special events, territorial brand, geobranding, territorial brand positioning.



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## 1. Introduction

Developing territorial branding is becoming a necessary element of communication between government, business and public. Designing a unique image for each region and the increased recognition of Russian territories are equally important, as they draw attention to the region, give an opportunity to develop it more effectively.

This problem remains relevant, each territory requires a unique promotion model, a special scheme of positioning that takes into account the existing mentality and regional specialization. Anholt (2011), one of the world's best geobranding experts, used the word combination "place branding" for the first time as a professional term in 2002.

## 2. Problem Statement

Territorial branding and its issues were in the focus of attention for both foreign and Russian researches, such as Dinny (2010), Vizgalov (2011) and others. However, it should be noted that the holistic theory of territorial branding still does not exist. Only in early XXI century, the region became the subject of research as a geographical, administrative, economic, cultural and historical, ethno-cultural unit in professional PR activity. Territorial branding is a new phenomenon for Russia and has a high potential for development, as a successful brand plays an important role in developing the economy, culture and tourism infrastructure of the territory.

Fejling (2014) considers territorial branding as "a strategy increasing the competitiveness of cities, regions, geographical zones and states with a view to conquering foreign markets, attracting investors, tourists, new residents and skilled migrants" (p. 6).

According to Meshherjakov et al. (2011),

*the territorial branding constructs the brand of the territory, based on an integrated approach to the search and development of the territorial identity, as well as communicates its comparative benefits to different target groups by creating a bright, attractive image consisting of internal and external attributes. In addition, it is an important tool for marketing management of the territory and it is aimed at accumulating the communicative capital of the territory as an integral part of the institutional capital. (p. 150)*

It should be noted that there is no uniform approach to defining the territorial brand. The debate around the term "territorial branding" results mainly in defining it as an independent process of territorial development or as an integral part of territorial marketing.

Experts disagree on what the place brand is, but they are unanimous on what it is not. Vizgalov (2011) summarized the experts' opinions: "First, it is not just a sign, a symbol that distinguishes the city from other territories.

Second, the name of the place is not its brand either, as it can reflect its identity, but may not be an integral part of the local image. Alternatively, it may have nothing to do with the either.

Third, product brand definitions are not suitable for defining territorial brands. The city is not a product for sale, but something much more complex. One of the basic values of the product sold is its price, i.e. the lower, the more attractive. However, a “cheap” city does not mean a good city. Much closer to the concept of the city brand is the concept of a corporate brand, which in its promotion emphasizes (advertises) values of a higher order: social responsibility, sustainability, creativity, kindness, openness to guests, etc.

Fourth, the main differences in determining the place brand arise from difficulty to identify clearly, who is the carrier, the subject of the brand. On the one hand, it is clear that the carrier of the city brand is the city itself (the city community). On the other hand, if the brand is an impression of the city or a set of ideas about it, then the external “consumer” of the city — investor, potential resident, tourist — becomes the carrier of the brand” (Vizgalov, 2011, p. 56).

The most comprehensive is the definition of geobrand by Ataeva (2015) “the brand of a region or city as an important factor of the territory promotion relies on its political, economic, sociocultural potential, as well as natural and recreational resources, brand goods and services localized in a certain geographical area” (p. 45).

Therefore, a territorial brand should be interpreted as a recognizable image of the territory, built on the associative ties based on natural and recreational, political, economic and sociocultural symbols, replicated to form the population identity, raise the status of investment and socio-economic attractiveness of the region.

According to Vizgalov (2011), the goal of constructing a territorial brand is determined by “the desire to demonstrate to the world its “theme”, i.e. identity, essence, face, which are presented in bright, attractive images, symbols and unique events” (p. 78).

Local authorities, city communities seek to find the main idea, which will be the core of the territorial brand, through which the population of the territory can be consolidated and various activities will be implemented. Thus, there is a need to create their own image for each region and increase the recognition of the Russian territories. However, the territorial branding concept is not a product of fundamental or scientific or applied research, rather it is formed based on a rapidly increasing number of practical approaches used in specific territories. Each region, due to its individual features, should have its own sustainable development strategy that relies on its strengths.

Developing and promoting brands of Russian cities do exist in practice, but not all existing brands can withstand competition with the world analogues. The reason lies not in the absence of agencies that can professionally carry out such a task, but rather in a poorly developed strategy and unwillingness to form an individual specific model based on the population’s mentality in order to strengthen the territorial brand.

Countries, regions, cities create their own territorial brands and use different positioning strategies, many territories resort to event marketing (Pino, Guido, Peluso, 2015). The region, aspiring to succeed with the youth audience, should adopt such instruments as festivals, marathons, holidays, celebrations, flashmobs and other activities.

All cities hold a large number of events, but not all events become brand forming. For the event to start working on the image of the territory, there are three strategies. The first is to create one’s own

mega-event, which periodically (usually once a year) will gather an audience in a certain location. Such events are brands in themselves, strengthening the image of the territory and attracting tourists. For example, “Alye Parusa” (“Scarlet Sails”) is a holiday for graduates in St. Petersburg; an open-air music festival “Nashestvie” (“Invasion”) takes place in the Tver region; “Kinotavr” is a cinema festival in Sochi; a spring festival of mass skiing down the slopes in swimsuits “GrelkaFest” is held in Sheregesh (Kuzbass), etc.

The second strategy is to establish a special creative space in the region, which will become the centre of different events united by common logic, style or idea. For example, there is a museum reserve “Tomskaya Pisnitsa” in Kuzbass. At the All-Russian competition within the framework of the exhibition Russian Open Event Expo, the museum reserve “Tomskaya Pisanitsa” became a winner in the nomination “The best event space” (it was recognized as the best platform for event tourism in Russia, October 2019) (Smirnova, 2019).

The third strategy is to franchise events or to some extent “replicate” other successful events, the aim of which is to organize more complex forms of leisure for active local population and tourists and to develop loyalty to the territory. It is necessary to employ all strategies, especially if geobranding focuses on preventing young people from leaving the region.

The main results of special events are impressions and networking. High-quality events allow one to create a favorable image of the territory, cause positive emotions among tourists and residents, ensuring a desire to visit the event and the region again.

The Kemerovo region is no exception; it also needs to develop its own unique brand. Kuzbass already occupies a special place on the map of Russia. With proper positioning it may not only “resound”, but will also attract additional investments to the region, specifically to small towns. Constructing a new regional brand requires engaging young people because this socially active group can lay a solid foundation for an attractive regional image, specifically from the point of view of tourism.

Kuzbass possesses numerous resources, especially within the coal industry. However, constructing the brand of Kuzbass as a coal industry centre lost its importance for young people. It is necessary to employ another associative series capable of attracting inhabitants, both inside and outside the region. Such a resource can be the tourist specialization of the region, thanks to which there is an opportunity to build a sustainable tourism cluster. The Kuzbass region is rich in natural resources, historical and archaeological artefacts, which can provide the basis for the cluster. Anholt (2011) believes in his concept of competitive identity that “tourism is one of the six key elements of the territory's modern brand” (p. 37).

### **3. Research Questions**

The study was conducted in two groups of young people: inhabitants of Kuzbass (to determine internal perceptions) and inhabitants of other regions (to clarify external perceptions of Kuzbass). The respondents were young people aged from 18 to 27, the total number was 80 (20 males and 60 females).

The first subgroup included 40 people, both students and residents of the Kemerovo region, 27 of them were born and raised in Kuzbass (the method of random selection was used).

The second subgroup consisted of 40 people, residents of other regions (representatives of ten subjects of the Russian Federation, such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, Krasnoyarsk, Buryatia, Yekaterinburg, Voronezh, Barnaul, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Tomsk).

Experts on marketing and branding of territories were characterised by considerable experience in their area (over ten years). The first group of experts included specialists from the Kuzbass region (nine people), the second included nine representatives from other regions (Moscow, Kazan, Novosibirsk). The total sample was 98 respondents.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The research was focused on studying the possibilities of creating and positioning the territorial brand of Kuzbass in the tourist sphere and its feasible promotion with the use of special events.

#### **5. Research Methods**

The study was conducted with the use of questionnaires and expert surveys.

#### **6. Findings**

According to the survey results, most of the young representatives of Kuzbass (65 %) are ready to change the region. At the same time, the criteria of attractiveness for inhabitants of Kuzbass were landscaping of the city, availability of parks and squares (62 %), municipal and regional holidays (27 %), developed infrastructure of tourist facilities (25 %), as well as policy of the Kemerovo region (22 %)<sup>1</sup>. It can be attributed, in the first place, to the fact that inhabitants characterize the area as socially oriented.

The Kemerovo region is famous for coal and chemical industry, so it is not surprising that Kuzbass is associated mainly with coal, metallurgy, mines, quarries (37 %). The Kuznetsk coal basin is one of the largest coal deposits in the world. Besides, many respondents associate Kuzbass with a snowman or Yeti (8 %). This tourist youth symbol, which was launched recently, is rapidly gaining popularity. Notably, almost every third respondent mentioned that the Kemerovo region triggers associations with social support, awards, opportunities, social development (13 %) and regional policy (20 %). The list of sustainable associations included pristine nature, which can guarantee the territorial brand construction (22 %).

The number of associative symbols of Kuzbass also included production brands, mainly food brands. The majority pointed at OOO “Yashkino KDV” and condensed milk from Tyazhin as “purely regional” brands of Kuzbass products. The confectionery factory “Yashkino” is a production division of one of the largest Russian producers of confectionery and snacks, turning out a wide range of confectionery products. Products of the condensed milk manufacturer Kuzbaskonservmoloko have been enlisted in the rating of “100 best goods of Russia” for over a decade. Many products have been awarded diplomas and prizes, including those of the international level. The company has been producing its famous condensed milk for 60 years and is proud of the quality of selected raw materials and final product.

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<sup>1</sup> The total amount is more than 100%, as respondents could choose up to three answers. — *Authors' note*

Another production brand of Kuzbass is a modern brand of the farmer cooperative “Kalina-Malina”, which produces natural products and is in great demand among the inhabitants of the region. Also, respondents pointed out V. Shuklin's project MySiberian, which produces original Siberian gifts and souvenirs.

All these evidenciate the existence of established production brands and the emergence of new ones, which contribute to increased Kuzbass recognition.

Answering the question “Where do you spend your vacation most often?”, most respondents gave the following responses: within the Kemerovo region (52 %), in Russia (35 %), abroad (13 %). Most likely, this is conditioned by the fact that most respondents are limited in finances or perhaps interested in the historical past of their region, as well as prefer domestic tourism.

The most popular places for tourism and recreation in Kuzbass, according to respondents, are the historical, cultural and natural museum reserve “Tomskaya Pisanitsa” (11 %), ski resort “Sheregesh” (31 %), reserve “Krasnaya Gorka” (7 %), natural reserve “Kuznetsky Alatau” (17 %), monument of history and architecture of federal significance “Kuznetsk Fortress” (7 %). The Kemerovo region has a wide range of cultural recreations for modern youth and great potential in terms of positioning the region as an attractive tourist centre. So wide a range of answers suggests that young people are aware of the tourist facilities located on the territory of Kuzbass.

Taking into account the data on the positive sides of the region, the youth respondents were offered several areas enabling the development of the territorial brand in Kuzbass. Respondents tended to choose tourism (55 %), overshadowing cultural and educational (25 %) and industrial (20 %) spheres. This may be credited to the waning popularity of Kuzbass as the coal industry centre. The region requires a new positioning which can stop the outflow of youth, as well as allocate this territory among the others.

The question “Can the Kemerovo region become a tourist brand of Siberia?” resulted in a significant proportion of positive responses (47 %). Young people immediately indicated a number of places suitable to design and develop the tourist brand of Kuzbass. It exposes the potential regional development in the spheres of recreation and tourism, e.g. ski resort “Sheregesh” (82 %), natural reserve “Kuznetsky Alatau” (50 %), museum reserve “Tomskaya Pisanitsa” (37 %).

The territorial brand development implies a certain positioning of the region, which will distinguish it among other territories. This positioning can be carried out with the help of special events (as 92 % of respondents believe), promoting the region. Successful organisation of such events requires a large audience, preferably young.

It is worth emphasizing that young people have shown themselves as a socially active group, demonstrating willingness to take part in such events (92 %).

Responses from residents of other cities showed that the majority of them have been to Kuzbass before (54 % of respondents, only 2 % of them had not needed to visit this region again since then). Among respondents who have not been to the region, 69 % are ready to visit Kuzbass as tourists.

Residents of other regions produced associations with Kuzbass that can compare well with those by Kuzbass residents: coal industry, the beauty of nature, and the politics of the Kemerovo region came first. Respondents from this group preferred the coal industry (45 %), as the Kuznetsk coal basin is considered one of the largest deposits in the world, concentrating the huge reserves of coal.

Residents of other regions attributed several places to the objects within the tourist brand of Kuzbass, e.g. the previously mentioned resort “Sheregesh” (30 %), “Kuznetsky Alatau” (25 %), museum reserve “Tomskaya Pisanitsa” (15 %), the monument of history and architecture of federal importance “Kuznetsk Fortress” (2 %), museum reserve “Krasnaya Gorka” (10 %), the natural reserve of Shorsk National Park (8 %), etc. This suggests that the tourist sites of Kuzbassa are known not only to the residents of the region, but also to representatives of other territories.

Answering the main question “Can the Kemerovo region become a tourist brand of Siberia?”, the majority of respondents from other regions responded positively (73 %), which lets us make conclusions about a great potential of Kuzbass in developing the territorial brand within this sphere because many Kuzbass residents answered the question positively as well.

Kuzbass experts registered the outflow of youth from the region, pointing to the lack of prospects for their professional growth. This demonstrates the need to create a favourable environment for the young people to realize their potential in the region. However, at the same time, experts exposed the following positive aspects, such as holding regional and city holidays, landscaping cities, availability of parks and squares, and developing urban infrastructure.

Experts’ opinion on the necessity to develop the territorial brand of Kuzbass is ambiguous. Marketers believe that the territorial brand already exists in the Kemerovo region; they call it “spontaneous”, i.e. the emphasis shifts from the coal industry to the image of Yeti, the snow man. At the same time, there is no final image and no single vector of development, which would attract the attention of investors and tourists.

The interviewed experts disagreed on the area for developing the territorial brand for Kuzbass. It is connected with the discovered associations as some see an advantage of the coal industry, the others focus on tourism opportunities. This suggests the likely combination of the two spheres, which can result in positioning the region as the destination of industrial tourism (visits to mines, quarries, events dedicated to industry of the region).

The most famous tourist sites of Kuzbass, according to experts, include ski resort “Sheregesh”, historical, cultural and natural museum reserve “Tomskaya Pisanitsa”, museum reserve “Krasnaya Gorka”, natural reserve “Kuznetsky Alatau”, monument of history and architecture of the federal importance “Kuznetsk Fortress”. The only difference from the respondents’ answers was mentioning Lake Goluboye, located near the Tashtagolsky district.

Experts absolutely agreed that it is necessary to position the territorial brand of Kuzbass by means of carrying out special events. The events that are held in the region contribute to the recognition of the territory included GrelkaFest<sup>2</sup>, the search of yeti, holding regional and city holidays, such as the Day of Russia, Miner’s Day, etc.

The obtained data are sufficient to assert that experts assess positively developing the territorial brand of Kuzbass in tourism, as well as its positioning by means of special events.

Experts from other regions visited the Kemerovo region at least once, and some of them even took part in events increasing the recognition of the Kuzbass region, e.g. mass skiing in Sheregesh, regional youth student forum “Brand Event”, etc.

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<sup>2</sup> GrelkaFest is an annual mass descent of ski enthusiasts and snowboarders in Sheregesh. The first such mass descent was recorded in the Guinness Book of Records. The festival attracts about 10,000 people every year.

As for associations, experts from other regions link the Kemerovo region with the coal industry and politics. The interviewed experts are well aware of the tourism orientation of the region, it results in conclusion that there is a high probability of creating a territorially brand of Kuzbass in tourist sphere, because experts gave unanimously positive response to the question “Can the Kemerovo region serve the territorial brand of Siberia?”

Experts consider the implementation of various kinds of activities as a means of positioning the region. It was found that it is necessary to use the popularity of Kuzbass as the coal industry centre in line with tourism, i.e. promote tours over coal mining enterprises with a full immersion in the atmosphere, using models and films in presentations devoted to the region or its individual subjects (both in Russia and abroad), as well as organizing thematic festivals with the involvement of famous guests.

Experts emphasise that special events aimed at developing the territorial brand of the region, will finalise the idea of the territorial brand of Kuzbass in tourist sphere.

It is important to point out that the experts interviewed are ready to help with special events: they are ready to organise and participate, share their knowledge, teach master classes, etc.

Thus, according to the results of the survey, Kuzbass contrary to widespread ideas (it is perceived by many as a conservative, industrial and “non-youth” region) gradually changes its profile. It develops, becomes more attractive for young people from other regions. Thus, this research enables to conclude that the actual brand of Kuzbass has strengths for young population in spheres other than coal industry, metallurgy, and social welfare. Kuzbass can also be positioned as a tourist region. A positive image of a regional entity conduces to attracting external resources (tourists, investments, labor, etc.), developing positive associations and emotional attachment to the region. Thus, addressing the issues of devising and promoting the territorial brand remains relevant for Kuzbass.

It is noteworthy that young people are ready to become an active converter of the surrounding space. In this regard, it seems necessary to develop and design the image and symbolic attributes of Kuzbass as a tourist and youth region. Similar to inhabitants of Kuzbass, young representatives of other territories believe that the region needs a new positioning, which would set a new vector of development and would attract investments into the region.

Experts, in their turn, discussed the great opportunities of creating the territorial brand of Kuzbass in the tourist sector with the use of special events that improve the recognizability of tourist places. Taking into account the recommendations received from experts, one needs concentrate on special events. There are following special events held in Kuzbass:

1. Festival GrelkaFest.
2. The complex of activities related to the search of a snowman, the yeti's wedding and the introduction of the annual holiday – a Snow Man Day (November, 18). N. Valuev took part as a special guest in the mission searching for a snowman and led the expedition to Mountain Shoriya. The results of this expedition were supported by photographs of traces allegedly belonging to the Yeti and figures of humanoid beings.
3. Regional festival of youth and students, dedicated to the World Tourism Day “Siberian Quest 2014”. The tourist festival has become an effective form of organizing event tourism. The festival was held in September 2014 on the lakeshore near the village Starye Topki. Students and activists of youth

associations competed in walking, water tourism, strike ball, took part in the bard song contest, demonstration performances of military-patriotic youth clubs, the historical reconstruction club.

The youth orientation of territorial branding in Kuzbass was launched “from below” by the student youth themselves in the framework of the forum “Brand Event”. The forum was held in Kemerovo state university facilitating the discussion of regional brand strategies. The initiative to create the “grass-roots” youth brand of the region received support from the administration of the region in 2015, and in 2018 at the federal level already within the framework of youth grants from Rosyouth. The forum itself can also be considered within the framework of educational tourism, it allows attracting students, public, scientists and practitioners in stimulating the regional discussions on forming the Siberian regions’ image. The work of the two forums resulted in the youth’s formulating specific feasible trends of the region promotion. Firstly, when creating the regional image, it is proposed to use such verbal characteristics as brutal, strong, extreme, sporty, ecological, green, etc. Secondly, it is necessary to give up outdated logos with excessive content of components, make the logo more concise, capacious, youth and implement it actively in souvenirs and various advertisements. Thirdly, it is necessary to pay attention to the development of the tourist infrastructure, which should link remote parts of the region with the Golden Ring of Kuzbass, develop non-traditional types of tourism, create a strong independent brand of Sheregesh as an international year-round resort, establish a paleontological scientific and cultural centre in Chebulinsky area based on the results of the new archaeological research.

Youth initiatives in the field of tourism brand strategy have been developed at the annual Kuzbass tourist forum (held since 2017), which has scientific and practical significance and access to the administration and management of regional and federal importance.

It is necessary to continue such events, as the results of the forum gave a positive effect. The issue of positioning attracted attention of the regional administration, marketing, tourism and advertising experts, as well as the socially active part of the population of the Kemerovo region and the adjacent regions. In addition, the efforts resulted in the worthy ideas that will allow positioning the region as a tourist centre of Siberia.

These events mainly contribute to featuring Kuzbass as a tourist centre. The above said allows a conclusion that the Kemerovo region has a powerful platform for developing and implementing the territorial brand of Kuzbass as a centre of cultural and educational tourism.

Territorial branding is an intellectual and interdisciplinary process of designing a generalized territorial image, positively perceived by residents, serving a tool for retaining the population and attracting investment.

In addition, geobranding helps determine the identity of the nation, increase the socio-cultural self-esteem of the population. Both national entities and individual cities are branded. And if the key task of national geobranding, as a rule, is political and social solidarity, then city branding pursues mainly other goals, such as attracting investments and developing tourism. Many countries have used this tool for a long time. There are both successful and quite ineffectual approaches.

The most successful global examples of geo-branding are city brands of New York, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Hong Kong and others. In Russia, Perm, Kaluga region, Nenets Autonomous District, Sochi, Skolkovo implemented interesting projects.

The connection of the territory with the region in geobranding is not mandatory, some territories emphasize their independence and international status, e.g. “The Hague is an international city of peace and justice”. Others, on the contrary, demonstrate their national identity, e.g. “Edinburgh is the inspiring capital of Scotland”, “Glasgow is stylish Scotland”. The Kemerovo region adheres to the same strategy, e.g. “Kuzbass is the coal heart of Russia”.

Russia entered the era of branding territories late; there was no long period of directed geobranding (in its modern sense). The world tourist map presents Russia to foreigners as a “geobranding desert”. The reasons for this are different: historical and political conditions affected it significantly (the Iron Curtain did not allow presenting Russian territories as attractive for foreign tourists); extensive territories with a low population density and uneven socio-economic levels cause difficulties for the development of tourism infrastructure and, above all, for transport logistics. The budgets of most Russian territories cannot afford required significant financial investments in geobranding; there are no qualified agencies and specialists with positive experience of territorial branding for regions with similar development profiles, etc. When determining the regional brand strategy, one needs to take into account the following factors: the geographical position of the territory, its geopolitical status, natural and resource potential, national and cultural features.

Except Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia has no world-renowned cities. Territorial branding in our country is going through a difficult period, and the results can not always be assessed unequivocally. The situation has taken a turn with the change of strategy, i.e. within the framework of national geobranding, the experts have relied on international projects, special events, such as annual St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), Olympic Games in Sochi 2014, International Festival of Youth and Students 2017 (Sochi), the 2018 FIFA World Cup, which involved 11 cities (Moscow, Kaliningrad, St. Petersburg, Nizhny Novgorod, Volgograd, Kazan, Samara, Saransk, Rostov-on-Don, Sochi, Yekaterinburg).

Forming a successful brand strategy requires proceeding from the real possibilities of the territory, weighing all strengths and weaknesses, as well as from the economic potential (Ferreira & Dionísio, 2019; Pino et al., 2015; Ponikowska, 2019). The Kemerovo region faces an important task of repositioning the territorial brand, getting rid of the negative image of the subsidized coal mining region unattractive for young people. Experts argue that the geobranding strategy for Kuzbass should include developing a tourist cluster and shifting the focus to scientific, educational and intellectual resource. Therefore, it is necessary to prioritize over universities and tourism infrastructure.

## **7. Conclusion**

The additional activities that allow positioning the brand of Kuzbass in the tourist sphere include the annual Kuzbass tourist forum, which visualizes the comprehensive tourist picture of the region and facilitates developing links among travel agencies. Forum participants can communicate directly with representatives of the tourism industry in Siberia and choose a favourite tour for themselves.

One can popularize the tourist sites of the region with the help of special quest events in these places. The unifying event that can affect positioning the territorial brand of Kuzbass in the tourist sphere may take the form of the youth student forum “Brand Event: reload”.

Special events will contribute to the following:

1. attracting young people's attention, including representatives of media professions (such as journalism, marketing, advertising, design and public relations), photographers and bloggers, to the development of a positive image of the region, based on cultural patterns;
2. developing PR-campaigns aimed at improving negative associations, stereotypes and images and creating new positive ones;
3. establishing a communication platform for network interaction of the public, universities, authorities and business of the Kemerovo region with representatives of other regions of the Russian Federation for creating and promotion branding projects of regions and forming an integrated brand of Siberia;
4. setting up a free creative space encouraging and supporting new ideas of youth, developing culture and creativity.

According to experts, by the summer of 2020 the number of tourists visiting resorts and sites of Kuzbass will run up to 2.5 million people. The number of employees in the tourism business will increase by 1.7 times. These figures are likely to be much higher when special events are held regularly. Undoubtedly, this will require developing the tourist cluster of the region, which includes world-class ski resort "Sheregesh", where over a million people can rest annually, the city-museum Mariinsk, Shestakovsky archaeological complex with fossilized remains of a dinosaur (Chebulinsky district), the largest lake in Kuzbass Berchikul (Tisulsky district), etc. It is necessary to develop the infrastructure of Kemerovo and Novokuznetsk in order to serve the growing flow of tourists: international airport, hotels, transport, cultural and historical objects. All this will guarantee the target audience the appropriate set of services, the availability of a certain (expected) level of infrastructure.

It is worth considering the option of industrial tourism development. It is necessary to design tourist routes for industrial enterprises of the Kemerovo region, especially those that witnessed the history of Kuzbass' development, e.g. closed mines in Kiselevsk, Prokopyevsk, gold mines in the Tisulsky district, silver mines and the first metallurgical plant in Guryevsk and other enterprises.

The implementation of territorial branding is fully carried out through marketing tools (strategic, symbolic, advertising and PR). Event marketing is merely one of the stages of the territorial brand development, but it is with the help of special events that all marketing tools may be implemented, which will increase the competitiveness of the territory, consumers' inflow, investment influx into the region.

Event geobranding is the most effective tool for promoting the territory, as the successful implementation allows a positive emotional perception of the territory due to the participation effect. Developing the unique image for each region and increasing the recognition of the Russian territories are essential, both for external entities in order to develop tourism and attract investments, and for internal (to define identity, develop solidarity and anchor residents in the territory, reduce emigration sentiments). This draws attention to the region, enables development that is more effective.

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