

**E.S. Bundova**

Siberian Federal University, Russian Federation, Krasnoyarsk, Svobodny 79  
 e-mail: ido-l@mail.ru

## CITY IMAGE DURING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

**Abstract:** *This article explores the visual information part of the urban environment that can be identified by visual observation and contains the entire information layer of this environment. In fact, visual information field of the city is the language that the city speaks to a person. For stable development of cities under conditions of an unstable economic situation and crises, we have to look for such options to improve the urban environment that could have the most positive impact on the city's image with minimal costs. Such a solution can be the transformation of the visual information field of the city as the most dynamic element of the urban environment, which most easily adapts to any economic, political, eventual and other changes, affecting the appearance of the city as a whole.*

**Keywords:** *identification, visual information field of the city, city look, city image, city environment, wayfinding system, advertisement, orientation.*

### Introduction

The issues of urban identification and positioning in the global ranking of cities are increasingly becoming the starting point for many changes taking place in recent years with the urban environment, bringing the idea of its authenticity into the category of marketing concepts. Russian cities from this point of view are a unique phenomenon. Formed in the unique historical and urban conditions, first affected by the standards of Soviet urban planning, and then the market economy, which introduced a huge amount of commercial information, as well as advertising of global and local brands, they survived twenty-five years of permissiveness. The establishment of the framework and regulations began in the 2010s.

Identification issues are becoming more acute for the city authorities also due to the fact that numerous economic studies clearly show that a city with its own identity becomes more successful, more attractive and develops faster. Modern cities are changing, regardless of age, status, size and location. Urban environment is changing, new ways of the city development are being invented and, most importantly, the increasing significance is attached to identification. Every city wants to have its own unique image. The reason for this is explained in his article "The Modern City: The Strategy of Identity" by Alexander Sogomonov: "the city is entering into an unprecedented in the world history competition with each other for human, information and cash flows" (Sogomonov, 2010). A city that has its own "face", its own meaning and values becomes the most attractive for all categories of people.

To identify the space, material elements that fill the environment are important, and to identify the city space you need an idea, an image and a beautiful myth. Due to the differences in the concepts of "identification" and "identity", absolutely different approaches to work with the image of the city are formed. The terminology used by experts in the field of urban identity boils down to several basic concepts: the appearance of the city, the image of the city and the brand of the city. The image of the city is formed in three temporal layers (Putintsev, 2011): the appearance and reputation of the city are connected with the past (as the experience of interaction between the city and the person), the image – with the present, and the brand – with the future. If the work on the city identity is carried out only at the level of one of the temporary layers, it is possible to trace a low correlation between the efforts to improve the quality of the urban environment and the formation of the image of the city in the present and the brand of the city in

the future. Conversely, an orderly and space-related work structure forms the urban identity more fully, allowing positive changes in the material reality of the urban environment to influence the image and brand of the city immediately, changing its past reputation and established image in a positive way. This leads to the conclusion that to form a positively perceived urban brand it is necessary to work on the image of the city both in humanitarian and material contexts, or rather in the “reality and virtual reality” (Putintsev, 2011).

The virtual reality of the development of urban identity is the media space and the so-called media image of the city – “the image created by the media, mass media, editors, journalists, press officers of government agencies, commercial structures, business and other representatives of the information environment” (Morozova, 2013). Media image is aimed at the formation of mental representations about the territory. Construction of media image takes place not only in virtual media reality, but also in the urban environment, forming a new visual and information field of the city. The formation of the identity of the city takes place technologically and in stages, representing a set of actions:

1. Formation of the city image, connection with history and “the spirit of the place”. At this stage, all mental elements associated with the past are used: the reputation of the city, legends, stereotypes, archetypes and historical memory associated with the place. In material terms – these are historical and cultural complexes, historical architectural objects, objects of cultural heritage and unique small architectural forms of historical significance for the urban environment. This approach is a good basis for building a city brand and is often used: all European cities exploit the spirit of the place (“genius loci”), which helps to form a unique identity.

2. Present formation of the unique image of the city on the basis of the existing material, information (historical and cultural, political, intellectual, visual, investment) and other complexes. At present the dependence between the quality of the urban environment and the formation of a positive image of the city is very high: from the point of view of behaviorism, the image of the city is formed at the time of interaction between a man and the city. If the promised image and reputation of the city is different from the impression an individual gets, a reaction to this is disappointment.

3. The formation of a long-term and cost-effective brand of the city through constant communication and information processes that provide a positive psycho-emotional impact on individuals. A territory or a city branding is directed to the future. It unites the appearance, reputation, image, media image, urban aesthetics and information, people and territory.

Solving the problem of the humanitarian positioning of the city in the global ranking of cities, investing resources and efforts only in the media development of urban identity, associated more with the future formation of a stable and recognizable urban brand than with the formation of the image of the city in the present, is another mistake. This mistake does not allow to achieve sustainable results in the positioning of the city. Despite high material costs, a city with a popular brand, but without tangible evidence of the positive ideas that are implemented in the urban environment, becomes a sham, meaningless, empty shell without inner content. Successful work on the image of the city depends on targeted efforts to improve the environment and on the real material space of cities, and the virtual reality of information networks.

### **City image during international events**

The significant means in the formation of the image of the city include “communication activities and media that demonstrate the openness of the territory for contacts and allow external entities to know it better, to make sure the materiality of its advantages” (Morozova, 2013). Event branding is a term that refers to the development of the city and is responsible for the formation of its identity through the organization of exhibitions, conferences, festivals, the Olympics, Universiade, Spartakiad, etc. It is one of the effective ways in a relatively short period of time to concentrate the efforts of the authorities on creating a favorable image of the city, improving the infrastructure, creating the identity of the city, preserving the historical and cultural capital,

transforming the historic quarters of the city into an attractive place for citizens and tourists, clearing the city of everything superfluous and superficial, increasing the commercial attractiveness of the city for business investment and much more. If the area of the formation of the media image of the city is an economic concept that has a political and marketing connotation, the positive urban identity and conscious efforts to create a favorable urban environment are more urban and architectural design categories. Influencing the image of the city, the visual quality and material content of the urban environment can form its friendly and positive image, which will be confirmed in the present environment by the constant positive changes.

Material changes in the urban environment are expensive and require long-term investments. It is very difficult to completely rebuild the city for several years, filling it with eminent architecture, modern infrastructure, new roads, parks, etc. it is possible only with enormous financial investments (for example, Saudi Arabia). Also, it is almost impossible to change the climate of the city, its favorable natural environment is more attractive to tourists. For the stable development of cities in the context of unstable economic situation and crises there should be such options to make the urban environment better, which at minimal cost could have the most positive impact on the appearance of the city. This solution may be the evolution of the visual information field of the city as the most dynamic and subjected to the easiest transformation element of the urban environment. Information visual field of the city, as one of the most alive, flexible and subjected to changes of city formations, most easily adapts to any economic, political, event and other changes, influencing a look of the city as a whole.

International events of the highest level of significance, which are practically never repeated in the history of one city, belong to event branding, which can globally affect the appearance and image of the city and stimulate the authorities to quickly and effectively improve the urban environment, making a qualitative leap towards the formation of a new urban identity. These are the Olympics, football championships, Universiade, etc. London is among the leaders in hosting the Olympics (3 times). Twice games took place in Los Angeles, Paris and Athens in summer, and in St. Moritz, Innsbruck and Lake Placid in winter. Each time the Olympics became an event that has an indelible impact on the quality of the city and life in it. Not for nothing, London ranks first in the world rankings and its urban environment, prepared for the three Olympics, is considered to be one of the most comfortable and friendly in the world. Other rating leaders are the cities of Canada and Australia. So, Sydney, which took the seventh place in the authoritative rating of the Economist's "World's Most Liveable Cities" in 2014, hosted summer Olympics in 2000, Vancouver which took the third place in this rating hosted the Olympics in 2010. Barcelona globally changed its image in the early 1990s after the Olympics in 1992. After these Olympic games within 10 years tourists' inflow to the city doubled, the period of their stay in the city doubled and the city started receiving 4 times more money from guests.

There is also a similar situation in Russian cities: the Universiade held in Kazan in 2013 strengthened the positions of Kazan and the Republic of Tatarstan in the eyes of the international sports and business community and made it possible to modernize and improve its urban environment. The Olympic games in Sochi left behind a huge legacy: the latest sports facilities, new roads and transport, high-class hotel complexes, new housing. Due to the Olympics Sochi has an opportunity to become a year-round international level resort and the main visiting card of Russia on the world tourist map. The specific pride is bringing homes and outlets to a single architectural style, cleaning the city from the ubiquitous annoying ads.

During preparation for the XXIX winter Universiade 2019 Krasnoyarsk faces the challenge of transforming its urban environment. Today, the issues of how to make the city more harmonious, friendly and convenient for residents and tourists in a short time with minimal cost are relevant. The authorities are well aware that this is a chance to transform the city, to build new sports and infrastructure facilities, to improve the quality of the urban environment, to create the image of the city at the level of the world ranking of cities, and, possibly, the city brand. In

the Master plan 2.0. the city of Krasnoyarsk positions itself as “a wonderful Northern city with a continental climate, hot summers and a real Russian winter”. Event branding, with the Universiade as its example, is an excellent opportunity to influence the state and appearance of the urban environment of Krasnoyarsk.

### **Visual information field of the city**

In addition to the usual architectural parterre, the information environment – text, sign, and visual – is becoming increasingly important for the image of the city. The visual field of the city is a spatial array of visual sensations available for observation to an individual who is in the urban environment at the moment. As a result of this observation, a certain “aesthetic, spiritually-saturated image” of the visual environment of the city (Stepanova, 2006) is formed in people’s consciousness. At the same time, the attitude to the visual field of the city is formed collectively, reflecting public opinion and people’s attitudes to the urban reality. In fact, the visual information field of the city is the language of communication between the city and a person. Since modern society lives in the world of information and this information is mainly of a visual nature, cities become not just a territory for life, but a territory of perception through the awareness of social, communicative and symbolic links. “For a modern citizen, this is a scene in which, according to postmodern ideas, the ‘drama’ of his/her life unfolds, there are diverse actions and events that form the conceptual picture of the world” (Volchkova, Lazareva, 2008).

In the modern city different types of information are presented in their layers of a certain set of material elements. Having different functional purpose, they are often combined into single multi-functional complexes. This symbiosis makes it difficult to categorize the types of urban information and to establish a hierarchy. This is the difficulty of studying and analyzing the visual information field and objects, as each information element has a multifunctional value and has a greater impact on the entire information environment of the city. Another important feature of the visual information field of the city is its flexibility and ability to transform in the course of the historical development of cities: it is easy to respond to the change of political influences and paradigms of socio-economic development of society.

At the post-industrial stage of the city development, the visual information field is developed under the influence of market mechanisms and serves more to advertising than information purposes. In a commercial city, the main business language is advertising that appeals to basic human needs and uses the most powerful perceptual principles, influencing the mentality much more actively and obsessively than just information. At the heart of this language are the principles of behaviorism, invented by the American psychologist John Watson, who later became a famous advertiser. They are in the “stimulus-response” effect, when right in the streets a person is affected by active stimulus in the form of advertising, calling to buy something (or rather to take an opportunity to buy), and there is an immediate reaction – one goes and makes a purchase. Architecture in such cities becomes secondary, since it is not visible due to advertising. The facade of the building is now intended for advertising, and not for the presentation of the building and the architect, so the architecture starts adapting to the requirements of the new global city: there are media facades forming mediastreet (Akhmedova, 2008). Examples of such commercial development of the visual information field of the city are the cities of Southeast Asia, America, Japan and, partly, Europe. Entering the war for human attention, the elements of the visual information field of the modern city use all the available means to attract attention. And information that is designed to regulate human behavior and direct it (road signs, address system and orientation) loses in this unequal battle. All this contributes to the formation of aggressive visual environment of the modern city, provoking people’s aggression. But there is another way – the path of the European historical city with a valuable architectural heritage, where the information field of the city develops against the background of architectural structures, becoming a logical complement to the urban environment. If we consider the regulation of advertising in European countries, the placement of advertising and signage in the

historic city centers is strictly regulated: there are almost no large advertising installations, and signs on the facades play mostly informative, but not promotional role. Even such large networks as McDonald's and KFC with bright and flashy signs, temper their advertising fervor in the centers of European cities and place modest names above the entrance, designed in the same style with the facade of the building and other signs located nearby. At the same time, in McDonald's restaurants located at the entrances to the city or in residential areas, the signs look different: bright flashy brand colors, quite large to be seen from the road and complete disregard for the architecture.

In particular, if you study the major Asian megacities, such as Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai and others in more detail, you can see a clear division into areas where "everything is possible" (in sense of advertising) and where there is "nothing" (as in the best European capitals). It all depends on a district location, its historical significance, architectural content, and the concept of its development.

### **Research and analysis**

The main decision for Krasnoyarsk in the process of determining its way can be considering its territorial division according to "special purpose zones" (historical center) and other areas of the city. This division is the first step towards understanding the unequal value of the urban environment and architectural development in different areas. Such segregation should be implemented delicately, not making the whole city the "other zone", where you can do almost everything.

Inspection of the visual information field of the historical center of Krasnoyarsk revealed a number of shortcomings:

- poor state of the target system;

- over-saturation of building facades with bright and intrusive ads (including bulky ones), which is often illegal and without relevant permits;

- no signage system in the city, both for pedestrians and drivers.

Nowadays, there are three types of signage system in the center of Krasnoyarsk:

The system of stands "Historical Krasnoyarsk", installed at the initiative of the Ministry of Culture of the Krasnoyarsk Territory and containing a map-scheme of the nearby objects of cultural and historical heritage. Eight stands contain only highly specialized information: name and location of objects of cultural and historical heritage. The stands are subjected to acts of vandalism, and not restored, since they have not been transferred to the balance of urban services.

The system of commercial navigation, which appeared in the historical center of Krasnoyarsk in May 2015 at the initiative of the Department of Architecture of Krasnoyarsk with the participation of private advertising companies (Fig. 5). This navigation system was the first step of the city authorities in an attempt to comprehend and implement a single system of information for orienting on the streets. Formally, there was a navigation system in Krasnoyarsk, but, in fact, it is not able to perform the functions assigned to such orientation systems in the modern city.

Road signs with street names and directions of movement are designed for drivers' orientation. Confidence in such a system of signage is extremely low, as it is impossible to predict the appearance of the next sign along the driver's route.

The negative phenomena which have developed during the last 15 years became a consequence of insufficient quantity and quality of the regulating documents and the lack of legal regulation in this sphere. In the context of the basic requirements for urban information systems and orientation, which consist in the unity of color and stylistic solutions, good recognition and visibility, increasing the confidence of residents to these types of signs, the "rules of landscaping of the city of Krasnoyarsk" do not allow to manage the design, manufacture and placement of this type of urban information centrally. The current situation in Krasnoyarsk shows that homeowners make an address plate at their own discretion, using the style, size and shape which they consider

to be the most appropriate. Regulation of stylistically unified system of pointers is impossible without the development of a single design, a single color and font solutions for all types of address pointers, as well as strict compliance with the requirements for materials of manufacture and placement of these pointers in the urban environment.

Currently, the main normative document regulating advertising on the streets is the Federal law “On Advertising” and local documents. The experience of Moscow suggests new ways of coordination and control over advertising in the historical center. In April 2013 in Moscow, commissioned by Moscow Committee of Architecture and Urban Development, the architectural-artistic concept of the external appearance of streets, highways and territories of the city of Moscow, briefly referred to as “Design Code” was developed by Art. Lebedev Studio and Glavbolgarstoy for the first time in Russian city (Lebedev, 2013). The main goals and objectives of this document are: “ordering the placement of information structures (signs) in the historic part of the city; the formation of a full-fledged architectural and artistic urban environment; the development of artistic solutions for signs harmoniously combined with architectural, stylistic and coloristic features of buildings; application of advanced technologies and materials based on the study of domestic and foreign experience”. “Moscow Design Code” gave an opportunity to entrepreneurs “to create their own design after having studied the provisions of the concept of the location of the sign placement, its type, type of lighting and location of the information field of the text, logo and trademark on the sign”, since in accordance with the law “On Consumer Rights Protection” installation of signs does not require additional approval. Vehicles and pedestrian orientations represent another layer of visual information field of the city. The basic document, regulating directing traffic signs (signs of group 6 – informational signs and service signs), bearing the indication character is GOST R 52290-2004. This GOST is a very detailed and complete document that clarifies all issues regarding the graphic appearance of the sign. Its disadvantage is the lack of clear regulations on the placement of traffic signs, which are most often taken randomly and haphazardly.

A more complex and integrated approach requires pedestrian orientation. Despite all the urgency of creating orientation systems in Russian cities, at present there are no regulatory documents in this area. The only official document, which is currently in force and has a recommendatory character, is “The Methodological Guide to the Creation of a System of Road Signs to Cultural Heritage Sites and Other Media”, developed by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation by the Department of Tourism and Regional Policy in 2013.

In fact, this document is the first attempt to comprehend such a complex section of urban information as urban navigation at the state level. Despite its timely appearance, existing foreign experience and world trends in the field of urban navigation “The Methodological Guide” considers rather one-sided orientation system, mostly in the context of “integration of cultural and historical heritage of the Russian Federation in the tourism industry.” Unfortunately, this document considers the concept of tourist in a trivial way: as an individual interested in meeting not the basic needs of a person, but as an individual interested primarily in obtaining information “about memorable places and objects of cultural and historical heritage”, including those “related to the days of military glory in the history of Russia”. Simple studies show that based on the needs of tourists it is important for the orientation system to reflect information about such basic tourist attractions as transport hubs, commercial objects such as hotels, restaurants, etc., and not only about the objects of cultural and historical significance. The idea of creating a common navigation system itself is very good, as the availability of easy navigation for tourists and locals evidence of the high quality of life and demonstrates a certain level of cities development. But, unfortunately, the solution of this problem proposed by the Ministry of Culture in The Methodological Guide is not a truly developed and complete system, although it is positioned as a general system of tourist navigation. It is rather “a project proposal for the execution of some road signs, similar to tourist signs in other countries.” Creating an orientation information system is a complex and long process. There are excellent examples of such guidance systems

development in the most advanced cities of the world, such as London with its orientation system “Legible London”, Toronto, New York, Melbourne, etc. In Russia only Moscow can be mentioned as a successful example of creating the city navigation system, where currently the single orientation system, which was developed for the underground and surface transport, pedestrian space, urban bike and transport hubs, and helps to navigate the city throughout the surface and underground paths, has been implemented and operates. But Moscow did not follow this path immediately, having gone through the experience of not successful initiatives, which required abundant funds from the city budget.

Krasnoyarsk currently faces an acute problem of creating a system of orientation information for the city, including solving the problem of orientation for guests who will come to the city during the Universiade 2019. The Autonomous Non-Profit Organization “Executive Directorate of the XXIX World Winter Universiade 2019 in Krasnoyarsk” established on July 11, 2014, has identified a separate functional direction in its structure which is called “Signs and Pointers” during the preparation for the Universiade. This unit will deal exclusively with the creation of signage and signs for the Universiade facilities, without affecting so needed orientation system for the historic city centre of Krasnoyarsk. The city administration is working in this direction, but it is moving very slowly. So, by the summer 2018 (when there is less than a year before the Universiade in Krasnoyarsk), there apparently will not be a project on a single navigation system, although there are a lot of talks on this topic and even the budget is allocated. The most dangerous thing in this is the arrangement of “some” pointers without a system, without the development of the single design and clear analysis of locations.

### Conclusion

World experience shows that the image-making of the city, qualitative changes in its information and orientation environment occur in connection with some significant sport or social events: the Olympics, the Universiade, international forums, etc. World-wide events serve as an impetus for the creation of convenient infrastructure in the city, including the improvement of the visual field of the city and the material filling of the urban environment with information elements. And if the city authorities do not use such an event as an opportunity to receive funding for the implementation of the project on creating a modern and friendly urban environment and a promising image of the city, they will have to wait for the next opportunity for a long time.

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