

ABSTRACT

Thesis subject matter: “Problems of a provincial town image positioning (using the example of Georgiyevsk)”

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Research relevance is determined by the necessity for developing economic, tourist, recreational and other potential of Russian provinces, which is a significant source of local Budget creation. These days provincial town image creation and positioning is becoming the core business of local authorities. Therefore, the task of researching possible strategies for a Russian provincial town image positioning is becoming actual. A Russian province that faced the problem of image positioning is Georgiyevsk Urban Okrug, a municipal entity of Stavropolsky krai. The historical, natural, cultural, symbolic, and personal capital of this municipal entity, properly submitted in a form of the strategy of image positioning, may serve as a kind of a starting point, become the basis for achieving identity of a town, make Georgiyevsk more popular, interesting, help it carve out its niche in investment, tourism and production. Thus, the tasks of researching trends and prospects for optimizing the image of a town also gives relevance to the research.

Purpose: to identify key problems of image positioning of Georgiyevsk Urban Okrug and find promising directions of solving them with the help of comprehensive program tools for optimizing the image of a town.

Tasks:

- to describe approaches to understanding territory image, introduced in papers by Russian and foreign authors;
- to find possible strategies for a provincial town image positioning;
- to trace the dynamics of Georgiyevsk image model development;
- to come up with a comprehensive program for optimizing Georgiyevsk Urban Okrug image.

Research results. The main result of the work is the development of a comprehensive program for optimizing Georgiyevsk Urban Okrug image. Given the existing image potential of the town, a strategy of its further development has been determined, that is: positioning the town as a territory of regional significance with rich past, historical-cultural and trade-economic traditions. Appealing to history and current territory potential should play an important role in giving a prominent position to regional significance of the town, its central position (geographical, transport) in developing historical, cultural and economic ties with the peoples of the Caucasus and supporting and connecting role in modern trade-economic and cultural-political interaction with the neighboring subjects of the Russian Federation. The study of the objective conditions of the territory, its internal environment, positive and negative factors of the attractiveness of the town has made it possible to identify strong (positive factors) and weak (negative factors) of the attractiveness of Georgiyevsk, clarify the main competitive advantages of the territory that determine the promising directions of its image positioning as well as key risks, threats and dangers, which may complicate optimizing the image of the town. The analysis of the obtained results has made it possible to come up with a set of measures aimed at

correcting the identified weaknesses in Georgiyevsk and unlocking the existing image potential of the town.

It is expected that the results of the program will be increased attractiveness of Georgiyevsk Urban Okrug to various categories of targeted audience (local residents, the residents of neighboring territories, Russian and foreign public, business community, investors, tourists); support to municipal authorities and their initiatives; flow of investment, labor, and other resources to the town; increased competitiveness of the territory and goods and services produced there.

Key words: image, territory image, the image of a town, identity, territorial imagemaking, positioning, promotion strategy.