How to choose a city slogan and a city logo - The role of verbal and visual identity in city branding, with examples from Hungarian cities

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Abstract

Slogans and logos may be the most tangible elements in the marketing and communications of a city. Both are really good if they capture the character and story of the city, distinguish it from other places, and are capable of inspiring tourists, investors, and, not least, locals.

However, if slogans and logos are ordinary and meaningless, they may do more harm than good. "The colourful city", "The livable city", "The friendly city", "Explore (city)", "A city that's different", or "In the heart of Europe" are slogan efforts that have been used a thousand times before and will only make their user look ridiculous. Similarly, a logo that is overcrowded with too many elements at the same time is likely to become an incomprehensible montage, thus does not contribute to the improvement of the townscape. The same is true for logos with an oversimplified little sun shining, carrying no clear message.

Therefore this study first examines what elements make a good slogan. What aspects should professionals consider when creating a slogan? What do the examples of American cities tell us, and what can we learn from Hungarian examples?

In the next section, logos are discussed. What should we take into account when designing and approving a logo? How can it become a part of the entire visual identity? What are the typical examples in connection with it? How do Hungarian cities apply them?

All in all, the question is: what makes a good slogan and a good logo in the case of a city?

Keywords: city branding, city marketing, slogan, logo, verbal and visual identity

1. Good slogans

If we are looking for the origin of the word 'slogan', we must travel back to Gaul in time and space. Gallic people used the word 'sluagh-ghairm' as a battle cry. (Healey 2009)

Although we do not use the word as a battle cry anymore, we can be sure that "similarly to brand names, slogans are an extremely effective tool for the development of brand equity" – as Kotler, the "Pope of Marketing" and Keller, one of the most famous experts of branding said in their book *Marketing Management* (2006, p. 378.).

They also highlight that " the role of the slogan is to provide a reference point or clue to customers in order make them understand what's behind the brand, and what makes it special." (Kotler-Keller 2006, pp. 378-379.)

However, it is not easy to define what makes a good slogan. The author of this article summarized its aspects in his book *The power of brand names* (Papp-Váry 2013):

- It 'grabs' positioning
- It has a clear message and communicates the 'story' of the product
- It is attractive and includes 'consumer and customer' advantage
- It carries a positive connotation (or at least it is not negative)
- It is inspiring: it urges us to buy the product, or get more information about it

- It is relatively short (not longer than 5 words)
- It differentiates: it is unique, original, and different from competitors
- It can be used and sustained on a long term, you do not have to replace it
- It is easy to memorize and repeat
- It harmonizes with the logo
- It is catchy and witty
- Clients –and colleagues – like it.

Of course we rarely find slogans that meet all the above criteria. However, we still feel that the most famous product/service slogans comply with them:
- Apple: 'Think different'
- Nike: 'Just do it'
- L'Oreal: 'Because I'm Worth It'
- M&Ms: 'Melts in your mouth, not in your hand'
- BMW: 'The ultimate driving machine'
- KFC: 'Finger lickin' good'
- Avis: 'We try harder'
- Volkswagen Beetle: 'Think small'
- The Independent: 'It is. Are you?'
- 7UP: 'The Uncola'
- De Beers: 'A diamond is forever'
- California Milk Processor Board: 'Got milk?'

We may also notice the slogans of the following brands: Intel, Gösser, HBO, Calgon.
- 'Intel Inside'
- 'Gut. Besser. Gösser.'
- 'It's not TV. It's HBO'
- And of course: 'Washing machines live longer with Calgon'

And what is the common point in these four slogans? They all include the brand name itself.

This does not necessarily mean that only slogans following this pattern could be successful, but it is not at all surprising that David Ogilvy said in his book *Ogilvy on Advertising* (2001, first publication: 1983) that the headline of an advertisement should contain the brand name if possible. Paul Arden, a former creative director of the Saatchi&Saatchi advertising agency, also voiced a similar opinion (2003).

Although they suggested this for advertisement headlines, their statements are just as valid for slogans – or even more:
- 'Today, Tomorrow, Toyota' – the Toyota slogan says.
- 'The Coke Side of Life' – as Coke suggests.
- 'You've been Tangoed' – said the slogan of the Tango fruit (primarily: orange) juice brand, whose advertisements featured a giant orange man with a tendency to surprise unsuspecting people.
- 'A Guinness a day is good for you.' – If the slogan declares that it is good for us to drink it, then we must drink it. The slogan was first used in a campaign in 1928, and the reason for creating it was that is was originally recommended as a medicine... (Haig 2003, p. 201-203.) Later it remained a beer, and the daily portion was also omitted from the slogan, so it became 'A Guinness is good for you'.
- 'Australians Wouldn't Give a XXXX For Anything Else' – the slogan of the Australian XXXX beer says, making use of a wordplay with XXXX that might cover a well-known (swear)word.
- 'Come to Marlboro Country' – a slogan accompanied by the world's longest running advertising campaign, where we could see a cowboy enjoying his freedom.

- 'Winston tastes good … like a cigarette should' – sang Fred and Barney, the two main characters from Flintstones, in a period when the placement of tobacco products was not yet forbidden in cartoons.
- 'America Runs on Bulova' – the humble slogan of the watch brand Bulova suggested that the first TV advertisement of the world was associated with them, and, of course, it featured a watch.
- 'Nothing runs like a Deere' – John Deere tractors referred to their reliability with this slogan.
- 'Why Slow-Mow When You Can Flymo' – Flymo is a lawn mower brand.
- 'Fly the friendly skies of United' – Without the term 'of United', the identification of the airline using the slogan would have been much harder.
- 'There's Hertz and not exactly.' – That is, there is Hertz car rental, and the rest, which are not as good as them. Of course the slogan was justified by the fact that Hertz was a market leader for quite a long time.
- 'No FT, No comment' – the slogan for the financial daily Financial Times.
- 'Beanz Meanz Heinz' – That is, Heinz means beans, or, to be more precise, canned beans. True, they have also been producing ketchup and a variety of other products since then.
- 'You work hard, you need Right Guard' –Right Guard deodorant is recommended for people working hard.
- 'If it's Madewell, it's well made' – This is an excellent message in the case of ladies clothing, as the wordplay suggests that ladies buying Madewell clothes will be well-prepared.
- 'Bubble Yum. Number yum in bubble gum.' – Suggesting that it is the best bubble gum, but refers to it as 'number yum' instead of 'number one'.
- 'Marmite – My mate' – Excellent choice for a food product.
- 'Maybe she's born with it. Maybe it's Maybelline.' – a brilliant slogan by Maybelline cosmetics suggesting that the lady was either born beautiful, or Maybelline made her a beauty.
- 'Do you...Yahoo!?', that is, 'Are you using the Yahoo browser?' – composed with a rhyme in a more witty way, and this is true even if Yahoo is basically dead.
- 'Happiness is a cigar called Hamlet.' – Associating happiness with Hamlet cigars.
- 'Don't just book it. Thomas Cook it.' – That is, do not only reserve your trip, but use the Thomas Cook travel agency to book it.
- 'There are some things money can't buy. For everything else, there's MasterCard.' – Although it is a comparatively long slogan, with related advertising spots built on the same scheme, it was imprinted successfully in consumer's minds (X product – at … price, Y product – at … price, Z product – at … price, and finally, something that is not a product – priceless).
- 'Nobody was ever fired for buying from IBM' – said IBM's slogan some time ago. Although no official slogan was based on the idea, and it was not included in any of their advertisements, their salespeople spread it by word-of-mouth marketing, or, we could say, guerrilla marketing. The argument proved good enough to make buyers responsible for IT investments choose IBM.

2. International examples, city slogans

As I have pointed out above, one of the roles of a slogan is to 'grab' positioning.

Of course, positioning must be defined before a slogan is created. This involves the consideration of three aspects (Ries - Trout 1997, Papp-Váry 2011):

1. What are the strengths of the product/service, or the city?
2. What do 'customers' need?
3. What is the positioning of 'competitors', that is, other cities?

Based on the above, the following positioning sentence must be defined: "…… is the only product in the product category that is different from its competitors in ……"

In the context of cities, this means: "…… (name of the city) is the only place (in the specific country or county) that is different from all other cities in ….. and ….. (in that region)".

Again, it is important to note that this is not the slogan yet, but a strategic idea describing the uniqueness of the city.

Good positioning also has a positive influence on city development and the improvement of city communications. However, if there is no positioning, the outcome is meaningless slogans. (See e.g. Baker 2007)

It is worth examining what kind of city slogans we see in the United States, which may be called the cradle and leading country of branding.

Several rankings of city slogans have been created, but most of them included the same slogan in the first position: 'What Happens Here, Stays Here'. The sentence is a great match for a city famous for its nightlife, and, especially, gambling. Of course, the city is Las Vegas.

Even for Las Vegas, it took long to find this slogan. (See Pride 2004). Before that, they used slogans such as:

– 'The American way to play'
– 'No one does it better'
– 'The entertainment capital of America'
– 'Las Vegas is Las Vegas'

The latter may have sounded overly confident, as if the city slogan had nothing else to say about Las Vegas. However, it was a good idea to include the name of the city. It is no wonder that some experts say that the current slogan ('What Happens Here, Stays Here') would sound better this way: 'What Happens in Vegas, Stays in Vegas'.

The inclusion of the city name in the slogan is justified by the fact that several cities that made the Top 100 list of slogans used this solution (See Tagline Guru 2011):

– 'Only in San Francisco' (San Francisco, California
– 'Cleveland Rocks!' (Cleveland, Ohio)
– 'Keep Austin Weird' (Austin, Texas)
– 'Experience our Sense of Yuma' (Yuma, Arizona)
– 'Newark, on a Roll' (Newark, New Jersey)
– 'You Can Do Better in Can Do' (Cando, North-Dakota)
– 'Livable, Lovable, Lodi' (Lodi)

The latter two are also interesting in another sense. Cando utilized the wordplay originating from the name of the city ("Can Do"), while in the case of Lodi, the alliteration makes the slogan unique and easy to remember, even if a "livable and lovable city" is more of a cliché.

The slogan of Tombstone, Arizona uses alliteration and some sort of wordplay together: "The Town Too Tough to Die".

Cities with names carrying possible wordplay are lucky. Besides the abovementioned Cando and Tombstone, examples include:

– 'The City Was So Nice They Named it Twice' (Walla Walla, Washington)
– 'Where Chiefs Meet' (Meeteetse, Wyoming)

It is at least as favourable if the character and positioning of a city provide a starting point:

– 'Where Yee-Ha Meets Olé' (Eagle Pass, Texas)
– 'The Aliens Aren't the Only Reason to Visit' (Roswell, New Mexico) (Referring to the extraterrestrial events taking place around the city)
– 'The City That Never Sleeps' (New York City, New York)
– 'The Sweetest Place on Earth' (Hershey, Pennsylvania) (Referring to the chocolate brand)
– 'The Richest Place on Earth' (Virginia City, Nevada) (The city was famous for its silver mining in the 1800s, and used to be the richest city in the United States)
– 'Where The People Are Warm Even the Weather Isn't' (Andover, Kansas) (Referring to the big tornado in 1991)
– 'City with a Mission' (San Gabriel, California) (Referring to Gabriel Archangel, the eponym of the city, and the famous Catholic mission there)
– 'It's not the end of the world but you can see it from here' (Bushnell, South Dakota) (Referring to the location and small size of the city)

However, cities in the US do not only provide good examples. Two slogans that do not really differentiate, or inspire:

– 'The City Different' (Santa Fe, New Mexico)
– 'Something to Remember' (San Antonio, Texas)

Based on the slogans above, we can state that it is always good if a slogan is characterized by factuality and musicality. (See Hildreth 2013)

If an advertiser manages to find an interesting fact, then it should be included in the slogan. However, it is also important that such facts must be real facts, that is, it should feature real information. Two examples:

Some time ago London used to use the slogan 'Visit London: it rains more in Rome'. (This assertion may be fact-checked: the annual amount of rain is actually higher in Rome.)

The choice of Yubari, a Japanese town was the following slogan: "No money but love". (The town actually went bankrupt in 2007. They hired an advertising agency who found an exciting fact: Yubari had the lowest number of divorces in the country. Therefore the slogan "no money but love" turned into a kind of positioning that served as a basis of business. The mayor held a press conference and announced that Yubari is the city of happy couples. They also established a small office, where locals and tourist couples could 'reinforce' their marriage. Shortly, the number of couples visiting the city was 3000. To make the idea come alive, they also created a mascot for the city, called Yubaru Fusai – as the word 'Fusai' means debt and married couple at the same time. However, the most exciting part of the story was the local support that the idea received. Within a short time, they offered Yubari Fusai branded books and notebooks, produced a CD with a selection of lovesongs, and also sold branded chocolate and beer. However, the most popular part of the concept was the Yubari Fusai mascot – which is no wonder in a country where people are so fond of Hello Kitty. The slogan 'No money but love' resulted in a lot of press coverage including TV, radio, newspapers and online. The city received several encouraging positive comments in the the digital space, and many people googled its name. Quite many of them also visited the place: in Yubari, tourism increases by 10 per cent each year, and the campaign received several awards at the Cannes advertising contest. Incomes are also increasing, therefore the city debt is decreasing. Of course, if the debt was over, they would also need to replace the beginning of the slogan 'no money but love'.

Besides factuality, the other important aspect is musicality. "Quite plainly, the way the words sound. Rhythm. Cadence. Tone. Timbre. Vibrato. Phrasing. When it comes to a slogan, these things matter a lot. (…) It's what you say and the way that you say it." (Hildreth 2013, p. 222.)

But let us return to the USA and slogans – even if the following examples are not traditional slogans. The reason is that several American settlements have been accompanied by nicknames in the past years, decades, centuries. Sometimes these are more popular than the official slogan, and it is always an advantage if a city possesses one:

– New York: "The Big Apple"
– Las Vegas: "Sin City"
– Los Angeles: "La-La Land"
– Philadelphia: "The City of Brotherly Love"
– Liberal, Kansas állam: "The Land of Oz"
– Miami:"Vice City"
– Detroit: "Motor City"
– Chicago: "The Windy City"
– Salem: "City of Witches"
– Houston: "Space City"
– Huntington Beach: "Surf City"

3. The slogans of Hungarian cities

In the light of the above, it may be useful to examine what slogans are used by major Hungarian cities. This time our approach is the other way round, performing the slogan test – which means that we see a slogan, and tell the name of the city that comes into our mind.

In some cases, the answer is easy, because the slogan includes the name of the city:

- 'Me, You, Győr' ("Én, Te, Győr!"): a previously used slogan for the city of Győr

In other cases, the message is so unique and obvious (at least for Hungarians), that it can only be associated with the specific city:

- 'The city of freedom and loyalty' ("A hűség és szabadság városa"): Sopron
- 'The city of queens' ("A királynék városa"): Veszprém

But do we know which city is:

- 'The city that unites' ("A város, amely egyesít"),
- 'A city with open gates' ("A nyitott kapuk városa"),
- 'The city of future' ("A jövő városa"),
- 'The city of waters' ("A vizek városa"),
- 'The city of grape and wine' ("A bor városa"),
- 'The spa city' ("A fürdőváros"),
- 'The friendly spa' ("A barátságos fürdőváros"),
- 'In the attraction of centuries' ("Évszázadok vonzásában"),
- 'My love at first sight' ("Első látásra szeretem"),
- 'Where the family spends the vacation' ("Ahol a család nyaral")?

Well, their names are (in the same order):

- Budapest
- Miskolc
- Szekszárd
- Tata
- Villány
- Eger
- Balatonalmádi
- Sárvár
- Zalaegerszeg
- Balatonboglár

It is not impossible to convey the message of these slogans. Sure, it is possible, but a greater amount of money and a stronger communications offensive is needed than in the case of slogans almost bound to the city, clearly associated with it.

All in all, it is worth having a look at the examples of Hungarian cities, matching the slogans and cities mentioned above, and adding further examples:

Table 1 – The slogans of Hungarian cities

Name of the city	The original (Hungarian) version of the slogan	English translation
Baja	'Mediterrán életérzés a Duna mentén'	'Mediterranean feeling along the Danube'
Balatonalmádi	'A barátságos fürdőváros'	'The friendly spa'
Balatonberény	'A Balaton zöld sarka'	'The green corner of Lake Balaton'
Balatonboglár	'Ahol a család nyaral'	'Where the family spends the vacation'
Balatonfüred	'A kultúra városa'	'The city of culture'
Balatonfűzfő	'Tengernyi lehetőség'	'Sea of opportunities'

Balf	'Egészség a Nyugat kapujában'	'Health in the gate of the West'
Békéscsaba	'Ahol a kerítés is kolbászból van', 'A kolbász fővárosa'	'Fence made of sausage', 'The capital of sausage'
Bogács	'Ahol nem csak a fürdőzés élmény'	'Where bathing is not the only experience'
Budapest	'A város, amely egyesít'	'The city that unites'
Csorna	'A Rábaköz szíve', 'A Rábaköz fővárosa'	'The heart of Rábaköz', 'The capital of Rábaköz'
Debrecen	'A Napba öltözött város', 'Abszolút Debrecen', 'Debrecen hív!'	'The city clothed in Sun', 'Absolutely Debrecen', 'Debrecen calling'
Debrecen and Hortobágy	'Pusztán csodálatos'	'Merely wonderful' (another possible translation: 'Wonderful in the wilderness')
Dombóvár	'Természetesen Dombóvár!'	'Naturally Dombóvár'
Dunakeszi	'A mi városunk'	'Our city'
Eger	'A fürdőváros', 'A barokk város', 'A Te történeted'	'The spa city', 'The Baroque city', 'Your story'
Érd	'A virágzó kertváros'	'The flourishing garden city'
Erdőbénye	'Bor, mámor, Bénye'	'A good year in Bénye'
Etyek	'Budapest szőlőskertje'	'The vineyard of Budapest'
Felsőtárkány	'A Bükk nyugati kapuja'	'The Western gate of Bükk'
Fertőd	'A muzsika városa'	'The city of music'
Gárdony	'A Velencei-tó fővárosa'	'The capital of the Velence Lake'
Gödöllő	'A megújuló értékek városa'	'The city of renewing values'
Gyál	'Az innovatív kertváros'	'The innovative garden city'
Gyöngyös	'A szőlő és a bor városa', 'A Mátra kapuja'	'City of grape and wine', 'The gate of Mátra'
Győr:	'Én, Te, Győr!', 'A találkozások városa', 'A folyók városa', 'Egészség, Kultúra, Innováció – A jövő Győrben épül', 'Egy város, ezer élmény'	'Me, You, Győr!', 'The city of meetings', 'The city of rivers', 'Health, Culture, Innovation – the future is being built in Győr', 'One city, a thousand experiences'
Gyula	'A történelmi fürdőváros'	'A historic spa town'
Hajdúböszörmény	'A hajdúk fővárosa'	'The capital of Hajdús'
Hajdúszoboszló	'Az egészséges élet csak három szó: Gyógyvíz, Napfény, Hajdúszoboszló', 'Hajdúszoboszló, a felüdülőhely', 'A reumások Mekkája, a strandolók paradicsoma'	'There are just three things to make you a healthy fellow: medicinal water, sunshine, and Szoboszló', 'Hajdúszoboszló, the recreation resort', 'The Mecca of rheumatics, the

		Paradise of bathers'
Harkány	'A gyógyító ölelés'	'The healing embrace'
Hatvan	'Jövőnk öröksége'	'The heritage of our future'
Hévíz	'Az élet forrása'	'The source of life'
Hollóháza	'Hollóháza, ahol alkothatsz!'	'Hollóháza, where you can create'
Igal	'Velünk gyógyul a világ, nálunk pihen a család'	'The world is healing with us, the family is relaxing with us'
Kaposvár	'A lehetőségek városa', 'A legvirágosabb magyar város'	'The city of opportunities', 'The most flowery Hungarian city'
Kaposvár és Zselic	'Kultúra a Zselic ölelésében… ahol az élmény szembe jön!'	'Culture embraced by Zselic… where experiences come in your way'
Karcag	'A Nagykunság fővárosa'	'The capital of Nagykunság'
Kazincbarcika	'Színes város'	'Colourful city'
Kecskemét	'Hírös város'	'Hírös city'
Keszthely	'A Balaton fővárosa'	'The capital of Balaton'
Kisar	'Vendégül látjuk'	'We treat you'
Kiskőrös	'Élmény a Kunság szívében'	'Experiences in the heart of Kunság'
Kiskunhalas	'A csipke városa'	'City of lace'
Komlóska	'A Zemplén gyöngyszeme'	'Pearl of Zemplén'
Makó:	'Virágos, vendégszerető kisváros a Maros partján', 'Nem csak hagyma'	'Flowery, hospitable small town by the Maros River', 'Not only onions'
Mátrafüred	'A Mátra nálunk kezdődik'	'The Mátra starts at us'
Mezőkövesd	'Matyóföld szíve'	'Heart of Matyó land'
Miskolc	'A nyitott kapuk városa', 'Hello Miskolc', 'Miskolc, a Te helyed'	'A city with open gates', 'Hello Miskolc', 'Miskolc, your place'
Mórahalom	'Mártózzon meg az egészségben!'	'Immerse in health'
Mosonmagyaróvár	'Virágzó város'	'Flourishing city'
Nagykanizsa	'Nagy álmok, nagy lehetőségek, Nagykanizsa', 'Mindig egy lépéssel előrébb'	'Big dreams, big opportunities, Nagykanizsa', 'Always one step ahead'
Nagykőrös	'A megújuló város'	'The renewing city'
Nagykörű	'Magyarország cseresznyéskertje'	'Cherry garden of Hungary'
Nyírbátor	'A Sárkányok földjén', 'Hit és egészség'	'In the land of dragons', 'Faith and health'
Nyíregyháza	'Nyíregyháza többet ad, mint gondolnád', 'Hit és egészség'	'Nyíregyháza gives you more than you would think', 'Faith and health'
Ópusztaszer	'Lépj be a múltba'	'Enter the past'

Orfű	'Színezd újra az életed'	'Recolour your life'
Paks	'Az együttműködés városa'	'The city of cooperation'
Pápa	'Egy kicsit mindenki pápai'	'Everyone's a little bit of Pápa'
Parád	'Palócok központja', 'Palócok földjén'	'The center of Palócland', 'The land of Palóc people'
Pécs	'A kultúra városa', 'A mediterrán hangulatok városa', 'Határtalan város', 'A tudomány fővárosa', 'A modern művészetek városa'	'The city of culture', 'The city of Mediterranean impressions', 'The borderless city', 'The capital of science', 'The city of modern arts'
Sátoraljaújhely	'Zemplén fővárosa', 'A megvalósuló álmok otthona'	'The capital of Zemplén', 'The home of realized dreams'
Sárvár	'Évszázadok vonzásában', 'Kristálytiszta élmény', 'Élmény és tradíció', 'Együtt pihen a család', 'Gondtalan pihenés',	'In the attracion of centuries', 'Crystal clear experience', 'Experience and tradition', 'The family is relaxing together', 'Carefree relaxation'
Siklós	'A vár városa'	'The city of the castle'
Siófok	'A nyár fővárosa', 'A Balaton fővárosa', 'Itt kezdődik a Balaton'	'The capital of the summer', 'The capital of Lake Balaton', 'Lake Balaton starts here'
Sopron	'A hűség és a szabadság városa', 'Sopronban mindig történik valami', 'A Kékfrankos városa'	'The city of freedom and loyalty', 'Something is always happening in Sopron', 'The city of Blaufränkisch'
Sümeg	'A Pannon táj szíve'	'The heart of the Pannon landscape'
Szarvas	'Kőrösök szívében, legendák földjén'	'In the heart of the Kőrös Rivers, in the land of legends'
Szécsény	'A fejedelmi város'	'The princely city'
Szeged	'A napfény városa'	'The city of sunshine'
Székesfehérvár	'A királyok városa'	'King city'
Szekszárd	'A jövő városa', 'Az élhető város', '…ahol feltöltődsz!'	'The city of future', 'The livable city', '… where you recreate'
Szentes	'Szabadság Szentes Szeretem'	'Freedom, Szentes, I love it'
Szigetvár	'Civitas invicta', 'Az ország déli kapuja'	'Civitas invicta', 'The Southern gate of the country'
Szilvásvárad	'Otthon a természetben', 'Ahol a természet átölel'	'At home in the nature', 'Where nature embraces you'
Szolnok	'A Tisza fővárosa'	'Capital of the Tisza'
Szombathely	'Szent Márton városa'	'The city of Saint Martin'

Tapolca	'A barlangok és vizek városa'	'The city of caves and waters'
Tata	'A vizek városa'	'The city of gardens and waters'
Telkibánya	'Hívja, várja, visszavárja Aranygombos, Telkibánya'	'Aranygombos and Telkibánya invites, welcomes and awaits you again'
Tihany	'Az élmények szigete'	'The island of experiences'
Tiszakécske	'A napfény és a vizek városa'	'The city of sunshine and waters'
Tokaj	'Ezer éves történelem', 'Fehér borok, színes kultúra'	'Thousand year old history', 'White wines, colourful culture'
Tolcsva	'A kastélyok városa'	'The city of castles'
Vásárosnamény	'A Bereg szíve'	'The heart of Bereg'
Verpelét	'Bor és a nóta városa'	'The city of wine and song'
Veszprém	'A királynék városa'	'The city of queens'
Villány	'A bor városa', 'Villány, természetesen!'	'City of grape and wine', 'Villány, naturally'
Zalaegerszeg	'Első látásra szeretem', 'Zalaegerszeg, a Göcsej kapuja'	'My love at first sight', 'Zalaegerszeg, the gate of Göcsej'
Zalakaros	'Titkunk vizünk'	'Our secret is our water'

Source: Collection by the author for a tourism project in 2017

It should be noted that some items on the above list may not be inaccurate as several cities (for example, Győr) change their slogans at short intervals. In other cases, cities use different slogans on their materials for various purposes, using mutltiple slogans to target different groups such as tourists, investors, etc. There are also examples of slogans created specifically for EU projects, for example, 'Faith and health' in the case of Nyíregyháza and Nyírbátor. Sometimes we do not even know if a slogan is the official motto of the city, it was created by the tourism destination management (TDM) organization, or someone just uploaded a video on Youtube with a slogan that became popular afterwards. In any case, using too many slogans has a negative effect on the city brand: it is confusing for tourists and investors, and even worse in a sense, it also confuses locals.

But let us take a closer look at the slogans themselves.

First we must examine the question if the slogan of a city should include the word 'city' at all, because if there is one thing that we know (almost) for sure about a city is that it is a city. Is it a reason to leave out the word 'city', or is it a reason to include it? Both arguments are logical in a way.

Illustration 1:

Examples of Hungarian cities with slogans including the word 'city':

Veszprém: "The city of queens (A királynék városa)", Kiskunhalas: "City of lace (A csipke városa)", Szolnok: "Capital of the Tisza (A Tisza fővárosa)", Szekszárd: "The livable city (Az élhető város)", Balatonfüred: "The city of culture (A kultúra városa)", Paks: "The city of cooperation (Az együttműködés városa)", Szécsény: "The princely city (A fejedelmi város)", Verpelét: "The city of wine and song (Bor és a nóta városa)", Gödöllő: "The city of renewing values (Megújuló értékek városa)", Győr: " One city, a thousand experiences (Egy város, ezer élmény)", Mosonmagyaróvár: "Flourishing city (Virágzó város)"

Illustration 2:

Although we realize that it is a city, this slogan by Budapest, the capital of Hungary,
does not say much about the city: "The city that unites (A város, mely egyesít)"
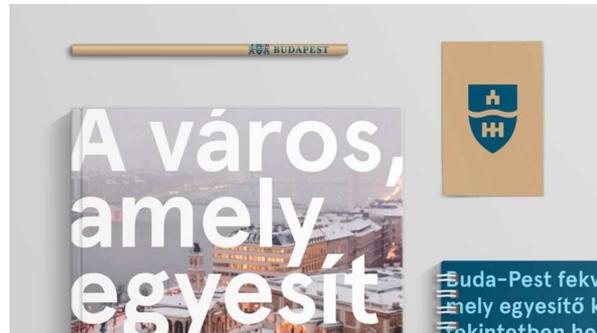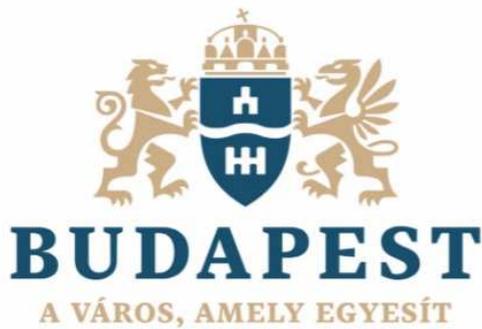
Another common practice besides including the word 'city' in the slogan is to associate the city with a greater geographical unit, county, region, river, lake, etc. This kind of slogan is based on the notion that the city is less known than the geographical unit it is associated with.

Illustration 3:

Another common solution is to create a slogan presenting the city as the 'heart' or the 'capital' of a greater, more known geographical unit:

Kiskőrös: " Experiences in the heart of Kunság (Élmény a Kunság szívében)", Mezőkövesd: "Heart of Matyó Land (Matyóföld szíve)", Siófok: "Lake Balaton starts here (Itt kezdődik a Balaton)", Balatonberény: "The green corner of Lake Balaton (A Balaton zöld sarka)", Gárdony: "The capital of the Velence Lake (A Velencei-tó fővárosa)"

4. The role of logos

Good brands do not only use good slogans, but they also have good logos and – in a broader sense – good visual identity. Wally Olins, the author of the book *On B®and* goes as far as to state that "logos are the heart of branding programs" (2008, p. 30.).

Others quote Confucius: "A picture is worth a thousand words" – referring to the role of logos that is greater than that of brand names in their opinion.

But they are wrong. On the one hand, the text of the original saying by Confucius says "A picture is worth a thousand gold pieces", which means that visual appearance plays an extremely significant role, but words (including brand names, that is, city names and associated slogans) are even more important.

On the other hand, if we take a look at the origin of the term 'logo', we realize that it comes from the Greek word 'logos', whose original meaning is 'word'. This suggests that the role of logos is no different than displaying the name in a visual way (Healey 2009, p. 90.)

Of course we may also find counterexamples such as Apple, Shell, the Red Cross, Nike or Starbucks, where you do not even have to write down the brand name, because you can identify the brand based on the logo.

However though, if we look at their original logos, we can see their brand names included in capitals, and the brands only omitted them several years or decades later. In addition, Apple, Shell, or the Red Cross could also exclude their brand names because their logos are brand names as well – in English-speaking countries people say apple, shell, and red cross if they see the sign of an apple, a shell, or a red cross. The situation of Nike as a brand is more complicated: the company placed the 'pipe' symbol on its products for several decades, and consumers using the brand met the symbol every single day – they were actually wearing it. Another example is Starbucks: the company has only omitted the caption on its cups, but their cafés still carry the brand name written in huge letters.

Once again: the role of a logo is to support the appearance of the brand name as much as possible. This is usually achieved with a combination of a word (the brand name) and a visual symbol, but there are other options as well.

What is a good logo like? According to graphic designer Paul Rand (quoted by Healey 2009, p. 90.): "An ideal logo is simple, elegant, versatile, practical and unforgettable". However, this definition is not specific enough. If we should provide a checklist with a series of questions about good logos, it would look like:

- Does the logo communicate the brand, its positioning and values in an appropriate way? (For example, if the brand is for women, does it use a slim, feminine font? If it is for men, does it use a more robust, thicker font? Does it use colours that support the message? For example, in a somewhat simplified manner, white colour can be associated with cleanness, black with luxury, blue colour may suggest leadership, violet may be connected with royalty, and green suggests an environmentally friendly character.)

- Is the logo simple? Are you sure it does not include too many elements? (It is no coincidence that if we consider the logo history of great brands, they have become simpler.)

- Does it work on black and white surfaces as well? (Although the number of black and white press products is decreasing, it is still worth considering a black and white version of the logo as our colleagues may need to print corporate materials in black and white.)

- Does it work in small sizes? (Can it be noticed if it is scaled down to a really small size? Can the brand name be noticed in a reduced size?)

- Can it be used horizontally and vertically as well? (It is usually more useful to create a logo that is horizontally wide in a 2:1 ratio approximately. The reason for this is that many surfaces possess this ratio, e.g. billboards, business cards, e-mail signatures, or the façades of buildings, therefore a logo like this can be placed on them more easily.)

- Can the logo be extended to offline and online identity materials? (After all, a logo is just the basis of visual identity. We need to check if it works on envelopes, writing papers, invitations, advertising materials, e-mail signatures, the website, etc.)

- Can it be applied on merchandising items and 'gadgets'? (Some time ago a graphic designer told me that one of the basic questions concerning logos is: "Would we take on a T-shirt like that?" And, similarly: would we use a key ring like that? Or would we put a sticker like that on our car?)

- Are we sure it can not be confused with the logos of other (competitor) brands? (The essence of branding is differentiation. It is no wonder that Pepsi is using more blue colour than before, distinguishing itself from the redness of Coca-Cola.)

- Does it grab attention? (The violet-orange combination used by Fedex delivery services can be noticed from a distance. Bookline online book shops did not only choose neon green because it was different from the competition, but it was also different from the communications of all other online companies – let us remember that we do not only compete with our direct commercial rivals, but also with everyone else as we try to attract attention.)

- Can the brand be clearly noticed? Can the brand name be easily read? (We should not think that we are Nike, Apple, or Shell.)

Illustration 4:

The original meaning of the term logo is "word" –
which means that the word (the brand name) must be easy to read.

The city of Pécs (as the European Capital of Culture in 2010) broke this rule, which was an unfortunate choice.
Usually logos with a wide shape are also more practical than vertically elongated ones.


5. The logos of cities

"In the case of cities, logos and slogans may function similarly to trademarks of traditional products: they are symbols that represent the city or the region in a simple, easy to understand way", says Lajos Boros in his study *City Branding – Márkateremtés a helymarketingben ("The creation of brands in place marketing")* (2010, p. 49.)

The difficulty comes from the fact that most cities already have a "logo", that is, their coat of arms. However, it usually does not comply with the requirements mentioned above, and, especially, it is not suitable to attract tourists and investors.

The solution is usually the use of the traditional coat of arms in certain official documents, and the use of a 'real' logo in all other materials reaching the public.

Illustration 5:

The duality of the city logo and coat of arms (and, in certain cases, their multitude) is an issue in all cities:
The coat of arms and former logo for Győr, Hungary (the logo was replaced in 2017)
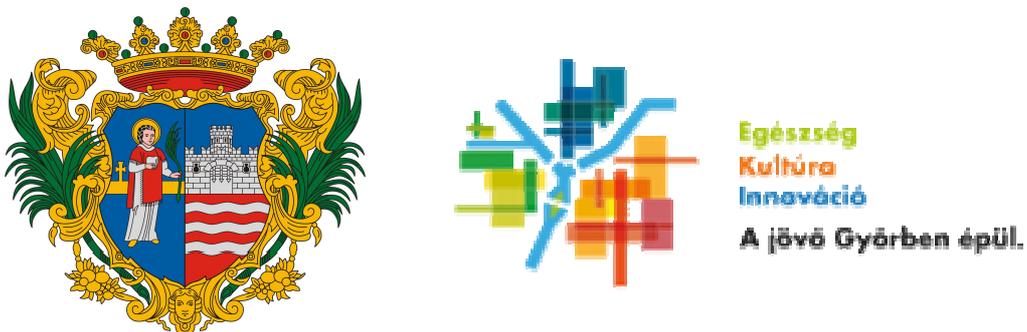
Many cities use a coat of arms and a logo at the same time, but the situation is further complicated by the fact that several cities also use a variety of logos serving various purposes:

- the logo used by the municipality / mayor's office
- the logo used to attract tourists
- the logo used to stimulate investment
- the logo or logos used to promote the sales of local products
- the logos of various local NGOs
- the coat of arms and logo(s) of the local football team, or other important sports clubs
- the logos of local city companies (e.g. public transport)
- logos created for specific events and programmes
- and so on.

If these elements are not corelated in some way, the result may be a gigantic cavalcade of logos resulting in the disintegration of city communication.

This is true even in the case of metropolises, for example, London.

Illustration 6:
A cavalcade of logos does not facilitate uniform communication –
even if it is a well-known metropolis, e.g. London.

At this point I must emphasize that, however strange it may seem, it is always better to have one good logo that can be used on the long run than a series of brilliant logos replaced each year. The reason is simple: in the latter case there is not enough time to 'convey' them to the target audience.

In this sense, the case of Spain is a positive example – not only did they choose a central logo, but they have also stuck to it for decades. The unique figure was designed back in 1983 by famous artist Joan Miró. At the time, the logo was regarded as revolutionary, because it did not use the Spanish flag or coat of arms, but still included the national colours of Spain, and even symbolized the sun. What is even more important is that the logo is still used in the communications materials of the country. (See for example Papp-Váry 2009) However, the long-term use of the logo may also be attributed to the fact that it was designed by a famous person, a real celebrity, and not some unknown graphic designer – in the latter case, they would have presumably replaced the logo with a new one.

All in all, the Spanish logo has become an example to follow: several countries and cities tell their graphic designers and city identity experts to create something like the one Miro designed for Spain.

Another emblematic example is the "I heart NY" logo designed in 1977, which is also interesting because it was originally created for the State of New York, and not New York City. It is also associated with a legend: it was designed by Milton Glaser of Push Pin Studios. The name of the famous designer played a significant role in the first years of the visual symbol, therefore it was not replaced.

It should also be noted that there is no logo or design that would be immediately loved by the public or the profession. For example, the Spain logo mentioned above was criticized for looking like fried eggs. Therefore it is extremely important that the logo survives its first years, months, weeks, or days, in spite of the criticism likely to follow its introduction.

Let us have a further look at cities and villages, this time with examples from Hungary.

In a research by Gábor Kozma in 2005, the ratio of Hungarian city/village logos featuring certain characteristic elements was also examined.

According to its findings (see the table) the most popular symbol was water, included in more than half of the logos (55.5 per cent). This can be explained by the fact that the majority of examined settlements is located near a river or by Lake Balaton.

The second most common element appearing in 48.1 percent of logos was a typical building associated with the specific place

The third most common symbol was the Sun with a result of 40.7 per cent. The use of this image can be explained by the Hungarian climate characterized by sunshine and good weather, and the positive implications of sunny weather.

The three most prominent elements were followed by symbols such as relief (18.5%), vegetation (14.8%) and heart (3.7%).

Table 2:

The appearance of typical elements in city logos

Element in logo	Percentage of cities using it
Water	55.5
Building	48.1
Sun	40.7
Relief	18.5
Vegetation	14.8
Heart	3.7

Source: Kozma, Gábor: Terület- és településmarketing – Geográfus és földrajz tanár szakos hallgatók számára ("Regional and city marketing – for students of geography and geography education"), Debrecen, p. 134.

Illustration 9:

It may also be useful to display a characteristic building from the city in the logo as seen in the examples below: Széchenyi Castle in the case of Fertőd, the Votive Church or the Dome in the case of Szeged, and the Reformed Great Church and the Nine Hole Bridge in the case of Debrecen and Hortobágy

Illustration 10:
The Great Church of Debrecen also appears in another logo in a stylized form –
it is also interesting that the logo is also based on the domain name as the .hu extension suggests

Illustration 11:
The same solution is used by the city of Tokaj,
but their logo but refers to a wine region, not a building

In the case of Hungarian cities it is exciting to see that there are examples of logos featuring the city name only, and others also including the slogan.

Illustration 12:
A few examples from Hungary with logos including the name
without a slogan

It is important to point out that the inclusion of the slogan in the logo is not always compulsory. On the one hand, if a city can not find a unique slogan characterizing the place, it is not worth pushing the issue. On the other hand, it is possible that a specific logo should be used alongside with a slogan (or slogans) in certain cases, while it should be used with no slogan for other purposes.

Illustration 13:

A few examples from Hungary with logos (or at least some applications of them) including the slogan:

Hatvan: "The heritage of our future (Jövőnk öröksége)", Hajdúszoboszló: "Hajdúszoboszló, the recreation resort (A felüdülőhely)", Gyál: "The innovative garden city (Az innovatív kertváros)", Hévíz: "The source of life (Az élet forrása)", Eger: "Your story (A Te történeted)", Nyírbátor: "In the land of dragons (A sárkányok földjén)", Makó: "Not only onions (Nem csak hagyma!)", Balatonfűzfő: "Sea of opportunities (Tengernyi lehetőség)", Szentes: "Freedom, Szentes, I love it (Szabadság Szentes Szeretem)", Tiszakécske: "The city of sunshine and waters (A napfény és a vizek városa)", Szekszárd: "… where you recreate (…ahol feltöltődsz!)"

6. Uniform and diverse

This title may seem contradictory, but it makes an important point. The mantra of using logos used to be the consistent use of a single logo without any modifications, but the situation is different today.

For example, Coca-Cola has been using the very same logo on the packaging of its products and in its advertisements almost since the founding of the company in 1886. Counterexamples include MTV (Music Television), which has used variations of its logo, for example, according to various music genres. We could also mention Google, which uses different logos every day, sometimes even varying by country, e.g. with special logos designed for national holidays.

We may also find examples for the diversification of city logos. Similarly to MTV, the city of Melbourne (Australia) choose a letter M. The city uses the logo flexibly: it has a uniform basic shape, but there is a variety of shapes and a wide range of colours within the basic shape.

Copenhagen follows a similar concept: there is a basic format with a wordplay involving the city name – cOPENhagen, suggesting openness. This is complemented by slogans such as 'open for connections', 'open for change', 'open for tolerance', and 'open for development'.

Illustration 14:

The city of Melbourne is a good example of using a central logo
in a way that it can be flexibly shaped with colours and forms inside another form

Illustration 15:

In the case of Copenhagen the term 'open' appears in various forms, always adapted to the intellectual content of the specific slogan, for example, 'open for connections', 'open for change', 'open for tolerance', and 'open for development'.

Some cities go even further in flexibility. According to Neumeier (2006, p. 91.) logos used to be important tools in the era of print press, but in the online age they are replaced by avatars that can be 3D, and may even move or jump. He claims that variations in the visual identity – and, in general, branding – may function similarly to people, who can be serious or funny at different times, but others always recognize them.

However, he is only partly right: MTV or Google are large companies who can afford to employ graphic designers assigned to design logos for them. In addition, both companies appear on the screen, where logo modifications are easily implemented. It is no wonder that even MTV and Google have their own basic logo that they use for more official communication, for example, press releases.

This is also exemplified by a former logo of Budapest with a blue ribbon. This element could (and, actually, did) move in films and digital materials, but a basic version of the logo was still necessary.

Illustration 16:

The former logo of Budapest with a blue ribbon is a good example of a basic version
that can be animated in films and digital materials.

Illustration 17:

You would not think how much input is behind a logo or its creation. In the blue ribbon logo of Budapest there is a reference to Danube and the bridges (each fold in the ribbon is a bridge). The logo also embodies a rotated letter B, and a rotated heart. The blue ribbon carries a positive message in itself as it usually symbolizes the first place in watersports/sailing races.
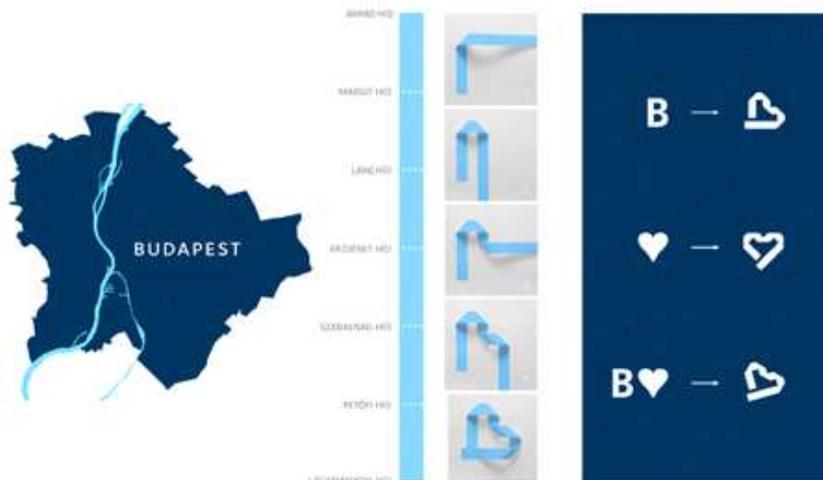
7. From logo to identity

If there is a good logo and an associated visual identity, it is practical to explain them in a so-called identity manual specifying the most important elements and the rules of using them, such as (see logoterv.hu, 2013):
   – Basic expectations: logo, font, colours, the use of colours, examples for the use of colours, an explanation of the terms used in the handbook, the use of the logo of the predecessor, the figure impersonating the city
   – Basic regulations: tha basic versions of the logo, their use, examples, mascot
   – Legal consequences: general rules, trademark

- Office stationary: writing papers, business cards, notes, memos, reports, accompanying cards, mailing card, invitation card, envelope, labels, press releases, press dossier, folder, dossier holder
- Business forms: stamps, forms, computer forms, technical and editorial forms
- Publications: front page, desktop publishing, advertising brochures, catalogues, publications for internal use, phone directories for internal use, information boards
- Advertising and promotional activities: international, domestic, recruitment publications, outdoor advertising, illuminated advertisements, billboards, advertising columns, other print advertisements, frame graphics, advertising films, advertising spots, sponsorship, musical identification, signal, etc.
- Exhibitions: stand visuals, editing the information surface, graphical plans of the panel, typography, goods carriers
- PR activity: creating the front page of reports, PR films, reference films, B-roll films, image films, newsletters, presentations, presentation and sales materials, press photo database, creating the crisis communications handbook, etc.
- Packaging: general rules, principles, identifiers
- The identification of the city: general expectations, labels, inscriptions, alternative options,
- External and internal guidance systems: building identifiers, illuminated direction boards, in-house signs, boards, name boards, internal portal, flags, etc.
- Branding of vehicles associated with the city or the municipality: cars, trucks and other vehicles
- Uniforms: badges, helmets, coats, management clothing, formal wear, appearance at various events
- Gifts and promotional items: occasions and criteria of providing gifts, thresholds, promotional items, wall calendars, greeting cards
- Network communications: Communication within the city, publications, professional meetings, research cooperation, city newspaper, city news programmes, database access, communication between the city and the persons specified, contact requirements, confidentiality codes, websites
- Other – electronic - communications, CD, video, internal communication materials
- The identity of web-based communication tools: website, intranet, banner designs, Word and PowerPoint (possibly: Prezi) templates, etc.

What is even more important is that these items should not only be included in the identity manual, but also enforced and adhered to. This is also valid for electronic materials and everyday documents prepared by the municipality. It is shocking to see when some municipalities send Word or Powerpoint files with random fonts, awful layout, and a disintegrated logo. It is true that visual consistency in itself does not create a brand – but it is also true that it is a useful tool in brand building.

However good the logo of a city is, we cannot expect that it will please everyone – it would be a hopeless venture. We also have to prepare for the waves caused by the introduction of a new city logo. In certain cases some people think that the logo is 'lame'. In other situations it becomes a matter of political debate and the whole issue becomes politicized. We should also note that such situations may also result in more local publicity for the new logo.

Another important question to consider before the introduction of a new logo: are we sure that the new one is so good? Wouldn't it be better to go on using the old one? People seeing the logo every day, that is, professionals involved in city identity might be bored with the old logo, but it does not necessarily mean that locals or tourists are bored with it as well.

Illustration 18:

The new logo of Miskolc was introduced in 2012, and sparked a heated debate – the logo includes local sights such as the Diósgyőri Castle, Lillafüred and the Cave Bath of Miskolctapolca.

Illustration 19:

The figure below suggests that Miskolc has used a wide range of logos so far – luckily they used one for 10 years, and have been using the current one for 5 years.

8. Summary and suggestions for the selection of city slogans and logos

Robert Govers, a prominent expert of the topic, published an article in *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* (2013) titled *Why place branding is not about logos and slogans*. As he explains with great exaggeration, "As places have (more often than not meaningful) names and landmarks, the amount of time and investment generally spent on designing logos and slogans as opposed to actual reputation management for places, seems to be a waste."

Jeremy Hildreth, the other prominent expert of the field uses more gentle words in his article *The joys and sorrows of logos and slogans in place branding* published in the same journal (2013, p. 222.): "In an ideal situation, no more than 10 per cent of a place's identity budget would go toward developing logos and slogans and other signifiers, whereas 90 per cent or more of the budget would be used to find identity-enhancing actions and identity-centric substance, both of which speak louder than words, or logos."

The opinion of the author of this study is closer to Hildreth's ideas than Govers' words. Indeed, it is important to emphasize that the significance of slogans and logos in city branding must not be overrated. However, they should not be underrated, either. They may have a serious role in the communication and promotion of the city and the city brand, resulting in a more positive image, more customers of local products and services, and more loyalty to the place.

Therefore it is very important to consider the aspects presented in the article.

When choosing a slogan, we must keep in mind that:

- The original meaning of the word is 'battle cry' – that is, we should choose a slogan that really activates.
- The role of a slogan is to provide clues on what is behind the brand (city), and what its main advantages and values are.
- If a brand name (city name) is part of a slogan, there is greater chance that people remember them – both the slogan and the brand.
- Good slogans are based on facts, or have a musical character – in an ideal case, they carry both characteristics.

When choosing a logo, we must also keep in mind the following aspects:

- The original meaning of the term logo is 'word'. That is, the role of a logo is no different than displaying the name visually.
- It should function in a way that communicates the brand, its positioning and values well.
- It is important to make it simple, enabling it to function properly in coloured and black-and-white versions, on small and big surfaces.
- In the case of most (but not all) logos the ideal choice is a width that is twice as big as the height of the logo.
- A logo is only the basis of visual identity. A good logo can be communicated in offline and online materials, building the brand consistently.
- It should be different than that of competitors (other cities), and, if possible, should be distinguished from anything else, because it has to attract attention.
- A simple, but effective logo test: "Would we take on a T-shirt like that?"
- This is also important because in the case of place marketing the logo must be placed on T-shirts, pens, keyrings, bottle openers, baseball caps, and a wide range of other objects that can be sold to tourists and may be included in packages presented to possible investors. In addition, such materials may also strengthen the identity of locals. Let us think of the great success of 'I love NY' T-shirts with the heart symbol – but we should not copy it entirely. We must be different!

Illustration 20:

Testing a (city) logo: "Would we take on a T-shirt like that?" -
It is no accident that the city of Vásárosnamény included this plan in its city identity manual, winning the National City Marketing Prize (Országos Városmarketing Díj) contest organized by the Hungarian Marketing Association

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