



THE CENTRAL AND THE LOCAL SYSTEMS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION MANAGEMENT

■ ABSTRACT:

The sustainability is strongly connected to the conception of Food Sovereignty, which became an everyday issue again in the last years among the people dealing with agriculture. Considering the philosophy of the movement, the farmers have a right to produce local food, and the consumers have a right to decide by whom and how produced provisions intend to buy. In our research we examined the attitude of the consumers toward the natural foodstuff. The tools of the marketing have a role in the positioning of these products. Regional marketing is a new concept, which is not widely known in Hungary, there are only very few and limited experiences with it. It is a total of all the activities and at the same time a way of thinking, the aim of which is to take a product to the customers very efficiently. In the South Great Plain Region several top-quality products are made and these products are Hungarian specialties. In this immense competition an image formed about a country, a part of a country or about a region has a considerable influence on the decision of customers - both on the national and international market.

■ KEYWORDS:

region marketing, rural development

INTRODUCTION

Regional marketing is a new concept, which is not widely known in Hungary, there are only very few and limited experiences with it. It is a total of all the activities and at the same time a way of thinking, the aim of which is to take a product to the customers very efficiently (Berács, 2006). The task of regional marketing is to explore the competitive assets and attractions of a region, to help the realization of the plans in order to support achieving the goals of economic and community life. In the South Great Plain Region several top-quality products are made and these products are Hungarian specialties (Piskóti, 2006). In this immense competition an image formed about a country, a part of a country or about a region has a considerable influence on the decision of customers - both on the national and international market.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Region marketing is barely known in Hungary and we have only limited experience in connection with its Hungarian applications. Region marketing is by all means part of marketing. It is a mixture of such activities which purpose is to effectively channel products to the customers.

It must be considered, that there is a strong competition in satisfying consumer demand. Main goal of region marketing is to help discovering the competitiveness and charm of the region in order to reach multilateral development-, economic- and life-conduct objectives. Being a member of the European Union, it is vital for Hungary that its food industry could reserve its traditional role. Numerous high-quality, special products are produced in the South Great Plain Region. Farming experience - gained throughout centuries - resulted in special, unique products representing national values. Europeanisation is about opening up political, economic, geographic and social space. This is being carried out through the reduction of a wide range of traditional protection mechanisms of these spaces. The process serves the interests of the economic centre, the market, international capital and multinational companies. Nationally or regionally specific rules and regulations currently represent obstacles for the free movement of people, goods and capital (Camagni, 1995). Business needs to have access to local and regional economies. To achieve this, generally accepted regulations and policies, to ensure the necessary conditions (stability, proper relations, common technical standards, etc.), are needed.

The European Union, the political centre of Europe, can be seen as a central organisation, which can design, negotiate and enforce these conditions. The continuously growing common regulations on markets, trade, safety, environment and different aspects of production, aim to provide for the access required by the economic centre (Picchi, 1994).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

REGION MARKETING IN THE REGION OF DÉL-ALFÖLD OF HUNGARY

The contradiction of the present time is the “global-local paradox”. While global competition is intensifying, more and more companies have been concentrating in one region, where the local environment provides appropriate conditions for production. The reason of that is that among the advantages of the association, the advantages coming from a local environment secure increasing revenue levels.

In the Region of Dél-Alföld, the image was created in a way that it reflects the characteristics of the countryside, the atmosphere of the land, values of local people and history and traditions of the region. The region possesses a number of good quality agricultural products that have great prospects for the future. The positive image of the regions enhances the identity of local communities that assist them in finding their interest locally.

The figure 1 shows the aspects of situation survey basing marketing strategy.

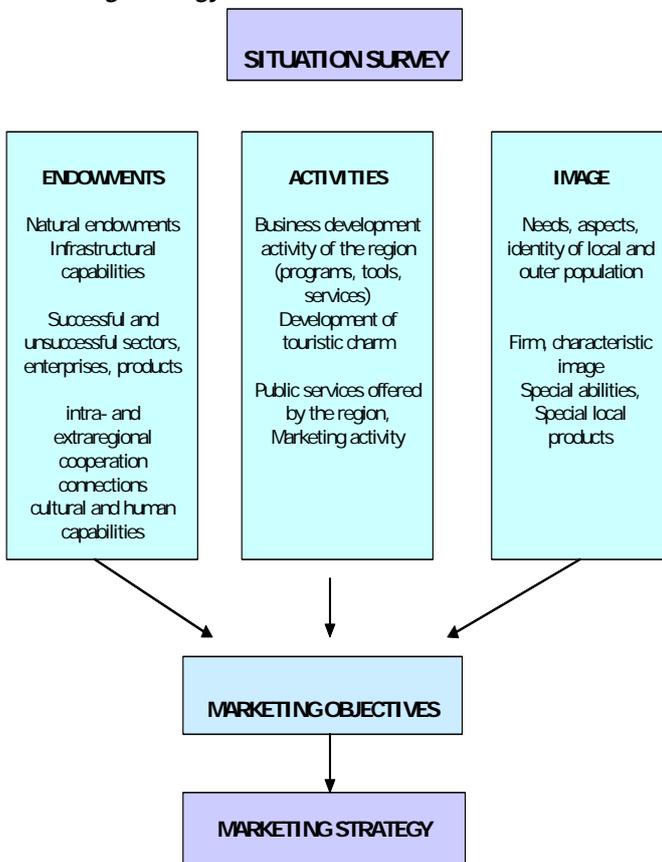


Figure 1. The aspects of situation survey basing marketing strategy

THE CENTRAL AND THE LOCAL SYSTEM OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

One type could be called the central administrative system of rural development, based on fundamentally top-down interventions of the political centre (Gusztáv, 2005). It comprises such elements as: European and domestic policies; centrally redistributed resources; institutional networks; skills, technical and procedural knowledge of various level bureaucrats; strategic development plans. It has a formalised and institutionalised character. It is based on written rules, established procedures and controlled by bureaucratic institutions. It uses external resources for intervention, usually works with a very narrow flow of information, with high transaction costs and aims at quantifiable results. At the same time it can have a large scope and embrace higher level or long term strategic objectives, which are above short term economic rationality (Amin et al., 1994). The other type could be called the local heuristic system of rural development, based on essentially endogenous, bottom-up processes (Ray, 2001). It comprises such elements as: local economic, political and social actors; local development plans; social networks and kinship relations; local authorities, innovative individuals, development associations and partnerships as well as the development skills and experiences of these local actors (Gusztáv, 2005). Although it builds upon local resources, rural values and synergistic effects of multiple activities, it often needs external finance and encouragement: financial resources, technical assistance, mediation, expert knowledge, etc. (Terluin, 2003).

SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE REGION

Strengths of the region:

- ❖ Role of agriculture is dominant in the Region, the food industry is competitive even by international comparison;
- ❖ Number of sunshine hours is very high and the average yearly temperature is also amongst the highest in Hungary;
- ❖ Number of tertiary educational-, research- and cultural centers is outstanding in national comparison.
- ❖ Many famous firms with high level of professional culture and brands connected to them works in the Region.
- ❖ There are a number of unique, excellent quality traditional products, which are unambiguously characteristic to the region.

Weaknesses:

- ❖ The GDP per capita has remained unchangedly below the national average in the past years;
- ❖ Quality and quantity of transportation infrastructure is insufficient;
- ❖ Proportion of foreign capital is lower than the national average;
- ❖ Many small regions of the Region belong to the group of small regions currently being in critical position.



Threats:

- ❖ Regional effects of the EU's Agricultural Policy;
- ❖ Appropriate environmental protection agreements and cooperations wouldn't be signed with the neighbouring countries;
- ❖ Sharpening competition between the domestic region and the regions of neighbouring countries.

Possibilities:

- ❖ Growth of the role of euroregional organizations;
- ❖ Affirmation of the South-Western European gate role with the reconciliation of the Balkanic situation;
- ❖ Change in consumer preferences;
- ❖ Positive international image of certain kinds of foods;
- ❖ Demand for unique, special provincial products.

CONCLUSION

Material and immaterial products which are manufactured in, and are representative exclusively to the Region should be supported practically in regional cooperation. Beside measurable economic profits the following advantages can be achieved:

- ❖ conservation of traditions and cultural heritage, strengthening the idea of belonging to the same community among the people living in the region;
- ❖ forming the peculiar image in the competition among the regions and in the accelerating globalization processes of our days.

It can be expected only as a result of a long-term, coordinated marketing strategy that the image of South Great Plain Region becomes widely known and attractive. One precondition of this is that the Region should successfully represent the selected image and to develop a positive affection for its special local products. This affection could be formed inside the region by positive local-patriotism, while outside the region with the sympathetic and valuable features.

This is important because the South Great Plain Region has its competitors by now - certain domestic and neighbouring country regions. In the future, the enhancement and specialization of the competition between regions could be expected. The South Great Plain Region only has its chance to effectively join the domestic and international competition if conscious preparations and image-forming takes place.

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