



**FRIDAY 21<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

**Keynote speech: "A vision for tomorrow's sponsorship: Berlin and Istanbul's example"**

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*IMG offers support in the development of its clients activities by creating and organising sports events, fashion and lifestyle events in order that they function as effective sales and marketing platforms.*

Today, the objective of many cities across the world is to impose their image on the cultural map. They are numerous strategies to achieve this, from architecture (the Bilbao effect with the opening of Guggenheim Bilbao) to the hosting of the Olympic Games (Montréal, Beijing). These strategies often result in radical changes which can lead to a cultural transformation. In order to construct partnerships at this level, one needs to often work on the principle that "ideas come first, money later". If a city experiences the need to boost its activities and its image, a sponsoring company can give it a coherent platform in order to achieve this. First one needs to know how to create a 'bespoke' partnership.



Why Berlin and Istanbul? Because IMG have developed here, thanks to events linked to fashion, adapted solutions for the specific needs of these two cities by finding appropriate partners.



Challenges for Berlin: to affirm its place on the cultural scene and to impose its (new) image. The main goal being to become one of the four most influential cultural capitals in the world. Lots of ideas and creativity, but how to attract investors? Berliners represent a cultivated, reactive and sophisticated public, but the main problem is finance – how to find a sponsor of the same calibre who can answer to, and support, the new image of Berlin?

Berlin, has for a long time, been perceived as 'sleepy', a city with a great quality of life – after the second world war the city was rebuilt with huge parks, respectful of the most modern urbanism concepts. However, it has never



been able to compete with New York or Paris on the world stage.

The firm Mercedes wished to lend their support to the changing of Berlin's image. They became involved in "The Tent", a space constructed on one of the most symbolic sites of the city, the Babel Platz. The site has very delicate connotations, being one of the sites where Nazis burned more than 25, 000 'dangerous books'. To install a fashion show on this site was an obvious risk, a challenge, but "The Tent" invited people to react to this space in a new and hopefully positive way.

- Respect for the symbolism of the site: Berliners and tourists alike still had access to the memorial marking the book burning event
- A new symbolism for the site: *Fashion Week* installed right in the heart of the city, affirming the importance of fashion for Berlin and its new ambitions
- Potential events for the site: Mercedes presented their latest car here (not in Frankfurt, not in Paris) thereby boosting the development of the image of the city

In the same vein, the second event used by Berlin was the creation of the Formula 1 circuit at the Brandenburg Gate which was sponsored by Hugo Boss with Lewis Hamilton at the wheel of a vintage Mercedes car. The idea was primarily to create a sports and cultural event rather than a promotional and commercial vehicle uniquely for Hugo Boss.

Geographic locations can be key. In a similar scenario, thanks to sponsorship, the Postbahnhof created a new image for itself. This industrial building, delapidated and run down, was transformed into a concert hall and disco.

The challenges for Istanbul were different to those of Berlin. Istanbul was already seen as being cultural and 'on the scene'. Istanbul wanted to create an image that was more serious, as being more than just a tourist capital. It has just welcomed the Formula 1 Grand Prix, it was on the list for the Olympic Games when its rival, Smyrne, was applying for the Universal Exhibition, and Turkey was struggling to enter in to the EU.



Istanbul, like Berlin, chose to use fashion in order to find good partners who would also invest in its image and its activities. The Istanbul Fashion Experience aimed at gaining diplomacy and credibility, attracting the right sponsor and building a strong relationship with them. The creation of an event linked to fashion had its roots in the traditional Turkish textile and retail sector – a rich heritage. It was also a way in which a different and positive message could be spread about the city and about the Turkish economy.



**In both examples, what each party takes away:**

Sponsors

- Contribution to brand enhancement
- Corporate Cultural Responsibility
- Employees interest
- Return on investment → PR and media coverage

Cultural Institution

- “Less is more” fewer sponsors with a better strategy
- Attract investments, but do not stop there, look for long term relationships

B2B relationship

- Cities need money
- Sponsor must be there at the right moment

Measurement / Return on Investment

- Cultural power boosts economic power
- Sales (i.e. cars for Mercedes)
- Media coverage

The success of these two examples relies on firstly the formulation of objectives, the justification of those objectives, and the setting up of actions that will achieve the goals sought, either by a city or by an cultural organisation as well as those of its partners.

