

# **The Diplomat & Image-Building Insights into a Training for Diplomats**

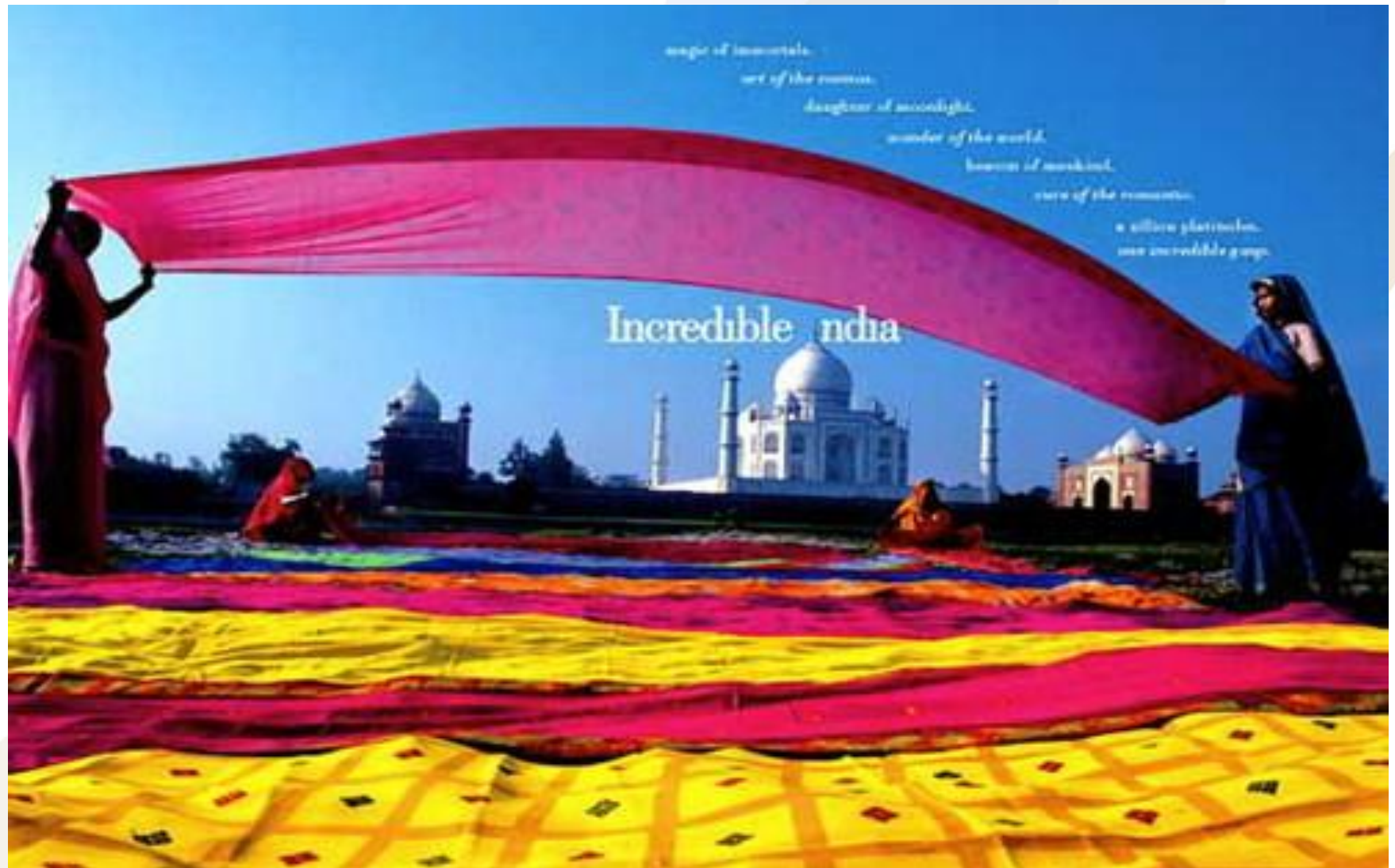
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As seen on CNN... *Malaysia Truly Asia*



# Also on CNN... *Incredible India*



# What is Country Image?

- Image and perceptions of risk go together  
Lack of information equals **Risk**
- Image puts a country on the map  
Some countries are **BIG** unknowns

The way a country is perceived can make a critical difference to the success of its business, trade and tourism efforts, as well as its diplomatic and cultural relations with other nations.

# Image-Building Criteria

Nation Brand Hexagon



The Nation Brand Hexagon  
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# What's in a Country Name?

- **Exports** – Determines the public's image of products and services from each country and the extent to which consumers proactively seek or avoid products from each country-of-origin.
- **Governance** – Measures public opinion regarding the level of national government competency and fairness and describes individuals' beliefs about each country's government, as well as its perceived commitment to global issues such as democracy, justice, poverty and the environment.
- **Culture and Heritage** – Reveals global perceptions of each nation's heritage and appreciation for its contemporary culture, including film, music, art, sport and literature.
- **People** – Measures the population's reputation for competence, education, openness and friendliness and other qualities, as well as perceived levels of potential hostility and discrimination.
- **Tourism** – Captures the level of interest in visiting a country and the draw of natural and man-made tourist attractions.
- **Investment and Immigration** – Determines the power to attract people to live, work or study in each country and reveals how people perceive a country's economic and social situation.



# General Country Image vs Business Image

## Narrowing Focus is Key for Cost-Effectiveness

- What audience?
- What sector/subsector?
- What country/region?
- What channels?

## Research is THE Most Important Part of the Image-Building Effort

- Assessing how foreign investors view the location
- Assessing how companies in your country's priority sectors view the location
- Identifying locational strengths and weaknesses of your country
- Developing an action plan with key messages for a target audience

# Building Messages

Image Building Images should be:

**Built on the strengths** >>> but also addressing the weaknesses

**Comparative** >>> know your competition

**Accurate and truthful** >>> backed by data (sources and statistics)

**Agreed upon** >>> consensus among institutions

**Consistent** >>> all staff should be aware and using same messages

**Repeated over time** >>> used in speeches, brochures, letters, etc



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# Message Structure

- **Feature**
  - Location X has more software graduates per capita than any other location in the region.
- **Advantages**
  - It is easier to recruit new software graduates in location X than in competing locations.
  - The ready supply of new software graduates keeps their salaries moderate.
- **Benefits**
  - Company start-up is not hindered by technical skill shortages.
  - Lower skilled-labor costs contribute to improved profitability.

# What Diplomats Can Do

## Part 1

- Research what potential investors think about your country >>> by examining country reports and news articles you will see how influential government and media sources commonly portray your country.
- Think of your country's image and outline typical perception foreigners may have that carries risk implications and FDI deterrents.
- Then, elaborate messages that you, as a diplomat, could use in communications (speeches, meetings, etc) and for regular information requests that address those risk perceptions effectively.
- Contact journalists or opinion leaders and provide them accurate information regularly.
- Address inaccuracies when you see them in the media.
- Proactively feed news to journalists

# What Diplomats Can Do

## Part 2

- Identify influential journalists and editors in key financial, business and sector-focused magazines, as well as business and economic affairs correspondents at national television and radio stations.
- Establish a regular dialogue with these journalists. For example: An investment announcement is an excellent opportunity to host a press conference to get to know journalists.

*When Intel first invested in Costa Rica, news of the investment was released to newspapers and magazines around the world, not just the local newspapers in Costa Rica and California. The press coverage that ensued lasted over six months.*



# What Diplomats Can Do

## Part 3

- **Collect data through surveys >>> define what steps you need to take to bridge the gap between how the target audience views your location and how you would like the location to be perceived in the future.**
- **Survey results also can indicate whether you should, in fact, commence an image-building campaign in your target country.**

For example, results may show that investors have an unfavorable perception of the location's political and/or economic stability. If your location has an unstable political and economic climate, it would be premature to run the image-building campaign until positive changes in the investment climate have occurred.

- **If you ever consider going for a full-fledge country-image campaign seek professional advice and invest heavily on research**

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