

# Are 2010 host cities doing enough? Part 2

 By [Dr Nikolaus Eberl](#)

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Recently, this column examined the [scope of destination branding for the 2010 host cities](#) and posed the question whether the traditional methodology of coining a tagline and building an advertising campaign around it is enough for yielding maximum branding mileage for 2010 destinations.

As evidenced by previous sporting mega-events, the real challenge for the host cities lies in generating PR coverage rather than joining in the millions of advertising messages that are bound to hit 2010 audiences left, right and center. This was the very reason that the 2006 FIFA hosts, Germany, achieved such tremendous destination branding success.

- At the time of the 2006 World Cup, Michael Batz's "[Blue Goal Hamburg](#)" light art project provided a glittering trademark for the hosting city of Hamburg, branded as the 'Gateway to the World'.

Erected on the rooftops of Hamburg's tallest buildings, 165 blue goals were illuminated each night during and after the event, each of them signalling a singular message to the world - that is Hamburg being "open for business". As each goal was sponsored by a corporate, this campaign cost the city of Hamburg very little and generated tremendous PR coverage.

[Said Steven Goff from the Washington Post](#): "One of the impressions of Hamburg that could possibly be my longest-living memory was the view of the truly beautiful Blue Goals on the roofs of apartment blocks, offices and public buildings. From my hotel room - and luckily I was staying on the 15th floor - I could see one of these on the Alster. It was a fantastic view and one of which Hamburgians should be proud."

- When the Berlin Zoo reported the birth of a polar ice bear for the first time in 33 years, a worldwide frenzy was unleashed that has been unheard of. Left for dead by his mother and witnessing his brother freeze to death, Knut was raised by a male nurse, against the advice of animal activists who went on TV to state that raising Knut by hand violated animal protection legislation.

When Knut was first released in the open in March 2007, 100 camera teams from all over the globe and 560 journalists turned out to report the news. In the first 17 days of Knut frolicking in the open, more than 300 000 visitors came to view him, the zoo had to employ traffic wardens to regulate the pedestrian flow and bouncers to pull viewers off the fences every 20 minutes and... the zoo's share prices have more than tripled.

And, for the first time ever, an animal appeared on the front cover of *Vanity Fair*, featuring a 16-page cover story, titled "[I, Knut - A World Star from Germany](#)".

- Germany's nation rebranding strategy for the 2006 FIFA World Cup was based upon analysing the very essence of Brand Germany and establishing what Germany had to offer the world - in other words, what has made Germany a great contributor to the universe of nations and what is the very first quality that should come to anybody's mind when thinking of Germany.

Going back to the archives of German history, the team of brand researchers found the one single contribution that Germany has time and again bestowed the world with, to be... innovations. Calling the campaign "Land of Ideas", project manager Mike de Vries went about building the case for rebranding Germany as a global hub of innovation.

Initiated barely 18 months before the kickoff of the world cup, the first project of the "Land of Ideas" Campaign was about showcasing to the world six great innovations which were given birth on German soil. Called "[The Walk of Ideas](#)", this consisted of placing six giant sculptures in the city centre of Berlin, each within walking distance. Made up of an innovative new plastic material called Neopor and coated with a special new paint, each sculpture was up to 12m in height and up to 20 tons in weight.

All told, generating more than 3.5 billion media contacts worldwide and achieving more than €100 million in media coverage (at a nominal cost of €25 million, half of which was sponsored by the private sector), the [Land of Ideas campaign](#) has become Germany's most effective nation branding campaign ever. And within one year from hosting the world's biggest sporting event, destination Germany experienced an increase in international leisure tourism by 33% and the hosting city of Berlin reported an upsurge in international business tourism by a record 47%.

When the 2011 results are in, one year after the final whistle is blown, will the 2010 host cities report similar scores in international leisure and business arrivals and be crowned world champions in destination branding?

## ABOUT DR NIKOLAUS EBERL

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