

# The specific features and directions of regional image-building

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**Abstract:** This article examines the peculiarities of regional image formation and its establishment on a global scale. Special attention is paid to the penetration of the image-making sphere into the media space of Uzbekistan and the specifics of this direction. The image at the regional level, in particular, the unique conditions and climate of the Khorezm region, is also highlighted.

**Keywords:** Image, PR, regional image, media space, politics, state image.

**Introduction:** Countries around the world are constantly striving to improve and maintain a positive image. Looking at today's political landscape, it's clear that developed nations have already created and established their images. Creating an image is not a process that can be resolved in a day or even a year. It is a collection of experiences accumulated over the years.

If we look at the history of Uzbekistan, it is not a state that suddenly emerged in 1991. It is a land where historical processes unfolded, great figures fought battles, and minds of wisdom and knowledge were nurtured. In 1991, we simply regained our independence and became one of the nations continuing on their own path.

Having achieved independence through many sacrifices, we started anew, working on ourselves from scratch. Today, in its 34-year history, this country is steadily documenting its image on the pages of history.

Nowadays, the world recognizes Uzbeks not only as a Turkic nation but also under the name "Uzbekistan" anew. People who originate from our country are now recognized and acknowledged around the globe. Our land gave birth to historical figures like Amir Temur, Abu Ali ibn Sina, Mirzo Ulugbek—who studied the stars and built ladders to them—and Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, who, despite his young age, ruled at 12. Today, Uzbekistan's image continues to amaze the world thanks to the efforts of such individuals.

So, when did the concept of "image" appear? When did countries begin to work on their images?

## METHODOLOGY

Image creation is the process of forming a positive perception and building and managing the image of a person, company, or brand in order to achieve specific goals. This process includes developing external appearance, behavior, communication, and self-presentation that aligns with the chosen role, position, or target audience.

An image is also the path determined by a state. As V. M. Shepel rightly noted, "A successful image is a long-term investment in achieving professional and personal success." Every state invests in its image, and it can serve them for a long time.

Forming an image is the very process of working on image creation, which is essentially the skill of "presenting" the image that the audience demands. Psychologists Ye. Bogdanov and V. Zazikin, in their book *The Psychological Foundations of Public Relations*, outline several image-building technologies used in politics:

- Forming an image based on the "ideal image" of a candidate;
- Scenario-based approaches or creating a "sequence of events";

- Use of verbal and linguistic methods;
- Use of political mythology techniques, and others.

- Several principles of image formation can be highlighted:

- The principle of self-discipline and self-improvement (enhancing one's own image);

- Harmonization of visual representation;

- Communicative and speech-based influence;

- Self-management (optimizing one's lifestyle, work habits, and adapting to environmental conditions).

Uzbekistan has been able to recreate its previously established image through hard work and achievements. The technology of image creation is well-developed in our country. Leaders consistently maintain an ideal image. Leaders like Islam Karimov and Shavkat Mirziyoyev are among those who hold a significant place and image in politics. Their courage and humanity have always been praised. Even one such example as Shavkat Mirziyoyev's implementation of the "Mehr Operation" has significantly enhanced the leader's image.

Image-making is a professional activity that involves creating an image with specific characteristics, as well as modifying an existing image to achieve certain goals and objectives. I believe that every element plays an important role in the creation of an image. For example, although the Central Asian countries may not have distinct symbols, the lifestyles and customs of each nation differ from one another.

From a historical point of view, even today, Turkmenistan is perceived by the world community as a "closed" country, yet it is known as a nation that loves and values animals. According to \*Kun.uz\*, Turkmenistan is famous worldwide for its Akhal-Teke horses. Scientists say that this breed has a history dating back 5,000 years. There are more than 3,000 Akhal-Teke horses in Turkmenistan, and they stand out for their pedigree, beauty, and elegance. These horses have become a symbol of national pride in Turkmenistan, are placed at the center of the national emblem, and have been presented as prestigious gifts to leaders of various foreign countries. For Turkmenistan, these horses undoubtedly serve as a "business card."

Uzbekistan, on the other hand, is working to build its image through various fields. In our homeland, the fields of tourism, sports, and culture are currently contributing significantly to the formation of the country's image. Uzbekistan is becoming increasingly well-known around the world for its famous "Alp Arslons" (brave athletes), its national dances and songs, as well as its tourism destinations. In recent years, one of the areas that has most contributed to raising Uzbekistan's image is sports. Thanks to sports like boxing, football, judo, and taekwondo, we have gained international recognition. This demonstrates that both historical perspectives and the active involvement of the younger generation in various fields are important in image-making.

It is well known that the images of both the country and its leaders play a significant role in shaping the image of regions. The reforms and management transformations that have taken place in Uzbekistan in recent years have created opportunities for us to present ourselves to the world more actively.

It is also commonly known that Chapter 16 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan is dedicated to the administrative-territorial structure of the Republic. According to the Constitution, "The Republic of Uzbekistan consists of regions, districts, cities, towns, villages, and settlements, as well as the Republic of Karakalpakstan" (Article 68). The current administrative-territorial division of the Republic reflects the state of the country's productive forces, their distribution, the development of transportation and communication systems, and the organizational structure of local governance. The region represents the highest and largest administrative unit in Uzbekistan's system. The other territorial units—districts, cities, towns, villages, and settlements—are internal subdivisions of the regions. Uzbekistan is divided into 14 territorial-administrative units. Each region has its own administrative center. The image of each region is partially formed and is distinguished by its customs, traditional clothing, and dances.

If we take Khorezm as an example, it is one of the most ancient and truly unique regions of Uzbekistan. The earliest records of Khorezm are found in the Zoroastrian texts known as the "Avesta." For this reason, this region is considered one of the cradles of human civilization. Renowned historical figures such as Beruni, Al-Khwarizmi, Zamakhshari, and Ogahi lived and worked here. The first scientific academy in Central Asia, known as the "Ma'mun Academy," was established in this region. Due to its many ancient monuments, Khorezm is also known as the "land of a thousand fortresses." With ancient towns, palaces, mosques, and minarets that have stood for thousands

of years, every stone in this land has a history to tell.

The heart of the region is Khiva, an open-air museum with a 2,700-year history. Khiva's historical center, featuring the famous Ichan-Qala and Dishan-Qala fortresses, is included in the UNESCO World Heritage list. Notable landmarks such as the Kalta Minor Minaret, the Juma Mosque with its 218 carved wooden columns, the iconic 56-meter Islam Khoja Minaret, the Tosh Hovli Palace, the Kukhna Ark Fortress, the Mausoleum of Pahlavon Mahmud, the Nurullabay Palace, and the Muhammad Amin Khan Madrasa are considered the jewels of Khiva.

## RESULTS

Khorezm is not only renowned in the fields of science but also in tourism and traditional dance. Its unique customs and food tourism are also developing rapidly. Among the regions of Uzbekistan, Khorezm stands out for its historical architecture and cultural practices. It can be said that the flow of tourists to this region is higher than to others. For instance, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan adopted a resolution titled "On Additional Measures for the Comprehensive Development of the Tourism Potential of Khorezm Region for 2022–2026."

According to the resolution, tourism has been identified as the key driver sector for creating new jobs in the Khorezm region. Over the next five years, measures will be taken to increase tourism services in the region by at least five times. This includes fundamentally improving the infrastructure of tourism facilities, establishing new family guest houses and "tourism streets," as well as introducing both domestic and international tourists to the region's rich tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

To develop the infrastructure of tourist sites, steps will be taken to provide them with roads, drinking water, natural gas, and electricity. In addition, new tourist routes and products will be introduced in the region, advanced international practices in tourism will be applied, and promising neighborhoods will be identified for development. The cities of Urgench and Khiva are being promoted as leading tourist destinations.

In particular, "tourism streets" will be created on Pahlavon Mahmud Street in Urgench and in the "Alley" square area in Khiva. These streets will feature food shops aimed at serving tourists, shopping tourism facilities, stalls selling handicrafts, and additional amenities such as foreign currency exchange points, two tourism information centers, and sanitary-hygiene facilities.

The establishment of such tourist zones is expected to

significantly increase the inflow of tourists from around the world. With these tourism development opportunities, Uzbekistan is certain to attract global travelers.

## DISCUSSION

The experience of image-building in Uzbek regions can serve as a successful model for other areas as well. Developing a clear concept for each region individually is of great importance. In Khorezm, strong tourism projects have been initiated. Tourist demand for historical sites and food tourism in the region remains consistently high.

## CONCLUSION

Although Uzbekistan is located in a geographically complex environment compared to other Central Asian countries, it has firmly established itself as one of the region's most stable and determined states. Step by step, the country is working to strengthen the image of its regions based on available resources. There are many rural areas rich in tourism potential even in remote regions. If these areas are provided with electricity, natural gas, and other essential services, they too can develop into major tourist centers.

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