

City marketing in U.S. smart cities: A comparative study

Stefano CARBONI,
stecarboni1@gmail.com

Scotty SHAW,
scottyslaw@alumni.duke.edu

Christian GILDE,
University of Montana Western, Dillon, U.S.
Christian.Gilde@umwestern.edu

Abstract

Objectives This article investigates the city marketing strategies employed by selected U.S. Smart Cities, with the aim of understanding how they promote themselves to attract new residents, firms, investors and visitors. **Prior work** The study builds on the established literature on city marketing and place branding, as well as recent comparative analyses of Smart Cities and territorial marketing, extending this work by focusing on how smart urban agendas are translated into concrete branding and communication strategies. **Approach** Analysing Smart City rankings enables the identification of three Smart Cities in the United States, namely New York City, Boston and Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW). A comparative analysis is employed to examine their city marketing strategies, including whether their promotion highlights historical aspects, cultural elements or innovation narratives, and to analyse the branding principles and communication tools used. **Results** The analysis identifies key dimensions of the cities' promotions, including brand development, brand communication, brand maintenance, promotional benefits and strategic limitations, and shows how each city configures these dimensions differently. **Implications** The findings offer useful guidance for academics, researchers and practitioners seeking to design, assess or improve marketing strategies in Smart Cities, particularly in terms of aligning branding with governance, stakeholder engagement and resident-facing value. **Value** The article contributes to the field of city marketing by providing a structured comparative analysis of marketing strategies in different types of Smart Cities and by illustrating how distinct city marketing approaches can foster city visibility and perceived attractiveness.

Keywords: smart city marketing, smart city branding, smart city ranking.

1. Introduction

1.1. Smart city

The increase in urban populations comes with a variety of challenges that cities must address. The most pressing of these are traffic congestion, waste management, crime, education, employment, and health services. In this context, Smart Cities are urban areas that use their resources to improve the aforementioned infrastructure, all of which enable cities to function and make them liveable [1].

Beyond technical upgrading, Smart City agendas are also staged as branding projects. Cities mobilise rankings and standards, and showcase best practices to signal modernity, efficiency and openness to innovation to investors, firms, visitors and residents [2, 3, 4].

At the same time, promotional campaigns can produce Smart City mirages, positive online sentiment and anticipation that outpace material progress, underscoring the need to align branding with delivery [5].

Adoption incentives also have a signalling dimension: U.S. cities report that strengthening the city brand and appeal is a significant predictor of smart-technology uptake [6].

1.2. City marketing

City marketing, which is developed through urban and regional strategies [7], concerns the application of marketing strategies to promote geographical locations such as cities, regions or countries in order to attract tourists, investors, businesses, and residents [8].

This form of promotion is based on various theoretical frameworks from marketing, geography, urban studies, and regional economics [7]. Marketing principles are applied to places, thus treating them as products or brands which must therefore be positioned strategically and which must be promoted in a competitive market [7].

Recent research describes a revolution from logo-centric promotion to multi-stakeholder brand management that integrates policy, participation and everyday experience [9].

The elements of city marketing include market segmentation, positioning, stakeholder involvement, communication, and branding [10]. Market segmentation refers to the identification of target audiences based on location needs and preferences [10]. Tailoring market segmentation to different stakeholder groups enhances the alignment between branding strategies and audience expectations [11]. This requires enhancing the identity of a place by highlighting its advantages and strengths [10], as well as aligning the image of the place with the perceptions of stakeholders [12]. Stakeholder engagement involves working with the municipality, businesses, and residents [10] to understand and align interests at the community level.

In Smart City contexts, branding unfolds across project initiation (how smart is scoped and justified), platform communication (especially social media), and brand maintenance, sustaining credibility with residents [13, 14].

Universities frequently act as innovation brokers and reputation multipliers within these processes, convening firms, city hall and communities to co-create solutions and strengthen the city's knowledge narrative and brand credibility [15].

The more recent concept of place branding, in which place brands are co-created by the city and its stakeholders [16], includes several intangible factors, such as the culture and heritage of the territory, which shape the image and perceptions of a place [17]. Incorporating cultural narratives in branding enhances the emotional connection of stakeholders with the place, strengthening brand loyalty [18]. Place branding therefore involves the creation and management of a distinct identity for a specific place [17] and includes the use of communication strategies, including secondary communication channels and digital marketing [10].

Place branding embodies a unique character and shared idea that represent a place's identity, which guides discussions around what makes a city, region, destination, or country special and unique. It also serves as a promise and a prism through which a place's audience interprets its behaviour, communication, and crisis management. Ultimately, it functions as a source of unity and identification, extending beyond mere visuals like logos or marketing campaigns to encompass the actions and behaviours of those leading and representing the place [19]. Place branding strategies involve multi-dimensional efforts aimed at helping a community or location to find and live up to its identity and vision of the future, requiring full engagement from key stakeholders to deliver on the brand promise [20].

Additionally, while place branding shares some similarities with private sector branding in terms of principles and rigour, it differs significantly due to the multitude of stakeholders involved, the absence of a single custodian or owner, the time-consuming nature of the process, and the complexity of weaving together various aspects such as natural resources, urban planning, geography, and local cultures [20]. Place branding serves to bring people and interests together, strengthen competitiveness, and create a sense of community and self-esteem [21].

A resident-based brand-equity lens further shows that smart, green, creative narratives strengthen the place brand only when citizens perceive high-quality, distinctive smart attributes that translate into tangible benefits for living, working and investing [22].

This study reads Smart City branding through two complementary lenses. First, leadership in, of, and for the city conceptualises how actors inside municipal government, across city systems, and on behalf of the broader urban community author and legitimise value narratives and coordinate delivery [23]. Second, university orchestration positions higher-education institutions as knowledge brokers in Quadruple-Helix ecosystems convening firms, government and communities to co-design, test and diffuse solutions that also strengthen a city's innovation narrative and brand credibility [15].

1.3. Purpose and research question

This study seeks to identify and compare the city marketing strategies adopted by three U.S. Smart Cities, New York City, Boston, and Dallas-Fort Worth, selected for their different urban profiles and positions in the observed Smart City rankings. Building on work that frames urban marketing as a tool for governance and development [24], the convergence of smart, sustainable and marketing-oriented city logics [25], and the role of digital promotion in shaping stakeholder engagement [26], Smart City branding is conceptualised as a governance capability rather than a late-stage communications activity.

In line with public leadership theory, particularly the distinction between leadership in, of, and for the city [23], and with research on universities as orchestrators in Quadruple-Helix ecosystems [15], this study examines how narrative authorship and multistakeholder coordination support brand credibility and citizen-facing value across five dimensions: brand development, brand communication, brand maintenance, promotional benefits, and strategic limitations. Accordingly, this study is guided by the following research question:

RQ: How do city marketing strategies in New York City, Boston and Dallas–Fort Worth differ across brand development, brand communication and brand maintenance, and what promotional benefits and strategic limitations are associated with these approaches?

Therefore, the research is addressed through a comparative analysis that uses Smart City rankings as contextual evidence for case selection and benchmarking and analyses the city marketing strategies of New York City, Boston, and Dallas-Fort Worth across five dimensions (brand development, brand communication, brand maintenance, promotional benefits, and strategic limitations), based on triangulated sources from official documents, programme pages, partnership announcements, and owned-media content. **The findings provide a detailed overview of current practices in the three U.S. Smart Cities and clarify how city marketing contributes to their positioning and stakeholder value within Smart Cities.**

2. City marketing strategies in the literature

2.1. Collaboration between different organisations in city promotion

City marketing involves stakeholders from the public and private sectors, where government agencies and local businesses collaborate. In fact, a place promotion strategy requires the integration of different perspectives to align objectives and resources and therefore improve the effectiveness of marketing strategies [27]. This generates synergies that help to structure an urban brand suitable for a wide audience [28]. The study of Kavaratzis [29] emphasises that such inter-

organisational partnerships allow cities to draw on diverse skills and resources. Furthermore, the study of Hankinson [30] highlights the role of brand alliances, in which public institutions and local businesses collaborate to co-create a city brand. Such "alliances" also promote a sense of belonging among stakeholders, which is essential for long-term brand management [30].

In this regard, Anholt [20] states that the effectiveness of city promotion often depends on the collaborative networks that cities build and that can then be amplified through collaborations with external organisations, including multinational companies. Such networks help cities to improve their global visibility, as well as attract investors and other different stakeholders, such as students and tourists. Therefore, as highlighted by Kavaratzis and Hatch [12], the success of city marketing strategies lies in the ability of city managers to coordinate these different collaborations and maintain a vision of a unified brand that attracts both local and global audiences. Public-private partnership (PPP) design also matters for performance and brand credibility. Cities consider PPPs where risk allocation, innovation potential, and reputational payoffs align [31], and governance mechanisms, such as top-level planning and collaborative routines, further improve outcomes and public perceptions [32].

Smart Cities often place environmental sustainability at the centre of their branding. Green strategies, including low-carbon mobility, circular waste systems and resilient public spaces, have become common elements of urban marketing [33, 34].

Through partnerships with firms and environmental organisations, cities can promote sustainable urban development and use these initiatives to send credible and distinctive signals that attract residents, investors and visitors [35].

2.2. Smart cities in the U.S.

IESE Cities in Motion Index

The IESE Cities in Motion Index (CIMI) offers an evaluation of urban performance across the following nine dimensions: governance, urban planning, technology, environment, international profile, social cohesion, human capital, mobility and transportation, and economy. The CIMI ranking assesses cities' sustainability and quality of life by using a weighted composite indicator and the internationally recognised DP2 technique [36]. In the 2024 edition, New York City is ranked 2nd, with a score of 97.11 and a performance level of "A" (Advanced). Boston is ranked 15th with a score of 68.28 and a performance level of "RA" (Relatively Advanced). In this ranking, the index highlights Boston's human capital and technological innovation. Dallas is positioned 43rd, with a score of 60.36 and a "RA" classification [37].

IMD Smart City Index 2024

The International Institute for Management Development (IMD) Smart City Index evaluates cities globally by balancing economic and technological performance with quality of life, environmental sustainability, and inclusiveness. The ranking is produced in collaboration with the World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization (WeGO) and is based on five years of citizen surveys and data collection across 142 cities [38]. In the 2024 rankings, New York City ranks 34th, followed by Boston at 36th place, while Dallas-Fort Worth was not listed in the IMD rankings [38].

Innovation Cities Index 2022-2023

The Innovation Cities Index ranks cities based on their capacity for technological innovation, startup ecosystems, and economic development [39]. This index evaluates 500 cities globally, scoring them out of 60. In this ranking, New York City is positioned 3rd globally, trailing only Tokyo and London, with a score of 56/60, which highlights its robust technological ecosystem, international appeal, and innovative capacity. Boston ranks 7th, which underscores the city's leadership in academic research, healthcare innovation, and sustainability. Dallas-Fort Worth ranks 22nd, which highlights the city's dynamic economic growth and increasing focus on technological infrastructure and innovation [39].

3. Methods

This study involves data collection on the three cities' marketing and branding strategies across different dimensions, followed by a comparison.

The analysis first examines the main foundations of territorial promotion in these cities and their key stakeholders. It then considers the development of logos and city branding, as well as the tools used to support and evolve the city brands and to strengthen communication with stakeholders. The study also investigates the marketing strategies used to achieve greater visibility, in order to accomplish economic growth and a strengthening of the local identity.

Finally, this research identifies limitations and challenges associated with the marketing approach of each city.

3.1. Research design

A comparative analysis is adopted, focusing on New York City, Boston, and Dallas-Fort Worth, to compare how U.S. smart cities develop, communicate, and maintain their city brands over the 2019-2025 period. Case selection follows a replication logic (literal and theoretical replication) to surface patterns robust across different urban profiles: global technology-finance hub (New York City), a higher-education and biotech cluster (Boston), and a fast-growing metro with sport-finance identity (DFW).

Branding is treated as a governance capability that aligns place, purpose, person, position, process, and performance [23]. This six-lens view lets the analysis trace how branding narratives are authored, sponsored, and legitimised through cross-sector coalitions and leadership modes, such as digital government, digital driver for economic growth, open platform for civic innovation.

Complementing this, universities are positioned as orchestrators and knowledge brokers in Quadruple-Helix ecosystems, integrating firms, city hall, and communities, and thereby amplifying the city's knowledge narrative and brand credibility [15].

The primary unit of analysis is the city-level branding strategy including the brand platform, campaigns, slogans, iconography, and partnerships. Embedded sub-units are: (i) programme-level initiatives (innovation challenges, digital-rights and participation platforms, sustainability drives); (ii) coalitions and partnerships (PPP/P4 arrangements, university consortia); and (iii) owned media (official social channels and websites).

The research follows a set of comparative dimensions and theory-informed propositions. Five dimensions are assessed: brand development, brand communication, brand maintenance, promotional benefits, and strategic limitations, against the following propositions:

P1 (Leadership alignment): Cities whose branding narrative explicitly maps to leadership lenses and modes show more coherent cross-channel messaging [23].

P2 (University orchestration): Cities where universities act as integrators exhibit greater brand credibility for knowledge-based and innovation-based positioning [15].

P3 (Resident value): Branding that signals distinctive, lived smart attributes achieves stronger resident-based brand equity [22].

P4 (Platform engagement): Branding that adopts two-way, effective social content yields higher engagement, popularity, commitment, and virality [14].

For each city, official brand assets and campaigns, tourism and economic development reports, programme pages (such as innovation challenges), partnership announcements, MOUs, and posts from official social accounts, such as Instagram and Facebook, during 2019-2025 were compiled.

Directed content analysis is used, with a codebook seeded by the literature on leadership lenses, university roles, PPP governance, platform engagement, and resident brand-equity drivers. All materials were read and coded manually on the basis of these categories. Data were triangulated across documents, websites, and

owned-media posts, and negative evidence (such as, Smart City mirages) was recorded.

3.2. Data collection

Data were harvested from (a) official city strategy and brand materials; (b) tourism and economic development reports; (c) programme pages for smart initiatives; (d) partnership announcements, PPP/P4 arrangements and university collaborations; and (e) posts and metrics from official social media and other owned channels.

To ground the theoretical framework on Smart City branding and promotion, a structured Scopus search and staged screening were implemented. Rather than reproducing the full Boolean string, Table 1 lists the filters and scope, and Table 2 summarises the outcomes.

Table 1. Scopus search protocol, filters, scope

Element	Setting
Timespan	2019 - 2025
Document type	Articles
Language	English
Subject areas	Primary: Business, Management and Accounting; Social Sciences Secondary (to capture comms/IS angles, but filtered by inclusion rules): Decision Sciences; Computer Science, Information Systems; Economics, Econometrics and Finance; Environmental Science (for sustainability-as-brand).
Keyword Block A, Smart	Smart City OR Smart Cities OR Smart urban OR Digital city OR Urban innovation OR Smart sustainable city
Keyword Block B, Brand, Marketing	City branding OR Place branding OR Urban marketing OR Territorial marketing OR Marketing strategies OR Digital marketing OR Brand co-creation OR Stakeholder engagement OR Public-private partnerships OR Urban advertising.
Source titles, quality focus	The literature search started from journals ranked in AJG 2024 (tiers 4-3) in marketing, management, public management, innovation and urban studies. It was then extended to journals that are central to the specific fields of the study, in particular Place Branding and Public Diplomacy and the Smart Cities and Regional Development Journal. Additional searches were conducted using Google Scholar, local newspapers and other search engines in order to identify the communication tools employed by the observed cities.
Inclusion criteria	Explicit link between Smart Cities and city branding, marketing or promotion, whether conceptual, empirical or methodological.

Exclusion criteria	Pure tech, engineering without branding, pure finance without promotion value, non-urban contexts.
--------------------	--

Source: Own elaboration

Table 2. Screening and inclusion summary

Stage	n.	Notes
Records retrieved	122	Scopus, filters per Table 1
Title-abstract screened	122	Screened for Smart × Branding intersection
Eligible for Smart × Branding intersection	18	Post-screening eligibility
Included (Core)	8	Direct Smart City branding, promotion focus
Included (Supporting)	9	Governance, engagement adjacent to branding

Source: Own elaboration

Coding hooks were derived from the literature. To ensure comparability with the cases, explicit codes were added for leadership lenses and modes [23], university orchestrators and engagement mechanisms [15], PPP design and governance [31, 32], owned-media engagement [14], resident brand-equity drivers [22], and adoption and signalling motives [6].

4. Results

4.1. New York City: Strategic objectives and target audience

New York City’s marketing targets various stakeholders, including tourists, new investors and residents. The main objectives are to increase tourism by exploiting its monuments and promoting its culture through international events.

The city promotes its image as a global financial hub and as a suitable location for innovation and new business opportunities. Initiatives such as NYCx are designed to promote New York City as a city at the forefront of technological innovation [40].

4.1.1. City marketing strategies

The logo "I Love NY" was implemented by graphic designer Milton Glaser in 1977 [41]. Designed to promote tourism in New York City during a time of economic crisis, this slogan has, over time, achieved global fame, encapsulating the culture of the city in its promotion [42].

In recent years, the logo has been modified to include all the stakeholders of New York City and to specify that it is the city, rather than the state. Therefore, the design of the new logo "We Love NYC" represents a rebranding developed in partnership with the New Era brand and includes a Yankees cap and references to iconic

cityscapes of the city [43]. By promoting a sense of pride and belonging among its residents, the city intends to build a community around its city brand.

4.1.2. Promotional channels and stakeholder engagement

New York City uses several promotional tools to communicate with its stakeholders.

These include social media platforms and official websites of the city. The official Instagram account of "We Love NYC" has made it possible to engage both locals and visitors, and to promote local events as well as local businesses in the city [44].

As noted in the main objective of the "I Love NY" logo, a central aim is to increase tourism and the associated positive economic impacts. This objective is reflected in the 2023 annual report of New York City Tourism + Conventions, which reports a 9.6% increase in the number of tourists compared with 2022 levels [45], as well as a forecast for 2024 that anticipates a further 4% growth compared with 2023 [45].

NYC's smart-brand narrative is stewarded primarily by leadership in the city via agency-led initiatives and mayoral convening, with episodic for-the-city coalitions around hallmark campaigns. University orchestration is present but fragmented across initiatives, which sustains experimentation yet dilutes a single citywide knowledge narrative.

4.2. Boston

4.2.1. Boston smart city

Boston is one of the largest cities in the United States and has a population of around 650,000, with the Greater Boston metropolitan statistical area being home to approximately 5 million people [46, 47]. The largest industries in Boston are finance, real estate, education, healthcare (especially biotech), scientific and technical services, trade and transportation, and tourism [48].

According to the IESE Cities in Motion Index 2024, Boston ranks among the top 10 cities worldwide in the following dimensions: economy, human capital, and technology [37]. IMD ranks Boston 36th out of 142 Smart Cities in the world, and highlights that the lack of affordable housing as well as heavy traffic are the main problems the city faces [38]. Boston is home to more than 40 institutions of higher education, including Harvard University and MIT, and leads North America in both patents per capita and venture capital investment per capita [49].

4.2.2. The marketing strategies of Boston

Boston strives to present itself as a strong city brand and Smart City. As a whole, annual tourism generates approximately \$24 billion for Massachusetts [50]. People

come to the historic city for education, biotech, healthcare, and shopping. The city uses both social and traditional media to promote itself [51]. The city also uses recommendation systems, such as Yelp and word-of-mouth advertising, to communicate its message to its target audience [52]. The place branding that Boston utilises for its economic development aims to attract tourists, as well as business investors and people who want to live in the city [53]. In addition, Boston uses its sports and sporting traditions to market itself as an entertainment centre (e.g., Fenway Park, TD Garden).

4.2.3. Examples of Boston's promotional successes

One example of a public-private partnership is between the city of Boston and New Balance. In 2016, the athletic company New Balance, whose home is Boston, announced its “Nobody Runs Like Boston” campaign [54]. The campaign emphasised the brand’s connection to the city and the international running community who are drawn to the Boston Marathon every year. The campaign introduced Boston-labelled footwear and apparel [55, 56]. New Balance disseminated its Boston slogans through social media, bus shelter ads, subway station displays, and street banners [56]. In addition, New Balance highlighted the college sports culture that exists in Boston. For example, the shoe brand introduced a special edition sneaker for Boston College using its New Balance 9060 shoe [57, 58].

Another example of a public-private partnership is between Boston and Moderna. Boston-based biotechnology firm Moderna moved its headquarters from a rather inconspicuous location in the city to a new 460,000-square-foot building in Kendall Square, where MIT is located, which is considered one of the central business hubs in Boston [59]; a relocation that the company hopes will promote innovation, expand its market share and business presence, and leverage the expertise that is developed by local universities, such as Harvard, MIT, and Boston University [60, 61]. The company’s brand and pharmaceutical product portfolio are great assets to the city of Boston and the local scientific, health, and university communities [61].

Boston exhibits tight coupling between leadership of the city and university orchestration, with higher-education institutions regularly co-designing pilots and translating outcomes into reputational assets for the city brand. This configuration reinforces a coherent identity around health, education and innovation.

4.3. Dallas-Fort Worth

4.3.1. The metropolitan area of DFW

Dallas-Fort Worth recently became the fourth-largest metropolitan area in the U.S. and has experienced a population growth of 6% between the 2020 census and the 2023 census estimate, registering 8.1 million inhabitants in 2023 [62]. Furthermore, one-fourth of all Texans live in DFW, which has become the primary metropolitan

area in the Southern United States [63]. The attractiveness of DFW, home to Dallas (the ninth-largest American city) and Fort Worth (the twelfth-largest), has allowed it to become the fastest-growing metropolitan area that is ranked in the top 25 [64].

4.3.2. City marketing in DFW

Dallas-Fort Worth, also known as the Metroplex [65], celebrates its cowboy origins at the Stockyards, which represents a Cowboy Disney World in downtown Fort Worth. The Red Pegasus, which first adorned the top of Texas' tallest tower in 1934, became the symbol of Dallas [66]. This cowboy symbolism can also be seen in the local sports teams: the Dallas Cowboys (NFL), the Dallas Mavericks (NBA), the Dallas Wings (WNBA), and even the collegiate SMU Mustangs [67]. The Cowboys have been famously known as America's Team since 1978 [68]. This has also allowed DFW to establish itself as a sports city, as, similarly to Boston and New York City, it is one of the few U.S. cities to have teams in all five major sports leagues (NFL, NBA, MLB, NHL, and MLS) [69]. In addition, the 2026 FIFA World Cup designated DFW as the host for nine games, more than any other city [70].

Regarding the city logo, it was found that the Red Pegasus originated as a corporate logo. In 1913, Vacuum Oil had created the flying red horse logo, which evolved into a city symbol [71], and the Dallas Chamber of Commerce implemented the Triple-D logo, which has been primarily associated with the city's branding [72].

4.3.3. City's collaborations

Sports and finance are part of why Dallas and Southern Methodist University (SMU) worked together to design a logo that combines the city's Triple D with the school's mascot [67]. In May 2024, Oxford Economics released its inaugural Global Cities Index, which it calls a comprehensive evaluation of the world's 1,000 largest urban economies [73]. This report ranks Dallas as the sixth top city in the world by economic score (90.2) (behind New York City's 100 and ahead of London's 86.4, Paris' 85.8, and Tokyo's 84.7) [73].

The announcement of the entry of Goldman Sachs and Y'all Street (the Texas Stock Exchange, backed by BlackRock and Citadel Securities), as well as the New York Stock Exchange's recent announcement that it is relocating its Chicago office into Dallas to establish NYSE Texas, increases the competitiveness and attractiveness of Dallas and supports the famous saying: "Everything is bigger in Texas" [74], suggesting that new initiatives can find space in its territory. Dallas worked together with IBM to explore opportunities for implementing smart technologies in transportation systems [75] alongside other projects.

IBM placed smart billboards in major cities across the U.S., including DFW, where they promoted the role of technology in improving urban life [76]. This project

includes IBM’s vision of Smart Cities as hubs of innovation, where technology improves communication and infrastructure, as well as energy efficiency and public safety [77].

DFW’s externally oriented brand signals in finance, sports, and mega-events display decisive leadership for the city. The opportunity is to institutionalise university orchestration so that event and growth narratives convert into resident-facing smart benefits that can be evidenced and sustained.

5. Discussion

The analysis of the city marketing of the three cities highlights different types of approaches to territorial promotion. Each of these cities employed methods related to its cultural and economic context. Table 3 represents the different dimensions of city marketing of New York City, Boston, and Dallas-Fort Worth.

Table 3. Case study analysis results

	New York City	Boston	Dallas-Fort Worth
Brand development	Fundamental principles: Cultural diversity, resilience, and economic vitality. Stakeholders: Tourists, local businesses, tech innovators, and residents.	Fundamental principles: Historical significance, intellectual leadership, and healthcare innovation. Stakeholders: Tourists, residents, students, academics, healthcare professionals, and local businesses.	Fundamental principles: Economic growth, sports culture, and Texas charm. Stakeholders: Residents, sports fans, businesses, finance professionals, and global investors.
Brand communication	Tools: Social media, digital ads, iconic events. City Brand: "I Love NY" and "We Love NYC". Partnerships: Cultural institutions and global brands.	Tools: Social media, traditional advertising (transit ads), word-of-mouth promotion, and events. Partnerships: Collaborations with New Balance, Moderna, and local academic institutions.	Tools: Events, sports marketing, and cultural symbols. City Logo: Red Pegasus and the Triple-D logo. Partnerships: Sports teams (Dallas Cowboys), global companies (Goldman Sachs, NYSE Texas, Nasdaq, and Texas Stock Exchange, affectionately known as Y'all Street), and entertainment venues (AT&T Stadium, Six Flags, Texas Live!).

Brand maintenance and further strategies	Evolving campaigns since the 1970s. Shift from "I Love NY" to "We Love NYC".	Balancing local city branding and politics. Boston maintains its brand by using city-industry partnerships with private companies, such as New Balance and Moderna.	Combining traditional cowboy culture with modern global financial branding. Investments in sports and large-scale global events like the FIFA World Cup 2026.
Potential benefits	Reaches diverse stakeholders. Promotes social cohesion and strengthens local identity with global reach.	Increases city tourism, commercial investments, and new residents. Develops the city into a cultural centre.	Enhances global visibility through sports and financial leadership. Attracts residents and investors through growth and liveability. Strengthens local identity with cultural symbols and events.
Strategy limitation	Needs more widely accessible communication tools to engage all stakeholders effectively.	Struggles to allocate enough resources for the city's health care, housing, and transportation sectors. Risks increased traffic congestion, waste, and crime.	Balancing traditional cowboy imagery with modern branding. Needs to address population growth challenges, such as infrastructure and sustainability.

Source: Own elaboration on New York City [40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45], Boston city [46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55] [56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61], Smart City ranking [37, 38] and Dallas–Fort Worth [62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71] [72, 77] branding and promotion material.

New York City

Table 3 shows New York City's engagement with diverse stakeholders, and reflects NYC's approach to creating an inclusive and adaptable city brand to varied audiences. Furthermore, the implementation of a city brand such as "I Love NY" and "We Love NYC" has been integrated into international events and partnerships with global brands, such as New Era. New York City's branding strategies, dating back to the 1970s and continuing to evolve, promote local community engagement, and strengthen the city's identity among its residents. As such, New York City's approach to urban branding reflects its identity as a global metropolis.

Boston

Boston's city marketing is characterised by the promotion of its historical and intellectual heritage. The city seeks to create a local identity through a combination of its historical heritage with the academic life that surrounds it, and along with that, the advances in medicine and healthcare.

Boston promotes its territory using both social media and traditional communication channels and leverages partnerships with MNCs such as New Balance and Moderna. Marketing strategies are aimed at students, as well as tourists, new investors and its own residents.

Dallas-Fort Worth

Dallas-Fort Worth's approach to city marketing combines its rapid economic growth with a cultural identity rooted in its Texas and cowboy charm. The branding of the region emphasises its sports culture and its role as a metropolitan centre, which attracts a variety of stakeholders, including new residents, sports enthusiasts, and new investors. Place promotion is mainly done through cultural events that promote local pride among current and potential new residents and visitors.

The cross-case contrasts in Table 3 motivate three mechanisms through which branding gains credibility and attachment: leadership alignment, university integration, and platform and PPP engagement.

Leadership alignment

Branding coherence rose where city narratives were explicitly authored by cross-sector leaders, public executives, civic entrepreneurs and anchor institutions, and where those actors built and sustained legitimacy by linking smart projects to place purpose and performance [23]. In New York City, brand maintenance around I Love NY and We Love NYC and innovation challenges, such as NYCx, exhibit leadership in the city, public agencies convening agendas, and for the city, coalitions that frame citywide benefits, thereby sustaining a globally legible promise of openness and dynamism. Boston's narrative gains coherence where leadership of the city intersects with the classroom and the laboratory; city officials, industry and universities align on health, education and knowledge-economy themes. Dallas-Fort Worth's messaging shows prominent leadership around economic growth, sports and financial hubs. The challenge is to connect these signals more consistently to everyday, resident-facing smart benefits to avoid a narrative that outpaces inclusion [3, 4].

University orchestration

Where universities act as orchestrators and knowledge brokers, hosting living labs, co-designing challenges and mediating between firms, city hall and communities, the smart brand gains technical credibility and narrative distinctiveness [15]. This mechanism is strongest in Boston, such as through MIT and Harvard spillovers and the reputational symbolism of Moderna's relocation. It is more episodic in New York City, where it appears in initiative-specific pilots, and in Dallas-Fort Worth, where it is visible mainly in symbolic ties via SMU branding and talent.

Platform and partnership engagement

Smart City brands now live on owned social platforms, where two-way, effective content is most likely to drive popularity, commitment and virality [14]. New York City's long-running brand assets feed consistent content, Boston's heritage and knowledge mix lends itself to storytelling, and Dallas-Fort Worth's sports and

mega-event calendar offers episodic spikes that could be routinised into relational engagement. On the delivery side, PPP design and governance, risk allocation and collaborative routines influence performance and perceived credibility [31, 32]. Where partnerships are transparent and outcome-oriented, branding claims are easier to substantiate; where they are extractive or opaque, mirage risks grow [5].

Resident value and adoption signals

Place brands strengthen when residents perceive distinctive, lived smart attributes, quality, uniqueness and daily relevance [22]. Adoption research also indicates that cities sometimes pursue smart programmes to signal managerial capacity and competitiveness [6]. The risk is reputational over-promising if signalling outpaces delivery. Balancing external signalling with citizen rights, inclusion and everyday utility remains central to durable brand equity [3, 4].

6. Comparison between NYC, Boston, and DFW & concluding remarks

As this paper has shown, the marketing and branding strategies of metropolitan areas take advantage of trends and policies to create unique local city brands in order to enhance the appeal and liveability of a city. This work examined the marketing approaches that New York City, Boston, and Dallas-Fort Worth used to communicate a strong city image, while balancing local city promotions and politics. The investigation of New York City revealed strong historical and present-day city marketing. This exploratory work used several markers to gauge the city's marketing success; these markers included the growth of tourism, the popularity of its key slogan "I Love NY", the economic impact of attracting businesses and investments, and an increase in community engagement. This study highlights the varied nature of NYC's branding strategy, demonstrating that it employs local adaptation to a certain extent when creating its brand. Boston uses both social and traditional media to promote itself. Boston also employs city-industry partnerships with private companies that are based in the city, which is exemplified by the partnerships with athletic leader New Balance and biotech Moderna. In its city promotion, DFW incorporates its cultural and technological identity along with its interest in financial markets. By leveraging its reputation as a hub for finance and sports, as well as fostering public-private partnerships, DFW promotes its territory to businesses, investors, and new residents. New York City, Boston and Dallas-Fort Worth are prime tourist, business, and residential destinations that provide a good foundation for exploring city branding in the United States. This analysis shows the process of city branding by examining the three metropolitan areas and linking them to traditional and digital marketing tools.

The analysis pattern-matches within and across cases against the leadership lenses and orchestration code families to assess how configurations align with brand development, communication, maintenance and perceived benefits. Read

comparatively through the lenses of leadership in, of and for the city and university orchestration, the three cases illustrate distinct pathways by which Smart City branding becomes either a credible governance asset or a merely promotional claim. In New York City, long-standing symbolic capital, such as “I Love NY” and “We Love NYC”, provides a stable narrative frame that municipal leaders and civic partners mobilise to legitimate innovation programmes, an instance of leadership in and for the city where convening power and coalition-building convert technical initiatives into a clear promise of dynamism. Yet the city’s university contributions are distributed across many initiatives rather than orchestrated at system level, which fragments the knowledge narrative; fuller formalisation of the university role would strengthen the coupling between experimentation and public value. Boston exhibits a tighter coupling of leadership and orchestration; universities act as structural integrators of the innovation story, mediating between firms and city hall so that the Smart City identity accrues technical credibility and social meaning. Dallas-Fort Worth advances an assertive, externally oriented narrative centred on growth, finance and major events, demonstrating decisive agenda-setting for the city; the remaining task is to translate these high-visibility signals into lived, resident-facing smart benefits by strengthening university brokerage and embedding coalitions that make promises materially verifiable in daily life.

Although New York City, Boston, and Dallas-Fort Worth have distinct historical trajectories and cultural repertoires that shape their identity narratives differently, they also share brand-relevant commonalities that matter for Smart City positioning. Each one fields franchises across the five major U.S. sports, providing highly visible brand assets and platforms for storytelling, partnership activation, and event-led engagement that can be mobilised within broader city narratives [69]. More strategically, all three curate ties through sister-city arrangements and megaregional collaboration, while seeking reputational validation in global benchmarks such as the GaWC classification and the Global Power City Index, GPCI [78, 79]. Read through the lenses of leadership in, of, and for the city and university orchestration, these arenas become venues for convening coalitions, translating technical innovation into public value, and projecting a coherent identity beyond municipal boundaries. The 2026 FIFA World Cup illustrates how hallmark events can amplify place-brand visibility if embedded in governance arrangements that deliver resident-facing legacies in mobility, safety, and inclusion.

Across the three cases, the comparison suggests that brand coherence and durability increase when leadership alignment and university orchestration converge. Leaders provide authorial legitimacy, clarifying purpose, convening coalitions and sustaining accountability, while universities stabilise the knowledge base, reduce uncertainty in multi-actor coordination and anchor the city’s promise in recognisable competencies. Where these two functions move in tandem, branding

ceases to be a late-stage communication exercise and instead becomes a governance capability through which cities align narrative, investment and delivery. Conversely, when either function is weak, when leadership is episodic or when universities are present but not empowered to orchestrate, Smart City branding risks remaining performative rather than constitutive of public value. Cities should therefore articulate, explicitly and publicly, who leads in, of and for the city on the smart agenda and how universities are mandated to convene multistakeholder learning and experimentation, so that brand claims are routinely validated by delivery. The three profiles suggest that the strength of the Smart City brand is a function of the complementarity between leadership mode and university orchestration, not of communication volume per se, a proposition future work can test longitudinally across additional cities.

Theoretical contribution.

City-branding theory is extended by specifying a Branding-as-Governance triad: (1) leadership alignment (who authors, convenes, and legitimises the brand); (2) university orchestration (who brokers knowledge and anchors credibility); and (3) platform and PPP engagement (how communication and delivery co-produce value). This triad nests within the five branding dimensions and links Smart City governance to place-brand performance, offering a parsimonious bridge between marketing and public-management literatures.

Practical implications.

Cities should: (a) name a cross-sector brand leadership group and map it to in, of and for roles; (b) institutionalise university brokerage via living labs and joint challenges that produce visible pilots; (c) design PPP governance for transparency and learning; (d) manage social media as a relational asset and optimise for commitment and virality, not only reach; (e) tie every flagship project to resident-facing benefits with clear KPIs to pre-empt mirage effects.

Limitations and future research.

The analysis relies on publicly available materials and does not observe internal decision logs or resident micro-perceptions. Future work can triangulate with resident surveys, engagement metrics and PPP contract data, extend cases to smaller and more peripheral locales, and test the triad using longitudinal indicators of brand equity and governance quality. The proposed triad formalises the interface between Sancino and Hudson's leadership lenses and Ferraris et al.'s orchestration logic, specifying how actor roles and knowledge brokerage are translated into brand coherence, credibility and citizen-facing value. The comparative framework developed in this article also provides a useful basis for group case studies in teaching, enabling students to analyse city marketing strategies in other Smart Cities using the same five-dimensional structure.

References

- [1] S. Carboni, "Smart Cities in comparison: An analysis of the best Smart Cities," *Smart Cities and Regional Development (SCRD) Journal*, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 65-78, 2024.
- [2] C. Smigiel, "Urban political strategies in times of crisis, A multiscalar perspective on Smart Cities in Italy," *European Urban and Regional Studies*, vol. 25, no. 6, pp. 612-626, 2018.
- [3] G. Charnock, H. March and R. Ribera-Fumaz, "From smart to rebel city, Worlding, provincialising and the Barcelona model," *Urban Studies*, vol. 56, no. 9, pp. 1822-1840, 2019.
- [4] C. Irazábal and P. Jirón, "Latin American Smart Cities, Between worlding infatuation and crawling provincializing," *Urban Studies*, vol. 58, no. 11, pp. 2305-2325, 2021.
- [5] R. Arku, A. Buttazzoni, K. Agyapon-Ntra and E. Bandauko, "Highlighting Smart City mirages in public perceptions, A Twitter sentiment analysis of four African Smart City projects," *Cities*, vol. 130, p. 103857, 2022.
- [6] E. Araral and E. Gomez, "Why do cities adopt smart technologies? Contingency theory and evidence from the United States," *Cities*, vol. 106, p. 102873, 2020.
- [7] P. Kotler, *Marketing places*, Simon and Schuster, 2002.
- [8] G. Hankinson, "Relational network brands, Towards a conceptual model of place brands," *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 109-121, 2004.
- [9] M. Grebosz-Krawczyk, "Place branding (r)evolution, The management of the Smart City's brand," *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 93-104, 2021.
- [10] J. R. B. Ritchie and J. R. R. Ritchie, "The branding of tourism destinations," *Proceedings of the annual congress of the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism*, pp. 1-31, 1998.
- [11] M. Baker and E. Cameron, "Critical success factors in destination marketing," *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 79-97, 2008.
- [12] M. Kavaratzis and M. Hatch, "The dynamics of place brands, An identity-based approach to place branding theory," *Marketing Theory*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 69-86, 2013.
- [13] R. Vijaygopal, R. Bennett and S. Savani, "Initiation, marketing and branding of Smart City projects, A study of decision processes," *Cities*, vol. 139, p. 104356, 2023.
- [14] S. Molinillo, R. Anaya-Sánchez, A. Morrison and J. A. Coca-Stefaniak, "Smart City communication via social media, Analysing residents' and visitors' engagement," *Cities*, vol. 94, pp. 247-257, 2019.
- [15] A. Ferraris, Z. Belyaeva and S. Bresciani, "The role of universities in the Smart City innovation, Multistakeholder integration and engagement perspectives," *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 119, pp. 163-171, 2020.
- [16] S. Bisani, M. Daye and K. Mortimer, "Legitimacy and inclusivity in place branding," *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 109, p. 103840, 2024.
- [17] M. Kavaratzis and G. Ashworth, "City branding, An effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick?," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, vol. 96, no. 5, pp. 506-514, 2005.
- [18] R. Govers, "Imaginative communities, Admired cities, regions and countries," *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 125-133, 2021.
- [19] A. Beer, S. Ayres, T. Clower, F. Faller, A. Sancino and M. Sotarauta, "Place leadership and regional economic development, A framework for cross-regional analysis," *Regional Studies*, vol. 53, no. 2, pp. 171-182, 2019.
- [20] S. Anholt, "Definitions of place branding, Working towards a resolution," *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 1-10, 2010.
- [21] F. Kaefer, "Understanding place branding, An insider's guide to place branding, Shaping the identity and reputation of cities, regions and countries," *Routledge*, 2021.
- [22] C. Chan, "From the perspective of local brand equity, How do citizens perceive green, creative and smart brand potential of future Hong Kong?," *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol. 19, no. 4, pp. 500-513, 2023.

- [23] A. Sancino and L. Hudson, "Leadership in, of, and for Smart Cities, Case studies from Europe, America, and Australia," *Public Management Review*, vol. 22, no. 5, pp. 701-725, 2020.
- [24] S. Cevallos, "Urban marketing for Smart Cities," *Smart Cities and Regional Development (SCRD) Journal*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 91-96, 2022.
- [25] T. Buskó, "Is a smart sustainable city a marketing-oriented city?," *ORAȘE INTELIGENTE ȘI DEZVOLTARE REGIONALĂ*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 63-76, 2025.
- [26] N. Vangelov, "Digital marketing and outdoor advertising," *Smart Cities and Regional Development (SCRD) Journal*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 81-91, 2025.
- [27] S. Hanna and J. Rowley, "Towards a strategic place brand-management model," *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 27, no. 5-6, pp. 458-476, 2011.
- [28] M. Kavaratzis and G. Ashworth, "Partners in coffeeshops, canals and commerce, Marketing the city of Amsterdam," *Cities*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 16-25, 2007.
- [29] M. Kavaratzis, "From "necessary evil" to necessity, Stakeholders' involvement in place branding," *Journal of Place Management and Development*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 7-19, 2012.
- [30] G. Hankinson, "Location branding, A study of the branding practices of 12 English cities," *Journal of Brand Management*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 127-142, 2001.
- [31] P. T. I. Lam and W. Yang, "Factors influencing the consideration of public-private partnerships for Smart City projects, Evidence from Hong Kong," *Cities*, vol. 99, p. 102606, 2020.
- [32] J. Ju, L. Liu and Y. Feng, "Governance mechanism of public-private partnerships for promoting Smart City performance, A multi-case study in China," *Cities*, vol. 153, p. 105295, 2024.
- [33] K. Kunzmann, "Smart Cities after COVID-19, Ten narratives," *The Planning Review*, vol. 56, no. 4, pp. 20-31, 2020.
- [34] K. Kapoor, Y. Dwivedi and M. Williams, "Role of smart technologies in promoting co-creation in city branding, Evidence from Smart Cities in India," *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 129, pp. 567-578, 2021.
- [35] C. Mahringer and J. Riedl, "The role of sustainability in city branding, A systematic literature review," *Journal of Place Management and Development*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 129-144, 2020.
- [36] IESE Business School, "Cities in Motion," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.iese.edu/faculty-research/cities-in-motion/>.
- [37] IESE Business School, "IESE Cities in Motion Index 2024," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.iese.edu/media/research/pdfs/ST-0649-E.pdf>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [38] IMD, International Institute for Management Development, "Smart City Index 2024," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.imd.org/smart-city-observatory/home/>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [39] Innovation Cities, "World 500 city rankings," 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://innovation-cities.com/>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [40] NYC, City of New York, "NYCx Challenges," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.nyc.gov/html/nycx/challenges.html>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [41] New York State Library, "I Love New York logo," 2013. [Online]. Available: <https://web.archive.org/web/20150906091226/http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/emblems/iluvny.htm>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [42] K. Dinnie, *City branding, Theory and cases*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- [43] WELOVENYC, "Ad campaign," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://welovenyc.pfnyc.org/>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [44] WELOVENYC, "Instagram," 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://www.instagram.com/welovenyc/>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [45] New York City Tourism + Conventions, "Annual report 2023," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://corporate.nyctourism.com/annual-report/2024>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].

- [46] United States Census, "Boston city, Massachusetts," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/bostoncitymassachusetts/PST045222>. [Accessed 01 08 2024].
- [47] United States Census, "Boston-Cambridge-Newton," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/31000US14460-boston-cambridge-newton-ma-nh-metro-area/>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [48] Empowering American Cities, "Dashboard," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://empoweringamericacities.com/dashboard/>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [49] B. Cohen, "The 10 smartest cities in North America," Fast Company, 2013. [Online]. Available: <https://www.fastcompany.com/>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [50] Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism, "Annual report," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.mass.gov/>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [51] Up There Everywhere, "Place branding podcast, Boston, the inbound revolution and iconic landmarks," 2015. [Online]. Available: <https://www.upthereeverywhere.com/podcast-episode3-boston>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [52] Up There Everywhere, "UP has team in Boston at Inbound," 2019. [Online]. Available: <https://www.upthereeverywhere.com/blog/up-has-team-in-boston-at-inbound-2019>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [53] Up There Everywhere, "Place branding podcast focuses on Boston, the inbound revolution and iconic landmarks," 2019. [Online]. Available: <https://www.upthereeverywhere.com/blog/place-branding-podcast-focuses-on-boston-the-inbound-revolution-and-iconic-landmarks>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [54] New Balance, "New Balance updates "Nobody Runs Like Boston" campaign," 2016. [Online]. Available: <https://newbalance.newsmarket.com/2016/new-balance-updates--nobody-runs-like-boston--campaign/s/0ef6fbef-bd53-49ba-b871-286e0f35befa>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [55] New Balance, "Our purpose," 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://www.newbalance.com/our-purpose.html>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [56] New Balance, "Newsroom homepage," 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://newbalance.newsmarket.com/>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [57] Sneaker News, "The New Balance 9060 Boston College is available now," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://sneakernews.com/>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [58] Hypebeast, "Boston College receives special edition of the New Balance 9060," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://hypebeast.com/>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [59] Moderna, "Moderna celebrates grand opening of new global headquarters," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.modernatx.com/en-US/media-center/all-media/blogs/new-global-headquarters>. [Accessed 01 08 2025].
- [60] A. Gabriel, "Moderna Moves Cambridge Employees Into New Headquarters," *BioSpace*, 2024.
- [61] M. Brennan, C. Feng and K. Olmos, "Moderna relocates to new, 462,000 square-foot Kendall Square headquarters," *The Harvard Crimson*, vol. 151, 2024.
- [62] Census Reporter, "Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX metro area," 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/31000US19100-dallas-fort-worth-arlington-tx-metro-area/>. [Accessed 20 01 2025].
- [63] Fort Worth EDP, "Why Fort Worth," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://fortworthedp.com/why-fort-worth/>. [Accessed 20 01 2025].
- [64] R. Lee, "Vacant land, flood exposure, and urbanization, Examining land cover change in the Dallas-Fort Worth metro area," *Landscape and Urban Planning*, vol. 209, 2021.
- [65] City of Dallas, "City of Dallas wins global award for Smart Cities Initiative," 2017. [Online]. Available: <https://www.dallascitynews.net/city-of-dallas-wins-global-award-for-smart-cities-initiative>.
- [66] D. Magazine, "How the Red Pegasus Became a Symbol of Dallas," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-ceo/2024/november/how-the-red-pegasus-became-the-symbol-of-dallas>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].

- [67] Southern Methodist University, "Brand logos," 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://www.smu.edu/brand/logos/>.
- [68] NFL, National Football League, "NFL teams," 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://nfl.com/teams>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [69] R. Burton and N. O'Reilly, *The rise of Major League Soccer, Building a global giant*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2025.
- [70] FIFA, "Dallas to host nine FIFA World Cup 26 matches," 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://www.fifa.com/en/tournaments/mens/worldcup/canadamexicousa2026/articles/dallas-stadium-host-nine-world-cup-matches>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [71] The Henry Ford, "Mobil Pegasus sign, circa 1940," 2025. [Online]. Available: <https://www.thehenryford.org/collections-and-research/digital-collections/artifact/210314>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [72] DBEST, "Why Dallas is Triple D.," 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://www.dbest.co/why-dallas-is-triple-d/>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [73] Oxford Economics, "Global Cities Index," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://www.oxfordeconomics.com/>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [74] Dallas Morning News, "Everything's bigger in Texas, Here are 14 of the state's wackiest Guinness World Records," 2023. [Online]. Available: <https://www.dallasnews.com/>. [Accessed 10 01 2025].
- [75] Dallas Innovation Alliance, "Awards, Announcements and Digital Inclusion," 2022. [Online]. Available: <https://www.dallasinnovationalliance.com/news/tag/Smart+Cities>. [Accessed 30 01 2025].
- [76] Digital Synopsis, "IBM created 'Smart' Billboards for 'Smarter' Campaign," 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://digitalsynopsis.com/advertising/ibm-smart-ideas-smarter-cities/>.
- [77] IBM, "Attentive billboards," 2001. [Online]. Available: <https://research.ibm.com/publications/attentive-billboards>. [Accessed 09 02 2025].
- [78] GaWC, Globalization and World Cities Research Network, "The world according to GaWC, World cities 2024," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://gawc.lboro.ac.uk/gawc-worlds/the-world-according-to-gawc/world-cities-2024>. [Accessed 09 02 2025].
- [79] Mori Memorial Foundation, Institute for Urban Strategies, "Global Power City Index 2024," 2024. [Online]. Available: <https://mori-m-foundation.or.jp/english/ius2/gpci2/index.shtml>. [Accessed 09 02 2025].