EMERGING CORPORATE URBANISM IN EUROPE:
Developing Responsive Strategies within Brandhubs in the Experience Society

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Content

2.2. Goals

2.2.1. Problem Statement

The proposed research examines <u>a new, hybrid urban typology</u> resulting from corporate conglomerates, or Brandhubs, in the contemporary experience society. It investigates the recent appearances of this phenomenon in Europe with regard to its historical predecessors and contemporary counterparts, proliferating primarily in North America and the Far East. In the light of the current restructuring of cities to experiential spaces of shopping, recreation and cultural events, the focus is on the latent potential of this typology for responsive physical urban development, offering in addition to functional and commercial benefit an experiential and sociocultural added value from which both the private and public realm can profit.

In their promotional strategies, big-name corporations have come to incorporate <u>the Brandhub</u> to create their identity as a popular institution. Brandhubs, as referred to in this study, are comprehensive mixed-used environments that aim to mediate the company's identity to a broad audience in an experiential urban 'public' space. Designed by signature architects, they are a veritable reification of the consumer commodity itself. In addition to hosting the traditional retail, office and/or housing facilities, they are highly pervaded by entertainment, culture and other complementing event components, together forming a hub of experiences entirely organized around the given corporate brand and its sub-brand identities. The closest precedent to this development is the flagship promotional store such as the Niketowns (Nike 2003) or Prada epicenters (Koolhaas 2001b; Herzog 2004). This example, however, is limited to a purely architectural – if not interior design – scale. Instead, the goal of this research is to analyze this phenomenon at an urban scale, where Brandhubs in the framework of <u>public-private partnerships</u> are strategically implemented at a planning and governmental level to foster urban development. With projects such as the Universal CityWalk in Hollywood/ Orlando/ Osaka, the Daimler City in Berlin, Disney's Times Square Development in New York, the Sony Centers in San Francisco/ Berlin/ Tokyo, Migros's WESTside in Berne, the VW ErlebnisWelt in Wolfsburg, and potentially the distributed Prada Universe, the Hugo Boss Town in Metzingen, and the Adidas World of Sports in Herzogenaurach, the implication of Brandhubs in the development of both the city and the corporation becomes evident.

Once the corporate branding strategy leaves the confines of the traditional office block or single cell retail shop to incorporate entire districts or neighborhoods, the urban architectural problems increase in complexity and the socio-economic aspects begin to implicate many actors other than the corporation and individual property owner in question. In the United States, where Brandhubs are already an established model, the public sector is involved on an almost 'equal' footing with the developer from the beginning; the project emerges through their partnership. While this practice is a unique North American one, resulting primarily from the 'weak' structure of city governments and the power of the private sector, it is rapidly becoming an accepted model in Europe. A great part of this research will be dedicated to a careful analysis of the conditions in which this occurs in the European context in comparison and in contrast to the North American predecessors.

The rapidly progressing <u>privatization, globalization, commodification or even "Disneyfication"</u> of the urban public realm has generated a bland, artificial uniformity that displaces or exploits the variety of local places, businesses and cultures (cf. Sorkin 1992; Roost 2000; Klein 2001). It also tends towards the production of "The Generic City" or "Junkspace" as keenly labeled by Rem Koolhaas (1995 and 2001), in which shopping streets, business districts and city centers in general become undistinguishable from one another. Hence, the central question raised by this study is how Brandhubs respond to public concerns at present and how they might potentially be integrated into more sustainable development strategies.

The projects investigated in this study are all based on the consumer-oriented retail and/or entertainment market. While some utilize the rather commercially-driven entertainment mall to generate identity and urbanity like the Daimler City, Disney's Times Square Development, Hugo Boss Town or Universal CityWalks, others such as the Adidas World of Sports, Migros's WESTside, Prada Universe, Sony Centers or the VW ErlebnisWelt draw on more sophisticated culture-oriented marketing strategies. These diverse branding strategies dictate a specific urban architecture, where 'culturalized' or even 'anti-marketing' strategies encourage a typology that hides the ubiquitous brand name.

As part of their common marketing efforts both the brand-name corporations and entrepreneurial city governments praise the popularity of these projects, and how they immediately improve the local situation. However, they can also be a source for urban problems. Many critics who scorn such corporate conglomerates have pointed out their negative social and cultural consequences on the urban landscape and society (cf. Sorkin 1992; Huxtable 1997; Gottdiener 1997; Hannigan 1998; Ronneberger et al. 1999; Roost 2000; Becker 2001). By likening them to Disneyland, they argue that these "landscapes of power" transform cities into totally commodified and polarized environments that erode public space and marginalize the local context.

While Brandhubs clearly create instant urban regeneration, their long-term contribution to the city and real life expectancy remain questionable, especially since they are based heavily on the ephemeral, the event, the experience. Do Brandhubs improve the local condition in the long run or are they simply the next evolutionary step from the entertainment mall and will be replaced in the short term? Can they become deeply rooted in the city or are they solely driven by commercial considerations, exploiting the local context for export, tourists and suburban day-trippers? Are Brandhubs the epicenters around which new urban identities evolve or do they simply accelerate the destruction of local places? Does the Brandhub typology constitute a promising model for sustainable urban development or is it a warning signal that public urban space itself is rapidly being transformed into a consumer commodity? Do brand-name corporations have the capacity to develop highly responsive urban spaces that could not have been realized by the public sector alone? Can the forces of society be integrated in Brandhub developments in a way that they appropriate those of the economy rather than the other way round?

In the stream of the rapidly alternating marketing cycles and functional patterns as well as rising public concerns about the commercialization of everything, there is a <u>need for a differentiated set of urban values</u> as well as for strategies that challenge the spatial and temporal forces of brand-culture. This research will first profoundly examine the Brandhub phenomenon and then, based on the findings, construct methodologies and instruments for <u>developing responsive strategies within the Brandhub typology</u>.

2.2.2. Hypotheses, Milestones and Expected Output

This research is built around the hypothesis that **responsive corporate urbanism** requires the creative integration of private and public values in a highly differentiated urban architecture. This implies that the creation of a responsive urban environment is based on the premise that physical, economic, and sociocultural developments are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components. In addition, this study assumes that the facilitation of such a creative interplay necessitates both collaboration and competition: cooperation or <u>collaboration as a mechanism for creating urban value</u> (creative integration of divergent urban forces) and <u>competition for capturing urban value</u> by dividing it up fairly among the key stakeholders involved in the development process. These include the corporation as the main visionary and developer as well as the public, which is represented by the public authorities and possibly by opposing citizen's groups or nonprofit organizations (benefit for both the corporation and the public). This simultaneous interplay shows a more dynamic relationship than the words cooperation and competition alone. This is why this study embraces the portmanteau term "coopetition", which was coined by Ray Noorda in the late 1980's and extensively researched by Adam Brandenburger and Barry Nalebuff (1996) in the business context.

Furthermore, this research hypothesizes that with such a <u>responsive, 'coopetitive' strategy,</u> seemingly contradictory objectives and competing urban values can be correlated so that they complement one another and exponentially add value to the urban built environment and its socioeconomic viability. In the development of Brandhubs, big-name corporations are confronted with two major objectives: firstly, the search to maximize profit, and secondly, the satisfaction of the consumer's and citizen's growing demand for meaningful experiences and social responsibility. Contemporary corporate urbanism is a true showcase of how architecture, culture and economy can come together (cf. Harvey 1989b and 2001; Zukin 1991 and 1995; Jameson 1991; Pine and Gilmore 1999; Mikunda 2002; Riewoldt 2002; Wall 2003). As will be demonstrated in the rationale for this research, the Brandhub typology exists not only to provide functional and commercial benefit,[1] but also experiential and sociocultural added value that is unique, highly visible and can be directly experienced.[2] This implicates that Brandhub developments are successful when they can trigger positive emotions and generate lasting sympathies, not only within one-time tourists, brand obsessed shoppers or the social elite, but also within the broad local population. For this reason, corporate Brandhub developers have to work with – not against – the public stakeholders as well as transgressive cultural producers, even if their interests are antagonistic to the corporation's own codes and functioning. The most profitable way might be counterintuitive: If corporations view their opponents not as a threat but as a creative source to satisfy citizens' and consumers' needs and desires, they can increase public acceptance, lasting brand loyalty, and consequently long-term economic profits (cf. Bosshart 1997; Cogman and Oppenheim 2002).

In this regard, this study hypothesizes that successful Brandhubs have to provide **a responsive, highly differentiated and condensed urban architecture**. The responsiveness within this architecture is chiefly influenced by four major hypothetical factors that enhance urban value. First, <u>a unique mix and composition of uses</u> that condenses commercial and sociocultural, private and public, global and local as well as diverse hybrid spaces to resonate to the rising sophistication of users' demands. Second, <u>an appropriate form</u> that makes the users aware of the diversity of choices and experiences available to them. Third, <u>a close integration with the city</u> to complement and enrich instead of displace or exploit the project's immediate context. And fourthly, <u>a meaningful urban identity</u> that mediates the corporate culture and regional peculiarities in a way so that it responds to public concerns as summarized under the umbrella of corporate citizenship,[3] and thus enabling more and more of the population to identify with the project.

Ultimately, this study assumes that the creation of such a responsive environment has benefits for both the corporation and the public. For the corporation, this involves added expenditures that should not only be viewed as an essential cost of doing business, but rather as an investment that offers lasting economic bonuses, chiefly because the integration with the local context and the provision of added amenities adds significantly to the longevity of the Brandhub, and therefore its sustainability. For the public, responsive Brandhubs open possibilities for novel urban spaces within which more sustainable cultures can evolve and constitute catalysts for local physical, economic and sociocultural development.

In this manner responsive corporate urbanism utilizes a <u>win-win strategy</u>, which implies that one can only create a sustainable urban future when all stakeholders, including the corporation and the public, can equally or even exponentially benefit from the urban development. As a result, the primary goal for fostering the responsiveness of the Brandhubs would seem to be to achieve a reasonable and equitably distributed level of corporate and social well-being.

In order to examine how this responsive win-win strategy is inherent in the Brandhub typology, this research proposes a **five-phase examination method**. In the first phase, it will provide <u>a comprehensive understanding of the origins and characteristics of the Brandhub</u> as a new urban typology in both its historical and contemporary as well as global and local context. Second, it will examine <u>a series of case studies</u> of this emerging typology in the European context. The case study method has been chosen because it allows for the inclusion of diverse information, factors and contingencies – the tangible with facts and the intangible with descriptions and observations. It is therefore the most appropriate method to detect the particular strength and weaknesses of these projects for responsive urban development. In order to capture the mutual

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[1] Most commercial developments are purely consumption-driven such as traditional shopping malls realized by profit-driven real estate developers. They are usually defined by (i) the most profitable use (dominance of international chains over local businesses or sociocultural institutions; lack of public facilities), (ii) a generic and replicable architecture ("cheap", reusable, isolated from the context), and (iii) the provision of a controlled environment (exclusion of specific levels of the population). Such reductionist developments have a very short lifespan. They neither integrate the public sphere nor have real substance. Since they are purely commercial and functional oriented, they tend to have a very short lifespan. Moreover, their dreary homogeneity quickly appears visual and mental "cheap" or boring.

[2] With their highly heterogeneous urban spaces, in which added amenities are integrated into the consumption process or vice versa, brandhubs are more convenient and enjoyable than the monotonous and monofunctional developments of the recent past, which are characterized by the strict separation of private/commercial and public/sociocultural offerings.

[3] Corporate citizenship or social responsibility (CSR) is based on the obligation of an organization to act responsible with respect to its stakeholders as well as the society and the environment at large. The United Nations Global Compact (2002) outlines nine fundamental principles of CSR and asks companies to act on these principles in their own corporate domains. As of March 2003, 717 big-name corporations from various countries participate in the UN Global Compact such as DaimlerChrysler AG, Nike Inc. and the Volkswagen AG.

relationship between the physical built environment and dynamic social factors, an urban matrix will be defined. In addition, a conceptual framework, an urban value net will be constructed with which the 'coopetitive' – cooperative and competitive – mechanisms inherent in the selected cases can be evaluated. The intention is to detect indicators for productive synergies between urban architectural, economic and sociocultural values. In the third phase, this research will conduct <u>a profound cross-case evaluation</u> to extract the most important urban factors that have to be fulfilled in order to foster the responsiveness within the Brandhub typology. Based on this assessment, <u>a net of coopetitive, positive urban factors as well as a scientifically supported, action-oriented catalogue of measures</u> will be proposed in a fourth phase, which aim to be used as tools for developing responsive strategies for Brandhubs as a basis for robust and lasting urban development. It will allow corporate developers, public authorities and advocates, urban planners and architects to contribute to responsive Brandhub developments by optimizing existing resources. New forms of coopetitive project development will also allow cultural producers and users to be active and equal participants. By creating viable public spaces, operative social and cultural venues as well as a basis for long-term economic growth, corporate as well as local structures will be enriched. Finally, the findings of the research will be documented and extensively disseminated at international conferences, symposia, journals and online discussion platforms with the objective of contributing to the <u>transfer of knowledge</u> and of receiving valuable feedback for the study's refinement.

With its mixture of urban architectural, economical and sociocultural explorations as well as theoretical, empirical, and practice-oriented studies, this research will become a tissue of urban values in its own right, a compendium of resources and examples, a manifold <u>brand-knowledge hub</u>. While this synoptic approach might be questionable, it fortifies the fact that it is increasingly impossible to understand the forces that are shaping our cities from only one perspective. In order to generate long-term qualities for the city and its future, one has to bridge the gaps between those who view corporate urban conglomerates solely as a physical built form, those who criticize their sociocultural effects, and those who concentrate on their economic relevance. By weaving formerly separate areas of knowledge together, this research tries to bridge disciplinary boundaries in order to get to the heart of a complex and sophisticated contemporary urban development.

2.3. Rationale and State of Research

The rationale for the proposed study and the state of research consists of four parts. First, the emergence of Brandhubs as a new urban typology is illuminated in its historical and contemporary context, and its distinctiveness in the contemporary experience society can be defined. Second, exemplary Brandhubs are presented that show the 'global' urban phenomenon and its local development in the German and Swiss context. Third, scientific research published on the subject will be reviewed in order to point out the already detected problems and potentials of contemporary corporate conglomerates as well as to highlight both the relevance and the limits of previous and ongoing research. Finally, major research methodologies used in this study are discussed in relation to this study's intents.

2.3.1. Evolution of Corporate Urbanism and the Brandhub Typology

Corporate urbanism is not a totally new phenomenon. Corporate conglomerates are meanwhile old and widespread enough to have a history of their own. Starting from the Renaissance, a recursive development line can be drawn from the innovative identity architectures and company towns of the industrial age to the corporate office towers of the service society and the theme parks of 'the society of the spectacle' up to the rapidly emerging Brandhubs of the experience society. Previous corporate conglomerates differ in many ways from today's Brandhubs and they are surely not the end of the current debate about new promotional strategies and new concepts for urban development. However, it can be shown how certain crucial architectural and socioeconomic motivations have surprisingly remained unchanged.

2.3.1.1. Corporate Identity in the European Middle Ages and Renaissance

Already in the European medieval and renaissance period wealthy families, who encompassed many diverse interests and activities, established the foundations of today's corporate business structures. As merchants, financiers, and entrepreneurs with branches in major European trade cities, these families were not only active as art patrons, but also as urban-architectural developers. An interesting example is the <u>Fugger family</u>, who reigned as the wealthiest family in the world throughout the 15th and 16th century. Starting with their parent house in Augsburg, the Fugger Corporation developed factories as well as trade branches, banks, and palaces all around Europe. The most interesting contribution of the Fugger dynasty, however, is that they founded the first social settlement in the world, the "Fuggerei," which served and still serves today not only as a memorial for the family, but also as a tourist attraction and place of pilgrimage for architects.

Another famous example is the <u>Medici dynasty</u>, which was the most important family of bankers in Europe between the 15th and 17th century. The Medici family is not only well-known for having ruled Florence, the place of their headquarters, but also for their involvement in Florence's urban development. Their town planning efforts started with the Palazzo Medici and the adjacent extension of the adopted Basilica di San Lorenzo and found their climax with the reconstruction of the Uffizi and the Palazzo Pitti, and the famous linkage of the two buildings with the Corridoio Vasariano. Their omnipresent constructions, both public and private, sublimate the power and grandeur of the Medici name not only through signature architectures, but also by brandishing the family's shield, their logo of sorts.

| *The Fugger Logo* | *The Fugger Palace*: *Augsburg 1515* | *The "Fuggerei"*: *Augsburg 1523* | *The Medici Logo* | *Palazzo Medici*: *Florence 1444* | *Galleria degli Uffizi*: *Florence 1565/80* |

The urban-architectural marvels of these business empires can be seen as precedents to contemporary corporate conglomerates in that they impressively combined work, residential, cultural and entertainment facilities. Moreover, like today's Brandhubs, they were visible symbols of the wealth and power of their patrons. However, the brand spaces of the Renaissance were only accessible to the wealthy elite, leaving the rest of the populace to admire the facades of their imposing edifices. As contemporary Brandhubs cater to a middle class consumer society, they give the impression of being open to the entire public. Yet, their apparent exclusion or exploitation of the poor and disenfranchised members of society is simply more insidious, because they foster the desire not only to consume certain products, but entire lifestyles.

2.3.1.2. Corporate Identity Architecture and Company Towns in the Industrial Age

During the Industrial Age, large international corporations were also active as urban developers. Their representative industrial architectures were raised to the status of symbols, heralding the arrival of corporate identity architectures that now dominate the cityscape. They constructed corporate headquarters, factories, and even whole company towns. Starting in England, these conglomerates increasingly spread in the rest of Europe, the USA, and later in Asia. The following are some groundbreaking Swiss and German examples.

Already in 1876, well aware of the symbolic impact of corporate identity, the Feldschlösschen Brewery built a production facility in form of a fortress in a picturesque setting near Basel. In 1907, with the reconstruction of the AEG Areal and the design of the "Turbinenhalle", Peter Behrens created a model for industrial architecture, symbolizing innovation and modernism for the AEG electricity company in Berlin. Drawing on this model, Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer designed 1913 the famous Fagus Work in Alfeld an der Leine. In the 1920's Behrens was also involved in building the Hoechst Areal in Frankfurt. His expressionistic language turned out to be so emblematic that the tower and bridge of the administration building became the world-famous logo of the Hoechst Company.

Feldschlösschen Logo	*Feldschlösschen Brewery*: *Rheinfelden 1876*	*AEG Logo*: *Behrens, Berlin 1907*	*AEG Areal*: *Behrens/ Bernhard, Berlin 1911*	*Turbine Factory*: *Behrens, Berlin 1909*
Fagus Logo	*Fagus Work*: *Gropius and Meyer, Alfeld an der Leine 1913*	*Hoechst Logo*	*Hoechst Administration Building and Entrance Hall*: *Behrens, Frankfurt a. M. 1924*	

Another important predecessor of contemporary corporate conglomerates was the company town – entire communities built by companies to house their employees. Most company towns exemplify the principles of Ebenezer Howard's (1898) "Garden Cities of Tomorrow", an utopian vision for creating a city in which nature would peacefully coexist with industry, as well as Toni Garnier's (1901) model "Cité Industrielle" as the precursor to modernist planning in which residential and industrial uses were strictly zoned. An interesting example of a German company town is the "Krupp-Stadt" in Essen, comprising the Krupp headquarters, numerous industrial utilities as well as settlements for their employees, including stores, learning and recreational facilities. Krupp's impact on the cityscape of Essen was not limited to the actual Krupp-Stadt. It also included the representative Villa Hügel, numerous social settlements such as the renowned garden city Margaretenhöhe by Georg Metzendorf, the Alfried Krupp hospital, and various nursing and convalescence centers. An even more comprehensive corporate city is the Siemensstadt in Berlin. The headquarters and factories are completed by communities such as the "Großsiedlung Siemensstadt" (Ringsiedlung), which was master planned by Martin Wagner and Hans Scharoun. Another interesting example is the retort city "Stadt des KdF-Wagens," comprising both the Volkswagen Works and an industrial colony for its employees, constructed in the open countryside based on the urban development plan by Peter Koller. In 1945 after denazification, the town was renamed into Wolfsburg.

Krupp-Stadt: *Essen 1912*	*Margaretenhöhe*: *Essen 1909-38*	*Siemensstadt*: *Berlin 1930*	*Ringsiedlung*: *Berlin 1932*	*"Stadt des KdF-Wagens"*: *1938*	*Town Hall Building*: *Wolfsburg 1951*

Like company towns, today's Brandhubs are the product of specific socioeconomic processes. Company towns as stated by Margaret Crawford (1995) in her book "Building the Workingman's Paradise" were shaped by welfare capitalism, industrial transformation, and the efforts of reformers to steer those forces. In contrary to this social and functional rationality of the welfare state, today's Brandhubs are the product of a neoliberal market rationale, which intensifies competition and the battle for customers. Characterized by a commercialization of culture and culturalization of the economy, this rationale contributes directly to the formation of Brandhubs, in which culture and commerce become entangled. Moreover, while the construction of company towns was based on the separation of functions, contemporary corporate conglomerates seek to merge urban

activities related almost entirely to consumption in a dense setting – in many cases by restructuring these former strictly zoned industrial towns into experiential spaces for consumption.

2.3.1.3. Corporate Towers in the Service Society

Innovative industrial architectures and company towns were later succeeded by corporate towers, which had their prime in the 20th century, most notably in North America and later in Asia. Office towers began in an age when corporate giants built self-made monuments to house their employees. Although born in Chicago, with examples such as Louis Sullivan's masterpiece Carson Pirie Scott Building from 1898, the high-rise boom moved at the beginning of the 20th century to New York. Whereas the Chicago constructions prefigured the skyscrapers of the austere International Style, the New York Art Deco towers of the 1920's and 1930's were also built as public amenities, possessing a grandeur that was appreciable by the general population. A famous Art Deco landmark is the Chrysler Building designed by Van Alen with motifs inspired by automobile designs. The ornamental Art Deco period was followed by the International Style architecture of glass and steel, which was introduced in 1952 with the New York Lever House designed by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM) and reached its design climax in 1957 with Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building. Most of the high-rise buildings that we are familiar with today are variations of the Cartesian rationality of International Style architecture, although there are a few postmodern exceptions such as the New York AT&T Building designed by Philip Johnson – ironically now occupied by Sony America and the Sony Wonder World. In 1974 with the completion of the 442 meter tall Sears Tower in Chicago, also designed by SOM, the corporate towers in the US reached their highest point. Since then, the US skyscrapers have been extensively copied throughout Asia. Up to this date, the tallest building in the world is the currently constructed 508 meter high Taipei 101 tower by the Taipei Financial Center Corporation. Many much taller and more comprehensive high-rises have been envisioned such as the X-Seed 4000, an artificial island that can house a whole city with up to 1 Mio inhabitants, encompassing living, working, and leisure spaces.


Carson Pirie Scott Building: *Chicago 1898* ***Chrysler Building***: *New York 1930* ***Lever House***: *New York 1952* ***Seagram Building***: *New York 1957* ***AT&T (Sony) Building***: *New York 1983* ***Sears Tower***: *Chicago 1974* ***Taipei 101***: *Taipei planned 2004* ***X-Seed 4000***: *Tokyo vision*

Corporate towers gained great symbolic power in the time of an economic boom, during which significant concentrations of capital controlled by multinational corporations dominated the world's economies. It was this symbolism in conjunction with the saturation of the downtown office market in the late 1980's that would seal the fate of these towers, a fate of tragedy and an aftermath that led to a global rethinking on mega towers. Contemporary corporate conglomerates go beyond the symbolic architectures of the past. Although they may have similar motives, namely to be popular, entertaining and urbane, current developments go further still, instrumenting architecture and public spaces to provide stimulating physical experiences – a simulacrum or real interaction often escapist in nature.

2.3.1.4. Corporate Theme Parks and Urban Entertainment Destinations: 'The Society of the Spectacle'

Direct predecessors of brand settings that forge physical backdrops for experiences with a high entertainment value are themed environments. Theming has been widely researched from the "decorated shed" and the "inverted duck" as controversially discussed in Robert Venturi's (1972) landmark Learning from Las Vegas via the exurban theme parks and suburban shopping malls up to the more recent urban entertainment destinations of the rediscovered city. In what has been labeled as "The Society of the Spectacle" (Debord 1967), these themed and aggressively branded environments have evolved into major extensions of the media as spaces for experientially organizing consumption. From a sociocultural perspective, Mark Gottdiener (1997) in "The Theming of America" has analyzed the origin and nature of themed environments as part of the everyday social fabric, and John Hannigan (1998) in the "Fantasy City" has explored the same subject with a focus on urban development. To some extent, the theming of experiential brand spaces has also been analyzed in terms of choreography such as by the dramaturgic specialist Christian Mikunda (2002).

An early model of a themed environment is the Casino Resort Las Vegas. While it commenced as a notorious gambling strip, it soon transformed into a lavish hotel resort, and more recently, into a themed shopping and family entertainment destination. How Las Vegas changed from the "Sin City" into the "The All-American Tourist City" has been extensively researched (cf. Parker 1999, Angélil 2000). Concerning the urban architecture of Las Vegas, Jose Gamez (2004) has performed a series of investigations that add to the diagrams found within "Learning from Las Vegas." The next movement in Las Vegas might be that it turns into one Brandhub dominated by one corporate giant. Already today it is controlled by a small handful of corporations that own some 60 percent of the Las Vegas tourism industry. By all accounts, Las Vegas is the ultimate example of what Joseph Pine and James Gilmore (1999) call "The Experience Economy."
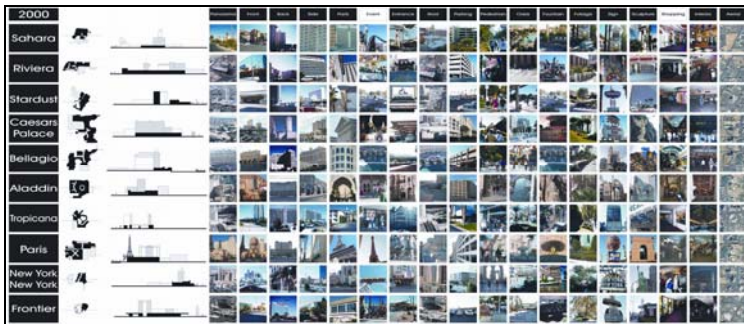
***Re- examination of (Learning from) Las Vegas: Architecture and Urban Form in the Society of the Spectacle**. Photo credit: Jose Gamez et al. University of Nevada, School of Architecture 2000.*

Other major theme parks were developed by the entertainment industry. In 1955 with the opening of <u>Disneyland</u> in California, the Walt Disney Company began a theme park empire that now spans the globe. By continuously "imagineering" new experiences, Disney applies its theming expertise to a variety of offerings ranging from Disney Worlds via the Disney TV shows to the Disney Cruise Lines. Since Disney started this trend, its theming and branding strategies have been widely imitated. Above all, they have been adopted by profit-driven real-estate developers: first to upgrade monotonous suburban shopping malls with decors and amenities into urban-like specialty malls, and second to expand these customized entertainment malls back into the cities. In the USA, this has become increasingly important since the 1970's and 80's, when the suburban shopping malls reached their saturation point.

So while the early theme parks and malls developed as monocultures located at the edge of the city, their more advanced successors cumulate as <u>mixed-use developments</u> in the city itself, integrating (i) shopping, (ii) dining, (iii) entertainment as well as other complementing leisure components around a 'public' open-air space. This specific mix of uses is known as the "trinity of synergy" of <u>urban entertainment centers</u> (Beyard 1998 and 2001: 28).[4] Among the first UECs realized in the 1970's and 80's, then referred to as festival market places or downtown malls, are Faneuil Hall in Boston and Harborplace in Baltimore (Rouse 2003) as well as Horton Plaza in San Diego (Jerde Partnership 2003a). Built to compete with the suburban malls that dominated the retail market in the US and to revitalize downtown, the realization of these early UECs required extensive help from urban governments; they demanded both elaborate public and private strategies to handle the complex problems posed by the city. This complicated process by which they came into being led to the establishment of <u>public-private partnerships</u>. How these and other UECs were realized backed by public-private partners and how they stimulated urban regeneration has been profoundly researched by <u>Bernard Frieden and Lynne Sagalyn</u> (1989) in their pioneering book "<u>Downtown, Inc.</u>"

Meanwhile, the development of UECs in the frame of public-private partnerships has become an established practice in the US and also a rapidly emerging model in Europe (cf. Beyard 1998 and 2001; Hannigan 1998; Reiff 1998; Steinecke 2000; StadtBauwelt 2000).[5] Their general potentials and problems for urban development have been extensively illuminated. On the one hand, they have been praised to be very popular and economically successful, because they bring prosperity for both the corporate developer and the city. On the other hand, they have been substantially criticized for their negative social and cultural consequences infiltrating the city with mediocrity, commercialism and mass culture. For example <u>Michael Sorkin</u>'s (1992) collection of essays entitled "<u>Variations on a Theme Park</u>" illustrates how the Disney theme parks have become insidious models for today's disturbingly secured and simulated environments. In this and other publications, critics such as M. Christine Boyer, Margaret Crawford and Mike Davis exemplify the pervasive "Disneyfication" of the post-industrial urban landscape. Their overall thesis is that this destroys the variety of historic places and produces an artificial homogeneity. They argue that the public realm increasingly has been replaced by hyperreal worlds of simulation – predominantly as spaces of commodification.

The impact of such commodified environments has also been widely discussed in the light of an increasing privatization of the city. On the one hand, they have been termed as "<u>dual cities</u>" (cf. Mollenkopf and Castells 1991) or "<u>control centers</u>" (cf. Deleuze 1990; Sassen 1991), which tend to be carefully controlled to tailor to consumers and social elites while excluding undesirables and thus enforce the already existing polarization within cities. On the other hand, they render a certain degree of uniformity to all cities and tend towards the production of "<u>The Generic City</u>" or "<u>Junkspace</u>" as keenly labeled and described by Rem Koolhaas (1995 and 2001a).

While many critics object to the homogeneity of simulated or "disneyfied" spaces, it has to be noted that their generic nature increasingly becomes outflanked by the rise of non-replicable and rather original experiences that draw their energy from local culture and/or high-quality design with real materials and honest intentions. Such unique environments not only proliferate in the North American context, but even more radically in Europe where authenticity as an intrinsic strength has always prevailed (cf. Reiff 1998; Bosshart 1997; Pine and Gilmore 1999; Harvey 2001; Mikunda 2002). One major reason for this is that authenticity, history and locality have become commodities themselves.

In recent decades, the intensified competition put forth by the globalization of the markets has forced both cities and corporations to differentiate themselves from their competitors. To become more distinctive, they increasingly produce unique commodities by appropriating local peculiarities as well as aesthetic and ethical meanings of diverse origins from which they can extract economic benefit. As <u>David Harvey</u> (2001: 10-13) confirms, the forces of globalization in a sort of

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[4] Urban entertainment centers (UECs) can take various forms. While all are multi-anchored by the "trinity of synergy" most are marked by one major use: for example (i) shopping or outlet centers (e.g. West Edmonton Mall, CentrO Oberhausen, Prada Universe, Factory Outlet Hub Metzingen), (ii) entertainment districts (e.g. Universal CityWalks, SI-Entertainment Stuttgart, Times Square Redevelopment, Sony Centers, Space Park Bremen), (iii) service centers (e.g. Potsdamer Platz Berlin, Odaiba City Tokyo, Zentrum Zurich North), (iv) resorts and leisure parks (e.g. Las Vegas, Disney Worlds, Legolands, Migros's WESTside, Adidas World of Sports), (iv) multi-functional halls or sport arenas (e.g. Seattle Seahawks Stadium, St.-Jakobs Park Basel, Allianz Arena Munich, the planned Hardturm Stadium Zurich), (v) upgraded railway stations or airports (e.g. Euralille, Stuttgart 21, Promenaden Hauptbahnhof Leipzig, Unique Airport Zurich), and (vi) corporate visitor centers (e.g. VW Autostadt Wolfsburg, BMW Welt Munich, the planned World of Coca Cola in Atlanta).
[5] Many American downtowns are currently reconstructed with UECs themed around motifs of the traditional European city that provide urban comfort such as sidewalk cafes and lively piazzas. The trend towards UECs in the US can be seen as a sort of "Europeization" of the consumer experience. Conversely, European cities increasingly take over the concept of the North American entertainment mall.

contradictory manner lead to "the valuation of uniqueness, authenticity, particularity, originality and all manner of other dimensions to social life that are inconsistent with the homogeneity presupposed by commodity production." In other words, the dreary homogeneity that goes with "Disneyfication" or pure commodification erases the uniqueness of products and places, and thus their competitiveness. Harvey states if corporations and cities are not to totally destroy the uniqueness that is the basis for sustaining growth in an otherwise fiercely competitive world, then they "must support a form of differentiation and allow for divergent and to some degree uncontrollable local cultural developments that can be antagonistic to their own smooth functioning." Furthermore, he argues that they "can even support (though cautiously and nervously) all manner of 'transgressive' cultural practices precisely because this is one way to be original, creative and authentic as well as unique."

For sure, this exploitation of the local milieu for economic benefit of others can be seen as even more insidious than the evident Disneyfication of it. However, by seeking to trade on special qualities, profit-driven corporations and cities open up new spaces within which more sustainable alternatives can be conceived and implemented. These "spaces of hope", as Harvey calls them, include Brandhubs, which integrate sociocultural developments into commercial developments in a way that the forces of society can seek to appropriate and undermine those of the economy rather than the other way round.

2.3.1.5. Brandhubs in the emerging Experience Society

Big-name corporations increasingly participate in the aforementioned restructuring of cities from monotonous industrial or service centers to multifaceted spaces of experience. As key visionaries and development partners, contributing to every aspect of planning, marketing and operation, they fuel new corporate landmarks, here identified as Brandhubs. Thereby their main intention is to differentiate themselves from other corporations, to generate lasting brand loyalty, and to sustain growth in a fiercely competitive world. The development of the Brandhub also represents the change from a pure service to an experience-oriented economy, a new economic area in which according to Pine and Gilmore (1999) "every business is a stage" and companies must design compelling and engaging events. In the construction of Brandhubs, corporations therefore utilize both the concept of the themed UEC as well as the practice of public-private partnerships. Therefore, the central question raised by this study is how far Brandhubs are not only implemented to the advantage of the corporation, but also for the benefit of the public, in particular, the local community.

Brandhubs are comprehensive urban mixed-use environments constructed entirely around the given corporate brand identity. In contrast to traditional corporate identity architectures, they not only comprise offices, housing and amenities for their employees, but also consumption- and experience-oriented UEC components for the general public. Together these urban offers form an experiential hub of activities, all themed around the given brand or sub-brand identities.

Groundbreaking US examples are the Universal CityWalk in Hollywood, Disney's Times Square Development in New York, and Sony's Metreon Center in San Francisco. The intention of Disney, Universal, Sony and other big-name corporations to construct such large-scale urban projects is to mediate their identity in a pleasing setting so as to trigger lasting sympathies. As Otto Riewoldt (2002: 8) in his book Brandscaping asserts "Behind the brand-building efforts there lies the conviction that the glamour and power of the brand are the key weapons in the battle for target groups and customers" or as Naomi Klein (2001: 21) in her seminal No logo critically pinpoints "The products that will flourish in the future will be the ones not presented as commodities but as concepts: the brand as culture, as experience, as lifestyle." In this context, David Bosshart (1997: 44) speaks about the "emotionalization" and "de-materialization of consumption," meaning that customers don't buy material commodities anymore, but themes, messages, symbols, cults and events.

For this reason, corporations in their promotional strategies have come to incorporate the public event to create their identity as a popular institution. In order that their corporate identity can be experienced by a broad audience, they either annex public spaces or make their private spaces public. With such semi-public Brandhubs, they try to construct an enjoyable atmosphere that generates high-emotional value and allows for a characteristic encounter with the brand. As mediators of identity, Brandhubs become communicators of a specific culture or lifestyle be it mobility, wellness, knowledge acquisition, constant self-regeneration, environmental-consciousness or all at once.

In addition to these experiential branding efforts, mega-corporations increasingly utilize multi-media strategies, in particular the concept of cross-promotion. Hitherto this practice, in which one media product advertises one or several other products, was primarily employed in the media industry (cf. Beyard et al. 1998: 16 and 2001: 23; Bosshart 1997: 86; Herrmann 1999). In the construction of Brandhubs such synergistic effects are used for the first time on an urban scale with the aim of further increasing brand visibility and market penetration, signifying the creation of multi-brand monopolies. This phenomenon can be illustrated with Disney's Times Square Development,[6] which was keenly shaped by Robert A.M. Stern Architects: The Disney store on 42nd street advertises with billboards for Disney movies. The New Amsterdam Theater shows the Disney-Musical "The Lion King" next to a theme restaurant of the sports channel ESPN, which also belongs to Disney. A studio of the subsidiary company ABC broadcasts the television show "Good morning America" in front of Disney's entertainment center at Times Square (cf. Sassen and Roost 1999: 143; Sagalyn 2001).

Disney's Times Square Development: *New York 1999. Photo credit: Peter Aaron / Esto.*   **Universal CityWalk**: *Jerde Partnership, Hollywood, Los Angeles 1993. Photo credit: Gimcracker.com.*

In large part, the model for this spatial cross-promotion project is architect Jon Jerde's 1993 pedestrian promenade Universal CityWalk, a prototypical retail entertainment destination that gains popularity and generates profit by forming a synergetic link between Universal Studios, Universal City Cinemas, and the headquarters of Universal Creative. With its shops, restaurants, nightclubs, theaters, offices and classrooms Universal CityWalk is an extension of the existing entertainment venues of

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[6] This project is part of the 42nd Street Redevelopment project in New York City – a large-scale public-private partnership project, which started in 1981 between the urban authorities of New York City, the New York State Urban Development Corporation (UDC) and multiple private developers, among which the Disney Corporation was the driving force and investor.

Universal City (Jerde Partnership 2003b; Universal Studios 2003). As approved in a 1995 report by the Urban Land Institute: "The economic synergy of the project is evident … Since CityWalk's opening, patronage at the Universal City Cinemas is up 60 percent, and the studio tour is up 15 percent. Similarly, when the amphitheater has a good concert night, CityWalk's facilities are filled to capacity" (Fader 1995: 18-23).

Having also successful predecessors in Japan, like the Sony showroom in Tokyo's Ginza or the Sony Tower in Osaka, Sony's Metreon,[7] cross-promotes Sony's consumer electronics and media products in a similar yet more subversive manner. Already its outside façade gives us a glimpse of the show inside. The spectacular entrance features what Sony refers to as its home page – massive wings displaying information on Metreon. In the interior, Sony's flat panel televisions scattered throughout announce the next movies that will be shown in one of its 15 movies theaters or show art from the Museum of Modern Art. The Sony's Style Store presents Sony's latest electronic gadgets next to the Sony CDs and DVDs. The PlayStation Store features a "game tender," who fetches any game you like on one of the 30 game stations. The Airtight Garage, a cave adventure zone for techno-entertainment, includes three socially interactive games exclusively developed for it. All these Sony components mixed with other shopping venues, meeting spaces, restaurants, museums and events feed off one other, creating a particular synergy. As Metreon (1999) writes: "It is the latest trend towards event spaces where guests can eat, meet and play all in one great location."

Sony's Metreon designed by Simon Martin-Vegue Winkelstein Moris, San Francisco 1999. Photo credit: SMWM.

All three mentioned US examples are based on the consumer-oriented retail and entertainment market. However, with their standardized lowbrow offers directed towards the broad popular mass, Disney and Universal utilize the entertainment mall as an urban generator, in which the key measure for success is income per square foot. In contrast, Sony's Metreon deploys more cultural-oriented marketing strategies, which are driven more by promotional goals than direct retail profit. By integrating extensions of independently run businesses and institutions found elsewhere within San Francisco, Metreon tries to create a more sophisticated environment that integrates the local culture. Moreover, by branding most of its products under different labels, ranging from the PlayStation via the Airtight Garage to the Metreon complex, Sony consciously hides its global brand name. In this way, Sony propagates a multi or even anti-brand culture as described by Paul Kunkel (1999) in "Digital Dreams". These subversive branding tactics can sooner be linked to Sony's interest in the relatively large youth market than it can to any form of ethical consciousness about monopolies.

With such projects that transform the brand into a physical urban attraction, the implication of these developments in the (re-)development of the city becomes evident. As urban destinations, these corporate conglomerates mirror all facets of contemporary urban life. Once the corporate branding incorporates entire districts or neighborhoods, the architectural problems increase in complexity and the socioeconomic aspects begin to implicate many other actors than the corporation and the individual property owner in question. In the USA where the Brandhub is meanwhile an established model, the public sector is involved on a sort of equal footing with the corporate developer from the inception; the project emerges through their partnership. This practice is a direct result of the declining fiscal resources of city governments, who have shifted their responsibility for providing public facilities to the private sector. Consequentially, city governments are becoming increasingly dependent on private initiatives, philanthropy, or outright exactions for public constructions that would have been built by the city in earlier times. While this new form of urban development first evolved in the US, it is becoming a rapidly emerging model in Europe. Moreover, while commenced by the entertainment industry their promotional strategies are increasingly adopted or even advanced by other consumer-oriented industries such as automotive, fashion, grocery and sports. A great part of this research will be dedicated to the careful analysis of the conditions in which this phenomenon occurs in the European context, and in specific, with an analysis of German and Swiss Brandhubs in contrast and in comparison to their predecessors in the US.

2.3.2. Brandhubs in Germany and Switzerland

For now, three cases in the German and Swiss context have been chosen to exemplify the Brandhub phenomenon: the Sony Center Berlin, the VW "ErlebnisWelt" in Wolfsburg, and Migros's WESTside in Berne. These Brandhubs will become part of an in-depth development of case studies, which will be centered on two major perspectives. From the viewpoint of the corporation, the main question is how the Brandhub is implemented as a promotional instrument. In specifically, how it is shaped to mediate the corporate identity as memorable experiences as well as how multi-media strategies such as cross-promotion are incorporated to increase brand equity and market coverage. From the perspective of the public, the major question is to what extent does the propagated corporate identity, which is assumed to be economically, environmentally, and socioculturally responsible, manifests itself in the Brandhub development.

2.3.2.1. The Sony Center in Berlin

The Sony Center Berlin, which is part of the Potsdamer/ Leipziger Platz development initiated by the Berlin government in 1991, is a clear example of a Brandhub that not only utilizes the public event, but also the principle of cross-promotion: first

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[7] Metreon comes from a combination of the words metropolis and "eon", a greek word for gathering place. The Metreon complex was realized by Sony Development and designed by the four women architectural office Simon Martin-Vegue Winkelstein Moris. It is the last part of the redevelopment project Yerba Buena Gardens. Located in the South of Market Street area in San Francisco, Metreon sits across the Museum of Modern Art and on top of the Marriott Hotel (cf. Brunner Foundation 1999).

by tangibly rendering Sony's dual structure as both a consumer goods and media producer, and second by creating a new competence center for the European entertainment industry (cf. Sony Berlin GmbH 2003).

Sony Center Berlin designed by Murphy/Jahn, Berlin 1992-2000

At first glance, the Sony Center with its vast glass curtain-wall facade appears as a closed and monotonous corporate building. However, a closer look reveals that the complex in fact is broken down into individual buildings of heterogeneous qualities, framing a surprisingly open, nearly public plaza. This spectacular forum, which is used as a 'public' gathering place, is surrounded by shops, cafés and restaurants. Like at Metreon, these urban amenities are pervaded by Sony facilities: Sony's Style Store and Professional Center as well as Sony's multiplex cinemas. The main difference to Metreon is that the Sony Center Berlin is not just geared towards techno nerds, but to a wide audience ranging from film enthusiasts to sport fans. In the forum, under the floating 'umbrella roof', a variety of spectacular professional and cultural events take place: product launches, fashion shows, premieres, live TV coverages like World Championships, and even real sports events such as pole vault competitions. In addition, other complementing culture providers are integrated in the center. Examples are zoon.com – an interactive lounge by VW – and the film center that comprises the German Film and Television Academy, the Arsenal repertory cinema, and diverse media archives such as the Film Museum Berlin. The Sony Center also features a historic monument the "Kaisersaal" (banqueting halls) of the former Grand Hotel Esplanade, which was removed from its original location and implanted into the new building. Today, it simultaneously serves as both restaurant and museum. The Sony Center Berlin also houses residences and corporate workplaces as its own headquarters: the Sony Corporation Europe, the Sony Music Entertainment Germany, and Columbia Tristar. Other companies, in particular from the entertainment industry, could also be attracted such as Fuji TV or the HSG Film and Video Production.

Plan Sony Center Berlin

Urban offers: (1) Deutsche Bahn AG (office tower), (2) film center/ media library, zoon.com, webfreetv.com, *(3) Sony Style Store, Music-box, CineStar Original/IMAX*, (4) Sanofi-Synthelabo Germany, offices, *(5) Sony Europe headquarters and Professional Center, (6) Sony Music Entertainment and Columbia Tristar*, apartments, (7) Esplanade Residence, Josty, Kaisersaal, (8) public forum, restaurants.
Mixture of uses: 50 % offices (1, 4, 5, 6), 20 % apartments (7), 12 % cultural facilities (2), 12 % entertainment (3), 6 % forum/gastronomy (8).
Size: 27000 sqm lot, 137.000 GFS.
Costs: 770 Mio Euro. Photo credit: Murphy/Jahn.

With such companies and institutions as tenants and as the host of the international film festival Berlin, Sony tries to conquer the German movie and TV market. In this way, the Sony Center not only generates an urban destination, but also fosters a new market for the entertainment industry. By subversively merging Sony's flagship and professional stores with urban entertainment and culture, the Sony Center Berlin cross-promotes both Sony's consumer goods and media productions. Moreover, by propagating an event culture and by transforming semi-public space into brand space, the Sony Center tries to raise the identification with the brand to a lifestyle experience.

2.3.2.2. VW Autostadt and ErlebnisWelt in Wolfsburg

In 2000, the VW Autostadt of the Volkswagen Group, which also derives its branding strategies from the entertainment industry, opened. The 25-hectare complex is a corporate visiting center located in the immediate vicinity of the VW headquarters and main production plant in Wolfsburg. Designed according to the master plan of Henn Architekten, it is an exemplary case on how the concept of themed entertainment environments can be directly translated to the world of the automobile (cf. Autostadt GmbH 2003).

VW Autostadt designed by Henn Architekten, Wolfsburg 1996-2000. Photo credit: Autostadt GmbH.

The VW Autostadt is part of the ErlebnisWelt, one of the four divisions of the "AutoVision" concept[8] put forth by the Wolfsburg AG, a 50/50 private-public partnership between Volkswagen AG and the city of Wolfsburg that aims to foster economic and sociocultural impulses for the future development of the city. Next to the Autostadt, the ErlebnisWelt comprises a network of six distinctive zones: discovery and entertainment, sport and recreation, shopping and experience, art and culture, fun and fantasy as well as tradition and modernity that pervade the entire city. The Autostadt, in conjunction with the ErlebnisWelt, is an innovative example on how a monotonous industrial city can be transformed into a multi-cultural Brandhub offering state of the art services and leisure amenities (cf. Wolfsburg AG 2003).

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[8] The "AutoVision" concept comprises four interacting modules: "InnovationsCampus, SupplierLocationServices, ErlebnisWelt and PersonnelServiceAgency," which are grouped together as divisions under the umbrella of the Wolfsburg AG (Wolfsburg AG 2003).

Plan VW ErlebnisWelt by the Wolfsburg AG, Wolfsburg 1996-2012

(1) Autostadt. (2) Discovery and Entertainment: Science, designer, and orientation center, entertainment facilities. (3) Sport and Recreation: Family resort, fitness and wellness center, popular and extreme sports facilities, stadium and arena. (4) Shopping, Experience and Variety: Lifestyle shopping center, consumer goods showcase, school and university, offices for companies and organizations. (5) Art, Culture and Life Awareness: Center for art, technology and communication, network world bar, children's world, garden of senses, congress park, etc. (6) Fun and Fantasy. (7) Tradition and Modernity. Photo credit: Wolfsburg AG.

The VW Autostadt is a corporate communication center embedded in a synthetic landscape, in which visitors are invited to embark on a journey of discovery to the multifaceted world of the automobile. It is a thematic service park that features a piazza-style reception forum, an auto museum, an elaborate auto delivery center, distinctive cult-pavilions for each brand of the VW Group, a Ritz-Carlton hotel, tours through the adjacent VW works, theaters, restaurants, stores as well as other amenities. With the juxtaposition of the cult-pavilions, the VW Group can cross-promote its various brands including Audi, Bentley, Lamborghini, Seat and Skoda. Moreover, by animating these attractions with diverse installations that fuse art, entertainment, learning and branding, Volkswagen tries to communicate four major values: quality, security, environmental consciousness and social competence. Thus, the Autostadt not only worships the company's brands, but also its intriguing history and its influence on world culture: from the "People's Car" via the "Love Bug" to the "automobility" of the future. The Autostadt quotes signs and terms of the bourgeois city, it refers to forum and piazza, stages spaces for the collective and the individual. Paradoxically, the Autostadt like the Daimler City substitute the urban public spaces, which were destroyed by the automobile society.
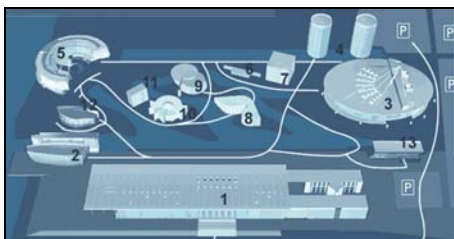
Plan VW Autostadt

Urban offers: (1) Forum with info booth, exhibition and stores, (2) auto museum, (3) auto delivery center, (4) car towers, (5) Ritz-Carlton hotel, (6) kid's world, (7-12) pavilions: VW (7), Seat (8), Audi (9), Skoda (10), Lamborghini (11), Bentley (12).
Size: 25000 sqm lot, 137.000 GFS.
Costs: 450 Mio Euro.
Visitors: 4.4 Mio year (2.4 Mio guests).
Photo credit: Autostadt GmbH.

With this staging, the VW concern expects to increase the value of its products and to differentiate themselves from other car companies. The intention is not simply to convince the customer to buy his or her car directly from the firm, but rather to generate long-term brand loyalty. This strategy is based on the belief that by connecting the brand-name with a physical place, the customer will identify more strongly with the brand, enhancing its emotional relationship with the corporation. In short, the Autostadt materializes the fetishistic relationship Germans have with their car.

2.3.2.3. Migros WESTside in Berne

Developed by Switzerland's largest retail organization Migros, WESTside will become a super-regional urban entertainment destination. As announced on its website, the Brandhub will blend shopping, working, living, pleasure, and recreation in an "all-in-one experience for all sorts of people, no matter what their tastes and interests are" (Neue Brünnen AG 2003). Scheduled to be open in 2006 on the western edge of the city of Berne, WESTside is an exemplary case for questioning the typical typology of an urban entertainment center. By condensing city and landscape, center and periphery, outstanding architecture and commerce, high and low culture, consumption and relaxation, Migros's goal with WESTside is to set new dimensions for urban development.

Migros WESTside *designed by Daniel Libeskind, Berne-Brünnen 1995-2006. Photo credit: Neue Brünnen AG.*

WESTside is part of West Berne's most important urban extension area: the "Brünnen Development Plan" elaborated by the city of Berne (Stadt Bern 2003). Originally, this plan was comprised of a single residential area. However, with the initiative of Migros to build a "shopping and leisure paradise" adjacent to the planned residential area, the mono-functional scheme turned into a holistic and financially feasible vision that is currently realized by the Neue Brünnen AG with Migros Aare as the majority shareholder. Next to the WESTside complex that is hoped to generate 800 jobs, the plan also incorporates residential accommodations for 2,600 people, ample green zones, and convenient interchange possibilities for public transport and the motorway. With Daniel Libeskind as the architect, WESTside is also a very ambitious architectural project. According to Libeskind, the conglomerate will become a dynamic place that challenges the border between consuming, acting and 'just being'. In this manner, WESTside consists of four fluidly interconnected parts: (i) a shopping mall with specialist shops of all sorts, (ii) a fitness and wellness zone including an adventure pool and a climbing wall, (iii) a hotel with a mediaplex and convention wing for business people and tourists alike, and (iv) a superstore park with a do-it-yourself and garden center. These complexes will be connected by a public piazza and senior resident area on the roof. In addition, they will be highly pervaded with dining places ranging from self-service facilities to ethnic gourmet restaurants, discovery and cultural offerings, supervised playgrounds as well as leisure areas.
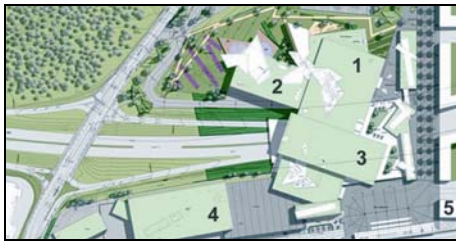
Plan Migros WESTside

Urban offers: *(1) Shopping, (2) fitness and wellness, (3) hotel, mediaplex, convention wing, (4) superstore park, (5) apartment buildings (IG-Brünnen), (x) connectors: public piazza, senior residence, gastronomy, cultural facilities, and recreational areas.*
Size: *81.662 sqm lot, 190.000 sqm GFS.*
Costs: *Approx. 500 Mio CHF (WESTside) plus approx. 380 Mio CHF (IG-Brünnen).*
Visitors: *3.5 Mio expected per year.*
Photo credit: Neue Brünnen AG.

Within these multi-cultural spaces, which are targeted towards a broad audience and will be open 365 days a year, Migros will be able to stage and cross-promote its various businesses and institutions, including retail, leisure and travel, gastronomy, sport and wellness, culture and education and last but not least banking. Migros contributes substantially to the quality of life in Switzerland and seeks to further its image as a widely accepted, responsible, consumer- and environment-friendly company. To what extent Migros materializes this image within WESTside will be measured according to the expected outcome. Since WESTside is not yet completed, this study will also consider other projects of the Migros group that foster urban development.

2.3.3. Scientific Research Published on the Subject

Despite being recent developments, the Brandhubs above already benefit from wide media coverage – TV, newspapers, architectural design magazines, tourists brochures etc. – showing their omnipresence in the public realm. However, what has been published in the scientific context is limited to rather brief albeit important articles and a few books. For the most part, these corporate projects have been discussed individually and in general only from one perspective either (i) by those who view these projects as a physical built form, (ii) by those who criticize their sociocultural consequences, or (iii) by those who highlight their economical relevance. What has not yet been systematically researched is how these viewpoints, which hitherto represent competing urban values, can be correlated. The development of such a multi-perspective framework is of particular importance for showing the impacts of corporate conglomerates on urban development, for detecting productive synergies between these seemingly conflicting values, and for developing responsive strategies to creatively shape corporate conglomerates so that they have lasting benefits for both the corporation as well as the public.

2.3.3.1. Architecture and Urban Design
All the Brandhubs that are part of this research have been featured in major urban design and architecture magazines. There they have been mainly presented with an emphasis on their physical appearance and architectural style. A few observers have also looked at the brand-building impact of these projects. What has hardly been addressed is the potential of these environments for responsive urban development.

    The few texts that exist on the brand-building factors of experiential spaces are mostly written from a corporate viewpoint, focusing on how these environments engage and attract consumers such as <u>Pine's and Gilmore</u>'s (1999) "<u>The Experience Economy</u>" or <u>Mikunda</u>'s (2002) "<u>Marketing spüren</u>". Although such texts consider design issues, they hardly give answers to fundamental urban-architectural questions. To date, only one book has been explicitly published on the subject, <u>Riewoldt</u>'s (2002) picture book "<u>Brandscaping: Worlds of Experience in Retail Design</u>." With projects such as the Niketown in London, the City-Mall Sevens in Düsseldorf or the Migros stores, the book illustrates how "brandscaping" – the creation of three-dimensional brand worlds that can be perceived by the senses – is increasingly becoming a characteristic part in the design of showrooms and retail centers. Unfortunately, the book concentrates on architecture and interior design and does not consider how such tangible brand landscapes are strategically implemented on an urban scale. In contrast, the findings on how urban "brandscapes" lay value on generating an emotional impact will take priority in this research.

    Besides these brand-building investigations, the local European debate is mainly centered on the question of which architecture and urban design model is most adequate to generate identity and urbanity. For example, the Daimler City and Sony Center project in Berlin have been dialectically compared as European versus (North) American urban models: moderate vs. spectacular, manifold vs. uniform, reactionary vs. progressive urban renewal. Most urban architectural reviews sympathized with the European-inspired Daimler project master planned by Italian architect Renzo Piano. In contrary, the (German-)American Helmut Jahn designed Sony project is predominantly excoriated as a show of corporate and architecture egotism. Yet, such prejudices or superficial comparisons on form and style do not stand a closer inspection. The Daimler City with its rather uniform, simulated, and controlled spaces fulfills all criteria of a US-American entertainment mall, albeit unanticipated. And even though the Sony Center reflects the ideal of a corporate monolith much more literally than the Daimler City, its inner plaza is unexpectedly not at all a closed space, but rather an almost public one, open to the street and accessible to the public 24 hours a day. As opposed to the commercial onslaught of the Daimler City, the Sony Center with its rather unique and local-based cultural offers produces an experiential space for both Berliners and tourists (cf. Sewing 2000).

    Concerning the potential of Brandhubs for urban development, the question of whether they are good-looking for architects or fit certain aesthetic criteria is only marginal relevant. Much more important is how Brandhubs act and resonate to people, how well they are integrated into their context, and how well they fulfill the experiential and sociocultural demands of the urban society. Consequently, the impact of the physical built form on urban life and culture has to be considered.

2.3.3.2. Urban Culture and Sociology
Meanwhile in European and US contexts alike, a plethora of sociocultural texts exist both on theme parks and shopping malls in the periphery as well as on the more recent urban entertainment centers of the rediscovered city (cf. Gottdiener 1997; Hannigan 1998; Steinecke 2000; StadtBauwelt 2000). These investigations will become a central part of this research.

However, only a few authors have looked at the Brandhubs investigated in this study. Moreover, most critics focus on the problems than on the positive effects of these corporate projects. By relating them to Disneyland, they argue that cities and public spaces are increasingly transformed into privately controlled, simulated and commodified environments as for example <u>Werner Sewing</u> (2000) in his article "<u>Heart, Artificial Heart or Theme Park? Trying to make sense of Potsdamer Platz</u>" or <u>Frank Roost</u> (2000) in "<u>Die Disneyfizierung der Städte</u>" (The Disneyfication of the cities). Furthermore, hardly any case study analyses exist on Brandhubs. Instead one is left with a plethora of macroscopic observations, which are theoretical at best and mere speculation at worst.

Roost has conducted the most detailed studies on corporate conglomerates from a sociocultural perspective. In "The Disneyfication of the cities," Roost profoundly examined Disney's important role in the Times Square redevelopment. He most notably investigated how Disney, backed by hardliners from politics and police, managed to transform Times Square from a notorious red-light district into a family-friendly entertainment destination. Moreover, he convincingly demonstrates how Disney set new dimensions for the future restructuring of cities with this project. In this book and in other publications, Roost (2003) points out that the increasing presence of such "city surrogates" are not limited to the US, but also flourish in Europe. With exemplary cases such as the Daimler City in Berlin, he explains that the European projects entail a new simulated form of urbanity as well. However, Roost concludes that these corporate conglomerates are scarcely suitable to solve the problems of our cities. He detects that the exclusion of specific levels of the population as well as the demarcation of losers from the economic development is an essential component of the marketing success of these projects, and thus, he claims that they enforce the already existing social and spatial polarization of our postindustrial landscape.

The key motivation of big-name corporations to develop Brandhubs to create their identity as a widely respected institution, require them to navigate "highly public ethical and social concerns … Increasing numbers of large corporations thus find themselves caught between two seemingly contradictory goals: satisfying the investor's expectations for progressive earnings growth and the consumer's growing demand for social responsibility" (Cogman et al. 2002). For this reason, big-name corporations more and more go beyond the mainstream and brand-obsessed shoppers as their target groups. Instead they have come to incorporate the undesirables and even their opponents such as anti-globalization campaigners or environmental activists in their corporate-wide branding strategies, as asserted by leading consumer researchers[9] and as illuminated by Naomi Klein (2001: 115). For example, one of Sony's main target groups in the creation of Brandhubs are the "Reactors … [who] are born on the street, or wish they were … are subversive, rebellious, suspicious of power and authority, have no taste in the conventional sense and favor honest contradiction" (Kunkel 1999: 140).

However fierce debates circulate about these multicultural responsible branding strategies: Are they just cynical or do they have honest intentions? Are they a temporary trend and will be replaced in the long-run? Do they indicate that corporations want to evolve and play more positive sociocultural and environmental roles? Are corporations moving from image to action branding? To what extent do corporations not only pretend to be good citizens, but actually practice corporate citizenship and thus act responsibly with respect to the local stakeholders and the society at large? To analyze and answer these questions, the motivations and goals of both the corporate developers as well as those of the public authorities who support them in Brandhub developments will have to be considered.

2.3.3.3. Urban Economics, Urban Entrepreneurialism and Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships projects have become a praised form for corporate urbanism, because they entail advantages for both the corporate developer and the city. For the developer, they purvey incentives such as tax abatements, provision of cheap land, financing aid, and eased planning regulations. For the entrepreneurial city, they entail economic impulses, job creation, increased tax revenue as well as direct investments for public needs. This sort of 'getting and spending' as well as the common interest in the construction of an attractive image is what bind the city and the private developer together.

The emergence of <u>public-private partnership projects</u> is mainly seen as a consequence of the profound structural changes, which have affected Western cities since the 1970's: The significant growth of service and leisure industries, globalization, privatization, deregulation as well as the related de-industrialization and the declining power of the nation-state to control transnational forces. These tendencies are perceived as the main causes of an intense interurban competition, which puts increased pressure on cities. As a response, urban governments have increasingly shifted their endeavors from a reactive, regulative planning approach towards proactive strategies of urban development and employment growth. In the North American context, these proactive strategies have been termed as "<u>urban entrepreneurialism</u>," which is in stark contrast to the "managerialism" of the welfare state of the previous decades (Harvey 1989a: 3-17 and 1989b). Hence, urban governments have turned to new sources to foster the prosperity of their city (cf. Noller et al. 1994; Ronneberger et al. 1999; Becker 2001). Similar to the corporate developers, they utilize consumption-driven strategies of urban stimulation. By selling a new or repackaged image of their city, they try to attract investors, tourists, qualified workforce, and new taxpayers. This sort of urban entrepreneurialism can be characterized as a shift from a supply-oriented to a flexible demand-oriented approach of urban governance and planning.

Meanwhile, public-private partnership projects have been widely researched but from limited viewpoints. Research conducted from the viewpoint of the city has been primarily documented in the context of <u>urban policy</u>, focusing on the change of urban governance and planning practice (cf. Brenner and Theodore 2002). Research conducted from the viewpoint of the <u>real estate industry</u> is mainly centered on the profitability of these projects, and whether or not they have successfully responded to a market demand, the return on investments, etc. What has not been researched is the motivation of brand-name corporations such as Migros, Sony or Volkswagen, whose core business is not real estate development, to participate in these public-private partnerships projects. Brandhubs as the outcome of these novel partnerships take on a character of their own, which is evidently different than the meanwhile established partnerships and real estate deals in which profits are generated from "a combination of rents and leases, percentages of sales, land appreciation, tax write-downs and concessions" (Hannigan 1998: 103). Economic profit is no longer determined primarily through use and land value, but by branding and the provision of experiences – strategies which are brought in by the brand-name corporations.

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[9] In the battle for customers, forward-thinking corporations have come to adopt variations on the theme of diversity and tolerance in all of its forms (cultural, political, sexual, racial, social) as the defining idea for Generation X. More recently, they also consider the lucrative demographics of the Generation Y, which are environmentally conscious, feel collective responsibility, and are interested in a company's morality. Confer Yankelovich (2003), http://www.yankelovich.com or Bensley and Whitney (2001), http://jbresearchco.com/GenY.html.

Besides the theoretical constructs of Fredric Jameson (1991) and Harvey (2001) as well as Pine's and Gilmore's (1999) and Sagalyn's (2001) practice-oriented approach to capture this new relationship between architecture, culture and commerce, there is scarcely anything published on the economic aspects of Brandhub developments that goes beyond the numbers of visitors per day or the traditional cost-benefit analyses, which do not include brand and sociocultural added value. The reason for this might be that the research is conducted by the corporations themselves and thus limited in their outlook.

As part of their common marketing efforts, both the brand-name corporations and entrepreneurial cities praise that public-private partnership projects are very popular and immediately improve the local situation (cf. Neue Brünnen AG 2003/ Stadt Bern 2003; Wolfsburg AG 2003/ Stadt Wolfsburg 2001; Sony Berlin GmbH 2003). Furthermore, they claim that the economic impetuses and environmental improvements of these projects serve the entire population, including the 'poor' who turn out to be, incidentally, some of the most avid consumers. While Brandhubs clearly create instant urban regeneration, do they also meet a multitude of local needs and improve the local condition in the long run? Do these projects generate a local identity that integrates different cultures or are they simply concerned with the exploitation of the context to market these projects for export? Moreover, what is their real life expectancy? Are the simply the next evolutionary step from the entertainment mall in the city and will be replaced when the ever new experience-seeking consumers migrate to new "in-places"? Will Brandhubs be the next "Junkspace" (Koolhaas 2001a) or do they constitute a new form of urban public space, which creatively combines commerce and culture in a highly differentiated urban-architectural environment?

2.3.4. Research Intent

The intended contribution of this research to the fields of architecture and urban planning is to provide a body of case studies, which aim to be used as tools for creating responsive strategies within the Brandhub typology. In the contemporary experience society, where the spheres of culture, economy, politics and society merge, neither architecture as pure art or 'public gift' nor fully commercialized architectures seem viable. As mediators between sociocultural and economic values, architects and urban planners cannot elude the forces of the brand-culture. On the contrary, acknowledging their importance would be the first step in changing them to foster viable alternatives, creatively integrating both the interests of the corporation and those of the public to help generate a highly differentiated urban environment. As Daniel Libeskind affirms: "This is nothing negative. The power of the economic representation has to be integrated into the architecture. That is the main task of this architecture" (Tobler 2001). To construct a multi-perspective case study framework within which divergent and often conflicting urban viewpoints and values can be analyzed and integrated this research draws upon four major works and methodologies.

First, Margaret Crawford's (1995) "Building the Workingman's Paradise" explicitly locates the design of company towns within the socioeconomic constraints that existed in the Industrial Age. It portrays "the built environment of the company town not as a static physical object, but as the product of a dynamic process, shaped by industrial transformation, class struggle, and reformers' efforts to control and direct these forces." The underlying methodology, which is based on a "more complete and flexible explanatory framework" and includes both a broad survey and detailed case studies on the subject will be transferred to this research. Similar to company towns, today's Brandhubs are the product of specific socioeconomic processes. In particular today's neoliberal market rationale, characterized by an intensified competition, directly impacts the formation of Brandhubs.

Second, Bernard Frieden's and Lynne Sagalyn's (1989) "Downtown, Inc" explicitly goes beyond the pessimism of many professionals, mainly social and architectural critics, aimed at corporate urbanism. With diverse case studies on several types of downtown retail malls in the USA, this book shows how maverick developers, entrepreneurial cities, inventive architects and planners found "creative solutions to the problems presented by conservative lenders, sociocultural and political controversy, and shrinking federal subsidies." This US-American model that objectively detects productive strategies and positive factors for the revitalization of urban centers by combining private profit with civic purpose urgently needs a pendant in the European context.

Third, the crossdisciplinary thinking of "The Condition of Postmodernity" (Harvey 1989b), "Postmodernism" (Jameson 1991) or "Landscapes of Power" (Zukin 1991) reveals the interrelationship of culture and economy not as "a one-way street but [as] a continuous reciprocal interaction and feedback loop" (Jameson 1991: xv). These writings have substantially analyzed the built environment as a mirror of the contemporary material culture, dissected either as part of the "cultural logic of late capitalism" (Jameson 1991), the "global commodification of culture" (Harvey 2001) or the "circuits of cultural capital" (Zukin 1991). This literature will be utilized as a critical framework to help articulate the conflicts and contradictions inherent in contemporary corporate urbanism. However, this interpretation of the urban form as an outcome of cultural, economic and political processes is just one explanation, albeit an important one. It is a very general, macro-level perspective that does neither examine how specific modifications in urban form are produced nor inform us about the practice in creating these changes. If the theoretical perspectives on postmodern urbanism provide a top-down view, this study aims to offer a bottom-up perspective based on in-depth case studies, which disclose this inside process on the formation of Brandhubs. This analysis will not just focus on the designers' visions but also how that vision is formed and how the projects are developed and eventually packaged in collaboration with the corporate developer and the other stakeholders involved in the development process.

Finally, the work of the doctoral program "Urban Forms: Conditions and Consequences" (Lampugnani 2002) examines in-depth the reciprocal relationship between the urban form and societal factors. Through the analysis of historical cases, it aims to contribute to an "interdisciplinary theory of conditions and consequences of urban forms." Kerstin Höger attends the program to discuss its methodologies and results in relation to this research. Although it differs from this work through its historical perspective, it will be very valuable to build on its findings as well as its discussion on the principles and factors of urban design.

2.4. Detailed Research Concept and Plan

As stated in section 2.2., the main goal of this study is to examine how the responsiveness of contemporary corporate urbanism and its manifestation in the form of Brandhubs can be fostered in order to facilitate an urban architecture that provides wide private and public benefits in a sustainable manner. To achieve this central goal, this research proposes a five-phase examination method organized as work packages (WP 1 - 5) with anticipated results and milestones (M 1 - 5):

WP 1) Background research – the evolution of corporate urbanism and the Brandhub typology:
    Provision of a comprehensive understanding of the evolution of corporate urbanism and the Brandhub phenomenon.
    Definition of the distinctiveness of Brandhubs as a new urban typology in the contemporary experience society.
    Detection of key factors of corporate conglomerates success, which will be analyzed in the case studies.
M1: Report on background research

WP 2) Case studies of selected Brandhubs in the European context:
    Disciplinary sub-investigations: assessment of individual urban factors to detect if they are responsive (level 3).
    Conceptual view on the cases: synthesis of urban factors by means of an urban matrix and urban value net to detect if they are coopetitive or synergistic (level 2).
    The cases at large: development of holistic and emphatic case understandings (level 1).
M2: Reports of the individual case analyses

WP 3) Comparison of the individual case study results:
    Cross-case assessment of the hypothetical-influencing urban factors (level 3: proof/ disproof of individual hypotheses).
    Cross-case evaluation of the urban matrices and urban value nets (level 2: proof/ disproof of coopetitive hypotheses).
    Interpretation of the case study results as a whole (level 1: proof/ disproof of overall responsiveness and sustainability).
M3: Report on cross-case assessment

WP 4) Methodology for responsive corporate urbanism:
    Verification of the significance of the most important urban factors that have to be fulfilled in order to foster the responsiveness of the Brandhub typology (level 3).
    Construction of a general net of positive, coopetitive urban factors (level 2).
    Development of a scientifically-supported, action-oriented catalogue of measures for developing responsive strategies within Brandhubs as a basis for sustainable urban development (level 1, all previous findings).
M4: Report on responsive urban methodology

WP 5) Documentation, knowledge transfer and refinement:
    Documentation of research results and review with case stakeholders, case experts and scientific advisors.
    Dissemination at international conferences, symposia, journals and online discussion platforms.
    Revision and reports in iterative refinement cycles according to received feedback.
M5: Final report on research results and dissertation

2.4.1. State of Research: Evolution of Corporate Urbanism and the Brandhub Typology (WP 1)

As described in the state of research, the emergence of the Brandhub as a new urban typology will be examined in both its historical and contemporary as well as global and local context. The goal of this broad survey is, on the one hand, to comprehensively understand the evolution of corporate urbanism and its contemporary manifestation in the form of the Brandhub typology. On the other hand, functioning schemes and key factors that make contemporary corporate conglomerates successful will be determined. These models and factors will be analyzed in the case studies and highly considered in the development of a responsive urban methodology. This background and state of the art research will be mainly conducted through observations as well as scientific literature and data reviews, in which also the authors introduced in the rationale will become part. It is split into the following four subtasks:

2.4.1.1. Comparison of the Brandhub typology with its main corporate predecessors
Compare contemporary Brandhubs with its major corporate predecessors, dating back to the Renaissance period, and the conditions in which they evolved in order to determine similarities and differences:
    Corporate identity in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.
    Corporate identity architecture and company towns in the Industrial Age.
    Corporate towers and suburban business parks in the service society.
    Corporate theme parks and urban entertainment destinations in the 'society of the spectacle'.

2.4.1.2. Emergence of the Brandhub as a new urban typology in the experience society
Correlate the emergence of the Brandhub phenomenon to contemporary forces, and characterize it accordingly:
    The expansion of a neoliberal market rationality is seen as the main cause of an intensified competition that forces both corporations as well as cities to differentiate themselves (cf. Harvey 1989a and 2001; Noller et al. 1994; Ronneberger et al. 1999; Brenner and Theodore 2002). → The Brandhub as a "differentiation tool" for both brand-name corporations and entrepreneurial cities to stay competitive in a highly neoliberal market.

The rise of an "experience economy" (Pine and Gilmore 1999), in which the commercialization of culture and the culturalization of the economy is of particular importance (cf. Harvey 1989b and 2001; Jameson 1991; Zukin 1995). → The Brandhub as an experiential epicenter of highly interactive activities meeting the demands of the "experience society" (Schulze 1992).

The hybridization of formerly separated typologies such as for shopping, dining and entertainment with other complementary spaces for culture, education or recreation. For example, theme stores (shoppertainment), dinner theaters (eatertainment), gastro-museums (eaterculture), and science parks (edutainment). → The Brandhub as new hybrid typology that merges commercial (formerly private) and sociocultural (formerly public) typologies into novel spaces.

The proliferation of large-scale entertainment destinations, which have a modular mix of uses, provide life around the clock and are highly branded and themed (cf. Schwanke 1987; Gottdiener 1997; Beyard et al. 1998 and 2001; Hannigan 1998; Steinecke 2000; Wall 2003). → The Brandhub as a comprehensive urban mixed-use environment that attracts both experience-seeking customers and cultural-conscious citizens.

The establishment of public-private partnerships to realize these large-scale urban mixed-use environments (cf. Frieden and Sagalyn 1989; Ronneberger et al. 1999) and the entry of brand-name corporations as key development partners in bringing in novel resources vital to the success of the project such as distribution channels, branded products or services, new marketing strategies as well as risk reduction strategies, vertical integration and customer research (cf. Hannigan 1998). → The Brandhub as private-public venture between brand-name corporations and entrepreneurial cities.

The apotheosis of flagship architectures, which are designed by star architects and are veritable reifications of the consumer commodity themselves, like the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. → The Brandhub as urban signature architecture that mediates the corporate and/ or city identity in a commodified environment.

The implementation of new marketing tools such as experiential spatial branding (cf. Pine and Gilmore 1999; Mikunda 2002; Riewoldt 2002) and multimedia marketing or crossover branding (cf. Herrmann 1999). → The Brandhub as public event and promotional instrument that mediates the localized corporate identity in an experiential brand space to generate lasting brand loyalty and trigger synergies among integrated activities to achieve higher levels of brand visibility.

The growing criticism against the increasing commodification of the urban public realm or 'brandalism' (cf. Sorkin 1992; Roost 2000; Klein 2001; Becker 2001) and the rising demand for meaningful experiences and corporate social responsibility (cf. Bosshart 1997; Cogman and Oppenheim 2002). → The Brandhub as urban catalyst, stimulating local development and providing meaningful spaces within which more sustainable urban identities can evolve.

2.4.1.3. Demarcation of Brandhubs from other contemporary corporate conglomerates

Demarcate Brandhubs as defined in this study from other contemporary corporate conglomerates in order to extract characterization criteria:

Corporate visitor or image centers and flagship outlets, which are realized as a pure private venture and thus are not strategically implemented to foster urban development in the framework of public-private partnerships: e.g. Vitra Centers in Weil am Rhein and Birsfelden, the BMW Welt in Munich, Ford's eco-friendly River Rouge plant in Dearborn, Michigan, the planned World of Coca-Cola in Atlanta, and the worldwide Niketowns.

Business-to-Business (B2B) centers or clusters, which are targeted at business partners and not towards end consumers. Thus they neither sell nor brand to the larger public. In particular projects developed by companies, which are not active in consumer industries: e.g. Novartis Campus in Basel, Swiss Re Center in Rüschlikon, and Stanford Research Park (Silicon Valley).

Recycled industrial brownfields or urban development projects initiated by large corporations in joint business with the city for recycling desolate industrial areas and then selling them to other investors or firms. These projects incorporate the public event, but not for proactively branding the corporation: e.g. ABB Areal in Baden and Zürich North, Maag and Sulzer-Escher Wyss Areal in Zürich West, Sulzer Areal in Winterthur, or the Weststadt (formerly Kruppstadt) in Essen.

2.4.1.4. Relationship of the investigated Brandhubs to their worldwide counterparts

Relate the selected cases to their contemporary counterparts, predominantly in America, Asia and Europe, in order to illuminate the global urban phenomenon and its specific local manifestation in the German and Swiss context, including the latest tendencies:

Germany: Adidas World of Sports in Herzogenaurach, Hugo Boss Town/ Mega-Brandhub Metzingen, Promenaden Hauptbahnhof Leipzig, Stuttgart 21 and the Allianz Arena Munich.

Japan: Toyota City, Universal CityWalk in Osaka, Odaiba district in Tokyo as Mega-Brandhub with Sony's Mediage, Toyota City Mega Web, Fuji Television Building, and Sega's Joypolis.

Mexico: Omnilife's JVC Center, the Jorge Vergara Carbrera cultural, convention, and business center in Guadalajara.

Netherlands: Almere City Center, and Amsterdam Science Park.

Switzerland: Unique Airport Zürich, the planned Hardturm Stadium and the envisioned ETH Science City Zürich.

USA: Universal CityWalk in Hollywood and Orlando, Disney's Times Square Development in New York, Sony's Metreon in San Francisco, MIT University Park in Cambridge, MA.

Distributed: The Prada Universe including the Prada epicenters in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Tokyo, the Prada headquarter USA in New York, and the Prada Le Cure production center and outlet in Terranuova, Arezzo.

2.4.2. Case Studies in the European Context (WP 2)

A certain critical number of European case studies that exemplify the Brandhub typology will be examined in-depth. For the moment, three cases have been chosen: (1) the Sony Center Berlin, (2) Migros's WESTside in Berne, and (3) the VW ErlebnisWelt in Wolfsburg. In using the case study method, this research aims to provide for an analysis of diverse information, factors and contingencies that are only evident in real-life experiences – the tangible with facts and the intangible with descriptions and observations. Only the comparison and contrast of different examples can lead to a critical understanding of the problems and potentials of the Brandhub typology for responsive and sustainable urban development.

For its scientific legitimation, this work refers to the extensive scholarly literature on case study methods as well as their wide application in research projects that are dedicated to real, complex, often ill-defined, and socially relevant problems. From a socio-scientific perspective, such highly contextualized research methods are described as a new type of science that allows for novel ways of interaction between theory and practice. In "The new production of knowledge" (Gibbons et al. 1994) and "Re-thinking science" (Nowotny et al. 2001) this type of science is defined as Mode 2. This mode doesn't replace the traditional disciplinary research (Mode 1), but complements it by drawing on a broader socioeconomic context and by being more sensitive to social accountability and reflexivity. The aim of Mode-2 science and this study is to generate practice relevant knowledge that is useful to the industry, government, and society more generally.

For the conception of the case analyses, this research primarily draws upon Roland Scholz's and Olaf Tietje's (2002) "Embedded Case Study Methods", which have been tested in several cases on sustainable development (cf. ETH-UNS Case Study Bureau 2003). In particular, it builds on the two cases related to urban planning: "Sulzer-Escher-Wyss" and "Zentrum Zürich Nord" (Scholz et al. 1995 and 1996). Similar to these cases, this study tries to integrally analyze the interplay between environmental, economical, and social issues in order to foster sustainable urban development as intended in the Agenda 21 (UN Division 1992) and UN-Habitat Agenda (1996). However unlike the UNS cases, which are conducted from an environmental science perspective and tend to focus on ecological issues, this study concentrates on the built environment: its meaning, form, functioning and reciprocal interrelationship with socioeconomic aspects. Thus the emphasis is on experiential and cultural sustainability, something which is usually ignored in environmental studies.

On the one hand, this study transfers the different types of knowledge integration as detected by Scholz and Tietje (2002: 40) to responsive corporate urbanism: (i) integration of knowledge from different disciplines (e.g. urban design and planning, economics, sociology and cultural studies), (ii) knowledge from different stakeholders (e.g. the corporation and the public), and (iii) different qualities of knowledge (e.g. analytical and intuitive, quantitative and qualitative). On the other hand, it adopts Scholz's and Tietje's three level system (2002: 30) to efficiently structure the case analyses and to trigger different qualities of knowledge: understanding, conceptualizing, and explaining. Congruent with this knowledge system, the case study method of this research is split in three levels: (1) a holistic understanding of the cases as a whole, (2) a conceptual and synergistic view on the cases, and (3) disciplinary-sub investigations that explain individual case factors.

To conduct the case studies according to these levels, two types of data are utilized and processed. The first is data from existing bodies of scientific knowledge such as disciplinary assertions and theories. The second is data from the cases themselves such as surveys, documents, measurements, expertise and so on. The relevant material required for the case analyses will be collected from diverse sources, including: (i) site visits, own experiences and observations; (ii) publications in scientific books, journals, newspapers, the Internet, etc; (iii) archival records and documents mainly from the key stakeholders involved in the Brandhub development such as case descriptions and discussions, drawings and images, locational reports and statistics as well as zoning, framework, master and realization plans; and (iv) questionnaires and interviews both open-ended and structured with the key persons responsible for the development of the project, case experts and with economic and sociocultural critics.

2.4.2.1. The Cases at large: holistic and empathic case understandings (level 1)

The goal is to develop a comprehensive and empathic understanding of each of the individual Brandhub developments, their unique qualities, deficiencies, potentials and limits:

Solid anamnesis and status quo of the case: the history of the initiation, design, planning, realization and marketing process (chronology with main stages, duration and dates), and the general vision and goals of the project.

Key stakeholders, their roles and goals: (i) the corporation and their partners: corporate lenders and investors, real estate developers, public agencies, architects, planners, other designers as well as (ii) the public: municipal and state authorities as well as public advocates, users and customers such residents, visitors, employees, and tenants.

Organization and leadership of the project based on planning, legal and realization instruments and in relation to the form of the public-private partnership (e.g. informal agreements, a project work group or even a project company among the corporation and the city): top-down vs. bottom-up, dominant vs. equitable, competitive vs. consensus-driven.

Overall urban planning, architecture and other design issue: master and building plans with regulations; main project elements including form, function, size; urban identity and appearance; urban structure and pattern (composition of main project elements, density, building heights and styles etc.); accessibility, traffic and parking concept; relationship to overall urban development plan as well as the connection to surrounding districts and the city.

Maintenance, operations and security as well as financing and economic considerations.
Based on these holistic analyses, the essential hypothetical urban factors that have to be fulfilled to make the Brandhub typology responsive are elaborated and then correlated on the next level.

2.4.2.2. Conceptual view on the cases: synthesis of factors via an urban matrix and value net (level 2)

On the second level, the focus is on a conceptual model of the real cases – a multi-perspective framework based on the methods of knowledge and data integration. Thus the viewpoint changes from the holistic perspective of the first level to a

system view. This view is used as a vehicle for organizing and synthesizing the urban factors required in order to analyze the overall responsiveness within Brandhubs and their potential for sustainable urban development. It helps to produce more valid case understandings and contributes to the conceptualization of the cases. To determine where the integration of individual urban factors is required, an <u>urban matrix</u> will be constructed (see Fig. 1). Along the horizontal dimension, this matrix captures the mutual relationship between the physical built environment and the dynamic socioeconomic factors. On the one side, the underlying forces represented by the key stakeholders – the private corporation as well as the public authorities and advocates – exert influence on the urban form and its functioning. On the other side, the resulting urban architecture implicates consequences for the stakeholders and the public in general. Along the vertical dimension are the key urban factors affecting the responsiveness of Brandhubs.

Within this urban matrix, this study hypothesizes that <u>creative coopetition</u> is required to foster the responsiveness. First, collaboration as a mechanism for creating urban value by integrating the seemingly conflicting stakeholder interests into a highly differentiated and condensed urban architecture. Here, the role of the architects and planners as mediators between the private and public realm and as integrators of the divergent interests into a physical urban form is of particular importance. Competition secures urban value from the resulting responsive urban architecture by dividing it up fairly among the stakeholders. To detect the coopetitive – cooperative and competitive – mechanisms inherent in the individual cases an <u>urban value net</u> will be developed. Thereby, the focus is on indicators for creative interactions among architectural and socioeconomic values. The aim of the urban value net is to show in detail how clear profit can be gained from not only considering functional and commercial factors, but also experiential and sociocultural aspects. This has added benefits for both the corporation and the public, chiefly because the integration with the local context and the provision of added amenities adds significantly to the vitality and longevity of the Brandhub, and therefore its sustainability.
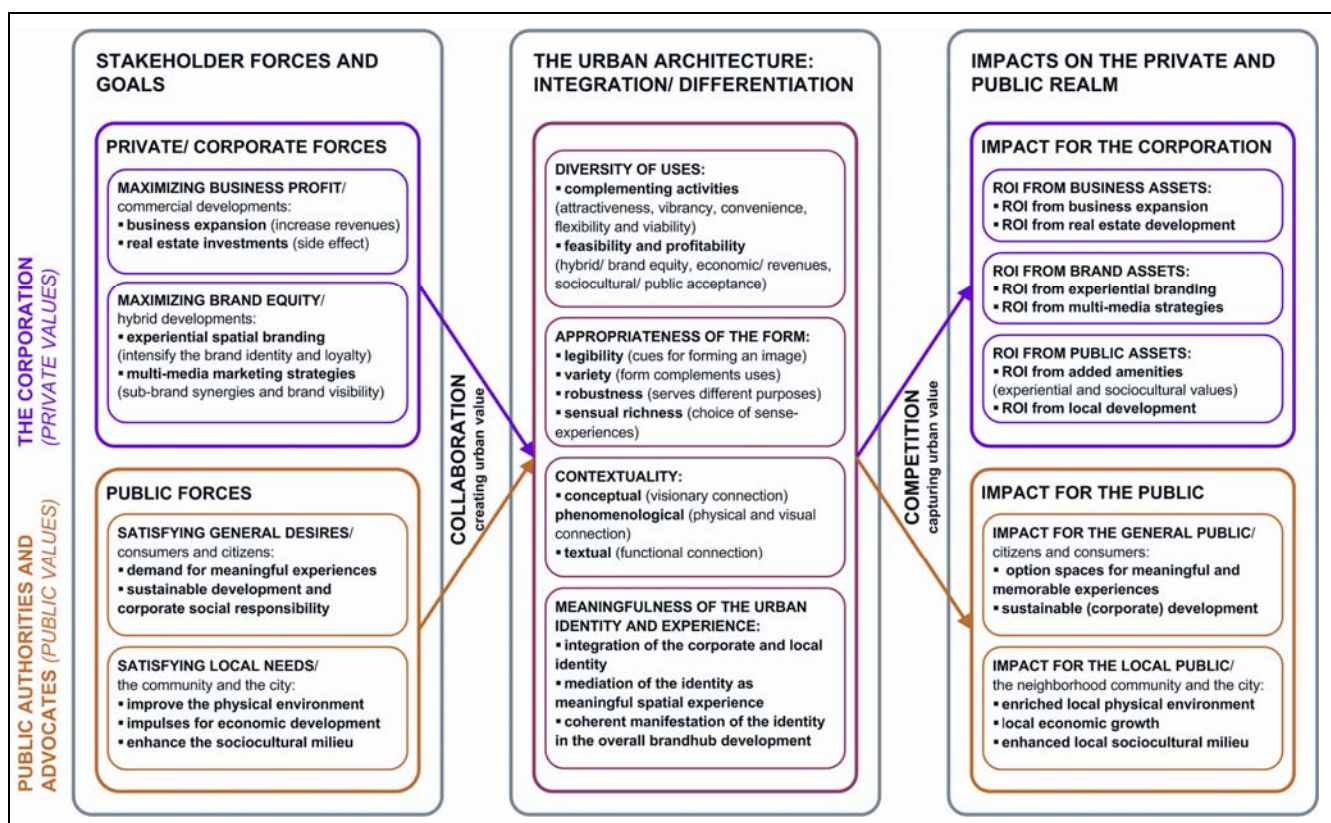

Fig. 1: The urban matrix and urban value net as multi-perspective framework for the case analyses.

2.4.2.3. Disciplinary sub-investigations: assessment of individual urban factors (level 3)

On the third level are separated data and results from disciplinary sub-investigations based on the urban matrix and urban value net. Here, the individual urban factors relevant in the Brandhub developments are examined. The intention is to detect how hypothetical influential factors are implemented in the cases and to evaluate if they have a stimulating, ambivalent, or inhibiting effect for responsive, sustainable urban development, both quantitative factors through the evaluation of existing data, and qualitative ones through interpretations and descriptions will be taken into account. These data-level analyses are organized in sub-investigations according to the requirements of the synthesis level: (i) the stakeholder forces and goals, (ii) the urban architecture, and (iii) the impact on the private and public realm. Scientific methods from relevant disciplines are part of this level.

2.4.2.3.1. Stakeholder forces and goals

First, the forces that exert influence on the urban form will be analyzed, primarily, the motivations and goals of the key stakeholders involved in the Brandhub development: (i) the corporation as the main developer and visionary as well as (ii) the public, which is represented by the city authorities as cooperative facilitator and as supportive provider of incentives and possibly by public advocacy such as the local community, activist organizations or nonprofit groups.

In general, the main goal of a **corporation** is to maximize profit in order to satisfy its investors' or shareholders' expectations for progressive earnings growth. Concerning Brandhubs, this study hypothesizes that this implies two major

interests: the <u>maximization of business profit</u> and <u>maximization of brand equity</u>.[11] The former is based on <u>commercial developments</u> as <u>business expansion</u> both in size and field (e.g. new corporate branches and work spaces) and negligibly as financial investments in <u>real estate</u> (e.g. renting or selling the spaces to other users). Commercial developments are dependent on the market demand and aim to increase a corporation's market share, market penetration, and thus its revenue. The latter utilizes <u>hybrid developments</u> – a mixture of commercial and sociocultural components – as vehicles to intensify the consumer's perception of, experience with and relationship to the corporate brand. Hybrid developments are dependent on the corporate umbrella brand and its sub-brands. They encompass two novel promotional instruments. First, <u>experiential spatial branding</u> to create a strong physical presence of the corporate brand by mediating its identity as meaningful and memorable experiences in a physical environment, meeting the consumers' desires, and thus increasing brand awareness, brand preference and brand loyalty.[12] Second, <u>multimedia marketing strategies</u>, in particular the concept of cross-promotion, to trigger synergies among different sub-brands or products of a corporation and to achieve higher levels of brand visibility through multimodal penetration. Generally, hybrid developments are very cost-intensive, resulting in low or no direct, yet high indirect economic profits. Thus, in order to maximize profit, the challenge of the corporation in the development of Brandhubs is to achieve the best mixture of commercial and hybrid components.

From the perspective of the **public authorities and advocates**, this study hypothesizes that the main interest in the development of Brandhubs is the attraction of private investments to satisfy <u>general public desires</u> and to promote <u>local development</u>. The former addresses the demands of both experience-seeking consumers and sociocultural conscious citizens. It includes the desire for option spaces that allow for meaningful experiences as well as the request for sustainable development that is based on corporate social responsibility. The latter refers to the satisfaction of the surrounding neighborhood community and/ or city residents, who are directly affected by the Brandhub development. It encompasses (i) the improvement of the local physical environment (e.g. the vitalization of fallow or decaying urban centers or quarters, also as an antidote to urban sprawl), (ii) impetuses for local economic development (e.g. the promotion of local businesses and institutions), and (iii) the enhancement of the local sociocultural milieu (e.g. the augmentation of local peculiarities and the equal participation of the community and transgressive cultural producers). The main challenge for the <u>public authorities</u> in the development of Brandhubs is to go beyond acting as legal facilitator by employing strategies for wresting design, financial and sociocultural benefits from the corporation (e.g. design requirements; exactions for the provision of urban amenities such as open space and public facilities; linkage fees for art complexes, affordable housing, day-care centers or other social services; tying corporate revenues to profits for maintaining these spaces and services; reserving space and providing operating funds for the local community to develop their own institutions; making locals a first source employee tool). For the <u>public advocates</u> as well as cultural producers, the challenge is to gain concessions and to integrate their values into the Brandhub development in a way that the forces of culture and society, also by antagonistic movements (e.g. public pressure through advocacy campaigns), can counterbalance or enrich those of the corporation.

2.4.2.3.2. The urban architecture (creation of urban value)

With regard to the stakeholder forces and goals, this study hypothesizes that in order to be successful, Brandhubs have to integrate the aforementioned private and public values into a responsive, highly differentiated and condensed urban architecture. Differentiation and condensation are the driving force behind responsive corporate urban design. Differentiation of the Brandhub is critical for its responsiveness towards both economic and sociocultural values and thus for its distinctiveness, attractiveness, robustness and competitiveness. Condensation is important for unifying divergent or contradictory interests and parts of the Brandhub development into a compact, high-value compound. Taking this into account, the responsiveness of the Brandhubs architecture will be assessed on the basis of <u>four major hypothetical-influencing factors</u>: (1) the diversity of uses, (2) the appropriateness of the form, (3) the contextuality, and (4) the meaningfulness of the urban identity and experience. For each of these hypothetical influential factors, which are interrelated, criteria are defined in order to evaluate their responsiveness.

2.4.2.3.2.1. Influencing factor 1: diversity of the mixture and composition of uses

<u>Hypothesis 1</u>: Brandhubs are only successful if they provide its users with an essentially democratic place, enriching their opportunities by maximizing the degree of options available to them. Diversity, particularly diversity of uses, is therefore a key factor for increasing choices. Because the different uses, forms and people provide a rich experiential mix, different users interpret the place in different ways: it takes on diverse meanings and allows for diverse experiences. Diversity of use is therefore the key to diversity as a whole. A highly diverse mixture and composition of uses – commercial and sociocultural, international and local, private and public as well as hybrid spaces – has a positive impact on the responsiveness of Brandhub developments. A unique mix and composition of uses is also important to demarcate the project from potential competitors.

<u>Criterion 1.1. – The degree of diversity according to activities (in %)</u>: Brandhubs mix and match an array of key and optional components in various configurations (see Fig. 2), allowing for a variety of activities. A high diversity of activities as well as a highly condensed composition of these activities is vital for the Brandhub's vibrancy (multiple attractions, a-city-within-a-city, sociability, life around the clock, optimal visitor frequency during the day and week), convenience (multiple choices and proximity), flexibility (adaptability, unique responsiveness to market conditions) and viability (multi-anchoring, market dominance through differentiation, cross-promotion between offers).

<u>Criterion 1.2. – The degree of interaction or synergy between activities (in %)</u>: Diversity is not achieved purely by arbitrarily shuffling a mix of activities on a site. To work well, the uses should support each other. Some uses are incompatible because of factors like noise or traffic generation. These should not be located close together. Moreover, some activities such as primary or constant uses act like magnets, attracting people to the site at frequent intervals. Concentration of residential and workplaces are primary uses: nearly everyone has to go home and to work at frequent intervals. Also established stores, alternating events, and certain entertainment facilities such as multiplex cinemas attract people at frequent intervals. In

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[11] Brand equity requires a constant effort to increase positive consumer perception and experience (the brand's assets: brand awareness, quality, identity, preference and loyalty as definable expressions of the consumer's relationship to the brand), while minimizing the negatives (brand liabilities: any action, decision or event that undermines the consumer's perception or experience of the brand).

[12] Brand loyalty is gained when a customer accepts no substitute for the brand. It is the most valuable of all brand assets, but also the most vulnerable.

contrast, secondary uses are enterprises which themselves lack the pulling-power to attract people, but which live off the people drawn to the place by its primary uses. Synergy among integrated activities also allows companies to amortize marketing expenses across multiple sub-brands or products, achieving higher levels of consumer awareness and insulating the corporation from economic downturns in particular business areas.
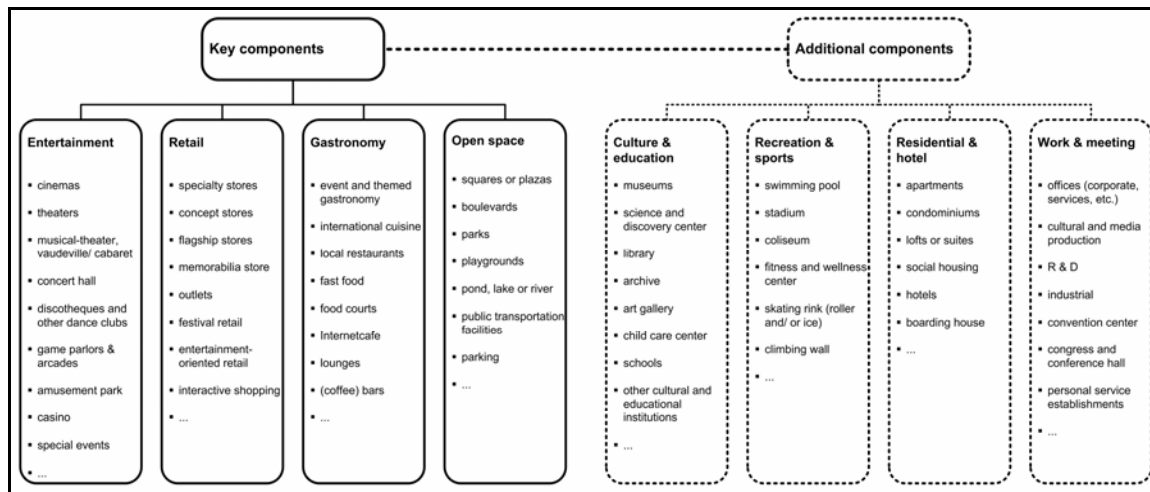

Fig. 2: Mixture and composition of uses according to complementing activities.

Criterion 1.3. – The degree of diversity according to feasibility and profitability (in %): A project's mixture of uses arouses particularly strong interest amongst those with power over the development, because it is both the basis of economic performance and a key concern of planning control. Thus, the diversity of use requires feasibility at the economic and political level. A high diversity of commercial, hybrid and sociocultural developments is decisive for the responsiveness of the Brandhub. Commercial facilities account for direct economic revenues. Hybrid developments, highly experiential and branded spaces with their pleasing atmosphere and emotional try-before-you-buy offerings trigger lasting sympathies and contribute to the generation of brand equity and public acceptance by satisfying the user's desires for commercialized cultural or culturalized commercial experiences. Sociocultural developments meet the local needs and thus contribute to the social robustness and longevity of the Brandhub.
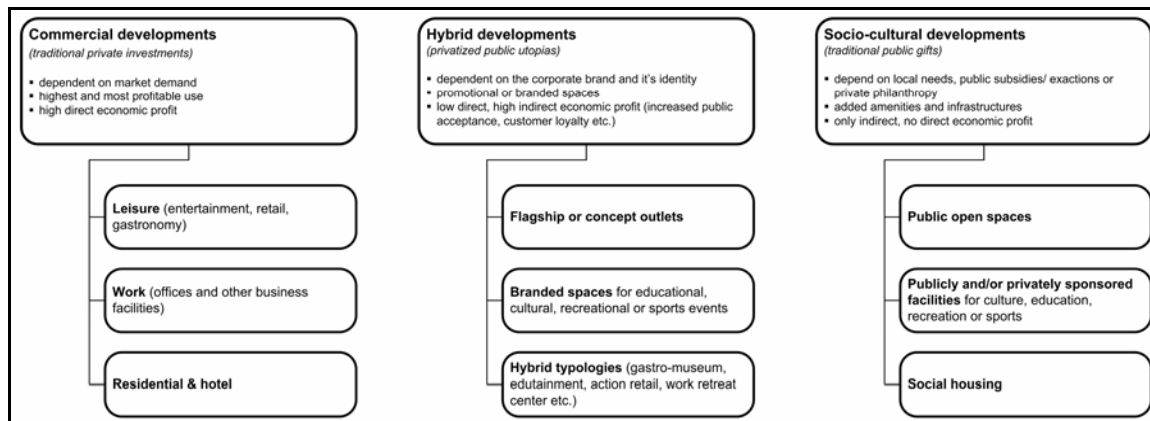

Fig. 3: Mixture and composition of uses according to feasibility and profitability.

2.4.2.3.2.2. Influencing factor 2: appropriateness of the urban form

Hypothesis 2: The appearance of the Brandhub strongly affects the interpretations people have of it. This means that people interpret places as having meanings, and when these meanings help to make the users aware of the diversity of choices offered to them, the form of the Brandhub is responsive or appropriate. The interpretations the users give to the Brandhub are influenced by three different qualities: (i) its legibility, (ii) its variety and robustness, (iii) and its sensual richness.

Criterion 2.1. – Legibility: Diversity of choice is only valuable when people can grasp the options available to them. Thus the degree of choice offered by a Brandhub depends partly on its legibility, or how easily the users can understand its organization. Legibility is supported when the awareness of the physical form and of the patterns of use complement one another. The point of legibility is that the users are able to form an image to help them orient themselves in a certain place (cf. Lynch 1960). A Brandhub is legible when its different elements are differentiated from another, in particular when the different volumes and spaces have differing spatial qualities such as size, material, texture, rhythm, etc.

Criterion 2.2. – Variety and Robustness: These qualities are concerned with the ways in wich the Brandhub is used. To support them, the appearance of the Brandhub should help facilitate the coexistence of a variety of uses, by making its image seem appropriate as a setting for each of the uses concerned. Brandhubs, which can be used for many different purposes, offer their users more choice than those whose design limits them to a single fixed use. Brandhubs which offer such a physical flexibility are robust: their spatial and constructional organization is adaptable for the widest possible range of likely activities as well as future uses, both in the short and the long term.

Criterion 2.3. – Richness: Both visual and non-visual richness is defined by the choice or variety of sense-experiences which users can enjoy. For most people, sight is the dominant sense. But richness is not a purely visual matter. Next to the sense of sight (visual experience), other senses have implications on the responsiveness of the Brandhub: the sense of motion (kinetic experience marked by different possibilities for moving through the Brandhub), the sense of smell (olfactory experience), the sense of hearing (aural experience), and the sense of touch (tangible experience, the richness of the surface texture). A Brandhub is rich when it offers sensory choice to its users, including a range of options for different sense-experiences on different occasions.

2.4.2.3.2.3. Influencing factor 3: contextuality – the intensity and sensitivity of the connection with the context

Hypothesis 3: Contextuality refers to a conceptual, phenomenological and textual connection with the "genius loci" (cf. Norberg-Schulz 1979), the existing urban fabric, encompassing both topological and architectonic components. An adequate connection in form of a continuity or change both in space and time enriches the project's context, instead of isolating, displacing or exploiting it. The more intense and sensitive the integration, the higher the contextuality and thus the responsiveness of both the Brandhub and its surroundings. Concerning Brandhubs, contextuality is important on two scales: the immediate local surrounding and the city/ region as a whole.

Criterion 3.1. – Conceptual integration: A visionary or imaginary connection based on abstract or generic ideas, possibly referring to the history of the site, the social context or local culture.

Criterion 3.2. – Phenomenological integration: A physical and visual connection regarding the urban character and structure (e.g. pattern, orientation, rhythm), atmosphere (e.g. material substance, form, surface and color), and accessibility (e.g. inclusive vs. exclusive, open vs. closed, number of direct links to the system of private and public transportation).

Criterion 3.3. – Textual integration: A functional connection considering the content such as complementing urban places, businesses and cultures through which gaps in the urban fabric can be closed.

2.4.2.3.2.4. Influencing factor 4: meaningfulness of the urban identity and experience

Hypothesis 4: The identity is the distinguishing character or personality of the Brandhub. It is the message and meaning, which is expressed by the different media or signifiers of the Brandhub – its activity pattern, its form and its contextuality. The identity of the Brandhub and its experiences – sensations created within the users – signifies how meaningful the Brandhub is for its users. It should reflect the relationship between the private realm of corporate ownership and the public domain of the city. A Brandhub identity is responsive when it communicates both the corporate as well as the local identity as meaningful and memorable experiences.

Criterion 4.1. – Integration of the corporate and local identity: A sensible integration of the corporate identity (its culture, mission and vision) and the local identity (its uniqueness and peculiarities) within the Brandhub make it responsive. It generates a sense of place and a special character that is reliable.

Criterion 4.2. – Mediation of the identity as meaningful experiences: The mediation of the Brandhub identity as meaningful experiences, which respond to general and local public concerns, triggers positive emotions or "good vibes" and increases the identification of the population with the project – inhabitants, tourists and business people alike. Original and trustful experiences also increase the market penetration, the diversity of user groups and the frequency of repetitive visits.

Criterion 4.3. – Manifestation of the identity in the overall Brandhub development: The identity should not only be highly visible, experiential and meaningful, but also manifest itself in the overall Brandhub development. It should be integrated coherently within all the different parts of the Brandhub.

2.4.2.3.2.5. Interrelationship of the influencing factors

All hypothetical influential factors of the Brandhub – the diversity and composition of uses, the appropriateness of the form, the contextuality, and the meaningfulness of the identity and experience – should interact with each other. They all create urban value through their interrelationship with each other, which in turn contributes to the responsiveness of the Brandhub.

2.4.2.3.3. Impacts on the private and public realm (capturing urban value)

This study further hypothesizes that the provision of such a responsive urban environment has added benefits for both the corporation and the public (win-win).

2.4.2.3.3.1. Impacts for the corporation

For the corporation and its partners, the development of responsive Brandhubs involves added expenditures that should not only be viewed as an essential cost of doing business, but rather as an investment that offers lasting economic bonuses. The provision of hybrid brand components and sociocultural amenities as well as the integration with the local context increases the brand equity and public acceptance, and therefore adds significantly to the vitality and sustainability of the Brandhub. In return, it also generates progressive earnings growth. This increased economic profit as the difference between revenues and costs (profit = income minus costs) will be measured with cost-benefit analyses methods, in specifically with the return on investment (ROI) ratio,[13] which can be obtained from the corporation.

Impact 1.1. – ROI from business assets (direct revenues): ROI from business assets consists of ROI from business expansion (profit from increased revenues, market share, and market penetration) plus ROI from real estate development (profit from real estate sales or rental income as a side effect).[14]

Impact 1.2. – ROI from brand assets (brand equity): ROI from brand assets consists of ROI from experiential branding (increased brand equity: brand awareness plus brand quality plus brand loyalty minus brand liabilities) plus ROI from multimedia strategies such as cross-promotion (increased sub-brand synergies and visibility).

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[13] The return on investment (ROI) ratio measures the profitability and consists of a numerator that reflects the benefit derived from an investment (income or net return) and a denominator that reflects to the resources employed (investments or capital expenditures):

Impact 1.3. – ROI from public assets: ROI from public assets consists of ROI from added amenities such as option spaces for meaningful experiences and more sustainable cultures (increased satisfaction of the general public) plus ROI from local developments (increased acceptance by the local population).

2.4.2.3.3.2. Impact for the public realm
This study assumes that responsive Brandhubs yield economic and functional benefits as well as experiential and sociocultural values that satisfy general public desires and local needs.
Impact 2.1. – Impact for the general public: For experience-seeking consumers and responsible citizens, responsive Brandhubs provide novel urban spaces that offer a wide choice of meaningful experiences and that open possibilities for the evolvement of more sustainable urban alternatives, cultures and identities.
Impact 2.2. – Impact for the local public: For the neighborhood community and the city, responsive Brandhubs constitute valuable contributions to their local development as well as to their quality of life and well being. They provide (i) an enriched physical environment (e.g. a new or improved urban quarter), (ii) economic growth and viability both directly (e.g. job creation, increased tax revenues and purchasing power through attraction of new businesses, tourists, consumers and inhabitants) and indirectly (e.g. new attracted developments in surrounding areas, increase in property values, household incomes and employment opportunities), and (iii) an enhanced sociocultural milieu (e.g. new public spaces and facilities, availability of affordable housing, preservation of historic and cultural resources, evolution of local cultures and identities).

2.4.3. Cross-Case Assessment (WP 3)
After the completion of the individual case analyses, the results will be compared in both a quantitative and qualitative manner. First, the sub-investigations on the individual hypothetical-influencing urban factors will be assessed to prove or disprove if they are responsive (level 3). Second, the syntheses, the urban matrices and urban value nets will be evaluated to prove or disprove if they foster synergies among individual factors and coopetition within the investigated Brandhub developments (level 2). And third, the case study results as a whole will be interpreted with the aim to understand the general strength and weaknesses of Brandhubs for responsive, coopetitive, and sustainable urban development (level 1).

2.4.4. Development of a Responsive Urban Methodology (WP 4)
Based on the cross-case assessment, a methodology for responsive corporate urbanism will be developed. In form of an inductive approach, which is split in three steps, general assumptions will be derived from the particular case study results. First, the most important urban factors that have to be fulfilled in order to foster the responsiveness within the Brandhub typology will be extracted from level 3 of the case study results. The focus is to verify the significance of the individual urban factors relative to each other. Second, a general net of positive, coopetitive urban factors will be constructed by productively combining sustainable interrelationships of the urban matrices and urban value nets resulting from level 2 of the case analyses. And third under consideration of all previous findings (level 1, 2, 3 and WP 1), a scientifically-supported, action-oriented a catalogue of instruments and measures will be determined, which aims to be used as a tool-box for productively dealing with Brandhubs as well as for developing and utilizing responsive strategies as a basis for robust and sustainable urban development. This catalogue of means will mainly consist of architectural and socioeconomic measures. If required, it will also consider legal as well as urban planning, branding and management related issues. The resulting methodologies and tools will allow corporate developers, city authorities, urban planners, architects, cultural producers, citizens and consumers to generate responsive Brandhub developments as well as similar typologies by optimizing existing resources. New forms of coopetitive project development will allow cultural producers and citizens to be active and equal participants. By creating viable public spaces, operative social and cultural venues as well as a basis for long-term economic growth, both global and local structures will be enriched.

2.4.5. Documentation and Knowledge Transfer (WP 5)
Finally, the findings of the research will be regularly documented and discussed with the case stakeholders, case experts and scientific advisors. They will also be submitted to the scientific community and the public at international conferences, symposia and via journals. Moreover, they will be extensively exploited by a crossdisciplinary and transnational online platform. The aim of dissemination is to contribute to the transfer of knowledge and to receive valuable feedback from experts and laymen for the refinement of this study in iterative cycles.

This research is related to a broader project called "ANDI – a new digital instrument for networked creative collaboration in the urban architectural practice" (Schroettner et al. 2003). This project was initiated by ortlos architects Graz in conjunction with a team of experts from major universities in Europe, including the Chair of Architecture and Urban Design at ETH Zürich as well as the information technology service company SchlumbergerSema in Barcelona. The aim of ANDI is to construct an open source Internet platform to discuss and solve complex urban architectural problems in an interdisciplinary manner. The findings from this research will directly flow into the ANDI database and made available on the WWW through the ANDI interface. In this way, both the ANDI team and the ANDI users – experts working on the subject as well as practitioners involved in urban and architectural developments – can build upon the achievements of this research.

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2.7. Significance of the Project to the ETH

Research on contemporary urbanism is of crucial importance to the recently founded Institute of Urban Design and Network of City and Landscape (NSL). The Institute of Urban Design aims to develop and impart knowledge of basic principles and methods of urban design under consideration of the experience acquired from both the history of urban planning and contemporary practice. It is specifically devoted to the development of relevant, problem-oriented strategies, which in opposition to the generally sectorial-oriented and short-term visions in today's practice, will promote integral and sustainable solutions for urban problems. As an example, the investigation of corporate urbanism and its contemporary manifestation in the Brandhub typology will contribute to these goals. The development of a responsive methodology within the Brandhub typology will also add to the goals of the Network of City and Landscape, namely the creation of "foundations for a sustainable as well as culturally and aesthetically appropriate shaping of our environment" (NSL 2003).

This research will not only supply a historical and theoretical background of corporate urbanism, but also an action-oriented methodology for a sustainable urban future. Specificially, this methodology will serve as a catalogue of measures for developing responsive strategies within future Brandhubs. Through the utilization and optimization of these existing resources, it will allow private and public stakeholders to function as equal partners in generating sustainable urban developments. In addition, this methodology will be designed that it can be applied in similar urban typologies as in the planned development of the ETH Science City, and even be transferred to other fields, where new forms of responsive urban development are required.

Up to the present, such novel interactions between theory and practice at a crossdisciplinary interface has hardly been researched and has only recently become the topic of several international colloquia and studies at leading universities, including the ETH Collegium Helveticum, the ETH UNS Case Studies (Scholz et al 2002), and the "Graduiertenkolleg Urban Forms: Conditions and Consequences" (Lampugnani 2002), indicating its relevance. This project provides a valuable contribution to the establishment of these new research methods, which are defined as "Mode-2" (cf. Gibbons et al 1994, Nowotny 2001). In the line with this new mode of science, the results of this scientifically supported, practice-oriented project will be useful to people in academia, industry, government, and hopefully to society in general.

The research results will also be highly fruitful for further research as well as for diverse teaching purposes in the urban field. For example, the results of the case analyses can be used in seminars on urban architecture, economics, culture and sociology, as the one described in 2.5. The overall responsive methodology can also be applied in a design studio setting as exemplified in the Harvard studio model (Harvard Design School 2003). In this model, a given group of students, or more specifically their professor, is solicited by a developer and/or a planning official with a real problem for which they are seeking a creative solution. The design studio is dedicated to this problem and benefits not only from the complexity of a real situation, but also from sponsored travels and having their work on the subject published in a finished book such as the case with the China studios or those in Bilbao between 1996 and 1998, which Kerstin Höger curiously inquired into during her studies at Harvard. The developer or planning body likewise benefits from having 10 to 20 students work on as many potential solutions to their problem. Both parties benefit from the exchange between the academic world and the commercial and/or political world. This bridging of the critical and creative world of academia with the corporate world is also a potential pedagogical model for the ETH and other European schools. Certainly in the light of the changes European cities are currently facing.

Finally, the proposed project provides an important link between current social issues, namely the discussion of the effects of globalization, privatization and commodification on the urban landscape and society with central topics of the current urban-architectural discourse. As one result of these contemporary forces, it will particularly question the aggressive expansion of corporate branding as a stand-in for public funds, ranging from public events and infrastructures to entire neighborhoods and cities, even to schools and universities as our culture's most tangible embodiment of public space and collective responsibility, and "maybe as the one place left where young people can see genuine public life being lived" (Klein 2001: 105). By developing a win-win methodology for private-public development projects from which both the corporate and the public realm can exponentially benefit, this research project will contribute to the achievement of a reasonable equilibrium between corporate profits and public well-being.