

Colombia debuts new narrative to promote itself abroad

This narrative is based on the kindness of Colombians and will serve to strengthen export promotion, attract greater foreign investment, grow international tourism, and generate patriotic pride amongst Colombians.

“Colombia, the most welcoming place on Earth is the new manifesto that the country will use to strengthen its global position and recognition as an ideal business and tourism destination.

The new manifesto, which will be led by ProColombia through the Country Brand, is the result of quantitative and qualitative research carried out with Colombians and foreigners through more than 1,500 surveys and focus groups. This study made it possible to identify Colombians’ essence—their warmth and kindness—and then design and validate the manifesto. Thanks to this study, it was concluded that more than 70 percent of the participants found the message in question to be positive and to correspond to who Colombians are.

Additionally, this brand manifesto is presented at a time when foreign promotion of Colombia has become more important than ever before, because it aims to position the country internationally as well as create national pride by highlighting a characteristic that represents Colombians.

"Making a foreigner feel at home is easy to do in Colombia, as warmth, service, and empathy are part of its inhabitants’ DNA. That is why “Colombia, the most welcoming place on Earth” is the most accurate manifesto and provides a unique message to share with the world about our land and, most importantly, about our people!", stated Flavia Santoro, president of ProColombia.

The manifesto will become a long-term message to be used in the business areas that ProColombia promotes internationally, making the promotion of tourism, investment, and exports more effective. In this sense, the impact indicators will be linked to the arrival of investment projects and international travelers, as well as to exports of non-mining and non-energy products and services.

“For Colombia, 2020 was a year in which we found ourselves facing exceptional circumstances, which has brought out the best in Colombians, and that is what this manifesto represents. Currently, we are seeing the need to redouble our efforts to promote the lines of work that are key to Colombia’s economic recovery, and this message will help us with this goal," Santoro added.

The change in how Colombia is perceived globally

Before declaring the aforementioned manifesto about Colombia, the world already recognized the country for its welcoming qualities. According to InterNations—the largest global network of foreigners who live and work abroad, with 13,000

expatriates from 188 countries—Colombia is clearly recognized as one of the most welcoming countries in the world.

The study indicated that 87 percent of people in the network agree that Colombians' general attitude towards expats is friendly.

Colombia is also a changing country and the world recognizes it. In 2019, eight countries made positive changes to their travel warnings for Colombia. The United States, France, Canada, the United Kingdom, Italy, Israel, South Korea, and Japan are the markets that have recognized improvements in Colombia's security situation.

In addition, both Colombia and ProColombia have received major recognition. For example, the Country Brand Awards—awards that honor Country Brands throughout the world—gave Colombia distinctions in its three categories, which are awarded at the global level as well as by region—the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

At the regional level, in the Americas, Colombia took third place in the “Doing Business” category for its investment attraction strategy and second in the “Doing Tourism” category for the design of its tourism brand. Colombia also finished second in the “Overall” category, which recognizes national management of the pandemic.

Additionally, at the South American version of 2020 World Travel Awards, which are known as “the Oscars of Tourism,” Colombia won nine awards, including Leading Culinary Destination and Leading LGBT Destination. In addition, ProColombia took home the award for Leading Tourist Board. Additionally, six cities—San Andrés, Bogota, Medellin, Barranquilla, Cali, and Cartagena—were recognized in other categories.

This confirms the confidence that others have in our country, thanks to everyone's hard work—from the national government's efforts to improve security to embassies and promotion agencies, such as ProColombia, endeavoring to change perceptions of Colombia.