

Opinion Piece
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Beyond SEQ: Building the Brisbane City-Region Brand

To make the most of 2032, our region needs to ditch its 'SEQ' moniker and get behind brand Brisbane.

Released earlier this year, Deloitte's *Going for Gold* report identified that done right, the brand boost of the Games could deliver a \$24 billion post-Games economic uplift.

While this uplift will be shared across the region, state and nation, the global event we will be hosting in 7 short years from now is called the **Brisbane** 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

And as an Olympic and Paralympic city, the name and identity of 'Brisbane' is gaining valuable global traction and brand recognition.

That's not to say that cities outside of Brisbane need to lose their own brands in a local context, but to truly benefit as a region, we must put aside our parochialism and embrace a shared identity that resonates with a global audience.

Focusing on individual place brands or an outdated administrative construct only serves to dilute the power of the overarching Olympic and Paralympic opportunity.

And let's face it, SEQ just doesn't cut it.

The term SEQ is typically associated with governance and administrative outcomes, such as the SEQ Regional Plan or the SEQ City Deal. It has traditionally been seen as a safe way to geographically describe a region that comprises 12 different- and some very large- local governments.

Outside of Queensland, few would know or understand which cities, towns, places and landmarks are associated with SEQ. And fewer still would appreciate that we increasingly operate as a single region, and are heavily investing in the physical connections needed to maximise the benefits of this collaboration.

If we reframe SEQ as the Brisbane city-region, we can move beyond a geographical descriptor to build a sense of place and identity around an identifiable brand that will help national and international visitors locate us.



Through outwardly classifying ourselves as a city-region, we are alluding to the strength of collaboration and connection within; one that bridges artificial government boundaries.

Visitors don't know- or care- if they are staying in one city and attending an event in another. What they care about is the event experience, the restaurants they dine at, the hotel they are staying in, and the ease with which they are able to move between destinations.

Businesses don't care if they are based in an office building in one city, while their workers live in the next local government area. They care about the ease of doing business, access to a qualified workforce, and availability of housing for their staff.

We are no longer competing for tourism and investment dollars with neighbouring cities. Brisbane is now competing- as a region- on the world stage. It is being named alongside Tokyo, London, Paris and LA. The name has cut through, and we are building an authentic and powerful identity.

Each of the region's cities has its own unique assets and advantages, and they will always find opportunities to promote themselves. But if we want the world to find us in 2032, we need to put aside our differences and rally behind 'Brisbane city-region' as our new, collective identity.

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