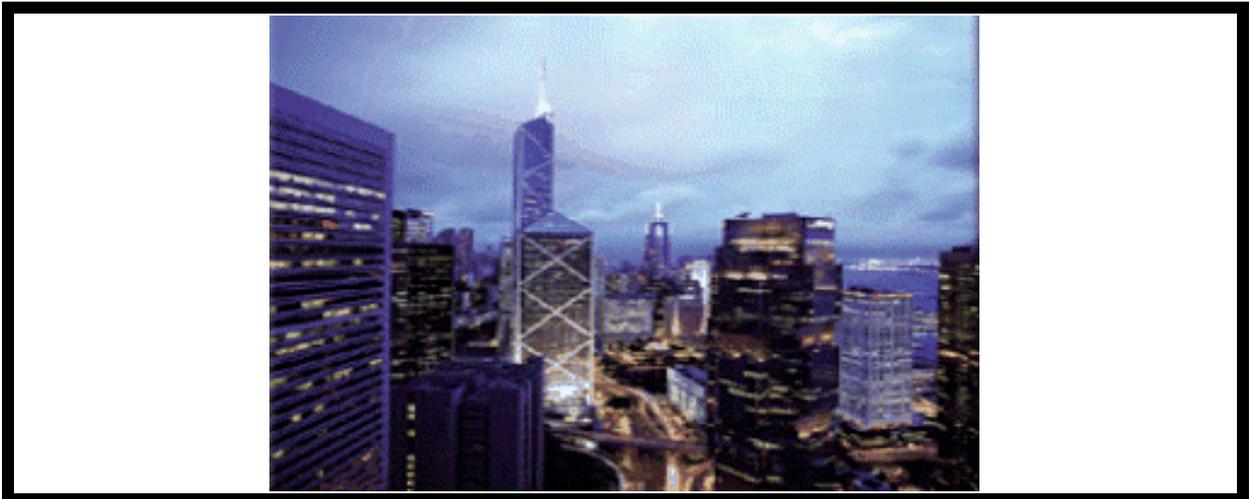




# ISTTE

International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators

## **NEW FRONTIERS IN TOURISM RESEARCH**



**Annual Conference Proceedings of  
Research and Academic Papers  
Volume XVI**

**Hong Kong, SAR China  
September 26-28, 2004**

**Gayle R. Jennings, PhD  
Editor**

# **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION**



# **ISTTTE**

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## Preface

The 2004 International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators (ISTTE) conference theme is: “International Collaboration”. This theme has informed the production of the *Proceedings*. Specifically, there has been international collaboration in regard to the paper review process, the conduct of a number of research projects reported in the *Proceedings* as well as the production of the *Proceedings*. As occurred in 2003, an increasing number of research paper genres have focussed on research issues related to education. In particular, across the genres, papers consider learning issues for students, the impact of education on ethics, the classroom interphase of information technology, preparation of students for the workplace, curriculum development and assessment, as well as educators and emotional intelligence. The *Proceedings* also includes paper submissions which examine various markets and market segments, consumer behaviour and travel experience provision, destination marketing and niche markets. Broader commentaries regarding tourism research and information technologies are also provided.

The *Proceedings* contains full papers, poster papers and extended abstracts of working papers. This year, 47 submissions were received across the various categories including 40 in the research and academic paper sections. After a double blind review process, 15 research and academic papers were accepted. This represents approximately 38% acceptance rate for research and academic papers. Of those 15, 11 appear in this *Proceedings* and the conference program. Seventeen refereed poster papers and six working papers were invited for presentation at the conference, of those, eight posters and four working papers have been included in the conference program and in the *Proceedings*.

At the time of going to print, the order of presentation of papers in the *Proceedings* matches the Conference Program. Any changes to the Program after that date are not reflected in this *Proceedings*

I would like to thank all the researchers who participated in the Paper Call Process regardless of the outcome. My sincere thanks are extended to the reviewers who gave generously of their time; and provided constructive commentaries to the authors. This is a significant contribution to ISTTE as well as to the profession and the disciplines of Tourism and Hospitality. Sharon Scott, President of ISTTE and members of the ISTTE Board of Directors have continued their support and commentary regarding the research paper stream for which I am grateful. Finally, I wish to note my thanks to Professors Kaye Chon and Cathy Hsu, as well as to Assistant Professor Karin Weber; and Antonia Wong, ISTTE Conference Coordinator, along with the conference organising committee for their support and assistance with the Paper Calls and the production of the *Proceedings*.

Gayle R. Jennings, Ph D  
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## **Section I**

# **Research and Academic Papers**

# LEARNING ISSUES AND LEARNING PROBLEMS OF CONFUCIAN HERITAGE CULTURE STUDENTS STUDYING HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

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## ABSTRACT

International education is one of Australia's largest industries and the fees generated by international students are becoming increasingly important to the budgetary health of Australian universities. It has been found that the majority of international students studying at higher education level in Australia are from Asia and that these students have unique needs and requirements and experience a range of learning issues and problems associated with the move to a western education environment.

As part of a larger study, and working within a postpositivist interpretative paradigm, this paper builds on previous research that identified the learning style preferences of international students who are studying hospitality management and/or hospitality and tourism management at higher level in Australia. This paper reports on research that examined CHC students learning experiences and identifies differences in educational approaches and highlights specific problems and issues regarding students learning experiences.

This research found that international students had to make substantial changes to their educational approach and were required to become involved in a variety of new, unusual and uncomfortable learning techniques. This research suggests that western universities and western academics might take a more proactive approach regarding the learning experience of international students.

Keywords: International students; learning issues and problems

## INTRODUCTION

During the past decade, education has developed to be Australia's eighth largest export industry, earning AUD\$3.149 billion in export income in session 1998/1999 (Davis, Olsen and Bohm, 2000) and contributing AUD\$4.2 billion to the Australian economy in 2001 (Bohm, Davies, Meares and Pearce, 2002). In comparison to domestic students who pay tuition fees through a combination of government subsidy and personal contribution, invariably international students pay full tuition fees (roughly double the domestic student fee) to the educational institution. As a whole, in 2000, these international students contributed an estimated AUD\$900 million annually to university budgets in Australia (Davis et al. 2000).

Considering the potential income opportunities for Australian universities, it is not surprising that they are keen to attract and retain international students. Many are often explicit in their desire to increase their proportion of full fee paying international students.

Consequently, higher education institutions in Australia are adopting strategies that will result in international students undertaking tertiary study at that particular university. Indeed the drive to attract international students is often quantified and translated to university, faculty and school strategic objectives.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA

The recruitment strategies adopted by many Australian universities appear to be successful as international student enrolment at Australian higher education institutions has grown significantly over the past decade. Australia now ranks third behind the United States and the United Kingdom as the destination of choice for international students (Meares, 2003; IDP Education Australia, 2000). The number of international students studying Australian programs in Australia has more than doubled from 46,600 to 108,600 students in the period 1992 to 2000 (Maslen, 1999; IDP Education Australia, 2000). This figure has continued to rise with some 115,365 international students studying for Australian higher education qualifications in semester one 2003 (IDP Australia, 2003). While Australia trails both the UK and the USA in terms of international student enrolments, the annual growth rate of international students studying in Australian higher education institutions at 15.3% outstrips the growth rate of both the USA and the UK, at 4.9% and 3.5% respectively, during the period 1997 to 2003 (Meares, 2003). Currently more than 13% of the total student enrolment in Australia originates overseas (IDP Australia, 2003).

Future demand for Australian education appears strong with the International Development Program (IDP Australia, 2003) considering that of the forecast 7.6 million students who will be studying overseas by 2025, almost 1 million of these will be studying for Australian qualifications, either onshore in Australia, by distance learning, or at an offshore campus of an Australian institution (Bohm, et al. 2002).

Traditionally, the majority of international students who study for an Australian qualification originate from Asia with Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia and more recently China, contributing in excess of two thirds of the total overseas student enrolment (Sharma and Calderon, 1998; Davis et al. 2000; IDP Australia, 2003). Asia is forecast to continue to represent the major source countries for international students in the future. It is forecast that students from Asia will represent 92% of the total number of international students studying in Australia in 2025 (IDP Australia, 2003). Regardless of nationality, it has been found that the majority of Asian students who study in Australian higher education institutions are of Chinese nationality or Chinese ethnicity, or originate from countries that share a common Confucian tradition, such as Vietnam, Japan, and Korea (Bohm et al. 2002). This group of students is commonly referred to as Confucian heritage culture (CHC) students (Lee, 1999, Barron, 2004).

## THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

In conjunction with the drive to attract the ever increasing number of CHC students to study in Australia, universities invest substantial funds in a variety of recruitment methods. Such is the importance placed on this market that most universities have designated international departments responsible for marketing and recruitment, the administration associated with processing applications and the orientation and continued pastoral care of international students. Consequently it would seem appropriate that once international students have been attracted to a university, initiatives would be undertaken to ensure that the

student has an enjoyable and successful learning experience (Kennedy 1995; Yanhong Li and Kaye, 1998). Indeed it has been suggested that institutions should provide “holistic support services for (international) students” Jennings (2001:50). However, a criticism faced by western universities is that great emphasis is placed on the initial attracting of international students but that they are ignored thereafter (Niven 1987; Kennedy, 1995). Recent studies have indicated students frustration and disappointment regarding the level of support received by CHC students in comparison to the level of fees being paid (Moon, 2003)

The needs and requirements of CHC students have been identified as being concerned with two general areas. Firstly, it is contended that CHC students will experience issues concerned with living in a foreign country, such as dislocation, culture shock, accommodation problems and homesickness (Ballard and Clanchy 1991). Secondly, is that CHC students have been identified as experiencing issues and problems concerning the overall learning experience. In particular, it has been found that such students appear to adopt a learning style that it at odds with both other international students and domestic students (Barron, 2004). In addition, these students’ have been found to be lacking in certain study skills and display classroom behaviour that is very different to other students in western classrooms. It has been suggested that CHC students’ specific needs and concerns that should be recognised and dealt with separately from the needs and concerns of other international students (Yanhong Li and Kaye, 1998).

#### LEARNING ISSUES AND PROBLEMS OF CHC STUDENTS STUDYING OVERSEAS

It has been suggested that it is normal for the CHC student to experience stress throughout their home country education (Chan, 1999). This sensation is subsequently accentuated by gaining a position at an institution overseas and it would appear that CHC students who undertake university level study in one of the major English speaking destination (MESD) countries experience a range of issues and problems associated with their education. When compared to their domestic counterparts, CHC students themselves suggest that they feel incompetent across a range of study skills, including time management, revision, English language and examination skills (Burns, 1991). Such students have also reported themselves as experiencing extreme difficulty in joining in classroom discussion and consequently experienced various physical and psychological stress symptoms as a result of their western education (Chan, 1999; Robertson, Lines Jones and Thomas, 2000). Indeed, voluntary discussion in the classroom situation is alien to most CHC students (Choi, 1999). Consequently it has been suggested that these feelings of stress are, in part, brought about by the different approach to learning that CHC students have to adopt when studying overseas (Chan, 1999) and it has been suggested that CHC students experience difficulty in employing a learning strategy other than memorising (Robertson et al. 2000). The concept of participating in group work and giving presentations to peers has been found to be a key concern for many CHC students (Barron, 2004).

CHC students also appear to experience issues regarding their relationship with the teacher. It has been suggested that, in Australia, CHC students are required to get used to a more casual student/teacher relationship where the student is required to take the initiative, for example, regarding meeting with academic staff as opposed to being told specifically when a member of staff will be available (Choi, 1997). Consequently, it has been found that many students decide not to communicate with the academic as such an action might be considered rude due to the perceived status of the academic and the excessive regard for authority held by the students (Moon, 2003).

When compared to local students CHC students experience additional concerns and problems at a more extreme level (Mullins, Quintrell and Hancock, 1995), including worry and feeling scared (Ramsay, Barker and Jones, 1999). In order to combat these feelings and overcome difficulties in class, many international students adopted such coping strategies as working harder, undertaking additional reading and cooperating with other international students regarding note-taking and study sessions.

The stressful situation in which these students find themselves has been found to be compounded by three issues. Firstly, these students have to contend with the family pressure to succeed (Yee 1989). Secondly, by the lack of understanding that western educators have regarding the behaviour of CHC students in the classroom and their overall approach to learning (Chan 1999), and finally, that many students are involved in racist incidents both on and off campus (Robertson et al. 2000).

Lecturing staff responses tended to echo many of the concerns of students but with different emphases. Staff considered that CHC students were reluctant to become involved in, and contribute to, class discussion. In addition the CHC students' difficulty with the concept of there not being one correct answer to a question was highlighted. Other concerns expressed by lecturers were the CHC students' reliance on books, not taking responsibility for their own learning and not understanding the concept of plagiarism (Robertson et al. 2000). The problem associated with CHC students not being aware of the requirement of acknowledging other people's intellectual property within their assignments and the concept of plagiarism has been identified in earlier Australian studies (Watson, 1999).

It is reasonable to expect that all students will experience an initial period of anxiety and stress associated with university study. However it would appear that many CHC students' problems increased in both number and intensity as the student progressed through their program (Mullins et al. 1995).

## UNIVERSITIES RESPONSIBILITIES

It might be suggested that when a university expends resources attracting lucrative international students to study their programs, it would also be appropriate that some responsibility for the overall experience of those students should be shouldered by the host university. This can be achieved in several ways and many universities attempt initiatives that will assist the student to settle into their new academic and social life and consequently minimise their readily identified predictable and learning problems.

That the university provides a supportive atmosphere from both an academic and social perspective will go some way to ensuring that international students will continue to come to that university. The argument is that a successful student, who has had an enjoyable period at a particular university, will communicate that satisfaction to friends and relations who, in turn, may decide to pursue study in that particular university or country (Mullins et al. 1995; Huang and Brown 1996). Due to the potential benefits associated with this word of mouth advertising it would seem appropriate for Australian universities to adopt strategies that would make an international student's learning experience as positive as possible.

This research builds on previous research that identified the learning style preferences of CHC students who are studying hospitality management and/or hospitality and tourism management at tertiary level in Australia. This paper reports on research gathered that

examined CHC students learning experiences and identifies differences in educational approaches and highlights specific problems and issues regarding students learning experiences. This paper concludes with several strategies that universities might introduce in order to improve the learning experience of CHC students studying overseas.

## METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS

This paper represents a portion of a larger study which the researcher approached from a postpositivist perspective. Postpositivism operates under an ontology of critical realism which assumes an objective reality, but recognises that it is imperfect (Dias and Hassard, 2001). Thus, the postpositivist researcher uses a variety of both qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve a more accurate indication of what is happening in reality (Phillips and Burbules, 2000). The postpositivist then uses triangulation in order to examine the same variable as a means of increasing accuracy (Neuman, 1997). From a practical viewpoint, it is held that the postpositivist conducts research in a well controlled environment, such as the classroom or within the framework of a focus group (Fischer, 1998) and thus uses more natural and comfortable settings (Dias and Hassard, 2001). Sparks (2002) considered that the postpositivist researcher conducts both individual and group research but solicits the emic, or insiders' viewpoint. Consequently, the postpositive researcher aims to produce recommendations that assist in the general improvement of an issue rather than develop definitive results.

Data were gathered using focus group interviews with CHC students at four tertiary education providers of Hospitality and/or hospitality and tourism management in Australia. Although in depth interviews allow a significant degree of flexibility for the researcher to explore issues as they arise in conversation, focus groups were used in this study. The advantage, which a focus group has over an in depth interview "is that the respondents or informants involved react to one another more naturally" (Priest, 1996:109). In this approach a richer picture of how information is processed and conclusions are drawn can be constructed when compared to an interview situation (McMillan, 2000; Priest, 1996). The research objectives and the methodology chosen were deemed entirely suited to the synergistic and dynamic nature of focus groups (Morgan, 1997). Ticehurst and Veal (1999) suggest that it is most appropriate to use focus groups when a particular group is important to a study, but is so small in number that members of that group would not be adequately represented in a general survey, for example in the case when people of a specific culture or ethnic group form the focus of a study. In addition, Ticehurst and Veal (1999) also suggest that the use of a focus group is most appropriate as a means of including respondents who may not wish to be interviewed on an individual basis.

The focus group interviews were recorded and transcribed and the data were analysed via content analysis which is described by Neuman (1997:272) as "a technique for gathering and analysing the content of text". Content analysis allows the researcher to probe into and discover content in a meaningful way and allows the researcher the opportunity to compare content across a variety of texts. In this instance, content analysis allowed the researcher to compare content across the four focus groups conducted in this study. The content was then analysed via quantitative techniques and the data were able to be displayed via charts. In order to develop a more sophisticated data set, the results were weighted thus allowing the researcher to identify the overall importance of the participants' comments

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participants were asked to reflect on what different study approaches they have had to adopt in order to successfully complete subjects at their Australian institution. Chart 1 gives an overview of participants' responses. Respondents made comments regarding the change of emphasis from memorising to understanding. Indeed the most common response concerned the students' new found focus on understanding the material presented. One participant stated that 'I've had to change because well, usually I just study and memorise things but now I have to digest (the material) myself and not just memorise but make it more clear'.

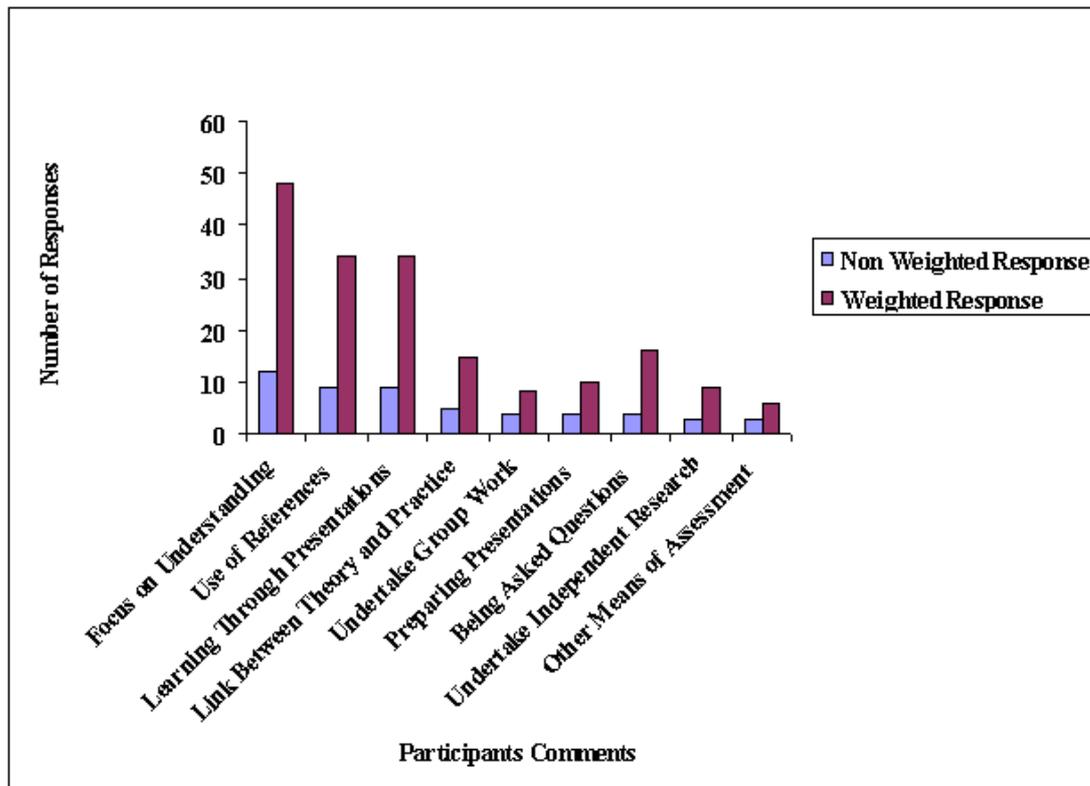
In addition to a realisation regarding the need to understand the material presented, this comment would also suggest that there has been a perceptible shift in the responsibility for learning with this respondent clearly understanding their requirement for understanding the material. This shift towards understanding the material presented in class also appeared to be important with participants in all four groups making comments concerning this point. In addition, several participants commented that their requirement to understand the material resulted in a clearer link between theory taught in the classroom and practice in industry. One participant suggested that "it's not just memorising, it is connected with the real world experience".

Respondents appeared to understand that a change in classroom behaviour was required in order to be successful. Respondents commented that the focus was no longer on the individual student and that group work and presentations were now commonplace. Several respondents made the clear link between presentations and their increased level of understanding with one participant stating that "because you are standing there you have to fully understand the material you are presenting and so you can answer questions about the material".

Focus group participants were asked to specify what issues or problems had affected their learning experience in Australia. The most common response to this question concerned students' participation in class. This aspect appeared to be very important as members of each focus group commented that participation in class was a major issue or problem concerning their educational experience in Australia thus far.

Group work and presentations were again mentioned as a significant difficulty and several comments regarding the issue of students of particular nationalities working together were raised. This last comment was raised both from an inclusion and an excluded perspective. Firstly, respondents considered that Australian students tended to stick together when forming groups and preparing presentations and the accusation was made that

**Figure 1**  
**Non Weighted and Weighted Responses to Question: What different study approaches have you had to adopt in order to successfully complete subjects/courses here in Australia?**

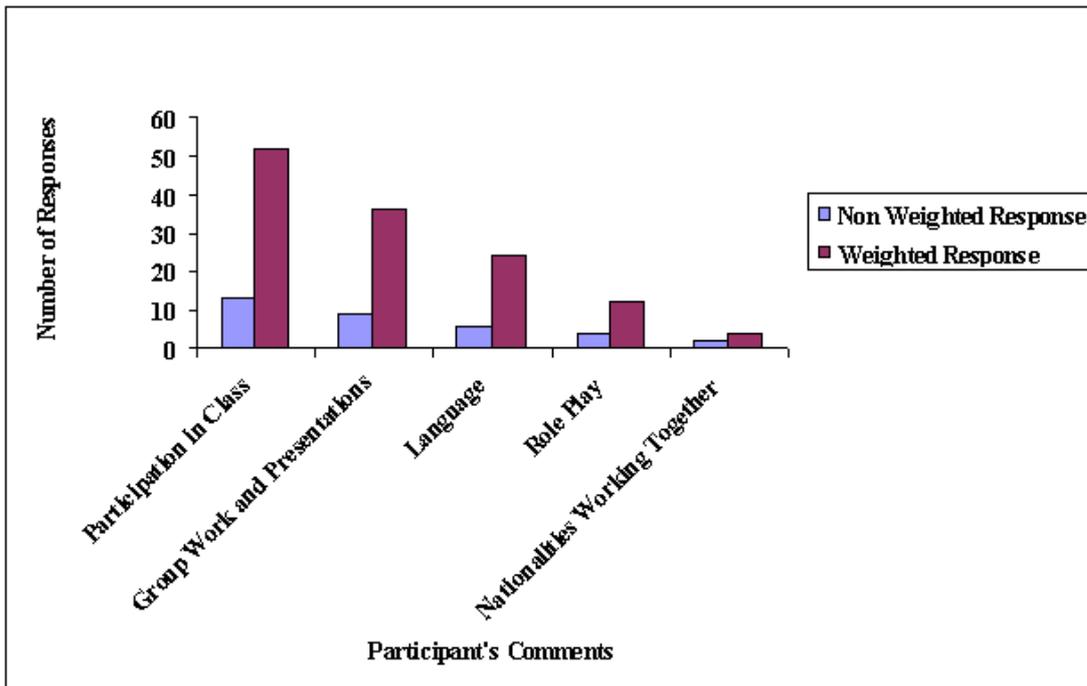


Australian students considered that international students would not make a valuable contribution to the group project, with one participant commenting that:

There is also a problem I've encountered when I'd join the Aussies. Then (sic) what it turned out to be was they don't really appreciate my participating because they all think that you know nothing. You're not from an English background country. Sometimes I would try and participate but they may reject and at the end of the whole assignment they would go up to the tutor and say that I didn't participate and so I don't deserve the mark.

Focus group participants were asked to reflect on their learning experience in Australia so far. Generally the majority of comments were very positive with the most frequently mentioned response suggesting that participants' educational experience thus far had been good. However, it must be noted that on the negative side, several participants mentioned that their Australian educational experience had been stressful. Comments made by participants would suggest that the stress they were experiencing was founded in the recognition of the serious consequences that would be associated with them failing their program. This feeling of stress was reasonably commonly felt as members from three focus groups made such comments.

**Figure 2**  
**Non Weighted and Weighted Responses to Question: What learning issues or problems have you experienced here in Australia?**



Respondents also made comments concerning the overall approach to learning and it was noted that respondents appeared to enjoy the learning methods common on their Australian program. When asked this question, one enthusiastic respondent stated:

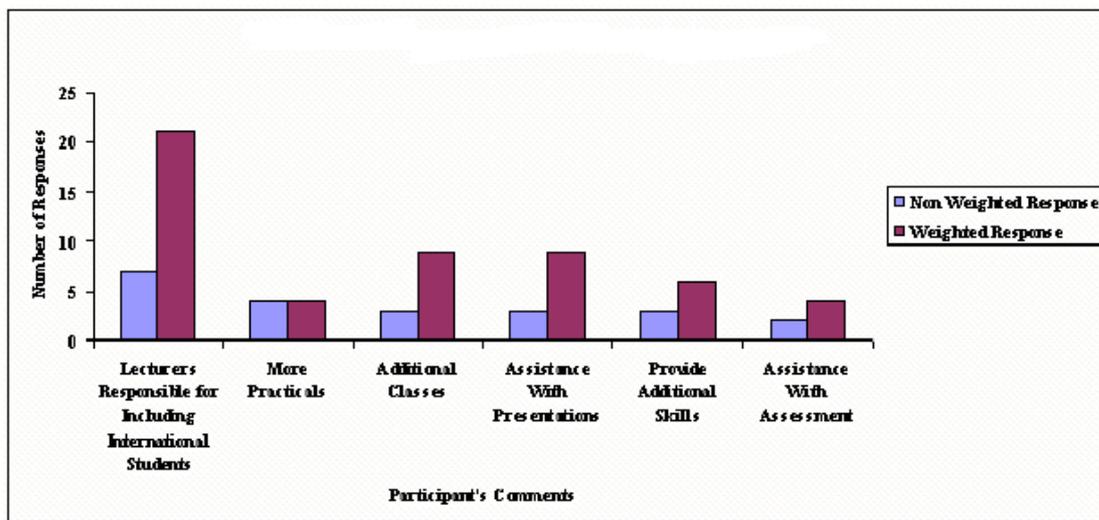
Good, good, because here things are very interesting and after you have finished studying your subject, you still remember things. You still remember the things you were studying in your previous semester.

In addition, respondents stated that they enjoyed sourcing information and relished the opportunity to debate, discuss and ask questions. Many participants recognised the direct link between their studies and their future careers and commented that the focus on understanding and the information sourcing and debating skills would be relevant and of use in the future. Several respondents also made comments regarding the positive relationships that existed between students and lecturers and complimenting the good standard of teaching.

Towards the end of the focus group interview participants were asked what recommendations they could suggest that would improve their learning experience in Australia. Broadly speaking, respondents' comments fell into three categories. The first and most frequently mentioned response to this question concerned students' classroom behaviour. Responses to this question would suggest that respondents considered that responsibility for encouraging CHC student classroom involvement needs to become the responsibility of the institution. It was suggested that the lecturer in charge should take a more active role in managing the class interaction, ensuring that international students were included in class discussions and that group composition for presentations be controlled to ensure that there was a mix of nationalities in groups.

Respondents also considered that the university could provide additional classes after formal lectures that were specific for international students. It was suggested that these classes would be an opportunity for international students to question the lecturer, seek clarification regarding the content of the lecture and have the opportunity to more fully reflect and digest the material presented in the preceding lecture. Similarly, respondents also considered that the development of study skills and more assistance with assessments, particularly presentations would improve their learning experience.

**Figure 3**  
**Non Weighted and Weighted Responses to Question: What recommendations would you suggest that would improve your learning experience?**



## CONCLUSION

From this research, it is evident that the CHC students are required to make a paradigm shift in their approach to education. They are expected to fit into a system which is very different to their home country. These results would suggest that their level of learning has progressed from describing and replicating to understanding, evaluation and analysis. In addition, there is a recognition of an assumption of responsibility for learning through debate and disagreement and the substantiating of discussion and submitted work. These students are exposed to classroom dynamics that are very different to their previous experience and are expected to treat their once revered lecturers with what some feel is disrespect. In addition, students are introduced to a range of new methods of assessment for which they are ill prepared and find extremely difficult and uncomfortable.

While this research has focussed on student experiences, it is possible to make several comments regarding the institutions that these students attend. It would appear that students consider that many of these institutions treat students well. However, it might be suggested that these students would appreciate and benefit from additional institutional support and consequently it is suggested that more could be done in terms of the development of practical study skills and the support that such students receive as part of their study program.

Finally, it might be possible to make several comments regarding the lecturing staff with whom these students have to deal on a daily basis. It is reasonable to conclude that students appreciated the high quality of teaching they had received and enjoyed the more relaxed and informal student/teacher relationship. However, it was noted that many students considered that lecturers might take a more proactive role in the management of classroom activities, most notably regarding the composition of groups. It would appear from comments made that while students recognise that there has been a shift in the responsibility for learning, students do feel that the lecturer does have some responsibility for classroom management which appears to be lacking.

It has been found that the majority of CHC students academically outperform their western counterparts and most students successfully complete their western education (Biggs, 1998). However, this research has highlighted that a CHC student who studies and eventually graduates from a western university will have had to contend with a variety of learning issues and problems throughout their period of study. That such students succeed is testimony to their hard work, diligence and flexibility. This research has highlighted several proactive strategies that might be adopted by universities and academics in order to make this learning experience less stressful and ultimately more enjoyable.

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# DOES EDUCATION HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON ETHICAL POSITIONS? A STUDY OF TURKISH TOURISM MANAGERS

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## ABSTRACT

The research study reported in this paper examined the relationship between type and level of education, corporate ethical values and personal ethical positions (moral philosophies) of managers in charge of marketing of tourism organizations. A mail survey was undertaken with a sample of marketing executives of 1066 tourism organizations in Turkey. Managers responded to questions about their ethical positions through a questionnaire based on the EPQ scale. Corporate ethical values were measured by the CEV scale. Results indicate that Turkish tourism marketing executives are more idealistic rather than relativistic in their moral philosophies. Although the results do not support the influence of gender differences on moral philosophies as in the previous studies conducted in Turkey, they particularly indicate the influence of education on ethical positions of tourism marketers.

Keywords: Tourism ethics, ethical positions, education.

## INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing social perception that many businesses put their profits above ethical considerations (Shaw 1996). Since late 1980s, what might be considered a response to this perception, many educational institutions began to incorporate business ethics in their teaching. A study has found that the majority of the tourism and hospitality institutions in the United States included ethics in their teaching (Enghagen 1991a). There is little doubt that tourism, in an atmosphere of increasingly fragile natural environment and various uncertainties that arise from the effects of political instability and globalization, need its managers to be ethically aware. However, the culture of materialism and self-interest that prevails particularly in western societies makes ethical education of business students a challenging task (Enghagen 1991b) and renders the effectiveness of such teaching questionable (O'Halloran 1991). The need for finding a suitable paradigm for teaching ethics in a multicultural managerial environment, such as tourism, has been debated (Yaman 2003). In general, there is support for incorporating ethical courses in business education (Arlow and Ulrich 1985; Stewart, Felicetti, and Kuehn 1996) and business students appear to think that ethical practices are beneficial for business profitability (Stewart et al. 1996). In the field of tourism, it has been suggested that ethically responsible policies would be beneficial for the organizations that adopt them (D'Amore 1993) and that an ethical approach would lead to a more effective segmentation of markets (Wheeler 1996).

Tourism has a number of issues that require ethical approaches as have been highlighted by a number of scholars in recent years. In the forefront of those issues is the concern for tourism's effect on the environment (D'Amore 1993; Hultsman 1995; Payne and Dimanche 1996; Holden 2003). Other questions, to which universal legal answers are mostly not existent, are ecotourism (Wight 1993), sociocultural effects on Third World development (Lea 1993; Ahmed, Krohn, and Heller 1994), stakeholder involvement (Walle 1995), travel agency conduct (Dunfee and Black 1996), and hospitality management conduct (Whitney 1990, 1992). A few authors commented on the need for codes of conduct for industry (Dunfee and Black, 1996; Wight, 1993; Whitney, 1990). The effectiveness and generalizability of such codes of conduct is questionable as different nations place different levels of importance on issues requiring an ethical awareness for responsible consideration (risk management and security, sustainable development, environmental protection, etc.) depending on the perceived needs of their population. In addition, developing nations who view tourism as one of the paths to relative economic independence resent the attempted imposition of more affluent countries' codes. Regardless of that, managers and tourism organizations increasingly are expected to include ethical considerations in their decision-making. However, for such integration to be effective, an understanding of the decision processes of tourism marketers in situations involving ethical considerations is necessary. Ethical position, or moral philosophy, is considered as one of the most important factors of influence in ethical decision-making (see, for example, Hunt and Vitell 1986; Trevino 1986; Ferrell and Gresham 1985). An understanding of the moral philosophies of tourism managers in different countries is essential for various reasons. It can be used in the development of training programs on ethical behaviour as well as in the formulation of codes of ethics. It could also help in the design of courses on ethics in business management education in different cultural settings. From a practitioner's point of view, such understanding would help tourism managers from different countries in the evaluation of ethical behaviour of different cultures.

This paper presents the findings regarding the influence of the type and level of education of tourism managers of Turkey on their moral philosophies. It is part of an ongoing larger study that investigates various aspects of tourism managers' perceptions of social responsibility and factors that influence those perceptions in a number of cultures.

## CONSTRUCTS

### *Ethical Positions*

"Business ethics is the study of what constitutes right and wrong, or good and bad, human conduct in a business context" (Shaw and Berry 1992:3). The primary concern of ethics, then, is human conduct. Central to the enquiry into human conduct is the concept of 'goodness'. To defend or promote ethical, or 'good', conduct, we must first define what is meant by 'good'. In ethical theories, there are two main approaches for separating good conduct (right actions) from bad conduct (wrong actions). The first type of approach is referred to as *deontological* and "contend that right and wrong are determined by more than the likely consequences of the action. An act is wrong "because of the inherent character of the act itself" (Shaw and Barry 1992: 57-58). The second approach is termed *teleological*, in which what is right action is determined "by weighing the ratio of good to bad that an action is likely to produce" (ibid: 57).

Forsyth (1980) suggests two basic dimensions of personal moral philosophies emanating from the approaches described above. These are termed *idealism* and *relativism*. Relativism is defined as "the extent to which the individual rejects universal moral rules"

(Forsyth 1980: 175-176). A relativistic individual will consider a conduct as good, if the conduct conforms to a prescribed standard. Idealistic individuals, on the other hand, believe in moral absolutes when making ethical judgments. If the action were morally “right” then it would always lead to “right” consequences. Conversely, relativistic individuals are skeptical about universal moral rules and believe that negative consequences will often be mixed in with positive ones.

Forsyth (1980) developed a taxonomy that classifies four distinct personal moral philosophies by crossing idealism and relativism dimensions. Individuals can be termed as *situationists* (those who have high relativism and idealism values), *subjectivists* (those who have high relativism but low idealism values), *absolutists* (those with low relativism but high idealism values), and *exceptionists* (individuals with low relativism and idealism values). Absolutists judge actions as moral or immoral in accordance with some universal moral rule consistent with a deontological approach; exceptionists tend to act in a way that produces “good” consequences consistent with a teleological ethical philosophy. One of the best-recognized teleological approaches is known as *utilitarianism*, which advocates that an action is good when it benefits the greatest number of individuals or when the majority approves it.

#### *Level of Education*

There have been a number of studies that looked into educational level of business managers and their moral philosophies with contrasting findings. In his study of marketers’ ethical behaviors, Lund (2000) reported that the education level of respondents positively influenced their conduct. Browning and Zabriskie (1983) demonstrated that purchasing managers with more education viewed vendor gifts and favors to be more unethical than less educated purchasing managers. In contrast, a number of other studies could not establish any significant relationship between the individual’s years of education and ethical beliefs (Dubinsky and Ingram 1984; Kidwell, et al. 1987; Merritt 1991; Serwinek 1992; Honeycutt et al. 2001).

There were also studies that investigated the relationship between the educational level and moral philosophies of marketers and found a negative relationship between education and idealism (see, for example, Ho, Vitell, Barnes, and Desborde 1997).

#### *Type of education*

Researchers found that marketing professionals with majors in business studies are less ethically sensitive than marketing professionals that majored in other disciplines (Merritt 1991; Tyson 1992) and that students with business majors are more tolerant of unethical behaviour than students with majors in other areas (Hawkins and Cocanougher 1972). On the other hand, Chonko and Hunt (1985) report that managers with technical majors are more ethical than managers with non-technical majors. Some studies show no significant differences between type of education and ethical beliefs (Dubinsky and Ingram 1984; McNichols and Zimmerer 1985; Reiss, 1998) or reveal that type of education does not influence ethical behaviour (Lund 2000).

#### HYPOTHESES:

Based on the above the following hypotheses were tested:

*H1: Turkish tourism marketing managers are more idealistic than relativistic.*

*H2a: There is a positive relationship between the level of education and moral philosophies of tourism marketing managers.*

*H2b: There is a relationship between the type of education and moral philosophies of tourism marketing managers*

*H3a: Corporate ethical values are positively related to the idealism of tourism marketing managers.*

*H3b: Corporate ethical values are negatively related to the relativism of tourism marketing managers.*

## METHOD

### *Sample, Data Collection and Response Rate*

An initial sampling frame of 1,000 tourism marketing managers was compiled from the directories of the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Culture and the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies. A “judgmental sampling method” was employed to ensure the inclusion of the major players in the Turkish tourism and hospitality industry.

The mail-out to 1,000 tourism marketers included a self-administered questionnaire, a cover letter, which emphasized the international nature of the study and promised a copy of the study results, and a preaddressed return envelope. Additional efforts such as personal presentations to industry associations (e.g., SKAL) helped to increase the response rate. Finally, a total of 219 questionnaires were received which indicated a 20.5 per cent response rate out of the overall number of 1066.

A detailed profile of respondents is presented in Table 1.

## MEASURES

In this study, The Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) developed by Forsyth (1980) was used to measure the ethical ideologies of the tourism marketers. The EPQ assesses personal moral philosophies by asking individuals to indicate their acceptance of items that vary in terms of relativism and idealism” (Forsyth, 1992: 464). The EPQ involves 20 attitude statements. The first ten items measure idealism and the second ten items measure relativism. A five-point continuous scale was adopted (Vitell, Rallapalli, and Singhapakdi 1993a) in place of the original nine-point scale. For each respondent, two EPQ scores are computed by taking the mean score of their responses to the idealism and relativism items respectively. Reliability assessments for both dimensions were conducted for the purposes of this study. The Cronbach’s coefficient alpha values for idealism and relativism scales were 0.84 and 0.79 respectively.

**Table 1**  
**Profile of respondents**

<b>Organisation's Annual Revenue</b>	
Under \$1m	37.7
\$1 to \$4.9m	22.6
\$5 to 24.9m	24.5
\$25m and over	15.2
<b>Organisation's foundation date</b>	
1970 or before	3.0
1971 – 1980	2.5
1981 – 1990	10.0
1991 or later	84.5
<b>Number of employees</b>	
Fewer than 10	22.1
10 – 19	16.2
20 – 49	20.6
50 or more	41.1
<b>Respondent's position</b>	
Owner / operator	27.7
Managing Director / CEO	17.0
General Manager	3.4
Senior Manager	11.2
Other	40.7
<b>Highest level of formal education</b>	
Secondary school	13.2
TAFE Cert/AssDip/Dip	10.4
Bachelor's	59.9
Postgraduate degree	16.5
<b>Main specialization</b>	
Business (Hospitality and Tourism)	55.9
Business (other than H&T)	19.0
Business (other than H&T)	16.1
Arts and Humanities	9.0
Other	
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	74.5
Female	25.5

## CONCLUSION

### *Testing of the hypotheses*

The significant finding for education and idealism indicates that idealism decreases as educational levels increase (Tukey HSD post hoc test suggest, the difference is significant at 0.05 level), though the same argument can also be made for “relativism” the relation is not significant. In addition, on type of education, the data reveals that individuals with Arts and Humanities degree have a higher perception regarding the importance of ethics and social responsibility. However, they also have higher scores on the “subordination of ethics and social responsibility” dimension which may indicate some sort of controversy. Tukey HSD Post Hoc Tests indicate that responses of individuals with Arts and Humanities degree are significantly different from the responses of individuals with Business degree other than Tourism and Hospitality on the “importance of ethics and social responsibility” dimension where individuals with Business degree other than Tourism and Hospitality have the lowest mean score. On the other hand, for the “subordination of ethics and social responsibility” dimension, Tukey HSD Post Hoc Tests show that individuals with Arts and Humanities degree are significantly different from individuals with Business degree in Tourism and Hospitality. Therefore, the results support the research findings of Merritt (1991) and Tyson (1992) who have found that marketing professionals with business majors are less ethically sensitive than marketing professionals with other majors. Overall, this finding may suggest that marketing professionals’ perception regarding ethics and social responsibility differs as a function of educational specialization. In addition, the responses of marketing professionals to corporate ethical values also tend to differ as a function of educational specialization, though post hoc tests do not indicate a significant difference.

*H1* states that tourism managers in Turkey are more idealistic than relativistic in their moral outlooks. The mean idealism and relativism figures supplied in Table 2 support this. *H2a* and *H2b* state that there are relationships between the level of education and the type of education and moral philosophies displayed by Turkish tourism managers. As can be seen in Table 3, both *H2a* and *H2b* were supported as univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) identified significant differences on idealism. This result suggests that the level and type of education seem to play a differential role in identifying the idealism of tourism marketing managers. It is possible that country conditions in the economic, political and legal environment might be having an impact on the relativism of managers. Conversely, cultural variables, such as collectivism and power distance might exert influence on the idealism levels.

**Table 2**  
**Mean values**

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Idealism	4.26	.51
Relativism	3.20	.88
Corporate ethical values	4.17	.85

1 = Disagree strongly, 5 = Agree strongly

**Table 3**

## Regression Analysis

### Dependent variable: IDEALISM

Factors	Standardized Beta	t-value	Significance
Corporate ethical values	-.203	2.92	.04
Level of education	.145	-2.501	.03
Type of education	1.64		.04

R Square = .049

Adjusted R Square = .034

F-value = 3.12

Significance = .02

*H3a* states that corporate ethical values have a positive influence on managers' idealism where *H3b* states that they negatively influence relativism. Results indicate corporate ethical values have a positive influence on idealism. However, *H3b* is not supported as there is no significant relationship between corporate ethical values and relativism levels. These results agree with a similar (non-industry specific) study by Singhapakdi et al. (1999b which found that idealism was significantly influenced by corporate ethical values where relativism was not.

### Discussion

This study examined the variations in moral philosophies of tourism marketing managers in Turkey as defined in terms of idealism and relativism. It is argued that those variations may be explained in terms of gender differences, differences in the level and type of education and corporate ethical values. One important implication of this study is that societal culture as well as the corporate culture can have an effect in the formation of managers' moral philosophies, which consequently influence ethical behavior.

Based on the results of this study, tourism marketers, in general, tend to be more idealistic than relativistic. The high mean score on the idealism may suggest that according to Forsyth (1980: 176), marketing professionals can be classified as "absolutists" who "tend to agree with statements that are consistent with a general approach to moral philosophy known as deontology" which "rejects the use of an action's consequences as a basis for moral evaluation and appeals to natural law or rationality to determine ethical judgments".

Turkish managers were significantly higher than expected in their idealism as well as relativism scores. Although higher relativism score was unexpected in this survey, it is in accordance with the previous research comparing managers from collectivist cultures to those from individualistic cultures (Singhapakdi et al., 1994).

It appears that the presence of corporate ethical values have a positive effect on marketers' moral philosophies. As idealism is strongly linked with corporate ethical values, this result might be seen to indicate that idealistic managers are influenced by the corporate values of the organization. In general, marketing professionals who are involved in the tourism system have the perception that their companies have high ethical values.

Specifically, they have the highest perception for the “personal gain reprimanded” item indicating that when someone in the organization engages in unethical behavior that results in personal gain, they strongly believe that he/she will be punished.

There is an urgent need for the education of students of tourism and hospitality management in ethical issues. Findings of this study can be incorporated in the development of such courses through alerting students to the differences in thinking with regards to moral issues in terms of idealism and relativism and making them aware that such differences may be due to differences in societal culture, economic and social environment and corporate culture. Scenarios and case studies representing various tourism ethical dilemmas can be developed as suggested in a recent paper on the ethics education in tourism (Yaman 2003).

One limitation of this study is the number of factors that are investigated. Moral philosophy is an evasive phenomenon that is hard to pinpoint precisely. Some of the variables of importance that were not investigated by this study would include religion and organizational position of the managers and the size and professional environment of the organization. Future research should also extend the area of inquiry by including other variables, increasing the factors that are theorized as being antecedents to moral outlooks in business.

Despite its limitations, however, this exploratory study indicates an important addition to an under researched area. It is, to authors’ knowledge, the first study in the specific industrial milieu of tourism that attempts an empirical investigation of a highly difficult phenomenon.

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BRIDGING THE GAP:  
TOWARDS A KNOWLEDGE-BASED  
DEVELOPMENT MODEL FOR TOURISM SMEs

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## ABSTRACT

In general the relationship between the tourism industry and academic tourism research is a tense and problematic one. Large-scale national/state or research foundation funded research programs are often met by skepticism and indifference within the tourism industry. The theoretical, methodological and conceptual academic exercises seem to have limited appeal and value to a business characterized by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) struggling to survive. On the other hand, academics and academia have a tendency to disregard tourism SMEs as non-professional businesses. Consequently, we are largely faced with a relationship characterized by mutual prejudices and mistrust.

The objective of this paper is to demonstrate the mutual benefits and value of developing inter-active collaboration between academic research/educational institutions and small and medium size tourism businesses. Certainly, many research and educational institutions provide consultancy services to tourism businesses, but more seldom do they engage in committed business development by the strategic application of scientific-based knowledge. Equally uncommon is the conscious reflection among tourism researchers on the reciprocal effects of development work for scientific knowledge generation.

Since 2003, the Centre for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT) in Denmark is engaged in a large EU-funded project, working closely with 15 tourism SMEs aiming at business development through knowledge exchange, strategic partnerships and collaboration. The role of CRT is to act as a coordinator and facilitator by systematizing, conceptualizing and make the development process comprehensible. An Interactive Knowledge-Based Model (IKBM) has been developed, which function as a platform for the participating businesses, allowing them to identify their different needs, to share knowledge and experiences, and most importantly, to develop actions and solutions.

**Keywords:** Knowledge Creation, Knowledge Management, Knowledge Transfer, Tourism SMEs.

## INTRODUCTION

Although universities have existed for many centuries, research has been on the academic agenda for hardly more than a century. Originally, the main task of universities was to provide academic education. In general, the development of academic education and research was of little direct relevance to the surrounding society. Particularly in Europe, universities upheld a rather autonomous status, and nurtured the belief in and strive for pure

and objective scientific knowledge. According to the academic gospel, the process of scientific research followed its own path and rhythm, and it was not a major concern for the researcher whether the knowledge produced was of any direct use to the surrounding society (Rothblatt, 1997).

A slightly different situation developed in the emerging nations of the 1800's. Particularly in the United States, the universities being established developed a more pragmatic relation between academia and the surrounding society. The structure of State universities, in most cases depending on land grants, enthused the development of extension and outreach programmes and departments, specially designed to assist and support dominating regional economic and business sectors, most commonly in agriculture (Rothblatt, 1997).

In spite of basic differences, the two approaches - the European ideal of pure research and the American academic pragmatism - display similar traits in its perspective on knowledge production and dissemination. During the last decade this perspective has been thoroughly challenged, both from within academia itself, as well as by the profound economic changes taking place in society (Brulin, 1998). For tourism research and education the changes taking place, offer both serious challenges and strategic opportunities. However to fully utilise the opportunities, our understanding of knowledge creation, management and transfer in tourism has to be critically brought to the top of both the academic and business agenda.

## FROM KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION TO KNOWLEDGE CREATION

During the age of the industrial welfare societies, the relationship between university based education and research, and the surrounding society developed in two directions. The first model is referred to as the linear model, and denotes the traditional type of research where the goal is development of theoretical models. The theoretical knowledge is separated from the concrete application, and is transferred from the research community to the practitioners as theoretically codified knowledge. It is based within established academic disciplines and funded through public grants (Brulin, 1999: p. 97).

The second model, developing primarily since the 1970s, is the consultancy- based model. Here university research is largely organized to solve problems and supply useful products and services for demanded by actors outside the university. Most oftenly these actors are large businesses and public authorities, and the funding usually comes from non-academic research foundations. Just as in the linear model, it is characterized by vertical relations and governance, and established academic methods are preferred.

The obvious problem of the linear model is that it suffers from the shortcomings of the belief in high and pure science so characteristic for the era of rational modernity. By rejecting a close relationship to the world of practice, the dynamic potential of the application of research is under-utilised. Conversely, the consultancy-based model runs the obvious danger of turning universities and research institutions into branches of the big corporations' and public authorities' R&D units (Brulin, 1998: p 105).

During the last decade, both models have been seriously challenged. Departing from the post-modern critique of the legitimacy of modern science and the wide-spread belief in true and pure knowledge, more than a few researchers have posed the provoking question:

“To what degree has academic research access to a more real reality or true truth than ordinary people?” (Brulin, 1998: p 94). Moreover, in recent times numerous researchers within the social sciences have pointed to the need for a distinctive approach to the relationship between research and the surrounding society that better corresponds to the needs of the post-industrial world (Bourdieu, 1996. Lyotard, 1993).

For sure, today the basis for economic growth cannot, as during the industrial age, rely upon large scale, national plans or programmes. Like the showcases from the San Francisco Bay area, the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina, Sofia Antipolis in France, or the Öresund Science Region in Denmark/Sweden teach us, successful development of internationally competitive clusters require close and creative relationships between research, business and public authorities to secure the development of new and innovative products and services (Porter, 1990. Gibbons, 1994).

Instead of large-scale solutions and national programmes, the order of the post-industrial age calls more informal agreements of growth, where businesses and entrepreneurs are encouraged to invest and grow based on the actors’ own reality and the local and regional context. “Thus in the future economic development and growth will have to build on a variety of individual ‘agreements’ and mutual trust in people’s own sphere of life” (Brulin, 1998: p 101). One of the great paradoxes of the post-industrial world is the simultaneous importance of, on the one hand, a globalized economy, and on the other hand, close relations within the local and surrounding environment.

In a globalized economy, largely depending on mutual trust at the local and regional level, peoples’ and businesses’ perception of their environment becomes pivotal. If people and businesses believe that the local and regional environment will be supportive, they might choose to develop economic activities, start businesses and grow; if they believe that the environment will be problematic, they will most likely choose to refrain from doing so. (Swedberg, Himmelstrand and Brulin 1999).

In the unfolding local and regional ‘Economy of Trust’, universities and research institutions can make a real difference. The universities and research environments are well-suited places for the establishing of informal ‘agreements’ between individuals and businesses about local and regional growth and development. By playing the role of an ‘honest broker’, university and research, can strategically guide and advance the development of local and regional structures and networks of co-operation between different actors.

These local and regional ‘coalitions of development’ can serve as platforms for a continuous dialogue on socio-economic growth and development. As indicated, universities and research institutions have an innate role to play in creating horizontal interactive relations between different actors and in stimulating a critical discussion on growth and development (Toulmin & Gustavsen 1996).

In this sense, knowledge is profoundly transformed from being something instrumentally ‘produced and disseminated’ in a deliberate division of labour between academia, business and public authorities in a primarily national context, to something critically ‘created and transferred’ in an close and inter-active dialogue and co-operation between academia and a variety of private and public practitioners in a largely local and regional context.

## KNOWLEDGE CREATION THROUGH CO-OPERATION.

Compared to the two models described above, the co-operation model represents a radically different approach to the relationship between university and research, and the surrounding society, by emphasising the interactive and fundamentally equal relation between researchers and practitioners. Primarily, this approach focuses on processes of development through horizontal networks of collaboration, and the methods applied is chosen in a flexible way, just as the forms of governance and funding.

**Table 1**  
**Forms of Co-Operation Between Research and Community**

	<b>The Linear Research Model</b>	<b>Consultancy-based Research</b>	<b>Knowledge Creation Through Interactive Cooperation</b>
<b>Objective</b>	Theoretical models	Practical use and relevance	Processes of development/action
<b>Means</b>	Knowledge transfer / vertical relations	Sell and buy, vertical relations	Dialogue, weblike networks
<b>Methods</b>	Established science	Chosen according to task Established methods preferred	Chosen according to task
<b>Governance</b>	Disciplines/Collegial	Business and public authorities	Researchers in dialogue with practitioners
<b>Funding</b>	Grants	Non-academic research foundations together with businesses and public authorities	Various forms

After Brulin (1998: p. 104)

By developing and utilizing the co-operation model, universities and research embark on a challenging, but in our view, most rewarding journey (WTO & CTC 2003). In essence the model identifies the major task of the researcher(s) and the practitioner(s) as jointly defining the research problems and situation. The co-operation between different actors means that new understanding is developed through the reflected experiences generated in the dialogue and practices between the actors participating in the research process. Thus, the actual point of departure for co-operative based research is the basic understanding that successful research do not result in any precise truths, but rather in an interactive, continuous process of development between researchers and practitioners.

More importantly, the model gives proper acknowledgement to the need for including the knowledge of the practitioners in the process, i.e. the ones that really own the experiences in focus for the research (Brulin, 1998: p 98). The research and development work progresses by the different actors giving the generated experiences a common language. Consequently, language becomes a crucial factor in the research process. However, language cannot be used as a simple reflection of reality, instead the researchers and practitioners must learn to work with a variety of images and languages. In the words of Schön, this type of interactive knowledge creation can be described in terms of *reflective communities* (Schön, 1983).

Concretely, the reflective community denotes the understanding that truth does not depend on the degree of precision with which a theory corresponds with reality, or the degree of coherence with other truths, but rather on its capacity to lead the thinking practitioner and researcher to a successful and satisfactory solution to a problematic situation. Furthermore, the knowledge creation rests on a constituent relationship between ends and means. Actually, in this type of interactive process, neither the practitioner nor the researcher differs between ends and means. Instead they define them interactively simultaneously, giving the problematic situation a framework of understanding. In this sense, the truth is not *discovered*, but *created* in the process through which it is verified (Uhlen, 1996: p. 336).

As indicated the interactive co-operation model is fundamentally better suited to cope with the theoretical and practical challenges of the post-industrial, globalized economy. However, in order to fully rise to the occasion, research has to become much more time-conscious. Undoubtedly, the interactive contact with practical problems and the everyday realities of practitioners necessitate changes in the pace of the research process. In short, for research to become of practical relevance it should ideally be carried out in real time, i.e. simultaneously with the changes and development taking place in society (Burlin, 1998: p.99)

If successful, the interactive co-operative model, offers not only a much more creative and innovative relationship between research and society, but also a more democratic research process where the researcher is directly involved and accountable, not mere bystanders observing. When exposed to the acute pressure of action, the researcher is forced to develop and make use of his rhetorical ability – to clarify and convince - in a dialogue with the actual situation and the other participants.

Contrary to common critique, the autonomy and integrity of the interactive and co-operating researcher is just as important as for the traditional researcher. However, autonomy and integrity is not maintained by the researchers not engaging in an interactive relation with the practice/practitioners in the research process. “A research community that do not allow itself to be influenced in a enriching interaction with the surrounding environment, runs the risk of being marginalized in relation to it, and in the end become of no real interest at all” (Burlin, 1998: p. 105).

#### TOURISM – CAUGHT IN THE KNOWLEDGE GAP?

As a result of the paradigmatic shift in the understanding of knowledge creation, a body of literature and experiences have surfaced involving the production/creation of knowledge, transfer of knowledge, as well as management of knowledge. In particular, knowledge management (KM) appears to have made a significant impact on business operations as well as in academic research and education (Shariq, 1997. Bouncken & Pyo, 2003).

Chase (1997) has appropriately described KM as “the encouragement of people to share knowledge and ideas to create value-adding products and services” (p. 83). More concretely, KM involves customer-focused knowledge, intellectual asset management, innovation and knowledge creation, transferring knowledge, and best practices. Successful implementation of KM ensures that “enterprises act as intelligently as possible to secure viability and overall success; and to otherwise realize the value of corporate knowledge assets” (Ruhanen & Cooper, 2003: p. 9).

In line with the interactive co-operation model, the KM approach demands that research is carried out to understand the processes and practices for generation, identification, assimilation and distribution of knowledge. Thereby it will be possible to achieve a knowledge advantage:

“This is a drastic change from the traditional practice that searches and develops knowledge after recognizing its need. Knowledge management provides knowledge in hand in advance, in anticipation of the knowledge use. When the knowledge is in hand, the speed of operations improves greatly by eliminating knowledge searching time. When the knowledge is based on internal team cooperation, copying the competitive advantage by the competitors can be very difficult” (Bouncken & Pyo, 2003: p. 2).

The novel approach to the creation, transfer and management of knowledge has just recently reached the tourism industry and research (Bouncken & Pyo, 2003. Kahle 2003). In the case of the tourism industry, this is particularly evident in the sectors that have a strong service tradition, while the transport and distribution sectors has been more successful. In the case of tourism research, the slow uptake can be explained by the specific character of the discipline as theoretically underdeveloped, largely market-driven, descriptive and case-study oriented (Tribe, 1999. Airey 2003).

As Ruhanen and Cooper (2003) emphasize, it is time for tourism research to move beyond the traditional short-term promotion and market research and embrace new directions: “...there is a need for a new research agenda that will enable the tourism industry to fully participate in the future knowledge economy” (Ruhanen & Cooper, 2003: p. 11). At top of the agenda, Ruhanen and Cooper put knowledge management: “Knowledge management must be considered an underpinning objective for future research agendas so that the increasing intellectual capital in tourism can be transformed into industry capabilities” (Ruhanen & Cooper, 2003: p. 13).

The very same message is conveyed by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO). According to WTO survival in tourism will depend on the strategic capability to adapt to the growing importance of knowledge. More specifically, WTO points to the need for focusing on (WTO, 2003: p. 6):

1. Creation of knowledge (strategic or applied research),
2. Capacity for knowledge application (optimizing its consequences and results),
3. Proper integration of knowledge in productive and organizational processes,
4. Dissemination of knowledge through education and training.

To secure that tourism can successfully become part of the knowledge economy, the tourism industry and tourism research have to work much more interactively and creatively together. As WTO critically remarks, this requires a whole new approach by both the tourism industry and tourism research: “The instrument (knowledge management), which is so closely linked to development that many deem it worthy of being considered an end in itself, cannot be reduced to the merely tactical matter of market intelligence. Equally unreasonable is the opposite view, which relegates it to an ivory tower for the amusement of ‘impractical’ academics and intellectuals” (WTO, 2003: p. 6).

The gap between the tourism industry and research is often referred to. In spite of obvious exaggerations and overtones in the critique, we need to recognize the fact that tourism research too often is of little relevance at best, and completely neglected at worst, when tourism development is on the agenda, whether the political or the business agenda. This is to a large extent explained by the traditional service character of the tourism industry, and the predominance of SMEs who usually are research averse. As Ruhanen and Cooper correctly remark, this situation is damaging for all: “As a result, tourism research is under-utilised and the sector is not as competitive as it could be” (Ruhanen & Cooper, 2003 p. 10).

#### ATTEMPTING TO BRIDGE THE GAP: A DANISH SHOWCASE

The call for interactive co-operation between the tourism industry and university and research is slowly being picked up around the world. Among the pioneers, the Tourism Extension Services of University of Minnesota continues to develop their extensive and successful programme for local and regional tourism development. Among new initiatives, particularly the Australian Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism is worth mentioning, which has been established to bring together researchers and research-users from universities, businesses and the public sector with the aim to interactively develop collaborative research and development ventures. The long-term objective is to “further develop and market the collective intellectual assets of the centre for the benefit of industry” (Ruhanen & Cooper, 2003: p. 13).

Since 2003, the Centre for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT) in Denmark is engaged in a knowledge-based and innovative project together with various tourism enterprises. The CRT, based on the small island of Bornholm, in the Baltic Sea, has been in existence for ten years. Originally the Centre was set up as a state-funded, traditional research institute with a particular responsibility for establishing tourism research in Denmark. In addition, the Centre developed regional research focusing on the socio-economic development of peripheral areas.

However, in 2002 the foundation of the Centre was profoundly changed. Besides tourism and regional research it was decided that the Centre should actively engage in community outreach by developing links to and co-operation with various local and regional actors. Accordingly, during the passed two years, the Centre has developed several projects in close collaboration with private businesses, public authorities, interest organizations, as well as with other academic institutions. As a result, CRT today has an extensive and active network of project partners and has concurrently succeeded to substantially increase its external funding.

An important precondition for this successful development is that the activities carried out rest on an internally agreed commitment to the importance of knowledge sharing and transfer. In this way, the CRT considers itself more as a knowledge milieu and meeting place for knowledge exchange, than as a research institute. In a modest way, the CRT is trying to realize the notion of co-operation between research and practitioners as a reflective community, and the notion of the researcher as an honest broker.

Based on impressions and inspiration from a visit to the Tourism Extension Services at University of Minnesota in 2002, a project was developed jointly between the CRT and tourism SMEs on Bornholm. The two year project started in the summer of 2003 with basic

funding from the regional EU-fund, and in addition the participating enterprises invest their working hours into the project. The main objectives of the project are to:

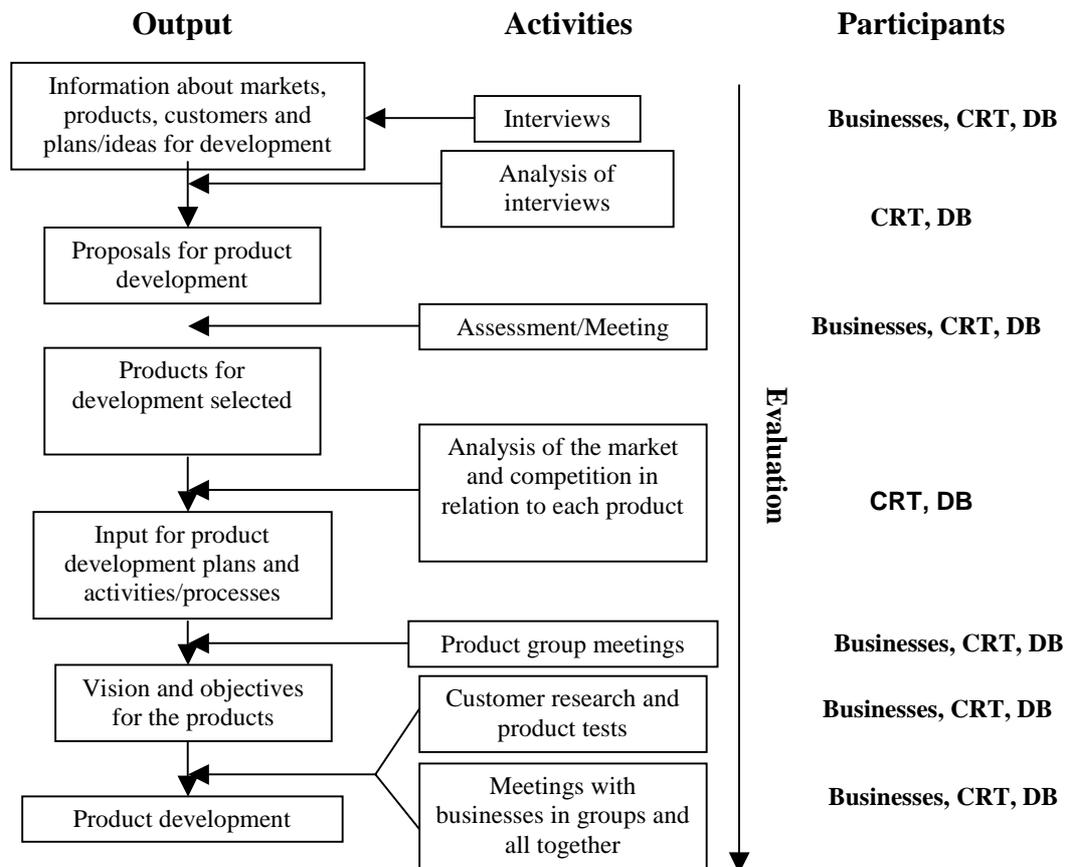
- Develop new tourism products or improve existing ones,
- Develop a model for how to gain new knowledge through the interplay of the day-to-day reality of the businesses and research,
- Develop the co-operation between CRT, Destination Bornholm and tourism businesses on Bornholm,
- Develop learning processes and resources that are based on research, and which increase the tourism entrepreneur's understanding of his/her pre-conditions and ways and means to development.

After an initial round involving close to 20 tourism enterprises, a core of project partners emerged consisting of:

- The Center for Regional and Tourism Research
- Destination Bornholm (the regional DMO)
- *Attractions*: Bornholm Art Museum, The Museum of Bornholm, The Medieval Centre, NaturBornholm
- *Hotels*: Hotel Balka Strand, Hotel Friheden, Hotel Fredensborg
- *Tour operators*: Bornholm Tours, Feriepartner Bornholm
- *Crafts*: Cassius Clay (pottery)
- *Activity holidays*: Rø and Rønne Golf Courses

From the outset, the project has been aiming at developing an interactive knowledge-based development model (KBDM) for tourism SMEs. In this model, every stage of the development process contains moments for joint knowledge creation and exchange, and with active inputs from all the different participants. In this way, the participants are, although to a varying degree, active in problem identification, method selection, analysis, as well as concrete product/service development. The interactive process is outlined in details in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**  
**An Interactive Knowledge Development Process**



An important output in the project was the early and joint decision to establish five working groups with different focus, namely Golf, Art & Culture, Dynamic Packaging, Gourmet, and Knowledge and Resources. Each group display different dynamics and approaches to the specific topic, but common for them all (except for the so far inactive Gourmet group) is the motivation of the participants and the willingness to co-operate and share knowledge even with former competitors. Particularly noteworthy is the joint decision to establish a specific working group on Knowledge and Resources, as a way to secure the long-term knowledge exchange. The project is now entering a critical phase where the actual initiatives for product and service development is to be launched.

#### TOWARDS A GENERAL KNOWLEDGE-BASED DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Acknowledging the theoretical and practical challenges posed by the knowledge economy for tourism development, the CRT wants to use the described project to develop and enhance the general understanding of the knowledge creation and transfer involved in tourism SMEs, and thereby contribute to the long-term development of this important part of the tourism industry.

At a general level, the proposed model assists us in identifying and analysing key processes, techniques and tools for creating and transferring knowledge. It includes:

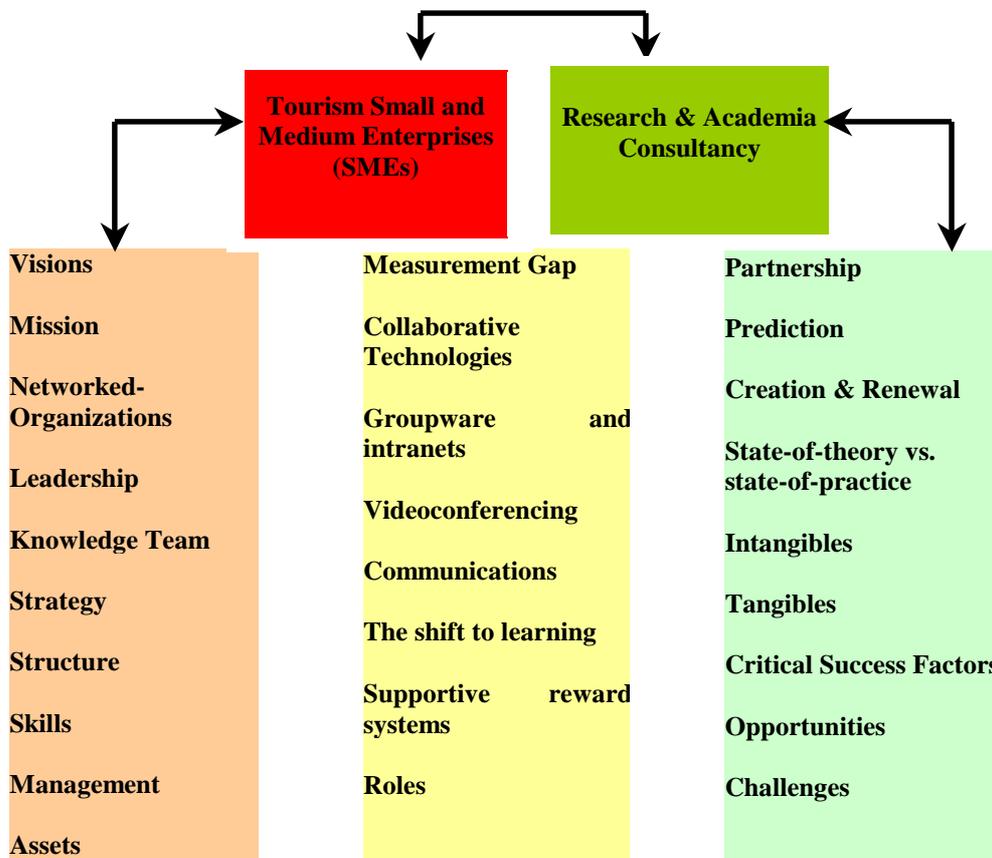
- How to create a knowledge culture - overcoming what is usually the largest obstacle to creating and sharing knowledge,
- Why effective knowledge-based strategic plans are crucial to SME's future business success,
- Frameworks and models for knowledge-based principles - tried and tested by participating SMEs,
- How to identify and classify corporate knowledge (industrial, academic, and consulting),
- Essential resources, capabilities and skills - new roles, including that of the CRT researchers and consultants,
- The role of technology - how to identify and implement solutions for effective knowledge creation and sharing,
- How to protect corporate knowledge

If successful, the implementation of the Knowledge-Based Development Model will provide a coherent set of strategies and practices to cultivate and enhance the SMEs responsiveness, effectiveness, productivity and long-term success. Ideally, it will transform every level of the business operation. For instance, as businesses become increasingly virtual and horizontal, leadership becomes the responsibility of almost everyone in the company/business. Especially, leadership is the framing of the organizational vision and bringing all the business employees into an active participation of the achievement of that vision. Leadership is increasingly collaborative. Everyone has to become a strategic thinker and planner. This requires building on existing skills and creating new skills, capabilities and relationships. Hence, knowledge is crucial.

In short, the main goal of the KBDM is to enable the tourism SMEs to become successful self-renewing knowledge-based businesses that build long-term inter-relationships with their customers, strategic competitors and partners (academia and consultancy) for common advantages. Therefore, the main goal will be fulfilled when the Knowledge-Based Development Model works with SMEs to create and implement:

- Continuous improvement throughout all processes of the business,
- Fundamental development of product and service processes to achieve considerable gains,
- Indicators of evaluations that provide information critical to guide and evaluate the achievement of strategic goals,
- Scenarios to test strategic plans and actions in possible future business environments.

**Figure 2**  
**General Model of a Knowledge-Based Interactive Platform**



In our view, tourism research is at a challenging crossroad, where it has a strategic opportunity to bridge the existing knowledge gaps. The CRT tries to contribute to this by developing the Knowledge-Based Development Model for tourism SMEs, which, on the one hand, should contribute to developing interactive and equal relations between the tourism industry/surrounding society, and research/university. On the other hand, the KMDM should play an important role in alleviating the present state of theoretical underdevelopment and the market-driven pragmatism.

By engaging in the opportunities provided by the novel approaches to knowledge creation, transfer and management, tourism research and education, can begin to make a real difference to an industry in urgent need of knowledge development. However, at the same time, tourism research has to seriously consider how it is going to translate and transfer the knowledge of the practitioners, arising from the interactive co-operation, into the theoretical and conceptual realm of research. That is: How is tourism research itself going to adapt to the requirements of knowledge-based development?

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# USEFULNESS OF A VIRTUAL SIMULATION IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores students' perceived usefulness of an Internet-based hospitality simulation to develop competencies and improve course performance. It was hypothesized in this study that students will have a positive perception of the simulation's usefulness. Results of the study were that students' perceived usefulness of the simulation was positive.

Keywords: simulation, gaming, undergraduate education, hospitality education.

## INTRODUCTION

With continuous advancements in computer technology, the potential to provide students with experiential learning activities through active learner roles facilitated by interactive learning modules has gained more attention from educators (Gredler, 1994; Martin & McEvoy, 2003). In an attempt to incorporate more innovative tools for delivering course material, educators are looking at technology for application software solutions. Increasingly, it is possible to simulate real world experiences through interactive software that are often missing in the traditional training modes of lecture and case study. Incorporating interactive games, simulations, and drills that create an environment where users are more active in the learning process present an avenue for educators to explore.

To date, some educators in hospitality have used these applications to enhance the learning experience for students. Computer-based simulations have been used in both the hospitality industry and in education since the late 1960s as an instructional tool to help reinforce hospitality concepts such as financial management, marketing, human resources, and the dynamics of interdepartmental relationships (Kluge, 1996; Martin & McEvoy, 2003; Miller & Petrillose, 1992). However, there is little empirical evidence demonstrating the usefulness of simulations in improving learner performance. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine whether students perceive computer simulations to be useful tools in developing their competencies while improving their course performance.

## BACKGROUND

With computers in the learning environment, the potential to act out constructivist theories on knowledge acquisition is easily facilitated. Student involvement in higher-order cognitive skills becomes possible with computers because they provide memory support, juggle interrelated variables, and perform lower-level cognitive tasks (Salomon, 1992). Findings from a study by Feinstein (2001) indicate that experiential learning increases learners' capacity to evoke higher-order cognitive abilities in terms of problem-solving skills and judgment, thereby increasing a learner's dynamic knowledge. Other positive outcomes may also include improvement or mastery of a skill or strategy through an effective partnership with the learning environment in addition to reaping the benefits of improved cognition (Murphy, 1997). These researchers suggest that computers represent a means to enhance students' cognitive skills. As Salomon (1992) explains:

The intellectual partnership with computer tools creates a zone of proximal development whereby learners are capable of carrying out tasks they could not possibly carry out without the help and support provided by the computer. This partnership can both offer guidance that might be internalized to become self-guidance and stimulate the development of yet underdeveloped skills, resulting in a higher level of skill mastery (p.252).

This partnership with computer-assisted learning can also lead to enhancing the general problem solving ability of its users. Developments in new computer-based learning environments have been found to facilitate complex problem solving through integrated knowledge (Dijkstra, Krammer & Merriënboer, 1992). Essentially, these technologies have by-passed the behaviorist philosophy to embrace student-instruction interaction (Winn, 1993). Computer-based learning systems are mainly developed based on the learning model of constructivism whereby knowledge is constructed by the students themselves and not delivered by the courseware. Undoubtedly, active participation and interactivity with the technology presupposes any experience, knowledge, skills' acquisition, or the change of an ability into a skill that is encouraged under the constructivist model (Mikropoulos, Chalkidis, Katsikis, & Kossivaki, 1997).

Advances in learning technologies have afforded educators with the opportunity to enhance the learning environment, resulting in a shifting from the traditional one-to-many pedagogical format to more interactive and student-centered learning environments (Scott & Hannafin, 2000). With technology-based learning environments, students are stimulated into becoming active learners with various capabilities (Vosniadou, De Corte, & Mandl, 1994). For example, stimulated learners could make efforts to construct knowledge and embed learning through meaningful, authentic activities that encourage collaboration and social interaction, taking into consideration students' prior knowledge and beliefs.

### *Educational Simulations*

Educational simulations are best described as a simplification of reality presented in an immersive and interactive environment where learners can explore different approaches and experience different outcomes on a daily basis (Hill & Semler, 2001). From an educational perspective, such an exposure could potentially help to reinforce concepts already covered, or help to introduce new concepts in class discussions. With simulations the object of realism in presenting concepts may be preserved to a greater degree and made more relevant to the target audience than other methods used in the classroom. When compared to

other methods of instruction such as case studies, simulations provided a more realistic scenario, a more competitive environment for students participating, and provided for more objective feedback (Thompson & Dass, 2000).

There has been a steady increase in the use of simulations in hospitality education (Russell & Russell, 1996), and simulations have been reported by hospitality educators to be an effective learning tool (Feinstein & Parks, 2002). Simulations introduced to the hospitality industry and education have included CRASE (the Cornell Restaurant Administration Simulation Exercise), based on a medium sized licensed restaurant; CHASE (Cornell Hotel Administration Simulation Exercise), based on a large hotel with the primary focus on rooms division management; CHESS (Competitive Hospitality Education Simulation Series), based on a large hotel with the primary focus being on yield management; and HOTS (Hotel Operational Training Simulation), based on a hotel with a mix of foodservice and accommodation products and “Top Of The House” based on a 500 room hotel in a medium sized city with a focus on situation analysis, performance assessment, business plan development, and operating decisions for the hotel (Fawcett, 2002; Martin & McEvoy, 2003; Hinton, 1996).

To a large extent, the simulations mentioned above feature limited visual interfaces or other forms of pictorial representations. That is to say, “simulations used in hospitality education are alphanumeric simulators that do not provide a visualization or graphical representation of the dynamic processes of a hospitality operation” (Feinstein & Parks, 2002; p. 405). Moreover, they tend to be proprietary software that requires schools to purchase and install the program from a diskette on a single computer to complete work sessions, therefore, were not designed for learning in an online environment. Yet, with the thrust towards the use of the Internet in higher education, the potential exists to create experiential learning using traditional simulations to capitalize on the possibilities and realism that Internet-based information technology provides (Galea, 2001). As Internet-based learning technologies have proliferated on university campuses through the extensive use of WEBCT and Blackboard (Stoel & Lee, 2003), the potential also exists for more educational simulations, in particular those in hospitality, to take advantage of the anywhere, anytime paradigm.

Several studies have been conducted to evaluate simulations in hospitality education. Feinstein and Parks (2002) argue that while these studies have highlighted the use of simulation to bridge the gap between theory and practice, which contributes to the literature, they have mostly been conceptual rather than empirical. Fawcett (1996) identified six possible learning outcomes by examining the use of CRASE in educating hospitality students in accounts. The overall conclusion by Fawcett (1996) was that CRASE promoted higher levels of industry and work related skills that were more difficult to develop in traditional learning environments. Similarly, Top of the House was used by Ferreira (1997) to examine whether or not students improved their decision-making performance in two measurements after five rounds of the computer simulation program. It was observed that team building and group cohesion skills emerged for most groups working in the simulated environment.

Feinstein (2001) designed a quasi-experimental study to explore the effectiveness of a simulation as an instructional system in foodservice. Using a Foodservice Instructional Simulation Technique (FIST) to educate foodservice managers on the dynamics of a foodservice operation, an assessment tool was created to differentiate cognitive abilities of participants in the treatment group and the control group. Results of the study showed that dynamic knowledge and higher order cognitive abilities increased as a result of simulation

modeling. In a study on the use of HOTS in hospitality and tourism education, Martin and McEvoy (2003) sought to determine the effectiveness of simulations in hospitality education by surveying its users. Their findings suggested that the simulation was effective as a learning tool in helping students to apply the principles and concepts of core hospitality courses such as marketing, finance, accounting, and human resources.

In another research conducted by Curland and Fawcett (2001) using the CRASE simulation to develop financial skills in hospitality undergraduates, it was found that student learning was enhanced and their apprehension towards the accounting course was reduced. More specifically, students reported that they developed a range of skills and techniques that were facilitated by using real accounting data obtained from the income statement and balance sheet of their restaurant. Interestingly, students showed ownership of the business and felt they could work easier with the data as it originated from the businesses created in CRASE.

It is evident from the studies conducted that students experienced increased levels of performance in several competencies such as decision-making, group cohesiveness, communication, and negotiation skills. The studies also indicate that simulations were an effective instructional tool for use in hospitality education and contributed to increasing higher order cognitive abilities. Building on this knowledge, this study sought to contribute to the existing literature by exploring the perceptions of students of an Internet-based simulation.

#### *Internet-Based Simulations*

Presently, there is an increase in the move towards developing simulations for use in the online environment. With the widespread use and accessibility of information technology it is now possible to develop experiential pedagogy that combines all the teachings of traditional simulations with the new possibilities and realism that Internet-based information technology provides (Galea, 2001). In particular, the Internet medium supports simulations that are socially collaborative, international, and cross-cultural with rich information resources available on demand (Martin, 2003). Students may find themselves as part of an online virtual community with the ability to interact with a more diverse set of users from other universities/colleges.

To date, one virtual reality simulation product for hospitality education has detoured from the convention to capitalize on the benefits of Internet technologies by providing an interactive learning environment online where users are the owners of a virtual business they created and managed. BYOB or BuildYourOwnBar<sup>TM</sup> provides an experiential learning environment for students in an online community to participate in activities related to planning, opening, managing, and problem-solving an on-going hospitality business. The business exists in the form of a Web-page that acts as a gateway for other students and instructors to visit and interact with the owner and the virtual hospitality businesses. Visualizations of tangible features such as a hotel lobby or the lounge of a bar are projected on screen for 'guests' and is just one of the components of the virtual business that can be evaluated by visitors. It is possible that these and other factors may impact how students perceive the use of simulations as instructional tools.

## THE RESEARCH SETTING

While computer-based simulations have been credited with achieving a greater degree of realism by reproducing the attributes of a real-world system (Shannon, 1975), there appears to be a need for rigorous research on measuring the usefulness of the technology as an instructional tool (Feinstein & Parks, 2002). Previous studies on simulations used in hospitality education have focused on: (1) how hospitality principles are reinforced; (2) students' feelings towards simulations; (3) how student learning was enhanced; and (4) how it would prepare students for management positions in the industry (Martin & McEvoy, 2003; Russell & Russell, 1996; Curland & Fawcett, 2001; Pederson & Pederson, 1993). However, this study utilized an independent approach to obtain students' perceived usefulness of an Internet-based simulation to complement traditional instruction in undergraduate education. As such, the following research question was formulated to guide the research process: "What are the perceptions of students regarding the usefulness of an Internet-based hospitality simulation in their course?"

## THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

For this study, the survey developed targeted students who were required by their instructors to use the Internet-based simulation as part of their coursework. The sample for the research study consisted of users of the Internet-based simulation, BYOB, who had access to the simulation as at the Fall 2003 semester. Due to the nature of the simulation, users can register to start on any given Monday for a period of 6 or 8 weeks. Since most users were registered on the simulation for 8 weeks in addition to having different start and end dates, a qualifying question was asked before students gained access to the survey. The survey was made available online for a period of 26 days from February 5<sup>th</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004. It was felt that 4 weeks of experience in the online environment of the simulation would have adequately exposed the users to the concepts explored in the survey. Therefore, those respondents who indicated that they used the simulation for less than four weeks immediately received a thank-you message whereas those with four or more weeks experience on the simulation were able to complete the survey.

On a five-point Likert-type scale, students were asked about their 'perceived usefulness' of the Internet-based simulation by indicating the level to which ten related descriptors were important. Questions pertaining to perceived usefulness were obtained from three related studies on the usefulness of simulations in education. Slight modifications were made to suit the purposes of this study. Therefore, items addressing 'planning skills', 'decision-making skills', 'hospitality business concepts', 'general management perspectives', 'financial data analysis', 'communication skills', and 'problem identification and analytical skills' were obtained from Chang, Lee, Ng, and Moon (2003). 'Improve quality of course assignments' was adapted from Stoel and Lee (2003) while 'enhance effectiveness in course' and 'improve performance in course' were sourced from McGorry (2003). To that end, Table 1 shows a list of the questions asked of students relating to their perceived usefulness of the simulation. In addition, students were asked to elaborate on background information relating to their demographics and their experience using simulations.

**Table 1**  
**Survey Questions on ‘Perceived Usefulness’**

<i>I think the Web-based simulation is useful for this course because it helped me to ...</i>
1. Develop planning skills.
2. Develop decision-making skills.
3. Learn concepts related to hospitality business.
4. Understand general management perspectives.
5. Use financial data to make business decisions.
6. Improve written communication skills.
7. Develop problem identification and analytical skills.
8. Improve the quality of their course assignments.
9. Enhance their effectiveness in the course.
10. Improve their performance in the course.

## RESULTS

To address the research question, the groups mean of the construct ‘perceived usefulness’ was computed and reported. A One-Sample t-test was conducted on ‘perceived usefulness’ for students with a test value of 3.0, the midpoint, to determine the level of significance. From the original dataset of 259 cases, only 113 cases were suitable for conducting statistical analyses. The summary of scores for students’ personal demographics is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Summary: Students’ Personal Demographics**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Levels</b>	<b>Frequency <i>F</i></b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>Age</b>	Under 19	24	21.2
	19 - 21	68	60.2
	22 - 24	15	13.3
	Over 24	6	5.3
<b>Gender</b>	Male	38	33.6
	Female	75	66.4
<b>Year in college</b>	Freshman	69	61.1
	Sophomore	9	8.0
	Junior	11	9.7
	Senior	21	18.6
	Graduate Student	1	.9
	Transfer Student	1	.9
	Returning	1	.9
	Student		

An analysis was carried out on two variables – ‘hours per week’ and ‘like simulation’ to examine how many hours students who said they liked simulations were actually logged in

for. The resulting cross-tabulation in Table 3 shows an unexpected response. As was anticipated, students who had previously indicated that they did not like simulations were also logged in for fewer hours; 82.1% were logged in for up to 10 hours the most. A similar trend was noticed for those students who indicated they did not know if they liked simulations. That is, 80% of them were logged in for up to 10 hours the most. These findings indicate that the majority of the overall sample (78.1%) used the simulation between 1 and 10 hours.

**Table 3**  
**Cross-tabulation: Hours per Week and Like Simulations**

Variable	Levels (hours)		Like Simulations			Total
			Yes	No	Don't know	
Hours per Week	1 to 5	<b>n</b> % within Hours per Week % within Like Simulations % of Total	22 44.0% 42.3% 21.0%	16 32.0% 57.1% 15.2%	12 24.0% 48.0% 11.4%	50 100.0% 47.6% 47.6%
	6 to 10	<b>n</b> % within Hours per Week % within Like Simulations % of Total	17 53.1% 32.7% 16.2%	7 21.9% 25.0% 6.7%	8 25.0% 32.0% 7.6%	32 100.0% 30.5% 30.5%
	11 to 15	<b>n</b> % within Hours per Week % within Like Simulations % of Total	6 50.0% 11.5% 5.7%	4 33.3% 14.3% 3.8%	2 16.7% 8.0% 1.9%	12 100.0% 11.4% 11.4%
	16 to 20	<b>n</b> % within Hours per Week % within Like Simulations % of Total	2 33.3% 3.8% 1.9%	1 16.7% 3.6% 1.0%	3 50.0% 12.0% 2.9%	6 100.0% 5.7% 5.7%
	21 to 25	<b>n</b> % within Hours per Week % within Like Simulations % of Total	2 100.0% 3.8% 1.9%	0 .0% .0% .0%	0 .0% .0% .0%	2 100.0% 1.9% 1.9%
	Over 26	<b>n</b> % within Hours per Week % within Like Simulations % of Total	3 100.0% 5.8% 2.9%	0 .0% .0% .0%	0 .0% .0% .0%	3 100.0% 2.9% 2.9%
	Total	<b>n</b> % within Hours per Week % within Like Simulations % of Total	52 49.5% 100.0% 49.5%	28 26.7% 100.0% 26.7%	25 23.8% 100.0% 23.8%	105 100.0% 100.0% 100.0%

#### STUDENTS' PERCEIVED USEFULNESS

In the One-Sample t-test, all ten items as well as 'overall perception' were selected for analysis. Using a test value of 3.0 (the midpoint), the items were tested at a 95% confidence interval. These items were included in the t-test in order to determine if there were any outliers that influenced the mean score for 'overall perception'. To measure the 'overall perception' the test should be significantly different between the mean score from the midpoint of 3.0. The results of the t-test are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4**  
**Results of One Sample Test for Students' Perceived Usefulness**

Items Measuring Perceived Usefulness	Test Value = 3.0				
	t	df	Sig. (1-tailed)	Mean	Mean Difference
Planning Skills	4.607	112	.000*	3.42	.42
Decision-making Skills	6.943	112	.000*	3.60	.60
Hospitality Concepts	7.786	112	.000*	3.65	.65
General Management	7.617	112	.000*	3.65	.65
Financial Analysis	7.733	112	.000*	3.66	.66
Communication Skills	-.373	112	.355	2.96	-.04
Problem Identification/ Analytical Skills	2.837	112	.002*	3.26	.26
Quality of Assignments	-.164	112	.435	2.98	-.02
Effectiveness in Course	1.302	112	.098	3.14	.14
Performance in Course	1.362	112	.088	3.15	.15
Overall Perception	4.824	112	.000*	3.3496	.3496

\* Significant at  $p \leq 0.05$

While the mean score for 'overall perception' was significant, only six of the ten items measuring the variable were significant. As seen in Table 4, 'communication skills', 'improve quality of course assignments', 'enhance effectiveness in course', and 'performance in course' were not found to be significant.

## DISCUSSION

Students in this study indicated that they logged in to the simulation an average of seven times per week and were spending an average of five hours online (median averages were used having accounted for the outliers). It was surprising to learn that 75% of the students who indicated that they liked simulation were actually logged in for ten hours and less per week. Although the pattern was noticeable for students in the other categories to log in for less than ten hours, they had indicated they did not like simulations or they did not know if they liked simulations. The result was unconventional as it was anticipated that if a subject likes or enjoys simulations then he/she would spend more time on it because it is something they enjoy doing.

Since the result diverted from convention, it could be argued that those indicating they liked simulations have a higher level of familiarity with the environment; the only difference is they are creating a business and are expected to learn concepts applicable to hospitality as against playing a game for sole enjoyment. It could also be argued that these students are more capable of adjusting to an educational simulation easier and are more adept at interacting with simulated environments. From their past experience with virtual environments, they could have developed a skill or strategy of interacting with the environment in a more effective and efficient manner that would require less time commitments.

Additionally, it appears that using the simulation proved more challenging for students were not familiar with simulation software and as a result, they spend less time with the simulation. This supports studies by Starkey and Blake (2001) and Galea's (2001). As the authors suggest, students may experience challenges such as the lack of user friendliness, technical faults, and the perceived reality in the environment and as such, may respond by committing less time towards their business in the simulation. It should be noted however that these assertions are made entirely without any known general population measure for the average time spent per week by students in an online simulated environment.

From the students' perspective, the Internet-based simulation has shown to be a tool useful for the development of skills crucial to the hospitality business management namely those skills relating to planning, decision-making, general management, hospitality concepts, and problem identification. It therefore served to give students a taste of owning a hospitality business and generally enhanced their understanding of the complexity of managing a hotel or restaurant. The richness of the information generated from this study allows for a better understanding of students' perceived usefulness of the use of simulations in post-secondary education.

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# TEACHING AND LEARNING: INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY INTO A LEISURE-BASED CURRICULUM

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## ABSTRACT

The tourism and leisure industries in Australia are rapidly maturing. With this maturity has come commensurate changes in how businesses operate. Adherence to a more professional ethic, better work practices, and a greater expectation of the graduates entering the field are all changes which have, in one manner or other, impacted upon the industry and importantly, those tertiary institutions which seek to suitably educate tourism and leisure graduates for it. Given the pressures now on the tourism and leisure programs to deliver the graduates "workplace ready", it is interesting to note that the substantial increase in the use of technology in these same educational settings has impacted significantly on both those who learn and those who teach in recent times. The incorporation of new technologies has, for many, meant a move away from the traditional "chalk and talk" method of delivery and an increase in the uptake of computer based solutions designed to facilitate flexible teaching and learning via the World Wide Web. These solutions are often designed to form an integrated system that assists in rapid 'on-line' development and delivery of educational web environments. To provide an interactive and interesting web environment however, which is both engaging and promotes effective learning, a system should integrate subject or course content with a variety of activities or "learning tools". However, creating such an on-line course creates the potential for the course developer to use the tools in a way that may detract in one manner or other from the learning experience. In a simple sense, this usually means that the focus of the curriculum designer has been skewed towards the product (technology) rather than maintaining, more appropriately, a workable balance of both product and process (teaching and learning). With this in mind, this paper will focus on the pedagogical issues that go hand-in-hand with the use of such a web-based system. Drawing on the reflective experience of the author, a range of considerations will be presented for the effective delivery of a leisure and recreation management program. Such considerations, it is argued, are necessary for the development of learning and for aiding today's tourism and leisure students to be work ready for the "real world".

Keywords: technology, flexible delivery, interactive learning.

## INTRODUCTION

The new millennium has brought with it an immediate challenge for universities offering flexible programs of study in leisure and tourism management in Australia. The tourism and leisure industries are maturing, individual businesses are becoming significantly more professional in their operations, and the expectations of employers, in terms of the graduates they are recruiting, has changed markedly in recent years. In such an environment it is no coincidence that many leisure and tourism programs around Australia have aligned their offerings, in some manner or other, with either commerce or business driven degrees in recent times. Clearly, many programs have already acknowledged that if they are to survive they must align themselves more fully with the idea that they are in the business of providing avenues for learning which are reflective of the needs of society and which meet the needs of employers in Corporate Australia. Given such a changing work environment, one can only

speculate as to whether or not flexible delivery of learning materials will eventually spell the end of the traditional campus as many of us currently know it or perhaps more appropriately, have known it to be. Regardless, while innovation and the creation of alternative models of teaching and learning are obvious keys, any degree program offered in the future must continue to provide suitable training and education for tourism and leisure management students such that they are “workplace ready” upon graduation (Berno, 2003; Grigg & Brown, 1998).

As noted by the Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Board (1998: 49), the characteristics of learning outcomes at the undergraduate level today are expected to include:

- . the acquisition of a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, the underlying principles and concepts, and the associated problem-solving techniques;
- . the development of the academic skills and attitudes necessary to comprehend and evaluate new information, concepts and evidence from a range of sources; and
- . the development of the ability to review, consolidate, extend and apply the knowledge and techniques learnt.

Yet, despite the best efforts of the Advisory Board to establish suitable benchmarks for universities throughout Australia, with the broad intent of producing quality graduates, many human resource managers and business executives in the leisure and entertainment field today, perceive that a high proportion of entry level managers (primarily new graduates) are insufficiently prepared to manage people. More specifically, it is perceived that many new leisure and tourism graduates lacked time management skills, leadership experience, often lacked knowledge about core business areas of operation, and had limited problem-solving and written communication skills (Fairbourn, 2003; Ladkin, 2002).

In seeking to address such concerns, staff of the School of Tourism and Leisure Management, at the Ipswich Campus of The University of Queensland (UQI), have developed in recent years, a suite of specialisations related to the leisure and tourism industries. These specialisations being positioned in recent years under the umbrella of the more generic business management degree as is currently offered by the university. Importantly, the programs have been designed with the clear intent to equip students with the core competencies that will enable them to become the business and leisure management professionals of the future: consumer oriented, entrepreneurial, and with a strong business acumen (Crossley, Jamieson & Brayley, 2001). These competencies being identified as desirable qualities for employees in both the public and private sectors as, more and more, the public sector adopts a “user pays” mentality to its operations (Crompton & Kim, 2001).

Such program development has entailed a move away from the more traditional face-to-face mode of delivery to encompass one that incorporates a more flexible delivery of learning materials engendering elements of student-centred decision-making and time management. The philosophy underpinning this new mode has intentionally gone beyond the more traditional delivery focussed approach, to one which encompasses an educational philosophy and a set of strategies incorporating a variety of media and technologies for teaching and learning. More specifically, courses have been designed and developed with the intent of increasing student access to a wide variety of stimulating learning resources and delivery media. The environment, therefore, intended to be student centred and learning focussed with the wider aim being to develop graduates with a desire for learning that went beyond completion of the traditional 3 year professional degree in leisure and tourism management.

## FACING THE CHALLENGE OF INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY INTO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In higher education today, a growing body of expertise is emerging as researchers grapple with the design and use of technology-based learning contexts (Faulkner, Littleton & Woodhead, 1998). These changes, as one might expect, are a point of some concern for many academics in the higher education setting as they are being forced to rethink old (and perhaps comfortable) ways of knowing, teaching and learning, as well as being required to update their base level of technological expertise. Importantly, the pressure for change has been directed beyond just teaching the core studies in a manner that offers a new experience for students via the use of technology (Nikolova & Collis, 1998).

Rather, it has entailed the incorporation of technology such that students undertake activities that have elements of investigation and problem resolution that allow them to clarify, challenge and build upon concepts, and identify the relationship between them (Grigg & Brown, 1998). Laurillard (1995) argued that this is crucial for effective teaching and learning whereby, at the same time, the more mundane, or operational elements, of the activity can be supported technologically (Faulkner, Littleton & Woodhead, 1998). Importantly, constructivism has encouraged tourism and leisure management academics at UQI to alter their perceptions of learners from individuals who are irrational and unknowing to that of being cognisant beings with well-developed theories (Grigg & Brown, 1998; Sahin, 2003). Thus, and as noted by Osbourne (1996), constructivists have rightly turned their attention to the learner arguing that he or she is largely responsible for their own learning. That is to suggest that students should be considered active participants in the process of learning, with multiple learning styles requiring a diverse range of interactions inclusive of group activities, brain storming, and interpretative discussions. The constructivist teacher seeks to encourage students to connect and summarise concepts by analysing, predicting, justifying and defending their ideas. This might entail, for example, providing opportunities for students to test their hypotheses, especially through interactive group discussion of concrete experiences (Sahin, 2003). Importantly, the constructivist approach is very much focussed on the quality of the learner's understanding, the depth of that learning, and its application to related contexts (Hu, 1997). Constructivism provides ideas and principles about learning that have important implications for the construction of technology supported learning environments (Tam, 2000). One of which is the need to embed learning into authentic and meaningful contexts. Another is that learning is a personal, as well as social, activity (Lindschitl, 1999). As such, the use of technology allows for the creation of learning environments that are not only diverse but also socially rich. For example, peer tutoring via computer, email and discussion boards (Sahin, 2003).

Of course, such a change in direction and thinking has meant a significant adjustment too for UQI students studying in the leisure and tourism management specialisation as effective personal learning can be facilitated by as many factors as there are that can inhibit learning (Barron & Arcodia, 2002; Barron & Henderson, 2002).

In such a volatile and rapidly evolving environment, one might imagine therefore, that it has been quite a task for many academics to develop subject materials for delivery in the flexible delivery mode which incorporate the use of a technological learning platform but which do actually facilitate effective learning. Effective learning, in this context, referring to

“the complete acquisition of what is to be learned as well as long-term retention, retrieval and transfer, application or adaptation to other relevant situations or contexts” (Pithers, 1998: 9).

It is fair to say therefore that in coming years, if not already, business-driven leisure and tourism programs such as those offered at UQI will face a real challenge to meet the demands of students for learning environments that are conducive to student-centred learning, which provide opportunities to develop skills that encourage lifelong learning, which are meaningful in the workplace, are appropriate for a diverse population and which, put simply, are not boring. In fact, it has been recognised by a number of researchers (Cervero, 1999; Dijkstra, Seel, Schott & Tennyson, 1997; Pithers, 1998) that the growing demand for positive learning environments, coupled with the technological advances occurring in the field, will be a critical pressure point for universities in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## THE EDUCATIONAL VALIDITY AND USE OF WEBCT

There are, of course, a variety of "off the shelf" packages that would have provided valid educational experiences and learning opportunities for students. The majority of commercially available software packages provide educators with a set recipe for course design. By contrast, WebCT offers course designers flexibility to employ a range of "tools" to facilitate student learning. Designers are able to construct innovative and individual courses utilising evocative on-line tools in a customised way. Each course developed using the on-line resources of WebCT can be tailor-made and continually adapted to meet the learning needs of students and the features of the learning material being explored. It is this feature of WebCT that has been most attractive to the leisure and tourism educators at UQI, and the principal strength emerging through ongoing course evaluations. Leisure and tourism staff at UQI have recognized that educators need to be responsive, adaptive and flexible so as to effectively facilitate student learning of material. That said, it is its simplicity and flexibility that has encouraged course designers on other campuses of the University to trial the package also.

A comment made by a number of authors (Nikolova & Collis, 1998; Wild & Quinn, 1998) reviewing the benefits (or lack thereof) of the application of new technologies in the educational setting is that a key failing for many (and perhaps the reason behind their poor outcomes) is the focus primarily on the product itself. By and large they suggest there is little thought given to how the new technology can be used purposefully in an educational sense. It is clear, therefore, that the focus should be more on the educational viability and use of that product in a learning environment. That is to say the focus should be on aspects of both instructional design and delivery technologies (ie. both product and process). WebCT, as a learning technology is clearly useful, but it is not *the* answer. While the use of this type of technology may extend interaction, provide a variety of delivery options, improve student access and encourage learning it must, most importantly, be adequately managed (Andrews & Bowser, 1995: 87). As rightly pointed out by Simpson, “provided that we understand the limitations of each technology as well as its capabilities, and more importantly, provided that we understand the people we are trying to educate and the kind of education we are trying to give them, we can use technology in ways that will really help. There is no technological panacea; there are only technological solutions to some educational problems” (1985: 91). Thus, while a number of academics appear to favour the use of WebCT over other software packages that are commercially available (Goldberg, 1997; Hill, 1996), it is important to recognise nevertheless that any package, if used appropriately, can be a worthwhile investment for educators. This exploratory study therefore set to benchmark the suitability of

the “learning package” as offered by the author with a view to identifying some of the core issues or problems that one need address to enhance the learning outcomes of the student when actively engaged in a technologically-aided program of study.

## STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

Given the intent of the study it was important therefore to gauge and reflect on the perceptions of students at The University of Queensland who have had the opportunity to study in business courses which have incorporated a web based software package and which have been cased in the leisure and tourism context. To this end, data were collected from 91 students enrolled in courses taught by the author using a standardised test battery devised by the Teaching and Educational Development Institute (TEDI) staff of the university. The survey instrument, consisting of 15 items using a 5 point Scale from 1 (very poor) through to 5 (outstanding), sought to identify student perceptions of teaching and course delivery. In addition to the 15 items, students were also able to provide additional comment if they chose to do so on the form. The findings from student evaluations, collected from student groups enrolled in leisure and tourism management courses at the end of the semester are thought-provoking to say the least. For instance, printed learning guides were popular but books of readings were not. Clearly, this finding suggests that the development of flexible learning materials should focus on the final use of those resources and the related need that they be aligned better with the intended learning outcomes. Students rated highly the use of email but not the use of chat sessions. Similarly, it was clear that particular sub-groups of students were ill at ease with the use of WebCT and the style of learning that such technology incorporated. A notion supported by Barron and Arcodia (2002) and Barron and Henderson (2002) who found that many leisure and tourism management students did not cope well with the change in learning approach to that with which they had previously been accustomed. This was particularly true for many overseas students in their first year of study who found it difficult to adjust to a study program where the primary focus of interaction with the instructor was not always the lecture (Barron & Arcodia, 2002). Clearly, such a finding suggests that within a leisure and tourism program, students require significant support in their first year of study so as to assist them in the development of the necessary skills and attitudes for active independence. Small group learning was favoured by the majority of students while many expressed concern that flexible delivery entailed some element of learning in isolation. For many students, the idea that an individual might pursue a course of study without being involved in some form of social engagement with their peers during the learning experience was something they did not favour at all. Supporting such concerns as being legitimate, Hartley (1999) identified student isolation as being detrimental to the learning process and suggested that fostering and developing a group/class presence appeared to be an important aspect if learning was to be effective. Concerns were also raised by students about the mechanisms of feedback with some considering that the use of technology was too impersonal and non-interactive. Interestingly, students perceived that the traditional roles of student and lecturer had been altered in the process with the lecturer now considered more personable and approachable than previously. Perhaps the greatest concern raised by students however related to study loads and assessment levels which the students considered to be excessive with the advent of the flexible delivery of course materials. Clearly, while some issues are easier to resolve than others, these are all issues requiring attention when designing curriculum that is reflective of the requirements for effective teaching practice and student centred learning.

## THE REAL CHALLENGE OF LINKING WEB-BASED SOFTWARE PACKAGES AND LEARNING IN COURSE DESIGN

Louis Pasteur once noted that “chance favours the prepared mind” (Orlich, Harder, Callahan & Gibson, 1998: 398). It is a point well worth pondering for within this simple quote are many hidden truths about how one should teach and the opportunities that tend to present themselves to students that have acquired effective learning skills. From the outset, it should be made clear then, that in seeking to develop in students effective learning skills, self-directed learning, reflective practice and experiential learning, all of which have become “buzz words” within the educational context in recent years, should not merely be used as substitutes for learning. Learning, in this context being regarded as a cognitive change which involves in some manner or other, active practice, reinforcement and feedback about the relevant knowledge and skill requirements for a particular program of study (Wild & Quinn, 1998). It is a point also argued by Pithers (1998) and one worth raising again as these fundamental elements are essential for the acquisition of substantive knowledge, skill development and, most importantly, development of expertise. When staff at The University of Queensland began to develop new leisure and tourism management curriculum materials utilising the WebCT platform, the majority were keen to ensure that the learning environment enabled the learning of a broad range of skills that facilitated, rather than restricted, the student’s flexibility. Autonomy was recognised as being a key factor as was the need to ensure that each student had a sense of exploration and discovery of subject matter. A line of argument supported by Van den Brande (1993: 2) who considered that flexible learning was about “enabling students to learn what they want (frequency, timing, duration), how they want (modes of learning), and what they want (that is the learners can define what constitutes learning to them)”.

Realistically, effective learning should enable students to identify, discriminate between and differentially use appropriate strategies within different contexts, an element so important in new learning (Kauchak & Eggen, 1998). It was important therefore, that leisure and tourism management students, through the use of learning materials on learning platforms such as WebCT, developed complex skills such as critical thinking, problem solving techniques, and the use of abstraction and analysis. This was achieved, for this author at least, by assigning tasks that required varying elements of reflective assessment, synthesis of core materials and problem identification and solution utilising the best features of the WebCT tools. Such tools including the hyperlinks, bulletin board, templates, and on-line reflective exams as aids for learning. It is interesting to reflect on the fact that one of the most important outcomes of using the bulletin board, for example, from a pedagogical point of view, was that it not only forced students to actually write but served to develop in many, a higher level of performance motivation. While the completion of the learning modules themselves, and the dialogue and interaction with the lecturer were both seen as key facets of the learning, it is considered the broad abilities of the lecturer to create the positive learning environment is the key. Within this context it is also desirable that effort be made to facilitate the actual learning in a culturally appropriate manner, such that there is a desired ‘mix’ for developing learning skills (Faulkner, Littleton & Woodhead, 1998). As such, if the use of web based technologies such as that exemplified in this paper are our future, then there is clearly a strong onus on universities to play an active role in the process. Such a role may include, for example, providing academic staff with the requisite opportunities and incentives for professional development that encourage them to acquire the pedagogical skills needed to create active learning environments for students that are more appropriately aligned with industry expectations of new graduates.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

As argued by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities (1999) in the United States of America, one of the key elements of the “learning society” in the new millennium will be that it seeks to foster and develop habits of learning and ensures that there are responsive and flexible learning programs and learning networks available to address all students’ needs. Importantly, such a society needs to have a view that information technologies, inclusive of the new interactive, multimedia technologies, can be positively utilised as tools for enriching learning. A point argued by Eaton (2001) who suggested that increasingly a hybrid model of learning will likely be commonplace in the foreseeable future as more and more students attend traditional university campuses yet take many of their courses online. While the staff at The University of Queensland have only begun to really explore the full potential of WebCT for the development and delivery of a tourism and leisure-based curriculum, it is clear that students are being exposed to a learning platform that offers much in terms of developing lifelong learning skills whilst, at the same time, meeting the stated knowledge requirements, standards and qualities desired of students at the undergraduate level by employers and educational authorities alike. A key consideration given that any leisure and tourism management degree program offered in the future must continue to provide suitable training and education for its students such that they are “workplace ready” upon graduation (Berno, 2003; Grigg & Brown, 1998).

For leisure and tourism management students, the tools available within various software packages, such as the one exemplified in this paper, provide contexts for collaborative learning, the development of understanding within a socially supportive environment, feedback allowing the development of more ‘mastery goal’ focuses for learning, and a clear conceptual framework for the learning materials. All these being key tenets of the constructivist approach to teaching and learning through which students are able to construct their own understandings within a social context. Importantly, there remains today substantial support within the educational literature for the effectiveness of such an approach (Cole & Chan, 1994; Nikolova & Collis, 1998). There is little doubt that, if used effectively, software packages such as WebCT, can significantly enhance the development of effective learning and, perhaps more importantly, lifelong learning, for many individuals not adequately catered for in many current learning settings. Future research therefore might seek to explore the ways in which instructors can better balance their concerns for delivering academically rigorous, yet technology-aided, course content whilst addressing the myriad of student concerns as identified in this study. Moreover, this study has highlighted the fact that the instructor is an integral component of the whole learning process. For instance, as one learns to use the technology it has immediate implications for how they then guide and assist students through the course material. As such, further research related to the most effective forms of training to assist instructors to use technological packages effectively would appear warranted.

As noted by Fox (2000: 235), “new technologies will not allow us to easily or more effectively do the same things we used to, rather it will change what we do, our work practices and relations, our jobs and our futures. It will also change what and how students learn”. It would appear the real challenge ahead for many of us therefore will be to develop learning environments encapsulating the best features of the new technologies available to us whilst still maintaining the focus on the content, and not on the delivery medium.

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## PREPARING STUDENTS FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM REALITIES

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### ABSTRACT

Through a collaborative experiential project, students become actively involved in the learning process creating a learning environment charged with excitement and the desire to excel. Interaction with travel and tourism professional through each stage of the project provides a realistic overview of the interrelated nature of the industry.

Keywords: Collaborative learning, experiential learning, active learning

### INTRODUCTION

Television, the Internet, and computer games have conditioned Generation X and Generation Net students to be visually oriented, receiving information in short bursts. Persuading students to internalize lecture and textbook information needed for travel and tourism careers becomes harder every year. "Helping students learn as effectively and efficiently as possible remains a challenging, and sometimes puzzling, task for teachers" (Smith & Van Doren, 2004:56). Whether in the classroom or through electronic media, "Education is rapidly evolving from one of presenting instruction to that of facilitating learning." (Elam & Spotts, 2004: 50). In response to this challenge, many instructors have integrated some form of reality-based learning into their classes. This paper discusses an approach developed by the authors' over a ten-year period involving hundreds of students that has met with resounding success.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Classroom learning environments have been classified into three general types: individualistic, competitive, and cooperative (Johnson & Johnson, 1974). Although most of today's classrooms are oriented to a competitive environment, research has shown that, of the three approaches, a cooperative environment is the most conducive to student motivation and learning (Schlager, Lengfelder, & Groves, 1999; Feinstein, 2001). In this environment, students are organized into small groups and work to attain common goals. Students discuss the material among themselves, which helps them gain a better understanding of it and encourage one another to work together in a truly interdependent setting with personal accountability (Johnson & Johnson, 1984-85 & 1999). Additional benefits of team-based learning in travel and tourism education have been extensively documented (LaLopa, Jacobs, & Hu, 1999; Wolfe & Gould, 2001).

The pedagogical approach we have taken with our students in a one-term undergraduate introductory travel and tourism course, ranging in size from 35 to 55 students, builds on the most common approach to travel and tourism instruction. This approach utilizes the textbook as a basic guideline, which is then modified through lectures and classroom activities, bringing subjects to life (Schlager, Lengfelder, & Groves, 1999). Encouraging students to read the

textbook and then enhancing textbook concepts and facts with explanatory lectures provides undergraduate students with the confidence needed to apply what they have studied and reinforces the importance of their newly acquired knowledge through experiences. This approach combines several pedagogical approaches including collaborative learning and experiential learning designed to reach higher-level educational goals. Even during traditional lecture presentations a very heavy dose of student involvement, practitioner input, and active student participation must be interspersed to prepare students to engage in team-based, collaborative experiential projects.

### *Collaborative Learning*

Teams are present in almost every business activity in which students will engage and the importance of placing students in team activities has not gone unnoticed by the academic community. However, simply placing students into cooperative learning teams to complete activities can be viewed as simply a classroom exercise with little relevance to future work life realities. Therefore, instructors should strive to bring reality to team-based activities. Taking the next step, moving team-based assignments to collaborative learning, can bring added meaning to these experiences.

Collaborative learning "includes student learning teams, active learning, cooperative learning, and, when used successfully, classroom assessments. Faculty should understand that collaborative learning provides additional pedagogical tools to enhance and supplement lectures." (Cluskey, Ehlen, & Rivers, 2001, p 84). Perhaps, most importantly, faculty should recognize that collaborative learning is essential to developing higher-level thinking and critical thinking skills (Cunningham, 1996) as well as well as the ability to work with individuals of differing political, religious, and ethnic backgrounds (*About Campus*, 2003).

### *Experiential Learning*

Kolb (1984) defined leaning as "a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (p. 38). Successful learning requires both guidance from the instructor and practice from the student. In other words, learning does not just happen. It occurs through a cyclical process involving four stages: concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Experiential learning does not mean that students learn everything on their own. The instructor is still present, supplying a framework for learning, providing guidance, and helping students to expand their own thinking as their confidence grows.

"Emphasis is on 'doing' through the use of theories, concepts or processes to create practical outcomes. Active experimentation should move inactive learners - possibly both physically and mentally - into active and involved learners" (Young, 2002: 44). Table 1, developed by Frontczak (1998: 27), provides an overview of the differences between the traditional learning and experiential learning.

**Table 1**  
**A Comparison Between Experiential and Traditional Learning**

	<b>Traditional Learning</b>	<b>Experiential Learning</b>
<b>Student</b>	Student is passive Student is spectator Vicarious experience by student Low student involvement Low student commitment Less risk for student Impersonal Student is "empty cup"	Student is active Student as participant Direct experience by student High student involvement High personal commitment for student More risk for student Personal Student as "full cup"
<b>Teacher</b>	Teacher-centered Teacher has control Teacher's experience primary Teacher as transmitter of knowledge Teacher decision-maker Teacher knows Teacher responsible for learning Teacher as judge	Student-centered Student has control Student's experience primary Teacher as guide/facilitator to learning Student decision-maker Student knows Student responsible for learning Absence of excessive teacher judgment
<b>Learning/ Knowledge</b>	Predefined learning One-way communication Broadcast learning Goal of knowledge accumulation  Stress cognitive processes  Linear, sequential learning Instruction Predictable outcome Emphasis on pedagogy/didactics School as regiment Product (knowledge)-oriented Theory-based	Customized learning Two-way dialogue Interactive learning Goal of knowledge, skills and attitude development Includes cognitive, affective and behavioral processes Non-linear learning Discovery Outcome not always predictable Emphasis on learning School as fun Process-oriented Student's perceptions-based

This enhanced stage of learning is achieved through student, faculty, and practitioner collaboration (Cluskey, Ehlen, & Rivers, 2001). Experiential education introduces the complexity of real world situations that often cannot be replicated in the classroom. "This complexity, even though it makes it very difficult as an instructional methodology, is dynamic. This type of dynamism helps to motivate the student because they can see the direct application of the theory in the classroom to the real world" (Schlager, Lengfelder, & Groves, 1999: 481). "Experiential learning is the process which occurs within the individual learner while experiential education occurs once the learner shares the intellectual experience in some manner with others. Sharing can take many forms such as journals, group discussions, papers, or presentations" (Frontczak, 1998: 26).

*Focus on Active Learning*

Perhaps most importantly, the role of student involvement in the learning process has been acknowledged and encouraged by one of the largest accrediting bodies in the world, the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business International. In their accrediting guidelines, they state:

The most effective learning takes place when students are involved in their educational experiences. Passive learning is ineffective and of short duration. Faculty members should develop techniques and styles that engage students and make students responsible for meeting learning goals. . . . Regardless of the delivery mode of the program, students should have opportunities to work together on some learning tasks.

Each student is a resource who brings unique experience and knowledge to combined tasks. Students need to acknowledge their responsibilities to their fellow students by actively participating in group learning experiences. (pp. 52 & 53)

As with any classroom activity, assessment is paramount. Has learning occurred and if so, can students demonstrate their knowledge? Tables 2 and 3 developed by Bloom (1956) and Frontczak (1998) respectively provide simple rubrics for learning assessment.

**Table 2**  
**Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives**

<b>Cognitive Stages</b>	<b>Level of Measurement</b>
Knowledge	Basic Recall
Comprehension	Understanding the facts
Application	Using material in new situation
Analysis	Understanding of information
Synthesis	Putting together parts to create a new solution
Evaluation	Judgment of the materials and conclusions

**Table 3**  
**Method of Analysis of Experiential Learning Activities Using Kolb's Model**

<b>Stages of Learning Process</b>	<b>Learning Objectives for each stage</b>	<b>Questions for educators to ask regarding learning activity</b>
Concrete experience	Encourage active student participation and involvement in the learning process.	Was the assigned activity relevant to the overall course objectives? Did the professor provide sufficient directions and an appropriate environment for the activity to occur? Are the students capable of such an activity? Did the student discuss the "who, what, when, where, and why" of the experience (much like a straight-forward, objective, informational "new item")? Did the student discuss not only the experience or activity, but also what led up to the event and the consequences?
Reflective experience	Allow students the opportunity to express their feelings toward the learning experience.	Are students given the opportunity to communicate their feeling, reactions and emotions toward the experience? Does the professor limit or suspend judgment regarding the student's feelings? Are students given some directions for expressing feelings (i.e., guided reflection)? Are students encouraged not only to reflect on the experience, but to also consider what triggered these feelings?
Abstract conceptualization	Assist in student understanding of the concepts and theories presented in class	Are students provided with guidance on how to relate this experience to the relevant theories/concepts/topics studied in class? Are students encouraged to formulate tentative hypotheses for generalizations based in these theories and their related experience?
Active experimentation	Improve students' ability to apply what has been learned to new experiences and new topics.	Are students given the opportunity to specifically explain what they had learned from the experience and how they could apply this knowledge to future experiences?

### *Classroom Design and Approach*

Experiential learning creates a dynamism in the classroom setting that motivates students as they see the direct applications of theory to real world situations (Schlager, et al., 1999). Collaborative learning further enhances classroom lectures, increases student cooperation through teamwork, fosters higher level thinking skills, and maximizes individual learning (Cluskey, et al., 2001). Making the move to reality-based learning does not mean instructors abdicate their leadership roles in the educational process. To the contrary, their role in enhancing learning is enhanced as they ensure:

- Each activity contributes to student learning.
- Joint responsibility between themselves and their student for leaning success.
- That each activity draws on knowledge students have acquired through other experiences and in other classes to enhance their learning.
- That knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired through learning activities can be transferred outside of the classroom. (Smith & Van Doren, 2004)

To implement a cooperative classroom learning environment, the challenge becomes not only overcoming students' resistance, but also instructors' resistance to change from the traditional lecture format. Academicians are notoriously slow to change, and it is no wonder as Smith and Van Doren (2004) documented. Just think, the lecture format is familiar; most academic reward systems focus on research productivity rather than classroom effectiveness; student input is often minimized in instructor evaluations; change is almost always suspect and resisted; and there is the ever present fear of failure when something new is tried.

They must be made comfortable to move from a system that has encouraged and rewarded individual competition for grades to one where the emphasis is on group interaction. In a cooperative learning environment, students are faced with meeting group expectations, thereby subjecting them to more personal risks. In addition, cooperative learning experiences offer potential instructional benefits over the traditional classroom environment that fosters either individualistic accomplishment or competition among classmates (Boyer, Weiner & Diamond, 1984-85; Cluskey, et al., 2001).

This combination of classroom approaches is designed to evolve during the term. At the beginning of the term, we follow the most common type of lectured-based instructional methodology (Schlanger, et al., 1999), serving primarily as disseminators, focusing on building a solid knowledge base while crafting professionalism among our students. Providing this foundation relies on using textbook materials. As the term progresses, we shift to more of a facilitator role, allowing students to grow through knowledge application and activity-based experiences.

### THE PROJECT

We designed a one-term comprehensive team project to incorporate a variety of tourism topics, allowing students to experience not only the complexity of the tourism industry, but also the professionalism needed for career success. Industry professionals from travel agents to executive chefs work with students through each stage of the project to reinforce lectures and textbook materials and validate the importance of learning today for application in the future. This project includes the following milestones and deliverables. The complete text of the project can be seen in the appendix.

## DISCUSSION

Through the use of a collaborative experiential project, we create an environment in which students become actively involved in the learning process. This approach is designed to create a learning environment charged with excitement and the desire to excel. Interaction with travel and tourism professionals through each stage of the project provides students with a realistic overview of the interrelated nature of the industry.

Guest speakers from transportation, accommodations, distribution, and attractions were invited to interact with the students. In addition, a chef's panel was developed several years ago. Five executive chefs from the local area are invited each term to meet with student teams and assist them with the banquet preparation challenges presented in Milestones 4 and 5.

### *Assessment*

A useful approach to assessing how this project contributes to the development of students' knowledge, skills, and abilities is Bloom's (1956) taxonomies. The developmental learning power of the project is demonstrated through each of the milestones shown in Table 4.

**Table 4**  
**Tourism Student Team Project**

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Bloom's Hierarchical Cognitive Stages</b>
One	Memo of understanding the requirements of the project.	Knowledge; basic recall Comprehension; understanding of facts
Two	Analyze and compare three World Heritage regions.	Knowledge; basic recall Analysis; understanding relevance of information
Three	Develop and document a group travel itinerary which includes transportation, accommodations, attractions, entertainment and meals.	Knowledge; basic recall Comprehension; understanding of facts Application; Using materials in new solutions Analysis; understanding relevance of information
Four	Develop and document a banquet event for 80 people. Include in the milestone recipes and costs, room layout and décor, plating diagrams, entertainment, table-top diagrams and place settings	Knowledge; basic recall Comprehension; understanding of facts Application; Using materials in new solutions Analysis; understanding relevance of information
Five	Combine Milestones four and five into a professional portfolio for judging by a panel of tourism professionals.	Synthesis; putting together parts to create a new solution Evaluation; judgment of materials and conclusions

### *Student Feedback*

In the spirit of continuous improvement, student comments are solicited at the completion of the course. Students are asked not only what they liked and disliked about the project, but also how the project can be improved. First, the overwhelming number of responses indicate that students enjoy the project and the interaction it requires with industry professionals. Second, they express great pride in their ability to produce a high quality professional product that showcases their knowledge and accomplishments. However, they also note that the project requires a great deal of time and is a time management challenge to

complete each milestone in a timely fashion.

Third, student comments from previous classes have resulted in changes. There were originally three milestones in the project, but, based on student feedback, the number of milestones has been increased from the original three to four and then to six to spread out the workload. At first, we specified destinations, but, based on feedback, we moved to a format that allowed student teams to select their own destinations within some parameters. The project in its current format has met with resounding success. In fact, most of the comments we now receive are similar to the following. “The project was a great hands-on way of applying the information that was being learned. It was also nice that the destination was not a ‘top 10’ hot spot like Paris or Hawaii.” “This project helps prepare us for the real world where we will be working together a lot.”

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## APPENDIX TOURISM PROJECT TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

The tourism industry is multifaceted and draws from many disciplines. The following project will familiarize you with many of the key elements of the tourism industry and demonstrate your depth of understanding. In completing the project, you will rely on information from your textbook, your instructor, the library, tourism professionals, and other sources such as the Internet. Helpful Internet links will also be provided throughout the project. The final result of your research will be a professional portfolio demonstrating your knowledge of the interrelated nature of the world's largest and fastest growing industry.

### Your Task

Your task is to prepare an adventure tour package to one of the following locations featuring UNESCO's "World Heritage Sites" (see <http://whc.unesco.org/criteria.htm> for description of criteria for inclusion of properties in the World Heritage List).

- Australia, China, Egypt, Greece, India, Japan (shrines & temples), Mexico's ancient civilization, Peru's ancient civilization, Tanzania and Uganda's natural wonders.
- Your tour will present the cultural, historical, environmental and natural features of the area to your traveling clients.

You will then develop a banquet proposal that can be used as a sales tool for promoting your tour. There are two major parts to completing this project and each part has been divided into milestones with specifically described deliverables.

In the first part of this project, you will be placed in the role of tour wholesaler. As a tour wholesaler, you are responsible for developing a tour package and for creating appropriate marketing literature and collateral documents.

In the second part of the project, you will be placed in the role of food and beverage manager. As a food and beverage manager, you are responsible for creating a menu, detailing logistics, and producing a banquet that is designed to provide a preview of the tour package developed in part one of this project. (See Appendices A and B of this document.)

Your tour package should be targeted to attract and meet the needs of a medium-sized group of participants (approximately 45) who are members of an alumni affinity group. This group was formed over 10 years ago by a tourism graduate so that alumni could meet once a year and experience new travel destinations. The tour always takes place in October and the banquet serving 80 to 100 people is held in April to promote the tour.

Although the participants share the same alma mater, they cross a wide demographic spectrum. They range in age from 24 to 42 years and have annual incomes from \$32,000 to \$120,000. Most participants are not married and even those that are typically opt to travel solo when they sign up for the annual tours. There have always been a fairly equal number of men and women in this group and they can be classified as mildly allocentric. No requests have been received from past participants for any special accommodations due to their health, ability, or dietary concerns.

Successful packages have always included transportation, accommodations, and a choice of activities. Based on the results of satisfaction surveys, successful tours have ranged from seven to ten days, including travel time, and priced from \$3,200 to \$4,800. A full list of activity and entertainment options has been provided on an *a la carte* basis.

Your portfolio should include detailed documents and supporting materials built around the completion of the following milestones.

### Project Milestones, Deliverables and Grading Criteria

Write a memo indicating your understanding of the project and an overview of the steps in the form of a time line that will be involved in successfully completing it. Prepare your memo as a Microsoft Word document and submit it as an e-mail attachment.

Grading Value = 20 points

Submit a report as a Microsoft Word attachment outlining basic tourist information about three potential World Heritage regions. Limit your description of each destination to one single-spaced page. Prepare a comparative analysis of the three regions considering time of year, target markets, etc.

Grading Value = 30 points

With Milestone 3, you will begin collecting materials that will be assembled into your portfolio. The first major section of your portfolio will contain a detailed description of a destination from the three you researched and reported on in Milestone 2. As you develop this section, imagine yourself in the role of a travel writer. You should begin by describing both the physical and cultural geography of your destination. You will also need to include specific information about required travel documents, and other useful information for participants such as currency exchange rates and helpful resources.

This section of your portfolio will require:

- The development and documentation of an itinerary including intermodal transportation and different categories of accommodations
- Costs for transportation
- Costs for accommodations
- Costs for attractions
- Costs for entertainment opportunities
- Any other information that will make the trip more worry-free and enjoyable for the participants

Grading Value = 100 points

The next major section of your project will require you to shift your focus from a tour wholesaler to a food and beverage manager. In this section of your portfolio, you will:

- Create a menu reflecting the local cuisine of your tour destination.
- Provide recipes for each item on your menu.

- Prepare and photograph a plate showing how each food item is to be presented.
- Prepare a worksheet detailing portion sizes and food costs for all the items required to produce your menu for 80 to 100 people. (See Appendix A of this document.)
- Secure the signature of a food and beverage professional, i.e, chef, kitchen manager, purchasing manager, food and beverage director/manager, or food service director, to document the completion of all four parts of this milestone. (See Appendix B of this document.)

Grading Value = 100 points

The final section of your portfolio will describe a banquet showcasing your menu and tour. You should take into consideration the activities and entertainment alternatives described in your tour to create a setting that will let your guests imagine they are at your destination. Milestone Five will be documented through the completion of a:

- Banquet Event Order Sheet
- Recipe and Cost Worksheets
- Description of room décor
- Entertainment
- Room Layout Diagram
- Table Top Diagram and Place Settings
- Plating Diagrams or photographs

Grading Value = 100 points

### Milestone Six

All sections of your project have now been completed and it is time to assemble your work into a professional portfolio for final grading. Your grade will be based on the following criteria:

- Professional appearance
- Suitability of itinerary for clients
- Creativity of tour components
- Tour brochure
- Menu creativity
- Recipes and Food Cost Worksheets
- Plating photographs or diagrams
- Room layout and Table settings
- Banquet Event Order Sheet
- Interrelationship among destination, menu, decor, and entertainment.

Grading Value = 50 points for portfolio presentation

Appendix A of Tourism Project

BANQUET EVENT ORDER SHEET

Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Function: \_\_\_\_\_

Catering Managers:

Arranged by:

Phone:

FAX:

e-mail:

---

ALL MEETING ROOMS ARE NON-SMOKING

Original Count:

Agenda:

Guarantee: \_\_\_\_\_ Set: \_\_\_\_\_

notification

*Room is subject to change with  
to customer*

---

Event Purpose:

Set-Up Requirements:

Room:

Time:

Room Set-Up fee:

Cost plus tax and service charge

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Beverage Requirements:

Audio/Visual Requirements:

Room:

Time:

Decorations:

Attendance:

Special Comments:

Appendix B of Tourism Project

RECIPE AND COST WORKSHEET

Menu Item:  
Course:

<b>Ingredient</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Cost/ Unit</b>	<b>Extende d Cost</b>

Total Cost:

Number of Portions:  
Portion Size

Preparation Time:

Preparation Method:

Plating Directions:

Source of Recipe:

# DIASPORA CULTURE, IDENTITY AND TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE VIETNAMESE IN AUSTRALIA

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## ABSTRACT

The study examines the relationship between the adapted culture of Vietnamese migrants (*Viet Kieu*)<sup>i</sup> in Australia and their travel behaviour. A conceptual framework is proposed by integrating the theories of migrant cultural adaptation and of consumer behaviour to capture this relationship. The findings suggest that through the process of adjusting culturally to a new land, "homecoming" travel amongst the *Viet Kieu* may be associated with issues of identity and meaning. Reflective of different levels of cultural adaptation, sub-groups within the *Viet Kieu* community display distinct cultural and travel behavioural characteristics.

Key words: Diaspora tourism, Travel Behaviour, Culture

## INTRODUCTION

For many Western nations, diasporas have been a potent force shaping their relationships with a variety of first and third world countries. International connections and networks based on ethnicity readily cross national boundaries and frontiers. The dispersal of diasporic communities has prompted extensive travel activity on the part of migrants, particularly between their new and old countries. This phenomenon continues to expand in terms of both scale and of scope. Given the magnitude of the phenomenon globally, it is surprising that so little research has examined the travel characteristics of migrant communities and the wider implications of such travel.

The connection between culture and travel behaviour generally has remained largely unexplored. The literature covering the emerging field of diaspora tourism is particularly scant and inadequate. Examinations of the travel behaviour of Vietnamese migrants in a cultural context are almost non-existent. Information is urgently needed to provide an enhanced understanding of the various issues associated with the rapidly growing flow of migrants from and within Asia. This important knowledge gap has given rise to the major focus of the present research investigation.

## AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The substantial *Viet Kieu* community in Australia appears to constitute a significant travel market with a strong pre-disposition for travel to Vietnam (Nguyen, 1996; Thomas, 1996; Viviani, 1996). This study aims to explore the influence of cultural factors on *Viet Kieu* behaviour, with particular reference to return visits to Vietnam. With a view to exploring the socio-cultural contexts within which the *Viet Kieu* traveller operates, a conceptual framework will be developed to capture the linkages between *Viet Kieu* adapted culture and travel behaviour.

The study aims to extend our understanding of diaspora in the following ways:

- To ascertain the relationship between *Viet Kieu* travel behaviour and its continuity with traditional Vietnamese culture, as expressed in *Viet Kieu* adapted culture, and prompted by the desire to preserve Vietnamese identity and meaning.
- To explore the common and distinguishing features of adapted culture and travel behaviour amongst groups within the *Viet Kieu* community. These include travellers and non-travellers, with the former being those who have travelled to Vietnam, and the latter being those who have not.

It is intended that the research will provide an empirical characterization of migrant travel behaviour in a cultural context by examining the *Viet Kieu* community in Australia as an example of a new immigrant population involved in an ongoing process of creating its own adapted culture.

## CULTURAL VALUES AND MIGRANT CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOUR

An understanding of cultural values may provide useful insights into consumer behaviour (Bon, 1991). Tseng and Hsu (1991) assert the significance of the maintenance and transmission of values as influences over the purchase behaviour of migrants. Yau, Chan and Lau (1999) have developed a model to explain the influence of cultural values associated with the decision to purchase gifts. Yau (1994) conceptualises the process of consumer satisfaction by looking into the effect of cultural values and other determinants on consumer satisfaction. Reisinger and Turner (1999) suggest that differences in cultural values and rules of behaviour between Asian tourists and Australian hosts directly influence tourist satisfaction, and differences in perceptions of service providers directly influence tourist social interactions. FitzGerald (1998) examines the different cultural values of various ethnic groups that represent important tourist groups to Australia and identifies different habits, expectations, and preferences towards food and drink from those of the mainstream Australian culture.

Within a migrant community, the differential rates of adaptation and integration amongst individuals can lead to different consumption patterns. In the context of tourism one might anticipate that such differential rates of adaptation may lead to differences in destination choice, motivations and decision-making processes. In examining the role of leisure in the lives of Asian Canadian adults, Tirone and Pedlar explore leisure as a contribution to the sense of identity, and the role that leisure plays as young people try to balance both host society and their own cultural traditions (2000). Reflecting the collectivist orientation of most Asian cultures<sup>ii</sup>, leisure that includes travel is distinctly group orientated

and may serve to fulfil socially orientated needs such as group belonging or prestige rather than needs such as self-fulfilment (Shuette, 1998). It is of central importance to spending time family and/or the group to which they belong. Consistent with this approach, Asians are exhibiting a growing emphasis on family-orientated leisure activity. Leisure behaviour offers an opportunity for an individual to elevate his/her status to join a group, or to stay in a group whose status is in transition.

An understanding of Asian leisure motivations can provide insights into *Viet Kieu* travel behaviour within a cultural context. Though no previous study has been undertaken on the influence of culture on the travel consumption behaviour of the *Viet Kieu*, it is anticipated that the importance of Vietnamese cultural values such as family and group orientation and status will continue to permeate consumption behaviours. It is anticipated that the *Viet Kieu* will adapt certain values and behaviours prevalent amongst the host society to their tastes and preferences, but retain the core and important values of traditional Vietnamese culture. Given their cultural background and experience, it is also anticipated that the *Viet Kieu* are generally pragmatic, value-conscious consumers, planning their purchases carefully with a view to saving face, group belonging and maintaining social status. Identification and validation of these practices may assist in the prediction of their travel behaviour.

## THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY WITHIN DIASPORIC COMMUNITIES

Diaspora refers to “collective trauma, a banishment into exile and heartaching longing to return home” (Cohen, 1997). The underlying travel motives of migrants may be driven by nostalgia for their perceived ancestral homes and by the desire to maintain identity. These distinctive identities of diaspora communities have been variously reinforced, renegotiated and reified by travel between the old and new countries. All diasporas are therefore in part cultural (Urry, 2000), and cannot persist without much corporeal, imaginative and increasingly virtual travel both to that homeland and to other sites with the diaspora (Kaplan, 1987). Commenting on the link between diaspora and mobility, Clifford states that: “dispersed people, once separated from homelands ..., increasingly find themselves in border relations with the old country” (1997). Cohen even suggests an elective affinity between what might be termed the processes of ‘diazotisation’ and the proliferation of global networks and flows (1997).

Migrants are faced with a loss of roots, and a subsequent weakening of their sense of belonging. This sense lingers on in the form of memories and experiences that are mixed with other histories and cultures (Chambers, 1994). Cox describes migrants as “marginal persons standing on the border of two cultural worlds but fully members of neither” (1980). They linger at the intersection of self-identification between the former and adopted countries, wondering which side offers them greater acceptance, and are sometimes confused about their own feelings of belonging.

Nostalgia is a widespread phenomenon among migrants and is likely to colour the images that potential travellers have towards their homeland. David argues that nostalgia is deeply implicated in the sense of who you are, what you are about and, to some degree, where are you going (1979). It can be used as a lens when constructing and maintaining one’s identity. Nostalgia trips have therefore been characterized as ‘surreptitious and ambivalent’ reflective of a reluctance to lose hold of the present and belief in the future (Urry, 1995). Such visits may offer an escape from the realities and anxieties of a world which sometimes feels out of control. The visits may highlight things that are missed and

offer the prospect of providing participants with happy memories. A visit to the homeland may replenish the sense of self, and provide empowerment, belonging and direction, even if it is only temporary. It is therefore argued that migrants regard the country that they have left behind with a mixture of nostalgia and anxiety and that such attitudes may reflect the attitudes to travel prevalent amongst migrant communities.

## VIETNAMESE DIASPORAS AND THE HOMELAND

In examining the relationship between the diaspora and attitudes towards travel, it is important to have a thorough understanding of how migrants view events and people in their former homeland.

Like other migrant groups, the *Viet Kieu* have had to cope with the trauma of change as well as with a sense of nostalgia that they invariably experience for their family and homeland. Their path has been more fraught than has been the case for many other migrant groups, given the special circumstances that led to their departure and the extra uncertainties associated with enormous personal hardship (Viviani, 1996). The feeling of nostalgia was particularly intense during the early period of Vietnamese migration, when there was minimal prospect of return to their homeland ( Nguyen, 1987). Cultural alienation has been reinforced by feelings of insecurity and by the absence of the support networks and systems prevalent in Vietnam.

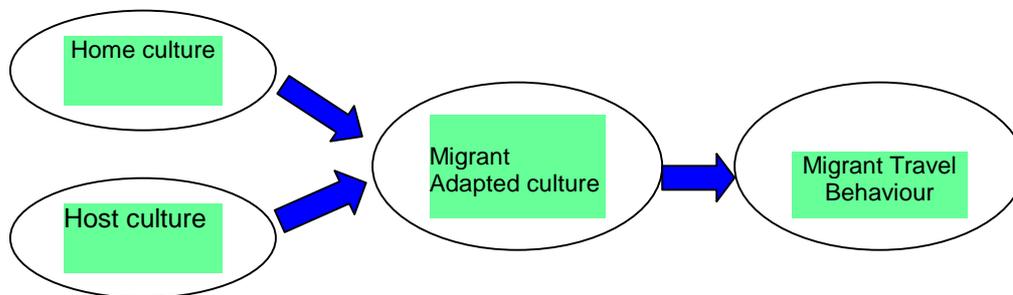
There is an ongoing interplay between ‘home’ and ‘away’, and between Vietnamese living in the diaspora and those in Vietnam. Issues of identity, rootlessness, belonging and the relationship between past and present may be associated with the decision to travel and subsequent experience of travel to the homeland by migrants. Possible *Viet Kieu* travel motives may include nostalgia for, and attachment to, the ancestral home and the desire to maintain a Vietnamese identity. A visit to the homeland may replenish the sense of self, and provide empowerment, belonging and direction, albeit temporary. Such powerful drivers mean that a trip to the homeland may be perceived as desirable and attainable by the *Viet Kieu* in helping to maintain a balanced life and to resolve identity-related issues during the process of adjustment to their new environment (Nguyen and King, forthcoming).

Important insights into the relationship between *Viet Kieu* adapted culture and travel behaviour may arise from an examination of consumption as a cultural phenomenon and by distinguishing those aspects of ethnic consumer behaviour which derive from cultural constants and those which derive from changing personal preference. We may expect both influences to be present. In practice the *Viet Kieu* may be actively engaging in the construction of cultural meanings. We may speculate that a culture with certain distinctive consumption values may be emerging, influenced by the material and social milieu in which these immigrants now live, and by their interactions with one another. A deeply felt sense of identity and belonging and the attachments to traditional Vietnamese culture may provide suggestions and directions in predicting *Viet Kieu* travel behaviour, particularly to the homeland.

## A CONCEPTUALISATION OF TRAVEL WITHIN THE DIASPORA

The conceptual framework which follows synthesises the theories associated with migrant cultural adaptation and consumer behaviour. Cultural adaptation theory explains how previous cultural background continues to influence the structure, and function and values of migrant families in the host society. It provides a framework for studying consumption behaviour generally but with particular emphasis on the travel patterns of migrants as they adjust to the host culture. As proposed in Figure 1, cultural adaptation would influence certain characteristics of migrant travel consumption. Since migrant adapted culture is a product of both the home culture and the host culture, the conceptual framework attempts to explain the linkages between the home and host cultures in creating a distinct adapted culture.

**Figure 1**  
**The Relationship between Adapted Culture and Migrant Travel Behaviour**



*Source: Developed by the researchers*

The proposed framework provides a mechanism for understanding the *Viet Kieu* travel phenomenon, since it investigates the way in which migrant groups have built their separate identities in a new cultural context and how they may adopt a new perspective on the significance and meaning of travel to different places. These assumptions are a basic premise of the present study. As values, identity, goals and expectations change, a transformation occurs in migrant consumption behaviour. Travel motives, patterns, expectations and experiences may also be expected to change. To gain a proper understanding of the phenomenon of what might be described as "Homecoming travel" it is essential to have insights into influence of *Viet Kieu* adapted culture.

**Proposition 1:** There is a positive relationship between *Viet Kieu* travel and the need to maintain Vietnamese identity and meaning.

**Proposition 2:** *Viet Kieu* travellers and non-travellers display different cultural and travel behavioural characteristics.

## RESEARCH METHOD

One thousand self-designed questionnaire forms were administered to the *Viet kieu* in Melbourne and Sydney where the majority of the *Viet kieu* concentrate, of which 435 valid responses were generated. The instrument was developed incorporating a wide range of literature. Two culture-related studies (Caplan *et al.*, 1989; Hofstede, 1984) have played an important part in determining a set of shared identifiable Vietnamese cultural values, and in

examining the relationships between cultural values and consumption behaviour as part of the migrant adaptation process.

The survey was conducted with a view to identify the cultural and travel behaviour characteristics of the *Viet kieu*, and to making a distinction between travellers and non-travellers, with regard to the cultural attitudes influencing travel behaviour. All respondents were aged 18 and above. This particular age group was chosen because of its travel growth prospects and the likelihood that the target audience would generate more ideas and a better understanding of travel in its cultural context.

The t-test was applied to examine differences in values and travel behavioural patterns between the two *Viet Kieu* groups - travellers and non-travellers. Whenever it is appropriate to test the relative importance of two variables from the same sample, the paired sample t-test was undertaken.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### *The Characteristics of Viet Kieu Travel*

The *Viet Kieu* started to travel to Vietnam in earnest after 1989, when the Vietnamese government introduced the "open policy" of encouraging home visits by overseas Vietnamese. Of the 435 respondents 51% are males and 49% are females. Most were born in Vietnam (99%) with only four respondents having been born in Australia. Nearly 90% of respondents reported maintaining close contact with family, friends and/or relatives in Vietnam with a third claiming to have very close contact. Primary ties linking the first generation *Viet Kieu* to their family and relatives in Vietnam appear to account for a substantial part of the Vietnamese travel market.

When respondents were asked about the extent to which they identify with or are conscious of being either Vietnamese or Australian, most (over 90%) feel Vietnamese, with a third of this group expressing the feeling 'very highly'. Many express a strong desire to maintain the Vietnamese language as a part of Vietnamese culture. Most are happy with their lifestyle in Australia, though three quarters believe that they would have a 'somewhat' better life in Vietnam if they went back. This result is somewhat contradictory. Though the majority of respondents live happily in Australia, they think a better life may be had back in Vietnam. Cultural factors may influence their feelings and emotions, and motivate them to visit their country of origin. This issue needs to be analysed further to explain the apparent contradiction, as well as any underlying factors.

Away from the homeland, it is understandable that the *Viet Kieu* "feel attached to the soil and to the ancestral tradition of Vietnam" and "always think about the ways of life they/ their family left behind". They appear to have mixed feelings of sadness and pleasure, of good and bad memories. The memories of the past are sometimes evoked, and may be as clear as they were yesterday. Nostalgia might become more prevalent when they face difficulties and failures, and even when they experience success. The findings are consistent with the responses provided elsewhere to questions about purpose of travel to Vietnam.

Amongst *Viet Kieu* travellers, gift-purchasing for family, friends and relatives is a well-known behavioural phenomenon. They would be more likely to travel to places suggested by family in the homeland or in the diaspora, indicative of the enduring influence of the extended family in the decision-making process. The *Viet Kieu* travel to Vietnam

primarily for the purposes of preserving cultural heritage, family maintenance and getting marriage, with preserving cultural heritage being considered most important. This reflects a strong cultural need amongst the *Viet Kieu*: to maintain traditions, and to preserve cultural, historical achievements and customs. “*Cultural heritage*” could therefore be seen as a ‘*push*’ factor as well as a ‘*pull*’ factor that motivates them to travel to the country of origin.

In the process of adapting to a new environment, the above factors are viewed as contributing to holding the family together and to maintaining continuity of lineage and are vital for *Viet Kieu* continuity, development and even existence. They also play a crucial role in maintaining happiness and in contributing to success. Marrying a traditional Vietnamese may guarantee the preservation of Vietnamese cultural tradition and the maintenance of family continuity and the importance placed on marriage in *Viet Kieu* travel indicates an attachment to roots. The *Viet Kieu* are primarily motivated by a desire to experience culture, history and customs. They pursue the benefits of family togetherness. They also prefer to visit friends and relatives and places where they have originated from to re-establish their familial and kin relationships. Their common goal is to promote kinship. Travel to the homeland plays an important part in achieving this goal.

The findings reveal that most *Viet Kieu* retain a strong Vietnamese identity and maintain close ties with the homeland. Return trips are frequently viewed as a moment in which the person returning is measured up for changes, for success, and for bringing back rewards to their country. In visiting their former homeland, they are forced to confront a changed Vietnam. This transformative period has revealed differing values between and within the diaspora and the homeland. One of the striking characteristics of the *Viet Kieu* is how they can create communal spaces of belonging based on the perceived reproduction of traditions. The desire to maintain Vietnamese identity in the host country appears to be paramount for the *Viet Kieu*, and has emerged from a position of ‘in-betweenness’ where the relations between ‘here’ and ‘there’ need to be negotiated and redefined. This clearly relates to the creation of a diasporic space of cultural relations: a transnational culture between locations.

Travel amongst the *Viet Kieu* serves the purpose of creating and maintaining a shared sense of common origins and assists in the establishment and re-establishment of kin and social networks. The maintenance of social ties and attachments to familial and ancestral places creates a sense of complete Vietnamese identity. *Viet Kieu* adapted culture may be defined by a deeply felt sense of identity and belonging. Combined with an attachment to traditional culture and to the homeland, these factors may help to predict *Viet Kieu* travel behaviour, and particularly to predict travel to their ancestral homeland.

#### *A Comparison between Travellers and Non-Travellers*

Comparing those who have travelled previously and those who have not travelled may provide insights into the relationship between travel motivations and cultural determinants. The two groups, *Viet Kieu* travellers and non-travellers, were found to differ in terms of identity, happiness, and feelings towards Vietnam or Australia as their home. The former maintain closer contact with their family, friends and relatives in Vietnam than the latter. Interestingly the incidence of feeling “*Vietnamese-ness*”, and of viewing Vietnam as the home country is higher in the case of travellers. Conversely, the mean scores for non-travellers are higher than for travellers in the case of a sense of “*Australian-ness*” of Australia as the home country, and of having a happy life in Australia. Though differences in cultural

**Table 1. Demographic characteristics of travellers and non-travellers**

<i>Respondent Characteristics</i>	<i>Travellers [171 or 39%]</i>	<i>Non-travellers [264 or 61%]</i>	<i>*Sig.</i>
Gender:			0.88
Male	19.8	31.3	
Female	19.3	29.7	
Age			0.00*
18-19	0.5	1.6	
20-29	12.6	23.4	
30-39	9.4	17.5	
40-49	9.7	16.8	
50-59	5.1	1.4	
60&over	1.8	0.2	
Family structure			0.00*
Single, living alone	7.6	25.3	
Single, with children	2.8	2.3	
Single with extended family	8.0	14.9	
Married with spouse	6.7	10.3	
Married with spouse and children	11.7	6.7	
Married with extended family	2.3	1.4	
Religion			0.00*
Christian	8.0	6.7	
Buddhist	21.1	24.8	
None	9.9	29.4	
Qualification			0.00*
Primary school	1.8	1.6	
High school	12.4	17.9	
Vocational school	6.2	26.2	
University degree	14.3	13.3	
Post-graduate degree	3.4	1.8	0.00*
Occupation			
Manager/administrator	1.4	1.6	
Professional	5.7	4.4	
Trades- and salesperson	8.5	4.6	
Workers	11.5	25.1	
Retired	1.8	0.2	0.00*
Student	5.5	7.1	
Unemployed	2.3	5.1	
Other	2.3	12.9	
Income			0.00*
Below A\$ 10,000	7.8	11.0	
A\$10,000-19,000	5.3	8.3	
A\$20,000-29,999	6.9	25.7	
A\$30,000-39,999	4.8	9.0	
A\$40,000-49,999	8.0	4.1	
Over A\$50,000	6.2	2.8	
Length of residence			0.00*
1995-2001 (1-6 yrs)	5.7	21.1	
1985-1994 (7-16 yrs)	23.0	35.4	
1975-1984 (17-26 yrs)	10.3	4.4	
Migrant category			0.00*
A refugee	23.0	25.7	
Family re-union migrant	11.3	28.7	
Overseas student	4.8	3.2	
Tourist	0.0	2.8	

\*Sig.: Chi-square significance.

attitudes toward travel do exist, both groups generally view a trip to Vietnam as being both desirable and attainable.

The two groups exhibit a number of demographic differences. As indicated in Table 1, the difference in religious beliefs between the two groups is of particular note. Are travellers more concerned about religious beliefs than non-travellers? If so, is the maintenance of family religion one of the main drivers for *Viet Kieu* travel? More than twice as many *Viet Kieu* travellers than non-travellers have lived in Australia for a period of between 17-26 years. Travellers appear to represent the first wave of migration after the reunification of Vietnam. This group is a more highly educated, more established, and more middle class group than those who followed. They quite clearly express a need to retain their identity and meaning in terms of regular contact with the homeland and/or with other members of the Vietnamese diaspora, and this may be associated with the different cultural characteristics between travellers and non-travellers.

Over half of the traveller respondents are repeat visitors, suggesting that the *Viet Kieu* have potential as a repeat visitor market. Two thirds of the traveller respondents reported that their first visit to Vietnam involved visiting family, friends and/or relatives, with a third citing holiday as the main purpose for travel. These proportions change in the case of repeat visitors, with nearly half claiming to visit family, friends and/or relatives, 42% travelling for a holiday, and 8% on business. Both groups agree that they would travel to Vietnam to 'feel the warmth and love of the Vietnamese people', because such travel would provide them with a 'feeling of self-confidence, certainty and strength'. The association between prestige and overseas travel may influence the motives of *Viet Kieu* travel. Amongst non-travellers the importance attached to prestige, perceived value for money and what constitutes affordability may have the effect of delaying a trip to Vietnam by diverting it to other destinations or to spending money on alternative purchases. Other factors may also prompt postponement of travel and merit further investigation.

The similarities and differences between travellers and non-travellers should be viewed in the context of the social and cultural complexities of the diaspora. The former will respond to a greater or lesser extent on the basis of their travel experience. The latter will respond hypothetically. The former base their previous responses on reality, the latter on imagined feelings. Travel behaviour is attributed to the pursuit of traditional cultural ends by travellers, while non-travellers refer to the need for show, exhibition and superstition. The most notable contrast between the attitudes of the two groups towards travel is that it functions as a symbol of success for non-travellers and for more practical, pragmatic ends amongst travellers.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results presented in this study have provided insights into the Vietnamese diaspora, and should advance our understanding of the nature of travel by members of other diasporas to their ancestral homelands. The *Viet Kieu* in Australia are an illustration of maintaining links with the past and the homeland, as they undergo a process of adaptation. A unique identity has been created which merges traditional cultural values with those of the host country. Their consumption patterns generally and their travel behaviour in particular are reflective of this identity and culture.

This study has attempted to provide insights into the consumer behaviour of a particular diasporic community. Existing theories of travel consumer behaviour have been shown to be predominantly Euro-centric in their presuppositions and not readily applicable to the consumption patterns of Asians generally and Asian migrants in particular. Additional account needs to be taken of factors considered important in the Asian context that are largely absent in Western cultures, notably the strength of group identity and belonging, the prominence attached to status, the need to save face, the custom of gift-giving, and the importance of family ties and decision-making.

An intricate web of travel motivations appears to limit the freedom of choice and constraints of *Viet Kieu* travellers within the diaspora. Apart from emotional and cultural needs, a range of practical and moral issues are influential. Practical reasons include marriage and business, whereas moral reasons include family and ancestral commitments, and the desire to maintain a traditional Vietnamese culture and identity. A clear picture emerges of *Viet Kieu* travellers as comfortably settled in Australia yet still calling Vietnam 'home' and quite consciously and deliberately maintaining a Vietnam cultural identity. A greater ambivalence is evident in the case of non-travellers. Their thoughts concerning Vietnam are wistful, romantic and nostalgic, fed by memory and somewhat removed from reality. This ambivalence, together with the need to treat travel as a signifier of success, suggests a less settled group, more uncertain concerning its identity and less successful in integrating the two worlds of meaning. This is a worthwhile area for further research focussing on migrant groups with an interest in travel. It was found that travellers are more secure and settled than non-travellers. They recognise and incorporate the ongoing context with Vietnam and/or the diaspora as being integral to their adaptation, identity and meaning.

This study has provided an enhanced understanding of the context within which travel choices are made. It contributes to a better understanding of an important segment of a rapidly expanding migration phenomenon. It offers insights into the meaning of travel within a socio-cultural and economic context. Diaspora tourism is clearly a market niche of considerable potential. It involves a complex range of activities, experiences, episodes, and impacts, many of which have been unsearched and may be misunderstood. The complex interplay between continuing nostalgia for the homeland and partial integration into a new country, underpins a significant and growing phenomenon. It is suggested that future research investigates additional aspects of diaspora tourism such as migrant travel within their adopted country (domestic travel) and travel to diasporic communities other than the former homeland.

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<sup>i</sup> *Viet Kieu* are those who carry with them Vietnamese cultural heritage; have taken citizenship of other countries, and live permanently outside of the territory of Vietnam.

<sup>ii</sup> For the purpose of this study, Asian cultures mean cultures of Confucian Asian countries.

CULTURAL MEDIATION IN GUIDED TOUR EXPERIENCES:  
A CASE STUDY OF AUSTRALIAN GUIDES OF CHINESE TOUR GROUPS

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## ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the cultural mediating role of tour guides on Chinese group tours in Australia, which emerged as important for this market. Using a case study, the paper reports on an investigation of views of tourism industry representatives, tour guides and Chinese visitors on cultural mediation. The investigation includes respondents' defined meanings of the role of cultural mediator, and their evaluation of tour guides' performance of this role. Consistent with previous studies, both visitors and tourism industry representatives reported that to be a cultural mediator, a tour guide needs to mediate access, information, and encounters, but their elaborations on what these roles entail provide new insight beyond that which has been previously reported in the literature. The case study also provides empirical evidence that cultural mediation by tour guides facilitates and delivers memorable experiences. The paper concludes with several important implications for the tourism industry for training tour guides.

Keywords: Australia, Chinese Visitors, Tour Guide, Cultural Mediation, Guided Tour Experiences.

## INTRODUCTION

Visitors join guided tours for a variety of reasons, but there is increasing evidence that the desire and need for 'cultural mediation' is a central motivator for international visitors who engage the services of a guide (Laws, 1995; Weiler & Ham, 2001). In the case of Asian visitors to Western (developed) countries, for example, the fully escorted group tour is the predominant way of travelling (Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000). Members of these group tours depend on their guides to overcome their cultural and language barriers and strike a balance between cultural buffering and exploration. Indeed, all tour groups travelling abroad experience the visited country in a way that is at least partly filtered and structured by their tour leaders or their guides (Pearce, 1982a). The guide may influence not only where tourists go and what they see, but also

what aspects of the host culture they are exposed to, how the host culture is translated and presented as well as the group's interaction with host communities and social settings. Thus, as Christie and Mason (2003) observed, good tour guides offer their clients more than a superficial introduction to a new environment, country or culture: they *connect* them with that culture.

Not surprisingly, then, a guide's performance can influence the tourist's experience in fundamental ways (Pearce, 1982b; Arnould & Price, 1993); indeed, what a guide does or does not do can 'make or break' a tour (Schmidt, 1979). Tour guides who are culturally inattentive can compromise an entire travel experience through insensitivity and communication problems (Lopez, 1980). It is also possible for a tour guide to isolate tourists from a destination community (Schmidt, 1979), effectively depriving them of the very connection they came to experience, even though the tourists themselves may be unaware that this is happening. If this type of 'insulated adventure' experience occurs, those tourists in search of something different and exotic may be dissatisfied and the experience may fall short of achieving mutual understanding (Wang, 1999).

The gap between expectation and reality on guided tours was recognised over twenty years ago by Pearce (1982a). He argued that the mediating effect of tour guides on intercultural tourist experiences represented an area in need of research. However, there is still an almost complete absence of research dissecting or analysing the mediating role of tour guides. Of the handful of studies conducted, most are either descriptive in nature or in the category of *a priori* conceptualisation. There is a lack of both theory building and empirical testing with respect to what makes an effective cultural mediator and its impact on the visitor experience (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001).

Moreover, the focus has been on the mediating effect of guiding Western tourists in developing countries, with little research examining tour guiding of new visitor segments, for example, outbound tour groups from developing countries such as China. Thus, there is a need for research on the cultural mediation role of tour guides, particularly those who lead tour groups from non-Western countries to tourism destinations in the developed world (Cohen, 2003). It is the goal of this paper to address this gap in the literature.

#### STUDY FOCUS: CHINESE-SPEAKING LOCAL TOUR GUIDES IN AUSTRALIA CHINESE VISITOR TRAVEL TO AUSTRALIA

In 2001, the annual growth rate of Chinese visitor arrivals in Australia was 38 per cent. Similar growth is predicted for at least the next eight years. The latest forecasts from the Australian Tourism Forecasting Council (2002) indicate that the number of Chinese visitors to Australia will reach more than 1.4 million annually by 2012, beyond the growth of any other market.

It is the policy of the Chinese government, however, to organise, plan and control the development of Chinese outbound travel (China National Tourism Administration, 2001). Control is achieved through a number of mechanisms such as single-trip passports, restricting travel options through approved travel agencies and tour operators, and limiting travel to designated destinations. By the year 2002, China had approved 22 destinations for outbound

travel<sup>1</sup>. Of these destinations, Australia was the first Western country to be given Approved Destination Status (ADS), which enables Chinese nationals to use ordinary passports when applying for tourist visas for visiting Australia (Tourism Forecasting Council, 1999).

## CHINESE-SPEAKING LOCAL TOUR GUIDES

Under the ADS scheme, Chinese holidaymakers must join an ADS group tour if they wish to visit Australia. These ADS group tours are fully inclusive, and require a Chinese-speaking local guide for every group. These guides are expected to lead the groups to places of interest, deliver commentary and interpret the attractions of the visited region. They are also expected to mediate interactions between the group and the host as well as control the tour (that is, they are responsible for safety and security as well as the itinerary). As a result, local tour guides looking after Chinese tour groups serve as the main point of contact between the destination and their Chinese clients.

Despite the importance of the tour guide's job for the Chinese market, there have been few published studies on guides of Chinese group tours (Ap & Wong, 2001; Wong, 2001; Zhang & Chow, 2004), and no study of Chinese-speaking local tour guides in Australia. While anecdotal evidence suggests that many of these guides are able to facilitate non-stressful, interesting and satisfying interactions for visitors, some have low levels of English language proficiency and limited knowledge of Australian geography, history and culture. Despite their official status as 'Australian residents', they struggle with cultural fluency in much the same way as their clients, and lack the in-depth knowledge and cultural competencies necessary to facilitate the intercultural experience that their Chinese visitors are seeking. Given the importance of guides as cultural mediators for Chinese visitors to Australia and other ADS countries, an examination of cultural mediation in this context is both timely and important (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001).

## DEFINING THE CULTURAL MEDIATION ROLE OF A GUIDE

For the purpose of this paper, a cultural mediator can be defined as 'a person who facilitates communication, understanding, and action between persons or groups of different cultures' (Taft, 1981: 53). More specifically, a mediator's task might include 'disseminating information, promoting mutual understanding, forming culturally relativistic attitudes, producing cross-cultural empathy, spreading international goodwill and reconciling disparate cultural practices' (Bochner, 1981:306).

Tour guides work at the interface between the tourist's and the host's culture, and thus assume this cultural mediation role in addition to their many other tasks (Cohen, 1985; Smith, 2001). According to Cohen (1985), the mediating function of a tour guide includes two components: social mediation and cultural brokerage. Social mediation involves acting as a go-between, linking visitors to the local population and to tourist sites and facilities, and making the host environment non-threatening for the tourist. Cultural brokerage, as suggested by Cohen (1985), mainly involves provoking thought and helping tourists connect with the host culture (Tilden, 1977; Ham, 2002). Cultural mediation is considered by Cohen as a primary role of the

professional tour guide. It is the second component of the guide's mediatory role and is seen as vital to the quality of tourist experiences.

A number of published studies (Schmidt, 1979; Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1982b; Pearce, 1984; Cohen, 1985; Hughes, 1991; Pond, 1993; Gurung, Simmons & Devlin, 1996; Bras, 2000; Ap & Wong, 2001; Smith, 2001; Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001) have acknowledged the mediating role of tour guides although they have not typically distinguished between the social and cultural mediatory roles (Table 1).

These studies suggest that the mediating activities of tour guides can be categorised into at least three aspects: *mediating access*, *mediating information* and *mediating encounters*. Tour guides *mediate access* by determining which part of the local environment, heritage and culture is exposed to tourists and which is hidden. Tour guides are expected to provide tourists with physical access and insight into the host culture without intruding on the private life of local people.

The interpretation function is largely seen as a way of *mediating information*, that is, by conveying the significance of the visited place, tour guides help visitors make intellectual and emotional connections with the place (Weiler, Johnson & Davis, 1991; Pond, 1993; Gurung, Simmons & Devlin, 1996; Bras, 2000; Ap & Wong, 2001; Smith, 2001, Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001).

Tour guides also *mediate encounters* between tourists and hosts, between tour group members, and between tourists and staff working for local restaurants, hotels, attractions and so on (Schmidt, 1979, Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1982a; Hughes, 1991, Smith, 2001). The guide not only acts as a go-between in these encounters but also as a role model of what is appropriate behaviour (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001).

The remainder of this paper reports on an investigation of views of tourism industry representatives, tour guides and Chinese visitors regarding cultural mediation. The investigation includes respondents' definition of the cultural mediating role of tour guides, and the role that cultural mediation plays in visitors' most memorable experiences.

**Table 1**  
**Role of a Tour Guide as a Mediator: Definitions in the literature**

<b>Author &amp; theoretical perspective</b>	<b>Mediating role</b>	<b>Underlying theme</b>
Schmidt (1979) Sociological	Buffer between tourist - and social environment, influence what to see, how to get there, how to deal with locals, removing interaction difficulties	Mediating access and encounters
Holloway (1981) Sociological	Information giver, provision of access, catalyst of group interaction, mediating tourist-host interaction	Mediating access, information and encounters
Pearce (1982b, 1984) Social-psychological	Shape tourist-local contact, acting as catalyst for group solidarity, influence tourists' perception on host community	Mediating information and encounters
Cohen (1985) Sociological	Interpretation (translate the unfamiliar), selection (what tourists can see and what they cannot see), mediating encounters between cultures	Mediating access, information and encounters
Hughes (1991) Psychological	Facilitate communication between cultural groups, provide insights into local way of life, buffer between tour group and the unfamiliar, provide access to non-public places	Mediating access, information and encounters
Weiler et al. (1991) Tourism/tour guiding	Cultural brokering, Interpretation	Mediating information
Pond (1993) Tourism/tour guiding	Inform, create memorable interpretations	Mediating information
Gurung et al. (1996) Tourism/tour guiding	Agent between the visited and visitors, interpret host cultural and natural features, point out points of interest, making strange encounter non-threatening	Mediating information and encounters
Ap & Wong (2001) Tourism/tour guiding	Interpretive aspect of guiding enhance visitors' understanding of the destination	Mediating information
Bras (2000) Anthropological	Brokers as entrepreneurs, turn social relationship and guiding narratives into a profitable business asset	Mediating information & access
Smith (2001) Sociological	Mediating between hosts and guests, cultural interpretation, ethnic imaging, cultural trait selection, decision making	Mediating access, information and encounters
Yu, Weiler & Ham (2001) Intercultural communication Tourism/tour guiding	Facilitate communication, understanding and action between different cultural groups	Mediating information and encounters

## RESEARCH METHODS

This paper is based on a larger empirical study undertaken in two phases: a qualitative phase in late 2001 using semi-structured interviews, followed by a quantitative phase in late 2001 - early 2002 using self-completed questionnaires.

## SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION

In the first phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty tourism industry representatives. The purpose of the interviews was to uncover perceptions of the informants about the roles that Chinese-speaking tour guides are expected to play. The interview results together with the findings from the review of past studies on roles of guides were used to design an instrument for the phase two surveys. The informants include one inbound tour operator association, one tour guide association, one tourism training institution, five Chinese-speaking tour guides, seven approved ADS Australian inbound tour operators and five approved Chinese travel agencies (wholesalers) headquartered in Beijing. Sampling was purposive and, in the case of the Australian inbound tour operators, a census was attempted.

In the second phase, self-completed questionnaire surveys were employed with local tour guides and Chinese visitors in ADS groups. For the tour guide survey, the researcher distributed approximately 100 questionnaires either in person or by mail, of which 31 completed questionnaires were returned. For the visitor survey, a list of approved ADS Australian tour operators (30) and a list of approved ADS Chinese travel agencies (21) were obtained. A random sample of tour operators was used to distribute questionnaires to Chinese visitors in ADS groups. In order to ensure an adequate sample size, the researchers also obtained permission from two hotels in Melbourne to access respondents; these two hotels accommodate most of the Chinese ADS groups that stay in Melbourne. In total, 495 questionnaires were collected, producing a useable response set of 461.

The use of mixed methods in this study aimed to reduce the limitations inherent in adopting one specific paradigm. However, the methods are not without limitations. First, the size of the population of Chinese-speaking local ADS guides in Australia is not known, and thus in the absence of a sampling frame, a probability sample was not possible. Consequently, the non-random sampling procedures together with the modest number of respondents to the tour guides' survey may have resulted in sampling error (Salant & Dillman, 1994), affecting the generalisability of the findings. However, multiple data sources were used to minimise bias.

Second, the manner in which the visitor data were collected was also constrained by a number of factors. Due to limited access to Chinese ADS tour groups, the visitor survey was mainly conducted in Melbourne, resulting in limited opportunities to triangulate visitor data. Also, assessment of the guided tour experience was based on responses collected just prior to completion of the tour; therefore, comparisons between pre-tour expectations and post-tour perceptions could not be made.

## METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data from phase one consisted of field notes and tape transcripts which were content analysed and classified. In phase two, although the main purpose of conducting

the visitor survey and the tour guide survey was to examine tour guides' intercultural competence (see Yu, 2003), certain sections of each questionnaire related to tour guides' roles. Respondents of both the guide survey and visitor survey were asked to rate the relative importance of several roles of tour guides. In addition, visitors were asked to answer three open-ended questions about their most memorable experience during their visit to Australia; what role, if any, their tour guides played in such experience; and any other comments they would like to make.

To analyze how industry representatives and visitors perceive the roles of tour guides, responses to the semi-structured questions in the in-depth interviews and responses to the open-ended questions were translated and transcribed, and inductive data analysis was used to process the data. Statistical analysis was performed to compare how visitors and guides perceive the roles of tour guides.

Several steps were taken to strengthen the validity of the findings. First, the researchers inspected and compared all the data fragments (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) so that the full variation of the issues under investigation could be observed (Perakyla, 1997). Secondly, in an effort to think critically and objectively, the researchers resisted the temptation to jump to easy conclusions (Silverman, 2000:178). Thirdly, data were treated comprehensively to achieve integrated and precise results (Mehan, 1979). For example, the perceptions of roles of tour guides given by the industry representatives were compared with the findings from both the visitor survey and the guide survey, and integrated concepts were identified. Finally, the responses to the open-ended questions were tabulated to identify any strong tendencies (Silverman, 2000). As the following results reveal, the use of multiple data sources and multiple methods of collecting data proved to be valuable and, because the qualitative and quantitative data are in many cases consistent, enhanced the trustworthiness of the research findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Perceptions of Tour Guides as Cultural Mediators*

As already mentioned, semi-structured interviews were conducted with tourism industry representatives to elicit the most important roles of Chinese-speaking local tour guides. Using content analysis, five main roles (categories) emerged, one of which was 'to be a cultural mediator'. Some respondents noted that, although desirable, the role of cultural mediation is a difficult one for guides.

Subsequently in phase two, the five roles were presented (in a self-completed questionnaire) to both tour guides and visitors, and respondents were asked to rate the relative importance of the roles on a scale from 1 (not at all important) to 7 (extremely important). Both groups rated cultural mediation as an important role of the guide (mean score of 5.8 for both groups), although all of the other roles (providing good customer service, caring for the health and safety of the group, providing information and managing the group itinerary) were rated somewhat higher in importance by both guides and tourists. It could be argued, however, that there is an element of 'mediation' in each of the other roles.

*Respondents' Defined Meanings of the Role of Cultural Mediation*

Results from the interviews with the tourism industry representatives and the visitors' self-completed survey revealed not only the perceived importance of the cultural mediating role of tour guides but also insights into the meanings of this role. Consistent with previous studies, as shown in Table 2, both visitors and tourism industry representatives reported that to be a cultural mediator, a tour guide needs to mediate access, information, and encounters, but their elaborations on what these roles entail provide new insight beyond that which has been previously reported in the literature.

**Table 2**  
**Respondents' Defined Meanings of Cultural Mediating Role**

<b>Cultural Mediating Role</b>	<b>Respondents' Defined Meanings</b>
Mediating access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Not only provide physical access but insights into the local culture</li><li>▪ Facilitate visitors to observe and experience cultural differences</li><li>▪ Connect visitors with places visited</li></ul>
Mediating information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Deepen visitors' understanding of host society, cultural values and lifestyles</li><li>▪ Provide language interpretation</li><li>▪ Facilitate two way communication</li></ul>
Mediating encounters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Help visitors understand and accept local customs</li><li>▪ Initiate interaction between the locals and visitors</li><li>▪ Role model appropriate behaviour</li></ul>

For example, in relation to mediating *access*, some respondents stated that a qualified tour guide should be able to act as a bridge between two cultures and as a people-to-people ambassador. By mediating access, tour guides should facilitate not only physical access, but also insights into the local culture, and ultimately, enable visitors to observe and experience cultural differences and connect them with the places visited.

With respect to mediating *information*, both the visitors and the tourism industry respondents perceived that tour guides need to deepen visitors' understanding of the host society, cultural values and lifestyles. They also need to provide language interpretation to facilitate two-way communication.

Regarding mediating *encounters*, industry representatives observed that tour guides need to help visitors understand and accept local customs and to show visitors how to act in a manner that does not run counter to local norms and ways of thinking. For example, the tourism industry representatives assert that some Chinese visitors act contrary to host country norms by smoking in places where smoking is forbidden, by spitting and by talking too loudly. Respondents noted that as cultural mediators, tour guides cannot always instruct their clients about appropriate behaviour, but must communicate the message in inoffensive and indirect ways. Tour guides need to initiate interaction between the locals and visitors.

These findings add to previous discussions of the cultural mediation role, particularly with respect to the need for a *cognitive and affective* dimension for mediating

access, for more *depth* in mediating information, and for more tact and *behaviour role modelling* in mediating encounters.

#### *Respondents' Evaluation of Tour Guides' Role Performance*

Visitors were asked to answer three open-ended questions about their most memorable experience during their visit to Australia, what role, if any, their local tour guides played in such experiences and any other comments they would like to make. In terms of actual performance in relation to cultural mediation, findings from these open-ended questions describe the role performance of Chinese-speaking local tour guides in more detail but are consistent with the opinions expressed by tourism industry representatives. 'Good' tour guides were seen to be those who were able to deliver and broker information in ways that broaden visitors' views and facilitate communication between visitors and locals.

While acknowledging that some Chinese-speaking local tour guides have done well in *mediating information*, both tourism industry representatives and visitors perceive the main weaknesses in the current performance of many Chinese-speaking local tour guides to be inadequate knowledge about Australia resulting in a lack of depth in the information provided. According to tourism industry representatives, many tour guides have limited knowledge of Australia pertaining especially to tourism sites and general knowledge of Australian culture. The visitor survey respondents also acknowledged that the guides' provision of information on Australia's history, geography, culture and economic development and the country's position in the world fell short of their expectations. This reinforces the findings of the in-depth interviews with industry representatives, that depth of knowledge and interpretive communication technique are the areas of cultural mediation most in need of attention.

#### *Tour Guides' Cultural Mediating Role in Visitors' Most Memorable Experiences*

Respondents to the visitor survey were asked to describe their most memorable experiences during their visit to Australia. Two hundred and twenty respondents provided 339 responses to this question. As shown in Table 3, visitors' most memorable experiences were grouped into five main categories and ranked from the highest to the lowest frequency. Respondents expressed that their guided tour provided them with a deeper understanding of Australia including their understanding of Australian people, Australia as a nation and Australia as a tourism destination. The harmonious relationship between the Australian people and their natural environment was also mentioned, as was the way Australia protects wildlife, the way local people obey rules and regulations and the national interest in sport. Thus, respondents generally provided responses that related more closely to the *information* aspect rather than to the *access* or *encounter* elements of mediation.

**Table 3**  
**Most Memorable Experiences**

<b>Most Memorable Experience (Multiple responses)</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>
Learning about Australia society, cultural values & lifestyles	<b>113</b>
Cities & sites	<b>88</b>
Scenery, nature & climate	<b>67</b>
Friendly people & interaction with locals	<b>24</b>
Others	<b>27</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>339</b>

\*220 people provided 339 responses to Q19, of which 8 answers are not relevant to the question.

Respondents were also asked to describe what role, if any, their tour guides played in their memorable experiences. The role of cultural mediator was the most frequently mentioned with responses such as: "...furthered our understanding of Chinese & Australian cultures"; "...broadened our views, acted as a link between eastern and Western cultures"; and "...enhanced our understanding and facilitated communication between visitors and the locals" (Yu, 2003:138). Again the role of *mediating information* was apparent. In short, the visitors' responses provide empirical evidence that cultural mediation by tour guides facilitates and delivers memorable experiences and is a key mechanism by which the guide enhances the experience for this market segment.

## CONCLUSION

This paper concludes with the implications of the research findings for theory and practice together with avenues for further research. In terms of the implications of the research findings, this paper sheds some light on the meaning, the importance and the elements of the cultural mediation role in the context of guiding Chinese ADS groups in Australia. Further study is needed to determine the relevance of these findings to other market segments and tourist types. This paper also provides empirical evidence of the positive impact of the cultural mediating role on Chinese visitors' experiences, and it demonstrates that cultural mediation is an important guiding role of Australian guides of Chinese group tours.

The insights gained from this research also support previous literature that suggests that cultural mediation has three aspects: mediating access, mediating information, and mediating encounters. The fact that cultural mediation is a key role of the guide and a key element of visitors' most memorable experiences provides the basis for recommending recruitment, selection, training and management strategies that aim to improve the level of competence of guides as cultural mediators.

With regard to training, knowledge about Australia, its history, geography, and culture as well as the tourism product, and the level of communication skills needed to interpret such information, were perceived as weaknesses of Australian guides of Chinese group tours. Thus, these areas appear to be important if tour guides are to be effective at *mediating information*. Knowledge and skills in *mediating access* and *encounters* are also clearly important in recruitment, selection and training of guides. Tour guides of Chinese

group tours need to be able to engage and connect visitors in a physical but also an intellectual and emotional sense, with the host populations, cultures and environments of the places visited. These are all skills that can be acquired through training.

Training could be both classroom based and on-the-job, and could incorporate both an apprenticeship system and study tours so that new tour guides could observe and learn from experienced guides. Overall, stronger support should be given to tour guides, especially newcomers to guiding, to obtain intercultural training. To facilitate training, adequate funding may need to be allocated to tourism and tour guide associations and tourism training authorities, to improve access to basic entry-level as well as advanced guide training for Chinese-speaking tour guides.

Moreover, good guiding, particularly with respect to the cultural mediation role, is the responsibility of not just individual guides. There appears to be a need for tour operators and the tourism industry to support professional development, on-the-job training, better remuneration and rewards for good practice for Australian-based Chinese-speaking tour guides. A formal tour guide certification or licensing system that recognises and rewards quality guiding *including cultural mediation competence* would help to attract and retain skilled Chinese tour guides, and provide more incentives to improve their performance as professional guides in general and as cultural mediators in particular. If excellence in cultural interpretation and mediation is to be achieved, commitment and support from all parties: government, the tourism industry, employers and the guides themselves, is essential.

With respect to avenues for further research, attention might be focused on particular destinations, sites and attractions, and experimental manipulation of tour guiding variables based on the research findings from this study. For example, research might focus on the impact of tour guides' levels of competence on their effectiveness in mediating access, information, and encounters relating to a particular destination or a site. Another avenue for research is to examine effectiveness in mediating access, information and encounters and how each of these impacts on tourists' cognitive and affective learning and the level of intercultural interaction. Finally, there is considerable scope for extending this area of enquiry beyond guides to other mediators in the tourism industry.

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<sup>i</sup> The designated destinations were: Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Brunei, Nepal, Hong Kong, Macao, Myanmar, South Africa, Turkey, Egypt, Malta and Germany.

# COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS OF ATTRIBUTE-BASED IMAGE IN A MASS MARKET - THE CASE OF HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined the attribute-based image of China's Heilongjiang Province as an international destination. The correspondence analysis revealed that Heilongjiang was uniquely associated with the image of "snow and ice" and "border sightseeing". No other competing destinations were as distinctively identified with these two attributes. However, when the trip purpose was introduced into the analysis, it was found that the strength of the association of the destination with these two attributes differed between the business and leisure groups. The business group also perceived the attribute of nature scenery as the most distinctive of Heilongjiang, and closely associated it with the attribute of people and culture. The findings illustrate that international tourists to China did not perceive China as one homogeneous destination. For Heilongjiang, the knowledge of its position in the minds of tourists and perceptual differences amongst different segments is essential for the development of effective marketing strategies.

Key words: China, Heilongjiang, destination attribute, image, market segments.

## INTRODUCTION

The important role of China in the international tourism arena has been well recognized, particularly since the World Tourism Organization (2000) predicted the country to be the most popular destination by 2020. The country in general takes the prediction seriously and aspires to meet the expectation. Indeed, China has made an impressive stride in attracting the inbound arrivals since the first groups of western tourists started tricking into the mysterious land in the late 1970s. By the end of 2002, nearly 98 million arrivals were recorded, as compared to less than two million in 1978. Despite the adverse SARS impact in 2003, China expects to host over 100 million overseas tourists in 2004.

Amidst the excitement of China's growing predominance, however, there is an evident oversight of impending problems of sustainability. The characteristics of the country's inbound tourism are very much reflective of those of mass tourism. The length of stay has become shorter and shorter each year. Average spending has been decreasing in real dollar terms. The tourism product has remained largely dependent on sightseeing (Robert 1996). Marketing activities at the national level are underlined by the assumption of a homogenous inbound market, and driven by product orientation. Price wars are constant in

the marketplace among tour operators and hoteliers alike. Popular tourist routes designed for inbound tourist groups have been reduced to commodities bought and sold at bargaining prices.

Tourism administrations at provincial and local levels, on the other hand, seem to recognize the consequences of the mass market approach. Along with the efforts to identify the uniqueness of their regions through research-based tourism planning, provincial tourism bureaus, particularly those that are traditionally left out of popular sightseeing routes, begin to take customer-oriented measures. They strive to develop products and marketing strategies, more based on the understanding of traveling consumers than on the blessings of intermediaries.

Heilongjiang in the Northeast China was among the first provinces that conducted consumer surveys for its tourism industry. The provincial tourism bureau sanctioned a survey of international tourists in 2001. Among the survey's objectives, the bureau was interested in understanding international tourists' perceptions of the province as a travel destination. The current study was designed to achieve the objective by addressing two questions: 1) how Heilongjiang was perceived differently from other travel destinations, and 2) what was the mediating effect of trip purpose on the perceptions.

## DESTINATION IMAGE

Tourist perceptions of a destination have been examined extensively in the research domain of destination images, and more recently within the concept of destination branding. Empirical studies of destination image began in the 1970s with Levens' (1972) study of visitors' images of eight Mediterranean countries and Gunn's (1972) introduction of the well-known two-dimensional (organic vs. induced) model. A wealth of literature on destination images has evolved since then. The interest has been sustained with consistent empirical demonstration of a clear relationship between positive perception of destinations and positive purchase decisions (e.g., Crompton, 1977; Pearce, 1982; Woodside & Lysonski, 1989; Bojanic 1991; Gartner, 1989; Martin & Baloglu, 1993; Milman & Pizam, 1995; Ko & Park, 2000; Cai, 2002).

The term of destination image generally refers to a compilation of beliefs and impressions based on information processing from a variety of sources over time, resulting in an internally accepted mental construct (Crompton, 1979; Gartner, 1993). Two related questions have been the focal points of continuing investigation. One question deals with how the image of a destination is formed; and the other explores specific components that constitute a total image of a destination. Gunn's two-dimensional (organic vs. induced) model dominated much of the early investigation into the formation of a destination image. In his seminal work, Gartner (1993) reviewed extant literature to date and proposed a continuum of eight image formation agents. They included overt induced I, overt induced II, covert induced I, covert induced II, autonomous, unsolicited organic, solicited organic, and organic. These eight agents emphasized the effect of varying information sources on the image formation of a destination.

Gartner's 1993 work also suggested a three-tier structure of destination image components. Based on previous conceptual and empirical reports, Gartner proposed that a destination image consisted of cognitive, affective, and conative components in hierarchical order. The conative component depended on the perceptions developed during the cognitive

stage and evaluated during the affective stage. A similar typology of destination image components was proposed and empirically examined by Baloglu and McCleary (1999). In their framework of destination image formation, the two authors posited that the destination image construct was composed of three components: perceptual or cognitive, affective, and overall image. Their definition of the cognitive and affective components mirrored that of Gartner's. The cognitive part of a destination image was the beliefs or knowledge about the destination's attributes. The affective part was concerned with the motives a tourist had for selecting a destination selection. They differed, however, on the definition of their third component. While Baloglu and McCleary's overall image component referred to the total evaluation of the cognitive and affective components, Gartner's cognitive component emphasized the actions and behaviors of a tourist as the results of the overall evaluation.

A more recent work by Cai (2002) introduced the study of destination images into the realm of destination branding. Cai proposed that a destination image comprised 3A's: attributes, affectives, and attitudes. The attributes were defined as perceptual tangible and intangible features characterizing the destination; affective as personal value and meaning attached to and benefits desired from the attributes; and attitudes as overall evaluations and basis for actions and behavior.

The current study examined the attribute component of a destination image using the case of China's Heilongjiang Province. The study focused on international tourists' perception of the destination's attributes of natural scenery, snow and ice, border sightseeing, people and culture, and urban sights and sounds.

## THE CASE OF HEILONGJIANG PROVINCE

Located in the Northeastern China and the sixth largest province, Heilongjiang possesses rich tourism resources with unique geographical and climatic characteristics. In the year 2000, more than half a million international tourists visited the destination, generating ¥189 million Yuan in tourism receipts and moving the province from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> place in China's inbound arrivals.

The traditional destination image of Heilongjiang was a winter and summer resort. In recent years, the local government has capitalized on its natural features of snow, forest and wetland to develop new products and activities, such as ice lanterns, snow sculptures, skiing, hunting, boating, summer holidays, environmental and ecological sightseeing, historical sites, national cultural life, and border tourism. In 2002, the province developed "Heilongjiang Tourism Development Strategy and Planning," which established the statement of the province's future tourism image. For the domestic market, the slogan was "Heilongjiang is a cooling place in summer and a snow world in winter." For the international market, the slogan was "Heilongjiang: Cool Province of China". Currently, Heilongjiang's international tourism consists of border market of Russia; short-haul market of Japan and South Korea, and Southeast Asia countries; and long-haul market of other Asia countries or regions, Europe and USA.

In 2001, the provincial tourism bureau sanctioned a visitor survey of international tourists. The purpose of the survey was to develop a comprehensive understanding of their behavioral characteristics and perceptions of Heilongjiang Province as a destination. The survey was conducted by the Social Investigation Agency of Heilongjiang Province and Harbin Institute of Technology. The personal interview technique was used for data

collection. Interviewers were undergraduate students who went through a seven-day training. The data were collected in September and October of 2001 at hotels, parks, sport facilities, and historic and culture attractions. A total of 519 questionnaires were collected. This study used 479 valid observations from the survey, and retained only those variables that addressed the two questions of this study's objective: 1) how Heilongjiang was perceived differently from other travel destinations, and 2) what was the mediating effect of trip purpose on the perceptions.

### *Sample Profile*

Majority of the respondents in the sample were male (63.6%). About 41.1 percent of them were between 31 and 40 years old, and 22.1 percent between 19 and 30 years old. More than half (69.0%) had a bachelor's or master's degree, while 16.6 percent had earned a high school diploma. About 26.0 percent reported monthly income between US\$801 and US\$1,000. The Professional/Technical was the most well represented occupation (about 42.5%). Approximately 31.6 percent of the respondents had four people in their household. Table 1 summarized the sample characteristics.

**Table 1**  
**Sample Profile**

Variable	%	Variable	%
Age		Gender	
18 and under	2.1	Male	63.6
19-30	22.1	Female	36.4
31-40	41.1	Occupation	
41-50	18.3	Government	19.9
51-60	13.9	Professional/Technical	42.5
60 and over	2.5	Manager	1.1
Education Level		Sales	3.4
Left high before diploma	2.1	Skilled worker	10.4
Earn a high school diploma	16.6	Military	3.8
Associate degree	12.2	Student	9.9
Bachelor's degree	54.3	Owner/Self-employed	9.1
Master's degree	14.7	Family Size	
Household Monthly Income		1	0.6
\$800 and under	16.4	2	10.1
\$801-\$1000	26	3	18.7
\$1001-\$1200	14.7	4	31.6
\$1201-\$1500	11.9	5	23.8
\$1501-\$2000	13.9	6	9.1
\$2001-\$3000	9.8	7	4.8
\$3001-\$4000	4.9	8	1.3
\$4001 and above	2.3		

## IMAGE OF HEILONGJIANG

The image of Heilongjiang Province was examined through correspondence analysis. This technique is a special case of principal component analysis. It uses the singular value decomposition to analyze contingency tables from multinomial data. The most important feature of this technique is its multivariate nature which enables the simultaneous examination of relationships between multiple categorical variables. It treats variables in a joint space with categories data where other multi-attribute analytical methods cannot. Since the correspondence analysis provides a direct spatial view, this method is particularly helpful in analyzing cross-tabular data in the form of numerical frequencies, and results in a simple graphical display which permits straightforward interpretation and understanding of the data (Greenarce, 1993). Correspondence analysis also helps to show how variables are related, not just the relationship exists (Gursoy & Chen, 2000).

The categorical variables in this study were 1) Heilongjiang (HLJ) and other provincial-level destinations including Liaoning (LN), Jiling (JL), Nei Mongol (NM), Xinjiang (XJ), Beijing (BJ), and others (Other); 2) destination attributes associated with these destinations as perceived by the respondents including natural scenery (Nature), snow and ice (Snow), border sightseeing (Border), people and culture (People), and urban sights and sounds (City); and 3) the two trip purposes of business and leisure. The correspondence analysis was first applied to the entire sample. The results are shown in Figure 1. The first dimensional solution in the perceptual map explained 61.71 percent of the total variance, and the second dimensional solution explained 36.31 percent. The two-dimensional solution was deemed satisfactory with a total of 98 percent of variance accounted for.

**Figure 1**  
**Attribute-Based Images Perceived by All Respondents**

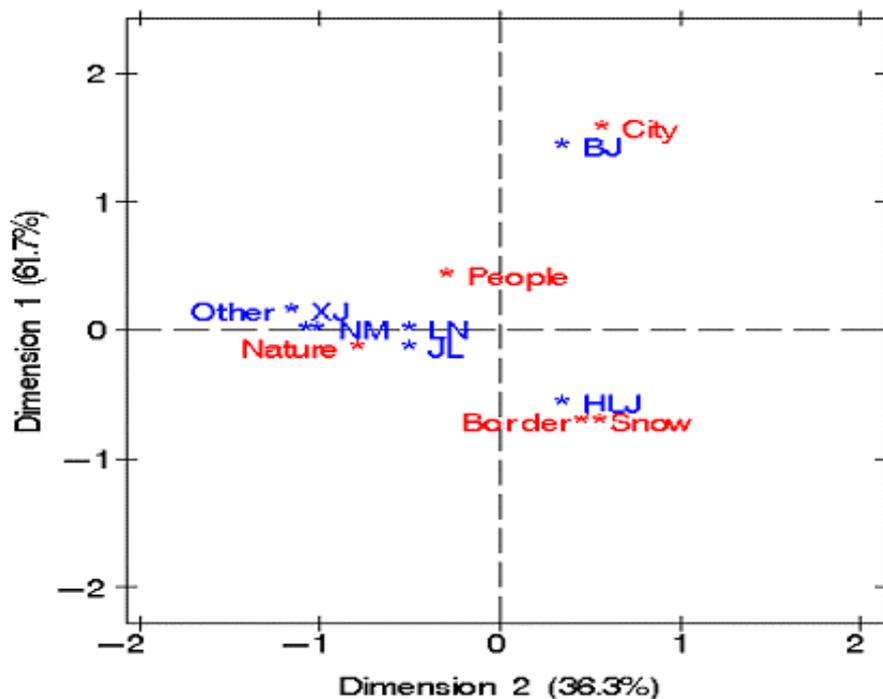


Figure 1 illustrates that the respondents strongly associated Heilongjiang Province with the unique destination attributes of “snow and ice” and “border sightseeing”. While the

perceived association of snow and ice confirmed the traditional image of the province, the perceived association of border sightseeing reflected the emergence of the destination’s border tourism traffic from Russia. No other destinations were as distinctively identified with these two attributes, albeit the fact that Liaoning and Jiling Provinces also claim winter climate as their tourism resources, and that Nei Mongol and Xinjiang Autonomous Regions offer products of border tourism. On the other hand, Heilongjiang Province was very weakly associated with the attributes of “natural scenery”, “people and culture”, and “urban sights and sounds”, as indicated by its greater distance to them in the perceptual map. This is despite of the fact that the destination possesses and promotes all these attributes.

However, the correspondent analysis yielded a different perceptual map when the variable of trip purpose was introduced. Figure 2 illustrates the results. The two-dimensional solution accounted for a total of 86.3 percent of variance. It is noted that about the majority (79.9%) of the respondents indicated their main trip purpose as leisure, and remaining 20.1 percent as business.

**Figure 2**  
**Attribute-Based Images as Perceived Business vs. Leisure Respondents**

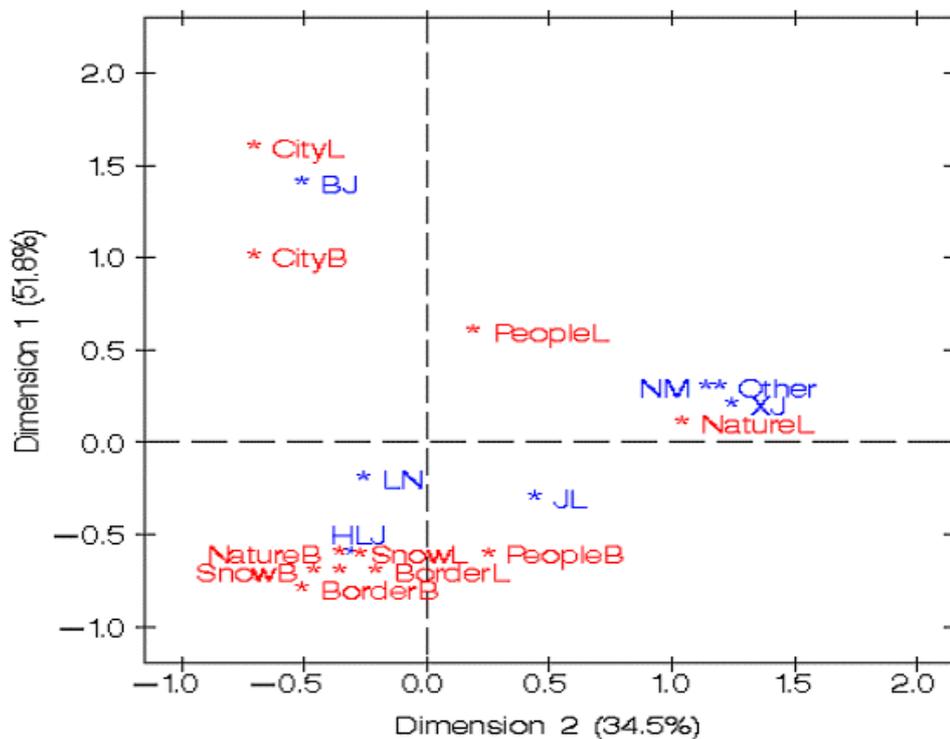


Figure 2 indicates that the strongest association of Heilongjiang Province as perceived by the leisure respondents was with “snow and ice” (SnowL), followed by “border tourism” (BorderL). The business respondents also closely associated the destination with the attributes of “snow and ice” (SnowB) and “border tourism” (BorderB). However, the strongest association of Heilongjiang Province as perceived by the business respondents was with “natural scenery” (NatureB). The same attribute was distantly located away from Heilongjiang as perceived by the leisure respondents (NatureL). The two groups also held a different perception toward Heilongjiang Province in its association with the attribute of “people and culture”, as could be seen from comparing the distance between HLJ and (PeopleB) and that between HLJ and (PeopleL). The business respondents held a stronger

association of the destination with its people and culture than the leisure respondents. The perceptual differences evidently existed between the two groups.

## DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

In 2002, Heilongjiang Province developed its tourism strategic plan, titled “Heilongjiang Tourism Development Strategy and Planning”. The 2001 survey, from which the current study’s sample was drawn, was an important element of input into the drafting of this document, which was supposed to provide guidelines for the development and marketing of the province’s tourism. One of such guidelines was the image statement for the province as an international destination.

The slogan “Heilongjiang: Cool Province of China” seemed to embody the attribute of “snow and ice” well, according to the finding of this study (Figure 1). The choice of the word “cool” was meant to reflect the climatic characteristic of its winter season. The perceived association of Heilongjiang with the attribute in the minds of international tourists appeared to be stronger in reality than as found in this study, given the fact that the data used in the study were collected in the non-winter months of September and October 2001.

Tourism resources of Heilongjiang Province are diverse and obviously beyond simply its winter snow and ice. The strategy underlying the slogan seemed to focus on the destination strength while capitalizing on the slang meaning of the popular English word “cool” to describe the destination as excellent, satisfactory and complete in other attributes such as people and culture, natural scenery, and urban sounds and sights. The finding of the study suggested that international tourists as one market did not seem to perceive the destination as strongly associated with these attributes. They did, however, regard border sightseeing as an important and unique attribute of Heilongjiang. This might be a biased finding due to the composition of nationalities represented in the sample, which was unknown - a major limitation of this study. Heilongjiang Province divides its international market geographically into three regions: Russia on its border, short-haul market of Japan and South Korea, and Southeast Asia countries, and long-haul market of other Asia countries or regions, Europe and USA. The perception of the destination as strongly associated with border sightseeing was possibly affected by a large representation of Russian tourists in the sample.

As one market, the international tourists to Heilongjiang Province may not see the destination as unique in attributes other than snow and ice and border sightseeing. This would have been the conclusion and become a base for the destinations marketing activities if the market were indeed treated as homogenous. The finding of the study as shown in Figure 2 revealed otherwise. The introduction of a basic segmentation base – the trip purpose – resulted in the market information that Heilongjiang Province could not afford to ignore. Business and leisure tourists were differentiated from each other in their perception of Heilongjiang as an international destination in at least two aspects. First, although both groups regarded snow and ice and border sightseeing as unique attributes of Heilongjiang, the strength of the association of the destination with these two attributes differed between the two groups. Second, the business group perceived the attribute of nature scenery as the most distinctive of Heilongjiang, whereas this attribute was not as such in the mind of the leisure group. The business group also considered a close association of the destination with the attribute of people and culture, but the leisure group did not.

The recognition and understanding of these differences should be valuable for Heilongjiang Province in developing marketing strategies to effectively attract each of the two groups. The process of forming cognitive images from attributes determines which destinations move into the perceived, realistic, and attainable opportunity set in the minds of tourists. In this regard, the knowledge of the destination's associations with the attributes and the strength of each association in the minds of different segments of tourists is also helpful for Heilongjiang to gain competitive advantages.

An important implication of the study's findings for China's international tourism in general is that international tourists to China did not perceive China as one homogeneous destination. They clearly differentiated one region from another. Some provinces may share similar destination attributes, such as natural scenery and people and culture. Unless such similarity is in the minds of tourists, attempts to bundle them together will be in vain. In destination marketing, tourist perception is the reality.

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AN EXAMINATION OF DESTINATION BRANDING:  
A CASE STUDY IN INDIANA

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ABSTRACT

Destination branding is a complex process. Investigations into the relationships among various constructs of destination branding have been relatively limited. This study proposed a model of destination branding by examining relationships among destination image, awareness, brand elements and identity, and benefit to the destination. Structural equation modeling was employed as the statistical tool. Significant relationships were found among brand element, image, awareness, identity, and benefit to the destination. All the hypotheses were supported. The relationships disclosed in the model provide a conceptual model useful for future studies on destination branding. Keywords: destination branding, image, awareness, structural equation modeling

INTRODUCTION

Differentiating a destination from its competitors has become critical to marketers in today's highly competitive marketplace. Tourism marketers are challenged to develop strategies that enable a unique identity for destinations, which in general suffer more from lack of awareness by potential visitors than from inefficiencies in management (D'Hautserre, 2001). There has been an increased push among practitioners to build a strong brand for their destinations. Yet, academic studies on destination branding are just emerging and relatively limited in scope.

Kaplanidou and Vogt (2003) stated that "destination branding is a combination of all attributes associated with the destination under a unique concept, which expresses a unique identity and personality of the destination and differentiates it from its competition." Destination branding is therefore a complex process. Tourist destination decision-making is affected by factors including the knowledge of the place. In branding terms, the knowledge consists of brand image and brand awareness (Keller, 1998). A significant number of studies have been done on examining destination image. However, image in the context of branding has not been well examined. Cai (2002) suggested that image formation is not branding, but a step closer to branding. There still remains a critical missing link – brand equity, which is defined as the marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand, and involves choosing brand elements such as slogan that will affect the identity (Keller, 1998).

Although a substantial literature has evolved in the area on branding for consumer goods, there have been relatively few discussions on the distinction between the constructs of

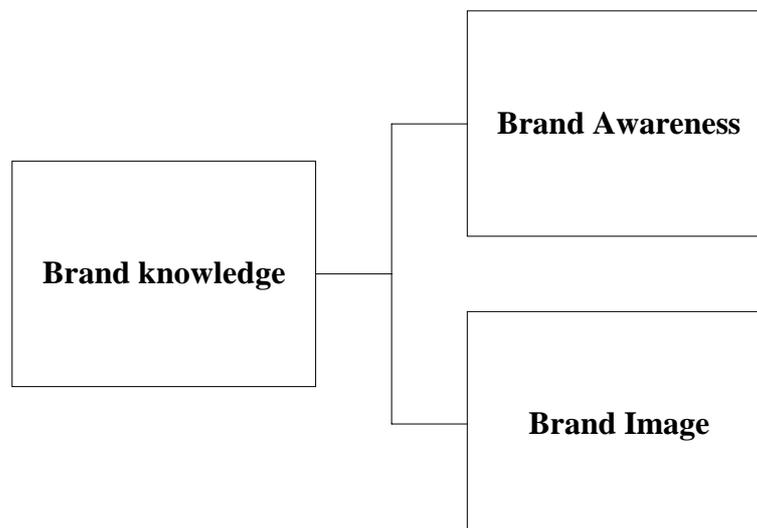
brand element, brand knowledge, brand equity, and the benefits related to destination branding. Based on the frameworks proposed by Keller (1998) and Cai (2002), this study aimed to examine branding in the context of destination image, awareness, elements, identity, and benefits. The study distinguished itself from others by focusing on the examination of relationships among various constructs of destination branding. The goal is to develop a conceptual model for future studies of such relationships.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Branding*

Branding has become an important marketing tool. The concept of brand equity arose in the 1980s from the marketing literature (Keller, 1998). However, there has not yet been a common terminology of brand equity. Farquhar (1989) indicated that “brand equity can be measured by incremental cash flow from associating the brand with the product.” Aaker and Brel (1993) suggested that “...a consumer perceives a brand’s equity as the value added to the functional product or service by associating it with the brand name.” Keller (1998) explained brand equity from a customer perspective and defined it as “the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of the brand.” According to him, a brand is said to have “positive customer-based equity when customers react more favorably to a product and the way it is marketed when the brand is identified as compared to when it is not.”

**Figure 1**  
**Brand Knowledge**



(Source: Keller 1998, p 94)

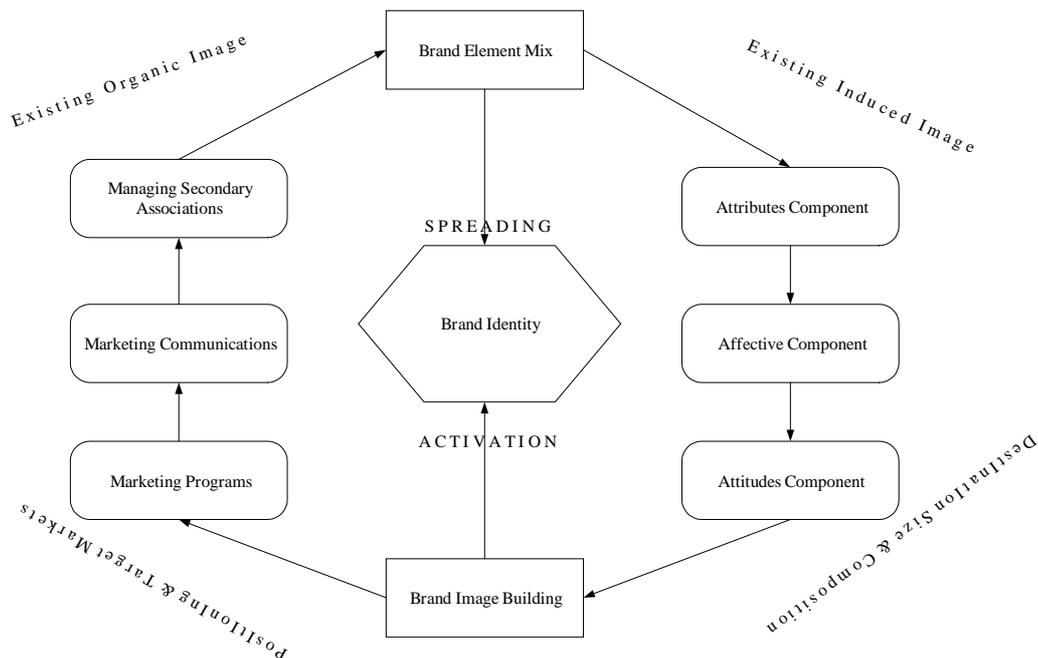
Brand knowledge consists of brand awareness and brand image (Figure 1). Brand awareness is “related to the strength of the resulting brand node or trace in memory, as reflected by consumers’ ability to identify the brand under different conditions (Keller, 1998).” Creating brand awareness “involves giving the product an identity by linking brand elements to a product category and associated purchase and consumption or usage situation.” Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1993) considered brand image as the consumer’s perceptions of the brand’s tangible and intangible associations. Krishnan (1996) found that high equity brands are more likely to have more positive brand image than low equity brands.

While the branding model developed by Keller (1998) has been backed by sound theoretical argument in general, only a small portion of it has been empirically tested to date (Grace & O’Cass, 2002). In addition, although Keller’s model is supposed to have a blanket representation of both goods and services, some researchers argue that there may be differences among the two in terms of marketing principles (Grace & O’Cass, 2002; Berry, 2000). Turley and Moore (1995) criticized that there was an overwhelming tendency to study branding in terms of physical products. Branding a destination is more than branding a physical product. This study explored Keller (1998) framework and examined if his model could be adapted in destination branding.

### *Destination Branding*

Branding has been studied extensively in the general marketing field but is relatively limited in tourism destinations. Past studies about destination image are abundant. However, as Cai (2000) argued, “image formation plays only a partial role in branding a destination, and total practice should involve actively and methodologically building a consistent image by integrating a variety of marketing activities”.

**Figure 2**  
**A Model of Destination Branding**



Source: Cai (2002)

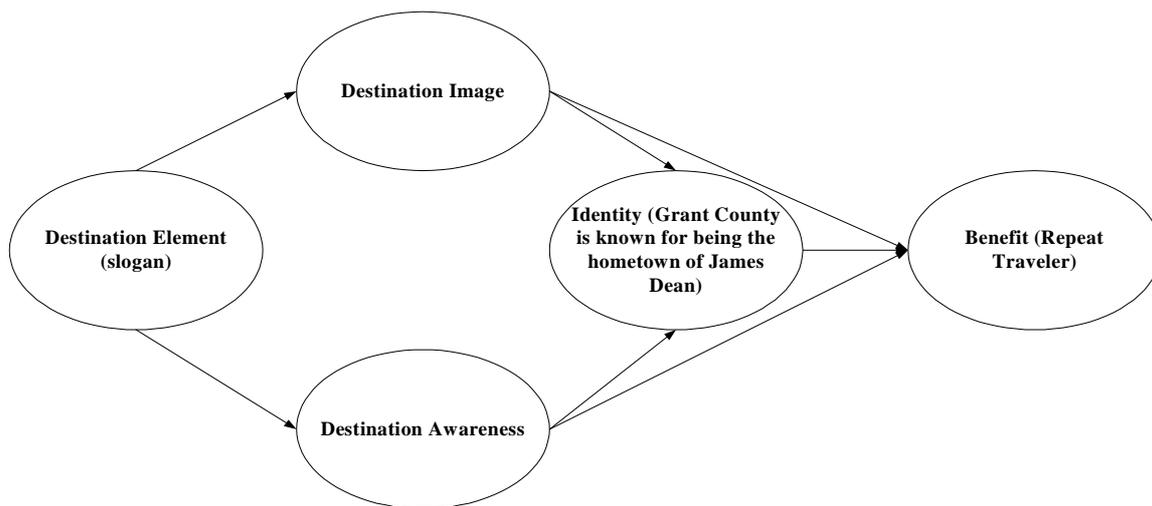
A review of past studies found that few frameworks were proposed for the study of destination branding. Among the few, Cai (2000) proposed a destination branding model as shown in Figure 2. In his model, destination branding is a recursive process that revolves around the central axis formed by brand element mix, brand identity, and brand image building. The process starts by carefully choosing brand elements, which could be slogan or logos that identify the destination. By choosing the right element, the process of forming strong and consistent brand associations that reflect the attributes, affective, and attitudes components of an image begin. Cai’s model “goes beyond the tourist-oriented approach to

encompass what image a destination marketing organization wants to project through each of the 3As. This makes it possible to assess the gap between the perceived and the projected. The assessment then provides input in building the desired image that is consistent with brand identity and through marketing programs, marketing communications and managing secondary associations”. Cai’s model contributed to the understanding of destination branding. However, it did not examine the relationships among various constructs.

## METHODOLOGY

Based on the frameworks proposed by Keller (1998) and Cai (2002), this study posited dynamic relationships among destination image, awareness, element, identity, and benefit to the destination. It was hypothesized that 1) brand element has a positive effect on destination image; 2) brand element has a positive effect on destination awareness; 3) destination image and awareness have positive effects on identity; and 4) identity has a positive effect on benefit. These relationships are illustrated in the proposed conceptual model of the study (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3**  
**The Conceptual Model**



The data utilized in this study was drawn from a visitor profile study conducted for the convention and visitors bureau in Grant County, Indiana, USA. The data was collected through personal interviews at a variety of interview sites including hotels, motels and all the major attraction sites in the county during nine different trips between August 2002 and August 2003. James Dean, a Hollywood star, was born in Grant County where he spent much of his childhood in the county. The convention and visitor bureau markets the county with the slogan “James Dean Country, Where Cool was Born”.

The sample size used in this study was 1,160. Visitors were defined as persons residing outside Grant County. Structural equation modeling was employed in this study. Structural equation model is used to “explain the pattern of series of inter-related dependence relationships simultaneously between a set of latent (unobserved) constructs, each measured by one or more manifest (observed) variables” (Reisinger & Turner, 1999). Structural equation model can be used to estimate variance and covariance, test hypotheses, conventional linear regression, and factor analysis (Reisinger & Turner, 1999). However,

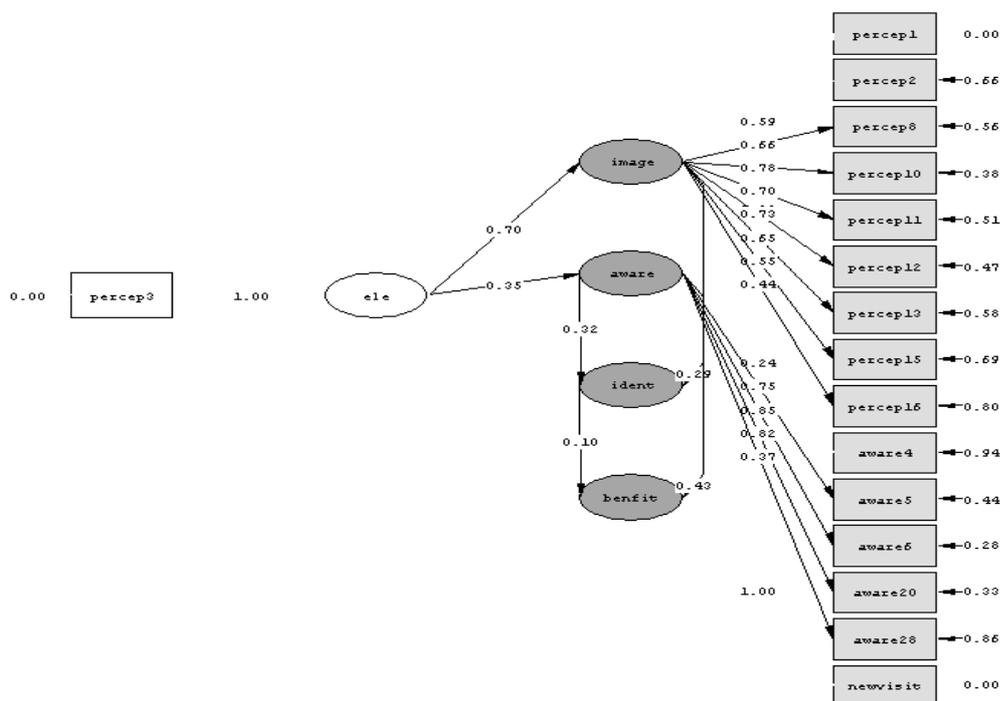
structural equation modeling must be directed by theory which is critical for model development and modification. Model fit determines the degree to which the structural equation model fits the sample size (Schumacker & Lomax, 1996). According to Joreskog and Sorbom (1989), model fit indexes that commonly used include chi-square, goodness of fit index (GFI), and adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI) (Schumacker & Lomax, 1996). Chi-square value relative to the degrees of freedom indicates that the observed and estimated matrices differ. Chi-Square value which is statistical significance indicates the probability that this difference is due to sampling variation. However, chi-square analysis is sensitive to sample size, because as sample size increases (generally above 200), the chi-square test has a tendency to indicate a significant probability level (Schumacker & Lomax, 1996). Other indexes such as GFI, AGFI or root mean square error of approximation values (RMSEA) can help to identify the fitness of the model. RMSEA with value equal or smaller than 0.05 indicated a good fit of the model.

The independent variable used in this study was the destination image which was measured by seven statements in a five-point Likert scale. The statements were “Festivals in Grant County are fun and educational to families and children (percep2)” “Grant County has several unique attractions for visitors (percep8),” “I would recommend my friends and/or relatives to visit Grant County (percep10),” “Grant County is my type of destination (percep11),” “Grant County is a good place for family weekends (percep12),” “Grant County is a good place for a daytrip (percep13),” “Grant County is one of my favorite places (percep15),” and “directional signs are helpful in finding way around in Grant County (percep16).” The latent variables were awareness of Grant County (i.e. the awareness of the James Dean attractions and events including James Dean Memorial Gallery (aware4), James Dean Gravesite (aware5), James Dean Memorial Park (aware6), James Dean Birthday Celebration (aware20) and James Dean Run Car Show (aware28). If visitors were aware of or have been to the attractions or events, the answers were recoded as yes otherwise recoded as no), element (i.e. slogan, “Grant County is a cool place to visit (percep3)”), identity (i.e. “Grant county area is known for being the hometown of James Dean (percep1)”), and benefit (i.e. number of previous visits (newvisit)).

## RESULTS

The initial results of structuring modeling revealed a poor fit of data with RMSEA=0.058, although the chi-square was significant at  $p=0.000$ , which could be due to large sample size. After checking the modification indices and examining possible improvements, a path from awareness to benefit was added. The final model, shown in Figure 4, was satisfactory with RMSEA = 0.049. Chi-Square and other testing statistics in the final model were all significant (as shown in Table 1). They showed that GFI = 0.95, AGFI = 0.93 and NNFI = 0.97. Indices such as GFI, AGFI, and NNFI with values greater than 0.9 indicated a good fit of the model.

**Figure 4**  
**The Empirical Model**



Chi-Square=385.97, df=101, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.049

All the hypotheses were supported in the results. The brand element had positive effects on destination image and destination awareness. Destination image and awareness had positive effects on identity, which in turn had a positive effect on benefit. The results also indicated that visitors' awareness of the events and attractions of the destinations might have a direct impact to the number of visit.

**Table 1**  
**Testing Statistics of the Model**

Degree of Freedom = 101	Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.93
Chi-Square = 385.97 (P = .000)	Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) = 0.97
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.95	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)=0.049

## CONCLUSION

This study revealed that the convention and visitor bureau in Grant County has chosen an effective brand element (slogan), which contributes to the positive image and positive awareness of the destination. When visitors have a positive image on the destination and are made aware of its attractions and events, they will have better knowledge of and a greater appreciation for the uniqueness of the destination. This means that a positive image and awareness may help visitors to identify the uniqueness of a destination. The identification of

the destination's uniqueness (Grant county area is known for being the hometown of James Dean as in the current study) may lead to repeat visits to the destination.

This study utilized secondary data from a visitor profile study. The indicators that could be used to measure the variables were limited. Future studies can use more indicators to measure the branding constructs. Nevertheless, the findings of the study contribute to the understanding of the relationships among destination element, image, awareness, identity and benefit, thus bearing significance to the evolving body of destination branding literature. In addition, this study suggested the appropriateness of the application of Keller's general branding model.

Destination branding is a complex process. Successful branding requires consistent element, image, awareness, and identity. For tourism practitioners, the findings of the study highlight the importance of choosing the right element(s) for a destination. Combination of the right element, a good image of the destination and visitors' awareness of the attractions leads to the visitors' knowledge about the uniqueness of the destinations, which in turn encourages repeat visitation revisiting the destinations again.

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MANUFACTURING A NEW SOURCE OF VISITORS:  
A PILOT STUDY OF INDUSTRIAL TOURISM IN THE U.S.

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ABSTRACT

With increasing consumer interest in visiting business operations and considerable economic and social benefits for the companies involved, industrial tourism has grown rapidly. It is imperative for academics now to define and fully describe this relatively new category of special-interest tourism. This study attempted to provide a definition and original typology framework for industrial tourism based on the existing literature. Additionally, it explored operational and organizational patterns, benefits and future challenges through a pilot study of industrial tourism in Indiana, U.S. The result of the pilot study provided some useful information for further empirical studies.

Keywords: Industrial Tourism, Special-Interest Tourism, Typology.

INTRODUCTION

Industrial tourism is a relatively newly acknowledged category of special-interest tourism. Tours are the main attractions provided and offer visits or exposure to company plants and sites, production lines, equipment, materials, and products. By developing industrial tourism, companies and local communities are gaining considerable economic and social benefits.

The earliest instance of industrial tourism can be traced back to the 1950s in the automobile manufacturing industry in France (Yan & Lin, 2001). This soon spread to other industrial categories and now has become an important branch of special-interest tourism. In the past 50 years, industrial tourism has fully developed in many European countries and in the U.S. In France, the two largest automobile manufacturers, PSA Peugeot Citroen and Renault host more than 200,000 tourists every year. Other sites such as Arianespace (rocket manufacturer) and Airbus (aircraft manufacturer) are also popular destinations. There are about 5,000 French companies open to the public. In the U.S., many large organizations, e.g., the U.S. Mint and Houston Space Center, have a tradition of providing tours to visitors. During opening days, with or without an appointment, people can visit by themselves or with the help of a tour guide (Yan & Lin, 2001; Fuhrmans & Fleming, 1999).

Many developing countries are also embracing industrial tourism as a potential growth sector in tourism and as a means for increasing sales and improving the brand images of companies and the country as a whole. In 2001, China introduced an initial list of 100 exemplary manufacturing and agricultural tourism sites to help promote industrial tourism nationwide. Some of these sites have become famous attractions (China National Tourism Administration, 2001).

## STUDY OBJECTIVES

Although industrial tourism has been present for more than 50 years in some developed countries and is growing rapidly in developing countries, there are few empirical studies on this topic in the academic literature. In addition, confusion exists in the literature on the definition of industrial tourism, its components and impacts. There are additional issues and concerns, along with a lack of accepted principles and practices, for the management and operation of industrial tourism. A more in-depth understanding of industrial tourism is needed to more effectively guide its future development. Based on the existing literature and other resources on industrial tourism and, as an extension of the special-interest tourism framework, this study was designed to meet the following objectives:

1. To define industrial tourism.
2. To suggest a comprehensive typology of industrial tourism.
3. To explore general operations and organization of industrial tourism in companies.
4. To determine the benefits of industrial tourism on the companies providing tours and to find out future challenges.

It is recognized that the operational and organizational patterns of industrial tourism may vary by country and area and the present study focused only on industrial tourism in the U.S. This pilot study was conducted in Indiana as an initial step before launching a similar national study in the U.S.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Although industrial tourism is a relatively new subset of the attraction system, the phenomenon has already aroused the attention of academics. Several hints or descriptions about industrial tourism can be found in early publications. Frew (1998) did research on some of these early studies and summarized the major points in, "*An empirical study of industrial tourism attractions*," which made a significant contribution to industrial tourism research.

Some authors clearly placed industrial tourism within the tourism system. MacCannell (1999) stated, "Potentially, the entire division of labor in society can be transformed into tourism attractions." This highlighted the potentially great size of the industrial tourism sector. Inskeep (1991) incorporated "interesting economic activities"

among his cultural attraction categories. These “observed, described and sometimes demonstrated” activities have similarities to industrial tourism. Five types of attractions incorporating elements of industrial tourism (attractions concerned with primary production; craft centers and craft workshops; attractions concerned with the manufacturing industry; transport attractions; and religious attractions) were included in Prentice’s (1993) typology of 23 categories of tourism attractions. Swarbrooke (1999)’s description of this category as being “designed for a purpose other than attracting visitors” is the closest to what Frew (1998) proposed.

Frew (1998) also discussed other definitions of industrial tourism, by Yale (1991) as the presentation of “contemporary manufacturing processes” and, by Dodd and Bigotte (1997) in the context of wine tourism, as “visits by consumers to the site of a production facility and can include educational tours of the facility and tasting of the product that is produced.” Based on a critical analysis of these works, Frew (1998) proposed this definition of industrial tourism, “visits by tourists to operational industrial sites where the core activity of the site is non-tourism oriented.”

The current study also attempted to define industrial tourism. In doing so, it was determined that one crucial element in differentiating industrial tourism from other types of attractions -- the primary purpose of providing tour is not for the sake of the tourists -- needed to be reexamined. There are now many sites, such as some company museums and state- or county-owned museums showcasing the economic transitions in the Industrial Revolution or interpreting industrial activities. These sites also provide opportunities for tourists to learn how things were made and what changes were going on in industry in the past (Gelbert, 1994). Although they are open primarily for educational and tourism purposes, these sites are also an integral part of industrial tourism. Moreover, this existing definition is oversimplified since it emphasizes only the supplier side of the tour while failing to identify another important stakeholder of the tour -- the tourists -- and does not consider tourists’ motivations for taking industrial tours. Furthermore, the relationship between industrial tourism and other closely related terms, such as industrial heritage tourism, agricultural tourism, factory/plant tours and customer experience tourism, has not been clarified. This study further examined the definition of industrial tourism within the broader context of special-interest tourism and examined its relationship with a variety of other frequently used terms.

### *Special-Interest Tourism*

Special-interest tourism (SIT) is specialized tourism involving group or individual tours by people who wish to develop certain interests and visit sites and places connected with a specific subject (World Tourism Organization, 1985). Generally speaking, these people share the same profession or have a common hobby, and are devoted and attracted to a particular form of travel rather than to a specific destination (WTO). Industrial tourism, with people’s interests in various industries as the hub around which the total travel experience is planned and developed, is an important and growing component of SIT.

SIT is growing worldwide and two factors are contributing to its development. First, Weiler & Hall (1992) in their book, *Special Interest Tourism*, argued that SIT's increasing popularity resulted from fundamental changes in the tourism market with the development of new patterns of tourism consumption. People's interests have broadened and shifted towards 'experience oriented' holidays with an emphasis on action, adventure, fantasy, nostalgia and exotic experiences. These changes at least partially explain the development of industrial tourism. During these trips, visitors see people at work, adding value, using technology that ranges from the familiar to the arcane and understand how things are made (Ware, 1993). Tours can be valuable educational experiences and an interesting way to spend free time, either at home or away (Berger & Berger, 2002). With the growing interest in how business is done and how items are produced, combined with a greater concern for life enrichment and for learning experiences during travel, the industrial tourism market will further prosper.

The operation of SIT is different from many traditional destination trips since small business entrepreneurs are often the primary driving force behind its development. Smaller firms are central to wealth creation and distribution in SIT (Douglas, Douglas, & Derrett, 2001). The potential economic and social benefits are another reason for the increasing popularity of SIT. For industrial tourism, changing working environments and management philosophies provide more incentives for companies to offer tours. Some businesses, especially those that are growing, want to share their successes with the world. Some companies have a longstanding tradition of providing tours, and consider this to be an ideal opportunity to communicate with people outside the company or reverse misinformation about an industry (Ware, 1993).

#### *Tourists in Industrial Tourism*

The purpose for visiting an industrial tourism site has been discussed in both academic and industry publications (Middleton & Parkin, 1989; McBoyle, 1996; Dodd, 1998; Mitchell & Mitchell, 2001; Mitchell & Orwig, 2002). Middleton and Parkin (1989) suggested that people desire to find out what is going on behind normally closed doors. McBoyle (1996) broadened this by indicating that people also desired to shop for the products or mementos of companies. He also pointed out that there was a significant and growing demand for industrial tourism resulting from a population that was increasingly aware of and inquisitive about environmental issues. Mitchell and Mitchell (2001) generalized that companies maintain manufacturing plant tours, company museums, and company visitor centers to satisfy the intellectual curiosity of consumers. This argument explains industrial tourists' motivations from a psychological perspective. What is often neglected in these studies is visitors' interest in experiencing the production activity (Dodd, 1998), although this is sometimes not allowed due to security and feasibility concerns. With an experience regarding a product, its operation, production process, history, and historical significance, visitors discover more about the products they consume, while manufacturers can forge closer relationships with visitors (Mitchell & Orwig, 2002). As a result, the purpose of visiting industrial tourism sites can be generalized as watching and experiencing industrial operational activities for enjoyment or education.

In defining the customers of industrial tourism, there exists some confusion regarding whether a company should be open to the public to ensure an equal entrance opportunity for all or should target a specific set of visitors. According to the attraction system defined by Leiper (1990), tourists are persons away from home whose behaviors are motivated by leisure-related factors. However, this definition is silent as to the specific trip purposes that compose leisure, and does not include business travel or business/leisure trip combinations. When people are on trips with the main purpose of doing business, they may have intervals of uncommitted time and engage in some tourism or leisure-related pursuits at their destinations. Therefore, it seems unwise to limit the definition of industrial tourism to a site that is open to the public, and to specify that one of its purposes is to allow the public to enter (Frew, 1998). The World Tourism Organization (2004) defines tourism as “the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.” According to this broader definition of tourism, business partners, trade and VIP guests, people with a special interest in the products, and educational institutions (e.g., schools) would also be considered as customers of industrial tourism (Ryan, 1989; Veley, 1998).

### *Industrial Heritage Tourism*

Heritage tourism was once only associated with sites from historical periods up until the mid-1980s. This segment has expanded since then and is now defined as anything that “reflects a heterogeneous nostalgia for the past as imagined or presented” (Prentice, 1993; Rudd & Davis, 1998). People’s nostalgia extends into the workplace including such venues as distilleries, textile mills, mines, oil refineries, shipping yards, and manufacturing plants. These have emerged and increased in importance as the result of the disappearance of these workplaces with economic focus shifts from manufacturing to service economies. As a result, people no longer have daily contact or first-hand knowledge of these industries and plants. The younger generations may view these manufacturing venues with curiosity because they have never experienced factory work. Conversely, the older generations may view the industrial era with nostalgia as they remember the “good old days” (Rudd & Davis, 1998).

These interests in industrial sites and products of older technology have spurred the development of industrial heritage tourism in the last few decades and hence aroused a keen interest among academics. Several studies have been done with a focus on mines and quarries (Edwards & Coit, 1996; Rudd & Davis, 1998; Wanhill, 2000). The characteristics, operational patterns, and typologies of industrial heritage tourism have also been explored. Edwards and Coit (1996) said that the value of industrial heritage tourism is not based on its artistic importance, but rather on its value as a witness to an industrial process which has changed society. It involves the development of tourism activities and industries on manmade sites, buildings, and landscapes that originated with industrial processes from earlier periods. Edwards and Coit (1996) also provided a typological framework based largely on the experiences of Wales and Spain. This typology encompassed four broad groups of industrial heritage tourism attractions: productive, processing, transport, and

socio-cultural attractions. With the exception of the productive attraction group, all of these included “site-based” and “site-serving” places. Rudd and Davis (1998) talked about how a working industrial operation exploits tourism as a tool of public relations and not to directly increase profits. Wanhill (2000) found several key factors in the economic success of heritage attractions including project objectives, market, pricing, the museum, and organization, while analyzing the competition, financing, and profit-volume of a mining museum.

While industrial heritage tourism is related to industrial tourism, the term has often been referred to as industrial tourism without any distinction being made. Some consider that industrial heritage tourism, where industrial activities have ceased, is an integral component of industrial tourism; others think industrial tourism includes operational sites that are of relatively recent origin. Since the word heritage here indicates an interest in the past, industrial heritage tourism should be included in the broader concept of industrial tourism to embrace both old and modern industrial sites.

However, it is important to appreciate the key differences between heritage and operational industrial tourism sites with respect to their goals and objectives, operating patterns, and impact on the local destination and community. The former has a strong emphasis on heritage values with the goal of educating the public or conserving a heritage site (Rudd & Davis 1998; Edwards & Coit 1996; McBoyle 1996). For the latter, the industrial tourism activity is ancillary to manufacturing, being used to supplement profits, gain a greater market share, ease the economic stress associated with the shift to a post-industrial society, assert an industry’s environmental integrity, or renegotiate the company’s relationship with the physical environment (“Plant tours”, 1987; “Planning”, 1991; Anonymous, 1992; Anonymous, 1996; Fuhrmans & Fleming, 1999;). Because of these differences, studies should be designed specifically for each of these two types in the future research. The current study focused on the second type of industrial tourism sites, where the main purpose of business was on production and sales.

#### *Manufacturing & Mining and Industrial Tourism*

The term “manufacturing tourism,” “factory tourism,” and “plant tour” are seldom found in the academic literature, but are commonly used in newspapers and magazines. These terms, although in common usage, are too limited in scope since they overlook an extremely important industry sector in services, which has been rapidly developing in recent years. In addition, they exclude other company locations without factory or plant areas.

However, manufacturing is still a very important subset of industrial tourism. It represents most kinds of work in which industrial tourists are interested. For example, the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) specifies 20 categories within the manufacturing sector (Table 1). Examples of industrial tourism can be found within almost all these categories. Many of people’s favorite industrial sites and the most typical industrial sites are among these categories, such as: food manufacturing, beverage and

tobacco product manufacturing, and wood product manufacturing (Stevens 1988). Manufacturing together with mining, another activity area that is often open to the public, constitute one broad category of industrial tourism – manufacturing & mining. Some common characteristics can be found within the sites in this list: the tours will take in the plant or factory area; there are tangible products produced; the technology used is generally advanced and sophisticated; and there is opportunity for visitors to experience the production activity. These characteristics delineate this category from others, which will be discussed later and provide a useful guideline for a typology of industrial tourism.

#### *Agricultural/Rural Tourism and Industrial Tourism*

Agritourism, sometimes known as agrotourism or farm tourism, is defined as any business conducted by a farmer for the enjoyment or education of the public, to promote the products of the farm and to generate additional farm income (Hilchey, 1993). The Industrial Revolution had a profound influence on the production patterns of agriculture and many farm, fishery, and forestry operations have adopted advanced tools and facilities to gain higher yields. Now tourists can see how a modern, industrialized farm operates during their visits. For example, they can see how preserves are made and learn how juice, jam, wine, and other food are produced in farms, orchards, wineries, etc. (Berger & Berger, 2002). As a result, many of these activities in which a visitor can participate can be considered as an important subset of industrial tourism.

According to NAICS, the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting sector includes the following five categories: crop production, animal production, forestry and logging, fishing, hunting and trapping, and support activities for agriculture and forestry (Table 1). Several features can be found in this sector: More activities will be taking place in the farm or field; the products are generally tangible and low in technology; and people can readily experience and get in touch with the production activity. As a result, this sector can be differentiated from the Manufacturing & Mining sector and Services (Table 1) sector which have more indoor activities; and with services, more intangible products that provide less opportunity for visitors to experience.

#### *Definition and Typology*

Having now examined the motivations and types of people that take industrial tours, as well as comparing industrial tourism to industrial heritage tourism, and specifying the three broad supply-side categories of industry, a clearer concept of industrial tourism can now be articulated. Industrial tourism can be defined as a type of tourism provided by interpreting industrial activities for the enjoyment and education of visitors. The activities can be interpreted by company plants and sites, production lines, equipment, materials, and products. The enjoyment and education are gained through touring and experiencing the industrial sites.

Derived from this new definition, a three-layer typology for industrial tourism is envisaged (Figure 1). The first layer classifies industrial tourism into different time frames: industrial heritage tourism, which informs people more about industrial traditions, and

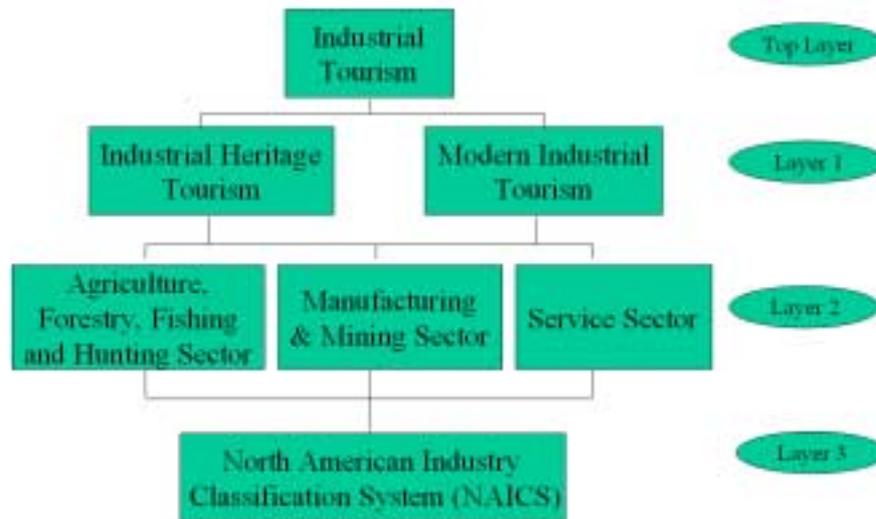
**Table 1**  
**The Three Broad Categories of Industrial Tourism**

<b>Manufacturing &amp; Mining</b>	Food Manufacturing	Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	Textile Mills	Textile Product Mills	Apparel Manufacturing
	Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing	Wood Product Manufacturing	Paper Manufacturing	Printing and Related Support Activities	Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing
	Chemical Manufacturing	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	Primary Metal Manufacturing	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing
	Machinery Manufacturing;	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing	Miscellaneous Manufacturing
	Oil and Gas Extraction	Mining (except Oil and Gas)	Support Activities for Mining		
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing &amp; Hunting</b>	Crop Production	Animal Production	Forestry and Logging	Fishing, Hunting and Trapping;	Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry
<b>Services</b>	Transportation and Warehousing	Information;	Finance and Insurance;	Educational Services;	Health Care and Social Assistance;
	Public Administration				

modern industrial tourism, which gives visitors an idea of the most contemporary and advanced techniques used in industry. The second layer divides this broadest first-layer concept into three different sectors: Manufacturing and Mining; Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; and Services. Since the services industry is still in its formative stages, there are less well articulated categories as with the other two industries. According to the available guidebooks on industrial tourism (Axelrod & Brumberg, 2002; Berger & Berger, 2002; Gelbert, 1994; Ware, 1993), some categories have been identified within this sector: transportation and warehousing, such as: airport and postal services; information, such as: newspaper publishers; finance and insurance, such as: banks and stock exchanges; educational services, such as: schools and institutes; health care and social assistance: such as hospitals; public administration, such as: Space Center (Table 1). With the development

of industrial tourism, more specific categories should be incorporated in this typology framework in the future.

**Figure 1**  
**A Suggested Typology of Industrial Tourism**



## METHODOLOGY

To examine the differences among these layers and categories, and the operations and impacts of industrial tourism, a pilot research study on industrial tourism was conducted in Indiana before launching a similar national study. A questionnaire was designed to collect information on the operational patterns, the organization of industrial tourism, and the benefits and challenges of providing tours to visitors. The questionnaire was pre-tested through interviewing the visitor services coordinator of a major industrial tourism provider in Indiana to ensure that the questions were understandable and relevant to a study of industrial tourism.

A list of 100 companies providing tours to visitors was assembled by contacting 45 convention and visitor bureaus in Indiana between November 2003 to January 2004 and by referring to two guidebooks on the companies open to the public; *Inside America 2002: The Great American Industrial Tour Guide* (Berger & Berger, 2002) and *Watch It Made in the U.S.A: A Visitor's Guide to the Companies That Make Your Favorite Products* (Axelrod & Brumberg, 2002). These 100 companies were telephoned to determine the names of the people responsible for scheduling and organizing tours and their contact information. Some 55 companies agreed to participate in the survey and an online survey was conducted during March 2004. A total of 37 companies responded to the survey and on the average the companies in the sample had provided tours for more than 24 years.

## RESULTS

### *Operational Patterns of Industrial Tourism*

The Indiana companies surveyed had conducted industrial tours for a wide range of

time period. While 56.8 percent of them had been in industrial tourism for less than 20 years, some 16.2 percent opened their doors for 20 to 50 years and 21.6 percent for more than 50 years.

The major purposes of providing tours to visitors were promoting products (83.8%), selling products (70.3%), and improving image (64.9%). Other purposes included reinforcing brand loyalty (56.8%), stimulating company pride (40.5%), improving company's physical environment (18.9%), and stimulating staff morale (16.2%). The other purposes identified by the companies were educating the public (16.2%), educating schoolchildren (10.8%), and showing products to potential customers (5.4%) (Table 2).

**Table 2**  
**Purpose of Providing Tours (n = 37)**

Purpose	Frequency	%
Selling products	26	70.3
Improving image	24	64.9
Promoting products	31	83.8
Reinforcing brand loyalty	21	56.8
Stimulating staff morale	6	16.2
Stimulating company pride	15	40.5
Improving company's physical environment	7	18.9
Other purposes:	14	37.8
Educating public	6	16.2
Educating school	4	10.8
Public relation	1	2.7
Showing products to potential customers	2	5.4
Tradition	1	2.7

Most of the sites only opened their factory areas for visitors (86.5%) and less of them (21.6%) allowed people into office areas. This was related to security and liability concerns (Yale & Yale, 1994; John, 1996). Some other opening areas were identified as retail stores (8.1%), showrooms (8.1%), vineyards and wineries (8.1%), visitor centers (2.7%), and no fixed open areas (depending on the needs of visitors) (2.7%). Access to these areas was determined according to specific business characteristics. Among these companies, only 18 of them (48.6%) had designed routes for tourists.

Generally speaking, the open days for industrial tourism were the company's operating days. Some companies offered limited activities during weekends or non-work days. Several companies had variable opening days and hours in different seasons. Some 56.8 percent of the companies needed reservations. Most of the industrial tourism sites (86.5%) imposed some rules on visitors. The most frequent rules were limited freedom to look around or leave the touring groups (51.4%), camera/recorder use (45.9%), age minimum (29.7%), and walking area restrictions (18.9%).

Table 3 shows various services provided to the visitors. Guided tours were the most

common (89.2%), followed by showroom/gift shop (59.5%), information displays (56.8%), discussions with managers, supervisors or workers (54.1%), and gifts (43.2%).

**Table 3**  
**Service Provided (n = 37)**

Service	Frequency	%
Information displays	21	56.8
Walk-through exhibits	14	37.8
Audio-visual presentations	15	40.5
Show room/gift shop	22	59.5
Gifts	16	43.2
Guided tours	33	89.2
Cafe/small restaurant	1	2.7
Corporate dining facilities	5	13.5
Discussions with managers, supervisors or workers	20	54.1
Participation in the manufacturing/testing	8	21.6
Foreign language capabilities	3	8.1
Other services:	4	18.9
Handicapped accessibility	1	2.7
Literature on products	1	2.7
Testing	1	2.7

#### *The Organization of Industrial Tourism*

Not many companies (16.2%) had set up visitor centers for coordinating tours. Some of the other companies had sales (24.3%), owners themselves (16.2%), marketing (8.1%), manufacturing (5.4%), human resources (5.4%), guest relations (5.4%), customer communications (2.7%), or event coordinator (2.7%) departments for tour operations instead. A significant number of companies (27.0%) did not have a specific department responsible for tours. Some 16 (43.2%) of the companies had various department cooperating in conducting the tours.

The study also investigated the number of the people involved in providing tours (Table 4), the expenditures for conducting tours (Table 5) and whether the companies promoted the tours. Some 18 (75.7%) of the companies promoted industrial tourism via various means. Table 6 shows that the most frequent means for promoting the industrial tourism were the company itself (59.5%), Internet/Web (45.9%), and travel magazines (40.5%).

**Table 4**  
**Number of People Involved in Industrial Tourism (n = 35)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
1	3	8.6
2	6	17.1
3	3	8.6
4	3	8.6
5	3	8.6
6	7	20.0
10	3	8.6
15-19	3	8.6
Various	4	11.4
Total	35	100.0

**Table 5**  
**Company Expenditures on Industrial Tourism (n = 37)**

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Not applicable	7	18.9
under \$5,000	16	43.2
\$5,000-\$9,999	2	5.4
\$10,000-414,999	1	2.7
\$15,000-\$19,999	1	2.7
\$25,000-\$29,999	1	2.7
\$30,000-\$34,999	1	2.7
\$35,000-\$39,999	2	5.4
\$40,000-\$44,999	1	2.7
\$90,000-\$99,999	1	2.7
\$100,000 or more	4	10.8
Total	37	100.0

**Table 6**  
**Means of Promotion (n = 37)**

<b>Means</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Company itself	22	59.5
Convention and visitors bureau	12	32.4
State tourism division	15	40.5
Travel agency	2	5.4
Internet/Web	17	45.9
Business magazines	5	13.5
Brochure	7	18.9
Travel magazines	15	40.5
Other means (e.g., partners/dealers)	4	10.8

*Benefits and Challenges of Industrial Tourism*

Some 34 (91.9%) respondents indicated that they would go on providing tours in the next three years. Their attitudes toward the benefits of industrial tourism were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with 5 representing strongly agree (SA) and 1 being strongly disagree (SD) (Table 7). The most positively rated company benefits from industrial tourism were image improvement (4.5), brand loyalty reinforcement (4.5), product promotion and marketing (4.3), stimulating staff morale (4.3), and improving company's physical environment (4.0).

**Table 7**  
**Benefits of Industrial Tourism**

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Stand. Dev.</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>NA/D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
Revenues in entrance fees, catering receipts and other service charges	3.4	0.9	7.1	35.7	46.4	7.1	3.6
Revenues in product sales	2.9	1.2	6.9	24.1	41.4	10.3	17.2
Product promotion and marketing	4.3	0.7	40.0	50.0	10.0	0.0	0.0
Company image improvement	4.5	0.6	53.3	40.0	6.7	0.0	0.0
Brand loyalty reinforcement	4.5	0.5	46.7	53.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Stimulate staff morale	4.3	0.7	40.0	46.7	13.3	0.0	0.0
Stimulate company pride	3.6	0.8	10.0	46.7	40.0	0.0	3.3
Improve company's physical environment	4.0	0.9	23.3	56.7	16.7	0.0	3.3

When asked about future challenges in providing industrial tours, most respondents considered they had limited time, personnel and space for these activities. When too many

tourists came or came without reservation, the tours could interrupt normal workday operations and became an annoyance. Another challenge was safety and liability, an issue becoming increasingly important after 9.11.

## CONCLUSIONS

Many prior research efforts have investigated industrial tourism within specific categories, such as mine tourism, industrial heritage tourism, or from particular perspectives such as concentrating on the supply side of industrial tourism. This study expanded the definition of industrial tourism into both the supply and demand sides and proposed a typology framework according to different timeframes and industry categories. To further explore the operation and organization of industrial tourism and its benefits, an empirical study was conducted on companies providing tours to visitors in Indiana. The results depicted the operational and organizational patterns and indicated industrial tourism's generally positive impacts on companies. Promoting and selling products, and improving company image and brand loyalty were two particularly prominent benefits for companies.

Although this empirical study provided some useful information for further research, it was just a pilot study with a limited sample size and geographical scope. To gain better information in this area, a more comprehensive study needs to be accomplished. Moreover, the current pilot study focused on the supply side, and future studies on industrial tourists must be conducted and the results combined to gain a more comprehensive understanding of industrial tourism.

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## **Section II**

### **Refereed Poster Papers**

USING CAREER PATH ANALYSIS AS A  
MEANS TO DIRECT FUTURE HOSPITALITY CURRICULUM  
DEVELOPMENT IN TAIWAN- A CASE STUDY OF THE LANDIS TAICHUNG  
HOTEL

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## ABSTRACT

This study researches the direction of future hospitality curriculum development in relation to the career paths of a group of hotel managers from an internationally known full service hotel in Taiwan. The data is collected from personal interviews and observation. The findings profile the hotel managers' career background and present the merits which make a positive impact on their career development. Hotel managers' viewpoints about the curriculum development of future hospitality education in Taiwan are also addressed. This study concludes that gaining a hospitality education is not necessarily a preferred route to hotel management jobs. Neither to work up from an unskilled manual job through the ranks to management is also not a desirable option. Education and training are important but they should stimulate students' interests and modify students' characters in addition to reinforce students' skills and knowledge. To be a hotel manager, one should be able to demonstrate his/her strong interest to work in the hotel industry as well as to exhibit distinctive personal quality. Based on this study, educators are encouraged to be attentive to students' interests and personal quality development and include these elements in the curriculum design in the future.

Key Words: hotel manager, career path, curriculum development, Taiwan

## INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is growing in importance internationally in terms of its contributions and effects. In order to develop Taiwan as an international tourist destination, the Taiwanese government included the 'Doubling Tourist Arrivals Plan' in its National Development Plan aiming to attract two million tourist arrivals by 2008. Hence, a series of incentives are provided to encourage the investors to participate in the national-wide tourism development plan, which resulted in a rapid growth of the hotel industry.

The sharp increase in hotel numbers simultaneously encouraged the development

of hospitality education in Taiwan. As of the end of 2003, there are 143 hospitality relevant programs available across all levels. Programs offering hospitality management courses have the titles of tourism management, travel management, leisure management, hotel management, hospitality management, food and beverage management and so on (Tourism Bureau, 2004). The titles of these 'management' programs indicate that managerial jobs particularly in the hotel industry are attractive to Taiwanese students when planning their careers after graduation.

Woods et al. (1998) observed that the recent worldwide recession has eliminated a great deal of management jobs. Similarly, Riley and Ladkin (1994) also pointed out that careers are increasingly moving away from traditional types of bureaucratic structures to careers that involve more self-directed development. These changes urge a need to re-examine the management employment market in the hotel industry. Given the importance of tourism as an economic activity in Taiwan and the subsequent growth in the hotel industry employment, careers in the hotel market are a significant option available to individuals seeking jobs within the Taiwanese labor market. Therefore, information on careers in the industry may help to inform career choice as well as provide feedbacks to the changes of curriculum. Set against this background, this study was conducted with three objectives: to profile the career path of managers working in the hotel industry; to identify the merits attributing to the success of hotel managers and to propose the directions of future hospitality curriculum development in Taiwan.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

As hotel managers, Jayawardena (2000) stated that one needs to have good general management ability and good knowledge of key technical areas, which can be lodging, food and beverage or areas other than these two. Pavesic (1993) and Egan (1997) believed the approach of reducing vocational skills and teaching students more advanced management techniques would presumably lead to success in mid and upper levels of management and as staff specialists. These statements point out the concern over what to teach in hospitality curriculum and the value of managerial versus technical skills. Educators are constantly torn between the very real desires to meet the short term employment needs of industry while attempting to prepare students for long term success in their careers (Guerrier and Lockwood, 1989; Cooper et al., 1992). In the case of preparing students to achieve their success in the management employment, hospitality education especially at the higher level of education should emphasize on the development of students' management abilities.

Despite the concern of technical skills versus managerial knowledge, there is also a persistent debate within the industry regarding the value of education. The debate centered on whether the preferred route to hotel management is to gain a vocational education, or whether it is preferable to work up from unskilled manual jobs through the ranks to management. The study of Dale and Robinson's (2001) responded to this debate. They reported that hotel employers simply recruit anyone who is equipped with a combination of specialist technical knowledge and has established general management knowledge required for managers' jobs regardless of the education background of applicants. Therefore, a hospitality degree does not guarantee the advancement in hotel careers and hospitality graduates are indeed competing to hotel manager posts with non-hospitality graduates.

Moving away from the focus of managers' skills and knowledge, Ladkin (2002) provided insights into the question of how hotel managers become hotel managers. To put it in another way, to understand how hotel managers make choices in their career opportunities and achieve success in managerial positions is also of use to hospitality curriculum development. She stressed that working in the hotel industry as managers requires the industry to provide structural opportunities for such occupations as well as the individual to demonstrate his/her ability and ambition to pave their ways to management careers. The importance of having granted opportunities and holding unique personal merits are finally being noted.

Based on the above researchers' point of views, it is clear to draw the conclusion that there are three core elements needed to become a hotel manager: availabilities, competences and personal qualities. By exploring hotel managers' career paths, the value of each element that contributes to management employment can be assessed. Career analysis, as explained by Ladkin (1999) can be seen as analysis of labor supply illustrating not only the structural patterns of careers in terms of education and functional responsibilities, but also the motivational forces behind these career paths. To better plan the hotel industry manpower, the academic sector and the industry must be become more innovative in terms of course direction, content, programming and delivery. Career paths then, therefore, can serve as a means to direct future hospitality curriculum development.

## METHODOLOGY

Although there is a couple of studies on hotel managers' career paths have been done, for example, Ladkin (1999) and Ladkin (2002), none is available in Taiwan. Hence, this study becomes an exploratory study based on the qualitative design empirically to study the career paths of hotel managers. A group of 12 managers including the assistant general

manager working in all departments in the Landis Taichung Hotel were selected as research samples. The reason for selecting the Landis Taichung Hotel, as the study sample is that its reputation makes it a popular hotel among hotel job seekers and has a long history in providing internships to hospitality students. The data was collected with semi structured in-depth personal interviews and three months on site observations and was further analyzed with the content analysis technique.

As to the ethical issues, the author was honest to the respondents about the purposes of this study and made it clear to the respondents that this study is confidential rather than anonymous. Although the author would prevent any harm to her research respondents caused by participating in this survey, the identification of a given respondent is possible when a respondent is being referred to, for instance, 'the manager of the lodging department'. Hence, information about their next destination after the Landis Taichung is not revealed in this study.

## RESREACH FINDINGS

The majority of respondents have no background in hospitality education. These respondents, interestingly, do not have experiences working in the hotel industry prior to their employment at the Landis Taichung, either. They have a low mobility in their career history and tend to stay in one firm for at least a few years before they move on to the next one. The Landis Taichung Hotel is their first hotel employment. With their expertise in specialized fields such as computing, finance and so on, they were either being offered manager positions directly or not long after their employment began.

Opposite to the above managers, the assistant general manager, lodging manager and food and beverage managers are the only three who have degrees in hospitality studies and all received their education overseas. Like other managers, they have more than five years working experiences but devoted specially to the hotel industry only. They have a higher mobility than the managers not directly responsible for guest services. They reported that the more hotels they work for, the more ideas they have as how to solve problems, lead the team and most importantly, gain promotion with the change of hotel.

All managers were aged ranging from 30 to 45 years old. They mostly reached their hotel manager post around their early 30s. Four respondents are female but either male managers or female managers stressed that the gender has never be an issue to them when being granted hotel manager jobs. They believed that it is their interests to motivate them to enter the hotel industry and become fully devoted. Nearly all respondents

expressed the same view that the core reason to their success in the hotel industry is 'knowing yourself if you like working with people in an ever changing industry'. Hence, respondents all exhibited a sense of satisfaction from working in the hotel industry and such satisfaction is not from the salary package but from 'right people do the right thing in the right place'.

Although the research respondents have varied backgrounds in terms of their education and working experience, they identified the core skills they have to perform their managerial job namely communications, problem solving, working with others computing skills and numerical skills. The last two are particularly important to managers such as finance, human resources management and so on as they need information technology and statistical skills to analyze the varied tasks. Respondents believed these core skills would lead to success in mid and upper levels of management. Likewise, they also stated that these core skills are transferable skills allowing them to work outside the hotel industry.

In addition to core skills, personal qualities are important elements in obtaining managers work in the hotel industry. The research respondents stated that it is a common practice in the hotel industry not to employ anyone who is too fat or too tall in the lodging and food and beverage departments. As a manager representing a specific department, to look smart and dress smart are essential. In addition to smart appearance, respondents further listed the following qualities they considered to have effects on their hotel manager careers: polite and helpful manner when dealing with customers, strong leadership qualities to inspire staff, outgoing personality, ability to remain calm under pressure, and creativity and enthusiasm for thinking up new business ideas.

The respondents believed that one can learn hand-on experiences by working in the industry. However, they listed a number of subjects that require systematic learning, for example, foreign language, information technology, accounting and finance. In addition to these general management skills, there is also a set of specialized subjects of importance in the eyes of the general manager, lodging manager and food and beverage manager such as hospitality health and food technology, hospitality general operation, reception and accommodation operations, food and drink services, business administration and so on. According to respondents' experiences, these skills and knowledge are not possible to learn comprehensively in the hotel and one should try to learn as much as possible at schools. Likewise, nearly all respondents stated that they are lifelong learning practitioners. Since hotel work is more directed towards a self development basis as a result of eliminating resources for in house training, hotel managers urged educators to be

more concerned with students' learning and motivational force behind the courses they study.

## DISCUSSIONS

The research findings confirm the statement of Dale and Robinson's (2001) that there is no direct relationship between the degree subjects and the possibilities of working in the hotel industry as hotel managers. However, having a hospitality degree from overseas with language proficiency and cross cultural understanding has proved to be useful when comes to be a general manager, lodging manager and food and beverage manager. In terms of the value of hospitality education, respondents who reached their position by working their way up in the hotel industry did not consider an education in hospitality as necessary. Although a small number of respondents recognized the value of hospitality education, they tended to have faith in overseas hospitality education rather than the local one.

Jayawardena (2000) stated that a manger requires good general management ability and good knowledge of key technical areas. The respondents reported the merits they hold are continuing interest, core skills and personal quality. They did not consider themselves in any way to be more superior to their colleagues. Rather, they acknowledged themselves as the most devoted ones. The past research tends to be more concerned on skills and knowledge but overlooks the importance of personal qualities in relation to career success. However, respondents supported the view of Ladkin's (2002) that the value of hospitality education is to transform students to become the 'right people' through the learning process.

Although the respondents agreed that there is no fast track way to managerial posts. However, what maybe preventing students becoming hotel managers is their attitude towards learning. Students tend to learn for the sake of passing exams rather than for their own sake.

## CONCLUSIONS

The data from hotel managers' career paths suggest that the personal interest, personal quality combined with management competences and specification skills yields a valuable and desirable hotel manager candidate. In addition, having proficiency in foreign languages and understanding about the culture would be ideal to work in an international hotel especially as managers who are directly responsible for guest services. A more

innovative approach to hospitality education is desirable for stimulating students' analytical skills, which in turn would help students to make decisions in their future managerial work. Future hospitality curriculums should aim to integrate the teaching of attitudes, skills and knowledge in a way that is more realistic and more relevant to the industry. As an exploratory study, this study has shed some useful light on the way to direct future hospitality curriculum development based on the analysis of hotel managers' career paths in Taiwan. By relating the industry career realities to the curriculum design, the manpower needs of the prosperous international hotel industry in Taiwan might be met more effectively. Further study on this topic is recommended to conduct a comparison study between different types of hotel managers' career paths.

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## ASSESSMENT OF CURRICULUM: INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVES

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### ABSTRACT

This study measured 40 subject-matter variables on their level of importance for success in the hospitality industry as perceived by lodging operators, foodservice operators, and other industry professionals. A survey--designed from the feedback of five focus groups, each representing different constituencies—using a 5-point Likert scale was mailed to 2339 industry professionals, with 328 (14.02%) respondents. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and the LSD post-hoc test were used to analyze data. Results include a ranking of the variables by each of the three groups surveyed, as well as an all-inclusive ranking. The all-inclusive ranking lists ethics, leadership, preparation for industry employment, internships/industry experience, hospitality management and organization, and operations analysis (respectively), as the most important subjects for success in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: hospitality curriculum

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the differences among operators in various hospitality industry segments on the importance of the subject-matter knowledge necessary for success in the hospitality field and to compare the differences in views among those operators. Analysis of differences among those operators' perceptions of subject matter importance provided a basis for recommendations on how hospitality programs can improve curriculum to satisfy the needs of a specific industry segment or of all hospitality business segments examined in the study. The specific research questions of this study were:

1. What are the perceptions of lodging operators, foodservice operators, and other industry professionals regarding the importance of course subject areas for success?
2. Are there any differences between the perceptions of the lodging operators, the foodservice operators, and other industry professionals regarding the importance of subjects for success in hospitality curriculum?

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies have looked at the components of hospitality curriculum and the need to integrate operational and managerial skills for success (Dopson and Tas, 2004; Baum, 1991; Burbidge 1994; Christou 2002; Dopson and Nelson 2003; Knutson and Patton 1992; Li and Kivela 1988; Tas 1988; Tas, LeBrecque, and Clayton 1996; Tas, LeBrecque, and Clayton

2000; Kay and Russette, 2000; Okeiyi, Finley, and Postel 1994; Dopson and Tas, 2004). Any attempt to assess relevant curriculum, regardless of the components, must be industry driven.

In these studies, respondents included hotel managers (Tas, 1988; Baum 1991; Li and Kivela, 1998), students (Knutson and Patton, 1992; Burbidge, 1994), and hotel human resource specialists (Nelson and Dopson, 2001; Dopson and Nelson, 2003). Dopson and Tas (2004) argued that the biggest challenge hospitality educators face today is determining clear objectives for the curriculum that meets the constantly changing needs of the industry. While lodging makes up a major portion of the hospitality industry, it should, by no means, be the only segment considered when assessing curriculum.

One of the goals of this study was to gather data from a large group of industry professionals from across the country to overcome sampling and generalizability limitations of previous studies. It identified the most important and least important course subjects, as ranked by industry professionals, for success in the industry and also analyzed differences in the rankings between industry segments.

## METHODOLOGY

A survey instrument was developed (Churchill, 1979; DeVellis, 1991) to gather data on industry professionals' perceptions of 40 subject-matter variables. Each variable was measured using a 5-point Likert scale (5=extremely important, 1= not important at all) as to their importance for success in the hospitality industry. A self-administered survey questionnaire (Dillman, 2000) was used to collect data and was mailed to 2,339 industry professionals. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used to report the rank order importance of the subject matter variables. An ANOVA, along with the LSD post-hoc test, was used to determine where among the industry segments significant differences in perception occurred.

## RESULTS

Overall, respondents reported skill sets in the subject matter areas of ethics, leadership, preparation for industry employment, internships/industry experience, and hospitality management and organization as the most important for success in the hospitality industry. Table 1 shows the mean rank order of the subject matter areas by level of importance as a summary of all respondents in the survey.

**Table 1**  
**Subject Matter Areas Ranked According to Importance for Success by All Respondents**  
**(N=328)**

Rank	Subject Matter	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Ethics	3.39	0.80
2	Leadership	3.39	0.73
3	Preparation for Industry Employment	3.27	0.81
4	Internships/industry experience	3.24	0.92
5	Hospitality Management and Organization	3.16	0.78
6	Operations Analysis	3.13	0.78
7	Overview of the Hospitality Industry	3.08	0.90

8	Foodservice Operations and Controls	2.98	0.81
9	Computer/Information Technology	2.91	0.86
10	Service Management	2.87	0.82
11	Strategic Management	2.87	0.88
12	Principles of Marketing	2.86	0.88
13	Human Resource Management	2.85	0.85
14	Hospitality Marketing Strategy	2.84	0.90
15	Sales/Sales Management	2.75	0.93
16	Food Safety and Sanitation	2.69	1.03
17	Accounting	2.68	0.86
18	Finance	2.66	0.88
19	Lodging Operations	2.65	0.87
20	Revenue/Asset Management	2.65	0.88
21	Economics for Decision Making	2.47	0.86
22	Entrepreneurship	2.47	0.97
23	Beverage Management	2.29	0.91
24	Management Theory	2.27	0.86
25	Dining Room Service Management	2.25	0.96
26	Meeting Planning/Convention Management	2.21	0.88
27	Statistics for Management Decision Making	2.20	0.94
28	Business Law	2.19	0.83
29	Innovation and Product Development	2.09	0.97
30	Wine and Specialty Beverage Service / Production	2.06	0.93
31	Tourism	2.05	0.93
32	Distribution Channels	2.00	0.97
33	Fundamentals of Cooking	1.90	0.89
34	Foreign Language	1.73	0.98
35	Destination Management	1.63	0.88
36	Math (calculus)	1.56	0.97
37	Secondary Revenue Management (spas, gift shops, recreation, etc.)	1.53	0.86
38	Real Estate/Property Development	1.49	0.88
39	Gaming/Casino Operations	1.24	0.86
40	Study Abroad	1.12	0.96

Table 2 shows a comparison of the mean rankings by industry professional segments.

**Table 2**  
**Subject Matter Areas Ranked According to Importance for Success by Industry**  
**Segment (N=241)**

Subject	Lodging	Foodservice	Other
	Operators	Operators	Segments
	<u>M</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>M</u>
Overview of the Hospitality Industry	3.18	3.04	3.01
Preparation for Industry Employment	3.39	3.48	3.18
Fundamentals of Cooking	1.78	2.16	1.94
Lodging Systems and Procedures	3.00	2.44	2.60
Foodservice Systems and Control	2.82	3.19	2.99

Hospitality Management and Organization	3.26	3.22	3.12
Marketing	2.93	2.65	2.94
Hospitality Marketing Strategy	2.96	2.65	2.90
Operations Analysis	3.21	3.31	3.02
Ethics	3.31	3.42	3.46
Strategic Management	2.91	2.78	2.93
Computer/Information Technology	2.92	2.94	2.96
Math (calculus)	1.61	1.63	1.50
Business Law	2.30	2.00	2.12
Statistics for Management Decision Making	2.22	2.18	2.20
Sales/Sales Management	2.94	2.58	2.68
Accounting	2.75	2.65	2.60
Economics for Decision Making	2.55	2.55	2.35
Meeting Planning/Convention Management	2.27	2.29	2.14
Finance	2.64	2.56	2.62
Real Estate/Property Development	1.59	1.43	1.48
Management Theory	2.40	2.31	2.21
Human Resource Management	2.76	3.04	2.78
Service Management	2.92	3.17	2.66
Revenue/Asset Management	2.88	2.54	2.53
Tourism	2.24	2.02	2.02
Food Safety and Sanitation	2.31	3.33	2.64
Beverage Management	2.12	2.79	2.33
Leadership	3.46	3.63	3.30
Entrepreneurship	2.48	2.56	2.45
Gaming/Casino Operations	1.41	1.39	1.13
Distribution Channels	2.09	2.00	1.96
Internships/industry experience	3.27	3.37	3.21
Foreign Language	1.77	1.79	1.81
Study Abroad	1.20	1.00	1.25
Secondary Revenue Management (spas, gift shops, recreation, etc.)	1.71	1.41	1.57
Destination Management	1.70	1.54	1.74
Innovation and Product Development	1.92	2.12	2.24
Dining Room Service Management	2.08	2.83	2.13
Wine and Specialty Beverage Service and Production	1.90	2.50	2.10

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Note. 1 = Not Important At All to 5 = Extremely Important

An analysis of variance showed that among the 40 variables in this study, the mean differences of 17 proved to be statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ) among the three segments of industry professionals. The LSD post-hoc test was conducted to determine where among the

three groups of industry professionals the significant mean differences occurred. Table 3 shows the results of the post-hoc test.

**Table 3**  
**Results of LSD Post-hoc Test for Differences Among Industry Segments**

Subject	Industry Segments	Mean Difference*
Preparation for Industry Employment	Foodservice Operators/Others	-.3006
Fundamentals of Cooking	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	.3737
Lodging Operations	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	-.5577
	Lodging Operators/Others	-.4000
Foodservice Operations and Controls	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	.3752
Operations Analysis	Foodservice Operators/Others	-.2898
Business Law	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	-.3012
Sales/Sales Management	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	-.3628
	Lodging Operators/Others	-.2612
Service Management	Lodging Operators/Others	-.2549
	Foodservice Operators/Others	-.5124
Revenue/Asset Management	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	-.3411
	Lodging Operators/Others	-.3522
Food Safety and Sanitation	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	1.0137
	Lodging Operators/Others	.3296
	Foodservice Operators/Others	-.6841
Beverage Management	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	.6680
	Foodservice Operators/Others	-.4581
Leadership	Foodservice Operators/Others	-.3310
Gaming/Casino Operations	Lodging Operators/Others	-.2824
Secondary Revenue Management	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	-.2991
Innovation and Product Development	Lodging Operators/Others	.3254
Dining Room Service	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	.7426

Management	Foodservice Operators/Others	-.6930
Wine and Specialty Beverage/Production	Lodging Operators/Foodservice Operators	.5964
	Foodservice Operators/Others	-.4018

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\*Mean difference is significant at  $p < .05$

## DISCUSSION

While the hospitality industry consists of many diverse segments such as lodging, foodservice, gaming, consulting, and others, there appears to be some subject-matter areas important to all segments: ethics, leadership, preparation for industry employment, internships/industry experience, and hospitality management and organization. In order to prepare students for particular segments, it is suggested that a core body of subject matter be delivered to all hospitality students, with an option for them to choose specific elective courses (developed in conjunction with professionals from that segment).

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A USEFUL EXTENSION OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH THAT  
CONTEXTUALIZES THE OCCUPATION/PROFESSION OF  
CHEF AND CHEF EDUCATOR WITHIN THE WIDER FRAMEWORK OF  
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI) AND ITS APPLICATION/RELEVANCE TO  
HOSPITALITY SERVICES

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ABSTRACT

Emotional Intelligence, an abilities/skills model, may have significant application/relevance to hospitality services. New data reaffirms that chefs measure average EI when compared to other professional populations. Chefs rank third from the bottom on how much emotional intelligence (EI) is required for job satisfaction (JS). A comparison of two EI survey tools, Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) and Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) is presented.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, hospitality, chefs, MEIS, MSCEIT

INTRODUCTION

*The Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS)*

Table 1 represents MEIS results. The scale ranges from very low to very high in the four abilities of EI. The abilities include: identifying (awareness and expression), using (influencing thought and matching to tasks), understanding (meaning and implication) and managing (reception and integration into thinking) emotions.

**Table 1**  
**MEIS Results Table**

MEIS` Scale	Faces	Stories	Identify	Use	Definitions	Perspectives	Understand	Manage	Total
Very High	≥ 81	≥ 96	≥ <b>176</b>	≥ <b>79</b>	≥ 130	≥ 66	≥ <b>194</b>	≥ <b>70</b>	≥ <b>495</b>
High	80-72	95-85	<b>175-158</b>	<b>78-72</b>	129-119	65-61	<b>193-182</b>	<b>69-66</b>	<b>494-474</b>
Average	71-55	84-63	<b>157-122</b>	<b>71-60</b>	118-99	60-51	<b>181-160</b>	<b>65-58</b>	<b>473-426</b>
Low	54-46	62-51	<b>121-101</b>	<b>59-53</b>	98-88	50-46	<b>159-149</b>	<b>57-54</b>	<b>425-401</b>
Very Low	≤ 45	≤ 50	≤ <b>102</b>	≤ <b>52</b>	≤ 87	≤ 45	≤ <b>148</b>	≤ <b>53</b>	≤ <b>400</b>

## RESULTS

Chefs measure average EI when compared to ranges as established in the EI literature. The data tabulated in Tables 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are derived from completed MEIS surveys (N=110) of practicing chefs and chef educators, collected at the 2001 American Culinary Federation National Conference held in Las Vegas. Scores include mode (typical), the median (middle) and the mean (average). The data collected confirms the findings of the PI's doctoral research "Measure of Differences in Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction of Practicing Chefs and Culinary Educators as Measured by the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) and Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey "(Hendee, 2002).

**Table 2**  
**MEIS Identifying Emotions (N=110)**

2001 Chefs	Faces	Stories	Identify
Mean/Average	58.0	73.8	131.8
MEIS Scale	Average	Average	Average
Mode	59	90	147
MEIS Scale	Average	High	Average
Median	60	79.5	137.5
MEIS Scale	Average	Average	Average

**Table 3**  
**MEIS Using Emotions (N=110)**

2001 Chefs	Use
Mean/Average	63.1
MEIS Scale	Average
Mode	66
MEIS Scale	Average
Median	64
MEIS Scale	Average

**Table 4**  
**MEIS Using Emotions (N=110)**

2001 Chefs	Definitions	Perspectives	Understand
Mean/Average	100.6	55.7	156.3
MEIS Scale	Average	Average	Average
Mode	120	59	181
MEIS Scale	High	Average	Average
Median	110	59	161
MEIS Scale	Average	Average	Average

**Table 5**  
**MEIS Managing Emotions (N=110)**

2001 Chefs	Manage
Mean/Average	62.5
MEIS Scale	Average
Mode	69
MEIS Scale	High
Median	64.5
MEIS Scale	Average

**Table 6**  
**MEIS Total Emotional Intelligence (N=110)**

2001 Chefs	<i>Total</i>
Mean/Average	413.9
MEIS Scale	<i>Low</i>
Mode	460
MEIS Scale	<i>Average</i>
Median	426.5
MEIS Scale	<i>Average</i>

#### TOOL ANALYSIS

A comparison of the two tools, MEIS and MSCEIT (Table 7) notes factors considered to include: time, reliability and method. Additionally, the chart indicates that the majority of chefs surveyed were below average or average: 90.1% (MEIS) and 89.7% (MSCEIT).

**Table 7**  
**Comparison of MEIS and MSCEIT Tools**

	MEIS	MSCEIT
TIME – Administer	20-35 minutes	45- 1 ½ hour
TIME - Score	½ hour ( self scoring)	Publisher / online automatic
RELIABILITY	.96	.91( general) -.93 (expert)
PRICE	\$47	1 kit w/ score \$50
METHOD	Ability	Ability
Mode	Paper pencil	Paper pencil, Online
Availability	1 <sup>st</sup> published model	Replaced MEIS
Sample	832 (1999)	Normative – 5,000 (2003)
Below Average /Average EI	90.1% (N=110)	89.7% ( N=60)

#### SUMMARY

Emotional Intelligence may have significant implications for careers and education in general but more specifically for travel and tourism, and culinary based educational programs and curricula. Emotional Intelligence is a skill that may be learned, incorporated into travel

and tourism and culinary education standards and integrated in curricula embracing multicultural and diverse environments and populations.

"Most beginning cooks who carefully follow a recipe can produce a good tasting meal without necessarily knowing about all the ingredients. School based programs focus on these basic recipes.. [and] avoid difficult issues like whether emotional intelligence... can be taught. Might these programs teach a bit of emotional intelligence? Perhaps just as gaining experience around the kitchen might help someone begin to develop as a chef" (Salovey and Slater, 1997, 21-22).

People should be treated fairly and job satisfaction is an indicator of emotional well being (Spector, 1997). Questionable management styles contribute to high labor costs and turnover (Uchitelle, 1999). Fifty percent (50%) of foodservice workers experience job satisfaction and annual job turnover rate is 40% (Martin, 2000). Yet, chefs are ranked third from the bottom in terms of how much emotional intelligence is required for job satisfaction (Caruso, 1998 and Yates, 1997).

A hospitality career requires focusing on a task in a structured environment working as a team, adapting plans, motivating others, making decisions, problem solving complex situations, and creating positive solutions for employees and the customer. It is higher EI that may set you apart from colleagues and lead you to further satisfaction and success in the workplace (Caruso, 1999).

## CONCLUSION

Hospitality education may embrace EI skills in their standards and require programs to include student development with EI components in the curricula as K-12 standards have in Florida schools (Mueller- Ackerman, B., 2001). EI skills allow us to understand and shape our actions by building esteem, stronger classrooms and contribute to life success and satisfaction as much as 70-80% (McCown, Freedman, Jensen and Rideout, 1998).

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## THE STATUS OF TOURISM RESEARCH: AN ISTTE PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

Through a collaborative experiential project, students become actively involved in the learning process creating a learning environment charged with excitement and the desire to excel. Interaction with travel and tourism professional through each stage of the project provides a realistic overview of the interrelated nature of the industry.

Key Words: content analysis, bibliometrics, longitudinal study.

### INTRODUCTION

Where have we been, what have we learned, and what has changed? These may not appear to be typical research questions, but as Ritchie (1994) notes, the concept of research is diffuse, being used in many different contexts resulting in varying meaning among individuals and across disciplines.

What research means to members of the International Society for Travel and Tourism Educators (ISTTE), can be gained through the lens of its conference publications. These publications provide an opportunity to identify the state of tourism research among its members. With that end in mind, this paper presents a systematic qualitative and quantitative review of research published in ISTTE conference proceedings since 1989.

Content analysis was conducted on 274 publications that were included in the proceedings from 1989 until 2003. Variables that were included in the content analysis included length in number of pages, statistical method(s), number of authors, affiliation of the authors, geographical focus of the study, acceptance rates, number of references, geographical location of author(s) institution(s), and key word(s)/subject(s).

Each paper was reviewed and analyzed independently by two members of the research team. Differences in professional judgments by the two initial

reviewers were resolved either through discussion and consensus or were referred to the third member of the research team.

### Methodology

Content analysis was selected as an appropriate research tool for evaluating the published papers since it is possible to meet the basic criteria for being objective, systematic, and quantitative. In addition, content analysis of communications has a well-established track record among social scientists and marketing researchers (Kassarjian, 1977). Since the published proceedings comprise the complete written record of the researchers' efforts, content analysis is an ideal methodology.

The first task of selecting the sample frame for this particular study proved to be an easy task. Since the proceedings of ISTTE conferences have only been published since 1989, we thought it only fitting to include all papers since the first published proceedings. It should be noted that the word international was added to the name of the society in 1997.

The second step proved to be more challenging as we had to determine the appropriate units of measurement. Based upon a literature review of other research (Alvar, 2000; Sirakaya, 1999; Kaid, Tedesco, and McKinnon, 1996; Kassarjian, 1977; McCleneghan, 1997; Schramm and Neil, 1991; Walsh, Lowndes, Riley and Woollam, 1996; and Wert, Center, Dale, and Myers, 1991) using content analysis methodology we selected the following variables:

Length in number of pages	Number of references
Statistical method(s)	Geographical location of research
Number of authors	Universities of authors
Geographical focus	Key word(s)/Subject(s)
Acceptance rates	

Although none of these studies can be considered directly applicable to the current analysis, they confirm the use and applicability of content analysis for studying previously published research. Findings and conclusions will be presented in the final paper.

### Results

Research has evolved and matured significantly since the initial conference in 1989. The conference for 2000 was eliminated from all data analysis since the papers appeared to be an aberration of the prior years. Papers were much shorter with the papers more closely resembling extended abstracts rather than final publishable papers. The following sections will provide specifics in regards to the metrics listed previously.

### Paper Length

Year	Average length	Year	Average length	Year	Average length	Year	Average length
1989	8.89	1993	12.61	1997	9.00	2001	11.69
1990	9.73	1994	12.47	1998	12.06	2002	12.33
1991	9.13	1995	12.33	1999	12.25	2003	12.50
1992	10.88	1996	10.00				

### Statistical Method(s)

The top 10 statistical methods used in the conference proceedings were:

Statistical technique	Frequency	Percentage	Statistical technique	Frequency	Percentage
Descriptive	136	40.5%	Regression	15	4.5%
ANOVA	28	8.3%	HT	14	4.2%
Chi2	27	8.0%	Factor	12	3.6%
Cluster	24	7.1%	chi-square	7	2.1%
T-test	18	5.4%	MANOVA	6	1.8%

The most prolific authors during the life of the conference are:

Author	Frequency	Author	Frequency
Morrison, Alastair M.	14	Evans, Michael R.	5
O'Leary, Joseph T.	13	Milman, Ady	5
Josiam, Bharath M.	10	Yale, Laura J.	5
Hsu, Cathy H. C.	9	Lin, Li-Chun	5
Cai, Liping A.	9	Chen, Joseph S.	5
Cook, Roy A.	6	Jennings, Gayle R..	5
Hsieh, Sheauhsing	6		

### Geographical Location of Research

Year	Location	Frequency	Year	Location	Frequency
1989	International	1	1996	International	14
1989	USA	2	1996	USA	8
1990	International	4	1997	International	9
1990	USA	2	1997	USA	13
1991	USA	6	1998	International	7
1992	International	3	1998	USA	10

Year	Location	Frequency	Year	Location	Frequency
1992	USA	3	1999	International	12
1993	International	5	2001	International	7
1993	USA	6	2001	USA	5
1994	International	7	2002	International	3
1994	USA	11	2002	USA	12
1995	International	3	2003	International	6
1995	USA	12	2003	USA	4

#### Universities of Authors

One hundred thirty-five schools have been represented in publications over the life of the conference. The most prolific universities are (multiple authors are not eliminated from this consideration):

Author Institution	Frequency	Author Institution	Frequency
Purdue Univ.	45	Texas A&M	10
Fort Lewis College	18	Hong Kong Polytechnic	9
Virginia Polytechnic Inst. & State Univ.	15	Univ. of Houston	8
Kansas State Univ.	14	Univ. of Denver	8
University of Wisconsin-Stout	12	Univ. of Tenn.	8
Iowa State Univ.	10		

#### Number of References

Year	Average	Year	Average	Year	Average	Year	Average
1989	7.00	1993	11.06	1997	14.18	2001	21.31
1990	11.47	1994	22.88	1998	22.94	2002	22.80
1991	12.87	1995	17.33	1999	26.94	2003	29.00
1992	11.94	1996	16.55				

#### Keyword(s)/Subject(s)

The focus of the research has been very diverse. The top five keywords used in the research were:

Keywords	Frequency	Keywords	Frequency
Tourism	40	Hospitality	8
Education	10	Market segmentation	7
Marketing	8		

### Summary of Results

	Pages	Authors	Location	References
p-value	0.0310	0.0024	0.5854	0.0001
Correlation	0.5763	0.7420	0.1597	0.8545
Intercept	9.6825	1.4562	0.3719	7.9892
Slope	0.1882	0.0523	0.0087	1.2630

### Discussion of Results

The average length of papers is increasing by year, with a p-value of 0.031 and an r-value of 0.571. (The linear regression equation is  $\text{Length} = 9.68 + 0.19 * \text{Year}$ , or in other words, every five years the average paper length increases by about 1 page).

The average number of authors per paper is increasing by year, with a p-value of 0.002 and an r-value of 0.742. To some extent, people are collaborating more on research. It was surprising to see that there were not more internationally focused papers. The percentage of papers with an international geographical focus varied widely from year to year, but displayed no discernable pattern. The average number of references per paper is increasing by year, with a p-value of 0.0001 and an r-value of 0.855. The linear regression equation is  $\text{References} = 7.99 + 1.26 * \text{Year}$ , or in other words, the average number of references per paper grows by more than one every year.

Based on these findings, we offer the following conclusions.

Our best indication that ISTTE has matured is that the average number of references per paper is increasing.

Other indicators that ISTTE has matured are that the average number of pages and the average number of authors are also increasing.

Interestingly, ISTTE has not become more internationally focused. (It has been international all along, with about half (45%) of the papers receiving international focus.)

ISTTE has grown in size and matured as an academic conference through the years and these changes bode well for the future academic stature of the organization.

REFERENCES: Available upon request

# NO MERCY IN THE INTERNET BATTLE! WEBSITE EFFECTIVENESS FOR BRICK & MORTAR TRAVEL RETAILERS

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## ABSTRACT

This exploratory study was designed to evaluate the Website performance of brick-and-mortar travel retailers (BMTRs) in the U.S. and investigate the present situation in their Website marketing. A Website evaluation instrument was developed based on the Modified Balanced Scorecard (BSC) approach, and four evaluation perspectives were considered: 1) technical, 2) customer, 3) marketing effectiveness, and 4) travel agency. Most BMTR Websites were being used as “electronic brochures” rather than being presented as “integrative distribution and marketing channel.” They had weaknesses in attracting customers and were not designed to generate substantial online profits. Implications for improved performance of Web marketing by BMTRs were identified. Keywords: Retail travel agencies, Website performance, Modified Balanced Scorecard approach, Brick-and-mortar-travel retailers (BMTR).

## INTRODUCTION

Although not all the statistics are consistent, the growth in the online travel market has been noticeable during a tumultuous shakeout of the travel industry (Desloge, 2003; Marcussen, 2003; Pappas, 2000; TIA 2003; Travel Weekly, 2001). According to the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA), more than 64 million online travelers – 30 percent of the U. S. adult population – used the Internet to get information on destinations, resulting in 42.2 million actually booking travel online during 2003. TIA reported that the number of online bookers continues to grow, at 29 percent in 2003 compared to 23 percent in 2002.

In the midst of the steady expansion of the online travel market, the trend is also for the travel giants to continue growing by absorbing smaller companies, but the profitability of the traditional brick-and-mortar agencies is eroding due to commission cuts and strong price competition (Pappas, 2000). Recent research indicates that 39 percent of the \$27 billion in online travel sales in 2002 was shared among the top three online travel agencies; Expedia, Travelocity, and Orbitz (Marcussen, 2003). Moreover, more than 60 percent of business travelers made their air travel bookings directly through airline Websites (Travel Weekly, 2001). In the meantime, the number of travel agencies across the country fell 14 percent from 32,901 at the end of March 2002 to 28,310 in March 2003, according to the Airline Reporting Corporation. Of the travel agencies that closed in Missouri, for example, about half were independent (Desloge, 2003).

While the Internet adoption rate has reached a plateau, many traditional walk-in travel agencies have quickly entered the e-travel market. However, success is not guaranteed in the ongoing metamorphosis of online travel. The rapacious mega travel agencies and airlines have quickly garnered a large market share and blocked traditional agencies from customers who still expect individualized, high-touch travel services. If they are not smart enough, traditional travel agencies will be defeated in a brutal Internet battle. Therefore, it is very timely to examine the Web-based competitive environment and to suggest some implications for traditional agencies for application in Web marketing and management.

Despite many practical guides and consultations about Website design and increasing traffic, comparatively little research exists to assist brick-and-mortar travel retailers (BMTRs) in building and maintaining more effective Websites. Raymond (2001) tried to explore the successful adoption of Internet technology in small travel agencies and concluded with the request for further exploration of the competitive dimensions of Internet marketing from both the strategic and marketing viewpoints. Park (2000) examined the top 60 Korean travel agencies using content analysis, but ended by recommending more studies on broader aspects of travel agencies and travelers' assessment of their Websites. Accordingly, a more systematic assessment of BMTR Website effectiveness from comprehensive and multidimensional perspectives was proposed and tested in this study. In addition, marketing implications for increasing BMTRs' online profits were outlined.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Since its inception, the Internet has integrated more easily with the characteristics of services than products and has contributed to the dynamics of change in the travel industry. The travel industry is very fragmented and requires rich and up-to-date information, which makes it especially appropriate for the benefits that the Internet offers (O'Connor, 1999). By using Internet -based technologies, travel agencies can market services in a variety of effective ways ranging from information dissemination to substantial transactions (O'Connor, 1999; Park, 2002; Schwartz, 1999).

While many researchers corroborate that online travel is a booming business (Connolly, 1998; Diefenbach, 1998; Law & Leung, 2000), the issue of Web-based marketing initiatives that attract and retain the consumers of travel has become critically important. Buhalis (1999) warned that traditional travel agencies who fail to adapt and take advantage of the new opportunities online would face significant competitive disadvantages and jeopardize their future prospects owing to the potential travelers' opportunities to bypass intermediaries in the distribution chain (Anckar & Walden, 2002). In addition, Evans et al. (2000) argued that small travel firms might be lost in the competitive electronic market entailing heavy managerial costs and high technology, in contrast to larger tour operators and travel groups, which adopted e-commerce early, dominated CRS/GDS systems, and are financially more secure (Evans, 2000). Lewis et al. (1998) warned there would be significant reductions in the number of travel agencies because of the cost effectiveness of the information and better connectivity to the customers in this high competitive and shaky market structures. Among these cautious warnings and pessimistic anticipations, however, there is still considerable justification for the continued presence of small, independent travel agencies given the continual growth of leisure travel demand and the importance of the travel agents' advice in leisure travel purchase decisions.

Bloch and Segev (1996) attempted to analyze the impact of e-commerce on the competitive structure of the industry and to propose the possible strategies to take advantage of the new online business. They predicted that the two main roles of travel agent - information brokers to pass information from product suppliers to customers, and transaction processors to print tickets or forward money - would increasingly be played by technology and the travel agents would have to focus on a third role - advisors to provide added-value information to their customers, assisting the customers in their choice of specific products and destinations. Especially, they emphasized the new role of technology in enhancing the shopping experience for holiday packages by providing advanced services, for example kiosks, supporting multimedia clips, databases of relevant travel, visa and destination information, etc. Given the weaknesses of existing channels like advertising through print or other traditional media, Lau et al. (2001) suggested that to achieve cost effectiveness, maximize communication to target customers, and gain channel control through customization should be the directions for an ideal Internet marketing plan.

As travel agencies consolidate and merge rapidly, and since the commodity-like nature of travel products is often emphasized, there is an increasing need for travel agencies, large and small, to differentiate their offerings by adopting strategies to provide a

combination of cost advantage, product leadership, and customer focus. Bressler (2001) urged hospitality and travel organizations to reevaluate online marketing strategies and strengthen marketing activities despite the downturn of nation's economy and the belt-tightening financial situations of many companies. Implementing effective Web marketing often requires large amounts of capital and expertise, and small companies might find it harder to compete, leading to increasing industry concentration. However, the open nature of the Internet can actually reduce the barriers for small companies that have good online expertise and are creative. Moreover, small business owners can establish long-term relationships and increased loyalty by tailoring services for repeat customers, and they are able to increase business value through reduced labor costs, higher reliability of information, and less waste of resources and inventory (Mooney et al., 1997; *Small Business Success Magazine*, 2001).

As the limitless possibilities of the online market have been emphasized and small business owners and managers were strongly recommended to adapt their business process to the new "e-business" infrastructure, this transformation in commercial relationships and transactions has already happened (Bloch et al., 1996). Various efforts to suggest effective marketing practices for small business in the booming of e-business (Bell and Tang, 1998; Chircu and Kauffman, 1999; Haynes et al., 1998; Poon and Jevons, 1997), and many studies also provided a diversity of market analyses and strategic recommendations in tourism and hospitality area (Buhalis & Spada, 2000; Lau et al., 2001; Morrison et al., 2002). Concomitantly, a number of studies were performed to evaluate the performance or effectiveness of different tourism and hospitality Websites (Cano and Prentice, 1998; Connolly et al, 1998; Ho, 1997; Kasavana et al., 1997; Murphy et al., 1996).

Among the growing body of literature on Internet marketing and its effectiveness in tourism and hospitality, however, only a few studies specifically addressed travel agency Websites. Particularly, no research has been completed to examine the Websites of brick-and-mortar independent travel agencies and to suggest better online marketing. The travel agent industry is currently undergoing a major transition due to a shift in distribution channels reflecting the increasing impacts of e-commerce. These impacts are even more significant for independent traditional agencies, which could not be the innovators in online e-commerce, but are still destined to compete with more established players in the online marketplace. They urgently need to develop effective and sustainable online marketing strategies to survive and prosper in the new travel marketplace. More fundamentally, the evaluation of performance and effectiveness of Websites is required because of the significant setup and maintenance costs and intense online competition (Tierney, 2000).

## STUDY OBJECTIVES

This exploratory study was designed to present a conceptual method for measuring and evaluating the performance of the Websites of brick-and-mortar travel retailers in the U.S. The specific objectives were to: 1) determine the overall effectiveness of BMTR Websites in the U.S.; 2) examine the similarities and differences among BMTR Websites in terms of geographic characteristics and group affiliations; 3) evaluate the performance of BMTR Websites in the U.S. from different perspectives; and 4) provide recommendations for improving the effectiveness of BMTR Websites.

## METHODOLOGY

An instrument with multidimensional evaluation criteria for measuring the performance of BMTR Websites was devised based on Morrison et al.'s (1999) Modified Balanced Scorecard (BSC) for Website evaluations in tourism and hospitality businesses adapted from Kaplan and Norton's (1992) Balanced Scorecard approach. Prior to the evaluation, e-travel marketing specialists including experienced researchers and practitioners checked the instrument and it was amended accordingly. The evaluation criteria of BMTR Websites included the technical, customer, marketing effectiveness, and travel agency perspectives:

1. Technical perspective: Is the Website technically sound in design and is it effectively registered with search engines?
2. Customer perspective: Is the Website easy to locate, attractive, useful, and user-friendly for past and potential guests?
3. Marketing effectiveness perspective: Does the Website effectively follow the key principles of marketing?
4. Travel agency perspective: Does the Website show the attractiveness and characteristics of travel agencies?

*Technical Perspective*

Six specific criteria were used to evaluate the technical qualities of BMTR Websites: (1) link check; (2) HTML code errors; (3) browser compatibility; (4) load time; (5) spelling check; and (6) link popularity. NetMechanic (<http://www.netmechanic.com/maintain.htm>) was employed to develop an accurate evaluation of each site. NetMechanic uses a five-star rating approach per page. The link check tested the total number of links and the number of broken links found in each Website. The HTML check included bad HTML tag usage and HTML language errors. Browser compatibility checked how well the Website was displayed when viewed in different browsers. The load time checked the download time for Websites under common modem speeds. LinkPopularity.com (<http://linkpopularity.com>) was employed to check the criterion of link popularity, which is the total number of Websites that link to a certain site. LinkPopularity.com allowed the site to query Google, Altavista, and Hotbot.

*Customer Perspective*

The customer perspective was evaluated in five categories: (1) site accessibility; (2) site navigation; (3) visual attractiveness of the site; (4) ease of contact; and (5) currency of information. Twenty-one specific criteria were evaluated with dichotomous yes/no responses.

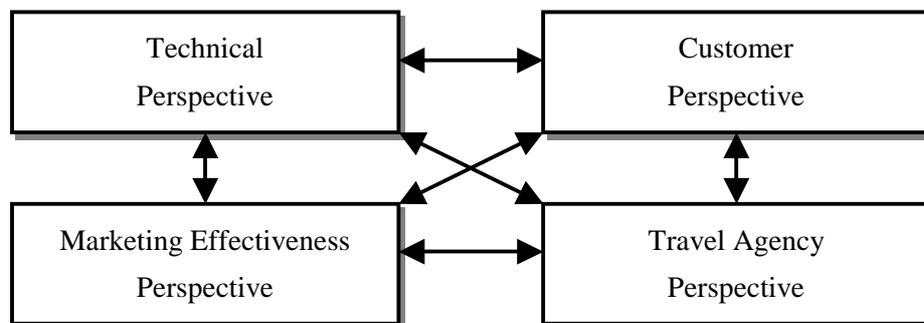
*Marketing Effectiveness Perspective*

The marketing effectiveness perspective was evaluated in seven categories: (1) marketing segmentation and targeting; (2) positioning and branding; (3) marketing research; (4) relationship marketing and database marketing; (5) customer service; (6) partnership; and (7) value adding. Each of these specific marketing effectiveness criteria were evaluated with dichotomous yes/no responses.

*Travel Agency Perspective*

The travel agency perspective was evaluated in eight categories: (1) searching function; (2) booking function; (3) searching and booking efficiency; (4) transaction and payment; (5) legal compliance; (6) privacy and credibility; (7) travel information; and (8) customer service and customization. The specific criteria of travel agency perspective were evaluated with dichotomous yes/no responses.

**Figure 1**  
**The Modified Balanced Scorecard Approach Used in This Study**



## SAMPLING

The stratified and systematic random sampling methods were used to select an appropriate sample for this study. The full lists of retailers affiliated to three wholesaler travel Websites (American Express Travel, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, and Vacation.com) were initially obtained from the Web. Each of three retailer groups was then divided into nine subgroups by Census region. Finally, two BMTR Websites were randomly chosen from each of the resulting 27 sub-groups of the population of travel agencies, with 54 BMTR Websites being chosen in total.

## DATA COLLECTION

All the Website evaluations were conducted in April 2004, using the same computer laboratory in order to avoid the bias of speed and site accessibility. A group of graduate students and a group of senior students from a tourism and hospitality department at a major university were invited to complete the BMTR Website evaluations. Seventeen senior students were selected from a class on travel industry technology and operations. They had experienced the evaluation and discussion on Website characteristics and performance of online travel agencies for three hours in the class. Eleven graduate students were selected who had experience in Website evaluations for other studies and most of them had taken a graduate-level marketing class with a specific focus on Website marketing and evaluation. Fourteen of the evaluators were international students and the other 14 were U.S. residents.

A 30-minute training session was conducted prior to the evaluations providing specific instructions on how to use the modified BSC. Each question on the instrument was explained and relevant examples were shown from other BMTR Websites. During this training, the evaluators were given an opportunity to ask questions and improve their ability to use the instrument. Due to a potential learning curve effect and social response bias, each evaluator was given the Website list and they were randomly assigned a different starting point. Therefore, no two evaluators were evaluating a particular Website at the same time. This was done to prevent a bias toward the Website based upon the order of evaluation. Throughout the Website evaluation process, two proctors were in the computer laboratory. The proctors ensured that the evaluators did not communicate with each other, thereby controlling for social response bias. They also provided assistance to the evaluators when questions arose with respect to the Websites or measurement criteria.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The overall performance of the BMTR Websites across the four perspectives was considered to be relatively poor, with the 54 sites earning only 54.25% of the total points available for this evaluation. Among the four different evaluation perspectives, the marketing effectiveness and travel agency perspectives had the poorest performance (44.2% and 37.3% respectively of their available points). The scores for the technical (73.3%) and customer (62.2%) perspectives were significantly higher.

**Table 1**  
**Overall Performance of the Websites of travel agency sample**

Evaluation Perspectives	Weighted Mean Score	Maximum Score
Technical	18.32 (73.3%)	25
Customer	15.56 (62.2%)	25
Marketing Effectiveness	11.04 (44.2%)	25
Travel Agency	9.33 (37.3%)	25
Total	54.25	100

These scores indicated that most of the BMTRs were not using their Websites effectively, especially from the marketing and travel agency perspectives. This finding was consistent with the descriptive statistics derived from the travel agency list collected for this study. Among the 2,962 travel agencies listed, there were only 1,900 (64%) with their own Websites. Furthermore, most of the travel agencies with Websites appeared not to be making substantial of them. Many had less than five pages of content or were just used as electronic brochures.

For the comparison of Website performance by the affiliations and the geographic characteristics of sample BMTR, the non-parametric ANOVA test (the Kruskal-Wallis Test for *K* Independent Samples) was used and the results are shown in Table 2 and 3.

**Table 2**  
**Weighted Mean Scores and Kruskal-Wallis Tests by Affiliated Travel Agencies**

Evaluation Perspectives	Carlson	Vacation	Amex	Chi-Square	Asymp. Sig.
Technical	17.00	18.30	19.66	30.345	0.000**
Customer	15.57	16.55	14.57	10.353	0.006**
Marketing Effectiveness	11.09	10.66	11.39	1.356	0.508
Travel Agency	9.6	8.04	10.33	6.755	0.034*
Total	53.26	53.55	55.95	3.54	0.170

\* *P*-value < 0.01    \*\* *P*-value < 0.05

**Table 3**  
**Weighted Mean Scores and Kruskal-Wallis Tests by Census Region**

Region	Technical Perspective	Customer Perspective	Marketing Effectiveness	Travel Agency Perspective	Total
New England	17.73	16.19	12.90	11.4	58.26
Middle Atlantic	15.24	15.63	9.35	7.13	47.35
East North Central	18.82	14.49	9.53	8.03	50.88
West North Central	15.56	17.11	11.20	10.8	54.66
South Atlantic	19.44	12.74	10.47	8.63	51.28
East South Central	20.22	16.39	12.58	11.13	60.32
West South Central	18.67	15.68	10.73	10.07	55.14
Mountain	19.76	15.24	11.05	8.13	54.18
Pacific	19.44	15.56	11.04	9.33	55.37
Chi-Square	64.598	19.570	18.364	15.744	24.006
Asymp. Sig.	0.000**	0.012*	0.019*	0.046*	0.002**

\* *P*-value < 0.01    \*\* *P*-value < 0.05

Although there were significant differences by the travel agency group affiliations for the technical, the customer, and travel agency perspectives, the test result for the overall performance score showed no significant differences. However, the test results from the comparison of Website performance by Census region were significantly different for each of the four evaluation perspectives and also for the overall performance scores. From these results, the Website performance of the BMTRs was low across all three agency affiliation groups. Interestingly, Website performance varied across different regions within the U.S.

To understand the problems of these Websites and make substantial suggestions for better performance, the mean scores for each evaluation category within in the four perspectives (technical, customer, marketing and travel agency) were calculated. Table 4 summarizes the evaluation categories for the four perspectives and the mean scores converted to percentages of the available points per category. The results again indicated that most of the BMTR Websites were not used effectively, especially in terms of their marketing

effectiveness and in generating profits for the travel agencies. For example, the BMTRs need to make greater use of Websites for gathering research data and developing better relationships with their customers. Additionally, they need to provide better customer service information and greater value can be added for the Website visitors by offering special Web fares or other promotional benefits.

**Table 4**  
**Mean Scores by Evaluation Categories for Four Different Perspectives**

Perspectives	Evaluation Categories	Mean Scores (percentages)
Technical Perspective	Link check (Bad links check)	94%
	HTML check (Average number of errors on 5 pages)	80%
	Browser Compatibility (Average number of errors on 5 pages)	72%
	Load Time	54%
	Spell Check (Check the number of wrong spelled words)	73%
	Link Popularity (Check links to other sites)	21%
	<b>Technical Perspective Total</b>	<b>65.4%</b>
Customer Perspective	Site accessibility (Easy to remember domain name/URL)	76%
	Site Navigation (Clear and effective navigation tools, home button available, site map and site search engine)	50%
	Visual Attractiveness of the site (Clear and readable text, uncluttered pages, sufficient contrast, aesthetically appealing backgrounds, photographs, other images, java script, and appropriate use of color for visual attraction, limited vertical and horizontal scrolling and effective Web page space)	68%
	Ease of Contact (Clearly available direct email, mailing address, telephone number, fax number, and directions to the office)	68%
	Currency of Information (Current and timely information and the date of the last site update indicated)	41%
	<b>Customer Perspective Total</b>	<b>62.2%</b>
	Marketing Effectiveness Perspective	Market Segmentation and Targeting (providing relevant product choice for specific target markets)
Positioning and Branding (standard positioning statement or slogan, standardized logo or brand mark, and text describing the uniqueness of the travel agency)		61%
Marketing Research (on-site survey)		7%
Relationship Marketing and Database Marketing (Call or email back service, collecting the personal information from the potential customers, newsletter, premium for the registered customers, past testimonial, and discussion groups)		31%
Customer Service (FAQs, toll-free tel. no. available, and state working hours)		37%
Partnership (Links to other tour operators, lodging/accommodation facilities, restaurant/food services, cruise lines, resort/leisure facilities, wholesalers, and Web portals)		51%
Added Value (Web fares)		48%
<b>Marketing Effectiveness Total</b>		<b>53%</b>
Travel Agency Perspective	Searching Function (Searching function on the first page, searching possible for tour package programs, destination, air/hotel/car-rentals, & cruise products, and sorting function by different product categories from searching pages)	40%
	Booking Function (Booking page available and its independency of operation)	46%
	Searching and Booking Efficiency	35%
	Transaction and Payment (Fare rules available, cancellation and change rules available and online payment available).	30%
	Privacy and Credibility	51%
	Travel Information (Information on travel tips, currency, weather, driving direction, airport facilities, travel insurance and destination guides).	33%
	Customer Service and Customization (Customized travel information provision and travel planner function).	35%
	<b>Travel Agency Perspective Total</b>	<b>38.9%</b>

The Internet has had a dramatic impact on the competitive dynamics within the travel industry (Scharl and Taudes, 2001), because it is the best medium to disseminate voluminous and complicated travel information to potential customers and to market travel products least expensively and most effectively. This characteristic of the Internet provides great potential advantages to both customers and suppliers. Therefore, travel agency Websites can attract the customers to visit and be loyal if they offer accurate and complete travel information with convenient booking or purchases. However, most of the travel agency Websites tested in this study did not provide enough travel information and sufficient booking and purchasing tools, even though these features are the most beneficial. The results showed that these BMTR Websites performed very poorly in all of the travel agency perspective categories, except for the privacy and credibility of information.

While these Websites had comparatively high scores in technical performance, they still need to be improved in loading times and increasing link popularity to attract more visitors. Link popularity check is one of the ways to quantifiably and independently measure a Website's online awareness and overall visibility. The scores for the customer perspective were higher than for the marketing effectiveness and travel agency perspectives. These higher scores were caused by the relatively higher performance in visual attractiveness, site accessibility, and ease of contact. But these Websites need to be updated more often with timely and correct information.

## CONCLUSIONS AND MARKETING IMPLICATIONS

This study was designed to develop and test a conceptual method for the evaluation of Website performance of brick-and-mortar travel retailers in the U.S., determine the existing Website performance of BMTR Websites, and provide recommendations for better online marketing. From the analysis, it was clear that these Websites are not yet completely ready for the digital customers who expect to use the convenient but customized travel services through only a few clicks in travel agency Websites. In particular, these travel agencies do not provide integrated Internet services to their customers and thereby cannot make substantial profits from the great potential advantages of the Internet for the travel industry. The Website performance scores in the marketing effectiveness and travel agency perspectives were very low, indicating that these Websites are designed without clear marketing strategies and travel agency initiatives. The Websites are functioning more as electronic brochures rather than being interactive promotion and distribution channels.

The technical and visual aspects of these Websites were better than the practical and functional aspects such as searching, booking, and travel information provision. Only a few Websites in the sample had online booking and transaction functions. Some of these travel agencies forwarded the Web pages for product searching and booking directly to provider or wholesaler sites. The travel information provided on these Websites was small in quantity and low in quality. Instead of trying to make visually attractive Websites, these travel agencies need to upgrade their Websites for more effective product and information searches, facilitate more easily accessed and secured booking functions, and provide more comprehensive and practical information. The information and services should be designed and customized for customers' needs so that more of them will revisit and stay longer on the Websites.

The travel industry is being fundamentally altered by the applications of information technology. The decentralized and disintermediated situation caused by increasing Internet adoption in travel industry, travel agencies must provide significant quantities of high-quality information in order to succeed in the marketplace. If they can provide less than perfect information, it is more efficient for consumers and service providers to bypass travel agents and deal directly with each other.

## LIMITATION AND FUTURE STUDIES

This exploratory study tentatively addressed the marketing issues faced by brick-and-mortar retail travel agencies. It is the first known attempt to identify evaluation criteria for

Website effectiveness among small and independent travel retailers. The measurement perspectives presented in this paper could be the foundation for a set of industry benchmarks. However, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other BMTR Websites due to the limited sample. The sample in this study was randomly selected from the full list provided online by three main wholesalers in the U.S., but the sampled BMTRs varied in scale and specialization owing to the difficulties of standardizing the sizes and categories of sampled agencies. In future studies, the instrument can be modified and customized for different specializations and company sizes so that it may provide a barometer for better online marketing for different types of travel agencies.

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## DESTINATION IMAGE AS A TOOL FOR MARKETING AND PROMOTING TOURISM DESTINATIONS

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### ABSTRACT

This study attempted to examine the role of destination image in positioning and promoting a tourism destination. Using the case of Houston, TX, a qualitative in-depth interview with the destination marketers provided an analysis of existing destination images, developing beneficial images as key factors that might positively influence on travel decision making. Primary data were collected with visitors to Houston (N=300) focusing on the evaluation and influence of beneficial images. Employing a unique qualitative combined quantitative analysis, the study presented a unique approach to developing and assessing destination image and suggested ways to explore the utility of beneficial images for future studies. The results will also benefit tourism destination marketers and providers by providing a practical guideline in developing and utilizing destination images for effective positioning and strategy formulation.

Keywords: Destination image, Beneficial image, Destination positioning, Destination marketing

### BACKGROUND

Developing a desirable image of a product or a service has become a primary concern for marketers in branding and product positioning (Kotler, Bowen, & Makens, 2002). Tourism destination marketers, in particular, have strived to make a desirable appeal of the destination image and to determine optimal positioning as a key to effectively induce potential visitors' purchasing decisions (Joppe, Martin, & Waalen, 2001). Such efforts appear to center in promoting positive or desirable images that can match with and fulfill the needs and expectations of potential travelers. To gain competitive advantage, a destination needs to create a unique identity of distinct brand value (Middleton, 2001; Pike, 2002).

With the third largest working population in the U. S., Houston has recently experienced a booming tourism industry with 68% of increase in travel spending between 1994 and 2000 (Dean Runyan Associates, 2002). In 2002 more than 23.1 million people visited Houston and spent approximately \$9.6 billion, supporting 86,100 tourism related jobs directly (Texas Department of Economic Development, 2004). Despite the destination's increasing popularity and unbeatable offerings of sport facilities and other amenities, however, Houston has lost its bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games. One school of thought argued that the lack of destination brand identity might have been the crucial factor for the loss, signaling an immediate need to analyze and reevaluate existing images of Houston to improve its destination appeal.

The purpose of this study is to develop and utilize beneficial image as an effective tool for positioning tourism destinations. The analysis of destination image in this study begins with an overall review of existing images that might have been overlooked or unattended to date. Once identified through an analysis of existing images, beneficial images are to be further examined as key factors associated with travel decision making. Taking an example of Houston, TX, where the role of destination image requires immediate attention of both practitioners and researchers, the current analysis is expected to provide an useful guideline for effective market positioning by linking destination marketers to unique consumer needs. Developing and maximizing the utility of beneficial image of a destination will also help tourism marketers and providers gain competitive advantage and thus enhance effective marketing strategies.

## RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

Destination images can be perceptual phenomena that have both cognitive and affective components (Pike & Ryan, 2004), representing the total impression that a destination makes on the minds of travelers in making destination choices (Vogt & Andereck, 2003). Affective destination images, referred to the value that travelers place on destinations based on travel benefits they are seeking, could be used as unique marketing tools to position a travel destination, which then enhance an appeal to potential travelers' feelings and emotions (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). Researchers (Andreu, Bigne, & Cooper, 2000; Baloglu, 1999) have also reported that projected destination images can mediate the relationship between visitation intention and promotional stimuli as "pull" factors and traveler characteristics influenced by travel motivations as "push" factors.

Destination images can differentiate a destination from one another and play an integral role in travelers' decision-making process. A destination with positive images, for instance, is more likely to be considered for further evaluations or selected as a final destination due to the perceptions or impressions held by travelers with respect to the expected benefit or consumption values (Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000). In this, positive images can form a basis of positioning and promoting a destination, while opportunities appear to focus on developing unique concepts or features associated with powerful images (Middleton, 2001). Positioning takes favorable perceptions, impressions, or beneficial images to define the destination by showing how it is compared to its competing destinations, such that an accurate assessment of product image is a prerequisite to designing an effective marketing strategy (Pike & Ryan, 2004).

Studies in destination image research have reported that strong brand recognition and effective differentiation could be the key attributes to creating a unique image of a destination (Baloglu, 1999; Pike, 2002). Studies have also discussed that beneficial images can be created or induced by perceived benefits or values that potential travelers expect in exchange for their travel purchases (Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000). Several researchers stressed the role of affective perceptions of a destination in enhancing destination positioning for effective marketing purposes (Andreu & Cooper, 2000; Pike & Ryan, 2004).

This study aimed to develop and utilize beneficial image as an effective marketing tool for positioning and promoting a tourism destination with a unique brand recognition. The specific research objectives were to: (1) analyze existing destination images in developing beneficial images; (2) evaluate such beneficial images from visitors' perspective; and (3) assess the importance of each beneficial image in travel decision making.

## METHODOLOGY

Having taken Houston as the study site, subjects in this study were defined as visitors to Houston who were residing outside the Houston Metropolitan Statistical Area [MSA] and 18 years of age or older. A self-administered survey questionnaire was developed to collect primary data about: (a) beneficial images of Houston as a tourism destination; (b) travel satisfaction; (c) traveler characteristics such as demographics and socioeconomics; and (d) trip related factors. The key variable, beneficial image (see also Results section, first paragraph), was measured in two levels: (1) evaluation of those generally expected or well-known images of Houston in terms of the level of agreement; and (2) assessment of those beneficial image in making decisions to visit Houston in terms of the level of importance.

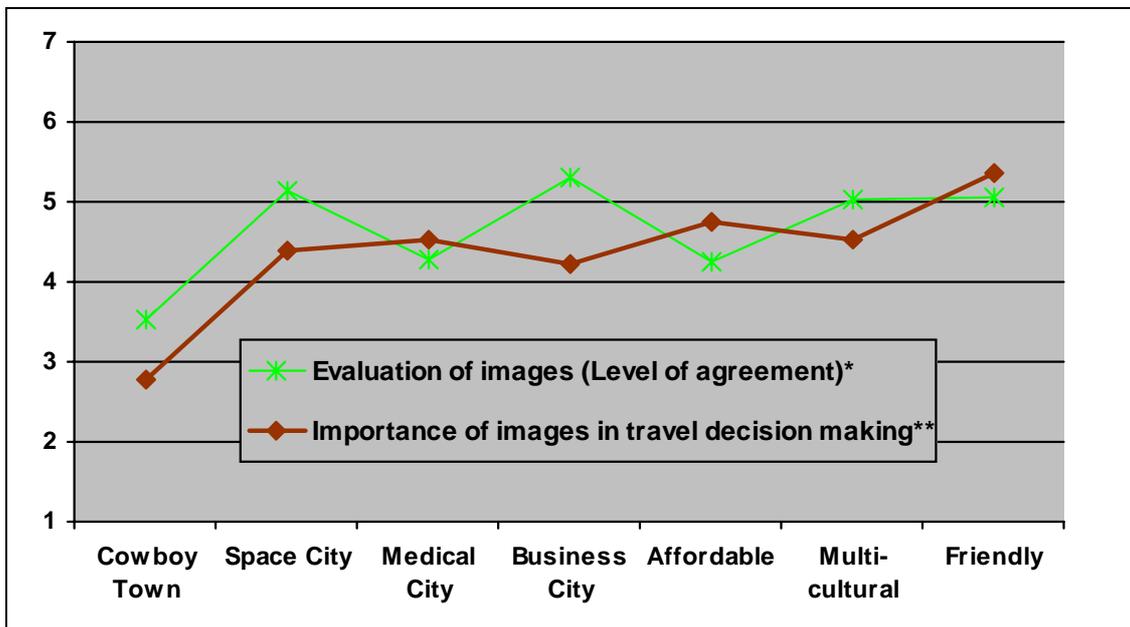
A total of 350 survey questionnaires were distributed among visitors to Houston between November 2002 and the January 2003. Based upon recent statistics reported by Texas Department of Economic Development (2004), leisure travelers to Houston appear to outnumber business travelers (67% versus 33%). In an effort to reinforce the representativeness of the data, a quota sampling method with five survey sites was employed. This sampling frame was designed to represent leisure travelers at attractions (i.e., Space Center, the Galleria), business travelers at different hotel locations (i.e., Warwick, Hilton), and visitors in general at the visitor information center located adjacent to the Museum District. Out of 350 distributed, 303 surveys were collected, and of these, only 300 (or 86% response rate) were valid to be used in the data analysis.

## RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The first research objective was to analyze existing images of Houston for developing beneficial images. An in-depth interview with a group of destination image specialists affiliated with the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau first identified a total of 13 existing, well-known images of Houston. Following was a qualitative content analysis, classifying those images into four categories – strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Of those, 7 items appeared to offer certain expected value or benefits that travelers might be seeking in Houston. From a destination marketing perspective, such expected value or benefits need to be highly or positively recognized as selling points in positioning and promoting Houston as a tourism destination. Results of the qualitative analysis suggested beneficial images of Houston such as: (1) cowboy; (2) NASA; (3) medical center; (4) rodeo; (5) least expensive; (6) multicultural city; and (7) friendly destination, securing the first research objective.

Those identified beneficial images were then evaluated from visitors' perspective. Using a seven point scale (score 1 being strongly disagree to 7 being strongly agree), respondents were asked to indicate the level of agreement on the listed images that people might expect from traveling in Houston. Among the survey respondents (N=300), Houston was most well known for a business city (Mean = 5.31), followed by the Space city and a friendly city (Mean = 5.14 and 5.04, respectively) (Figure 1). It was surprising that Houston's world class medical facilities were relatively less expected (Mean = 4.27) to the above images. Moreover, the long-attended cowboy town image was the least expected (Mean = 3.52). Overall, the evaluation of those projected images revealed that Houston was rather expected as predominantly an urban destination.

**Figure 1**  
**Evaluation of Projected Beneficial Images of Houston and**  
**Importance of Beneficial Images in Making a Decision to Visit Houston**



\* Level of agreement: Score 1 being “Strongly Disagree” to 7 being “Strongly Agree”

\*\* Level of importance: Score 1 being “Not at all Important” to 7 being “Extremely Important”

The influence of each beneficial image on travel decision making was further assessed in terms of level of importance. Despite its well expected image of a business city, Houston’s friendliness was the most important image for the respondents to visit Houston (Mean = 5.36 with score 1 being not at all important to 7 being extremely important). By the same token, the image of a medical city or of an affordable destination appeared to become more important for visiting Houston than generally expected. As shown in Figure 2, the purpose of this comparison is to determine if those images for which Houston was well known might be different from those which actually played important roles in inducing or influencing on travel decision-making.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The current analysis of destination image in conjunction with travel decision making presented a unique approach to linking practitioners to consumers in destination marketing research. Beneficial images were developed by active involvement of the local destination marketers then evaluated by visitors to the destination, providing a useful, practical guideline that can be applied to the current market almost immediately. While this study has been executed at one tourism destination, there should be more destinations where the same approach is possibly to be applied without requiring a major change in the framework.

From descriptive data in the survey, a typical visitor to Houston tends to be a college graduate, middle-aged, married person whose average household income is around \$40,000. While staying in hotels for 2 or 3 nights, this traveler spends about \$1,000 on average per trip. While not much information has been reported about visitors to Houston, such profile can be used as important ground information to better understand visitors and thus to make predictions about future travel behavior.

The results of this study suggest that for effective market positioning, tourism destination marketers should recognize the significant role of destination image and be actively involved in developing beneficial images. Brand recognition should also focus on beneficial images of a destination while polishing up its long-unattended true image should not be ignored. By so doing, a unique destination image can be developed and utilized to brand a destination by promoting “who they are” rather than “what they have.”

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# RECREATION IN BUKIT TIMAH NATURE RESERVE IN SINGAPORE

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## ABSTRACT

This paper examined the usage pattern and visitors' experience of Bukit Timah Nature Reserve in Singapore. As the only primary rainforest, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve is the most important site for biodiversity conservation in Singapore, but it is also a tourism attraction promoted by the government. The usage pattern of this reserve, in terms of characteristics of visitors, frequency of visits, length of stay, recreational activities, and experience of users were obtained through a site survey. The views of visitors were also collected and analyzed, and the results show that the perceptions of visitors are generally positive, but there is a conflict between providing more facilities and controlling visitor numbers. Keywords: recreation, nature reserve, usage pattern, perception.

## INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Singapore is a highly urbanized city-state located at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula. Located in the middle of the island, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve remains the only substantial area of primary rainforest in the country. It was considered the most important site for biodiversity conservation in the "Master Plan for Conservation of Nature in Singapore" formulated by the Singapore Nature Society (Singapore Branch of the Malaysian Nature Society, 1990). Although it is only 164ha, there are more plant species in this nature reserve than in the whole of the United States of America. It is also the habitat of several small native animals (Bugna, 2002).

However, unlike other countries where protected areas are often in remote regions, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve is located in the city, and ever greater pressures of recreational use are placed on this small patch of rainforest. It is reported that 140,000 people visited the reserve in 1997 (Nathan, 1998) and it is promoted as an attraction for nature tourism in the official guide (STB, 1999:32). However, the impact of recreation and tourism threatens the survival of this natural remnant (Henderson, 2000).

Information on patterns of use and perception of visitors is essential to make informed decisions when providing nature-based tourism and recreation opportunities. This information will be useful in the future planning and design of the site, facility maintenance and visitor management.

## METHODOLOGY

Specific qualitative data on the usage pattern, in terms of characteristics of visitors, frequency of visits, length of stay, recreational activities, and experience of users were obtained from 150 interviews undertaken at the exit of Bukit Timah Nature Reserve in

December 2003. In order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the use of the nature reserve, the survey was conducted over both weekdays and weekends. The survey was carried out during the day, between 7am to 8pm. A standardized questionnaire was used in the survey, and open-ended questions were used to fully understand the experience of the visitors and their suggestions for change.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Users composition and characteristics*

The survey results show that 89% of the visitors were Singaporeans and only 11% of the visitors came from other countries. It indicates that the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve is mainly used for local recreation and that it is still not a major tourist attraction.

Most respondents (54%) arrived in family groups, 30% of them came with friends and only 16% came alone. 23% of respondents came for the first time, and most of the other respondents visited regularly. 6% of respondents came daily, 19% of them visited 2-3 times a week, and 27% of them came once a week.

The common visit (71%) at Bukit Timah Nature Reserve was less than half a day (about 1-3 hours), and only 29% of the respondents spent half a day there. According to the survey results, no respondents stayed a whole day or overnight in the nature reserve.

### *Activities and behaviors in the nature reserve*

Most visitors do more than one activity in the Reserve, but the range of activities is not very wide. As shown in Table 1, the most popular activity is walking which were chosen by 72% of respondents. The less common activities in descending order are: watching view (35%), jogging (17%), photography (12%), bird watching (11%), cycling (5%), and talking to people (4%). Obviously, the most popular behaviors are activities related to exercise.

**Table 1**  
**Activities of visitors in Bukit Timah Nature Reserve**

<i>Activities</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Walking	108	72%
Watching view	53	35%
Jogging	26	17%
Photography	18	12%
Bird watching	17	11%
Cycling	7	5%
Talking to people	6	4%

Note: some respondents did more than one activities.

It seems that most visitors do not come into close contact with wildlife. Only 12% of respondents said they had any contact with wildlife voluntarily, and in most cases the wildlife referred to are monkeys looking for food at the car park. However, judging from the data, a high percentage of respondents (48%) walked or jogged off the existing trails, and most of them visited this nature reserve regularly and were familiar with the routes. Unfortunately, this behavior can cause soil erosion and disturb wildlife.

### *Usage of facilities*

The survey results show that the usage frequency of the walking trail are similar for all the routes with 32%, 20%, 35%, and 21% for Route 1, Route 2, Route 3, and Route 4 respectively (Figure 1).



What the respondents' like about the nature reserve is primarily focused on three aspects (see Table 3). Firstly, the qualities of the place, such as fresh air (40%), natural environment (19%), tranquility (11%) and wildlife (10%) are most loved by the visitors. Secondly, the feelings evoked by the nature reserve are also important but less so than the tangible physical qualities. Relaxation is the most often mentioned quality (8%) that is felt by the respondents. Thirdly, the facilities of the place, such as walking trails (6%), are also features liked by visitors but appear to be the least important.

**Table 3**  
**What users like about Bukit Timah Nature Reserve**

<i>Features</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<u>The place</u>		
fresh air	32	40%
nature environment	29	19%
tranquility	16	11%
wild life	15	10%
greenery	11	7%
cooling /shade	9	6%
beautiful view	6	4%
clean	3	2%
<u>Personal feelings</u>		
relaxation	12	8%
different from other places	3	2%
safe	1	1%
<u>Facilities</u>		
walking trail	9	6%
playground	1	1%

Note: some respondents gave more than one like.

When the respondents were asked about their dislike of the place, most of them (54%) offered no comments. Among those who commented, the strongest dislike was related to the facilities, such as the shortage of car parks (6%). The quality of the nature reserve was also criticized – too crowded (7%) and noisy (1%). Although the negative comments on the experience of the nature reserve were minor, it possibly indicates the degradation of the visitors' perception caused by the large number of visitors. It is possible that the visitor number is near or is beyond the perceived carrying capacity.

A wide range of suggestions for change was given, ranging from the provision of more facilities to making the nature reserve more beautiful. The main suggestions were to provide more car park lots and toilets. These suggestions were echoed in the dislikes of the respondents.

**Table 4**  
**What visitors dislike about Bukit Timah Nature Reserve**

<i>Features</i>	<i>No. of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<u>Facilities</u>		
No enough Parking lots	9	6%
Toilet is not enough	7	5%
No enough bins	3	2%
Drinking fountain	3	2%
Some junctions do not have maps	1	1%
No real natural track	1	1%
Trails are muddy	2	1%
Stairs of walking trail are too high	1	1%
<u>The nature reserve</u>		
Too many people and crowded	10	7%
Noisy	2	1%
Too near urban area	1	1%
too small	1	1%
no view on top	1	1%
<u>Wild life</u>		
Children are afraid of the monkeys	3	2%
Mosquito	2	1%
No enough animals	1	1%
No comment	81	54%

Note: some respondents gave more than one dislike.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, the usage pattern of Bukit Timah Nature Reserve was investigated through a site survey. Local visitors make up a major proportion of visitors, and Bukit Timah Nature Reserve is not an important tourism attraction. Most visitors come regularly and usually spend less than half a day there. The most popular activities are related to exercising, such as walking and jogging.

The problems of facility provision and maintenance include shortage of facilities and the uneven allocation of facilities. Controlling the provision of facilities can be a measure to limit visitor number, but the shortage of facilities can also degrade the quality of the reserve. In Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, many cars park on the roads near the entrance and this induces a management problem. Furthermore, most facilities, such as the visitor center, toilet, shop and water cooler, are located near the entrance to decrease the impact of visitors on natural environment, but this causes great inconvenience to the visitors.

The perception of visitors is generally positive, and the nature reserve is described as a natural and tranquil place. But some negative experience such as the feelings of noisy and

crowded should not be neglected. From site observation, group activities are the major cause of noise. Controlling group sizes is a possible way to minimize this negative impact.

This study reports only on a site survey of users. The ecological impact of visitors on the reserve is not assessed and will need to be studied separately. To do this, it is necessary to determine the carrying capacity of the nature reserve. The depth and complexity of this ecological study is beyond the scope of the current paper. Nevertheless, an understanding of the social needs and perception of the nature reserve as presented in this paper will help in future plans and management of the reserve.

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# THE IMPACT OF THE SEPTEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> ATTACKS ON AIRLINE ARRIVALS AND CONVENTIONS IN NINE MAJOR US CITIES

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to research and analyze the impact that the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 terrorist attacks had on airline passenger arrivals and convention attendance in nine major US cities. This study examined convention attendance and airline passenger arrivals from January 2000 to December 2002 of nine cities: Gateway cities (Atlanta – Hartsfield International, Chicago – O’Hare International, Los Angeles – International, New York – JFK International); Fly-in tourist destinations (Las Vegas – McCarran International, Orlando – International); and Non-gateway cities (Houston – George Bush International, Phoenix – Sky Harbor International, and Seattle – International).

Key words: Impact, September 11<sup>th</sup>, Terrorism, Airline arrivals, Convention attendees.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

On Tuesday morning, September 11, 2001, 19 suicide hijackers crashed four commercial airplanes into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, DC and in a field in Somerset County, west of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It has been estimated that between 5,000 and 6,000 people were killed. The tragedy has had an unmatched coast-to-coast economic reach (Tumulty, 2002). The insurance claims alone reached \$40.2 billion. During the first 3 months after the attacks, hotel bookings in the United States declined between 20% and 50% as individuals and groups cancelled their vacation plans, cancelled or postponed conventions, corporate meetings, seminars and trade shows. Many hotels in tourist areas, such as Las Vegas and Orlando, slashed rates, offered free breakfast, discounts on theater tickets and other special promotions to stimulate travelers back into these hotels. Fly-in tourist destinations were the hardest hit after September 11 with record declines in occupancy percentages and rates.

The economic impact of the tragedy has been devastating, especially on the airline industry. It is estimated that the US airline industry lost \$7.7 billion and more than 80,000 workers with further damage absorbed by a \$5 billion bailout from Congress. When the United States Federal government shut down the skies for two days following the September 11 event, the airlines lost over \$100 million in sales revenues. They continued to suffer millions of dollars in lost revenue as the traveling public made alternative plans for several months after the event. The cutbacks in airline operations caused cutbacks in support services, such as airline food service, cleaning, and aircraft mechanics and layoffs in support service firms. For example, LSG Sky Chefs, the nation’s largest airline caterer, laid off 30% of their workforce following September 11.

After the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks and the ongoing onslaught of terrorism, war and a rebounding economy, temporarily emptied conference centers and hotel meeting rooms have started regaining some of their past glory over the past 2 years. Cities that thrive on conventions and meetings such as New York, Chicago, Orlando and Las Vegas have been hit the hardest with declining hotel occupancies, lowered domestic and international airline arrivals and lost convention and meeting business. According to Strausburg (2001), in the wake of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, meeting cancellations cost more than \$ 1 billion in lost U.S. business. The Convention Industry Council reported that between the slowing economy and the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, the convention industry revenue dropped to about \$76 billion U.S. in 2001 from \$96 billion U.S. in 2000 (Hischmann, 2001). In 2002 the U.S. convention, meeting and exhibition industry was estimated at \$110 billion. Although slow, the convention industry is gradually gaining ground over each previous year.

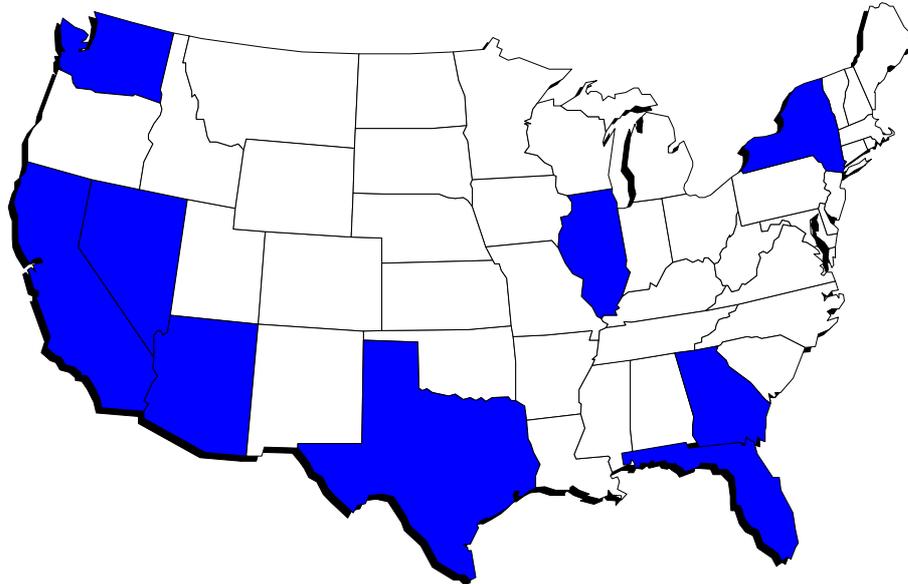
However despite the overwhelming odds against the convention industry, wide ranging efforts to rebook hotels as well as some novel business schemes and extraordinary acts of cooperation among convention and conference center professionals have been noticed through out the industry (Strashburg, 2001). Meeting and event planners have shared business leads and reduced commissions to attract cash-strapped clients. Corporations such as Hilton and Marriott waived penalties they normally would have charged clients for lower than expected attendance at hotel functions. Online event planning sites such as StarCite, a 3-year Philadelphia company catering to event organizers, vendors, hotels and other suppliers, have gone so far as to suspend its normal fees for users of their service – a privilege that that would normally cost hotels an annual membership fee of \$1,900 to \$15,000. Today the U.S. convention business is a \$555 billion industry that employs 8 million workers and generates \$99 billion annually into local, state and federal tax coffers (Tsuroka, 2003). The impact of 9/11 may be felt in some markets for years to come.

## METHODS

This study examined passenger arrivals from January 2000 to September 2002 of nine airports in different cities: Atlanta – Hartsfield International, Chicago – O’Hare International, Houston – George Bush International, Las Vegas – McCarran International, Los Angeles – International, New York – JFK International, Orlando – International, Phoenix – Sky Harbor International, and Seattle – International (At Los Angeles, Orlando, and Seattle airports, the name of the airport is the name of the city).

The airports were classified into **gateway cities** (Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York), **fly-in tourist destinations** (Las Vegas and Orlando) and **non-gateway cities** (Phoenix, Seattle and Houston). In the research findings, the airports will be referred to as the name of the city where they are located (Figure 1). The data was collected from the airport websites or from airport administrations.

**Figure 1**  
**Map of the Nine States Where the Nine Cities Were Located**



In addition, each Convention & Visitors Bureau was contacted for these nine cities to determine the percentage increases or decreases for their convention attendance for the same time period. Unfortunately, the convention data was not available on a monthly basis but rather on an annual basis so only annual comparisons could be made. The research questions include:

- 1. How have passenger arrivals to gateway cities changed since 2000?*
- 2. How have passenger arrivals to fly-in tourist destinations changed since 2000?*
- 3. How have passenger arrivals changed comparatively among these nine cities since 2000?*

## FINDINGS

Passenger arrivals and convention attendance in 2001 and 2002 were compared to a base year of 2000. The rationale for using a base year was to show the recovery or decline of passenger arrivals and convention attendance to pre-9/11 levels. Unless stated, the assumption is that all comparisons are made against the 2000 figures for passenger arrivals and convention attendees. It is interesting to note that a decline in airline passengers already existed in early 2001 prior to September 11, indicating that an economic slowdown already existed.

### *Question 1: How have passenger arrivals to gateway cities changed since 2000?*

Atlanta, Los Angeles, New York and Chicago had average decreases between 0.45% and 1.06% for the first eight months for 2001. In September of 2001, a dramatic downturn occurred of passenger arrivals for all four cities. As would be expected, New York had a decrease of 31.82% for September but the other three cities also experienced dramatic decreases. Atlanta experienced a 29.46% decrease, Los Angeles experienced a 32.23% decrease and Chicago experienced a 33.59% decrease compared to 2000. During the final three months of the year, New York experienced an average decrease of 29.41% while Los

Angeles experienced a 24.24% decrease compared to Atlanta and Chicago that experienced a 13.22% and 15.56% decrease, respectively.

**Question 2: How have passenger arrivals to fly-in tourist destinations changed since 2000?** Las Vegas had an increase of 3.60% of passenger arrivals for the first eight months of 2001 compared to Orlando that had a decrease of 0.47%. During September of that year, both Las Vegas and Orlando suffered a decrease in passenger arrivals of 27.92% and 31.65%, respectively. The last three months of the year Las Vegas (16.16%) and Orlando (22.96%) faced double digit declines. However, for the first eight months of 2002, Las Vegas (-3.28%) recovered to near 2000 levels while Orlando (-12.25%) still faced double digit declines. During the month of September 2002, Las Vegas's passenger arrivals were down by 6.34% while Orlando's was down by 22.29%. The last three months of the year, Las Vegas passenger arrivals decreased by 8.85% compared to 14.48% for Orlando. The average per monthly decrease for 2001 and 2002 for Las Vegas was 3.96% and 4.93%, respectively. However, Orlando suffered declines of 8.69% in 2001 and 13.64% in 2002. Las Vegas recovered faster than Orlando. Is this due to the fact that Orlando is a family destination compared to Las Vegas that is an adult destination? Does it matter that Las Vegas is on the west coast and Orlando is on the east coast? How did each airport handle the aftermath of 9/11?

**Question 3: How have passenger arrivals changed comparatively among these nine cities since 2000?** During the month of September 11, 2001 all of the nine cities suffered decreases from 33.59% to 25.85%. This tremendous drop in passenger arrivals caused massive layoffs and financial difficulties throughout the airline industry while also affected the cities themselves. However, passenger arrivals for the year ending 2001 ranged from a negative 10.71% to a negative 2.13%. Since 9/11 occurred in the latter part of 2001, the full-effect was not seen in their annual figures.

## CONCLUSIONS

New York probably recovered faster than most people would have expected. There seemed to be an atmosphere of solidarity for New York after 9/11 in terms of supporting convention industry in New York City. Their convention business has grown since 9/11 by double digit figures that have probably affected their tourism industry. Their airline passenger arrivals increased but did not recover to its pre-9/11 levels. People in the Northeast region might have driven rather than flown during this time period. On the opposite side of recovery, Los Angeles has not recovered nearly as quickly as other cities. In 2002, their airline passenger arrivals decreased by 16.28% and convention attendees decreased by 27.9%. Was this decrease partly due to Los Angeles' economy? Or did people try to avoid flying through Los Angeles and selected other sites? Did the restructuring of airline routes affect the number of passengers flying through Los Angeles?

Another interesting finding was the impact of 9/11 on two tourist destinations. Las Vegas recovered much quicker than Orlando in both airline passenger arrivals and convention attendees. It seems that adult destinations are more insulated than family destinations in terms of being affected by terrorist attacks. Las Vegas might have benefited by being located close to Los Angeles that allowed people drove to Las Vegas for vacation rather than taking the chance of flying during this period of uncertainty. Mansfeld (1999) identified that after a terror attack there are four primary factors in the speed of recovery: 1) Nature of the security situation, 2) Characteristics of potential travelers, 3) The characteristics of the affected

tourism system, and 4) The kind of crisis management measures taken by the affected destination. When you consider that Las Vegas and Orlando were very similar in three out of these four factors with only the characteristics of potential travelers being significantly different, the conclusion that family destinations are impacted more than adult destinations seems like a valid conclusion.

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## **Section III**

# **Refereed Working Papers**

# DEVELOPING A VIRTUAL POSTER CONFERENCE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS: A TRANSATLANTIC EXPERIENCE

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## ABSTRACT

Investigating the experiences of graduate student participants in a virtual poster conference organized jointly by an American and British University, this paper identifies the key issues that require to be addressed in the future development of this type of cyber activity. Through the conduct of focus groups, the views of participant's are elicited and analyzed within and across each of the institutions. The experiences of each group of students are reported in relation to the process of preparing for the conference and their subsequent attendance at the event. This feedback is analyzed and used to identify the nature and scope of improvements required for running similar events in the future. In addition to reporting the views and experiences of conference presenters, coverage is extended to that of conference attendees who were requested to provide feedback on their experiences and impressions of attending the virtual conference.

Keywords: Virtual conference; graduate students

## INTRODUCTION

This working paper reports on the inaugural International Hospitality and Tourism Virtual Conference (IHTVC), organized jointly by Purdue University (USA) and the University of Strathclyde (UK) and held in April 2004. Participants were drawn from the graduate student communities of hospitality and tourism students at both Purdue and Strathclyde. This initiative was conceived with the aim of facilitating a unique opportunity for graduate research students from both universities to display and share their research interests in a refereed forum and to demonstrate their technological capabilities to a global audience. This inaugural conference enabled research students to be part of an innovative and groundbreaking symposium which contributes to the advancements in the use of technology for multi-cultural learning, exchange of ideas and information sharing in the hospitality and tourism field.

For the conference, students were required to develop a virtual poster based on PowerPoint slides and accompanied with an audio voice over provided by each participant. Each 'poster' was permitted a maximum of ten slides and consists of a presentation, with audio, of ten minutes duration. All attendees were able to comment on the presentations and encouraged to engage in dialogue with poster presenters.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Based on the foregoing, this paper seeks to capture and convey participants' experiences on a number of key research questions with a view to developing and enhancing similar future virtual encounters between research students on a larger scale. To this end the paper reports on feedback solicited from participants on their experiences in preparing for and subsequently attending a virtual conference. In addition, we report on the feedback and comment from those who attended the virtual conference.

## METHODOLOGY

In light of the overall exploratory purpose of the research it was decided that the most effective method to capture participants' views and to stimulate reflection was through the organization of two focus groups: one at Purdue and one at Strathclyde. Each focus group was recorded and subsequently transcribed with key themes within – and across – each group of students identified. Feedback and comment from attendees was gathered using a facility provided on the conference Internet site.

Ultimately this paper is concerned with identifying the key issues associated with the use of this technology and the experiences of presenters in the context of similar virtual events. The longer term focus concerns identifying the potential for the IHTVC to become a global event which utilizes technological applications and innovative techniques to support the development of graduate student research in travel and tourism.

## INVESTIGATING BIRDING FESTIVAL ATTENDEES

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### ABSTRACT

For communities near wildlife refuges, bird watching can provide economic benefits. North Dakota has several wildlife refuges and many communities are exploring the possibilities of capitalizing on these natural resources. Festivals often attract non-residents that contribute to the local economy. An intercept survey was conducted to collect data from people attending a birding festival in North Dakota. Expenditure data will be analyzed to estimate the economic impact of the event. Images and satisfaction levels will be used to identify target markets for future events.

Keywords: birding, economic impact

### INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

Across the United States, birding festivals are increasing in popularity (Cordell & Herbert, 2002; Kim, Scott, Thigpen, & Kim, 1998). For rural communities with limited commercial attractions, natural resources represent a viable prospect for developing tourism. Birding festivals provide an opportunity for rural communities to attract many tourists. Festivals often attract non-residents that make substantial expenditures throughout the event. Expenditures for lodging, meals, gasoline, and other services often provide communities with much needed economic activity. Accordingly, more rural communities are seeking to enhance tourism to their area via the development of birding festivals.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service estimated that in 2001, over 18 million Americans traveled away from home for the primary purpose of bird watching (LaRouche, 2003). They found that state residents spent an average of \$35 per day and non-residents spent an average of \$134 per day on wildlife watching recreation. The report also indicated the states with the highest percentage of birders per the number of residents include those around North Dakota (Montana 44%, Wisconsin, 41%, Minnesota 36%, Wyoming 34%, Iowa 34%, and South Dakota 33%). Therefore, bird watching has potential to contribute significantly to the state economy.

The second annual Birding Drives Dakota festival was held in June of 2004. Festival organizers wanted to assess the economic impacts of the festival on the area. The festival organizers have received limited support from local businesses and organizations. It is the festival organizers' intent to demonstrate the value to the community of holding a birding festival. The analysis of the economic impact of the festival will give festival organizers data to

support the benefits of having non-residents visit the area. The organizers also wanted to learn more about the attendees to develop marketing plans for the future.

## METHODS

An intercept survey of attendees asked participants how they learned about the event, images of the area, satisfaction with the event, services utilized and desired, expenditures within the area, and demographic characteristics. An attempt was made to survey all festival attendees. Fifty-four completed questionnaires, representing 80 people (some families completed one questionnaire) were collected (an estimated response rate of over 90%). Of the respondents, 76% reported they were not local residents.

The expenditure data will be analyzed with an input-output model to estimate the economic impact of the event, including the direct and indirect impacts of non-residents. This will help organizers demonstrate the value of the festival to local businesses and increase the likelihood of gaining business owners' support for the event in the future. The images of the area and satisfaction levels will be analyzed and used to develop a marketing plan for the 2005 event.

The results will help identify the target market, and generate promotional and product development ideas. Past research has indicated the demographic profile of birders is shifting to include younger, less educated, and lower income groups (Cordell & Herbert, 2002; LaRouche, 2003). Results from the current survey will help identify if this is true for North Dakota festival attendees.

Rural tourism is not a panacea. Results from the survey can be used to give festival organizers and local businesses a realistic expectation of the economic impact of this type of event. The participants' perception of the event and demographic information will also help organizers target future participants.

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# CONCEPTUAL BRANDING MODEL FOR SPECIAL INTEREST TOURISM – APPLICATION IN WINE TOURISM

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## ABSTRACT

Studies are abundant on consumer goods branding; and research work on destination branding is emerging. In contrast, the concepts of branding have been rarely explored in the field of special interest tourism (SIT). The current study applies branding concepts to one form of SIT, wine tourism. A conceptual model for branding SIT is proposed based on the study of existing literature on destination branding. The application of this model will be discussed in a case study of wine tourism in Indiana.

Key words: special interest tourism, branding, wine tourism, destination image.

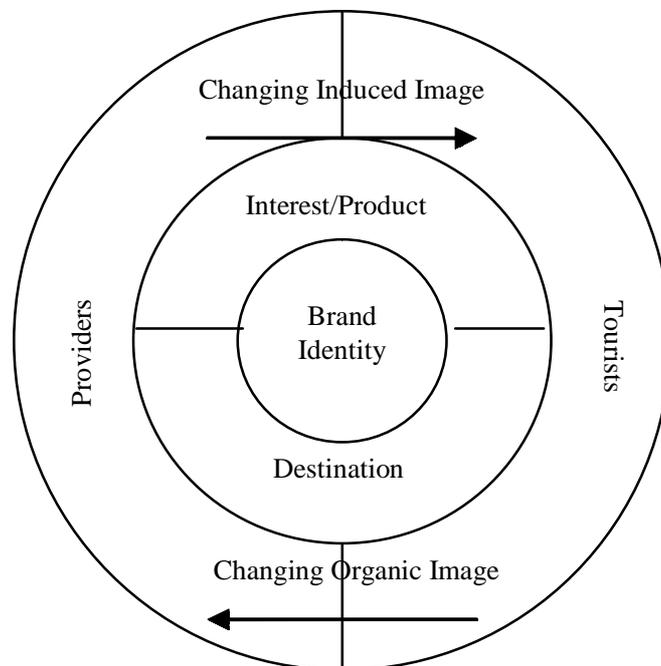
## INTRODUCTION

Special Interest Tourism (SIT) is specialized tourism involving group or individual tours by people who wish to develop certain interests and visit sites and places connected with a specific subject (World Tourism Organization, 1985). It is now growing on a world wide scale (Crockett & Wood, 1999). The increasingly competitive tourism marketplace arouses the concern of SIT providers to develop strategies for distinguishing their products. Successful branding can help establish a meaningful point of difference and plays a key role in making the product the market's choice (D'Hautesserre, 2001). However, the concepts of branding have been rarely explored in the area of theme-based tourism products or SIT. The current study focuses on filling this void by applying branding concepts to one form of SIT, wine tourism.

Efforts have been made in the study of destination branding (e.g., Cai, 2002; Crockett & Wood, 1999; D'Hautesserre, 2001; Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott, 2003). These extant works were largely extended from the destination image research (e.g., Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Dolnicar, Grabler & Mazanec, 1999; Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Gartner, 1993) and in the domain of consumer goods branding (e.g., Keller, 2002; Netemeyer, Krishnan, Pullig, Wang, Yagci & Dean, 2004). Theories regarding image formation, image building and the relationship between these two blocks have been proposed. It is commonly accepted that destination branding model constitutes two inter-connected modules: image formation module from customers' side and image building module from providers' side. They affect each other in a two-dimensional way. Integrated marketing activity changes the induced image of customers in the image formation module and inner formation of destination image leads the changing of the organic image presented by the providers in the image building module. This evolution would finally result in a consistent brand identity for the destination. These theoretical foundations provide a conceptual framework for the study of SIT branding.

Two SIT characteristics delineate SIT branding from destination branding (Douglas, Douglas & Derrett, 2001; Weiler & Hall, 1992). First, SIT tourists are devoted to a particular form of travel rather than to a specific destination. This difference helps identify many groups of tourists and also result in a different image formation of SIT products. Second, small business entrepreneurs are the driving force behind the development of SIT. They are central to wealth creation and distribution in the SIT, as well as to the SIT branding. In destination branding, the destination marketing organization will lead the branding efforts of one geographic region. Thus, SIT providers will tend to combine both the positioning strategy of the company and that of the destination to convey an attractive brand. By analyzing existing SIT image literatures on skiing, shopping, Santa Clause, music, wine, cultural, gaming and education tourism (Chaney, 2002; D'Hautseserre, 2001; Getz, 2000; Hall, Sharples, Cambourne, & Macionis, 2002; Judd, 1995; Lockshin & Spawton, 2001; Martin & Haugh, 1999; Pretes, 1995; Sellars, 1998; Williams & Fidgeon, 2000; Wong & Law, 2002), two major components which concern image formation and image building of SIT are identified. One is the interest that motivates tourists to go for the SIT tour. This interest is very often presented as a specific product, such as products sold in the shops, wine produced in the wineries, casino resort, education institute, and music and bar. The other is the destination where interest/product “grows”. SIT can not exist in isolation from the destination that it is located in. Their images are associated with each other, so are the efforts made for branding. A conceptual branding model for SIT is proposed by integrating these two components with the extant concepts of destination branding (Figure 1).

Figure 1  
Conceptual Branding Model for SIT



To apply this conceptual model, the two modules of image formation and image building need to be further illustrated. Previous studies of destination branding suggest that image formation system composes attribute, affective and attitudes components while image building system composes marketing programs, marketing communications, and managing secondary associations (Cai, 2002). Specifications are still needed for developing these

components in SIT branding. The current study chooses wine tourism as a representative form of SIT. Wine tourism is recognized as a rapidly growing segment of SIT. The branding of winery is considered essential for achieving the benefits of wine tourism as well as creating strong brands for the company and the region where it is located. The case of Indiana wine tourism is used for testing this model.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques will be used in this study. The owners of the wineries and the directors of convention and visitors bureaus in the region will be interviewed to gather data in both image formation and image building modules. The projected organic image will be identified through content analysis of Indiana wineries' news and print advertisements. The induced image will be gathered through a visitors' image survey. The organic image projected by wineries' marketing activities will be compared to the visitors' induced image to measure the effectiveness of SIT branding.

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# DEVELOPMENT OF ADVANCED TOURISM TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND EDUCATIONAL SECTORS

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to promote the use of advanced telecommunications and information technologies in public, private, and educational sectors. Development of networked kiosks\* will drive visitor adoption, loyalty, and use with a convenient and intuitive interface for improved customer/visitor retention and attainment. The implementation of networking kiosks will allow data sharing across different applications and platforms. With innovations such as data transmission security, the developed networked kiosks will allow off-site public staff, private workers, and researchers comparable access to the same data and network speeds. Outcomes of this study will enable the sharing and creation of a broad range of public and business information (including state and local government tourism services; attraction services; real time data collection and analyses; and resources that promote self-sufficiency) and an improved level of satisfaction for resident and non-resident visitors.

Keywords: Advanced telecommunications and information technologies, Kiosk Information Systems

\*Kiosk Information Systems (KIS) provide tourist information including weather, interstate construction, and attraction information and conduct an on-site touch-screen visitor survey.

## INTRODUCTION

Data collection standards in the tourism industry do not exist and current information is not well gathered and reported. Currently, national and state-by-state statistical information is always two or more years old. It is impossible to make current decisions with out-of-date information. This study will implement a real-time data collection and reporting system that will provide public sector, private sector and educational partners with current decision-making information and analyses. The implementation of networked research will allow data sharing across different applications and platforms. Information collected from the selected 13 welcome centers coupled with the supports of public agencies and private businesses will enable the hospitality and tourism units to operate more effectively.

Researchers will retrieve tourism and service related data sets from the networked kiosks directly. The analysis of this data will be almost immediate and information will be provided to partners on a timely basis. Particularly, researchers can make

recommendations to public and private sections regarding how the agencies and companies can achieve their strategies, and demonstrate the nature of competition and the dynamics within the tourism and service industries in Tennessee. Based on the input provided by the visitors regarding their travel experiences and needs, both public and private tourism related business will understand their customers better, create new business/attraction opportunities and sustain its competitive advantage in the marketplace.

#### APPROACHES THAT EMPLOY NETWORK TECHNOLOGIES

The methodology will be a real time data collection and analyses process. Visitor data to be collected includes, but is not limited to (1) origins of visitor, (2) socioeconomic background, (3) trip motivation, (4) trip behaviors, (5) travel expenditures, (6) purchase behaviors, and (7) service needs. Results of the real time research will benefit local and regional communities, tourism related non-profit agencies at the local level, and state agencies in developing tourism and marketing efforts, and economic related strategies. Included in the appendices are results of two studies that incorporated the use of touch screen technologies for visitor research.

#### DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PLANS

The data collection and analysis plan of this study will revolutionize the information provided to tourism professionals. It will improve the information turn-around from many months or years to a matter of days or weeks. The information will be also utilized to create innovative educational and training methods. Outcomes of this study will enable the sharing and creation of a broad range of public information including state and local government tourism services; attraction services; and resources that promote self-sufficiency and an improved level of satisfaction for resident and non-resident visitors. More importantly, the project investigator hope that the development, implementation, and evaluation of networking kiosks are to aid in future tourism technological development strategies at city, county, and state levels.

Note:

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