

ICSIM

Film Tourism Triangulation of Destinations

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Abstract

Marketing of destinations through films by product placement is a new phenomenon applied by DMOs since they have realized its economic impact on driving tourists to destinations by creating a desirable image visually and literally in films. In order to support film tourism that enhances the brand image of the destination, DMOs adapt many activities to attract filmmakers through various strategies. In this regard, film tourism is studied by many scholars but for the first time this research aims to center both qualitative and quantitative research in addition to the literature review. This study targets all the members of DMAI with their activities related to destination marketing before and after the release of films through a quantitative research. In addition each destination website was examined to find out how destinations benefit internet technology through a list of items in terms of destination marketing. The results provide fruitful implications both for scholars and practitioners.

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1. Introduction

Books regularly lead to new streams of tourists, and have been doing so for a long time (Reijnders, 2011). But when subject is a film, it is only possible to come ‘closer’ to the story once it is clear where the story takes place, and once the location has been ‘validated.’ (Reijnders, 2011). In fact, a deeper emotional connection between viewers and a TV drama is an important vehicle for the audiences to become film tourists (Kim, 2012). Prospective tourists are deemed to be drawn to destinations through the assimilation of images of places used as backgrounds and foregrounds in the (popular) media productions (Kim, 2012). The main implication is the product placement one - that its use as a film location has considerable value; consequently it is worthwhile taking steps to attract television film and movie companies, and making the best use of the exposure once secured (Tooke & Baker, 1996). Films are a passive involvement entertainment form, rarely employed as a promotional device primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal, and profitability of tourist destinations (Tooke & Baker, 1996). A movie may generate and sustain interest in a destination in a way which destination marketers cannot afford to do (Tooke & Baker, 1996).

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The exposure a film gives a city, province or country is an advertisement viewed by 72 million people, the average worldwide screen audience for a movie (Tooke & Baker, 1996). A TV programme or a motion picture in a prime destination not only brings in money to the location during the actual filming, which could be quite significant, it can also inspire people to visit the location for years afterwards (Kima et. al, 2007). Many fans may become familiar with a destination by participating in various activities related to the celebrity (Lee et al. 2008). Thus, this study focuses on studying film tourism and destination-marketing organizations related activities from a perspective that combines both quantitative and qualitative research on the same subject.

2. Film Tourism Promotion Through DMOs

Recognition gained from motion picture films can be substantial and the recouped value through increased tourism, when compared with paid advertising promotions, is worthwhile (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). If a film has uniqueness, status or timely significance it will magnify the tourism potential of a destination (Riley & Van Doren, 1992). In the same study of Riley & Van Doren (1992) it's been mentioned that motion picture films do adhere to the definition of 'hallmark events' because they are of limited duration in viewing time and in the number of days at cinematic venues. On the other hand, unlike movies, TV series provide weekly reinforcements of a destination's appeal and local tourism boosters state that top-of-mind awareness can do wonders for tourism (Kima et. al, 2007). For the purpose of attracting tourism, the creative placement of a tourist destination can be achieved by having onscreen characters with whom viewers can develop strong parasocial relationships, exhibit positive attitudes toward the location (Su et al. 2011). For instance, celebrities are cultural icons that can act as a proxy for shaping the perceptions and needs of many audience members in a postmodern society (Lee et al. 2008). On the other hand cultural proximity plays a key role in determining the strength of the effects. To make product placement (TV-induced tourism) a more effective strategy, it is important for a country to promote its cultural symbols or heritage internationally (Su et al. 2011). Furthermore, destination managers should develop and commoditise souvenirs containing emotional meaning and nostalgic values embedded in viewers' viewing experiences (Kim, 2012).

3. Triangulation

Methodological triangulation: involves using more than one method to gather data, such as interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documents (Hussein, 2009). (Decrop, 1999). Decrop (1999) describes triangulation as derived from topography and first used in the military and navigation sciences, the concept has been fruitfully adapted to social science inquiry. This method of triangulation is based on the triangle analogy implying that a single point is considered from three different and independent sources (Decrop, 1999). Denzin (1989) cited in Kimchi et al. (1991) explains triangulation in research as an effort to make it the study clearer. Method triangulation entails the use of multiple methods to study a single problem that can be different qualitative methods or a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques (Decrop, 1999). 'Triangulation' can be achieved by using different research technique which are helpful for cross-checking and used to provide confirmation and completeness, which brings 'balance' between two or more different types of research (Yeasmin & Rahman: 2012). According to Decrop (1999), since each method has its own boundaries and biases, and single methodologies result in personal biases, using multiple methods covers the way for more credible and dependable information. Thus, qualitative data can be used to strengthen quantitative research designs in general (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

Triangulation means looking at the same phenomenon, or research question, from more than one source of data which the information coming from different angles can be used to corroborate, elaborate or illuminate the research problem.(Decrop, 1999). Often this purpose in specific contexts is to obtain confirmation of findings through convergence of different perspectives (Yeasmin & Rahman: 2012). 'Triangulation' for completeness purposes is used mainly in researching the less explored or unexplored research problems (Yeasmin & Rahman: 2012). This type of triangulation is very similar to the mixed method approaches used in social science research, where the results from one method are used to enhance, augment and clarify the results of another (Hales, 2010:15).

In social science research, the concept of triangulation is used metaphorically; it has various meanings and involves many corresponding procedures (Paulien et al., 2002). Hales (2010:18) implies that data and methods triangulation can reinforce the validity and credibility of a finding, which makes it much easier to explain and

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