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THE CAPITALIZING OF THE FILM-INDUCED TOURISM PHENOMENON THROUGH STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION IN YORKSHIRE, UK

The need for a thorough investigation into how the film induced tourism phenomenon can be maximised upon through stakeholder collaboration was particularly evident from the literature review undertaken. It showed that there was a significant research gap in the successful collaboration of this relatively new phenomenon into a destination's marketing activities. To proceed to the next stage of research, the key tourism and film stakeholders behind the Yorkshire brand were interviewed as the main objective of this research is *to discover to what extent the integration of film and tourism has actually occurred in Yorkshire*. Unfortunately, in Yorkshire, the tourism and film stakeholders do not work together, even when a big budget film is being produced there. This represents a failed valuable opportunity when the brand could be successfully integrated into any film promotion packages.

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Introduction

In an ever more celebrity-led universal society, the global opportunities offered through film induced tourism are vast but are only just starting to be realized. Although the success of film induced tourism can be linked to the success of a film, up until now there is no precise means to predict this. In spite of this, destinations hosting films seen by millions worldwide stand to benefit from film induced tourism: even if the plot is a failure, the landscape can be a winner. Some may think the film speaks for itself but the tourist stakeholders have become conscious that with well-targeted marketing and film industry support, they can further exploit the interest created. VisitBritain's¹ movie maps and New Zealand's destination branding strategies in connection with *The Lord of the Rings* are prime examples of this (Mintel 2003: 21). Collaborative campaigns with the film industry are a commanding way to induce film tourists (Grihault 2003). Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)² are beginning to form relationships with film stakeholders, with the intention of pursuing productions and film releases, so they are in a position to act as soon as they see the signs of film induced tourism (Hudson and Ritchie 2006a: 259–260).

The continuing effect of film and television series on destinations is crucial in the present international environment. Tooke and Baker (1996) recommend that encouraging media companies to film in destinations ought to be made part of destination policies and procedures, in light of the rising tourist numbers and inbound tourism statistics enticed by a film or a television series. For that reason, it is obvious that a wide range of industries should take advantage of the relationship between tourism and film/television (Corlett 1998: 128).

The Case Study

¹ VisitBritain, the national tourism agency, promotes the UK internationally in 36 markets and England in the UK, France, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands (VisitBritain, 2008).

² A DMO is an organization at any level which is responsible for the marketing of an identifiable destination. Therefore, this excludes separate government departments that are responsible for planning and policy (Pike 2004: 14).

Yorkshire was selected as the case study area as it has been the film location for many popular television series and films. It is also the subject of much location research within the tourism discipline (see Beeton 2000, 2005; Mordue 1999, 2001; O'Connor *et al.* 2005, 2006, 2008). The need for a thorough investigation into the film induced tourism phenomenon was particularly evident from the literature review undertaken, as it showed that there was a significant research gap in the successful integration of this phenomenon and destination marketing.

Through the literature review a number of implications for the future development of such destinations are highlighted, for instance, the many positive and negative impacts of filming the various television series in a destination and the use of destination branding in the promotion of a film destination. To proceed to the next stage of research, the key tourism and film stakeholders behind the Yorkshire brand were interviewed as the main objective of this research is *to discover to what extent the integration of film and tourism has actually occurred in Yorkshire.*

Research Approach

Data collection via strategic conversations with the key stakeholders behind the Yorkshire brand was undertaken in July 2006 (see Table 1). All of the respondents had extensive and specialist knowledge of the specific matters pertaining to the Yorkshire brand and thus, they were the most effective method of obtaining detailed in-depth information. The 28 stakeholders were chosen based on their current positions to facilitate representing the views of the film and tourism industry in Yorkshire. While this method is subjective, the researcher picked the most well-informed tourism and film stakeholders that represent an industry based perspective (see Table 1).

Table 1. Stakeholders Interviewed

EM-Media (x 1)	National Park Authority (NPA) (x 4)	Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) (x 1)
Regional Screen Agency (RSA) <i>Screen Yorkshire (x 2)</i> <i>Screen South (x 1)</i> <i>Screen East (x 1)</i>	Screen tourism.com (x 1)	University of Nottingham (x 1)
Regional Tourism Authority (RTA) (x 4) <i>Scarborough District Council</i> <i>Kirklees Council</i> <i>York Tourist Bureau</i> <i>Hambleton District Council</i>	England's North Country (x 1)	The National Trust (x 1)
Tourism Information Centre (TIC) (x 3)	UK Film Council (x 1)	Yorkshire Tourist Board (YTB) (x 2)
VisitBritain (x 4)	Yorkshire Forward (x 1)	

Issues for discussion materialized from the literature review had to be customized for the different interviewees, since each stakeholder, depending on their knowledge and experience of the several areas under review, could tackle specific issues more fittingly.

Results

Tourist stakeholders should be aware of the benefits of using positive destination images in a film or a television series

England's North Country feels that for any real maximization of potential, the tourist authorities and the RSAs have to work more closely together and the tourist authorities, in particular, have to take a more active strategic approach to the concept. This is where the

opportunity really lies (YTB, 2006) and it needs to be negotiated before cinematic release (University of Nottingham, 2006). The UK Film Council maintains that its current film induced tourism research project integrates these. Screen Yorkshire feels that it has never really had a strong working relationship with the YTB, whereas the York Tourist Bureau claims to work closely with both film producers and Screen Yorkshire in relation to possible film locations within the City of York. The YTB is currently developing a filming location pack for York for these producers and Screen Yorkshire to induce such tourism.

The RTA needs to work with local councils to facilitate filming requests and to actually make it happen efficiently so that everyone has a positive experience. It is no good having an ideal location or a beautiful village if the local council does not want to co-operate. By working with the RSA, the RTA will develop a working relationship with the production companies. This will help them identify possible publicity shots as not all production companies are happy to give this information away and timing is crucial, so contact via a RSA is vital. Scarborough District Council has been doing this for the last few years with Screen Yorkshire, as they have found that the more they work with one other, the more the region benefits from the positive impacts of film induced tourism.

As more destinations see the benefits of film induced tourism, marketers are getting more proactive and working closer with the film industry (VisitBritain, 2006). They have done this in the past as it seems to really work (UK Film Council, 2006) as with *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Da Vinci Code* =The producers of the *Miss Potter* film were considering using Scotland instead of Cumbria for the filming location but the Cumbrian Screen Commission lowered their location fees to attract the production. They were very proactive and they sent out a comprehensive guide to location managers and production companies to encourage filming there (The National Trust, 2006). The Peak District National Park is also

working EM Media, their local RSA, to promote their local film locations but it is only a small part of their overall work.

The importance of the financial contribution of film induced tourism to the destination

The suggestion that tourism stakeholders might financially contribute to filming so that they will gain the right to control how these images are portrayed in media is not likely, nor can this be financed on an individual basis by the local authorities. VisitBritain has developed close partnerships with film companies in relation to *Harry Potter* and *The Da Vinci Code*. The tourism stakeholders need to liaise with the production companies at the post film production stage, as the film stakeholders tend to be more concerned with their own needs and not those of stakeholders.

Many stakeholders such as VisitBritain do not believe that getting directly involved in the production of a film is beneficial for the tourism stakeholders. The buy-in from the National Tourism Authorities³ (NTO) to a film or television series can be very effective especially if done internationally as with *Pride and Prejudice*. Some stakeholders have worked together successfully in the past but much of this depends on the tax breaks which endorse films as seen with *The Lord of the Rings* and TNZ but not with *The Da Vinci Code*, which was mentioned by only one stakeholder (VisitBritain, 2006).

Concluding remarks

Closer collaboration between the film and tourism stakeholders

Closer collaboration with the RSAs and actively sponsoring their activities to encourage production, and being as film friendly as possible is crucial for continued success. Once it is secured, a closer collaborative partnership is essential in order to decide on a strategic approach to maximize the opportunities which emerge. The destination can then be

³ NTO is generally the government body responsible for tourism at national level.

ready to meet the demand following screening and the production can be woven into the destination brand itself. The tourist stakeholders should meet with the film stakeholders and work out how both sides can get the maximum exposure for their campaigns; working closer together can provide a fully effective, long-term partnership (VisitBritain, 2006). Film companies should be more forthcoming with publicity photos and clips while the filming destination should have a publicity clause in its contract with the studios (The National Trust, 2006).

VisitBritain works closely with its strategic partners in relation to film induced tourism and plans to continue doing so to facilitate maximized effectiveness and inspiring people to visit what they have seen on the big screen. It is essential to keep abreast of what is being filmed where, and initially maintaining the relationship between the tourism and film stakeholders, namely the production companies, the local authorities, tourism officers and the RSAs. It seems that once a release date is determined this is the point where planning should begin, so that promotional materials are ready to coincide with destination images appearing on the big screen.

Yorkshire's tourism and film stakeholders should work in tandem

Many academic researchers (Beeton 2001a, 2005; Mintel 2003; Mordue 1999, 2001; O'Connor and Flanagan 2000; O'Connor *et al.* 2005, 2006; Tooke and Baker 1996) have studied Yorkshire as a film induced tourism destination. They suggest that the YTB could benefit more from incorporating film and television into tourism destination marketing and planning, but so far they have not been very proactive considering the number of film and television series, that have freely promoted Yorkshire to date. Currently, film induced tourism is not a strategic priority for the YTB and it has no plans to use it in its future marketing and/or branding campaigns. Previously, the YTB had used it (when devising the *Yorkshire on Screen Film Trail* - 2001/2002), but it was not deemed financially viable to

continue in the long term. The use of the film induced tourism phenomenon seems to have been a success in recent times, as seen with *Pride and Prejudice* where agencies such as the Peak District National Park have worked with their RSA, EM-Media. They responded to demand and produced materials to encourage tourism.

Unfortunately, in Yorkshire, the tourism and film stakeholders do not work together, even when a big budget film like *Harry Potter* is being produced there. This represents a failed valuable opportunity when the brand could be successfully integrated into any film promotion packages as seen in the Peak District. Ideally, the multiplier effects should be considered during the shooting of the film or television series. Screen East claims that moving image media tend to strengthen the brand they are trying to portray. It can become even more successful if the tourist board and the local tourism officers collaborate with their respective RSAs which presently is not happening in Yorkshire.

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