

The Role of Cultural Institutions and Events in the Marketing of Cities and Regions

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Preserving heritage and culture of a city with tourism

Introduction

A building can be a piece of art exactly the same as pictures. This notion is argued by many scholars, yet a building designed in a way that can both satisfy practical needs and instigate aesthetical pleasure is equal to a painting.

It is understandable that the “use” of tourism in a particular location involves the construction of services that must necessarily interact with the consumer who is a tourist and, besides, with all the people who live in the area in question.

Low cost airlines have changed the dynamics of tourism. It is not simply the search for warm weather but often a holiday weekend or two weeks abroad cost less than the equivalent vacation at home. Anywhere you go, airports are packed with people travelling — Concorde type first class exclusivity has gone — mass travel has taken over.

In today’s travel environment, destinations have become competitive. Governments subsidize low cost seats in budget airlines to keep them flying to less popular destinations or to keep them coming in shoulder or winter seasons. National economies compete and fight for the tourist’s dollar, yen, euro, yuan, crown or £ pound.

Tourism could help maintain the quality of architecture and preserve architectural heritage in historic districts.

The end result can be good if the money spent by tourists is used to preserve the area of a city with modern or historic architecture.

So what is the purpose of the tourism realm in the 21st century?

1. Tourism as a product

While global tourism has grown steadily at 7% annually over the last 5 years, recent growth has been limited by the financial crisis. The UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reports that it “expects 2009 international tourism [growth] to be in the range of 0 percent to a 2 percent decline.” However, the UNWTO also reports that the niche markets of adventure and cultural tourism are two of the strongest segments of the tourism industry and that culture has become a component in almost 40% of all international trips.

In 2010, according to data from the World Tourism Organization (WTO), international tourist arrivals totaled 940 million worldwide, 58 million more than in the previous year. The year 2010 reversed the downward trend of international tourist arrivals recorded in 2009, with a year-on-year growth of 6.6%, the highest since 2005. In 2010, tourism activity showed global positive results on the supply side, which marked the reversal of the downward trend in tourism after negative results of 2009, linked to international economic crisis.

It means that tourism will be one of the most important industries in the future, and architecture provides impulses to examine regional identity as well as the lifestyle.

Starting with basic understanding of what is a product, a good example is given by Kotler (Kotler, 1983), who defines product as “anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a want or need. It includes physical objects, services, persons, places, organization, and ideas”. By this definition Kotler explains that products are not just physical objects, but also services, persons, places, organizations, and ideas that constitute tourism.

There are different approaches to the definition of a product in tourism. Various articles analyze the definition of a tourism product, its main components and models.

Medlik and Middleton in 1973 define tourism products as a bundle of activities, services, and benefits that constitute the entire tourism experience. (Medlik and Middleton, 1973, pp. 28–35). According to them, a tourism product consists of five components: destination attractions, destination facilities, accessibility, images, and price. In later articles Middleton (1989) explains that the term „tourism product” at two different levels. These two levels differ by the experience of the tourist. One level is a more “specific” experience, which is that of a discrete product offered by a single business such as a sightseeing tour or an airline seat. The other is the “total” level, which is the complete experience of the tourist from the time one leaves home to the time one returns. The „total” level is synonymous with the „components model.”

Other authors, Jefferson and Lickorish (1988), offer another version of the tourism product and provide two definitions for clearer understanding and for covering the most of the meaning. First view of the tourism product is more general — a „collection of physical and service features together with symbolic associations which are expected to fulfil the wants and needs of the buyer” (Jefferson and Lickorish, 1988, p. 59) and, more succinctly, the tourism product „is a satisfying activity at a desired destination” (Jefferson and Lickorish, 1988, p. 211).

Smith (1994, pp. 582–595) suggests one more way of looking at a tourism product. In his article he discusses many models and definitions. As a ground of his research he suggests his own model of a tourism product but also, and more importantly, his conclusion is that the tourism product is more than the sum of its parts. He emphasizes that the success of a product in meeting the needs of tourists is determined by how well each element is designed and integrated with others. In his terms, the tourism product

is not a simple combination of elements, but a result of synergistic interaction among all the components.

Differently than other authors mentioned above, Gunn is one of the few who highlighting the necessity of having a clear concept of what constitutes a tourism product: „Misunderstanding of the tourism product is often a constraint in a smoothly functioning tourism system” (Gunn, 1988, p. 10). He states that a tourism product is fundamentally a complex human experience (not a simple, objective commodity) and that tourism product development must be an integrated process involving information services, transportation, accommodations, and attractions.

Tourism product is a service that can be enjoyed by tourists from the place of origin, in a tourist destination, until returning to their homes, which is supported by: tourist attractions, facilities and services, product price, accessibility support that can facilitate travel activities (Bukart and Medlik, 1986, p. 151).

Having this definition of a tourists product, it can be understood as a complex package of services and products tourists receive during the time they spend in a certain place or travelling from one place to another.

With this paper we intend to explain why tourism could help to preserve local architectural culture. Tourist product is produced and consumed in one and the same place.

Competition between business services exploits tourism products, which promote contributions of various social groups and reflect their coexistence. They bear some connotations with the industry of goods and services organized to produce tangible and intangible assets to satisfy the needs of local population.

Tourism product consists of activities and services related to accommodation, food, transportation, typical local products, leisure facilities, and entertainment.

The results produced by the use of a tourism product need to be profitable for companies and individuals who dedicate time and financial investment to tourism. Through the acquisition of foreign currency from tourism activities, collection of taxes, tourism activities will encourage local, regional and national growth.

Apart from Europe, no other major economic region has ever enjoyed such a wide range of support to tourism industry. As a result, more and more sophisticated regulatory regimes and lobbying for change — or resistance to change — have accounted for a large part of the business model applied to rebuild old buildings that in some areas are almost artificial, like a big playground for tourists, and not for local people.

Feeling the squeeze post the credit crunch crisis, in a new age of austerity, the maintenance of historic cities has discontinued and signs of degradation began to appear in buildings and on the streets, sweeping away both tourists and local people.

To resolve the problem we propose in this research paper that the money earned from tourism should be used directly for the maintenance of these areas.

We all observe emerging and increasing concerns about sustainability and pollution-related aspects. We also see the comeback of old traditions, old-style businesses, local and natural products. Another observation is that tourists like to shop in these traditional areas, to eat and try the local food, and they are keen on discovering the local identity.

With the resurgence of traditional forms of business, which were replaced by large franchising companies, the same everywhere, people are coming back to live in city centres, thus keeping the memory of the place. It is this local memory that tourists begin to seek, they want to understand, to see how local people live, and understand their customs and traditions.

There is a new type of tourists, more culture-oriented, who seek to understand cultural identities of each site.

If in the future we can return a little to the past, we believe that cultural identity of each country will be preserved.

Globalization, in general sense, is positive but if we take a closer look at nonexistent cultural barriers combined with the absence of local policies addressing historical and social protection, we realize that politically the strongest countries, together with major international brands, can very easily conquer the space of non material and material culture.

Stop thinking and reboot!

2. Culture vs tourism

2.1. Culture

Culture is a set of distinctive features characterizing spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional paradigm of a particular nation. Moreover, it encourages self-identification and motivation for regional cultural performances. However, culture is not a monolithic concept; it develops with people like a living system. In some cases the evolution of culture can be seen in contrast with other cultures. It evolves through interactions and exchange of ideas, values, and rituals.

Cultural diversity, which exists on the planet, makes the world more distinctive and saturated. In this case the preservation of cultural identity of a specific nation is extremely important. In the time of globalization when the boundaries of original cultures blur, every nation wishes to preserve its heritage not only when it comes to customs, traditions, and language, but also historical places and buildings, which embody the knowledge of a nation, its legacy, and spirit.

2.2. Tourism (Definition and point of views)

Tourism generates not only tremendous revenue, but also assists the spreading of knowledge about a country and the culture of a particular nation. It is broadly agreed that tourism has an impact on identities of places (Kneafsey, 1998, pp. 11–112).

In the global scale, the Western culture reached its peak of dissemination, so there is a vivid contrast between the cultures of the Western world and the others. As one can admit, tourism is the vehicle of cultural exchange and the purpose to reach homogeneous cultures through meeting common people, visiting historically or aesthetically significant sites and places.

People had to use the streets, squares, markets and parks of the city regardless of these places' quality and attractiveness.

One question started to emerge: what are the changing expectations *vis-à-vis* city space?

Market research helps governments develop architectural project that are close to market needs as well as successfully involve architecture in tourism marketing. There is data available concerning market needs, trends and opportunities, potential target groups and the evaluation of users and guests of contemporary architecture. However,

some scholars claim that tourism is an instrument of expansion. For example, some researchers while visiting Ladakh admitted that crucial change took place in the region after it had been visited by Western tourists. They admitted that the people of Ladakh began to feel stress, loneliness, and fear of growing old, unemployment, inflation, etc., all fears characteristic of the Western society (Reinfield, 2003, pp. 2–3).

Some scholars noticed that some cultures felt inferior to the Western one because of its high technological development and expansive nature.

While a lot of researchers raise the topic of negative consequences of mass tourism, like environmental pollution, diseases and destruction of cultural homogeneity, its positive outcomes are often forgotten. A number of works have shown how ethnicity is represented, perceived, and reinvented through the tourist gaze (Stronza, 2008, pp. 244–245).

The ability of people to interact with such vast quantity of different cultures is a privilege of every human being of this world. However, every nation has to develop strong connection with its cultural legacy for the purpose to preserve its roots and maintain healthy relationship with the world and environment around them. Nowadays, one can observe positive outcomes of globalization. The growing importance of traditional local cultures passed from generation to generation originates from the fact that local and regional interests are strengthened against negative effects of globalization (Illes, 2004, pp. 1–2).

It builds not only strong connection between the nation and its culture, but develops tourism and attracts more people. In some cultures tourism plays the most important role in economic development of the country and is the main source of revenue for the majority of people.

As more and more governments recognize the contribution that travel and tourism make — or could make — to their economies and employment, they turn to change the methodologies of urban planning and protection of historical areas. The brand of a place increasingly more often determines the directions where people, capital and ideas flow. More and more cities, destinations and communities have realized that they need to take a strategic (versus organic) approach to developing their brand positioning in order to compete on the global stage.

Tourism activity in its different reflections puts emphasis on accommodation capacity, number of guests and overnight stays, as well as the total revenue of hotels and similar establishments visited by tourists and classified by the Local Tourism Authority.

If we approach tourism development and strategy from the point of view of what is potentially feasible in a given location, by creating visions of desired future we can identify strategies how to get there. Then, we can promote revitalization of old urban centres, which are usually historical areas, and create a brand for tourist destination.

3. What to do?

3.1. The idea of reconstruction

Reconstruction and preservation and renewal of significant historical places and buildings create strong and healthy relationship with culture and its roots. They may also enhance tourism and economic development. Heritage can take an intangible form, like

language, traditions, and customs or a material form: archaeology, art, movable objects, architecture and landscape (CRATerre-ENSAG, 2006, pp. 8–9).

Preserving architecture as well as its further reconstruction and repairs are the most important elements of preservation of culture and maintaining links with the identity of the nation.

The idea of reconstruction of historical buildings has been discussed by numerous researchers, from historians to archaeologists, since the creation of the first major reconstruction project at Colonial Williamsburg in 1926 (Holland, 2011, pp. 5–6).

Each of them has got her/his arguments justifying on what grounds the building in question should be preserved. There are certain rules of reconstruction, which every professional must know, though there are cases when the reconstruction ruined the original idea of a building breaking the homogeneity of the historical site. Recently, numerous debates are going on if reconstruction is ethical concerning the originality of the building or whether it is inappropriate to change the structure or interior, and/or exterior design.

However, a lot of scholars forget that the majority of historical buildings were created a long time ago and they need to be preserved in a good shape to connect different generations by creating a strong bond with local heritage and culture. There are also security measures adopted to maintain buildings of significant importance by preserving them. This could be one of the light motives of attracting tourists to historic cities, because, if the governments used the strategy, they could win money to maintain and rebuilt these areas. Cities have always experienced many changes during their history. Historic urban quarters have a special place in the city's history because of their cultural, historical and architectural value. They reflect the history of the city's culture and indigenous culture with their unique forms and patterns (Kneafsey, 1998, pp. 111–115).

Cities are often important focal points for the development because they offer concentrations of heritage assets, infrastructure services, private sector activity, and human resources. Improving the conservation and management of urban heritage is not only important for preserving its historic significance, but also for its potential to increase income-earning opportunities, city liveability, and competitiveness (Kneafsey, 1998, pp. 115–123).

3.2. Traditional or modern?

Several architects and planners noticed the opportunity to reconstruct areas of old heritage in cities using money from tourism.

This question is relevant when we plan the reconstruction and methodology to be used, but what kind of reconstruction? Architects must decide if they are going to restore historical patterns and maintain the spirit of that area, or if they are going to introduce new, modern shapes and layouts.

At first glance, the idea to restore according to the old style may appear anti-modernist, but the idea of this research paper is to explain the concept of using funds from tourism for the reconstruction of old buildings, that make part of our memories.

Nowadays, countries, cities and all heritage zones are promoting tourism to develop sustainable policies and practices, which respect socio-cultural communities and cultural costumes but at the same time have the potential to provide, in the future, benefits to the place. Then, they can use money from tourism to reconstruct old heritage.

This is how we could maintain, on the one hand, the memory of the place and cultural costumes, and, on the other hand, attract more tourists.

In 2012, tourism was included, for the first time, in the Outcome Document of RIO+20, and as well in the agenda of G20 leaders. It means the importance of tourism in all economies is growing faster and faster. In 2012, over one billion international tourists travelled across the globe, and by 2030 their number is expected to reach 1.8 billion (UNWTO, 2004, p. 1).

In my opinion countries must use some of the money generated by this development for the reconstruction of traditional cities, in some cases because they were destroyed by the war, and in other cases just because they are very old buildings and it is necessary to reconstruct them to restore their traditional layout. That is what tourists are looking for.

3.3. New methodology and sustainable layout

The global market influences the understanding of aesthetic standards.

We could say that understanding the past leads to the future and, at the same time, to think about sustainability, we have to take into account a complex system that completes and complements three fundamental aspects, i.e.: ecological, economic, and social aspects. Humanity has always used natural resources that the world offers to us. Nowadays, forests are consumed faster than they are planted, giving no time for the regeneration of tree species. The problem is the same with almost all natural resources that we have at our disposal, causing serious disturbances from the point of view of sustainability. Consumption of wood, one of the main resources in the construction sector, from the point of view of architecture, is not compensated by financial costs and levels of pollution arising from transport, storage and processing of new products.

Industries in developed countries consume about 75% of the world energy while the least developed countries, with higher population density, consume only about 25% of the energy available. There is a huge gap in the relationship between energy production/population and tourist product.

Speaking of profits, they should be earned with economic efficiency in mind, existing resources and the costs of their maintenance.

Within the three key elements of the triangle, by attaching higher or lower importance to a specific element, the product changes with the final result.

It becomes an eco-sustainable or a sustainable project. In other words, we combine ecology with technology.

For an architect or designer, the project may include recycled materials, reused or renovated decorative materials. The architect will design in a sustainable way using her/his methodology of work and her/his creative process.

Today everyone talks and thinks in terms of global sustainability and sustainable products. The term "sustainability" is directly associated with the word "support", which means; maintenance, continuation, extension, stay alive. The word "support" represents the idea of being able to continue to maintain.

The design of a sustainable product should follow the example as presented in Figure 1 below.

If we manage to get the maximum of ecological, economic and social aspects, we will be on the right way to building efficient business strategy for tourist industry.

SWAT analysis, is a working tool which provides better understanding of strategies that could be adopted to resolve problems. No matter whether we think of retaining as much grazing land as possible in rural areas — by integrating low environmental im-

pact tourism with renewable energy technologies, and existing agricultural use of land — or preserving existing buildings in urban historical areas.

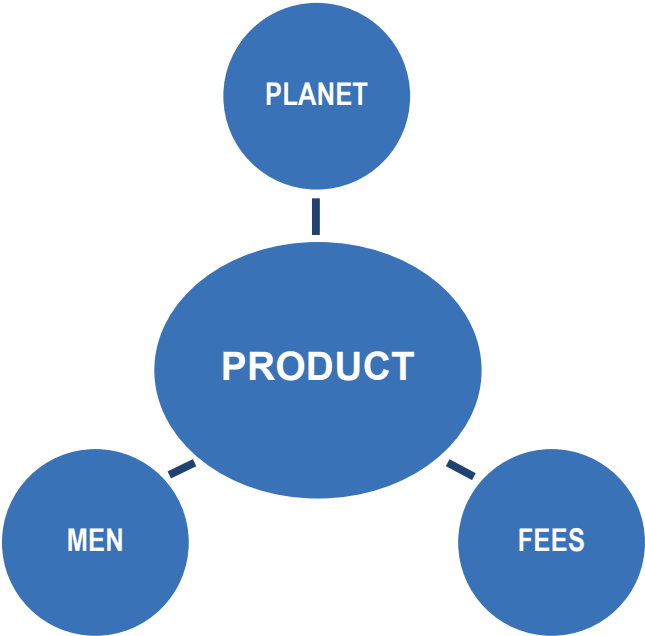


Figure1. Product vs Sustainability

Source: Luís Pinto, 2015.

New buildings must be cheap to build, but unusual enough to attract international interest.

When possible, a solar farm can be incorporated into the landscape to neutralize the carbon footprint left by tourists, if the budget allows. We also should include local markets where local products are sold.

The downtown area of an old city can be understood as a package of certain services and products for tourists and so it should be perceived as one whole product for the tourist.

The methodology that we could suggest to be used for a project in the downtown area of an old city must include the main concept, a unifying brand, a clear structure — segmentation, and marketing strategy.

With this methodology we interact with people and buildings and often transform the city centre in a tourist product.

Conclusion

The value of today’s architecture and reconstruction is the cultural heritage of tomorrow.

Cultural heritage is an essential asset of each nation. Preserving its tangible and intangible legacy bounds all generations together creating an unique essence and spirit of every nation. In its own terms the authenticity of every culture preserves the diversity of

the world and the ability of every human being to learn from the other nations and cultures. In the circumstances of globalization and rapid development of mass tourism, the preservation of historical sites and buildings, in our opinion, plays one of the most important roles. For some people tourism is not so important in preserving local architecture, however, as the time has changed, it is time to face the truth and use digital gadgets to one's advantage.

In conclusion, the existence of a wide range of tourism product models shows the complexity of its nature, involving different levels of service. Furthermore, authors modify the definition of a tourism product from different points of view. Most of them have asserted that tourism product is essentially experiential — not just something that is experienced but rather an experience itself. Others contradict most tourism product definitions, since they lack the sense of perception and clarity. At the same time, they highlight the importance of the clear understanding of tourism product as a success factor for smooth tourism and its development.

Destinations, developers and planners must understand the values and aspirations of tomorrow's consumers. They must analyze and synthesize the importance of historical places for tourists. Investment in infrastructure and heritage conservation that are advantageous for tourism development are also key elements of creating lively cities, in other words, improvements that support tourism also enhance residents' economic opportunities and the standard of living. Moreover, if short-term crisis actions can be aligned with longer-term poverty eradication and climate needs, the overall industry structure may actually be strengthened.

Architecture is a way of expressing cultural diversity and innovative potential of a region, and tourism industry directly helps to preserve it.

For those who are entering the tourist industry it is exciting to understand that tourism is at the heart of radical transformation of the "heritage" European industry, opening up new markets at local, national and international levels.

The tourist industry does not need to live by tariff alone it can help protect the heritage and develop cultural economy.

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