

## **The Parallel Worlds of Tourism Destination Management and the Creative Industries: Exchanging Knowledge, Theory and Practice**

**Key words:** creative industries, destination management, education, professional development

## 1. Introduction

Raunig et al (2011: 185) suggest that, 'culture making is a crucial industry in today's global battle for tourist cash', yet this paper suggests that there is insufficient recognition of critical ideas, professional and cultural practices associated with the 'creative industries' among tourism destination management researchers, practitioners and policy-makers in England. Having established the current position the paper then contributes to the debate about optimising continuing professional development (CPD) by arguing a need for destination managers to explore parallel agendas, knowledge needs, interests, and occupational discourses among creative industry practitioners, and likewise for creative industry practitioners concerning tourism and destination management.

Tourism destination management organisations (DMOs) and arts and cultural agencies in England face deep cuts in their public funding under the Government's economic austerity programme (Coles, Dinan and Hutchison, 2012). There are growing expectations from policy-makers and within the tourism and cultural sectors that they will need to work more closely together and be (co-) funded by the private sector (see Parnell, Millward and Spracklen on increasing private sector involvement in sport development for a parallel debate). Destination managers and arts / cultural officers in England are particularly vulnerable as many have been employed in local government, where deep budgetary cuts have exposed discretionary activities such as tourism and the arts. Both tourism and arts / cultural sector practitioners therefore have shared experiences of the 'changing landscape' regarding public funding of their work, a consequence of which is some pooling of resources and the emergence of closer working relationships at national and local levels.

Tourism, the arts and cultural sectors also currently 'reside' within the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (in England) as the 'home' of national tourist boards VisitBritain and VisitEngland, and also of agencies with strong relationships with tourism, including Arts Council England, English Heritage and Historic Royal Palaces. DCMS also leads on the 'creative industries' (which embraces a range of arts and cultural activities and economic outputs as discussed in section 3 below). However, tourism is not recognised officially as being a component sector of the creative industries although much of the work of destination managers draws on and promotes creative industry *milieux* and artistic outputs as major elements of many, particularly urban, destinations' tourism 'offer'.

A closer and strategic working relationship between VisitEngland (VE) and Arts Council England (ACE) was announced in 2013 (VE/ACE 2013) with their joint statement noting that 'the cultural sector – museums, art galleries, theatres and festivals - are a crucial part of England's visitor economy'. A specific initiative that emerged from the ACE/VE collaboration during 2013-14 was an invitation to consortia involving cultural and destination management organisations to tender for '*Cultural Destination*' status. Successful bids needed to demonstrate that they will build capacity in the cultural and visitor economy sectors in their defined geographical area (which may transcend local government boundaries) and work to reposition cultural organisations to be more prominent in the local visitor economy (ACE, 2013, personal communication). In view of this initiative, destination managers and arts and creative industry practitioners 'on the ground' are having to work more closely with and understand each other's agendas, professional priorities and dispositions, suggesting a need for inter-professional learning, research and development.

However, education and training for tourism and creative industry practitioners are largely distinct from each other with parallel sector skills councils leading on contrasting training agendas (People 1<sup>st</sup> and Creative and Cultural Skills respectively) and with Creative and / or Cultural Industries Management undergraduate and postgraduate programmes typically paying limited if any attention to tourism and arguably, Tourism Management courses paying insufficient attention to the humanities, culture and the arts (Caton, 2014). There is therefore a separation between tourism and the creative industries at the levels of policy, communities of practice and also research, professional development programmes and the curriculum. This paper argues that education and professional development programmes for destination managers need to pay more attention to the Humanities broadly and arts and cultural concepts and ideas in particular. The paper focuses primarily on England though its arguments may be applicable in other national contexts.

The paper is primarily theoretical, though it is supported by the author's reflections on more than 15 years involvement as a board member of the Tourism Management Institute (TMI), a leading professional body for destination managers in the UK, and also a contribution as a board member of a European association of cultural festivals practitioners. The paper also draws on exploratory research with TMI members during a workshop convened to discuss their continuing professional development (CPD) priorities at the TMI conference in Autumn 2016. The findings of a CPD needs survey conducted among TMI members in 2011 are also used to help shape the debate.

## **2. (Cultural) Destination management**

Destination management in England is arguably a profession that lacks recognition beyond the confines of the tourism sector, researchers and local government. The functional title begs questions of what comprises a 'destination', what its management entails and whether destination managers have the authority to genuinely manage their territories in any meaningful sense. Wang and Pizam (2011) suggest that a standard definition of destination management is elusive, though as the title of their book indicates, as well as in the practice of many destination managers, there is often a conflation of 'management' with 'marketing' (Fyall, 2011; Morgan, 2012; Voase, 2012).

For Laesser and Beritelli, (2013:2),

'destinations can be understood as being geographic entities; a cluster or (latent) network of suppliers; or additionally, as a network of suppliers activated by visitors' demands. In essence, they are productive social systems with specific business aims and non-business related goals'.

'Geographic entities' with rare exceptions, are of course not *Terra Nullius* and are populated more or less by resident communities with greater or lesser interests in tourism as an economic activity and recognition and support for the notion and practice of destination management. Who are the 'suppliers' of destination 'product' within the 'visitor economy' and whether they see themselves as such may also be questioned.

Laesser and Beritelli (2013: 2 emphasis added) suggest that destination management entails,

'planning (*within tourism-related domains*); lobbying (on behalf of *all tourism stakeholders*); marketing...and; service coordination'.

In the case of the VE/ACE *Cultural Destinations* programme, arts and culture are explicitly incorporated with destination management organisations, therefore highlighting the need for destination management to embrace creative industry practitioners (and consumers as 'creative tourists') within 'tourism-related domains' (Richards, 2011; Richards and Wilson, 2006). By extension, there is also a need to include creative industry sectors and tourists attracted by them explicitly in considerations of marketing, competitiveness, sustainable development and governance. All of this suggests the need for understanding, knowledge exchange and professional development across the tourism and creative industry sectors.

The destination management literature addresses to an extent connections with arts and culture, though rarely are the 'creative industries' formally and explicitly discussed. Fyall (2011), for example refers to organisational 'cultural divisions' between private and public sectors in destination management, an observation that could be extended to consideration of a divide that may exist between destination managers and creative industry practitioners and officers. Hager and Sung (2012) consider local arts agencies 'that have entered the local ecology of destination management in the United States as part of the network of organizations seeking to attract cultural tourists' (Hager and Sung, 2012: 400). They argue that this relationship has been virtually ignored in both the tourism and arts management literatures. As part of a wider 'state of the art' discussion of creativity and tourism, Richards (2011) refers to the creative industries but the coverage of relationships in theory and practice across sectors is limited. Gretzel and Jamal (2009) also have little to say directly about the creative industries in their observations on what they argue (following Florida, 2002) is the emergence of a 'creative tourist' class / category.

Other studies address components of the creative industries in relation to tourism, but the coverage is fragmentary though substantive in some fields, focusing usually in depth on individual creative industry sectors or milieux. Examples include creative cities and spaces (Alvarez, 2010; Evans, 2009); music and dance (Aoyama, 2009; Gibson and Connell, 2005; Long, 2014); film, TV and tourism (Beeton, 2005; Hudson and Brent Ritchie, 2006; Reijnders, 2011); crafts (Cohen, 2001); performing arts (Hughes, 1989). Ooi (2007) and Long and Morpeth (2016 and 2013) are rare exceptions to this though to date there appears to have been no research that has explored the relationships between destination management and creative industries collectively in England with particular reference to research and CPD needs and issues across sectors.

The role of higher education and the nature of knowledge and its exchange in the professional development of destination managers may be viewed in this context. However, in order to understand the nature of knowledge exchange between researchers and practitioners in destination management, it is first necessary to appreciate three contributing factors – the development and scope of tourism destination management as a field of study, the development of tourism destination policy, and the nature of the destination management sector.

Tourism is a relatively new field of study with the first dedicated academic courses being established in the 1970s. It is interdisciplinary, drawing on a range of related disciplines such as sociology, geography, economics, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, management

and marketing. It follows that there is no single and clearly agreed tourism research paradigm and no set of agreed concepts which define tourism. Rather, it draws on a range of approaches which are associated with the disciplines which underpin Tourism Studies. Although both quantitative and qualitative approaches have been used since the 1970s, a shift in research emphasis in the field has emerged in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, expressed as a “critical turn” (Ateljevic, Morgan and Pritchard, 2007) or “cultural turn” (Aitchison, 2006; Caton, 2014). This has seen greater research attention to cultural dimensions of tourism that go beyond emphasis on management and the social sciences.

Tourism is equally difficult to define within the policy community, encompassing a range of related areas such as transport, hospitality and marketing as well as destination management (now officially embracing arts and culture in the UK). Policy makers in general are under increasing pressure to develop a robust evidence base, primarily economic, to justify public funding, and the tourism and creative industry sectors are no exception to this (see Jancovich, 2012; O’Brien, 2014; and O’Brien, 2013 for closely related debates concerning the need for evidence bases in cultural policy).

A further factor affecting knowledge exchange is the nature of the tourism (private) sector itself. It is highly fragmented, dominated by SMEs and micro-businesses and characterised by relatively poor wages and high staff turnover, all of which can hinder the effective flow of knowledge and development of professionalism. Furthermore, traditional knowledge management approaches are aimed at individuals and individual organisations, whereas a tourist destination is made up of a diverse range of organisations (including cultural and creative industry practitioners, many of whom share the characteristics of tourism SMEs), thus there are challenges in translating and delimiting knowledge exchange at a destination level (see Cooper, 2006).

The relationship between the academic and policy and practitioner communities is also not always clear and is often marked by different research interests and professional priorities. Some key concepts in knowledge management have been applied to tourism. For example, Xiao and Smith apply the “two communities” theory to tourism, arguing that “research producers (usually academics) and users (practitioners or policymakers) reside in two culturally different worlds” (2007:317), and Tribe (1997, 2006) applies Gibbons’ theory of Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge to tourism, setting out the different needs of the research and practitioner communities (bearing in mind of course that tourism and creative industry practitioners inhabit parallel communities of practice).

The current destination management curriculum focus in UK University Tourism programmes is dominated by management and social science perspectives and approaches. For example, the TMI operates a course recognition scheme which reflects their view of what should constitute the curriculum in order to be relevant to the professional needs of destination management practitioners. While ‘Cultural Tourism’ is identified as part of the TMI criteria, the curriculum proposed is dominated by management, social science and political perspectives on the professional practice of destination management. It may be that this emphasis is entirely appropriate at undergraduate level, where a broad education in critical tourism management studies is required. However, it may be questioned whether these criteria apply at postgraduate and post-experience level where a greater degree of knowledge concerning the creative industries is needed to reflect the need for closer joint working.

### 3. The 'Creative Industries' and destination management

While any industry sector (and not least tourism) may apply creativity and innovation to its processes and products, a cluster of sectors has been defined by the UK Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) as officially comprising the creative industries. DCMS considers these sectors to be: *"...those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent which have a potential for job and wealth creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property"* (DCMS, 2001; CCS, 2013).

The standard definition of the creative industries used by the DCMS and replicated beyond the UK was rationalised by sector training agency Creative and Cultural Skills (CCS) in 2013 to include:

- Advertising and marketing
- Architecture
- Design and designer fashion
- Film, TV, video, radio and photography
- IT, software and computer services
- Publishing
- Music, performing and visual arts

The DCMS approach to the definition and mapping of the creative industries has been influential on policy elsewhere, with Higgs and Cunningham (2008) providing examples of comparable approaches in Taiwan, New Zealand, Singapore and Australia. However, there are issues and controversies in the definition of the creative industries (Bakhshi, Hargreaves and Mateos-Garcia, 2013; CCS, 2013; Hartley, 2005; Hesmondhalgh, 2002), with these including that the complex and fragmented nature of these sectors and their close economic relationships with firms in the wider economy mean that it is difficult to distinguish them from other industries (including tourism). A further issue is that the creative industries are characterised by high levels of micro-businesses, firms employing fewer than 10 people, and businesses below the Value Added Tax threshold in the UK (CCS, 2013; DCMS, 2004). This results in difficulties in establishing the economic value and extent of the creative industries. Self-employment (and high rates of 'churn' and failure) means that official data may not capture the creative industries accurately (McRobbie, 2004). This observation may also be applied to many operators in the tourism sector.

The conflation of the 'cultural' and 'creative' with 'industry' is a source of considerable controversy and academic debate. Some argue that the 'creative industries' definition values culture primarily or even solely for its economic role, rather than for its much wider contribution to ideas, aesthetics and society. 'Culture Industry' has negative connotations for some theorists drawing on the work of the Frankfurt School in its critique of the media in particular (Adorno, 1991; Habermas, 1987). For such critics, new and emerging media and technology organisations possess too much power in shaping socio-cultural change and public attitudes, with particular concerns about their impact on the young, poor and vulnerable and in the alienation of society at large (Raunig, Ray and Wuggenig, 2011; Schlesinger, 2007). The opening quote by Raunig et al. (2011) that culture making is crucial industry the battle for tourist cash, serves to emphasise how, like any other industry, it is subject to the debates shaping government policy.

There is a substantial academic literature, as well as in the claims of destination marketing organisations, which proposes that creativity may be applied to space, place and milieu (Comunian, Chapain, and Clifton, 2010; Florida, 2010). Examples include Drake (2003) and Roodhouse (2006) on Sheffield's Cultural Industries Quarter; Evans, (2009) and Bagwell (2008) on creative 'clusters' in London; and Sasaki (2010) on the 'creative city' and regeneration with the involvement of artistic communities in Osaka, Japan.

There are some clear connections between destination management and creative industry practitioners through for example the development and application of new and emerging (social) media in tourism, in relation to some festivals and cultural events, and in showcasing the creative identity of place through destination marketing but this is patchy, uncoordinated and lacking in any clear strategic direction (Long and Morpeth, 2016). However, the sectors that are included in the creative industries all, more or less, have connections with tourism broadly, niche tourist markets and destination management in particular. These are illustrated in Table 1.

### **Insert Table 1 here**

It is evident from the illustrations included in table 1 that there are rich, diverse, complex and important connections between creative industry sectors and destination management. However, there are also sensitivities and controversies that may emerge in the relationships between some creative practitioners (artists), their intellectual property and tourism.

An example is the highly controversial though extremely popular contemporary British artist Banksy, whose work is based on graffiti and involves the surreptitious marking of buildings and walls, usually completed without permission and at night without being witnessed. There is a mystique surrounding Banksy as his identity is disguised and he has managed to retain anonymity. The work is highly political and at times possibly illegal and risky (such as in the political statements represented in the work on the wall dividing Israel and Palestine and the recently opened 'Walled Off Hotel' in Bethlehem). Questions arise concerning how official destination agencies reflect and promote such controversial work. Is Banksy (and other artists whose work attracts controversy) subversive, or is he now part of the tourist mainstream (as suggested by his 2015 'Dismaland' exhibition in Weston-Super-Mare) or both? Arguably Banksy can now be viewed as a 'mainstream' artist with his 2010 exhibition in Bristol attracting huge attendances and his film 'Exit through the Gift Shop' (with a title referencing tourism) also having been reasonably popular (Long and Morpeth, 2016).

Another example is the award winning and critically acclaimed musician Richard Hawley who is frequently quoted praising his home city of Sheffield (Long, 2014). However, he was outspoken during a public meeting in 2013 attended by this researcher in opposition to the city's application to the UK City of Culture programme as artists such as him objected to their work being packaged and commoditised as a tourism product. Managing the relationships between artistically minded and at times, sub-cultural and oppositional creative / artistic 'talent' and destination management is thus a challenge that may be ameliorated by improved mutual understanding.

## **4. Conclusions and implications for destination management education and professional development**

Creative industry sectors provide rich contributions to the distinctive resources and attractiveness of destinations. Creative industry practitioners are also responsible for developing the images and technologies that enhance destination representation and are associated with niche, special interest tourist markets that go beyond 'mainstream' elite and 'high art' cultural tourism (Richards and Wilson, 2006). All of this suggests a need for destination managers to develop their understanding of this complex and critical arena of social, economic and artistic practice.

Such professional development could focus on theory, practice and application to destination management of any of the constituent sectors of the creative industries. The titles of short courses and conferences promoted by professional bodies such as the TMI suggest that there is considerable attention to technological and social media developments relating to destination management and marketing but little or no focus on the other component sectors of the creative industries. At the same time, websites promoting postgraduate courses offered by UK universities in Creative and/or Cultural Industries pay scant or no attention to tourism, suggesting a reciprocal need for education and professional development.

Destination management ultimately is concerned with telling stories to visitors about places. Destination managers therefore need to have a deep understanding of the *genius locus* of their areas informed by historical knowledge and appreciation of aesthetics, arts, literature and local cultures, i.e. enhanced cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984). Such knowledge will enhance professional practice through developing more sophisticated narratives of destinations. There is an opportunity to enhance relationships across the tourism and 'creative industries' and particularly at a time of public sector budget cuts to sectors that have traditionally been reliant to greater or lesser extents on public funding (at least in the UK). However, destination managers need to recognise and negotiate occasions where artistic sensibilities and dispositions may resist being appropriated and commoditised.

This suggests the critical need for more research on the contrasting backgrounds, education and occupational discourses of tourism and arts / creative practitioners (as well as researchers across these fields). The existing literature on knowledge 'transfer' and 'exchange' between researchers, policy-makers and practitioners across these domains seems to have little to say about what that knowledge may comprise.

This paper has its prime focus on destination management theory and practice. Hopefully, an equivalent paper from a creative industry perspective on tourism and destination management will be forthcoming as a further contribution to this policy debate. Greater dialogue across the apparent 'divide' between destination management and the creative industries in theory, policy and practice will result in enhanced mutual understanding based on continuing (inter) professional development.

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Creative Industry Sector	Relationships with destination management theory and practice
Advertising and marketing	Place representation and branding, destination advertising campaigns, copywriting, photography etc.
Architecture	'Place making' / 'shaping'. The attraction of 'iconic' landmark buildings etc. See for example, the Academy of Urbanism <a href="http://www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/">http://www.academyofurbanism.org.uk/</a>
IT, software and computer services	The 'gamification' of tourism. Games based on recognisable urban destination streetscapes.  Interactive destination mapping software. Online 'communities' as tourist markets (Marletta, 2011)
Design and designer fashion	Vernacular design in place identity and representation.  Defining national 'style' and image. Retail tourism. As subject of major exhibitions (e.g. David Bowie, Vivienne Westwood).
Film, TV, video, radio and photography	Film-induced tourism (Beeton, 2005); Screen tourism (Kim, Long and Robinson, 2011) and place representation, festivals.  Broadcast outputs relating to destination image and tourism specifically. Journalistic coverage of tourism etc.
Music, performing and visual arts	Music and place identity (Connell and Gibson, 2004). Festivals etc.  Theatre breaks, tourism as performance (Edensor, 1998) Street theatre and sense of place, festivals.
Publishing	Travel writing, 'literary tourism', intermediation e.g. literature as travel app., screen adaptations, guide books, 'creative writing' in tourist literature.

**Table 1:** The Creative Industries and Destination Management

