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FILM TOURISM RESPONSES TO THE TOURIST'S EXPECTATIONS - NEW CHALLENGES

Theoretical articles
Case studies

Abstract

This paper sheds light on the world of film tourism, the connection between the film as an image-making tool and the attractiveness of tourism destinations. In this context the present research analyses the phenomenon of film-induced tourism. Even though the phenomenon of the film tourism has been recognized, there are still few profound studies and a lack of the statistical data. However, the evidence of existence of such a phenomenon as film-induced tourism is incontrovertible. Thus, the little statistical data available on this topic indicates that such countries as UK, Australia, and New Zealand lead the way from the point of view of the film tourism. Existence of this type of tourism and its potentially significant economic value make understanding the drivers of film-induced tourism extremely important to know.

Introduction

Today tourists are more sophisticated, that being the main driver for them to look for new destinations and experiences. Lately there has been observed a new touristic phenomenon: tourists tend to visit destinations featured in films. Film-induced tourism is a new form of cultural tourism. Recent research shows that films can have significant influence on tourist decision-making. Moreover, not only do films provide short-term tourism revenue, but they also bring profit to the destination in the long term.

In spite of the lack of the statistics on the impact that films have on tourism, some relative figures can still be found. According to the latest works, among which are the ones written by the Romanian, Finnish, and Thai young researchers (Walaiporn Rewtrakunphaiboon), UK, Australia, and New Zealand are the countries that have an increasing interest in studying and developing the film-induced tourism.

Literature review concerning the definition of a film-tourism:

The Scotland's National Tourism Organization defines film tourism as a business where visitors are attracted to the area through the storylines in a film or through the portrayal of a certain place on a film or on television. It is also said that the number of visitors coming to a place from the effect of a film, can be called film tourism. (Roesch 2009, 69)

According to the Finnish researcher T. Tanskanen, film-induced tourism is a wider term for people who take a decision to travel to a place that they have previously seen on a screen. However, it should be mentioned that there is a difference between 'film tourist' and 'film location tourist'. Both types of the tourists are inspired to by a film, but the film tourist has no intention of visiting the actual filming locations. For instance, people who like watching The Sex and the City series might want to visit New York but they don't have any intention to visit the actual filming locations. Meanwhile, the film-location tourist has every intention to see the actual on- and off-locations and physical settings that were used to produce the film scenes.

It is notable that film tourism represents a special interest tourism. In such a way, we can also call it a niche tourism - the one having its own special focus groups and characteristics. According to T. Tanskanen citing Mr. Papathanassis, "a film tourism niche does not serve a specific group of people but instead every film has its own target group, some movies attracting more visitors than others". (Papathanassis 2011, 149.)

The motivation uniting all film tourists is a desire to visit a place they have seen on screen. A case in point is the Alnwick Castle situated in North East England that is known from the Harry Potter movies. The first part of Harry Potter franchise was released back in 2001 and the last movie was released in 2011. Shortly before the release of the last part under the title Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2 the Alnwick Castle had witnessed 120% increase in visitor numbers. In such a way, there is a clear-cut correlation between its appearance in a film and a huge effect it may have on the visitor numbers, cash flows and economy in general. In his interview to Croniclelive.co.uk councilor Neil Bradbury, executive member for customer services and culture at Northumberland County Council, said: "When Alnwick Castle doubled as Hogwarts School, the town attracted worldwide attention from fans of the books and films.

"Visitor numbers soared, there was a multi-million pound boost to the local economy and even local house prices were reported to be on the rise.

"There is no doubt the Harry Potter phenomenon generated huge spin-offs for the area and brought the type of publicity that no amount of money could buy.

"Even after all these years, the stories still continue to draw people to the area." (Croniclelive, 2011)

Influence of film on tourism demand

According to the Thai researcher Walaiporn Rewtrakunphaiboon, the destination image may greatly influence tourist choice in the matter of destinations (see Table 1). Images of destinations play an important role in influencing tourist decision-making process. Films can become the source of information on certain aspects of the country such as nature, culture and people which result in the construction of the attitudes towards the country. He underlines that an interest in the nation and its positive image created by a film may become a contributing factor to making a decision to actually visit the country.

People try to find an escape from their real life routine in such leisure activities as watching movies as well as traveling. There are many stimuli which may encourage viewers to travel to a certain place, namely: physical properties such as scenery and landscape, their associated theme, storylines, events and actors, shaping the audience' feelings, emotions and attitudes towards places.

According to Iwashita, location and film experiences are enhanced in memories by associating them with the actors, events and setting (Iwashita, 2006). People's associations and feeling are tightly connected with their memories, desires, and obsessions. These are the factors that give a special meaning to a certain location. In such a way, films make some locations iconic by means of the emotions they provoke among the viewers. Taking into consideration the abovementioned

factors, we provide the following table that reflects the correlation between the forms of film tourism and factors that became stimuli of choosing a certain location. A summary of different forms and characteristics of film tourism is shown in Table 2. Many global film locations induce tourists to visit. According to Walaiporn Rewtrakunphaiboon, the scandalous American series 'Sex and the City' represent one of the examples. Google search results and numerous mass media confirm the supposition that various eating out locations featured in the series, such as restaurants and bars, and shops became must-see destinations for tourists visiting New York.

Forms of film tourism

As mentioned earlier on, film tourism can represent itself through various forms and types. We can see from the table posted above that some forms of film tourism are categorized by the type of location that is portrayed in a film and how it has motivated the visitor to act. Below there will be presented three following forms of film tourism: on-location film tourism, off-location film tourism and film tourism as a form of business tourism.

On-location film tourism

According to T. Tanskanen, on-locations are filming locations or film-related locations represented by existing buildings and streets. Some of these locations may be touristic attractions on their own and may have gained their popularity before appearance in a movie. However, people visiting these locations may still be brought in the category of film tourists (Tanskanen, 2012).

As opposed to the ones mentioned above, other locations attract tourists exactly and only because they made an appearance in a film. In these cases spots that previously were considered as unimportant can turn into touristic attractions. Sometimes the filming crews leave some set constructions untouched to attract tourists. For instance the Russian movie "The Horde" depicting the ancient tartar-mongol state The Golden Horde's capital Sarai Batu. It was filmed not far for the actual archeological site. The site itself is not open to public, and in any case would not attract an average film tourist. Meanwhile, the set represented by the ancient city restored piece by piece turned a desert-like semi-stepp zone in a touristic attraction.

Sue Beeton cited by Tanskanen gives various types of on-location tourism. According to her, sometimes the film set itself may play the role of an important motivator and may be main purpose of a trip or from time to time film tourism can be part of a general holiday trip. Film tourism can also represent a nostalgic tourism in whose framework the locations present another era or the film on its own can inspire the person to visit historic locations (Tanskanen, 2012).

According to Beeton, film tourism may be considered a form of a pilgrimage which contemplates visitors coming to honor the movie, to feel their belonging to the imaginary world and maybe even re-enact parts of the film on-location. Among other features film tourism has in common with pilgrimage we can enumerate the communality as the first pilgrims tend to travel in groups and see the journey also as a social event, so do many times the film tourists. Film tourism helps people to experience the sense of belonging by means of meeting other people with similar interests.(Beeton 2005, 10, 34.). Sometimes on-location tourism happens to take place in the areas that have nothing to do with the actual filming.

According to Beeton, visiting homes of celebrities may be also considered on-location tourism with the celebrities' dwellings being the main attraction. Moreover, so-called 'runaway productions' fall into this category, that presupposing the filming being done in a different country than the one presented in a movie, usually due to financial reasons. For example the movie Braveheart (1995) represents a story taking place in Scotland but it was filming took place in Ireland.

Into more commercial part of on-location tourism fall the film tours where several filming locations are showed to the visitors, like the London Movie Locations & TV tour, and guided tours to specific on-location sets, like The Lord of the Rings set Hobbiton in New Zealand. (Beeton 2005, 10.) Sometimes big blockbuster movies can bring so much tourism to an area that it is profitable for private entrepreneurs to create products and packages related to a

film. Film tours, themed hotels and themed restaurants are good examples of this kind of business boosts. (Roesch 2009, 11.)

Off-location tourism

Off-locations are represented by artificial structures, being built with the sole purpose – for the filming or for tourism purposes like film studios or film parks (Roesch 2009, 6-7). Today the major part of influential film studios are operating either film studio tours or themed film parks. Among there studios Warner Bros, Universal, and Fox can be listed.

The Universal Studios in Florida is likely to be the most well-known themed park is which is built exclusively for touristic purposes. The park offers a number of movie based rides such as the Terminator and themed areas like Harry Potter and Jurassic Park. The film-based areas provide gift shops based on the objects featured in the respective movies. It is important to note that there haven't been any filming of production on the territory of the theme parks.

Film studio tours represent a wonderful opportunity for those interested in the actual filming process.

These studios are first and foremost created for filming and production purposes. Their lateral purpose – organization of guided tours.

"Even though the actual filming has taken place in the studio, they are still called as off-locations because of their artificial nature", says Tanskanen in her work.

According to Beeton, movie premiers and film festivals are also part of the off-location tourism branch that frequently causes an off-location visitor peak to the area arranging the event (Beeton 2005, 10-11.). As Ms. Tanskanen reported in her work, it is obvious that tourists are ready to travel long distances to experience the "togetherness" with the other fans and see the stars of the movie walking the red carpet. (Tanskanen, 2012, 17)

Film tourism representing business tourism

It should be kept in mind that film tourism can represent business tourism. In terms of film tourism, business tourists may include film producers who are either looking for the appropriate filming sites or have already started filming. This type of business tourists can encourage creating the holiday and recreation part of film tourism. (Tanskanen, 2012, 17)

It is advisable for tourism agencies to acknowledge the value of this type of tourist as they frequently stay more nights in the hotel than any other type of business tourists, in the meantime consuming local services like restaurants and entertainment.

For instance, hotel discount packages destined for filming crews could attract film businesses to the area. The film business tourists are likely to prefer the best price-quality ratio, just like any other type of tourist. It is the matter of services offered to the film producers; financial incentives and locations characteristics which make the producers choose certain places.

Driving forces and expectations in film tourism

The touristic gaze is described by Tanskanen with the reference to Urry as a curiosity to look at things that are out of ordinary and experience things that are not part of everyday routine. Our ability to gaze is formed by our expectations, wishes, desires and backgrounds. Films, just like books and TV commercials, intensify the urge to gaze upon certain locations creating daydreams and fantasies about the places. (Urry 1990, 1-3.)

Both Beeton and Urry are of the opinion that tourism is motivated by one's dreams and desires for new experiences. In such a way, it is the image pictured in one's mind that generally determines one's decisions (Beeton 2005, 26). Once arrived at the destinations, all tourists see the same spot in a different manner.

Stefan Roesch subdivides the tourist gazing into three types. The first type is the spectatorial gazer who is interested in briefly contacting the film locations.

"Their main motivation and purpose is to collect signs and markers on camera or video to proof that they have really been there on the location. The risen status amongst friends after showing the proofs was found a significant motivator for the recording of the places in photographs and video," cites Taskanen Roesch's classification.

The next types is the collective gazer. This type of a visitor puts a great deal of emphasis on 'togetherness'. It is important for them to participate in the tour with others. Roesch notes that from time to time this type of tourists may experience a sense of a psychological pressure – feeling obligated to take pictures or do the same things as other members of the group do. (Roesch 2009, 129-130.)

The last type is the romantic gazer – a person with romantic expectations. Romantic gazers want to appreciate every moment and take their time on the location. They often prefer travelling alone or with a close friend. Such people usually want just to "inhale" the atmosphere, says Roesch. As an opposite of the spectaculars and collective gazers the romantic gazers see the places as sacred locations rather than as sites of a spectacle. It was seen important by the romantic gazers that there was enough time on the tour to explore and admire the location in solitude. (Roesch 2009, 134-135.)

Thus, the tour organizers ought to consider the emotions, desires and needs of a tourist thinking what type of visitors this type of film attracts. As earlier mentioned different films attract different visitor groups and the way that these visitors are taken into consideration can affect on the location reputation. For example the Sex and the City-tour in New York has attracted, as might be assumed, women in their thirties to tour the city (Beeton 2005, 37) and on the other side are the Star Wars tour participants visiting the Tunisian locations in 2005,14 out of 17 participants were male (Roesch 2009, 112).

Challenges of film tourism

Natural, historical and man-made attractions have been historically recognized as the principal types of tourist attractions. There's a limited number of these attractions, and Destination Marketing Organizations sometimes experience difficulties when it comes to attracting tourists who have visited the attractions to revisit the destination.

According to Walaiporn Rewtrakunphaiboon, some Destination Marketing Organizations have been engage in an active promotion of the so-called 'hall marks events' as another type of attraction that enhances destination image and acts as a luring device for tourists to the destination. Under hallmark events Rewtrakunphaiboon understands

"trade fairs, festivals, culturally unique events, historical commemorations, major socio-political happenings and sporting events" (Rewtrakunphaiboon, 2008).

Promoting tourist destinations to attract potential tourists by means of advertisement on radio, newspaper, television and magazine may cost too much, underlines the researcher. For instance, Europe, the leader in terms of number of international tourist arrivals, spent €600 million in 2007 for their advertising campaigns (Risse, 2008).

Some Destination Marketing Organizations rely on exposure of the advertising spots and print media too much when it comes to efforts that could attract more visitors to the destination. However, modern tourism promotion techniques lack funds to prolong destination exposure to sustain the interest of potential visitors. (Riley,1994). Moreover, every day consumers have to face hundreds of print and broadcast adds which confuse their consumption each day.

Rewtrakunphaiboon believes that destination promotion through films is one of the effective solutions for the challenges facing *Destination Marketing Organizations* at present. Films can fulfill the deficiencies of prolonged exposure as well as sustain the interest of the audience. Promoting through films would be even more powerful for unknown tourist destinations with lesser expense than traditional advertising campaigns (Rewtrakunphaiboon, 2008).

Case study: Lord of the Rings
New Zealand created a whole new industry based on the production of the Lord of the Rings films (later referred as LORT) under the tagline "It took two years to film the Lord of the Rings trilogy, but millions of years to build the sets". According to the authors of the leaflet "Experience Films in Real Life – a Hanbook on Film Tourism" citing the newspaper USA Today, the number of visiting tourists rose from 1.7 million in 2000 to 2.4 million in 2006. To a great extent, this 40% growth is attributed to the success of The Lord of the Rings films (Elmgaard & Holmgaard Christophersen, 2011).

"The trilogy became a starting point of a huge industry, however, only an insignificant proportion of the original set remains. When the film production had come to an end, it was agreed to dismantle the many huts, fortresses and other structures in order to protect New Zealand's natural environment. Thus, the single remaining element is the hometown of the hobbits. It was erected in a locality within the Waikato region.

Among other materials used for the film set there were artificial leaves. They were imported from Taiwan and affixed to dead trees within the locality. Other most recent facts concerning Lord of the Rings mentioned in "Experience films in

reals life – a handbook on film tourism" are shown in Box 1.

"This slightly odd set still stands – now featuring as "The Hobbiton Movie Set and Farm Tour".", commented the authors of the handbook "Experience films in reals life – a handbook on film tourism". (Film by Aarhus, 2012, 16-17).

Here's how Dr. Stefan Roesch commented the case in his interview given to the authors of the handbook mentioned above:

"Prior to The Lord of the Rings (LOTR), Tourism New Zealand had not had much experience with film tourism, only in connection with the film The Piano. However, when Tourism New Zealand had confirmed that the shooting of The Lord of the Rings was to take place in the country, they soon took advantage of the opportunity to become involved in the production.

Along with the film director Peter Jackson (a proud New Zealander) and the array of international actors, Tourism New Zealand made sure that everyone knew that the film was being shot in New Zealand. In the course of the two years it took to shoot The Lord of the Rings trilogy, the various stakeholders had sufficient time to establish a professional collaborative relationship with one another. This resulted in Wellington, the capital of New Zealand, hosting the world premiere of "The Return of the King" - the last film of the LOTR trilogy. When it came to the production of The Hobbit, Peter Jackson encountered some problems – despite all the conditions being right for the film to be shot in New Zealand. The actors' union interfered, obstructing the production. Warner Brothers considered relocating the shoot to Eastern Europe, before The New Zealand government stepped in. They offered a 25-million-dollar tax rebate (in addition to the existing 15% tax exemption) in exchange for the assurance that The Hobbit would be shot in New Zealand, that advertisements for holidays to New Zealand would be included on the DVD version of the film and that the country would host another world premiere. According to economic estimates, losing The Hobbit would have equaled a revenue loss of about 1.5 billion dollars for New Zealand." ". (Film by Aarhus, 2012, 16-17).

Conclusions
Film tourism marketing tools have been implemented in the leading film destinations such as United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand and Australia with great success. The abovementioned countries can teach their successors how one can benefit from bringing films to their countries in order to promote existing or new attractions.

The success of film locations greatly depends on the success of films. Some film locations are much more attractive for tourists than others. Even

though films positively on destinations in terms of economic and cultural values, film tourism still need to struggle with a number of obstacles.

Destination Marketing Organizations should take into consideration many aspects of the potential tourist's personality such as sex, age, background, aspirations etc. It is crucial to know the aim group of a certain film tourism location. Personal emotions may greatly influence the location image created in a tourist's mind and, therefore, affect the destination choice.

The last but not the least, it is more advisable for the DMOs to invest in attracting filming crew to the location than trying to promote this location by means of a traditional advertising.

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Appendices

Tables

Table 1.

Successful films, their location and the impact on the visitor number

Film	Location	Impact on the visitor number
Braveheart	Wallace Monument, Scotland	300% increase a year after release
Captain Corelli's Mandolin	Cephalonia, Greece	50% increase
Field of Dreams	Iowa, USA	35,000 visits in 1991 and steady increase every year
Four Weddings and a Funeral	The Crown Hotel, Amersham, England	Fully booked for at least 3 years
Harry Potter	Various locations in UK	Increase of 50% or more in all filmed locations
Mission Impossible 2	National Park, Sydney	200% increase in 2000
Notting Hill	Kenwood House, England	10% increase in one month
Pride and Prejudice	Lyme Park, England	150% increase
Sense and Sensibility	Saltram House, England	39% increase
The Beach	Thailand	22% increase in youth market in 2000
Troy	Canakkale, Turkey	73% increase

Source: Adapted by Walaiporn Rewtrakunphaiboon from Hudson & Ritchie (2006)

Table 2.

Different forms and characteristics of film tourism

Form	Characteristics
1. Film-induced tourism as part of a main holiday	Tourists will visit film location or book a film tour for a holiday without any previous destination knowledge
2. Film-induced tourism as a main purpose out of special interest	The booking of a holiday to a destination as a result of its profiles on the screen
3. Film-induced tourism icons as focal points of visit	Natural beauty, historical places, actors can serve as icons
4. Film-induced tourism to places where filming is only believed to have taken place	Tourists visit the filming places even if the film represents a different setting.
5. Film-induced tourism as part of romantic gaze	Tourists like to gaze on places reinforced by the films in solitude, establishing a semi-spiritual relationship with the place
6. Film-induced tourism for reasons of escape	Visiting film locations elevates tourists beyond the mundane reality of everyday life

Source: Adapted by Walaiporn Rewtrakunphaiboon from Busby & Klug (2001)

Boxes

Box 1.

Recent facts concerning Lorg of the Rings

- The overall budget of the trilogy was 281 million dollars.
- The total box-office turnover came up to 2,917,506,956 dollars and the film was awarded 17 Oscars in total.
- On the NZ tourist front, the turnover rose by 40% from 2000 to 2006
- In Wellington, NZ, the premiere on The Return of the King attracted 120,000 people, and the huge media attention generated by the premiere is believed to represent a value in the environment of 25 million NZ dollars in free advertising for New Zealand.
- In comparison, the Wellington City Council invested 1.8 million NZ dollars in the preparation of the world premiere.
- 120,000 people turned up on the streets of Wellington to honor the film makers and the stars. The event was high-profile, and that put New Zealand on the global tourism map.
- Up to December 2003, Ian Brodie's The Lord of the Rings Location Guidebook was the bestselling book in New Zealand. According to 9 % of international tourists that have visited New Zealand, The Lord of the Rings was one of the main reasons of their travelling to the country in question.

Source: Experience films in reals life – a handbook on film tourism, 2011.