



TRU Stories 3

Highlights from the Monash Tourism Research Unit



Highlights from the Monash Tourism Research Unit

Acknowledgements

The Monash Tourism Research Unit, led by Professor Betty Weiler, undertakes projects in partnership with industry, government and universities. We are grateful to all those individuals and organisations that have contributed to successful research outcomes. Individuals and organisations listed here played important roles in projects described in TRU Stories 3.

Chinese tour guides at Sovereign Hill
Department of Environment and Conservation, Western Australia
Interpretive and zookeeper staff and volunteers at Werribee Open Range Zoo
Latrobe Valley Tourism Advisory Board
Parks and Wildlife Service, Tasmania
Parks Victoria
Sustainable Tourism CRC
Tim Sullivan, Deputy CEO, Sovereign Hill Museums Association

Research and administrative assistance on a number of projects were provided by:

Andrea Zhang
Annita Allman, Executive Assistant, TRU
Brendan Kelly
Brent Moyle
Dr Xin Yu
Leah Stamm
Lisa Gormley

The following images are courtesy of Tourism Victoria:

Chinese Temple – Bendigo (page 4)
Walhalla (page 5)

The following image is courtesy of Parks Victoria:

Alpine National Park road after Bushfire (page 12)

Tourism Research Unit (TRU)



TRU Members present at the 5th Anniversary celebrations held on 11 September 2008.

TRU Stories 3 marks five years since the inception of the Monash Tourism Research Unit (TRU). The mission of TRU is to encourage, facilitate, conduct and disseminate quality research that contributes to the knowledge base of tourism and meets the needs of stakeholders. Stories contained within reflect established and emerging tourism research strengths of TRU members in:

- strategic communication;
- tourism economics;
- protected area planning and management;
- training and education;
- tourist behaviour;
- image and media; and,
- business, attractions and events management.

We welcome your questions and comments about the projects described here. Authors will be pleased to hear from you. We are also interested in developing partnerships or tourism projects beneficial to your communities and your organisations. You'll find lead author contact details and a brief biography concluding each story.

To read previous TRU stories or find further information about Monash's Tourism Research Unit, see: www.buseco.monash.edu/units/tru

We hope you enjoy TRU Stories 3!

Damian Morgan
Editor, TRU Stories 3

Contents

Interpretation research in Australian protected area management agencies: Interpretation planners and managers have their say <i>Rosemary Black and Betty Weiler</i>	3
Developing a marketing and interpretation plan for Bendigo's Chinese Heritage Precinct <i>Warwick Frost, Jennifer Laing, Fiona Wheeler, Betty Weiler and Keir Reeves</i>	4
Defining the Latrobe Valley tourism market <i>Gabby Walters</i>	5
Pre-visit communication with park users <i>Glen Croy, Mike Reid and Stephen Wearing</i>	6
Using the Interpretation Evaluation Tool Kit: What have we found? What have we learned? <i>Betty Weiler, Liam Smith and Pieter Van Dijk</i>	7
Investigating the economic drivers of frequent flier programs <i>Nathalie McCaughey</i>	8
Measuring the carbon footprint of Australian tourism <i>Peter Forsyth, Serajul Hoque, Larry Dwyer, Ray Spurr, Thiep Van Ho and Daniel Pambudi</i>	9
Tourism-protected area partnerships in Australia: Designing and managing for success <i>Jennifer Laing, Betty Weiler, Sharron Pfueller, Glen Croy, Susan Moore, Aggie Wegner, Diane Lee, Jim Macbeth and Michael Lockwood</i>	10
Community and visitor interaction on Bruny and Magnetic Islands <i>Brent Moyle, Glen Croy and Betty Weiler</i>	11
Bushfire impacts on tourism and visitation in Alpine National Parks <i>Jennifer Laing, Dale Sanders and Meg Houghton</i>	12
Postgraduate tourism research in Australia: Patterns, trends and gaps <i>Betty Weiler, Jennifer Laing, Gary Lacey, Rosemary Black and Roy Ballantyne</i>	13
Regional destination marketing: Case study of the branding of North East Victoria, Australia <i>Fiona Wheeler, Betty Weiler and Warwick Frost</i>	14
Film, media and destination decision-making <i>Glen Croy</i>	15
Previous TRU Stories	16
Further Information	Back cover

Interpretation research in Australian protected area management agencies: Interpretation planners and managers have their say

Rosemary Black and Betty Weiler

Charles Sturt
University, Monash
TRU

Project aim

This project explored interpretation research conducted and utilised by Australian Protected Area Management (PAM) agencies. Specifically, we investigated interpretation research being undertaken and how this informs or influences PAM interpretive practice. We also identified factors facilitating or inhibiting interpretation research and dissemination of findings. Good interpretation practice involves more than just impressive exhibits or stimulating guided walks; it requires rigorous and well-informed policy, planning, and evaluation. Hence, our study determined the extent interpretation research used by PAM agencies enhances the experience and satisfaction of visitors. We also investigated whether interpretation research improved the profile and image of the agency, addressed visitor management issues, or increased visitors' awareness and understanding of natural and cultural values.

Method

The project surveyed senior interpretation staff from nine Australian PAM agencies. We conducted in-depth telephone interviews with 15 interpretation planners and managers in September-October 2007. Questions focused on types of research undertaken, reasons explaining this (facilitators and inhibitors), procedures used to conduct research (e.g., internally or under contract), resources allocated, agency use and non-use of findings, and agency staff perceptions of research needs and priorities.

Results and benefits to industry

Interviewees reported that interpretation research is normally prompted by crises or short-term needs filled by specific projects. The most common type of interpretation research was site-specific, content (subject matter) focused.



Projects were undertaken at the planning, development and delivery stages of interpretation. Surprisingly little evaluation research was undertaken in topics such as the effectiveness of interpretation to influence visitor attitudes, behaviours or visitor satisfaction. Two-thirds of the interpretive staff interviewed reported their agency made little use of research findings with potential to improve interpretation practice. Barriers to undertaking interpretation research included a lack of funding, time and low agency priority.

Strategies for reducing barriers to both research and findings dissemination were identified. Firstly, more frequent liaison between researchers and practitioners would ensure that interpretation research meets agency needs. Secondly, research findings should be accessible, relevant, and beneficial to interpretation practitioners. Both these outcomes may be achieved by workshops, targeting senior interpretation staff, that highlight the range, value and application of interpretation research. Such activities will enhance the transfer of research to practice within agencies. Better linkages between research and practice would also provide credibility for interpretation research resulting in higher priority and dedicated funding among PAM

agencies. Interpretation Australia Association, the national organisation representing the profession, should also communicate to senior managers the value, relevance and cost-effectiveness of interpretation research for achieving PAM agency goals. Agency support for interpretation research will then grow as senior management become convinced of its value.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Dr Rosemary Black

rblack@csu.edu.au

+61 2 6051 9983

Prof Betty Weiler

betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au

+61 3 9904 7104

Dr Rosemary Black is a Senior Lecturer in Ecotourism and Interpretation in the School of Environmental Sciences at Charles Sturt University. She has a strong interest in applied research and has published and presented numerous papers in heritage interpretation, environmental education, the impact of the digital divide and sustainable behaviours

Developing a marketing and interpretation plan for Bendigo's Chinese Heritage Precinct

Warwick Frost, Jennifer Laing, Fiona Wheeler, Betty Weiler and Keir Reeves

Monash TRU,
University of Melbourne

Project aim

The project assisted the development and marketing of the Chinese Cultural Heritage Precinct in Bendigo through marketing analysis. The project also provided recommendations for enhancing visitor experiences through interpretation.

Method

The project was informed by past research, marketing, interpretation theory, statistical data, and community stakeholder consultation.

Representatives of sixteen key stakeholder groups were interviewed on their vision for the Bendigo Chinese Heritage Precinct.

The first project stage audited current tourism products and experiences in Bendigo, focusing on Chinese and gold-rush heritage. A number of proposed tourism developments were also analysed, including a plaza nearby the Golden Dragon Museum and an exhibition space located at the old Post Office. The project compared Chinese heritage developments in other regional areas experiencing gold rushes, specifically, Victoria, New Zealand, California and Canada. Markets were also assessed according to their characteristics and potential for Bendigo; these markets were current visitors, heritage visitors, and ethnic Chinese. An analysis of marketing issues associated with the Chinese Heritage Precinct followed, including aspects of promotion and pricing. Further research involved stakeholder interviews, site visits, review of previous research and visitor statistics.

Interpretation planning theory underpinned a strategy developed for the Bendigo Chinese Precinct. This strategy enhanced the Precinct's meaning and hence visitor understanding. A series of proposed themes for interpretation were developed from a variety of sources. This process also examined potential



interpretive media suitable for delivering themes and reaching the desired audiences.

Results and benefits to industry

The project highlighted a number of issues. For example, infrastructure projects are required to enhance visitors' experiences. These include expanding and reinvigorating the tourist tram network and constructing an interpretation centre at the kiln discovery site. More intangible solutions involve site integration through linked thematic interpretation. The primary Precinct target market was identified as the incidental heritage visitor. This market segment seeks a mix of tourist experiences; for example, quality food, wine and shopping, while exposed to the heritage ambience. Chinese Australian visitors are an additional target market for Bendigo. Ethnic Chinese visitors from countries including Hong Kong, Taiwan or Singapore form a third potential market. Interpretation strategies

for the Precinct remain a high priority. Contentious and changing historical viewpoints should complement visitor and community expectations.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Dr Warwick Frost

warwick.frost@buseco.monash.edu.au

+ 61 3 9904 7042

*Warwick Frost has a PhD from La Trobe University and Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Commerce degrees from the University of Melbourne. He is a Senior Lecturer in Heritage and Tourism at Monash University and has written extensively on heritage tourism and Australian history. His book *Travel and Tour Management* was published by Pearson in 2004 and he is currently co-editing (with Michael Hall) *National Parks, National Identity: Tourism and the Origins of the National Parks Concept*, published by Routledge in 2008.*

Defining the Latrobe Valley tourism market

Gabby Walters



Monash TRU

Project aim

This research project defines the existing tourism market for Latrobe Valley, located in Gippsland, Victoria. To meet the need for further research required by the Latrobe Valley Tourism Advisory Board, a quantitative research design investigates:

- Demographic characteristics of Latrobe Valley leisure tourists (e.g., origin, age group, income level);
- Visitor motivations;
- Travel behaviour within the region (including attractions visited, mode of transport, choice of accommodation);
- Information seeking behaviour (i.e., tourist information sources); and,
- Other places and activities of interest (to identify travel patterns across destinations and leisure choices).

Method

Data are collected using self-completed questionnaires. People visiting Latrobe Valley for tourism purposes are

approached at popular visitor points throughout the region. Locations include the Latrobe Visitor Information Centre and the historic township of Walhalla. Participants have the option to complete the questionnaire immediately or at a later time. Questions include reasons for visiting the Latrobe Valley, usual residence, information sources used for the region and types of activities planned.

Results and benefits to industry

The research provides the Latrobe Valley Tourism Advisory Board with essential tourism market information. This information facilitates visitor targeting. Tourism is becoming a prominent industry within the Latrobe Region. Improved understanding of consumers within target tourist markets allows identification of a suitable tourism brand for the region. This outcome encourages and assists local tourism providers to improve their business strategies and service delivery. In addition, better understanding of visitors to the Latrobe Valley allows the region to enhance cooperative tourism marketing efforts.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Dr Gabby Walters

gabrielle.walters@buseco.monash.edu.au

+61 3 9902 6153

Gabby Walters is a Lecturer with the Department of Marketing, School of Business and Economics, Monash University. Her research interests include: tourism consumers' visionary and emotional responses to advertising stimulus, the emotive components of consumer decision making, marketing communications and destination branding. Gabby has also been recently appointed as a member of the Destination Gippsland Ltd Board of Directors.

Pre-visit communication with park users

Glen Croy, Mike Reid and Stephen Wearing

Monash TRU, RMIT University, University of Technology Sydney

Project aim

The project investigated pre-visit communications in protected area marketing and management. The findings were intended to support marketing decisions by protected area managers in planning and implementing pre-visit communication strategies. In the context of growing recreational and tourism demand for and access to natural locations, potential impacts can be managed and minimised by informing potential users about protected areas including the suitability of visitor activities. Messages should be consistent across the diversity of tourist information sources. The project reviewed and evaluated existing practices in protected area marketing communication in regard to desired communication and behavioural objectives.

Method

A series of in-depth interviews were conducted with protected area and tourism organisation marketing and communication managers. Interviews generated insights about marketing, visitor and stakeholder communication, and pre-visit communication. Results allowed comparison of best practice Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) models. IMC achieves communication objectives through the design and strategic use of visitor and stakeholder communication activities. This strategy improves communication connections between the strategic planning and tactical implementation. Consequently visitor and impact management issues are addressed in a consistent and planned manner.

Additionally, a survey distributed by park agencies facilitated an Integrated Pre-visit Communication Management (IPCM) audit. First, the IPCM audits an organisation's strategy foundations, including the vision, mission, and stakeholder integration. Second, the



IPCM audits strategy development, including visitor connectivity, clarity of objectives, and clear planning process. Third, the IPCM audits strategic consistency and resource commitment. The third phase encompasses message harmony among communications involving numerous stakeholders and resource availability supporting IMC.

Results and benefits to industry

IPCM audit resulted in 14 recommendations, with five presented here. First, park agency marketing and communication managers should institute regular reviews of pre-visit communication management using the IPCM audit. This process allows active benchmarking of communication strategy and implementation against best practice. Second, park agencies should strengthen relationships with State and Regional Tourism organisations. This effort will enable visitor insights to be shared, facilitating consistent pre-visit messages and activities. Third, the integration of visitor data into strategy development and campaign planning should be improved. This requires access to secondary and primary data concerning potential visitors and their decision-making processes. Fourth, park marketing and communication managers should

include information sources (including media) and experiential questions in visitor surveys. Managers should redesign visitor surveys to probe experiences sought by visitors and reasons leading to destination choice. Finally, and following directly from the fourth recommendation, park agency communication and marketing managers should develop product-segment portfolio matrices using park experiences available and sought by visitors. This requires visitor segmentation to be matched with experiences offered by parks and protected areas. Such matrices facilitate the design of pre-visit communication campaigns and strategies for specific parks, experiences and visitor segments.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Dr Glen Croy

glen.croy@buseco.monash.edu.au

+ 61 3 9904 7032

Dr Glen Croy is a lecturer and researcher in the Tourism Research Unit at Monash University.

Using the Interpretation Evaluation Tool Kit: What have we found? What have we learned?

Betty Weiler, Liam Smith and Pieter Van Dijk



Monash TRU

Project aim

As reported in a previous issue of TRU Stories, the Interpretation Evaluation Tool Kit was developed by consulting with interpretation managers to agree on the most important indicators of “effective” or “successful” interpretation and to provide a way of monitoring and benchmarking the outcomes of face-to-face interpretation. We have recently used the nature-based instrument to investigate the relationship between number and types of interpretive media and what visitors take away from their experience at the Werribee Open Range Zoo. We have also used a translated version of the heritage-based instrument to determine whether the tool kit can assess the impacts of an interpretive tour experience on Chinese-speaking visitors to a heritage tourism attraction in Australia.

Method

The ten key indicators of successful interpretation measured by the tool kit include outcomes such as whether the interpretation made them think, its relevance, impacts on visitors’ attitudes to nature and heritage preservation, their inclination to engage in positive word-of-mouth advertising, and whether they wanted to stay longer at the site or

return someday for a repeat visit. On-site surveys of 288 zoo visitors made it possible to examine the relationship between the type and number of interpretive experiences and visitor-based interpretive outcomes. Interpretive experiences ranged from just one (walk only) to five (walk, listen to keeper talk, interact with a zoo volunteer, interact with a zoo actor and go on a behind-the-scenes tour). In a separate study conducted at Sovereign Hill, the indicators were translated into Mandarin, back-translated and pre-tested. Interpretive outcomes were then measured for group tours from China. Two hundred and eighty-five individual group tour members were surveyed to examine whether the instrument would be usable in a non-English speaking context.

Results and benefits to industry

These two studies demonstrate the usefulness of the Interpretation Evaluation Tool Kit on a number of levels. The Werribee Open Range Zoo study found that no one individual interpretive medium performed better than any other in terms of the ten indicators. However, the results regarding the number of interpretive media were compelling; on every indicator, the more media that were used to communicate with zoo visitors, the greater the impact. The perceived

cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes that the tool kit assessed were all significantly higher for visitors who were exposed to multiple interpretive media or experiences as compared to just one. These results support the use of multiple layers of interpretation at tourism sites and attractions to enhance visitor outcomes and the use of the tool kit as a reliable interpretation assessment tool.

In the Sovereign Hill-based study, the translated version of the heritage questionnaire proved valid and reliable (the Relevant and Meaningful indicator excluded) when evaluating interpretation-based visitor outcomes in a Chinese-language context. The study also provided insight as to interpretive outcomes achieved through the existing tour, notably a positive attitude toward heritage preservation and global satisfaction with the experience. However, the results reveal that in the case of Chinese group tours, the interpretive product is falling short in creating empathy for the historic period being interpreted at Sovereign Hill. This finding suggests the need for further research, both with Chinese-language tour participants and for other sites and attractions. Nonetheless, the tool kit was successfully translated and used on a non-English speaking visitor group, adding weight to its usefulness and versatility.

Both studies provide benchmarks within the particular attraction as well as for other providers of nature- and heritage-based tourism.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Professor Betty Weiler

betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
+61 3 9904 7104

As Director of the Tourism Research Unit, Professor Betty Weiler undertakes and supervises a wide range of projects in the broad area of visitor services and tourist experience management. She is known for her applied research focus, particularly in the areas of tour guiding and heritage and nature interpretation.

Investigating the economic drivers of frequent flier programs

Nathalie McCaughey

Monash TRU

Project aim

In 1981 American Airlines (AA) launched the first digitally based frequent flier program (FFP) in a format that has since become industry standard. FFPs are characterised by extensions to non-flight related markets (e.g., banking), perceived profitability and attractiveness to business travellers. The growth of FFPs has attracted academic interest from psychologists, marketers, and more recently, economists. Although economic research lags behind the other disciplines, research indicates that:

- FFPs strongly influence purchase decisions of travellers; and,
- business travellers are willing to pay a premium to travel with a carrier linked to their FFP.

FFPs appear to create substantial benefits for an airline. However, the associated administration costs are large. Hence, determining the underlying FFP economic drivers is important to airlines requiring strategic information on the economic viability of FFPs. We aim to enhance economic understanding of FFPs, although the project does not consider psychological factors or marketing related issues. The project examines the link between FFPs and employees' financial gains derived from non-tax benefits earned through work-related air travel.

Method

In economics, the principal-agent problem underpins FFPs. The principal (firm) pays for the flight, while the agent (employee) is enticed by the airline, through the FFP, to buy expensive or unnecessary flights. This problem simplistically assumes that an employee's firm fails to notice, ignores or is powerless to stop employees choosing flights. Moreover, goods and services purchased using FFP points are non-taxed fringe benefits, even though they are earned in the course of employment. Therefore, employees profit themselves from FFPs. The question is,



do airlines win or lose from running a successful FFP?

Complex economic analysis is required to test this proposition. The first step was to model a FFP system assuming only one airline existed. The outcome followed conventional economic thought in that financial benefits derived from FFP did accrue to the airline. That is, FFPs increased airline revenue. A subsequent model assumed a market with many airlines. Under this scenario, the non-taxed fringe benefits gained by employees were found to be crucial to the success of an airline's FFP. Further work, including interviews, will be undertaken to test the applicability of theoretical outcomes from the project to the aviation industry.

Results and benefits to industry

The theoretical models indicate that FFP viability result from non-taxation of benefits accruing to employees. The analysis also demonstrates that other key stakeholders (airlines and employers) benefit at the expense of the government (loss of tax revenue) and leisure travellers (paying higher fares due

to the FFP). Nevertheless, FFPs are a positive tool for airlines catering to business travellers. On completion, the project will deliver strategic information to airlines regarding pricing policies, FFP design and investment decisions with implications for airline travel within the Asia-Pacific region.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Nathalie McCaughey

nathalie.mccaughey@buseco.monash.edu.au

+61 3 9905 8642

Nathalie McCaughey is currently undertaking her PhD in the Economics Department at Monash under the supervision of Professor Peter Forsyth. She tutors 'Competition and Regulation', 'History of Economic Thought' both at third year level and 'Micro Economics' at first year level at Monash University, Clayton Campus and lectured 'International Economics' at third year level at Deakin University, Burwood Campus.

Measuring the carbon footprint of Australian tourism

Peter Forsyth, Serajul Hoque, Larry Dwyer, Ray Spurr, Thiep Van Ho and Daniel Pambudi

Monash TRU,
University of New
South Wales, Monash
University Department
of Economics

Project aim

Australian industries are becoming increasingly aware of their carbon footprint, and tourism is no exception. Producing the goods and services that tourists buy involves greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, both from the direct production of these, and from the inputs that tourism industries use. In this project, the Sustainable Tourism CRC Centre for Economics and Policy sought to develop methods to measure the carbon footprint of tourism, and to apply these to measure the footprint for 2003-04, the latest year for which the full data set was available.

Method

The measure of "tourism" which was used in this study is that used in the Australian Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), which is the recognised measure of the economic activity associated with tourism. With information about the GHG emissions from each of the component industries, such as accommodation, local transport and food and beverage, along with the profile of the industry from the TSA, the direct emissions from tourism were estimated. In addition, estimates were made for the emissions associated with tourism use of motor vehicles, and from international aviation to and from Australia. This provides a measure of the "direct" carbon footprint of tourism, or the emissions due directly to production by the tourism industry. In addition, there are indirect emissions from tourism, resulting from the production by industries which supply inputs to tourism. Furthermore, emissions from imports supplied to tourists or the tourism industry were estimated. The result is the most comprehensive and rigorous set of



estimates of the emissions from tourism available anywhere in the world.

Results and benefits for industry

The estimates show emissions directly associated with tourism production in 2003-04 were 26.3 million tonnes, which constitutes 4.7% of total Australian industry and household emissions for that year. Given that, in this year, tourism accounted for 4.1% of GDP, it can be seen that tourism as an industry is slightly more emissions intensive than the Australian average. Most of tourism's direct emissions are the result of transport. Tourism's indirect emissions are estimated to be 28.1 million tonnes, and thus total emissions were 54.4 million tonnes. The carbon footprint of tourism provides industry and government with measures of how tourism in Australia contributes to the climate change problem. It gives an indication of the possible impacts that policy measures, such as the government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme, will have on the costs of the industry. The Carbon Footprint has been presented at an industry workshop, and is available free

for download from the Sustainable Tourism CRC website, www.crctourism.com.au.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Prof Peter Forsyth

peter.forsyth@buseco.monash.edu.au
+ 61 3 9905 8642

*Peter Forsyth is Professor of Economics at Monash University. His research is focussed on the economics of aviation and of tourism. With Anne Graham and Andreas Papatheodorou, he edited the book *Aviation and Tourism* (Ashgate Publishing Limited 2008). Recently he has written several papers on how climate change policies will impact on tourism and on aviation in particular.*

Tourism-protected area partnerships in Australia: Designing and managing for success

Jennifer Laing, Betty Weiler, Sharron Pfueller, Glen Croy, Susan Moore, Aggie Wegner, Diane Lee, Jim Macbeth and Michael Lockwood

Monash TRU, Murdoch University, Charles Darwin University, University of Tasmania

Project aim

Partnerships are regarded as essential for sustainable protected area tourism. Partnerships foster involvement by the private sector and local communities, enhance tourism opportunities and provide increased resources for protected area management. This project examined the characteristics and attributes of successful partnerships between stakeholders involved in tourism associated with protected areas by asking four research questions:

1. What elements are involved in developing, fostering and maintaining partnerships among stakeholders in sustainable tourism within protected areas?
2. How do these elements contribute to partnership success?
3. Why are some partnerships more successful than others?
4. How do partnerships benefit partners and contribute to sustainable tourism?

Method

The project focussed on 21 partnerships across Australia. Each partnership was associated with the tourism industry and most included protected area agencies. Other stakeholders were local government, state and regional tourism organisations, government departments (apart from protected area and tourism agencies), non-government organisations, community groups and indigenous people. Tourism partners ranged from small accommodation or tour providers to large-scale commercial developments.

One hundred members of partnerships completed a questionnaire and follow-up interviews. This process determined outcomes from the partnership and sustainable tourism aspects. In follow-up interviews, we asked partners about the



features and outcomes they thought were most important and, most critically, what enabled them to be present or absent.

Results and benefits to industry

Success, as defined by partners participating in this project, covered outcomes including achieving the partnership purpose, gaining benefits from partners, improving information on protected area management, and accruing economic gains for the protected area. Additionally, partnership success encapsulated outcomes supporting sustainable tourism.

Respondents rated the most important outcomes as achieving the purpose of the partnership, providing benefits to partners and improved information availability to protected area managers. Many sustainable tourism outcomes were considered important, including improved understanding of protected area values, biodiversity conservation, greater respect for culture, and increased social benefits to local communities.

Positive outcomes are achieved through the contributions of 44 features characterising the partnership itself, working arrangements or the working environment. For the partnership itself, the most important features were involvement of decision makers, support from the protected area agency and partner leadership. Communication, trust and commitment were the most important features within outcomes related to working arrangements.

The most important features of the working environment were adequate organisational and financial support, plus tourism supportive legislation with respect to protected areas.

Many factors inhibited partnership success such as inconsistency in regulations across state boundaries, a lack of coordination in licensing approval processes within governments, short lease or licence terms, and regulations not covering all protected area users or visitors. Resources were also an issue, with partners referring to lack of staff, inadequate financial backing and insufficient involvement by the protected area agency in the partnership.

The study findings assist protected area managers, government and tourism operators by identifying what works and what needs to be improved in current approaches, as well as suggesting some directions for the future.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Dr Jennifer Laing

jennifer.laing@buseco.monash.edu.au
+61 3 9904 7048

Jennifer Laing has a PhD from La Trobe University, a Masters degree in Business Administration from Durham University (UK) and a Law degree (Honours) from the University of Melbourne. She is a Lecturer in Tourism at Monash University and her research interests include adventure tourism, heritage tourism, health and wellness tourism and festival/event tourism.

Community and visitor interaction on Bruny and Magnetic Islands

Brent Moyle, Glen Croy and Betty Weiler

Monash TRU

Project aim

Interactions among local community members and tourists varies for many reasons including economic dependence on the tourism industry, level of community attachment, lifestyle choices, and the distance of residence from the focal point of tourist activity. This project explored such interactions between locals and visitors within small island settings. The project sought an understanding of the interaction process, assessing factors including local motivations, facilitators and barriers, benefits and costs, and the nature of interactions.

Method

This research focussed on Bruny Island in Tasmania and Magnetic Island in Queensland. Interviews were conducted with 30 tourism stakeholder groups from local council, government departments, community groups, clubs, accommodation providers, tour operators, local business, parks and wildlife agencies, and residents not involved with the tourism industry. Interviewees recounted their own interaction experiences with visitors and provided comments about general interactions between island communities and visitors.

Results and benefits to industry

Key findings have emerged from the first stage of data analysis. Locals reported multiple motivations for interacting with island visitors, ranging from financial gain to seeking meaningful experiences. Community members identified interaction facilitators including festivals, events, markets, attractions and tours. Barriers to interaction stemmed from islander lifestyle choices, lack of time, visitor locations, poor infrastructure, limited resources and a lack of opportunity. More generally, the nature of interactions among visitors and locals varied from memorable or welcoming encounters to superficial or hostile contact. Importantly, the research documented local views of tourism



holding the potential to enhance or destroy their community. Interactions were assumed to have a determining role in local perceptions of tourism within their communities.

Recommendations will assist island communities to engage with visitors in meaningful ways. The project highlights the key role played by locals in the visitor experience. Locals have a unique opportunity to foster new relationships by engaging with visitors, an outcome that presumably encourages visitors to extend or repeat their visit. Enhancing local appreciation of such interactions will enable island communities to manage tourism in the context of changing visitor patterns. (Predictions suggest that future visitors will travel to fewer destinations but remain in each for

a longer time.) The research project also contributes to efforts that minimise negative tourism impacts on islands and their communities, reducing the overall footprint of tourism.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Brent Moyle

brent.moyle@buseco.monash.edu.au
+61 3 9904 7189

Brent Moyle is a PhD scholar in the Monash TRU. He holds a Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Honours), from Monash University. Brent's PhD research examines the interaction between communities and visitors in island settings.

Bushfire impacts on tourism and visitation in Alpine National Parks

Jennifer Laing, Dale Sanders and Meg Houghton

Monash TRU,
La Trobe University

Project aim

This project had three aims:

- Explore bushfire impact on tourism in Victoria's Alpine National Parks and adjacent areas;
- examine the profiles and views of potential visitors to these areas following the most recent period of wildfire in 2006/07 to determine changes in visitor patterns and behaviours; and,
- investigate reactions of selected tourism operators to bushfires and subsequent implementation of crisis management strategies.

Method

Interviews were conducted with 10 potential visitors, 10 operators and 10 current tourists from Mount Buller, Mount Hotham/Dinner Plain and Falls Creek. Interviewees included four operators and four tourists for each mountain location. People interested in visiting Victoria's alpine areas were

identified at the Melbourne central business district. Questions used were drawn from previous relevant data collections.

Results and benefits to industry

The majority of tourism businesses reported harsh short-term effects from the 2006/07 fires. Some businesses experienced complete loss of trade for most of the summer season. Although the majority of businesses had bushfire emergency plans, few actively planned for recovery following such disasters. For example, business may have used databases to inform customers of continuing or restarting service. Interviewees observed that negative or sensationalist media reporting affected business initially, both by warning potential visitors to avoid the alpine region and in failing to emphasise the recovery process.

Victorian Alps visitors were well informed about the bushfires from a variety of sources including radio, Internet and newspapers. Interviewees noted that negative media of bushfires did not discourage revisiting the region. Most indicated the fires did not influence or change their itinerary, activities pursued,

or satisfaction with the high country experience.

Potential visitors reported that information in the wake of the bushfires, even where negative, would not influence their decision to travel to the Victorian Alpine region. Interviewees did identify potential post fires risks such as falling trees, but recognised that bush fire events do not occur every summer. Television news was the primary knowledge source for bush fires while the Internet was the most frequent information source for planning summer holidays. Interestingly, no potential visitors knew how long the bush fires raged or recalled positive media coverage for facilitating visitation post-fire. Potential visitors were not motivated to visit the Victorian Alps based on concern for tourism operators' livelihoods.

The project findings assist protected area managers and the tourism industry in Alpine regions to better understand issues affecting post fire visitation patterns in national parks, tourism more generally, and areas for further research.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Dr Jennifer Laing

jennifer.laing@buseco.monash.edu.au
+61 3 9904 7048

Jennifer Laing has a PhD from La Trobe University, a Masters degree in Business Administration from Durham University (UK) and a Law degree (Honours) from the University of Melbourne. She is a Lecturer in Tourism at Monash University and her research interests include adventure tourism, heritage tourism, health and wellness tourism and festival/event tourism.



Postgraduate tourism research in Australia: Patterns, trends and gaps

Betty Weiler, Jennifer Laing, Gary Lacey, Rosemary Black and Roy Ballantyne

Monash TRU, Charles Sturt University, University of Queensland

Project aim

Using a comprehensive and carefully assembled database of research masters and PhD theses completed in Australia, four projects were undertaken to identify patterns and trends in various aspects of postgraduate tourism research. We aimed to capture the research topics and methods used by postgraduate research students to indicate the research capacity and interests of the wider tourism discipline, highlight strengths, identify gaps and determining avenues for future research.

Method

Masters theses and doctoral dissertations submitted and accepted for higher degrees by Australian tertiary institutions were identified, dating from the first tourism thesis completed some 40 years ago. We used keywords including hotel, hospitality, interpretation, leisure, tourism, tourist, travel, tour, recreation, holiday, vacation, guide, trip and heritage to produce a dataset of Australian tourism, hospitality and leisure-related higher degree theses. Details were downloaded to an Endnote database listing Author, Year, Title, City, University, and Thesis Type.

In the first project we created a 'refined' database of 461 entries (dissertations identified as tourism-related). The database was used to identify patterns and trends in postgraduate tourism research, detailing the level of study (masters or doctoral), geographical distribution, and disciplinary emphases. The second project assessed trends and patterns in environmental education as opposed to interpretation/tour guiding research. The third project created a sub-set of theses focussing on Asian countries (excluding Asian outbound tourism to non-Asian destinations) to determine trends, topic areas and gaps. The fourth project (in progress), compares theory applied in Australian

doctoral research to that applied in the United States of America and Canada.

Results and benefits to industry

The project documented tremendous growth in tourism doctoral-level dissertation completions, while in the past 10 years masters theses have declined dramatically. We also found unexpected patterns and emphases in higher degree research. For example, business dominates as a disciplinary context while thesis outputs are disproportional among Australian States and individual universities.

The second project documented dominance of topics concerning schools and country-specific case studies in environmental education theses, while interpretation theses commonly centered on case studies of specific parks or nature-based settings. The field of business, especially economics and marketing, were the main focus of Asian-themed tourism research. However, many disciplines and topics have been largely neglected. Variations in thesis topics across Asian countries were explained partially by socio-demographic trends and government policies.

Overall there has been an expansion and maturation in doctoral tourism research, evidenced by growth in completion numbers, disciplinary range, breadth of theories used, employment of interdisciplinary research and the use

of, or contribution to, tourism theory. This maturation both extends the knowledge bank within disciplines and advances the science of tourism. Characteristics of the reviewed theses ensure the continuation of scholarly inquiry into tourism and the enhancement of professional practice.

Documenting the scope of postgraduate tourism research in Australia provides value to researchers. The findings highlight Australia's capacity in research and professional practice. The analyses also provide potential benchmarks for comparison with other subject areas or disciplines, non-student research and postgraduate tourism-related research in other countries or regions.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Prof Betty Weiler

betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
+61 3 9904 7104

Betty's Weiler's qualifications include a PhD from the University of Victoria (Canada) and a Masters degree in Planning from the University of Waterloo (Canada). She has supervised 8 Masters by Research and 5 PhDs to completion and has won three awards for postgraduate supervision including the prestigious Monash University Vice-Chancellor's Award for Postgraduate Supervision (2006).



Regional destination marketing: Case study of the branding of North East Victoria, Australia

Fiona Wheeler, Betty Weiler and Warwick Frost

Monash TRU

Project aim

The project examined how the principles and practices of branding are applied and adapted in a regional tourism context. This research explored the process of developing, launching and implementing a regional brand. This focussed on the relationship between the master brand, local destinations and engagement in the branding process among region-specific tourism operators. Our goal was to improve regional destination branding practices by exploring rural context factors that facilitate or impede regional tourism marketing. The project provided pragmatic guidelines to assist destination marketers with the regional branding task.

Method

Rural North East Victoria, Australia was the case study. In 2006, this regional tourism area was re-branded as Victoria's High Country. This project tracked the launch and implementation process of this brand. This required ongoing fieldwork over three years. This included:

- visiting local destinations within the region;
- attending regional tourism meetings, strategy meetings, branding forums, festivals, commemorative events;
- observing the brand implementation and documenting prevailing regional tourism issues;
- analysing historical records, relevant literature, regional development plans, policies, tourism plans and marketing strategies; and,
- interviewing government, industry and regional community stakeholders.



Results and benefits to industry

This research charts the progress of a regional tourism industry facing enormous competitive and environmental pressure contextualised by unprecedented social and economic change. At time of launch, the brand had some support from local destinations and tourism operators, though it was contentious for others. Some stakeholders felt the brand did not fit the local identity or sense of place. Further, the brand was not considered to best represent tourism offerings. Stakeholders also questioned the priority applied within the regional marketing strategy to certain destinations, resorts, sub-regions, brand names and individual operators. To address this, the regional marketing committee conducted a brand communication program for region stakeholders. This initiative engaged local destinations and tourism operators in cooperative marketing ventures. Strategies included brand and promotional campaigns, strengthening the tourism product and marketing skills development within the regional community.

Based on project findings, recommendations encompassed internal brand building, local tourism capacity development, engaging with local brand

'champions' and leveraging existing local networks. Further, many rural areas require policies and processes to create or strengthen social capital and tourism capacity. Destination marketers and policy makers should be mindful of these factors. Grassroots initiatives must be balanced with umbrella tourism organisations. This is preferable to the latter's dominance, resulting in disenfranchisement and lack of destination-brand support.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from:

Fiona Wheeler

fiona.wheeler@buseco.monash.edu.au
+61 3 9904 7189

Fiona Wheeler is a PhD scholar in the Tourism Research Unit at Monash University. She holds a Master of Science in Tourism Management from Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Fiona comes from a strong marketing background. Prior to returning to academia she worked in marketing research and analysis roles, with experience in product development, customer experience management and branding.

Film, media and destination decision-making

Glen Croy

Monash TRU

Project aim

The project identified the effect of film on destination decision-making. There has been a recent increase in the use of films to attract tourists, for example, Tourism New Zealand's use of The Lord of the Rings trilogy. The project highlights the complex role of film, and media in general, in the travel decision-making process. Film plays many roles in this process, but nevertheless, it is rare for a film alone to influence tourists' specific destination choices. More generally, films form memorable images of places, along with other information sources, which influence tourists' perception of a destination's availability and suitability. The altered destination image can be positive, familiar and adequately complex to induce the travel decision.

To investigate the influence of film on destination decision-making, a decision-making process was specified. Potential tourists generally progress through a four step decision-making process. The first step collates all destinations in the potential tourist's awareness. The second step eliminates unavailable destinations due to factors including cost, time availability and safety. The third step eliminates remaining destinations that cannot satisfy travel motivations. In this step, destinations are categorised into three groups: those unable to satisfy motivations; those that neither satisfy nor dissatisfy motivations; and those that satisfy the travel motivations. The fourth step selects a destination from the last grouping in step 3. As can be identified, this process is largely undertaken sub-consciously.



The Lara Croft fabled 'Jungle Temple', Ta Phrom, Cambodia

Method

Components related to travel availability and suitability were determined using a multi-method approach. The method involved a free elicitation survey and in-depth interviews to identify the breadth of travel decision-making factors and components. The findings were synthesised into a relevant, clear and efficient list, subsequently employed using a before and after destination assessment. Differences in responses before and after viewing indicated the film's influence on potential tourists' destination decision-making image.

Results and benefits to industry

Film tourism researchers have speculated that film plays a direct role in attracting visitors to a destination. This project proposed that film plays an indirect role through the construction of meaning of place. Key results supported this proposition and highlighted the complexity of the role of film and media in the destination decision-making process. Not surprisingly, film was found to affect destination decision-making, though was insufficient by itself to alter the travel decision. The project had

three implications for tourism destination management. First, film and other media have an effect on destination image, which can be memorable. The implication indicates that destinations should use potential tourists existing media generated images in their destination information. Second, films contribute to the creation of familiar and complex images of destinations, though not by themselves. Hence, other destination information will need to be provided to potential tourists, linked to the films, to enhance the familiarity and complexity of the destination image, importantly from credible sources. Third, destinations need to actively manage their image. The impact of a single film or a one-off media reported event can dramatically influence potential tourists' images of the destination. Through an awareness of the existing destination image, and the ideal image, destination managers can mitigate or emphasise image modifiers by using, for example, media familiarisation visits.

Additional details regarding this research can be obtained from

Glen Croy

glen.croy@buseco.monash.edu.au
+61 3 9904 7032

Dr Glen Croy is a lecturer and researcher in the Tourism Research Unit at Monash University. He completed his PhD, titled The Role of Film in Destination Decision-Making through the Department of Tourism, University of Otago. Glen co-hosts the biennial International Tourism and Media (ITAM) conference, with Dr Warwick Frost (TRU, Monash), and Associate Professor Sue Beeton (La Trobe University).

Previous TRU Stories

The following table lists the projects described in previous TRU Stories. TRU Stories 1 and 2 can be downloaded from TRU's website at: www.buseco.monash.edu/units/tru/

Project title	Project contacts
An examination of emotional intelligence, emotional labour, emotional dissonance and burnout in employees at a major tourism attraction	Pieter Van Dijk pieter.vandijk@buseco.monash.edu.au
Backpackers and development	Jeff Jarvis jeff.jarvis@arts.monash.edu.au
Beach tourism patterns in Australia	Warwick Frost warwick.frost@buseco.monash.edu.au
Brand identity in rural tourism destination marketing	Fiona Wheeler fiona.wheeler@buseco.monash.edu.au
Community values for the Murray River Reserves	Sharron Pfueller sharron.pfueller@arts.monash.edu.au
Comparing Thailand's projected identity as a destination to its image as perceived by Australian tourists	Varintra Sirisuthikul tui.sirisuthikul@buseco.monash.edu.au
Developing tourism satellite accounts and tourism CGE models for the states and territories	Peter Forsyth peter.forsyth@buseco.monash.edu.au
Development of an evaluation tool kit for assessing the effectiveness of face-to-face interpretive programs	Sam Ham sham@uidaho.edu Betty Weiler betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
Experimental evaluation of persuasive communication strategies aimed at keeping visitors on the walking tracks at Port Campbell National Park	Sam Ham sham@uidaho.edu Betty Weiler betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
Exploring cave interpretation: Ideas from the profession	Rosemary Black rblack@csu.edu.au Betty Weiler betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
Exploring the nature and extent of recreation conflict in protected areas	Kirsty Tumes ktumes@gmail.com Betty Weiler betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
How do zoos utilise environmental interpretation to foster sustainable behaviour: A case study of Zoos Victoria	Liam Smith liam.smith@buseco.monash.edu.au
How tourists react to profound wildlife experiences	Liam Smith liam.smith@buseco.monash.edu.au
Implementing sustainable practice in tourism operations	Sharron Pfueller sharron.pfueller@arts.monash.edu.au
Influencing visitor use of alternative transportation systems in Australian national parks	Jim Curtis james.curtis@buseco.monash.edu.au
Making an edgier interpretation of the Gold Rushes and Eureka Stockade	Warwick Frost warwick.frost@buseco.monash.edu.au

Project title	Project contacts
Managing backpackers and residents in urban areas	Vicki Peel vicki.peel@arts.monash.edu.au
Marketing of protected areas as a tool to influence visitors' pre-visit decisions	Glen Croy glen.croy@buseco.monash.edu.au
New measures of tourism yield	Peter Forsyth peter.forsyth@buseco.monash.edu.au
Public liability in the Australian tourism industry	Damian Morgan damian.morgan@buseco.monash.edu.au
Relationship between tourism in national parks and community-based conservation: The case of West Bali National Park, Indonesia	Arisetriarso Soemodinoto ari_soemodinoto@yahoo.com Sharron Pfueller sharron.pfueller@arts.monash.edu.au
Religious tourism and environmental issues at sacred sites in India	Kiran Shinde kshinde@une.edu.au Betty Weiler betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
Seasonality in the tourism industry	Christine Lee christine.lee@buseco.monash.edu.au
The building of "Brand Australia"	Jeff Jarvis jeff.jarvis@arts.monash.edu.au
The strategic importance of international students to the Australian backpacker industry	Jeff Jarvis jeff.jarvis@arts.monash.edu.au
Tourism benefits and aviation policy	Peter Forsyth peter.forsyth@buseco.monash.edu.au
Understanding expectations and experiences of Chinese visitors to Victoria	Xin Yu lynn.yu@optusnet.com.au Betty Weiler betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
Understanding outdoor adventure experiences: A study of New Zealand mountaineers	Lee Davidson lee.davidson@vuw.ac.nz Betty Weiler betty.weiler@buseco.monash.edu.au
Using persuasive communication to influence the behaviour of visitors to protected areas	Sam Ham sham@uidaho.edu Jim Curtis james.curtis@buseco.monash.edu.au
Visitor satisfaction in natural and protected areas: A case study of Port Campbell National Park	Brent Moyle brent.moyle@buseco.monash.edu.au



Further Information

For further details about research projects conducted by the Monash Tourism Research Unit, please contact the individual researchers outlined in TRU Stories, or contact:

Annita Allman
Executive Assistant

Tourism Research Unit
Faculty of Business and Economics
Monash University, Berwick Campus
PO Box 1071
Narre Warren, Victoria 3805

Telephone: +61 3 9904 7224
Fax: +61 3 9904 7225

Email: enquiries.TRU@buseco.monash.edu.au

www.buseco.monash.edu/units/tru