POP-CULTURE TOURISM

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WHAT IS POP CULTURE TOURISM?

"The Science of Everyday"

- Ideas, perspectives, attitudes, images and other phenomena that are deemed preferred per an informal consensus within the mainstream of a given culture, especially Western culture.

- "Cultural expressions" within film, tv, radio, fashion, literature and music

- Defined by (Lindgren, 2005; Strinati, 2004):
  - Liked by "the many" (*volume*)
  - Other than "fine culture" (*ethical value*)
  - Mass production and mass consumption (*volume, cultural imperialism*)
  - Commercial
  - "The people’s culture (by the people, for the people)"
  - "Accessible" (*often seen as trivial and dumbed-down in order to find consensual acceptance throughout the mainstream*)

- Pop culture tourism – tourism induced by pop culture phenomena.
Pop-culture Tourism Phenomenon I: Film (and literature) tourism

• Film tourism is defined as tourist visits to a destination or attraction as a result of the destination’s being featured on television, video, or the cinema screen. (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006)

• Tourism and literature – The Grand Tour (18th century)

• Now:
  – Development of creative industries (primarily film and television)
  – Information society and media development
  – An increasing interest for how media-related tourism contribute to creating an attractive image for destinations and how that influences tourist flows (Hudson och Ritchie, 2006; Lee et al., 2008; Riley et al., 1998; Connell, 2004).
THE TWILIGHT SAGA

116 million copies sold and translated into 37 different languages.

The 5 movies have grossed almost 4 billion USD worldwide.
Characteristics of Film Tourism

• *Sudden emergence* – thus, hard to predict and plan

• Highly *demand-driven* (Müller, 2006)

• Can be a *short-term phenomenon* but can lead to both short- and long-term effects.

• Is based on *constructed realities*, i.e. based on both authentic as well as purely fictitious foundations (Frost, 2010) which creates a strong emotional tie between a tourist and the destination (Kim & Richardson, 2003) Thus, challenge to balance the authentic elements of the place and the elements constructed by the film/book. (cf. Jamal & Tanase, 2006)

• Tourists (fans) are often heavy users of internet based *social media* which then influences their travel behavior. Thus, marketing challenge to reach film tourists through social media.
A festival or feast (opposite to fast) is defined as: a period of time set aside to commemorate, ritually celebrate or enact, or anticipate seasons (agricultural, religious, or socio-cultural) that give meaning and cohesiveness to an individual and his/her community. (O’Hagan & Scott, 1992).

Key programmic “elements of style” are:
- ritual and symbolism (e.g., patriotism; religion; attachment to the theme)
- emotional stimulation (through spectacle, aesthetic experiences)

Pop-culture Tourism Phenomenon II: Festivals
Rokksild Festival, Storsjöyran and Way Out West

Gothenburg, 32.000 guests

Östersund, 50.000 guests

Roskilde, 100.000 guests
“...social world that begins to take shape when enthusiasts in a particular field pursue substantial shared interests over many years” (Stebbins, 2005: 12).
Consumer Tribes

Tourism experiences and behaviour to be understood in a wider socio-cultural context. Consumer tribes (Cova & Cova 2002) follow the social dynamics of *tribal belonging* - production of collective identity, practices, rituals, meaning, material culture.
Practices

(what members of the social world do)

- symbolism (e.g., signs of membership and status)
- ritualistic behaviour (e.g., at events)
- communication among members: methods and hubs
- facilitation and mediation of communication among actors and organizations
- the "ethos" (values, rules, guidelines, etiquette)
- badges (for prestige and identity)
- routines (training, competing, skill development)
- consumption (clothing and equipment purchases, events and travel, reading and study materials)
Roskilde Festival: The Orange Feeling

• Sense of community
• Solidarity
• Diversity
• Tolerance
• Artistic Freedom
• Eco-equity

Fan: Couldn't help but think of the orange feeling, when I saw this on a sunny fall day in London. Can't wait until 2012!
RF: The Orange Moustache, maybe?
Twilight star Robert Pattinson increases tourism by 1000 percent in Washington State town where New Moon is set.

By TRAVELMAIL REPORTER

‘Vampire tourism’ breathes new life into small town

To capitalize on New Moon’s popularity, the Volterra tourism board sponsors Twilight-themed weekends that include a reception with “blood.”

By Don Faust, www.DonFaustPhoto.com, for USA TODAY

VAMPIRE VACATION

‘TWILIGHT’ FANS TURN A QUIET INDIAN RESERVATION INTO AN UNWITTING TOURIST MECCA

Teen ‘Twilight’ Vampire Tourism

Volterra’s Battle for Authenticity
TWILIGHT DESTINATIONS: SETTINGs, LOCATIONs & OTHER

**TWILIGHT DESTINATIONS - SETTINGS**
- Forks and La Push, Washington, USA
- Volterra, Italy

**TWILIGHT DESTINATIONS - LOCATIONS**
- Vancouver/British Columbia, Canada
- Montepulciano, Italy

**OTHER DESTINATIONS – EVENTS AND CONVENTIONS**
- TwiCon, USA
- Eternal Twilight, Great Britain
- Fan events – e.g. in Indonesia
- Marketing events – e.g. in South Korea
Forks, WA USA – Home of Vampires and Werewolves

- Small, remote, industrial, peripheral town in Washington becomes Mecka for Twilight fans
- Small & friendly community, natural beauty
- The author googled on ”rain”
- More than 300, 000 visitors since 2005 (pop. just over 3000).

Construction of a fictional reality.
- Themed accommodation
- Twilight themed menus
- One company running Twilight Tours
- One big fan shops + retailer
- Twilight related products everywhere, even petrol station.

- Problems of authenticity relates only to the indigenous population which is neglected.
TWILIGHT + VACATIONER = TWICATIONERS
Volterra, Italy – Stronghold of the Volturi Vampire Clan

• Stephanie Meyer came to Volterra in 2007 to present her book, after that Twilight tourism increased.

• Historical town, growing tourism

• The film not shoot in Volterra, major disappointment

• After the New Moon film premiere in 2009 the boom came. “No planning, this is a surprise.” In 2009 and 2010 large amount of tourists. 20% Twilight tourists

• Different target group – young and international

• Capacity of around 600 beds in Volterra, sometimes capacity problems.
Montepulciano, Italy - Throne of the Volturi Vampire Clan

- Historical town & wine and event tourism

- Film team “knocked on the door” in 2009 for potential location inspection.

- May 2009 film shooting – “Montepulciano was overcrowded, a completely crazy week.” “10 000 visitors per day just for the movie.”

- “Montepulciano earned 2,5 million Euros only for that week.”

- After film shooting continuous streams of “Twilighters” visited. New age group.

- Premiere of New Moon on November 18, 2009. They say Volterra in the movie!
Vancouver/British Columbia, Canada - A Stage for Film Vampires and Werewolves

• Metropolitan city, industry, tourism, film production, natural beauty

• British Columbia – “Hollywood North”

• Tourism organisation and Film commission have no interest in developing film tourism.

• Fans come primarily for celebrity spotting (social media is used) and for the places where the film was shot.

• A few entrepreneurs offer tours to film locations and celebrity spotting
### Pop-culture Induced Tourism Development Strategies (Larson, Lundberg & Lexhagen, 2013)

<table>
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<td>boosterism</td>
<td><em>fabricating place authenticity</em> (Forks)</td>
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<td>community-oriented</td>
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<td><em>guarding place authenticity</em> (Volterra and Montepulciano)</td>
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Possible explanations:
- National/cultural differences
- Stage in tourism life cycle
- Different expectations
FILM TOURISTS’ MOTIVES

Complex combination of factors

• Escape from daily life

• Identity, nostalgia, learning

• Attractiveness of the destination

• Content of the film

• Emotional ties to a place based on a film experience

• A strengthened feeling in the interplay between fiction and reality

• An interest in film celebrities
I followed him into the forest. The evidence of his path had disappeared instantly. There were no footprints, the leaves were still again, but I walked forward without thinking. I could not do anything else. I had to keep moving. If I stopped looking for him, it was over. Love, life, meaning... over.

Bella Swan, New Moon, Chapter 3, p 73.
“...you just think you are in the movie, it’s so wild...”
Pop-culture tourists’ on-line behaviour

66% had travelled to a Twilight destination
63% had Twilight as a primary motif for the trip
79.5% thinks that Twilight web pages and social media is the most important source of information
High mean value for use of information in social media to plan a trip (5.64), sharing in social media (5.19), and social media affects decisions for travelling (5.19)
92% use web pages, blogs and web forums several times a day or several times a week.
Twilight Journey

Trip to Seattle, Forks and Oregon!!


Created on Jan 4, 2010 - Updated May 31, 2010
By Rate this map - Write a comment

dew drop inn
100 Fern Hill Rd. Forks, WA 98331, United States

Hospital where Dr Cullen works!

Forks High School

La push beach

Forks Sign

Baseball diamond
The marketing potential of virtual communities

**Facebook.com/orangefeeling**

**In Numbers**

- 150,000 fans in total (and these two guys really like metal!)
- 8,276 new likes this month (that’s 1/18 of the total)
- 21,219,457 friends of friends ('Friends of Friends' is also a really great song by the band Hospitality who played at Roskilde this year)
- 345,000 people reached weekly (an amount of people matching the audience and volunteers present at three consecutive Roskilde festivals!)
- 58,237 page views in October (almost as much as the capacity in front of Orange stage)

**Exposure and Part-Time Marketers**
Facebook Traffic (number of total posts per month)
Tribal Adoption Indicator
(fan to wall owner ratio)
Service co-creation

• Marketing facilitates mutual value creation (Vargo & Lusch 2004; Payne et al. 2008)

• Typology of consumer roles based on commitment to problem solving (Blazevic & Lievens 2008):
  – Passive user
  – Active informer
  – Bidirectional creator
# Value Co-creation Strategies for Social Media

*(Gyimóthy & Larson, forthcoming)*

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CUSTOMER INSOURCING
by Social Media Dialogue

Organic and appointed ambassadors

- F2F information distribution
- Service recovery/damage control

Fan: Roskilde has always started with the chaotic storming of the fence and early entering to the camping area. This is a big part of going to Roskilde and it also determines when and in some ways how your camp and festival week will be. This is the way it is supposed to be. Part of going to the festival is the chaos, the fighting for your own spot and the entire “you on your own mentality that follows”

Ambassador: No it hasn’t been like that ALWAYS. It has been like that for the last 8-9 years, and it always escalates further every year and it’s just a matter of time before one get seriously hurt by this behaviour. So by acting like this you brought it [the camping booking system] on yourself.
Thanks for your pep yesterday and the fine words (+great tips on band) which we will return to in 2012. Continue wishing for artists, post your suggestions for improvement and other things we could develop the festival!.

Fan 1: Quit those bloody deluxe tickes, no lies about how many tickets still available! Otherwise, an extraordinary festival!

Let's continue jamming ideas: How do YOU think we (as in everyone at the festival) can create an even greater sense of community and togetherness at the festival camping grounds, with room for everyone.

Do you think the cashfree festival is a good idea? If yes, how could it work?

Crowdsourcing: Share your ideas
- Illusion of participation
- Display and rating of suggestions

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COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATION

Customising based on new fan activities:
- Dating and finding (new) friends
- Clubbing (gender ratio app)
- Reviews and popularity ratings of bands and festival services

Fan 3. I was dressed in a dinosaur sleeping bag on the last Sunday at the festival site when a lovely looking girl gave me a postcard that said: “You are handsome, wanna go with me to a party?” As she walked away I told her Arena by midnight, but I never met her there. (5 July 2011)

Did you meet somebody at Roskilde you would like to meet again or stay in touch with? Post your inquiry below.
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*(Gyimóthy & Larson, forthcoming)*
Conclusions

• Pop-culture tourism is an opportunity for destinations to increase awareness, strengthen destination brand/image, and attract new tourist segments.

• It is of great importance for the destinations/tourism organisations to understand the pop-culture community in order to capitalize on this segment. Social media is the communication medium used by the fans and where decisions to travel are taken.

• Destinations/tourism organisations can adopt different co-creation strategies to engage the pop-culture community in value creation – customer insourcing, co-innovation and community consolidation.
Thank you for your attention!