



## Research Paper

## Thirsting for vampire tourism: Developing pop culture destinations

Mia Larson<sup>a,\*</sup>, Christine Lundberg<sup>b</sup>, Maria Lexhagen<sup>b</sup><sup>a</sup> Department of Service Management, Lund University, Campus Helsingborg, P.O. Box 882, 251 08 Helsingborg, Sweden<sup>b</sup> ETOUR, Mid Sweden University, 831 25 Östersund, Sweden

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## ABSTRACT

Destinations associated with pop culture phenomena, such as destinations depicted in books and films, often experience increased numbers of visitors as well as strengthened and changed destination images. The pop culture phenomenon the Twilight Saga (book and film series) is in this paper used as an example to explore how a pop culture phenomenon can affect destinations, and how destinations manage this type of tourism. Case studies in Forks, WA, in the USA, Volterra, Montepulciano in Italy and British Columbia in Canada illustrate different tourism destination strategies. Forks has, for example, developed experiences based on a fictionally constructed reality connected to *Twilight*, which has reimagined the destination, and, thus, *fabricated the authenticity* of the place. Volterra and Montepulciano, on the other hand, have experienced a Twilight Saga tourism development characterised by deliberations regarding the immersion of Twilight Saga elements into their cultural heritage which has resulted in a strategy best described as *guarding the authenticity* of their respective destinations. Finally, British Columbia has had no strategy and exhibits little interest in Twilight tourism. The priority of the destination has been to satisfy the needs of film producers. The study elaborates on different paths of pop culture tourism development, i.e. it is not always advisable to fully exploit the potential that a pop cultural phenomenon can bring to a destination. Which strategy should be used by a particular destination depends on the unique character of the place and its perceived need for tourism development.

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## 1. Introduction

Popular culture tourism, such as film and literature tourism, has received an increasing amount of attention in tourism research lately (Frost, 2010; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006; Lee, Scott, & Kim, 2008; Shandley, Jamal, & Tanase, 2006). This kind of tourism rests on the imaginary created in books and films and it consists of experiences of fun, fantasy and desire (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). The experiences are 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). This construction of reality is also referred to as commoditization or staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1973), which does not necessarily result in a less genuine or authentic experience for the tourist. On the contrary, this staged authenticity may create a new and enhanced authentic experience (Cohen, 1988). The often extensive amount of interest in characters and places depicted in films and books is an opportunity for the destinations in question to develop film or literature tourism (Tanasescu, 2006).

\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +46 707 880408.

E-mail addresses: Mia.Larson@ism.lu.se (M. Larson), Christine.Lundberg@miun.se (C. Lundberg), Maria.Lexhagen@miun.se (M. Lexhagen).

Pop culture tourism is often characterised by a sudden appearance and is strongly demand-driven. Most often it emerges suddenly, and may surprise actors at the receiving destination. In addition to this, it is difficult to predict since films and books are not produced for the purpose of generating travel to certain locations/destinations (though there are exceptions). This type of tourism may have potential, but there is a risk that it may be relatively short term. If so, this makes investments and destination development difficult to motivate in a long-term perspective. Furthermore, films and books create constructed realities, not always connected to the places in which they are staged. Thus, film and literature induced tourism development suffers from problems of dealing with fiction and reality, i.e. to balance the authentic elements of the place and the elements constructed by the film and/or the book. Shandley et al. (2006) refer to this problem and state that it can be seen as a cultural post-colonialism facilitated by globalisation and the globalising reach of the culture industry.

The purpose of this paper is to develop exploratory themes on how destinations deal with pop culture tourism. Focus is on the perceptions and actions of the public organisations responsible for tourism development at the destination. What strategies do they adopt and how is place identity balanced with the destination image constructed by the films/books and in the development of pop culture tourism experiences? Firstly, we will describe the

effects of the pop cultural phenomenon as perceived by the public organisation representatives. Different kinds of pop cultural destinations will be described; *settings*, where fictional stories take place, and *locations*, where movies are shot (Tookey & Baker, 1996). Secondly, we will describe how the public organisation representatives approach the phenomenon and how they use it in their destination marketing strategy. In particular we will discuss how the tension between the destination image induced by the pop cultural phenomenon and the place identity is managed.

The cases illustrated in the paper are destinations drawing on the highly successful vampire books and films the Twilight Saga. The Twilight Saga by Stephenie Meyer consists of four books. Already in 2010, 116 million copies of the books had been sold ([www.publishersweekly.com](http://www.publishersweekly.com)). The first four films (out of five), released on the big screen and DVD/BlueRay before November 2012, have grossed over 3.1 billion US dollars worldwide ([The-numbers.com](http://The-numbers.com), 2012). The story of a vampire falling in love with a teenage schoolgirl has attracted an enormous amount of attention, particularly in social media where fans meet and discuss. The story is primarily played out in four different settings – Forks, La Push and Port Angeles in Washington, USA, and Volterra, Italy. All of these destinations now have considerable tourist flows due to the phenomenon; this is despite the fact that none of the movies were filmed here. Primarily, the movies were filmed in Portland, Oregon, in the USA; British Columbia (e.g. Vancouver, Squamish, Tofino) in Canada; and Montepulciano in Italy; destinations that also attract Twilight induced tourism.

## 2. Managing and marketing pop culture tourism

Based on the explorative case studies at the selected Twilight destinations, themes evolved that described their characteristics, challenges perceived by the public organisation representatives and strategies adopted. These themes connect to theories, concepts and discussions in a variety of social science literature, in particular within tourism, film tourism and literary tourism that are presented below.

### 2.1. Consumer induced demand and lack of strategic planning

Pop culture tourism destinations emerge from the demand of pop culture consumers who experience a need to connect to the fictional stories of their interest. The tourism growth is often sudden and explosive. The Dracula tourism in Romania, for instance, started in the 1970s (Reijnders, 2011a, 2011b) and grew despite Romania's lack of interest in encouraging it (Light, 2007). Connecting to Butler's (1980) model of a tourism area cycle, the exploration phase is short, i.e. when there are few tourists and the tourist facilities are very limited. Challenges might include capacity problems in accommodation and other services, uncovering a lacking supply of tourism experiences and attractions associated to or necessary for this form of tourism (Connell, 2012; Müller, 2006). Thus, these kinds of destinations often experience a strong marketing push to cultivate niche products and experiences (Connell, 2012), i.e. to enter the involvement and the development phase of the tourism area cycle (Butler, 1980). Many times it is, however, not only a short-term demand induced by the pop culture phenomenon. Riley, Baker and Van Doren's (1998) study of twelve film sites showed that the span of movie inducement lasted for at least four years and tourist flows increased between 40 and 50%. Still, demand from this particular niche tourist segment will in many cases fade relatively quickly and the pop culture tourism destination enter a phase of stagnation and decline (Butler, 1980).

Despite many destinations being aware of the potential of pop culture tourism, Hudson and Ritchie's (2006) study of destination marketing organisations showed that nearly all could be more proactive with film tourism. The main constraint was a lack of resources. Connell (2012) argues that film tourism typifies a traditional boom-bust approach to tourism destination development that sometimes encompasses a lack of planning. This boom-bust approach can be related to a tourism planning approach identified by Getz, 'boosterism', which assumes that tourism is inherently good and should be developed. Another approach Getz identify is the 'community-oriented' approach, which assumes that there is a need for local control and that development should be balanced and defined in socio-cultural terms. (Getz, 1987 cited in Hall & Page, 2006) As Connell (2012) states, there is a need for a strategic supply-side response in film induced tourism development. Müller (2006) confirms this in his study on literary tourism. Thusly, pop culture tourism destinations need to have a more strategic planning approach to the tourism development, i.e. to "be proactive, responsive to community needs, to incorporate implementation within a single planning process, and to be ongoing" (Hall & Page 2006, p. 410).

### 2.2. Branding and image formation at pop culture destinations

There are unique destination marketing opportunities following pop culture tourism involving the shaping of destination images and brands (Connell, 2005, 2012). In tourism marketing literature a destination brand is defined as a "name, sign or symbol representing the core values of a place offered for tourism consumption" (Gnoth, 2007). Thus, destination brands represent the benefits of various services that are promised to tourists (Gnoth, 2007). They include functional, experiential and symbolic brand dimensions. The power of a brand lies in the customer's ability to differentiate one brand from another (Gartner, 2009). Keller (2008) identifies four stages of building a brand: (1) establishing brand identity which involves creating customer top-of-mind awareness about the brand, which is closely related to tourists' use of information sources and familiarity (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Baloglu, 2001); (2) establishing brand meaning by supporting customers' brand associations and ability to identify and evaluate brand attributes and benefits; (3) evaluating customer response and establishing positive brand attitudes; and (4) establishing customer relationships aimed at creating brand attachment and brand activity for loyalty.

Destination image is an important factor in brand building and widely acknowledged as an important source of brand equity (Boo, Busser, & Baloglu, 2009; Lassar, Mittal, & Sharma, 1995). Bigne Alcaniz, Garcia, and Blas (2009, p. 716) defined destination image as "the overall perception of a destination, the representation in the tourist's mind of what he/she knows and feels about it. In sum, it consists of all that the destination evokes in the individual; any idea, belief, feeling or attitude that tourists associate with the place." Destination image has been conceptualised as a continuum between "common" functional and psychological characteristics versus "unique" characteristics like sights, local events, special feelings and aura that form a very specific holistic destination impression (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Several studies have identified significant relationships between destination image and satisfaction as well as tourists' loyalty behaviour (Bigne Alcaniz et al., 2009; Faullant, Matzler, & Füller, 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). However, as Konecnik and Gartner (2007) argue, image should not be viewed as a single explanatory factor in determining tourism decision-making processes.

Image studies are an important part in understanding film tourism (Connell 2005, 2012). There are not many studies on the effects of pop culture tourism on image formation, something that

Kim and Richardson (2003) stated already ten years ago. However, researchers have found that motion pictures can increase awareness of the place depicted and induce tourism (Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Riley et al., 1998). Recognising this as a positive outcome, destination marketers for example in the UK, USA, Korea, Australia and New Zealand, are using film-related aspects in marketing campaigns (Connell, 2012). However, Kim and Richardson (2003) found that although a movie can significantly affect the viewers' image of a place portrayed in a film this could be in both positive and negative directions. Importantly, studies have shown that it may be difficult to move away from an unwanted image created by films (Bruce, 1996; Rockett, 2001; Brereton, 2007). Beeton (2004) even warns marketers that a popular film will not automatically encourage tourism if the images do not correlate or are predominantly negative. Hence, tourism destination images may need to be modified in order to leverage opportunities of marketing through films (Beeton, 2004).

Accordingly, some previous research shows the connection between image formation and pop cultural tourism, and the importance of it. However, the actual management and marketing of pop cultural tourism, e.g. how destination marketing representatives attempt to manage image formation for the purpose of building a destination brand, has received little attention.

### 2.3. Place identity and authenticity

Identity and representations of community are clearly affected by tourism (Ballesteros & Ramirez, 2006), such as pop culture tourism. Conflicts can emerge where local residents perceive that the tourism development challenge the particular qualities of place, and where place meaning and attachments are compromised (Dredge, 2010, p. 104). For instance, the forms of tourism demand the Dracula tourism in Romania involves are discordant to the way the people in Romania imagine themselves and wishes to be imagined by others (Light, 2007). An important task for tourism developers when capitalising on this kind of tourism is to take into account place identity, i.e., as defined by Lewicka (2008) as self-categorization in terms of place. This can be connected to the discussion on sustainable socio-cultural tourism development, i.e. the preservation and/or management of the social-cultural elements of a destination (Mason, 2003). On the other hand, identities can change. This process can be linked to discussions on authenticity where Cohen (1988) has offered the concept of “emergent authenticity” to describe this evolutionary process. He describes authenticity as “negotiable” and argues that “a cultural product, or trait thereof, which is at one point generally judged as contrived or inauthentic may, in the course of time, become generally recognised as authentic” (1988, p. 279–80).

Peterson (2005) discusses how tourism promoters can reimagine the historical past of a destination, even into popular mythical worlds, and thus, fabricate the authenticity of the place. Jones and Smith (2005) also discuss the concept of fabricating authenticity in their study of how New Zealand used *The Lord of the Rings* to strengthen the national identity. They found that some actors play off genuine authenticity (cultural and historical) against a false appearance of authenticity, which is manufactured in order to satisfy commercial ends.

So, there are vast challenges for destinations in managing pop culture induced tourism considering the often sudden appearance of the demand, the uncertainty of the effects (e.g. regarding scope of the tourism, new tourist segments and changed destination image), the balance of the real and imaginary attributes of the destination in destination marketing and product development, and the considerations regarding socio-cultural sustainable tourism development. The discussion in the findings section show how these challenges manifest themselves in Twilight Saga

tourism destinations resulting in distinguishing three distinct strategies of managing pop culture tourism.

### 3. Methodology

The study presented in this paper is part of a research programme on pop culture tourism and the Twilight Saga phenomenon. The study began in 2010 and, apart from the case studies presented here, includes observations of fans at events and during destination visits, interviews with fans, and a quantitative survey of fans (see Lexhagen, Larson, & Lundberg, 2013; Lundberg & Lexhagen, 2010, 2012; Lundberg, Lexhagen, & Mattsson, 2012). Thus, understanding of the consumption side of pop culture tourism preceded these case studies. The case studies are qualitative, explorative and inductive in their character. Hence, the data in the study led to the emergence of the theoretical themes discussed (Yin, 2011).

Due to the varied nature of destinations with Twilight Saga tourism (see later descriptions of the destinations), and with the ambition to cover different contextual conditions, a holistic multiple-case study research design was chosen (Yin, 2003). In multiple-case studies the single case is of interest because it belongs to a particular collection of cases that share a common characteristic, termed quintain by Stake (2006). This research design was chosen in order to study what is similar and different about the cases in order to understand the quintain, which in this study is a certain type of tourism (i.e. pop culture tourism) better. Stake (2006) also suggests that cases are portrayed comprehensively offering the reader room for their own interpretations as well as offering that of the authors. This is also why we have attempted to give as much detail as possible to the descriptions of each destination as well as the sections that describe destination management activities. Furthermore, the case studies aim to produce dense and comprehensive descriptions of the studied object in order to bring previously unknown (or unconscious) conditions and variables into focus leading to new perspectives on that which is studied (Merriam, 1994).

Although Twilight Saga fans travel to many places around the world, mostly due to events related to the Twilight Saga, the most important destinations are those which have served as locations or settings and which have large volumes of Twilight Saga fans visiting the destination. The destinations chosen in this study were previously known by the authors. The selected cases are two settings of the saga; Forks (Washington, USA), which is the main setting in the books, and Volterra (Italy), which is portrayed in the second book of the Twilight Saga, *New Moon*, and two cases that are film locations; Montepulciano (Italy), which represented Volterra in the film *New Moon*, and Vancouver (British Columbia, Canada) where many sequences of the films were shot. All destinations attract a large amount of ‘Twilighters’ (Twilight fans), e.g. tourism in Forks shot from almost nothing to over 70,000 visitors in 2010 and 20% of the tourism in Volterra 2010 were Twilight tourists.

These cases constitute a purposive sample (Patton, 1990; Stake, 2006) for this study. The logic of purposive sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases that can inform the questions under study. Studying these purposive sample cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalisation (Patton, 2002). In line with the explorative nature of this study the cases were selected based on both the expectation that: “it either predicts similar results (a literal replication)” and the expectation that it “produces contrary results but for predictable reasons (a theoretical replication)” (Yin, 1989, p. 53).

Data was collected by means of seven semi-structured interviews in total. The interviews gave the interviewee ample leeway

for how to reply (Bryman, 1995), and involved nine film and literature tourism representatives at public organisations. The interviewees were selected based on contacts with the official tourism organisations at each destination and they were deemed appropriate based on their involvement with management activities at the destination and connection to Twilight tourism activities in particular. This meant that they were in a position to describe and discuss activities and perceptions that would add the most to the portrayal of the case study as a whole (Stake, 2006). In Forks two interviews were carried out; the first with the director of Forks Chamber of Commerce and the manager of Forks Visitor Centre, and the second one with the Mayor of Forks. In Volterra two interviews were carried out: the Mayor of Volterra and the vice manager of Volterra Visitor Centre. In Montepulciano one interview was carried out with two people: the Public Relations manager of Montepulciano and the Trade and Industry manager. In Vancouver two interviews were carried out; one with the Operations manager at Vancouver Visitor Centre and one with the Vice President of LT & Digital market of Tourism Vancouver. As previously stated, a large part of the four movies (out of five) in the series have been filmed in British Columbia, partly in the city of Vancouver, in Greater Vancouver (e.g. Langley, Surrey, New Westminster) and to some extent in other parts of British Columbia (Squamish, Tofino) ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)). As a result of this, representatives from Vancouver Visitor Centre and Tourism Vancouver were selected for interviews. During the interviews the respondents were asked to discuss the Twilight Saga film production and tourism in British Columbia as a whole. Thus, the case studies do not capture a broad stakeholder perspective of destination management at the destinations involving interviews of all stakeholders of Twilight Saga tourism. Instead, the focus was on how key actors in the public sector, responsible for governing the city/town and the tourism industry, perceive the pop cultural phenomenon and how they manage it.

An interview guide was used to guide the interviews. It dealt with the history of tourism at the destination in general and Twilight tourism in particular; its characteristics, scope and effects; destination management, marketing activities, product development, and strategies; and future prospects. The guide for the personal interviews was adapted to the type of work performed by the interviewee. Although the interview guide supported the interviews, the respondents were able to elaborate freely on the topic, which they did gladly, thus making the interviews explorative. In that way the empirical data became vivid and rich, which facilitated a deeper understanding of the studied topic (Gillham, 2000). The interviews lasted from one to two hours. They were recorded and transcribed. Moreover, observations of the destinations were carried out both on site (Volterra and Montepulciano in October 2010 and Forks and Vancouver, British Columbia in March 2011) and on their respective web sites. The observations focused on what kind of Twilight related products and services actually were in place at the destinations during our field-work stay and what they showed on their websites.

The analysis of the data was performed in different steps. After reading the transcripts and formulating the research questions of the article, the data was coded with the help of the software programme NVIVO 9 into different themes. Next, further coding was carried out in order to refine and produce a theoretically guided description and analysis of the data. Thus, the analysis followed an abductive procedure, i.e. it was by turns guided by both empirical data and theory (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 1994).

Methods of triangulation were employed in this study. For instance, in order to both validate the interpretation of the empirical data from the interviews and find different aspects in the data, two researchers and one assistant were present at each interview. Moreover, listening to the tape recordings and

reviewing the transcripts was done by two researchers independently of each other and later in the form of discussions. The coding of the data was primarily done by one researcher but extensively reviewed by another. Furthermore, the observations through on-site visits by the researchers, spending several days at each destination participating in Twilight tourism activities, ensure a correct interpretation of the contents of the interviews. Interviews at each destination were also conducted with more than one person in order to cover as many aspects as possible.

Concerning the limitations of this study and the method employed, Stake (2006) states that the benefits of multiple-case study will be limited if fewer than 4 cases are chosen or more than 10, but that for good reasons many studies have fewer than 4 or more than 15. Since this study includes 4 cases, that are the most prominent Twilight Saga related tourism destinations, we believe that they are representative cases that are suitable, and which provide sufficient information, in order to explore management of pop culture destinations. In line with Eisenhardt's (1989) argument about case studies, the results are empirically valid, although the generalisability may be low. However, the aim of case studies is not to make generalisations, but instead to explore and understand the dynamics of the specific phenomenon (Eisenhardt, 1989). This is a limited study that could have been expanded to include more actors in the pop culture destination network, for instance private tourism firms such as tour guides, hotels and shops, and more pop culture destinations. The results should therefore be tested in larger-scale case studies and at other pop culture destinations. Below, the cases are described and discussed in relation to its connection to and the management of Twilight tourism Table 1.

#### 4. The destinations

Forks is a small city located in Clallam County, Washington, US with a population of 3532 (<http://www.forkswashington.org/police-chief>). It is a small town with a close and friendly community. Historically, Forks economy has been based on the timber industry, but it has also attracted some nature-based tourists to the rainforest in their Olympic national park. In addition to the timber industry, the correctional industry is an important part of the regional economy. Its locality in the north-west of US has, prior to the publication of author Stephenie Meyer's first book in the series, obstructed visitor flows to the town: "it's rather an off place to come to. It feels very remote" (Mayor of Forks).

Volterra is a town of roughly 11,100 inhabitants, located in Tuscany, Italy, approximately 60 km southeast of Pisa. The town dates back to the Middle Ages and is known as a centre for culture and art, particularly alabaster handicrafts: "...high art and culture and history, 3000 years of history/.../But not a dead city, only for the tourists, but a living town" (Mayor of Volterra). A representative of Volterra Tourism Office seconds this opinion and emphasises that they wish to brand the town as a slow city. The town's economy is primarily based on copper, salt and alabaster mining but with its location in Tuscany they have a growing tourism industry (<http://www.ne.se/volterra>; <http://www.volterra.se/sevaderheter>).

The neighbouring town Montepulciano has a population of approximately 14,500. It is known for its fine wines, but also for its art and architecture. Montepulciano has kept its medieval character, with the walls surrounding the city and has many well-preserved monuments, a medieval square and a popular cathedral ([www.montepulciano.net](http://www.montepulciano.net)). Montepulciano has, in addition to being selected as location for the second movie in the Twilight Saga franchise, been used as a recording site of several well-known movies, such as *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1999) and *The English Patient* (1996)



(Thesan & Turan, 2009). The town's economy is to a large extent based on tourism and has received the prestigious quality trade-mark *Touring Club Italiano*, which is only awarded to cities that offer high quality tourism facilities. Central to the town's overall tourism strategy are events, often based on culture: *"we want to focus our attention in these events that are good, very good, perfect done, then comes the tourism, and the tourist here can find really a good atmosphere, a beautiful landscape, good food, good wine, so it's an ensemble of things together that we can offer to the tourist"* (Montepulciano tourism representatives).

Vancouver is Canada's third largest city with 2 million inhabitants. It is part of the province British Columbia, which is mountainous and woody; the Rocky Mountains occupy much of the area. Tourism is, in addition to their timber, food, metal and engineering industry, an important source of income for the city ([www.ne.se/lang/british-columbian](http://www.ne.se/lang/british-columbian)). British Columbia is also the third largest production centre for film and television in the world, after Los Angeles and New York City and has therefore been named "Hollywood North". Movie production in the region can be traced back to the beginning of the 20th century with educational films documenting mining, logging and fishing. Film production in the region today is a lot more diverse including animation, documentaries, and experimental films as well as large "Hollywood film productions" and popular TV series (Spaner, 2003). A representative from British Columbia Film Commission explains the region's attraction as a production centre: *"Vancouver/British Columbia is seen as being extremely attractive as a production centre, it's full service, we have from pre-production right through the post, and all the capabilities and services in between."* The destination's attraction for tourists is found in its natural environment and the physical environment as well as its ethic and diverse culture and gateway to North America or the Canadian experience. A representative of Tourism Vancouver describes the destination's core values: *"our basic branding statement is that we're spectacular by nature so we really try and push our service. We have a high standard service in the city and we are very proud of it."*

## 5. Findings

### 5.1. The Twilight Saga brings fresh blood to destinations

The first time tourist representatives in Forks heard of the Twilight Saga was in 2006 when they received a telephone call from the local librarian explaining that there was an author who had written a book about the town and vampires and was scheduled to do a reading event in a local park. After this event, fans of the series started to show up at the Visitor Centre: *"In 2007 it jumped from 6000 people and then it went up to 10,000 people and then it really jumped in 2008 and that's because the movie came out in 2008."* (Forks Visitor Centre) In 2010, visitor numbers reached a peak of almost 73,000 tourists.

The Twilight Saga has strengthened Forks destination brand and the town now receive visitors from all over the world. Forks, rather than other neighbouring towns, is the main attraction according to Forks Visitor Centre representatives: *"It [neighbouring town Port Townsend] used to be that's where everybody wanted to go, now people say oh Port Townsend, is that anywhere near Forks? We are the measuring stick."* Its brand has not only been strengthened among potential tourists but both nationally and internationally among Twilight Saga readers and viewers according to Fork's mayor.

There are, however, a few image problems that the town has had to work up against. Firstly, during those few days a year when the sun is shining they have to apologize to the visitors as the Twilight books portray a town where it rains all the time. Secondly, since the production company selected another location

for the filming of the movies, some visitors end up being disappointed that they are not able to visit the actual film sets. This phenomenon is called *local dissonance* and has been described in previous research on film tourism as the difference between where a story takes place and where it is filmed (Frost, 2006, 2009; Tooke & Baker, 1996; Riley et al., 1998).

Like Forks, Twilight tourism came as a complete surprise to Volterra, according to the tourist office staff in Volterra: *"...and we were actually not prepared to have lots of buses coming to her [author of the Twilight Saga Stephenie Meyer when she visited the town in 2007]."* The reason for being selected as a setting was that the author had a group of characters by the name of Volturi who lived in Italy. When she later on realized that there was a town in Italy called Volterra she decided to make it their home. Since then, up to a hundred Twilight fans visit the local tourism office daily (Volterra Visitor Centre) and in 2010 between 15 and 20% of total visitor numbers were Twilight tourists. Just like Forks, Volterra has difficulties with local dissonance due to being featured in the book but not selected as movie location: *"...many really think it was shot here, not in Montepulciano and they are very disappointed in the end."* (Volterra Visitor Centre).

In Montepulciano, the town's first interaction with the Twilight Saga was in the winter of 2009 when a small group of Americans approached the town officials when scouting for movie locations. Much later, when they learned that the city had been selected as film location for the Twilight Saga they had to investigate what it was: *"I [then] discovered that this movie would change the history in Montepulciano/.../From that moment on, we had the craziest period of our history"* (Montepulciano tourism officials). At the time of the shooting of the movie, the city attracted approximately ten thousand tourists daily from all over the world (some of these fans worked as extras in the film), which resulted in capacity problems regarding for example accommodation and restaurants. As a result of the shooting of the movie and the media attention that followed, Montepulciano has become well-known around the world: *"It was a special, special, special event, like a world cup of football/.../Looking forward 30 years, probably this is one of the most important moments we had in our tourism history, a moment that increased and changed the tourism in Montepulciano."*

Vancouver and British Columbia is, as previously mentioned, the third largest production centre for film and television in the world, and as such it is a stand-in for many other cities around the world on the big screen. In the case of the Twilight Saga, four out of five movies have used Vancouver and British Columbia as location ([www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)). According to Vancouver Tourism, Vancouver and British Columbia's appearance in movies and TV series can be seen as extra value added to the overall tourist experience rather than a primary motive for tourists. This can be explained by the fact that the destination is usually a stand-in for other cities and as such not directly recognisable for tourists. Both Vancouver Tourism and Vancouver Visitor Centre officials report that film tourists as a group represent a small proportion of visitors in the region. However, a large proportion of these film tourists come to the region while the movies are shot in order to partake in for example celebrity spotting and leave as soon as the production is wrapped (Tourism Vancouver; Visit Vancouver). However, this kind of tourism is seldom planned or organised by Tourism agencies, and although many Twilights visit Vancouver and British Columbia for this reason, they are barely acknowledged by tourism organisations in Vancouver.

### 5.2. Taking a bite out of the marketplace: Twilight Saga related products and marketing activities

Twilight fans travelling to Forks are described as primarily women of all ages and from all over the world: *"And the other*

interesting thing is the different people who are intrigued by these books, it is not limited to teenage girls, as I have said our fanship has gotten older and older. And it's not only women any more we have men fans too" (Forks Visitor Centre). According to destination officials, Twilight tourists are the best tourists in the world as they come of their own accord, and they do not feel tricked or trapped by marketing messages and some of them describe their travels as "pilgrimage to the Twilight Saga nirvana" (Mayor of Forks; Forks Visitor Centre).

In order to meet the demand of these travelling fans, Forks Visitor Centre has developed a Twilight map on which important Twilight attractions are plotted: *"this map of Forks showing people where the hospital was, the police station, the Swan House"* (Forks Visitor Centre). The attractions were identified and included after personnel at the Visitor Centre had read the books and received permission from the owners of the different milieus. Forks Visitor Centre also developed their website to include the Twilight theme.

In addition to the Visitor Centre's work with transforming Forks into 'Twilight Forks', a number of entrepreneurs included Twilight themed products in their stock. For example the local pharmacy developed Fang Floss, Bella Swan's First Aid Kit (a Twilight Saga character prone to accidents) and the local supermarket sells, for example, Twilight books, t-shirts, posters and pins. Restaurants at the destination included Twilight themed meals on their menu such as Swan Sandwich, Werewolf Burger, Vampire Shake, Jacob's Blackberry Cobbler, Bella Lasagna and Ed Bread. Furthermore, value added motel rooms were offered with Twilight Saga interior design. A previous flower shop was transformed into Twilight Central offering souvenirs and tours and a completely new Twilight souvenir shop and tour operator was started. In addition to these facilities for Twilight fans, the destination annually arranges the Stephenie Mayer Day on character Bella Swan's birthday in September, which attracts thousands of people. Moreover, smaller DVD release parties are organised for fans. With that number of Twilight themed products and services, risks for copyright infringement is always present. The destination's stakeholders respond to this by being very careful with for example names and fonts.

Getting into the spotlight and receiving unintentional and cost-free marketing through media is something that all Twilight destinations have in common as a result of being associated to a pop culture phenomenon. Forks has for example been featured in both national and international media such as the Today Show on NBC, People Magazine and USA Today.

Just like in Forks, the first thing Volterra tourism officials developed to meet the demand of Twilight tourists, was to make a map of Twilight attractions in town. They also developed Internet sites, a Facebook page, they offered packages and tours, and to some extent merchandise. The tourist officials expected Twilight fans to be young girls but were soon proven wrong: *"So they're actually much older/.../those who did the package [tour] were actually all over 20/.../In general they are from...you can say from 17 till 30"* (Volterra Visitor Centre). In Volterra, tourism officials and entrepreneurs integrated their heritage into the Twilight experience such as creating Twilight New Moon souvenirs from alabaster and incorporating the history of the town into Twilight guide tours, and like Forks, the town has hosted events for the release of the Twilight movies. In the same way as their counterpart in the USA, Forks, they have deliberately worked around copyright issues when developing their products and services.

The city has received a lot of media attention due to its association to the Twilight Saga: *"So we were very lucky, it was publicity...it's one of the cheapest marketing things...we couldn't have paid [for] it"* (Volterra Visitor Centre). The city has also marketed their connection with the Twilight Saga at trade events like the Rome film festival. To this event, they developed brochures, leaflets and a CD including images of Volterra and Twilight

Saga related activities for distribution to journalist. The production company behind the Twilight Saga franchise has also helped the town market itself by releasing a trailer featuring the actors of the series saying *"Bella Volterra, un saluto"* (Greetings, beautiful Volterra), which was the most viewed video on YouTube for some time.

Just as in Forks and Volterra, the Twilight Saga has brought a new tourist segment to the town of Montepulciano. Before the town was used as location for *New Moon*, it primarily attracted visitors 30 years of age and older interested in fine culture: *"the Twilights are different to manage as tourists, but because most of them are teenagers/.../they come here in town together with their families. So the families, at the end, discover Montepulciano"* (Montepulciano tourism representatives). In order to satisfy these tourists, one of the owners of a business in the town bought the copyright to use "Montepulciano, city of New Moon" which he later donated to the city. As a result a number of products and services, from ceramics, t-shirts, bags, caps, guide tours and wine, were developed. A local hotel, which was used as wardrobe services during shooting of the movie, offers accommodation for tourists with rooms named Edward's changing room and Bella's changing room. However, compared to Forks, both Italian destinations have a much more limited range of Twilight Saga products and services, and no shops that exclusively sell Twilight related products.

Much like other Twilight destinations, the city of Montepulciano has received massive national international media coverage due to the Twilight Saga: *"[It] was so important because Montepulciano now is well-known around the world, and this is just because of the movie/.../[It would have been] impossible for Montepulciano to have so much money to spend in commercialising the image of Montepulciano, so that was for free."*

Because film tourism in general is perceived as marginal by tourism officials in Vancouver and British Columbia, limited investments have been made into developing products and services for this group of tourists. For Twilight tourists, an itinerary around some of the locations has been produced. The destination also attempts to capitalise on the phenomenon when the DVDs of the series are released. One example is that Tourism Vancouver teamed up with the Canadian Tourist Commission to arrange a contest targeted to UK citizens. It resulted in a lot of exposure, especially through social media, and collaboration with travel offices and hotels, which is expected to have long-term effects. The winners of the contest were treated to a trip to British Columbia to experience Twilight and the Canadian experience (Tourism Vancouver). There are a few tour operators at the destination focusing on film and TV series location tours. One of these offers Twilight location tours during which she brings fans to movie sets or places used when filming the Twilight Saga. Because many of these locations are made up by urban or nature environments with no visual remnants of the actual set, the tour guide's knowledge and skills as a storyteller is of outmost importance for the tourist experience.

### 5.3. Hunting for balance between capitalisation and preserving place identity: destination strategies

The mayor of Forks describes the early development of Twilight tourism in his city as an ad hoc process. It started with a couple of enthusiasts working at Forks Visitor Centre and Chamber of Commerce who saw potential in capitalising on the phenomenon: *"we got a group at the chamber and started dreaming up things to do, we sat around one afternoon and that's how we got going, it was very ad hoc"*. Many local merchants, motels and B&Bs showed interest in attracting more tourists to the destination (Forks Visitor Centre). History has now shown that investments in this type of tourism

have been lucrative for the town and its entrepreneurs. However, they come from a position of careful optimism: “we don’t want to bank everything on *Twilight*. The locals have always wanted to be a little bit careful. For example if you are a business and you are just selling everything *Twilight* and it stops. So everybody has been making it very carefully/.../maybe ten years from now this will still be going, I don’t know. If it does we will be happy but if it doesn’t we will at least say we planned both routes” (Mayor of Forks).

Tourism officials view its association with the *Twilight* Saga as a way to attract first time visitors to their destination and to build a long-term relationship with them that stretches beyond the *Twilight* Saga experience: “We figure if we create an adventure for them and they have a pleasant memory of it they will bring their kids and come back, or their friends, or their cousins, or their mothers/.../will it be *Twilight* related? Probably not, fads come and go. So at some point we have to be as a community able to just let it go and remember it for what it was” (Forks Visitor Centre; Mayor of Forks).

In Volterra, *Twilight* tourism’s sudden emergence came as much as a surprise as it did in Forks. Initially, the Visitor Centre put together a group of stakeholders including the local bank, restaurants, hotels and a couple of merchants, all of which show an interest and enthusiasm for tourism in the wake of the *Twilight* Saga. Some of these stakeholders contributed to the project financially. This group gathered when there was a demand for, for example, a new product. The process has, however, been coloured by what tourism officials describe as Italian bureaucracy, which may have prevented capitalising further on the phenomenon: “It is not always easy in Italy. Just to give you an example, it was not possible to put in the website of the municipality, it was not possible to put a link to the webpage of the Volturi and New Moon/.../you need the permission of this person, and it has to conform with the regulations” (Volterra Visitor Centre).

Volterra attempts to implement a social-cultural sustainable strategy where the integrity of their cultural heritage is in the forefront when developing *Twilight* tourism: “we want to deal with it in the best sustainable way. So we don’t want to become the city of the vampires. That is very very important for us/.../we want to value our territory we have, and that’s more important than vampires” (Volterra Visitor Centre).

Just like Volterra, the city of Montepulciano treasures their local heritage and the culture and event tourism they had before *Twilight* tourists started to show up in town. For tourism officials, *Twilight* tourists are a welcomed group of visitors but not at the cost of supplanting other traditional forms of tourism: “we are very pleased to have all these tourists coming to Montepulciano, even for this reason [*Twilight*] but not just for this reason/.../because they discover the real Montepulciano, but we don’t want to create nothing else. We don’t have any free weekends”. Other similarities Montepulciano shares with its neighbouring town Volterra is the limited market research compiled on tourism in general and *Twilight* tourism in particular. However, both towns estimate *Twilight* tourists to make up approximately 15–20% of total visitor flows.

For Vancouver and British Columbia films are a way to break through the awareness stage of potential visitors. It serves as a possibility to make a connection between something fans have an emotional tie to and the destination brand; it becomes an added proposition why people travel to Vancouver, British Columbia. Tourism Vancouver’s own market research has shown that films are not one of the primary motives for visitors in Vancouver or British Columbia but rather adds value to an overall tourist experience (Tourism Vancouver). One reason why film tourism is difficult to capitalise on in this region is the different logics of the tourism and film industries. One example is the view of how information should be disseminated. The tourism industry builds upon the dissemination of information about attractions, products and services to large target groups, while the film industry’s logic

builds upon limiting the spread of information about filming and locations during pre-production and filming: “I don’t think that the film industry really wants tourists because it makes their job harder. I don’t think they would want us to say oh go here when they’re filming/.../We don’t really market it, so it’s more people show up/.../Because often the film sets aren’t published, like so we’re not told/.../They want to get the shooting done” (Visit Vancouver). On the other hand, Tourism Vancouver attempts to capitalise on the film productions during the later stages when for example the movie is released on DVD/BlueRay and when for example fan contests are organised. Another reason for the destination not to get involved until later stages of production is that they then know how the destination is portrayed on the big screen and how well it has done at the box office: “Sometimes we also have to be conscious of when we get involved with filming, just how we are going to be positioned” (Tourism Vancouver).

#### 5.4. Considerations regarding authenticity and local support

Forks tourism officials state that they owe a lot to the author of the *Twilight* Saga when developing authenticity in the tourist experience of visitors. Because of Mrs. Meyer’s capture of Forks environments, the development of an adopted authenticity was fairly unproblematic: “So my tip of my hat to her, we have been really, really lucky all things considered that they did a good job, just a fair portrayal. They could have made us look bad or something that we weren’t/.../Stephanie described it well without ever having lived here/.../people in town have taken it to heart and people have made their own individual contribution to this, and we are keeping it alive and well (Mayor of Forks; Forks Visitor Centre).

One important building block when building authentic destination experiences is the attitudes and behaviours of locals towards tourism and tourists. In Forks most parts of the local community have been sympathetic or positive towards *Twilight* tourism. Initially, the local newspaper received a few letters vilifying the concept of vampires and a few young loggers were complaining about the increased traffic and the types of tourists the phenomenon attracted. These opinions have, however, changed over time to become more positive. The only local group that has been consistently hesitant or negative towards this form of tourism is high school students: “I think the kids in particular are sort of stand-offish and amused by the whole thing. Can you imagine when all of a sudden your high school is just the coolest school in the whole world, and I am the same person I was yesterday (Mayor of Forks; Forks Visitor Centre). The people at the Forks Visitor Centre says that they have talked with these negative groups and explained how important *Twilight* is for the town, which improved things.

Adjacent *Twilight* destination La Push, a Native American reservation, has experienced some negative effects of *Twilight* tourists which have resulted in restrictions: “They had some difficulties with people coming in from the outside and disrespecting their culture and their heritage. The biggest issue they had was a TV crew that came out of SMBC that was down there filming the graveyard which was just an absolute no, no. And they also had some issues with the [Forks located] tour companies going down there/.../And we have caused people to go over to their reservation and we distribute etiquette lists so the people don’t offend them. We want to make sure they remain happy” (Mayor of Forks). Furthermore, the tribe decided to hire a public relations agent in order to cope with the attention and visitor flows that they received because of the *Twilight* Saga. Their attitudes towards the phenomenon can be described as dichotomized: “they think they [the films] are funny, they watch them and laugh. But they do feel some pride about it too” (Forks Visitor Centre). They have also capitalised on

the tourism by offering accommodation and sales of native items in La Push as well as in stores in Forks

Much like Forks, Volterra is grateful that the Twilight Saga author has given her characters a connection to the town's true history: "she [Stephenie Meyer] says that the Volturi are ancestors from the Etruscians. So we connect the Volturi to the Etruscians". It has been important for the town to incorporate its history to the Twilight Saga mythology in order to make an authentic experience for tourists: "the people come to Volterra because of Twilight, [then] we show them the real treasures of the city" (Volterra Visitor Centre). Most locals and local businesses have shown their support for Twilight tourism. Initially, a few people expressed a fear that their town would be confused with Montepulciano (which portrayed Volterra in one of the movies). Overall, the attitudes of locals have been positive: "So I think that in the end everybody is having a profit out of it/...[cause Volterra is a touristic town, we are living from tourists, and I think in the end, everybody is happy about everything]" (Volterra Visitor Centre).

Similarly to Forks and Volterra, *Montepulciano* utilises its association with the Twilight Saga to attract new visitors. However, when these tourists arrive, tourism officials want them to experience the authentic identity of the destination: "So even if the movie, *New Moon*, was so important for the town and even if we had a lot of tourists/...[coming here and discovering Montepulciano, we want to maintain our identity. I mean Montepulciano is a famous town with historical moments, with a very important history, with art, with a wine producing town]" (Montepulciano tourism representatives). For example, when the film was wrapped, the production company asked if they wanted to keep the fountain, which was built for the movie on the town square. Town representatives rejected this offer due to the fact that it was purpose-built and would not have constituted an authentic part of the town's architecture. In the same way as with the other Twilight destinations, Twilight tourism has received local support in Montepulciano. A few people have complained about crowding and parking but most locals value the positive effects of this type of tourism, such as the economic boost.

In *British Columbia* and *Vancouver*, the creation of authenticity is primarily in the hands of tour operators. Many Twilight film locations are situated on private property that tourism stakeholders have little control over. In addition to this, the production company tears down most purpose-built sets when filming is completed. Due to these conditions, a tour operator in Vancouver creates authenticity by making the connection to the Twilight Saga by for example using her knowledge on the movie production process. As a result of film tourism's marginal role in Vancouver and British Columbia, no local reactions to it have been documented according to Tourism Vancouver. However, the film production itself sometimes raises negativity when production companies block off public places. But again, most locals' reactions are of a positive nature: "I think people and residents in particular take certain pride in the fact that others are coming from other places in the world just to film here" (Vancouver Tourism).

## 6. Discussion

The case studies of the destinations do indeed, similarly to other studies (Riley & Van Doren, 1992; Riley et al., 1998), show that films and/or literature can increase awareness of the place depicted in them and induce tourism. Both settings of the story and film locations of the popular Twilight Saga attract large numbers of tourists (however, it is unclear how many in Vancouver, British Columbia, since they are not acknowledged). In addition, the tourists predominantly belong to tourist segments that

the destinations had not seen before. The tourism development at the destinations was based on pull factors, i.e. reflected in the demand from customers (Hjalager, 2002). It actually came as a big surprise to all the studied destinations, except Vancouver, British Columbia since they are used to have different kinds of blockbuster movies and successful TV series filmed at their destination. However, after a while, when the destinations realized the scope of the Twilight phenomenon, and experienced the media attention they got, they also realized that it strengthened the destinations' image and brand identity (Connell, 2012, 2005; Keller, 2008). For Vancouver, British Columbia this was nothing new; they had been using films to create customer top-of-mind awareness (Keller, 2008) for a long time.

Forks, Volterra and Montepulciano did, after a short while of reflection and resistance, acknowledge tourists' associations to Twilight, thus incorporating Twilight in their brands (Keller, 2008). Montepulciano, for instance, came up with a slogan; *Montepulciano, city of New Moon*. The destinations, except for Vancouver, British Columbia, developed Twilight related products and services. Forks in particular was keen on capitalising on the pop culture phenomenon. Thus, the destinations adopted a reactive approach to tourism planning. Moreover, similarly to other studies on for instance literary tourism (Müller, 2006), there was little or no long-term strategic planning in relation to the pop culture induced tourism; it was more ad hoc. This can be explained by the fact that the destinations expected the Twilight boom to fade in a short period of time and were therefore hesitant to invest in the concept. In some way, their hesitation could be logical since, as Riley et al. (1998) found, film tourism normally declines after four years. On the other hand, Riley et al. (1998) also showed the potential of a visitation growth of 40–50% induced by films, thus, indicating that efforts of strategic tourism planning could be worthwhile.

The destinations exhibit different strategies concerning how to manage Twilight tourism. Forks acted on the Twilight tourism relatively whole-heartedly and did not try to manage or restrict local initiatives to capitalise on the Twilight theme. Forks became a constructed reality (Frost, 2010) for tourists to experience, and after some time the tourism representatives managed to reimagine the historical past of Forks into a town where vampires and werewolves exist, and thus, fabricate the authenticity of the place (Peterson, 2005). Since most locals either capitalised on Twilight, or knew someone who did, there was no real resistance to this change. The Italian destinations, on the other hand, show a different approach to pop culture induced tourism than Forks. They were clearly avoiding the risk of cultural post-colonialism (Shandley et al., 2006) as a result of the Twilight Saga by displaying themselves as living and active towns, having strong local identities based on their cultural history. Simultaneously, they welcomed hordes of tourist wanting to experience the cities of the vampires, but they guarded the authenticity of the destination by not developing as many products and services as Forks did, and by incorporating genuine authentic elements in the Twilight souvenirs and guided tours. Thus, the Italian towns were not willing to compromise on their strong destination images and local place identities and resisted developing tourism strategies that would change their destinations. Furthermore, one of the four studied destinations, Vancouver, British Columbia, did not bother with capitalising on the Twilight tourists other than one or two small entrepreneurs offering guided tour experiences. The lack of interest displayed by the Canadian destination may be explained by the size of the city and its tourism; the Twilighters constitute a small number of all tourists. Another reason may be the focus on film production in the city, and that it sometimes conflicts with film tourism development since film producers are reluctant to be in the gaze of tourists.



**Table 1**  
Pop culture induced tourism development strategies.

<div> <div>Approach to dealing with the authenticity of the place</div> <div>Tourism planning approach</div> </div>	Fabricating authenticity	Guarding authenticity
	<i>Fabricating place authenticity</i> (Forks)	
Boosterism		
Community-oriented		<i>Guarding place authenticity</i> (Volterra and Montepulciano)

The case studies show a guarding approach at the Italian destinations and a boom-bust approach (Connell, 2012) at the American destination. Hence, the study indicates that there is a (national) cultural difference in how destinations develop pop culture tourism. Another explanation for the different approaches is where in the tourist area cycle (Butler, 1980) the destinations were. Forks had relatively little incoming tourism pre-Twilight, and as the phenomenon hit the town it was seen as a way to boost a new industry. The Italian destinations, on the other hand, had already had a substantial amount of tourism before the Twilight era, and for them it was just an extra bonus to get a new segment of tourists, although they did not depend on them. It was more important to guard an authentic place identity. The Canadian destination, finally, already had large tourist flows, and did not know how many of them were Twilighters. Since they did not consider Twilight as a primary motive for tourists to visit, they saw them as a rather uninteresting segment. The difference between the destinations' approaches to developing Twilight tourism can also, in part, be explained by expectations, i.e. that the Canadian and Italian destinations expected the boom to fade in a short period of time and were therefore hesitant to extensive investment in the concept, whereas Forks thought it would fade in a few years but still exist to a certain extent.

Accordingly, three strategies can be distinguished concerning pop culture induced tourism development in the four destinations: (1) fabricating place authenticity; (2) guarding place authenticity; and (3) no strategy. Forks developed experiences based on a fictional constructed reality (Frost, 2010), which reimagined the destination into a popular mythical world, and, thus, fabricated the authenticity of the place (Peterson, 2005). Combining that approach with a view that tourism is inherently good and should be developed, they managed to boost (Getz, 1987 in Hall & Page, 2006) the tourism in a very short period of time. They developed a sort of mini "Twilight Disneyland" in Forks. This was manifested in thematised products and services such as Twilight tours, sign-posting, thematised hotel rooms and souvenirs. Similarly to what Jones and Smith (2005) found in their study of *The Lord of the Rings* in New Zealand, many actors in Forks play off cultural and historical authenticity against a fabricated to satisfy commercial ends.

Volterra and Montepulciano, on the other hand, perceived that developing Twilight related tourism challenged the particular qualities of their places (cf. Dredge, 2010) and therefore guarded the authenticity of their places. A socio-cultural sustainable tourism development was prioritised instead of maximising the benefits of the Twilight induced tourism flows. Destination development was about using the books/films to attract interest for their historical/

cultural heritage and to keep the Twilight theme to a minimum. Contrary to Forks, this was manifested in relatively few products and services related to Twilight, and the ones that were developed were connected to the place identity, such as souvenirs only slightly adapted to the Twilight theme. This can be interpreted as a community-oriented approach to tourism planning, i.e. that tourism development should be controlled, balanced and defined in socio-cultural terms (Getz, 1987 in Hall & Page, 2006). Table 1 shows the first two strategies presented above of dealing with pop culture induced tourism. It shows the strategy used by Forks – *fabricating place authenticity* – where the tourism planning approach is about boosting tourist flows to the destination, which is achieved by developing a destination brand that involves a fabricated authenticity of the place. The table also show the strategy of Volterra and Montepulciano – *guarding place authenticity* – that has a community-oriented tourism planning approach and a guarding approach to dealing with the authenticity of the place.

Finally, Vancouver, British Columbia, had no strategy and little interest in the Twilight tourists. The priority of the destination was to satisfy the needs of film producers, and not film tourists. There were, however, some small film tourism entrepreneurs that struggled against the film companies to get access to the places where they could create experiences for their customers.

Hudson and Ritchie (2006) state that in order to be successful in pop culture tourism development, destination marketing organisations should collaborate with film commissions, which in turn would generate publicity. Moreover, they should put more effort into having film and site maps, guided tours, packaged attractions, and then, measure the impacts. The studied cases show that different paths of development can be chosen, i.e. it is not always advisable to fully exploit the potential a pop cultural phenomenon can bring a destination, particularly considering that it may be difficult to move away from an unwanted image created by a pop culture phenomenon such as a film (Bruce, 1996; Rocket, 2001; Brereton, 2007). Destination representatives should, firstly, analyse how the pop culture induced image of the destination could affect the place identity; an analysis involving the whole community. Then, an analysis of if and how the new segment would intrude on existing tourism should be made. Lastly, the costs of investing in this new segment of tourists considering the relatively short-term benefits should be considered. What strategy should be used by a particular destination depends on the unique character of the destination and its perceived need of developing tourism.

The case of Twilight, however, shows that some pop culture phenomenon cannot be prevented, and that the destinations will have to manage it in one way or another. The studied destinations show examples on how to connect to a pop cultural phenomenon

in order to increase the awareness of the destination, for instance by collaborating with media, activities involving celebrities (Lee et al., 2008), and organising events. Thus, the pop culture phenomenon is used in the brand building process (Keller, 2008). For mature destinations it is particularly important to integrate attributes of the pop culture phenomenon into the existing destination brand, thus, stimulating the new tourist segment to experience the core values of the destination. The intention is to stimulate loyalty (Keller, 2008) to the destination and, thus, future visits.

This paper explored how managers in public organisations responsible for tourism development in four destinations perceive and manage pop culture tourism. However, the study presented only focused on one pop culture phenomenon; more examples are needed. A comparison between different kinds of pop culture phenomenon would be useful, e.g. of different scope, targeting different tourist segments and involving different tourism experiences. Moreover, more substantial analysis on destinations, involving more stakeholders, could contribute to a more in-depth analysis of the management of pop culture tourism.

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