

Brand New Zealand v Brand Old Britain

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Introduction: The overseas part of my fellowship was spent in New Zealand during the first 6 weeks of 2008. During this period, I met with national and regional tourism officials, accommodation providers, attraction and activity operators, adventure tourism leaders, i-Site manager and staff, Department of Conservation rangers, national and regional transport carriers. I also chatted, as one tourist would in a very informal way to lots of tourist in order to get an accurate overview about what attracted them to visit N.Z. I studied in depth the marketing of an established tourism area, an emerging one and one national park.

I met people of all ages, from all walks of life, from over the world and lots of mature Britons many of whom were on repeat visits. I returned home from N.Z in awe of their landscape, wildlife, warmth of welcome, strength of identity, and well-run tourism industry. The fellowship was an amazing experience that allowed me to explore a wonderful country, broadened my horizons and increased my knowledge enormously.

New Zealand markets itself exceptionally well in innovative ways, and has achieved the remarkable sales position which all business strive for... strong repeat business and gaining new business by word of mouth recommendation.

B) Main Tourism Branding Report:

Tourism is a key global economic driver. Tourism is probably the globe's biggest industry, and even maybe the oldest industry. The first human who went walkabout in Africa went on tour and became a tourist. Nobody can possibly know if our curious ancestors spread out across the globe for pleasure or need.

The Internet has revolutionized the promotion of a destination and brought massive global competition.

A strong brand and a commercial innovative marketing strategy are as essential to a country as they are a can of branded baked beans. Tourism is now a highly competitive global market, the ability to differentiate by marketing a country as a Brand is the **Key** to success.



New Zealand, promote all of the country as a distinctive brand. Tourism New Zealand, accommodation providers, I-Sites, transport carriers, shops, restaurants, businesses, visitor attractions, tour operators, adventure and extreme sports groups, and national sports teams, all promote the New Zealand Brand effectively.

The brand logo, a silver fern on a black background is identifiable, authentic, attractive, simple, natural, memorable, looks good on brochures, websites, promotion material, products, male and female clothes. The same silver fern is also used on the grading logo as illustrated. New Zealander's all sing in tune from the same branded song sheet.

Both New Zealand and Britain are a collection of islands, both are English speaking; approximately the same geographical size and have their own unique selling points. Both have internal low cost flights allowing tourists easy access to explore all parts of their country.

Both tourism industries look to be set up in the same way, in fact they are totally different. New Zealand's

tourism industry was purpose planned, has a marketing strategy, is professionally run at all levels and has an iconic brand. Britain's tourism industry evolved in a historical manner into a fragmented outdated mess. TNZ promote one destination to great effect, unlike Visit Britain has been obliged to do since devolution fragmented the overseas marketing of The British Isles.

New Zealand takes its tourism industry seriously at government level. New Zealand's success was no accident, when Britain joined the European Union; N.Z had to find new ways to earn a living, they correctly identified tourism as an industry with potential growth then invested in planning, infrastructure, management, branding and marketing. As a result, N.Z original image as a far-flung, half closed, destination, 20 years behind the times, suitable only for backpacker, became the globe's coolest destination.

New Zealand truly deserves its expanding tourism industry, which in 2007/8/9 was worth \$ 17.5, billion a year, employing 1/10 people. Tourism is one of New Zealand largest industries and growing year on year.



The film "The Lord of the Rings" and Billy Connolly's TV programme and video "World Tour of N.Z" both promoted N.Z exceptionally well. However the real success came when N.Z invested in professional branding "100% Pure New Zealand. "

Tourism New Zealand has an innovative marketing team driving the brand forward. For example during the 2007 rugby world cup, the huge blown up rugby ball pictured was the backdrop for the world's media reports. The space cost nothing and whoever spotted this amazing promotion opportunity deserves the marketing of the year award of 2007. Australia 2008 year's job in paradise offer was also deserving of admiration. Innovation marketing ideas work.

New Zealand is a land of pioneers, entrepreneurs, and innovative people. Tourism New Zealand recognised the potential of and adapted to internet marketing in the early days of the net. They promote an identifiable, easy to navigate website, which sell all the islands that make up New Zealand as ONE destination. Apart from a couple of good exceptions, for example top10 holiday parks and the AA website, the private sector has not and is unlikely to fragment the marketing of N.Z because of TNZ early and ongoing overseas marketing success.

Britain's Tourism Industry

Britain has no strength of brand, no identifiable logo. Tourist Information Centres, tourism associations, DMO's, RDAs, local councils and national park authorities all pull in a multitude of different fragmented marketing directions competing with one another other for customers and funding. Unlike New Zealand, here in Britain we are all singing different songs from the same Hymn book.

Tourism is pigeon holed within the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform might be more appropriate Britain's 5th biggest wealth creator. Britain's tourism industry has been utterly neglected by successive governments who have failed to implement reform at a time of great change due to low cost flights, change in tastes, the internet and massive increased global competition.

Overseas Marketing

Britain has several official non-branded different looking websites, Visit Britain, Visit Wales, Visit Scotland, Visit Northern Ireland and Enjoy England. By selling Britain in bits, we put each individual country that make-up "**The British Isles**" into direct competition with one another rather than sell **Brand Britain**.

Visit Britain's marketing budget has been allotted in an unfair way, with Scotland having been in receipt of almost twice the marketing funding to England. And yet, Visit Britain had a government remit to fund tourism in all areas of England equally, be it a northern industrial area or a traditional holiday destination historically heavily dependent on its tourism income such as South West England. Oddly Yorkshire was allotted £8m in 2009. Visit Britain Marketing Budget has for the last decade been in the region of £38m per year.

2007/8 budget: Source - Conservative Party Website.

www.conservatives.com/News/News_stories/2007/10/Hodge_must_explain_tourism_figures.aspx

Visit Britain £35.5 million (overseas marketing) broken down

Visit Scotland £21.7m, Wales £13.5m, Visit England £12.3m Northern Ireland £5m.

(The above figures add up to rather more than £35m?)

Now in 2011 It is planned to reduce the marketing budget for Britain: 2010/11 28,8m, 2011/12 26.5m, 2014/15 21.20m.

Note: Britain's 2011 £28.8 marketing budget is almost half of the £45K increased NZ budget. And it has also allotted £14m for infrastructure improvements, Britain £0.

Note: The proposed amount of £100m for the next 4 years is a miniscule advertising budget for an industry that is worth £116 billion per year to Britain's economy. Especially true if we continue to market England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland in a fragmented way, rather than sell **Brand Britain**.

Brand Britain:

Devolution fractured Britain, and brought with the fragmented marketing of England, Scotland, Wales, & Northern Ireland. Apart from some far flung America states, Hawaii, Alaska & California. I cannot identify another country in the world with such an insane marketing strategy.

Everything has changed since devolution, in the last decade the globe has become increasingly competitive and interconnected. **Fragmented marketing is totally unsuitable for today's "global economy."**

Marketing anything in a fragmented manner weakens the product. Marketing on the net requires - new thinking, innovative sales ideas, but most of all... a distinctive brand combined with a sales strategy.

Logo: A branded product requires an instantly identifiable logo which reflects the British identity and authenticity. Visit Britain requires the brand identity Tesco's has. Stonehenge is the iconic candidate.

Britain's private marketing sector recognised and leapt at the marketing opportunities the internet offered, increasing the fragmentation. The private sector's online marketing websites can be more effective and cheaper for accommodation providers to advertise with. Active Hotels, Late Rooms, Trip Advisor are gaining market share, they are well-established and working well.

Note: The private sector cannot market destination Britain globally.

Visit Britain's inbound visitor figures. Year upon year until recently an increase in visitors to our shores was reported by VB. However if these increasing numbers included students + eastern Europeans who came to work in huge numbers during the past decade + visitors from the Asia Pacific region who do come not to explore Britain, but to stay with relatives, they cannot represent an increase in tourists to Britain.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmcomeds/133/13306.htm>

Britain's Domestic Marketing:

A multitude of tribal areas and tourism associations are all individually chasing a declining domestic customer base due to the British people's growing addiction to overseas travel. Britain has an outdated sales policy both nationally and domestically. Globalization, the internet, and internal low cost flights, have changed the way a destination must be sold.

Public Private Partnerships.

The public sector can often be wrongly influenced by the private sector. PPP tourism committees consist of public sector people and private sector people, many of which have No professional tourism background or qualification. Tourism committees are made up of the semi-retired from other trades who become part-time accommodation providers; they attract serial committee seat collectors. Professional tourism operators do not have the time or inclination to sit on Hydra like tourism waffle committees. How can it be right for someone with no knowledge who lets a couple of 3rd rate B&B rooms be allowed to strongly influence the marketing of a destination, future direction and the spending of public funding. PPPs are not in their current form fit for purpose.

Conclusion:

New Zealand has a distinctive brand, and a strong united front innovative marketing strategy. Britain has no brand strength, because it is fragmented, tribal and failing to make a sales impact. Rather than compete with one another in a tribal manner. The amount of funding allocated for overseas marketing, if used collectively in the National interest would be far more effective for all areas of Britain. Surely an industry, worth approximately £116 billion per year (VB own figures July 2010 report) to the British economy, employing around 2.7 million people either directly or indirectly, is worthy of a rethink.

When the Chinese premier met Obama in America Jan 2011

Wen Jiabao's speech mentioned increasing Trade & **Tourism** between the two countries was top priority. China, just like New Zealand and other countries have recognised the worth of tourism and are investing in their tourism industry. **Red Danger Ahead Lights** are flashing. The British Government must recognise tourism for its economic worth. The affluent middle class Chinese's just like the rest of the globe ... buy a Brand. **Brand marketing is the Key to achieve growth.**

Any business, let alone a country that reduces its marketing budget at a time of increased competition, global unrest and economic difficulty is making a false economy and a dreadful mistake.

End of Main Report

Tourist Information Centres: New Zealand's I-Sites (TICs) are branded and professionally run. They have computer literate, smartly logo promoting staff. All TICs I popped in seemed exceedingly busy, in the morning with visitors dishing our advice, booking tours, and in afternoon booking tourist into nearby vacant beds. They seemed far more commercial than our offices, but had the same issue as our offices re council support or lack support of for tourism from local councils.

N.Z accommodation providers promote the Qualmark Grading Logo with pride. Almost everybody who earns a tourism dollar promotes it. The logo is unforgettable because it appears everywhere on almost everything. Britain has a misshaped union jack, and the rose grading logo, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland promote their own logos.

Local Tourism Regional tourism bodies are the official body responsible for marketing their areas within N.Z. In Britain a multitude of small tourism organisations and groups, most funded from different pots of public funding promote themselves individually, and not in a cohesive way.

Adventure Tourism: There is nothing in Britain that would in any way compare with the popular adrenaline fuelled activities New Zealand offers. Britain's blame culture combined with health and safety regulations would prohibit all. In Britain even horse riding holidays and trekking centres are shutting because of H&S regulation and prohibitive insurance costs.

Accessing Accommodation:

Most N.Z accommodation providers are quality graded by TNZ. The cost for grading in NZ was higher than in Britain. I heard no complaints from accommodation providers, so I presume that means they don't mind the expense because Tourism New Zealand is doing such a good marketing job.

Disability: I was impressed with Air New Zealand care over one disabled elderly passenger on our flight. Disabled facilities within accommodation seemed similar to ours.

C) Nelson Tasman - Able Tasman National Park v Exmoor National Park

Two of the most beautiful unspoilt areas in the world, and share many of the same issues. Nelson Tasman has it all, the whole area from Farewell Split to Nelson City which includes three national parks has something to suit everybody, beach holidays, boating holidays, fishing, tramping, arts and crafts, wildlife, scenery, landscape, activities, and wonderful food. No wonder New Zealander's head to Nelson Tasman for summer holidays. Kaiteriteri Recreational Reserve campsite was full, 90% occupied by New Zealanders, 10% the rest of the world. The exact opposite of all other N.Z campsites and holiday parks I stayed in. The Nelson region, covering five distinct geographic areas, is marketed as a brand in a professional manner by Nelson Tasman Tourism organisation.

Wilson's Experience the award-winning tramping tour and boat operator were marketing Able Tasman National Park on the internet exceptionally well. Nelson Tasman Tourism, Motueka I-Site and Wilson's Experience were all very helpful as regards meeting me.



Exmoor National Park: There are several privately funded websites and several publicly funded websites marketing Exmoor National Park. The latter funded by West Somerset District Council and/or Exmoor National Park, these two authorities also fund a brochure and part fund a free advertising paper called the Exmoor Visitor. All are promoting the Exmoor National Park; there is no brand identity whatsoever. To add to the fragmentation, three official destination management organisations DMOs, also promote ENP: - these bodies are Visit Somerset, Visit Devon and the North Devon Marketing Bureau.

To further dilute the marketing of this geographical region several of Exmoor's towns and villages also market themselves with a multitude of different looking website and some produce leaflets. There are several tourism associations, three different funded non-communicating tourism information offices, and three Exmoor National Park visitor centres.

There is no cohesive marketing strategy; a brand is non-existent ... the fragmentation is palpable.

If other areas, officially backed tourism committees have been as un-professional and financially unaccountable while spending large amounts of public funding, a complete change in national structure is long overdue.

Note: The last paragraph refers to a 10/13 year up to 2009 when a lack of financial transparency period occurred, after the local authorities decided to scrap the professional tourism officer's job and instead allowed a public private partnership to take over the marketing of Exmoor National Park.

D) New Zealand Travel Diary

I selected to fly with Air New Zealand because they network market with Tourism New Zealand in the promotion of New Zealand. We flew premium economy via LA outbound and returned economy via Hong Kong 6 weeks later. Flight left Heathrow 31st Dec, 1st Jan was lost forever, landed in LA eye scanned fingerprinted, re-boarded same aircraft, arrived NZ 2nd Jan after experiencing a Pacific dawn that resembled a scene from a Sci-Fi movie. The Feb homeward bound flight provided hours of aerial views of China, the Himalayas, Mongolia and Russia.



I travelled with my husband who paid his own way. We rented a motorhome for the duration, (Photo Fox Glacier Holiday Park) staying most nights on excellent Top Ten holiday parks or DOC campsites. In total we spent £10K of our own money + my fellowship grant. Hubby drove the camper van, on days I had meetings he played golf or

went fishing.



We covered approx 1,700 miles, travelling down to the southernmost tip at Slope Point, zigzagging our way across South & North Islands up to Omapere in Northland. My picture was taken during a magical day spent with Real Journeys' exploring the awesome scenery of Maniporui Lake & Doubtful Sound, who also drove us down a tunnel in a coach 2 miles underground to observe a hydro electric power station.

I flew up Franz Joseph glacier at dawn, landed, walked on the glacier, and flew down Fox Glacier in a tiny helicopter. I went Dolphin watching in the beautiful Bay of Islands and cruised through the Hole in the Rock. I fulfilled a lifetime ambition when Whale watching at Kiakora... it was an amazing privilege that exceeded all expectations, even the 3 meter swells added to the excitement.



The owners of delightful Cranford Oak Motel in Christchurch were exceptionally helpful. I was amused to hear the training manual used by this first rate motel was Britain's Hotel Inspector TV programme, fronted by Ruth Watson. Superb hospitality and tourism advice was given by the owners of my farm stay, Red Deer Homestead on the banks of Hawea Lake, near Wanaka. What a house! What a location!

The Resurgence, a 5 star eco-tourism boutique lodge near Motueka truly deserved its many accolades; it also had informative helpful hosts and we met an eclectic mix of knowledgeable global guests.

I peeked inside a tiny West Coast hostel, the old school house at Okarto, two affordable backpacker's establishments and inside a Wicked camper van.

We spent one night on a tatty North Island campsite close to Ruapehu Volcano, failed to sleep in a saggy Wellington motel bed. Hammer hot springs were great fun, but had grubby changing rooms. Not bad, only three moans from a critical eye during 6 weeks spent on the hoof, reflects exceptionally well on the excellent quality of tourist attractions and types of accommodation offered in New Zealand.

I swam with a ray accidentally, saw two huge whale's breach, dolphins squeak, penguins go to bed, sea lions close at hand, albatross fly overhead, and squashed possums daily. I saw the second biggest tree in the world, caught fish and learnt about eastern lifestyle with Japanese and Malayan ladies who both spoke perfect English during a productive day spent aboard a fishing boat in Marlborough Sound.

I met two mature English sisters in Picton, who were touring New Zealand using public transport. One, a farmer's wife was involved in the promotion of rural crafts in Derbyshire said times were tough as regards tourism in her area.

I watched in amazement when a tourist helicopter took off adjacent to a main road and cafe in Waitangi. We crossed the earth's fault lines several times, soaked in bubbling natural hot tubs. Occasionally we went exploring miles from anywhere, driving on scary roads with washouts, and even used a long drop loo.

A fascinating geology museum at Duntroon, nearby Elephant Stones and Earthquake Valley awoke an unexpected passion for geology. Arthurs Pass is spectacular. The Remarkable - remarkable, Glenorchy - gorgeous. Takaka Hill - challenging, Waikoropupa Springs - crystal clear, Moeraki Boulders - extraordinary, Wai-O Tapu thermal wonderland and Kauri museum of wood at Dargaville in North Island both excelled.



Observations:

I would imagine it is only a matter of time before tourists getting too close to wildlife have to be controlled. I saw over-zealous tourists in The Catlins and on the Otago Peninsular standing between the sea and burrows impede the progress of penguins returning after a whole day spent at sea reach their burrows, where their hungry youngsters awaited. I saw two visitors invade a sea lions space at their peril and to his irritation at Farewell Spit. And several visitors including children annoy seals relaxing on rocks at Kiakoura. I watched as youngsters and adults used the extraordinary Moreki boulders as play equipment, two had even been spray painted pink. I saw young men ignore warnings and defy death when jumping into bolder strewn river from Pelorus Bridge. I got drenched at Hasst, chased by Sandflies on the West Coast, and humidity exhaustion in Northland ... all added to an amazing experience.

Department of Conservation: The many natural attractions this government body are responsible were well maintained, educational, eco friendly, visitor friendly and free. It was a DOC campsite warden who was tidying a site near Wanaka who first told me about binge drinking young Brits camping overnight with no respect for the landscape or neighbours. I asked if other countries youth behaved in this way... his answer sadly was no. I heard the same complaint from campsite neighbours in Russell, a Danish couple with two young children, who said they had packed up and moved on in the middle of the night from a campsite near Queenstown because they feared for their safety when the behaviour of group of drunken British backpackers got out of hand.

Adventure Tourism: Due to the limitations of age and nerve, I observed, rather than participated in risk-taking activities or sports, which are extremely popular reasons for visiting N.Z. However we took up all opportunities that arose to join in with visitor endorsed excursions at our own expense. Non apart from the Whale watching were pre-booked. All were top quality rewarding experiences, most promoted eco-tourism. All without exception were educational, good value for money and faultless in every aspect. All showed great customer care, attention to health and safety issues and drove home the message of respect for both landscape and wildlife.

Only once did I encounter a car parking charge in New Zealand and that was at Auckland's superb customer friendly, spotlessly clean airport.

While waiting to board the homeward bound plane, I began to be aware of designed dressed affluent looking Chinese's tourists filling up the departure lounge. I was told they were returning to Shanghai on the 747 before and the 747 after our flight.

Feb 2008: I awoke to the massive impact China is going to have on global tourism.



The homeward bound Hong Kong stopover was a pre-booked treat for me and my husband. We stayed at the 5 * InterContinental Hotel, which employs 700 staff and oh boy did it live up to its glowing online reviews.

The standard of accommodation, cleanliness, and food were all excellent. The warmth of welcome and discreet service provided in a relaxed informal manner to all guests, no matter whether they were dressed in Prada, shell suit or tramping gear was truly outstanding. The hotel staff were all dressed immaculately and extremely courteous. All guests seem to be valued and treated as individuals, which is really difficult thing to achieve in big hotel.

As a country gal, I expected to dislike Hong Kong; instead I loved every moment of our 3 days spent there. The hotel kindly let us in our room with a jaw dropping floor to ceiling view over Hong Kong waterfront early. Complimentary jet lag rejuvenating tea and a lovely birthday cake surprised us both. (My DOB must have

been flagged from passport). The evening before we flew home we were even asked if anything could be done to ease our departure. I have stayed in the best of hotels in London, France & Ireland, I worked in the 5* Royal Bath Hotel in Bournemouth... I owned and ran 5 star gold award farm house B&B and self-catering cottage complex for 18 years... nothing compared.

Hong Kong growth figures for 2010 <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12548766>

Feb 17th I boarded the plane home from clinically clean, spacious stylish Hong Kong airport, arrived back here at a third world airport owned by the Spanish, it's called Terminal 3 @ Heathrow. I overheard two fellow inbound tourists, comment about the dreadful state of the place. The route from aircraft to baggage collection had a water stained ceiling and needed a coat of paint. A large wall mural of a Union Jack was peeling in the baggage collection hall-entrance; there was no warmth of welcome. What a difference when compared to arrival at Auckland Airport where airport staff greets arrivals efficiently, but smile. Heathrow is also a national disgrace. Terminal 3 reminded me of a cramped shopping mall on the first day of the sales on departure with unhappy staff and an unwelcoming tatty transport hub on arrival. I felt the people who say "you can tell the state of a county by its main airport" might well be correct.

A short while later when filling up with fuel in the first M5 services heading westwards, I groaned in horror, the services area was litter strewn, bins overflowing, toilets unspeakable, staff grumpy. If I were a visitor arriving from overseas the first 30 minutes, would not have endeared me to want to stay in Britain one moment longer. Bad standards of behaviour by a small minority of our youth when overseas are damaging Britain's image abroad. The main arrival area to our country is letting us down.

The last time Britain was rebranded the internet, low cost flights and massive global competition didn't exist. Mrs Thatcher was at the helm complaining about the new union jack logos, promoting cool Britain oddly on the tails of BA planes ... everything has changed since then.

Failure to invest, rebrand and radically reform Britain's tourism industry at this pivotal moment in time would be a huge missed opportunity.

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Report written 2008 - updated March 2011

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