Understanding Olympic tourist behaviour: Implications for maximising the tourism impacts of the Olympic Games.

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Content

• Setting the scene
• Brief overview of the research
• Understanding the Olympic tourist
• Research Strategy
Setting the scene

• Tourism is one of the biggest impacts resulting from hosting the Games
• However lack of research in ‘understanding the Olympic tourist’
• Abundance of descriptive impact studies which, although important, limit our knowledge
• Need to understand Olympic tourist behaviour in order to underpin marketing & leveraging strategy
Consumer Behaviour

- Understanding customer needs is one of the major underpinning constructs of the marketing concept (Evans, Jamal & Foxhall, 2006)

- Marketing objectives depends on knowing, serving and influencing consumers (Peter & Olson, 2008)

- To market host countries to Olympic tourists effectively it is essential to understand the needs and wants of the tourists as consumers
Olympic Tourists

– Lack of behaviour orientated studies

– Only in very rare cases are there any detailed considerations of behaviour (Weed & Bull, 2004)

– The effect of the event depends on the strategies put in place to nurture the impacts (Chalip, 2003)

– The effectiveness of the strategies depends upon an underpinning of the understanding of behaviour (Weed, 2006)
Research Strategy

• Higher level needs approach the status of values (Evans et al., 2006)

• Personal values assist individuals to form their attitudes, and ultimately the behaviour they choose (Hede, Jago & Deery, 2004)

• Utilising the Laddering interview which seeks to uncover the links between the attributes (A) of the product, the consequences of consumption (C) and the personal reasons for consumption (V).
Research Strategy

• Respondents are encouraged by means of repetitive and interactive questions to dig deeply into the discussion about (A), gradually indicating (C) and then (V) (Veludo-de-Oliviera et al., 2006)

• Allows respondents to think critically about their own motivations

• Interviews carried out with international tourists at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games
Theme 1:

Identification

Nation

Athlete

Sport
Theme 2:

- Belonging
- Friendship
- Social Interaction
- Self-esteem
Theme 3:

The ‘Third’ Place

Escape

Entertainment

Stress Reduction
Conclusions

• Reasons why tourists come to the Games are not necessarily for ‘tourism’ reasons
• Strategies need to be formed that build upon these underlying reasons
• Maximising the tourism impacts depends upon this understanding of reasons.
• Augmenting the product to attract more tourists