

Current issue in tourism: The authentic tourist

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Abstract

It is Scotland's tourism ambition to grow by 50% by 2015. In order to achieve this, "authenticity" has been identified as a future key consumer-driver and as a trend that matches Scotland's brand equity proposition of "human, enduring and dramatic". This paper identifies 10 trends that are shaping the concept of authenticity and exemplifies these through two scenarios—the *Ella Stewart Family Centre Holidays* and *Orkadian Ancestors and Fiddlers*. The paper discusses the concept of "authenti-seeking", which is defined as "consumers searching for authenticity from a range of products, services and experiences or looking for it within themselves". This concept is then considered within the context of tourism, highlighting the opportunity for Scotland, whether this be community-based propositions, activity holidays or even nostalgic, authentic products, such as the Tizer Experience at Barr's Soft Drink Plant. If authenticity is to be a serious proposition, it must be built around the notions of ethical, natural, honest, simple, beautiful, rooted and human concepts.

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1. Introduction—why is authenticity important in tourism?

One of the key areas identified by research into the future of Scottish tourism focuses on the concept of authenticity (Future Foundation & VisitScotland, 2005). Authenticity as a concept is nothing new (Brass, 2005; Chambers, 2005); destinations such as Australia, Canada and China are promoting authentic experiences. There is a growing desire to obtain experiences and products that are original and the real thing, not contaminated by being fake or impure. This movement away from impurity, the virtual, the spun and the mass-produced in a world seemingly full of falseness needs further explanation. The great writers, Plato (Guthrie, 1987), Dostoevsky (Stuchebrukhov, 2004), Freud (Gertner, 2000) and Baudrillard (1983) have all explored the concept of authenticity in order to understand its meaning in people's life. There is a dearth of literature about authenticity and

tourism from different philosophical approaches such as positivism, constructivism or post-modernism (Wang, 1999). But whatever your approach, the importance of authenticity is paramount.

Wilmott and Nelson (2003) have identified the complexity of consumerism, with consumers seeking new meaning, consistent with Maslow's self-actualisation concept. Initially, people are concerned about wider issues such as the environment, animal rights or Third World hunger. This movement to self-actualisation is a search for a deeper meaning and a sense of worth beyond material possessions. It is a fulfilment of moving beyond goods and services to experiences. At one level it means increased spending on holidays, eating out, the theatre and so on. But it also includes special experiences such as white-water rafting or spending a weekend at a health spa. This is what Pine, Pine II, and Gilmore (1999) call the 'experience economy'. But Pine (2004) also observes that, as the experience economy matures, a shift is identified towards authenticity. Consumers decide to buy or not to buy, based on how real they perceive the product/service offering to be. Thus the rendering of authenticity emerges as a selection criterion

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for tomorrow's tourist. So why is authenticity important for the future of Scottish tourism?

2. The future directions of Scottish tourism

In 2003, Scottish tourism is a £4.4bn industry, representing 3% of GVA and 9% of employment. VisitScotland's (the national tourism organisation responsible for marketing Scotland) main domestic markets are Scotland, North of England, London and the South East of England. These markets represented 80% of all revenue and 89% of trips. Scotland's main overseas markets are North America, Ireland and Germany. It is the Scottish tourism industry's ambition to grow the value of tourism by 50% by the year 2015 and by 200% by 2025. This ambition has been led by its scenario-planning and futures research programme, overseen by a scenario-planning group of leading tourism organisations and supported by the Future Foundation, a leading consumer think-tank. This futures' research has identified four profiles of visitor-types to Scotland, which focus around on the need for cultural capital, the desire for new experiences, business tourism, and the quest for authenticity. This paper elaborates on that last theme, the authentic tourist (Future Foundation & VisitScotland, 2005). It sets out to clarify why authenticity will be an important consumer trend of the future for Scottish tourism.

Two scenarios have been constructed as a means to illustrate the authentic tourist experience, namely *The Ella Stewart Family Centre Holidays* and *Orcadian Ancestors and Fiddlers*. The scenarios used in this paper are not a final representation of the future but a means by which to discuss dimensions and the exploration of the concepts that surround tourism and authenticity. For further details about scenario planning and construction, readers are referred to *The Sixth Sense* by Van der Heijden, Bradfield, Burt, Cairns, and Wright (2002) and *Strategy Making* by Colin Eden and Ackermann (1998).

3. The scenarios

3.1. Scenario 1: Ella Stewart's family centre holidays in 2015

The landscape has always been one of Scotland's main assets but over the last 10 years we have seen higher temperatures, more rain and more climatic disruption. In order to deal with this situation the industry has developed a number of small, all-year-round, indoor, family centres called the *Ella Stewart Family Centres*. These good-value, regional activity centres provide an environment of safety, shelter and fun, as well as being situated in locations of natural beauty. The benefit of the centres is that they have created thriving tourism communities, catering for both the short-break visitor and the day-tripper. The centres, with initial funding from Scottish Enterprise, have enabled tourism businesses in the surrounding area to form

partnerships with the resort, drawing upon local skills. These centres saved the agricultural industry after the ending of all EU subsidies in 2009.

Our journey begins with Mr. and Mrs. Derek Hughes from Liverpool, who are taking their grandchildren, Andrew (aged 7) and Emily (aged 9) on holiday during half term. The family have flown from Liverpool's John Lennon Airport to Perth's Regional Airport. From there, they take the bus to Pitlochry's *Ella Stewart Family Centre*. On arrival they are greeted by Hamish the Haggis and check into their bothy. Everybody takes part in the afternoon's activities, which include milking the goats, then making goats' cheese with the milk, followed by storytelling by local children's authors. High tea is grilled salmon fish fingers with chunky, fat-free chips and salad. The wild salmon has been caught in the local river. The next day, Andrew and Emily take part in a pottery class while Mr. and Mrs. Emily Hughes visit the local Trinity Church to find out more about St. Angus, a recently canonised saint. The Church tourism officer tells the story of the St. Angus's robe, now on display at the church and which, allegedly, has healing powers. Every year, pilgrims from as far afield as South America and South Africa visit the church, especially during the Holy Angus Festival held in the first week of March.

The next day, the family set out on a day trip to Barr's Irn Bru factory in Glasgow to sample granddad's favourite drink, Tizer. The factory tour begins with the family taking part in a classic remake of one of Irn Bru's TV adverts. Emily has a virtual role as one of the character actors. But the best part of the trip is when Granddad Hughes puts on a diving suit and swims the 'Tizer experience', up and down the factory, through all the pipes, eventually coming out in the bottling plant. He looks very 'tizered'!

All in all, a wonderful, authentic half-term holiday which includes nostalgia, fun and pilgrimage.

In 2015, an authentic experience is the central proposition of Scottish tourism ensuring that tourism is everyone's business. This means that all kinds of industries such as farming, the church and the soft-drinks industry realise the importance of Scottish tourism, where businesses must search for new experiences and present them in an innovative way. In this scenario, authenticity is captured through the concepts of 'community', 'ethical consumption', 'innovation', 'regional identity' and 'simplicity'. The trends of 'extended families' and 'longevity' are used to highlight a number of experiences captured in the Ella Stewart Family Holiday Centre.

3.2. Scenario 2: Orcadian ancestors and fiddlers

Alistair Leishman is 17 years old and is spending an extended weekend on Orkney this summer. He is fed up with the mass-tourism package holidays which are being marketed by the big tour companies. He is one of those

Scots who are aware of Orkney and its spiritual tranquillity but who have never visited. As Orkney has protected status as a tourism destination, the number of tourism arrivals are restricted by imposing a £1,000 ecology tax which tourists have to pay on arrival.

In order to get around the islands, Alistair uses his Hertz hydro-cell car as all carbon emission fuels are banned on Orkney. Orkney's strict ecology and sustainable tourism policy has meant that the island has maintained its local species and landscape in a world where Scottish tourism has been too successful and led to environmental damage. The price of this success has resulted in the destruction of tourism icons. Alistair he has read how Ben Nevis in 2012 was over-developed with pathways, souvenir shops and a funicular railway which spoiled the landscape and damaged irreversibly the fauna, flora and the ecology of Scotland's most famous mountain. Ben Nevis was in complete contrast to Skara Brae where Historic Scotland, realised that over-development would threaten its existence. Their clever use of technologies, reservation management and pricing strategies at the site ensured that Skara Brae would remain accessible but tourism would be sustainable.

Another reason for Alistair's visit to Orkney was the release of the Hollywood blockbuster *Red Cloud Calder*, the story of a Canadian Indian and his Orcadian ancestors. Alistair's fascination was further fuelled by the animated series and The Real Shakespeare Company's version of the story.

This year, the musical festival which grew from Orkney's informal music scene into a flourishing international event, features the Inuit fiddlers from Aklavic whose music has a close association with traditional Orcadian music. Alistair, a keen fiddler, was able to with the Indians as if he were at a Scottish ceilidh.

The relationship between tourism and the environment is a key feature of this scenario. Over-development has resulted in the loss of national icons such as Ben Nevis, meaning that price has to be used as a means by which to control demand. Orkney has become a sustainable tourism destination in which the authentic experience is paramount. Orkney is a faraway place where remoteness is a key driver, a destination that has not been spoilt. Alistair is on a quest, where hobbies and activities become the tourism experience e.g. jamming with the Inuit fiddlers. He is on a journey of self-fulfilment.

4. Trends that will influence the authentic tourist

Why will authenticity be an important trend for Scottish tourism to follow in the future? The consumer in 2015 is better educated, more sophisticated, has travelled the world, is concerned about the environment in which he or she lives and wants a better quality of life. Combining these facts, we are led to the conclusion that they have a desire for 'real' experiences rather than something false.

Table 1
Trends shaping the authentic tourist

Trend 1	A global network
Trend 2	Ethical consumption and volunteerism
Trend 3	The affluent consumer and the experience economy
Trend 4	The educated consumer
Trend 5	Trust in the past
Trend 6	Individualism
Trend 7	Multi-culturalism
Trend 8	Resistance to marketing
Trend 9	Time pressures and authenticity
Trend 10	Increased competition amongst tourism destinations

Ten trends (Table 1) have been identified from the scenarios which will shape the authentic tourist. So now, let us look at the evidence and assumptions about the future.

4.1. Trend 1: a global network

'It is not what you know but whom you know'—that is the classic saying of how to get on in the world. Today's society, unlike previous generations, is free to choose connections and influences whether they be the democratisation of the family, the phenomenon of blogging, the exponential rise of email or the brokering of personal contacts. Society today has fewer social boundaries. Technology has revolutionised personal communications and produced a global-network knowledge society. Travel and the internet have brought new tastes and awareness of new ideas and destinations. Long-lost friendships are rekindled on friendsunited.com. Openness and transparency have become the norm. However, technology is just an enabler. The desire for human contact is as strong as it has always been (Brass, 2005). The consumer is very much part of the global network society. The desire for human contact is highlighted throughout the scenarios.

4.2. Trend 2: ethical consumption and volunteering

There are very few markets in the UK not affected by the trend in ethical consumption. Wilmot (2003), in his book *Citizen Brands*, recognises that consumers with greater affluence (who are also better educated and more concerned for the environment they live in) are turning to ethical consumption as a means of contributing to society, which results in citizen brands, where society is the heart of the brand. One of the best examples of a citizen brand has been the rise of Fair Trade over the last decade (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2006). Growth in the number of products under the Fair Trade label, which was launched in 1995, has stood at between 40% and 90% per annum. This has expanded from one brand of coffee to 250 foods, including fruit, juices, vegetables, snacks, wine, tea, sugar, honey and nuts, all sold at a premium price. By using the principles of ethical purchasing and citizen brands, individuals are contributing to the society they live in.

This movement towards ethical consumption is partnered by a trend to inconspicuous consumption where consumers do not broadcast their personal success via ostentatious display. In line with this change in consumerism, volunteering is re-emerging as a tourism experience, whether this be rebuilding a stone dyke for the *National Trust of Scotland* or walking the Great Wall of China for *Marie Curie* or using a gap year to build houses in Thailand. In the scenarios, we observe the issues of sustainability and community involvement as a representation of ethical consumption.

4.3. Trend 3: the affluent consumer and the experience economy

According to the CIA, by 2020 the world GDP will grow by 50% (Hutchings, 2004). Such a forecast puts to bed the myth of economic decline, as propositioned by a number of economists (Yeoman, 2004). In Britain household disposable income has grown threefold in real terms between the early 1950s and the start of the new millennium. This is an annual average increase of 2.5% per annum. This has had a major impact on the material aspects of people's lives. Not only have televisions, telephones, and washing machines become the norm but now consumers have an increasingly large proportion of their discretionary income to spend on holidays, health and leisure activities. Luxury, once for the minority, is now a mainstream phenomenon. This accumulation of wealth means that consumers are constantly searching for self-esteem and self-actualisation as they perceive that they have all of their tangible goods and needs. The consumer focuses their expenditure on goods and services which will improve their quality of life and enhance their sense of self. Therefore, as the experience economy grows, consumers devote their increasing affluence to travel and tourism products. As the experience economy matures, a shift is identified by which consumers search for and buy a real experience rather than something that is false, fake or manufactured. Here, the consumer searches for a destination that offers a sense of real place, rather than a theme park constructed solely for the tourist.

4.4. Trend 4: the educated consumer

In 1992, 35% of UK consumers had no qualifications whatsoever, compared with 20% in 2006. Furthermore, across the world, levels of educational attainment are increasing, especially in higher education. In 2004, 2.2 million of all school leavers in England and Wales went into higher education compared with 0.7 million in 1970 (Yeoman, 2004). Education is a key driver in authenticity as the consumer is more discerning, affluent and sophisticated in the choices they make. In the scenarios this trend is illustrated by the case of Alistair Leishman, a student, who is very knowledgeable about Orkney and about his past.

4.5. Trend 5: trust in the past

Taylor (1991), in his book *The Ethics of Authenticity*, concludes that the consumer feels safe in the past as the future is uncertain. Therefore, they search for authenticity based upon feelings of nostalgia, a search for their historic roots and heritage. For example, parents buy Scalextric car racing sets and Hornby model railways for themselves rather than for their children (Gillham, 2004). Taylor then demonstrates that authenticity contains an artificiality which Cohen (2002) and Eco (1986) construct as a false reality. For example, Disneyland is seen by some as quintessentially American and it is in this sense that it can be perceived as authentic; its authenticity is a symbolic one. It is a reflection of American society and culture which post-modernist theory portrays as real. Disneyland is the perfect example of manufactured authenticity based on illusion and fantasy and is an example of how authenticity means different things to different people and, indeed, how it is historically, culturally and politically determined. Within the scenarios the example of the Hughes family's visit to the Irn Bru factory is an illustration of the nostalgia engendered by constructed authenticity. It is Lowenthal's (1985) majestic study, *The Past is Another Country*, that reminds us that a country's past is associated with its buildings, battle, culture and heritage. Destinations without these elements have no festivals to celebrate and have no cultural iconic value. Destinations rich in history and heritage are perceived to be authentic because history is an illustration of the truth rather than something that is falsely manufactured. However, we will concede the point that history has many interpretations. Within the scenarios, this reliance on the past is illustrated by the church tourism officer telling the story of St. Angus's robe which, allegedly, had healing power.

4.6. Trend 6: individualism

Linked to the trend of increased affluence and luxury has been a shift towards individualism in which the consumer searches for products and services which meet his or her individual needs. In addition, this is related to the trend of the diminishing role of social and mutual institutions, encouraging a decline in deference to authority and growth in self-reliance. The impact of new media technologies and globalisation raises awareness of new communities and connections. The combination of these trends provides a melting pot from which people can draw their identity. It helps lower the barriers to people's potential and allows them to be exposed to a greater variety of options. As the consumer faces complexity of choice and markets become more fragmented and individualistic, so identity will still be derived from family, local and national attachments but also from lifestyle choices, specific brand affiliations and niche interests.

Authenticity becomes the expression of a person's individualism through the achievement of self-actualisa-

tion. This could express itself in participation in volunteering or in tracing one's ancestral roots. It is also illustrated in the scenarios by the Hughes family's consumption of food associated with their holiday destination and by Alistair Leishman's fascination with traditional Orcadian music.

4.7. *Trend 7: multi-culturalism*

The whole process of globalisation has significantly amplified the meaning of the term 'multi-culturalism' within our social order. Access to an even wider range of ideas and interests has never been easier. The internet boom, the expansion in specialist and minority television channels, and the relentless growth in international tourism, etc, combine to stretch perceptions and eliminate what we might call mono-culturalism, i.e. seeing the world through only one set of pre-ordained, inherited notions. The consumer of today will watch the latest Bollywood film, consume a curry, purchase exotic spices for cooking and will read about Rajasthan in the latest edition of the *Lonely Planet*. Multi-culturalism has now become an everyday concept in the life of the consumer. In the scenarios, an expression of this multi-culturalism is Alistair Leishman's exposure to the Orcadian Indians and a Hollywood blockbuster and his interest in traditional music.

4.8. *Trend 8: resistance to marketing*

In 2003 Coca-Cola, following negotiations with the Scottish Executive, removed its logo from drinks vending machines in Scottish schools (Future Foundation, 2005a). A year later, a survey by the Scottish Parent Teacher Council found that a majority of parents opposed the branded promotion of food products in schools. In 2004 a hospital in Norfolk, following complaints from parents, banned McDonald's staff from giving meal vouchers to the families of sick young patients. McDonald's pointed out that they had been fund-raising for the hospital over the previous 14 years and this was political correctness going too far. The point of these observations is that big companies and well-known brands seem to be curtailed, corralled and controlled by this phenomena. Does this mean the rise of the world of Klein (2001) and No Logos? Or is it an observation of consumers' suspicion and scepticism of marketing's attempt to persuade them?

Resistance to marketing is a key trend which advertising is becoming increasingly unsuccessful in persuading consumers to buy products and services. In 2005 the average consumer in the USA was bombarded with 5000 messages per day, compared to 1500 in 1960. Britons receive just under 4 billion pieces of direct mail every year and a recent survey by Gartner suggests that a third of all email in the UK workplace is unwanted, all of which leads to in a society suffering from information overload (Future Foundation, 2005b). In the scenarios, Alistair Leishman

takes a holiday on Orkney based on recommendations by friends, on what he has learned at school and on his rejection of the over-sold mass tourism destinations.

Digital television means the consumer can skip the advertisements and, therefore, we have witnessed the rise in popularity of product placement in many television programmes. The highly educated consumer has a sense of mistrust towards big business ever since the fallout from Enron and WorldCom. The consumer, therefore, turns to their friends and families or independent sources for advice on purchasing activity, hence the rise of the network society.

4.9. *Trend 9: time pressures and authenticity*

Gazinta is a term coined by the American economist, Burns (1993), to describe people's desire to maximise the efficient use of their time. He argues that time has become a more precious commodity as affluence has increased and opportunities and horizons have broadened. The law of *Gazinta* states that people are led to sample a range of activities and satisfaction rather than devote themselves to one or two. However, while the portfolio of activities and leisure activities in particular has grown, there are still only so many hours in the day. Many leisure venues have broadened their offer to the consumer so that a wider range of activities is presented under one roof. For example, shopping centres have cinemas and cinemas contain cafes; pubs offer TV viewing, food, quizzes and live music.

On the other hand, according to research by the Future Foundation and VisitScotland (2005), people will increasingly want longer, more natural, 'authentic' activities to operate as 'time spaces' in their lives. In effect, people's leisure portfolios will incorporate a wide range of 'short-burst', simultaneous or integrated activities taking place alongside spells of longer, less hectic activity which can be described as 'time oasis leisure'. Climbing a Scottish Munro (mountain) may be perceived as an example of a short-burst activity but once the climber reaches the summit the tranquillity of the 'authentic' landscape becomes a person's time oasis. In the Ella Stewart scenario, Mr. and Mrs. Hughes are 'grandtravellers' who are taking their grandchildren on holiday because the children's parents are otherwise engaged at half-term. Throughout their holiday they follow Burns' *Gazinta* principle by which they sample a number of activities rather than devoting themselves to one activity. There are bursts of adrenalin but there is also time for tranquillity.

4.10. *Trend 10: increased competition amongst tourism destinations*

The worldwide growth of tourism must count as one of the most remarkable achievements of the last 50 years. With one or two exceptions, the proportion of the world's population taking part in tourism activity has risen year on year over the last three decades. The propensity for tourism

Table 2
World's top tourism destinations by international tourist arrivals

Rank	1950	World share	1970	World share	1990	World share	2002	World share
1	USA		Italy		France		France	
2	Canada		Canada		USA		Spain	
3	Italy	71%	France	43%	Spain	38%	USA	35%
4	France		Spain		Italy		Italy	
5	Switzerland		USA		Hungary		China	
6	Ireland		Austria		Austria		UK	
7	Austria		Germany		UK		Canada	
8	Spain	17%	Switz.	22%	Mexico	19%	Mexico	14%
9	Germany		Yugoslavia		Germany		Austria	
10	UK		UK		Canada		Germany	
11	Norway		Hungary		Switzerland		Hong Kong	
12	Argentina		Czech		Greece		Hungary	
13	Mexico	9%	Belgium	10%	Portugal	10%	Greece	11%
14	Netherlands		Bulgaria		Malaysia		Poland	
15	Denmark		Romania		Croatia		Malaysia	
	Others	3%	Others	25%	Others	33%	Others	40%
Total	25 Million		166 million		456 million		703 million	

is linked to the trends of affluence and general well-being. According to the [World Tourism Organisation \(2004\)](#), tourism is the world's largest industry. Receipts from international tourism increased annually by an average of 3.3% per annum from 1995 to reach 523 billion US dollars in 2003.

According to [Table 2](#), in 1950 the world's top five destinations represented 71% of all international tourist arrivals, whereas in 2002 they accounted for only 35%. This means that 99.6% of the countries have a tourism offering. You can now take a holiday at the North Pole and the South Pole and everywhere in between. Even Afghanistan has a tourism offering of the 'last unconquered mountains of the world'. According to [Lennon \(2004\)](#), [Yeoman, Durie, McMahon-Beattie, and Palmer \(2005\)](#) and other leading tourism writers, destinations which have a high iconic value will be able to distinguish themselves from the competition. Iconic value relates to a nation's culture and history. [Lowenthal \(1985\)](#), in his book *The Past is Another Country*, states that nations' buildings, battles, culture and heritage are central elements of their tourism package.

Both scenarios illustrate how Scotland can be positioned as an authentic experience, whether this be Alistair Leishman's interest in his heritage or Pitlochry's historical sense of place.

5. What does this mean for scottish tourism?

[Brass \(2006\)](#) uses the term 'authenti-seeking' for consumers searching for authenticity in a range of products, services and experiences or looking for it within themselves. This trend presents an opportunity for Scottish tourism; as going on holiday is now perceived as the No 1

luxury experience ([Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2006](#)) and those who go holiday perceive an authentic cultural experience as the most important kind of holiday experience, across all age, gender and socio-demographic groupings ([Brass, 2006](#)). This authentic experience is about avoiding areas and activities where there are lots of other tourists, indicating a desire to explore the untouched and unexposed. This means that Scotland must not be too successful, thereby creating hot spots and over-developed destinations as the funicular railway on Ben Nevis. As we see in [Fig. 1](#), this trend is high amongst ABs and older generations, perhaps emphasising a world cynicism about the unoriginal, which is less obvious in the not-yet-jaded younger generations.

In terms of activities, the appeal of outdoor holidays and activities is on the rise, whether this be walking, camping or trekking. The phenomenal resurrection of caravanning holidays over the last 5 years is a reflection of freedom and the open road. As a result of recent changes to the law regarding accessibility to land, combined with greater awareness of health issues, there has been a rise in the popularity of outdoor holidays, as highlighted in [Fig. 2](#).

Additionally, hiking and nature-based activities are associated with the appeal of the outdoors. Even amongst the 20–30 age group, the Ramblers' Association is experiencing a rapid rise in its membership, suggesting that singletons are looking for a social network in which to get involved, something that is supportive, providing a community environment that counteracts the perceived negative affects of a networked society and globalisation. As well as activity holidays, extreme sports is becoming a mainstream activity as rising income levels have improved accessibility to niche activities and driven tourism activity towards non-conventional experiences. This trend is push-

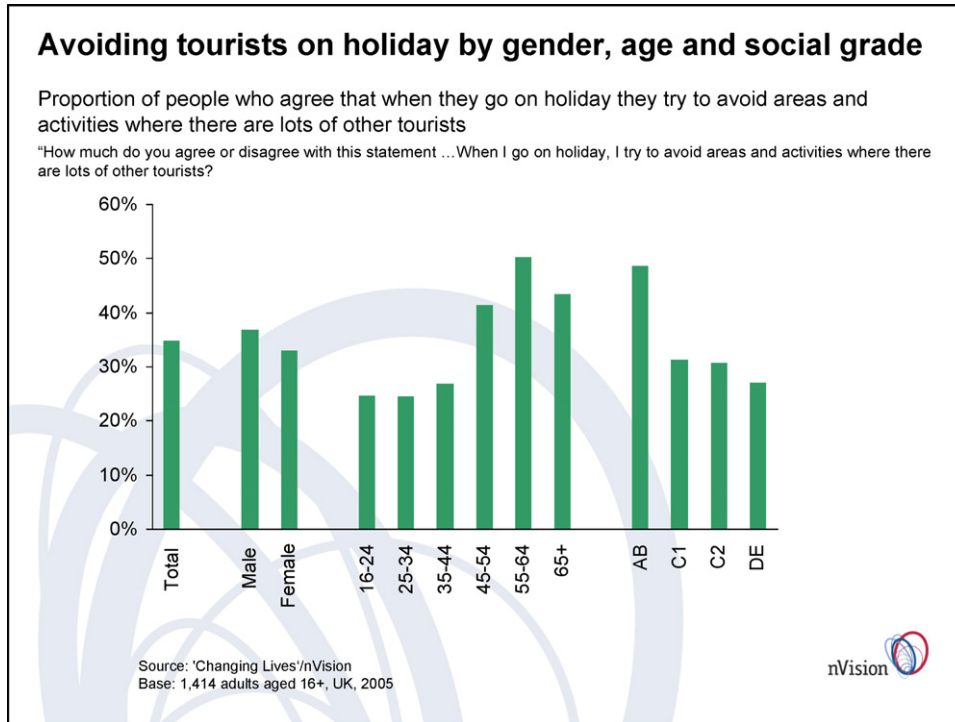


Fig. 1. Avoiding tourists.

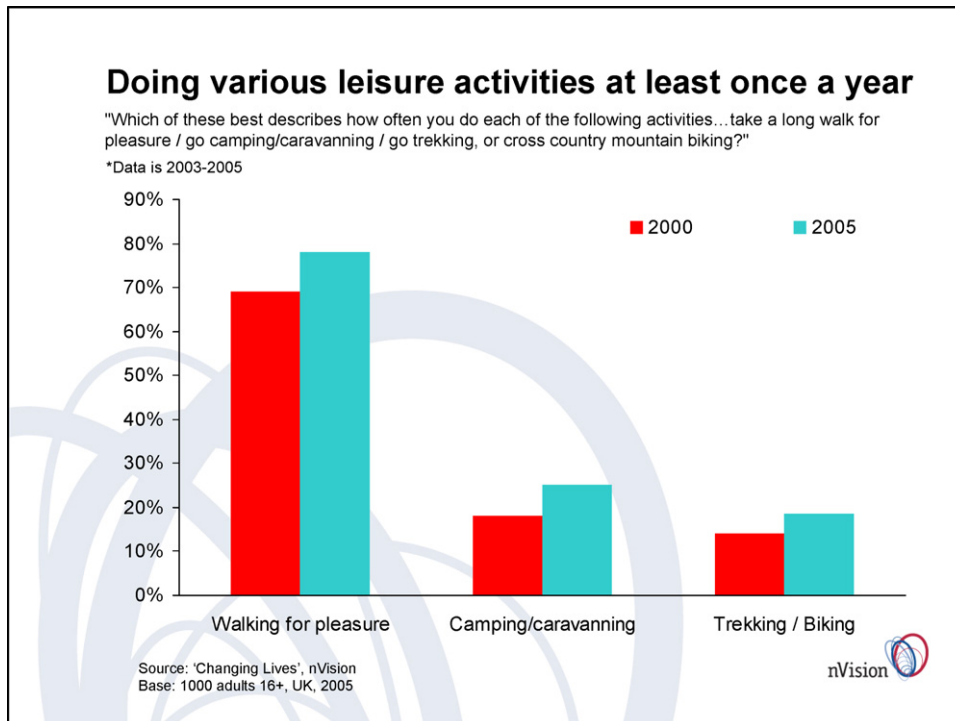


Fig. 2. Doing activities on holiday.

ing the boundaries of activity tourism, to a raw, unadulterated and unmediated thrill. To a certain extent, this trend has a *carpe diem* about it, because people are packing more in because of uncertainties associated with their lives. Yet, at the same time, they

seem to be undertaking these activities within a secure and safe environment, hence the term 'safe adventurism' (Page, Bentley, & Walker, 2005). This certainly points to an opportunity within the market to offer thrill-providing, original experiences without the usually attendant risks,

for example, trying out the *Tizer Experience* in the scenarios.

Boyle's (2004) appraisal of authenticity means that tourists are searching for a connection with something that is real, unsullied and rooted within the destination. Hence the connection to 'heritage seeking'. These visitors increasingly hark back to 'the good old days', despite the fact that the quality of life has significantly improved since the 'good old days'. Here, tourism destinations have an opportunity to create something real, what is termed 'a sense of place'. Yeoman and colleagues state that destinations which have no history, have no anniversaries or festivals to celebrate. It is a destination's image that is shaped by its history, which then creates its sense of place. It is a destination's food, people and places which make up its heritage and its character (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2006) and which thereby provide a destination with its own authenticity. Visits to historic buildings, museums and galleries are on the increase. Whilst much of this may have to do with increased marketing, there is also the prediction by Naisbitt (1982) who said 'the more our lives are steeped in technology, the more people will want to be with other people at movies, museums and book clubs'. Who would have thought we would see the resurgence of the book in this digital age. We have only to look at the Edinburgh International Book Festival and Wigtown which markets itself as a book destination to observe this phenomenon.

Turning to food consumption, the rise of the organic and the Fair Trade phenomenon, as illustrated in the scenarios, is presently being conditioned by people's desire for 'real food' that tastes of something and comes from a real place. The book, *Fast Food Nation*, by Schlosser (2002) and the film, *Supersize Me*, by Spurlock (2004) have been instrumental in disclosing the way in which the fast-food industry acts and what the consumer thinks of that industry. Hence, the rise of the Slow Food movement as an alternative. Slow Food is all about real food, regional identity, something that is ethical, natural and honest. The rise of the Slow Food movement has a direct correlation with people changing their diet across all social grades, indicating a growing health consciousness and also a desire to change their ordinary lives to accommodate something that is perceived as incorporating more goodness for their bodies.

Carey (2006) of Tourism Concern notes that sustainable tourism will be a core driver in the future as destinations shape their image. Carey states that, when sustainably developed, tourism can create so many social and economic opportunities for the destination community.

Tourism can be a powerful tool of development, but its potential can also be wasted. Too often tourism enterprises see each other only as competitors, and end up frustrating visitors. Every destination talks about quality and exceeding visitors' expectations, but what is the spark that transforms a destination into something remarkable? It is a destination that has pride and is

passionate about celebrating its heritage, its food, landscapes and its people. Of course, authenticity does not guarantee sustainability, but without the celebration of 'local distinctiveness' it is just 'another resort' Carey (2006).

Authenticity and sustainability go hand in hand where communities build a tourism product which belongs to their community, for example, the Kawaza Village tourism project in central Zambia where tourists can stay in an authentic African village, learn about environmental issues, collect wild honey, and find out about apiculturists (Schlesinger, 2006). Every evening villagers and tourists gather around a campfire, tell stories and dance. The Kawaza tourism project allows tourists, who would normally stay in a nearby safari camp, to 'get out' and meet the real African people. Each tourist makes a minimum donation to the project of \$15 for a day visit or \$45 for an overnight stay. All the money raised are used for a number of community projects, such as the employment of teachers in the local school or jobs for villagers. The village has everything from an entertainment manager to local dance troupes for the tourists. This concept is repeated all over the world, with specialist travel operators such as Explore or Exodus promoting themselves as sustainable tourism operators—where sustainability has become a key driving force in shaping tourism demand.

Sustainability, according to Brass (2006), is authenticity linked to goodness, and exploring one's inner potential is another aspect of authentic-seeking—that of searching for a non-material, authentic and deeper experience. According to research by the Future Foundation (Brass, 2006), an increasing number of people are undertaking activities which incorporate creating something new, e.g. learning new skills or even going back to traditional activities and putting a modern, techno-friendly twist on them. Learning new skills is evident in the rise of activity learning holidays, such as painting or bird watching or attending a book festival to hear a reading by the author himself. Most important of all, holidays have become a means of escaping from everyday life (Fig. 3) or getting in touch with one's true self.

Holidays provide the right environment for these kinds of unmediated experiences; the idea that "it's just me and the mountain" and, of course, for some people, the great outdoors has that strong spiritual dimension that satisfies an inner need. The Future Foundation has, since 1983, been asking the question, 'If you had just one wish, which of these would you choose?' This question was asked in 2005 just after the 7th July London bombings and over 35% of people still considered their greatest wish to be to fulfil themselves, up nearly 20% from 20 years ago.

As we can see in Fig. 4, people seem to be responding to this inner desire in various ways, whether it be experimenting with yoga, climbing a mountain or trying a new sport such as bugging. For others it is simply spirituality or religion.

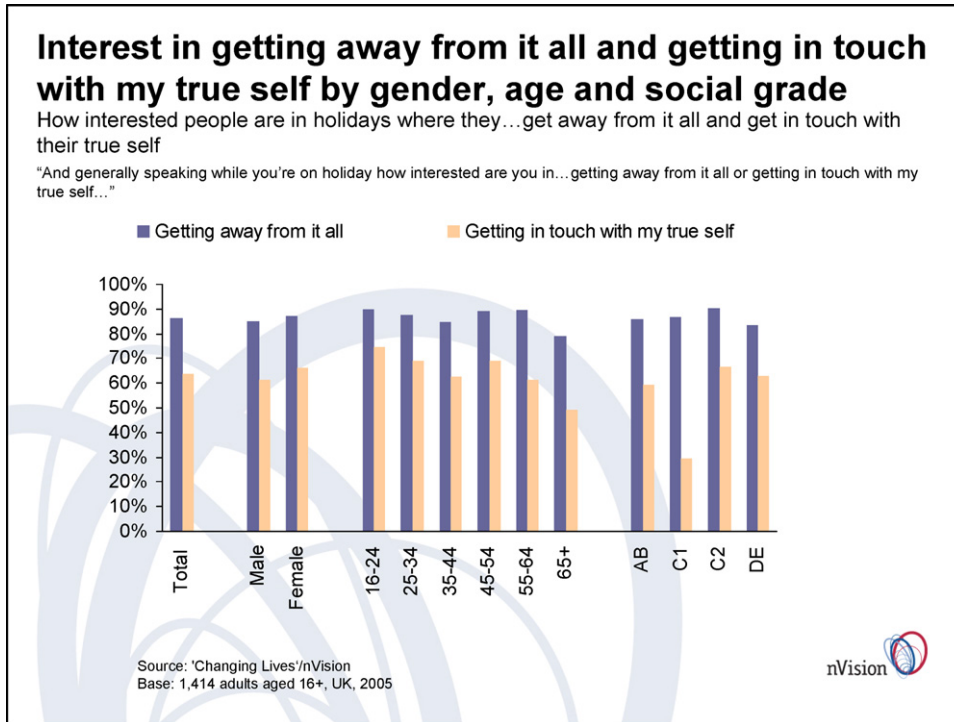


Fig. 3. Getting away from it.

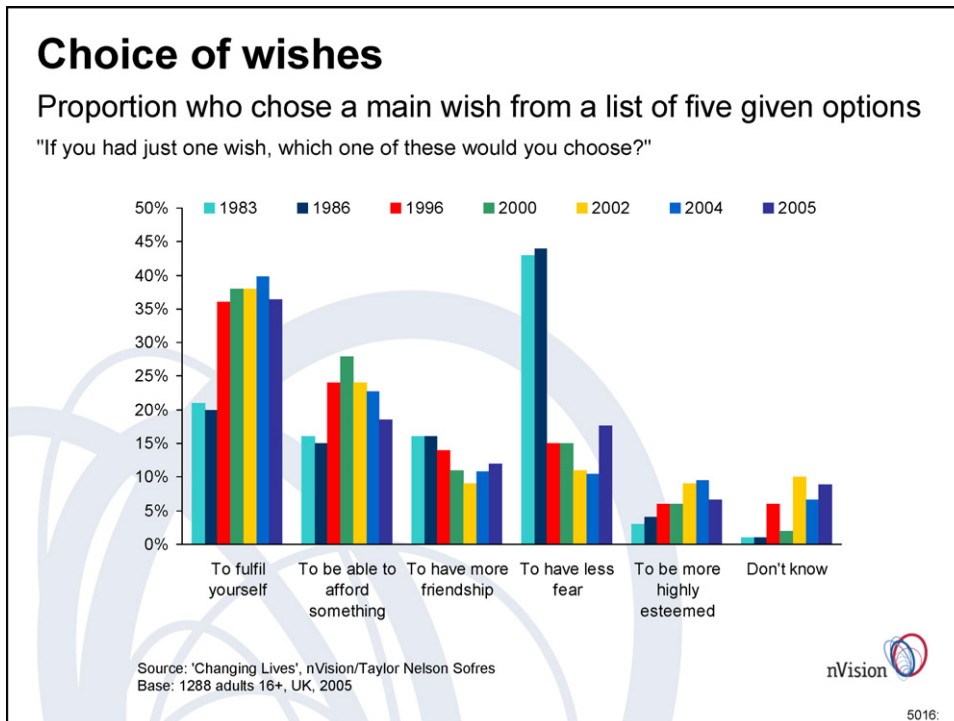


Fig. 4. Choice of wishes.

The desire for spirituality is a growing phenomenon in which people wish their lives to have more of a spiritual content, more of a sense of purpose. Sense of purpose explains this spirituality, in which we search for the opportunity to contribute to society; in tourism terms this

could be a trekking holiday, raising money for cancer research or restoring a dry-stone dyke in the Highlands of Scotland. Hence, as we have already observed, sustainability extends itself into 'volunteering', 'community' and 'ethical consumption'.

This search for a sense of purpose lies in Maslow's hierarchical need for self-actualisation (Maslow & Lowry, 1999), which is associated with American TV's McGraw's, 2004 definition of authenticity as:

The authentic self is the YOU that can be found at absolute core: it's the part of you that is not defined by your job, or your function, or your role. It is the composite of all your unique gifts, skills, abilities, interests, talents, insights and wisdom. It's all your strengths and values that are uniquely yours and need expression, versus what you have been programmed to believe that you are 'supposed to be and do'.

Authenticity at times can be false; there is a paradoxical form of modern *authentic seeking*. So far these manifestations have encompassed the real and unmanipulated tourism experiences; yet, in modern life, reality television is a form of false reality. Reality TV is a quintessential window of authenticity—watching the characters on *Big Brother*, warts and all, in real time and unedited. There is a reality (to a certain extent) and authenticity about this proposition that extends into the scenarios, captured by the *Tizer Experience*. Could this reality be the next expression of authenticity—something based upon past consumption? Watch out for the James Bond Holidays starring Sean Connery, along with flirting classes from Miss Money-penny. Remember, authenticity is a concept that is borrowed, hijacked and owned by many.

6. Concluding remarks—Scottish tourism and authenticity

The trend of authenticity is a close fit with the proposition of Scottish tourism, based upon its brand equity of a human, dramatic and enduring proposition (Yeoman et al., 2005). The cornerstones of authenticity are quintessentially linked to David Boyle's (2004) writing and more. So, to conclude, authenticity should be:

Ethical—An authentic experience should be founded on the principles of community, sustainability and ethical consumption.

Natural—Tourism should be a natural phenomenon which is pure and not tainted nor manufactured. Natural tourism products are those which are quintessentially associated with the destination or region.

Honest—Be honest with your visitors; the tourist industry shouldn't promise something which can't be delivered or produce something tainted by falseness that will spoil the authentic proposition.

Simple—An authentic experience should be simple to understand in which the visitor can see the benefits. The more complicated the experience, the more unbelievable it will be. As the world is full of complications, an authentic experience should be simple, pure and consumed in an inconspicuous manner.

Beautiful—Authentic destinations have a beauty about them, whether this is a magnificent view which creates a

sense or place, or the feeling that experience cannot be copied as it belongs there and only there.

Rooted—Authenticity has some sense of past which is rooted in the destination or community. Scotland is the place of dramatic landscapes whereas Las Vegas is all about gambling, dancing girls and illicit experiences.

Human—A human experience is something that is living and people-focused. This means that the tourist wants human contact which is local and real.

The importance of all of the above is for us to understand how this trend is developing and whether it will last. Some years ago the psychologist Grandpre (2000) forecast that, as the world emptied of reality, we would see hyperactivity, depression and violence. As this analysis shows, this is far from the case. Rather, we are heading towards a vision outlined by Robert Nozick (1989), who said; "In a virtual world, we'll long for reality even more."

This is surely an opportunity for Scotland's tourism industry—especially for those providers who are trying to be authentic and appeal to visitors whilst also undertaking niche marketing. Will it last? It will! As long as technology and virtual life continues to develop at the pace they are, the need for human contact and for traditional activities will increase. As consumers become even more empowered and cynical of fake promises, they will continue to seek out the authentic in their own way.

For Scotland to accurately position itself with an authentic proposition, the tourism industry needs to emphasise the attributes of honesty, natural, ethical, human and real, as Boyle (2004) discusses. This means that Scotland must not patronise visitors with tokenism, for example, when talking about green tourism and sustainability. Destinations must be seen to contribute some genuine benefit to the community and to make their offering personal and human. This means involving the tourist and community groups in promoting the destination and products through innovative methods that are seen as original and un-phoney.

A destination founded on authenticity needs community involvement and a strong brand proposition in which the equity of authenticity is positioned. Tapping into the visitor's desire for an authentic experience means harnessing the consumer's creativity to constantly enhance refresh the experience and the product offering.

If all else fails, consider what the marketing guru Seth Godwin (2005) said: "Authenticity: If you can fake that, the rest will take care of itself".

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