Learning Objectives
Upon completing this chapter you will be able to:

- Understand the importance of attractions for the tourism industry;
- Describe and classify different types of attractions;
- Understand different ownership and management of different types of attractions;
- Appreciate the role of events as attraction.

Introduction
Attractions are a key element of tourism. This chapter explores the diversity of different attractions: man-made, natural, event-related, and activity-based. Some of the aspects of attractions that are important to understand include their ownership and management structure, their target market and the orientation of the attraction. The location of attractions, whether a fixed site or a special event taking place at a one-off venue, helps managers and planners to understand the potential demand for the attraction and the most effective marketing tactics to adopt. Other aspects that managers and planners need to look at include accessibility (not just location but transportation linkages and accessibility to persons with disabilities), the authenticity (if any) of the attraction and the need for interpretive services and signage. Because of the great diversity of attractions, this chapter provides you with a number of different cases studies that introduce different examples of attractions.

Attractions
Visitor attractions are natural locations or features, objects, or man-made constructions that have a special appeal to tourists and local residents. In many
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destinations, specific attractions are performing a motivating role, and are major pull factors for tourists (see Chapter 14) in their destination choice. In fact, they ‘are arguably the most important component in the tourism system. They are the main motivators for tourist trips and are the core of the tourism product. Without attractions there would be no need for other tourism services. Indeed tourism as such would not exist if it were not for attractions’ (Swarbrooke, 2002, p. 3).

While there are various ways to classify attractions, Swarbrooke (2002, p. 5) identifies four main types:

1. Features within the natural environment.
2. Human-made buildings, structures and sites that were designed for a purpose other than attracting visitors, such as religious worship, but which now attract substantial numbers of visitors who use them as leisure amenities.
3. Human-made buildings, structures and sites that are designed to attract visitors and are purpose-built to accommodate their needs, such as theme parks.
4. Special events.

Another frequently used typology is the basic differentiation between attractions that are based on: (i) natural features; (ii) man-made features; (iii) cultural features; or (iv) any combination of these three.

Depending on the nature, size and location of attractions – constructed, natural, or event-based – attendance varies substantially but can reach significant numbers. The following case study explores man-made attractions in North America.

Case Study: Man-made attractions in North America

Table 9.1 provides an overview of the most popular type of man-made attractions in North America. Theme parks, casinos and zoos are among the most visited places, a pattern that can be seen globally, although local conditions and admission fees can influence this somewhat.

Table 9.1. Visits to attractions by North Americans (2003) (Cook et al., 2006).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction type</th>
<th>Attendance (million visits)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme parks and amusement parks</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casinos</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoos and aquaria</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major league baseball</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major league football</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway shows</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nascar racing (Winston Cup)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In contrast to man-made attractions, America’s 58 national parks cover an area of 340,000 km\(^2\) and 18,222 km\(^2\) of oceans, lakes and reservoirs, 19,720 km of trails and 13,700 km of roads. They accommodate approximately ‘only’ 285 million visitors annually; significantly less than theme parks and amusement parks (National Park Service, 2011).

Cooper et al. (1998) classify attractions by ownership, capacity, market or catchment area, permanency and type. However, these classifications appear rather narrow, not taking vital factors into account, such as ownership, multiple stakeholder involvement, access and so on (Leask, 2003). Therefore, Leask (2003) proposes a more comprehensive model, based on the product and resources, but taking other important factors into account as well (Fig. 9.1).

**Fig. 9.1.** Classification of visitor attractions (adapted from Leask, 2003, p. 7).

Weaver and Lawton (2010) also contend that it is not sufficient to simply list and categorize attractions, but demand that managers and owners regularly assess their attraction, using a variety of attraction attributes. These attributes include ownership, orientation, spatial configuration, authenticity, scarcity, status, carrying capacity, accessibility, market and context (Weaver and Lawton, 2010). The difficulty in classifying attractions is exemplified well in the wider range of activities and facilities provided at Highland Safaris in Scotland (see Case Study) where a wide range of factors, including geography, location and land-use make the attraction almost unique in the UK.
Case Study: Highland Safaris, Scotland

Highland Safaris describes itself as Scotland’s Premier Land Rover Safari and Event Management Company. Operating in Highland Perthshire, they have developed a range of innovative activities that enable both large and small groups to engage with the spectacular landscape and experience Scottish culture. The business welcomes individual visitors and caters for private parties and celebrations (adult and child), school groups and the corporate market. Highland Safaris have been awarded various accolades, including Most Enjoyable Visitor Attraction and have been finalists in the VisitScotland Thistle Awards twice.

For the leisure visitor, Highland Safaris’ core product is its Land Rover safaris (Fig. 9.2), from 1½ to 4 hours in duration, exploring the countryside in an off-road vehicle (with the option of a trek on foot as well) on a tour that can encompass a variety of themes such as geology, wildlife, history, seasonal safaris and special interest safaris (e.g. photography).

Fig. 9.2. Land Rover safaris are the core product of the successful Highland Safaris (courtesy of Highland Safaris).

In addition to Land Rover safaris, the company has found a way to generate greater profit from the walking/cycling market. In addition to the usual provision of facilities such as bicycle hire, Highland Safaris offer walking and cycling safaris, where visitors choose from a selection of routes (between 2 and 6 hours in length) and are then ‘dropped at the top’ of the hill of choice along
with route maps, fact sheets, an emergency contact number, a bike repair kit (where appropriate) and an optional picnic hamper. Guided mountain treks are also available. These activities appeal to both regular walkers and cyclists who appreciate the benefit of expert local knowledge and recommendation and also to those who would not normally undertake this type of activity, either because the uphill sections of the route are perceived to be too strenuous, or due to the isolated natural environment.

For visitors who do not want to venture into the wilderness, the Highland Safaris visitor centre has an excellent range of facilities and activities. The café serves a selection of homemade produce (and provides picnics for safaris) and the gift shop stocks a variety of locally made and traditional Scottish items, as well as equipment related to the outdoor activity market, such as binoculars. A professionally designed 1 km mountain bike skills loop is within sight of the visitor centre and is free to use, although donations towards maintenance are appreciated. The site also offers gold and gem panning, a discovery garden, a play area, and Red Deer encounters in the adjacent Deer Park with a safari ranger.

For business clients, Highland Safaris provides an extensive range of corporate and incentive days, team activities and team challenges based largely around Scottish traditions, along with a high quality dining experience and full event management service if required. Some products are an extension of the Land Rover safaris available to leisure visitors, such as Safari Quests, whilst other activities are available only to the corporate market, such as Highland Games challenges. In line with the Highland Safaris’ commitment to sustainability (they have achieved a Gold standard Green Tourism Business Award) and they also offer a team-building Eco Challenge.

Case Study provided by Lucy Robinson, LPR Associates and Colin at Highland Safaris

Ownership and orientation

Various agencies can own and operate visitor attractions, including public entities, voluntary organizations and private individuals or companies (Wanhill, 2003, p. 22):

- Public:
  - Central government;
  - Government agencies;
  - Local authorities;
  - State industries;
- Voluntary organizations:
  - Charitable trusts;
  - Private clubs and associations;
- Private:
  - Individuals and partnerships;
  - Private companies;
  - Corporations.
In many cases, ownership is linked to the type of attraction (orientation). For example, large natural attractions, such as national parks, are mostly publicly owned and operated, and custom-built man-made attractions are commonly privately owned (e.g. theme parks). Voluntary organizations usually have a specific interest in the conservation and preservation of natural, built or intangible heritage, and subsequently either own and operate such attractions, or take stewardship over them.

**Case Study: Tiritiri Matangi: Multi-partnership tourism that provides measurable outcomes for the environment**

Tiritiri Matangi exemplifies how government, community, researchers and commercial operators can work together to provide a sustainable tourist activity within an ecological restoration project. Tiritiri Matangi Island (locally known as Tiri) is a wildlife sanctuary that lies 30 km north of Auckland, New Zealand (Fig. 9.3). The ecologists John Craig and Neil Mitchell based the restoration plan on the principle that the promotion of recreation on conservation land is fundamental to fostering environmental advocacy (Miller et al., 1994). Tiri is one of only two open scientific reserves in New Zealand that visitors can access by private and commercial vessels, and see rare species such as takahe (*Porphyrio mantelli*) that were only rediscovered in 1948. New Zealand’s flora and fauna are particularly vulnerable to exotic mammalian predators as bats are the only native land-based mammals in New Zealand. Public access to the island greatly increases the potential for infestation by exotic species; there have been cases of rats arriving by boat on New Zealand’s other open scientific reserve, Ulva Island (Department of Conservation, 2011).

The interface between scientific research and community involvement has been critical to the success of the restoration project. Since 1977 this 220 ha island has generated over 39 doctoral and master’s theses on subjects ranging from the behavioural ecology and management of rare species to the effect of the proximity of walking tracks to breeding and nesting behaviour of birds (Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi, 2012). Tiri is a model for community involvement in conservation with individuals and groups involved in planting over 280,000 trees from 1984 to 1994, increasing forest cover from 6% to 60% and transforming a farm into a coastal forest.

Tiri is jointly managed by the government, i.e. the Department of Conservation (DoC), and the community, i.e. the Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi (SoTM), through a memorandum of understanding (Rimmer, 2008). Formed in 1988, SoTM works with university-based researchers, concerned Maori tribes and DoC to manage the restoration of a much depleted ecosystem. Since 1993 all exotic mammals have been removed from Tiri. Over 16 species of endangered bird, reptile and insect species have been successfully translocated to Tiri, including the little spotted kiwi (*Apteryx owenii*), stitchbirds (*Notiomystis cincta*), tuatara (*Sphenodon punctatus*) and wetapunga (*Deinacrida heteracantha*). In turn, Tiri birds have been taken to different locations to repopulate or diversify a species’ gene pool (Rimmer, 2008; Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi, 2012).

As of 2012, DoC has only two full-time workers on the island and SoTM has only one full-time worker, highlighting the importance of volunteers and the income generated through tourism activity to the restoration effort.
Tiritiri Matangi fits Higham and Lück’s (2002) criteria of urban ecotourism, and is cited as an example of tourism activity that is responsible and actively contributes to enhancing the environment in which it operates (Orams, 2001). Since 1999, SoTM has provided guided tours, and DoC provides overnight accommodation on the island. 360 Discovery operates the concession to provide a scheduled ferry service from Auckland and provide free transport for guides, shop staff and freight, making it achievable for SoTM to provide guided tours for over 100 people for 5 days a week. Income from the island’s shop and guiding concession are major sources of funding for SoTM, which provides most of the money for infrastructure, research and translocation work on the island (Rimmer, 2008).

Site management is centred around three objectives: building a sustainable ecosystem that can complement ecological restoration work elsewhere; preventing the incursion of disease and exotic fauna and flora; as well as allowing for recreational use of the island. Tiri is a popular boating and diving spot, and many private vessels land on the island. An outbreak of the disease Salmonella typhimurium resulted in the death of 26% of the stitchbird population on Tiri in 2006 and was believed to have resulted from human introduction (Ewen et al., 2007). The visitor management techniques used to protect the island range from overt methods such as restricting the amount of visitors on commercial vessels to a maximum of 170 per day to the provision of information and education. Tourist activity generated by the combined efforts of SoTM,
DoC and 360 Discovery not only results in the active management of those tourists arriving on commercial vessels but also monitoring the recreationists who arrive by private boats.

*Case Study courtesy of Jonathon Spring*
*AIS St Helens*

A further complexity with the ownership of attractions results from the philosophy associated with ownership. Where a facility such as a museum is publicly funded, and the exhibits are on public display, then there is a strong argument that access should be freely available for the public to see these artefacts, yet this may be in conflict with the costs of maintaining and opening a building to the public.

**Spatial configuration**
The shape and size of an attraction are important attributes, demanding different management strategies. National parks, for example, are often vast areas of land requiring very different management approaches than, for example, a small museum. Ownership and legislation are not the only factors influencing these management regimes, but also potential user conflict at boundaries and the infrastructure of the attraction (in the case of a national park, this can include roads, a hiking trail system, huts and campgrounds, and service providers).

**Authenticity**
Depending on the type of attraction, authenticity is a very important and highly debated attribute. Especially cultural attractions vary significantly from very authentic to entirely staged approaches. Even if the actual attraction is the original (i.e. 100% authentic), the surrounding features, background and number of visitors might greatly detract from the feeling of an authentic experience.

**Case Study: Stonehenge World Heritage Site, UK**
The prehistoric English monument of Stonehenge is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the best known attractions in the world, and subsequently attracts large numbers of visitors each year. Of course, the famous circular setting of large stones is authentic, i.e. they are the original stones. However, due to large visitor numbers, site management is faced with enormous challenges. The site was framed by two main roads, which experienced a rapid increase in traffic. The plan to build a tunnel was cancelled in 2007 due to the high cost. Until 1977, visitors were allowed to walk around the stones, and even climb on them. Due to the increasing visitor numbers, and a combination of potential negative impacts on the stones, as well as visitor dissatisfaction due to the unauthentic atmosphere, site management closed off immediate access to the monument, and visitors have the opportunity to enjoy it from a walkway surrounding it. Another example at Stonehenge is two wooden posts, which were erected in the Mesolithic not far from the stones. Today, a car park is in this place, and the former posts are marked by circular white marks in the middle of the car park.
In terms of cultural authenticity, there are many examples where indigenous cultures offer dances and ceremonies for visitors, often at custom built tourist sites. Most of these shows include authentic parts of the traditional dances and ceremonies, but are often customized to the taste of Western tourists (Fig. 9.4).

**Fig. 9.4.** Cultural dance show for tourists in Fiji: The plastic skirt is certainly not authentic (courtesy of Michael Lück).

**Scarcity**

An important factor for the management of an attraction is its scarcity. Unique and rare features commonly attract large numbers of visitors. Such features provide a focal point for the marketing the attraction, and constitute an important pull factor. However, if there are few, if any, alternatives to these specific features, management has very limited options potentially to redirect visitors to neighbouring attractions that do not possess those features. This is particularly true for unique natural or cultural features.

**Case Study: Niagara Falls**

For example Niagara Falls, consisting of the Horseshoe Falls in Canada and the American and Bridal Veil Falls in the USA, has been a major attraction for a long time. A total of almost 30 million tourists visit the falls each year, and put an enormous pressure on the small Canadian town of Niagara.
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Falls (population approximately 83,000). Over the years, a large variety of additional attractions were developed around the falls, such as a marine and amusement park, haunted houses, casinos, an IMAX theatre, a butterfly conservatory and an aviary. While from an economic standpoint the scarcity of the main resource, the falls, provides a steady stream of visitors and thus generates significant economic benefits, managers of the area face challenges with both environmental and social impacts related to the large number of tourists. Since the falls are the main reason for tourists to visit the site and town, there is no option to redirect them to another attraction nearby.

**Status**
The status of an attraction can have similar effects as the scarcity. Weaver and Lawton (2010) differentiate between iconic attractions and secondary attractions. Iconic attractions again can be natural or man-made, such as the Uluru Ayers Rock in Australia (natural), or the Great Wall in China (man-made). While such iconic attractions have the potential to act as major pull factors for tourists, they also bear the risk of stereotyping a destination (Weaver and Lawton, 2010).

**Carrying capacity**
Carrying capacity is an important concept in visitor management. It is an attribute of all attractions, and in many cases the basis for management decisions. Carrying capacity describes the maximum people a given attraction can absorb at any one time, before an unacceptable deterioration of the physical or built environment sets in and visitor satisfaction decreases. It is often divided into physical, social and economic carrying capacity. The concept of carrying capacity is discussed in detail in Chapter 16.

**Accessibility**
Accessibility is an important part of every attraction. Without adequate access, an attraction might suffer from under visitation (and potentially a subsequent lack of economic viability) or from crowding issues (for example, due to traffic jams). Access to attractions can also be limited through laws and regulations. Examples include remote places, such as Antarctica, and restricted conservation areas. Generally speaking, there is an inverse relationship between accessibility of an attraction and its visitor numbers (Fig. 9.5).

**Fig. 9.5.** Visitor access function (adapted from Cooper et al., 1998, p. 297).
Lastly, access can be influenced by affordability. In many countries there is an entry fee for the access to national parks (for example, the USA and South Africa). In order to make access fair and affordable, citizens and residents in South Africa are eligible for a reduced entry fee. Many man-made attractions also charge an access or entry fee, which, depending on the type of attraction, can be quite expensive, and thus regulate access.

Commentary: The debates between access and conservation

1. Religious sites: the contested issues are clear here – a large religious building or site costs money to maintain, it may be both a site of pilgrimage (where religious motivations exist) and a tourist attraction (where no religious interest exists), and it may also be a community facility and place of worship. Often admission fees are charged, but these may presented to visitors as ‘donations’ (with a suggested minimum donation amount), with parallel schemes to recognize local users as exempt from admission fees so they can worship in the building. Often admission fees are presented with interpretation explaining how this income is used to care for the site and to enhance the customer experience. It is clear from review sites that whilst most people are accepting of these admissions policies, many others are not so supportive.

2. Admission fees and secondary spend: in 2001 the UK Government introduced free admission to its museums. This was the reversal of a 1980s policy to encourage national museums to charge admission to reduce the burden of these museums on the public purse. Some museums elected to charge for entry including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Natural History Museum, whilst others, including The National Gallery, continued to offer free entry. When the new policy was introduced the Government agreed to subsidize any lost ticket revenues. The result of this policy, and an increased focus on providing catering and retail facilities within the museums, has led to increased visitor numbers and increased revenues, but there are times when this is to the detriment of managing capacity effectively on the busiest days of the year.

Market
The appeal of an attraction to certain markets can significantly impact its financial viability. For example, theme parks and zoos appeal to a wide spectrum and large numbers of visitors, while an aviation museum attracts a very specialized market and thus generally smaller numbers of visitors (Fig. 9.6). Therefore the marketing activities of different attractions need to be customized to the specific markets they want to attract.

Context
The context of an attraction is characterized by its surroundings, for example the setting, adjacent developments and buildings. The context can greatly hamper the visitor experience, for example through visual or noise pollution, or provide an appropriate setting for an attraction, such as a historic city centre providing the context for a museum about local culture and history.
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**Fig. 9.6.** An aviation museum, such as the SAAF Museum in Port Elizabeth (South Africa), attracts a certain specialized market (courtesy of Michael Lück).

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**Case Study: The Heritage Railway Line**

Heritage railways and their respective locomotives form the backbone of the railway attractions sector, and can be divided into typologies of attractions (Table 9.2):

**Table 9.2.** Typologies of attractions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museum collections</td>
<td>Trains on static display</td>
<td>The National Railway Museum in York (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage railways (steam and diesel, passenger and freight lines)</td>
<td>Restored sections of track used by preservation groups as tourist attractions</td>
<td>The Severn Valley Railway (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tramways and tram museums</td>
<td>Collections of trams and track for running trams</td>
<td>The National Tramway Museum (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway sites</td>
<td>Historic sites with limited track distance but with operational locomotives</td>
<td>The Barrowhill Roundhouse (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private charters</td>
<td>Steam trains (and increasingly diesel trains) operated on mainline routes as tourist experiences</td>
<td>Darjeeling Himalaya Train (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Shakespeare Express (UK)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Continued*
While there are a large number of heritage railways, there are an even greater number of disused railway lines, and these have become a new type of attraction, reopened as cycling and walking routes for a different form of sustainable transport.

### Non-purpose-built attractions

Some visitor attractions are purpose built as an attraction, while others were created for different purposes but evolved into tourist attractions. Examples for the latter include shopping malls (such as West Edmonton Mall in Canada), cathedrals and churches (such as Notre Dame in Paris), or industrial sites, such as mines (see case study) and factories (Table 9.3), modern buildings (such as the Sydney Opera House), superstructures (such as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco), or modes of transport (such as the monorail in Seattle or local buses in Malta; Fig. 9.7). The discussion piece in the case study illustrates the role of shopping and shopping centres in the development of tourist attractions.

### Table 9.2. Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funicular railways</td>
<td>Offering hillside transport between high and low parts of a town</td>
<td>Bridgnorth (UK), Aberystwyth, Wales (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model railway collections and exhibitions</td>
<td>Model railways, designed to recreate scenes or periods in history and taken to shows and exhibitions</td>
<td>The Warley Model Railway Exhibition at The National Exhibition Centre (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage transport as a part of an attraction</td>
<td>Trams and trains used as part of another attraction</td>
<td>Trams at The Black Country Living Museum, narrow-gauge trains in theme parks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 9.3. Examples of leading industrial visitor attractions (‘000s) (Swarbrooke, 2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of company</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Visitors per annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hershey</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coca-Cola</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Drinks</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellogg’s</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swarovski</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>Crystal</td>
<td>650,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadbury</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford Crystal</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinness</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Beer</td>
<td>400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parfumerie Fragonard</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Perfumes</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BNF Sellafield</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Nuclear energy</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenfiddich</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Whisky</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heineken</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Brewing</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Case Study: The Attraction of Shopping

It is almost a given that most tourist activity is inextricably linked to some form of shopping, through food and drink, souvenir purchases or through activity choices. Of course there is a degree of supposition to aligning shopping and tourism because it is difficult to plot retail spending patterns against tourists and non-tourists because of the differing nature of touristic activity. The following points are, therefore, designed to try to put some sort of shape and scope around shopping within a tourism context, defining the types of shopping activity that are tourism related, deduced from a range of previous research (see reference list) into the phenomenon.

1. Shopping as an ancillary function of the visitor attraction (e.g. gift shops) or destination (e.g. ‘bucket and spade’ shops at the seaside).
2. Shopping for travel and tourism products within retail sectors that are, as a result, influenced by seasonality. Examples of this include swimming costumes, tents and travel accessories.
3. Shopping for essentials while on holiday, carried out mainly by those taking self-catering holidays and who need to stock up on cooking provisions and household wares.
4. Shopping as a distinct tourism activity, where the experience is designed as a ‘shopping destination’ and for the most part, therefore, requires participants to travel as a pre-requisite to shopping.
5. Shopping to experience local culture through an engagement with local products, local crafts-people and a desire to purchase something that truly ‘belongs’ to, and is ‘from’ the destination.

Fig. 9.7. Traditional local buses in Malta became a popular tourist attraction in their own right (courtesy of Michael Lück).
There are numerous issues at play in trying to decipher what is happening with tourists when they engage in shopping activity, as Coles (2004: 379) identifies: there are ‘issues such as the spatial, temporal and purchasing behaviour of tourists as shoppers, the type and nature of goods acquired as part of shopping episodes and tourists’ shopping performances’. In highlighting these tourist performances Shields (cf. Coles, 2004: 379) identifies that there is an ‘increasing emphasis in society on the capture and consumption of material goods … often non-essential [in such a way that] shopping has become an integral element in contemporary recreation patterns [with many using] shopping as a way of fulfilling part of their need for leisure because shopping offers enjoyment and even relaxation’. It is crucial to recognize that shopping in this context is discussed as a leisure activity, as part of the tourist experience and as a result is embedded within the experience that tourists have come to expect. There is, therefore, a powerful argument that destinations must seek to:

- Define the ‘local’ product;
- Define the brand for that local product;
- Seek to support traditional and local crafts and producers;
- Define the destination shopping profile (‘quaint’ market towns, ‘modern’ shopping centre);
- Position shopping and retail within marketing material.

To define further the relationship between tourist choice and shopping preferences it is useful to try to understand why people want to shop in the first instance, and more importantly, what relationship exists between the core tourism market for destinations and that markets retail interests. Moscardo (2004: 294) discusses the role that shopping centres play in the development of a destination. These include:

- Shopping satisfaction and service quality;
- Aspects of souvenir purchase;
- Motivations for, and benefits of, shopping;
- Shopping as a tourist activity.

This is of course supported by the impact of retail on local economies, which also reflects the importance of the ‘local’ retail offer. The economic contribution of retail is felt through direct consumer spend and through local employment and quality of life as a result of increasing job opportunities, and the indirect regional investment that is generated through the supply chain and then induced employment opportunities through greater inward investment from logistics, finance and hospitality businesses.

Research suggests that tourists ‘spend approximately one-third of their total tourism expenditures on retail purchases’ (Gratton and Taylor, 1987; Littrell et al., 1994). Research also identified clear links between age and gender and shopping activity, which influences the types of shops that groups will visit, with a traditional family group likely to visit most shops because their mixed retail typologies means they all have different interests. A wide appeal can be achieved, therefore, through a mixed retail offer, as is often seen in branded shopping outlets.

In cities the design of shopping centres has been another focus of research, investigating the relationship between architecture and consumerism. Most modern shopping facilities include in
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their design catering spaces, child-care areas, regularly provision events and entertainment facilities including cinemas and bars, creating a micro-destination within the destination. This is of course to be commended in the context of the extra visitor numbers generated as a result, but often the businesses that populate these microcosms of commerce are required to pay a considerably higher rent than local business may be able to afford, and such a location may not be the right position for traditional retailers. Because many of these centres are full of homologous high-street retailers, which is not by any means a criticism, the 'local' product remains in its traditional location on the high street. It is crucial then to plan how to encourage potential visitors to the traditional retail areas to leave the shopping centres to explore these areas and to purchase goods. This can be achieved through promotional activity, cultural events and other activities that raise the profile of traditional shopping areas.

Then there are the smaller towns. These shopping malls place a huge pressure on traditional shopping centres and market towns, potentially pulling consumers away from these traditional retail environments, with the promise of easy parking, easy access, long opening hours and shelter from inclement weather. The threat here is actually two-fold. The first issue is the threat from the designer shopping environment, which has been discussed, and the other comes from the impact of out-of-town retail parks which have replaced the traditional butcher, baker and grocer of the traditional market town. In this situation it is even more important to build upon local identity and products, and to consider the wider shopping environment. The market town needs to compete, not just on the retail offer, but on the quality of the experience of the shopper. This means then, that some consideration must be given to the things out-of-town shopping areas and retail centres do well:

- Places to shelter from the rain;
- Facilities for families;
- A good quality retail offer;
- Clean toilets;
- A good catering offer;
- Free parking;
- Secure parking.

Retail as a leisure activity is more susceptible to external influences than other sectors of the tourism economy, particularly economic impacts. Previous research points towards the notion that people preserve some of their available money to ensure that they can still enjoy leisure activities even during an economic downturn. When people have less money to spend they may still visit shopping destinations, but they may not spend so much money. While this means that car parks and services still generate income, managers must consider the longer term impacts that a decline in retail can induce, such as closed down and disused shops, which detract from the image of the destination. As a result marketing and promotion become important during lean times when less disposable income is available, and a destination with a wide retail offer is likely to compete well in a more competitive market place.

*Anbridged excerpt from Robinson (2009b)*
Case Study: Mining for tourists. An example of industrial heritage tourism development in Waihi, New Zealand

Industrial heritage attractions are deeply connected to their host communities, especially where geological resources were the magnet for human settlement. Most local inhabitants have some involvement in the associated industry and many rely on it for their livelihoods. When the natural resources are exhausted or the industry is no longer competitive, communities often turn to their industrial heritage, seeking salvation through tourism.

Edwards and Llurdes de Coit (1996) and Swarbrooke (2002) have identified typologies of industrial heritage attractions associated with the extractive industries. Waihi, a gold-mining town on New Zealand’s North Island, illustrates how one community’s inter-related heritage assets can together produce a multi-faceted industry-based destination, attracting visitors and encouraging longer stays (see Table 9.4).

Table 9.4. A typology of industrial heritage attractions associated with the mining and the extractive industries (Swarbrooke, 2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural</th>
<th>Human-made, not originally designed primarily for visitation</th>
<th>Human-made and purpose-built for visitation</th>
<th>Special events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caves</td>
<td>Mines</td>
<td>Mining Theme Parks</td>
<td>Mining festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rockfaces</td>
<td>Quarries</td>
<td>Mining Museums</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landforms</td>
<td>Mining railways</td>
<td>Mining Open Air Museums</td>
<td>Mining commemorations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mining communities</td>
<td>Mining Museums</td>
<td>Mining anniversaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mining ghost towns/abandoned mining settlements</td>
<td>Mining Interpretation centres</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mining routes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those types shaded in bold are regularly represented in the network of heritage experiences centred on Waihi.

In 2004 Waihi (population 4500 in the 2006 census) pro-actively addressed its dependence on a single industry. Fluctuating gold prices and increased extraction costs created concerns about the main goldmine’s viability. The community’s response to economic uncertainty embraced its industrial heritage, making the large opencast mine in the town centre a focus and catalyst for many visitor activities (Fig. 9.8). The town invested funds to move the historic pumping-engine
Tourism

house and replicate a poppet head, developing landmarks in the town centre just visible from State Highway 2 (designated the ‘Pacific Highway’) as it skirts through Waihi taking travellers between Auckland and Tauranga.

**Fig. 9.8.** The Martha Mine, the deep open-cast goldmine, still operates right in the heart of Waihi town. It features prominently on the local attractions menu, with a popular perimeter walkway incorporating interpretive panels and examples of large scale mining engineering equipment. It is one of the stops on the regular industrial heritage mini-bus tours (courtesy of Jane Legget).

Extending the theme, the town installed interpretive panels, street furniture, bronze sculptures and banners celebrating gold-mining heritage. It manages a Gold-Mining Discovery and Information Centre (Fig. 9.9), offering tours of the operational goldmines and promoting abandoned gold-mining sites in the scenic Karangahake Gorge, linked by a heritage railway and walking trails incorporating early mining tunnels. An annual festival, GoldFest!, a mini-bus tour and a perimeter walkway around the opencast Martha goldmine (with annual Pit Rim Fun Run) are all recent ventures consolidating Waihi’s re-branding as ‘New Zealand’s Heart of Gold’.

The original plan, ‘Vision Waihi’ (2004), achieved all this by assessing potential contributions and needs of different stakeholders, including them in discussions to refocus the town’s identity. The stakeholders ranged from local ratepayers, the mining company, business associations and assorted community groups. This network ultimately included the local museum, which had initially sidelined itself, believing its role as expert supplier of local history was being undermined. The museum’s rich archival collections hold records of the early mining companies, important sources of information for visiting researchers, family historians and other genealogists. Its displays of objects and models present both mining and Waihi’s social life, and it hosts temporary exhibitions by local artists and community events. A change
of committee members turned the museum into an enthusiastic partner, now supporting the community initiative and renaming itself as Waihi Gold-Mining Museum.

Like the canary in a coal mine, constructive relationships and openness to new ideas are indicators of a healthy atmosphere for community tourism initiatives. Sharing and respecting expertise, local knowledge, creative ideas and business advice while valuing equally the heritage resources and contemporary mining operations have provided the oxygen for Waihi’s revitalization as an industrial heritage destination (Legget, 2011).

Case Study provided by Jane Legget
AUT University

Commentary: Debating the Management of Heritage Attractions

World Heritage

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) identifies sites that are of international significance. According to UNESCO (2010), they "seek to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world..."
considered to be of outstanding value to humanity’. However, the act of demarcating a site as internationally significant results in a rapid increase in its popularity as a tourist destination. Current research suggests that many World Heritage Sites are failing to manage their site or the consequential economic and social sustainability in a consistent way, with some sites considered to be at risk and others failing to deliver an effective legacy within host communities. UNESCO (1972) stated that: ‘it would be a mistake to assume that the World Heritage List is simply an ever-expanding tourist’s guide to hundreds of wonders in the modern world’, but in reality World Heritage Sites and ‘wonders’ have become just that – ‘must see’ symbolic attractions in cultural tours, itineraries, tour operator and tourist board marketing, with World Heritage Site award the equivalent of a Michelin Guide 3-star rating (Evans, 2004, p. 316).

Managing Access
Public access can also mean very different things, and may refer to simply being able to see a historic site through to opportunities for education and active involvement in conservation, and there are relationships that exist between heritage and volunteering, and the growth of volunteering as part of the serious leisure movement.

Access versus Conservation
There are many research issues that revolve around these management challenges. Consider first the ‘Do Not Touch’ sign. Well-intentioned though it is, it is also an unfriendly sign, a negative message that suits the needs of conservators worried about historic fabrics, but attracts the antipathy of front-facing staff keen to provide a visitor welcome. Of course there are compromises – the provision of extra seating for visitors (often though in marked contracts to a historic interior) or more sensitive touches such as placing items on the chairs (a spiky teasel usually puts off most of those wishing to sit down). Other attractions have taken the opposite approach and allow visitors to sit and touch everything within reach, placing items for preservation beyond arm’s reach with ropes, barriers and covers.

Edutainment
In recent years the huge growth in technologies such as podcasting, supported by broadening access to high speed Internet, has meant that heritage can be interpreted in many different ways to meet the needs of various audiences. The formalization of education from the 1980s onwards also provided heritage attractions with specific educational themes that they could use and adapt to meet the needs of school visits. Many attractions now offer outreach schemes, which may include taking handling collections into schools and offering workshop days and drama performances.

Ownership
The question of ‘whose heritage is it?’ is commonly asked, and the altruistic view is that heritage is a shared resource that belongs to the widest community who can benefit from it. According to UNESCO (2010), ‘World Heritage Sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located’. It could be argued, therefore, that access should be free of charge to visit, and frequently is in the public sector. However, there is a growing mass of heritage-related attractions and many would collapse within months without the correct care and attention, all of which comes at a cost. With the public sector insisting heritage is managed and maintained, many heritage attractions have to charge admission fees and act like businesses in order to pay for
maintenance of attractions and, equally important, the interpretation, research and presentation of those attractions. An admission charge is not just an income generation tool, but a visitor management tool. The fragile nature of many historic buildings would make it impossible to allow unlimited admission and a charge goes some way to limiting visitor numbers. In instances where even this is not enough of a deterrent, timed and pre-booked ticket systems may also be used.

Commentary courtesy of Carol Southall and Peter Robinson (abridged from Southall and Robinson, 2011)

The Countryside as an Attraction

Rural tourism is an interesting case, and is discussed in more detail in Chapter 10 as it has evolved essentially as a result of improved accessibility, and as a result of the changing nature of the countryside. There is no escaping the fact that the landscape has been shaped and sculpted by those who have worked it, together with natural climatic changes and this has led to sites becoming popular for a range of outdoor activities, from sightseeing to walking, cycling, mountain biking and a host of other activities. The old slate quarry in Wales (Fig. 9.10) has become a popular adventure tourist destination for a host of activities, from building sandcastles on the beach to coasteering, the activity seen in the picture.

Fig. 9.10. Coasteering at The Blue Lagoon at Aberreidy (courtesy of Peter Robinson).
Tourism

Farrell and Russell (2011) note that in Europe, the countryside is comprised of rural areas that have been transformed extensively by human activities associated with the land. Elsewhere, the countryside is distinct from wilderness, which may not have seen such levels of human influence.

Further common acts of countryside modification include the planting of forestry and hedgerows and the building of paths, roads, bridges, dams and walls. These activities have created a rural landscape that is neither wild nor urban, and which is appreciated for its picturesque scenery. Such a landscape of course has its own social history and tradition and this is also often preserved in museums and explained through visitor centre interpretation, creating centres for tourist activity to emanate from, whether that happens to be a honey pot village in a national park, or a visitor centre in a forested area, such as the example shown in Fig. 9.11, where the children’s play area looks out over the Queen Elizabeth II Forest Park in Scotland, owned and run by the Forestry Commission, a public sector body that works with a range of stakeholders in its woodland to provide facilities for walkers, cyclists (including advanced level mountain-biking courses), horse riding and a host of other leisure and family activities.

**Fig. 9.11.** The Queen Elizabeth II Forest Park (courtesy of Peter Robinson).

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**In Search of the Unusual**

While most people know of the main attractions to visit in a particular place, there are a considerable number of smaller, less well known, less explored attractions, hidden away above shops, off the tourist
trail and perhaps lacking some marketing effort. There are many travel books dedicated to these unique and hard to find places, and they deserve mention in this book because often they are examples of entrepreneurship, or the passion of a group of like-minded conservationists wanting to save their local heritage, and they exemplify a rather different tourist experience. UK examples include The Cumberland Pencil Museum (the museum of long-established Cumbrian firm who produce Derwent pencils), The Puzzling Place (a private collection of optical illusions above a shop in Cumbria), The Falkirk Wheel built to support the regeneration of the canal network in south-east Scotland (see Fig. 6.2), Green Wood Forest Park (an environment friendly theme park with a people-powered rollercoaster in Wales) and Diggerland, where children and adults can drive and play games with full size plant equipment (Fig. 9.12).

**Fig. 9.12a & b.** Unusual attractions at Greenwood Forest Park (courtesy of Peter Robinson).
Events as Attractions

Events serve many purposes including celebration, entertainment of locals and provision of recreational activity in and out of season for visitors. They help promote a destination and attract tourism, which leads to economic prosperity and development including regeneration. Media coverage generated by events can contribute towards creating a positive destination image in the tourism marketplace. Events and festivals are seen as a tool for raising awareness and as a catalyst in promoting a destination and attracting tourists. The image of a destination can be enhanced or damaged by the success or failure of a festival or event (Gelder and Robinson, 2011).

MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events) are also an important sub-sector of visitor attractions. All four categories draw large numbers of delegates and visitors; however, in the context of this volume meetings, incentives and conferences are seen as part of business travel, and subsequently not discussed any further, except to recognize that this activity can stimulate future inward investment as business people see the attractions of a destination while travelling on business or to attend a conference, exhibition or incentive, and then return to establish business operations there. They can also become unpaid ‘ambassadors’ for a destination by communicating to colleagues and others their positive impressions and favourable experiences about a particular destination.

Non-business events can be subdivided into festivals, tournaments and other events (Table 9.5). Most events and festivals have initially been designed to cater for a local or regional market. However, many such events have grown into larger scale events and attract national and international markets. According to Morgan and Pritchard (2004) it is difficult to visit a major city without being confronted by an impressive list of sport and cultural events that compete to capture the attention of tourists.

Table 9.5. Typologies of events (Godfrey and Clarke, 2000, p. 68).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Festivals  | Music  
Jazz, folk, country, brass, classical, popular, local  
Drama, theatre  
Dance  
Classical ballet, contemporary, national, folk  
Food and wine  
Literature and poetry |
| Tournaments | Sports  
Local, regional, national, international  
Athletics  
Racing  
Horses, dogs, cars, motorbikes |
| Other      | Re-enactments  
National days |

Continued
CHAPTER 9: Visitor Attractions

Events are especially important in the context of the legacy, or longer term impacts, after the event. These can relate to raising awareness, community building, improved image and enhanced local economic activity. Subsequently, many of the successful events have become regular occurrences, and created a vital link between tourists, businesses and local residents. Where these occur in a specific destination each year they are defined as Hallmark Events.

In addition to image and income generation, mega-events, such as the Olympic Games and sports world cups, also offer a unique opportunity to improve local infrastructure. Governmental funding helps host cities to upgrade their roads and public transport, as successfully shown in the case of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. Billions of dollars have been invested in improvements of the infrastructure, and thus in increasing the quality of life for local residents. The Olympic Village, built in a decayed neighbourhood, left new apartments after the games.

Case Study: The Viaduct Harbour in Auckland, New Zealand

An excellent example for a city’s opportunity to revitalize areas is the oldest sporting trophy, the America’s Cup, which was hosted twice in Auckland, New Zealand (2000 and 2003). Right in the city centre, the previously underutilized Viaduct Harbour was redeveloped for the Cup, in order to host the syndicates with their yachts and equipment, but also for visiting vessels and spectators.

Table 9.5. Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic celebrations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carnivals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodeos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parades</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts and craft fairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural shows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower shows</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auctions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antique fairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious pilgrimage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pet shows and contests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing contests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air shows and tattoos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military displays</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo exhibitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrity visits</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This large-scale project cost NZ$60 million (US$49.9 million), and was undertaken in the 3 years’ preceding the 2000 America’s Cup. More than 10 years after the first event, the Cup Village is still very much alive with many restaurants, cafés, bars, hotels and recreational facilities. Many marine-based tour operators have sales stands and depart from jetties in the Viaduct (Orams, 2007). Following this success, Auckland again extended the developed area to the adjacent Wynyard Quarter. The new Wynyard Quarter boasts the new 6000 m² Viaduct Events Centre (Fig. 9.13), ten new eateries and bars, a viewing platform, and even reintroduced 1920 heritage trams in a small loop, in preparation for the Rugby World Cup, which New Zealand hosted in September and October 2011. The Wynyard Quarter connects the Viaduct Harbour with the existing large Westhaven Marina, and the Auckland Fish Market. Tourists and residents alike can now enjoy a coherent waterfront development, with commercial functions (working harbour, ferry port, tour operators, hospitality businesses) and recreational facilities (park, seating, bars and restaurants, marina) (Waterfront Auckland, 2011).

**Fig. 9.13.** The new 6000 m² Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland’s Wynyard Quarter (courtesy of Michael Lück).

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**Experience and Interpretation at Visitor Attractions**

The Visitor Journey is a model that offers an explanation of the ways in which visitors experience an attraction.

**The visitor journey**

The journey starts before the visit is made, at the point when the tourist first finds out about and decides to visit the attraction. At this stage marketing materials are most important to sell the offer at the attraction to consumers and to influence their decision to make a visit. The journey then
continues on arrival at the attraction, with first impressions being created by the initial experience of visitor services (car parking, signage) and front-line staff. The next stage of the journey involves visitor orientation and ticket buying (unless these have been bought online in advance), which is a two-fold process. The visitor needs to decide what to do, and when to experience the core product (the attraction itself), the secondary product (any additional activities and features) and the augmented products (retail and catering facilities). The organization needs to use this opportunity to ensure that the visitor is fully aware of everything there is to see and do, and to encourage secondary spend with guide books, maps and children’s activities. Shackley (2001, p. 21) notes that ‘Once the visitor has arrived at the site of his or her choice the nature of the experience is also affected by the availability of suitable visitor services, which may include interpretation, transport, parking, accommodation, catering, signage, guiding and merchandising, as well as by the attitude of site staff and managers.

The visitor journey continues through all aspects of the visitor experience and is concluded once the visitor has returned home and has reflected on their experience. For the attraction a key stage in the final part of the journey is the focus on encouraging repeat visits and offering a final opportunity to encourage additional spend if there are opportunities to secure future visits through membership schemes or special events.

Visitor interpretation

At all stages of the visitor experience it is essential that attractions provide information. Depending on the type of attraction, this may be information about the attraction itself, information about activities or educational and historical information that forms a part of the visitor experience. Goulding (2000) critiques interpretation and suggests that it is symptomatic of a dumbed-down approach to the visitor experience, although it could be argued that to engage most visitors, who are not specialists in the subject of the attraction, that this is to some extent necessary to make the experience accessible and engaging:

Since the 1960s there has been a dramatic growth in the number of museums and heritage attractions opening in this country … However the merging of the boundaries between what were once considered to be separate and distinct realms, essentially leisure and culture, precipitated an ongoing and controversial debate. Tiersten (1993) proposes that the private spheres of leisure and consumption have been segregated to the spheres of capitalist production. They constitute a culture industry which substitutes escapist commodified leisure for authentic experiences and by doing so have fostered conformity, passivity and political indifference among participants turned spectators. This is seen largely as a consequence of the way in which history, as interpreted in commercially driven museums, has become sanitised, entertaining and inauthentic.

Visitor interpretation can involve various techniques, such as signs and plates (Fig 9.14a, b), audio tours (Fig. 9.14c), video screenings, and personal interpretation provided by a tour guide (Fig. 9.14d).

There are many reasons that interpretation is important, and the case study of The National Trust provides examples of the different types of interpretation required given the breadth of sites and facilities owned and cared for by The Trust.
Case Study: The National Trust

From humble beginnings at the end of the 19th century the National Trust has grown to be a leading authority on conservation and today cares for over 300 houses, 250 gardens, 49 industrial sites, 61 pubs and inns, over 250,000 ha of countryside and over 700 miles of coastline, all supported by 4 million members, 43,000 volunteers, 600,000 school children, 62 million of visitors, retail operations and events, legacies, grants, donations and gifts (The National Trust, 2012).

The story starts in 1884 when Octavia Hill, keen to preserve the 17th-century garden at Sayes Court, contacted her friend Robert Hunter to ascertain if there was a way to preserve a historic...
property. There was no such organization at the time, but he suggested the creation of a company to act for ‘the protection of the public interests in the open spaces of the country’. Ten years later The National Trust was created and in 1896 acquired its first property, Alfriston Clergy House for £10. In 1899 the Trust acquired 2 acres of Wicken Fen, the Trust’s first countryside property and nature reserve. In 1907 an Act of Parliament allowed the Trust to protect properties in perpetuity for the enjoyment of the nation. Key to the Act was the notion that all property would be declared inalienable, i.e. it could never be sold or mortgaged and in 1937 a second Act was passed in Parliament (creating the Country Houses Scheme), which allowed the Trust to accept the gift of historic properties tax free. In return the donor family would be able to live rent free in a flat in their property whilst the Trust provided the care and maintenance required.

After the World Wars many owners of grand houses could not afford to maintain them, and to compound the problem many country houses were taken over during World War II for military use or for use as schools. As a consequence during the 1950s and 1960s it is estimated that as many as two major country houses were demolished every week, and others were converted into office facilities, religious retreats and schools. The Trust was inundated with requests and potential donations, and had the task of deciding which properties were sufficiently architecturally or historically valuable to justify their acquisition.

In 1965 the Trust set up Enterprise Neptune to focus on the acquisition of coastal property where it may have been at risk. In 1967 the first Working Holidays were held where volunteers stay in basic accommodation and work on building walls, restoring fencing and other estate management jobs. There was, however, at this time concern outside and inside the Trust that the organization had become too elitist, and too focused on grand country houses. An internal review took place and the Trust changed much of its modus operandi.

In 1970 the Trust started to sell souvenirs to its customers, thus creating a new income stream, which eventually came under the management of National Trust Enterprises, the part of the organization responsible for managing shops and restaurants. Over the next 30 years retail and catering developed, events became a key part of both income generation and visitor interpretation and the Trust has continued to focus on engaging a wider audience for its properties.

In recent times there have been properties that have contributed much to challenge, influence and change the way the Trust manages its properties. In 1984 the Trust acquired Calke Abbey in Derbyshire, a unique property in a secluded rural location, where the family had, since the 1880s, closed off parts of the house as they could no longer afford to maintain them (Fig. 9.15). With a vast estate across three counties the Trust was able to take on the project of restoration whilst relying on the farmland to provide much of the income needed. In many instances the Trust relies on a financial endowment when they acquire a property in order to invest in repairs and restoration. Much publicity surrounded Calke, a property that told the tale of the decline of the Country House because its reclusive owners rarely allowed anyone to visit the estate. Calke’s restoration says much about the development of The National Trust as an organization, for the Trust decided not to restore the property to its former grandeur, but to present it ‘as found’. The 4-year restoration project strived to maintain a feeling of abandonment and decay, whilst making the property structurally sound. The fragile nature of the contents provides a
management challenge, so at busy times only limited numbers of visitors are allowed into the property at any one time and effective interpretation is essential to explain the rationale behind this unique approach to preservation.

**Fig. 9.15.** Calke Abbey in Derbyshire (courtesy of Peter Robinson).

Other acquisitions that challenged the Trust’s philosophies included 2 Willow Road, a 1938 modernist property, which forced the Trust to consider not the architectural qualities of the property, but the significance of the historic value of the architecture. In 1995 the Trust acquired Orford Ness, a shingle spit on the east coast, which had been a military site used for the testing of nuclear trigger bombs and the development of radar. This unique habitat, valuable for its wildlife resources, left the Trust with a series of defunct weather-worn and eroded military buildings. Today some of these house interpretation, but others will be allowed to fall victim to nature and weather, a sensitive and naturalistic approach to management. Orford Ness is accessible only by boat and visitor numbers are controlled carefully.

The unique Victorian property of Tyntesfield was saved by the Trust in 2002, and is presented as an untouched relic of Victorian England, and the Trust provided training opportunities for those interested in developing conservation skills. Much work has been carried out in full public view. In the last two decades the Trust has also acquired and restored historic back-to-back properties.
in Birmingham in partnership with the Birmingham Conservation Trust, and also preserved The Workhouse at Southwell, both properties bringing more tenable, applicable and socio-culturally accessible aspects of history and preservation to the fore, to engender wider participation.

(Waterson, 1999; Robinson, 2008b)

Similar organizations to The National Trust in the UK include:

- English Heritage, a governmental advisory body, responsible for opening properties to the public, but funded through membership and the public sector. English Heritage is also responsible for listing buildings, national archives and grants for owners of historic properties.
- The Historic Houses Association is a further potential competitor, but unlike either The National Trust or English Heritage it is a group of privately owned properties. It has a public membership, which enjoys free admission to the privately owned properties, but is not a formal organization with consistent branding and marketing.
- In Scotland there is a separate National Trust for Scotland, which was set up in 1931, since which time similar organizations have been developed across the Commonwealth. There are National Trusts in Malta, Guernsey, Australia, New Zealand and Canada amongst others. In the USA, aware of the popularity of English history, the Trust works with The Royal Oak Foundation.

**The Tourist Information Centre**

The Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is the starting point for many travellers as they arrive at a destination. Variously referred to as Visitor Information Centres, Welcome Centres and Tourist Offices, they are a source of information, room booking services and usually a good place to pick up information on the many other attractions on offer in the destination. Historically the TIC has often been funded by the public sector, but the changing structure of destinations and the creation of more commercially focused destination management organizations has led to a shift in the way that TICs operate. Indeed many TICs were closed, often leaving only a flagship destination focused TIC as a ‘shopfront’ for the respective destination, and increasingly operated on a commercial basis. However, because the TIC is a shopfront for the destination, it can also provide an additional function, as a visitor centre, a model that is becoming increasingly common. In many national parks TICs are also visitor centres, offering interpretation, films, interactive exhibits and even hosting events, alongside the traditional TIC functions.

**Case Study: Attract and Disperse**

The Peak District National Park is the UK’s most visited national park. As a destination it is promoted by the destination management organization ‘Visit Peak District and Derbyshire’ and this name exemplifies perfectly the attract-and-disperse model. Visitors are attracted to a region by the core brand, in this case, The Peak District. Once there, they find out about the wider area, pick up
information from the TIC and plan their trip in more detail. This strategy removes the TIC from playing any role in initial decision making, so the DMO’s website must work effectively. Such DMO websites are now essential tools for destination marketing, offering information, interactive and online booking services. However, even these websites rely on the potential visitor knowing roughly where they want to visit, placing the emphasis back on the brand name, and it has been suggested that by the time visitors go to the destination website, they have already decided to visit.

However, VisitBritain also urge caution, noting that:

*many feel there will be a backlash against technology … particularly true with tourism where there is a real need to welcome people into a destination, there are also concerns that the industry itself has become a less human environment: computer-based, not people-based, which is perhaps a change for the worse. As we enter more new and unusual markets for Britain, there may be a need for some return to the days when relationships meant more than responding to an email, and whilst that does not mean there should be no investment in technology, it does serve to emphasise the importance of the Tourist Information Centre to address, as the research suggests, the fact that ‘there would always be a need for specialist knowledge and advice, regardless of the information available on the Internet.*

This case study highlights the importance of the TIC in providing highly specialized information about the destination, and as a friendly face, someone who represents the destination and can be there to help travellers unfamiliar with the region.

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**Commentary: Contemporary Issues for the TIC**

In 2008 a group of TIC and Visitor Centre managers attended a training course in Wales to identify ways to enhance the customer experience and improve the revenue generation within the TICs. A survey carried out at the time revealed the following areas of concern. Numbers are provided with each of the responses to clarify the response rates from 25 managers.

- Reduction in public sector budgets for discretionary services (13%);
- Staff training and retention (52%);
- Recession and inflation (44%);
- Poor weather, leading to a reduction in visitor numbers (44%);
- Competitors and market saturation (32%);
- Quality standards (20%);
- Changes in technology (16%);
- Need to meet changing and increasing visitor expectations (16%);
- Working together to reduce economies of scale, share marketing, share data for benchmarking (16%);
- Need to retain and increase visitor numbers (12%);
• Development of facilities to improve capacity facilities, reduce queuing, keep fresh, modern and up-to-date (8%);
• Need to manage space to maximize sales and information (8%);
• Capital funding to improve facilities (8%).
Other issues that were highlighted include: planning regulations, insurance, blame culture, signage, admission fees, sustainability, maintaining income, outdated resources, encouraging repeat visits, making people stay longer and spend more, and balancing the needs of visitors with those of the local community.

Commentary provided courtesy of LPR Associates (Tourism and Events Consultants)

The primary challenge for any welcome service, wherever it is located, is simple: it may be easy to identify how much money is made from ticket and room booking commissions, from souvenir sales and events, but it is much harder to ascertain with any degree of certainty the economic impact created by the TIC, and to prove this when looking at regional tourism funding and value for money.
Chapter Review

Attractions are the very heart of a tourism trip in the sense that they are often key activities or reasons for someone to make a trip. Even if a trip is being made for other purposes, such as visiting family or friends, visiting attractions is often part of the trip. There are numerous ways to classify attractions, such as theme or type of attraction (sport, cultural, heritage), ownership (public, voluntary, or private), seasonal versus year-round, event-based versus built-facility versus natural features. The primary purpose of these classification systems is to help provide a sense of order and understanding into the vast array of attractions.

The type of attraction strongly influences its operations. Museums and heritage attractions, as well as natural attractions such as national parks, usually emphasize preservation and authenticity; theme parks are operated in a way to entertain families and encourage repeat visits. Managers need to have a clear understanding of the objectives of the attraction they manage as well as the expectations of their visitors.

Festivals, events (including special events, concerts, sports events) and conventions (a special class of attraction with their own management challenges) represent a growing sector within the larger tourism sector.

Questions and Activities

1. Consider your most recent holiday. Think about the attractions that you visited. What types of attractions were they and why did you visit them?
2. Consider a tourist destination you know well. What types of attraction or groups of attractions does it feature?
3. Choose a heritage or natural attraction you know. Discuss the relative balance of promoting the attraction as a place to visit and enjoy, versus its role in preservation of nature or heritage.
4. What types of tourism events are offered in your community, including performances, sports and festivals?

Further Reading


Author Queries:

[AU 1]: Not in References