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Keywords

portrayal, aboriginal, spiritual, identity, tourism, advertising, creating, image, extraordinary, reality, mere, confusion

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The Portrayal of Aboriginal Spiritual Identity in Tourism Advertising: Creating an Image of Extraordinary Reality or Mere Confusion?

Abstract

This paper considers how Aboriginal identity and spirituality are appropriated to construct national identity for an Australian tourism advertising campaign, and proposes a research agenda to investigate whether incongruity, based on consumers' prior knowledge of Indigenous Australians' real everyday identity, might reduce advertising effectiveness.

Introduction

A key element of a successful brand strategy is the communication of a clear and consistent positioning of the brand; repositioning of a brand requires care. In national tourism advertising campaigns, facets of nation state identity are used to portray an image of an *extraordinary world* (Hummon, 1988), where the ordinary rituals of home and work can be replaced by an inverted social ritual of freedom and play. Elements of the *desired identity* (van Rekom, 1997) of the nation are used to construct a favourable nation-destination brand image for the consumer, differentiating one destination from others, imbuing it with some advantage over, and building preference among, competing destination brands. To portray the paradise that is the extraordinary tourist world, various elements of national identity might be employed, including ethnicity, heritage, lifestyle, or environment, such as 'sun, sand, and sex'. In multi-cultural nations, the social capacity building benefits of cultural diversity might be celebrated, or indigenous culture may be promoted to convey the core character of the destination and portray the desired destination identity. In the latter, national identity may be contested, creating confusion for advertising audiences.

The most recent national tourism advertising campaign for Australia, attempting to leverage off the international reach of the Baz Luhrmann-directed movie, *Australia*, is an example of a contested national identity portrayal. The potential success of this campaign might be considered by examining how Indigenous Australian spirituality is appropriated to create an *extraordinary world*. The portrayal of Indigenous identity elements in national tourism destination advertising may prove counter-productive, leading to reduced persuasiveness, when that which is celebrated in advertising communications is perceived as an embarrassing stain of national identity in reality. The purpose of this paper is to propose a study to examine how incongruity between the advertised desired national identity and prior-held nation-brand beliefs might influence the success of such an advertising approach. The next section reviews tourism and national identity literature. The identity of Indigenous Australians, in relation to the larger nation identity, is considered. A discussion of Australia's tourism destination advertising, including the current campaign, follows. Finally, a research study is proposed and discussed.

Tourism and National Identity

Tourism is seen as a source of economic stimulus and a point of coordination for national identity and culture (Craik, 2001). Nation has been defined as an imagined political community, because "members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (Anderson, 1983, p. 15), and a "named

human population” sharing territory, economy, history, culture, rights, and responsibilities (Smith, 1991, p. 14). National identity might be expected to reflect this notion of shared imagery, but the extent to which nations are in reality made up of one community with a shared imagery is questionable. *Old-world* nations are often communities of different ethnic groups, many of which have become increasingly multi-cultural. *New-world* nations, like the countries of North and South America, South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia, have typically become multi-cultural as a result of colonialism, and subsequent immigration flows, where an indigenous population, variously, occupies a marginalised space and identity in the modern nation. For these indigenous communities, the imagery of one nation’s identity may be far from a shared one.

Pitchford (2008) has explored how one marginalised, old-world ethnic group, the Welsh, has used tourism to help reclaim their national identity, using the term “identity tourism” (p. 3) to refer to the use of history and culture to represent the ethnicity and heritage of marginalised groups. Pitchford (p. 4) describes such tourism marketing as “emancipatory”, and therefore political, raising “questions about whose identity is represented and how, and the locus of control over ethnic heritage development; and interpretation”. This contest of power over identity portrayal is why “contemporary place branding is not simply a rational marketing activity: it is also a political act” (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride, 2004, p.8). It is unsurprising, therefore, as Morgan and Pritchard (1998) conclude, dominant groups tend to control identity imagery of subordinate groups.

Where mixed images of multi-cultural destinations are interpreted, the subordinate ethnic group may play the role of a “sub-brand” (Morgan and Pritchard, 2004, p. 71) in the nation destination’s overall brand architecture. In this way, Pitchford (2008) observes, Brittany is a sub-brand of France, and Native Americans are a sub-brand of Canada and the United States, although the latter “continue to be stereotyped as poor and backward, yet their traditions are also greatly appealing to many” (p. 12). Though a colonised and subordinate ethnic group, the Maori have been successful in asserting their national identity as a major sub-brand of New Zealand (Morgan and Pritchard, 2004).

The Identity of Indigenous Australians

Though Indigenous Australians make up only around two percent of the national population, they have often played a central role in Australia’s national identity, as it is portrayed to the world through its tourism advertising. The manner in which they have been represented, however, has typically been unidirectional, with the dominant ethnic group exerting power and authority over Indigenous Australian identity.

An early report on Australia’s tourism industry potential, *Australia’s Travel and Tourism Industry 1965* (Harris, Kerr, Forster and Co., 1966), recommended not only direct government funding of tourism promotion, but also that Indigenous Australia might provide a unique national tourism attraction. Craik (2001, p. 91) points out that this concept “at the time was at odds with official and mainstream ideas about Aboriginal culture”. These ideas were to find their voice after Sir Harold Holt succeeded Sir Robert Menzies as Prime Minister in January 1966. Holt signed the United Nations International Accord for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial

Discrimination, which compelled him to redress the *White Australia* policy. In 1967, an overwhelming 90.7% of the non-indigenous Australian allowed to vote agreed to a change in the Constitution that had since 1901 formalised the pre-colonial view of the *Great South Land* as *terra nullius*, or empty land, recognising Indigenous Australians, allowing them to be included in the national census, and providing them the same citizen rights as other Australians, including the right to vote. As citizens, Indigenous people were now once again able to move around freely, and be ruled by uniform Commonwealth laws, instead of different ones depending on which state they were in.

Though not officially recognised as Australian citizens, Indigenous Australian men were keen to improve their pay and living conditions by volunteering to fight in Europe's First and Second World Wars. Over 400 Indigenous Australians fought in the First World War. Though they were initially rejected on the grounds of race, by October 1917, when recruits were harder to find and one conscription referendum had already been lost, restrictions were cautiously eased. A new Military Order stated: "Half-castes may be enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force provided that the examining Medical Officers are satisfied that one of the parents is of European origin" (Australian War Memorial, 2010).

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Indigenous Australians were allowed to enlist and many did so. In 1940, however, the Defence Committee decided the enlistment of Indigenous Australians was "neither necessary nor desirable", partly because White Australians would object to serving with them. This changed with the entry into the Pacific Theatre of the War of the Japanese, with Indigenous men either enlisted as soldiers and were recruited or conscripted into labour corps (Australian War Memorial, 2010).

Without the recognition to be later afforded by the 1967 referendum, Indigenous soldiers returning from these wars did not receive the benefits those they fought alongside did. Only one Aborigine is known to have received land under a *soldier settlement* scheme, despite the fact that much of the best farming land in Aboriginal reserves was confiscated for soldier settlement blocks. Following the Second World War, Aborigines who fought for Australia came back to much the same discrimination as before. For example, many were barred from Returned and Services League clubs, a right afforded to other returning service personnel, except on ANZAC Day, the day that originally commemorated Australian and New Zealand efforts to assist the Empire on the beaches of Turkey, and subsequently all Australia's overseas military conflicts.

A subsequent report (Harris, Kerr, Forster and Co., 1969) focused on the tourism appeal of Central Australia, again recommending that Indigenous Australia should be capitalised upon as it had international appeal. A third report, commissioned in 1971 (Pannell, Kerr and Forster, 1971), evaluated the tourism potential of the Great Barrier Reef, and recognised not only the value of the marine and coral biodiversity but also a role for Indigenous Australians. Craik (2001, p. 91) observes that although none of the three reports was implemented, "they remain the benchmark for strategies for enhancing Australia's tourist potential."

Australia's celebration of the day the British landed on the shores of the colony that became Sydney has never sat comfortably with Indigenous Australians. When

Australia celebrated its bi-centenary, in 1988, this was seen by an increasingly vocal marginalised Indigenous group, now empowered by the 1967 referendum rights, as an insensitive commemoration of the anniversary of their being invaded. Perhaps conscious of Australia's international image, based on the plight of its Indigenous people, in August 1987 Prime Minister announced the formation of a Royal Commission to investigate the causes of the all too common and poorly explained deaths of Aboriginal people while held in State and Territory gaols. A total of 99 cases were examined, resulting in the 1991 report making 339 recommendations, "mainly concerned with procedures for persons in custody, liaison with Aboriginal groups, police education and improved accessibility to information" (naa.gov.au).

Sydney's hosting of the Olympic Games in 2000 provided an opportunity for a degree of reconciliation between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians. Confronted by a suggestion that Indigenous Australians might use the Games as an opportunity to draw attention to their plight, the Prime Minister of the day maintained his hard-line on issues such as the offering of an apology to those who had suffered as a result of the Australian government's policy of removal of Indigenous children from their families throughout much of the 20th century. Craik (2001, p. 102) observes the lead-up to the Games was media-managed "to eliminate all reference to negative stories", yet despite this, "the attention to Australia also brought attention to other pressing issues, in particular that of the treatment and situation of Indigenous Australians. To the extent that this became visible abroad, the Sydney 2000 Olympics damaged the reputation and image of Australia as a desirable destination."

In commenting on the role Indigenous athlete, Cathy Freeman, and other Indigenous Australians played in the opening and closing of the Sydney Olympics, White (2008) adds:

Australia's Aboriginal community were included in the telling of the story of their country: if only in a superficial manner. The unfortunate reality was that Indigenous Australians remained one of the most marginalised and sidelined groups in their own country. For the Sydney Opening and Closing ceremonies they were appropriated by event organisers to appease the world's media and a questioning global audience. The gesture was simply a token one, no more than smoke and mirrors. Australia's appalling record on human rights, health, education and life expectancy in this area remains unchanged.

What imagery of Indigenous Australia is displayed is a somewhat museumised and tokenistic artifice of authenticity. Such imagery is "profoundly political" (Anderson, 1991, p. 178). As Pitchford (2008, p. 4) argues, such "an identity attraction, by its very existence, raises questions about whose identity is represented and how, and the locus of control over ethnic heritage development and interpretation." In regard to Indigenous cultural tourism, Australia has faced a problem of "packaging and managing simultaneously the unique qualities, exotic elements and everyday life for the tourist gaze, a challenge that is more difficult in a culture that is the object of colonial and postcolonial exploitation" (Craik, 2001, p. 109).

Two recent, high-profile Indigenous deaths in police and correctional service department custody raise the question of how Indigenous Australian identity was recognised by the 1991 Royal Commission report into Deaths in Custody, and serve to highlight the Australian nation's postcolonial, or perhaps even continued colonial,

legacy. The death of Cameron Doomadgee in 2004 from massive internal injuries in a prison lock-up on Palm Island, off the north Queensland coast, and a Indigenous elder, known as Mr Ward, of Laverton, Western Australia, have attracted the scrutiny of national and international media.

Cameron Doomadgee died after a scuffle as he was taken to a cell in the Palm Island police station. In 2006, Queensland's acting state coroner found a police Senior Sergeant was responsible for Mr Doomadgee's death, however, the same police officer was acquitted of the resulting charge of manslaughter in 2007. In 2008, Mr Doomadgee's family challenged the Townsville judge's decision to set aside the findings of the 2006 inquest, which found the Senior Sergeant was responsible for the man's death. In 2009, the Court of Appeal ruled the Townsville judge's findings be set aside, but it also found the process of the decision made by the judge was "flawed" (Australian Broadcasting Commission, 2009). At the time of writing this paper, a second coronial inquest into Mr Doomadgee's death is underway.

In 2009, Mr Ward died while he was being transported in the back of a Western Australia Depart of Correctional Services van 360 kilometres (225 miles) to jail in temperatures of up to 50 degrees Celsius (122 F). For the four-hour-plus journey, local police at Laverton provided Mr Ward with a 600 ml (one pint) bottle of water and a frozen meat pie. The vehicle's locked pod was a fully-enclosed metal cubicle, with metal floor and side bench seating. The temperature in the desert on that day was around 40 Celsius, but the cabin's air-conditioning unit was not functioning at the time, allowing the internal temperature to reach over 50 degrees Celsius. Though a loud noise was heard by the van's driver and colleague some time into the journey, they did not stop to investigate. When they did open the rear door of the cabin, XX was found unconscious. The hearing was told that when Mr Ward arrived unconscious at hospital in Kalgoorlie, his body was so hot that staff were unable to cool him down.. An inquest into Mr Ward's death heard he suffered third-degree burns where his body touched the metal floor (news.smh.com.au, 2009). The coroner commented the vehicle was "not fit for humans", and found that Mr Ward's death was in breach of Australia's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Sydney Morning Herald, 2009).

These snapshots are reported here to implicate the asymmetry of power in the juxtaposition of Indigenous Australian identity and the dominant Australian nation. It is against the backdrop of this unequal power relationship that that the factual identity of Australia resides. Craik (2001, p. 109) provides a sober warning regarding the use of Indigenous identity in Australia's tourism advertising:

As Aboriginal cultural tourism looks destined increasingly to epitomise an image of Australia that attracts inbound visitors it is important that Indigenous communities, governments, the tourism industry and the Australian public tackle the place of Indigenous culture in Australian life and redress problems and contradictions. Other wise continued tourist growth may reinforce perceptions of a racist, postcolonial nation that fails to acknowledge its most distinctive element. In this sense, tourism is inextricably tied to images of nation and identity at home and abroad, but this twinning can be a double-edged sword.

It might also be noted that, unlike the relationship between the New Zealand Indigenous Maori and their colonial invaders, which was set on a degree of formal footing when representatives of the British Crown and about 540 Maori rangatira, or chiefs, agreed to the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 (New Zealand History Online, 2009). The national identity of the Maori, recognised through this formal relationship, plays a focal and confident role in New Zealand's very successful *100% Pure New Zealand* campaign (Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott, 2002). The next section discusses how Australia has portrayed its national identity to the world, including the portrayal of Indigenous identity, through its two most recent national tourism advertising campaigns. Following this discussion, a research agenda to investigate the effectiveness of the most recent campaign is proposed.

Advertising the Tourism Destination Australia

A traditional advertising approach for a brand is to feature the brand's key benefit, that is the emotional or functional benefit that answers the question, "What does it offer?" (Rossiter and Bellman, 2005, p. 45). This key benefit might be identified by determining: what is important or motivating to customers; how the brand delivers on important benefits; and which of these important benefits it delivers uniquely (Rossiter and Bellman, 2005).

Given Australia's inability to deliver on a positively-formed postcolonial Indigenous Australian identity, as highlighted by Craik (2001), it is curious, but not altogether unexpected that Australia's national tourism advertisers persists in featuring a contrived Indigenous authenticity in its campaigns. Craik (2001, p. 109) notes that the packaging of Indigenous imagery, such as the Tjapukai cultural park in Cairns, north Queensland, "has been popular with mainstream tourists as a commercial venture, but there are questions about the involvement of local Aboriginal people...and the ways in which Aboriginal culture is re-tooled for tourist consumption".

In Australia's penultimate national tourism campaign, various facets of the national identity are showcased using a humorous appeal that might be expected to miss its mark. In a TV version of the ad, smiling Australians describe their preparations intended to make visitors feel welcome: "We've had the camels shampooed...And we've got the sharks out of the pool...We got the 'roos off the green...". An Aboriginal dancer adds, "And we've been rehearsing for over 40,000 years." A final cut is of a bikini-clad young woman on an otherwise empty beach delivering the tagline, "So where the bloody hell are you?" M&C Saatchi, the agency that created the campaign claimed "a massive research campaign" found "people like Australia not so much for Australia but for Australians", and the campaign was therefore designed to capture "the real Australia and who we really are — an easygoing, welcoming nation. And people like us for that" (Stanley, 2006).

Tourism Australia, the national destination marketing organisation, claimed the ad was tested on 47,000 consumers in seven key countries, particularly in Britain, and in Japan and China, and was well received. Australia's Tourism Minister at the time said, "We have really road tested the campaign and it works." The campaign was "to form the centre-piece of Tourism Australia's strategy to convert record awareness levels of Australia as a destination into actual visits and lift annual visitor numbers from the present 5.5 million a year to 9 million by 2014" (Lee, 2006). At the

campaign's launch, the Tourism Minister defended the use of the word *bloody*, rejecting the suggestion that visitors would find it offensive: "This is a great Australian adjective. It's plain speaking and friendly. It is our vernacular." The Prime Minister also defended it: "I think the style of the advertisement is anything but offensive. It is in the [right] context and I think it's a very effective ad" (Lee, 2006).

While the Australian tourism industry's peak bodies, the Transport & Tourism Forum and the Australian Tourism Export Council, gave the campaign their support, Australia's largest hotel group, the French corporation Accor, expressed its concerns that the tagline would be lost in translation (Lee, 2006). In some of Australia's key Asian tourism markets, such as Malaysia and Singapore, the words *bloody* and *hell* were dropped, and the ad ran with the less offensive "Where are you?" (Lee, 2006). The British government reacted by banning the campaign, until Australia's Tourism Minister, along with the bikini-clad tagline reader from the television advertisement, travelled to London to explain the language used and make a personal appeal for the ad to be cleared.

In the controversy over the appropriateness of the campaign's "bloody hell" tagline, the portrayal of Indigenous Australia's identity appears to have been overlooked. While the ad's copy acknowledged Indigenous Australians' lengthy presence in the country, the suggestion that their ancient culture had been practiced for the arrival of international tourists in the 21st century might be seen to have trivialised their cultural heritage as mere commercial entertainment for touristic consumption.

By October 2008, the *bloody hell* campaign that had been launched in 2006 and charged with attracting a record 9 million annual international tourists by 2014 had been scrapped. The campaign had been banned or withdrawn in some nations and tourism figures also indicated it was largely a failure (aap.com, 2008). Late 2007 had seen a change of government in Australia, and in 2008 the new Prime Minister described the campaign a "rolled gold disaster" (aap.com, 2008). In August 2009, Australia's Trade Minister announced the Federal Government would spend A\$20 million on encouraging creative thinkers to come up with a new brand for Australia, adding, "What we've got to have is a better way to define our identity and brand it" (Lee, 2006).

From October 2008 until mid 2009, an interim "new sophisticated destination campaign to make Australia the 'must visit' destination for travellers around the world," created by the "internationally renowned filmmaker Baz Luhrmann and his team", due to the "unique opportunity created by the production of Luhrmann's epic film *Australia*," was to run in all Tourism Australia's major markets around the world (Tourism Australia, 2008). This campaign included two television commercials, one for the US market the other for the Japanese market, featuring the young Indigenous actor from Luhrmann's *Australia* movie.

Tourism Australia (TA) executives lauded the new campaign. TA's Executive General Manager Marketing said "The campaign is unlike any other tourism campaign. It's cinematic in style, is based on a story with a beginning, middle and end, is sophisticated and highly emotive. It is not the traditional slide-show of pretty pictures of places and people," TA's Managing Director acknowledged "The challenge was always going to be how to ride the power of the film, but with a

standalone and self-reliant tourism campaign” (Tourism Australia, 2008). Unfortunately, the movie failed to ride the power of the box-office, failing to win the anticipated appeal with international markets and at home.

In the most recent campaign, the portrayal of Indigenous Australian identity is once again of issue. At the same time as *black* deaths in custody were making headlines in Australia and internationally, the new TA advertising campaign reached back into the archives to take a page from the report, *Australia's Travel and Tourism Industry 1965* (Harris, Kerr, Foster and Co., 1966), to appropriate Indigenous Australians' spiritual link with the land. Through the medium of the near-naked Indigenous actor whispering to the over-worked and over-stressed executive in New York and Tokyo, “Some times you've got to lose yourself to find yourself. Sometimes, you've got to go walkabout,” aided by a Disney-like sprinkling of ochre-hued pixie-dust, the *extraordinary world* of Australia is identified. But it is an artificial authenticity that is portrayed. The shamanistic power attributed to the Indigenous figure that magically gains entry into each executive's home and unconscious, and the visual image of the protagonist's nakedness and child-like innocence resonates with the romantic notion of the *noble savage*. Such portrayals are not new of course; Chidester (2004), for example, discusses how *invented traditions* have transformed 'folklore' into 'fakelore' in the service of national interests in the invention and appropriation of indigenous authenticity in African folk religions. The Indigenous identity in TA's current tourism advertising campaign is a far cry from the factual identity of Indigenous Australia, being played out in Australia's prison cells and prisoner-transport vehicles.

The concentration on negative illustrations in the paper is not intended to suggest there are not positive facets of the contemporary identity of Indigenous Australians. There are, of course. It is deliberately done, however, to highlight how Australian national identity still struggles to move from a colonial to a postcolonial outlook and appropriately accommodate the place of Indigenous culture in Australian life. The inability to achieve this move, as reflected in these recent tourism advertising campaigns that demonstrate Australia's dominant ethnic groups controlling the identity imagery of subordinate Indigenous groups, a situation discussed by Morgan and Pritchard (1998), is bound to undermine the effectiveness of such advertising efforts. The next section proposes a research agenda to test this likelihood.

Proposed Research Study

The current TA advertising campaign risks being rendered ineffective on two fronts: First, it is a radical departure from the previous marketing communications approach, and therefore likely to promote confusion in the minds of audiences searching for a clear, consistent, and agreeable image of Australia's identity as a holiday destination. Second, campaign audience members that already hold national identity knowledge of Australia, based either on their prior experience with the brand or its coverage in national or international news media, for example, negative coverage of its Indigenous peoples, may find such advertising incongruous with already held beliefs and attitudes.

A key element of successful business strategy is the communication of a consistent brand positioning; repositioning of a brand, such as that here, moving from a

humorous, cheeky advertising appeal to a more cinematic, story-telling approach, requires care. In line with dissonance theory, which posits that inconsistency in an individual's cognitive system produces dissonance (Festinger, 1957), Kang and Herr (2006) suggest that to reduce dissonance, consumers insert the mental step of first deciding if the advertising claim looks right. To judge if a claim looks right, an individual will relate message material to other message content or to prior knowledge and attitudes stored in memory. Social judgment theory posits that people's prior attitudes distort their perceptions of the positions advocated in persuasive messages, (see Eagly & Chaiken 1993, p. 363 for a discussion), similar to cognitive responses theory which argues that new information will be evaluated against already-held cognitions that serve as a frame of reference for new messages. Cognitive response theory (Wright, 1973) argues that consumers cognitive responses depend on the newness of the 'product' to the respondent: prior brand attitude for a familiar brand, prior attitude to the product category for a new brand in a familiar product category, or from the advertisement itself when there is no prior attitude if the situation is a completely new product for the respondent (Rossiter and Percy, 1997). Cognitive-response theory assumes that the respondent is motivated "to try to make sense of incoming information from the advertisement" (Rossiter and Percy, 1997, p. 269), that is, the respondent is highly involved with the processing task. The theory, however, does not account for persuasion in the absence of evidence of elaboration on any relevant message content (Meyers-Levy and Malaviya, 1999).

Dual-process theories, such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981, 1986) and the Heuristic-Systematic Model (Chaiken, 1980), address this criticism by suggesting a systematic (*central*) and a heuristic (*peripheral*) route to persuasion, with the relative strength of each route determined by the extent of respondent elaboration. When motivation and ability are high, elaboration likelihood is high, and more effortful (central) processing is expected to generate a relatively large number of both ad and brand cognitions. When motivation or ability is low, elaboration likelihood is low, and processing is linked to relatively few advertisement and brand cognitions, with judgments likely formed by heuristics (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994; Petty and Cacioppo, 1979).

A recent research development has shown that rather than process information objectively, consumers may be motivated by goals other than accuracy and may selectively process message-relevant information in line with those other goals (Johar, Maheswaran, and Peracchio, 2006). One such biasing influence is *defense* motivation (Agrawal and Maheswaran, 2005; Ahluwalia, 2002; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). Consumers may be accuracy motivated to process advertising communications in a systematic and objective manner (Ratneshwar and Chaiken, 1991), or they may also be *defense motivated*, using heuristics to "protect vested interests, attitudinal commitments, or other preferences" (Koslow, 2000, p. 247). Srull and Wyer (1986, p. 541-2) argue that processing goals "often determine what we attend to, how we perceive objects and events, how we use reasoning processes to make inferences about causal connections, how these events are organized and represented in memory, how they affect both long-term storage and retrieval of information (or lack thereof) to make higher order judgments and how they enter into possible affective reactions". Keller (1991) agrees that the fact that processing goals influence the information that consumers notice, evaluate, or respond to in an advertisement is critically important.

Correcting a negative image by placing emphasis on positive identity characteristics (e.g., Nuttavuthisit, 2007) might be made all the more difficult by the appropriation of the extraordinary of indigenous spirituality, given the oft negative associations of the *ordinary* of this facet of Australia's identity. Against the background of recent branding campaigns and Australia's tourism performance, the conflict between nation brand for the product class of tourism and overall nation brand image (e.g., Lee and Ganesh, 1999) is analysed. We propose research questions for a future study to test the theories outlined here, in particular: Does inconsistent brand identification erode positive brand image perceptions?, and To what extent do held beliefs about brand image inhibit the persuasion effectiveness of countervailing desired brand identity claims?

The purpose of this paper is to propose a research agenda to examine the information-processing biases consumers might bring to a new message evaluation task, given the inconsistency of that new message with prior messages, and the inconsistency of the new message's desired identity elements with other confounding identity elements. The research agenda proposed will seek to address:

P₁: Tourism Australia's inconsistent brand positioning will lead to greater confusion and dissonance, and therefore less favourable attitude to the ad, brand, and behavioral intention, for highly-involved audience members

P₂: Tourism Australia's inconsistent brand positioning will lead to lower confusion and dissonance, and therefore more favourable attitude to the ad, brand, and behavioral intention, for less-involved audience members

P₃: Greater brand identity incongruity will lead to less favourable attitude to the ad, brand, and behavioral intention, for highly-involved audience members

An experimental design, using an international online consumer panel study is proposed. Cognitive thought listing, immediately after exposure to stimulus material will be used to indicate heuristic or elaborate processing. The dependent variables to be measured include attitude to the ad, attitude to the brand (Australia as a holiday destination), and behavioral intention. Image incongruity, expected to negatively moderate the relationship between the TA advertising stimulus and dependent variables, will be measured and its role analysed.

Conclusion

The Australian master brand has tended to trade off the assets in its natural environment, such as the Great Barrier Reef, beaches, the Outback, Uluru (Ayers Rock), and its rainforests, its relaxed, outdoors-oriented lifestyle, and the cultural artifacts of its Indigenous people, particularly their arts and close ties to the wilder parts of the Australian land. These approaches have been strategically inconsistent and tend to rely on invented, political depictions of Indigenous identity that is at odds with the factual identity of Indigenous Australia. These two issues are expected to lead to reduced international tourism advertising effectiveness, and not deliver Australia the growth in this sector of the economy it might expect.

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