

**BEST Education Network**  
**Think Tank VI**  
*Corporate Social Responsibility for Tourism*

Sue Beeton, PhD  
Director of Research  
School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management  
La Trobe University, Victoria 3086, Australia  
s.beeton@latrobe.edu.au

**Abstract:**

**The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: CSR, Film and Tourism**  
**Two Cases of Filming in a Small Community**

This paper reports on an element of an ongoing research project undertaken since 1999 in relation to the effects of film-induced tourism on a small community based in North Yorkshire, England, namely Goathland. Goathland is better known to TV audiences around the world as the village of Aidensfield in the long-running series, *Heartbeat*. Its railway station and heritage train was also used as Hogwarts Station in the *Harry Potter* movies.

Both the TV series and the movie have been extremely popular and increased the number as well as altered the 'type' of tourist visiting Goathland, which is set in a national park with a resident population of 300 (Mordue, 1999; 2001; Beeton, 2005). However, the extent of responsibility taken by the respective film companies in terms of the related tourism is significantly different, particularly in

relation to community engagement and opportunities for that community to commercialise its exposure as a film site to visitors. This paper considers these differences in terms of each organisation's demonstrated Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to Goathland.

### *Basis of CSR and Its Links with Tourism*

The notion of the need for organisations to operate responsibly and ethically is not new, and is founded upon the ethical basis of many societies; however, the increased emphasis on tourism businesses contributing to the communities on which they rely on for their actual tourism product now dominates much tourism thought and literature. In a move to differentiate this from notions of philanthropy where gifts to a 'worthy' cause regardless of its links with an organisation's core business is seen as the only form of responsibility, the term Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has gained dominance.

Carroll's (1979) four components of CSR provides us with a framework for thinking about what CSR encompasses, namely the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary activities of a corporation. It is the last two that are of particular interest here as they tend to be driven by notions of ethical behaviour and societal values.

The impact of film on some small communities in terms of ensuing tourism is well documented, both in terms of opportunities as well as costs (for example, Riley, Baker and Van Doren, 1998; Beeton, 2000; 2001; 2006). However, the legacy left by those who directly benefit from filming, namely the film companies themselves, is not as clearly articulated in relation to their ongoing responsibility to that community.

For some time, it has been argued that these corporations should consider the costs associated with the concomitant tourism that can follow, particularly in terms of ‘ethical marketing’ (Murphy and Laczniak, 1981; Wheeler, 1995) and ‘social marketing’ (Bramwell and Lane, 1993; Dinan and Sargeant, 2000); however, it can also be argued that they need to go further in their community responsibility by assisting (or at the very least, permitting) the development of commercial opportunities for these communities. Guided tours, film and locale branded souvenirs and guidebooks are some of the commercial spin-offs that have the potential to provide business opportunities in what are often marginalized rural communities. Such opportunities can alleviate the negative effects of the social costs experienced, such as overcrowding, loss of privacy and changes in the type of visitor. For an in-depth discussion of the effects of a change in visitor type in Goathland and other communities, see Beeton, 2005.

In essence, this paper considers a crucial aspect of CSR in relation to film-induced tourism, namely, do film companies demonstrate care regarding the flow-on aspects of their filming in terms of leveraging opportunities to the communities in which they film? By considering this, we also ask, is CSR alive and well in film-induced tourism?

## **Method**

Taking a case study approach, two cases of filming in a small community and resulting tourism opportunities provided by the film companies involved are examined. The data is based on participant observation at Goathland as well as reported data from the region and film companies themselves.

*Heartbeat* is the creation of Yorkshire TV (YTV), while *Harry Potter* comes from the Warner Brothers (WB) stable, the former being more closely linked to the actual region than the latter. This is due primarily to its regional proximity, but also the ongoing nature of the TV series, which has been in production since 1991.

## **Findings<sup>1</sup>**

The findings illustrate the outcomes of two different corporate approaches and their outcomes. YTV regularly films in public and private areas of the village. While they used filmed in the public areas of the station, WB set up its filming base on private land, which required no council or community approval.

### *1. Heartbeat*

When visiting Goathland, where the main *Heartbeat* sites are around the village centre, a visit to any of the shops immediately confirms the town as the site of Aidensfield, with a plethora of souvenirs and books on the topic. In addition, some establishments have chosen to double-brand themselves, such as the Goathland Hotel, which retains some of the fictional Aidensfield Arms signage.

### *2. Harry Potter*

In stark contrast with the plethora of *Heartbeat* memorabilia and references, there is virtually no direct evidence of *Harry Potter*, even at the railway station. Due to copyright restrictions imposed by WB, the community is not permitted to use the Harry Potter name in any commercial sense. For example,

---

<sup>1</sup> Please note, that there will be more detail in the findings and conclusion in the final paper! Plus a little more literature on CSR...

when the station wanted to have an event for *Harry Potter* fans, they had to call it a Witches and Wizards day.

However, fans are aware that this is a film site from the movies, and there is a small book on the topic of filming at the historical railway which notes that part of the movie was filmed there (Idle, 2003).

## **Conclusion**

The differences illustrated in these two cases can be seen as a direct result of each company's differing future needs – York TV needs to keep returning to Goathland to film, so it has a certain economic imperative to provide opportunities for the community, whereas WB has less need to return as even the station footage for *Harry Potter* can be re-used and re-created in a studio.

Nevertheless, they also point to differing attitudes towards the social responsibility of each organisation.

*A final word (or twenty):*

So, is CSR simply the latest PR buzzword? If a company is operating in a responsible manner, does it mean it is practicing CSR? Does it matter?

## **Bibliography**

- Beeton, S. (2000) 'It's a Wrap! What happens after the film crew leaves? An examination of community responses to film-induced tourism' *TTRA National Conference - Lights! Camera! Action!*, Burbank, CA, pp. 127-136
- Beeton, S. (2001) 'Smiling for the Camera: the influence of film audiences on a budget tourism destination' *Tourism, Culture and Communication*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp.15-26
- Beeton (2005) *Film-Induced Tourism*, Channel View Publications, Clevedon
- Beeton, S. (in-press 2006) Understanding Film-Induced Tourism, *Tourism Analysis*
- Bramwell, B. and Lane, B. (1993) Interpretation and sustainable tourism: the potentials and pitfalls, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol.1 no.2, pp.71-80
- Butler, R.W. (1990) The influence of media in shaping international tourism patterns, *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol.15 no.2, pp. 46-53
- Carroll, A. B. (1979) A three-dimensional conceptual model of corporate performance, *Academy of Management Review*, Vol.4, pp.497-505
- Clarkson, M.B.E. (1995) A Stakeholder Framework for Analyzing and Evaluating Corporate Social Performance, *The Academy of Management Review*, Vol.20 No.1, pp.92-117
- Dinan, C. and Sargeant, A. (2000) Social Marketing and Sustainable Tourism – is there a Match? *International Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol.2, pp. 1-14
- Idle, D. (2003) *Filming On and Around the North Yorkshire Moors Railway*, North Yorkshire Moors Railway, Pickering
- Mordue, T. (1999) 'Heartbeat Country: conflicting values, coinciding visions' *Environment and Planning*, Vol.31, pp.629-646
- Mordue, T. (2001) 'Performing and directing resident/tourist cultures in Heartbeat Country' *Tourist Studies*, Vol.1, No.3, pp.233-252

Murphy, P.E. and Lacznaik, G.R. (1981) Marketing ethics: a review with implications for marketers, educators and researchers, *Review of Marketing*, pp.251-256

Riley, R., Baker, D., and Van Doren, C.S., (1998) 'Movie Induced Tourism', *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 25, No. 4, pp. 919-935

Smith and Westerbeek (forthcoming)

Wheeler, M. (1995) Tourism marketing ethics: an introduction, *International Marketing Review*, Vol.12 No.4, pp.38-49