

5th Annual conference

The 5th Annual Conference of ECTN took place during late September in **Turku, Finland.**

The theme was *Cultural Tourism with a Twist – new ways of doing cultural tourism.*

The following columns give a taste of some of the presentations at the conference

Professor Terry Stevens

Innovation and Creativity –the key ingredients for successful cultural tourism.

Some figures and observations - Cultural tourism accounted for almost 360m international tourist trips in 2007 or 40% of global tourism (OECD) – Cultural tourism has a vital role in image creation and destination branding- *Morgan and Pritchard*, Professor Stevens urged

delegates to take a risk and have fun – he identified some of the barriers to effective Cultural tourism as

- serial reproduction
- formulaic solutions
- passive and often dull or boring
- placelessness
- McDonaldisation : McGuggenheim
- non-places
- universal cultural spaces

Professor Stevens suggested some of the following as part of the new trends in Cultural tourism

- The rise of skilled consumption
- Creativity now part of lifestyle –*the cultural creatives*
- Rise of the Creative Class / The Creative City
- The importance of identity
- The lure of the local
- The need for self discovery, involvement and interactivity

The shift from the tangible to the intangible in visitor demand should be a drive for the planning of cultural tourism. There is a real need to include *Creative Tourism* as part of *Cultural Tourism*.

Robert Willim Lund University

Industrial Cool

Treating industrial ruins as a spent force in terms of their attraction to visitors could be to miss an opportunity. Industrial ruins create emotions and feelings – the challenge for cultural tourism is how these can be harnessed.

There are three major aspects

- staged factories
- resurrected factories
- industrial ruins

Fuller versions of these presentations **and more** from the conference can be found at www.ectn.eu.com

ECTN Board

ECTN Board will be meeting in January to discuss future joint project funding applications to the European Commission, in particular whether to submit a Capitalisation bid under Interreg IVC and a bid under the Culture Programme. The Board will also consider the date and venue of the next ECTN conference.

**Prof. Dr. F.M. Go,
Rotterdam School of
Management, Erasmus
University**

***A Governance
Perspective on Place
Branding.***

The construction and transformation of human values occurs in emerging cultural networks.

New experiences and products demanded by tourists and consumers often entail environmental pressures, new technologies, new quality standards, and new notions what is authentic and 'fake'.

Cultural tourism should be defined in a broader realm -beyond museums and symphony orchestras, however important these may be.

The host-guest encounter is often the most memorable experience for the visitor.

A balance of citizenship and consumerism issues make up a product we call cultural tourism

As a consequence of globalization and the 'graying' of the population there is a growing interest in authenticity across European markets. There is also a great demand for quality.

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**Xavier Greffe
University of Paris
*Culture and Local
Development***

The cultural economy includes the visual arts, live arts, heritage, the cultural industries, the creative industries and cultural products.

Iconic sites have the potential to attract and create locally grown and locally managed SME's.

The iconic sites of an area (e.g. museums) are a big draw because of their permanence and also as a place for people to meet – therefore they are a big economic driver.

The visual and audio visual arts attract visitors who spend more than other visitors.

The production of local cultural products can be a big economic driver for the community and the global economy offers broader markets for many of these products.

The economic potential of culture for the territory is similar to an export potential, except that in this case it is not the product that moves but the consumer.

Is the creation of cultural districts good because of the synergy that could develop or a threat because of the competition that might arise?

**Conference summary -The "C's"
Challenges**

- Convergence and Conformity – the pressures of globalisation making identikit 'me too' destinations: 'McDonalds, McGuggenheim, McGoogle?'
- Carbon – journeys and other consumption will become rarer, more precious and more valued
- Cash – Resources are becoming squeezed especially for the public sector over the next few years
- Competition – an exponential rise in places to visit
- Cheer-leading – 'look at me' marketing-led branding

Counter-Attack - How can we help, how do we best respond to those we serve - communities, industry, governments, policy makers? What tools does cultural tourism have in the box

- Capital - social, environmental, human, imaginative...
- Creativity - creative industries approach - curious, organic, unpackaged, innovative
- Co-creation - dynamic development of brands, destinations and products by interaction of communities and visitors
- Communities - local and virtual as well as national
- Collaboration - across Europe to guarantee diversity rather than homogeneity, but using shared techniques and methodologies to underpin quality and evaluation
- Consultation/ Conversation - between sectors, between visitors and communities, between regions, virtual and face-to-face
- Confidence - willingness to take risks - not always easy for governments or the industry
- Charm – creative tourism delights and seduces us *Peter Cole*