

Conceptualising Olympic tourism legacy: destination marketing organisations and Vancouver 2010

Stacy-Lynn Sant*, Daniel S. Mason and Tom D. Hinch

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, Canada T6G2H9

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Hosting an Olympic Games is expected to generate tourism legacies for the host city, region, and country well beyond the event. Since a host city's tourism industry plays an important role in delivering wider economic benefits to the city and region, tourism legacies feature prominently in proponents' attempts to legitimise the public expenditure required to bid for and host an Olympic Games. Despite inconsistencies in conceptualisations of the Olympic legacy in both academic literature and industry practice, destination marketers continue to be charged with formulating strategies to leverage an Olympic Games for tourism benefits. A qualitative and interpretive case study approach was used to examine how destination marketers in Vancouver, as well as those at the provincial and federal levels of government, conceptualised the Olympic tourism legacy. Results show that destination marketers' conceptualisations of legacy vary depending on their mandates as well as the needs and aspirations of their destination. The study also highlights the importance of a collaborative approach in developing leveraging strategies for a host city, region, and country.

Keywords: Olympic legacy; tourism legacy; leveraging; mega events; destination marketing organisations; leveraging strategies; tourism; sport tourism

Introduction

Hosting an Olympic Games¹ is often viewed by the host city as a tourism and economic stimulator (cf. Boukas, Ziakas, & Boustras, 2013). According to Williams and Elkhatab (2012), while the Olympic Games are not specifically designed as tourism mega events by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), 'they are increasingly being positioned by local proponents as a once in a lifetime opportunity to bolster the host destination's competitiveness in the global tourism marketplace' (p. 317). Despite the potential for an Olympic Games to displace or discourage tourists due to crowding out and

*Corresponding author. Email: sant@ualberta.ca

other event-related effects (Agha, Fairley, & Gibson, 2012), it remains a powerful tool for the development of tourism in a host city, region, and country.

The prospective growth of a tourism destination's products and the anticipated expansion of the tourism industry are key expectations in the overall economic development strategies of Olympic host cities. For example, the New South Wales government claimed that the economic impact of the 2000 Sydney Games would be bolstered by tourist visits to Sydney well into the post-Games period (Toohey, 2008). Following the example of the Australian Tourist Commission,² destination marketing organisations (DMOs) have begun to leverage mega events for a variety of tourism benefits which are expected to be sustained well beyond the event (cf. Chalip, 2001, 2002, 2004). These benefits are often referred to as legacies (Gold & Gold, 2009) and may include improved destination awareness, enhanced city image, and increased visitation (Chalip, 2003; Getz, 1989; Weed, 2008).

Mounting concerns about excessive infrastructure costs and white elephant facilities (MacAloon, 2008, p. 2064) prompted the IOC to include a 14th mission statement in its Charter in 2002. The IOC subsequently amended its Host City Contract to reflect the importance of leaving a positive legacy in the host city. Vancouver, British Columbia, was the first host city to sign this new contract. The International Olympic Committee (2003) noted that the conceptualisation of legacy is constantly in flux as it is not only 'affected by a variety of local and global factors' (p. 1), but also differences in the perspectives of the IOC and potential hosts. The meaning of legacy is therefore shaped in the context in which the Games are delivered.

Olympic host cities (and regions) are often well-established tourist destinations prior to a bid; examples include Sydney and Barcelona. The city of Vancouver is no exception, as it is consistently ranked and rated as one of the top places in the world to visit and live.³ Despite its popularity as a tourist destination, bid proponents believed that bidding for and hosting the 2010 Games would result in long-lasting benefits for the city and province, especially in the areas of tourism, economic development, and transportation infrastructure (Sant & Mason, 2013; VANOC, 2007). Not surprisingly, Vancouver's bid for the 2010 Games was championed by the city's DMO, Tourism Vancouver (Mickleburgh, 2008, p. S1). Given tourism's role in delivering wider economic legacies to a host city and region (Essex & Chalkley, 1998; Gratton & Preuss, 2008; Heinemann, 2003; Toohey, 2008), tourism legacies feature prominently in proponents' attempts to legitimise the public expenditure required to bid for and host an Olympic Games. Although the costs associated with bidding for and hosting an Olympic Games can be considered exorbitant, relative to its economic impact (Short, 2008), our aim is not to assess the event's cost-effectiveness.

Despite the inconsistencies in conceptualisations of legacy in both the academic literature and industry practice (Chappelet, 2006; Gratton & Preuss, 2008; Preuss, 2007a); destination marketers continue to be charged with

formulating strategies to generate long-term tourism benefits. The purpose of this paper is therefore to examine how destination marketers at the various levels of government (federal, provincial, and municipal) conceptualise legacy. In order to do so, we examine the case of Vancouver, host of the XXI Winter Olympic Games. Our study is organised around three questions: (1) How do destination marketers perceive tourism legacy? (2) How do destination marketers' notions of legacy influence the planning process and leveraging strategies used to deliver tourism benefits? and (3) What do destination marketers consider to be the key tourism legacies generated in the host city, region, and country post-Games?

The results of this study will provide insight into the meaning of tourism legacy in an Olympic city, the planning process for potential tourism benefits, and the scope of integration of these legacies into other event legacies (or lack thereof). DMOs' conceptualisations of tourism legacy may in turn influence the strategies and initiatives implemented to create tourism benefits, a major contributor to the economic legacies of hosting. Effective leveraging strategies may not only generate positive tourism impacts but also mitigate potential negative consequences (Weed, 2009). In practice, our results can guide future host DMOs to better plan for, manage, and sustain event-related tourism benefits. This article proceeds as follows: it begins by presenting a brief examination of tourism legacy and event leveraging. The case study follows in terms of context, methodology, and the results of our data analysis. The final section highlights some implications of our findings for effectively leveraging the Games for tourism benefits in an Olympic host city, region, and country.

Event legacy

The concept of legacy is not novel as almost every host city since the Olympic Games that was revived in 1896 has had some form of legacy (Cashman, 1998). On the other hand, academic research on the topic is relatively new. Legacy has been conceptualised as all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for, and by, a sport event, which remain longer than the event itself, irrespective of time of production and space (Gratton & Preuss, 2008; Preuss, 2007a). Thomson, Schlenker, and Schlenkorf (2013) identified five themes across definitions of legacy appearing in the event management, sport management, and urban planning literature between 1991 and 2008. These themes can be used to conceptualise legacy in a particular context: (1) the use of legacy as opposed to another term, (2) legacy as inherited or planned, (3) the temporal nature of legacy, (4) legacy as positive or negative, and (5) legacy as a local or global concept. Although there has been steady growth in research on event legacies (cf. Dansero & Puttilli, 2010; Dickson, Benson, & Blackman, 2011; Florek, Breitbarth, & Conejo, 2008; Heinemann, 2003; MacAloon, 2008; Preuss, 2007a, 2007b; Thomson et al., 2013), 'a precise definition with clear parameters appears to be elusive'

(Dickson et al., 2011, p. 291). Despite a lack of consensus regarding its meaning and use (Cashman, 2006; Preuss, 2007a), legacy continues to play an important role in bidding for, planning, and managing an Olympic Games.

Prior research has explored positive relationships between the Olympic Games and tourism (Bohlin, 2000; Bramwell, 1997; Burton, 2003; Getz, 1998, 1991; de Groote, 2005). Expansion of a host city and region's tourism industries is expected as a result of increased tourist arrivals at the time of the Games, return trips by Olympic tourists, and visitations generated by the media coverage of the Olympics. Media coverage is thought to be a key element in enticing potential tourists to visit a host city (Preuss, 2004), as it is likely to generate increased destination awareness and enhancement of destination image. These are considered key tourism legacies as both may lead to significant gains in a destination's market and brand position (Chalip, 2003; Dansero & Puttilli, 2010; Ritchie & Smith, 1991). The Olympic Games have therefore become part of the global political economy, and potential hosts aggressively compete for hosting rights in an effort to position themselves favourably in the hierarchy of world cities (Shoval, 2002).

According to Ritchie (2000), mega sport events have the potential to transform a city, a community, or an entire country into a major tourism destination. These events may create changes in a host city and region which may be both tangible (new sport facilities and improved transportation networks) and intangible (improved city image and reputation). These changes may in turn foster new developments in tourism that may be related (or unrelated) to sport or events (Dansero & Puttilli, 2010). The 2003 Rugby World Cup, for example, capitalised on the sport and transportation infrastructure designed for the Sydney 2000 Summer Olympic Games and also benefited from Olympic tourism promotion (Cashman, 2006). Another notable example is that of the 2006 Football World Cup held in Germany. Florek et al. (2008) found that by hosting the World Cup, Germany was able to improve its overall country image among visiting football fans. This was considered a positive side-effect of hosting for the German tourism industry as a whole, as it was hoped that the improved image would increase sport tourism and other tourism-related activities well after the event concluded. Tourism legacies also include additional employment in the tourism sector (Ritchie, 1984), and reduced seasonal fluctuations in visitation (Getz, 1997). In Vancouver, hosting the 2010 Winter Olympic Games was viewed as an opportunity to increase visibility in the international media, with the overall goal being to present the region and country as a year-round tourist destination (Burton, 2003; Dansero & Puttilli, 2010; De Moragas & Botella, 1995).

Although Li and Blake (2009) suggested that hosting mega sport events may provide a long-term promotional benefit for the city or region (a key aspect of realising tourism legacies), Ritchie and Smith (1991) found that the awareness of the city of Calgary dramatically increased before and during the 1988 Winter Olympic Games, but was not sustained post-event. They concluded that in order

to remain competitive in the international marketplace, destination marketers should not only anticipate a certain rate of awareness decay but also take steps to counter it. Potential increases in Olympic tourism are often exaggerated as economic impact studies fail to account for displaced tourists who opt not to visit the city and region during the Games (Getz, 1998; Smith, 2009). Although increases in international tourist arrivals have been observed in the host cities of Albertville, Lillehammer, and Vancouver, these increases are found to be short-lived (Gruben, Moss, & Moss, 2012). In an effort to sustain the tourism benefits of the Olympic Games well into the post-event period, or rather to create tourism legacies, DMOs have begun to plan for both long-term⁴ and short-term⁵ outcomes; this is referred to as event leveraging (O'Brien & Chalip, 2007).

Event leveraging

Hosting an Olympic Games essentially provides a long-term leveraging opportunity in the form of promotion of the host city, region, and country as tourist destinations in ways that can enhance overall market position (Chalip & Leyns, 2002; O'Brien, 2006). Current Olympic tourism leveraging programmes are mainly associated with the role of the media in city/nation branding. Television coverage of an Olympic Games increases exposure of the host city, region, and country to a variety of audiences, thereby creating opportunities for a host to maximise this exposure and build their tourism brand (Preuss, 2004).

Leveraging can be defined as 'the processes through which the benefits of investments are maximised' (Chalip, 2004, p. 228). Chalip (2001) was one of the first researchers to apply the term 'leveraging' to sports events. The leveraging perspective illustrates a shift from 'the traditional ex post, impact-driven, outcomes orientation, to a more strategic ex ante, analytical approach' (O'Brien & Chalip, 2007, p. 297). This suggests that event leveraging presents a more proactive, strategic approach to creating event legacies, rather than simply looking back at event outcomes. Merely hosting an Olympic Games is therefore not enough to leave major benefits for the city, region, and country. Sydney, host of the 2000 Summer Olympic Games, is widely recognised as having set the benchmark for leveraging an Olympic Games for tourism benefits. According to Morse (2001), the main objective of the Australian Tourist Commission was to market not only the city of Sydney, but the entire country of Australia internationally as a tourist destination.

Event leveraging involves 'the implementation of strategies by stakeholders to maximise the benefits from hosting an event or festival' (O'Brien, 2007, p. 142). The application of leveraging strategies recognises that the event itself is an 'opportunity to implement particular tactics which may foster and nurture the impacts that are desired' (Chalip, 2002, p. 8). Therefore, instead of being considered an intervention, the event is thought to be a resource from which wider benefits can be leveraged (Chalip, 2004). Chalip (2004)

defined leverage initiatives as ‘those activities which need to be undertaken around the event itself which seek to maximise the long-term benefit from events’ (p. 228). These initiatives are considered to be separate from, but related to, the delivery and management of event projects. According to Smith (2013), ‘if the event is the asset which is being leveraged then the potential for leverage is greatest with respect to sport mega events as these are the most significant contemporary events’ (p. 4).

Chalip (2004) developed a general model for sport event leverage. According to this model, the host community’s portfolio of events is termed a leverageable resource and there are two opportunities for leveraging events. First, in the immediate or short term, host communities can leverage ‘event visitors and trade’ with the strategic objective being to optimise total trade and revenue. Second, in the longer term, ‘event media’ can be leveraged with the aim of enhancing the host community’s image. Weed (2008) adapted Chalip’s model to assess the strategies that may be employed to maximise tourism opportunities presented by a single event. The leverageable resource in Weed’s model was an Olympic Games, that is, a specific event, rather than a host’s portfolio of events as highlighted in Chalip’s (2004) general model. According to Weed, hosts have two opportunities for leveraging an Olympic Games: Olympic tourism and Olympic media. The strategic objectives associated with these leveraging opportunities are optimising Olympic-related tourism and enhancing the image of the Olympic host city destination. The former refers to ‘immediate strategies to generate tourism business’ (Weed, 2008, p. 72), whereas the latter is considered to be a longer term strategy to enhance the destination’s image.

Weed’s (2008) model for Olympic tourism leveraging extended Chalip’s (2004) general model by including a temporal dimension. Weed incorporated an analysis of leveraging opportunities during the Olympic Games as well as in the pre- and post-event periods. This is an important extension of Chalip’s model as the pre-event period has been overlooked in discussions of long-term impacts as the focus tends to be on the ‘legacy’ of an event, which by definition occurs in the post-event period (Solberg & Preuss, 2007). Solberg and Preuss (2007) posited that the pre-event period may generate ‘considerable activity, which can include tourism effects’ (p. 215). Thus, increased visibility gained from winning a bid for an Olympic Games has the potential to boost tourist arrivals in the preparation and pre-Games period. Host cities may therefore reap tourism benefits well in advance of the actual staging of the event. Weed’s model also incorporated a geographic dimension which highlighted tourism benefits that could be generated in the host city as well as the surrounding areas.

The concept of legacy is often thought of as being produced post-event; however, the literature has shown that host communities can take advantage of tourism opportunities from the initial stages of the bid to well after the event (Solberg & Preuss, 2007; Weed, 2008). According to Smith (2013),

leverage projects are often cited by event organisers when criticism is forthcoming from the community regarding wasteful spending and a lack of local benefits. Smith suggested this is not so much an indication of problems with the leverage model, but rather the limited way that the model has been adopted thus far. The coordination of various organisations, with diverse interests, activities, and perspectives; limited funding for leverage projects; and the issue of who should design and implement leveraging strategies are some of the main challenges of leveraging an Olympic Games for long-term tourism benefits (Chalip, 2002; Smith, 2009, 2013). Examining the strategies and initiatives implemented by host DMOs to leverage the Games for tourism legacies in an Olympic host city, region, and nation will provide insight into how future hosts can plan for, manage, and sustain event-related tourism benefits.

Case study context

In 1998, the Canadian Olympic Association selected Vancouver-Whistler to be Canada's candidate for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. Vancouver was short-listed by the IOC and became an official candidate city in 2002. At this time, there were approximately five million annual international overnight visitors to the province of British Columbia, with the Greater Vancouver Area being the most popular destination (Tourism British Columbia, 2003). The majority of these tourists were visited in the months of May to August, while January to April had substantially lower arrivals. After winning the international bid in 2003, the province's lead DMO – Tourism British Columbia – was given a mandate by the government of British Columbia to utilise the Games to: increase media coverage, grow travel trade and visitor awareness, fill excess tourism capacity, promote the province's tourism products and experiences, and convert increased awareness into tourism revenues and visits (Tourism British Columbia, 2003). These tourism benefits aligned with the view of the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC, n.d.) – the national tourism marketing agency – that the 2010 Games provided 'a once in a lifetime opportunity to accelerate global awareness of Canada' (p. 1). The Games were seen by destination marketers as an opportunity not only to combat seasonal fluctuations in visitation in the host region, but also to further raise the profile of the city and the country in the world tourism market.

In 2005 Tourism British Columbia led the formation of the '2010 Tourism Consortium' – a collaborative partnership of the five host DMOs – the CTC, Tourism British Columbia, Tourism Vancouver, Tourism Whistler, and Tourism Richmond – as well as a variety of local stakeholders such as the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and the Arts, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games Secretariat. The Consortium developed guidelines as well as a Joint Tourism Olympic Strategy to leverage the Games for positive tourism legacies (Tourism British Columbia, 2008). This document also outlined the areas of cooperation for the Consortium and the formation of eight working groups⁶

to address each area. The CTC worked closely with the Vancouver Organising Committee (VANOC) to promote the Winter Olympic Games as ‘Canada’s Games’. As part of the 2010 Tourism Consortium, the five host DMOs developed joint programmes and initiatives; however, each DMO had its own mandate for leveraging the Games for tourism benefits.

Method

Given that we were interested in how legacy was being defined, conceptualised, and leveraged by destination marketers, we sought out the views of senior management of the DMOs themselves. Thus, a qualitative and interpretative case study approach (Creswell, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) was employed in order to examine the host DMOs’ conceptualisations of legacy and, in turn, the strategies and initiatives implemented at federal, provincial, and municipal levels⁷ to leverage the 2010 Games for tourism benefits. The underlying basis of a qualitative approach depends on ‘appreciating how actors construct and interact with their social world’ (O’Brien, 2006, p. 244). Since the meaning of legacy is created in the context of the city bidding for and hosting an Olympic Games, a single-case study approach allowed for a thorough description of the phenomena under study (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Sparkes, 1992).

Data collection

A three-phase process guided the study’s design and subsequent analysis of the data. The data were collected from multiple sources in order to increase the reliability and validity of the findings (Yin, 2009). First, a review of the event legacy and event leveraging literature provided the rationale and theoretical framework for the study, as well as the basis for empirical analysis. Second, documents were collected which included DMO annual reports, leveraging strategy documents, marketing and promotional materials, and tactical reports. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with destination marketers, which allowed for more detailed information to be gathered. These interviews provided the opportunity for the interviewer to probe and expand a participant’s responses (Weiss, 1994). Potential participants were identified through elite purposive sampling in an effort to draw knowledge from the most informed actors directly involved in leveraging the Vancouver Games for long-term tourism benefits. Elite interviewing provides a rich and thorough source of data as top executives hold strategic knowledge (King, 1994; Lowe, 1981; Weed, 2003). A total of 12 interviews were conducted with members of senior management (chief executive officers, vice-presidents, and directors) from Tourism British Columbia,⁸ Tourism Whistler, Tourism Vancouver, Tourism Richmond, and the CTC – Canada’s DMO. Interviews took place from March to July 2012, that is, two years post-Games. While our list of

interviewees was not extensive, our purposive sampling allowed us to access the strategic leadership of all five of the host DMOs. Combined with our other data, this gave us a rich understanding of how DMOs viewed legacy. Interview questions were guided by themes emanating from our review of the literature on event legacy and event leveraging. An interview guide was used to provide focus for the interview and questions centred on the following areas: (1) participants' understanding of Olympic legacy and leveraging, (2) the tourism legacy planning process, (3) event leveraging strategies and initiatives, (4) tourism legacies in the pre-Games, Games, and post-Games periods, and (5) challenges and lessons learned from leveraging the 2010 Winter Games for tourism benefits. All interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed for analysis.

Data analysis

We employed an interpretive method of qualitative content analysis to analyse the data. This method of analysis can be defined as 'any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings' (Patton, 2002, p. 453). Specifically, we used a directed version of qualitative content analysis, whereby initial coding began with a theory and/or relevant researching findings, followed by the researcher(s) allowing for themes and categories to emerge from the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). According to Denis, Lamothe, and Langley (2001), a partly deductive (theory inspired) and partly inductive (data inspired) approach can be useful as it gives the researcher the opportunity to gain insight from the data without reinventing concepts that have been previously used.

We adapted our process of qualitative content analysis from guidelines provided by Mayring (2000) and Zhang and Wildemuth (2009). We began by defining our unit of analysis. Since 'the instance of a theme might be expressed in a single word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or an entire document' (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009, p. 3), using a theme as a coding unit not only allowed us to uncover the expression of an idea but it facilitated the assignments of codes to text of any size. An initial set of coding categories was developed from our examination of previous studies on event and tourism legacy and existing leveraging models. We used the themes identified in Thomson et al.'s (2013) study in order to determine how legacy was conceptualised by tourism executives in the host city and country as a whole.

Chalip's (2004) and Weed's (2008) leveraging models were also used as a foundation to explore our data for themes relating to leveraging. These included opportunities for leverage; strategic objectives; leveraging initiatives; and temporal dimensions. The use of themes developed in previous studies has the advantage of supporting the accumulation and comparison of research finding across multiple studies. Our coding scheme was then tested on a

sample of text. Coding the data followed. During this process new data continued to be collected; therefore new themes that emerged were continually added to our coding scheme. For example, when examining interview data regarding the challenges and lessons learned from leveraging the 2010 Games for tourism benefits, several inductive codes emerged. These included collaboration, partner engagement, and funding.

In order to organise our data analysis, our codes were grouped into clusters to determine the basic or lowest order themes derived from the textual data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The basic themes were then grouped into 'organising themes', which summarised the lower-order themes. We then derived our 'global themes' by grouping the organising themes (see Table 1). Global themes function as a summary of the main themes and reveal our interpretation of the texts. Finally, our qualitative analysis was supported by the use of *NVivo10*. This qualitative software package was then used to conduct text queries in order to cross-check certain aspects of the manual coding process.

Findings and discussion

The following section describes destination marketers' perspectives on tourism legacy. The themes that emerged from our data analysis are summarised in Table 1. We discuss the role of prospective legacies in DMOs' decision to champion the 2010 Olympic bid, destination marketers' categorisation of tourism benefits based on tangibility, the collaborative planning process, and the various challenges involved in sustaining tourism legacies in the post-Games period.

The legacy imperative

The legacies attributed to former Olympic hosts such as Barcelona and Sydney appeared to be a significant motivator for DMOs' support of the Olympic bid. Barcelona's Olympic legacy of new and improved tourism and transportation infrastructure established the city as a popular cultural and convention destination. Commenting on the state of the tourism industry at the time of the bid, Participant 11 indicated that 'Vancouver was being severely out-gunned in all of its major markets relative to other destinations. Hosting would provide an unwarranted level of publicity and improved infrastructure – legacies that could last well after the Games were over'. Destination marketers also attributed the success of the Olympic referendum⁹ to potential legacies. Participant 10 stated that 'some of the legacies being touted at the time were economic generation, building the tourism industry, and some of the infrastructure. I imagine all those things swayed the voters'. Of our 12 participants, all indicated that tourism legacies were considered to be positive outcomes from the hosting of a mega event. For example, Participant 6 stated that 'legacy is about leaving something behind that is positive, there's not much negative, if at all, the

Table 1. Summary of emergent themes.

Codes	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global themes
Transport infrastructure	Hosting promotes development of infrastructure	Accelerate industry development	Legacy imperative
Sport venues	Growth of products and services	Replicate legacies of previous hosts	
Capacity			
Destination awareness	Increased awareness of Australia and Sydney		
Brand position			
Revenue	Expansion of convention tourism in Barcelona		Tangibility of outcomes
Employment			
Seasonal fluctuations	New destinations eroding market share	Mitigate competition	
Market share	Games a platform to refresh Canada's brand		
Global marketplace			
Destination image	Skills, knowledge, and experience are important for hosting future events	Legacies can be intangible or soft	Tangibility of outcomes
Brand equity			
Destination profile	Image and profile are difficult to measure		
Hosting skills			
Convention centre	Programmes and initiatives provide long-term benefits	Legacies can be long lasting, permanent	

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Codes	Basic themes	Organising themes	Global themes
Highway Rapid Transit Programmes Initiatives	Infrastructure enhances tourist experience in the long term		
Partner engagement	Partnerships are critical to leveraging activities amongst host DMOs	Formalised collaboration necessary	Collaborative planning process
Collaboration Relationship building	Present host DMOs as one voice		
Resources Objectives Leveraging initiatives	Need to pool DMO resources Varying mandates	Mobilisation of DMOs across Canada	
Planning Working groups			
Economy	Economic crises affect travel	Unpredictability of the world market	Challenges of delivering legacy
Disease Media exposure Interest	Travel impacted by disease outbreaks 'Halo' around Canada during Games One-time investment by federal government	Interest and funding wane post-Games	
Conversion Funding Support			

Table 2. Host DMOs' anticipated tourism outcomes and time of production.

DMO	Short–medium-term outcomes	Long-term outcomes
National	Brand building	Increased destination awareness
	Media relations	Increased brand awareness
	Build alliances with partners	Increased brand equity
	Promote 'Canada's Games'	Enhanced destination profile
		Enhanced destination image
Provincial/ municipal	Increased visitation	Collaboration with partners
		Increased destination awareness
	Increased visitor spending	Increased destination profile
	Increased length of visit	Enhanced destination image
	Increased employment	Sport infrastructure
		Transportation infrastructure
		Knowledge, skills, and experience
		Collaboration with partners
		Increased volunteer base

Sources: Compiled from interview data, CTC (2010), CTC (n.d.), Tourism British Columbia (2008), Tourism Richmond (2007), and Tourism Vancouver (n.d.).

Games could only accelerate development of our industry'. In addition to an inherently positive connotation of legacy, destination marketers also described tourism outcomes in terms of its temporal nature or time of production (see Table 2). Tourism legacy was thought to be produced in the short to medium and long term. Participants therefore identified a variety of tourism benefits that could be generated in the years preceding the event as well as after the event was concluded.

After Vancouver won the Olympic bid, the host DMOs developed several strategy documents. For example, the province of British Columbia and its tourism industry developed a 10-year strategic framework (2005–2015) that identified the 2010 Games as a key catalyst to double tourism revenue to \$18 billion in 2015 (Tourism British Columbia, 2003). The media exposure associated with the Games was expected to produce quantifiable impacts in the form of increased visitation, employment, and revenue in the region. Other notable outcomes would be the improvement in tourism infrastructure and enhancement of the region's image and profile (see Table 2). As the national marketing organisation, the CTC developed a 2008–2012 Olympic Games Tourism Strategy for the entire country. The organisation was given a mandate by the federal government to use the Games as a platform to market Canada as a desirable tourist destination, with the ultimate goal being the growth of Canada's tourism revenues (CTC, n.d., p. 9). In the short term, the CTC focused on promoting the 2010

Games as ‘Canada’s Games’ and working with its partners to build a new tourism brand personality for Canada. These objectives were expected to generate lasting positive effects for the country’s tourism sector.

Tangibility of tourism legacies

Our data indicated that destination marketers at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels were hesitant to define tourism legacy, but preferred to categorise outcomes based on tangibility. For example, when asked to define the term legacy, Participant 11 attempted to describe it by saying:

Legacy is hard to define; I could probably best describe it in what I would consider to be the legacies from the Games themselves. Some of it is physical like the Convention Centre; it inevitably would have been built but the project was accelerated; the Sea-to-Sky Highway and the Canada Line – again projects that were accelerated. Overall, now we have fantastic infrastructure in the city that is generating benefits for tourism industry and of course we couldn’t pay for the exposure that we got from the Games.

Destination marketers’ views of the tangibility of outcomes seemed to vary depending on the type of DMO (national, provincial, or municipal). For example, national destination marketers identified tangible, long-term tourism legacies as increased awareness of Canada as a destination, improved brand position, brand equity, brand awareness, and increased overall profile of the country. However, participants at the provincial and municipal levels viewed destination and brand awareness as intangible outcomes. Participant 7 believed that ‘a soft legacy could be brand awareness which is somewhat more intangible; a hard legacy would be physical infrastructure’. Destination marketers at all levels also highlighted the knowledge, skills, and experience developed as a result of hosting the 2010 Games as significant intangible tourism legacies. For example, Participant 9 stated that ‘we have a number of people trained on the WorldHost¹⁰ programme and we have a volunteer base that now has experience in hosting one of the most complex events that a destination can stage’.

Provincial and municipal destination marketers emphasised the importance of new and improved infrastructure as long-term, permanent, tangible legacies which would improve the tourism product and experience in the region. Participant 10 indicated that ‘tourism is a complex ecosystem, you need to have the product, the brand, and the transportation infrastructure to sell, if people can’t get here then they can’t experience the destination regardless of how good the brand or experience is’. Key capital projects identified included the Sea-to-Sky Highway,¹¹ the extension of the SkyTrain system (rapid transit line), the Vancouver Convention Centre, Whistler Olympic Plaza, and Whistler Sliding Centre; all created in the pre-event period and expected to be sustained well beyond the event.

It is interesting to note that the provincial and municipal destination marketers considered the Vancouver Convention Centre, the SkyTrain (rapid transit link), and the Sea-to-Sky Highway as major legacies of hosting, despite being projects already in development and independent of the 2010 Games. These projects were merely accelerated when Vancouver won hosting rights in 2003. The tourism industry in the region expected to benefit from improved transportation networks, improvements to the Vancouver International Airport, as well as the various sport facilities built for the Games. These sport facilities were expected to attract sport tourists for years after the event.

The diverse outlook on the tourism outcomes highlights that there was some disagreement amongst destination marketers regarding the tangibility of key tourism legacies. Tourism legacies were conceptualised differently depending on the type of DMO (see Figure 1), and their strategies and objectives in turn reflected their organisation's mandates and desired legacies. For example, in keeping with CTC's mission to market Canada to the world, its main interest was refreshing Canada's image and enhancing Canada's destination profile – outcomes its marketers considered to be tangible, but the literature highlights as intangible. The national DMO placed greater emphasis on intangible, longer term legacies that capitalised on Olympic media coverage, while the provincial and municipal DMOs focused on tangible, short- to medium-term outcomes such as increased visitation and length of visit. Tourism British Columbia, for example, was mandated by the provincial government to increase tourism revenues in the province; this may explain why destination marketers in the region highlighted the importance of various longer term legacies but planned for and focused on short–medium-term outcomes.

Collaborative planning process

The desire to plan for and ultimately generate long-term tourism legacies (and by extension economic legacies) fostered DMOs' interest in event leveraging.

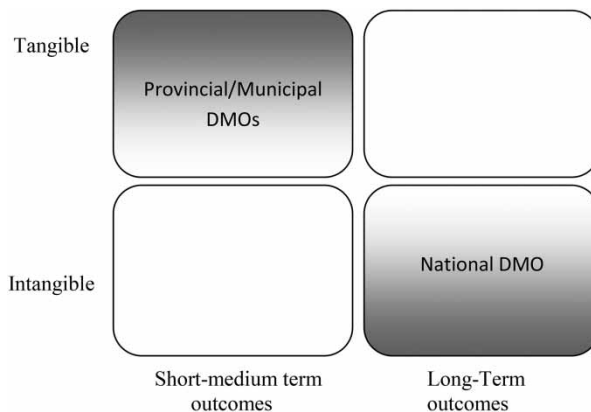


Figure 1. Host DMOs' perspectives on Olympic tourism legacy.

Legacy planning and event leveraging appeared to be synonymous, as participants indicated that event leveraging was merely a means of obtaining benefits from hosting an event. Strategies and initiatives were implemented to maximise the opportunities presented by bidding for and hosting the 2010 Winter Games. The Canadian federal government provided the CTC with one-time funding of \$26 million (CAD) to support the implementation of marketing strategy for Canada using the Games as a platform (CTC, n.d., p. 9). The Canadian federal government considered the CTC's tourism strategy – Leveraging Canada's Games: 2008–2012 Olympic Games Strategy – one of the key documents related to the hosting of the Games. This document referred to legacy as a 'new way of doing business for the Canadian tourism industry' (CTC, n.d., p. 17). The objectives of the five host DMOs included, but were not limited to, increased destination awareness; enhancement of destination image; increasing visitation in the pre-Games and post-Games periods; and increased visitor spending (CTC, n.d.; Tourism British Columbia, 2008; Tourism Richmond, 2007; Tourism Vancouver, n.d.).

As the national marketing organisation, the CTC used Canada's leveraging strategy as a guide for working with its partners to market the country as a desirable tourism destination. The strategy objectives highlighted included building a new tourism brand personality for Canada, ensuring lasting positive effect for the tourism sector, and promoting the 2010 Games as 'Canada's Games'. The CTC employed a three-phase approach to leveraging the Games for tourism benefits. This strategic approach involved the implementation of programmes and initiatives in the pre-Games period, immediately before and during the Games, and the post-Games period. Phase one or the pre-Games period focused on 'brand building' from January 2008 to September 2009, phase two emphasised media relations from October 2009 to April 2010, and phase three or the post-Games period was meant to 'harvest the afterglow' – a culmination of the positive effects built up from phases one and two. In the post-Games period the CTC expected that a refreshed brand and greater media exposure would lead to increased conversion; that is, the heightened awareness and interest in Canada as a destination would lead to the purchase of new products offered by the various provinces. The three-phase approach recognised that there were opportunities for generating tourism benefits at various stages of hosting. The 'period of event leverage' (Chalip, 2006), as it related to the 2010 context, is considered to be prior to and during the Games, with the goal of producing positive outcomes in the post-event period. Since the federal government's one-time funding of \$26 million (CAD) was expected to be utilised over five years, the end-point for Canada's tourism leveraging strategy was 31 March 2012, two years post-Games and the time of our data collection.

Implementing the national Olympic Tourism Strategy required the collaboration of DMOs at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels. For example, in the years prior to hosting, the provincial and municipal DMOs outside British Columbia were key partners in the building of Canada's new brand – *Canada*

Keep Exploring. Participant 5 stated that ‘to really develop and activate legacy we needed the engagement of all partners; there had to be cooperation among the destination marketers in Canada’. DMOs throughout Canada were particularly important to the National Asset Development Programme which was a pan-Canadian collaboration and investment in the collection of digital assets on Canada and all its provinces and territories. The contribution of the provinces’ DMOs included a total of 3200 digital images, 900 b-roll video clips,¹² and 600 travel story ideas (CTC, 2012) which were collected during phase one of the Olympic tourism strategy. The video clips and images would be critical to phase two, as they would be made available to the international media in the five months prior to the Games as well as during the event. The importance of these digital assets was highlighted by Participant 7 who stated that ‘these assets were critical when we were telling stories in the media, it wasn’t just about British Columbia; it was around all of Canada’.

The 2010 Tourism Consortium formalised the level of collaboration amongst the various DMOs in Canada. Explaining the development of the consortium, Participant 9 stated that

The CTC, Tourism British Columbia, Tourism Vancouver, and Tourism Whistler, were all on parallel paths developing Olympic strategies. The province of British Columbia had a Secretariat that called a meeting of the various tourism entities with the intent of developing a programme which revolved around the three months prior to the Games and during the Games. From there we recognised that if we as tourism industry didn’t take the reins ourselves it might have been dictated by Government and we didn’t want to be usurped by Government on any particular plan. We recognised that the Government was looking short-term and we were looking long-term. We had to be one voice.

Collaboration was therefore a key feature in the planning for and implementation of programmes and initiatives to leverage the 2010 Games in Canada. The decision to ‘separate’ from the Government of British Columbia and work together using a memorandum of understanding allowed the DMOs to coordinate their activities so that they could not only leverage the Games for tourism benefits but also ‘leverage resources from each of the tourism organisations’ (Participant 12). Although the IOC awards an Olympic Games to a host city, the 2010 context illustrates that the country, provinces, and territories presented themselves as one entity to VANOC, sponsors, and the media. This was done in an effort to reduce duplication of efforts and create benefits for the tourism industry as a whole.

Challenges of delivering legacy

The final report of the Olympic Games Impact series (conducted three years after the Games) interpreted tourism indicator data over the entire 12-year reporting period, from 2001 to 2013. The report concluded that being an

event region had ‘little to no effect on the number of overnight tourists during the event year’ (OGI-UBC Research Team, 2013, p. 56) nor did the region ‘appear to have an Olympic Host Advantage in how much visitors spent’ (p. 59). The report also indicated an increase in the number of meetings and conventions held in Vancouver; however, it was unclear whether this increase was ‘due to the Games (making Vancouver a more attractive location for hosting international events) or due to a greater capacity to host international events with the completed expansion of the Convention Centre’ (p. 61) – a development separate from the event. Thus, although the main impetus for hosting the 2010 Games was considered to be a legacy of increased destination awareness of the host city, region, and country (CTC, n.d.; Tourism British Columbia, 2003, 2008), the awareness achieved in 2009 and 2010 was not sustained in the two years post-event.

There was consensus among all participants that the brand building phase of the CTC’s Olympic Tourism Strategy coupled with ‘successful’ hosting of the Games increased awareness and value of Canada’s refreshed and repositioned brand. Furthermore, Canada was ranked number one on FutureBrand’s Country Brand Index¹³ in 2010. Although there is evidence of improvement in Canada’s brand equity, destination marketers commented that awareness and interest in Canada as a destination was not sustained. Participant 5 believed ‘there was a big lift in 2010 following the Games, awareness and interest went up and visitations were good; however, it [visitations] didn’t keep up at that pace’. Participant 8 stated that ‘in 2009 and 2010 there was a kind of halo around Canada so our tourism marketing was able to penetrate much deeper and convert more people to visit, but in 2011 it dropped back down to normal levels’.

In the CTC’s 2010 Interim Report on Canada’s Olympic Games Strategy, long-term outcomes were highlighted which included increased interest in visiting Canada, continued growth of tourism export revenues, and increased number of high-yield visitors to Canada (CTC, 2010, p. 7). It is interesting to note that our data showed that several of the programmes and initiatives that were implemented to create long-term impacts were indicated as legacies themselves by destination marketers. For example, the National Asset Development Programme was conceived as a means to achieving the strategic objective of brand building, which was in turn expected to generate a legacy of increased awareness. This programme was cited by participants as a key legacy of the Games since these digital assets were still being utilised in the years after the Games. Relationship building with tourism partners was also a part of phase one of Canada’s Olympic Tourism Strategy; however, the collaboration amongst tourism entities is considered by participants to be a long-term legacy, rather than simply a leveraging activity as indicated in the 2010 Interim Report (CTC, 2010, p. 8). Participant 5 stated that

the legacy for us has been about working together, it has been about cultivating and nurturing relationships that were developed in the course of preparing for the

Games. So there are those behaviours and relationships that are probably the longest-lasting legacy.

Destination marketers shared the view that they adequately planned for the creation of legacies; however, despite their collaborative approach the host DMOs encountered several challenges. Participant 2 stated that

As a DMO it is important to be realistic about the impact of these huge events. Often there are some grand ideas about the effect of the Games; we can't forget that tourism and brand do not live in isolation. The industry faces challenges in the form of the experience and the product itself, transportation, policy issues, terrorism, and reduction in funding; there are things we just can't plan for.

Several participants attributed the lacklustre performance of the industry in the post-Games period to the European economic crisis. For example, Participant 4 commented 'we had some really good plans and strategies but our markets hit some tough economic times. The question is if we didn't have the Games would visitations have declined even more?' Destination marketers also highlighted that future hosts should consider that international media quickly moves on to the next big event. Whilst the CTC saw success with the launch of a new, revitalised brand for Canada, the other host DMOs considered the Games not so much an opportunity to increase awareness of the city and region and ultimately tourism revenues, but one of capacity building. Improvements in tourism infrastructure, building of a volunteer base, and increased hosting experience were expected to serve the region in the years to come as long-term legacies of the Games.

Conclusion and implications

The purpose of this study was to examine how destination marketers in an Olympic host city, region, and country conceptualised tourism legacy. Potential tourism legacies are widely considered the impetus for bidding and hosting an Olympic Games; as such, Vancouver's bid was championed by the city's DMO. Legacy was a central theme of Vancouver's Olympic bid and featured prominently in the city's tourism strategy documents; however, we found that host DMOs neglected to define or clearly articulate the elements that constituted a tourism legacy. The need to justify the public expenditure necessary to bid for and host an Olympic Games, and the funds required to implement leveraging strategies, has contributed to the salience of the legacy in Olympic discourse. This fits with Cashman and Horne's (2013) view that legacy is a 'political notion through and through, while appearing simple, this makes it attractive' (p. 51) to event proponents. Legacy can be considered a taken-for-granted term (Cashman, 2006) which is not properly defined and therefore serves as a point of convergence (Gold & Gold, 2009) for the thinking of groups such as host DMOs which have divergent views and agendas.

DMOs' varied perspectives on tourism legacy have implications not only for the development of joint and individual strategies, but also for the measurement and evaluation of legacies post-Games. In order to plan for legacy creation and delivery, future host DMOs should clearly articulate how legacy fits into their mandate when developing leveraging strategies. By outlining the meaning of legacy in the host context, DMOs can determine the type of legacies they intend to pursue and their time of production; this would assist in identifying potential opportunities for legacy production at various stages of the event.

In the 2010 Games context, tourism legacy was considered to be a positive outcome of bidding and hosting. There was little to no mention of the various negative impacts of hosting such as over-crowding, Games-time aversion (tourists avoidance of the city and region during the Olympic year), and tourism displacement or crowding out (Matheson, 2002; Solberg & Preuss, 2007). The emphasis on positive impacts and downplaying or avoidance of negative impacts of hosting an Olympic Games can result in unrealistic expectations in the host city, region, and country. Future host DMOs should consider incorporating potential negative consequences into their leveraging models. According to Weed (2009), applying the leveraging concept to 'mitigate as well as leverage' (p. 624) may offer a more proactive approach to capitalising on the opportunities created by hosting large scale sport tourism events. Therefore, developing leveraging strategies that generate positive impacts and simultaneously mitigate negative outcomes may offer the greatest chance for tourism benefits to outweigh the various economic, social, and environmental costs of hosting. Gratton and Preuss (2008) argued that legacies should be regarded as those benefits that are planned and unplanned, tangible and intangible, and negative as well as positive. It must also be noted that what can be considered positive legacies for one group of stakeholders can be considered negative for another. Consider, for example, the influx of tourists during Games-time. Although increased visitation in the short term is considered a benefit to the tourism industry in the host city and region, it may result in increased crime and traffic congestion (Haxton, 2000; Lenskyj, 2000), thereby, negatively impacting residents.

Our analysis suggested that host DMOs considered legacy planning and event leveraging to be synonymous. Leveraging in the 2010 context was conceptualised as a means towards legacy creation. Chalip and Heere (2014), however, asserted that event leverage is grounded in a logic that distinguishes it from legacy planning, as the IOC's discourse on legacy focuses on event organisation. They suggested that although organising committees matter when it comes to leveraging strategies, models of strategic leverage do not put the onus on said committees. Weed, Stephens, and Bull (2011) suggested that the award of an Olympic Games may act as an 'exogenous shock' to the tourism policy system. This shock may temporarily (or permanently) strengthen the policy community, leading to greater collaboration; however, considering that legacy is a contested term with varied conceptualisations among destination

marketers, leveraging the Games for tourism benefits may 'generate a conundrum rather than a formula for action, planning, or policy making' (Tomlinson, 2014, p. 150). The question then remains who should be responsible for the planning, delivery, and management of tourism legacies? Since a mega event is a 'flash in history' (Solberg & Preuss, 2007), it follows that effects on visitor spending, branding, and awareness would likely be in the short term. Therefore, effective leverage requires strategising beyond any single event to achieve long-term tourism benefits. Rather than incorporating a portfolio of events in its national tourism leveraging strategy, host DMOs viewed the Games as the leverageable resource. Future host DMOs may consider incorporating a portfolio of events when developing joint and individual leveraging strategies and providing an array of products and services that the host destination and region can offer (Chalip & Heere, 2014).

In conclusion, our analysis and subsequent findings show that although legacy continues to be widely used by academics, media, organising committees, and destination marketers alike, a definition is still elusive. The meaning of legacy is considered to be shaped in the context in which the Games are delivered. DMOs' conceptualisations of legacy vary depending on their mandates, as well as the particular needs and aspirations of their destination. In the case of Vancouver, hosting the 2010 Games resulted in accelerated improvements to the Sea-to-Sky Highway, the SkyTrain system, as well as the construction of various sports facilities. From a destination marketing perspective, these legacies lead to a strengthened tourism product and destination brand. The study also highlights the importance of a collaborative approach in developing leveraging strategies for the host city, region, and country. The development of the 2010 Tourism Consortium allowed the host DMOs to pool resources as well as engage with VANOC, sponsors, and media as a single entity. Our study also illustrates that although DMOs engaged in leveraging activities to produce long-term tourism benefits, participants indicated that key legacies were the increased level of collaboration among DMOs in Canada and the development of programmes and initiatives, rather than the long-term outcomes of increased destination awareness and enhanced image of Canada and the host region. This would suggest that bid cities and regions would only benefit from this collaboration in the long term by hosting an ongoing portfolio of events.

Notes

1. For the purpose of this research study the 'Olympic Games' refers to the Summer and/or Winter edition and its corresponding Paralympic events.
2. The Australian Tourist Commission underwent a name change and is now referred to as Tourism Australia.
3. Vancouver has been named Condé Nast Traveler's 'Best City in the Americas' in 2004, 2005, 2006, 2009, 2010, and 2012; it has also won Travel Weekly Magazine's 'Best Destination in Canada' every year since the award's inception in 2003.

4. Long term can be defined as the period that begins with the bidding of the event and ends at some point in the future that is yet to be determined.
5. The short term refers to the period immediately before, during, and after the event.
6. The eight working groups were: Research and Measurement, Visitor Services/Volunteer Training, Travel Trade, Media Relations, Destination/Brand marketing, Leveraging Sponsors, Beijing 2008, and Events.
7. In the Vancouver 2010 context, 'federal DMO' refers to the Canadian Tourism Commission, 'provincial DMO' refers to Tourism British Columbia, and 'municipal DMOs' refer to Tourism Vancouver, Tourism Whistler, and Tourism Richmond.
8. As of 1 April 2010 Tourism British Columbia is housed in the province's Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Skills Training.
9. A vote held on 22 February 2003 asked Vancouver residents whether or not they supported the city's bid to host the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The final result was 64% in favour of hosting and 36% against.
10. WorldHost offers customer service training for tourism and hospitality professionals. It was launched in British Columbia, Canada as the SuperHost programme in 1985 offering service training for EXPO '86.
11. The Sea-to-Sky Highway connects the Greater Vancouver Area to the Resort Municipality of Whistler.
12. B-roll video clips are secondary footage used to add interest or meaning to a news story or marketing video.
13. FutureBrand is a global brand and innovation consultancy firm, its Country Brand Index is an annual study that examines and ranks country brands. Canada was ranked 12th in 2006, 8th in 2008, and 2nd in 2009.

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