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## **Nation branding: marketing New Zealand via movie set tourism**

### **Introduction**

Due to the undeniable economic values arising from a clearly developed image, countries have started to perceive a nation as a brand promoted on a world scale, consequently applying brand strategies and seeking values appealing to their target markets. A strategy entails a coherent message to be conveyed to a target audience in order to distinguish a country in a highly competitive environment. Thus implemented branding functions as „the process of designing, planning and communicating the name and the identity, in order to build or manage the reputation”<sup>1</sup>. The process can be incorporated by countries utilizing nation branding as a means of acquiring global recognition and achieving global competitiveness<sup>2</sup>, so countries attempt to develop a strong brand reputation, create a reliable and sustained image as their competitive identity. Reputation becomes a key differentiator for a country with a direct and measurable impact on every aspect of its engagement with other countries and a critical role in its economic, social, political and cultural progress<sup>3</sup>.

### **Film-induced tourism**

The brand images of countries such as the United States of America and Great Britain have been built on decades of political and economic activities, a rich cultural background and a versatile tourism supply<sup>4</sup>. However other countries of lower perception in the international audience need to seek a unique competitive advantage to be a serious player on the global marketplace. Film-induced tourism has emerged as an effective marketing tool to stimulate awareness of a country and tourist visits through film-associated promotional initiatives. A movie acquaints a viewer with

<sup>1</sup> Simon Anholt, *Competitive Identity: The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Region*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2007, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Keith Dinnie, *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*, First Edition, Elsevier Ltd, Oxford 2008, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> Simon Anholt, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Teemu Moilanen, Seppo Rainisto, *How to Brand Nations, Cities and Destinations. A Planning Book for Place Branding*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2009, p. 6.

a place and generates a desire to explore the screened location, becoming a paramount tourist motivator for travel. Destinations benefit from a growing trend of set-jetting performed by persons traveling to locations first seen in feature films. The relatively new phenomenon of film-induced tourism relates to „visitation to sites where movies and television programs have been filmed, as well to tours to production studios, including film-related theme parks”<sup>5</sup>. It may involve visits to real places portrayed within a specific movie (towns, villages, countryside and other environments that have been utilized as film shooting locations), visits to studio sets, film theme parks and attractions, locations where filming is currently taking place or a location marketed as a filmic location, where the film may not have been experienced by the tourist but attractive marketing imagery induces interest, participation in organized tours of film locations or film celebrity homes, haunts and associated film sites, visits to film festivals or destinations for film premieres, either to view or to watch the arrival of film celebrities<sup>6</sup>. Consequently on-location screen production generates on-location tourism.

Movie set motivation may appear to underlie film-induced tourist behavior, although an individual may visit a screened location for various reasons, even accidentally, while participating in a broader holiday or business trip. Three types of film tourists and associated motivations prevail:

1. Serendipitous film tourists, who just happen to be in a destination portrayed in a film and may or may not participate in film tourist activities, but their presence in a film destination is unrelated to the film. Motivations are based on social interaction and novelty.
2. General film tourists, who are not specifically drawn to a film location but who participate in film tourism activities while at a destination. Motivations are based on novelty, education and nostalgia.
3. Specific film tourists, who actively seek out places they have seen in a film. Motivations include self-actualization, pilgrimage, self-identity, fantasy, romance, nostalgia<sup>7</sup>.

Regardless of the motivation factors that drive an individual to visit a screened location the movie set tourism has proved to be an attractive niche of significant importance in the national marketing strategies of many countries.

### **New Zealand’s marketing strategy**

New Zealand, called *Aotearoa* by its indigenous Māori people meaning „the land of the long white cloud”<sup>8</sup>, markets its uniqueness as a country comprising the whole globe in one place, while for most of the world seems to be a very remote country, almost

<sup>5</sup> Peter Robinson, Sine Heitmann, Peter U.C. Dieke (edit.), *Research Themes for Tourism*, CABI, Wallingford 2011, p. 189.

<sup>6</sup> Joanne Connell, *Film tourism — Evolution, progress and prospects*, *Tourism Management* 33 (2012), p. 1009–1010.

<sup>7</sup> Niki Macionis, *Understanding the film-induced tourist*, [in] Frost, Warwick, Croy, Glen and Beeton, Sue (edit.), *International Tourism and Media Conference Proceedings*, Tourism Research Unit, Monash University, Melbourne 24th–26th November 2004, p. 89.

<sup>8</sup> A.H. McLintock (edit.), *Te Ara — the Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, originally published in 1966, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/1966/aotearoa>, retrieved on 15 Dec 2017.

inaccessible, at the very edge of the earth. The 1999-launched *100% Pure New Zealand* strategy was the first NZ's global marketing campaign implementing a consistent message and imaginary in all of its tourism markets promoting New Zealand as one of the most enduring and desirable destinations in the world. The promotional strategy was developed to rebrand New Zealand, offering visitors a single, compelling reason to visit the country, thus capitalizing on New Zealand's reputation as an untouchable paradise marketed with a picture of remarkable people, unique culture and invigorating adventure visitors will experience within New Zealand's landscape<sup>9</sup>. As the pre-1999 marketing of New Zealand as a tourism destination was fragmented and confusing, the consolidated brand communicated a single, clear and concise message of the country's unique combination of landscapes, people and activities found anywhere else on the globe, all designed to capture the imagination of its target market. Over the years it has been used as 100% pure relaxation, 100% pure welcome, 100% pure adrenalin, and 100% pure you — all connected back to the core premise of 100% Pure New Zealand<sup>10</sup>. The essence of the message is retained in the *100% Pure New Zealand* official logo. It is simple, raw and unmistakably New Zealand genuine. It incorporates the map of the country in the percentage symbol, while its Pure Pākati fonts reflect the letters carved out of native Kauri timber using traditional skills<sup>11</sup> (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The 100% Pure New Zealand campaign logo

Source: Tourism New Zealand, <https://www.newzealand.com/int/>, retrieved on 15 Dec 2017.

*100% Middle-earth, 100% Pure New Zealand*, an adaptation of the *100% Pure New Zealand* promotional campaign with its 2012 edition awarded World's Leading Destination Marketing Campaign in the World Travel Awards 2012 Grand Final<sup>12</sup>, leveraged the huge exposure New Zealand got on the global stage from the first *Hobbit* movie. First launched in August 2012 the campaign depicted New Zealand not as a pure movie fantasy, but authentic land with lush rainforests, glaciers, geothermal hot pools, snow-capped mountains, perfect white sand beaches, all to be explored by special interest travellers seeking diverse and unique experiences in one place. The campaign marketed New Zealand as the home of Middle-earth, directly referring to J.R.R.

<sup>9</sup>Eric Helleiner, Andreas Pickel (edit.), *Economic Nationalism in a Globalizing World*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London 2005, p. 207.

<sup>10</sup>Tourism New Zealand Corporate Website, *100% Pure New Zealand. What we do*, <http://www.tourismnewzealand.com/about/what-we-do/campaign-and-activity/>, retrieved on 15 Dec 2017.

<sup>11</sup>Tourism New Zealand Corporate Website, *100% Pure New Zealand hits sixteen with new look and an even richer story*, <http://www.tourismnewzealand.com/news/100-pure-new-zealand-hits-sixteen-with-new-look-and-an-even-richer-story/>, retrieved on 15 Dec 2017.

<sup>12</sup>World Travel Award, <https://www.worldtravelawards.com/award-worlds-leading-destination-marketing-campaign-2012>, retrieved on 17 Dec 2017.

Tolkien's legendarium, the human-inhabited world in Tolkien's imagined mythological past. This way it appealed to *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies fans who wished to experience the Middle-earth reality, accordingly capitalizing on opportunities generated by movies produced in New Zealand and promoting the country as an exceptional travel destination. *100% Middle-earth, 100% Pure New Zealand* rebranded New Zealand into Middle-earth. The strategy focused on converting the international attention New Zealand drew from starring in *The Hobbit* trilogy, into travel. It was designed to demonstrate how easy it was for people to come to New Zealand, experience Middle-earth's stunning landscapes, embracing people and unique activities.

### **New Zealand's film locations**

New Zealand can boast considerably impressive film industry. A remote country with mysterious landscapes, ancient forests made up of lush ferns, podocarps and towering kauri trees, and ubiquitous haze create a magical world of fantasy that can be transferred on screen. After the 1934 release of its first feature-length sound film *Romantic New Zealand*, the term "a world in a nutshell"<sup>13</sup> was coined for the country, which is particularly meaningful within the context of the film production. Movie producers find the world's nature in one relatively small country: tropical beaches, ocean, forests, jungles, deserts, snow mountains, glaciers, fiords, waterfalls, active volcanoes, geysers, emerald lakes, caves with underground waterfalls. Thus New Zealand is home to some of the most sophisticated film productions, with its most prominent high fantasy *The Lord of the Rings* movie trilogy, filmed between October 1999 and December 2000 entirely in New Zealand after roughly half a century from publication of the first novel. Transformed into imaginary world of Middle-earth, New Zealand fulfilled the requirements of an alternative, fantasy world so genuinely that it led to the emergence of the phenomenon of Tolkien tourism. *The Lord of the Ring* trilogy fans by travelling to sites of film- and book-related significance experience the stunning locations and lands that starred as Middle-earth, with most noted spots like the village of Hobbiton created in Matamata (Figure 2), Mount Victoria in NZ's capital Wellington, Kaitoke Regional Park filmed as a location for Rivendell and the Fords of Isen, Queen Elizabeth Park near Paraparaumu, the Wairarapa region — all the North Island location, as well as Nelson Tasman, Takaka Hill, three national parks — Abel Tasman, Nelson Lakes and Kahurangi, Mount Sunday in Canterbury region, Mackenzie Country, Mount Aspiring National Park, Lake Wakatipu, Fiordland National Park — located on South Island<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Alfio Leotta, *Touring the Screen: Tourism and New Zealand Film Geographies*, Intellect, Bristol 2011, p. 15.

<sup>14</sup> Tourism New Zealand, *The Lord of the Rings trilogy filming locations*, <https://www.newzealand.com/int/feature/the-lord-of-the-rings-trilogy-filming-locations/>, retrieved on 17 Dec 2017.



Figure 2. The Hobbiton movie set in Matamata

Source: Tourism New Zealand, *The Lord of the Rings trilogy filming locations*, <https://www.newzealand.com/int/feature/the-lord-of-the-rings-trilogy-filming-locations/>, retrieved on 19 Dec 2017.

Following the success of *The Lord of the Rings* and the Middle-earth effect, *The Hobbit* trilogy was also filmed entirely in New Zealand, throughout locations in both the North and South Islands, including the rebuilt 12 acre village of Hobbiton with the lush dairy farming landscape around the Waikato town of Matamata used to portray the peaceful Shire region of Middle-earth. *The Chronicles of Narnia* with its mythical landscapes feature the Coromandel Peninsula, its magnificent Cathedral Cove, Woodhill Forest, Flock Hill, Elephant Rocks, Purakanui Falls. Other notable movie productions include Disney’s *Pete’s Dragon*, the blockbuster film *King Kong*, *The Last Samurai* starring Tom Cruise, the 2017 epic sci-fi movie *Ghost in the Shell*, not to mention the 1993 movie *The Piano* which made Karekare beach in Auckland’s Waitakere Ranges famous around the world. Outstanding landscapes and iconic scenery became remarkable stars of the films popularizing New Zealand as an international film making destination. Table 1 presents top 10 movie locations famous due to film production.

Table 1.

Top movie locations portrayed by world-class directors

Location	Feature Films	Description
Lyall Bay, Wellington	King Kong	Oscar-winning New Zealand director Peter Jackson recreated New York in his home town of Wellington, for his 2005 remake of the film classic King Kong. “Skull Island”, home of King Kong, was located in a large-scale set built above Shelly Bay, on the Miramar peninsula and the dinosaur run scene in the movie took place at surfing beach Lyall Bay

Location	Feature Films	Description
Oreti Beach, Southland	The World's Fastest Indian	Oreti Beach, ten kilometers from the city of Invercargill, offers a vast expanse of sand, surf and sunshine. The Beach was filmed as a race track, a 26 kilometer stretch of perfectly smooth sand. It was where Burt Munro, subject of the film <i>The World's Fastest Indian</i> , created speed records on his modified Indian Scout motorcycle
Karekare Beach	The Piano	The breathtaking Karekare beach in Auckland's Waitakere Ranges was made famous in the 1993 movie <i>The Piano</i> , directed by New Zealander Jane Campion. <i>The Piano</i> won Oscar awards in three categories: Best Original Screenplay for Jane Campion, Best Actress for Holly Hunter, and Best Supporting Actress for NZ actress Anna Paquin
Kaitoke Regional Park	The Lord of The Rings, The Hobbit	Kaitoke Regional Park, north of Wellington, was used as a location for Rivendell, the home of the elves, in <i>Middle-earth Trilogies</i> . After dismantlement of the film sets, the park returned to its natural state
Flock Hill	Chronicles of Narnia	Flock Hill Station, near Arthur's Pass in Canterbury, was chosen by New Zealand director Andrew Adamson as the setting for the climactic final battle between Aslan's forces and the powerful army of the White Witch, in the <i>Chronicles of Narnia — The Lion, the Witch &amp; the Wardrobe</i>
Aoraki, Mt Cook, Hooker Glacier Lake, Christchurch — Canterbury	Vertical Limit	<i>Vertical Limit</i> , the thriller about climbing and falling from mountains was directed by New Zealander Martin Campbell. Filming took place on New Zealand's highest mountain (3,754 m), Aoraki, Mt Cook
Gorgeous Glenorchy, Queenstown	Wolverine, The Hobbit Trilogy, The Chronicles of Narnia, Pete's Dragon	Paradise — a real place at the end of the Queenstown — Glenorchy road in New Zealand's Southern Lakes region — set the scene for Beorn's House in <i>The Hobbit Trilogy</i> . This location was used in <i>Wolverine</i> , <i>The Hobbit Trilogy</i> , <i>The Chronicles of Narnia</i> and <i>Disney's Pete's Dragon</i>
Mount Taranaki	The Last Samurai	Most of the filming of <i>The Last Samurai</i> , starring Tom Cruise, took place near New Plymouth in Taranaki. A Japanese village was constructed for filming on the hillsides of the Uruti Valley, with Mount Taranaki standing in for "Mount Fuji"
Hobbiton Movie Set, Waikato region	The Lord of The Rings, The Hobbit	Hobbiton Movie Set — in the lush rural Waikato region — continues to attract international visitors looking to experience their own slice of Middle-earth in New Zealand. This set was used for filming <i>The Lord of The Rings</i> and <i>The Hobbit trilogies</i>
Cathedral Cove, Coromandel Peninsula	Chronicles of Narnia	The set for the ruins of the castle Cair Paravel, in the <i>Chronicles of Narnia — Prince Caspian</i> , was built on the nearby Hereherataura Peninsula, overlooking iconic Cathedral Cove. From beautiful Haei Beach on the Coromandel Peninsula you can walk to Cathedral Cove

Source: Tourism New Zealand, *Top 10 Film Locations*, <https://www.newzealand.com/int/feature/top-10-film-locations-in-new-zealand/>, retrieved on 19 Dec 2017.

Aware of the benefits of the on-location movie productions, New Zealand established The New Zealand Film Commission, an autonomous crown entity working to grow the New Zealand movie industry. The Commission actively supports and administers funding for films projects, including internationally recognized and celebrated feature films that entertain diverse audience. Through financing and administration of incentive schemes it has been involved in more than 300 feature films including *Goodbye Pork Pie*, *Heavenly Creatures*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, *Avatar*, *Hunt for The Wilder people* and *Mr Pip*<sup>15</sup>. NZFC attracts international screen productions to New Zealand by providing financial support for filming in that country. The New Zealand Screen Production Grant (NZSPG), which combines the former Large Budget Screen Production Grant (LBSPG) for international productions and the Screen Production Incentive Fund for New Zealand productions<sup>16</sup>, provides incentives for the further development of New Zealand's screen industry, with a significant proportion of the budget allocated to encourage international medium to large budget productions to locate in New Zealand. In the period of 1 January 2010 and 1 June 2017 international grants paid as LBSPG and NZSPG equalled to NZD 483,385,377, with a total amount of NZD 161,537,622 grant for *The Hobbit* trilogy. Other feature films include *The Adventures of Tintin* with total payment of NZD 34,438,582, *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* and *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* with total grant of NZD 29,221,535, or other high-profile movies as *Avatar* (NZD 8,231,185 — the final grant amount paid in 2010, 4 x interim grant payments made prior to 2010), *Fast & Furious 7* (NZD 5,717,134), and a recent large budget action film production *Ghost in the Shell* with an interim grant of NZD 12,594,994 paid out in 2016 and a final grant payment yet to be proceed. Table 2 presents a list of selected LBSPG and NZSPG international grants paid between 1 January 2010 and 1 June 2017.

Table 2.

Selected LBSPG and NZSPG international grants approved 1 Jan 2010 and 1 June 2017

Name of Screen Production	State	Total NZ Qualifying Expenditure (in NZD excluding GST)	Total Grant (in NZD excluding GST)	Date
The Adventures of Tintin — The Secret of the Unicorn	1st Interim	61,282,323	8,986,885	May-10
Avatar	Final	54,874,568	8,231,185	Jul-10
Yogi Bear	Final	41,542,236	6,231,335	Oct-10
The Adventures of Tintin — The Secret of the Unicorn	2nd Interim	89,130,137	13,369,521	Dec-10
X-Men — First Class	Final	14,614,611	2,192,192	Nov-11
The Hobbit	1st Interim	132,923,081	19,938,462	Jan-12

<sup>15</sup> New Zealand Film Commission, <http://www.nzfilm.co.nz/about-us>, retrieved on 19 Dec 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Ministry Of Business Innovation And Employment, *New Zealand Screen Production Grant*, <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/sectors-industries/screen-industry/nz-screen-production-grant>, retrieved on 19 Dec 2017.

Name of Screen Production	State	Total NZ Qualifying Expenditure (in NZD excluding GST)	Total Grant (in NZD excluding GST)	Date
Rise of the Planet of the Apes	Final	82,427,917	12,364,187	Jan-12
The Adventures of Tintin — The Secret of the Unicorn	Final	80,547,839	12,082,176	Mar-12
The Hobbit	1st Interim — Additional	1,383,414	207,512	Apr-12
Spartacus — Vengeance	Final	62,129,835	9,319,475	Aug-12
The Hobbit	2nd Interim	108,835,714	16,325,357	Aug-12
The Hobbit	3rd Interim	203,634,309	30,545,146	Nov-12
Iron Man 3	Final	23,174,346	3,476,152	Aug-13
The Hobbit	4th Interim	208,379,907	31,256,986	Jan-14
The Hobbit	5th Interim	150,685,384	22,602,808	May-14
The Hobbit	6th Interim	80,924,285	12,138,643	Sep-14
Dawn of the Planet of the Apes	Final	101,142,470	16,857,348	Dec-14
The Hobbit	7th Interim	94,200,425	18,780,050	Apr-15
The Hobbit	Final	49,155,559	9,742,658	Apr-15
Fast & Furious 7	Final	28,585,672	5,717,134	Aug-15
Alvin and the Chipmunks 4	Final	59,751,197	11,950,239	May-16
Pete's Dragon	Interim	58,144,612	11,628,922	Aug-16
The Shannara Chronicles	Final	44,296,452	8,859,290	Aug-16
Ghost in the Shell	Interim	62,974,968	12,594,994	Oct-16
The Jungle Book	Final	26,985,351	5,397,070	Oct-16

Source: based on data from New Zealand Film Commission, *LBSPG and NZSPG International Paid 1 Jan 2010 to 1 June 2017*, <http://www.nzfilm.co.nz/resources/lbspg-and-nzspg-international-paid-1-jan-2010-to-1-june-2017>, retrieved on 19 Dec 2017.

## International inbound tourism to New Zealand

New Zealand's efforts to influence international audience to visit the country resulted in an upward trend of inbound arrivals (Table 3). Since the *100% Pure New Zealand* campaign was launched the number of international visitors to New Zealand has grown considerably. In 2000, one year into the campaign, 181,600 more visitors arrived to New Zealand, which was an increase of 11.30% in relation to the previous year. The upward trend continued as in 2002 New Zealand welcomed more than 2 million visitors for the first time. The year of 2004 was another breakthrough year with almost 11.50% growth (241,433 more arrivals) amounting to 2,347,672 visitors a year. The next 5 years showed a slowdown and even a decline in 2008 and 2009,

when the total number of inbound arrivals never reached 2.5 million a year. The *100% Middle-earth, 100% Pure New Zealand* campaign accelerated the tourism inflow with nearly 6% growth in 2013 (2,717,695 visitors) and record breaking 3.1 million international visitors to New Zealand in 2015. This was up 274,527 (9.61%) from year ending December 2014. For the last 17 years the most dynamic year turned out to be 2016 with nearly 3.5 million inbound arrivals (368,012 more visitors) and a growth of 11.75%. This total number of international visitors is especially relevant in the country of approximately 4.8 million of own resident population<sup>17</sup>.

Table 3.

## International visitor arrivals to New Zealand

Year ended December	Number	Change from previous year	
		Number	Percent
2000	1,789,078	—	—
2001	1,909,809	120,731	6.75%
2002	2,044,962	135,153	7.08%
2003	2,106,229	61,267	3.00%
2004	2,347,672	241,443	11.46%
2005	2,382,950	35,278	1.50%
2006	2,421,561	38,611	1.62%
2007	2,465,680	44,119	1.82%
2008	2,458,552	-7,128	-0.29%
2009	2,458,382	-170	-0.01%
2010	2,525,044	66,662	2.71%
2011	2,601,444	76,400	3.03%
2012	2,564,618	-36,826	-1.42%
2013	2,717,695	153,077	5.97%
2014	2,857,400	139,705	5.14%
2015	3,131,927	274,527	9.61%
2016	3,499,939	368,012	11.75%
2017*	3,688,013	188,074	5.37%

\* year ended October

Source: Stats NZ, Infoshare, *International Travel and Migration, Visitor arrival totals (Annual-Dec)*, <http://archive.stats.govt.nz/infoshare/>, retrieved on 20 Dec 2017.

While evaluating the growth in international arrivals to New Zealand the impact of *The Lord of The Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies on inbound tourism cannot be dismissed. The 2004 International Visitor Survey, completed following the release of

<sup>17</sup> Stats NZ, *Population clock*, [http://archive.stats.govt.nz/tools\\_and\\_services/population\\_clock.aspx?url=/tools\\_and\\_services/population\\_clock.aspx](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/tools_and_services/population_clock.aspx?url=/tools_and_services/population_clock.aspx), retrieved on 19 Dec 2017.

*The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, found that six percent of visitors to New Zealand (around 120,000–150,000 people) cited *The Lord of the Rings* as being one of the main reasons for visiting the country, while one per cent of visitors indicated *The Lord of the Rings* as their main or only reason for visiting. This one per cent related to approximately NZD 32.8 million in spend<sup>18</sup>. The 2012 released *100% Middle-earth, 100% Pure New Zealand* campaign leveraged interest in New Zealand as *The Hobbit* films were cited by a significant number of visitors as an influence on their decision to visit the country<sup>19</sup>. The impact of *The Hobbit* trilogy was more significant than *The Lord of the Rings* due to more strategic use of marketing initiatives associated with the movies, consisting largely in creating the image of New Zealand as Middle-earth.

Increased tourist influx gears international visitor expenditure. Although the growth in inbound arrivals to New Zealand in 2001 and 2002 resulted in increased total expenditure by 10.10% and 13.31% respectively (NZD 578,983,535 and NZD 840,189,003), which contributed to the total amount of NZD 6,311,820,893.27 and NZD 7,152,009,896.51, the subsequent years did not prove so optimistic. The years up to 2013 stayed below NZD 7 billion in tourist spending, with declines even amounting to nearly 9.5% in 2010 (a drop in total expenditures of NZD 686,322,521). The year 2014 marked a significant trend shift of 12.29% increase to exceed NZD 7.3 billion in total visitor spending. Even more promising was 2015 with a growth by 31.26% (NZD 2,309,372,444 more in expenditures) to reach closely NZD 9.7 billion in total inbound tourist spend. The upward trend continued in 2016 when for the first time the total amount of international visitor expenditures exceeded NZD 10 billion (Table 4).

Table 4.

## International visitor expenditure

Year ending December	Total visitor spend (in NZD)	Change from previous year	
		Number (in NZD)	Percent
2000	5,732,837,358.28	—	—
2001	6,311,820,893.27	578,983,535	10.10%
2002	7,152,009,896.51	840,189,003	13.31%
2003	6,696,556,379.22	-455,453,517	-6.37%
2004	6,979,550,745.79	282,994,367	4.23%
2005	6,952,055,587.53	-27,495,158	-0.39%
2006	7,194,319,183.56	242,263,596	3.48%
2007	7,608,454,181.93	414,134,998	5.76%
2008	7,417,108,002.14	-191,346,180	-2.51%
2009	7,242,404,697.23	-174,703,305	-2.36%

<sup>18</sup> Tourism New Zealand, *New Zealand tourism: Facts and figures*, <http://media.newzealand.com/en/story-ideas/new-zealand-tourism-facts-and-figures/>, retrieved on 20 Dec 2017.

<sup>19</sup> Tourism Industry Aotearoa, *Tourism 2025. Growing value together. Whakatipu Uara Ngatahi. Two Years On*, Wellington May 2016, p. 10.

Year ending December	Total visitor spend (in NZD)	Change from previous year	
		Number (in NZD)	Percent
2010	6,556,082,176.46	-686,322,521	-9.48%
2011	6,780,328,970.94	224,246,794	3.42%
2012	6,342,136,162.39	-438,192,809	-6.46%
2013	6,579,562,171.92	237,426,010	3.74%
2014	7,388,171,620.40	808,609,448	12.29%
2015	9,697,544,064.02	2,309,372,444	31.26%
2016	10,085,816,488.59	388,272,425	4.00%

Source: Stats NZ, *International Visitor Survey — Visitor expenditure*, <http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz/wbos/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLECODE7571#>, retrieved on 20 Dec 2017.

The trend in the inbound visitor expenditure over the years 2000–2016 is illustrated in Figure 3.

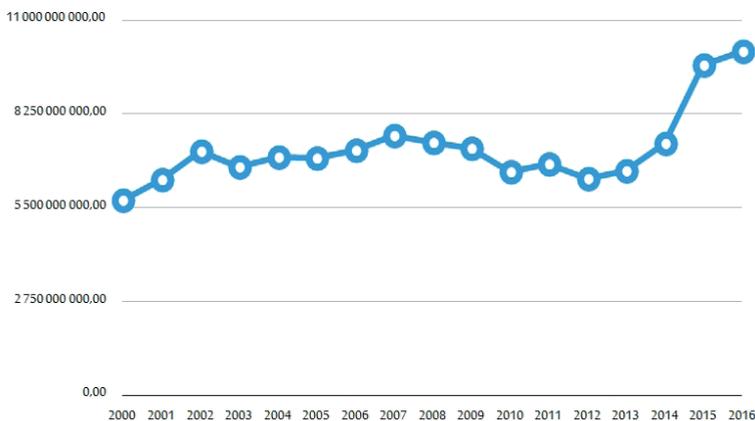


Figure 3. International visitor expenditure

Source: based on data extracted from Stats NZ, *International Visitor Survey — Visitor expenditure*, <http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz/wbos/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLECODE7571#>, retrieved on 20 Dec 2017.

The impact of on-location screen production on visitor arrivals and international spending is especially visible in the Waikato, the Matamata-Piako District, an agricultural area transformed into a major tourist attraction. The release of *The Hobbit* trilogy and the revitalization of Hobbiton resulted in a growing demand for the Hobbiton movie set tours, thus having a significant impact on visitor expenditure in Matamata. Total international spending in the Matamata-Piako District in 2009 amounted to NZD 9 million. Spending on cultural activities contributed around NZD 1 million. Spending on cultural activities grew strongly from 2011 to 2015 and contributed NZD 26 million in 2015. Spending in other areas correspondingly increased by NZD 10 million. Total

international visitors expenditure in Matamata-Piako District increased from NZD 9 million in 2010 to NZD 45 million in 2015<sup>20</sup>.

## Conclusions

Brand aware countries seek a unique differentiator to distinguish themselves in international competition. Encouraged by the worldwide recognition of the beauty of landscapes and scenery featured in international prominent movies *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Piano*, New Zealand found a niche to benefit from on the global market. As first marketing initiatives implemented by the country did not work so efficiently, a more elaborate and coherent strategy was needed for New Zealand to effectively capitalize on international publicity received from movies filmed there. While *The Lord of the Rings* films may seem to be more renowned to the wider public, it was *The Hobbit* trilogy that changed the perception of the country and transformed New Zealand into imaginary world of Middle-earth. Implementation of *100% Middle-earth*, *100% Pure New Zealand* international campaign and more strategic use of promotional initiatives related to the trilogy influenced destination awareness more remarkably, which resulted in a significant development of film-induced tourism. Although there are other associations with the country that inspire holiday makers to decide on a vacation “down under”, Middle-earth remains a key motivator for travel to New Zealand among ardent or less passionate movie fans. High-profile films attracting huge international audience and receiving extensive media coverage has turned out to play a primary role in the promotion of New Zealand as a tourist destination.

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## Abstract

The article discusses the phenomenon of building a country's brand and changing the perception of a country's image (rebranding) by applying a strategy relating to film productions located in a given country. New Zealand's marketing strategy addressed to film fans was built mostly on associations with the works of J.R.R. Tolkien ("The Lord of the Rings", "The Hobbit") by creating the image of the country as a mythical land of Middle-earth in the minds of its target audience. The aim of the article is to show how, basing on a unique marketing strategy, a coherent, one-of-a-kind, easily recognizable image of the country can be created.

## Keywords

nation branding, brand management, marketing strategy, tourism marketing, movie set tourism, film-induced tourism, set-jetting, international tourism, New Zealand

## **Kreowanie marki Nowej Zelandii poprzez turystykę miejsc filmowych**

### Streszczenie

Artykuł porusza kwestie budowania marki kraju oraz zmiany postrzegania kraju (*rebranding*) za pomocą strategii odnoszącej się do filmów, których produkcja odbyła się na terenie danego kraju. Nowa Zelandia swoją strategię marketingową skierowaną do wielbicieli kina oparła w większości na skojarzeniach z twórczością J.R.R. Tolkiena („Władca pierścieni”, „Hobbit”) poprzez wykreowanie w świadomości odbiorcy wizerunku kraju jako mitycznej krainy Śródziemia. Celem artykułu jest ukazanie, jak w oparciu o unikatową strategię marketingową można wykreować spójny, jedyny w swoim rodzaju, łatwo rozpoznawalny wizerunek kraju.

### Słowa kluczowe

marka kraju, budowanie świadomości marki, strategia marketingowa, marketing turystyczny, turystyka filmowa, turystyka międzynarodowa, Nowa Zelandia