

**THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FILM TOURISM
ON SMALL COMMUNITIES**

by

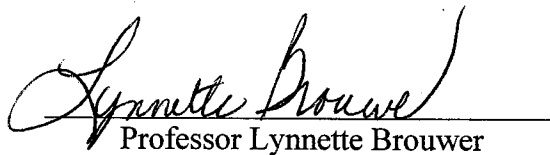
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ABSTRACT

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Over the past several years, movie producers have been filming on location rather than on a lot in Hollywood. The result is that various parts of the country have been depicted on the silver screen, enticing viewers to visit the set locations.

Filmmaking can provide economic benefits to a community by generating money through filming fees and taxes and by employing local crewmembers such as makeup artists and cameramen. Tourism revenue can increase in a particular area because of the marketing of a set location through film. This was the basis of the study: to survey communities that have been featured in films and to obtain information from them regarding the effect the film had on tourism in the area. The research investigated strategies to market a location to the film industry and ways in which it could capitalize on the advertisement of the film.

Through this research, participants from 13 North American communities provided data in which a community can promote itself to the film industry and advertise itself to moviegoers. The data was compiled and analyzed and a marketing model was

developed as an aid for communities seeking film tourism.

The study revealed the more a community was highlighted in a particular film, the larger the increase in tourism revenue. For example, Winterset, Iowa was the setting for the film *Bridges of Madison County* and the covered bridges of the community were a primary focus in the film. Since the release of the film, Winterset has seen a 91%-100% increase in its tourism industry.

This study will complement existing research to help communities design strategies to market their area as a film location. Communities interested in tourism development can use the research as a guide in launching film tourism. Film tourism offices can use it to enhance their growth. Research indicates that by exploring proven techniques, each community can create a development plan to fit their own needs and enhance their ability to be selected as a film production site.

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I am especially grateful to those communities who replied to my request for data; Julie Bonert from the Dyersville Area Chamber of Commerce, Dyersville, Iowa, Cindy, from Wabasha - Kellogg Area Chamber of Commerce, Wabasha, Minnesota, Brenda Hollingsworth, from Winterset, Iowa, and Joanne Olson, Deputy Director of the North Dakota Tourism Division. Without the suggestions made by the communities listed above, the research would have never culminated in a thesis. Thank you.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Cinematography is a billion dollar industry and like tourism it has the ability to invoke images of fantasy to the viewer. Film tourism can be described as tourist visits to a destination as a result of the area being featured on the movie or television screen. In other words, it is the effect Hollywood has on tourism.

Many areas with a declining tourism market have increased visitor activity with the help of film tourism. "If a movie gets shot in an area, it's one of the biggest tourism trailers you can possibly get" claims Jenna Shelley, director of tourism at Spokane Convention and Visitors Bureau, Spokane, Washington. (McDonald, 2002) Dyersville, Iowa, the film location for *Field of Dreams*, saw an influx of tourist traffic following the release of the film. Baseball lovers from all over the world flocked to Dyersville as if it were game seven of the World Series. For years, filmmakers have been taking audiences all over the world, figuratively, and literally.

Need for Study

As the top economic industry for over two decades, tourism offers the potential of creating new jobs, financial prosperity, commercial opportunities and worldwide recognition. (Baker, 2002) In a survey of 463 cities, conducted by the National League of Cities, 46 percent of respondents ranked tourism among their top three important economic sectors and are turning to travel and leisure to expand their local economies. (Yates & Graham, 2000)

The tendency to choose a destination based on factors other than "rest and

relaxation" is part of a nationwide trend in the travel industry. Gone are the days when sun and surf were the determinants in choosing a vacation spot. Ecotourism, adventure travel, and film tourism have developed into hot markets in the travel industry. (DiBona, 1998)

The goal of this study was to guide smaller economic regions in the planning and development of film tourism in order to enhance tourism and its economic impact on the community. The purpose was to supplement marketing efforts related to tourism development and to raise awareness of the economic influence of movie-induced tourism.

Problem Statement

The tourism industry was established as one of the fastest growing world industries in 2000. It has helped many communities by enabling the restoration of historical and cultural structures, making it an important component to the national, and local economies worldwide. (Yates & Graham, 2000)

Klaus Toepfer, United Nations Environment Programme's Executive Director noted the importance of the tourism industry's growth on the world economy when he said, "When businesses as a group decide to improve their performance, they are taking a very important competitive step.... When those businesses are part of one of the largest industries in the world - an industry that contributes US \$3.5 trillion to world GDP and creates 200 million jobs - they are also creating a significant opportunity." ("Sustainable Tourism Development," 2000, ¶ 3)

Small communities typically do not have the resources or the budget to develop tourism to their full economic potential. The purpose of this research was to build an

understanding of marketing efforts related to tourism development and offer suggestions for developing a marketing strategy to attract film tourism.

Research Objectives

1. To demonstrate the impact of filmmaking on a community's economy.
2. To identify marketing tools a community can use to develop film tourism.
3. To model strategies and marketing techniques to assist communities large and small to become recognized by the film industry for moving filming.

Importance / Benefits of the Study

The benefit of this study is hoped to serve as a guide for smaller communities seeking to develop film production as an economic facet and ultimately a long term touristic impact.

Limitations

The limitation to the study was the sample size that had been selected. By selecting communities that had already been chosen as a film location and had developed their film tourism, the researcher was limited in the number of communities from which to survey. While the overall population was statistically small, the information provided by the respondents supported development of a marketing model for film tourism offered in Chapter 5.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Hollywood's Influence on Tourism

For many people, the notion of a vacation in Iowa sounds like a joke but Hollywood has initiated a new segment of the vacation industry: movie induced tourism. Unconventional retreat spots such as Iowa and Kansas have seen tremendous growth in tourism as the result of blockbuster hits such as *Field of Dreams*, *Bridges of Madison County* and, *Dances With Wolves*. ("Where Bluebirds Fly," 1999)

Winterset, Iowa in Madison County, birthplace of John Wayne and film location of the Clint Eastwood directed, *Bridges of Madison County* currently receives an estimated 60,000 tourists a year. (Dorsey, 2000) John Wayne's childhood home and the bridges have always drawn visitors but the release of the film dramatically increased tourist visits. The covered bridges now draw international attention due to the free movie publicity. Doug Hawley, executive director of the Madison County Chamber of Commerce claims "the movie kept us alive...we've always had people here visiting the bridges, but the movie pushed us over the edge --especially internationally." (Edgington, 1996, p. 16)

The ability for the viewer to witness the background scenery of the area is what ignites interest, not necessarily the storyline. M. Night Shyamalan's success with *The Sixth Sense*, *Unbreakable*, and *Signs* turned Philadelphia into a show business city. Prior to the release of *The Sixth Sense*, Philadelphia remained a historical area in the minds of most people. Once the movie hit the screens, the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation was inundated with questions on its website like "where was that

park?” or “what was that restaurant?” (Hiltbrand, 2002) While the audience was watching the movie, the background scenery was striking a chord with viewers.

The retail movie screen is one of the most powerful ways of promoting a particular area regardless of the image it represents. The impression many of us have of Vietnam is conditioned by the Vietnam War. Visions of the country are often those from films about the war, such as *Platoon* and *Good Morning Vietnam*. Although the films portray a depressed, war-torn country where countless soldiers and civilians were killed, tourism in Vietnam has seen an annual growth of 40 per cent since 1991. (Yates & Graham, 2000)

According to the London Tourist Board Overseas Visitors Survey, almost 20% of all visitors to London said television/radio/cinema prompted them to travel to the United Kingdom. It has been estimated that Scotland's three blockbuster hits, *Rob Roy*, *Braveheart*, and *Loch Ness*, generated £7m to £15m in additional tourist revenue. In current U.S. dollars, that amount is the equivalent of \$12 million to \$26 million. Saltram House in Devon realized an increase in visitors by 39% in one year following the release of *Sense and Sensibility*. The increase was linked entirely to the film, as the house and location had not been marketed in any other way. (British Tourist Authority, 1999)

Cultural and Historical Tourism

Research in the past five years indicates that tourism reaches beyond beaches and amusement parks. According to a 1997 study by the Travel Industry Association of America, more than 65 million Americans reported they had visited a historic site or museum, or attended a music, arts or other special event at least once while traveling in

the past year. The study found that this group of travelers has tremendous economic potential for the industry, noting they spend an average of \$615 per trip compared to \$425 for the general U.S. traveler. (DiBona, 1998) This is an important market for a tourism development office searching for ways to increase revenue. By marketing itself through film, especially if the area has a historic or cultural tie, the community can tap into this growing tourism segment.

Another facet of film tourism is the marketing of hometowns. Featuring the hometown of a well-known actor or actress has helped to boost tourism in small towns across the country. "Every famous person comes from somewhere," says Terry Davis of the American Association for State and Local History. "And every somewhere -- especially towns where farm prices are down or the factory has closed or Starbucks isn't interested -- is looking for tourists" (Hampson, 2002) Tours of birthplaces and childhood homes of famous people vary from historic to kitschy. From George Washington's Mount Vernon to Elvis Presely's Graceland, there are an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 "house museums" spread throughout the country. (Hampson, 2002) Many of these homes have been donated and are staffed by volunteers, making them financially successful on some level regardless of the number of visitors who flock to the site. By opening the Lucille Ball-Desi Arnaz Museum and Gift Shop, Lucy's hometown of Jamestown, New York has attracted visitors from every state and 35 nations. (Hampson, 2002)

A hometown marketed as a tourist destination does not even have to be a true setting. When officials in Liberal, Kansas learned of the effects film has on tourism they decided to use *The Wizard of Oz* in order to breathe life into Liberal's financially struggling town museum. *Oz* had no community setting in an identifiable township,

therefore no one could challenge them for their progressive thinking. In 1981 they opened “Dorothy’s House”, a rustic Kansas farmhouse modeled after Judy Garland’s residence in the 1939 movie. Young Dorothies dressed in period costume lead visitors through the house stocked with vintage supplies and appliances. Attendance at the museum rose from 4,000 to 21,000, and was directly attributed to Dorothy’s House. (“Where Bluebirds fly,” 1999)

Filming’s Effect on the Local Economy

The actual filming process can bring about millions of dollars in revenue and employment for the citizens of a community. *A Thousand Acres*, brought in \$21 million and 183 full-time jobs to Illinois during its filming (Beeton, n.d.). There is sufficient evidence that tourists will soon follow, looking for the sites, people, experiences and even fantasies portrayed by the film.

Economists indicate that the economic benefit of tourism for a community is much higher than the actual revenue figures represent because of the “ripple effect” of spending in an area where a company is doing business. (Virginia, 1998) It’s not just the hotels and restaurants that will realize the benefit, but the local stores such as gas stations, gift shops and convenient markets as well. Table 1 provides an example of the ripple effect on local businesses.

Table 1*Tourism's Contribution to Community's Businesses in Missouri*

Business	% Of Income From Tourism
Hotel/Motel	94.5
Restaurants	49.4
Taverns/Bars/Liquor Stores	34.8
Amusement	33.1
Gasoline Stations	31.5
General Merchandise	18.6
Auto Dealers and Garages	15.8
Food (retail)	13.8
Apparel and Accessories	13.6
Lumber, Hardware and Building Materials	12.1
Furniture and Furnishings	12.1
Other Retail	12.2
Drugs	11.4
Farm Supplies and Agricultural Products	8.5
Other Service Firms	4.5

From US Department of Commerce

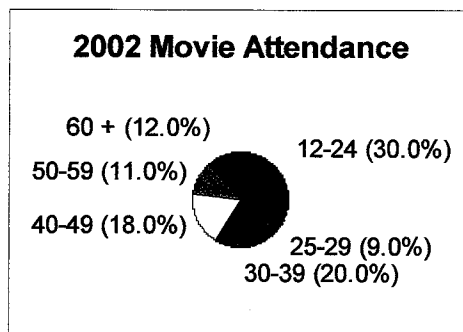
Revenues from local production companies for the city of Philadelphia 2003 are expected to exceed 2001's record of \$108 million by as much as \$10 million. Contributors to 2001's \$108 million were M. Night Shyamalan's *Signs*, *Ultimate X* (an IMAX film), 24 television projects, 30 commercials, 10 documentaries, 10 music videos, and 11 industrial films. (Hiltbrand, 2002) The Jennifer Lopez, Ben Affleck film *Jersey Girl* recently filmed in Philadelphia had an estimated budget of \$35 million. That number is slightly skewed because half of the budget went to pay the two leading actors, but an estimated \$15 million circulated throughout the city between hotels, cars, food, building materials, phones, and other requirements necessary in shooting a film. (Hiltbrand, 2002)

The price of making a movie soared dramatically last year, according to the Motion Picture Association of America, with the average major studio production costing nearly \$59 million, a 23 percent increase from 2001. (2002) Certain costs are unavoidable such as salaries of the actors, and the cost of special effects but one of the ways in which many Hollywood producers have controlled expenses is by filming on location rather than on a set in Los Angeles.

Michael Boyer, director of the Alabama Film Office, claim skyrocketing costs of filming in Los Angeles is the reason Hollywood started looking to film in Alabama. Movies have been shot in Birmingham, Huntsville, Selma and other sites, but the big winner in the Alabama film scene has been Mobile. Twenty two movies have been filmed in Mobile. As a result, features, documentaries, commercials and made-for-television films have put \$34.3 million in the local economy in the past six years. Alabama's economy as a whole has realized over \$43 million in revenue as a direct result of production costs and film tourism. (Tortorana, 1994)

Growth in Film Attendance

Attendance of moviegoers in 2002 was 165.9 million, a 6% increase from the previous year. Last year the average American went to the movies 5.7 times, the highest level of attendance since 1957. (Munoz, 2003) This kind of turnout generates a great opportunity for advertisement with more than 70% of movie viewers in an age bracket of decision-making when it comes to choosing a vacation destination (see Chart 1).

Chart 1*U.S. Movie Attendance for 2002*

From "U.S. movie attendance study," 2002, *Motion Picture Association Worldwide Market Research*

A locally produced film can act as an effective advertisement for a community and can be incorporated into brochures and promotions. (Virginia, 1998) Film tourism is the quickest and least expensive way to reach a massive market once a movie is produced.

Film Tourism's Effect on the Economy

The United States is known to the bulk of the world through film and its associated imagery. New York and Los Angeles have been in countless movies but one way we can see the effects of movie-induced tourism is to look at other parts of the country that would not have such a strong travel market if it weren't for the movies: such places as Moab Utah in *Thelma and Louise* or Savannah, Georgia in *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*.

Whether an area is seeking additional tourism revenue or not, the filming of a movie on location can help the economy. Prior to the release of *Field of Dreams*, Dyersville, Iowa had one hotel with 31 rooms, since the movie's debut in 1989 it now has

three hotels with 126 rooms. (Dorsey, 2000) Tourism more than quadrupled in Dyersville, as many of the tourists, traveling only for day trips do not utilize the hotels. According to Mark Singsank, executive Director of the Dysersville Chamber of Commerce, the 54,000 tourists that pass through every year spend up to \$100.00 a day. (Dorsey, 2000) This town with a population of 4000 generates \$5.4 million dollars in tourism revenue per year.

North Carolina has also been selected by the film industry making it the third largest filmmaking state in the country. (Pressley, 2001) In the past 20 years, over 515 films and television projects have been filmed there resulting in more than \$5 billion in revenue. (Pressley, 2001). North Carolina has indicated the post production is just as economic as the production phase of the movie. The Tourism Department has been marketing its connection to Hollywood by making many film locations assessable to tourists. Wilmington offers tours of Screen Gem Studios, a walking tour and a trolley ride, which will take the visitor past filmmaking locations, and even provides staged shows of stunt men in action. "Film projects come and go, but the overall effect on Wilmington is tremendous...It's not so much the specific movies as it is the impact on the community..." (Pressley, 2001) Before the film industry found Wilmington, it never had upscale sushi and cappuccino bars. (Pressley, 2001) The connection between Wilmington and Hollywood has turned it into a cosmopolitan city.

Table 2

North Carolina Movie Industry Facts

Year	Major Productions	Estimated Revenues from all Productions
2001	44	\$250.6 Million
2000	81	\$250.1 Million
1999	67	\$300.2 Million
1998	40	\$323.0 Million
1997	41	\$329.0 Million
1996	53	\$440.0 Million
1995	54	\$391.0 Million
1994	39	\$357.0 Million
1993	33	\$504.3 Million
1992	17	\$391.0 Million
1991	18	\$202.5 Million
Total 10 Years	487	\$3.7 Billion

From "Economic Impact of the Film Industry in North Carolina," (n.d.), *North Carolina Department of Commerce Film Office*

Movie-induced tourism is not limited just to the United States. *Sea Change*, an Australian based television program filmed in Barwon Heads, Australia, a rural fishing town has seen a dramatic increase in real estate values since the initial screening of the series. It is now being touted as the Sea Change Syndrome where cheap houses are disappearing off the market. (Beeton, 2000)

With 205 productions filmed in British Columbia in 2002, it has been dubbed "Hollywood North." Canadian pictures made up 140 of those 205 productions worth \$163.6 million. The remaining 65 films were based out of Hollywood, employed 35,000 people, and totaled \$830 million making British Columbia the third-largest film production center in North America. (British Columbia, 2002)

"The British Tourist Authority says its movie map, featuring film and TV locations over 60 years, is one of its biggest successes; every £1 spent on producing it

leads to £17 spent at a location on the map ‘About 20 per cent of overseas visitors say they've been influenced to see Britain by what they see in the media. That amounts to £2.5 billion a year,’” says the BTA's Jo Leslie. (Westbrooke, 2002) *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* is the growth opportunity to arrive on the BTA movie map.

According to spokesman, Robin Prestage, just after the Harry Potter film's November, 2001 release, it accounted for half of all calls to the BTA in New York. Prestage states, "This film will certainly help us enormously and when the next movie comes out, interest will grow." (Kiesnoski, 2002, p. 2) Bath, England estimates it has grossed over \$4.8 million by setting up a film center celebrating the Jane Austin novels filmed in the city. (Wintour, 1999, ¶ 8)

The thinking might be that tourism would peak immediately after the release of a movie then decline once the hype of the film has faded. Westbrooke (2002) has determined that a location in a successful film would see a 54% increase in visitors over the four years following the release of the film. The Queen Elizabeth Suite at the Crown Hotel in Amsterdam is still reserved for months in advance, seven years after its debut in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. (Westbrooke, 2002) Research indicates that rather than climbing up, reaching a pinnacle, and dropping off, film tourism seems to plateau over the long run. (Jones & Pederson, 1997)

Tourism Development

Community redevelopment gained popularity in the 1980s and 1990s and many planners saw tourism as part of that redevelopment in place of industries that were becoming obsolete. (Community, n.d.) Philip Kotler and Donald Haider discuss in their

book, Marketing Places: Attracting Investment, Industry, and Tourism to Cities, States and Nations areas seeking tourism must market themselves as an attractive product, by communicating their special qualities to target markets. *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* was one film that used the knowledge and understanding of why people would travel to Savannah, Georgia and what the travelers would be looking for, by highlighting the town's eclectic personality combined with its rich history and culture. No one could have predicted how *Midnight* would catapult Savannah's tourism by 88%. (Jones, 1997) Hotels and restaurants are not the only facet of tourism that are cashing in on the city's notoriety, every gift shop, bookstore and corner market is filled with *Midnight* souvenirs. The city's entire economy has prospered as a result of the film. The strategic development and marketing of Savannah as a tourism destination revitalized the once-depressed city.

Conclusion

The literature reviewed discussed many aspects of movie-induced tourism and reviewed the impact films have had on tourism development. The economic benefit to a local community as a result of being the backdrop to a Hollywood production was reflected in examples of projects filmed in Philadelphia and North Carolina. Hollywood has had a significant influence on tourism and with the knowledge gained in this chapter the research for this study has been justified.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

General Design

The literature identified discussed the parallels of film and tourism. An ex post facto case study was the basis of the research as key locations were surveyed on how films had affected tourism revenue in each particular community. Ex post facto is described as after the fact, therefore this study gathered information that had already been established. (German, Graff, Larson, Russell, n.d.)

Procedure

Participant Selection. A purposive, judgment sample was chosen by selecting communities whose tourism revenue has been linked to Hollywood. According to a web site developed by Ryerson Universtiy, Ontario, Canada, a sampling technique such as this is most appropriate when certain members of the population to be studied are thought to be more knowledgeable or willing than others to be interviewed. This study looked at areas which had a direct involvement in film tourism. The sample was drawn from a variety of sources with the majority of them stemming in part from The Worldwide Guide to Movie Locations by Tony Reeves. They were chosen for their experience and expertise in this field of study. This sample was selected based on box office success: movies that have grossed over \$20 million and were filmed in areas not previously known for tourism. Based on this information, the sample is considered representative rather than random or statistical. The list is as follows (Reeves, 2002):

Sample Selection for Research

1. Dyersville, Iowa - *Field of Dreams*
2. Winterset, Iowa - *Bridges of Madison County*
3. Liberal, Kansas - *Wizard of Oz*
4. Savannah, Georgia - *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*
5. Halifax, Nova Scotia - *Titanic*
6. Moab, Utah - *Thelma and Louise*
7. Wabasha, MN - *Grumpy Old Men*
8. Fort Hays, Kansas - *Dances With Wolves*
9. Vernon Hills, IL - *My Best Friend's Wedding*
10. Rayburn County, Georgia - *Deliverance*
11. Livingston, Montana - *A River Runs Through It*
12. Fargo, North Dakota - *Fargo*
13. Amityville, New Jersey - *The Amityville Horror*
14. Juliette, Georgia - *Fried Green Tomatoes*
15. Steward's Ranch, Colorado - *City Slickers*

The local Chamber of Commerce from the destinations above were contacted by telephone and asked to complete a survey which was mailed to them. Repeat mailings as well as follow-up calls and e-mails were sent to those respondents who did not complete the initial survey. The time frame for measurement took place over two months to allow for return of the completed survey, compilation, and analysis.

Information-Gathering. Thirteen surveys were distributed. Two surveys were not mailed. They were for Juliette, Georgia for *Fried Green Tomatoes and Steward's Ranch*, Colorado for *City Slickers*. Many of the offices the researcher contacted, recommended the surveys be sent to either a film office or the Department of Tourism. Nine out of the thirteen mailed surveys were sent directly to a contact person. The researcher was unsuccessful in retrieving a name contact or address for which to mail the forms for Juliette, Georgia and Steward's Ranch, Colorado.

Qualitative data retrieved by the survey was compiled in ways films and Hollywood can affect tourism revenue. Information was obtained as to how particular cities' and tourism development offices attracted Hollywood and influenced the media to its advantage to increase tourism. The information was used to formulate the findings of this study.

Analysis.

Upon retrieval of the completed surveys, the responses to each question were reviewed and analyzed. By evaluating the respondents' answers, the researcher offered a list of recommendations for promoting a community to the film industry and promoting film tourism to visitors. Specific tools used to draw filming and methods in which a community can promote itself as a film tourism destination are listed in Chapter 5.

Survey

A survey of 15 questions was developed by the researcher and sent to the selected sites for the purpose of collecting information to complete the study. The survey can be

found in Appendix Two. The questions vary in type from statistical data to yes/no and open-ended. General information regarding revenue increases to tourism and key aspects of film tours provided concrete facts about the effects of filming in small communities. Open-ended questions were used to gather information based on individual recommendations and key to this survey design. It was determined that the open-ended questions would allow for the most variety in offering recommendations. (McCracken, 1998)

Limitations

It should be noted that there is one major limitation in this study: non-participation by individual sample sites. Lack of participation may be the result of a staffing issue. Some smaller communities do not have separate film or tourism departments within the chamber of commerce. For a small community, it is often-found people working for the chamber will serve several departments at once. This was the reason some departments were difficult to contact or it was challenging to ascertain a contact person for which to mail the survey.

Another reason for non-response may be a lack of knowledge among those working for the chamber. This is not to say the staff doesn't know what its doing, however those who work with the community in completing surveys such as this, may not be in a position of decision-making when it comes to community and tourism development.

Four surveys or 26.6% were returned. They came from Winterset, Iowa; *Bridges of Madison County*, Wabasha, Minnesota; *Grumpy Old Men*, North Dakota; *Fargo*,

Dyersville, Iowa; *Field of Dreams*. The remaining eight communities were contacted again and asked if the respondents had questions or concerns about the surveys. No one did, however many of the comments regarding the delay or lack of response centered around being too busy to complete the survey. One area claimed poor weather conditions were keeping the tourism department too busy to take the time to answer the questions properly. Two more communities promised to return the survey as soon as possible, however, they were never received.

Chapter Four

Analysis

Responses to the survey can be found in Appendix C. All of the respondents found an increase in tourism after the film was released with Winterset and Dyersville, Iowa seeing the largest increase; 91-100% and 51-60% respectively. These two locations had a direct tie with the basis of each film's plot. Winterset is home to the covered bridges featured in *Brides of Madison County's* and Dyersville was the foundation for *Field of Dreams*. It appears the more direct the association of the destination with the film, the more the effect it had on tourism. North Dakota did not list an increase in tourism in terms of percent as the survey was completed at the state level based on three movies filmed there, *Fargo*, *Woolly Boys*, and *Northern Lights* rather than on one particular film. All four of the respondents claimed publicity of the community through the film was what attributed to the tourism increase and Winterset and Dyersville noted box office success as reasons for the increase. Again, the significance of this is the stronger the association with the community and the more successful the film, the more the area will resonate with viewers as a tourism destination.

North Dakota was the only respondent to have a film office, again, their survey was written from the state level. The functions of that office are to "develop, maintain and market a clearinghouse of the state's locations and services." All three films pertaining to this state's survey were developed with North Dakota in mind. The film office has been successful in marketing locations to film producers.

The communities' suggestions to draw filmmakers were to:

- Attend film industry trade shows
- Provide media kits
- Lobby for state funds
- Offer free/discounted lodging & use of sets

As for any of the methods being unsuccessful, North Dakota found the government and private businesses refused to provide funding for development. Attractive scenery, the local area being the setting for the film's plot and the local area having appropriate scenery for the film all attributed to the success of the tourism increase. Winterset, Iowa found the book *Bridges of Madison County* to help boost tourism.

The two respondents that offer a film tour were the two with the largest increase in tourism; Winterset and Dyersville, Iowa. Winterset offers a 1-2 hour, narrated, bus, group tour focusing on scene locations and other areas of interest not related to the film. Dyersville's tour is customized individually based on the group's criteria. It can last anywhere from one hour to a half-day, it is narrated, but viewed on foot, and takes the visitors past the set and scene locations.

Both Winterset and Dyersville found the Convention and Visitor's Bureaus as well as local dining and lodging establishments helped in promoting the tour by distributing brochures. Online links from travel websites were also found to be successful in marketing the area as a tourist destination.

Winterset, Iowa and North Dakota agreed to the statement "The utilization of film production as an advertisement is an effective marketing strategy in tourism

development.” Dyersville, Iowa and Wabasha, Minnesota *strongly* agreed to the statement, which made these communities feel they have a vested interest in film tourism and were therefore more willing to participate in the study.

Chapter Five

Recommendations

This study identified key process and procedures to enable a community to be selected as a film site and capitalize on the touristic potential after the release of a film. The analysis indicates that there are two distinct facets of film tourism 1) Site Selection by the film producers and 2) marketing and tourism development after the film has been publicly released.

The three objectives of this study were:

- 1) to demonstrate the impact of filmmaking on a community's economy,
- 2) to identify marketing tools a community can use to develop film tourism,
- 3) to model strategies and marketing techniques to assist communities large and small to become recognized by the film industry for movie filming.

The first objective was achieved through case study research in the Literature Review as well as questions three and four on the survey. Question three asked, "Was there an increase in tourism revenue after the film's release?" The analysis of the results indicated there was an increase in revenue within the community. Question four inquired, "What percent was the increased?" The responses ranged between 10% and 100%. It can be observed that smaller communities would serve to have a larger increase than a comparatively larger town or city.

The second objective of this study also asked a series of questions pertaining to marketing tools to be used to develop film related tourism. The communities were asked what they felt brought about the increase in tourism revenue. They were also asked whether a film office had been established in their community, and if so, what were the

primary functions of that office.

The third objective of the study was to formulate a model of marketing strategies and best practices to enable film site selection and ultimately film tourism. The third part of the survey directly asked questions pertaining to post filming tours and if they capitalized on that aspect of film tourism. Open-ended questions enabled the respondent to provide in depth details about marketing tools that worked for them.

All of the information obtained from this study and case analysis was compiled into a site selection and marketing model for communities considering film related tourism development. The focus of this model is to enable a community to capitalize on filming that was completed with a given community to enhance its touristic potential.

The following outline represents an example guide for tourism development regarding film site planning and post event tourism planning.

Community Marketing for Film Development and Tourism

It may take years before a filmmaker chooses an area for filming. Some films lose funding at the last minute, halting all production, or a neighboring community could be selected. The process of being selected as a community of choice by a filmmaker can be frustrating but the long-term economic benefits outweigh the lengthy waiting periods. In a 1998 study, it was modeled that communities with film production tend to have strong secondary level related tourism industries as well. The key to remember about film tourism is that films that do not meet public expectations or imagery will only return economic benefits during filming. (Virginia, 1998)

Facts to Consider Before Seeking Film Production

Film tourism can only occur once a movie is produced. In many ways it is not necessarily the best solution for every community seeking to enhance its tourism development strategy. As found in research, many factors must be considered before assuming the cost and effort of promoting an area as a film location to the film industry. The following seven factors must be considered to promote filming in a given community.

1: Task Force Development

A task force needs to be formed for the purpose of developing strategies to enable film production. The task force can identify strategies to improve tourism and economic development. This team should then assess the benefits of marketing themselves as a potential film production site. The task force should be balanced in membership, which could be comprised of local leaders, politicians and business personnel and residents.

2: Self Study: Current Tourism Trends, Demographics and Potential

If a city is selected for filming it is necessary to understand key elements found within the community. It is essential that the community task force review the current tourism market and determine if opportunities exist. Key aspects to consider are

- How big of a role does tourism currently play in the local economy?
- How does tourism compare with other aspects of the community's economy such as jobs, revenue sources, etc.?
- Who are the current tourists and why are they attracted to the area?
- How many visitors does the community host each year?
- Who and where are the potential tourists for the area?

3: Community Research: Residents

The task force needs to assess if additional tourism will make a positive or negative impact. Tourism can have a negative impact on a community, therefore outweighing any economic benefits. Research finds that residents' attitudes must be recognized because they can directly impact tourism development. (Harrill & Potts, 2003) Once the Task Force has completed a survey on resident attitudes, they will have an understanding of the support or lack of support for film development and its potential for tourism development. Research has found that if the residents have a voice prior to development, concerns can be addressed in a proactive approach and they can identify areas or events they do not want promoted to tourists.

4: Planning Objectives

As in any self study regarding development, it is essential to determine a master plan regarding marketing, planning, development and implementation of economic reinvestment. A development map that encompasses 5, 10 15 and 20 years needs to be formulated. There must be an acceptable level of change the community is willing to endure and the goal must take that into consideration. This vision will help the community in determining if they choose to market as a filming site and then move into film related tourism. This study will help the community define to what extent the marketing should be done to promote itself to the film industry.

5: Resource and Imagery Inventory

As with any tourism development it is essential to know the resources you can offer a potential visitor. The same applies to the film industry. Once the community has determined to market to the film industry. It is essential to catalog community resources

from support services to imagery and infrastructure. This inventory is then used as the primary resource for marketing the community to the film industry. The inventory can also be used as a support device for the current tourism industry if it exists.

The community must recognize that simply assembling a list of resources and images may not fully meet the needs of the film industry. It becomes essential to research film industry practices to best learn what is needed to capture film scouts and producers.

6: Community Infrastructure

A community location can be both positive and negative. Remote areas may provide an abundance of natural scenery perfect for filming, but their facilities must be considered. Inferior facilities may be acceptable for the short run but may not support the development of tourism. The community must recognize that filming is a short-term event while tourism in any format is a resource consuming industry that needs to be updated and maintained to sustain growth and economic return.

7: Final Investment

Once all of the potential issues have been investigated, mapped and outlined a community can determine if economic development via the film industry is needed or even desired. This is a critical juncture for any community, as it requires financial investment and development beyond the initial task force phase (Community, n.d.)

The seven self study elements represent the steps from concept to planned investment in tourism development around the film industry. After the self- study is completed it is essential to create an internal management structure that will enable the community to be recognized as a potential film site.

Elements of Tourism Development: 8 Steps for Film Promotion

Each community must set establish an organization and process to develop community awareness. The following eight steps were indicated in the study findings to enable communities to be selected as a film site. Every community must make an assessment regarding individual needs. The community must then set in place a process to enable film production in their respective community.

Establish a Film Office

It is essential when requests are made regarding filming, they can be transferred directly to the office responsible for information dissemination. Larger cities and states typically have in place a film office and contact list for film producers. It is important to establish an office that is able to provide information immediately when requested. As noted, larger metropolitan areas may be more suited to opening a formal film office. In some states, film offices that represent only specific regions in a given area have been created through funding by various local agencies. In many cases a separate office for film development does not fit into tight budgets and this information can be housed in the Chamber of Commerce. Key in development of a contact resource for the film industry it is important to note that most film offices are members of the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI). For information on starting a film office communities can contact the AFCI in Los Angeles.

Typically a community wishing to host film production must meet the following list of needs and will vary from film producer to film producer.

- ✓ **Location:** The setting is one of the most important aspects of the film. A film about the mafia would be shot in a metropolitan area, rather than the

deep south. The location must match the movie plot and is the primary element in site selection.

- ✓ **Accommodations:** A standard film will need housing for 100-150 cast and crew members. This includes, actors, the director and support staff. If they plan a lengthy stay, they may choose to stay in housing such as homes or furnished apartments. Another key need is a food and beverage industry that can work with the filming schedule, which tends to be erratic. Twenty four hour access to food and catering services are typically utilized.
- ✓ **Services and Utilities:** Filming crews demands support services that are usually available in urban markets. Cell Phones, taxicabs, rentable office furniture and equipment will need to be available.. These are important services that are looked at favorably upon by film organizations.
- ✓ **Transportation:** Transportation systems need to be nearby or accessible. Typically actors and the main crewmembers travel frequently in and out of a film site. Having a system in place to offer access to transportation is essential. They will need easy access to an airport and rental cars or transportation from the airport to the filming site.
- ✓ **Local Crew:** Key to remote sites or secondary city filming is the economic savings. The film producer will be seeking local crew for staffing purposes in many different facets of production. Camera personnel, set designers, make-up artists, etc. are among those who are often hired locally. .

Retain a location scout

A location scout is the individual or firm that directs film executives based on their knowledge of an area and potential movies needs. The scout is typically aware of many communities and is able to access film producers with information regarding specific communities and how they can be used in movie production.

The scout can then utilize the image and infrastructure inventory developed in the self analysis to formulate a media package for the film industry.

Community Promotion: Film Trade Shows and Film Festivals

Awareness that you are interested in film production must be demonstrated over a period of time. Establishing contacts and awareness of community interest in the film industry is essential. It is then essential that community representatives or hired location scouts attend all events that could further the development of film production. The nature of the industry dictates that networking is essential. It is at film festivals and trade shows where one will find the people who scout locations, make decisions based on budgets and hold the wallet for a film's budget.

Develop Media Kits

The foundation for the media kit was established in the community self study. The media kit must be comprehensive. Photographs of the region or videos or DVDs highlighting all the area has to offer will help to showcase the community when a film producer requests information on an area. The film industry kits must also contain information regarding resources the industry will need to utilize a given area. It should be noted that these kits can be part of the community's regular tourism promotion and imagery.

Lobby for state funds

Small communities cannot “go it alone”. Government funding from all sectors is essential and can be used to advertise the community to the film industry. The community scout, business leaders and advisory members can approach government bodies for grants; special funds and support based on the economic return film production may have in a given region, thus it may be necessary to hire a grant writer to formally prepare these requests.

Lobby for Tax Incentives for Film Production

Each community must enable film site production by assuring economic benefits to film producers. Many states now offer a tax savings or tax credits for engaging in business in that state. Some examples can be found in New Mexico where the state offers a 15% film production tax credit and a 5% - 7% deduction on production costs. State and community sponsored incentives are very attractive to the film industry due to the nature of the business. Film producers cannot assure success with any film therefore they are always looking to lower operating and development costs.

Offer Discounted or Free Services

As an incentive for film producers and production organization cost savings become essential. Working with local service providers, a community may be able to capture film producers by offering some services free of cost. Items such as utilities, trade and crafts industries as well as accommodations and production sites may be offered free of rental costs. This technique must be evaluated, as the community needs to determine if Short-term losses are more important than long-term benefits such as tourism and community awareness.

Respond quickly to requests

The community must realize that timing is everything, especially in the film industry. The locations, which will be taken more seriously by Filmmakers, are the ones, which are presented to the company in a timely and comprehensive manner. Responding quickly through established offices and agents assures the production studio that the community is professional and serious about conducting business with them.

Once a community has been selected, film production is completed and the movie or television show released, a community can begin to prepare for the tourist component of post film production within the community. Many factors must be realized that if the production is not released or is uneconomical the community will never obtain the long-term benefits of a film production. But it is essential to prepare for the future as the success of any film production is never known until after a public review. The public votes by ticket sales and ultimately will associate a community link and potential tourism value in the long run. Much is not known until the public accepts or rejects a film production.

Promoting the Community to Film Tourists

Marketing is essential in targeting tourists and can be utilized to increase the economic benefits of tourism to the community. Promoting postproduction film tourism is similar to promoting “regular” tourism with the exception that there is now one very identifiable component to attach to the area. Showcasing recognizable movie scenes will enable successful postproduction tourism. A community will need to model what the potential tourist is seeking in a given community. The following postproduction

techniques have been effective in communities large and small. The respondents of the study recommend that communities consider the following touristic elements.

- **Establish a Common Gathering Point of Reference for Tourists.** A Convention and Visitor's Bureau or similar site should distribute brochures, collect admissions and guide tourists - Be sure to have the local CVB distribute literature detailing individual film tours.
- **Establish Various Community and Site Tours**
 - **Film Tour** - To best capitalize on film tourism, a tour should be designed to highlight the movie itself and supporting facilities. This could be a comprehensive tour encompassing 1-2 hrs and fully guided by paid or volunteer staff.
 - **Self-guided Tours** keep overhead costs at a minimum. A tourist purchases admission to a set location and is provided with a map and information about the setting; the tourist then becomes the tour guide.
 - **Walking tours** also help to keep costs down by avoiding transportation expenses. These tours are ideal if many places in one small area pertain to the tour.
 - **Offer Complimentary Tours** - Offer complimentary tours to key individuals either working at the CVB or some of the local lodging and dining facilities so they could make a genuine recommendation to interested travelers.
 - **Use the World Wide Web** - The Internet has become one of the most important tools for tourism promotion and imagery. Linking a website

depicting the film tour from another site such as the local chamber of commerce, or one from the movie's promotion can hit a captive market.

Recommendations for Further Study

The research indicates that there can be a strong link between the film's plot and the film's setting and post filming tourism. This study produced only a simple relationship between community development from a film production perspective and film related tourism. Research stemming from this study could explore the prospect of customized screenplays or locating screenwriters to develop plays or scripts around specific communities to understand their intent in production and service needs. Further research in this area is recommended and should center on the cost of film office development and actual returns and the cost of developing tourism in a postproduction perspective.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the research objectives relative to the findings of the study. The findings demonstrated the effect films can have on developing tourism. It also indicated the potential risks and associated costs associated with film production and needs. Suggestions were provided for the community considering film development and the unknown risk of investment. There is no level of confidence that a film will be successful and if the resulting long term economic benefit will occur in the form of tourism. The research indicates that the community needs to be prepared and ready to respond quickly to the success of a locally produced film.

The research results gathered through the survey in this study was compiled to be used as a research guide for a community addressing an economic plan wishing to

augment its tourism development through the use of localized film production.

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Appendix A

April 20, 2003

Dear :

This survey is being conducted as part of a Master's Thesis for a Global Hospitality degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The purpose is to gather information in film tourism to be used as a research aid for small communities seeking to expand local tourism. The results will offer a marketing guide detailing a list of tools needed for the planning and development office of such communities.

If you would like a copy of the marketing guide, one will be mailed to you at the conclusion of this study. In an effort to compile the results in a timely manner, a prompt response is appreciated. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is provided for your convenience. Your input is very important. If you feel that the survey form doesn't provide adequate space for comments, feel free to attach an additional page. Thank you very much in advance.

Sincerely,

Angela Strauss
Graduate Student, University of Wisconsin-Stout

Appendix B

Film Tourism Survey
 Distributed as part of a Master's Thesis
 University of Wisconsin Stout
 Global Hospitality

Please complete this survey and return it in the enclosed stamped envelope by March 31, 2003. Thank you.

1. City/Town Name: _____

2. Film(s) associated with city/town:

3. Was there an increase in tourism revenue after the film's release?

- Yes No (skip to question #6)

4. If yes, what percent was the increase?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 10% | <input type="checkbox"/> 61-70% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10-20% | <input type="checkbox"/> 71-80% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 21-30% | <input type="checkbox"/> 81-90% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 31-40% | <input type="checkbox"/> 91-100% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 41-50% | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 100% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 51-60% | |

5. What do you think brought about the increase in tourism to your community?

- Box office success of movie
- Publicity of community due to movie's release
- Other (Please explain)

6. Does your community have a film office?

- Yes No

7. If yes to question #6, what are the key functions of that office?

Appendix B (cont'd)

8. What actions, if any, did your community take to draw filming to your area?
(Please check all that apply)

- Attended film industry trade shows
- Offered a familiarization tour to producers and/or film industry contacts
- Provided media kit (photos, videos, CD-ROM depicting local scenery)
- Lobbied for state funds to be used to advertise community to film industry
- Called producers and/or other film industry contacts
- Free/discounted lodging for actors and/or crew
- Free/discount on use of sets (local buildings, parks, etc.)
- Free/discounted local services such as use of office space, taxi cabs, utilities, etc.
- Free/discounts on dining for actors and crew
- Other (please describe) _____

None

9. Were any of the above-mentioned actions attempted, but unsuccessful?

Yes No

If yes, please explain

10. If your community took no actions to draw filming, what do you think did bring the film production to your town?

- Less expensive alternative to rising cost of production in Hollywood
- Attractive scenery/landscape
- Local area is setting for film's plot
- Appropriate scenery for film's plot/setting
- Other (please describe) _____

11. Does the city/town offer a tour related to the films listed in question #2? If no, skip to question #16

Yes No

12. Is the tour offered as an individual product or is it part of a package tour?

- Individual
- Package (please describe)
- _____

Appendix B (cont'd)

13. Please check all that apply to the tour.

A. Length of tour:

- 30 minutes or less ½ day tour
 30 minutes - 1 hour Full day tour
 1-2 hours

B. Method of viewing:

- Bus Walking
 Boat Other (please describe) _____

C. Guides:

- Self-guided Narrated

D. Focus of tour:

- Set/scene locations Interesting area locations not related to the film
 Local "hot spots" for actors Other (please describe) _____

14. What medium is used to promote movie tour?

- Brochures distributed by Convention & Visitor's Bureau
 Brochures distributed by local hotels/dining establishments
 Online advertisement linked from tourist website
 Local newspaper advertisements
 Television advertisements
 Radio advertisements

15. Have any marketing tools been used to promote the movie tour that have not been successful?

- Yes No

If yes, please explain

16. Have any marketing tools been used to promote film tourism that have not been successful?

- Yes No

If yes, please explain

Appendix B (cont'd)

17. The utilization of film production as an advertisement is an effective marketing strategy in tourism development.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

18. What recommendations would have for other communities who want to draw filming and film tourism to their locale?

If you would like a copy of the results mailed to you, please provide the following information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Appendix C

Survey Results

1. City/Town Name	Winterset, IA	Wabasha, MN	North Dakota	Dyersville, IA
2. Film associated with city/town	<i>Bridges of Madison County</i>	<i>Grumpy Old Men</i> <i>Grumpier Old Men</i>	<i>Fargo</i> <i>Wooly Boys</i> <i>Northern Lights</i>	<i>Field of Dreams</i>
3. Was there an increase in tourism revenue after the film's release?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4. What percent was the increase?	91-100%	10-20%		51-60%
5. What do you think brought about the increase in tourism to your community?	Box office Success Publicity of community	Publicity of community	Publicity of community	Box office success Publicity of community
6. Does your community have a film office?	No	No	Yes	No
7. If yes, what are the key functions of that office?			Develop, Maintain & Market a Clearing House of the state's locations and services	
8. What actions, if any, did your community take to draw filming to your area?		None	Attended film industry trade shows Provided media kits Lobbied for state funds Free/discounted lodging & use of sets	Provided Media kit
9. Were any of the above-mentioned actions attempted, but unsuccessful?			Yes - private business refusal; gov't refusal	No

Appendix C (cont'd)

10. If your community took no actions to draw filming, what do you think did bring the film production to your town?	Attractive scenery Local area is setting for film's plot Appropriate scenery for film's plot The book	Films not filmed there but movies were about Wabasha		
11. Does the city/town offer a tour related to the films listed in question #2? If no, skip to question #16.	Yes	No	No	Yes
12. Is the tour offered as an individual product or is it part of a package tour? package tour?	Package			Individual - group tours are set up per interest of the group
13. Length of tour	1-2 hours			Any length, 1 hour to ½ day
14. Method of viewing	Bus			Walking
15. Guides	Narrated			Narrated
16. Focus of the tour	Set/Scene locations Interesting areas not related to film			Set/scene locations

Appendix C (cont'd)

17. What medium is used to promote movie tour?	Brochures distributed by CVB and local hotels & restaurants Online ad linked from tourist website			Brochures distributed by CVB and local hotels & restaurants Online ad linked from tourist website
18. Have any marketing tools been used to promote the movie tour that have not been successful?	No			No
19. What medium is used to promote film tourism to your community?	Brochures distributed by CVB and local hotels & restaurants Online ad linked from tourist website	None		Brochures distributed by CVB and local hotels & restaurants Online ad linked from tourist website
20. Have any marketing tools been used to promote film tourism that have not been successful?	No	No		No
21. The utilization of a film production as an advertisement is an effective marketing strategy in tourism development?	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
22. What recommendations would you have for other communities who want to draw filming and film tourism to their locale?				