

BANGALOW BASKETS:

An image enhancing case study

Peter Wynn-Moylan
Southern Cross University

Abstract

The article explores destination image brand building and maintenance processes in a case study of Bangalow village. It describes Bangalow's transformation from a shabby highway drive-through to a successful heritage tourism destination and desirable residential village through a long term Mainstreet project led by Professor Henry Sanoff supported by dedicated local organisations. The resultant evolution of the village to heritage status with a global reputation for high quality food produce is related to its destination image creation. The case study examines how an unusual link between art and a Farmers' Market enhanced the image of both the food producers and the village for the visitor demographic sought by the village's retailers and producers.

Keywords

Bangalow, destination image, farmers' market, art, tourism

Introduction – Destination Image

The importance of destination image for attracting visitors and residents has been recognised for many years as central to eventual destination choice (McCartney,

2005). A strong, positive, discriminatory and recognisable image has a major influence on consumer behaviour and creates a greater possibility of that destination being chosen for visitation, for residential re-location, or for business development (Beerli and Martin, 2004). The difference between a successful, defined and understood image and one that is weaker and less differentiated can have a significant impact on a district's attractiveness for investment and for development of population and all businesses, and can influence local confidence and social unity. For any location, destination image formation is essential for successful capture and maintenance of ongoing development (McCartney, 2008a).

In terms of economic development and tourism potential, regions are not created equal; some have an abundance of resources and comparative advantages, while others have limited natural resources and infrastructure to support development. Yet most regions have a 'Destination Brand' that is used to create a single image or brand awareness of a district. It is usually based on comparative advantage e.g. historic, artistic and cultural, scenic, capital and infrastructure, human skills, resources.

A particular combination of environmental, socio-cultural and economic conditions contribute to a unique sense of place that attracts and shapes the experiences offered by a district or region (Gunn and Var, 2002; Ashworth and Dietvorst, 1995) which can be promoted as a district's brand. Destinations are much more than a particular combination of circumstances, the key is differentiation (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride, 2002).

What is different and special about a place can be integrated into a destination image that can motivate, inspire and drive development in the destination. Accordingly, a location's destination brand image should distinctively promote those attributes important to the person making the destination selection, that is, the outsider visitor, potential resident or investor, and those promoted attributes should be those clearly distinguishable from competing destinations (Morgan, Pritchard and Pride, 2002).

In a destination's quest to attract, brand image confusion can arise when destinations promote a lengthy list of attractions similar to those found elsewhere or contradictory attractions (i.e. manufactured experiences with authentic attributes) when a few strategically chosen attributes would be more effective. Often the image promoted by a destination may not necessarily be what the outsider perceives or encounters (McCartney, 2008b). Therefore, since the unique features of a destination are perceived differently by different viewers, image promotion must acknowledge, protect and enhance the multiplicity of experiences, qualities and features that make the destination attractive (Dredge and Jenkins, 2007).

Although the unique and authentic features of a region may be identifiable, the protection of those attributes is sometimes difficult. For example, the coherence and unity of the architectural features of a small country town might be placed at risk by standardised building structures associated with a global chain such as McDonalds or KFC. Monolithic supermarket complexes and generic shopping malls can intrude into significant historical landscapes and jeopardise a local sense of place (Dredge and Jenkins, 2007). The trading practices of such businesses can exclude local suppliers and put small retailers of local produce out of business.

It is important to note that image building is not necessarily a guided marketing process conducted by regional tourism bodies, chambers of commerce or regional development boards, but is more often the unintended by-product of the many choices made by an individual business reacting to customer preferences, the produce and services they wish to supply, and linkages with successful activities by others in the district. It is also important to note that the success of a destination's brand will largely depend on the support and engagement of the local community (Dredge and Jenkins, 2007). This is because local communities provide the human and social capital which contribute and maintain the attributes of unique qualities of place, values, culture, and the non-tangible experiences that attract people to a destination.

A region's reputation is built through communications, advertising and word-of-mouth; its brand is formulated through the products originating from within its borders. Historically reputations were slowly built and carefully constructed, and they remained consistent over the course of generations. Today, the opposite is true. Internet and mobile devices provide instantaneous ability to connect with other citizens of the world, with images, news, opinions and rumours, which means that a district's image can shift overnight. A location wishing to achieve long term differential and competitive advantages regionally as well as nationally must be able to plan continually, as well as monitor and manage its image and positioning strategy in order to endure and expand (Dredge and Jenkins, 2007). Management of image formation and communication mix is essential. Accordingly, the success or failure of many destinations relies on the effective management of the image held by potential tourists and potential residents (Morgan and Pritchard, 1998).

Impressions, Experience, and Authenticity

Destination selection has been shown to be influenced by a wide range of 'controllable' and 'uncontrollable' forms of information sources, be it television, internet, public relations and promotional campaigns, and so on (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2001; Hall, 2003; Dore and Crouch, 2003). Gartner (in McCartney, Butler and Bennett [2008]) claims that an image is formed in a potential visitor's perception in a continuum consisting of distinct components—such as paid for or requested forms of media; autonomous components such as news reports or user generated media; and organic sources from actual visitation. In addition, Williams (1998) maintains that destinations and experiences are culturally defined and viewed through 'cultural filters'. Cartier (2005) argues that the perception of a destination is subjectively defined through an individual's sensory engagement with the destination's environment.

Together, these observations make it evident that central to the creation of a destination image are the impressions of a place that visitors and residents experience. Pine and Gilmore (1990) say that creating impressions begins with asking how the person should be able to describe the experience, how it made them feel, or

describe what it was like. These impressions are delivered through tangible goods – food, venues, mementoes, books, and through intangible services – activities and entertainment. Different kinds of impressions rely on different kinds of experiences that are the inanimate and/or animate sensory phenomena that uphold the nature of a place (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). Inanimate signals are the sights, smells, tastes, sounds, and textures generated by, for example, landscape, food, flora and fauna. Animate impression signals emanate from the behaviour of those people encountered. Furthermore, the integrity of the experience requires more than layering on positive impressions, it must be authentic and consistent.

Cohen cites Cornet's claim that products with local authenticity are those items created for a traditional purpose by traditional methods that conform to traditional forms to argue that in order to be acceptable as authentic, the product should not be manufactured specifically and exclusively for an external market (Cornet in Cohen, 1988). A seeker of authenticity looks for the pristine, the primitive, the natural, and hopes to find it in other times and other places, since it is often absent from his/her own world (MacCannell in Cohen, 1988). The Australian Organic Market Report 2012 accounts for the 'explosion' of local farmers' markets as: more interest by people in the food they eat and awareness that it can be 'meddled with'; and they conclude that buying it from the grower is the only sure way that they can know how it has been grown (BFA, 2012). From this perspective the desire for authenticity can also be interpreted as a search for the product's integrity, its reliability of quality and value. This is so crucial that branding by regional bodies can only be successful as a marketing and promotional strategy if the image is backed by authenticity.

A well-defined association of origin and location can become a hallmark of quality and/or integrity. In international markets, where many regional brands – including European favourites like Beaujolais, Bordeaux and Champagne, as well as Stilton and Roquefort, and even Darjeeling Tea from India and Idaho Potatoes – are protected by the region, not the companies that operate in it. Known as geographical indicators, these brands are a form of intellectual property protected under international trade agreements. That the European Union places such a high legal emphasis on labelling the origin of products underscores the link between a

location's branding and the branding of the location's products. This is how the business of image branding creates the asset which is a district's brand (Koniszczew and Berry, 2011). The ability to legally use terms of regional origin authenticity allows for some protection against counterfeiting, false advertising and misleading sales messages. The experiences of the French wine industry demonstrate difficulty and expense of protecting regional origin branding. In the Bangalow region, the Byron Shire Council has, with varying success, attempted to restrict the use of Byron Bay's name to local products and license the use of iconic locations (Byron Shire Echo, 2011).

Cohen (1988) claims that an absence of commoditisation is a crucial consideration in judgments of authenticity. Commoditised cultural products are those that have lost their intrinsic meaning and significance for local residents, who in turn lose their enthusiasm for producing them for themselves. The process of commoditisation tends to affect the products as they become increasingly oriented to the tastes of an external 'other' public. Products may also be changed in form, materials, or colours in response to the impositions or temptations from large-scale and sometimes far-away consumers. To reach larger markets, growing methods and choices of varieties may change.

The Tilba Cheese story illustrates this process. The ABC Cheese Factory at Central Tilba on the New South Wales (NSW) South Coast was in operation from September 1891 producing a distinctive cheese variety using local milk and traditional methods in a small plant with just 17 workers. The factory had been modernised, but production was still hands-on. The boutique "Tilba Club" was a product known to many, available nationwide, and appreciated by loyal customers. The factory itself was a tourist attraction. ABC Cheese was sold to the King Island Company in 1999. In 2002 King Island was bought by National Foods, which was in turn bought by San Miguel in 2005. San Miguel is the Pacific's largest listed food, beverage and packaging corporation with brands like Boags, Berri fruit juices and San Miguel beer in its stable. As a tiny part of its product mix without the ability to grow bigger, San Miguel closed the Tilba factory, but retained the 'Tilba' brand, for a blended cheese produced in Melbourne. A caveat was placed on the closed factory in Central Tilba

that it shall not be used for cheese production. The genuine local product was supplanted and although availability of a Tilba brand cheese was maintained, if not perhaps the product quality, what's missing is authenticity (Strategic Economic Solutions, 2010). Connoisseurs and specialty cheese retailers no longer purchase the cheese which is now only available in mass supermarkets.

Accordingly, it can be seen that the destination image formation process is complex and dynamic, the primary challenge being to understand which attraction component comes first and how each affects one another, as a favourable image may be obtained through information processing, intention to visit or reside, and personal experience. To be effective, an image must be concise, compelling and genuine. For that reason it is vital that a district brand be clearly defined, broadly aligned, continually assessed, and to be reconfirmed across multiple touch points, so the stakeholders in a region's brand can more accurately manage and shape its image.

Bangalow – Heritage and Revitalisation

Bangalow is a village in the Northern Rivers region of NSW, located in the Byron Bay hinterland. The Bangalow district includes nearby rural locations of Binna Burra, Brooklet, Coopers Shoot, Coorabell, Fernleigh, Knockrow, Mcleods Shoot, Nashua, Newrybar, and Possum Creek. It has a total population of approximately 2400 (Bangalow Chamber of Commerce, 2011). Bangalow's nearest neighbour is Byron Bay which has a global tourism destination image of lifestyle and youth. Bangalow village is a growing tourism destination with an image that appeals to a different demographic – older, and more discerning (Bangalow Chamber of Commerce, 2011). The contrast with Byron Bay is reinforced through the experience impressions of Bangalow: quality food, art, heritage, and authenticity.

The businesses in Bangalow are more urban than rural: advertising and marketing, film and video production, graphic design, web design and information technology, architect and building design, finance consultants, interior design, massage, acupuncture, naturopathy, journalism, writing and art. The main street shops sell antiques, gifts and fashion; there are galleries, lifestyle shops, and eight estate agents.

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Notably there are no chain stores or franchises, such as Woolworths, Coles, Bunnings, McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Starbucks, Just Jeans or Rockmans. There is no shopping mall, no cinema complex, no car yards, and no fast food outlets. This development is an outcome of a deliberate image building process, development planning controls, and a serendipitous confluence of social movements.

Before European settlement the area was covered in dense sub-tropical rainforest on deep red volcanic soil. From the 1840s the forest was extensively logged for its valuable red cedar. By 1900, 99% of the forest had been cleared and the land was settled by dairy farmers and Bangalow became the centre of one of Australia's richest dairying regions. When the village was connected to Sydney by railway it grew into a significant town with two hotels, five churches, banks, livery stables and garages, tailors and haberdasheries, an engineering factory, a dairy and buttery, its own newspaper, two primary schools and a post office (Bangalow Chamber of Commerce, 2011). Bangalow resident George Reading was the wealthiest businessperson between the Clarence and Tweed rivers in 1895 (Ryan and Smith, 2001).

However, by the 1940s the region was in decline due to depleted soils, lack of manual labour and strong competition from more efficient dairying areas (Ryan and Smith, 2001). The dividing up of landholdings into smaller farms meant that diversification into beef farming and tropical fruit growing had only marginal economic viability. For the four decades up to the 1980s the history of the district was that of a shrinking population, the closing of agricultural support businesses such as butteries and abattoirs, and contraction of government services, while the only investment was in short term extractive industries (Ryan and Smith, 2001).

The comparative wealth of the village in the early 1900s had resulted in a series of quality commercial buildings and a distinctive main street. Its historical character had been noted in a 1980s regional heritage assessment (Shellshear, 1983). However, due to decades of neglect and lack of interest by absent landlords, the majority of the commercial and public buildings were in a state of disrepair. Two major fires had

destroyed half the shops and hotels which were not replaced and the town had shrunk to a single commercial strip either side of the Pacific Highway which passed through the middle of the town as its main street. In the 1960s the local Council ordered the distinctive Edwardian main street shop verandas to be replaced with cantilevered awnings. Storefronts were drastically altered, original facades covered with cheap materials, and poorly designed, out of scale signage installed (Sanoff, 1990). By 1980 the railway was shut down, the banks had moved out, the newspaper closed, the dairy works abandoned, and light industry relocated. The vibration of heavy Pacific Highway traffic had damaged older buildings and the noise and congestion made shopping in the street unpleasant. Retail businesses had not successfully competed with nearby towns and were mostly dependant on drive through traffic. Bangalow in the mid 1980s was in serious decline and in need of re-development. The issue for residents was the form the re-development would take.

Bangalow's revitalisation and associated image building process commenced in 1990 as an outcome of two key events. The first was the publication of two reports – a Development Control Plan (Pickles, 1989), and the Byron Shire Tourism Plan (Rieder, 1988). Both reports noted the potential of Bangalow as a tourism attraction and provided guidelines for future development. The second was the announcement by the Roads and Traffic Authority to re-route the Pacific Highway away from the village centre. As a consequence a revived Bangalow Chamber of Commerce undertook a ten year community strategic development plan that would integrate heritage, arts and culture, commerce, and tourism development. Grants were obtained for a team of University of Sydney architecture students led by Professor Henry Sanoff to incorporate small town image building, also called mainstreeting, into the planning process.

Through a series of workshops and public meetings Sanoff's team successfully established in the Bangalow community the understanding that the buildings and streets of a town convey an image which reflects the inner life, social conceptions, and human values of the users. They observed that Bangalow already had a 'pride in place', and that it had an existing atmosphere and personality. For businesses to succeed, the town had to change its image from being a stop on a journey between

other places to being a destination in its own right. Sanoff argued that the effort of correcting the damage to the town's character caused by decades of abuse should more than pay for itself in terms of strengthening the commercial potential of the area (Sanoff, 1990). He stressed that to revitalise the town there was no need to create a new image, but rather a need to re-focus the image that already existed. The emphasis should be on converting Bangalow from a dull, shabby highway quick stop into a heritage village with true charm that recognised its history (Sanoff, 1990).

Sanoff's planning development process required the participation of all key decision makers in the town and co-ordination between civic, historic, arts, and commercial interests. An organisation was established bringing together representatives from existing organisations to integrate economic development with a plan for the visual enhancement and preservation of key areas of the town by an awareness program based on a shared image of Bangalow (Sanoff, 2000).

A series of community workshops were held to discuss and agree on proposals for modifying existing buildings, environment and implementation strategies. A number of long term goals were formulated: to recognise the area's natural and scenic resources as major assets; heighten public awareness of the town's unique historical character; package and promote an image of innovation and tradition; retain the unique character and quality of life in Bangalow; and, encourage the arts to contribute to the development of the community (Sanoff, 2000).

In 1993/94 the Bangalow Progress Association and the Chamber of Commerce commissioned "The Bangalow Main Street Plan". The plan identified the historical features and value of the streetscape by building on 1983, '85 and '90 reports and studies which had considered the historical value and potential problems and identified tourism as an important industry. It detailed a number of specific recommendations to encourage well-designed infill development and the refurbishment of building and facades throughout the main street. This included selection and coordination of streetscape elements including signage, seats, litter receptacles and street lighting (Bangalow Progress Association, 1994).

These recommendations endorsed the intention of the Byron Council's 1989 Development Control Plan (DCP) guidelines to maintain Bangalow's visual cohesion through form, scale, and materials, not mere reproductions of earlier buildings (Pickles, 1989). For example, all new residential buildings were required to have metal roofs with similar pitch and shape to the existing heritage homes. The implementation of the DCP together with the Main Street Plan, and the Council's policy reversal of its insistence on cantilevered awnings, encouraged reluctant shopkeepers to invest in main street improvements by replacing the distinctive Edwardian verandas and other character-giving architectural features.

The 2003 Bangalow Settlement Strategy (Byron Shire Council, 2003) enshrined the values and principles established in the 1990s into a formal development control plan that recognised Bangalow's heritage and tourism opportunities, while balancing the need for community services and business development. It designated the main street as a heritage precinct and established development controls. The DCP particularly sought to protect the value of the surrounding rural landscape and economy, noting that encroachment into farmland with potential for horticulture and related rural industry should be avoided.

The revitalisation of Bangalow transformed the village into a prosperous centre of quality lifestyle. The restored buildings attracted retail business that flourished in the heritage setting, attracting both tourists and new residents. In 2010 the Byron Council obtained heritage listing status for designated buildings and streets. A self-guided heritage walk was established and the historical buildings were labelled.

Bangalow Image Evolution – Art and Food

As is common in small communities, an individual resident is often a member of several related organisations and this leads to co-operation and mutual aims between the organisations. Bangalow has three organisations primarily concerned with business promotion: a Chamber of Commerce, representing the village retailers and support services; the Agricultural and Industry Society, representing farmers and farm support businesses; and the Farmers' Market, representing food producers

selling at the weekly market. These organisations do only a small amount of standard promotional activities. A glossy annual business directory, a few tourist pamphlets and postcards, and the occasional television advertisement are the extent of their efforts in that mode. Instead, they support promotional activities that will attract a particular audience that also have direct community benefit, and that are clearly based on the desired village image. Their co-operation and shared approach can be seen in the annual festivals and events conducted, such as: the Billy Cart Derby, the Christmas Eve Carnival, the Classical Music Festival, the Sample Food Festival, the Mind, Body and Spirit Festival, and the Agricultural Show. Many of these are conducted in the key element of the Bangalow renewal process, the Arts and Industry Hall.

A major objective and subsequent achievement of the revitalisation project was the restoration of the Victorian era Arts and Industry Hall located in the Showgrounds in the centre of the village. The large timber framed hall with a double gable roof and pressed tin wall and ceiling lining had been used for civic meetings, dances, a cinema, agricultural show exhibitions, and wedding receptions, and had been the focal point of community cultural life (Sanoff, 1990). As with other Bangalow public buildings it had become dilapidated and misused. The Bangalow Main Street Plan regarded its return to its role as the arts and cultural hub of the village as vital. Federal and NSW government funding was obtained for its heritage restoration.

An example of the type of project currently supported is the 2010 Sculpture in the Paddock event. Eight sculptors were matched with eight local families who depend on animals to make their living. The sculptor's task was to tell the family's story in a three dimensional artwork that was then displayed at the annual Bangalow agricultural show. The more robust of these artworks were then permanently installed on a walking path around the village sports ground.

The 1990s planners' vision of Bangalow as charming heritage destination has been substantially changed and augmented by an unforeseen dynamic: food. Quality restaurants and cafés moved into the refurbished premises and the village gained

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several fine dining establishments with award winning chefs: Town, Harvest, Urban, Utopia, FishHeads, and a range of cafés. An influx of ‘tree changers’, highly educated urbanites moving to the country for a lifestyle transformation, purchased small acreages and converted farms into a variety of intensive speciality crops and livestock. Building on the knowledge and practices of the counterculture that had had a presence in the region since the 1970s, they used a mix of traditional, scientific and certified organic techniques to produce coffee, macadamia and pecan nuts, blueberries, stone fruit, limes, guavas, lychees, cheese, pork, beef, biltong, and gelato. These newcomers also understood and used promotional skills. As a result the quality of the restaurants and the local produce received national publicity.

For example, in the late 1990s, prominent pork producer Joe Byrne, disillusioned with conventional methods of pork production, resolved to produce natural tasting pork under the appellation Bangalow Sweet Pork. His feeding and breeding programs were formulated to produce pork without antibiotics, added hormones or genetically modified feeds (Sweetpork, 2013). In 2005 Bangalow Sweet Pork received the inaugural *Vogue Entertaining and Travel* ‘Produce Award’ as the ‘best eating quality pork in Australia’. Subsequently, use of the pork by celebrity television chefs and in Michelin starred restaurants led to substantial publicity in national gourmet-food magazines and newspapers. Other pork producers in the region followed Byrne’s example, and Bangalow pork is now recognised as a particular style and quality (Thomsen, 2004).

Bangalow region producers using traditional or organic methods for other products followed the example by entering into national competitions and exhibitions winning national awards for cheese, citrus cordials, olives, blueberries, bread, and coffee. As was the case with the pork, these products were also picked up by high end restaurateurs who used the Bangalow appellation on menus as a sign of quality and integrity. At the same time, the use of these local products in Bangalow’s cafés and restaurants by highly trained chefs moving into the village from the capital cities resulted in further publicity from food writers and awards in the *Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guides* (2012). This publicity substantially enhanced the village’s image and increased visitation to the extent that on weekends it is almost impossible

to find a parking space and booking at the cafés, with waiting queues crowding the footpath (Bangalow Heart Beat, 2012).

Bangalow Farmers' Market Art Project

The restaurants and cafés feature local organic produce of which a substantial portion is purchased at the Bangalow Farmers' Market held every Saturday morning. At this market, authenticity and quality is rigorously controlled. Vendors must be local growers and must display organic certification. Manufactured products must be made locally by the seller with either their own or another local growers' produce. Stall numbers are limited to prevent duplication of produce. All stall holders are members of a committee that sets and enforces the rules with expulsion from the market the severest penalty for breaches.

Every Saturday morning for two years fine artist Karena Wynn-Moylan photographed the produce she purchased at the Bangalow Farmers' Market before unloading it from her shopping basket (see Figure 1, for example). Her purpose was to record the variety of local food available from her local district over the period to raise awareness of its quality. She condensed the images into 24 paintings for exhibition throughout the region and in capital cities. The exhibition included an on-line published book of the images with recipes from the farmers whose produce was shown. This art project was not a commission, but her individual response to the principle and value of farmers' markets.



Figure 1 – Jumping Red Ant Roses (Source: Karena Wynn-Moylan)

Wynn-Moylan's purpose in depicting the produce from the Farmers' Market was to use art's transmuting ability to heighten and reinforce perceptions of its qualities of integrity and authenticity. The series of paintings of the growers' produce value added by attaching another layer of consumer experience to the items, elevating them to objects of visual sensory engagement.

Art, at its simplest, is a form of communication in which emotions, moods and feelings are communicated. Thomas Carlyle (cited by McLeod, 1991) argued that the arts transform experience by mediating between inner perceptions and feelings and the external world. An artwork can distil a range of meanings which resonate with, and are evocative of, many different personal meanings and human experiences. In

this way, the arts are reflexive, they recall and crystallise our perceptions of our lives and ourselves (McLeod, 1991). Art's symbolic power in Western culture gives context, responsibility and agency, enabling it to transform images, things and situations into more than they would be or are perceived to be (Eichler, 2009). Art is a complementary value system that adds its transformative power to mundane objects.

It is this use of art that Pine and Gilmore (1999) recommend for creating a brand image by emphasising the experience customers can have surrounding the purchase, use, or ownership of products by adding elements that enhance the customer's sensory interaction with them. They claim that businesses can provide an experience whenever they engage customers, connecting with them in a personal, memorable way on an emotional, physical, intellectual, or even spiritual level. While the experience itself lacks tangibility, the value of the experience lingers in the memory of any individual who was engaged where it remains long afterward.

Bourdieu's theory of cultural consumption and cultural capital as a means of gaining and maintaining social status has relevance in these activities. Consumers use the cultural meaning in consumer goods to express cultural categories and principles, create and sustain lifestyles, and construct notions of the self. Cultural consumption plays a significant role in the creation of social identity and position, and the inclusionary and exclusionary practices that form and maintain social groups, because each social class has its own distinct 'habitus', a way of looking at the world and operating in it that is common to its members (Bourdieu, 1984). As Habermas (1990) observed, cultural values merge into value orientations that shape the identity of groups and individuals in such a way that they form an intrinsic part of culture or personality. In this way a commodity is imbued with meaning that can express cultural aspirations and distinctions. Slater claimed it is a socio-cultural 'requirement':

By knowing and using the codes of consumption of my own culture, I reproduce and demonstrate my membership of a particular social order. Moreover, I act out that membership. My identity as a member of a culture is enacted through the

meaningful structure of my social actions – the fact that I do things in this way rather than that. Not only my identity but the social relations themselves are reproduced through culturally specific consumption. (1997: 132–3)

Artist Wynn-Moylan had involved the growers in her project from the beginning obtaining recipes from the growers using the produce depicted in the paintings. They recognised its promotional value for reputation building, reinforcement of the Bangalow brand and links with Bangalow’s demographic, and Bangalow’s tourism profile. The Farmers’ Market committee provided funding support for the exhibitions, a print run of the book, production of posters and cards, and a website.

Conclusion

The promotional activities of Bangalow farmers’ market had previously shown awareness that the image of the quality of their produce is enhanced by a relationship with other high quality activities and goods, making it attractive to a target customer that is primarily interested in quality and sustainability rather than cost. Their promotional activities are intended to reach people with the same values and interests as themselves – middle class, educated professionals, attracted to fine food, heritage, arts, and most of all, to integrity and authenticity.

An art exhibition featuring the market dovetailed deftly into this promotional mix. The act of an artist valuing their produce as an art subject adds value to the produce for the target customers of Bangalow image brand promotions by elevating the market visit from shopping to a sensory experience, thus adding to and reinforcing Bangalow’s destination image. Although this may have been intuitive rather than an intellectual understanding of its processes, in doing so the Bangalow Farmers’ Market committee demonstrated a sophisticated use of destination image building.

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