COMMUNICATING REGIONAL IDENTITY

The Hong Kong Tourist Board Website

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Abstract. Public websites provide a globally perceptible articulation of a particular corporate or institutional image. When websites are effectively representing nations or quasi-national entities however, they imply functions beyond simple marketing presence and commercial activity. They rather reflect images of how an autonomous country or region wishes to present or brand itself as a geo-political destination, offering clues to its self-identity, its distinguishing attractions, and its core cultural values. In addition, any such singular presentation must address the manifold expectations of potential site users, who have different backgrounds and needs. Tourism, the world's largest industry, is at the forefront of articulating the identificatory and iconic values of a region, and straddles the commercial and governmental spheres in representing and communicating these values. Governmental priorities and commercial imperatives imply that these spheres are not necessarily co-extensive, and are impacted by the regional structure of the industry, external perceptions of the destination and the effectiveness of branding strategies. These become critical issues when the website is an official portal, the point of first impression that brands a region, displaying its communicative practices and implying value commitments that attract and inform visitors or otherwise. In this paper we detail a case study of particular interest, the official Hong Kong Tourist Board site, and, using a two-stage questionnaire, investigate its perception from within one of its major regional neighbours and source markets for inbound visits, Australia. Issues concerning gender effects, along with the effectiveness of branding iconography, and information communication are examined. Several directions for further research are suggested.
1. Introduction

Tourism is the world’s largest industry, employing 200 million people, and generating an estimated 11% of global GDP (Roe and Urquhart, 2001). For many nations and regional areas it is both a major contributor of employment and a source of foreign revenue.

As an international, information intensive and media friendly industry, tourism has been well served by the potential of the internet as a marketing and communication channel, as well as its enablement of remote commercial transactions (Cloyde & Landfried (1995), Burger (1997), Walle (1996)). In addition to being a shop window for marketing attractions, websites supply the need for information on a destination, increasingly used by independent travelers. Tjostheim and Aanonsen (1997) note that independent travel constitutes a substantial market share, citing 1996 European figures of about 30% of summer travel abroad not being prebooked.

Globally, travel and tourism is the third largest category of internet purchases and with the continuing growth of internet users, the potential markets correspondingly increase, with significantly, much of this growth is likely to be in China. Even post September 11th, the upward trend in online travel continues: during December 2001 worldwide unique visitors to online travel sites was 94.3 million people (over 30% of the global audience), exceeding previous record levels, with larger growth shown for non-U.S. travel site visitors (comscore, 2002). Survey reports available online show similar increased growth in Europe (NUA, 2002) and elsewhere including China (CommerceNet, 2002).

Websites are critical in marketing destinations, and perform functions including displaying tourist attractions, providing information, visually and textually, and enabling commercial transactions. However, like other websites competing for limited attention of users, they must convey their purpose and scope quickly if they are to retain the amount of attention that translates into a commercial decision. The heuristic figure of eight seconds is suggested as the amount of time a site has to capture the user’s attention with an effective homepage download (Guzman, 2000). The content of this download should be attractive, informative, promising and communicate quickly a sense of the site’s nature if further exploration is to ensue. These issues are detailed from a professional practitioner viewpoint in Bradley and Fox (2000), who describe the redesign of the South Australian Tourism website. By analyzing the site’s purpose and likely audience Bradley and Fox determined where it failed to meet audience needs, and created a design that redressed this. An effective, audience-

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1 China’s internet regulator, the China Internet Network Information Centre (CNNIC), has reported an increase from 22.5 million to 33.7 million internet users in 2001 (Zhou, 2002).
focused homepage was key to the redesign. In an empirical study Geissler, Zinkhan and Watson (2001) consider the web as an advertising medium. They identify homepage design as a key communication component where the first look is critical to gaining consumer attention, and show how homepage complexity relates to communication effectiveness.

1.1. WEB PRESENCE OF DESTINATIONS

A web presence is potentially a statement to the world, and to be effective must represent accurately its political intentions, whilst addressing the needs of its users. Fisher, Craig & Bentley (2000) note, however, that designers of web sites are often unaware of their audiences' needs, wants and preferences, ultimately affecting how surfers may interact with the site. Vora (1998) observes that sufficient time to analyse the scope of the web content is not always spent. This issue may be addressed at different levels, from the identification of different categories of users and their preferences, to the cultural impact of iconography, to the effectiveness and appropriateness of branding strategy. The purpose of a portal site marketing a destination is to provide information leading to actual visits and related commercial transactions. It must also be attractive, and as positive reactions to a website increase purchasing willingness (White and Manning, 2000), it is important to secure this through effective design. Furthermore, since trust relates to brand recognition (see Barwise et al, 2002 for a review), communicating a strong and identifiable image, logo or other visual material memorably connoting the site is part of developing a presence in the user's mind, with which trust can develop through further interaction. Images of destination and culture are of great importance to achieving web site objectives, as these images include representations of national symbolism to a potential tourist's mind. As such, it gave them an overall perception of that destination. Montinho (1987) suggests that all places have an image, whether it be good, bad or indifferent. Even if unrepresentative, such images will be held consciously or unconsciously in the minds of potential visitors, and the website channel is ideally suited to manufacturing and deliberately conveying chosen images of destinations and, more widely, regional cultural values. The emphasis on visual language has been shown to be particularly important for destination marketing. Pictures for instance have proved more effective than purely textual channels (Beirne and Curry, 1999) as prospective visitors can see the destination rather than imagine it. In the field of tourism, whose essence is cross-cultural, multilingual and international, the role of visual icons is especially critical. Beirne and Curry (1999) have found that perception of destinations can change following web viewing². The associations between images, logos and a

² Although only 25 subjects were used in their study, this issue is one examined in the present study, and further validation of this result may be expected
destination conveyed wittingly or otherwise by the website will be inclined to leave prospective tourists with a distinct sense of the place, and a positive or negative feeling with respect to a potential visit.

Prospective tourists however are not necessarily homogeneous, and market segmentation exercises, conducted as specific projects are applicable. More generally though the relationship between culture and website design is poorly understood (Bourges-Waldegg and Scrivener 1998; Day 1998; Dray 1996; Ess and Sudweeks 1998; Evers and Day 1997, Lim and Turk 1999; Murrell 1998; Turk 2000; Turk and Trees, 2000), and within cultures, demographic effects of affluence, gender, youth and so on suggest other relevant variables at work. It is known, for instance, that females make more household purchasing decisions, including those on the internet. (Hawfield and Lyons, 1998). Attracting single women to Hong Kong was one particular initiative of the HKTB, who made this particular segmentation recently with the publication of “the New-Age Women’s Guide to Hong Kong”, with coupons and shopping tips. This resulted in an increase in female tourists to Hong Kong (Dwivedi, 2001), whose regional director for South and South-East Asia targeted this group. When asked if Hong Kong were a woman what her attributes would be, he identified stylish, intelligent and fun-loving, and relevant itineraries in Hong Kong for this market were identified. Relatedly, the splash page for the Hong Kong Tourism Board website, (www.discoverhongkong.com) requires the user to identify from which country they are visiting the site. This potentially allows a presentation of the site in terms relevant to what is known about the demographics of visitors from that region.

This approach implements some of the more recent thinking about cross-cultural consumption (Classen and Howes, 1996) who note that transnational (corporations) are increasingly adopting an approach based around tailoring global products and advertisements to local markets. Whilst certain values perceived as Western and embodied in product design may actually reflect more general, non-culturally specific values3, there is plenty of evidence that cultural effects emanating from local markets for global products affect consumer perceptions. Quoting Levitt’s (1983) phrase that the (products) of the industrialized world “play a single tune for all the world” Classen and Howes critique global marketing strategies that do not take into account cultural differences. In the present context it is thus relevant to examine the perceptions of potential consumers from a culturally distinct target market, who may have various preconceptions about Hong Kong from their own cultural background. The interrelation between consumers’ cultural background and their perceptions of another culture’s website is accordingly a key research issue.

3 Classen and Howes in this regard cite the example “a headache is a headache and aspirin is aspirin”
Like many other destinations, tourism is important to Hong Kong, accounting for its third largest source of foreign revenue after the textile and apparel industries (TradePort, 1999). Tourism services including transportation, hotels, retailing, sightseeing, entertainment, telecommunications, and restaurants account for the largest proportion of Hong Kong's service exports. Hong Kong is one gateway city to, and from, China, but unlike others, has an identity coloured by its unique recent past, and its previous history of governance, lends more autonomy to its activities of self presentation.

Despite its economic importance, until relatively recently there was no government policy aimed at promoting tourism, nor a government department responsible for tourism’s regulation and development. Instead, a government funded organisation outside the formal civil service structure the Hong Kong Tourism Board (formerly HK Tourist Authority) had this portfolio. This has since changed, with the establishment of the Tourism Commission in May 1999, reflecting increased government priority towards tourism development. The role of the HKTB, renamed from HKTA in April 2001, has changed correspondingly from primarily serving the interests of its local members to a larger responsibility for promoting the destination, including inbound tourism, overseas marketing and public education. This implies the requirement to present a “face” identifying Hong Kong, and implicitly what it stands for to the world.

The strength and nature of Hong Kong’s national identity has been examined post 1997 in a five country-comparative study by Keillor and Hult (1998). Identifying several components of national identity, including national heritage, ethnocentrism and cultural homogeneity, a number of validated questionnaire items addressing these were translated and backtranslated for presentation to samples in Sweden, USA, Mexico, Japan and Hong Kong. The Hong Kong sample “representing a majority of the areas of Hong Kong” consisted of 234 adult respondents. The Hong Kong sample scored highest on consumer ethnocentrism, (where cultural values affect product choices), but lowest for the dimensions of national heritage and cultural homogeneity. Given Hong Kong’s multicultural background and importance of its trading this is unsurprising, but without the high score on this dimension Hong Kong would have a national identity that would be considered “somewhat weak” according to the norms presented by these researchers. Although implications for general business and cultural interaction are drawn from this research, the study notes the particular market of Hong Kong as problematic, with the issue of Hong

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*4 In 2000, the tourism industry generated revenues of $61.5 billion. Tourism spending in the first half of 2001 was $32.3 billion, 7.2% higher than the same period last year. Source: http://www.info.gov.hk/tc/paper/doc/factsheet-5.pdf 15/2/2002*
Kong's national cultural variation possibly reflecting in the varying reliability scores observed.

Hong Kong is particularly interesting also at this time due to its status as a special administrative region of the PR China, having been "handed over" from its previous administration by the UK in 1997 (Lilley, 1997). This allows it to maintain its previous capitalist system but allow a substantial time for rapprochement with greater China. The present administrative arrangements allow a 50 year "guarantee of no change" during which Hong Kong's sense of itself and the identity it presents to the world may be observed through the imagery and design of its web presence. As a public relations exercise, it is relevant to consider what imagery is foregrounded, and how this reinforces or changes the perception of Hong Kong in the public mind. The identifications made by Hong Kong will reflect in its website: it has an identity characteristically different from Chinese and British, (Pang, 2001) but has been required to reference itself to both those cultures.

In this study we examined several issues implied by the above discussion. We first wished to establish whether the site effectively communicated the objectives of the HKTB. We also wished to confirm whether the finding that touristic perceptions can be changed following website viewing applied to this website, and whether there were any gender differences evident in perception and impact of the site. Finally we wished to examine the perceived identity of Hong Kong vis-à-vis China, since generic Chinese cultural imagery on the site might not convey distinctions relevant to the tourist market.

2. Research Approach

Bodies such as the Hong Kong Tourist Board routinely conduct their own market research through surveys and questionnaires, and the current research was not aiming to compete with, to replicate, or to contractually conduct such work. Instead, some general issues relating to the communicative effectiveness of a website for a particular and typical class of users were being investigated. More generally such studies address the issue of information quality, commonly considered important to information systems success, but often hard to assess (Zhang, Keeling and Pavur, 2001). These authors developed and validated an instrument for measuring user perception constructs applicable to assessing webpage quality, and tested it on the home pages of fortune 500 companies. Recognising that further research is needed that goes beyond the home page to the site itself, Zhang, Keeling and Pavur identify a cluster of companies with primarily strategic and transactional objectives directed closely to the consumer. For such companies perceptions of high presentation, navigation and quality characteristics are important. The questionnaire instrument developed by Zhang et al. was the basis for our study.
To ensure consistency of subject experience, and in order to avoid any possible interference with online data gathering by the HKTB itself, a snapshot version of the official Tourist Board site (www.discoverhongkong.com) dated around mid 2001 was locally cached. This is significant because the Hong Kong Tourist Board had relaunched itself in April 1st 2001, and had specific objectives regarding its image to convey, in particular, a marketing platform with the slogan “City of Life: Hong Kong is it”\(^5\). In addition the site was in dynamic evolution, and so a consistent version was required. Following a pilot survey of 10 subjects to refine the questionnaire and ensure its clarity in this context, an expanded version particular to the Hong Kong Tourist Board site and including some demographic questions was designed for a two stage process (Appendix A). This included questions covering the information quality areas addressed by Zhang et al, with additional questions aimed at assessing whether the site would be recommended, for example by word of mouth. Other questions concerned the surfer’s understanding of the purposes conveyed by the web site, home page, and the objectives services and products of the organisation. A question focusing on the surfer’s perception of the organisation’s communication and interaction effort was also included. Specific groups of questions concerned whether perceptions could be changed by viewing a site, and whether Hong Kong and generic Chinese imagery could be distinguished.

The first stage was conducted before subjects had surfed the web site and the second stage conducted after they had surfed the web site. However, subjects had to attempt the second stage of the questionnaire without referring back to the web site to gain more information. These ‘PRE & POST’ questions stages approach was established in order to capture any differences in the subjects’ knowledge before and after their exposure to the web site, thus indicating the effectiveness of information communicated by the site. The demographic questions were included at the end to minimise subjects’ perceived workload. Following the pre-surf questionnaire, each subject surfed the cached site for 15 minutes. As the site contained upwards of 8000 files, there was plenty of scope for exploration. With much navigation being naturally channeled through the home page however, there was considerable exposure to the critical branding images, When there are several hundred or more pages at a Web site, Vora (1998) has suggested that testing should be focused on home pages, which often encapsulate a site’s strategy and scope. A number of dynamically generated and other pages available on the online site were not downloaded for caching, and an error message was reported by the browser, which when clicked through twice would retrieve the page in question. As no subjects reported any difficulty with this, the effect was considered to be

\(^5\)We are grateful to Mrs Rebecca Lai, Commissioner for Tourism, Hong Kong SAR, for timely information and support in designing this research (see Donald and Gammack, (2001) for background)
randomly distributed across the site and can be seen as equivalent to delays due to network traffic in a live situation. Fifty subjects, (33 male, 17 female) took part in the study, all students at Murdoch University in 2001. These were all volunteers, rewarded for participation, and from a range of discipline areas. The majority (66%) were aged between 18 to 22 (33 subjects) followed by 23 to 27 (13 subjects), 33-37 (3 subjects) and 43 to 47 (1 subject). Most came from a western cultural background (78% primarily reside in Australia) and mainly spoke English as a first language (92%). Although studies involving students may be considered unrepresentative, in this case the demographics mirror closely the profile of young, independent travelers, IT and media literate and likely to make web purchases. For example the most common age for backpackers visiting South Australia in 1999/2000 was 20-24 years old (SATC, 2001) and accounted for one third of international visitor nights.

3. Findings

Several questions addressed the ability of the site to communicate organisational objectives. Question 11 concerned the perception of Hong Kong as a destination. Of the 50 subjects, 43 (86%) of subjects believed that Hong Kong is a shopping destination, 28 (56%) of subjects believed that Hong Kong is a cultural destination, 19 (38%) believed that Hong Kong is a historical destination, 21 (42%) subjects believed that Hong Kong is a leisure destination and 11 (22%) subjects believed that Hong Kong is a environmental (scenic) destination. These figures, summarised in figure 1, tend to suggest a view of Hong Kong not fully in line with its contemporary priorities in marketing itself, in which ecotourism is a significant part.

![Figure 1. Perceptions of Hong Kong as a destination](image)

Other objectives were effectively communicated, with a majority of subjects agreeing, and only one subject strongly disagreeing, that they
understood the HKTB’s web site objectives. For instance, 88% of the subjects believed promoting Hong Kong was the objective of HKTB’s web site, and 42% agreed that they understood the services and products of the HKTB. 48% of subjects stated that providing information about Hong Kong is the HKTB’s key service/product and only 3 subjects disagreed that they understood the service and product.

Questions concerning the best description of Hong Kong were asked before and after surfing the site. Before surfing the subjects were asked to suggest descriptive terms which grouped into the categories shown in figure 2a, which shows the percentage of subjects who considered that term, or a similar one, as being the best description of Hong Kong. Following surfing the same question elicited the responses summarised in figure 2b. This showed that a majority (62%) of subjects changed their views of what Hong Kong through surfing. Of those subjects who had changed their view, 35.5% stated that Hong Kong is best described as ‘City of Life, showing that, to an extent the slogan had been successfully conveyed and that perception of the destination could be changed by the website channel. Preconceptions about Hong Kong as being primarily a shopping destination for example, were diminished in importance through the surfing activity.

Figure 2a. Perceived best description of Hong Kong before surfing.
With a substantial number of subjects changing their minds about the best description these data were further analysed to determine which categories were specifically affected by the changes in perception (figure 3). This shows a shift from a common conception of a very developed city and business centre to an increased awareness of “City of life” as the best descriptor.

The site’s objective of attracting visitors was directly questioned in item 34, and its effectiveness gauged. 40 of the 50 subjects agreed or strongly agreed...
that they had an increased inclination to visit Hong Kong following their surfing, with one disagreeing and the rest neutral. Only 5 subjects however would base a travel decision only on internet provided information. The remaining 90% had either not thought of it as an information channel, or considered it unreliable.

The perception of Hong Kong vis a vis China was addressed by several questions both before and after surfing. Only 10 subjects had previously visited Hong Kong, and although 68% perceived its current government as Chinese, in general most subjects (74%) knew little or nothing about Hong Kong’s history and politics. Differences from mainland or generic Chinese imagery were established by asking which among a set of images were specifically identified with Hong Kong. Figure 4 shows the number of subjects who identified a particular image as being associated with Hong Kong, with correct identifications higher in those who had visited Hong Kong previously.

![Figure 4. Number of subjects identifying an image with Hong Kong.](image)

The reciprocal question was asked to identify which of the images was considered as Chinese and not specifically Hong Kong, and the results are shown in figure 5. Allowing for wrong or uninformed answers, clearly certain images are associated with one or other destination, with a degree of overlap for
items such as Bruce Lee, the red junk, and the dragon logo. The dragon logo is the symbol of the Hong Kong Tourism commission, but dragon imagery naturally has a long association with China.

![Bar chart](image)

*Figure 5. Number of subjects identifying an image with China.*

When asked directly, all but 2 subjects stated that Hong Kong was different from China, giving various reasons. These included that the governments were different (12 subjects), that Hong Kong was more lively (4 subjects) that the cultures differed (10 subjects) and that it was more westernized (10 subjects) with a stronger economy (8 subjects). However when translated into potential visitor preferences, an almost equal number would prefer to visit China (46%) as Hong Kong (54%), with the respective reasons tabulated in figure 6a and figure 6b.
Subjects were tested on the memorability of images to which they had been exposed through their surfing, and the results are shown in figure 7.

The three most memorable images, Jackie Chan, the City of Life Logo and the high rise buildings are all prominent on the home page of the website, with Jackie Chan’s memorability possibly reflecting the subject demographic. Scenic images are comparatively less memorable than the iconic ones, and confirms the
importance of the home page in conveying distinctive images. Despite the memorability of the Jackie Chan image, only one subject believed that this best represented Hong Kong, with 26 subjects choosing the City of life, 19 choosing high rise buildings and one subject each for other individual images. This suggests that the intended image is being conveyed effectively.

![Image retained following surfing.](image)

The favourable impressions conveyed by the site were reflected in the substantial agreement of subjects to the question comparing their before and after surfing impressions (figure 8). 64% further stated they would recommend the site to friends and relatives.
Figure 8. Number whose impression of Hong Kong was improved following surfing.

Attracting women to Hong Kong, as mentioned in the introduction had been a particular initiative of the HKTB, and so a gender based comparison of those who had an increased inclination to visit was made. This showed significantly more females than males had an increased inclination to visit following surfing the site. \(X^2 (3)=10.6, p=0.014\), suggesting the website was successfully addressing one of its target markets. Although no further determination from this data as to why this should be the case can be definitively made, it is possible that the site displayed opportunities in categories traditionally known to be attractive to women, with production values emphasizing stylish and fun loving aspects. The content of the “New age women’s guide to Hong Kong” described attractions under the headings of looking and feeling good, body and soul, the finer things in life, and arts and culture. These are staples of women’s interest magazines and so site content in this area may be expected to be attractive. Aesthetic choices by site designers may also have been made: for instance regarding symmetries in page design. Research has revealed that females prefer higher complexity in symmetry than do males, and other gender biases in aesthetic preference are described by Strachan (2000). Whether these ideas consciously translated into design choices is indeterminate, but would be interesting to explore further.

4. Conclusions and Further Research

Perceptions of national identity and the distinctive cultural values of regions affect the leisure choices and commercial interactions foregrounded in the tourism industry. It is in government interests at all levels to promote these
effectively, and both destination imagery and its perception will be done
consciously or otherwise. Websites are a major marketing channel in tourism
and in corporate promotion generally, and their quality in conveying
information and communicating their objectives effectively is a growing area of
research. Official or quasi-official portal websites brand geo-political
destinations, and suggest their self-identity, and core cultural values When their
users cross national and cultural boundaries, it is important to understand how
the website messages are perceived and used, so the relationships can be
managed through effective targeting of promotion and marketing campaigns,
recognizing the different motives and values at play in interacting with other
cultures and regions.

This study has considered a particularly dynamic case, where the
communicative effectiveness of the Hong Kong Tourism Board site’s objectives
were examined for an important demographic in a major regional neighbour and
source market. Among the results, it was found that a strong perception of
Hong Kong as a shopping destination could be modified through surfing,
(confirming Bierne and Curry’s (1998) finding), and that the logo perception as
identificatory of Hong Kong was increased. A generally increased inclination
to visit Hong Kong resulted from surfing the site, which was significantly more
prevalent among women, an identified objective of the HKTB. Images of the
logo, skyscrapers and Jackie Chan proved most memorable, confirming the
importance of the home page imagery in conveying an impression, but not
enhancing the image of Hong Kong as “scenic”, or especially ecotouristic.
Although recognizing Hong Kong as distinct from China, this demographic was
evenly split about which they would prefer to visit. The overall inference
however is that the site did effectively communicate its main objectives.

The interrelation between consumers’ cultural background and their
perceptions of another culture’s website remains a research issue, since this
group of subjects was itself not entirely from a western cultural background
(although 78% primarily reside in Australia, 8% did not mainly speak English
as a first language. This, however, is not necessarily unrepresentative of a
multicultural society such as Australia, and the small numbers involved in
separating subjects by their different background cultures, although suggestive
of hypotheses for future exploration, precludes statistical analysis within this
study. It is also possible that background culture effects may be dominated by
those of a more general student/independent traveler “subculture”. If effects of
background culture were to be shown however, there would be implications for
different forms of market segmentation. As effects of background culture are
clearly evident in other areas for this demographic, for example in approaches
to study, and attitudes towards authority, it is very likely that this aspect would
affect perceptions, and thus consumption decisions.
Several other suggestions for further research directions emerge from this study. These include refinements and replications with other tourist demographics and source markets, and for other Pacific Rim cities to put the present results into a wider context. Emerging theories of information quality and effective web design could be comparatively tested on static, mock or actual touristic sites to determine effective strategies for achieving particular objectives.

The issue of national, regional and/or cultural identity as expressed in communicable images is a rich one, and effective instrumentation and theory development is just beginning. As Keillor and Hult (1998) note, "By better understanding national identity in a given cultural context, as well as that culture's emphasis on the distinctiveness of that national identity, both the international business researcher and practitioner should be in a better position to engage in the study of any given culture and its interactions, in a business context, with other cultures." This suggests another line for research activity. Finally, branding effectiveness, and its perception and impact is of significant commercial interest, and whilst much of this is suited to contractual research activity, the cultural or subcultural values embodied and perceived in these are more subtle and elusive. By examining how cities and regions brand themselves, and represent their values in different media contexts, clues to their core values, and perceptions of those can be elucidated. This line of research is particularly promising for future work.

5. References


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Appendix A – Questionnaire

PRE ‘SURF’ QUESTIONS

1. How much do you know about Hong Kong's history and politics?
   Nothing 1 | A little 2 | Some 3 | A fair amount 4 | A lot 5

2. Hong Kong was under different Government(s) for about the last hundred and fifty years? Yes/No
   If YES, which country(s) do you think the previous Government of Hong Kong was under the control of?

3. Which country do you think the Government of Hong Kong is under the control of now? ____

4. Have you visited Hong Kong before? Yes/No

5. What feature would you identify as particular to Hong Kong ONLY? (Whether or not you have visited).

6. Have you visited Mainland China before? Yes/No

7. Which of the following logos or 'marketing images' do you associate with Mainland China BUT not Hong Kong? (Choose as many as applicable) (a 15 item table follows including copyrighted images)
8. Is there any aspect of Mainland China that you think could NOT be summed up in a 'logo' or marketing image?

9. Is there any aspect of Hong Kong that you think could NOT be summed up in a 'logo' or marketing image?

10. Do you believe Hong Kong is different from Mainland China? Yes/No
    Please give a reason for your answer

11. What kind of destination do you feel Hong Kong is?
    Shopping | Cultural | Historical | Environmental | Holiday | Other
    (Green)

12. Which images/logo do you feel best represents Hong Kong ONLY? (Choose as many as applicable)
    (15 item table follows including copyrighted images)

13. Between Mainland China and Hong Kong, which do you most prefer as your visiting destination?
    China | Hong Kong
    Why would you prefer the destination you chose?

14. Hong Kong is best described as...

POST 'SURF' QUESTIONS

15. What do you like MOST about this site?

16. What do you like LEAST about this site?

17. Is the amount of shopping information sufficient?
    1 Insufficient | 2 | 3 About right | 4 | 5 Too Much

18. Is the amount of cultural information sufficient?
    1 Insufficient | 2 | 3 About right | 4 | 5 Too Much

19. Is the amount of historical information sufficient?
    1 Insufficient | 2 | 3 About right | 4 | 5 Too Much

20. Is the amount of environmental (Green) information sufficient?
    1 Insufficient | 2 | 3 About right | 4 | 5 Too Much

21. Is the amount of leisure information sufficient?
### Communicating Regional Identity

22. This site appears to make it easy to correspond with the HKTB directly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

23. I clearly understand the services and products of this organization (HKTB) by looking at this site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

24. I would describe the services and products of this organization as:

__________________________________________________________________________

25. I understand the objective of this site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

26. The objective of this site is:

__________________________________________________________________________

27. Viewing this site gives me a better perception of Hong Kong.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

28. Viewing this site gives me a good perception of the organization (HKTB) itself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

29. My perception of the organisation (HKTB) is:

__________________________________________________________________________

30. I would recommend this site to a friend/relative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
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</table>

31. Which logos/image of Hong Kong can you still remember from the web site??

32. Which logo/images do you feel best represents Hong Kong ONLY? (Choose only one)

(15 item table follows including copyrighted images)

33. Hong Kong is best described as:

__________________________________________________________________________

34. After viewing this site I have the inclination to visit Hong Kong more than before.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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</table>
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

35. What is your age?


36. What is your gender?  Male/ Female

37. In which country do you primarily reside?

38. What is your country of birth?

39. Which language do you use most often?

40. Which description accurately identifies your present occupation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Business &amp; Professional</th>
<th>Skilled Worker</th>
<th>White Collar Semi Professional</th>
<th>Labourer</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

41. Which of the following household income ranges is applicable to you?

|$ 0 - 5,000 | $ 5,001 - 10,000 | $ 10,001 - 15,000 | $ 15,001 - 25,000 |
| $ 25,001 - $35,000 | $ 35,001 - 45,000 | $ 45,001 - 55,000 | $ 55,001 & Above |

42. How frequently do you surf the Internet (per week)?

| None | 1 - 2 | 3 - 4 | 5 - 6 | 7 & Above |

43. How frequently do you visit a tourism web site (per month)?

| None | 1 - 2 | 3 - 4 | 5 - 6 | 7 & Above |

44. Have you visited HKTB web site before? Yes/No

45. Have you visited any other tourism web site before? Yes/No

46. How frequently do you travel (per year)?

| None | 1 | 2 | 3 - 4 | 5 & Above |

47. Which country do you frequently visit?

48. Have you make any travel decisions mainly based on information found from the Internet? Yes/No

If YES please state main reason for doing so.
If NO please state main reason for not doing so.