# Nkandla: the unexplored frontier for heritage tourism to Zululand, South Africa

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**Abstract**

In recent times, the notion of culture and heritage tourism has been attaining greater importance due to economic aspects related to it as well as and more importantly, to a sustainable approach. Tourism development requires community involvement and will ultimately improve the quality of life in the community in a way which is measurable by both individual and impartial pointers. This article considers the potential to position Nkandla as a tourism destination. Findings propose that tourism sustainability is possible if Nkandla offers authentic educational and experiential value; collaborations are managed between managing authorities, commercial enterprises in proximity and the community; and partnerships are built around mutual beneficial relationships that balance revenues, conservation and economic development. This article highlight key value propositions offered by the destination and proposes some marketing guidelines.

**Keywords:** Nkandla, tourism, marketing, heritage, cultural tourism

**Introduction**

Current unemployment rates and the decline in gross domestic product (GDP) contribution by mining, agriculture and manufacturing has directed the focus of government to other sectors with potential to contribute to economic growth. Following international trends, South Africa too is realising the potential of tourism to diversify the economy and address unemployment in rural communities. The tourism industry is furthermore promoted because it creates opportunities for small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) to enter the market and contribute to the

national economic growth (Tauoatsoala, Henama & Monyane, 2015:2). Internationally, tourism has emerged as one of the largest industries, growing at compound rates of about 4% per annum. This growth has seen travel and tourism to be classified as a leading global economic driver for the 21$^{st}$ century. Indeed, growth appears to be virtually unstoppable, driven by growing wealth and facilitated by developments in communication and transport media'' (Steyn & Spencer, 2011: 178). The demand for tourism is almost unending, as more and more customers are getting introduced to tourism consumption. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) travel and tourism can be positioned as "an indispensable driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability'' (Hollenhorst, Houge-Mackenzie & Ostergren, 2014:305). It thus seems as if tourism has the potential to change economic fortunes of a country, by diversifying the economy. The focus of this paper is destination tourism and specifically on Nkandla as the unexplored frontier for heritage tourism to Zululand, South Africa. In the section to follow this article reviews the South African Tourism Sector. The literature to follow considers heritage tourism and builds a case on Nkandla as a possible tourism destination site. The article concludes with recommendations on appropriate marketing strategies to position Nkandla as an authentic tourism destination.


**The Tourism Sector**

Tourism offerings are characterised by fixed locations, which means that tourism experiences can only be produced at the destination requiring tourists to travel to the destination area (Henama, 2013: 231). Attractions include places of interest that exhibit natural or cultural value, has historical significance, offers natural or build beauty, or create leisure, adventure or amusement experiences. Tourism is thus dependent on the environment, both physical and human (Leong, 2008). These resources cannot be shipped offshore and can only be consumed locally. It is nearly impossible to put trade barriers to tourism as tourists are attracted if a country has attractive tourism offerings, a favourable visa regime and transport networks (Hollenhorst et al., 2014).

Today, tourism is regarded as the ''new gold'' as it attracts more foreign exchange than gold mining. In addition to local patronage, the sector earns foreign exchange, leading to potential high output and employment multipliers (Dupeyras & MacCallum, 2013; Lowitt, 2006: 2). In South Africa, domestic tourism promotion seeks to ensure that tourism is geographically dispersed and that the length of stay and expenditure is increased. In a report titled the *Economic Value of Tourism: City of Cape Town,* Grant Thornton (2009) noted that the average length of stay of foreign visitors was the longest in the Western Cape with 13,5 nights, followed by the Eastern Cape with 10,0 nights. This report recognised that to further grow the sector, there is a need for shared growth in all provinces. A recommendation was thus made to integrate the previously disadvantaged groups into tourism as product owners and tourists.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2010: 6), tourism and tourism-support activities can create a high proportion of employment and career opportunities for low-skilled and semi-skilled workers given that it is a highly labour intensive activity. Henama (2013) supported this notion and suggests that the tourism industry is a proven job creator. Tourism continues to grow as there is greater wealth in the world today and emerging economies are increasing the number of outbound tourists. Wood (2005) noted that the desire to travel is practically universal and tourist practices pervade many areas of social life. Tourism in South Africa entered a new growth phase with the end of apartheid, the hosting of the first democratic elections in South Africa. South Africa was able to embrace sports tourism by hosting the 1995 IRB World Cup and the 1996 African Nations Cup, which played a significant

role in national building and social cohesion. The attraction of major events has a positive spin off for tourism as noted by Steyn and Spencer (2011) that the Rugby World Cup in 1995 gave the industry a tremendous boost when overseas visitors' totals increased by a staggering 52% in a single year. The highlight was South Africa hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup™. Tourism has now been adopted as part and parcel of the economic policies of the government, to stimulate economic growth. In 2009, President Jacob Zuma announced that there would a dedicated Ministry and Department of Tourism to ensure that the tourism industry gets dedicated attention. Visser and Hoogendoorn (2012) asserted that for the first time tourism was specifically 'highlighted in the 2011 State of the Nation Address'. In May 2010, the South African President Jacob Zuma, commissioned the drafting of the National Development Plan (NDP) vision 2030. This plan sees the tourism sector as a comparative advantage for South Africa. ''There is growing evidence that a growing number of localities, from large cities to small towns, are beginning to undertake proactive interventions for LED using tourism as the lead economic sectors'' (Hoogendoorn & Visser, 2010: 547). Focus is furthermore placed on the projected expansion of intra-regional travellers. It is estimated that by 2020 the number of these travellers in Africa will exceed 50 million and this is anticipated to be a force for the transformation of tourism on the continent'' (Rogerson & Kiambo, 2007:506).

## Deterrents to Tourism

In order to meet set objectives of shared growth, increased length of stay, and geographical dispersion of tourism in South Africa, personal safety and security of tourists need to be a priority. Unfortunately, some of the country's highest crime rate areas are closely associated with major tourist destinations which have a negative impact on tourism (George, 2003; Ferreira, 2007). International terrorism further deters personal safety and has a negative impact on tourism (Parkinson & Heyden, 2015). Tourists are also warned against traveling to areas associated with risks of contracting diseases such as Malaria, Ebola and more recently the Zika Virus. The outbreak of the Ebola virus disease (EVD), for example, in West Africa had a detrimental impact on the tourism industry of African destinations such as Kenya and South Africa (Sifolo & Sifolo, 2015).

The absence of a favourable visa regime and good transport networks could impose further deterrents to the tourism industry. In South Africa, new visa rules came into effect in October 2014. These rules required visitors to apply for visas in person at South African embassies to record biometric information. Children under 18 years old, travelling in and out South Africa, were furthermore required to produce an unabridged birth certificate at entry ports. The new requirements resulted in an overall decline of 6.8% in the tourism industry. These regulations were relaxed following intense lobbying by the tourism industry, regulations were relaxed (Venter, 2016).

To manage deterrents to tourism, risks need to be identified and resources allocated to alleviate threats imposed by the external environment. In addition, industry players need to employ innovative approaches to identify new tourism attractions to expand existing offerings from traditional urban and natural reserves. A focus is furthermore required to follow collaborative and inclusive approaches with local communities. One such approach is heritage tourism.

## Heritage Tourism

Heritage sites could be core attractions in terms of tourist products (Alvarez & Korzay, 2011). The definition of heritage tourism has evolved from its initial idea which was limited to history

(Poria, Butler & Airey, 2003) to includes diverse resources including cultural, historical and natural assets (Russo and Jansen-Verbeke, 2008), intangible components, iconic places, natural and other attractions and events such as music festivals and beer fests. Consequently, many communities across the globe have realized the added value of placing their culture and historical endowment on show for adventure-seeking tourists who are keen to go beyond the sun, sea and sand traditional tourism offerings. Culture and heritage are strong attractions for tourists along with South Africa's scenic landscapes, long coastlines, rivers, wildlife and sunny weather. Cultural heritage and especially heritage tourism can become an important addition and component of South African tourism

The Travel Industry Association in the USA (2003) found that heritage travellers tend to stay longer at their chosen heritage destinations and spend more money there than other travellers. A State of the American Traveller Survey (2008) reported that travellers generally agreed that trips are more unforgettable if they include a heritage activity in which they learn something new and many such tourists extended their visits as a result. These are important consumers as they come with money paying for services from a tour operator, the accommodation, food and beverage consumption, and of course spending on local shopping and visiting world-class attractions which have an interesting history and are unique in many ways.

Heritage is what contemporary society decides to inherit and then pass on to future generations (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). In these actions, what the current generations do to preserve the past is important (Timothy & Boyd, 2003). Heritage sites can only be effectively preserved if they are economically viable investments for government and/or business. Thus by increasing a sites tourism business value, government and/or businesses may be persuaded to invest in its future. Heritage tourism tends to promote a sense of community and give people pride in their culture and its uniqueness. It furthermore allows people to work together to enhance economic and cultural development through what become distinctive community prospects. Research shows that travellers enjoy visiting destinations in which there is a strong community identity. Culture has been found to play a fundamentally important role in human development and in forging community identities (European Commission, 2007). Poria et al., (2003) state that heritage sites serve mostly two market segments. There are consumers who visit heritage sites for educational enjoyment purposes and then there are those who come to be emotionally caught up in an experience as it pricked their interest historically. The Battlefield Route of KwaZulu Natal is South Africa`s most significant and historically noteworthy route. Battlefield tourism is a growing sector and it promotes the development of facilities and better on-site interpretation of events by trained guides. Thus the support by local residents of such sites plays a critical role in their long term sustainability and will undoubtedly also boost the cultural heritage of the area. This article considers the inclusion of Nkandla as a heritage site to diversify the current South African tourism offering.


**Why tourism to Nkandla?**


The Nkandla Local Municipality is an administrative area in the uThungulu District of KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa (Nkandla, 2016). The small town of Nkandla is also the home town of the incumbent President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma. About a two hour drive north of Durban, past the valley of a 1000 hills, one finds Nkandla where the President has constructed a multi-million dollar homestead which has been the topic of fierce debate in parliament as well as in the media. Nkandla, offers however more than the now well-known presidential homestead. Nkandla (Enqabeni Enkulu KwaZulu) is the Zulu name for a place in which the Zulu

would take refuge in times of upheaval, internecine and foreign imposed strife. During uprisings such as the famous Bambatha Rebellion and the Ndwandwe War from Entumeni, the area was used as a place of refuge by many people. Numerous Zulu warriors used the Nkandla forest as their last resort for protection from their enemies over many years as it was difficult for their foes to fight the warriors who were concealed in the broad and dark forest (iNkandla eMahlathi Amnyama). Many Zulu heroes' graves are also found at Nkandla, such as that of Bambatha which is at Nsuze. The grave of King Cetshwayo is also located in Nkandla, (Nkandla, 2016), and if there were a tourist heritage site with a multimedia interpretation centre befitting his status at the site, this would be an important addition to the tourism product offering of Nkandla. Essentially the historical, cultural and natural resources that should make up a cultural heritage tourism program that could exist at Nkandla, would serve the future generations well in that it would instil in them a sense of belonging and pride and would also be a place to enjoy (Nkandla, 2016).

Battlefield sites or other historically significant areas are generally places that hark back to the past by preserving for the later generations an accurate record of history and what transpired at a particular place. Gunn (1988) states that historical sites such as battlefields, offer an excellent learning environment for domestic as well as international tourists in both formal and informal ways. Nkandla can thus play a key role in advancing and propagating knowledge about the history of an area and a country in general. A visit to the forest of Nkandla can for example, when part of a guided tour, serve as a wonderful exhibit for the benefit of the tourist. It can thus be a critical source of "living history" and provide tourists with greater insight into the intriguing past of South Africa. Heritage is what contemporary society does to inherit and pass on what has passed but also relates to the contemporary use of the past (Timothy & Boyd, 2003).

Viewed from an indigenous perspective, warfare tourism of any sort which is heritage based includes an extensive assortment of sites where clashes occurred such as both major and minor battle sites or areas where human remains are known to exist. The Nkandla Forest has a great heritage as it was used by Bambata, the son of Mancinza, the chief of the amaZondi, to seek refuge when the colonial authorities wanted to arrest him for refusing to pay the illegitimate hut tax, and basically starting what was to be known as the Bambata Rebellion (Gillings, 1989). It was also at the edge of the Nkandla forest, in Enhlweni, where King Cetshwayo was once provided refuge by Sigananda Shezi of the amaCube, during the civil war of 1883. King Cetshwayo, who required refuge with Sigananda above the Mome Waterfall in 1883, is buried in a striking grove of trees on a ridge close to where the Nsuze and Nkunzane rivers diverge. The Nkandla forests as such, cover an area roughly 160 sq km. The land is dramatically mountainous and includes an assortment of wonderful flora and fauna and was inhabited by elephants as recently as the 1940s as is evidenced by eye-witnesses such as the custodian of King Cetshwayo's grave, a certain Mr. Jotham Shezi, who stated that his father could recall elephants in the forest when he was a young boy (Gillings, 1989).

Battlefield and heritage sites offer tourists a first-hand experience but buy-in of the indigenous population is essential (Zeppel, 2006). In addition as locals become more aware that their way of life is not looked down upon, and that their traditional way of life is in fact appreciated by tourists, they will grow a sense of pride, self-esteem and appreciate their heritage. For the indigenous Zulu people, collaborative management approaches in tourism initiatives in Nkandla would be critically important (Butler & Hinch, 2007). It is clear from conversation with indigenous Zulus that the indigenous communities are endeavouring to be included in conversations involving their history and in telling their understanding of heritage stories to tourists. Such tourism sites are particularly important in that they provide lessons which resonate with people

from all walks of life and from all over the world. Nkandla in its unique way helped fashion the history of South Africa. It also offers the indigenous population and tourists the opportunity to greater comprehend their past and to forge their identity. Rayner (2006) asserts that in order to understand a battle or event, one has to understand the terrain, thus promoting the notion that a visit to a forest and the adjacent area are important considerations for those who enjoy history and all that heritage and cultural tourism have to offer. Equality of representation in viewpoints will be possible if the local community is involved and oral traditions are interrogated as to what happened historically at Nkandla and how so that not only a colonial viewpoint is heard. The consent of the local population for tourists to visit Nkandla forest will be non-negotiable since the area is especially significant to them. From a transformational perspective, tourism developments in Nkandla would be an opportunity for Indigenous communities to build up new economic opportunities and strengthen their political power by playing an active governmental role in the design and management of tourism to the area (Richards, 2011).

In order to have what should be a successful cultural heritage program for Nkandla, it would be important to consider five principles. These include collaboration, finding the fit between community and tourism, giving 'life' to a site or area, providing quality experiences that are authentic and finally preserving and safeguarding resources (Presevationnation.org, 2009). These aspects, when operating in sync, will tend to build community pride in heritage. The two key considerations for a cultural or heritage site are competitiveness and sustainability and that these must be reciprocally supportive.


**Nkandla as a cultural and heritage tourism site**

What exactly are cultural or heritage tourism and is there a difference? There are some differences in definition, and some call it cultural tourism, others heritage tourism, and yet others cultural and heritage tourism or cultural heritage tourism (Cultural & Heritage Tourism Alliance, 2002). If we interrogate the issue of culture it is a manifestation of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively and is thus an idiosyncratic collection of spiritual, cerebral, material and emotional features of society or a social grouping. It includes the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of particular people or a society and generally incorporates their art, literature, lifestyles, values and systems, traditions, history and beliefs (UNESCO, 2001). Cultural tourism is defined as the drive "to create a discerning type of tourism that takes account of other people's cultures" (UNESCO, 2005).

Contrariwise, heritage is an inclusive concept that comprises of many diverse values such as cultural, natural, historical, archaeological, architectural, and even geological. Heritage reflects diverse ways of living, habits, cultures and eras of human societies. Where there is a well-preserved heritage site, this invariably enables the local community and tourists to learn about the cultural history of the area. Given that heritage is not a renewable resource, it should be conserved in a resourceful manner and be sustainable. In an area such Nkandla in the KwaZulu Natal province, the rural economy is going through difficult times of change, and it would be advantageous for the local communities to use the rich cultural and historical heritage to assist in terms of economic upliftment. The rich history of the area must be able to attract state funding and tourism development support as a part of cultural heritage drive given that regional development and cultural heritage tourism are closely aligned (Silberberg, 1995).  Moscardo (1996) asserts that sustainable tourism development must equal the requirements of conservation and development. There should be an objective authenticity which can be evaluated by tourist to any particular heritage site (Moscardo & Woods, 1998). The past of a nation should not be viewed as a product and as such it cannot be invented or conserved in any

shape or form and can in effect only be refashioned for current use and it thus has no eternal value so to speak (Ivanovic & Saayman, 2013). Cultural heritage sites are important to tourism in general and thus need a synergistic relationship approach to exist between managing authorities, the commercial enterprises in proximity to an area to be promoted and the support of community residents to drive sustainable development so that both current and future generations will benefit from the heritage resources while the environment is conserved.

Cultural and heritage tourism as such invariably focuses on communities which as stated earlier have somewhat unique social practices but it also includes tourism to urban areas, including historic or large cities and their many cultural offerings such as history and natural museums and theatres. Nkandla's relatively close proximity to Durban is thus an added bonus for tourists. Cultural tourists as stated by Hughes (2002:164) may be seen as "typically well educated, affluent and broadly travelled, [and] they generally represent a highly desirable type of upscale visitor". They would therefore, for example, be more likely to visit Durban and Nkandla and spend far more than the average tourist (Selwyn,1996).

The local community of Nkandla would be able to showcase their traditions including for example, festivals and rituals, as well as their values and uniquely Zulu lifestyle. Visiting Nkandla once or indeed any other destination is firmly established as an authentic destination, will serve the important role of the reinforcing the self-identity of tourists and help lead to their self- actualization (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). Tourists love the opportunity to experience wide ranging cultural differences as they are viewed in other countries since this experience allows them to transform personally (Salman & Uygur, 2010). Given the nature of South Africa's history and the colonial past, it is difficult to ascertain whose past is actually truly represented in any cultural heritage site given the opposing viewpoints (Wiles, 2007). The preservation of cultural heritage seems to be a key factor in economic policies backing-up tourism development. In essence, it is also a given that the preservation of cultural heritage is significant and it is also used as a means for significant tourism product differentiation (Cuccia & Cellini, 2007:261). Mere presentation of information is insufficient to meet the mainstream tourists' needs. Consequently, they need to be inspired by what they see, hear, feel and experience so as to search for different information and be stimulated in the course of their learning at a heritage site (Tubb, 2003).

The authenticity of tourist experiences is a paramount consideration, and this can be arrived at by careful presentation of accounts of the past conducted by local people as well as the presentation of artefacts that are related directly to a particular event. Presentation should preferably be by those with some familial link to the event based on both oral and written traditions (Li, 2003). McCartney and Osti (2007: 27), posit that the existence of the genuine, original site and setting are absolute necessities when dealing with the notion of authenticity as this is what attracts tourists. Cros (2001) ascertained that when heritage sites were able to present their cultural significance to tourists, this tended to arouse their awareness of the need to safeguard the sites.

Cultural heritage sites entice many tourists and they should be committed to educate tourists as to real events that occurred previously (WTO, 2003). Wang (1999) also supports the idea that if objective authenticity is to exist at all, both the perceptions of the tourists as well as the attractions should be real. In the case of what is termed subjective authenticity it is merely the tourist experience that is real. Viewed as constructive authenticity, a heritage site such as Nkandla would be individually framed by tourists who would each view their own experience in visiting such a site as authentic. This would of course depend on how authentically the site is represented in conjunction with the tourist's authentic experience which are interlinked. In any

event it is apparent that tourists seek a measure of authenticity that is symbolic, as stated by of Wang (1999), who posits and existential type of authenticity which empowers tourists to rise above the daily social activities and obtain a true sense of who they are and where they come from. As tourists get to understand a site better and learn more about it, their awareness of the need for conservation is stimulated, and they tend to alter their attitudes and behaviours (Bramwell & Lane, 1993).

The way in which the tourist understands cultural values through his or her interpretation is important. It is especially the case with heritage sites which must strive to "increase visitor enjoyment and understanding, and prompt more environmentally responsible behavior" (Orams, 1996: 39). This is why it is necessary to provide well designed exhibits to cater for all tourist demographic profiles. Diverse types of interpretation, including inter alia audio and interactive material, should be utilised to enhance the tourists' experiences. In this way the tourists' interpretation is likely to be positive which bodes well for sustainable tourism development (Carr, 2001). Tourism planners should also then consider the personality and behaviour patterns of tourists (Frew & Shaw, 1999).

The uniqueness of a particular sites history and heritage when truthfully portrayed becomes the prime resource of perceived authenticity of what is objectively authentic in a particular site (Yeoman, Brass and McMahon-Beattie, 2007). As tourists try to uncover the cultural experience through their own eyes they become transformed. Tourist obtain new knowledge and experiences when visiting historical, cultural and other heritage sites of and it is thus important for tourism planners and marketers to make certain cultural and heritage sites are abundantly authentic in nature which is what tourists crave for.

**Commercial development**

Yang and Wall (2009), state that diverse stakeholders have different standpoints concerning tourism. They perceive tourism planning and development in different ways. Travel enterprises such as tour companies or travel agencies may tend to concentrate more on the development of the private company and seek to obtain political and economic benefits. The government on the other hand, may graft as tourism planners, regulators, directors, intermediaries and even as investors in the process of tourism development. Where there is only a short term drive for tourism development or over commercialization these will adversely impact the long term goals of tourism sustainability, and this will usually lead to the ultimate destruction or severe deterioration of the cultural heritage site involved in a manner in which the authenticity of the site is downgraded (Li, 2003; Gartner, 1996).

There is a somewhat tricky association between tourism development and cultural heritage management. This may manifest in any of seven different relationships between the parties concerned. These could be for example denial, unrealistic expectations, parallel existences, conflict, obligatory co-management, partnership, and variances in motive and practices (McKercher, Ho & Cros, 2005). Where there is commercialization of a heritage site this increases tourism revenue, which can then fund preservation, conservation and protection of the areas cultural heritage. Tourism development provides a myriad of economic opportunities for cultural heritage destinations but it can equally threaten and degrade heritage (Aas, Ladkin & Feltcher, 2005). If negative scenarios are to be avoided then cooperation and collaboration between the various stakeholders is critical.

Where there is compromise concerning tourism development there are many advantages such as less conflict resolution costs and the achievement of an economy of scale. Tourism is

established on a gradual process of building a community and has many positive impacts (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010) such as the economic, social and environmental. The economic stimulus that tourism brings includes amplified revenue, inflows of foreign exchange, and needed infrastructural development (Gartner, 1996). As stated earlier in this article, tourism also generates positive transformatory social effects which may be reflected in an improved awareness of cultural values, practices and heritages (Li, 2003). Having Nkandla as a heritage destination will also bode well for the environment as the community will be more aware of the need to protect the natural environment.

## Marketing Nkandla as a tourist destination

The marketing of Nkandla's heritage will be unique and the roles of future guides will be to educate tourists and allow the area to become self-sustaining as government funding is relatively sparse when it comes to heritage issues. Careful planning including market segmentation analysis needs to be done so as to ensure that all possible tourist demands, expectations, and needs and wants are met. Ideally a diverse market should be targeted based on the heritage and cultural education, and historical and ecotourism nature of Nkandla. There is globally an increasing demand for more accurate and authentic depictions of history, and the demand for such heritage construal and highly progressive tourism management approaches is mounting (Dallen & Boyd, 2006). Ryan and Cave (2005) focus on the importance of developing a pertinent image for an area or for a particular tourist attraction. Appropriate marketing will consequentially result in a long-term relationship with tourists. In order to quicken growth in tourism to Nkandla, it will be important to fully understand the wants and needs of the market by means of carefully planned market segmentation. Once target segments are identified, awareness needs to be created through appropriate marketing campaigns. Misiura (2006) has indicated that the marketing of heritage and cultural tourism coincides with the early development of marketing as an academic discipline in the USA in the 1950s. Middleton (1989) categorized seven constituents of a tourism visit which may be influenced by marketing. These include the appearance of the entrance to the site, the ambience exuded in the reception areas, the orientation to the site at the start of a visit, visitor routes followed at the attraction, the excellence of interpretation of events and displays, the attitudes and greeting by employees and the general sense of satisfaction and value for money. Harrison (2000) states that interpretation is important to visitors and this comprises presenting material to tourists to a site in a form that is manageable. Thus tour guides need to be well trained and well versed in what they impart (Russo et al., 2008).

An important consideration in the development of marketing campaigns is the value offered by Nkandla as a tourist destination. In this regard, positioning and branding would be key considerations. Given that Apostolakis (2003) views marketing in a heritage context as being engaged at repackaging the initial product to make the product more appealing and accessible to the mass market, it becomes important to attach positive connotations to a place such as Nkandla. In order to be truly successful, a heritage or cultural site needs to relate a story that is told authentically and which conveys such authenticity to the visitors (McKercher & du Cros, 2005. Tourists do not appreciate 'staged' tourism such as to the so-called 'authentic' Zulu villages in Gauteng Province which is far removed from an authentic Zulu setting.
Skinner and Theodossopoulos, (2011) note that:

> "The practice of tourism begins not at a destination but in the
> home world of the tourists emerging from and through their
> ideas and imaginings of what they might find when they go on
> holiday. Tourists' levels of satisfaction with their holiday is, then,

> in part moulded by what they expect, and this is equally true of how they will behave. The promises that are offered to the expectant tourists by the mediators of their experiences – travel agents, tour operators and their representatives, and so on, all of whom have their own expectations of tourism and tourists' behaviour – help inform the behaviour of tourists as part of their visits, thus making tourists co-creators in the tourism products they consume. This in turn informs the expectations of tourists who come after. Moreover, these expectations impact on the lives of local people and how they will learn to respond to the presence of tourists" (Skinner and Theodossopoulos, 2011).

Successful marketing thus requires that appropriate value propositions are developed in line with the needs and expectations expressed by targeted market segments. Different segments would have unique requirements which should be catered for in terms of the actual experience at the destination as well as the pricing thereof (Greffe, 2004; Neuhofer, Buhalis & Ladkin, 2012). Marketers would furthermore be required to select media and distribution channels consumed by different segments to create awareness through promotional material and advertisements. Innovative ways to create and communicate differentiation are furthermore required to deal with the proliferation of destination choices and increasing competition (Neuhofer et al,, 2012).  In this regard, social media could offer an influential platform. Social networking sites are characterized by having a consumer generated content which allows people to share information. This dynamic platform empowers users to collaborate to image a destination. The value of such an image is even more powerful than traditional word-of mouth recommendations. Indeed Web 2.0 and Travel 2.0 have been found to have "huge impact on the travel and tourism industry" (Miguéns, Baggio & Costa, 2008). Harnessing social media platforms also offer cost effective alternatives to traditional marketing strategies. This platform long since recognised that customers play an active part in co-creating their own experiences and that technology is increasingly mediating experience. Such understanding is key for destinations to create successful experiences and to differentiate their value proposition (Neuhofer et al,, 2012).  Finally, it is important to extend marketing endeavours from tourists to create and motivate collaboration and interaction between all stakeholders (i.e. managing authorities, commercial enterprises and communities) to actively manage relationships in a sustainable manner.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the course of human history, heritage sites such as for example, battlefields, have served as either places of wonder and stimulation, remembrance or celebration, or simply as leisure and tourism destination options. Today culture and heritage embody one of the most significant resources for forging or maintaining national identity and a sense of belonging. Heritage sites thus play a central role in nations' collective history and cultural identity. It is also necessary from a nation-building perspective to increase the general understanding of heritage, cultural values and identity. This serves the purpose of promoting social inclusion (Wearing, Archer & Beeton, 2007). Heritage sites such as Nkandla should be directed in appropriate marketing and promotional strategies and where there is marketing it must be sustainable especially in the heritage tourism space (Di Pietro, Guglielmetti Mugion & Renzi, 2013). Marketing is a critical issue in the communication process and will assist in making heritage and culture accessible, authentic and meaningful to all visitors. A huge challenge facing a unique site such as Nkandla is the economic aspects as it would need to become self- sustainable. Bonn et al. (2007) state that in the last decade there has been an intensifying attention paid to

the rediscovery of the past, which has engendered new varieties of cultural and heritage tourism.

The visitors who would visit Nkandla must be provided with a variety of amenities such as an assortment of accommodation establishments, food and beverage outlets and other attractions to ensure that they extend their stay and increase their financial expenditure to further boost the local economy and promote growth (Galí-Espelt, 2012). Tourism organizations and developers will need to make themselves conversant with the contents of the Nkandla Infrastructural Investment Plan and seek ways with which they can ensure that locals are given guidance on how to use some of their dwellings as accommodation establishments in a similar manner to guest houses. Various locally owned backpacking lodges could be established with the aid of industry associations so as to ensure that there is local ownership and that it is indeed sustainable. The immense natural beauty of Nkandla is available for utilization but it requires support by with human-made attractions and amenities that will ensure that tourists are likely to extend their stay and spend more in the area. The reality is that Nkandla will compete with other heritage tourism sites such as battlefields in the KwaZulu Natal province as a sought after tourism destination in both the domestic and international markets. It will equally be a challenge to satisfy visitors' expectations and manage their various impacts without compromising the authenticity of the sites visited.

## Recommendations

Whatever is undertaken in developing Nkandla as a tourism destination of choice requires the dimension of sustainability to be infused in it (Jamrozy, 2007).  Nkandla should be marketed along with other forms of tourism such as battlefields tourism as a package and not as a standalone experience. It is clear that tours to any sites are heavily dependent on travel agencies who create tour packages for visitors and their role would be critical in promoting any tourism initiatives for Nkandla. This traditional distribution platform also needs to be extended to utilise Web 2.0 and Travel 2.0.

Authentic offerings of traditional dance, music and African cuisine should abound in Nkandla and show off the area and its cultural heritage in its original form. Considering the beauty of the area, the creation of Nkandla hiking trails through the Nkandla forest could bring in many tourists who can then also use camping sites that would be locally owned. A carefully considered cultural heritage tourism site improves the quality of life for the residents as well as the visitors. In fact the visiting of historic sites and museums is the third most popular vacation activity for American travellers after shopping and outdoor activities such as hiking.

If we accept that cultural heritage tourism is "travelling to experience the places, artefacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present" (National Trust for Historic Preservation), then a place such as Nkandla becomes a valuable cultural, historic, and natural resource as a rich heritage tourism site. Cultural heritage tourism has many potential benefits communities and indeed for the country at large. Apart from increasing awareness of the area's historical significance, it should be creating much needed jobs and businesses and cultural tourism has the potential to diversify the local economy. It would also serve the important purpose of preserving the local traditions and culture of the Zulu. By beginning to attract tourists who are interested in history and preservation, an area will be greatly enhanced and could serve to increasingly generate local investment in historic resources while in the process of attracting revenues. One of the key objectives of cultural heritage tourism is greater collaboration with local organizations and the public to develop a sustainable economy. Partnerships would strengthen the links between the private and public sector and this will serve to protect both the natural and cultural resources. Examples include partnerships

to further develop the Nkandla Forest, Shu-Shu hot springs and the Ematshenezimpisi Game Reserve. This will enable the local municipality to undertake effective marketing outlays to tell a different story about Nkandla than what we currently know about it from the media. If developed and marketed adequately these attractions could unlock economic prosperity for Nkandla.

This in turn will improve the quality of life for residents and travellers who visit the Nkandla area. If pro-poor tourism is correctly planned, it can have a positive impact on agriculture and become a catalyst for other industries such as construction.

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