

Event-Led Strategy for Cultural Tourism Development: The Case of Liverpool as the 2008 European Capital of Culture

Authors : Yi-De Liu

Abstract : Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing global tourism markets and the cultures are increasingly being used to promote cities and to increase their competitiveness and attractiveness. One of the major forms of cultural tourism development undertaken throughout Europe has been the staging of a growing number of cultural events. The event of European Capitals of Culture (ECOC) is probably the best example of the new trends of cultural tourism in Europe, which is therefore used in this article to demonstrate some of the key issues surrounding the event-led strategy for cultural tourism development. Based on the experience of the 2008 ECOC Liverpool, UK, the study's findings point to a number of ways in which the ECOC constitutes a boost for the development of cultural tourism in terms of realising experience economy, enhancing city image, facilitating urban regeneration, promoting cultural production and consumption, as well as establishing partnerships. This study is concluded by drawing some critical factors that event and tourism organisers should consider.

Keywords : cultural tourism, event tourism, cultural event, European capital of culture, Liverpool

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