

# INTEX 18

Innovation Technology Expo

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

*"Digitalising Sarawak  
Translational Research"*

The 11<sup>th</sup> UNIMAS  
Research & Development  
**Exposition**

**17-18 July 2018**

**PULLMAN HOTEL, KUCHING**

[www.rimc.unimas.my/intex18](http://www.rimc.unimas.my/intex18)

*organised by UNIMAS Innovation*

### Tourist Expectation on UNESCO World Heritage Sites Brand Signals in Malaysian Historical Cities

Salmiah Abdul Hamid<sup>1\*</sup>, Qistina Donna Lee Abdullah<sup>1</sup>, and Teo Mlaw Lee<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak  
\* (E-mail: ahsalmiah@umimas.my)

This paper is intended to unfold the UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS) Brand Signal's functions and expectations by tourists. The brand identity which include the 'visual appearance and communication' is reflected through the brand owner, which in this case is the WHS brand. In 2006, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network which was convened in Santa Fe, New Mexico highlighted that the term 'creative tourism' as "travel directed towards an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture" [1]. Since the inscription on Melaka and Georgetown Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca in 2008, there have been development of conservation and management plans and structure to maintain the World Heritage Sites in the UNESCO list. Thus, in the empirical investigations conducted at the historical cities in Malaysia such as Melaka and Georgetown, varieties of signs and signals were found. Figure 1 shows an example of Street Maps that illustrate the WH emblem as symbol of UNESCO's WHS.

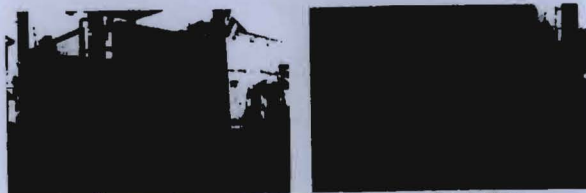


Figure 1. Street Map of Melaka and Georgetown Historic Cities

In this study, the researchers randomly interviewed the tourists around the core zones at both locations as there are more activities and signages found. The interviews were transcribed and themes were identified according to the tourist expectation model. Recognizable signages or wayfinding systems around the core zones were also identified and documented. The images were analysed according to the locations and type of sign design.

There are four main factors that determine the 'Tourist Expectation' when traveling; destination image, past experience, word of mouth and external communication [2]. For the purpose of this study, the participants were interviewed at the UNESCO designated zones in Melaka city and Georgetown within five days of data collection. The questions are relevant to the model of tourist expectation as can be seen in Figure 2.

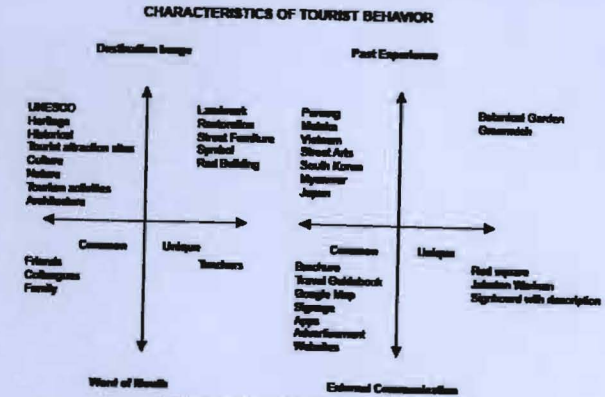


Figure 2. Characteristics of Tourist Expectation

Based on the model, the characteristics are illustrated through conversation between the researchers and the participants interviewed. Although our study was an exploratory research approach, it did uncover the experiences of tourists who have visited other UNESCO WHS in other countries and compares with Malaysian historical cities inscribed by the UNESCO. As a result, the management of both cities; Georgetown and Melaka should have collaborated and implement a more constructive planning to ensure that reliability and consistency of the WH branding image of both cities.

**Acknowledgment:** This research was funded under the UNIMAS Special Grant Scheme F03/SpGS/1412/16/13.

#### References:

- [1] UNESCO (2006). Towards Sustainable Strategies for Creative Tourism. Discussion Report of the Planning Meeting for 2008 International Conference on Creative Tourism, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA, October, pp. 25-27, 2006
- [2] Rodriguez del Bosque, I., San Martín, H., Collado, J., & del Mar García de los Salmones, M. (2009). A framework for tourist expectations. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 3(2), 139-147.