

Investigating the Potential of Domestic Short Break Holidays in NZ.

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Abstract

Tourism has increasingly become a key industry sector for many destinations in New Zealand. The rivalry among tourism destinations has grown stronger and destinations compete for both tourists and shares in tourism markets. Marketing applications to promote tourism destinations are increasingly common in New Zealand and most regions are organised by destination marketing organisations (DMOs). In order to apply marketing strategies successfully, destination marketers should possess a solid understanding of target markets. This knowledge would allow marketers to use promotional resources more effectively, which may ultimately lead to an increase in travellers to the promoted tourism destination.

This study's market of interest is domestic short-break holiday takers. Short-break holidays are recognised as an emergent and significant travel activity in New Zealand. Yet, relatively little is known about market preferences and motivations. Only recently, Pike (2002) presented the first formal investigation of domestic short-break holidays in New Zealand. Furthermore, key domestic short-break markets have only recently become available to relatively peripheral destinations. Arguably this is due to developments in New Zealand's aviation industry, which have significantly affected the accessibility and connectivity between source markets and tourism destinations.

This thesis establishes a fundamental understanding of domestic short-break holidays in New Zealand and investigates the viability of attracting short-break takers to a case study destination. To meet the aims and objectives of the study, a mail survey is conducted in three main urban centres in New Zealand; Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. Dunedin is used as a case study destination. The results suggest a high interest in short-break holidays within all three target markets. There was significant interest in air travel as a preferred mode to reach a short-break destination. Results on motivations and preferences partly reflect Pike's (2002) previous research. However, structural differences in the alignment of short-break attributes are noted. Dunedin is identified as a destination product that is suitable for short-break holidays and findings clearly suggest the viability of attracting short-break holiday takers from Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

Pike, S. 2002, 'The Use of Importance-Performance Analysis to Identify Determinant Short-Break Destination Attributes in New Zealand', *Pacific Tourism Review*, vol.6, 23-33.