

# Storytelling in Destination Brands' Promotional Videos

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## Highlights

- Stories permeate human life experiences.
- Storytelling ads convey brand values through emotion-laden stories and engage tourists.
- Deconstructs six destination brand videos using an adapted Hero's journey framework.
- Storytelling in destination brand promotional videos is still in its infancy.
- Failure to harness the value of storytelling represents a missed opportunity for DMOs.

## Abstract

Storytelling represents an extensive and rich body of research in tourism. Prior studies mainly focus on tourists' stories in understanding travel experiences and little knowledge exists as to whether destination promotional videos embed the principles of storytelling. Using the Hero's Journey as a guiding framework, this study conducts a narratological analysis of six destination brand commercials. The advertisements are deconstructed, assessing their story structure, story type, archetype enactment, and experiential outcome. Findings indicate that the majority of destination commercials fail to exhibit state of the art practices of storytelling and this represents a missed opportunity. The Hero's Journey offers a useful tool to help destination marketers to develop powerful storytelling promotional videos that connect with and engage prospective tourists.

**Keywords:** Storytelling, Hero's Journey, destination branding, promotional videos

## 1. Introduction

Storytelling is ubiquitous in every domain of life, helping individuals relate to each other and making sense of the world (Moscardo, 2010; Sanders & van Krieken, 2018). Robbins (2005, p. 769) states “we respond viscerally to certain story patterns unconsciously”, metaphoric reasoning, they argue, helps connect experience from one domain to another. Research on storytelling receives extensive attention in psychology (e.g. Schank & Abelson, 1977), sociology (e.g. Durkheim et al., 1995), organisation studies (e.g. Boje, 1991) and marketing (e.g. Woodside, 2010). An emerging body of knowledge also establishes the merits of storytelling in tourism (e.g. Kim & Youn, 2017; Lund, Cohen, & Scarles, 2018; Youssef et al., 2018) with prior studies focussing on tourists’ shared stories (e.g. Nimrod, 2008).

Marketing practitioners, and in particular advertising professionals, use storytelling as a potent tool to connect with, and to influence, their customers and prospects (Rose, 2011). Destination marketing organisations (DMOs) have also embraced storytelling to promote their offerings (Youssef et al., 2018). Storytelling not only helps in connecting destination brands and tourists, but also plays a crucial role in transforming experiences and developing advocacy (Chronis, 2005; McCabe, & Foster, 2006). Stories that associate destinations in the minds of prospective tourists (virtual journeys) can be highly influential and shape the actual journey (Gretzel et al, 2016). Destination stories disseminated in various ways as diverse players (e.g. businesses, marketers, customers) create and promulgate them through a range of social media platforms, a concept that Wong et al. (2016) describe as imaginative, transporting narratives. Increasingly, modern-day marketers are using the art of storytelling in their commercials (Herskovitz & Crystal, 2010) to inform, engage, and inspire both new and repeat customers (Gallo, 2016). Through exposure to promotional commercials and associated co-created, customer-to-customer communication (Gretzel et al., 2015), marketers orchestrate mediated experiences that seductively dream the viewer into the picture (Larsen & Urry, 2011). Salazar (2012) emphasises the importance of evocative stories, images and exoticised imaginaries in destination marketing. Moreover, Bishop and Robinson (1999) profoundly contest that without the use of beguiling imagery and discourse, there would be little or no tourism.

The journey of a tourist can be broadly classified into three main phases: (a) the virtual journey, exposure to brand-related stories and other materials in the digital space prior to the embodied experience; (b) the real, lived journey; and (c) the reflexive, post-journey phase of experience

sharing following a successful trip that may include peer-to-peer advocacy (Hudson & Thal, 2012). The focus of this research is on the virtual journey, defined by Stickdorn and Schwarzenberger (2016) as the pre-service period, initiated in the minds of potential tourists primarily during the early stages of the decision-making process, namely consideration and evaluation (Hudson & Thal, 2012). For the purpose of this study, the term ‘commercials’ refers to multi-media, short films that often form part of a paid integrated marketing communications campaign. These emotionally engaging, digital assets are also usually systematically leveraged to create a wider, longer lasting, earned social media and owned web site presence, aimed at engendering organically co-created, peer-to-peer distribution, promotion and advocacy.

Commercials can be potent vehicles deployed to tell stories (Woodside et al., 2008) and advertisements that tell a story can exert a positive impact on narrative transportation (Dessart, 2018). However, little is known if destination commercials embed elements of storytelling. Accordingly, the purpose of this research is to investigate whether and how the principles of storytelling permeate leading, trans-continental examples of destination brands promotional videos. The study draws on Joseph Campbell’s (1949) and Vogler’s (2007) Hero’s<sup>1</sup> journey monomyth for a systematic deconstruction of six destination commercials. The three main components of the Hero’s Journey include; departure (separation), initiation, and return. The significance and pervasive application of the Hero’s Journey is evidenced notably in the long form narrative, ranging from the classics of Hercules, Hamlet and Merlin to the modern-day Harry Potter (Burchfield, 2013; Khoury, 2006; Robbins, 2005).

The identified exemplar commercials were analysed using a narratological framework, drawing on storytelling studies (e.g. Foster, 2006; Moscardo, 2010; Mossberg, 2008; Woodside & Megehee, 2009). Our research contributes to the interdisciplinary theories of storytelling and has important implications for destination marketers in terms of (a) how commercials connect with their target audience through infusing the principles of storytelling; (b) how to embed the concept of the Hero’s Journey; (c) the art of archetype (e.g. hero) enactment in commercials; and (d) sense making of the experiential outcome, resulting from enactment of the archetype used in brand commercials. Thus, the study provides invaluable insights in terms of how destination marketers can develop more powerful promotional videos.

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<sup>1</sup> *The term ‘hero’, when used in this paper, is inclusive of all the genders.*

## 2. Literature Review

Human beings, also known as ‘*homo narrans*’<sup>2</sup> (Lund et al., 2018), are emotional creatures and stories are embedded in our DNA. As an essential part of human nature (Fisher, 1984), stories have touched hearts (Gallo, 2016) and used as emotional glue to connect with one another (Papadatos, 2006) since time immemorial, e.g. Aristotle, 2350 and Bharata, 2000 years ago. Storytelling using archetypes have also been popularised to help understand the nature of human transformation via the seminal works of Jung (1916) and Campbell (1949). Storytelling is a social phenomenon receiving interest from researchers in the fields of psychology, sociology, marketing, tourism, and the behavioural science (Durkheim et al., 1995; Escalas & Stern, 2003; Holt, 2003; Kim & Youn, 2017; Moscardo, 2010; Mossberg, 2008; Nimrod, 2008; Obenour et al., 2006; Sanders & van Krieken, 2018; Schank & Abelson, 1977; Youssef et al., 2018; Woodside et al. 2007; Woodside et al. 2008; Woodside, 2010).

### 2.1 Principles of Storytelling in Consumer Research

Storytelling shapes consumer behaviour, both brands and consumers tell stories, so too should destination brands, posit Singh and Sonnenburg (2012). With an extensive review of the literature (including seminal papers from: Escalas, 2004; Holt, 2003; Hiltunen, 2002; Jung, 1959; Mark & Pearson, 2001; Wertime, 2002), Woodside et al., (2008) and Woodside (2010) identified five principles of storytelling; story-based memory, episodic memory, catharsis, brand mediated archetype enactment and clarity seeking. The combined works of Woodside et al., (2008) and Woodside (2010) substantiate the merits of storytelling as a potent communication tool. In this paper, we propose to add one more principle; phronis, based on Sanders and van Krieken’s (2018) study.

The first principle, *story-based memory*, relates to how human brains process information. According to Schank, (1999, p. 12) “human memory is story-based” because “information is indexed, stored, and retrieved in the form of stories” (Woodside, 2010, p.532). Indices (a summary construct to assist navigation) are touch points such as plots, characters, challenges, the quest of protagonists, lessons, and messages, that can facilitate stronger awareness, intuitive

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<sup>2</sup> ‘*Homo Narran*’ refers to the ‘*storytelling human*’. Human beings are natural storytellers (Niles, 1999).

understanding, and more powerful emotional connections in the mind of the listener (Woodside, 2010). Story indices also include location, action, attributes, problems, and characters, which furnish meaning and create empathy (Singh & Sonnenburg, 2012) and provide an appropriate vehicle for communicating brand messages to consumers (Berger, 2013). Singh and Sonnenburg (2012, p. 189) note that “the more indices a story has, the more places the story can reside in memory and consequently be better recalled”. Drawing profoundly on the work of both Boyd (2009) and Niles (2010), Sanders and van Krieken (2018, p. 2) posit that “narrative is deeply rooted in both our cultural and biological makeup”.

The second principle of storytelling behaviour, *episodic memory*, relates to the mechanism’s memories are stored and retrieved. Memory is often contextually stored in episodes, meaning humans tend to remember things in terms of events, incidents and experiences, in the form of stories rather than data and facts (Woodside, 2010). Ideologies are formed by the accumulation of knowledge, skills and emotional sensations, they also shape our experience, help us make sense of the world and ourselves (Bruner, 1986, 1991 and 2004). This principle is particularly important in the context of person-to-person and person-and-brand relationships (Fournier, 1998; Schank, 1990).

With reference to the works of Holt (2003) and Jung (1959), the third principle, *catharsis*, is generally understood to be the relief obtained from releasing repressed or strong emotions. Catharsis is often typified as a kind of experiential pleasure triggered by emotional cleansing or purification and is related to Aristotle’s proposition of ‘proper pleasure’ (Hiltunen, 2002). Thus, retrieving, reliving, watching, and even telling stories i.e. an emotionally engaged experience through one or more of the archetypal myths (character, theme, situation or motif) can offer emotional relief or release (Woodside, 2010). One such classical archetypal myth is Campbell (1949)’s Hero’s Journey, prevalent not only in contemporary blockbuster movies (Burchfield, 2013; Khoury, 2006; Robbins, 2005), but also in some tourism marketing campaigns (e.g. Billings, 2006; Frost, 2010).

The fourth principle, *phronsis*, introduced by Sanders and van Krieken (2018), refers to an experiential outcome of moral sense making, often triggered by the transformation of a hero within the story. This moral sense making, the principles used to determine right and wrong, also enhances the prudence and practical wisdom of the hero. Thus, *phronsis* is an ethical,

experiential outcome that triggers inward reflection on an individual's moral stance, resulting from enacting heroic deeds.

The fifth principle, *brand mediated archetype enactment*, addresses the relevance of storytelling and includes both strategic and tactical stories (Aaker, 2018). The literature on brand communication emphasises the role of brand–consumer storytelling, which assists consumers in experiencing a kind of pleasure, as Bagozzi and Nataraajan's (2000, p. 10) note “that people need help in finding what makes them happy, and this is where marketing comes in”. This has led to the idea that happiness can be an outcome when consumers engage with specific archetypal plots. Thus, marketers, might tempt tourists to sign up for an emotionally stirring quest of their own by using story plots in their commercials.

The sixth and final principle, *clarity seeking*, draws on the notion that telling stories helps people seek more clarity (Woodside, 2010; Weick, 1995) about life, simplify complexity, and discover who they are. For example, many product and service providers seek to offer meaning to their customers through an appealing brand-story, which consumers can relate to and use to express themselves (Gallo, 2016). This ultimate principle has significant implications, particularly in transformational tourism, an emerging concept that focuses on understanding why some people travel to seek meaning for their life rather than escaping from the hard reality of everyday life (Robledo & Batle, 2017). Transformational tourists are like heroes who travel to find meaning in their lives and at the end, return with stories that help them discover their true selves and express themselves to others as explained by Weick's (1995) proposition: “How do I know what I think until I hear what I say?” (Woodside, 2010, p. 533).

## **2.2 Marketing Communication and Storytelling in the Age of New Media**

There are many studies of storytelling in marketing addressing brand promotion, product placement, and relationship between customers and brands (Woodside, 2010). On the other hand, existing tourism research mainly focuses on tourist stories, the role of narrative, stories and themes in interpretive settings (Hsu et al., 2009; Moscardo, 2010) and more recently, in the context of transformative tourism (Robledo & Batle, 2017). People often perceive an experience as a story or narrative elements that sit within a story. In the quest to understand experience in tourism, Moscardo (2010) analysed distinctive types of stories – genre examples include retiree travel stories (Nimrod, 2008), backpacker stories (Obenour et al., 2006), and

travel biographies (Desforges, 2000). These studies explore the role of travel in life and how travelling helps to further discover one's own self-identity. Nonetheless, research to understand stories told by destination brands via commercials is still scant and needs attention.

According to McKinsey & Company (Ram, 2017), increasingly affluent Millennials (the circa 1980-2000 born cohort) avoid product ownership in favour of multisensory experiences and instant gratification. This, seemingly, presents destination marketers with stark opportunity to emphasise the story vernacular in their communications to this segment. With the coalescence of ubiquitous and cheap wireless broadband, high levels of smart device penetration, and the advent of social media based peer-to-peer communication platforms, the marketing communication game has changed from playing predictable ten pin bowling to pinball wizardry (Henning-Thurau et al., 2013). Classically, in the broadcast model (Henning-Thurau et al., 2013) brand owners have an active role in controlling all elements of the marketing communications output, whilst consumers were merely passive end listeners. Social media has changed this power dynamic, and storytelling facilitates collaborative process of pinball like co-creation between marketers and groups of consumers (Singh & Sonnenburg, 2012). The way brands talk to their customers has been transformed (Woodside et al., 2008) and is increasingly dependent on less controllable, peer-to-peer distributed, user-generated content. Thus, significant potential exists for destination marketers to leverage co-creational brand storytelling by deploying compelling brand stories in promotional videos (Henning-Thurau et al., 2013).

### **2.3 Storytelling and Destination Brands Commercials**

Existing studies on storytelling in tourism can be divided into two major categories. The first research stream deals with tourists who have visited destinations and have stories to tell about their experience (Nimrod, 2008; Desforges, 2000), which is broadly known as *customers telling stories*. Here, researchers have been interested in evaluating user-generated stories, which usually spread through travel blogs (see: Banyai & Glover, 2012; Bosangit et al, 2009; and Pan et al, 2007) and via social media channels (see: Munar & Jacobsen, 2013; Ketter & Avraham, 2012). The second emergent line of research focuses on practitioners and creative professionals in relation to how storytelling makes good commercials, widely known as *marketers telling stories* (see: Ben Youssef et al, 2018; Mossberg et al 2011; Lichrou, 2010). This study

contributes to the second research stream by deconstructing and analysing commercials (specifically video), which play an important role in promoting destination brands. Video, because of its powerful ability to tell stories, is highly effective at informing, engaging and persuading customers and fostering conducive brand-consumer relationships, particularly on social media platforms. Papadatos (2006) argues that a memorable and engaging story always lies at the crux of effective marketing. A good story is powerful in getting tourists to embark on an emotion-laden Hero's Journey (Campbell, 2008; Robledo & Batle, 2017).

Although a rich body of research exists that unveils the secrets of storytelling, there is an apparent tension between theory and practice in the production of commercials. Storytelling not only helps in connecting destination brands and tourists but also plays a key role in transforming their experiences and in developing advocacy (Chronis 2008; McCabe & Foster 2006). Unlike products that can provide some functional benefits, the consumption experience of visiting a destination leaves tourists with a range of multi-sensory memories, often wrapped together in a collection of good, and sometimes bad, stories. Thus, effective, relatable stories, carefully seeded or associated with a destination, have the potential to influence the experience along the entire customer journey. This is particularly true for those travellers who see tourism and travelling as a way of feeding their soul and filling the spiritual vacuum, addressing a sense of emptiness created by lack of meaning of their lives (Robledo & Batle, 2017; Pearson, 1989). Here, the concept of the Hero's Journey becomes relevant: at the end of the journey (experience), the hero (tourist) is transformed.

## **2.4 The Hero's Journey**

Campbell's Hero's Journey monomyth (1949) offers a particularly relevant framework to understand stories in consumer (e.g. Buchanan-Oliver & Seo, 2012) and tourism (Robledo & Batle, 2017) research. According to Campbell (1949, p.23) "A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder; fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won; the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man". Deep inside our minds and hearts reside a hero who wants to embark on a journey of self-transformation. The Hero's Journey provides a useful template for a wide range of successful stories, including movie plots (e.g. The Lord of the Rings, Spiderman, Harry Potter, Matrix, Lion King, Star Wars) and many brand commercials (e.g. Nike: Choose go; Coca-Cola: Thank your Christmas Hero; Heineken:

Champions League). Campbell's (1949) Hero's Journey offers three key phases: departure (separation through the journey into the unknown world), initiation (a process of transformation) and returns (returning home as a transformed person). It is common for movie makers, storytellers and advertising directors to only use a few stages, and often in a different order (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018; Cao et al., 2011). Vogler (2007), who had long career as a screenplay story analyst (Duarte, 2010), further simplified Campbell's (1949) framework into 12 stages. Vogler's (2007) modified stages are regarded as a highly credible source in understanding movies, commercials and speeches (Duarte, 2010). The main purpose of this research is to evaluate if destination brand commercials manifest the principles of storytelling and conform to the Hero's Journey template. Combining the works of Allison and Goethals (2011), Campbell (1949), Vogler (2007) and Woodside et al. (2008), we developed a framework to analyse destination brand commercials (see Figure 1).

**[PLEASE INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE]**

### *Story Structure*

From Figure 1, the first part focusses on the story structure. There are many ways stories can be structured, with particular emphasis on analysing the plots (Mandler & Johnson, 1977). In this study, two components of the Hero's Journey, phases and stages, were included to comprehend the overall story structure. The three 'phases' – departure (separation), initiation and return – are drawn from Campbell (1949) and the 12 'stages of Hero's Journey were adapted from Vogler (2007). For Vogler (2007), the Hero's Journey starts in the '*Ordinary World*' (Stage 1) where the hero, in some form, gets a '*Call to Adventure*' (Stage 2). Initially, the hero is hesitant to get out of their comfort zone, denoted as '*Refusal to call*' (Stage 3). But '*Meeting with the Mentor*' (Stage 4), the hero is encouraged to take the risk in '*Crossing the Threshold*' (Stage 5) and then enters into the special world and encounters '*Tests, Allies, and Enemies*' (Stage 6). The hero then '*Approaches the Inmost Cave*' (Stage 7), preparing for a big change and endures an '*Ordeal*' (Stage 8) where they attempt a big challenge. This ultimately helps the hero to achieve their '*Reward*' (Stage 9) and gets on the '*Road Back*' (Stage 10) to their ordinary world. They are further transformed through '*Resurrection*' (Stage 11) and '*Return with the Elixir*' (Stage 12) to the ordinary world.

Vogler's first five stages fall under the departure phase where the hero comes out of their comfort zone (ordinary world) and embark on a journey to discover new and unknown world. Stages 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the initiation phase take the hero through several tests and challenges, transforming them into a different person. The last three stages represent the return phase, where the hero returns to their old world with new expertise to live fearlessly. This story plot formulation is undoubtedly implicitly if not explicitly familiar to every Harry Potter and Rey Skywalker fan alike. In addition, the framework enables the evaluation of story structure along with other brand-relevant elements such as brand slogan, story theme, and brand message (i.e. the moral of the story). Usually, the tagline, voiceover, monologue, dialogue and text within the promotional videos provide valuable information to assess the story theme and story type.

### *Narrative Archetype and Experiential Outcome*

Narrative archetype refers to the various characters used in the story which resonate with readers/viewers. The widely used archetypes are: hero, shadow (villains), herald (persons or events that call for an adventure), mentor (guides/helpers), threshold guardian (the gatekeepers), shapeshifters (the two-faced characters in the stories), trickster (the mischief makers), and allies (those who help the hero to go through the changes) (Vogler, 2007; Campbell, 1949; Jung, 1916). When analyzing the type of archetypes used in stories of destination brand commercials, it is also essential to understand the heroic traits and moral values manifested in the stories. To this end, the focus is on the eight traits as identified by Allison and Goethals (2011): smart, strong, caring, selfless, charismatic, resilient, reliable, and/or inspiring.

The concept of experiential outcome relates to enactment of hero archetype within the story. The heroic enactment in promotional videos persuades consumers to seek experiential outcomes. Two main types of experiential outcome exist: catharsis and phronesis. Catharsis is the pleasure resulting from consumers' emotional experiences, due to empathy used in the story (Woodside et al., 2008 and Woodside, 2010). On the other hand, phronesis relates to the moral or rational sense making that enhances the practical wisdom of the hero (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018).

### 3. Methods

The overarching focus of this research was to understand the extent destination promotional videos manifest the essence of the Hero's Journey (Vogler, 2007). Practitioners and academics from various disciplines widely consult Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey monomyth "*The Hero with a Thousand Faces*" (1949) and Vogler's (2007) framework to dissect and understand the structure of powerful stories. Such an approach has been recognised as particularly relevant and novel in the context of destination marketing (e.g. Robledo & Batle, 2017). In this study, the focus is on understanding how far destination commercials' storytelling conform to the general theories of storytelling, as evidenced in the psychology and marketing literatures (Duarte, 2010; Woodside et al., 2008). Narratological analysis (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018; De Jong, 2014) was used to evaluate audio-visual brand stories (Sanders and van Krieken, 2018). Six destination brand commercials were examined using four theoretical perspectives: story structure (Vogler, 2007; Campbell, 1949) and type (Aaker, 2018); archetype enactment (Vogler, 2007; Campbell, 1949); manifestation of heroic and moral values (Allison & Goethals, 2011); and pleasure outcomes comprising of both catharsis (Woodside, 2010) and phronesis (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018).

#### 3.1 Selection of Destination Brand Commercials

A rich body of research recognises that tourist destinations are perceived as brands to be consumed (e.g., Boo, Busser, & Baloglu 2009; Kim, Stepchenkova & Yimaz, 2019). In this study, destination brands are characterised as places such as countries, states, nations and provinces offered for tourism purposes (Gnoth, 2007). An initial list of 18 creative destination brand commercials were identified on the YouTube platform, three commercials from each of the populated continents, using four criteria: awareness (views), engagement (likes and comments), presence of story elements (plot and character enactment), and manifestation of the Hero's Journey concept. The near-global popularity of US originating YouTube, a non-subscription video sharing service created in 2005, made it a credible and efficient advertising archive resource, valued for its ubiquitous hosting of content posts.

A purposive sampling procedure was implemented to identify six destination brand commercials, one from each continent, using three criteria. First, the commercial had to contain time lapsed narratives (Labov, 2010; Labov & Waletzky's 1967) and include at least one hero

character, presented explicitly or implicitly, who consciously experiences the story's events (Sanders et al., 2012), such that the video can be related to phases and stages of the Hero's Journey (Vogler, 2007; Campbell, 1949). Second, commercials ideally should be official, designed and published by DMOs. Promotional videos by alternative tourism entities were considered only if no officially published DMO advertisement was available on YouTube. Finally, if a multimedia asset was published on the social media platform prior to 2017, the number of views should exceed ten thousand. Promotional videos with fewer than ten thousand views were only considered if the publication date fell after January 2017. As a result, the promotional videos of Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, South Africa, Scotland and California were retained for analysis. California provided a rich contrast given its natural link to storytelling via Hollywood, home to the U.S film industry. The six selected commercials for analysis are summarised in Table 1.

**[PLEASE INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]**

### **3.2 Analysis of Destination Brand Commercials**

The six commercials were evaluated using video content analysis (Pan et al., 2011). Key dimensions, variables and values (Bell (2001) are summarised in Table 2. The video analysis identified elements such as feature extraction, structure analysis, abstraction and indexing (Rose, 2007; Dimitrova et al., 2002). Pan et al. (2011) proposed a coding scheme to analyse video content in terms of superimposed texts/captions, video, and soundtrack (comprising; narration, theme song, music, and monologue or dialogue). All these elements are important to understand video content (Li et al., 2006; Dimitrova et al., 2002). To examine the story structure, first, each commercial was dissected in terms of key plots (p1, p2, p3, and so on), adopting a similar approach to Sanders and van Krieken's (2018) study. Each plot was further analysed with reference to the Hero's Journey, drawing on Campbell's (1949) three phases and Vogler's (2007) 12 stages. Second, the enactment of archetypes in the commercials (e.g. hero, shadow, herald, mentor threshold guardian, shapeshifters, trickster, allies) were evaluated. Third, the commercials were assessed in terms of experiential outcome (catharsis or phronesis), an essential principle of storytelling (Woodside et al., 2008). Next, the story themes were examined using text and captions, key events in the video, soundtrack, narration (voiceover), theme song, music, and monologue or dialogue. Additionally, the brand slogan and brand messages were examined as per Aaker (2018). The research team consisted of three established

scholars with extensive experience in destination marketing. The three authors watched the six commercials separately and triangulation across co-authors led to new perspectives and resolved any differences in interpretation.

**[PLEASE INSERT TABLE 2 HERE]**

## **4. Results**

### **4.1 Story Structure and Story Type**

The initial search reveal that although many consumer brand commercials exist portraying creative examples of the Hero's Journey (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018), only a handful of destination brand commercials were identified conforming to Vogler (2007) and Campbell (1949) Hero's Journey template. The emergence of transformational tourism, where people travel not just to escape from mundane life but to seek meaning, gives salience to the concept of Hero's Journey in destination marketing (Robledo & Batle, 2017). The first part of the analysis involves identifying plots within the six destination commercials. The plot elements within each commercial were then critically analysed to understand if it was possible to relate it to any of the dozen stages of Vogler's (2007) Hero's Journey template. The analysis reveals that all six of the commercials utilised some aspects of the Hero's Journey within their brand stories. The commercials, in general, conform to the 'Departure' and 'Initiation' phases of the Hero's Journey. However, only one commercial (Beautiful Bangladesh – Land of Stories) embed the 'Return' phase. Table 3 provides a summary of the findings of the analysis of the commercials against the 'story structure and story type' criteria: three phases and 12 stages of the Hero's Journey; as well as the brand slogan, story theme and brand message, leading to story type.

**[PLEASE INSERT TABLE 3 HERE]**

#### *Phase I: Departure*

The 'Departure' phase of the Hero's Journey includes five stages: (1) Ordinary World; (2) Call to Adventure; (3) Refusal of the Call; (4) Meeting with the Mentor; and (5) Crossing the Threshold (Vogler, 2007). Unlike movies that typically last between one and a half and three

hours, it is difficult for short commercials to explicitly cover all these stages and it was found that none of the analysed commercials did so completely through explicit/implicit expressions. The ordinary world (stage 1) was evident in just two commercials. This was explicit in the voiceover and text display of the South African commercial; and in the Bangladeshi commercial using a hero archetype, taking a bath in a lake. Refusal to call (Stage 3) does not feature in any of the six commercials. Mentor (Stage 4: Meeting with the mentors) is consciously presented in the South African commercial where a number of mentors were mentioned by name: *“You’ll meet the taxi driver and the Shebeen Queen who you will never forget... You’ll meet a lady called Danny Anna in Perkupp, who’ll write her recipe for pickled fish in the back of the menu. You’ll meet a 70-year-old surfer who’ll tell you about the time he sat on his board listening to a whale, whose breathing sounded like the heartbeat of the ocean itself.”* (Textual representation of the voiceover). Crossing the Threshold (Stage 4) is covered by all the commercials with the exception of the Brazilian promotional video.

In the analysis of movies, brand commercials, speeches, and presentations, the most represented stage of the ‘Departure’ phase of Hero’s Journey is *‘Call to Adventure’* (Stage 1). Our results found similar support for this notion as all six commercials cover this stage, for both single and multiple plots. The plot types in the commercials include: panoramic views of the destination, the presence of archetype (mostly hero), voiceovers, texts, and songs. These were applied quite creatively to call the heroes as potential travellers, to adventure. The ‘Tourism Australia and Chris Hemsworth’ commercial vividly depicts the panoramic view of the Australian Coastline and Blue Ocean (plot 1), supported by the voice-over: *“How can the colour blue be a feeling?”* whereas ‘Beautiful Bangladesh – Land of Stories’ advert used a western young man (backpacker), at sunrise above the Sundarbans mangrove forest of Bangladesh (enactment of hero: plot 2). Unlike the Australian ad, the Bangladeshi commercial create an emotional feeling using a background song. With a voiceover, *“Brazil is preparing to welcome you”*, ‘World Meets in Brazil’, the third commercial opens the door with the magnificent panoramic view of the sea, mountains and forest dominated by a statue of Jesus (plot 1, 2, and 3). Added into the plot was the sudden appearance of a young female backpacker, emerging through two big rocks on a mountain top, with a big smile on her face. In the fourth commercial, ‘South Africa Tourism Video - Leave Ordinary Behind’, the call to adventure begins with a beautiful local song, while showing the aerial views of the beautiful mountain and lakes of South Africa. This ends with the voice-over – *‘South Africa is different. The you who leaves South Africa won’t be the same as the you who arrived. You’ll find that there’s*

*nothing ordinary about this place, because you don't just visit South Africa, you will meet South Africa.*' (Plot 2). The fifth promotional video, 'Scotland. A Spirit of its Own – Spirit Lights' introduced Scotland with its islands (plot 1), waters (plot 2), artistry (plot 3) and the beautiful landscapes (plot 4) augmented with an evocative voiceover - "*It's in our island and over our water. It's in our artistry and in our lands*". Finally, the 'California Tourism - Dreamers TV Commercial' is notably different, introducing Californian city life as a dreamland and its people as dreamers. This commercial used many archetypes (many heroes and heroines) but the initial archetype was a young woman playing guitar who claims: "*People think Californians are just a bunch of dreamers*". It is perhaps unsurprising that California, the home of Hollywood, would use dreams to call its target audience to adventure.

### *Phase II: Initiation*

The 'Initiation' phase of the Hero's Journey includes four stages: (6) Tests, Allies, and Enemies; (7) Approach the Inner Most Cave; (8) Ordeal; and (9) Reward (Seizing the sword) (Vogler, 2007). The movie industry typically use these phases effectively in different 'Acts' (Act 1, 2, 3...) starting from small challenges to the most difficult challenges, building towards a powerful 'climax'. These stages mainly contribute towards the transformation of the hero, who is contextualised as a potential traveller. In the movies, in mythical stories or even in real life, as a hero sequentially steps through the stages, they face setbacks, suffering, and even a metaphorical death: "*the journey marks the death of a narrow, immature way of seeing the world and the birth of a wider, more enlightened way of viewing life.*" (Allison et al., 2019, p.2). The analysed commercials use all these stages, either explicitly or implicitly, but for the most part implicitly by using a number of necessarily short plots. Drawing on Allison et al's (2019) six types of transformation; physical, emotional, mental, moral, motivational, and spiritual, the researchers sought to identify which kinds transformation the commercials' creators wanted to promote to the potential traveller. The most popular was found to be 'emotional' and 'mental', helping the hero experience a different culture, lifestyle and nature context, and subsequently altering the worldview of the hero.

### *Phase III: Return*

The 'Return' phase of the Hero's Journey includes three stages: (10) Road Back; (11) Resurrection; and (12) Return with the Elixir. Unlike in long form movies, where this phase is

often explicitly shown, the commercials in our analysis did not include any aspect of this phase, either explicitly or implicitly, with the exception of the Bangladeshi commercial. In the final plot of this particular commercial, the hero (a young western male) was walking back through a crop field, but his slow pace of walking and body language suggested that he was reluctant to return home. Then a little girl, with whom he had some unforgettable memories, arrives from behind him and bids him good-bye with a flower bouquet gift and child's handwritten note stating 'we love you'. The voiceover - *"So when you leave, you can leave with stories that you can treasure, friends that will last a lifetime"* - marking the 'Return' phase with an emotional ending.

### *Story Type*

Further qualitative thematic analysis was undertaken to understand the type of stories emerging in the commercials, soliciting, in particular, elements such as story theme, brand slogan, tagline and brand message. Additionally, voiceovers and visual texts were found to be insightful sources. Analysis revealed that all six of the commercials had explicit brand slogans and messages. It was found that voiceovers, taglines, music, and even monologues played a vital role in telling the brand stories, all the executions except California's have used them intelligently. Although the brand slogans were clearly expressed through logos, texts, taglines, and voiceovers (see Appendix A), different messages could potentially be perceived by heterogeneous travellers, as the brand commercials in the study communicated several ambiguous messages through visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic forms of communication. Table 5 provides a summary of the analysis of the six short films, with particular attention given to story theme and story type, whilst also considering the elements that form them. Additionally, the full texts of the voiceovers and the monologues used in the advertisements are included in Appendix A. The dominant themes that were captured are; romance (possibly targeting the couples or partners), hospitality (to promote Asian culture of welcoming others), sensation (promoting a transformation change to tourists' experience), adventure (to promote the African heritage and culture), culture, nature and history (to promote historical traditions), and dreams (to promote the fantasy and fictions created by the Hollywood).

**[PLEASE INSERT TABLE 4 HERE]**

In summary, out of the six analysed commercials, one covered all three phases, five covered the first two phases of the Hero's Journey and just two advertisements started with the Hero's Journey in the 'Ordinary World'.

#### **4.2 Narrative Archetype Enactment and Experiential Outcome**

The second part of the analysis involved identification of the archetype enactment within the destination brand commercials (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018). The most common archetypes enacted within the destination brand commercials were; hero, hero and heroine, multiple heroes and heroines; mentor or helper; herald; and allies. As these were very short commercials, with quite simplistic story lines rather than more complex movies, the researchers decided to scope out the other archetypes that were typically only found in the longer form movies such as; shadow, threshold guardian, shapeshifter and trickster.

Initial analysis indicated that it was possible to develop cogent brand stories merely with three archetypes, predominantly hero, mentor and herald. Destination brands advertisements containing the main archetypes (heroes and heroines) evolved into action that was more compelling, for two main reasons. First, when the hero is portrayed as being involved in activities in the land of travel, it is easier for viewers to infer the hero was going through a transformation. Second, potential tourists can metaphorically enact the role of heroes and be part of the stories.

Among the six commercials, the most complete hero enactment was the 'Beautiful Bangladesh – Land of Stories' commercial, and it was shown to be a complete example of the Hero's Journey. Here, the young western man enacted the hero archetype and went through a number of experiential activities such as; glimpsing a Royal Bengal Tiger; experiencing the lives of fishermen onboard a modest boat; running along the longest beach in the world; and singing with local folk singers. The use of a western man experiencing an idealised version of regular life and seemingly embracing a slice of south Asian culture evokes the transformation of the hero, both explicitly and implicitly. Then, the researchers focus was to identify the heroic traits and moral values manifested by the hero within the commercials using Allison and Goethals (2011) eight traits; smart, strong, caring, selfless, charismatic, resilient, reliable, and inspiring. The heroic traits that have been mostly demonstrated within the commercials are strong, caring,

inspiring and resilient. Table 5 summarises the archetypes enacted, and the moral values demonstrated in the advertisements.

Further analysis sought to understand the type of experiential outcome engendered by the enactment of the key archetypes (e.g. heroes/heroines) within the stories. This was dependent upon; the plots of the stories, the adventure the key archetype goes through, the moral of the story and how it unfolds, and finally the nature of transformation of the hero/heroine. If the experiential outcome type was distinctly expressed within the commercial, potential travellers could anticipate what they might experience from any planned consumption of a destination brand experience. The analysis revealed that the commercials predominantly demonstrated explicit catharsis (Woodside et al., 2008; Woodside, 2010) as an experiential outcome, targeting the people wishing to come out of the mundanity of their lives and escape into their dream destination. However, in the Bangladeshi and South African commercials, implicit inferences of phronesis were also identified, where the key archetype went through (particularly in case of Bangladeshi commercial where it is somewhat more evident) a number of action gleaned wisdom activities. The process of transformation, through mastering the skills needed to adjust in any part of the world, contribute towards experiencing phronesis.

**[PLEASE INSERT TABLE 5 HERE]**

## **5. Discussions, Implications and Conclusion**

Our research contributes to the interdisciplinary literature on storytelling. When destination brand commercials unveil the transformation of tourists into heroes, with the support of stories and archetypes, brand identities are more easily understood (e.g., Ochoa & Lorimer, 2017) due to ‘*story-based memory*’ (principle 1), ‘*episodic memory*’ (principle 2) and ‘*brand mediated archetype enaction*’ (principle 5). Destination marketers can leverage the principles of the Hero’s Journey not only to promote a destination, but also to help establish strong brand-traveller relationships. This in turn can augment powerful word-of-mouth advocacy in the form of user-generated content creation (Sanders & van Krieken (2018).

In the promotional videos from Brazil and Scotland, the hero was provided with the unique selling points of the destination (information) using the story as a vehicle. The plots within

these two commercials emphasised the unique features of the destination that would fascinate the hero (potential traveller) to embark on a journey and relate to the concept '*seeking and knowing*'. This tactic may help potential tourists conceptualise the anticipated experience during their own embodiment of the Hero's Journey. In this case, the resulting experiential outcome of hero enactment is related to catharsis (principle 3) (Woodside, 2010) and are more appropriate to influence travellers who are looking to escape the monotonous reality of a humdrum life, where cognitive evaluation can be turned into conative response.

In the Australian and Californian commercials, the tactical brand stories introduced many archetypes (*some can be related to heroes and heroines*) and they are involved in several activities, which is more like '*doing and feeling*' rather than '*seeking and knowing*'. The plots involving '*doing and feeling*' also invite the potential travellers to escape from the mundane experience of their daily routine and feel catharsis (Woodside, 2010) at a higher level because they can make sense of the kinds of transformational experiences that could be invoked during their Hero's Journey, rather than just learning information about the destination. The expression of the archetypes in the commercials, a smile, a sense of relief of the stress – all help the potential travellers to conceptualise the type of catharsis as an experiential outcome. The art of storytelling with this approach is more memorable, as these are episodic (principle 1), filled with activities, and include both cognitive and conative elements in their conceptualisation.

In the Bangladeshi and South African commercials, the tactical brand stories not only get the heroes to know about the unique features of the destination (*seeing and knowing*) and the kinds of activities they can be involved with (*doing and feeling*) but also introduces the mentors and includes the plots where the hero is *interacting* with other archetypes (e.g. *mentor or local experts*) who can help them to go through the tests and trials during their Hero's Journey. In these commercials, the highest level of *heroic transformation* involving a series of *cognitive, conative* and *affective* episodes are evident. Heroes not only go through a transformational process of '*doing and feeling*' but also '*interacting and being*'. The Bangladeshi commercial clearly portrays how a western young man masters the ways of living in the east, and returns with the wisdom of both worlds (*east and west*) to live with ultimate freedom. The story hook not only attracts aspiring journeying heroes with the opportunity to experience catharsis (principle 3) (Woodside et al., 2008 and Woodside, 2010) but also through transformational phronesis (principle 4), enhancing their practical wisdom (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018).

Thus, the analysis uncovered that the exemplar destination brand stories connected with their target consumers in three different manifestations, with different experiential outcomes.

Nonetheless, there is a difference in approach between the Bangladeshi and South African commercials. The Bangladeshi promotional video highlights the hero archetype and the South African commercial focuses on the mentor archetype. One plausible explanation for this might lie in the different campaign strategies adopted by DMO's, one promoting heroic adventure, whilst the other emphasised the support available when travelling between places together with the adventure. The South African commercial introduced a number of characters by name who were ready to help the tourists during their visits. Research on consumer brands shows that archetype enactment can enhance brand-consumer relationships and build brand value (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018). Consistent with many engaging consumer brand commercials, the selected destination brand commercials illustrate creative ways of conveying story themes and brand messages through texts, voiceover and monologue. Figure 2 provides a pictorial analysis of the commercials against our framework.

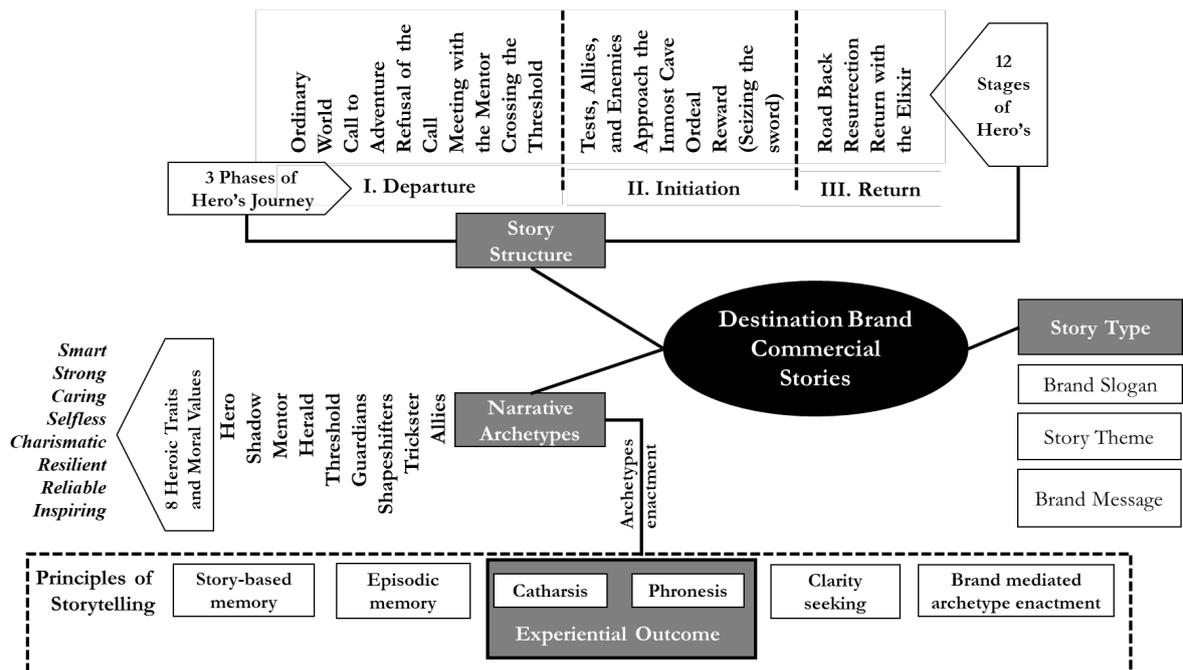
**[PLEASE INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE]**

Woodside (2010) notes that storytelling lies at the heart of marketing communications. This research projects' Hero's Journey analysis offers destination marketers a useful template to develop compelling and authentic brand stories (Aaker, 2018) with the potential to further engage current tourists and convert more potential visitors. Given the context of digital information overload (Sicilia & Ruiz, 2010), destination marketers are under pressure to create advertisements that would attract the attention of potential tourists. Furthermore, whilst prior research provides evidence of storytelling in video advertisements for consumer brands (Sanders & van Krieken, 2018), our findings reveal that their application in DMO's promotional videos is very much in its infancy, representing a missed opportunity for industry practitioners. To this end, DMOs should leverage the benefits of storytelling ads to convey their brand values through emotion-laden stories to engage their prospects. In addition, DMOs should post storytelling promotional videos to their social media accounts, closely monitoring reactions and catalysing the co-creation of authentic consumer stories (Lund et al., 2018).

Finally, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution for a number of reasons. In this study, six destination brand commercials were analysed in detail, from a short list of 18,

but there is scope for future research to replicate and expand this work using a larger sample. Additional research could be conducted using experimental designs to understand how commercials embedding the principles of the Hero's Journey elicit cognitive, affective and behavioural responses (e.g. intention to visit) among potential tourists. Future studies, in addition to establishing the effectiveness of storytelling (Yueh & Zheng, 2019), should develop scales to capture tourist perceptions of hero enactment within commercials and to measure the perceived experiential outcomes of catharsis and phronesis.

Figure 1: Framework for Analysing Destination Brand Commercials



Source: Adapted from Allison and Goethals (2011), Campbell (1949), Sanders and van Krieken (2018), Vogler (2007) and Woodside et al., (2008)

Figure 2: Pictorial summary of main findings

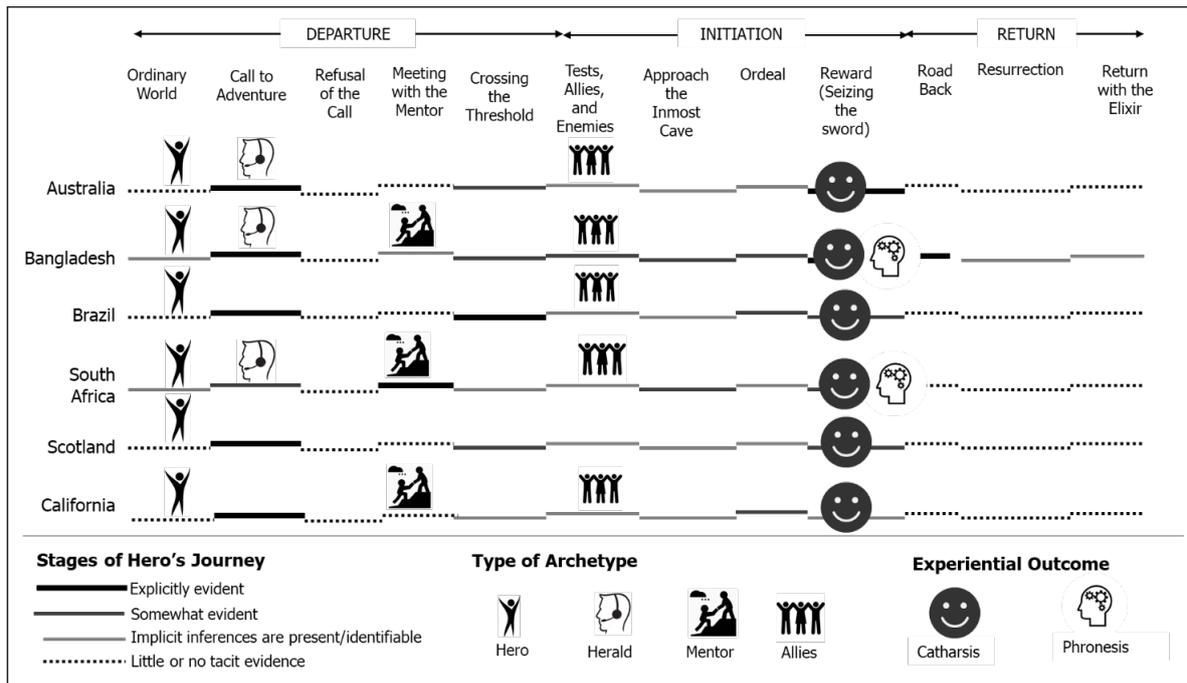


Table 1: Selection of Destination Brand Commercials

Commercials	Continents Represented	Views	Likes	Comments	Dislikes
C1. Tourism Australia and Chris Hemsworth ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUF7ja9ehIs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUF7ja9ehIs</a> )	Australia	3,021,579	2.4 K	286	94
C2. Beautiful Bangladesh - Land of Stories ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNUSIOMb6vI">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNUSIOMb6vI</a> )	Asia	729,785	5.4 K	379	139
C3. The World Meets in Brazil ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7oNV0GvUKs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7oNV0GvUKs</a> )	South America	600,698	232	7	29
C4. South Africa Tourism Video - Leave Ordinary Behind ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhtnMzCzrXk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mhtnMzCzrXk</a> )	Africa	150,984	477	47	29
C5. VisitScotland Advert 2016   Scotland. A Spirit of its Own - Spirit Lights ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otEcULXOpGc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otEcULXOpGc</a> )	Europe	146,962	482	57	15
C6. California Tourism - Dreamers TV Commercial ( <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KokMa8HX5o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KokMa8HX5o</a> )	North America	52,152	158	68	43

Note: Statistics obtained from YouTube on 30th May 2019

Table 2: Key Dimensions, Variables and Values

<b>Key Dimensions</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Values</b>
Story Structure	Phases of Hero's Journey	Departure Initiation Return
	Stages of Hero's Journey	Ordinary World Call to Adventure Refusal of the Call Meeting with the Mentor Crossing the Threshold Tests, Allies, and Enemies Approach the Inmost Cave Ordeal Reward (Seizing the sword) Road Back Resurrection Return with the Elixir
Narrative Archetypes	Hero	Heroic Traits and Moral Values
	Shadow	
	Mentor	
	Herald	
	Threshold	
	Guardians	
	Shapeshifters	
	Trickster	
Allies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Smart</li> <li>▪ Strong</li> <li>▪ Caring</li> <li>▪ Selfless</li> <li>▪ Charismatic</li> <li>▪ Resilient</li> <li>▪ Reliable</li> <li>▪ Inspiring</li> </ul>	
Archetype Enactment	Experiential Outcome	Catharsis Phronesis
Story Type	Story Theme	Brand Slogan (Explicit) Brand Message (Implicit)

Table 3: The Story Structure Exhibited in the Destination Brand Commercials

Story Structure		Destination Brand Commercials of:					
Phases	Stages	Australia	Bangladesh	Brazil	South Africa	Scotland	California
<b>I. Departure</b>	1. Ordinary World	-	x		x	-	-
	2. Call to Adventure	xxx	xxx	xxx	xx	xxx	xxx
	3. Refusal of the Call	-	-	-	-	-	-
	4. Meeting with the Mentor	-	xx	-	xxx	-	-
	5. Crossing the Threshold	xx	xx	-	x	xx	x
<b>II. Initiation</b>	6. Tests, Allies, and Enemies	x	xx	x	x	x	x
	7. Approach the Inmost Cave	x	xx	-	xx	x	-
	8. Ordeal	x	xx	xx	x	x	x
	9. Reward (Seizing the sword)	xxx	xxx	xx	xx	xx	x
<b>III. Return</b>	10. Road Back	-	xxx	-	-	-	-
	11. Resurrection	-	xx	-	-	-	-
	12. Return with the Elixir	-	xx	-	-	-	-
<b>Number (%) of 3 phases covered</b>		2 (67%)	3 (100%)	2 (67%)	2 (67%)	2 (67%)	2 (67%)
<b>Number (%) of 12 stages covered</b>		4 (50%)	11 (92%)	4 (33%)	8(67%)	6(50%)	5(42%)

XXX = Explicitly evident  
 XX = Somewhat evident  
 X = Implicit inferences are present/identifiable  
 - = Little or no tacit evidence

Table 4: Analysis by Story Type

	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Bangladesh</b>	<b>Brazil</b>	<b>South Africa</b>	<b>Scotland</b>	<b>California</b>
Brand Slogan	There is nothing like Australia.	Beautiful Bangladesh-Land of Stories.	Come celebrate life.	It's possible.	Scotland. A sprit of its own.	Dream big.
Brand Message	Australia isn't a place you see. It's a place you feel.	Happiness needs no reason. Here everyone has a story.	Brazil is preparing to welcome you!	Leave grey behind. Leave your old self behind. Leave ordinary behind.	Not explicitly evident.	Not explicitly evident.
Story Theme	Romance: The emotional love story of Australia.	Hospitality, Culture: The Bangladeshi story of culture and hospitality.	Sensation, Nature, Culture: The sensational story of Brazil	Culture, Adventure: The South African cultural story of adventure.	Culture, Nature, History: The Scottish mind-blowing story of sprit.	Dream: The Californian dream story.
Story Instruments	Tagline, voiceover, songs, music, brand logo.	Tagline, voiceover, songs, music, brand logo.	Tagline, voiceover, brand logo.	Tagline, voiceover, songs, music, brand logo.	Tagline, voiceover, songs, music, brand logo.	Tagline, monologue, brand logo.

Table 5: Archetype Enactment and Experiential Outcome

Archetype Enactment	Destination Brand Commercials of:					
	Australia	Bangladesh	Brazil	South Africa	Scotland	California
Hero	xxx	xxx	x	x	xxx	xxx
Smart	-	xxx	-	-	-	-
Strong	xx	xxx	-	-	xxx	-
Caring	xx	xxx	xx	xxx		
Selfless	-	-	-	-	-	-
Charismatic	-	-	-	-	-	xx
Resilient	-	xxx	-	-	-	
Reliable	-	-	-	-	-	-
Inspiring	-	-	-	xxx	xxx	xx
Shadow	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mentor	-	xxx	-	xxx	-	-
Herald	xx	xx				xx
Threshold Guardian	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shapeshifter	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trickster	-	-	-	-	-	-
Allies	xx	xxx	xxx	xxx		x
<b>Experiential Outcome</b>	Catharsis (xxx)	Catharsis (xxx), Phronesis (xx)	Catharsis (xxx)	Catharsis (xxx), Phronesis (x)	Catharsis (xxx)	Catharsis (xxx)

XXX = Explicitly evident

XX = Somewhat evident

X = Implicit inferences are present/identifiable

- = Little or no tacit evidence

## **Appendix A: Voiceover and monologue used in the commercials**

### **Voice over Australia**

How can the colour blue be a feeling?

Well, it's hard to describe. But it is.

You see, it's different down here.

The air just has more life in it.

Sounds touch you.

Yeah, it's a place that stays with you. And sometimes, if you're lucky, it stays forever.

And there's nothing like it.

It's like love. Cleanse your soul. Feel it in your veins. Breathe it in your lungs will stain. It's like love. For the first time. It'll all makes sense. You know it, you know.

### **Voice over for Bangladesh**

Happiness needs no reason.

This is what you feel when you come here.

Things that you will do, people that you will meet will keep on surprising you.

Your mind is a traveller, now your heart be the tourist guide.

Explore the land of surprises.

You will find warmth you will be looking for all your life.

So when you leave, you can leave with stories that you can treasure, friends that will last a lifetime.

### **Voiceover for Brazil**

Brazil is preparing to welcome you, we've tidied up the garden, expanded the kitchen. We've built the body rooms, planned a lighting, and organised the living room, the stage is being prepared for the sporting events in Brazil. Come on over. You'll feel bright at home. The world meets in Brazil. Come celebrate life.

### **Voiceover for South Africa**

The you who leaves South Africa won't be the same as the you who arrived. You'll find that there's nothing ordinary about this place, because you don't just visit South Africa, you will meet South Africa. You will meet the wild open beaches of the wild coast and the chief whose ancestors have lived in the hills above the Wan Yana River for a thousand years. You'll meet the taxi driver and the Shebeen Queen who you will never forget. You'll meet the Golden Lights of the Timber Vaati as it covers everything in a soft ambered love, it reminds you of how things once were and could be again. You'll meet a lady called Danny Anna in Perkupp, who'll write her recipe for pickled fish in the back of the menu. You'll meet a 70 year old surfer who'll tell you about the time he sat on his board listening to a whale whose breathing sounded like the heartbeat of the ocean itself. You'll go on a walk at night through a bush you will never forget because it was the night you felt you saw the stars for the very first time. You have supper under an acacia tree as the sun goes down and the giraffes gather by the watering hole, years later you'll find that the cord of the hippos still seems to echo through your heart. You will need South Africa and you'll never be the same again.

South Africa and the things you experience again here will change the way you see the world and change the way you live your life. Because when you embrace this country, you'll find

that the you who leaves South Africa won't be the same as the you who arrived, because when you meet South Africa you'll find that none of it, not one little bit, is ordinary.

### **Voiceover for Scotland**

It's in our island and over our water.  
It's in our artistry and across our land.  
It's in our history.  
And our cities.  
It's in all our stones that stand.  
It's time to come and find it.  
It's time to come and feel it.

### **Monologue and Voiceover for California**

People think Californians are just a bunch of dreamers.  
With our heads in the clouds.  
Like a bunch of space cadets.  
Is that the explosion?  
Secure the set. (Voiceover)  
Maybe we do live in a fantasy.  
And we can get a little starry eyed.  
A little bit out there. (Voiceover)  
We're just a bunch of dreamers.  
We're just like everyone else.  
I've drawn a blank, what's my line.

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