Marketing and Diaspora tourism: Visual Online Learning Materials as tools to attract the Haitian Diaspora 'new generation'

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Abstract

This book chapter examines the proposition that the education of the Haitian diaspora 'new generation' at a pre-visit stage using Visual Online Learning Materials could be effective in challenging the negative perception of the destination, and ultimately turned this diaspora into potential tourists. From a destination management point of view this chapter offers an alternative to existing promotional material used by the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) to improve the general perceptions of the destination. From an academic point of view, this book chapter contributes to academic research in tourism by adding the fact that Gamification can be a very efficient experiential marketing tool to attract (diaspora) tourists if using subtle and implicit marketing elements. Last but not least the chapter highlights the fact that diaspora as tourists is highly beneficial for a destination but could as investors could be damageable for the sustainability of the destination if poorly managed.

Keywords

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1. Introduction

The diaspora represents an interesting financial market for a destination (Hung, Xiao & Yang). Since 2011, the Haitian diaspora is one of the main targets of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Industries (Séraphin & Paul, 2015). This book chapter is going to offer an original segmentation of the Haitian diaspora but also a marketing strategy to encourage this diaspora to spend their holidays (again, or for the first time) in Haiti.

Segmentation as a concept appeared because not all customers have the same needs in terms of products and services. The purpose of segmentation is to cluster those customers and cater for them accordingly (Blythe, 2009). The results of this research are going to be very useful for the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Industries (MTCI) in terms of promotion and planning but also in terms of resources needed to achieve its objectives (Banasiewicz, 2013). From a conceptual point of view this chapter is going to contribute to the meta-literature in the field of international marketing and diaspora tourism. Existing literature about the image formation process of destinations typically refer to media (TV,

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news paper, etc) word of mouth, movies, tour operators, promotional video (Alvarez and Campo, 2011; Hall, 2002; Gartner, 1993; Gunn, 1972). We are adding to this list: Virtual Online Learning Material (VOLM) and pointing out the limitations of this approach, completing therefore Séraphin, Butcher and Korstanje (2016) research.

It is difficult to fit the Haitian diaspora in one of the four categories developed by Blythe (2009), namely: Behaviourally, geographic, demographic and psychographic. Blythe (2009) even suggested that segmentation should be constantly reviewed. Therefore, in this chapter we are suggesting an additional category: 'Experience' and more specifically, their tourism experience of their home country. This is a totally new approach and unconventional approach. Here the term 'unconventional' is to be understood as 'convention-breaking'; 'less traditional' and as 'non- conformity' (Norman, Artz, Martinez, 2007; Noble, 2001). Indeed, current strategies to segment the Haitian diaspora include: when they left the home country; their level of education; their contribution to the home country (Wab, 2013); their occupation in the host country; the sector they are working in; reason for resettling back in Haiti (Jadote, 2012); destination countries; country they were born; income (Cervantes Gonzalez, 2013).

The overall research question of the book chapter is: Can the negative image of Haiti be challenged at pre-visit stage using Visual Online Learning Materials?

Our research question will be articulated around two objectives: The first objective of this research is to show that 'tourism experience' is a valid criteria of segmentation. To address this objective, the chapter will be discussing the Haitian diaspora and its key features (different waves of immigration; destination countries; number of Haitians living abroad; experience with the tourism sector of their home country; etc). As for the tourism sector, it is especially vulnerable to exogenous factors like political instability, economic crisis, natural disasters and the outbreak of diseases (Ritchie, Dorrell, Miller & Miller, 2004). Those factors can cause destinations to decline and sometimes even totally disappear from the tourism map (Seddighi, Nuttall & Theocharus, 2001). In this respect tourism is a problematic industry (Korstanje & Tarlow, 2012). This is the case of the Haitian tourism industry. Subsequently, some destinations have adopted strategies to mitigate their problematic status (Korstanje 2009; Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Tarlow 2014). Because explicit and aggressive marketing strategies have proven to be ineffective suffering from legacy of political instability (Seddighi et al, 2001; Alvarez & Campo, 2014), we have opted in this chapter for a more subtle strategy: The education of the tourists going to Haiti. There has been a limited effort to educate tourists (Séraphin, 2013; Ballengee-Morris, 2002; Orams, 1996), and that is another focus of this study. Existing research on tourists' education focuses on the visit itself, but generally neglects the pre-visit stage. The second objective of this

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book chapter is therefore to provide evidence that educating the general public at a pre-visit stage about Haiti can increase visitors and consequently contribute to vital economic development. At this stage of our reflection, it is important to explain that the 'pre-visit stage' refer to the stage (before the actual holidays to the destination) when the knowledge and image that potential visitors have of the destination is conveyed by the media. As opinion drivers, journalists influence the general public representation of a place (Daghmi, 2007). Because, the smaller the destination is, the more likely its image is going to be based on its political situation (Gartner, 1993), hence the negative image of Haiti.

Based on the above, our research can be considered as a continuation of Alvarez and Campo's research (2014) on the impacts of political conflicts on a country's image and prospective tourists' intentions to visit. This paper could also be considered as a continuation of the work of Walters and Mair (2012) who not only argued that there is limited literature in the area of post-disaster destinations, but who also emphasised the importance of further research in the field of post-disaster messages communicated via broadcast media, internet, social networking sites. Last but not least, this paper could be said to be continuity of the author own research as he clearly explained that Haiti as a tourist destination is victim of a 'blind spot', that is to say gap between its negative image and the reality (Séraphin, Gowreesunkar & Ambaye, 2016). The author also indicated that this 'blind spot' could be erased by educating tourists

at pre-visit stage using Visual Online Materials (Séraphin, Butcher & Korstanje, 2016).

In this vein, we are going to address the following questions:

(a) How to segment the Haitian Diaspora?

(b) How to educate the Haitian diaspora second and third generation ('diaspora second generation or '2G' and diaspora third generation or '3G') in order to challenge the negative image they have of Haiti using a Visual Online Learning Material (VOLM)?

The results of this book chapter can present some limitations as Séraphin, Butcher & Korstanje (2016), theory on the potential of VOLM has not been tested empirically. The focus of this book chapter is on Haiti, its diaspora and the online game *HaitiJeConnais* (http://haitijeconnais.com#login#) but the findings may have a wider applicability for destinations with a similar profile. Case studies has become increasingly associated with in-depth exploration of a particular context (...) they offer fresh insight and ideas about a topic (...) there is no reason why case studies should not be used to test a hypothesis (Hammond & Wellington, 2013: 17-18). Woodside and Baxter (2013) in their quest to achieving accuracy and therefore the possibility to generalise results, pointed out that Case Study Research (CSR) is a tool helping to achieving excellence in the quality of results. This case study is going to compile and analyse recent

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research on tourism development in Haiti as well as research on Haitian

diaspora.

2. In and out of Haiti

2.1 Haiti and its tourism industry

Haiti was the most popular tourist destination in the Caribbean between the 1940s and the 1960s and, as such, attracted the international jet set. In 1957, the dictatorship and the atmosphere of terror organised by Francois Duvalier crippled the country's tourism industry (Thomson, 2014). The key issue in Haiti's development relies on the fact that Haiti has not been lead so far by presidents with a genuine interest for the development of the country (Séraphin, 2014a). Wagner (2015: 258) argues that Haiti became the first independent black republic in 1804, and since then endures 'long periods of political instability, increasing socioeconomic inequality, a nearly twenty-year occupation by US Marines, a nearly thirty-year dictatorship, several coups and military juntas, and an unremitting series of foreign military, political, economic, religious, and humanitarian interventions (...) Haiti and its people have struggled for stability, sovereignty and democracy'.

On January 12, 2010, an earthquake shook Haiti to its foundations and further damaged the tourism industry as most of the infrastructures and facilities of the sector were destroyed. Investments from the Haitian diaspora enabled the hospitality sector to begin to recover from the earthquake (Séraphin & Paul, 2015). However, because of its image of an unsafe destination (Higate & Henry,

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2009) it has been very difficult for Haiti to attract visitors (Séraphin, 2014a). As a first step, the Haitian Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) took an initiative towards rebranding the country with a new international logo and slogan that Séraphin, Ambaye, Gowreesunkar and Bonnardel (2016) deemed to be less effective (than the previous logo) as not telling the narrative of the destination.

In today's global economy, Haiti's main competitive advantages have been its abundance of low-wage, unskilled workers and its proximity to the USA. Haiti can therefore be classified as a weak State: its structures lack political will and/or the capacity to provide the basic functions needed for poverty reduction, development and to safeguard the security and human rights of its population. The weak governance and absence of accountability has facilitated the creation of parallel economies and patterns of patronage and corruption (Gauthier & Moita, 2010). The following table (Table 1) summarises the key issues affecting Haiti and its tourism sector. These have a serious impact on the image of the destination.
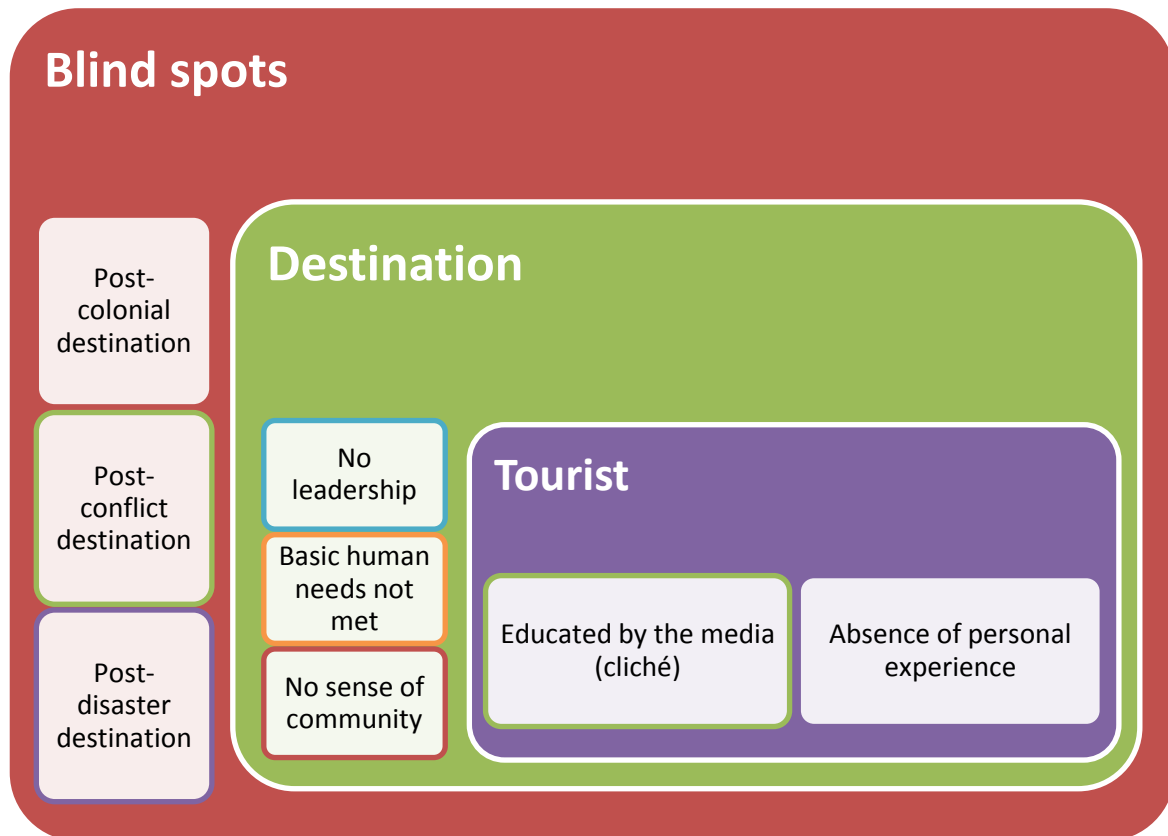
Table 1: Major issues within the tourism sector in Haiti

Author(s)	Year	Theme	Summary
Théodat	2004	Quality of the products and services	Haiti is still an amateur when it comes to tourism
Thernil	2004	Rejection of tourism	The locals do not perceive tourism as a 'godsend' for the country
Doré	2010	Training and courses in Tourism	There is a lack of quality training in the tourism and hospitality sector in Haiti
Séraphin	2013a	History of slavery and customer service	Customer service is also a major issue as a result of the slave trade, which is ultimately attributable to low levels of trust
Séraphin, Butler & Gowreesunkar	2013	Entrepreneurship and tourism	The lack of funding has constraining impacts on the development of social enterprise and enterprise in general
Thomson	2014	Poor quality products and services and limited positive impacts on the tourism industry	All the sectors of the tourism sector need to be improved. The locals are not really benefitting from the industry

Source: The author

The image people have of Haiti is mainly generated by autonomous agents (the image developed by the media) hence the 'blind spots' that Séraphin, Gowreesunkar & Ambaye (2016) define as the gap between the negative image of the destination and the reality (figure 1)

Figure 1: Destinations' Blind Spots

Blind spots

Post-colonial destination

Post-conflict destination

Post-disaster destination

Destination

No leadership

Basic human needs not met

No sense of community

Tourist

Educated by the media (cliché)

Absence of personal experience

Source: The author

2.2 The Haitian diaspora

In general, the diaspora is defined as a geographic dispersion of people belonging to the same community (Bordes-Benayoum, 2002). This group used to be considered as a 'brain drain' but now they are considered as a 'brain gain' (Groot & Gibbons, 2007). As a segment, the diaspora is a significant contributor to the economies and societies of countries in the region through remittances,

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investments, and importantly as sources of innovation and entrepreneurship (Minto-Coy, 2009; 2011). As a region, the Caribbean has been said to have been more profoundly influenced by migration than any other region in the world with the very make-up of racial and ethnic groups, the structure of society and the legacies thereafter being the result of migratory (forced or voluntary) flux related to e.g. the slave and sugar trades, colonialism, the formation of plantation societies (Minto-Coy, 2009) for a fuller discussion of these themes. More recent migration has seen mainly a movement of people out of the region leading to creation of a significant population, vis-a-vis the home population of many countries in the region. In Haiti, they contribute to a large extent to the GDP; to Foreign Direct Investment (FDI); to knowledge transfer; philanthropy; and tourism and cultural change (De Haan, 2000; Meyer & Brown, 1999). Minto-Coy and Séraphin (2016) also pointed out that this diaspora is a source of knowledge and innovation that can contribute to the territorial development of their home country. This diaspora is very important for the MTCI as tourists but also as investors. As a matter of fact, some of the most recent noticeable investment in the hospitality and catering sector are from the diaspora (Séraphin, 2014b). In a nutshell, the key features of the Haitian diaspora are as follows (table 2):

Table 2: Key features of the Haitian diaspora

Features of the Haitian diaspora	Sources
Strong link kept with the home country	Paul, 2008
Organisation of communities in the different countries they are settled in	Dufoix, 2003
Strong link among the members of the community	Laethier, 2007
Very proud to be 'Haitian'	Pizzorno 1990
Involved in the life of their new home and home country	Laethier, 2006; Audebert, 2006
Contribute greatly to the GDP of the home country	Dandin, 2012; Orozco, 2006
Brain gain	Paul & Michel, 2013; Barré et al, 2003
Highly qualified group. Most of them are in the USA	Wab, 2013
Second generation less interested in Haiti than their parents	Melyon-Reinette, 2010; 2009
Contribute to the territorial and economic intelligence of the home country	Minto-Coy & Séraphin, 2016

Source: The author

A few other key data to complete this overview of the Haitian diaspora (table 3; figure 2 & 3):

Table 2: Number of Haitian migrants by destination country (2010)

Haitian destination countries	Number of Haitian migrants	Structure (%)	Destination countries	Number of Haitian migrants	Structure (%)
1. United States	587,149	54.15	12. Suriname	869	0.08
2. Dominican Republic	311,969	28.77	13. Spain	769	0.07
3. Canada	73,753	6.80	14. Germany	645	0.06
4. France	42,103	3.88	15. Mexico	500	0.05
5. Bahamas	19,051	1.76	16. Italy	278	0.03
6. Netherlands Antilles	3,757	0.35	17. United Kingdom	217	0.02
7. Belgium	1,921	0.18	18. Denmark	177	0.02
8. Venezuela	1,509	0.14	19. Sweden	138	0.01
9. Switzerland	1,257	0.12	20. Greece	131	0.01
10. The Netherlands	1,087	0.10	Other countries	36,027	3.32
11. Cuba	909	0.08	TOTAL	1,084,216	100.00

SOURCES: American Community Survey 2010 for US data; IX Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda 2010-República Dominicana for the Dominican Republic, and from the World Bank for the remaining countries.

As the above table shows, the USA and the Dominican Republic are by far the main destinations for the Haitian diaspora.

Les deux grandes vagues migratoires du XXᵉ siècle, 1915-1935, 1965-1985, ont créé la diaspora qui, au Tricentenaire, 2005-2104, fait partie du nouvel espace haïtien.
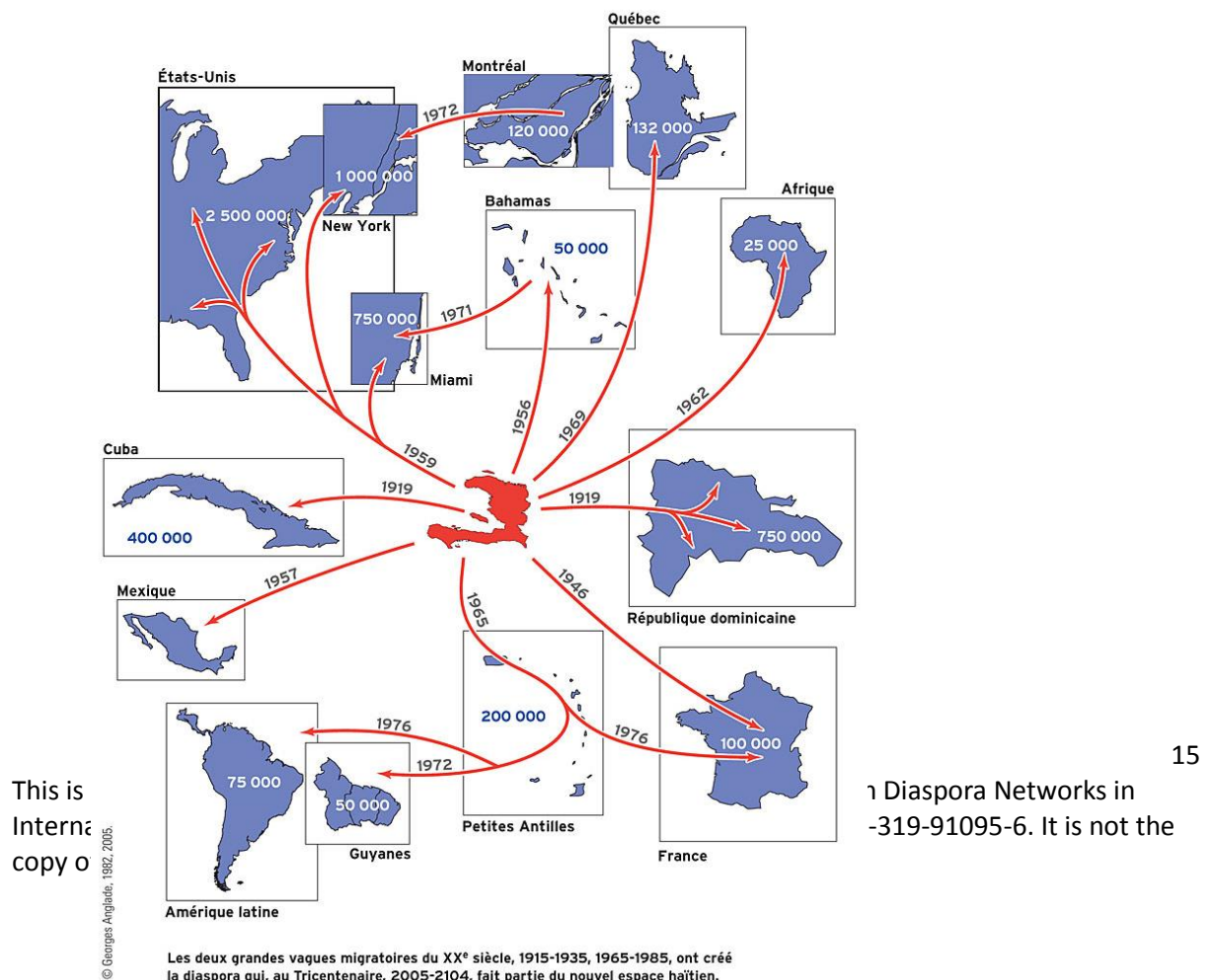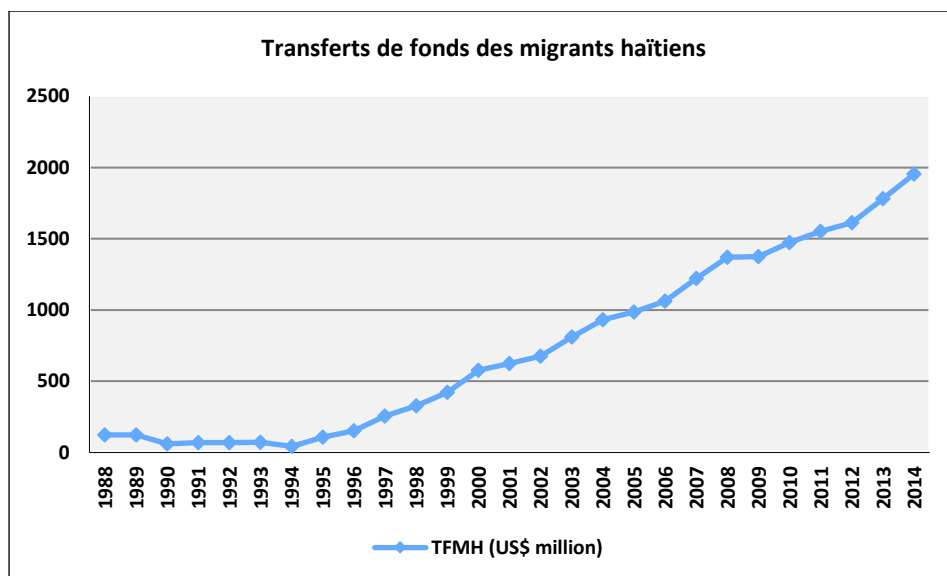
Figure 1: The different Haitians' migration waves

As figure 1 indicates, the Haitian immigration is not a new phenomenon. It started for political reasons then turned into political and economic reasons (Paul, 2008).

Figure 2: Money transfer by the Haitian diaspora

Transferts de fonds des migrants haïtiens

Source: Banque Mondiale, Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011 (october, 2014)
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1288990760745/RemittanceData_Inflows_Oct2014.xls)

The Haitian diaspora contributes extensively to the GDP of Haiti via money transfer.

2.3 A Tourism experience based segmentation of the Haitian diaspora

Séraphin (2014a) identified four stages in the evolution of tourism in Haiti:

(a) The first stage started in the 18th century. A very limited number of people used to visit Haiti. They were mainly attracted by the natural assets of the country.

(b) The second stage (1940s-1980s) – Haiti becomes a very popular destination in the Caribbean. However, it is important to mention the fact that in the 1960s

the number of visitors decreased drastically due to the insecure environment that emerged following the election of Jean-Francois Duvalier (1957-1971).

(c) The 3rd stage (1980-2010) - Haiti is no longer considered as a tourist destination. Due to political instability the country becomes one of the least visited of the Caribbean.

(d) The final stage (from 2011) – In 2011, Stephanie Balmir-Villedrouin is appointed Ministry of Tourism. Two years after her appointment, the Minister of Tourism managed to put Haiti back on the international map of tourist destinations.

As far as Haitian migration is considered, three main stages can be identified:

(a) The first wave (1915-1935) was before tourism was considered as a source of income for the economic development of the country. The first body in charge of tourism, namely the *Office National du Tourisme*, was created in 1939 (Séraphin, 2014b). The generation who left Haiti during this period is not familiar with the tourism industry in their home country.

(b) The second wave (1965-1986) has one foot in Jean-Francois Duvalier's administration (1957-1971) and one foot in Jean-Claude Duvalier's administration (1972-1986). During this second wave of migration, the number of visitors in Haiti was way above the Dominican Republic that was still focused on the sugar industry. But later, the political instability casted out Haiti from the world tourism map (Séraphin, 2010). The Haitians who left Haiti

during this period (1965-1986), have a mixed experience of the tourism sector in their home country.

(c) The last wave of migration (2005-2014) was still embedded in a context of political instability. With the election of President Martelly the political situation changed as mentioned earlier. The Haitians who left Haiti during this period also had a mixed experience of the tourism sector in Haiti.

The table (table 2) below crosses the stages of the tourism industry in Haiti with the various migration waves in order to provide an original segmentation of the Haitian diaspora.

Table 3: Experience and generation based segmentation of the Haitian diaspora

Stages of tourism in Haiti	Haitians migration waves	Segmentation of the Haitian diaspora
18th		Pre-tourism generation
	1915-1935	
1940-1960		Golden tourism generation
1960-2011	1965-1985	Deprived tourism generation
	2005-2014	Rejuvenated tourism generation
2011		

Source : The author

It is important to highlight the fact that this segmentation only takes into account Haitians born and bred in Haiti (domestic tourism). The diaspora visiting their home country was not taken into account (inbound tourism). The

fact that one dimension (inbound tourism) is missing, constitute the second limitation of our research.

3. Education of the Haitian diaspora 2G and 3G as a experiential marketing marketing strategy at pre-visit stage

3.1 Why targeting the Haitian diaspora?

A SWOT analysis (table 3) of the Haitian diaspora as tourists (based on Minto-Coy & Séraphin, 2016; Séraphin 2014b; Wab, 2013; Jadotte, 2012 and Newland & Taylor, 2010) gives the following results:

Table 3: SWOT analysis of the Haitian diaspora

STRENGHTS	WEAKNESSES
▪ Stay in local hotels ▪ Eat in local restaurants and buy products directly from local producers ▪ Decentralise tourism from Port-au-Prince to other areas of the country as diaspora like going back to their local towns ▪ Use the same infrastructures as the locals ▪ Can be used to test existing products and services	▪ The diaspora reinforces the American culture and image in their home country
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
▪ Strong interest for their culture and artefacts from their home country ▪ Strong connection with the members of their families who stayed home ▪ Part of associations ▪ Experience and innovation	-Elite attitude ('elephant sitting on Haiti')

Source: Minto-Coy & Séraphin, 2016; Séraphin 2014b; Wab, 2013; Jadotte, 2012 and Newland & Taylor, 2010; Gautier & Moita, 2010

The above table (table 3) shows that the diaspora is a real asset for the tourism sector in Haiti. There are more 'Strengths' and 'Opportunities' than

'Weaknesses' and 'Threats'. A comparative approach with non-diaspora tourists shows that the latest is less beneficial for the country (table 4):

Table 4: Comparative approach diaspora vs non-diaspora tourists

Diaspora as tourists	Non-diaspora tourists
▪ Stay in local hotels ▪ Eat in local restaurants and buy products directly from local producers	▪ Stay in international chain of hotels
▪ Decentralise tourism from Port-au-Prince to other areas of the country as diaspora like going back to their local towns	▪ Only visit well known tourist sites
▪ Use the same infrastructures as the locals	▪ Heavy investments are sometimes required to meet their needs

Source: Séraphin 2014b; Wab, 2013; Jadotte, 2012 and Newland & Taylor, 2010

3.2 An innovative marketing approach

Whilst research aiming to provide solution to improve the performance of post-colonial, post-conflict and post-disaster destinations (PCCD Destinations) focus on the destination (Avraham, 2015; Alvarez & Campo, 2014; Walters & Mair, 2012; Alvarez and Campo, 2011; Vitic & Ringer, 2007), this book chapter is interested in exploring solutions focused on the tourist at pre-visit stage. The pre-visit stage is an important phase of information processing and is shaped by personal knowledge and other third party information (Hubner & Gossling, 2012). Based on pre-visit information, it is very important to make people knowledgeable about the place through exposure to truthful information that can counter the exaggeration of risk and other negative preconceptions reinforced

within the tourists' culture. As a result, in this book chapter, we understand education as an opportunity to familiarise the Haitian 2G and 3G with their literature, history, geography, culture, local sayings, current affairs, etc). Walker & Mair (2012: 87) put it succinctly: Communication with the tourism market and the tourist 'is essential for Destination Marketing Organisation seeking to manage the misperceptions and media-imposed attitudes held by potential visitors'. The research starts from the dual premise that the country's image is defined by 'The impression that a person or persons hold about a country in which they do not reside' (O'Sullivan, 1996, cited in Seddighi et al, 2001), and that this impression is formed significantly through an individual's affective disposition rather than simply through a cognitive one (Alvarez & Campo, 2014). The approach is to make visitors more knowledgeable through appeals to their affective impulses (feelings and emotions), meaning that the strategy will have to be tailored towards this (Seddighi et al, 2001). Logically, the education of potential tourists of post-colonial, post-conflict and post-disaster destinations could challenge media reinforced clichés and false preconceptions, and promote a more clear eyed and positive view. Education can contribute to turn potential tourists into actual tourists, and enhance the experience of the tourists too (Séraphin, Butcher & Korstanje, 2016). Whilst tourism education is generally seen only from the students', academics', practitioners' and employers' angle (Dale & Robinson, 2001), this article

considers it as a pre-visit marketing tool, explicitly countering false or exaggerated negative notions relating to colonialism, disasters and conflicts of the past (both distant and recent). When people have a better knowledge of the true nature of a destination (history, tradition, context, etc), they are more likely to visit it because they will be less open to distortions, exaggerations and unbalanced accounts Gossling (2012). In 1994, National Advisory Council for England and Training Target UK (NACETT) identified the role played by training and education in the performance of a nation. Hence generally lifelong learning is related to employee skills and economic efficiency for providers. However, ever since Krippendorf's (1987) call for tourists to be educated about the destinations they visited in order to create a more ethical tourism, advocates of ethical tourism have argued that this is a moral goal for the industry. Such an approach to lifelong learning entails a new, open and innovative attitude toward education in tourism at the pre-visit stage. Thus, the following sections are going to discuss at a conceptual level the potential impact of technology (VOLM) on the diaspora (2G and 3G tourists' behavior) and non diaspora tourist behavior (figure 4).

Figure 4: Outcomes of VOLM

TOOL:
Virtual Online Learning Material (VOLM)

TARGETS:
Haitian diaspora as tourists + Non -Haitian diaspora tourists

OUTCOMES:
- Decide to visit the destination
- Still not convinced by the destination

Source: The author

3.3 Online education of the tourists

ITs play a role in all stages of the tourist experience (Neuhofer & Buhalis, 2012). That said, it is also very important to emphasise on the fact that ITs can also be used as a learning tool to disseminate knowledge to staff (Liburd & Hjalager, 2010) and subsequently improve the businesses' performance (Collins, Buhalis & Peters, 2003); enhance learning motivation (Klein, Noe & Wang, 2006 cited in Behnke, 2013) and stimulate participation and interest (Law, 2013). Based on the above information, our hypothesis is that online/virtual tool can be used as a tool to educate tourists about PCCD destinations at pre-visit stage and then motivate them to visit these destinations. In the same line of thought, Dale and Robinson's (2001) three domains model of tourism education argue that in order for a tourism education programme to

meet the need of the industry and stakeholders involved, it needs to: (a) develop interdisciplinary skills for a broad understanding of the industry; (b) provide expertise in a specific area in terms of skills; (c) explore some niche markets. Anderson, 2001 (cited in Walters & Mair, 2012), explains that the art of convincing a target audience relies on three elements: (a) an 'ethos' element based on the credibility and trustworthiness of the source of the message; (b) a 'pathos' element is linked with the emotional appeal of the message and finally, (c) a 'logos' element referring to the capacity of the message to inform.

3.4 'Haiti Je Connais' and Gamification

The term 'Gamification' is quite recent as it appears in 2008 and is defined as 'the use of game design elements and game thinking in a non-gaming context' (Deterding et al. 2011 cited in Xu, Tian, Buhalis, Webber & Zhang, 2015: 525). Gamification has many benefits: Improve loyalty; change of consumer behaviour; encourage customer engagement; enhance experience; improve engagement; provoke motivation; increase brand awareness (Xu, Weber & Buhalis, 2014). To this list, Capatina and Bleoju (2015) add that Gamification contributes to educate the players through their engagement and more importantly, contribute to enhance their Collective Intelligence, in other words, their capacity 'to engage in intellectual cooperation in order to create, innovate

and invent' (Levy, 1997 cited in Capatina & Bleoju, 2015: 294). In education, Gamification is gaining in popularity (Jimenez-Pelaez, Romero & Medina, 2014). Based on the above, Gamification could be used to educate the Haitian diaspora (and non-diaspora tourists) about Haiti and subsequently remove all the negative cliché about the destination and motivate them to visit the country. In this chapter Gamification is to be approached from organic agents (that are acquired through personal experience and are normally the most trusted source of information) perspective. This approach is powerful because it can quickly alter a tourist's image of a destination (Gartner, 1993).

The pan-Haitian App *Haiti Je Connais* (http://haitijeconnais.com#login#) is managed by the Haitian charity *Evolution d' Haiti* (http://haitijeconnais.org/). This charity is aiming to turn around the negative image of Haiti and raise awareness of the assets of the destination. As Minto-Coy and Séraphin (2016) argued, the Haitian diaspora is rather innovative and subsequently can contribute to the development of their home country. *Haiti Je Connais* is first of all an online quiz about Haiti. The questions covered include a variety of areas: Literature, cinema, sport, geography, current affairs, culture, tourism, local sayings). This online application proposed is effectively an interactive, fun and affecting repository of knowledge about Haiti. It encourages access to factual knowledge and informed, affective reflection about the country. It is not directly 'selling' Haiti *per se*, but following our analysis, may be all the more effective

for that in promoting it as a prospective destination. This is an example of what Rowley (2000) sees as knowledge management that is not neutral, but in pursuit of a specific objective (Davenport 1998, cited in Rowley, 2000), the objective being improving the image of Haiti and encouraging people (diaspora and non-diaspora tourists) to visit the destination. Gamification presented like a quiz can therefore be considered as a form of experiential marketing tool enabling the player to develop his image of Haiti based on what he knows about the destination instead of the message spread from the media (Oberhofer, Fuller & Hofmann, 2014).

3.5 The limitations of this strategy

This strategy which aims to use VOLM to change tourists (diaspora and non-diaspora) on Haiti is interesting as it offers an alternative to existing promotional material aiming to improve the general perceptions of Haiti and other PCCD destinations, as there is little evidence at the moment that existing strategies are effective (Séraphin, Butcher & Korstanje, 2016; Walter & Mai, 2012). However, the danger of the destination loss of authenticity is looming. Indeed, Séraphin (2014a) explained that Haiti is still a very authentic destination because the tourism businesses are mainly owned and managed by Haitians. However, he also warned that this authenticity would gradually fade away if the

industry happened to move from the hands of the locals to those of the diaspora and non-Haitians. As a results, the Haitian diaspora as actor of the tourism industry could potentially be an issue travellers are now looking for authenticity (Xie & Wall, 2003 in Park, 2014). The first hotel with an international standard which opened in Haiti, Hotel Oasis, opened in 2012, is owned by an Haitian from the diaspora (Séraphin & Paul, 2015). Other hotels with international standards and owned by Haitians from the diaspora followed (Séraphin & Paul, 2015: 7): La Lorraine (2012); Best Western (2013); Villa Nicole (2013); Hotel La Source (2013); Monte Cristo (2014); Colin Hotel (2014), etc. 'Authenticity' is regarded as the most important criterion for the development of heritage tourism' (Xie & Wall, 2003 in Park, 2014: 62). This also raised the question of sustainable tourism. The tourism industry has been highlighted as an industry that can positively contribute to the economic and social development of a destination (Buckley, 2012). However this industry can also negatively impact on a destination if poorly managed (Mazanec, Wober & Zins, 2007 cited in Iniesta-Bonnillo, Sanchez-Fernandez & Jimenez-Castillo, 2016). To some extent, the encouragement of the Haitian diaspora to invest in the tourism industry of their home country could be considered as an example of poor management if a strict qualitative and quantitative control is not operated in terms of type of tourism business and number of investments from the diaspora. If so far we considered the limitations of our research from the angle of Haitian

diaspora as investors, there are also limitations from the angle of diaspora as tourists. Séraphin (2016) indicated that the diaspora is not that different from others tourists (non-diaspora) on the basis that to be convinced they need to be provided evidence that (1) evidence that the service provided is good (2) information about events and sites to visits and finally (3) evidence of endorsements by opinion leaders who have already experienced the destination. However, Michel (2009) claims tourism can fully benefit a destination, only if the locals are fully involved in the planning and development of the industry and benefit from it. Despite these limitations, table 4 provides evidence that from a sustainable point of view that diaspora tourists are more profitable for the destination than non-diaspora tourists.

4. Conclusion

Segmenting the diaspora using 'experience' was all the more relevant in this book chapter as we used an experiential marketing tool, namely the online game *HaitijeConnais* to theoretical test the hypothesis that VOLM could change the way the Haitian diaspora 2G and 3G perceive their home country and would subsequently turned them into potential tourists for the destinations. Whilst this segment appears to be the more beneficial one for the destination, marketers from the Haitian DMO need to meet their needs in terms of quality of services

and activities. That said, as investors in the tourism industry, the role of the diaspora is more questionable from a sustainable point of view as their involvement can impact negatively on the authenticity of the destination. As for the App, whilst the existing App has merit, the analysis presented in the previous subsection (3.3) suggests that it could better meet the goal of promoting tourism in Haiti if it:

1. Adopts an interactive, multimedia approach (sound, images and videos about the destination);

2. Provides a clear and detailed mission statement (with a message for Haitians, diaspora, existing visitors, potential visitors);

3. Displays endorsements (by opinion leaders / travel writers)

Future research could be about testing empirically the capacity of VOLM to actually change tourist perception on a particular destination.

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