

Extending the exit brand: from Serbia's fortress to Montenegro's coast

Nicholas Wise, Tanja Armenski and Nemanja Davidović

Introduction

Throughout the 1990s, the Western Balkans was a region of geopolitical dispute as the former Republic of Yugoslavia was violently fragmented by a turbulent war. Focusing on Serbia, the war negatively affected the country's national image and deterred international visitors, causing the country to rapidly stagnate. In Novi Sad, images of destroyed infrastructure, bombings and international interventions were conveyed to global audiences through the media. Conflict left Novi Sad city and much of Serbia in a state of despair, thus deterring visitors. International audiences consumed negative images of Serbia as a country with much violence and political corruption, thereby projecting fearful imaginations and left the country isolated. In 2000 a youth-led movement began in Novi Sad as a response to the atrocities in Serbia throughout the 1990s. The Exit Movement, which led to the Exit Festival, was organised by students from the University of Novi Sad. During this time, youths gathered to protest against the policies of then Serbian president, Slobodan Milošević (see Rogel 2004). The Exit Festival has become synonymous with Novi Sad, Serbia, and has gained further international recognition being awarded 'Best Major European Festival' in 2013. The Exit brand was extended with the commencement of the Sea Dance Festival in 2014 (and soon after was awarded 'Best Mid-Sized European Festival' in 2015). The Sea Dance Festival became an instant success, despite the foundations of the Exit Movement being one based on narratives of struggle, protest and democracy. It is the successful relationship between these two festivals, held in neighbouring

countries, and the possible lost opportunities for Serbian tourism as a result, that form the focus of this chapter.

Since Exit's origin in 2000, the festival has attracted more than 2 million people from around the world, and it continues to convey messages of social democracy pertinent to contemporary global issues and struggles (ExitFest 2017). What started as a passive political protest has evolved into one of the most popular annual music festivals in Europe. Considered by many to be one of the festival's most unique attributes, the event is held in the Petrovaradin Fortress. The venue is a medieval fortress, a historical structure symbolising local history and heritage, but is more recently renowned for the contemporary festival. For Serbia, the growth of the Exit Festival was deemed significant towards generating tourism in the northern autonomous Vojvodina Region of the country.

This chapter builds on previous research assessing festivals and tourism in Serbia alongside critical discussions of destination/event branding and festival expansion. The next section will offer some conceptual insight on festival brands and event tourism before looking at the Exit Festival and the Sea Dance Festival as an extension of festival branding and success. Official web pages, newspapers and media outlets offer insights that complement observations to inform the section on the Exit brand and the 'Exit Adventure' before leading into a critical discussion of Serbia's lost tourism opportunity; the concluding remarks section will reflect on key points and future research directions.

Festival branding, destination branding and event tourism

As a destination, Serbia was negatively impacted by negative connotations of war from the 1990s, and by the early to mid-2000s, the Exit Festival played a role in transforming the image of Serbia as a destination (Wise, Flinn & Mulec 2015). Researchers assessing tourism and

destination branding have focussed on destination marketing and development (Govers & Go 2009; Kozak & Baloglu 2011; Morgan, Pritchard & Pride 2010). In this case, it is the festival brand that has been most successful. In a competitive business environment, a strong brand is seen as a company's greatest asset (Aaker 1996). Brands also help consumers gain awareness of a product, based on associations, quality, loyalty and experiences, in an attempt to differentiate a product from its competitors (see Keller 2003; Parent, Eskerund & Hanstad 2012).

Psychologically, brands are associations, and we frame associations with places based on recognisable features, particular events or various points in a place's history (Bassols 2016; Govers 2011; Kim & Perdue 2011; Morgan et al. 2010; Qu, Kim & Im 2011; Wise 2011).

Destination branding is tied to how a place/destination marketed and promoted, and to informing visitors about a place/destination offering (Çakmak & Issac 2012; Govers, Go & Kumar 2007; Kozak & Baloglu 2011). Corporations use branding to attract customers, using and creating recognisable logos that people associate with products. Likewise, destination branding, according to Kladou, Kavaratzis, Rigopoulou and Salonika (2017), refers to naming or developing recognisable logos or taglines, or creating associations. Beritelli and Laesser (2018) add that particular logos can help detail particular experiences to help visitors identify a destination. In this case, Exit has not only become synonymous with Novi Sad and Serbia, but arguably it is the Exit brand that motivates festivalgoers to visit Serbia. Gladden, Irwin and Sutton (2001) proposed three antecedents to branding (which are team-related, organisation-related and market-related) in the field of sports management, whereas event/festivals and tourism relate to experience-induced awareness and associations through branding specific to the acts involved (and this concerns the Serbian destination organisers and the (European) festival market in this case). Govers (2011, p. 227) further argues that destination branding "should be

about creating an overarching brand strategy or competitive identity that reflects a particular nation's, city's or region's history" (see also Baker 2012; Dinnie 2015). Research on destination branding is well established in the tourism marketing (e.g. Baker 2012; Govers & Go 2009; Kladou et al. 2017) and destination development literature (e.g. Bassols 2016; Dinnie 2015; Zenker & Jacobsen 2015); however, more work concerning festivals and branding is necessary to conceptually and practically consider this more focussed niche within the tourism and events literature.

Attracting festivalgoers helps enhance a destination niche, event tourism (Getz 2013; Getz & Page 2016), and also leads to creative place development (Waitt & Gibson 2009; Wise 2016). According to Getz and Page (2016, p. 597), one of the core propositions of event tourism is "events can create positive images for the destination and help brand or re-position cities". However, when places are known for violence in recent history, such negative associations can be burdensome. Therefore, a focus on youth culture or the appeal of festivals helps develop a nascent brand to attract people to a destination and use events as drivers to promote tourism (see Wise et al. 2015). The challenge arises when a destination struggles to develop a tourism agenda and promote its destination, and then a popular festival attract tourists, meaning that tourism and destination managers need to get involved in event and festival management. If the national, regional and local tourism managers/planners do not work with the event, the event itself (as this chapter argues) is solely what is supplied to consumers and visitors. Visitor demand is then linked to the brand, and such influence of the event itself overtakes what additional features a destination might have to offer—making it difficult to destination managers to manage tourism and visitor mobility. This is discussed as the 'Exit Adventure', the emergence of the Sea Dance Festival, and ExitTrip.

The rise of exit and the new 'Exit Adventure'

As mentioned, the Exit Movement was a political demonstration—messages across Serbia in 2000 were *otpor* (resistance and the people's movement against the Milošević regime) and *gotov je* (a slogan used to refer to the end of Milošević's rule). The Exit Movement aimed to bring people together using the power of music and to encourage people to vote in the upcoming election (Wise et al. 2015). People in Serbia often referred to the movement as the beginning of the end of Slobodan Milošević's rule, and 10 days after the first Exit Movement the first democratic government was established in Serbia. Whether or not the Exit Movement, in fact, contributed to domestic change in Serbia's political scene is debatable; however, the festival encouraged and generated social cohesion among youths. If we consider the impact of the event, its legacy links to the new opening of Serbia. Event organisers continued promoting sociopolitical messages pertinent to ongoing contemporary issues, regionally and globally (such as human trafficking, integration and voting). Furthermore, event organisers recognised the importance of making up for the "lost decade" of the 1990s that youths in Serbia missed, so they can now experience popular international artists and meet more international visitors. Research on the Exit Festival exists looking at the setting/venue of the event in the Petrovaradin Fortress (Besermenji, Pivac & Wallrabenstein 2009); host/guest interactions (Zakić, Ivkov-Džigurski & Ćurčić 2009); culture and entrepreneurship (Dušica 2011); and politics, youths and city/country image (Wise et al. 2015).

Promoted as a festival with a message held in a fortress which combines popular culture and heritage, in recent years the Exit Festival has become a missed opportunity for Serbia to further (and fully) sell itself as a destination. In view of the success and the growth of popular consumer products, increased demand, rising profit margins and the ability to expand operations, the Exit

Festival organisers saw an opportunity to add additional days and extend their brand. The Sea Dance Festival in Montenegro in its first three years has occurred in the days following Exit in Serbia—and is promoted as part of the ‘Exit Adventure’. Held at Jaz Beach (near Budva, Montenegro), the Sea Dance Festival channels myriads of young people through Serbia to Montenegro. However, Exit’s growth and success has arguably outsold Serbian tourism, with the ‘Exit Adventure’ suggesting that young people should carry on to the next festival on Montenegro’s beachfront as opposed to encouraging festivalgoers to explore the sights, attractions and highlights of Serbia’s Vojvodina Region. Moreover, the role of the media in promoting Exit (and now Sea Dance) fuels imaginations of Serbia as a destination specifically for summer music and the land of Exit.

The media has played a key role in promoting the Exit Festival. However, one of the challenges is while the media promotes Exit, they do it to help brand the destination and improve the negative image of Serbia as a war-torn country. Yet it was the festival, as opposed to the destination, that gained media and international recognition, with MTV expressing interest in 2004 to sign a deal with Exit to promote the festival beyond the Balkans (BBC 2004). This would be the main turning point towards establishing (and promoting) the Exit brand, but the negative legacies of war in conflict in Serbia and the immediate region were still fresh in the imaginations of people from outside the region. There was a need for western journalists to travel to Serbia and tell the story of the current situation and Exit to change how people perceived Serbia to promote the destination and the event. For instance, The Independent (2005) noted,

after NATO bombed Novi Sad in 1999, the youth of Serbia were ready to retaliate with a 100-day protest party. Exit was born, bringing in musicians and DJs, holding parties on the river, around the castle [sic] and on boats.

This article was written as Exit began to see more success and benefits from MTV. Years later the narrative and negative imaginations of war began to fade: “New look of Serbia: magical music event helps dispel the memories of war as country’s youth celebrates” (Birmingham Evening Mail 2009). The new destination brand of Serbia began to transition towards representing Serbia as a festival destination, and this was assisted by romanticised images of the event destination: “Exit is perched high and majestic above the river Danube in its historical fortress; about as far from humdrum as my imagination will stretch” (The Evening Standard-London 2007). Both the wide range of music genres performed at the Exit Festival and the location in the 17th-century Petrovaradin Fortress in Novi Sad have contributed to the rise in popularity of the event. The four-day festival is now recognised as one of Europe’s biggest” (The People-Ulster Edition 2011).

The Irish Times (2008) described the event as one “held in the 18th century [sic] Petrovaradin fortress overlooking the Danube in Novi Sad, Serbia...these days EXIT draws music fans from all over Europe for its hedonistic atmosphere and idiosyncratic line-up”. As the festival’s popularity increased, destination elements were often overshadowed by the event’s popularity, although the uniqueness of the venue was a destination feature regularly acknowledged:

The year was the 11th EXIT festival and the madness in a historic fort on the banks of the Danube has grown to such international acclaim, it now attracts headliners such as Placebo, Missey Elliott, The Chemical Brothers, LCD Soundsystem and Mika.

(Liverpool Daily Echo 2010)

Exit gives concert-goers the unique opportunity of exploring underground passages while checking out headliners Duran, New Order, Plan B and Guns ‘n’ Roses. The 18th-century [sic]

Petrovaradin Fortress in Novi Sad, where Exit is held, offers superb acoustics that allow bands to perform simultaneously without any sound interference.

(The Toronto Star 2012)

While these quotes are only a snapshot of how the media portrays the event, such quotes were common and suggest that the focus is put solely on the event, with little coverage portraying the appeal of the destination beyond the Petrovaradin Fortress venue. While destination marketers and managers cannot always influence how journalists and media outlets promote the festival, they can use these as frameworks of reference to build the destination appeal alongside the event. ExitFest (2017) builds on the promotion of the newspapers stating: “Exit is an award-winning music festival. It is held annually at the Petrovaradin Fortress in the city of Novi Sad (Serbia), which is considered by many as one of the best festival venues in the world”. The challenge is making the appeal of the destination relate to the audience of festivalgoers if they want to capture them as tourist before or after the event.

The economic impacts of events can vary depending on the destination. Larger cities have continuous business throughout the year, so they can expect hotel receipts to be consistent. Smaller or lesser-known destinations that host one key hallmark event each year may only see a short-term economic spike and may have to depend on the financial impact of the event for the year. A challenge then for destination managers is to give festivalgoers a reason to stay three or four days before or after an event—ideally to extend the impact of the event to nine to eleven days. It may not be achievable for a destination to host several major events or festivals throughout the year, but they can promote the destination in a way that highlights the success of the destination during the event, and they can showcase the quaintness and appeal of the destination when the event is not happening.

Hennessey, Yun, MacDonald and MacEachern (2010, pp. 218–219) note, “given the ever-expanding number of tourism destinations and the increased supply of products and services, the competition for visitors is intense and bound to become more so in the future”. It is therefore common to assume that destinations are competing against each other. However, what is less common is a destination competing against a local event that is now helping influence attendee mobility patterns. With the discussion concerning the impact and influence of Exit, the organisers now promote the ‘Exit Adventure’ as “2 FESTIVALS, 2 COUNTRIES, 2 SPECTACULAR LOCATIONS...1 UNFORGETTABLE ADVENTURE!” (ExitFest 2017). With the growth and rapid popularity of Exit, this allowed the festival organisers to extend the brand to a new location. The success was perhaps quicker than tourism planners and managers may have anticipated, but with the Exit Festival playing a key role in attracting youth from around the world to Serbia each summer, this allows them to control not only the marketing and promotion but also influence mobility.

The festival organisers are also taking their own lead on promoting the image of the destination based on the unique venues, in bold the state on the office website: “FROM THE MAGICAL FORTRESS TO THE BEST EUROPEAN BEACH!” (ExitFest 2017). The destination image features of the Exit Festival were assembled around the unique and aesthetic venue: the Petrovaradin Fortress (see Wise & Mulec 2015) which contributes to the destination brand and the event appeal. Thus the ‘Exit Adventure’ is arguably weakening the ability of destination managers to capture festivalgoers now that attendees can purchase a festival package. As promoted via the official website,

EXIT Festival, combined with its seaside sister Sea Dance Festival, makes for a world’s most unique festival package which has become the best festival holiday on the planet that spans

over 10 days! This amazing package combines two award-winning festivals at two spectacular locations in two neighbouring countries, which proved to be a successful formula that attracts over 270,000 people each year [...] to the magical Petrovaradin Fortress in Serbia, then continue their Adventure to the turquoise sandy Jaz Beach in Montenegro.

(ExitFest 2017)

In addition to the destination appeal of both festival locations, the website also notes,

EXIT Adventure has been acknowledged among festivals as the best value for the money by The Guardian and many other leading media. Compared to other major festivals, tickets are traditionally more affordable for the very competitive and diverse lineup. Accommodation, food and beverage prices in this region are also much lower compared to other European countries.

(ExitFest 2017)

In addition, to assist festivalgoers with travel planning, Exit has created a tourist service (called ExitTrip) to book a range of accommodations and arrange flights to various airports across the region. While much of this chapter is concerned with tourist demand, Exit is also controlling the supply side which takes away opportunities for local tourism providers in Serbia.

Serbia's lost opportunity

It is important that destination marketers and managers develop a brand that will define a place and work with event organisers to ensure the destination benefits from the popular festival and the festival benefits from the destination. In being critical of the case of the Exit Festival, it can be argued that destination marketers could have done more to highlight the destination of Novi

Sad, Vojvodina and Serbia as the Exit Festival grew in popularity and influence. Mulec and Wise's (2013) work (conducted 2010–2012) assessed the destination competitiveness of Serbia's Vojvodina Region. Destination management indicators were among the weakest findings, and while the majority of creative resources also needed improvement, they found that the 'quality and originality of festivals' was the most competitive creative resource in their survey of regional tourism experts (Mulec & Wise 2013). While regional experts did recognise the potential then, in 2013 the Exit Festival reached a European milestone being awarded the 'Best Major European Festival'. This status showed that in only 13 years, Exit went from a local grassroots movement in a destination recovering from war and political uncertainty to being the host of a festival that had emerged among the European music festival landscape.

Building on the success of the festival, instead of Serbia embracing this recognition, Exit Festival organisers then extended the Exit brand by promoting the 'Exit Adventure' and developing the Sea Dance Festival in neighbouring (but still distant) Montenegro. A new festival that commenced only in 2014 was also soon recognised with Sea Dance being awarded the 'Best Mid-Sized European Festival' in 2015. With the rising popularity of music festivals across Europe and the extension of festival brands, this creates challenges for destination managers. The example of Serbia is one of lost opportunities, where the chance to build the success of a festival into the development of a destination to promote subsequent tourism opportunities saw the Exit Festival influence the mobility of festivalgoers. While destination marketers in Serbia did promote Exit, the extent to which Exit promoted Serbia is debatable. Wise and Mulec (2015) analysed media content surrounding representations of Exit and found that despite the attempt to speak to the appeal of the destination, it was the uniqueness of Exit's venue, the Petrovaradin Fortress, that highlighted that attributes of the destination. Little else was found in terms of

promoting Serbia and Vojvodina as a destination beyond the event. Media presentations were matched with findings from surveys collected at the Exit Festival with the majority of participants only spending time in Serbia for the duration of the event and not knowing about subsequent tourism opportunities in the region. In most cases, domestic travel through Serbia was between Belgrade and Novi Sad (because of Belgrade's airport).

In order to improve Serbia's competitive position and to sustain it, both destination managers, local business owners and investors need to better consider longer-term planning. Dwyer, Duc Pham, Forsyth and Spurr (2014) highlight the need to focus on expenditure yield rather than visitor numbers, which has also recently been identified as the appropriate objective of Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) when marketing from both domestic and international tourism—which can then be applied to festival management using the same approach. In order to provide sustainable visitor yields, tourism operators should create theme-based products and shift promotion on the emotional benefits—which is one of the benefits of events and festivals. To achieve this there needs to be better networking and collaboration between public- and private-sector stakeholders to improve the overall performance of Serbia's tourism, events and leisure industries. Local tourism managers and stakeholders involved with tourism in Serbia need to do much more to present and showcase, or make visitors aware of supplemental tourism opportunities to festival attendees. According to Getz, Andersson and Carlsen (2010), there is a need for tourism planners to better know the festival audience and relate to their travel demands beyond the event. There is a need to better capture tourists before and after the event, but this might be able to be achieved if destination managers in Novi Sad, Vojvodina and Serbia work closely with ExitTrip and Exit organisers to form a stronger event-tourism partnership.

Conclusions

Once an established brand begins to promote itself and expand, it begins working like a corporate entity that builds strength. Because Serbia was recovering from a negative image, the Exit Festival offered something different, and at first, interpretations were suggesting it was playing a role in regenerating the image of Novi Sad and Serbia (Wise et al. 2015). However, the challenge presented in this chapter is that the destination itself (Novi Sad—Vojvodina—Serbia) was not able to fully capture the potential of the event to present other unique features of the destination. Instead, Exit grew as a brand and now has established the presence of another festival in Montenegro and harnesses its own image and power to create the ‘Exit Adventure’ and offer a festival package that directs event goers from one place directly to the next.

Festivalgoers need to travel between Novi Sad and Budva, so other towns in Serbia may capture some of these tourists as they travel between. Nevertheless, it is the appeal of the sea in Montenegro or the opportunity to traverse Bosnia and Herzegovina that appears to be most attractive. Thus some of the possibilities to capture these event goers in other Serbian destinations might be considered a lost opportunity.

This chapter of the handbook presents an overview and critique of Serbia’s lost opportunity given the ability of Exit to build on their own popularity and expand to another festival in another event location. Some of the insights presented from various media outlets and official tourism websites provide an overview of how an event or destination is perceived, allowing for academic inquiry, reflection and critique. More in-depth research is needed from several perspectives. Foremost, the consumer base of festivalgoers who attend both events should be assessed to better understand their interests and travel desires. This could help destination managers in Serbia better promote places to capture festivalgoers before the Exit Festival or on

route to Montenegro. From previous research at the Exit Festival, it was found that many were not aware of tourism opportunities or their main reason for visiting Serbia was to attend the Exit Festival (Bjeljac & Lović 2011; Zakić et al. 2009). Therefore, working with local and regional tourism stakeholders to promote their destinations during the event further and via popular social media platforms may help with reaching the target audience of Exit Festival attendees or those partaking in the 'Exit Adventure'.

Both festival and tourism managers must assume proactive leadership roles in a rapidly changing industry. Ongoing work is continuing to assess Serbian competitiveness as an events and festival destination, but to better secure and facilitate investments and continue building a festival base image, the Serbian tourism industry needs to be explicitly identified by wider stakeholder groups as a key economic sector, supported by a clear vision and strong leadership. Productivity increases in tourism will require a more highly skilled tourism workforce, but a workforce that can also cater to the festival industry and seek ways to capture and maintain festivalgoers as tourists.

References

- Aaker, D.A. (1996). *Building Strong Brands*. New York: The Free Press.
- Baker, B. (2012). *Destination Branding for Small Cities*. Portland: Creative Leap Books.
- Bassols, N. (2016). Branding and promoting a country amidst a long-term conflict: The case of Colombia. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 5(4), 314–324.
- BBC. (2004). MTV to sign deal with Serbian festival on music promotion. *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 29 June 2004.
- Beritelli, P. & Laesser, C. (2018). Destination logo recognition and implications for intentional destination branding by DMOs: A case for saving money. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 8, 1–13.

- Besermenji, S., Pivac, T. & Wallrabenstein, K. (2009). Significance of the authentic ambience of the Petrovaradin Fortress on the attractiveness of Exit Festival. *Geographica Pannonica*, 13(2), 66–74.
- Birmingham Evening Mail. (2009). New look of Serbia; Magical music event helps dispel the memories: of war as country's youth celebrates: The Great Escape. *Birmingham Evening Mail*, 22 July 2009.
- Bjeljac, Z. & Lović, S. (2011). Demographic analysis of foreign visitors to the Exit Festival, Novi Sad. *Journal of the Geographical Institute "Jovan Cvijić" SASA*, 61(2), 97–108.
- Çakmak, E. & Issac, R. (2012). What destination marketers can learn from their visitors' blogs: An image analysis of Bethlehem, Palestine. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 1(1–2), 124–133.
- Dinnie, K. (2015). *Nation Branding: Concepts, Issues, Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Dušica, D. (2011). Preduzetništvo u kulturi-studija slučaja muzičkog festival. *Kultura*, 130, 350–366.
- Dwyer, L. Duc Pham, T. Forsyth, P. & Spurr, R. (2014). Destination marketing of Australia: Return on investment. *Journal of Travel Research*, 53(3), 281–295.
- ExitFest. (2017). Exit Adventure. Retrieved from www.exitfest.org/en/exit-adventure. Accessed 21 November 2017.
- Getz, D. (2013). *Event Tourism*. Putnam Valley, NY: Cognizant.
- Getz, D., Andersson, T. & Carlsen, J. (2010). Festival management studies: Developing a framework and priorities for comparative and cross-cultural research. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 1(1), 29–59.
- Getz, D. & Page, S.J. (2016). Progress and prospects for event tourism research. *Tourism Management*, 52(February), 593–631.
- Govers, R. (2011). From place marketing to place branding and back. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 7(4), 227–231.
- Govers, F. & Go, F. (2009). *Place Branding: Glocal, Virtual and Physical Identities*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Govers, R., Go, F.M. & Kumar, K. (2007). Promoting tourism destination image. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(1), 15–23.

- Gladden, J.M., Irwin, R.L. & Sutton, W.A. (2001). Managing North American major professional sports team in the new millennium: A focus on building brand equity. *Journal of Sport Management*, 15(4), 297–317.
- Hennessey, S.M., Yun, D., MacDonald, R. & MacEachern, M. (2010). The effects of advertising awareness and media form on travel intentions. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management*, 19(3), 217–243.
- Keller, K. (2003). Brand synthesis: The multidimensionality of brand knowledge. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29(4), 595–600.
- Kim, D. & Perdue, R.R. (2011). The influence of image on destination attractiveness. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 28(3), 225–239.
- Kladou, S., Kavaratzis, M., Rigopoulou, I. & Salonika, E. (2017). The role of brand elements in destination branding. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 6(4), 426–435.
- Kozak, M. & Baloglu, S. (2011). *Managing and Marketing Tourist Destinations*. London: Routledge.
- Liverpool Daily Echo. (2010). A musical revolution; Ben Rossington uncovers Serbia's best kept secret. *Liverpool Daily Echo*, 26 October 2010.
- Morgan, N., Pritchard, A. & Pride, R. (2010). *Destination Branding: Creating the Unique Destination Proposition*. Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Mulec, I. & Wise, N. (2013). Indicating the competitiveness of Serbia's Vojvodina region as an emerging tourism destination. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 8, 68–79.
- Parent, M.M., Eskerud, L. & Hanstad, D.V. (2012). Brand creation in international recurring sports events. *Sport Management Review*, 15(2), 145–159.
- Qu, H., Kim, L.H. & Im, H.H. (2011). A model of destination branding: Integrating the concepts of the branding and destination image. *Tourism Management*, 32(3), 465–476.
- Rogel, C. (2004). *The Breakup of Yugoslavia and Its Aftermath*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- The Evening Standard-London. (2007). I'm just a festival fanatic; One aficionado thinks nothing of blowing a week's wages on a music weekend in Serbia; Where to hear the music this summer. *The Evening Standard (London)*, 11 July 2007.
- The Independent. (2005). Rock & Pop: How young Serbs rocked the castle. *The Independent (London)*, 15 July 2005.

- The Irish Times. (2008). Striking a chord. *The Irish Times*, Travel Section, 22 March 2008.
- The People-Ulster Edition. (2011). HEAD FOR EXIT: Serbia's best music festival offers song, sun and blue Danube. *The People (Ulster Edition)*, 29 May 2011.
- The Toronto Star. (2012). Rock, shock and 100 tons of splat! *The Toronto Star*, Travel Section, 26 May 2012.
- Waitt, G. & Gibson, C. (2009). Creative small cities: Rethinking the creative economy in place. *Urban studies*, 46(5/6), 1223–1246.
- Wise, N. (2011). Post-war tourism and the imaginative geographies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, 4(1), 5–24.
- Wise, N. (2016). Outlining triple bottom line contexts in urban tourism regeneration. *Cities*, 53(April), 30–34.
- Wise, N., Flinn, J. & Mulec, I. (2015). Exit Festival: Contesting political pasts, impacts on youth culture and regenerating the image of Serbia and Novi Sad. In Pernecky, T. & Moufakkir, O. (Eds.), *Ideological, Social and Cultural Aspects of Events* (pp. 60–73). Wallingford, UK: CABI.
- Wise, N. & Mulec, I. (2015). Aesthetic awareness and spectacle: Communicated images of Novi Sad, the Exit Festival and the event venue Petrovaradin Fortress. *Tourism Review International*, 19(4), 193–205.
- Zakić, L., Ivkov-Džigurski, A. & Ćurčić, N. (2009). Interaction of foreign visitors of the Exit Music Festival with domestic visitors and local population. *Geographica Pannonica*, 13(3), 97–104.
- Zenker, S. & Jacobsen, B. (2015). *Inter-regional Place Branding: Best Practices, Challenges and Solutions*. Berlin: Springer.