The Business of Dark Tourism:

The Management of Dark Tourism Visitor Sites and Attractions with Special Reference to Innovation

Submitted by:

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I certify that all material in the thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has been previously submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

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Abstract

This study explores the management of visitor sites and attractions associated with death, disaster and suffering, commonly referred to in the literature as 'dark tourism'. Although gaining increasing academic attention, the supply-side perspective of dark tourism is poorly understood with scarce empirical evidence relating to management operations and practices. This may be due to management operations and practices that are perceived to conflict with the sensitive themes of visitor sites associated with dark tourism. Particular consideration is given to the management concept of innovation identified as a significant gap for scholarly exploration.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews were carried out with senior management at 23 sites and attractions across the United Kingdom associated with dark tourism. The findings reveal that, contrary to suggestions that dark tourism sites may be restrictive in management practices, a wide array of innovative activities and marketing practices are widely conducted and innovation was viewed as a stimuli for repeat visitation. Furthermore, management operations are viewed as facilitating important stories of trauma for present and future generations. Omission of these stories would belittle the tragic circumstances in which people associated with the sites had died or suffered.

Moreover, managers at dark tourism sites acknowledged the ethical and moral tensions surrounding management practices at dark tourism sites. Indeed, the majority of managers adopted both highly ethical processes resulting in ethical innovations and complex consultation processes in order to mitigate any potential concerns from stakeholders. The ethical stance underpinning operations positions the phenomenon of dark tourism as a subset within the tourism sector, distinct from its counterparts. Recommendations include calls to widen the study to explore visitor perceptions of innovative measures undertaken by managers, and to focus on specific commercial aspects, such as retailing, within the business of dark tourism.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis
CGI	Computer Generated Imagery
CGC	Consumer Generated Content
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CT (SCANNING)	Computer Tomography Scanning
DDT	'Dystopian Dark Tourism'
EPOS	Electronic Point of Sale
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
GEW	Geneva Emotion Wheel
HTA	Human Tissue Act 2004
iDTR	Institute of Dark Tourism Research
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PR	Public Relations
RQ	Research Question
R&D	Research and Design
SDL	Service Dominant Logic
SME	Small and Medium Sized Enterprise
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
STEM	Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics
UGC	User Generated Content
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation

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When I embarked upon this research, I could not have envisaged how each respondents' words and experiences would have such a transformational effect upon me as a researcher, as a person who has personally experienced those who are dying, and subsequently suffered their loss. Through connectedness with respondents' experiences, I was not only able to offer illuminating interpretations of their experiences as a researcher, but also feel a kinship in being able to listen to such tragic, yet poignant, stories. It is with honour that I thank all the respondents for allowing me such privileged access to share and embrace these stories, spoken with such compassion and understanding. I feel a great sense of gratitude to 'my' respondents who are at the heart of my PhD experience, some of whom I have come to know personally outside of this process. Most of all, I honour all the people in these stories, many of whom are unknown, but feel known to me. Therefore, it is only fitting that my PhD should provide a tribute to all those who have suffered and died:

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing

John Keats

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

'Remember, man, you are dust, and to dust you will return.'

(Genesis 3:19)

1.1. Research Context: The Business of Dark Tourism

Where there is life there is death. This is an uncomfortable truth which universally, will affect us all. Humankind throughout history has been preoccupied with death, manifest in rituals, rites and customs and interpreted in an eclectic array of artistic symbolism such as the depiction of the 'Dance of Death' (Wolgemut 1493). These diverse forms of symbolism, representation, and material evidence offer contemplations on death by communicating ideas to individuals that shape the use of time and space. These contemplations may well be accompanied by practices including travelling to places and sites associated with death in the form of sacred pilgrimages made to view shrines to the dead (Seaton 1996), or travel to see sites of individual or mass death (Sharpley and Stone 2009). This 'travel dimension of thanatopsis' has been explored in the literature of 'dark tourism', a nascent area of increasing academic scrutiny (Seaton 1996:527). This term, initiated by Lennon and Foley in 1996, has entered academic discourse concerning tourist spaces broadly connected to death, disaster, and suffering (Stone and Sharpley 2008).

The concept of dark tourism continues to attract academic attention, draws significant interest from the media (Paris, 2013), and is fast becoming a pervasive feature of popular culture. Undeniably, this fascination with the phenomenon is most evident when visitor numbers are examined at sites and attractions associated with dark tourism (Coldwell 2013). Visitor numbers continue to increase, particularly at sites that symbolically represent dark tourism, such as The National September 11th Museum in New York (Edwards 2014). However, alongside this growing interest, concerns are expressed in the literature over the ethical and moral considerations associated with dark tourism, which is accused by some scholars of commodifying the dead and inciting voyeurism (Dann 1994; MacCannell 1999; Cole 2000; Lennon and Foley 2000; Pagliari 2004). Specifically, moral objections to retailing at dark tourism sites and attractions

have been raised by some scholars (Simpson 2006; Blair 2002). Some of the criticisms have led to accusations of the 'kitschification of memories,' such as Potts (2012) in her case study of commercialism at Ground Zero. However, these concerns and challenges are not only faced by iconic dark tourism sites and attractions. Indeed, even smaller, lesser-known sites and attractions are confronted with a range of ethical and moral dilemmas specifically when attempting to market, interpret, and innovate around historical trauma. In order to understand and address these concerns, it is vital therefore to identify the opportunities and challenges related to the management of sites and attractions associated with dark tourism.

Academic scrutiny of dark tourism has resulted in a growing range of studies crossing numerous disciplines, most notably in the humanities and social sciences. However, several gaps in the literature are evident in even the most comprehensive volume of recent works (White and Frew 2013; Johnston and Mandelartz 2015). Specifically, very little research has been conducted on dark tourism from a business and management perspective, although there are a small number of studies that focus on the management of museums (Miles 2002; Wollaston 2005; Ashworth and Hartmann 2005), more recent papers associated with the management of concentration camps (Magee and Gilmore 2015), and the marketing of ghost tours (Garcia 2012). Lines of enquiry within dark tourism research mainly feature upon explorations of tourist consumption behaviour and sense-making activities such as studies undertaken at battlefields by Dunkley et al (2011). Likewise, detailed descriptions of the characteristics of sites associated with dark tourism constitute another area of academic examination such as accounts of penal institutions as visitor sites (Strange and Kempa 2003). Vital management issues including innovation, repeat visitation, visitor interpretation, and marketing have been overlooked in the dark tourism literature. One reason for the lack of supply-side research in dark tourism may be that the concepts of management are perceived to conflict with the sensitive themes of these sites and attractions. However in reality, economic goals exist for the majority of these sites, and management activities are of paramount importance to undertake in achieving social and organisational objectives.

In particular, there is little consideration paid to innovation as a theoretical concept or a management practice within the context of dark tourism. Innovation

is key to many tourism-related activities such as those associated with dark tourism, a subset of visitor sites and attractions within the tourism sector. Specifically, innovation is a principal driver of growth to refresh and revisit products and services because of the perceived value and competitive advantage it can capture for organisations (Patrakosol and Olson 2006). This is acutely emphasised in the current economic climate in which the tourism sector faces many challenges (Pikkemaat and Peters 2006). The tourism sector is dynamic and fluid; continuously subject to changes in technology, consumer tastes and preferences, as well as economic-political conditions (Hall and Williams (2008). The application of empirical research associated with innovation is relatively recent in tourism scholarship (Hjalager 2010). Although a number of works exist which examine the relationship between innovation and tourism, less attention has been focused on the specific mechanisms behind innovation such as drivers, barriers, and processes. Particular emphasis has been placed upon innovation in this research as fewer studies have been conducted relating to tourism innovation when compared to other management practices within tourism, such as marketing and visitor interpretation. In particular, the relationship between innovation and repeat visitation has not been previously explored empirically, therefore research questions have been formulated to examine this relationship. Consequently, all these identified gaps provide a unique opportunity to develop and extend this nascent innovation work in the context of dark tourism, which is to date under-researched.

Other management practices selected for examination in this research include the marketing and interpretation of sensitive materials within dark tourism sites and attractions. These concepts and practices, alongside innovation, have all been identified as representing significant gaps within the literature. As businesses move towards more sustainable practices (Elkington 2006), efforts are made to detect and improve value for both tourism organisations and visitors. Recurrent business in the form of repeat visitors can provide resilience to organisations; manifest in the need to innovate to continue to attract visitors back. However, surprisingly little or no effort has been made to address repeat visitation at tourist sites associated with dark tourism, with the exception of a study at a Belgium battlefield by Winter (2011), where repeat visitors formed a substantial market. Consequently, as with other management practices and activities, the

dark tourism literature misses the nature of repeat visitation at dark tourism sites and attractions, and the role that innovation may play in stimulating repeat visitation. Indeed, the answers to these questions not only fill a significant gap within the literature, but provide a critical insight for managers in terms of understanding visitor behaviour and marketing management.

Marketing is a dynamic concept and performs a vital role within tourism organisations, as indeed within the wider business community. The impact of new technology, the threat of terrorism, greater consumer power, plus fluctuations in demand, have resulted in greater challenges for tourism marketers (Holloway 2004). As a key management operation, the principles of marketing in tourism are widely covered in the general tourism literature. However, the marketing of sensitive material is a complex and often contentious issue in a dark tourism context (Causevic and Lynch 2007). As a consequence, empirically-based knowledge is limited when related to these practices. Activities associated with marketing may be construed as risky undertakings by dark tourism visitor sites attractions due to concerns over sensitivities which may affect visitors, organisational reputation, and ultimately their brand. Therefore, this gap identified within the literature provides a unique opportunity to explore the nature and extent of marketing practices within dark tourism sites and attractions to offer an insight into the opportunities and challenges faced by managers.

Arguably, a key component of any touristic experience is visitor interpretation, commonly manifest as the representation of themes and materials. This concept is viewed as a vital experiential factor (White and Frew 2013) responsible for the navigation between place, items, history, and the related meaning(s) embodied within the tourist (Stone and Sharpley 2009). As interest rises in visitor encounters associated with dark tourism, whether battlefields, former penal institutions or sites associated with the Holocaust, there is commercial pressure to develop packaged experiences for visitors (Wilard et al 2013). However, in order to provide experiential elements, this raises many challenges for management on whether it is appropriate to interpret historical trauma, and if so, how to interpret these events in a sensitive manner whilst effectively representing all parties involved. The interpretive theme is featured within the dark tourism literature with considerable input from heritage studies. However, the literature mainly draws on conceptual undertakings rather than empirical evidence of the

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issues and challenges that managers may encounter when attempting to (re)present and interpret sensitive materials; specifically, the tools and techniques employed by management to (re)present historical trauma. Consequently, this highlights a significant gap relating to empirically-based knowledge in a vital experiential factor within the context of dark tourism, which this research aims to address.

Consequently, given the scant attention to these management concepts identified as significant gaps in the literature, this thesis explores these specific management concepts of innovation, marketing, repeat visitation and visitor interpretation at a sample of sites and attractions associated with dark tourism. As well as the academic value in addressing the gaps within the literature, the findings in this research have an associated applied impact for practitioners in understanding management perceptions and practices within this context, both in dark tourism and the wider tourism business community. For example, the findings can assist with identifying common ethical issues highlighted by managers, draw attention to tools and techniques employed for marketing and interpretation aims, and aid understanding of the role and practice of innovation within the sites sampled. The academic contribution plus applied impact forms the rationale of the research, which is expressed in the following aim and objectives.

1.2. Aim and Objectives of the Research

The aim of this research is:

'To investigate the management of visitor sites and attractions associated with dark tourism with special reference to innovation'.

By placing this research at the interface between management and dark tourism, two distinct bodies of knowledge are brought together for the first-time. The knowledge generated from this research provides a distinct contribution to the literature in two areas; dark tourism, plus the management literature. First, to develop further supply-side knowledge within the dark tourism literature in relation to innovation, marketing, repeat visitation, and visitor interpretation by investigating perceptions and practices of management. Scant attention has been paid to management within dark tourism due to the perceived conflicts and sensitivities around commercialisation at dark tourism sites and attractions.

However, dark tourism sites and attractions as a subset of the tourism sector share common tourism-related practices and operations, and are subject to the same pressures including adaptation to change; specifically in the midst of new technologies, more experienced consumers, global economic restructuring, and environmental limits to growth (Hall and Williams 2008).

Second, this research aims to contribute knowledge within the management literature, for example the tourism innovation literature, by exploring perceptions and practices of innovation within the context of dark tourism. The tourism innovation literature is still in its infancy when compared to the wider innovation literature. This provides an opportunity to add value to the literature on the practices and perceptions of innovation and other management concepts such as the relationship between innovation and repeat visitation, where innovation may act as a stimulus for repeat visitation. Knowledge will also be garnered from this research on wider practices such as marketing management and practices relating to interpretation of sensitive materials at the sites and attractions sampled. This information will provide critical insights and challenges of specific management practices within a particular tourism-related context to contribute to the tourism management literature.

In order to address the aim of the research, three specific, but linked, objectives are investigated (Figure 1.1). The first objective is to analyse how the concept of innovation is understood by managers at visitor sites and attractions associated with dark tourism. This objective includes how managers understand and perceive the role of innovation at the site (RQ1), and how they define the concept of innovation (RQ2), as well as the significance of innovation to the sites/attractions sampled (RQ3). The final research question under this objective relates to the relationship between innovation and repeat visitation, for example whether innovation may stimulate repeat visits (RQ4). This objective is addressed empirically in Chapter Five, informed by the empirical findings derived from data generated by the managers interviewed.

The second objective is to examine how innovation is practiced by managers at visitor sites and attractions associated with dark tourism. This objective includes identifying examples of innovation practiced at sites (RQ5) as reported by respondents. In addition, the enablers (RQ6) and barriers (RQ7) to innovating at dark tourism sites and attractions are investigated as well as the future role of

innovation (RQ8). Those practices of innovation that are targeted towards repeat visitors are also explored under this objective (RQ9). Principally, this objective is addressed empirically within Chapter Five. However, Chapter Seven on the (re)presentation of dark tourism discusses examples of 'ethical innovations' as a discreet subset of innovation practices at the dark tourism sites and attractions sampled.

The final objective is to identify key management issues with a particular focus on marketing and interpretation of sensitive materials associated with the sites/attractions sampled. This objective includes how visitors interpret the sites/attractions sampled, which includes the tools and techniques employed at the sites and attractions sampled (RQ10), and how the interpretation of sites and attractions presents opportunities and challenges for management (RQ11). With respect to marketing, there follows an exploration of how managers engage with marketing of their sites and attractions (RQ12), and how the marketing of sites presents opportunities and challenges for management (RQ13). This objective is addressed in Chapter Six, which is dedicated to marketing, and Chapter Seven, which is devoted to the interpretation and (re)presentation of sensitive materials at the dark tourism sites and attractions sampled in the research.

Figure 1.1. Aim, Objectives and Research Questions of the Study

AIM

To investigate the management of visitor sites and attractions associated with dark tourism with special reference to innovation.

Research Objectives

1. To analyse how the concept of innovation is understood by managers at visitor sites associated with dark tourism.

2. To examine how innovation is practised by managers at visitor sites associated with dark tourism.

3. To identify key management issues associated with the marketing and representation of sensitive material.

Research Questions

1. How do managers understand and perceive the role of innovation?

2. How do managers define the concept of innovation?

3. How important is innovation to site management?

4. How do managers relate the concept of innovation to repeat visitation?

5. What are the examples of innovation practised at sites?

6. What are the perceived enablers of innovations?

7. What are the perceived barriers to innovating at sites?

8. What is the future role of innovation at sites?

9. How do managers relate the practice of innovation to repeat visitation?

10. How do visitors interpret sites?

11. How does the interpretation of sensitive materials present opportunities and challenges?

12. How do managers engage with marketing of their sites?

13. How does the marketing of sites present opportunities and challenges?

Source: Author

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1.3. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters, consisting of an introduction and conclusion chapter, plus the empirical findings of the research, and a chapter on research methodology. The findings as reported by managers at dark tourism sites and attractions are revealed within three empirical chapters; innovation (Chapter Five), marketing (Chapter Six), and interpretation of dark tourism (Chapter Seven). The purpose of this introductory chapter has been to provide contextual background to the research, being the emerging academic subject of dark tourism. This chapter has included an introduction to the phenomenon of dark tourism as well as the rationale and context behind the research in order to derive the aim, objectives and research questions (cf. Figure 1.1).

The next two chapters provide a synopsis and discussion of research activity of the literature relating to the distinct bodies of knowledge combined within this research: dark tourism alongside the management concepts of innovation, marketing, and interpretation. In these chapters (Chapter Two and Chapter Three) it is argued that in general, management issues relating to dark tourism are poorly understood and have been overlooked within the literature. This is due to the fact that literature specifically relating to tourism innovation and dark tourism are still, in the main, within the development stage of academic enquiry. Moreover, little attempt has been made to address management issues within the dark tourism literature due to the perceived conflict between management concepts and sensitivities associated with dark tourism. Therefore, these chapters identify the significant gaps identified within the literature surrounding these academic subjects, which this research aims to address in order to provide knowledge on management practices and perceptions at dark tourism sites.

Chapter Four discusses the methodological issues employed in the research and begins with the identification and justification of the research philosophy of pragmatism, the research philosophy which guides the research. This chapter sets out the research methodology and design: semi-structured qualitative interviews administered by telephone to address the research aim and objectives. Telephone interviews were selected due to the wide geographical spread of the sites and attractions included in the sample. In general, qualitative research methods are less frequently employed than quantitative research methods in the

innovation literature. This provides an opportunity to add depth to knowledge garnered on the definition and concept of innovation. Consequently, the preparation, design, and execution of the data collection method, the sampling strategy employed, the data capture, and analysis methods are all discussed in detail within this chapter. In order to address the aim and objectives of this research a qualitative approach employing semi-structured interviews was used, conducted by telephone with 23 managers at dark tourism sites and attractions within the UK and Northern Ireland. As the majority of methodological approaches in dark tourism feature ideographic case studies, this provides an opportunity to conduct research on a much wider sample. A reflexive review which details the methodological dilemmas involved within this research entitled 'Emotional Methodologies' concludes this chapter.

The empirical findings of the research are presented, as well as relevant and appropriate theory to offer contextualisation. The findings are discussed thematically as three distinct empirical chapters; innovation (Chapter Five) marketing (Chapter Six) and interpretation of dark tourism (Chapter Seven). The headings in each chapter are formulated by summarising the key themes that emerged from the data, rather than driven by the literature. However, these themes are compared and contrasted with the literature to position the empirical findings within an academic context.

The final chapter concludes the research with a summary of the main empirical findings of the study, which concludes that innovation and marketing activities are widely practiced at dark tourism sites and attractions amidst the acknowledgement of sensitivities. Innovative activities are performed with a particular leaning towards innovations to augment the interpretation of sensitive materials. Marketing and promotional activities are widely conducted at dark tourism sites and attractions, viewed by respondents as a key opportunity to tell important stories of historical and human significance. These findings contrast with assumptions that innovative and marketing activities may be somewhat restrained within dark tourism sites and attractions where sensitivities are paramount. However, these anxieties and tensions are recognised by managers and addressed, resulting in a high level of ethical decision-making to navigate management practices against ethical and moral concerns. It is argued therefore,

that these ethical processes position dark tourism as a unique sector within the tourism sector, as a subset of visitor sites and attractions.

The limitations of the research are primarily identified as relating to methodological issues such as the operationalisation of the concept of dark tourism. In addition, limitations of telephone interviews as the sole method of data collection are recognised. Therefore, recommendations for further research include triangulation of research methods including use of observations to provide an additional layer of interpretation. New directions for future scholars in dark tourism research are suggested which include examination of specific management factors, such as retailing, as well as exploring management practices from a visitor perspective. A conceptual model of innovation process demonstrating inputs and associated outputs is provided within this chapter as a future research project adopting a mixed methods approach to develop the findings to be empirically tested within a wider tourism-based context.

CHAPTER TWO – CASTING LIGHT ON DARK TOURISM

**'The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge,
for the ears of the wise seek it out'**

(Proverbs 18:15)

2.1. Introduction

The concept of dark tourism has attracted substantial academic and media fascination in recent years as the phenomenon continues to draw an extensive number of visitors to a plethora of sites around the globe. For example, visitor numbers to Auschwitz grew 40% in 2015 (Childs 2016). When compared to tourism studies in general, academic interest in dark tourism is relatively nascent, attracting specific scholarly attention recently over the last two decades. However, the attention amongst scholars is now developing, and has resulted in an academic research centre opened in 2012 solely devoted to dark tourism-related research, the Institute of Dark Tourism Research (iDTR). Consequently, the purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the literature and current thinking associated with the subject of dark tourism. The assessment of the current knowledge base in this academic subject highlights significant gaps, which this research aims to address.

This chapter commences with a discussion on the framing of the concept of dark tourism including definitions and taxonomies where scholars have sought to make sense of the phenomenon. Next, the discussion centres around the current research activity connected to the field. The dark tourism literature is examined within a framework of three principal approaches to be found in the present research: the demand perspective, the supply perspective, and the integrated demand-supply perspective. It is contended that overall, the extant dark tourism literature lacks conceptual underpinnings grounded in rigorous empirical analysis; specifically with regard to business and management practices, the focus of this research. With the exception of Magee and Gilmore (2015) and Garcia (2012), few empirical studies have been conducted on management practices within dark tourism sites and attractions; specifically, the issues and challenges that managers may face when attempting to innovate, market, and

offer interpretation of their sites. The lack of studies on dark tourism from a business and management perspective relate to anxieties over commodification and the ethics of (re)presenting sensitive material. This has resulted in scholarly attention towards interpretive issues informed largely by input from heritage studies (Ashworth 1996; 2004, Ashworth and Hartmann 2005, Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). It is suggested that further empirical works are essential, specifically of an inter-disciplinary nature, to offer additional insights and deepen current understanding of the phenomenon. In order to examine the phenomenon however, it is important to first discuss the definition and conceptualisation of the term 'dark tourism' within an academic framework.

2.1.1. Definitions: Casting Light on Dark Tourism

Although the label 'dark tourism' was initiated by Lennon and Foley in 1996, many alternative terms have also appeared in the literature associated with death-related touristic activities. These include 'thanatourism' (Seaton 1996), viewed as a more academic term to dark tourism; 'black spots tourism', later refined as 'sensation sites' (Rojek 1993; 1997); and Holocaust tourism (Ashworth 1996: Beech 2000) – a term that refers to the number of memorial sites across Central and Eastern Europe. Other cognate terms connected, although referring to different types of contexts, include 'morbid tourism' (Blom 2000), 'phoenix tourism' (Causevic and Lynch 2011), relating to the potential role for tourism development in post-conflict areas, and 'fright tourism' (Bristow and Newman 2004), where individuals seek a fright or scare from their touristic experience. Specific consideration has been given to heritage sites with controversial histories, heavily influenced by the seminal work of Tunbridge and Ashworth's (1996) concept of 'dissonant heritage.' This contribution is a key feature within the heritage literature and a meaningful concept when attempting to frame dark tourism research. Therefore, key differences between the terminology lie primarily between contexts and application.

Although dark tourism and thanatourism (used inter-changeably) are the most prominent of the various terms in the literature (Friedrich and Johnston 2013), the meaning and application of the terminology is often blurred and contested (Johnston 2016). Crucially, there is no universally accepted typology of dark tourism, or even a standard accepted definition (Sondell Miller and Gonzalez

2013). However, a number of scholars have attempted to define and describe the concept of dark tourism, although many have failed to address the multi-layered complexity of the concept. Foley and Lennon (1996) typify dark tourism as 'the phenomenon which encompasses the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites' (1996:198). A definition which emphasises the affective experience of dark tourism encounters is suggested by Tarlow (2005:48) as 'visitations to places where tragedies or historically noteworthy death has occurred, and that continue to impact our lives'. However, Stone (2006:146) takes a broader approach, explaining that dark tourism encompasses 'sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre.' The inclusion of such an evocative term of the 'macabre' frames this view of dark tourism towards ghoulish and specter-like connotations. Conversely, a narrower definition akin to Tarlow (2005) may define sites of major historical importance to the exclusion of other lesser known places and events. In addition, no particular distinction has been made between human-made tragedies and natural disasters (Dalton 2015) or within particular sub-groups of sites; for example, typologies of sites of crimes.

Nevertheless, a factor common to all these attempts to define the concept of dark tourism is a collective association between tourism and death, disaster, and suffering in one form or another. For the purposes of clarity, this research adopts the broader application of the term dark tourism provided by (Sharpley and Stone 2009:10), where dark tourism is typified as 'an association in one form or another between a tourism site, attraction or experience, and death, disaster or suffering'. This definition has been selected to encapsulate a range of sites and attractions associated with dark tourism in order to capture a range of management experiences and practices.

Some scholars have focused on the negative trope of the term, with references made to value judgements where dark tourism is seen as a polar opposite to a form of 'light' tourism (Bowman and Pezullo 2010). Indeed, Seaton (2009:525) claims that dark tourism has 'transgressive, morally suspect, and pathological' connotations, and the label 'dark' in itself is subjective and loaded. Bowman and Pezullo (2010) go so far as to suggest that the term 'dark tourism' be abandoned altogether, although no alternative suggestion is offered. With the exception of both Stone (2006) and Nawjin and Fricke (2013), who raise concern over the use

of the term in a practitioner setting, no empirical evidence currently exists regarding the impact of the term and its connotations at sites associated with the phenomenon. However, these concerns do have an impact on practitioners, as the empirical findings demonstrate in Chapter Six, and on researchers aiming to operationalise the concept. Specifically, the lack of a unified definition and theoretical grounding underpinning dark tourism presents the researcher with many ontological as well as methodological challenges when attempting to research within the context of dark tourism, which will be discussed in depth in Chapter Four.

Connected to contestations over the definition of dark tourism, debate also proliferates over the temporal classification of dark tourism, for example whether it should be recognised as a historical phenomenon, predating living memory, as postulated in early work by Seaton (1996:1999), or seen as a purely modern phenomenon as argued by Lennon and Foley (2000). Seaton (1996) maintains that dark tourism derives from what he deems the 'thanatopic tradition' (i.e. the private contemplation of death) citing the medieval Dance of Death tradition as a representation to keep death at the forefront of individual consciousness. Stone (2012:1565) adds that the 'touristic packaging of death has long been a theme of the morbid gaze,' citing visits to morgues in 19th century Paris and the gladiatorial games in Ancient Rome as prime examples. A number of scholars (Dann 1998; Collins-Kreiner 2015; Winter 2011; Isaac et al 2011) also highlight the clear linkages between the well-established traditions of pilgrimage, whether traditionally sacred or modern secular, and dark tourism practices associated with sites of powerful historical events. However, arguably, it is clear that in one way or another people have long been attracted to places or events associated with death (Sharpley and Stone 2009). Furthermore, whether a long-standing traditional practice or post-modern endeavour, it is evident that the phenomenon continues to attract an increasing number of visitors per year to different sites around the world.

2.1.2. A Taxonomy of Dark Tourism
In the midst of debates over definitions of dark tourism, the term dark tourism has been generally accepted as a category to classify a wide variety of touristic endeavors associated with death, disaster, and suffering in one form or another. These include Holocaust sites (Lennon and Foley 2000), prisons (Wilson 2008),

battlefields (Hyde and Harman 2011), graveyards and cemeteries (Seaton 2002; Winter 2009; 2011), the famous dead (Foley and Lennon 1996), genocide (Bolin 2012; Friedrich and Johnston 2013), slavery sites (Austin 2002; Buzinde and Santos 2009), sites of natural disasters such as hurricane Katrina (Robbie 2008), fictional interests such as Dracula (Reijinders 2011; Alexandra et al 2014), paranormal activities or 'ghost tourism' (Holloway 2010), and serial murder (Gibson 2006). More recent themes for scholarly exploration include gang tours (Zerva 2015), 'gothic tourism' (Spracklen and Spracklen 2012), adventure tourism (Marson 2016), urban areas (Mandelartz 2016), dark leisure (Stone and Sharpley 2013). Such a rendition of the phenomenon reflects its wide applicability (Stone 2006), allowing many sites and attractions to be incorporated, but also signifies the need for further refinements and classifications to aid a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. One way to deepen understanding of dark tourism is assess the current research activity associated with the phenomenon.

2.2. Dark Tourism Research Activity

The following section provides an overview of the major strands of research activity in dark tourism. A review of the dark tourism literature reveals that scholarly investigation is dominated by both demand-side and supply-side perspectives with an integrated demand-supply approach featuring far fewer studies. A number of conceptual works also feature within the dark tourism literature with recent avenues of explorations linking the concept to other appendages of tourism, namely 'dark hospitality' (Hay 2015), and 'dark leisure' (Sharpley and Stone 2013; Elkington and Gammon 2013).

Methodologically, dark tourism research has predominantly been pursued through qualitative approaches, with a predominance of ideographic case studies. However, more recently, differing research methods have appeared, including the analysis of online blogs (Johnston 2016) and multi-website analyses (Powell and Iankova 2015). Although this denotes that some methodological advances have been made by researchers, significant methodological gaps are revealed from a review of current dark tourism research. In particular, very few empirical studies have been conducted on a wider scale with a larger sample size of sites and attractions (Brown 2013). Therefore, this provides an opportunity for a more widespread investigation of the management of dark tourism sites and attractions, a key foundation of the research. The following three sections provide

a synopsis of the research activity associated with dark tourism, and are identified as three major avenues of enquiry. Consideration is first given to the consumption of dark tourism experiences by visitors.

2.2.1. Consuming Dark Tourism – Demand-Side Research Activity

Demand-side research activity examines the consumption of dark tourism amongst a diverse range of sites, with the majority of works relating to visitor behaviours and motivations, in an attempt to make sense of dark tourism encounters. Early work concentrated on site-specific motivations, with later work addressing the wider dark tourism experience by exploring visitor affective responses, specifically, emotional responses to dark tourism spaces, which are still in the developmental stage of academic research. This section features details of studies relating to motivations and visitor experiences of dark tourism, where a number of drivers are suggested for dark tourism encounters. Research activity is also documented on the affective experience of dark tourism, in particular the developing work on the role of emotion when consuming dark tourism. As a developing body of work, it is useful to branch into wider fields of enquiry to assess the potential contribution of academic disciplines into dark tourism consumption. Therefore, this section includes a model of current disciplines feeding into dark tourism consumption research as well as suggested future multi-disciplinary research approaches to dark tourism.

In the wider tourism literature, a substantial amount of research on motivations has been conducted (Crompton 1979; Pearce and Lee 2005). Conversely, although a great number of studies have been conducted on motives for dark tourism consumption - some of which are included within this section - this work is still within a developmental stage. Methodologically, the majority of studies adopt a qualitative approach as ideographic case studies together with conceptual papers in an effort to theorise around the subject. Early work theorised that visits to dark tourism sites and attractions involved either some interest in death (a distinction apart from euthanasia tourism – Dale and Robinson 2011) in the form of symbolic representations (within museums for example), a celebration of crime or deviance and 'dicing with death' Dann (1998), or as witness to death (such as public executions, legal in Britain until 1868) (Seaton 1996). Accordingly, recognising a range of motivations, Seaton (1996:240) suggests these may exist along a 'continuum of intensity,' which includes various

purposes of travel (albeit with an interest in death in some form) from the 'lightest' to the 'darkest'. This approach, however, overlooks the possibility that the reasons for visiting dark tourism sites and attractions might be completely devoid of interest in death (Biran et al 2011), and as such, not all visitors to such sites are 'dark tourists'. This claim is also supported by Sather-Wagstaff (2011), in her ethnographic study of sites associated with 9/11, who is critical of the suggestion that visiting 'dark' places is based upon a morbid curiosity about death and tragedy. Rather, she argues, these claims are based on a poor understanding of visitors.

Indeed, several studies highlight motives akin to heritage, pilgrimage, special interest tourists (Hyde and Harman 2011), and cultural tourists (Kang et al 2012). Ashworth (2002) compiles a list of suggested motives including curiosity, identity, horror, and empathy, focusing on 'difficult heritage sites' (Ashworth 2004), a nod to the link between dark tourism and heritage, revealed with the addition of 'quest for roots' as an element of identity seeking behaviour. Similarly, a link between pilgrimage and tourism is highlighted. Pilgrimage is commonly cited as a suggested motive with a number of scholars exploring the seemingly close relationship between the two (Cohen 1992; Collins-Kreiner 2010). Motives which suggest special interest tourism are revealed with the inclusion of curiosity or fascination with the bizarre, as proposed by several scholars (Ashworth 2002, 2004; Tarlow 2005; Preece and Price 2005; Dunkley 2007; Isaac and Cakmak 2014).

Overall, a taxonomic approach for dark tourism motivations includes frequently cited motives including education and remembrance (Preece and Price 2005; Wight and Lennon 2007; Bigley et al 2010; Dunkley et al 2011; Hyde and Harman 2011; Kang et al 2012). In addition, entertainment (Lennon and Foley 2007) also features regularly in the literature, particularly when related to sites of less human and historical significance such as dungeon-themed attractions. Sites of human significance associated with the Holocaust and genocide as 'must-see' sites and attractions are also highlighted as key motives for travel to dark tourism sites and attractions (Biran et al 2011; Isaac and Cakmak 2013). These frequently cited motivations may suggest partly manufactured factors more closely associated with site characteristics, (Golanska 2015) or 'pull' factors (Stone and Sharpley 2008). In addition, psychological motives including the less appealing aspects of

the human condition, such as voyeurism and schadenfreude, are suggested by several scholars (Cole 1999; Seaton and Lennon 2004; Sharpley 2009; Sharpley and Stone 2009).

In all of these aforementioned typologies and suggested motivations for dark tourism consumption, it is important to note that individual categories are not mutually exclusive, given that any planned travel to sites may represent a compromise between many motivations (Horner and Swarbrooke 2016). Indeed, motivations may not be site-specific at all, but merely accidental, opportunistic, or even at the given time, fashionable endeavours. Motives may also depend on whether a tourist has any personal connection with the site or feels a sense of identity in terms of nationality or ethnicity for example (Poira et al 2003). Consequently, any number of reasons may be used to explain the motivations and factors leading to a visit to a site associated with dark tourism both individually and collectively. Golanska (2015) contends that there is a tendency for the need to categorise in tourism studies, and certainly formulating typologies can lead to obscuring subtle differences - ultimately undermining the complexity and multi-faceted nature of the phenomenon. More importantly, the array of motivations behind site visits are not all entirely based on empirical evidence, as noted by Seaton and Lennon (2004) and Wight (2006). This has prompted calls for further examination of motivations and wider consumption behaviour, which has been expressed by Stone and Sharpley (2008).

More recent works, however, suggest that motivation to visit such sites is not driven by the need to experience or witness death *per se*, but to contemplate one's *life* and one's mortality either through gazing upon the significant other - the dead (Stone 2011b, 2012; Johnston 2016), or as a process of self-understanding (Isaac and Cakmak 2013). Other related scholarly works suggest the desire to acknowledge and understand one's own mortality (Uzzell 1998) or for therapeutic reasons (West 2004). Podoshen's study in 2013 examined the psychological roots of 'blackpackers' – black metal music fans - noting the emotional affect and simulations underpinning consumption, albeit a special interest group. These variables were developed into a model leaning on cultural and psychological theories in a recent paper in 2015 on 'dystopian dark tourism' (DDT). These more psychological approaches, not solely recent offerings, present a different perspective with some scholars suggesting that visits to some

sites are motivated by the search for a moral framework that could impact their lives (Stone 2009). This approach is also supported by Naef (2013) who suggests that visitors can fulfil moral and civic duties by seeking to be educated and moved by dark tourism encounters which he deems a form of 'ethical tourism' by performing moral responsibilities.

Buda (2015) argues that aside from dark tourism motivations, emotions play a more important role within the dark tourism experience. Conventional wisdom and most research conducted on general leisure travel posits that increasingly positive emotions are elicited from the tourism experience. Given that dark tourism is associated with death, disaster, and suffering, one might conclude a priori that the emotions experienced by visitors would generate negative responses. However, research has shown that visitors also experience positive as well as negative emotional responses (Nawjin and Fricke 2013). By exploring emotions in a dark tourism context an insightful paradox emerges whereby such visits *do not* elicit purely negative responses (Nawjin and Fricke 2013). Indeed, visitors can experience emotions such as joy, relief, and pleasure such as those reported at the concentration camp memorial in Neuengamme by Nawjin and Fricke (2013).

The importance of studying emotions at dark tourism sites and attractions is supported by several scholars (Buda 2015; Best 2007; Biran et al 2011; Isaac and Cakmak 2013). Undoubtedly, visits to sites associated with death, suffering, and tragedy are 'emotionally laden' experiences (Nawijin and Fricke 2013:221). However, to date, little is known of how consuming dark tourism configures a tourist's emotions (Johnston and Mandelartz (2014). Notable exceptions include, Tucker (2016) who examined the role of empathy by highlighting the importance of examining empathy's limitations and risks, and Osbaldiston and Petray (2011) who explored motivations and emotions using a sociological framework. They suggest that dark tourism is not only a vehicle for paying respects, but can also be a means for overcoming negative feelings.

However, more importantly, the extensive focus on motivations and the experience(s) of dark tourism encounters has resulted in specific market segments being overlooked, namely, the repeat visitor. Notwithstanding studies by Kastenholtz (2013), and Liyanage (2015), little attempt has been made to

identify the nature and extent of repeat visitors at dark tourism sites and attractions. This is surprising given that it is generally agreed that repeat visitors are an important sector to retain within any business (Sundbo et al 2007) and particularly important for the tourism sector, which operates in a highly competitive and global arena. Similarly, a review of the wider general tourism studies literature reveals little or no attempt to explore repeat visitation within the realms of dark tourism as discussed in section 2.6.

Little is also understood about the experiences of visitors whilst engaged within and beyond dark tourism experiences. One exception to this is the research conducted by Sather-Wagstaff (2011) at sites associated with 9/11. In her compelling ethnographic study, she observed visitors' experiences and reports that visiting memorial places such as the World Trade Center are not trivial activities undertaken by a passive and unthinking audience. Rather, that there are abundant opportunities for significant emotional engagement at the site together with active participation. In particular she notes the acts of memory making, such as graffiti ('folk epigraphy') and photography as a way of personally expressing sentiments about 9/11, alongside feeling, listening, and sensing the environment. Photography is viewed as a critical practice through which visitors can both document their presence at the site alongside engaging with the events that took place there. Furthermore, she explores the practice of 'folk assemblages', where visitors intentionally leave objects, many of which are locally purchased souvenirs together with objects such as flowers or personal messages, represented as memorial performances. Consequently, although many perceive the World Trade Center as an 'empty' landscape (Sather-Wagstaff 2011:140), dark tourism experiences can be highly engaging and participatory despite the lack of any official interpretive measures (Dalton 2015), as the results in this study demonstrate.

The importance of these various studies and approaches highlight the potential contribution of knowledge from other disciplines, which is now discussed in the following section. Research into dark tourism consumption is a wide field of study. However, given the emphasis on suffering and tragedy at these sites, Dunkley (2011:861) quite rightly asserts that dark tourism research turns more conventional tourism 'on its head,' therefore making it difficult to apply any common motivational or behavioural theories. It is therefore useful to consider

research outside of general tourism studies. Figure 2.1 demonstrates how six academic fields of psychology, sociology, death studies, anthropology, tourism studies and the humanities, constitute current major avenues of research activity relating to dark tourism consumption.

Figure 2.1. Multi-Perspective Model of Dark Tourism Consumption

Source: Author

As Figure 2.1 demonstrates, a number of research areas feed into demand-side explorations associated with dark tourism. Alongside the current research activity, there are also a number of future research directions that can deepen knowledge and understanding of demand-side research connected to dark tourism. For example, research activity within anthropology and sociology may provide clues as to how and why people remember and visit sites of trauma and tragedy. Dunkley et al (2011) note that the sociology of memory includes a focus on exploring how past representations are generated, maintained, and reproduced, and within anthropology where studies examine how a group's memory is linked to certain sites and places (Schwenkel 2006). Both of these fields of study could help to uncover conscious and subconscious linkages underlying motivations to visit sites and attractions associated with dark tourism.

Studies of emotions in psychology could also be helpful in ascertaining the extent and level of emotion generated by dark tourism experiences. One notable tool is the 'Geneva Emotion Wheel' (GEW) designed by Scherer (2005) for use in psychological studies. This tool has not yet been applied outside of its field, however, transference into a dark tourism environment could yield important information on the affective experience by measuring the extent of emotional responses to dark tourism-related stimuli. These studies present opportunities to reflect deeper on psychological intentions behind, and responses to, dark tourism encounters rather than purely site specific 'pull' factors in future research.

Research into death, dying, and bereavement is also an illuminating source for scholarly endeavours within a dark tourism context. From studies exploring the sociology of death with influential contributors such as Tony Walter (1991; 2008), to research into death online and digital death research (Moreman and Lewis 2014), the theology of death (Davies 2008; Novello 2013; Schmemman 2003), the agency of the dead (Harper 2010; Young and Light 2013) and the power of the body (Bronfen 1992; Crossland 2009; Mellor and Shilling 1997). Of specific interest are the concepts of 'enchantment' (Hill 2007) and 'continuing bonds' (Wortman & Silver 1989; McCormick 2015; Bell and Taylor 2011).

Enchantment is seen as 'the search for community, meaning, and something sacred or supernatural' (Hume and McPhillips 2006: xvi). The concept has been explored as a process within a tourist service to help create stages of 'enchantment' within visitors (Cravatte and Chabloz 2008) and by recognition of the magical qualities of exhibits harnessing the power to enchant spaces and disrupt narratives within them (Hill 2007). The notion of enchantment within a dark tourism setting could unleash potential similarities in order to explore the agency and power of objects and spaces. This concept is important from both demand and supply perspectives when attempting to understand motives behind dark tourism consumption and in the supply of interpretive measures before, during, and beyond the dark tourism encounter.

Similarly, considering how practices of continuing/renewing the bond(s) between the living and the dead may unlock answers into practices and expressions of this relationship, which may underpin visitor behaviours and motivations. As Marcel Proust (1871-1922) so eloquently espouses, 'It is not because other people are dead that our affection for them grows faint, it is because we ourselves are dying'.

This concept has been studied from psychological perspectives and organisational perspectives (Bell and Taylor 2011). The concept of continuing bonds therefore, could help to further examine how dark tourism may serve as a mediating experience between the living and the dead (Walter 2009) outside of burial grounds and gravestones.

From a humanities studies perspective, Maddrell and Sidaway (2012) use a spatial lens to consider the relationships between space/place and death from varying disciplines encompassing a range of diverse spaces all encapsulated as 'deathscapes'. This idea is useful in exploring how the living perform various forms of practices in relation to the dead. In addition, post-colonial studies feed into dark tourism research activity with studies centred on sense making of post-colonial places and spaces and the intersection with dark tourism. These studies highlight how dark tourism may operate within various cultural backdrops and could help to identify motivations and behaviours related to identity and heritage.

Therefore, adopting a multi-perspective approach can widen understanding and challenge current notions within the literature. As Figure 2.1 demonstrates, the notable absence of business and management studies feeding into current research forms the rationale of the research. Crucially, research activity in these areas can highlight specific management issues and challenges; for example, regarding the marketing and interpretation of sensitive material and the balance between representing a historical event without exploiting people associated with traumatic events.

In summary, therefore, as this section highlights, there are a large number of manifestations and suggested influences relating to the consumption of dark tourism. Demand-related dark tourism research activity largely relates to visitor motivations and behaviours, and more recently, wider affective experiences. The ways in which dark tourism is consumed are mediated by a range of inter-related influences; complex motivational and behavioural factors all located within broader historical, political, and cultural frameworks (Sharpley and Stone 2009). Therefore, this has resulted in an array of suggested drivers for dark tourism activities including site-specific or 'pull factors' which may provide entertainment, education, and information; or 'push' factors, consisting of individual psychological influences, which may include fascination and curiosity or perhaps empathy towards victims. However, most importantly, interest in death appears

not to be a central aspect that guides experiences, as early work suggested. Rather, motivations include reflecting on one's life and one's mortality (Stone 2011b, 2012; Johnston 2016), or as a process of self-understanding, suggesting that these motivations for travel to sites associated with death, disaster, and suffering are more complex than originally considered.

Such a wide, diverse set of motivations and behaviours revealed in the literature demonstrates the need for further empirical research. As the current research activity demonstrates, dark tourism consumption as a scholarly endeavour crosses multiple research subjects. As the discussion in this section highlights, alternative perspectives from multiple disciplines can offer insightful contributions to add to current empirical evidence in order to provide a firmer theoretical grounding in understanding this complex and dynamic phenomenon. This wider approach may also add insight into critical questions including whether the phenomenon of dark tourism is driven by demand or supply. Although this is unclear currently from the developing body of work, what is apparent is that the demand for experiences and the supply of dark tourism encounters has grown in scale and scope, considerably so in recent years. Consequently, an overview of current research activity from this perspective is now discussed in the following section.

2.2.2. Purveyors of Dark Tourism –Supply-Side Research Activity

Supply-side perspectives relating to dark tourism consist of attempts to define and classify certain attributes of sites associated with dark tourism (Kang et al 2012), and adopts a fairly descriptive understanding (Apostolakis 2003). Arguably, there are a plethora of different sites, attractions and experiences around the world which could be classified as purveyors of dark tourism. This has led to a diverse set of places and experiences considered for exploration that could be considered as associated with dark tourism. Similar to the demand-side perspective, the majority of studies connected to this approach tend to adopt a more qualitative stance using a case study approach (Wight 2006); for example, Mowatt and Chancellor's (2011) study on Cape Coast Castle in Ghana, a site associated with African enslavement. This perspective also includes conceptual papers in an effort to theorise around the subject.

Early studies include the attempts made to classify dark tourism where various scholars have categorised dark tourism into various different shades of 'dark'. Miles (2002) subdivided dark tourism sites and attractions into dark, darker, and darkest. Similarly, Sharpley (2005) classified dark tourism into black, grey, or pale, and Stone (2006) into lightest and darkest. Naturally, this may raise concerns with such labelling serving as a contrast to more 'light' touristic encounters associated perhaps with traditional leisure pursuits, as well as the perceived negative connotation of the word 'dark' (Bowman and Pezzullo 2010). However, these classifications, although somewhat theoretically fragile by the lack of empirical evidence, are worthy initial contributions towards an understanding of the phenomenon.

In a notable study, Miles (2002) proposed a distinction between *actual* sites of atrocity (such as Auschwitz-Birkenhau) and sites *associated* with dark tourism (such as the UK Holocaust Museum - Beth Shalom), commenting that 'darker' tourism consists of greater 'locational authenticity' than its counterparts (Miles 2002: 1176). This is an important distinction and offers credence to the aspect of authenticity, a significant discussion point particularly relating to representation and interpretation of dark tourism as will be discussed in Chapter Six. Miles (2002) also considered temporal aspects where recent events may appear 'darker' due to the level of empathy shown by those drawn to dark tourism sites and attractions. Consequently, this suggests that empathy is an important factor from both consumption and supply perspectives. Furthermore, this also suggests that supply-side and demand-side perspectives cannot be disconnected, as producing a typology of sites involves the consideration of the subjective experiences they generate. This perspective is argued by a number of scholars (Farmaki 2013; Sharpley 2005; Smith and Croy 2005; Willis 2014) and discussed in the following section (cf. Section 2.2.3).

Building on suggestions from both Miles (2002) and Sharpley (2005), Stone (2006) put forward a conceptual extension of classifications of sites envisaged along a 'dark tourism spectrum'. This conceptualisation seeks to locate relevant sites according to their perceived characteristics ranked from 'lightest' to 'darkest' on a shade-based continuum - resulting in 'Seven Dark Tourism Suppliers' as shown on Table 2.1 below. The resulting categories offer a useful starting point for further exploration although, as Stone (2006) concludes, it may not be a

simple task to precisely plot a dark tourism site – most notably due to their multi-faceted nature comprising a myriad of characteristics. Causevic and Lynch (2011) add that many challenges are faced when attempting to plot sites in a linear and one dimensional manner.

The main challenge appears when attempting to operationalise these categories (Stone 2006) for research purposes (cf. Section 4.5.3). The category of 'dark shrines' of Stone's (2006) conceptualisation relates more to temporal focal points for memorialisation rather than any permanent marker *per se,* before shifting to more permanent fixtures within these categorisations. In addition, whilst these classifications (Stone 2006) were created with the emergent themes at the time of formation, these themes within the dark tourism literature now include a wider diverse set of topics of interest such as witchcraft and paganism, natural disasters, maritime tragedies, and slavery. Therefore, these distinctions formulated by Stone (2006) can only be referred to as exploratory formations rather than rudimentary typologies of dark tourism suppliers.

Table 2.1. Seven Dark Tourism Suppliers

Supplier	Description
1. Dark Fun Factories	Predominately have an entertainment focus presenting real or fictional death and macabre events.
2. Dark Exhibitions	Products which evolve around death which reflect educational or learning opportunities.
3. Dark Dungeons	Penal and criminal justice sites.
4. Dark Resting Places	Associated with cemeteries.
5. Dark Shrines	'Death markers', temporal, and focal memorials.
6. Dark Conflict Sites	War and battlefield sites.
7. Dark Camps of Genocide	Actual mass death sites.

Source: Author (adapted from Stone 2006)

Interestingly, within the seven formulated categories of suppliers within the dark tourism spectrum there is a certain playfulness around their distinctively catchy titles. However, Stone (2006) makes a very important point about the potential concern amongst practitioners about the term dark tourism being applied to their products, due to perceived negative connotation of the word 'dark' and the sinister undertones that the term may represent. Of course, preferred alternatives may

be more suitable, which are highlighted in the findings of this research in Chapter Six, Marketing.

The main weaknesses of the 'dark tourism spectrum' is that as a purely descriptive taxonomy, meanings attached to places by individuals are ignored (Miles 2014). The spectrum also purports to be a fluid and dynamic continuum of intensity, however potential movement between categories over time is not fully taken into account, although the author accounts for some shifts along the spectrum. For instance, logic proceeds that all crime-related sites are located at the 'darker' end of the spectrum, however murder-themed walking tours such as 'Jack the Ripper' walking tours in Whitechapel (www.jack-the-ripper-tour.com) could well be positioned at the 'lighter' end, veering towards more entertainment aspects. Whilst many would characterise 'Jack the Ripper' themed tours as harmless fun, others would point out that the victims were real women and to trivialise such murders is exploitative and in poor taste (Dalton 2015). This is demonstrated by a recent protest in May 2016 against a dedicated museum to 'Jack the Ripper' which opened in London in June 2015 (Brooke 2016). This highlights that many sites and attractions associated with dark tourism may be met with disapproval from a number of groups (Dalton 2015), due to major ethical and moral factors associated with dark tourism. Moreover, the categorisations are based on conceptual musings rather than empirical evidence, consequently empirically, these classifications cannot be adequately researched or positions accurately assigned.

The review of these attempts to categorise dark tourism suppliers demonstrates that this activity is problematic owing to the wide range of diverse sites considered for exploration. First, assigning categories to trauma, suffering, and death is both challenging and potentially extremely offensive (Dalton 2015). Second, what constitutes a dark tourism site? What are the features and characteristics that define such a site? Third, academic typologies may not have any relation to practitioners' understanding of their sites. From these questions, it is apparent that the term 'dark tourism' is difficult to conceptualise and operationalise when applied to a practitioner setting.

Alternatively, sites could be categorised according to their artefacts/objects for public display purposes. For example, distinguishing between those sites that display human remains, and those which don't, as the display of human remains

appears to cause the most controversy. Linked to this method of categorisation is legislation connected to the display of human remains, notably the Human Tissue Act 2004 (HTA) for example, and other ethical policies which may be adopted within museums. The HTA specifies licensing requirements for human remains within the last one hundred years. Therefore, three distinct groups become apparent according to the display of human remains and whether they are subject to legislative consideration or not (see Table 2.2 below).

Table 2.2. Categories of Sites According to Content and Legislation (HTA 2004)

Category	Regulation
Display of human remains within 100 years old	Legislative
Display of human remains over 100 years old	Non-legislative
No display of human remains	Non-legislative

Source: Author

An important point relates to why some sites are selected for touristic consumption whilst others are not. In their study on post-genocide Cambodia, Tyner et al (2012:854) use the terms '*unmarked'* and '*unremarked'* sites to describe landscapes and legacies of violence that are 'hidden in plain sight' – those sites and places not commemorated via official channels. Dalton (2015:175) adds to this debate, commenting on '*hidden'* sites such as those he visited in Argentina. These were made conspicuous by the lack of marketing, which he states illustrates the 'proscription attached to marketing'. He also contrasts sites of monumental significance, which are not suitably memorialised; deemed '*neglected'* sites in contrast to '*un-desirable'* sites, where commercial endeavours can cast a shadow on places associated with murder, highlighting Snowtown as a case study. Both examples Dalton (2015) uses are from his native country of Australia, which may explain the inclusion of these case studies and his opinions somewhat. Nevertheless, these '*unmarked'* or '*hidden'* sites illustrate the notable absence of some sites or seemingly less visible sites worthy of memorialisation, which can prevent the engagement of reflective contemplation. Dark tourism has been charged with being the 'dirty little secret' of the tourism sector (Marcel 2004), and certainly some historical events may be shrouded in a

cloak of shame and denial. Naturally, wider sociological and political issues may well be influencing factors, especially with contested heritages. These considerations from a management perspective highlight important ethical and moral concerns over dark tourism development, a prevailing concern within the literature and certainly a preoccupation within the media.

Connected to concerns over dark tourism development are debates both within the literature and reported by the media, concerning allegations of commodification by suppliers of dark tourism sites and attractions. These accusations of commodification are censured on moral grounds amongst concerns of 'milking the macabre' (Dann 1994:61). Indeed, in her ethnographic study of visitor experiences at sites associated with 9/11, Sather-Wagstaff (2011) remarks on how locals, scholars, critics, and journalists view visitors to the World Trade Center and wider dark tourism sites as inappropriate and exploitative, despite the prevalence of such places worldwide.

The argument that dark tourism is an expression of postmodern commodification of death has been discussed by a number of prominent scholars such as MacCannell (1999), and Lennon and Foley (2000). Pagliari (2004) laments that society has now moved from a 'death-denying' to a 'death-deriding' age whereby death is mocked, commercialised, and sold, and that sites trade on the memory of death and disaster (Cole 2000). Particular concerns have been specifically expressed over the perceived global exploitations of the Holocaust (Novick 2000; Cole 1999). Cole (1999) referred to the 'myth' of the Holocaust – the mass-marketed and Hollywood-produced image of the Holocaust constructed through film. Sather-Wagstaff (2011) argues that perspectives such as those discussed by MacCannell (1999) and by Lennon and Foley (2000) are informed by negative connotation of the words tourism and tourist often aligned with consumption, again considered deficient in social value.

A comparable concept to a Hollywood construction of the Holocaust is 'Disneyization', a concept associated with Kehoe 1991 and popularised by Bryman (2004) in his 2004 book 'The Disneyization of Society.' Viewed as a complimentary concept to McDonaldization (Ritzer 1993), 'Disneyization' has its roots in theories around consumerism and consumer culture, and is depicted as a process by which the principles of the Disney theme parks increasingly dominate more sectors of contemporary society (Bryman 2004). Certainly, dark

tourism may replicate aspects of Disneyization particularly in respect of specific theming for marketing purposes. An example of such theming is arguably 'The London Dungeon', a purpose-built tourist attraction which recreates various macabre and gory historical events in a gallows humour style. Dale and Robinson (2011) argue that although this type of theming is suitable for fictional purposes, problems arise when mixed with reality, raising additional anxieties of profiteering from the dead.

The supply-side perspective also draws heavily upon the heritage literature, which provides a number of studies into the political and cultural influences on developing and managing heritage 'sites of atrocity' (Ashworth and Hartmann 2005). The rationale for drawing upon heritage tourism studies relies on the fact that sites presenting death, disaster, and suffering have been studied as 'dissonant heritage' (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996), 'heritage that hurts' (Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998) and 'difficult heritage' (Logan and Reeves 2009). Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) suggest that dissonance exists among different groups, including descendants of both victims and perpetrators, as well as bystanders. However, as Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) argue, dissonance is subjective rather than fixed. These studies are particularly useful especially in the realms of post-conflict tourism, where conflict issues can potentially offer a new role for dark tourism as suggested by Causevic and Lynch (2011). However, all of these considerations will naturally present significant challenges for managers at dark tourism sites and attractions, in particular, when attempting to interpret historical events in an accurate and sensitive manner. As interest rises in visitor encounters associated with dark tourism, whether battlefields, former penal institutions, or sites associated with the Holocaust, there is commercial pressure to develop packaged experiences for visitors (Wilard et al 2013). The 'experience economy' coined by Pine and Gilmore (1999) advocates that managers provide unique staged experiences to maintain competitiveness and profits. However, this may prove challenging as visitors may be seeking a diverse range of encounters (Biran et al 2011), therefore requiring an array of interpretive tools and techniques to compliment the experience.

Therefore, similar to the demand-side research activity, a wider disciplinary approach is suggested, to continue to aid understanding of management issues and challenges at dark tourism sites and attractions. Figure 2.2 demonstrates

that the disciplines of psychology, humanities, archeology, and sociology as well as business and management disciplines, are useful to explore the complex nature of dark tourism, which is currently poorly understood and not able to capture the concept of dark tourism as a multi-faceted phenomenon. Classic supply-side business and management activities such as human resources, value chains, operations, and innovation have been overlooked in the dark tourism literature. This is in stark contrast to the wider tourism literature which includes a plethora of studies on business and management activities.

Figure 2.2. Multi-Perspective Model of Dark Tourism Supply

Source: Author

Critics of the supply-side approach comment that the markedly diverse range of visitor experiences, as well as the existence of various forms of supply, results in added dilution and fuzziness of the concept of dark tourism (Sharpley 2009). This approach also attracts criticism with the 'desire to name, sort, and categorise phenomena' (Bowman and Pezzullo 2010:189), regarded as similar to those efforts to classify the motivational aspects behind dark tourism consumption. Importantly however, a supply-side perspective can offer an insight into currently under-explored areas connected with the management of dark tourism sites and attractions including marketing and marketing issues as well as ethical and moral concerns, rather than mere classifications. Ultimately, all dark tourism sites and attractions display difficult subject matter for consumption (Brown 2013). As the

examples highlight, why and how this is done are of critical importance not only for the academic community, but for industry practitioners alike. With a prevailing focus on the interpretation of sensitive matter at dark tourism sites from a supply-side approach, fundamental business operations have been overlooked. For example, no empirical research has yet been conducted on the marketing and promotion of dark tourism sites and attractions, although a number of scholars have commented upon the 'kitschification' of dark tourism (Potts 2012; Sharpley and Stone 2009). In terms of general marketing activities undertaken by dark tourism sites, no empirical evidence, as yet, reveals the nature and extent of their marketing efforts. This is in stark contrast to the general tourism studies literature, which includes a wealth of studies relating to marketing, particularly in respect of destination management.

The two preceding sections have highlighted a silo approach to the investigation of dark tourism, which are dominant lines of research enquiry within the dark tourism literature. However, the combined approach of supply and demand is developing within the literature to offer a wider perspective of the phenomenon.

2.2.3. The Holistic Approach –Supply and Demand Research Activity

The final grouping within the literature is an integrated supply-demand perspective, which features studies that bring both the consumption and experience of dark tourism together with site characteristics and attributes. However, some studies of dark tourism sites and attractions reveal that some visitors are not familiar with the site's attributes (Poria, Butler, & Airey, 2004).

Studies following this more holistic approach feature much less often when compared to demand-side research activity and supply-side research activity. This is possibly explained by the lack of theoretical/empirical underpinnings from the silo perspectives with multi-faceted interpretations of the concept of dark tourism. This perspective consists of a small number of empirical studies, mostly based upon individual sites or comparative studies, which is again characteristic of the majority of empirical works within dark tourism research activity. A frequently cited conceptual framework for many further empirical investigations in this approach which features both supply and demand perspectives is a matrix of supply and demand, conceptualised by Sharpley (2009). In formulating this framework, Sharpley (2009) examined various site characteristics as well as the experience(s) sought by visitors. He proposed that a 'continuum of purpose'

exists of dark tourism suppliers varying from 'accidental' to 'purposeful' and identified four shades of dark tourism experiences (see Figure 2.3 below).

Figure 2.3. Matrix of Dark Tourism Demand and Supply

```
                        Demand
                        (palest)
                           |
                           |
   Pale tourism            |            Grey tourism
                           |            supply
                           |
                           |
 Supply                    |                    Supply
('accidental') ────────────┼──────────────── (purposeful)
                           |
                           |
   Grey tourism            |            Black tourism
   demand                  |
                           |
                           |
                        Demand
                        (darkest)
```
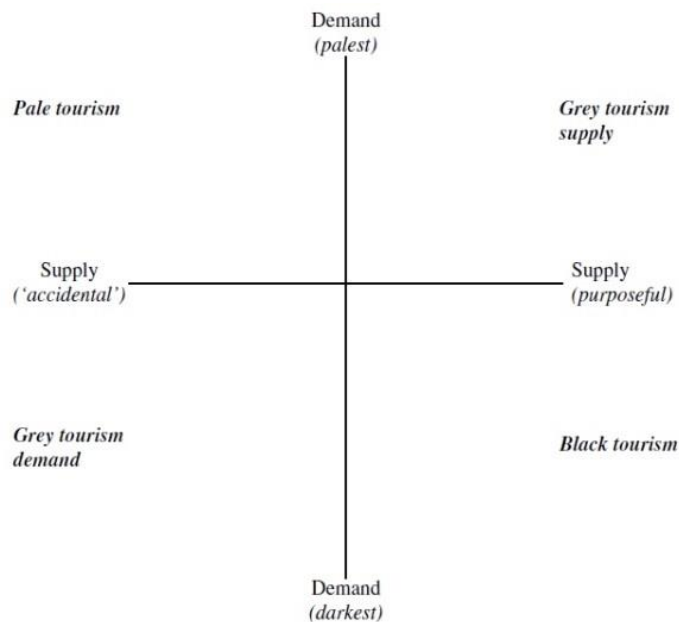
Source – Sharpley (2009:19)

A weakness of this matrix is the assumption of some 'interest in death' which, according to the evidence within the literature, accounts for initial suggested motivations rather than more recent propositions. Indeed, visitors may adopt a multitude of attitudes towards site and experiences, so it may be difficult to plot specific sites on the matrix. Inevitably dark tourism can be consumed in many different ways by many different visitors; although Sharpley (2009) stresses the possible existence of different experiences by adopting a holistic approach, the scope may be narrowed for dark tourism (Biran and Poira 2012).

The holistic approach includes Smith and Croy's (2005) conceptualisation of dark tourism in their exploration of the link between site presentation as well as visitor expectations and perceptions. However, they contextualised the study within a discussion of the definition of dark tourism, rather than an account of operational issues and challenges of site management. The study was centred upon 'The Buried Village', a site of a natural disaster in New Zealand. By exploring interpretive factors - specifically, images projected to visitors to the site - they argued that it is the perception of the site as dark (rather than site's attributes *per se*) that determines the nature of the visit. Most importantly, this study draws

attention to the possibility that not all tourists to sites presenting death, disaster, and suffering are engaged in a dark experience, contesting Sharpley's (2009) matrix.

Similar to Smith and Croy's (2005) findings, Biran et al (2011) also emphasised the perception of the site as a key element in understanding the tourist experience. They adopted an integrated approach to further clarify visitor experiences at Auschwitz-Birkenhau such as sought benefits of interpretation. Following Sharpley's (2009) matrix, they report a minimal interest in death in the context of Auschwitz, arguing that "pale tourism" might actually be heritage tourism. Furthermore, Farmaki (2013) studied the motivations of visitors and influencing factors of production on two dark tourism sites and attractions in Nicosia, Cyprus. The author of this empirical study suggests that production and consumption of dark tourism is both continuous and interrelated, as demand appears to be supply-driven and attraction-based. This highlights the nature of the tourism experience, which is based on an instantaneous production and consumption structure (Sharpley and Stone 2009). According to Farmaki (2013:281), demand for dark tourism consumption appears to be 'supply driven and attraction based,' citing the infrastructure, site characteristics, tourists' facilities, and accessibility as drivers influencing consumption intertwined with visitor motives and needs. However, although insightful, highlighting the 'pull factors' shaping consumption, the study was only based on two Cypriot museums associated with the Greek Cypriot struggle against the British, and thus a narrow focus, as acknowledged by the author.

A more recent empirical study from the services literature uses both demand and supply perspectives to investigate managerial perspectives of, and the key issues relating to, visitors' experiences of dark tourism sites and attractions; specifically, to consider how visitors may benefit from dark tourism encounters as a service experience. In this paper, Magee and Gilmore (2015) use a case-based method to explore four concentration camps across Europe. They highlight that sensitive sites can be places of transformation for visitors. In addition, current challenges reported by managers based within the sites include maintaining authenticity and the original purposes of sites to make them meaningful with a focus on visitor learning and reflection. Although insightful, these challenges may be distinct for sites deemed within the darkest edges of dark tourism sites and attractions.

Furthermore, similar to supply-side perspectives, a focus on the interpretive experiences overlooks vital operational elements such as human resources, marketing, and leadership, consistent within the majority of service based organisations.

The studies that adopt a holistic approach attempt to address the management of dark tourism sites and attractions whilst focusing on visitors' interactions. However, such a broad applicability can result in a lack of depth of understanding that can be gained more easily from the adoption of a single approach. In this research, a distinct supply-side perspective was adopted, partly due to time constraints and practicalities, but primarily to allow depth, rather than breadth, of complex issues and concepts associated with management of dark tourism sites and attractions; such as innovation and marketing, to be revealed by practitioners. It is suggested therefore, that further empirical research conducted from both demand and supply perspectives where multiple disciplines feed into these two perspectives will develop the literature in order for further studies to be conducted.

2.3. Summary

A review of the literature reveals three different and often contradictory perspectives that have been adopted for dark tourism research activity. However, most striking is the distinct dearth of studies into management issues within dark tourism sites and attractions, particularly from a business and management discipline. It is recognised that managers have a daunting task of attempting to fulfil many roles including that of funeral director, historian, teacher, and showman (Seaton 2009), whilst balancing sensitivities amongst a host of stakeholders. These issues are paramount to identify and address, given concerns around over-commodification and whether/how to sensitively (re)present and interpret past traumatic events for touristic purposes.

The dominant perspectives of demand and supply, and the more emerging integrated research approach, do offer some insight into the complex and multi-faceted phenomenon of dark tourism. However, from a review of the literature, the range of motives identified is as wide-ranging as the collection of sites explored, with prevailing concepts such as interpretation, commodification, and authenticity generating widespread (and somewhat contentious) discussion.

Indeed, a large proportion of studies focus on the interpretation experience where from a supply-side perspective, many different approaches to the maintenance and appointment of space are suggested within the literature. Consequently, the emphasis in the literature has been largely based on the (re)presentation of traumatic histories. The literature has also been criticised for various attempts to construct supply-side classifications, particularly based on degrees of 'darkness' (Mowatt and Chancellor 2011). Furthermore, the collection of works has been censured for lacking theoretical grounding with calls made to extend the field particularly from other disciplines in providing further empirical evidence (Stone 2011). This review has highlighted potential frameworks and suggests a multi-disciplinary approach to dark tourism research activity to cover different perspectives.

The majority of scholarly works consist of a significant input from a heritage perspective where wide attention is given to the controversies inevitably attached to sites associated with genocide and the Holocaust. Outside of representations of dark tourism concerning significant human trauma, lesser known and smaller dark tourism sites and attractions have not been explicitly identified or differentiated as special cases when exploring management issues. This is surprising given the wide range of diverse sites and attractions conceptualised as dark tourism providers. For example, the specific challenges that face managers at dark tourism sites and attractions, and how to address these, particularly when presented with ethical dilemmas, feature much less often in the literature when compared with heritage sites. This is somewhat surprising given that dark tourism sites and attractions constitute a particular subset of visitor attractions.

Specifically, there has been a reluctance to examine the business of dark tourism, for example, the business model of dark tourism and specific management concepts and operations. Specifically, whilst the focus has been concentrated upon the (re)presentation of traumatic histories, other equally important management operations within dark tourism sites and attractions have been overlooked, such as innovation and marketing. Given that all sites offering touristic encounters have their own organisational goals to meet, managers may seek to use different ways to entice visitors by providing unique experiences. An avenue that managers may look towards to address competing requirements

from a diverse audience and to retain important markets such as repeaters, is via innovation. The following chapter now provides a discussion on the research activity conducted on the management concepts of interest in this research, namely innovation, marketing and visitor interpretation and the relationship between two of these concepts, innovation and repeat visitation. This discussion will highlight the significant gaps in the literature which this research aims to address.

CHAPTER THREE - THE BUSINESS OF DARK TOURISM

'Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.'
Aristotle (385 BC – 323 BC)

3.1. Introduction

The preceding section highlighted that although academic enquiry is developing at an increasing rate, research connected to the management of dark tourism has been significantly overlooked in the literature. Whilst attention has been placed upon attempts to classify the phenomenon in respect of motivations alongside an emphasis on conceptualisations of visitor interpretation, other vital management operations have been side-lined. This is somewhat surprising given that dark tourism organisations are subject to the same pressures and aims as other tourism-based organisations such as attaining economic and social objectives. This is due, in part, to the distinct characterisations of tourism, but moreover, the characteristics of dark tourism, where anxieties over ethical and moral dilemmas exist, perhaps resulting in a reluctance to explore management concepts within a perceived contested area. In addition, the pressure on management to innovate as well as meeting many organisational and social goals, results in a myriad of complex and often controversial decisions to navigate, whilst attempting to commercialise activities against ethical concerns.

Consequently, an opportunity is provided to explore the practices of innovation, marketing, and visitor interpretation within the context of dark tourism. Of particular interest is the concept and practice of innovation and the relationship between innovation and repeat visitation to investigate whether innovation can stimulate repeat visitation. Therefore, a substantive proportion of the discussion within this chapter is connected to innovation, which forms two of the three objectives of this research (cf. Figure 1.1). This chapter therefore seeks to discuss the management concepts of interest in this research; namely, innovation, marketing, and visitor interpretation by providing an overview of research activity and current thinking connected to these management operations within the wider literature.

The chapter begins with a discussion on the concept of innovation alongside a taxonomy of innovation categories where limited frameworks are available for tourism innovation research. Following this, attention turns towards the research activity connected with innovation, including a classical approach and a tourism-based approach. The relationship between innovation and repeat visitation is explored, the two of which have not been examined together in the literature more widely and certainly not within the context of dark tourism.

The remainder of the chapter is devoted to other management concepts of interest to this research, namely marketing and visitor interpretation. It is contended that due to sensitivities surrounding commercialisation at these sites and attractions, very little scholarly attention in particular has been focused upon marketing and promotion of these organisations. Rather, the literature reveals a focus on the representation and interpretation of sensitive material. This highlights the complex ethical issues that face managers when decision-making in management, offering an opportunity to identify these complexities as part of this research. The findings reveal that dark tourism sites and attractions demonstrate an approach of 'ethical interpretation;' a framework in which managers acknowledge and address ethical issues associated with the narration and display of sensitive material. This framework is illustrated by evidencing decision-making that occurs within these organisations using marketing and innovation as complimentary tools for staff to mediate ethical issues.

3.1.1. The Concept of Innovation

Within the context of tourism, innovation could be argued as an elusive concept and is often associated with change and 'newness' (Hall and Williams, 2008). Of course, 'newness' can take many forms, such as new products, new processes, new markets, and new organisational forms. It is important to note here however, as Sundbo (2007) suggests, that in order to be considered an innovation, something need not be new at a universal or national level, only in a particular market segment.

A review of the innovation literature, however, reveals different approaches when studying innovation, which impacts upon attempts to define the concept. These approaches stem from the foundations of classical innovation theory which lie predominantly in the manufacturing industries. Therefore, early attempts to define

innovation more precisely, often drew upon the distinction made by Schumpeter (1939) between inventions and innovations, where innovations are viewed as representing the further development and application of inventions.

However, when applied outside of manufacturing, further distinctions between inventions and innovations become clear. Hjalager (1994) suggests that the division between inventions and innovation lies in the outputs of these, where innovation is a commercial output, brought to the arena of implementation and commercialisation. Indeed, innovations may also include minor adaptions of existing products and services (Hjalager 2002). Consequently, considering these suggestions, innovations can be conceptualised as both radical and incremental, for example, from significant technological advancements to small scale changes to products and processes.

In a differing vein, Hall and Williams (2008) emphasise that innovation should be understood as a series of individual acts akin to relational activity. This idea is further developed by Fischer (2001) as 'systems of innovation' – as a set of actors that interact in the generation and diffusion of new knowledge. These notions of innovation stress the importance of how innovations are situated in particular industrial and organisational contexts. This is helpful when attempting to position innovation within a dark tourism context and is broadly followed throughout this research. In addition, for the purpose of this research, a definition of innovation by Kanter (1983:20-1) is suggested. The selection of a broader definition of innovation for use within the research enables the capture of a wide range of management innovative practices to be reported by managers as follows:

> *Innovation refers to the process of bringing any new, problem solving idea into use. Ideas for reorganising, cutting cost, putting in new budgetary systems, improving communication or assembling products in teams are also innovations. Innovation is the generation, acceptance and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services…Acceptance and implementation is central to this definition; it involves the capacity to change and adapt.*

[Kanter, 1983:20-1]

However, it is important to stress that innovation is a challenge; for example, Tidd and Bessant (2009) refer to innovation involving a 'moving target' where not only is competition a constant, but in which the global context is also constantly changing. This is ever-prevalent in the tourism sector, which is fluid and subject

to continual change, often in unpredictable ways; for example, in response to crises there can arise both the opportunistic development of niche markets, and the transfer of knowledge from other sectors. It could be argued that innovating in a dark tourism context is seen as highly contentious when compared with other tourism sub-sectors, although some similarities can be found where nature is also 'packed' for touristic purposes. Dark tourism innovation may be seen as necessitating higher 'risks' due to the ethical and moral anxieties surrounding the nature of dark tourism particularly with regard to interpreting 'sensitively' amidst concerns over the commercial 'packaging' of death. Indeed, dark tourism as a packaged product for the commercial environment may also be viewed as a significant innovation. This is discussed in the empirical chapter devoted to innovation, Chapter Five.

The concept of innovation has not been examined in any detail within dark tourism research, specifically innovative activities taking place within dark tourism sites and attractions. However, some scholars have framed the term 'innovation' within the potential role for tourism development, particularly in post-conflict areas, referred to as 'phoenix tourism' (Causevic and Lynch 2008; 2011). A specific objective to be examined within the research is how managers within dark tourist sites perceive and practice innovation. Studies on innovation in the context of dark tourism have been overlooked, primarily as the relationship between innovation and tourism is a recent area of academic enquiry, as well as the conceptualisation of dark tourism, also developing academically, which is a complex and diverse phenomenon where conflicts over sensitivities prevail. By exploring the evolution of studies in the innovation literature, it is argued that the literature is dominated by research; focused on innovation processes and taxonomies with a focus on outcomes, based on manufacturing foundations, which when applied to tourism settings fails to capture the complexities associated with the tourism sector. Consequently, this research aims to fill the significant gap identified in the tourism innovation literature by contributing knowledge relating to the perceptions and practices of innovation at dark tourism sites and attractions.

How innovation is categorised is useful here to add to the discussion on the conceptualisation of innovation. Therefore, the following section outlines

typologies of innovation from the wider innovation literature to those applied within a tourism-based context.

3.1.2. A Taxonomy of Innovation Categories

The traditional innovation literature based on wider industries features specific attention to typologies of innovation. An early classification of innovation was outlined by Chan et al (1988) as incremental, distinctive, and breakthrough. These have a focus on 'newness' as well as additional offerings such as those from Adams et al (2006) and Schumpeter (1939). Adams et al (2000: 2006) identified three ways to classify innovation: on the basis of newness, focus, and attributes of an innovation. Schumpeter's innovation concept covered five areas as summarised by Drejer (2004): (i) the introduction of a new good or a new quality of a good (product innovation); (ii) the introduction of a new method of production, including a new way of handling a commodity commercially (process innovation); (iii) the opening of a new market (market innovation); (iv) the conquest of a new source of supply of raw material or intermediate input (input innovation); and (v) the carrying out of a new organisation of industry (organisational innovation). These initial classifications of innovation put forward by Schumpeter (1934) have been the inspiration for a number of scholars and studies (Weiemair 2006; Hjalager 2002; Fagerberg 2005; Drejer 2004).

Although scholarly attention towards tourism innovation is increasing, the application of innovation ideas and knowledge into tourism, when compared with other industry sectors, has only been modestly applied. Nevertheless, scholars including Hjalager have advanced the tourism innovation literature, most notably in the provision of typologies (2002; 2010) and innovation patterns particularly relating to sustainable tourism (1997). Building on early categorisations by Schumpeter (1939) and the general innovation literature, Hjalager (2010) provides five different type of innovations: product, process, managerial, marketing, and institutional, which are adopted within this research as a framework to explore dark tourism innovative activities. As with Schumpeter (1939), the categories of product and process innovations are clearly identified by Hjalager (2002). These two types of innovation categories refer to the generation of improved or new goods and services, and the ways to produce these goods and services (Fagerberg 2005). These categories have been selected for use due to the lack of other reliable frameworks within the literature

to examine practices of innovation. Moreover, four of Hjalager's (2002) classifications are also currently adopted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) who are devoted to the global performance and measurement of economic, social, and environmental activities. In order to demonstrate the applicability of categories formulated by Hjalager (2010), these have been conceptualised within a dark tourism setting to illustrate how types of innovation may work operationally (see Appendix III). As this table illustrates, a product innovation may consist of death as a 'resource' as well as all associated services, marketing, and infrastructure to form a packaged 'product' of dark tourism. Process innovations may include technological investments to interpret exhibitions and exhibits related to death for instance.

The previous two sections have attempted to conceptualise innovation by discussing the definition of innovation and a taxonomy of innovation as suggested by the literature. The following section provides a summary of research activity on innovation both within the wider academic arena and most significantly, in tourism studies to highlight the gaps within the tourism innovation literature to be addressed by this research.

3.2. Innovation Research Activity

The following sections provide an overview of the major strands of research activity related to innovation. A review of the wider innovation literature considered to be foundation of innovation theory, reveals that scholarly investigation is dominated by the processes and effects/outputs of innovation, primarily based upon products as categorised by manufacturing industries. This 'classical' approach includes a number of theories and concepts discussed within the literature such as 'creative destruction' and 'disruptive competition' (Schumpeter 1939).

Discussion then turns towards studies that have attempted to transfer these ideas from the traditional manufacturing based industries in the service industry and subsequently, the tourism sector. A review of the tourism innovation literature reveals that although the literature is developing, there is less engagement with specific key elements associated with innovation such as barriers and drivers of innovation. This is in stark contrast to the engagement with practices of innovation within the wider innovation literature where a wealth of research has been

undertaken. Specifically, there is no agreed consensus on the exact drivers and barriers to innovating within a tourism setting. Similarly, the processes of tourism innovation receive less attention when compared to typologies of innovation. Moreover, there are concerns regarding the applicability and transference of ideas and theories founded outside of the tourism sector due to the specific characteristics defining the tourism sector. However, similar to the wider innovation literature, technological innovations, specifically technological process innovations, have received particular attention from service innovation and tourism innovation scholars, denoting a focus on the visitor experience and service quality. Consequently, as the tourism literature is still developing, there is ambiguity over the extent and level of 'innovativeness' of tourism businesses. In order to understand innovation in a tourism-based context, it is necessary to chart the evolution of innovation literature, starting with the traditional foundations.

3.2.1. A Classical Approach to Innovation

The foundations of classical innovation theory lie primarily in the manufacturing industry largely based upon the ideas and theories posited by Schumpeter (1883-1950) which includes concepts such as 'creative destruction' and 'disruptive competition'. These concepts include a constant search to create something new which simultaneously destroys the old rules and establishes new ones (Schumpeter 1939). This 'disruptive' nature essentially changes the rules of the game by disrupting the existing system (Schumpeter 1939) which undoubtedly provides new winners or losers (Bessant and Tidd 2007).

Dominant features of the literature are based around the production of goods and technology and to a lesser extent on services (Morrar 2014). Indeed, a number of studies have focused on new product development that include identifying an opportunity, investment in research, opportunity evaluation, design and engineering, experimentation and testing, and product launch (Hidalgo and Albors 2008). This focus on technology and product development has been criticised by many (Morrar 2014; Buhalis 1998; Sorenson 2007) for its rigidity constrained to the adoption and use of technology. In addition, much of the innovation research in business has focused on the outputs of innovations often measured through patents (Gallouj and Weinstein 1997). Indeed, mainstream economics has traditionally measured innovation through input-output studies

(Unger 2005). Inputs have usually been studied on the basis of research and development data and patent statistics.

The processes of innovation have been subject to several approaches in the innovation literature which see an emphasis on the role of the entrepreneur, based on a Schumpeterian perspective. However, later work by Schumpeter (1947) also acknowledged that innovations were the domain of large firms possessing the necessary resources (Sorensen 2007). Central determinants for innovation were then seen as technology push theory and research and design (R&D) (Coombs et al 1987), and demand as a pull factor driving innovativeness. Most notably, innovation was seen as referring to one actor and a relatively straightforward process (Fischer 1999). Consequently, a prevailing view was that new product development is an end-to-end process of ideation to implementation whereby using formal processes is associated with organisational success (Sipe 2016). Consequently, extant research activity related to the wider innovation literature leans heavily on innovation outputs (Bain and Kleinknecht 2016) and processes (accentuating its disciplinary roots associated with science, engineering, technology, and mathematics (STEM). However, more recent studies have veered towards more dynamic models of innovation processes that feature networks, actors, sources, and constraints (Tidd 2006) to embrace wider factors which may influence innovation.

3.2.2. A Tourism-Based Approach to Innovation

The classical innovation literature provides a wealth of academic theories and models for consideration for further scholarly endeavours. However, a central concern questions the applicability and transference of traditional ideas into service industries, and in particular the tourism sector due to its distinct nature and characteristics (Hall and Williams 2008; Gallouj and Weinstein 1997). As this section argues, the tourism innovation literature features many studies that have attempted to transfer these ideas including those based upon specific tourism contexts and the wider service industry. However, the effectiveness of applying manufacturing-based concepts into a tourism-related setting is variable and poorly understood.

As the economy shifted from goods to services as well as the advancement of technology, service innovation scholars debated how organisations could apply the notion of innovation to service based industries. In addition, scholars found it

difficult to explain and apply innovation in services using traditional typologies questioning whether innovation can be understood fully from a theoretical manufacturing based framework (Gallouj 2002). However, awareness of the importance of service innovation has gradually been accepted, resulting in a commendable number of studies to shed the light on the specificities of innovation in services beyond the traditional point of view. Various approaches are offered in the service industry literature together with case studies with a significant input from the hospitality industry, particularly by Sundbo et al (2007); Jacob et al (2003); Orfila-Sintes and Mattsson (2009); Orfila-Sintes et al 2005; Ottenbacher and Gnoth 2005). However, when compared to the wider innovation literature, the number of theoretical and empirical studies on tourism innovation is low (Williams and Shaw 2011), seen as a consequence of the peculiarities of tourism and lack of data (Souto 2015).

Conceptual approaches to innovation in services has also been classified into theoretical perspectives of 'assimilation', 'demarcation,' and 'integration' (Morrar 2014). These approaches are distinguished by assimilation, where services are seen as similar to manufacturing, and demarcation, where the service industry is distinctive and different to manufacturing. The integrated approach aggregates both these approaches to enlarge the view of innovation encompassing services and goods of both technical and non-technical modes of innovation (Morrar 2014). Scholarly works on innovation in services focus on innovation processes and types of innovative activity with an emphasis on technological process innovations. Particular attention is devoted to improvements in service quality and design, denoting an economic output focus similarly to the wider innovation literature. Consequently, a 'synthesis' perspective (Carlborg et al 2014) emphasizing an integrated approach that considers both technological and non-technological aspects of service innovation rather than a generic perspective.

Innovation processes in the services sector have traditionally been considered less systematic than traditional approaches related to new product development (Prajogo 2006). Although there are similarities when considering idea generation, idea implementation, and evaluation, it can be less planned (Kowalkowski and Kindstrom 2012). Consequently, there have been some calls to widen the approach to a more holistic view that considers service innovation to be an organisation-wide process (Volo 2006). This call has resulted in other studies that

use this approach (Carlborg et al 2014). These scholars suggest that managers must consider all aspects of an organisation's business model in relation to its innovation performance (Sipe 2016).

Innovations have also been recognised to involve complex processes including interaction and feedback processes (Fischer 1999) where networks are viewed as an important factor. Service innovations may comprise complex organisational changes that rely on the support from external stakeholders or even on the collaboration between a network of firms (Mattsson et al 2005). Furthermore, innovation activities are less structured than in manufacturing and employees are more involved in the process (Sundbo et al 2001). Another branch of innovation theory has focused on the role of agglomerations (e.g. clusters, innovative milieu and industrial districts) where it is argued that innovation is a spatial phenomenon taking place mainly within limited geographical areas where industries are concentrated and where learning takes place (Sorensen 2007).

Critics argue that traditional models of innovation found in manufacturing industries are problematic when applied to the service industry due to its distinct nature and characteristics (Shaw and Williams 2008; Gallouj and Weinstein, 1997). Certainly, departments familiar to manufacturing industries such as Research and Development (R&D) are viewed as inconsistent with the dispersed and incremental nature of innovation in service based organisations such as tourism (Sipe 2016). The goods versus services debate is emphasised by Lusch and Vargo (2011) in their work on Service Dominant Logic (SDL). They assert that within this approach the consideration is on the relationship between a service, and a good – a good being an appliance used in service provision. Interestingly they argue that there is no good-versus-service winner or loser. This approach emphasises value co-creation, co-production, and co-creation (Shaw et al 2011); key characteristics of the service industry and discussed here in Chapter Six, Marketing. Subsequently a number of authors have utilised this framework to evaluate its logic, particularly in the accommodation sector (Shaw et al 2011; FitzPatrick et al 2013; Hayslip et al 2013).

Considerable research has been conducted on user involvement where consumers are now seen as co-producers or co-creators due to the diminishing boundaries between producers and consumers (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995). In addition, studies in the service industry have included the importance of

consumers' opinions when delivering a service (Orfila-Sintes et al 2005; Laws, 2004) highlighting the importance of customer feedback. However, users are not passive recipients; rather, they are often well ahead of the market in terms of innovation needs (Tidd and Bessant, 2009). This then raises an interesting question regarding these 'innovation needs' for dark tourism. For example, whether entertainment as a motive for dark tourism is a need to be addressed by managers when compared to memorialisation. Moreover, consideration should be given to whether and how these needs can be positioned for dark tourism innovation.

On initial inspection, therefore, traditional innovation concepts may appear to easily translate into the tourism sector as a service-based industry. The concept of disruption was most notably applied into a tourism context by Hjalager (2002) and referred to as the 'transilience model'. This model was originally based on the automobile industry, which Hjalager (2002) then applied to a tourism perspective (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. 'Transilience Model'
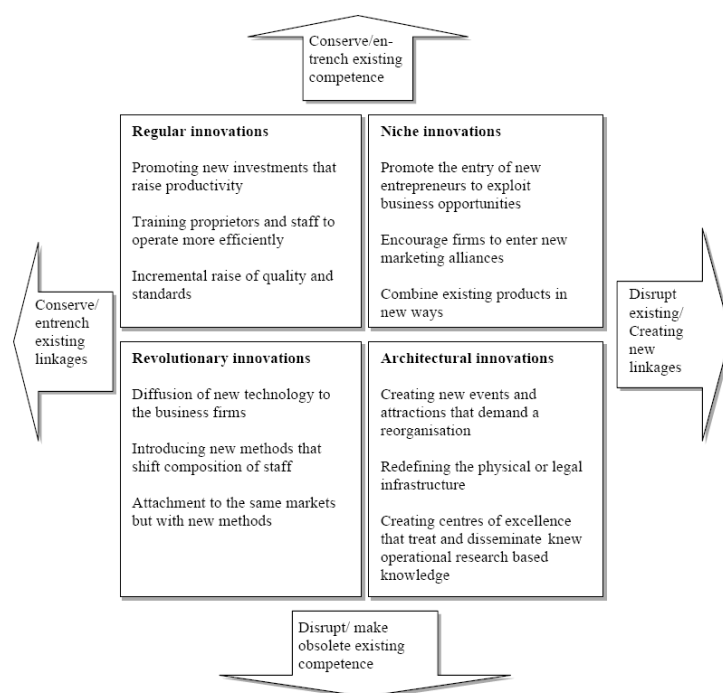
Source: Hjalager (2002:467)

As the model demonstrates, this extends and develops Schumpeter's ideas and identifies four types of innovation in tourism: regular, niche, revolutionary, and architectural. Although the model highlights the extent of disruption for each type

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of innovation, each type has different levels of knowledge and collaboration structures (Hjalager 2002). Critics of the model state that it is too static and descriptive (Hjalager 2002) and provides a limited framework when used to examine highly dynamic processes of generating innovation through knowledge transfer (Shaw and Williams 2008). It is also unclear in the literature of the extent of application of this model in tourism research. In addition, it fails to allow shifts in the nature of innovation over time where a niche innovation of entering a specialised market that might subsequently become an architectural innovation (Hall and Williams 2008).

The concept of disruption has also been applied by Shaw and Williams (2009) to the tourism sector. They argue that key innovations such as all-inclusive tours, eco-tourism, low cost airlines, and e-tourism marketing, are viewed as disruptive to pre-existing patterns of supply and demand. This is an important insight as this application can also be extended to include dark tourism, a growing phenomenon attracting increasing numbers of visitors to diverse sites and attractions worldwide. Certainly, this then suggests that dark tourism is a form of niche tourism as described by Causevic and Lynch (2006); Stone (2008) and Novelli (2005), which assumes dark tourism as a 'new' innovative form of tourism attracting a specific market. The market of this 'new' form of tourism sees so-called 'dark visitors' seek challenging and differing experiences away from the staple more traditional forms of touristic and leisure activities. However, as previously highlighted within Chapter Two, the phenomenon of dark tourism is more complex than an overly-simplified 'niche' terminology may suggest. This is due to wide ranging motivations; the ambiguity over whether dark tourism is demand or supply led amongst contesting definitions of the concept. However, other indicators that may reveal if dark tourism aligns as a niche form of tourism are discussed in Section 4.2.

Moreover, much less attention has been paid to innovation processes in tourism when compared to the service industry. However, studies of particular interest have attempted to address some of the peculiarities of the tourism sector. Mattsson et al (2005) developed a model comprising a number of concepts including 'scene-makers' – who create scenes from attractors (anything that attracts visitors i.e. events, activities, organisation) and 'scene-takers' who are responsible for creating and conceptualising the possibilities of innovations,

although not necessarily entrepreneurial, and may be a person, an organisation, a private firm, or a public organisation (Mattsson et al 2005). Another example includes Mosedale (2006) who suggested a 'commodity chain' approach - a way of linking between the 'coal face' and wider economic structures of the tourism sector in his noted case study of St Lucia and Virgin Holidays. He suggests that by examining all the connecting nodes of the chains, particular relationships can be highlighted between the controlling node and its influence on other nodes within the chain. Although processes have been given some attention in the tourism innovation literature, calls have been made to add to this research (Hjalager 2010). This is particularly significant in light of current topics such as consumer-driven innovation and the inclusion of consumers in the innovation process.

As well as the processes of tourism innovation, scholarly attention extends also to the drivers and barriers to innovating in tourism. It is evident that innovations in individual tourism organisations and enterprises are inspired and influenced by a range of internal and external dynamics (Hjalager 2010). As yet, no comprehensive understanding of the driving forces and determinants in the tourism innovation literature has been established. However, from the tourism innovation literature, determinants of innovation are distinguished between macro and micro-levels. For example, entrepreneurship is seen as a precondition for innovation and is characterised to include risk-taking, innovation, creativity, alertness, and insight (Hall and Williams, 2008). Entrepreneurs can be seen as drivers of change; however, many innovations take place as a result of external challenges including economic changes, demographics, tastes, and preferences (Hjalager and Nordin 2011).

Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that tourism organisations are particularly dependent upon external sources of knowledge (absorptive capacity) when compared with businesses in other sectors (Thomas and Wood 2014). Absorptive capacity is acknowledged as relating primarily to performance and competitive advantage, therefore assuming a key role within organisations. The concept is associated with 'knowledge embedded in the interactions of people, tools, and tasks [that] provides a basis for competitive advantage in firms' (Argote and Ingram 2000:150). Consequently the importance of knowledge and the nature in which it is held, managed, and transferred within and between organisations, has

been studied widely within the management literature with specific contributions by scholars including Drucker (1992); McElroy (2003); Argote and Ingram (2000); Cohen and Levinthal (1990), Polanyi (1958, 1996). In particular, Argote (1993) suggests the notion of 'knowledge reservoirs', highlighting the sub-networks of knowledge combined by organisational members, tools, and tasks. Other dominant lines of enquiry in the literature relate to the different types of knowledge, namely explicit and tacit knowledge. The former is associated with knowledge that is easily codified (Shaw and Williams 2009) whereas tacit knowledge is more intuitive and unarticulated (Polanyi 1996) and receives greater attention from scholarly examination. However, although absorptive capacity is an important construct within the management literature, it is deemed under-researched in tourism (Thomas and Wood 2015). Consequently, calls have been made to consider innovations in a knowledge management framework (Shaw and Williams 2009). Details of absorptive capacity as a determinant of innovation in dark tourism organisations can be found in Table 5.3.

Determinants of innovation are also influenced by the structure, nature, and strategy of the organisation. In this respect, the role of consumers in co-producing can be a critical factor to understanding competiveness (Shaw et al 2011). Naturally, some micro-level aspects will influence innovation at macro-level; for example, technological investments within an organisation. Investments in technology may often lead to improvements and enhancements of services, while the availability of technology may also affect the ways in which marketing is undertaken (Buhalis 2004).

In the context of dark tourism however, very little is understood about the drivers and barriers of innovation due to the lack of empirical investigations. As this forms part of a substantive objective, a range of determinants from a theoretical perspective provide a useful framework to compare the data against. Particular attention is paid to drivers of potential significance for this research; technology and marketing as well as potential inhibitors to innovation including lack of resources. To highlight both macro and micro-level determinants as purported in the literature, a table has been produced with corresponding dark tourism exemplars and can be found in Appendix III. It is important to note that the organisational internal characteristics are not exclusive or exhaustive categories and are inter-related. A full discussion on the empirical findings relating to the

drivers and inhibitors of innovation as reported by respondents can be found in Chapter Five.

Similar to the driving forces behind innovation, the tourism innovation literature reports a number of inhibitors to tourism innovation including structural and behavioural factors (Hjalager 2010). Tourism innovation strategy barriers may include a lack of strategic vision and insufficient prioritisation of innovation (Leal-Rodriguez et al 2014) or consist of rigid hierarchical structures that impinge innovations (Hall and Williams 2008). Hjalager (2010) reports on the inclination for SME's to be late and safe adopters of innovations or 'free-riding' upon the investment efforts of others. As previously outlined, tourism is defined by having low levels of linkages with R&D, where staff are hard to retain in a low paid sector and can suffer from a lack of funding (Nordin 2003). There may also be a resistance to change where many businesses may still consider innovation irrelevant particularly if they lack economies of scale (Pikkemaat and Peters, 2006) and implications appear too high for investment in innovation, particularly in the case of SME's (Varis and Littuen 2010).

Although innovation is seen as a vital role within many organisations, there may still be opposition to innovation where it is viewed as merely a 'buzzword' with no importance attached to it (Hjalager 2002). There also appears to be a lack of collaborative efforts as pointed out in previous sections. Indeed, Pikkemaat and Peters (2006) note that the majority of tourism businesses are still reluctant to enter into strategic alliances or collaborations. The size and scale of organisations is also a factor when considering potential barriers to innovate. SMEs are often slow to innovate, which may in part be due to lack of motivation (particularly for lifestyle entrepreneurs) or perhaps because they lack skills, training, and capabilities, or often because they are risk-aware (Talegeta 2014; Hall and Williams 2008).

These examples therefore suggest some ease of compatibility when transferring concepts located within the traditional innovation literature into a tourism-based context. However, the possible incompatibilities when transferring concepts are debated by some scholars (Jacob et al 2003; Walder et al 2006; Hall & Williams, 2008), with primary issues relating to the characteristics, measurement specifics, and different descriptive models of innovation in the service industry and tourism. Indeed, 'tourism' as a term is a contested concept including many technical and

conceptual definitions as stated in standard tourism texts (Cooper 2008; Holloway 2006). In addition, the idiosyncrasies of tourism comprise of many additional features such as being multi-sectorial and characterised by a proliferation of small businesses spread over wide geographies (Pender and Sharpley 2004). Furthermore, the industry is also dynamic and fluid; always subject to changes in technology, consumer tastes/preferences, and economic-political conditions (Hall and Williams, 2008). Tourism services are perishable and seasonal, possessing ambiguous property rights. Beech and Chadwick (2006) highlight neither the buyer nor the seller can claim to 'own' a tourism service, suggesting a co-productive element within tourism. This co-production element is an important factor as well as co-creation which are discussed in the empirical findings in Chapter Six.

The importance of experiences in a tourism setting are highlighted by Pine and Gilmore (1999) in their renowned concept of the 'Experience Economy', a raison d'etre within tourism-related industries. They emphasise that experiences have emerged to create value whilst engaging the visitor, complete with a host of sensory activities designed to create an immersive experience. Central to their work is the notion that experiences are distinct economic offerings – differentiated, co-created, and memorable – requiring continuous innovation to meet the needs of increasingly demanding visitors. How tourism managers deal with the intangible nature of their offering is particularly challenging – where managers have to mitigate the creation of the experience, generating and implementing ideas in an industry where ideas are easily imitated (Sundbo et al 2007). Managers also need to adapt to contextual issues as well as the unique characteristics of the industry as well as the ever-changing demands and desires of their visitors. They advocate the need to 'refresh the experience' (Pine and Gilmore 1999), by changing or adding elements that keep offerings new and exciting in the hope that visitors will return to re-immerse in the experience

Tourism is dealing with intangibles, with the value of tourism consisting in delivering memorable and pleasurable experiences. This means that tourism enterprises have to promote the type and quality of experience that can be anticipated to potential customers as a vital part of their marketing strategy. There is a desire to treat tourism as an experience production system (Sundbo and Hagedorn-Rasmussen 2008), wherein values and meanings can be designed

and evoked through various contextual elements within tourism-related services and experiences (Diller et al 2005). This informs a consumer-focus approach to designing and delivering tourism experiences. Consequently, scholars have attempted to introduce the term 'experience design,' gaining momentum in the tourism literature, to guide processes that place experiences at their core (Fynes and Lally 2008; Tussyadiah 2014). This uses design as a way to differentiate and characterise products and services, not only with the production of experiences, but also the creation of experiences. One example of this in hospitality is by Sipe (2016) who conceptualised a model with three influences on the experiences and with visitors at the core of the experience design (see Appendix IV).

In experience organisations where new ideas are easily imitated and customers are always looking for new and different ways to satisfy rising experience, continuous innovation becomes a necessary organisational objective (Ottenbacher 2007; Hjalager 2010). However, very little empirical evidence is available on experience-based innovation and scholars and practitioners alike may wrestle with the notion of dark tourism through the lens of the experience economy, particularly when related to sites of memorialisation and remembrance. Nevertheless, whether purposefully staged or not, the experience garnered by the visitor will be of central importance to management. This notion extends not only to first-time visitors, but to secure repeat visits. How innovation may play a role by attracting repeat visits is therefore an important consideration.

Many tourist destinations and sites rely heavily on repeat visitors who are generally accepted as an important sector to identify and retain. From a management perspective, repeat visitors are regarded as a desirable market due to the perceived reduction in marketing efforts where powerful recommendations can result in a reduction in the cost of acquiring new customers (Oppermann 1999). An avenue that managers may look towards to address competing requirements from a diverse audience, and to retain important markets such as repeaters, is via innovation.

A significant gap in the literature relates to the absence of any exploration of the connectedness between innovation and repeat visitors in dark tourism, who according to Winter (2012) form a substantial sector of visitors to dark tourism sites and attractions. As innovation may be a stimulus of repeat visitation, this is an important consideration for any tourism-related business. Some attention has

been paid towards this relationship, notably in the 'grey literature' by Volgger et al (2013) who emphasised the concepts of co-creation and co-production, and Kuusik et al (2011) who argued that technological innovation can serve as an enabling factor for repeat visitation. In this study, the authors used mobile data to distinguish repeat visitors from tourism flows in Estonia by measuring patterns and characteristics. However, this study only examined one type of innovative measure aimed at defining the repeat visitor rather than a range of innovative activities which could attract repeat visitors to a site or attraction. These few examples highlight that a significant research gap exists relating to innovation and repeat visitation, attributed to knowledge being still in the development stages relating to both dark tourism and tourism innovation. Therefore, this offers the opportunity to explore this relationship within this research; empirical findings of which can be found in Section 5.4.2.

3.3. Marketing

Alongside innovation, another management concept of interest within this research is the concept of marketing. Marketing is a contested concept in many senses (Gallie 1956) with differing views on the scope and focus of the concept. Indeed, the concept has evolved over time from a simple economic exchange between businesses and consumers, towards more sustainable tourism marketing principles and practices (Elkington 2013). Alternatives to the traditional perspective of marketing have emerged that include the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), a concept coined by Elkington (1994) and relationship marketing.

Relationship marketing can cover many different activities and can be viewed as marketing endeavours or a fundamental philosophy, although central to the concept are mutual commitment, interdependence, and trust (Palmer and Bijou 1995). Its central purpose is seen as achieving efficiency and effectiveness in terms of marketing productivity (Sheth and Sisodia 1995) and can include creating strong links with not only consumers, but other stakeholders, such as key employees (Holloway 2004). However, this perspective is not a recent phenomenon, but now enjoying a resurgence particularly attributed to technological developments which allow business to be connected with vast numbers of consumers and be more informed about their individual needs through knowledge acquired through databases for example. In particular, the role of social media is an important factor for marketing endeavours due to its

high user activity. Social media are produced by consumers to be shared with each other and are extremely search engine friendly (Xiang and Gretzel 2010). They add that tourism marketers have recognised the influence and challenges of social media with the potential for search engines to direct potential tourist traffic to competitors and call for benchmarking systems to track the role of social media together with developing current search engine technologies. Many tourism organisations and businesses have recognised the potential for including customer generated content (CGC) on their websites (including Visit Britain and Trip Advisor) and are traditionally recognised in the form of testimonials. However, understanding the individual needs, motivations, and behaviours of the consumer, together with utilising the most appropriate channel to reach them, is a continuous challenge for producers and marketers. Currently, no empirical investigations have focused upon the extent and role of social media platforms at dark tourism sites (with the exception of Johnston 2016). However, upon observation, the majority of dark tourism organisations within the research have a social media presence, with both a website and Facebook profile.

Advances in technology allow relationships between buyers and sellers to be built online as seen through interacting with consumer generated content via social media (Gretzel 2006) and website marketing (Holloway 2004). This is particularly relevant for marketers when attempting to target specific markets such as special interest groups. In today's digital world many young adults communicate, develop relationships, play, and learn new things centred in a virtual context (Spero and Stone 2004). Therefore, marketers are being encouraged to adapt their practices to reflect emerging trends and allow more truthful bonds to be made between brands and consumers (Spero and Stone 2004). Consequently, these examples present a unique opportunity to investigate the tools and techniques utilised for marketing activities at dark tourism sites and attractions, the empirical findings of which are found here in Chapter Six.

When placed within a dark tourism context, marketing is seen as particularly contentious. Indeed, commercial endeavours such as retailing appear to evoke strong responses especially from the media. For example, the 9/11 Museum has been criticised for the selling of souvenirs at the site where victims still lie. Items such as mugs, hoodies and t-shirts are seen to trivialise the terror attack, with the gift shop being charged with 'crass commercialism' by families of the victims

(Phillip 2014). As a result, the museum was then forced to remove items from the gift shop. Likewise, the media are rarely positive in their journalistic reporting of dark tourism, the example above highlights the contentious decisions management and curators have to navigate through in an attempt to balance sensitivities. Indeed, managers will need to meet economical and organisational objectives, which may necessitate marketing and promotional activities.

Sather-Wagstaff (2011: 80) comments on criticisms made by scholars such as Cole (1999) and Beech (2000) together with the media, highlighting that this perspective rejects any form of entrepreneurial activity at any site associated with dark tourism, 'results in diminished social value and meaning, trivialization, and forgetting' and therefore cast as a negative practice. She singles out photographs and souvenirs as particularly contentious; construed by some as frivolous and trivializing activities. However, she argues that there is a disjuncture between commerce and commemoration and consumption of commodities should not imply that dark tourism experiences cannot be deeply meaningful for visitors. Rather, that tourism as a form of consumption can be culturally meaningful allowing engagement with the visual and material culture of tragic events. Indeed, the practices performed both on-site and off-site by visitors can act as a process of 'commemorative site-making'; whereby the act of photography and the photographs themselves are powerful visual material for making and evoking memories (Sather-Wagstaff: 113).

Very little is known about the relationship between marketing and dark tourism, specifically, types of marketing-related activities undertaken and the challenges associated with the marketing and promotion of dark tourism sites and attractions. However, one of the few empirical studies of retailing at dark tourism sites was conducted by Brown (2013) in her study of 'dark tourism shops'. As part of this study, three museums shops were contrasted within: The International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, The Imperial War Museum in London, and at Auschwitz-Birkenhau in Poland. She noted how these shops are extensions of the interpretive work at dark tourism sites and attractions, fraught with issues relating to taste and decency. Moreover, her findings revealed the tensions between the competing aims of the shops, ideologically as well as economically. She argued that ultimately it appeared that profit was high on the agenda in the dark tourism shops sampled. This study highlights complex ethical decision-making which

takes place at dark tourism sites and attractions within contested political, economic, and social arenas. A discussion on ethical decision-making at the sites sampled can be found in Chapter Six.

Consequently, taking into account all these considerations, is it ethical to develop, market, or offer such sites for touristic consumption? (Sharpley and Stone 2009). Key questions for managerial consideration include decisions over development of sites associated with dark tourism, elements of commercialisation; for example whether financial transactions should be allowed, and if so, who should benefit? Also, if commercialism is introduced, how should it be achieved? These claims of engaging in overtly commercial activities at sites associated with death, disaster, or suffering inevitably affect key managerial decisions such as key concepts associated with this research; namely, innovation, marketing, and visitor interpretation.

3.4. Visitor Interpretation

Arguably, a key component of any touristic experience is interpretation, which is viewed as a vital experiential factor (White and Frew 2013) responsible for the navigation between place, items, and history, and the related meaning(s) engraved within the tourist (Stone and Sharpley 2009). Linked with marketing activities, interpretation is a key management operation in tourism-based organisations. A significant number of studies have considered the aspect of interpretation at sites that deal with sensitive issues (Beech 2000; Miles 2002; Wight and Lennon 2007; Lisle 2004; Tumarkin 2005) both in terms of the manner in which they are presented and the information they convey. Dark tourism offers the opportunity to write, or rewrite, histories and provide political interpretations of the past (Sharpley and Stone 2009). However, of central importance is how sites associated with death can be sensitively represented and interpreted to ensure visitors show respect for the victims and avoid glorifying perpetrators of crime (White and Frew 2013). The majority of studies feature an interpretive/dissonance stance, indicative of the heavy influence of heritage studies within supply-side dark tourism research activity, which largely focus on the attempts to (re)present a balanced, sensitive narrative for visitor consumption.

Following an interpretive/dissonance theme, an important consideration recognised by Seaton (2009:96) is the need for management to realistically assess the competing needs for different people. Seaton (2009) views dark tourism spaces as 'polysemic entities,' which have different meanings for different people. He draws on a 'heritage force field' model to help analyse what groups are likely to be sensitive to and affected by at dark tourism sites and attractions. This model (see Appendix I) was first introduced in relation to slavery heritage management (Seaton 2001) and guides managers to issues and conflicts emphasising consultation between the four main stakeholders as vital in initiating and maintaining dark tourism. Moreover, Seaton (2001) suggests the media as an additional influencing fifth group who also need to be effectively managed and involved in order to portray the correct messages. This is a key aspect as outlined here in Chapter Six, particularly when related to dark tourism, subjected to critical investigation from the media. This model helps to formulate typologies of stakeholders and help to identify their needs, but as a purely theoretical proposition may not accurately transfer into a practitioner setting.

In a similar vein, Poira (2001; 2007) emphasises the need for interpretation to address a new narrative for sites linking between the event concerned and stakeholders' feelings and degree of involvement. According to Poira (2001; 2007) combining these can lead to four 'stakeholder histories': *good active history*: past actions undertaken by 'my' social group which inspire positive feelings; *good passive history*: past actions not undertaken by 'my' social group, but from which they have derived benefits; *bad active history*: past actions undertaken by 'my' social group which inspire negative feelings; *bad passive history*: past actions not undertaken by 'my' social group which inspire negative feelings. The 'new' narrative should embrace all of these histories within interpretation.

Drawing on Seaton's model of a 'heritage force field' and Poira's concept of 'stakeholder histories', Sharpley (2009) put forward a 'Model of Governance' based on a constant, progressive process of stakeholder identification, the identification of each stakeholder history and the negotiated writing/re-writing of the site narrative. Sharpley (2009) suggests that the model offers a framework in an attempt to reduce the degrees of dissonance and is an iterative process; as new knowledge emerges or as political/cultural contexts evolve. The focus of the

model is a recognition of each history, rather than giving each history equal significance. However, caution is advised when attempting to translate governance into management, which are different conceptualisations.

Similarly, in an effort to balance conflicted histories, Seaton (2009) takes a taxonomical approach in outlining four different types of dark tourism sites and attractions (Appendix II) classified according to their 'origins' and 'beginnings' with suggested managerial 'actions', building on Said's (1975) work in post-colonialism. According to Seaton (2009) the reactive/proactive managerial planning approach stresses that consultation and participation with stakeholders are essential conduits to successful management. This raises an interesting point regarding different managerial 'actions' according to the origin(s) of the site associated with dark tourism and certainly a consideration when attempting to classify sites and attractions. For example, a purpose built dark tourism site or attraction may have differing, although no less significant, managerial challenges when compared to sites of non-touristic origins such as cemeteries.

All the above models and frameworks which lean on the dissonant heritage theme, can be useful particularly when considering sites of significant human impact, represented for example by sites of mass atrocity. However, as the literature reports a wide range of diverse sites as constituents associated with dark tourism, smaller sites of less human significance such as those based on more entertainment purposes may be overlooked. Moreover, the models and frameworks proposed within the literature are unfortunately conceptual undertakings, rather than based on empirical evidence to offer any precise theoretical grounding. Specific questions which remain unanswered by empirical investigations include how these theories may be put into practice. For example, all dark tourism sites and attractions will arguably have some form of narrative framed as stories with key messages to (re)present death, disaster, and suffering.

An empirical study undertaken by Strange and Kempa (2003) contrasted the interpretation of Robben Island's and Alcatraz's penal histories. Interestingly, within the programme of interpretation, they highlight specific measures that were incorporated to control visitor behaviour. This notion has been commented upon within the literature where measures to restrict or control access to some sites, for example where the famous dead are buried (Sharpley and Stone 2009). For example, Highgate Cemetery insists that visitors do not explore parts of the

cemetery unaccompanied. In addition, Strange and Kempa (2003) also compared the design of the penal institutions, arguing that cultural and political agendas surround the site, which affect the 'memory managers' who desire to interpret the sensitive past of both sites. Interestingly, the penal histories of both sites in their study had adapted over time due to the intervention of external stakeholders and storytellers, as well as the pressures of audience expectations which had shaped and reshaped distinctive interpretive frameworks. This example highlights the power of story-telling within sites and attractions, which is often fluid, resulting in continued demands on managers to be flexible, adapting to changes in the narrative as well as political, organisational, and social pressures.

Management issues in sites of genocide are highlighted by Hohenhaus (2013) in his recent empirical study in Rwanda. Upon visiting six major memorial sites, he reports several changes in management policy such as the provision of guided tours in English, seen as a gesture towards accommodating international visitors. In addition, similar to Strange and Kempa's (2003) study of penal sites, measures such as a 'no photography' rule were also introduced at the majority of memorial sites in Rwanda. Measures to manage visitors highlight the sensitivities surrounding visitor behaviour as well as anxieties over (re)presenting sensitive material. Specifically noted by Hohenhaus (2013) is the display of human remains, which he states is a particularly controversial element. The bodies on exhibition at Murambi are seen as especially problematic for Westerners. This is due to the perceived 'sequestration of death', where 'death has been removed from the public sphere and located instead in the private world of the individual' (Howarth 2007: 23-24), who are thus disturbed by such encounters with the dead. However, displaying the body is defended as a necessary measure in order to prevent genocide denial within Rwanda. Hohenhaus (2013) adds that the site management decisions in this regard have been made with the local population and local/national policies in mind rather than for foreign visitors. These empirical studies emphasise the controversies over design as well as the meaning and narrative which continue to shape and influence many dark tourism sites and attractions.

The quest to provide balanced and accurate interpretation may include aspects of 'authenticity,' a preoccupation both of academics and industry practitioners

alike. Deemed as 'traditional culture and origin; a sense of the genuine, the real or the unique' (Sharpley 1999:189), the concept is seen as an essential factor for visitors that seek 'genuine' experiences. Sharpley and Stone (2008) advocate that dark tourism sites and attractions should strive for authenticity because of their essential ingredients that engender empathy. This notion has been described as 'hot interpretation', a means of delivering messages by evoking sympathy and empathy from the visitor Uzzell (1989). Certainly Tilden (1977) argues that interpretation should not only provide information, but *should* provoke those being informed. Provoking an emotion may be critical for sites and attractions that are associated with social justice; for example, to transfer empathy into activism. This concept recognises the emotional component of interpretation rather than as a purely cognitive experience. These suggestions therefore add further credence to the role of emotion from both demand and supply perspectives.

In some instances, providing an authentic experience may result in the absence of any tools or techniques to interpret traumatic histories. Dalton (2015) comments that empty spaces of former atrocity can still provide powerful staging grounds by using imagination and memory in providing a sense-making experience. This solidifies the role of emotion behind each dark tourism encounter. Demand-side studies have recently sought to explore emotional responses to dark tourism encounters resulting in a number of aforementioned studies (cf. Section 2.2.1). Notwithstanding the comprehensive collection of works by Picard and Robinson (2012) as well as pivotal works by Uzzell & Ballantyne (1998) (which are again, based within heritage studies), wider empirical research is required to investigate the role and practice of 'hot interpretation' by practitioners from a supply-side perspective.

Providing authentic experiences has a specific resonance for interpretative strategies that are numinous (Paine 2000), auratic (Seaton 2009), or dissonant (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996) in character. The significance has been amply discussed by scholars such as Sharpley and Stone (2009), Williams (2007) and MacCannell (1989). Cohen (2011) argues that the dichotomy between actual sites and associated sites within dark tourism – a distinction proposed by Miles (2002) (cf. Section 2.2.1), is not deemed suitable to adequately describe authenticity in dark tourism. He proposes a new term '*in populo'* to describe sites

which embody and emphasise the story of the people behind events. It has been suggested that academic attention should be paid to the process of authentication of sites - how and why they are deemed authentic by visitors (Xie and Wall 2008). Indeed, this information naturally is of prime importance also to practitioners working within dark tourism sites and attractions. However, the concept may be conceptualised differently both from and within demand and supply perspectives according to the nature of the site or attraction.

Some interpretive experiences may also include the use of a guide to develop an understanding of the history, events, and people associated with the site. A number of studies have emerged within the literature focusing on the tour guide as a function of the interpretive experience. Poira et al (2006) suggests that tour guides are looked upon as information providers or site interpreters. Cohen (1985:183) suggests two types of guide: the '*pathfinder*' and '*the mentor*' and in later research (Cohen et al 2002:920) the concept of '*madrich*' referring to an informal leader facilitating discussions, thus enabling more interactive experiences (Reisinger and Steiner 2006). However, although important in constructing the tourism experience, some tour guides may have their own agenda and there is evidence according to Causevic and Lynch (2011) that tour guiding discourses can be used for political purposes. Naturally, discourses and narratives will vary according to the tourism site in question. Tour guides may also take on specific roles, such as peace activists or 'peace guides' as demonstrated by Suzuki (2012) in his study at Okinawa's Battle Ruins in Japan. He notes that guides attempt to form an 'activism bubble' within which visitors can develop an active learning community with a critical awareness of militarised realisms of the past and present.

Dark tourism has also been discussed in terms of its 'theatricality'. Rojek (1993) identifies dark tourism as a place-bound spectacle that requires actors, thus requiring theories of performativity in tourism to explain this phenomenon. Whether this approach is appropriate for dark tourism is a debate found within the literature (Chan 2009; Richards 2001). Willis (2014) explores how the role of theatricality can be utilised to connect with those 'absent others' often seen as having muted histories, through creativity and compassion. This emerging body of work primarily grounded in the humanities (not only academic works but arts based too – see performance work *Dark Visitors,* New Zealand 2008) seeks to

situate dark tourism as a staging ground to not only give the dead an affective presence, but also explore aesthetic relationships and wider social and political aspects of contemporary spectatorship (Willis 2014). This provides an interesting aspect when related to dark tourism sites and attractions.

Although these interpretive studies are insightful, the interpretive focus within the dark tourism literature is dominated by the aspect of dissonance, rather than how the narrative can help to construct meaning within organisations. Dark tourism sites and attractions convey powerful messages and contain a rich narrative; therefore, studies surrounding storytelling organisations can provide some insight into how narratives are constructed and the potential effect upon stakeholders. A number of these studies are located within the organisational studies literature (Langer and Thorup 2006; Denning 2006; Mittings et al 2011). However, the focus of storytelling within organisations in these studies leans towards the internal influence of the narrative on the organisation, for example the stories that are constructed as an organisation, rather than an external theme and the effect the narrative can have on the wider environment such as the visitor experience.

This research is firmly positioned from a managerial perspective with a central aim to uncover issues and challenges faced by managers with dark tourism sites and attractions. Therefore, a key consideration relates to how managers attempt to navigate challenges and concerns, which as previously stated, have been strongly expressed (Dann 1994; MacCannell 1999; Lennon and Foley 2000; Pagliari 2004; Cole 2000). However, these concerns have not yet been empirically tested, resulting in a level of uncertainty around the effect of dark tourism upon the visitor. Indeed, it is almost impossible to ascertain how moral and social norms have been transgressed without any hard evidence. Akin to the diverse range of motivations for the consumption of dark tourism, responses to dark tourism experience are equally diverse. Therefore, acknowledging these concerns in the absence of understanding evidence, an uncertainty is how can managers proceed 'responsibly' under such conditions? (Collindridge 1980). Responsibility is a social ascription that changes and evolves, which in part reflects changing norms and nature of society (Owen et al 2013). Of course, formal processes of ethical review and codes of conduct exist generally for research and innovation, but only in very narrow contexts (Owen et al 2013). Furthermore, no formal legislation exists covering ethical issues relating to dark

tourism sites and attractions, rather, guidance is offered to management, outlined by principles such as those suggested by the Museums Association's Code of Ethics (1977), recently revised in 2015. The current Code of Ethics and Conduct guides museum practice and covers three areas: public engagement and public benefit; stewardship of collections; and individual and institutional integrity. When joining the Museums Association, members agree to uphold, promote and abide by this Code of Ethics in spirit and in letter.

Outside of these specific guidelines for museums, tourism businesses may opt to create their own ethical programs or embed ethical principles within their business strategy to address concerns in the supply chain, the local community (in the tourism destination), within the organisation, and visitors. One such initiative includes Marriott International who have adopted a business ethics awareness programme to provide employees with the tools to identify potential ethical and compliance issues. In addition, the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) devised and adopted a global code of ethics for tourism, designed to minimise the negative effects of tourism activity on destinations and local communities. As demonstrated therefore, with no formalised and universal legislative structure available for organisations operating as dark tourism enterprises and those not governed by the Human Tissue Act 2004, organisations may act upon codes of moral and civic duty outside of any recognised framework. Consequently, although a framework does not exist of ethical procedures within the literature (with the exception of conceptual heritage models relating to interpretation), this research aims to reveal the processes and decision-making reported by managers. The empirical findings associated with ethical practices processes as reported by respondents can be found in Chapters Six and Seven.

3.5. Summary

Dark tourism and management concepts are contentious issues, namely due to the sensitivities tied in with the nature of gaining economic benefits from dark tourist sites and attractions. To explore this nexus, it is imperative to reveal the issues and challenges faced by managers in these settings. As the review of the literature reveals, scholarly focus relating to innovation, marketing, and visitor interpretation, is directed towards the representation of contested matter rather than research into broader managerial and operational activities across dark tourism sites and attractions.

Furthermore, the tourism innovation literature is still in its infancy when compared to the wider traditional literature on innovation and requires further empirical evidence regarding the specific drivers and barriers to innovating within tourism-based organisations. This is in stark contrast to the engagement with practices of innovation within the wider innovation literature where a wealth of research has been undertaken. Similarly, the processes of tourism innovation receive less attention when compared to typologies of innovation. Moreover, there are concerns regarding the applicability and transference of ideas and theories founded outside of the tourism sector due to the specific characteristics defining the tourism sector. However, similar to the wider innovation literature, technological innovations specifically, technological process innovations have received particular attention from service innovation and tourism innovation scholars, denoting a focus on the visitor experience and service quality. This denotes that although innovation is a vital component within the management of dark tourist organisations, the creation and adoption of innovation within these organisations is challenging and complex.

Specifically, there are very few direct, overt studies on innovation and dark tourism. This is contrary to the wide number of studies conducted on marketing, visitor interpretation in the wider management literature. Indeed, innovation is viewed as an elusive concept (Hall and Williams 2008) and the concept of dark tourism is complex and multi-faceted (Stone 2006). In particular, little research has been conducted on dark tourism innovation as to the scale, effect, and process of adopting innovation(s) within dark tourism sites and attractions. Likewise, no empirical evidence exists on the practices of marketing at these sites, for example the marketing tools employed at organisations and the issues and challenges faced by managers when attempting to balance sensitivities. In particular, evidence is lacking about the extent of marketing strategies and marketing activities undertaken/employed at dark tourism organisations. A review of the literature reveals some attempt at exploring retailing within dark tourism organisations, an anxiety highlighted in the media (Phillip 2014). Furthermore, consideration has not been given to wider influences such as the role of the media when attempting to promote sites and attractions and the use of technology when offering dark tourism experiences.

These significant gaps identified in the literature therefore, form the rationale behind the research, highlighting the scant attention towards dark tourism research from business and management perspectives particularly in respect of practices and perceptions of innovation, marketing, and visitor interpretation. These gaps are surprising however, given that dark tourism businesses are subject to the same pressures as tourism-based organisations in terms of economic and organisational goals. The lack of application is suggested as due to business management principles contrasting with sensitivities and ethical concerns surrounding dark tourism, particularly in relation to commercialisation. At present, no formal legislation exists covering ethical issues relating to dark tourism sites and attractions; rather, guidance is offered to management. This presents a unique opportunity to explore the ethical decision-making that is undertaken within dark tourism organisations concerning balancing sensitivities whilst addressing organisational outcomes.

Therefore, it is evident that further empirical research is required to develop knowledge relating to management within dark tourism organisations where significant gaps are identified. In order to address these gaps, it is essential that the correct research methods are identified and adopted to collect high-quality data to answer the research aim and objectives of the study, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

'In God we trust, all others bring data'.

(Dr W. Edwards Deming 1900-1993)

4.1. Introduction

The review of the literature in the previous two chapters has established the conceptual context of this research by providing an overview of the relevant bodies of knowledge of dark tourism and management. This chapter will now illustrate how ideas from the literature can be operationalised to generate insight into the complex relationship between specific management concepts at sites and attractions associated with dark tourism. Consequently, this chapter discusses the research philosophy, methodology, and research methods utilised in order to address the aim and objectives of the research outlined in Chapter One (cf. Figure 1.1). It is imperative to provide justification for the choice of research philosophy, research methodology, and research methods to address the research aim and objectives, as these choices will ultimately dictate the type of data and subsequent knowledge generated. This research adopts an inductive, pragmatic research philosophy using qualitative telephone interviewing as the most suitable method for this study to collect data from senior managers at 23 dark tourism sites. The strengths of telephone interviewing have been highlighted within the literature (Sturges and Hanrahan 2004; Novick 2008), particularly when interviewing senior management (Harvey 2010), and is a particular practical consideration when the sample is geographically spread, as these are within this research. Qualitative approaches are widely adopted within dark tourism research (Wight 2006) where the majority of studies adopt an ideographic case study approach rather than wider samples for exploration. Therefore, an opportunity is provided to conduct research on a wider sample of dark tourism sites and attractions, a key methodological factor in this research.

The chapter commences by outlining the key principles which govern the research beginning with an explanation of the philosophical stance which underpins the study, a pragmatic approach. This approach entitles the researcher

to explore actions and experiences without the constraints of adhering to one system of beliefs and reality – key tenets of this philosophy. A discussion follows relating to the quality criteria which governs the research to ensure rigour; in particular, the centrality of research ethics where steps are outlined to comply with relevant academic and professional ethical guidelines. The rationale behind the research methodology and design is provided including the selection of method of data collection, in particular the reasoning behind using semi-structured telephone interviews to collect data on managers at dark tourism sites and attractions. Specific consideration is placed upon the justification of sampling strategy and sample size in order to provide a profile of demographic characteristics of the respondents in the sample. The following section then outlines the fieldwork stage including how access was negotiated, including a brief discussion on factors considered when interviewing 'elites' – regarded as the subject group. This section also includes information relating to the interview protocol and the piloting exercise undertaken, prior to the main interview programme.

The final sections of the chapter explain how the data was captured and analysed including the resources required to complete these tasks. The chapter concludes on a reflexive note by documenting the research experience, encapsulated as 'emotional methodologies'. This piece has been included to highlight important methodological considerations when conducting research on sensitive issues and outlines the process and impact of the research on the researcher. The following section proceeds with a discussion on the principles guiding the research, governing all decisions associated with the research process.

4.2. The Governing Principles of this Research

This research arises from a simple, yet fundamental interest in the management of dark tourism sites and attractions, which is currently under-researched. This section outlines the governing principles underpinning the research to demonstrate transparency and rigour in the research process.

Social research does not take place in a vacuum. Methods of research are closely aligned to different visions of the nature of social reality and how it should be studied. Prior to the design of any research, considerations must be made of the philosophical assumptions which underpin any study. The choice of paradigm

provides a framework on how research should be conducted setting out the intent, motivation, and expectations for the research (Mackenzie and Knipe 2006). In this research, neither a positivist paradigm, interpretivist paradigm, nor realist paradigm are deemed as suitable approaches to adopt for the nature of this study to generate fresh insights into real life issues and problems within the management of dark tourism sites and attractions. As this research is aimed at managers' processes and experiences, with a focus on the centrality of the research aim and objectives, the underpinning research philosophy adopted for this research is pragmatism, which will now be discussed.

4.2.1. Pragmatism

Pragmatism originated in the writings of American philosophers such as William James and John Dewey (Collis and Hussey 2014). This perspective is seen as valuable in management research due to the focus on processes, problem solving, and the lived experience of individuals. It is important to note here that there are a number of pragmatic views and criticisms of these views, for instance Bertrand Russell's critique of William James who argued that there could be a distinction made between a statement that something exists and the utility of believing that something exists. However, a key advantage of adopting this approach is that although pragmatism is often associated with mixed methods research, pragmatism does not require a particular method or methods mix and does not exclude others. As Morgan (2014) argues, there is no deterministic link within any paradigm with respect to the choice of research methods. Pragmatism does not expect to find unvarying causal links or truths, but aims to interrogate a particular question, theory, or phenomenon with the most appropriate research method (Feilzer 2010). Therefore, this approach can lend itself easily to qualitative research, the approach undertaken within this research.

The adoption of this approach offers the advantage of the researcher being less constrained by a single paradigm with no commitment to any one system of belief and reality. However, this is not to suggest that pragmatism is a crude 'anything goes' stance, which is a perennial argument used against this approach (Morgan 2014). Rather, regardless of whether research uses a single method or mixed methods, pragmatism can serve as a philosophical programme (Morgan 2014) with a move away from debates merely on its technical application towards an understanding of pragmatism as a valuable paradigm for social research.

It is important to state that, although pragmatism is distinguished from the more dominant philosophical approaches within the social sciences by the absence of reliance on metaphysical assumptions, it does however recognise the value of those different approaches that guide choices for researchers about how to conduct research (Morgan 2014). Thus, as Morgan (2014) asserts, pragmatism can act as a new paradigm to replace 'older' ways of thinking about abstract philosophical differences. However, this statement is likely to cause hot debate amongst scholars who demand that pragmatism pay attention to metaphysics in understanding social research.

In tourism studies, pragmatism as a philosophical foundation to research is gaining momentum, previously dominated by more positivist approaches utilising quantitative studies associated with the collection and maintenance of data sets (Saunders et al 2012). Likewise, the interpretive stance is well established within tourism research with the use of more qualitative approaches, although are more recent undertakings in the last decade. However, calls have been made by scholars for more methodological diversity, and pragmatism has positioned itself as a contending paradigm to the prevailing positivist and interpretivist paradigms.

Pragmatism concentrates on beliefs that are more directly connected to actions (Morgan 2014) and focuses on experiences. Reason and Bradbury (2001:2) argue that pragmatist philosophy is also known as 'action research' to produce '*practical knowledge that is useful to people in the everyday conduct of their life*'. Consequently, pragmatism was chosen as a research philosophy as this research explores reported actions and experiences of managers at dark tourism sites and attractions, using language to frame their practices and how this is understood in an interview setting. This is particularly relevant when exploring how managers balance the decisions that they make with conflicting interests and how this is observed by the researcher. Therefore, it is necessary to gain an understanding of human problem-solving, rather than seeking truth or reality-founding principles of pragmatism. Furthermore, managers may have varying perceptions of their practices, which can only be observed through the researcher's acknowledgement of the existence of multiple realities and interpretations of the world rather than adherence to one single belief system. Moreover, the 'practical knowledge' generated by the research of managers' experiences and complex decision-making will offer a crucial insight into

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management practices and perceptions applicable both across the dark tourism sector and wider business community. The next section will now explain the guiding principles underpinning the research.

4.2.2. Quality Criteria

In order to demonstrate that the research was designed and conducted to ensure rigour, various quality criteria were adopted. A great deal of attention is applied to precision in all research methods, as without rigour, research is worthless and loses its utility (Morse et al 2002). There has also been some intense discussion amongst qualitative researchers, concerning the relevance and applicability of reliability and validity for qualitative research. Some writers suggest that qualitative research should be evaluated according to alternative criteria to move away from the ideas of measurement and standards underpinning reliability and validity (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Guba and Lincoln 1994). Advocates include Lincoln and Guba (1985) whose additional criterion contains trustworthiness and authenticity, and Yardley's (2000) evaluative criteria. Although Yardley (2000) compiled these criteria in a health setting, these principals can be adapted for management research. These principles are more suited to this research given the emphasis on ethical issues within the context of dark tourism and the necessity for reflexivity over standardised measures of rigour more akin to quantitative conventions. Therefore, how this research was designed and conducted to adhere to quality criterion is demonstrated on the following Table 4.1 using a framework suggested by Yardley (2000). However, it is unclear which ontological standpoint Yardley (2000) adopts when formulating these criteria, which may change the application of these conceptualisations somewhat. Nevertheless, this framework was deemed relevant when selecting quality criteria to cover the main quality standards associated with this research.

The final guiding principle governing the research relates to ethical considerations connected to the research, a vital consideration to ensure an effective duty of care is allocated to all stakeholders throughout the research process.

Table 4.1. Research Quality Evidence

Criterion	Quality Evidence
1. **Sensitivity to Context**	Thorough review of the literature to understand context, sensitivity to linguistic and dialogic contexts, recognition of researcher effects and status on respondents and consideration of balance of power within interview settings. Ethical issues identified and actioned upon.
2. **Commitment and Rigour**	In-depth engagement with the topic, thorough data collection procedure, competence in methodological skills, effective performance and depth of analysis and interpretation.
3. **Transparency and Coherence**	Clarity and coherence of argument, quality of narrative, appropriateness of research philosophy, methodology, and method. Detailing of every aspect within research process which is fully disclosed within thesis (reflexivity).
4. **Impact and Importance**	Value of research a) academic contribution – adding to current knowledge in the literature – theoretical worth b) Industry – information and guidance for practitioners in dark touristic settings and wider tourism and business communities. Closer fit between academic and industrial perspectives.

Source: Author, adapted from Yardley 2000

4.2.3. Research Ethics

Considering the evocative nature of the topic under investigation of death, disaster, and suffering, ethical issues were a key feature of this research. The focus on research ethics refers to the standards of behaviour guiding conduct in relation to the rights of respondents and those affected by the research (Saunders et al 2012). This does not refer solely to data collection stages. As the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) states in their current guidelines (2017), ethical issues need to be considered throughout the lifecycle of a research project which includes all preparatory stages and activities on completion of the study such as archival of data and dissemination of results.

The empirical design of this study was approved by the University of Exeter's *Research Ethics Committee* in July 2014. As this research is funded by the

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) the researcher followed their specific Research Ethics Framework to inform a code of practice for ethics and accountability, abiding also by the University of Exeter's internal ethics policy. These provided an ethical basis on which to anticipate issues and risks, exercising choice to avoid conflict and harm. These guiding principals were applied to the research context of dark tourism, as aforementioned, a contentious subject for some and a topic which has the potential to illicit highly charged emotions.

Within the *ESRC Framework for Research Ethics,* one guiding principal advocates that 'researchers should aim to maximise the benefit of the research and minimise potential risk of harm to respondents and researchers'. This latter point became a guiding rule in the ethical conduct of this study, which involved both a great deal of sensitivity and respect for senior management during the research process, in particular during the data collection stage. The researcher had to consider carefully the possibility that the research experience may be, at least, an emotional experience for both the researched and the researcher and at worst, a disturbing one with the potential to cause distress.

Meticulous plans were implemented in order to identify and action any potential ethical issues throughout the course of the research. This process has been documented and can be found in Appendix V. These issues identified as part of this research process sit alongside the most commonly identified issues as outlined by Saunders et al (2012). These common issues fit into broad categories of: integrity and objectivity, respect, avoidance of harm, privacy, voluntary participation, right to withdraw, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, responsibility in analysing and reporting, and data management compliance and safety (Saunders et al 2012). Therefore, although processes were documented and careful consideration was given to a number of issues, acknowledgement was given that the research was taking place in a dynamic, real-world situation and could therefore be subject to many unforeseen issues and opportunities.

The prevailing issue concerned sensitivities around the subject area and potential for emotional distress particularly when re-living traumatic events and discussions relating to death, disaster, and suffering; for example, considerations including how to probe respondents to encourage exploration of a point without causing distress. Although this issue had been forecast it was difficult to ascertain

effects until the data collection period was well underway. Within the research setting, if a strong emotional reaction was generated, the interview was paused for the respondent (and researcher in some cases) to regain composure, reassuring the respondent in order to ascertain whether the interview should continue. However, there were no instances where an interview was terminated throughout this stage of the research process.

In order to comply with data protection legislation and to help clarify the boundaries of consent specifically alongside issues of confidentiality, anonymity was extended to all respondents and the data was conducted on a confidential basis (Appendix V). For example, respondents could be identified through the mention of certain exhibitions or events that are associated with the site. Likewise, certain legislation may identify sites particularly if covered by the Human Tissue Act (2004), constituting a small number of sites in the sample. Therefore, in both of these instances, care was taken to anonymise any identifying features.

4.3. Selection of Data Collection Methods

A principle concern in any research is choosing the appropriate research method(s) to answer research questions as well as address research aim and objectives effectively, whilst ensuring rigour. As previously outlined, pragmatism places 'the research problem' as central. This centrality, according to the aims and objectives of this research, denotes the use of an exploratory tool to understand the realities of management within the context of dark tourism. Therefore, it is both logical and necessary to adopt an approach that facilitates an understanding of the social world of each individual manager to make sense of their experiences. Each manager will have different views of their managerial practices, therefore, it is important to understand these views as they provide access to the structures of meaning that construct their perception of reality. Furthermore, the research sets out to uncover and understand each manager's professional experiences and insights in the context of dark tourism, which requires unrestricted space and freedom. An explorative, inductive approach enables the researcher to identify multiple insights and layers of meaning, probing different lines of enquiry that cannot be uncovered through rigorous measurement. Rather than attempting to explain phenomena under any pre-determined frameworks associated with deductive approaches, an exploratory,

inductive approach empowers the researcher to get a 'feel' of what is going on to better understand the nature of a problem (Saunders et al 2012). Hence, selecting an inductive, exploratory approach with a focus on sense-making, meaning, and action (Smith et al 2009) required the adoption of a qualitative methodology rather than a more quantitative method associated with the emphasis on measurement and objectivity (Bryman and Bell 2015).

A range of modalities are available to the researcher to collect qualitative data, for instance, through language, observation, or interaction (Easterby-Smith 2012). However, semi-structured interviews were selected to offer flexibility by allowing room for managers to offer spontaneous descriptions and narratives when revealing their experiences (Brinkmann 2013). Furthermore, it was critical to develop rapport and trust, which can be facilitated by qualitative interviewing, particularly as this research is dealing with sensitive issues such as death, disaster, and suffering. A number of media are available for the qualitative researcher to conduct interviews such as face-to-face or via technological means. The medium selected for conducting the interviews with respondents was via telephone, which is now explained and discussed in the following section.

4.3.1. Telephone interviews

Telephone interviews are often depicted as a less attractive alternative to face-to-face interviewing and largely neglected in the qualitative research literature (Novick 2008). Yet, in management research, interviews via telephone offer significant benefits for researchers, such as easier access to respondents particularly when compared to face-to-face interviewing (Opdenakker 2006). More importantly, telephone interviews as a data collection method is both productive and a valid research option particularly when interviewing 'elites' such as senior management (Stephens 2007). There has been growing attention towards the role of elite members previously overlooked due to the historical leaning towards quantitative research in the social sciences (Harvey 2010). Although the term 'elites' is debateable due to changes in status in time and space, this term has been adopted within the research to describe business people who, at the time of the research, occupied senior management positions and were influential decision makers. These groups arguably can represent the position of the firm rather than on an individual basis, and can receive training on how to communicate their organisational activities (Harvey 2010). This is

particularly valuable when exploring organisational ethos, business models, and concepts such as innovation, as they hold valuable insights into organisations. As this research involved exploring these aspects in great detail, it was critical to gain access to key influencers able to make important decisions about these matters. A further discussion surrounding collecting data from elites can be found in Section 4.5.2.

Consequently, telephone interviews were selected as the most appropriate method for this research primarily due to three main factors; first, the flexibility offered, which is particularly important for elite members and may help to fully engage managers within the research (a major consideration for gaining access). Telephone interviewing can offer both managers and the researcher flexibility; they can be easily scheduled and re-arranged if necessary. Managers may also feel less committed as they do not have to host the researcher as in a face-to-face research setting. Second, another key advantage interviewing by telephone offers is when dealing with sensitive issues. Telephone interviews have been successfully utilised to generate information in a variety of research settings to explore sensitive issues such as depression (Allen et al 2003), substance abuse (Johnson and Hougland 1989), and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Aziz and Kenford 2004); and in management research, issues surrounding corporate responsibility (Miller 2001), disability in tourism (Shaw and Coles 2004), and exploring social impacts of tourism (Milman and Pizam 1988). In this research, it was felt that managers may feel relaxed and able to discuss sensitive issues with the interviewer not physically present; that is, to allow managers a level of emotional distance when discussing harrowing tales of brutality and violence. Furthermore, for practical reasons this method was also considered a preferred option, e.g. time and financial restrictions, as the respondents in this sample are spread over a wide geographic area.

The disadvantages of telephone interviews are related to body language being unobservable, which meant that it was not possible to see how managers responded physically to questions, thereby removing an important support to interpretation. In addition, Saunders et al (2012) argues that telephone interviews should only be used after trust between the researcher and respondents has been established. Consequently, in this research, an introductory email was sent out to invite managers to participate with follow-up calls to invite engagement in

the research to form a personable approach and build a relationship, rather than initial contact made by telephone.

The selection of an appropriate sample, a fundamental element within the design of the research, is vital to establish and assess research quality, therefore the sampling strategy is now discussed.

4.4. Sampling Strategy

To decide on the most appropriate sampling technique to employ within the research, attention was given first to the research aim and objectives as directed by a pragmatic philosophy. This not only provides a guideline of the types of units to be sampled, but also adheres to the philosophical and methodological orientations of the research. As this research is exploratory in nature and to give the greatest possible insight into managers' specific experiences, perceptions, and practices within dark tourism sites and attractions, it was decided that a non-probability sampling strategy should be employed. This is due to the fact that the population size and composition of dark tourism sites and attractions is not known, therefore no sampling frame is available to utilise a probability sampling strategy.

Discussions of sampling in qualitative research tend to revolve around non-probability strategies, in particular 'purposive' and 'snowball' sampling (Saunders et al 2012). Purposive sampling requires the researcher to sample to ensure a great deal of variety so that sample members differ from each other in terms of key characteristics relevant to the research question (Bryman and Bell 2015). Using a snowball sampling approach the researcher makes initial contact with people relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contacts with others. This type of sampling was not deemed appropriate, especially as the individuals to be interviewed within the sample sites were elites. It was felt that opportunity for snowballing would be dramatically reduced and necessitating considerable time if elite subjects needed to gain permission from their contacts first before they could pass on personal details to researchers. In addition, respondents may be unable and/or unwilling to provide contact details.

Therefore an a priori purposive sampling strategy was deemed the most appropriate strategy for site selection established at the outset of the research. The qualifying criteria required sites to have variation within the following aspects:

geographical location within the UK; (thematic) nature of site including a general representation of Stone's (2006) typology (see following section); type of organisation (public, private, charity); site type (e.g. museum, exhibition, memorial); number of employees; number of annual visitors; fee paying and non-fee paying, and opening date (for touristic or leisure consumption). A wide spectrum of sites and attractions that could be associated with dark tourism exist within the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland (the geographical setting of the research). Due to the problematic nature of defining these sites as belonging to the umbrella of dark tourism, a framework for guidance was initially required in order to assist with the sample selection process. Therefore, it was felt that some attempt should be made to broadly represent initial typologies of dark tourism suppliers as proposed by Stone (2006). However, upon closer inspection as shown in Table 4.2 below, 'dark conflict sites' pertaining to actual death sites associated with genocide, mercifully, do not exist in the United Kingdom. Although it is acknowledged that the UK does have indirect yet significant links with the Holocaust as highlighted by Shaw (2015) who cites examples of 'genocidal violence' and death sites, for example St Brice's Day and The Harrying of the North.

In addition, due to the temporal nature of 'dark shrines', it was also impossible to include this categorisation within the sample at the time of the research. However, a number of organisations feature within the remaining five categories, therefore efforts were made to include these for participation in the research. Outside of Stone's (2006) typologies, further sites were sought to mirror current dark tourism thematic classifications such as dark heritage e.g. castles, witchcraft, maritime disasters, and war related sites. As 'sites associated with war constitute the largest single category of tourist attractions in the world' (Smith 1996:248), attempts were also made to include a larger proportion of these to participate in the research and are included under the category of 'dark conflict sites'. This includes war museums as well as actual battle-sites. Table 4.2 demonstrates the number of sites included in the sample that align with Stone's (2006) classifications of dark suppliers. Although it is recognised that categorisations of dark tourism sites and attractions based on thematic nature can be subjective, the inclusion of a wide range of diverse characteristics provides maximum

variation necessary for the research. However, arguably all of these sites have a deep-rooted history of human suffering and trauma in one form or another.

Table 4.2. Sites Selected within the 'Seven Dark Suppliers' (Stone 2006)

Supplier	Description	Number of sites within the selected sample
1. Dark Fun Factories	Predominately have an entertainment focus presenting real or fictional death and macabre events.	1
2. Dark Exhibitions	Products which evolve around death which reflect educational or learning opportunities.	1
3. Dark Dungeons	Penal and criminal justice sites.	3
4. Dark Resting Places	Associated with cemeteries.	2
5. Dark Shrines	'Death markers', temporal and focal memorials.	N/A
6. Dark Conflict Sites	War and battlefield sites.	5
7. Dark Camps of Genocide	Actual mass death sites.	N/A

Source: Author

4.4.1 Sample Size

One of the problems that a researcher faces in qualitative research is establishing sample size and from the outset it was impossible to know how many interviews would be required to achieve saturation. Sample size for qualitative research is largely determined by data saturation, the point at which no new or relevant data is generated from the survey process (Bryman and Bell 2015). However, according to Warren (2002) and Morse (2004), the broader the scope of the study and the more comparisons between groups, the more interviews need to be carried out. Consequently, the issue of sample size in qualitative research is one of ambiguity. However, Saunders et al (2012) does provide some guidance dependent on the nature of study as shown in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3. Non-probability Sample Size Table

Nature of Study	Minimum Sample Size
Semi-structure/in-depth interviews	5-25
Ethnographic	35-36
Grounded theory	20-35
Considering a homogeneous population	4-12
Considering a heterogeneous population	**12-30**

Source: (Saunders et al 2012:283)

The population of interest in this study consists of dark tourism sites and attractions/organisations which are heterogeneous. Although they are all organisations by definition, their attributes can be wide ranging in terms of visitor numbers, size of site, and number of employees. Therefore, using this table based on these suggestions, a minimum sample size should fall within the region of five to thirty interviews to conduct. However, to provide further information, a review of the dark tourism literature examining sample sizes in qualitative research under this topic revealed sizes between one and fifty-five interviews. The main factor in determining sample size therefore was the heterogeneity of the population with Creswell (2012) adding that for a general study of this nature twenty-five to thirty would be appropriate. The 23 semi-structured interviews that were collected for this research, therefore, were deemed an appropriate sample for the purpose of this study.

4.4.2. Demographic Characteristics

A profile of respondents and associated organisations is found in Table 4.4 below. As this information demonstrates, varying attributes were taken into account in order that a suitable mix of characteristics were included within the sample. However, although a wide number of characteristics were sampled for, it was not possible to sample for all emerging themes present in the literature. In addition, a higher proportion of museums were included in the sample to reflect the predominance of war-related museums as a previously recognised dominant category (Smith 1996), which arguably induces some bias within the sample. One consideration was the inclusion of tour operators that offer tours to battle-sites and other locations associated with death, disaster, and suffering. However, on examination, these organisations revealed distinct business models and were therefore excluded from the sample. For example, attempts were made to select

walking tours associated with dark tourism, however the three organisations contacted all refused participation in the research. This was due to the management required for interview being heavily involved in the walking tours as practitioners, with the organisations contacted operating as sole owners.

Consequently, the sample consisted of a varied mix across a range of characteristics, reflecting the diversity and proliferation of dark tourism sites and attractions across the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. As illustrated in Table 4.4, the geographical mix of sites features urban, rural and coastal based sites including major cities (e.g. London, Bristol, Belfast, and Manchester), more rurally based locations (e.g. Newtownards, Northern Ireland) and coastal sites (e.g. Boscastle in Cornwall). The majority of sites selected feature museums comprising of both generic themes (war, criminal justice, slavery) and emerging themes developing within the literature (such as witchcraft and maritime disasters). Therefore, the constitution of the sample was as follows, museums (9), penal institutions (3), exhibitions (1), battle-site (1), historic castles (3), attractions (3), memorial (1), and cemeteries (2).

Publicly funded organisations constitute the largest proportion of sites (8), followed by charities (7), private establishments (6), and a minority of Crown sites (2). The bulk of the sites charged an entrance fee with the exception of local authority-led and independent museums alongside memorial sites. For those sites where an entrance fee was not requested, charges were made for guiding services or entrance to specific exhibitions, which in the sample, include a cemetery and former battle-site. The number of visitors that sites attracted ranged from the smallest at 200 visitors per annum at a museum formed within a working prison, to the largest visitor attracting site, a major London museum drawing over 6 million visitors per year at the time of interview. Unsurprisingly, the number of permanent employees housed at sites is closely connected to the number of visitors the sites can attract.

Table 4.4. Profile of Respondents and Dark Tourism Organisations

Manager ID	Gender	Location	Type of Site	Theme	Organisation type	No of employees (Perm)	No of annual visitors	Fee paying	Opening date
A	Female	Cornwall	Museum	Witchcraft	Private	4	50,000	Yes	1960
B	Male	Manchester	Museum	Egyptology	Public	60	420,000	No	1890
C	Male	Newcastle	Exhibition	Dead Body	Private	143	250,000	Yes	2000
D	Male	Cornwall	Penal Institution	Penal	Private	23	57,000	Yes	2004
E	Female	Leicestershire	Battle site	Conflict	Public	33	50,000	Partial	1970
F	Male	Portsmouth	Museum	Maritime	Charity	130	500,000	Yes	2013
G	Female	Staffordshire	Castle	Historic Site	Crown	50	85,000	Yes	2000
H	Male	Scotland	Penal Institution	Penal	Private	14	70,000	Yes	1989
I	Male	London	Cemetery	Cemetery	Charity	32	Unknown	Yes	1839
J	Male	London	Penal Institution	Penal	Public	1	200	No	2008
K	Female	Northern Ireland	Museum	War	Charity	12	36,000	Yes	1994
L	Male	Lancaster	Castle	Historic Site	Crown	15	50,000	Yes	2012
M	Female	Staffordshire	Memorial	War	Charity	50	250,000	No	1997
N	Male	Dorset	Museum	War	Charity	61	170,000	Yes	1947
O	Male	Northern Ireland	Attraction	Maritime	Charity	250	650,000	Yes	2012
P	Male	Portsmouth	Museum	War	Private	21	10,000	Yes	2013
Q	Female	Bristol	Cemetery	Cemetery	Public	13	26,000	Partial	1839
R	Male	London	Museum	Various	Public	1000	6.8 Million	No	1753
S	Female	Yorkshire	Castle	Historic Site	Public	11	66,000	Partial	1882
T	Female	Yorkshire	Museum	Workhouse & Criminal Justice	Public	143	16,000	Yes	1984
U	Female	York	Attraction	Entertainment	Private	40	Undisclosed	Yes	1986
V	Female	Liverpool	Museum	Slavery	Public	80	400,000	No	2007
W	Male	London	Attraction	Dark Heritage	Charity	290	2.85 Million	Yes	1851

Source: Author

When considering Miles' (2002) distinction of dark tourism sites and attractions, Table 4.5 below illustrates the type of site where *actual* death has occurred, compared to sites *associated* with death, disaster, and suffering within the research sample. As illustrated, sites and attractions associated with death, disaster, and suffering constituted the majority of the sample, rather than sites of actual death, of which six were included within the sample. The sites of actual death include death on battlefields, death by execution, or death associated with hard labour and poor conditions such as workhouses. In terms of the display of human remains, only three sites had the dead on display primarily within a museum setting, either as part of a collection within a large museum e.g. Egyptology section, or as a specific theme e.g. maritime tragedy. Although the majority of museums were not associated with sites of actual death, one museum was a former workhouse where death had occurred, classified below for the purpose of this illustration as a historical site.

Table 4.5. Profile of Sites – Death Related

Type of Site	Sites of Actual Death	Sites Associated with Death and/or Suffering	Display of Human Remains
Cemeteries		X	
Battle-sites	X		
Castles	X	X	
Historical site (former workhouse)	X		
Penal Institutions	X	X	
Museums		X	X
Attractions		X	
Exhibitions		X	X
Memorials		X	

Source: Author

It is also useful to distinguish between the number of purpose built tourism enterprises and those sites which had an original function diversified for touristic endeavours. This distinction is highlighted by Seaton (2009) when considering the origins and beginnings of dark tourism or thanatourism sites. These distinctions are particularly helpful when attempting to conceptualise dark tourism sites and attractions, specifically how this may impact upon classifications of sites

as proposed by Stone (2006). For example, those sites with different origins may have different perceptions and practices of operations within a dark tourism setting compared with sites designed for touristic purposes. In order to assess differences, the sites and attractions within the sample have been classified according to their origins as shown below.

As demonstrated in Table 4.6, the majority of sites featured a functional change from their original design (e.g. prisons, castles, historic sites). However, the two cemeteries operate as dual functions, namely, working cemeteries with an attached touristic element. Likewise, the battle-site featured within the sample houses a visitor centre on site, therefore demonstrating that there may be purpose-built elements, which can be temporary or permanent fixtures within sites of non-touristic origins.

Table 4.6. Origins and Beginnings of Dark Tourism Sites/Attractions

Type of site	Functional Change	Purpose built dark tourism site	Temporary dark tourism theme e.g. exhibition	Permanent dark tourism theme e.g. collection
Cemeteries	2		✓	
Battle-sites	1		✓	
Castles	3		✓	
Sites of suffering (workhouses etc.)	2		✓	
Penal Institutions	2		✓	
Museums			✓	8
Attractions		2		
Exhibitions		1	✓	
Heritage centres/Memorials		2		
Total	**10**	**5**		**8**

Source: Author

Expectedly, sites of original functions were long-established compared to sites built in the late 21st Century with the most recently built sites (e.g. new museums) within the sample recently constructed in 2013.

4.4.3. Respondent Profiles

In terms of respondent profiles, the ratio between male (13 managers) and female respondents (10 managers) was fairly balanced. However, the inclusion of more males and females even by a small margin could introduce some skew in the research. Respondents were drawn from a wide range of previous career backgrounds, some of which were aligned with their current job roles (e.g. heritage, tourism, education) and others that were seemingly un-associated (e.g. radio, art), although links can be made to job roles in the transference of skills. The majority of respondents had been in their current position for at least 5 years with one respondent serving 25 years as a general manager of an attraction in London. Only two respondents were new to their current role.

In terms of potential bias or skews within the dataset, not all sites were able or willing to provide their annual visitor numbers, therefore this data was missing in two cases within the dataset. Also, the majority of sites attracted a fee, which may exclude some visitors and consequently skew the dataset towards types of sites attracting specific demographics. Although the funding status of sites was closely balanced between public, private, and charities, there were only two Crown bodies in the sample, which may introduce some skews. However, it was impossible to ensure equal balance across all criteria for inclusion due to the lack of any framework within which to sample from.

In order to recruit the respondents, it was vital to secure access, which can be problematic and a time-consuming part of the research process. This will now be discussed in the following section.

4.5. Data Collection – Fieldwork

Following the sample selection, the next stage of the research involved the recruitment of respondents. This section includes information on the processes of data collection, outlining the issues and challenges that arose prior to and during the fieldwork period, such as negotiating access to respondents, interviewing 'elites' and the interview protocol. An internet-mediated technique for initial access was deemed more suitable for senior management as a more formal invitation to participate in the research process. Although a forecasted lengthy process, due to careful planning and meticulous detailing of the recruitment process, very few respondents refused to participate in the research. Of those respondents, the primary reason given for refusal to participate related to lack of

time or commitment to the research. Conversely, the research was positively received with a high level of engagement of respondents throughout and beyond the study.

Likewise, consideration was made in respect of issues that may be encountered whilst interviewing senior management, perceived as 'elites' within the research. Anticipating likely barriers and issues that may be encountered throughout the data collection process enabled effective plans to be formulated to minimise any respondent concerns and ensure a high level of continued engagement in the research. The factors associated with interviewing 'elites' also impacted upon the interview protocol; this is also discussed in section 4.5.3.

4.5.1. Negotiating Access

The process of negotiating access to secure participation in the research followed a number of procedures (see Appendix VII). Contact information of prospective respondents, including background information on each site, was generated from desk research on sites invited to participate. An official email invitation was designed providing an overview of the research, aim and objectives, suggested benefits from participation in the research, and relevant supporting documentation (Appendix IX). Initial recruitment requests were sent with follow up telephone calls made after 3 days from the preliminary email. This was considered sufficient time for potential participants to peruse the information in order to make an informed decision on whether to participate in the process.

A spreadsheet was designed to record the process of gaining access to respondents shown on Figure 4.1 below. As shown on Figure 4.1 this recorded the date of the primary email and following telephone call(s) over the recruiting process. Alternative contact details were given by the primary contact if another contact was considered more suitable to participate in the research, therefore requiring a record of further contact details and process of gaining access. An entry was made after each contact recording dates and names of potential respondents, whether a follow up call was required and outcome. Participation or non-participation was recorded and reasons for non-participating included for future reference. In total, out of 31 initial contacts made to organisations, only 8 organisations refused to participate. Information was also stored on background information and organisational structure to assist with communicating with

potential respondents. Therefore, following a systematic process to secure access as well as meticulous documentation of the process, 23 respondents were selected for inclusion in the research.

Figure 4.1. Contact Spreadsheet for Participation

Site Name	Contact Number	Contact 1	Contact 2	Contact 3	Outcome
XX	XX	31.7.14	Email sent to Diane 7.8.14	Forwarded onto manager 7.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 26.8.14		Follow up 30.8.14	Declined
XX	XX	31.7.14	David to call 11.8.14	Follow up 15.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	Call 1.9.14		Follow up 4.9.14	Interview
XX	XX	1.7.14	Called 25.7.14	Call again 29.7.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called 28.7.14	Follow up call 31.7.14 Carolyn	Interview
XX	XX	1.7.14	Kevin to call 4.7.14	Follow up Kevin 7.7.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 28.7.14	Follow up 1.8.14	Follow up 4.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 28.7.14	Left message 7.8.14	Manager called 7.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	14.8.14	Natalie (Marketing)	Follow up 18.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	1.7.14	Re-sent email 4.7.14	Follow up 7.7.14	Interview
XX	XX	7.8.14	Sent to PA Director	Follow up 11.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called 28.7.14	Follow up call 1.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called Dave 28.7.14	Follow up call 1.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	28.7.14	Janet (Ops)	Follow up Janet 2.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	28.7.14	Called Steven 30.7.14	Follow up Steven 4.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	4.8.14	Sent to CEO 8.8.14	Call 11.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	28.7.14	Contact Jim 5.8.14	Jim holiday - call after 15.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	7.8.14	Left message 10.8.14	Follow up 15.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called 28.7.14	Follow up 31.7.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called 30.7.14	Agreed	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called 31.7.14	Chris holiday call after 1.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called 28.7.14	Follow up 1.8.14	Interview
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called 30.7.14		Declined
XX	XX	Emailed 25.7.14	Called 28.7.14		Declined

Source: Author

4.5.2. Interviewing 'Elites'

A range of considerations were made in preparation for interviewing the elites in this research. Of course, many of these issues are not solely exclusive to this select group, but are applicable more widely. The biggest anticipated barrier was that of gaining access. McDowell (1998) states that the success of gaining access to elites depends on a great deal of serendipity and social networks as well as particular circumstances. As an external researcher with little or no contact with the sites selected for inclusion in the research, developing trust and access was always going to be a challenge. However, as Herod (1999) argues, being an 'outsider' can be an advantage. Indeed, a warm reception was received from elites in the research as they were keen to express their views on a topic which they viewed as poorly understood especially on a sector wide level.

Attention was also placed, prior to the interviewing process, on the suggested length of the interview (which was determined somewhat by the interview protocol). As Harvey (2011) notes, the literature on elites is not clear on how long is appropriate for conducting interviews. It was felt that asking for anything more than an hour, was unrealistic, therefore the request was for 30-45 minutes. The average length of the telephone interview was one hour with the shortest being forty minutes and the longest one hour twenty minutes. This perhaps reflects the level of interest in the topic and the style of the interview, where there was an avoidance of asking too many formulaic questions.

Researchers need to consider how to present themselves, gauging the atmosphere and adjusting their behaviour accordingly (Harvey 2011). This is particularly more challenging when interviewing by telephone rather than face-to-face. Assessment of the interview could be obtained through verbal clues only such as via tone, pauses and how the elites responded to questions. Consequently, throughout the interviewing process, shifts in position were undertaken to adjust to the style, atmosphere and pace of the interview. Similar to reports by McDowell (1998) the researcher shifted positions from 'extremely professional' with older patriarchal elites to 'sisterly' in some cases with female elites and 'superfast' with younger elites. It was important to project a positive impression and maintain flexibility not only to gain respect, but also to improve the quality of the responses. All respondents were offered a summary report of

the findings upon completion of the research project by way of reciprocity to bridge the gap between the researcher and the researched (Esterberg 2002).

4.5.3. Interview Protocol

As a semi-structured interview, questions were prepared in advance to encourage the respondents to talk about the main topics of interest whilst being flexible enough to develop other lines of enquiry throughout the course of the interviews (Collis and Hussy 2014). The researcher adopted the framework offered by Kvale (1996), whereby interviews included a specific combination of introducing questions, follow-up questions, probing questions, specifying questions, direct questions, indirect questions, and interpreting questions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted based on a template which was divided into five broad sections as an interview schedule (see Appendix X). The sections covered the topic areas associated with the research aim and objectives, namely: innovation, marketing, interpretation of sensitive materials, and the visitor base associated with the sites and attractions sampled. Questions formulated under these general sections were used for guidance only as areas for exploration, rather than strict administration of precise questioning.

The order of the interview schedule was given some attention prior to interview, shown in Appendix X. Harvey (2011) comments on the researcher being aware of the positionality of the respondents, using the appropriate language and being sensitive to the tone of the questions. Therefore, questions which may elicit emotional reactions were not placed at the beginning of the interview in order for rapport to have been built up prior to asking sensitive questions. Therefore, introductory questions were first asked relating to organisational factors followed by more complex questioning around innovation. Non-technical language was used and the researcher was mindful of adjusting the tone and positionality if necessary. To avoid respondents becoming tired and less detailed, each new section of questions was clearly defined (especially if changing topics) and a signal was given occasionally to state approximately the length of time the questions and/or the remaining interview would take. Questions which required longer and shorter responses were mixed up to avoid the respondent answering continual short or long questions.

Moreover, great consideration was given to the fit between the research questions and the interview protocol questions to deal with issues around

language. For example, the understanding by respondents of concepts such as 'innovation' and 'dark tourism'. The use of language, particularly the use of specific terms, is important in the 'sharedness of meanings' in which both the researcher and the respondent understand the context under different referents (Denzin and Lincoln 2000: 661). This fit of language is discussed in detail within Section 4.5.2 interviewing 'elites'. As previously mentioned, the concept of dark tourism is problematic, in terms of definition, with some debate as to the characteristics and features that comprise a dark tourism site. The term 'innovation' also generates confusion and lacks clarity within the literature; in particular, differences between academic conceptualisations of innovation and practitioner understandings of the term. However, ambiguity can offer the qualitative researcher the means of obtaining important data (Easterby-Smith et al 2012). Considerations were given at the research design stage, to not offer a definition of these concepts beforehand in order to explore perceptions and construction of the concepts from the respondent's perspective and to minimise bias in the research. These issues were explored in the pilot study (cf. Section 4.5.4), and both respondents recognised the term dark tourism and were happy to discuss the concept. However, the questioning around examples of innovation required some refining on initial interviewing, in terms of providing a loose framework in which to explore innovation practices within sites. It was felt that without some framework for direction in conceptualising concepts, there was a potential risk of respondents not fully engaging in the interview. Therefore, the line of enquiry was adapted slightly to suggest five broad categories of innovation according to Hjalager's (2010) typology (product, process, marketing, managerial, and institutional) to offer respondents a starting point for consideration when reporting examples. In the absence of any other appropriate framework that offered current classifications of types of innovations, Hjalager's categorisation was deemed the most appropriate to provide a framework for discussion.

4.5.4. Piloting

Currently in the literature there is very little guidance concerning whether interviewers should be encouraged to conduct piloting on elite members (Harvey 2010). Peabody et al (1990) suggests that researchers should pilot interviews to friends and colleagues before posing them to elite groups as they do not 'suffer

fools gladly' (Richards 1996: 201). The lack of encouragement may also be due to elite members having little time available. However, strongly encouraged within the social sciences and perhaps more synonymous with the design of questionnaires, pre-testing an interview can help determine if there are flaws, limitations, or other weaknesses within the interview design (Kvale, 2007). Considering the sensitive nature of the topic it was deemed vital to obtain feedback, in particular upon the wording and order of the questions as well as practical insights into the costs and time involved. Consequently, a pilot exercise was conducted with two senior managers at separate dark tourism sites and attractions as it was felt that the characteristics of the members of the piloting study should match those intending to participate in the implemented study; as suggested by Turner (2010). The first senior manager interviewed for the pilot exercise was a female senior manager based at a museum dedicated to the Holocaust who had been in post for over 20 years. The second respondent was a male senior manager based at a museum associated with World War II in Northern Ireland. The main feedback from the pilot studies was to make adjustments in relation to examples of 'innovation' where a framework was provided (cf. Section 4.5.3). Respondents in the pilot study did not take part in the main research, thus ensuring that the subsequent sample remained representative (Bryman 2008).

4.6. Data Capture and Analysis

In terms of conducting the interviews, scholars tend to disagree on whether interviews should be recorded (Harvey 2010). Byron (1993) argues that elite groups tend to be more relaxed and, as Peabody et al (1990) suggest, may even be inclined to talk more freely 'off the record' without a recording device. However, the main advantage of using a recording device is that once transcribed it provides a verbatim script of the interview and the researcher can focus more on engaging with the respondent (Richards 1996). In addition, a researcher can re-listen to the interview and audio-recording allows for direct quotes to be used (Saunders et al 2012). In this research, permission to record was sought both prior to the interview and immediately before proceeding with the interview. It was felt that this issue was less problematic as recording of the interviews took place using the telephone; thus, without the ominous physical presence of a recorder prevalent in face-to-face settings. All the interviews were recorded via the

telephone using the loud speaker setting and recorded with a separate audio-recording device.

To optimise the value from an interview and assist with analysis, where possible notes were taken during the interview. Taking notes whilst conducting an interview is quite challenging, therefore this task was practised during piloting. However, when conducting the interviews, it was felt by the researcher that as the interviews were to be transcribed verbatim that this did not necessitate extensive notes during the interview. However, full notes were taken at the end of the interview to capture the exact nature of explanations together with the following information as suggested by Saunders et al (2012). These include: site details; date of interview and duration; background information of the respondent (job role, gender, time in current post); and most importantly, immediate impressions, thoughts, and feelings about the interview.

4.6.1. Data Analysis

The data derived from the interviews was analysed in a rigorous and systematic manner in order to generate valuable information. As previously outlined the process of analysis was performed during the interviews to capture key themes, working through ideas as the interviews progressed rather than a rigid format conducted on the completion of the data collection period. Three methods of analysis were used throughout the analysis of the data: first, a computer assisted data analysis (CAQDAS) package (NVivo version 10) was utilised to organise and code large amounts of unstructured data; second, thematic analysis and finally followed by framework analysis (cf. Section 4.6.4) was conducted to understand the intricacies of the themes emerging within the data.

4.6.1.1. NVivo 10

The use of software for qualitative data analysis is not as widespread in contrast to quantitative research whereby the use of software packages such as SPSS is not only acceptable, but expected (Bryman 2008). NVivo was chosen to analyse the data set due to certain key advantages. First, to allow the data to be analysed very quickly, eliminating most of the clerical tasks associated with manually coding and analysing data (Bryman and Bell 2015). However, using software does not and cannot help with making decisions over coding or interpretation of findings (Weitzman and Miles 1995). The software allows an inductive stance to be used, which is the preferred research approach of this study. In this research,

the software facilitated analysis and coding of non-numerical and unstructured data collected in interviews. In addition, NVivo allowed the sorting of textual data and examination of certain relationships in the data. Furthermore, the software allowed the researcher to check for completeness within the dataset. A description of the NVivo components utilised within the research can be found in Appendix XI.

The primary information in this analysis was gathered in interviews conducted in 23 organisations. Overall, 23 cases were created, one for each organisation. In addition, the NVivo Queries function was used to analyse the data by identifying similar patterns between cases. Finally, attributes were assigned to cases, such as size of the organisation, geographic data, number of visitors received per annum, and seasonality. Relationships between attributes and cases were then examined such as levels of innovativeness against type of organisation.

4.6.2. Coding

Upon reviewing the literature, it was anticipated that the approach to coding during the data analysis stage may include some codes which seemed relevant to the literature, thus denoting an 'a priori' approach to coding; for example, the preference of technological interpretive tools within museums (Reino et al 2007). However, upon inspecting the data and aligned with the inductive approach selected for the study, empirical coding was conducted to develop analytical codes as these emerged from the data. Using the previous example, the findings revealed that other tools and techniques were used to narrate stories at dark tourism sites.

The process of coding followed two stages: initial coding and focused coding (Charmaz 2006), to move between analytical levels of interpretation and analysis. 'Nodes' were created in NVivo throughout the coding process, defined as 'a collection of references about a specific theme, place, person or other area of interest' (Bryman and Bell 2015:610). 'Free nodes' were used to assign data to categories of data with no logical connection and 'hierarchical nodes' (parent and child nodes) were created where under a parent node for example, innovation may have a series of child nodes associated, such as barriers to adoption, practices of innovation and so forth with a maximum of three levels of hierarchical structure.

The coding was structured in order to make sense of the data as themes emerged, rather than taking a prescriptive approach. This enabled the possibility of unexpected discoveries, for example, although not directly questioned, respondents used a variety of words that were coded as relating to ethics, such as 'moral dilemmas', 'sensitivities', 'anxieties' and 'tensions'. Figure 4.2 below illustrates the codes used throughout the study created within the NVivo project. As well as assigning nodes to categories of data, a code definition was created to outline the main features of that specific code. NVivo was used to keep a code log to document the ongoing process. A full report of the coding structure can be found in Appendix XII.

To ensure the integrity of the coding process, it is essential that coding is undertaken in a consistent manner. Therefore, it was deemed appropriate to double code a proportion of the data by another researcher to assess reliability of the coding prior to main application. In order to maintain 'inter-rater reliability' a sample of ten percent of the data was double-coded which is deemed sufficient (Lombard et al 2002). The reliability therefore, is indicated by the substantial agreement of results by duplicating the research efforts to check for similarities and differences (Krippendorff 2004). Three interviews were given to an external researcher who manually coded them. These can be found in Appendix XIII with coding attached.

Specific consideration was also given to coding of abstract concepts such as dark tourism, considered as difficult to operationalise when designing the research (cf. Section 4.5.3). Consequently, it was important to reflect respondents' perceptions and how the concept was verbalised to create accurate coding categories.

Although the software package was valuable when managing the data into cases, to organise and keep track of many data sources including memos and notes, to understand the complexities of the data, thematic analysis and framework analysis were utilised, which will be explained in detail in the following two sections.

Figure 4.2. Screen Capture of Codes Created in NVivo

Name	Sources	References
Advertising	8	17
Aftercare	16	29
Authenticity	8	17
Business Aspects	0	0
Comments relating to other sites	8	13
Customer care	5	13
DarkTourism Perceptions	17	38
Data Collection	17	24
Death	10	13
Decision Making	7	12
Entrepreneurship	15	19
Ethics	25	58
Innovation	1	1
Interpretation	25	83
Marketing	1	2
Media	9	18
Memorable Quotes	11	23
Perceptions	6	23
Site Theme	25	82
Visitor Base	3	3
Visitor experience	9	28

Source: Author

4.6.3. Thematic Analysis

This process refers to the process of analysing qualitative data in terms of commonalities, relationships, and differences with the aim of searching for aggregated themes within the data set (Gibson and Brown 2009). A criticism of this type of analysis is that by forming categories, an impoverished view of the phenomena may be formed as categories can potentially *hide* rather than *reveal* experiences (Gibson and Brown 2009). However, this does not imply that thematic analysis is meaningless as analysis refers to storytelling whereby themes are a useful choice for constructing the narrative. Therefore, in this research the data was first organised using NVivo to sort into interview cases, alongside additional information (e.g. spreadsheet of demographic data). Once initial coding of the data had been conducted to categorise the unstructured text, thematic analysis then took place to identify contradictions and inconsistencies within the data. This process included asking questions of the data as to the nature of the contradictions identified, but more importantly, *why,* using knowledge of the wider experiences of managers and knowledge of the specific context to situate the contradictions and inconsistencies. Alongside examining the data for patterns, the data was also actively analysed in terms of 'negative cases' (Patton 1999) where data appears to *not* fit the pattern. For example, looking for contradictory statements from respondents relating to perceptions of innovation.

The main themes identified within the data related to ethics, marketing, visitor interpretation, and innovation. Thematic analysis was used to begin initial investigations of the data, however, to drill down into the nuances of the data in an attempt for explanations, framework analysis was then performed on these themes.

4.6.4. Framework Analysis

This analysis entails the creation of matrices which included a theme-based approach to explain the theme of interest in more detail. The 'explanatory material' to evidence the theme or question in mind used either verbatim comments within each cell, or in some cases a quantifiable aspect if more appropriate. An example of a matrix for the theme of marketing is displayed in the screenshot below (Figure 4.3). Here, themes connected to whether marketing practices were viewed as challenges or opportunities were formulated and

populated with respondents' comments to provide evidence for that theme. The use of matrices helped to establish patterns that can be easily visualised. One of the main advantages of Framework Analysis is that it allows you to reveal simple relationships, by for instance, searching by organisational types (Barbour 2013).

Moreover, this method of analysis aided the researcher to map data generated in the cells of the matrices against the aims and objectives of the research in order that the aim and objectives were addressed. The advantages of framework analysis are that the process is systematic, comprehensive, and transparent, and can encourage the display of diversity (Barbour 2013). However, the need for reflexivity and considerations of the wider context is important rather than forcing data to 'fit' into categories or cells. The researcher was mindful of this potential pitfall when compiling matrices. The final section following now concludes the discussion on research methodology by providing an overview of the research process and the effect on the researcher.

Figure 4.3. Marketing Matrix

Site Name	Opportunities	Synopsis	Evidence (verbatim)
XX	Both	Current logo provocative (pentangle & witch) needs softening to attract locals. Rebrand & name change under way to soften image. Historically a "hidden gem" by word of mouth. Subject matter is controversial in itself but that is what attracts certain visitors.	"we always try to sort of steer that path between it being a place that people who love taboo and shocking stuff will still love, but still being safe enough for those that don't like that sort of thing, we have to sort of navigate that minefield I suppose, attracting average so-called people and still maintaining more extreme visitors. Opportunity, our subject matter is potentially sensitive but that is what intrigues our visitors and we can't shy away from the fact that witchcraft is controversial and has the potential to be challenging - that is why we are here! I think the marketing challenges can be overcome, can be dealt with. It's a really challenging subject to deal with and to deal with it well and that's part of what is exciting. If you were trying to deal with the history of gardening or something kind of tame it's sort of it's very, very easy to do and it doesn't really engage with human emotions I suppose and I suppose human emotions and human experiences. Some of which are incredibly negative, hurtful and painful and unpleasant. But that's the reality of human beings and behaviour and I think that if we can sort of look at that and deal with that then I don't see why it can't be a challenge that can be overcome and also why it can't be seen as something that could intrigue rather than deter"
XX	Both	General promotion of the site has to be sensitive to its being a memorial site. Finding moral balance between being self-sustaining and commercial. Marketing has to take a creative approach in order to avoid causing upset.	"you have to question everything you do and ask "Could this upset someone, could it offend, could it put people off coming" from a marketing perspective, it means we have to be quite creative to find solutions – this is a good thing!"

Source: Author

4.7. 'Emotional Methodologies'

There is increasing awareness that undertaking qualitative research is an embodied experience and that researchers may be affected emotionally by the research that they undertake (Dickson-Swift et al 2009). The place and importance of emotions in the research process was mainly driven by feminist scholars, for instance in their thinking about power differentials between researcher and the researched such as those proposed by Acker et al (1983). Alongside the consideration of emotion, are discussions which relate to the management of 'scholarly detachment' and whether this critical distance is ever achievable, particularly when associated with studying death (Woodthorpe 2011). It is widely recognized that death is a potentially sensitive area to investigate (Johnson & Clarke 2003; Lee 1993), however there are few reflexive accounts of the potential impact of studying death particularly the understanding of the emotions of the researcher (Hubbard et al 2001; Evans et al 2017). This may be due to disclosures of the challenges and issues faced in conducting research can leave the researcher vulnerable to indictments of partiality and prejudice (Bryman and Burgess 1994). However this raises an important point about the extent to which the researcher detaches themselves while knowing full well that the topic under scrutiny will be one that they will personally encounter, if not already (Woodthorpe 2011).

This reflexive piece does not wish to add to debates regarding 'insider/outsider' status or 'objective/subjective' positions (Dwyer & Buckle 2009), rather, to promote transparency in the researcher's experience of the process of researching death in a management related discipline for the purpose of this study. The account has been relayed in terms of before the interviewing process, during the interviewing process and after the interviewing process. The issues raised in this section provide opportunities for further reflection and supporting strategies which can be adopted prior, during and after any research project deemed 'sensitive'.

One of the first tasks before the commencement of the data collection within the field setting was to acknowledge some of the assumptions already held about death. As a practising Catholic, death is at the forefront of many contemplations for the researcher, and although loss through death had never previously been experienced, a certain affinity is engendered over its inevitability. However, over the course of two years prior

to the onset of the study, the researcher experienced the death of three significant family members. Although the effect of these experiences was initially acknowledged, considerations were focused upon the potential impact upon the researched, rather than the possible effects upon the researcher. For example, the design stage of the research included explorations of appropriate data collections methods to minimize potential negative effects upon respondents.

Consequently, the highly affective emotional components upon the researcher whilst conducting the interviews were not given sufficient accreditation in the early stages of the research. In particular, as highlighted by Rowling (1999), the experiences of loss reported throughout the fieldwork by managers when re-telling trauma, which resonated with the researcher's own experiences. For example, during the data collection period, the topic of death and human suffering in many forms was discussed on numerous occasions during the interviewing process. Many respondents recounted graphic and poignant stories regarding enslavement, murder, execution, disposal and burial which, for the majority of respondents, are central thematic tenants of their sites. There were a number of "emotion-generating situations" (Dickson-Swift et al 2009: 65) across the interviewing period where particular stories evoked strong emotions from both the researcher and researched such as empathy and sadness. The reactions and responses from managers on recounting these stories together with my own emotional responses generated a compulsion to reflect on aspects of the researcher's own grieving process alongside the impact of this "emotional labour" (Dickson-Swift et al 2009: 70).

Upon researching this area it was found that little information existed on 'emotional methodologies' excluding insightful works by Dickson-Swift (2007; 2006; 2009; 2008), McCosker et al (2001), and more recently, Evans et al (2017). Research does exist in humanities-related disciplines (e.g. emotional geographies) where research can be connected to the interface of emotions and space, exploring how feelings shape individual and social geographies and how place impacts upon affect and emotion; key scholarly works include Bondi (2013 and 2011). However, this developing body of work does not explicitly focus on the impact on the researcher when studying within these contexts. However, based within medical research, Dickson-Swift et al (2007) reports upon the challenges associated with illness and other stressful experiences,

including researcher exhaustion, listening to untold stories and feelings of guilt and vulnerability experienced by the researcher. Similarly, Sather-Wagstaff (2011) touches upon the difficulties and issues associated with her ethnographic studies in conditions of war. She emphasizes the importance of discussing how these conditions of war can affect the research environment and the subsequent interpretation of data and importantly, the researcher. Within a dark tourism context, Sather-Wagstaff (2011:16) highlights the emotional challenges of listening to trauma, citing that she still feels 'ill-equipped, unprepared and too awkward emotionally to represent many of these stories'. More recent work in death studies by Evans et al (2017:1), argues that using a relevant methodological approach, in this case, 'uncomfortable reflexivity', can help to 'reveal the work of emotions in research when dealing with sensitive contexts thereby producing what they deem 'emotionally sensed knowledge'. They also accentuate the role of researchers' emotional responses to fieldwork.

Consequently, there is recognition, albeit within rather specialist contexts, that researching sensitive issues can significantly affect the researcher on an emotional and practical level. However, barely any references are made to these issues within wider business and management fields bar the passing glance from research methods' textbooks as a standard script regarding ethics. Rather, within tourism studies, research exists on the emotional components of area and space, mostly associated with studying the impact of 'emotional labour' on visitors (Van Dijk et al 2009) or employees (Lv et al 2012). The lack of such research within a wider management perspective is somewhat surprising given the range and intensity of (principally) qualitative research on 'sensitive issues'. Such 'sensitive issues' may be defined as private, stressful or sacred, studies that deal with stigmatisation or of political issues alongside topics which generate strong emotional responses such as death or sex (McCosker et al 2001), inherent in all aspects of management research.

A number of reflections resulted from this experience that are worthy of discussion. Firstly, the extent of these experiences of death was not wholly realized – which until fully acknowledged, actually feature instinctively throughout the research process. Not enough significance was placed on these contemplations particularly when deciding upon methodology. In contrast, at the preliminary stages of the research design, it was felt that feelings and experiences of death could (and should) be isolated from the

research process. This may be in part, due to the nature of research methods schooling and greater personal experience of quantitative research alongside the desire to suppress 'inappropriate' emotions which may have connotations towards the rigor in carrying out research. However, as the research progressed, the generation of emotions was acknowledged and embraced and viewed as complimenting the process rather than as a restrictive factor to the research. The researcher developed a permeable 'researcher skin' to allow reflections of the impact of the interviews without compromising quality within the research process.

Consequently, this experience of researching sensitive issues lends itself to various opportunities currently missing for many researchers working within this field. Firstly, a call for further supporting systems including information and advice such as those available for psychotherapists and other healthcare professionals both within subject fields and within the wider academic community. Ethical protocols could also offer specific information and support systems for researchers both per institution and in wider circles including major funding bodies. Further empirical research and reflections on emotional methodologies would also benefit in adding to current knowledge, particularly in business and management related disciplines, therefore enabling these emotional experiences to not be viewed as isolated and unnatural. Lucey (2016) argues for a development of methods of researching the 'emotional' or sometimes the 'affective' turn in the social sciences. Therefore, discussion around the adoption of the most suitable method(s) to be employed that are sensitive to the emotional context of such research are essential to illicit powerful interpretations whilst acknowledging potential researcher effect. For example the use of 'critical reflexivity' as advocated by Evans et al (2017). In a parallel theme within geography more recently, Glass (2014) argues that discussions of emotions in fieldwork also impact the teaching and learning of methodologies whereby such understandings can enable the most appropriate teaching and learning strategies to be employed for future researchers, such as using student research journals and reflective field exercises.

Rather than deterring potential researchers to investigate sensitive issues, emotional methodologies offer additional opportunities for researchers to positively shape the lens through which interpretations arise (Kingdon 2005) offering depth and insight. Indeed, researching death from an academic stance alongside personal experiences

has not only aided the healing process through reflections on death and loss but has produced insightful interpretation and meaningful analysis of the powerful stories conveyed by managers within these charged spaces. These experiences echo a number of comparable reported experiences by scholars such as Evans et al (2017), Dickson-Swift et al (2007) and Hubbard et al (2001:119) who stress that unless emotion is acknowledged within the research process, 'not only will researchers be left vulnerable, but also our understandings of the social world will remain impoverished'. Ultimately then, further research is required to examine the role of emotions and uncover the emotional dimension of researching sensitive issues within management research which is crucial to understanding and demystifying methodological impacts of this type of powerful research.

Having discussed the research experience, this next section begins with the research philosophy which governs the research. This helps to situate the research with clear links between research philosophy, research methodology and selected method of research in line with the research aim and objectives of the study.

4.8. Summary

This chapter provided the rationale behind the research philosophy, research methodology, and the tools and techniques selected in order to address the aim and objectives of the research (cf. Figure 1.1). The research adopts a solution orientated, pragmatic research philosophy driven by the aim and objectives in order to explore management perceptions and practices in a real-world context. Using the guiding principles of the research; pragmatism, and an ethical and quality centred approach, the design of the research required an established research method to collect data. As little empirical evidence is available regarding the management of dark tourism sites and attractions, an exploratory tool was required to collect data from managers, thus, qualitative interviews were deemed the most appropriate research method to achieve the research aim and objectives. Qualitative interviews enable the researcher to explore complex social phenomena in depth; to delve into managers' experiences, perceptions and practices; and provide rich, detailed information on the issues and challenges faced within their organisations.

To conduct a robust and rigorous piece of empirical research considerations were given towards the careful planning, design and execution of the research to gather

reliable and detailed information from respondents in order to deliver the research questions. Specific attention was given to the status of the respondents, considered to be 'elites' as senior management and key decision makers. Therefore, the administration of the qualitative interviews was carefully chosen to reflect this status thus, interviews were conducted by telephone to offer respondents flexibility in order to engage with the research outside of demanding schedules. Furthermore, telephone interviews offer some level of anonymity hence allowing information to be divulged on sensitive issues, a key feature of this research. However, it is important to note that although great care and consideration was given to the design and execution of the research, a feature of a pragmatic approach is to acknowledge that the social world is dynamic and in constant flux. Therefore, the researcher acknowledges that although a robust and rigorous research process was sought and achieved in terms of addressing the research aim and objectives, research 'perfection' could never be attained. Moreover, to establish credibility and quality of the data a framework was adapted from Yardley (2000) suggesting criteria for evaluation. In addition, the careful matching of the most appropriate method to suit the needs of the research alongside the integrity of the researcher assures the reliability of the data.

As ethics was a guiding principle of the research, throughout the research process, all quality procedures were adhered to, akin to qualitative research. For example, efforts were made to ensure that respondents were fully informed of their rights to withdraw from the process at any time, giving full information on the project and consent to participate. The research process was meticulously documented paying special attention to the selection and recruitment of the sample. Dark tourism sites and attractions were selected to reflect a range of characteristics, using a purposive sampling strategy and following guidelines from the literature, due to the lack of a sampling frame of dark tourism providers. During the design of the interview protocol, specific focus was centred upon operationalising the concepts to be investigated. For example according to the literature, the concept of innovation is elusive (Hall and Williams 2008); this was also confirmed in the piloting exercise. Therefore, for exploration of the concept of innovation, a guiding framework (Hjalager 2010) was provided for respondents.

Consequently, from a subsequent recruitment exercise, 23 senior managers within dark tourism sites and attractions across the United Kingdom were interviewed

throughout the period July-November 2014. This ensures that reliable and valid findings can be generated. As a result of the interview programme, comprehensive data was collected resulting in valuable information for interpretation and analysis. Data was analysed using three methods; NVivo 10 to initially organise and code the data followed by thematic analysis and framework analysis. The interviews were coded according to themes emerging from the data rather than a-priori themes directed by the literature. Analysis was undertaken using thematic analysis and framework analysis to drill down into the nuances of the data to reveal rich insights. The analysis of the data was mapped against the aim and objectives of the research in order that the research questions were addressed.

The chapter concluded by outlining the research process and the effect on the researcher. This highlighted the emotional component of the research where the researcher had to 'develop a researcher skin' throughout the process (cf. Section 4.7). This discussion resulted in various calls to action where it was suggested that further support and evidence would assist other researchers when researching sensitive matters.

This chapter has outlined the process of research in order to address the aim and objectives of the research when exploring the management of dark tourism sites. Therefore, the following chapter now presents and discusses the empirical findings of the research revealed in 23 qualitative interviews with senior managers conducted across dark tourism sites and attractions in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. The findings and analysis in this first empirical chapter addresses research objectives one and two, by exploring the perceptions and practices of innovation by managers at dark tourism sites and attractions (cf. Figure 1.1).

CHAPTER FIVE - DARK TOURISM INNOVATION

'If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got'.

Albert Einstein

5.1. Introduction

Innovation is viewed as a complex, multi-actor phenomenon that translates ideas into some type of future value (Owen et al 2013) and is key to tourism-related activities as a principal driver of growth. The concept of innovation is receiving particular emphasis in the current economic climate in which the tourism sector faces many challenges (Pikkemaat and Peters 2006). Although the tourism sector is perfectly placed to benefit from innovation, it is a challenge to adopt in a sector which is dynamic and fluid, continuously subject to changes in technology, consumer tastes, and preferences, as well as economic-political conditions (Hall and Williams 2008).

The innovation literature reviewed in Chapter Three highlighted that the concept of innovation is complex, subject to increasing attention from tourism scholars. However, the extant, wider innovation literature is dominated by studies associated with manufacturing industries, which, when compared to tourism-based organisations, results in a fragmented understanding of the extent and effectiveness of tourism innovation. Consequently, the tourism sector is perceived as being less 'innovative' than other industries (Hjalager 2010). Moreover, very few attempts have been made to investigate the role of innovation within dark tourism sites and attractions. This is seemingly due to the conflict between management concepts and operations, and the sensitive nature of dark tourism sites and attractions. However, as argued in the literature review, dark tourism sites are subject to the same pressures in attaining economic and organisational goals and subset of visitor attractions.

This chapter aims to address the significant gaps revealed in the literature to deliver the findings relating to research objectives one and two associated with innovation as outlined in Figure 1.1. The findings reveal that despite assumptions that dark tourism sites may be restrictive regarding innovative behaviour, dark

tourism sites and attractions perform a wide range of innovative activities. Indeed, innovation is viewed as a critical operation by the majority of managers at the sites sampled. The links between innovation, marketing, and representation are inter-related, bound by a consumer-centric focus and the theme of the site, a central focus for innovative activities. Predominantly, the majority of reported innovative activity is related to product and process innovations, aligned with the tourism literature (Hjalager 2010; Shaw and Williams 2004), primarily to aid and enhance visitor interpretation at sites. This highlights a consumer-centric perspective when designing and implementing innovative measures. Moreover, the themes associated with dark tourism are perceived by managers as innovative, denoting dark tourism as a 'packaged product' for touristic consumption.

This chapter is comprised of six sections arranged thematically according to the themes gleaned from the data. Consequently, the chapter begins with a discussion on the concept of innovation as defined by the managers interviewed. The following sections then detail the reported practices of innovation as well as the barriers to and inhibitors of innovation. In addition, the effects of innovations are reported by managers according to the type of site. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the future trends of innovation, seen as continuing advancements in technology, prior to a summary of the findings to close the chapter.

5.2. Defining Innovation

Innovation is an elusive concept for managers in line with suggestions by Hall and Williams (2008). Even though a suggested framework was offered to respondents (Hjalager 2010), when asked to define the term 'innovation' no consensus was reached between respondents over a standard definition of innovation. Rather than attempt to describe the concept, a quarter of managers provided examples of perceived innovative activities within their sites, such as citing upcoming events or remarking on alterations being currently made within an organisation. However, when respondents did offer a description, there were a number of recurring themes. These can be found in a matrix listed per respondent in Appendix XIV. Frequent words used to describe innovation included 'new', 'different' and 'creative' which highlights the multi-faceted nature of innovation as a social construct. The accentuation of 'new' as a key aspect of

defining innovation aligns with a traditional Schumpeterian approach (Schumpeter 1939) as well as the most recent definition by OECD. However, 'newness' can be tempered by other factors as stressed by this manager:

> *I think it's creative, that's the key, that's the word because new doesn't necessarily mean it's good.*
>
> [Manager T, Workhouse]

The majority of managers used a combination of a number of key words to describe innovation as a wider concept to include; '*pioneering activities', 'taking risks', 'and being creative in approach'*. Outside of attempts to label innovation or provide examples of perceived innovative behaviour, the approach to innovation was offered by a small number of respondents illuminating the processes behind innovation. An important factor for a number of managers was that innovation should be approached in a proactive manner as an organisational approach rather than as a purely reactive measure. This is emphasised by one manager below based at a major museum in Liverpool:

> *As an organisation we have developed culturally to be open to opportunity and to have an open philosophy, rather than feel defensive and operate on a knee-jerk reaction…we will try and look to see how we should make it happen and that has provided us with innovation year on year.*
>
> [Manager Q, Cemetery]

As this quote above emphasises, for many managers the ethos of the organisation is a factor closely related to innovativeness, where innovation is situated at the core of the organisation, as described below:

> *We have never been a museum that has stood still.*
>
> [Manager A, Witchcraft Museum]

However, unlike the organisational approach highlighted above, the following quote highlights the role of the individual as a driving force for innovation within an organisation:

> *I will keep my eye on very carefully other things that are going on…I've got a rhythm to the business and I don't think it's going to crumble without me, but you know it could easily fall back to weeds without that drive, you've got to keep driving it.*
>
> [Manager G, Historic Castle]

This quote above depicts variants of entrepreneurship as a key determinant of innovation in the literature (Hall and Williams 2008; Mattsson et al 2005; Hjalager 2010; Hjalager and Nordin 2011) where, according to a Schumpeterian view,

entrepreneurs can play a key role in shaping modern capitalism (Schumpeter 1939). Although entrepreneurship within dark tourism sites and attractions was deemed as important by the majority of managers, similar to innovation, the concept of entrepreneurship was viewed by some as problematic to define with attempts consisting of highlighting specific employee skills or providing examples of the outputs of entrepreneurial endeavours. However, where defined, a number of managers saw themselves as providing a pivotal role for entrepreneurship as this manager states:

> *I come up with the ideas as the main business development manager, it's important to think outside the box, these ideas are then discussed within the wider management team.*

[Manager D, Prison]

Moreover, volunteers within organisations were viewed as valuable sources of entrepreneurship, particularly those who were previous visitors, viewed as having a critical insight into visitor needs, as this manager refers to below:

> *'I mean all our volunteers, some of them might be ex-teachers, some of them might be ex-military, they may know somebody in the military, and so they all have individual stories that they tend to share. Many of them have been before and that personal interaction really enhances the visit. We get a lot of feedback from visitors naming individual volunteers and how they've really made their day, you know, people go the extra mile really to make it work'.*

[Manager M, Memorial]

Although the approach and outcomes were revealed as suggestions of defining facets of innovation, specific factors associated with innovation were provided. Predictably, as emphasised in the above quote, given the emphasis in practice and highlighted within the literature (Hjalager 2015), just under half of the respondents cited technology adoption as an important factor associated with innovation. However, not all respondents agreed that the adoption of technology was in itself innovative, which may indeed be a barrier to innovative activity, as this manager expresses:

> *…I guess for me it would be a way of looking for new ways of interpreting, displaying information and that could be through high-tech modern media or it could be through just having someone in a costume chatting to people. It's not always got to be high-tech you know, because sometimes museums do high-tech stuff. But if the computer's broken down and none of its working, then it looks a bit crap which is awful, you know, at your visitor attraction.*

[Manager F, Maritime Museum]

This quote highlights the tension between the use of technology to enhance visitor interpretation of sensitive matter and the attempts to provide an 'authentic' experience, a preoccupation of the tourism sector and an aspect explored in-depth in Chapter Six, regarding the interpretation of dark tourism.

In addition, other respondents referred to the outcomes or effects of innovation. These respondents viewed the effects of innovation as critical, manifest predominantly in creating a positive impact upon the visitors, which denotes a visitor-centred approach to innovation. This view has similarities with Hjalager's (1994) distinction between inventions and innovations, where innovations are seen as having clear outputs. This is summarised in the following quote by a manager at a major attraction of a maritime disaster in Belfast:

> *To be innovative is to be at the forefront, to be ahead of the average person, I don't want to be like any other visitor attraction I want to be different. I want to be using technologies that are maybe unusual or at the forefront of their design…so that guests can see we are the innovators. But we also want to make sure that people feel comfortable so we have to find that balance which I think is being innovative as well.*

[Manager O, Maritime Attraction]

5.3. Perceptions of Innovation

Respondents were asked about the importance of innovation to the site/attraction. On the whole managers answered this question by placing emphasis on certain determinants which are discussed more fully in Section 5.5.

Barring one exception, all the managers reported that innovation was an incredibly important aspect to their site, regardless of size of site/attraction or theme of the site/attraction. This was due to the belief that innovating gave an organisation competitive advantage, and in addition was felt to be '*what all organisations do now'*. However, there may be an element of social desirability or 'yeah-saying' which can occur throughout the research process and particularly when interviewing elites (Harvey 2011). The main reported factor linked to the importance of innovation was in terms of justifying outcomes to funding authorities, specifically pertinent to those managers based in local authority funded establishments, charities, and government funded organisations within the sample. This finding is aligned with the literature (Hall and Williams 2008) regarding the role of the state and legislation as significant macro-level determinants of tourism innovation. This raises an interesting paradox however,

when compared to how respondents wavered over the definition of innovation. One reason for this finding may be due to innovation being a 'magic concept' (Pollitt and Hupe 2011), where innovation may be seen as seductive amongst practitioners.

However, the single exception to the consensus that innovation is a key operation was reported by one manager. When asked directly, the respondent replied that innovation was not important as an operation in his organisation, however, during the course of the conversation it became clear that this manager of a newly opened museum within a prison was very passionate about the developing collection and how to attract visitors. Upon probing this viewpoint, this manager expressed concern over the amount of work that innovating activities may involve as a serving officer newly appointed to a management role within the museum, outlining a barrier to innovative activities. The barriers reported by respondents including the perception of innovation as a labour-intensive activity are located in Section 5.6.

5.4. Practices of Innovation

This section details the innovative activities conducted within the dark tourism sites and attractions sampled. Throughout all the interviews, the majority of respondents passionately described examples of innovation, viewed as a defining principle of the concept of innovation (cf. Section 5.2). This section first examines the types of activities cited by managers, as undertaken at the sites sampled, according to Hjalager's (2010) classification of innovation (cf. Section 3.1.2). This section argues that some distinctions are found between different types of sites and their innovative behaviour, namely, museums and historic castles. As museums and castles do not form distinct categories within the seven dark suppliers formulated by Stone (2006), this subsequently questions this typology of suppliers. In particular, from a supply-side perspective, this classification is not solely suitable. The commonalities identified between sites was found in the types of innovation(s) adopted, namely, product and process innovations across all types of sites.

However, Hjalager's (2010) typology of innovations is useful in capturing types and variations of innovative behaviour. To recap from the literature review in Chapter Three, Hjalager (2010) proposed five categories, namely product,

process, management, marketing, and institutional innovations (cf. Section 3.1.2). In order to explore these categories in accordance with the findings at the 23 dark tourism sites and attractions interviewed, the following table (see Table 5.1) has been created below. This table outlines each category of innovation proposed by Hjalager (2010) with examples of innovation reported by respondents mapped in ascending order. The extent of material reported within a code has been assigned a percentage according to the number of examples provided. This table is an example of how Framework Analysis was utilised throughout the analysis of the data (cf. Section 4.6.4).

Table 5.1. Examples of Innovations

Type (Hjalager 2010)	Coded material (%)	Innovation(s)
Institutional	3%	Human Tissue Act 2004, legislative measures, funding cuts and restrictions, funding initiatives (Heritage Lottery Fund awards).
Management	7%	Site staff - empowering and enthusing staff to engage with visitors. New management appointments or re-structuring exercises which trigger innovation. Entrepreneurial activities.
Marketing	8%	Marketing practices - Social media campaigns, digital marketing including mobile applications, co-innovation with visitors, branding and re-branding exercises, co-production and co-creation with visitors.
Process	31%	Technological innovations – back office systems and technological measures to aid and enhance visitor interpretation e.g. interactives. Non-technological interpretive innovative activities.
Product	51%	New products/markets or alterations to existing products/markets - collections, new markets, events, new products, exhibits/artefacts, exhibitions, hours/seasonality, spatial changes.

Source: Author

As the table highlights, the two dominant types of innovative examples within the sites as reported by respondents fall into the two broad categories of **product and process innovations** (Hjalager 2010) with a strong emphasis, totalling half of the reported examples on <u>product</u> innovations. As will be illustrated in this section, the majority of examples of innovation were incremental in nature rather than radical, with the inclusion of minor adaptations of existing products and services (Hjalager 2002). Product and process innovations are often reported within the tourism innovation literature (Hjalager 2010). These findings are therefore not surprising and position the sites and attractions sampled as a subset of visitor attractions. With regard to product innovations, examples reported included new product offerings, such as retailing, new events, exhibitions, and the acquisition of new markets. Examples were also given including extensions to opening hours, changes to collections, or changes to trading seasons. The innovative activities identified also linked with the reported key defining words associated with innovation, such as 'new' and 'change'.

Within the category of process innovations, the specific innovative activities and practices referred to relate largely to technological and non-technological process innovations to aid interpretation of dark tourism experiences. An additional summary of the effectiveness of innovations is demonstrated in Figure 4.3. The findings demonstrate that technological process innovations fall into two categories: to enhance visitor interpretation (i.e. front office); and technological process innovations that may improve efficiency within the organisation (back office). To illustrate this, reported examples of front and back office technological innovations within dark tourism sites and attractions are highlighted in the following Table 5.2 below.

As demonstrated in the table below, the majority of technological innovations are implemented as tools to aid and enhance the visitor interpretation of their sites. Significantly, much less emphasis is placed on back office technological innovations including accounting, ticketing, or data collection activities. The majority of these examples are situated within museums and attractions of charitable or government funded status, which given the substantial investment that some technology requires, for example, 3D printing and CT scans, is somewhat surprising for museums subject to current funding restrictions. Of the organisations that were owned privately, two invested in technology which ranged

from larger investments e.g. specialist special effects technology for smaller scale investments such as touchscreen technology for use in gathering visitor data. Therefore, technological investments were utilised across all types of organisations, regardless of funding status.

As Table 5.2 demonstrates, technological investments varied from traditional measures such as audio-visual aids to recent advancements including augmented reality and specific special effects. As demonstrated in the above table, the virtual autopsy table at a national museum allows visitors to learn more about a particular mummy as the manager explains:

> *…so we've used technology there to try and engage people more deeply with him and his story, and also the work that the museum does to try to communicate to people more effectively than we've done in the past…that we don't just preserve things in erm, cases for the public, that we're actively researching to try and better understand how people lived and died in ancient Egypt and to use that knowledge for very practical purposes.*

[Manager R, National Museum]

As this manager highlights, this type of technological investment has wider positive implications, using advancements in technology from other industries (in this case, medical) transferred into tourism to not only engage visitors, but to acquire new knowledge about the ancient life and death of an individual via utilising technological innovations in a practical sense to tell his story, as he continues:

> *…and in the course of this we discovered how he died, and that hadn't really been known before…so we've used that to basically engage people with that, with his story…innovation is applying new developments, new technology, to do something that hasn't been done before…*

[Manager B, Local Museum]

This quote epitomises a core activity within the sites sampled, that of storytelling. The aspect of storytelling strongly resonates with managers at dark tourism sites and attractions, and is discussed in depth in Chapter Seven relating to visitor interpretation (cf. Section 7.2).

Most importantly, the themes associated with the narrative adopted within the sites sampled were deemed as innovative. Indeed, one manager described the *'unique way of looking at the Irish Soldier, as a whole, which is an innovative story'* [Manager K, War Museum].

Table 5.2. Examples of Technological Process-Driven Innovations

Front office technologies	Back office	Funding Status	Source
Audio-visual, digital scanning and 3D printing and CT scanning of objects (mummies)		Government	Manager B, Local Museum
	New till and booking system, new EPOS system	Private	Manager D, Prison
Computer generated imagery		Charity	Manager F, Maritime Museum
External audio-visual screens around the site		Crown	Manager G, Historic Castle
Touchscreen surveys, access to prison record and ancestral information	New data collection methods	Private	Manager H, Prison
Digitalisation of war records, oral histories and stills from World War I.		Charity	Manager K, War Museum
	New ticketing CRM system		Manager M, Memorial
Augmented reality, queue management systems (iPad), indoor cable car system, audio-visual, mobile technology	New accounting software (SAGE)	Charity	Manager O, Maritime Attraction
Virtual autopsy table		Government	Manager R, National Museum
Audio-visual installations		Government	Manager S, Historic Castle
Special effects (grey screen technology for photography), binaural audio technology and indoor rides.		Private	Manager V, Attraction
Augmented reality		Charity	Manager W, Attraction

Source: Author

Furthermore, one cemetery manager referred to cemetery tours as innovative products associated with the central purpose of their site. However, for other managers, associated with the theme of storytelling, raising awareness of social justice issues was deemed an innovative practice as this manager conveys:

> *We have exhibitions which bring the story up to date as well and in a recent edition of the campaign zone we are involving people in modern day campaigns, contemporary campaigns on the issue of slavery and bonded labour and human rights generally.*

[Manager U, Slavery Museum]

These findings relating to storytelling within the sites sampled therefore add further credence to the suggestion that dark tourism is positioned as a powerful innovative product within the tourism sector, with a distinct theme and associated narrative. This also suggests that the theme and narrative is equally, if not more, important than the mediums that convey the stories.

Not all process innovations were technological at the sites interviewed. This is an unexpected finding and is much less reported within the literature when compared to technical process innovations. Examples of non-technological process innovations reported by managers included the use and design of space, materials, and products, again primarily to aid and enhance visitor interpretation of exhibits and artefacts. For example, one manager based at a national museum remarked on how space and the use of specific materials had been used to adapt and distinguish the current display of the mummy 'Asru' to enhance interpretation of her ancient life. As he explains:

> *…so I think in the entire space we innovative in a variety of ways…there was definitely a feeling that the museum wanted to mark that particular case of Asru as special and different…simple things like the use of glass and the transparency of cases in order to see things on display.*

[Manager R, National Museum]

Similarly, another museum manager commented on non-technological interpretive measures which he deemed innovative, installed at his museum using a '*multi-method approach to engage visitors'*. These included a large display case to display a ship without any other interpretive tools, as the manager outlines below:

> *…how we display the main decks…we've got the ship on the right hand side…there's no interpretation in that gallery you just immerse yourself within the ship.*

The purposeful absence of any interpretive tools in dark tourism spaces is evident in a number of other dark tourism sites and attractions in the literature as highlighted by Dalton (2015) in his ethnographic account in dark tourism. To evoke emotional responses in visitors, dark tourism managers may opt to incorporate 'authentic' aspects in representing and re-creating a specific traumatic event as this manager conveys in his compelling account of an execution at his site, a former prison:

> *It's one of those visual things that everybody sees, everybody watches, ninety-nine point nine percent in silence, absorbing it, they won't forget it and we have the only one [working execution pit] in the UK. You can stand right in front of it and you can see it happen and we actually use a human being for demonstrating right up until the point that the guy's about to pull the lever and we put an authentic Victorian weight bag which the prison engineers would have used the day before to test the rig and drop, so you see the rope go taught and you see the rope disappear and you hear the bang of the doors, so you have the sensory stimulation of it as well which is thought provoking.*

[Manager D, Prison]

Dark tourism as an emotion-generating experience is supported in the literature (Buda 2015; Best 2007; Biran et al 2011; Isaac and Cakmak 2013) as an emerging area of dark tourism research. This account above exemplifies how the activation of emotional responses may also invoke action or change to align with organisational aims and objectives. In the case above, the aim being to provoke wider discussion on the use of capital punishment.

Although product and process innovations governed the narrative as perceived examples of innovation, this does not suggest that management, marketing, and institutional innovations were viewed as less important. In contrast, respondents gave engaging and detailed responses on marketing practices particularly with regard to the challenges beset by managers when dealing with sensitive topics. Further discussion on this topic together with innovative activities aligned with marketing are discussed within Chapter Six (Marketing). With the exception of one site, all dark tourism establishments had online media presence to varying degrees with many sites featuring on user generated platforms such as 'TripAdvisor', a major review website. Three sites had adopted the use of mobile application for visitors.

As Table 4.1 also highlights, management innovations consisted of new management appointments or re-structuring exercises seen as triggers for innovation. Positive employee relations were viewed as crucial to empower and enthuse staff, the results of which could then be passed onto visitors. Indeed, one museum commented upon *'our innovative organisational ethos'* and similarly, another attraction remarked upon their organisation's '*open philosophy to innovation'*. This demonstrates that in these two sites, the concept and practice of innovation underpinned organisational philosophy.

The extent of innovativeness at dark tourism sites and attractions is perhaps illuminated by the perceived absence or lack of any innovative activities. A specific lack of innovative activity was reported by one cemetery manager, who both described innovation articulately and regarded innovation as important for the success of any organisation. However, when questioned on examples of innovation with the researcher providing a response framework for guidance, this manager cited only one example of innovation as a new product adding that:

> *I'll give you an idea of how backward we are, now innovation was in terms of our cash handling, went from the ditching of a biscuit tin where we kept our cash, to acquiring a cash register!*

[Manager H, Cemetery]

The lack of innovation reported at this cemetery may be attributed to the function of a cemetery being placed outside of any touristic remit, hence exempt from innovating specifically around the interpretive experience for example.

This section has highlighted that the majority of dark tourism sites and attractions are widely innovative, involved in implementing a range of innovative activities. However, the majority of the innovative types revealed by the data consist of product and process innovations of an incremental nature. Naturally, decisions over types of innovations will rely on resources available, and expectations, which will have practical implications. This raises the question of possible discrepancies between the tourism literature which highlights significant achievements in innovation (Hjalager 2015), against more 'mundane' innovations practiced more widely in industry.

Specific practices of innovation are now examined, commencing with the concept of 'co-innovation'.

5.4.1. Co-innovation

Linked to knowledge acquisition, collaboration with actors inside and outside the dark tourism organisations can enhance innovation (Cano 2008). The findings in this research suggest that dark tourism sites and attractions are highly reliant on implementing co-creation strategies with their customers, which supports findings suggested by Shaw et al (2011) and act as a form of innovation.

Just over half of all managers across a range of sites stated that they 'co-innovated' with their visitors. Examples of 'co-innovation' reported by respondents included *'conducting focus groups with schools when developing a new product'*, reported by one museum and *'visitors often suggest things for events which we act upon'*, reported by another museum. Naturally, these reports depend on how managers defined and operationalised this concept, which many viewed as a visitor-led approach to creation and production of innovation within their sites. This provides further evidence together with the effects of innovation, of a user-led approach to innovation aligned with the concept of open innovation (Chesbrough 2006). The managers that reported co-innovation strategies viewed collaboration as vitally important both inside and outside their organisational boundaries; in particular with their internal stakeholders such as visitors and employees (specifically volunteers who may have been previous visitors themselves) to enhance innovation. This was undertaken by combining ideas and pathways particularly in respect of the development of new products as this manager highlights:

> *We were looking for some ideas to provide some refreshments for visitors outside the workhouses as a light-hearted feature…this ended up with talking with our volunteers where one suggested, "what about a small ice-cream stand, I always thought that when I visited here"…so we did it, and it's been a roaring success, the visitors love it and it's not too gimmicky.*

> [Manager T, Workhouse]

Particular emphasis was placed on the relationship between the sites as suppliers and visitors as consumers. This could be seen in terms of theatricality (Willis 2014) where visitors were seen as both 'scene-makers' and 'scene-takers' (Mattsson et al 2005) responsible for creating and conceptualising the possibilities of innovations to deliver 'dark tourism scenes' such as controversial exhibitions and events. In particular, one manager based at a museum placed

specific emphasis on co-design and co-creation strategies for new products and new markets by '*conducting consultation processes with our visitors to respond both to visitor needs and organisational objectives'*. The results of these strategies included '*spell-writing workshops'*, '*accessing hard to reach groups/outreach work,'* and a '*lecture series on the famous dead'*.

Other respondents in response to questions about co-innovation, referred to '*acting upon visitor feedback'* and similarly, '*not really, but we do try to think about what audiences would like in key segments'.* These views were again naturally dependent on the level and type of data collection initiatives undertaken on the visitor base at sites.

External collaboration was also viewed as an important aspect of the innovation process including relationships with the wider community. Further detailed information on external co-partnerships with suppliers, competitors, and the wider community can be found in Chapter Six (Marketing).

5.4.2. Innovation and Repeat Visitation

Two of the research questions focus on the relationship between innovation and repeat visitation, specifically how managers relate both the concept and practice of innovation to repeat visitation. The answers to these questions aim to fill a gap within the literature (cf. Section 3.2). Repeat visitors are defined as those who return one or more times to a familiar destination (Gitelson and Crompton 1984). However, the reality is unclear of the importance of this sector to dark tourism organisations. For example, when directly questioned on this sector, respondents stressed the importance to attract and maintain them. However, when asked initially for key audiences, repeat visitors did not regularly feature within the top three desired audiences (cf. Section 6.2.3).

However, as noted previously in this chapter, barring one exception, all respondents placed a significant level of importance upon innovation within their sites (cf. Section 5.3). Indeed, when related to repeat visitation, innovation was reported as a crucial component to engage this audience. Responding to visitor needs was felt particularly important for the repeat visitor market as this manager states:

> *You need to think of something eye-catching and new ways of presenting things…it's a good thing to keep people interested…keep people visiting again and again…*

The general consensus reported by respondents was that the relationship between innovation and repeat visitation was vitally important, manifest by adopting innovative activities which could attract and maintain repeat visitors. The most frequent activities cited by managers involved innovating around the experience to provide a wide and diverse product offering as this manager conveys:

> *they have something to come back for, they can't just see everything in one day, make it interesting, change it and if you keep them excited about future change they will be back to see it and perhaps bring their friends along too.*

[Manager D, Prison]

In particular, new product innovations (e.g. retail offerings) and more importantly, making changes to specific products or (e.g. temporary exhibitions) were viewed as drivers for repeat visitation as this manager states below:

> *…for example temporary exhibitions obviously would be a way to draw in people who've been before and come back again and something that would also appeal to locals.*

[Manager A, Witchcraft Museum]

Similarly, another manager based at a museum devoted to slavery, reported that *'refreshing the exhibition programme and providing a new offer is really important for sustaining repeat visitors.'* Contrary to previous research, managers did not refer to familiarity (McKercher and Guillet 2011) as a specific purpose for repeat visits. A full discussion on the profile and motives of repeat visitors can be found in Chapter Six (cf. Section 6.2.3). However, novelty (Assaker et al 2011) in terms of the theme of the site, was a specific attractor for repeat visitors due to its perceived uniqueness and novelty as this manager explains:

> *We have very many repeat visitors and we have people who are passionate about us and quite a lot of them quite like the idea, it's like a little secret find that only they know about…*

[Manager A, Witchcraft Museum]

These examples of techniques and tools to attract and retain repeat visitors have echoes of incremental, or more controversially, more 'mundane' or banal aspects of innovation rather than more radical innovations. Furthermore, the primary examples of product innovations are similar to wider practices of innovation attracting other key audiences within dark tourism organisations. This suggests

that no unique innovative practices are undertaken to specifically attract and retain this audience. However, the key may lie not in the types of innovations specifically aimed at this audience, but the adaption and process of established innovations; for example, the continued refreshment of product innovations specifically aimed to attract repeat visitors (Pine and Gilmore 1999). This practice raises questions of the nature and frequency of refreshment, and indeed, the obligation felt by managers of continual refreshment activities to retain repeat visitors. These questions could serve as future research directions.

Moreover, although these examples suggest that innovation may stimulate repeat visitation, there may be some element of social desirability and the perception that this market ought to be specifically targeted via innovation. Nevertheless, these examples do highlight that managers are responding to meet their visitor needs via innovation.

5.5. Determinants of Innovation

The drivers and determinants of innovation were widely discussed by the majority of respondents. These have been categorised according to micro and macro-level determinants and are displayed on Tables 5.3 and 5.4. As Table 5.3 below demonstrates, a number of micro-level drivers were described by respondents when responding to the importance of innovation to the site. These determinants were cited less when compared to macro-level determinants of innovation. As the table highlights, the aims and objectives of an organisation can trigger and direct innovations. One manager explained how the importance of innovation was defined according to the aims of the organisation, in this case a privately-run prison:

> *The owners and senior management team have a duty of care to one of the UK's leading historical assets, it has to be cared for, it has to be looked after and it has to be handed onto another generation in a better state than it was taken over in…that is a huge driver…*

[Manager D, Prison]

Table 5.3. Micro-Level Determinants at Dark Tourism Sites and Attractions

Micro-Level Determinants	Illustrative Evidence
Strategic aims of organisation (Keltner et al 1999)	*'We have an organisational philosophy to be open and reactive to the current climate, this is particularly important in this sector which has a finite market'.* [Manager M, Memorial]
Type of activity/theme (Cano 2008)	*'…our whole approach has been is um in a sense our, our erm, brand is based on two kings, one day, such a unique story and the way we interpret it uses a variety of mediums'.* [Manager E, Battle-site]
Organisational Structure (Sundbo et al 2007; Cano 2008).	*'As an organisation we have developed culturally to be open to opportunity and to have an open philosophy, rather than feel defensive and operate on a knee-jerk reaction…we will try and look to see how we should make it happen and that has provided us with innovation year on year'.* [Manager O, Maritime Attraction]
Individual entrepreneurship (Hall and Williams (2008)	*'…staff have to be walking history books because somebody will stop and talk to somebody and if a member of staff is enthused and engaged they're going to give a good history a good delivery and account of what's here and that's great for the visitors'.* [Manager D, Prison]
Business Model (de Reuver, Bouwman and MacInnes (2007)	*'We are trying to change the business model from what's always be the case here to how we want the museum to develop, especially in the area of education'.* [Manager A, Witchcraft Museum]
Funding (Giudici and Paleari 2000, Kaufmann and Tödtling 2002 and Martínez-Román et al., 2011)	*'It has had major investment, five, six years ago er, with heritage lottery funding where we erm, we interpreted and represented the displays which are about the story of 1485 erm, and the death, death of Richard III and the rise of Henry Tudor to the King of England'.* [Manager E, Battle-site]
Co-operation and collaboration (Cano 2008)	*'We also go into bedroom folders which goes into every B&B and hotel bedroom in Scotland, so we select areas that we go in a lot of them, so it's an insert into a bedroom folder, erm and the website, is obviously a big attractor as well, and we're linked to from other websites…this helps us to attract new markets to the prison'.* [Manager H, Prison]
Absorptive capacity (Thomas and Wood 2014).	*'Other exhibitions have been successful in other galleries which we have taken on board when designing this exhibition, what works, what doesn't work etc'.* [Manager F, Maritime Museum]

Source: Author

The previous statement also raises issues over preservation, a common concern amongst managers within historic buildings. As many of the sites relate to aging

physical structures, conservation was also a key aspect for a number of managers, an issue highlighted by Partee Allar (2013), when addressing the importance of innovation as summarised by the following manager:

We are on the at risk register and if we don't make changes the monument will continue to deteriorate and then parts of it become unsafe and will have to be cordoned off, people won't be able to use that part of the site again so it's important to us, yes.

[Manager S, Historic Castle]

Preservation is an important aspect within the wider tourism sector relating to heritage (Timothy 2007; Silberberg 1995). These examples reported by a small number of respondents highlight that preservation is related to the revenue stream as preservation maintains an experience. The aspect of preservation as a dual driver and barrier has not been explored in any depth in the tourism innovation literature.

Another important driver for innovation was identified as absorptive capacity where knowledge is absorbed from external sources and then shared within the organisation to meet the needs of visitors. This denotes the importance of this factor as an important driver for innovation (Shaw and Williams 2009). This is demonstrated by the following manager who highlighted the importance of innovation for his employees which can then be imparted to visitors at the attraction, as he explains:

…you've got to keep it fresh and that's for the staff as much as anybody else, because all of our staff have to be walking history books because somebody will stop and talk to somebody and if a member of staff is enthused and engaged they're going to give a good history, a good delivery and account of what's here, and that's great for the visitors.

[Manager D, Prison]

A driver that crosses both micro and macro-levels refers to the theme(s) associated with the sites sampled. This is a predominant finding throughout the research as this chapter identifies. According to the managers interviewed, they identified their sites as innovative according to the theme(s) that represented their organisations. This suggests that a core component of the business model pertaining to dark tourism sites and attractions, consists of the theme(s) of the sites sampled as this manager highlights:

> *…it's a museum that we consider to be active and reactive to current campaigns which enables us to incorporate innovation on a number of levels.*

[Manager U, Slavery Museum]

However, drivers of innovation that were expected to appear in the data according to literature included the size of organisation (Sundbo et al 2007). As the findings reveal, all the sites performed innovative activities across all organisations regardless of number of employees, although the extent of these activities differed. However, the majority of drivers suggested in the literature were revealed in the data from the sites sampled.

In addition, an interesting micro-level finding relates to entrepreneurial activities specifically with relating to the job role of respondents, particularly those who were relatively new to their posts. One respondent commented upon the '*desire to alter and innovate'* as part of the *'new injection of personalities'* in a team with which she was involved, in efforts to demonstrate enthusiasm in a new role through scanning for opportunities to innovate. It was believed that new employees may also bring specific skills and a fresh insight to a role, dependant on their career background, which may also trigger innovative activities. For example, one manager from an education career background found that her *'skills and enthusiasm'* enabled her to design and implement a new education programme for children at the museum in which she worked. This demonstrates the priority given to innovation on an individual level, which can then be fostered wider via new ideas, passion and skills – a typical entrepreneurial activity (Hall and Williams 2008; Chell et al 1991).

When macro-level determinants are considered, many more examples were reported by respondents when compared to drivers at the organisation level which are demonstrated on Table 5.4 below. However, regardless of frequency of reporting by managers of micro- and/or macro-level drivers, respondents emphasised the importance of these drivers to their organisations, evidenced by the detailed discussion generated by questioning.

As Table 5.4 below demonstrates, technological push factors and demand pull factors were emphasised by managers to be major driving forces of innovation (Hjalager 2010; Hall and Williams 2008). Technology was viewed as a major

influencing factor influencing the tourism sector as reported by the following manager opening up opportunities for innovation:

…in society generally people are more technically minded, there is a lot of constant innovation out there through technology and I think that is now so seeped into the way we live our lives, not just personally but publically and socially and through work, technology, sort of pervades every aspect of our lives. I think it will be important for museums and the cultural sector in general to be aware of what's happening and be open to new ideas and new ways of working in order to reach and connect with people.

[Manager U, Slavery Museum]

As demonstrated, technology is seen as a vital tool when communicating and engaging with visitors, which requires organisations to be flexible, proactive, and knowledgeable of technological advancements in the sector. These requirements may present some challenges for many tourism organisations, as these statements imply, such as recognising the role of technology as a major driving force, keeping up with technological advancements, and pressures to innovate, manifested in researching the 'next new thing'.

Likewise, concerns may exist over the ease of imitation, an unfortunate characteristic of the tourism sector (Sundbo et al 2007) as emphasised by one manager below:

…the dungeons were one of the first attractions to bring actors in, and you can see over the last ten to fifteen years that other attractions are bringing in actors…you watch the other attractions and they've started putting people in costume on…but there's not many that have got full blown performances like the dungeon's brand.

[Manager V, Dungeon Attraction]

The majority of managers vocalised the importance of innovation in respect of demand pull (Hall and Williams 2008) specifically trying to adapt to increasing changes in visitor desires and preferences. As highlighted by one manager, *'what would have attracted somebody ten years ago - may not now'*. Responding to visitor needs was felt particularly important for the repeat visitor market (cf. Section 6.2.3), an aspect discussed in Chapter Six (Marketing).

Another notable macro-level determinant, as outlined in the literature (Hall and Williams 2008) and stated by respondents, was competition. Managers stressed the importance of staying ahead of other competing businesses in their sector. A number of respondents adopted a proactive approach to staying ahead of competing establishments as summarised by the following manager:

…if you sit still other galleries will overtake you and move on…I get out and about, visiting other museums is an essential part of my job…chatting to colleagues and other managers.

[Manager F, Maritime Museum]

Table 5.4. Macro-Level Determinants at Dark Tourism Sites and Attractions

Macro-Level Determinants	Illustrative Evidence
Technology (Hjalager 2010; Hall and Williams 2008)	*'Technology is changing at such as rapid rate…I think for museums to stay really relevant they have to take that on board…it [technology] is really important if museums are going to continue to engage people particularly young people, getting them interested in coming and visiting museums and seeing them as important institutions'…* [Manager B, Local Museum]
Demand-led Innovation (Hall and Williams 2008)	*'…you need to follow visitors expectations if you want happy visitors so we need to move away from the idea that this is what we are providing and this is what we're offering to you but think of it as what are the expectations of people wanting to visit the site'.* [Manager I, Cemetery]
Media (Boyd et al 2013)	*'…so I did a tremendous amount of work, very good contacts in television, radio, PR, so I really did a big build-up to the opening, and it worked…'* [Manager G, Historic Castle]
Competition (Hall and Williams 2008)	*'…you can't just sit on your laurels and rest'.* [Manager V, Attraction]
Role of the State (Hall and Williams 2008) and legislation	*'An injection of recent funding has enabled us to consider how we want the gallery space to develop'.* [Manager J, Prison]
Innovation Systems (Hjalager 2010)	*'…so in order to reach a diverse group of visitors I think it's important to incorporate those forms of communication, interaction as much as you possibly can between all the different stakeholders'.* [Manager O, Maritime Attraction]
Business Model (Reuver et al 2007)	*'The central story allows us to be creative and forms a key part of our business model'.* [Manager O, Maritime Attraction]

Source: Author

Drivers for innovation in response to external changes were outlined by a manager at a major military memorial site relating to demographic changes and state interventions. The reduction of the military was a key concern for this manager who stated *'we will therefore have to find new visitors to replace them'.* Similarly, an aging population who visit war related sites who are declining in numbers, and the end of the current commemoration period of the Great War in 2018 were quoted as other influencing factors for the same manager when

considering the importance of innovation. This required her *'to develop new audiences through diversification or enhanced experience'* at the site. This illustrates how wider external changes can influence innovation on a micro-level according to the type of site.

Therefore, to summarise respondents' reports of drivers - it appears that many of the macro drivers are generic to all the organisations interviewed, in particular major factors such as technology and push/pull which feature widely in the tourism innovation literature. However, a number of micro factors reported by respondents are worthy of future research which have not been previously empirically examined, namely the influence of previous careers as a driver for innovation, and the strength of the brand, in this case of themes surrounding dark tourism. These micro factors may well cross into macro factors once widely examined across the tourism industry.

5.6. Inhibitors of Innovation

Respondents were equally as passionate about the barriers to innovation as the drivers for innovation within their organisations. Innovations can be a challenge to adopt within organisations (Tidd and Bessant (2009) particularly for tourism, based within a global competitive market. In order to examine the inhibitors of dark tourism innovations more clearly, they have been categorised as structural and behavioural inhibitors of innovation (Hjalager 2010).

5.6.1. Structural Factors

With the exception of just four sites, all the respondents mentioned finance as a primary restricting factor with many managers highly concerned about funding cuts, particularly those sites reliant on public funding. As simply put by one respondent:

> *It's always cost, it's finance, it's budget, it's having the money to actually do it, to be able to. You know you might want to make changes, but you haven't got the money to do it.*

[Manager K, War Museum]

Given the current constrained budgetary environment, this finding is generally expected and indeed, often reported as a major structural barrier to innovation (Hjalager 2010; Rodriguez et al 2014). However, despite financial concerns being a known structural barrier, this did not deter one manager from innovating as she describes below:

*I think all museum services and the financial situation will always be a barrier as it obviously limits what we can do, but I guess it's important for us to be creative and deal with the situation, look at what resources we **do** [original emphasis] have so even though it's a barrier it shouldn't limit us in what we do'.*

[Manager U, Museum Slavery]

Managers who expressed less concern regarding financial matters prioritised additional major structural factors related to site status (see physical challenges below) or were in receipt of/recently applied for Heritage Lottery Funding. However, whilst external funding may be less relevant for these particular sites, internal funding was still seen as an important issue, especially those who were reliant on large numbers of volunteer contributions for human resources. Comments were made by two managers on the cost of digital innovation, in particular, seen as expensive with no guaranteed outcome.

Challenges regarding the physical nature of building and spatial limitations were also critical factors for the majority of respondents. Due to the historical significance of some sites, a number of them are subject to restrictions either as historical assets, via listed building status, registered battlefields or scheduled monument status. Therefore, these managers were constrained in amending, altering, and adapting their sites according to the relevant governing body i.e. English Heritage, thus impeding many process or product innovations. This is summarised by the following manager of a scheduled monument who provides an example of the restricting effect on allowing access for all visitors that scheduled monument status brings to her site:

English Heritage are obviously involved with us here because it's a scheduled monument…and they have been very helpful on interpretation, but there's still tremendous problems with that…I can't put a lift in, we are exempt from the Disability Discrimination Act.

[Manager G, Historic Castle]

Conservation considerations and the requirement for maintaining and preserving timeworn historic buildings and structures can also affect the potential to innovate as the same manager adds:

…tensions between conserving the site and the running of the site, it takes huge resources to maintain and preserve historical assets such as castles.

[Manager G, Historic Castle]

Historic sites can also bring additional limitations relating to digital infrastructure due to certain physical features as this manager explains:

> *…it's the building itself, we have very different walls, I have actually introduced this year a whole WiFi section in the kitchen…but I couldn't get WiFi across the thick walls to other areas.*

[Manager H, Prison]

Another manager reports on a similar issue relating to installing the internet as the barrier to innovation at his site, in this case, a major cemetery in London:

> *…so getting in cables for the right connection, we're having a great deal of trouble and problems with broadband with people up the hill on one exchange and people down the hill on another exchange…we could connect a private connection on, but not a commercial connection…so trying to get a good internet connection is a big problem.*

[Manager I, Cemetery]

Although technology is viewed as a major determinant of innovation (Hall and Williams 2008), conversely it can also be an inhibitor of innovation. Managers voiced anxieties surrounding the reliability of digital technology which may present the need for additional resources, as this manager describes below:

> *…we are an independent museum so we don't have someone that can come in if something breaks down so we can't progress with technology at the moment.*

[Manager P, War Museum]

Capacity issues in the form of spatial limitations were highlighted as impinging on innovative activities for a number of respondents. Just under half of the managers interviewed cited capacity issues as a barrier to innovation including, 'the inability to extend or expand our exhibition space' or wider capacity issues. For example, one manager conveyed his fears over '*the amount of visitor numbers that the building can deal with'*, signalling issues regarding investment capital. These fears over visitor capacity were heightened for managers at working sites outside an original tourism-based function, such as with a cemetery and courthouse within the sample.

As expected, legislative and regulatory measures presented significant challenges for many managers, particularly those who were governed by the Human Tissue Act 2004 regarding the display of human remains (cf. Table 2.2). The aforementioned sites identified for their historical significance such as listed

buildings and scheduled monuments also provided examples of pressures and restrictive practices resulting from regulatory bodies, as this manager outlines:

> *The challenges of legislation are going to put a continued pressure on the interpretation of sites.*
>
> [Manager G, Historic Castle]

For these managers, legislative requirements resulted in subsequent product and process innovations, therefore situating the role of the state as both enabler of, and barrier to, innovation (Hall and Williams 2008). Respondents also commented upon more site specific structural barriers such as *'weather conditions which can profoundly affect our business'* and location of the site which can impact on transport costs in which '*schools have become expensive for transport'*. Location can also impinge on product innovations such as the potential to attract new markets. One manager based at a remote prison location commented that:

> *If we were a city centre location then we would attract more visitors and also be able to reach out to new markets such as special interest groups.*
>
> [Manager H, Museum Prison]

Time was also a perceived significant obstacle to innovation which was particularly related to the size and structure of organisations. As one sole trader explains:

> *I'm the sole trader doing the museum on my own. I don't really have the time or any help so I can't concentrate on what I can do for a theme next year, I just have to rely on word of mouth.*
>
> [Manager P, Museum War]

Conversely, larger, more complex organisations suffered similar temporal issues impinging on innovation as this manager of a site devoted to a maritime disaster describes:

> *If you take the refreshment programme for example we need to go out to different exhibition companies and different museum design companies…we've obviously got a tender process which is quite lengthy, once we choose a couple of different ones that we are excited about we take it to our owners…then the foundation…then the steering group and also the council may have an opinion on it too…it's the amount of time that that takes and by the time you get through those different levels sometimes it's a bit watered down…this is a real barrier for us.*
>
> [Manager O, Maritime Attraction]

This statement above also establishes the process of innovation as an iterative and complex process (Fischer 1999) with integrated feedback loops with employees and consumers more involved in the process rather than an end-to-end process. These findings align dark tourism innovation with a wider, holistic approach, between a collaboration of internal and external networks typical of service innovations (Mattson et al 2005). In addition, this statement relates to the governance structure of the organisation, which presents barriers to innovation. However, it is unclear whether the governance structure is related to the dark tourism offer, or whether it is related to charitable status.

Likewise, the structure of an organisation was felt by some to stifle innovation, especially those working within boundaries set by local authority, as one manager remarked:

> *A barrier for us is working within the parameters of local authority, the council does not think like a business.*

[Manager E, Battle-site]

These examples above highlight how major structural factors such as the lack of financial and physical resources, capacity, temporal issues, and regulatory measures can create endogenous barriers within many dark tourism sites and attractions.

5.6.2. Behavioural Factors

A number of behavioural factors were reported by respondents as creating significant barriers to innovation; namely, lack of stakeholder commitment to innovation, resistance to change, attitudinal factors, staff capacity and capabilities, as well as the pressure to innovate (Hjalager 2002; Sundbo et al 2007; Weiermair 2006). Examples of these issues are detailed below as reported by respondents and have been classified as human resource issues and management/organisational issues.

5.6.2.1 Human Resources

Respondents spoke fervently and at length regarding human resource issues at their sites whether permanent staff, temporary staff, or volunteers. A primary obstacle in relation to human resources related to the perceived resistance to change or inability to change (especially sites with an elderly staff base) as this sole trader explains:

…not having all your staff on board might be an issue which can prevent you from innovating.

[Manager P, War Museum]

Many of the sites interviewed relied on volunteer resources particularly during peak trading times throughout the year. This is unsurprising given that many visitor attractions and museums depend on volunteers particularly in heritage sector in the UK (Holmes 2003). The literature comments upon known barriers related to insufficient competencies and resources (Mistilis and Gretzel 2013). This following manager describes how a potentially opposing attitude towards a process innovation, in this case, new technology, was tackled in her site, a former workhouse and criminal justice museum through the use of volunteers:

…most of our volunteers are elderly and can be quite resistant to change so you've got to take them with you or you will lose them. We've just introduced electronic point of sale… we've brought in examples of it so they can see what we are talking about…we trained forty five volunteers and only two of them decided to step down…its winning hearts and minds taking people with you and not enforcing that sort of change'.

[Manager T, Workhouse]

This statement above also emphasises human resource capabilities, a barrier referred to by a number of other managers manifest as a lack of skills, knowledge and training specifically in relation to digital technology. Additional attitudinal factors reported by managers related to the *'lack of enthusiasm'* or *'lack of very creative staff'* and *'lack of commitment to our organisational ethos'*. These statements highlight the essential driving forces of innovation deemed important by managers and linked to their definition and perception of the concept of innovation (cf. Section 5.2). General human resource capacity issues were also mentioned by managers and although viewed as significant barriers to innovating, held less weight when compared to the attitudes and capabilities of staff at their sites.

Therefore, as these examples highlight, the capabilities of human resources e.g. expertise, knowledge, experience, training, and skills, were equally if not more important than the scale of human resources available, in order to innovate at dark tourism organisations. These human capital factors have also been noted by Blake et al (2006) as important productivity drivers.

5.6.2.2. Management/Organisational Factors

As aforementioned, managers at dark tourism sites and attractions cited a number of employee related capacity, attitudinal, and capability factors at their establishments inhibiting innovation. A number of similar management and organisational related factors were perceived as restricting innovative practices. Anxieties over the potential lack of creativity and entrepreneurial skills affected both management and employees. As well as the difficulty in implementing ideas, the challenge to come up with new ideas was felt by managers as especially problematic.

The pressure to innovate (Hjalager 2002; Sundbo et al 2007; Weiermair 2006) was felt strongly by just under half of the managers interviewed, particularly those who voiced passionate concerns over maintaining 'authenticity' at their sites, summarised by the following manager based at a major attraction:

> *We've got a real challenge here where we've got such well-established stories and such well-established experiences that are highly rated, that we are careful not to detract from that. So innovation for me is a fine line of being true to what we have done in the past but finding innovative ways to present it.*

[Manager W, Attraction]

The statement above highlights the distinctiveness of dark tourism manifest in powerful and evocative stories, and the tension around innovation, particularly technological innovations, seen as conflicting with the 'true' nature of tragic stories and events. This is a recurrent theme throughout the findings and expanded upon in both Chapter Six and Chapter Seven.

Similar to deficits in staff commitment to innovation, the majority of managers referred to the lack of commitment to innovation from both external and internal stakeholders aligned with Najda-Janoszka and Kopera (2014). These views were influenced according to the size and structure of the organisations in which managers were placed. As powerful external stakeholders, political and community buy-in were seen as vital for the success of innovation, as this manager based at a local cemetery reveals:

> *I think it [innovation] needs to have community support and understanding and therefore a strong case made, good communications and relations.*

[Manager Q, Cemetery]

For other respondents, the commitment offered by internal stakeholders held a key position for enabling innovations, such as *'getting people to understand your ideas, and changes from other departments, such as designers for example'*.

As the literature highlights, dark tourism is a contentious concept generating strong emotional responses to the supply and consumption of sensitive topics. However, only one respondent commented that the site theme impeded innovation, stating that *'commemoration is a difficult theme to interpret'*. In contrast, the majority of respondents felt that the site theme presented more opportunities than challenges particularly in respect of the marketing of dark tourism sites and attractions. This is a point further expanded upon in Chapter Six (Marketing).

Associating innovation with risk has been highlighted in the literature (Jogaratnum and Tse 2004) and was also stated as a defining component of innovation by a small proportion of managers interviewed. This association was seen as a potential barrier to innovating in respect of '*having the confidence that the changes will attract visitors and that it will work'*. Despite these concerns over risk which obstructed innovation at implementation stage, for a small number of respondents, innovations that initially failed, incentivised managers to innovate further. Refinements of an original innovation were mainly adapted in response to visitor feedback, as this manager of a castle illustrates with the following example:

> *…so for example bonfire night. It's very interesting this about people's habits. We had Vikings here, Vikings fighting by moonlight, great crowds of people... right, one year ago I changed it for Guy Fawkes, which I thought was a reasonable thing to do. So we had Guy Fawkes, and all these 17th century people, and the public hated it. Bring back the Vikings they said! So we changed it back.*

[Manager G, Historic Castle]

A small proportion of managers referred to 'failed innovations' at their sites. This was interpreted as examples of innovations which, according to managers, were not effective and were mainly related to attempts at digital interaction with visitors. The main reason given for these failings related to a lack of knowledge and support for technological developments (Mistilis and Gretzel 2013). However, these 'failed innovations' were few when compared to the majority of managers who provided comprehensive itemised descriptions of 'idealistic innovations'. These potential innovations, idealised rather than real, generated much

discussion of what managers would like to do without the barriers to innovating. However, it is easy to be idealistic about future innovations and less so about real projects.

Interestingly, the managers who assigned less importance to innovation still provided examples of 'idealised innovations'. These managers spoke passionately about their ideas for future innovations without any constraints, with managers more recent in appointment expressing higher levels of enthusiasm. Their ideas were based around product or process innovations particularly again related to visitor interpretation. Examples included new products such as animal mummies, appealing to new markets, or targeted work towards families, expanding display space, and implementing digital strategies. One example of an 'idealised innovation' related to co-innovation as this one museum manager commented:

> *There is not currently a policy on co-curating with members of the public. This idea would be really useful as you could get immediate opinions on these things.*

[Manager B, Local Museum]

Outside of these fairly standardised examples of innovation in any given tourism enterprise, a small number of respondents gave intricate accounts of idealised innovations specifically related to death, disaster, and suffering such as a death museum, wider display of human remains, and the telling of harrowing events using evidence and materials. This illustrates how barriers, whether structural or behavioural, that may stifle implementation of innovations, do not impinge on idea creation, and conversely may even be an enabler of innovation by thinking creatively to navigate barriers.

Barriers may act upon one point or many points within the process. As the findings suggest, structural barriers such as finance and legislation have a greater impact upon implementation stages of innovation. This finding is supported in the literature by Hadjimanolis (1999). Both barriers and enablers of innovation can contribute to the success of a site. Attention now turns to the effect of dark tourism innovations.

5.7. Effect of Innovations

As highlighted in the literature, the perception is that tourism organisations are not very innovative (Hjalager 2010). Certainly, where dark tourism organisations are concerned, no data currently exists as to the impact and level of innovation at dark tourism sites and attractions. Crucially, this research fills this void.

This section explores the effects and measurement of innovation at dark tourism sites and attractions as reported by managers. As highlighted in the literature (Hjalager 2010) measurement of innovation in tourism is challenging (Volo 2006) and official sources tend to rely on economic outputs, such as with OECD (2016) and more traditional methods of tourism innovation measurement focusing on outputs (Cano 2008). In response to questioning, the majority of managers viewed the outcomes of innovation at their sites to be extremely positive with statements such as '*it's proven so popular*' in relation to a recent exhibition and '*huge numbers of people have come to visit*' referring to a specific themed event. Even with notable barriers as referred to in the previous section (cf. Section 5.6), managers felt it worthy to obtain the desired outcomes as this manager explains:

> *…it took massive amounts, extra work for the staff but when you see it actually increasing, your visitors and your income and what it's generating, it's worth its while to do it, it is worthwhile to do.*

[Manager K, War Museum]

Exceptions to positive affirmations, comprised of a small number of managers who referred to '*failed innovations*' as aforementioned in Section 4.7.4 above. However, less detail was given to managers who commented on 'f*ailed innovations*' when compared to managers describing the perceived success of innovations at their sites. This suggests that there may be an element of social desirability bias here however (Grimm 2010), as managers may not want to admit to '*failed innovations*', particularly in response to research undertaken on innovation at their sites.

Managers who commented upon the success of innovation at their sites actively described intricate details of various examples of predominantly process-driven innovations designed to enhance the visitor experience. The narrative generated by this question leaned heavily on description rather than statistics to evidence effectiveness of innovation. Therefore, without triangulation of the findings the effect of innovations reported by respondents is rather subjective. Nevertheless,

the findings suggest that measuring the effectiveness of innovation at dark tourism sites and attractions was centred on a consumer-based approach by referring to the degree to which innovations affect the experience of visitors (Volo 2006).

The majority of respondents focused on positive visitor feedback to offer a 'measurement' of the effectiveness of innovation(s) at their sites. Eight managers responded to this question in terms of economic outputs via visitor numbers, giving statistics of increasing visitor numbers as a result of a specific innovation. Obviously, the reporting of visitor statistics and visitor feedback is influenced according to the level and type of data collection activities undertaken by management on their visitor base (cf. Section 6.2.2).

Consequently, respondents quoted official statistics where these details were known, whilst other sites where figures were not known (or were unsure of visitor numbers), focused heavily on visitor feedback. Evidence to support two response categories to this question of the effects of innovation is provided below in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5. Effects of Innovations

Response Category	Verbatim Evidence	Innovation	Source
Economic output	*'We saw significant increases in visitor numbers particularly with the local London audiences where visitor numbers and repeat visitor rates increased by 50% or more'.*	Product (temporary exhibition)	Manager W, Attraction
Consumer output	*'…for example we have one of the most successful blogs in a museum, there's a lot of content on there, related specifically to objects on display and things happening behind the scenes, now the viewing figure has gone up dramatically, and with relatively limited costs involved that's very effective. People are actively engaged and say how striking our artefacts are and how this has helped them engage with our collection'.*	Process (technological)	Manager B, Local Museum

Source: Author

The success of innovations at dark tourism sites and attractions can also be attributed to marketing activities undertaken at the site (see Chapter Six), as this manager based at a former prison site explains below:

> *…we expanded the tour to include parts of the former prison within the castle, and there was a huge TV campaign, you known to inform people this was happening, and we had people queuing round the walls to get in…hardly anyone had seen the inside so expanding this tour, the numbers went through the roof.*

[Manager L, Historic Castle]

Due to the problematic nature of measuring the effectiveness of innovation *prior* to implementation, managers stated they would invest in innovation without any concrete evidence of the outcome. As this manager states based at a workhouse:

> *…we did the mug shot exhibition which was really successful. As a result…we've got one of model police cars which is a summer exhibition to attract families and specialist collectors although we don't know yet if this will be successful or not.*

[Manager T, Workhouse]

This example above also highlights how innovation can be implemented as a result of previously perceived successful initiatives either internal or external, as this manager comments:

> *So what you see in terms of interactivity, trying to appeal to families and older people as well was something pioneered at another site, because it works very well.*

[Manager E, Battle-site]

A basic measurement of 'innovativeness' for the purposes of this research, is obtained via assessing the levels of reported examples of innovative activities at sites. This has been ascertained in this research by the number of examples reported by respondents as 'innovative' from all the interviews conducted. The number of examples of innovation cited by respondents were grouped according to type of site and mapped across the five classifications of Hjalager (2010) as illustrated on Table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6. Levels of Reported 'Innovativeness' at Dark Tourism Sites

Type of Site	Types of Innovation (Hjalager 2010)				
	Product	Process	Marketing	Management	Institutional
Attractions (3)	6	9	1	0	0
Exhibition (1)	5	2	0	0	0
Cemeteries (2)	9	1	1	0	0
Castles (3)	18	2	2	0	0
Prisons (3)	7	2	2	1	0
Museums (9)	7	2	2	1	0
Memorial (1)	4	2	0	1	0

Source: Author

Each site on average cited six examples, which given time constraints within the interview, denotes the level of engagement and enthusiasm towards innovation at their sites. Sites with higher numbers of examples included a major maritime attraction heavily reliant on technological process innovations and a war related museum citing new products and market innovations. Museums and sites associated with war cited larger proportions of innovative activity. This is in part due to the sample composition, but also demonstrates that legislation and funding concerns may trigger innovation where creativity is required in order to overcome barriers. However, in contrast, many sites undertake innovative practices outside of funding concerns, particularly those that are privately owned.

Interestingly as Table 4.6 highlights, the three managers based at castles also reported a higher number of examples of product innovation, which is attributed to diversification and attempts to attract new markets. The table also reveals that sites outside of touristic origins still embark on innovative practices such as cemeteries and prisons, however to a much smaller degree. Indeed, one cemetery manager only provided one example of innovation as highlighted in Section 4.2. The table also highlights management innovations for example

referring to substantial changes throughout the whole organisation evidenced by *'moving towards a culture of openness, where innovativeness comes from the top and feeds through the organisation resulting in a change in attitudes and practices'.*

An interesting consideration therefore relates to the type of innovation according to the type of site where certain 'stages' may be better or worse settings for innovation. For example, sites may be able to create dark tourism background 'scenes' (Mattson et al 2005) more effectively due to perceived authenticity, such as historic castles, prisons, and battle-sites. Obviously, these considerations will also be influenced by resources available within the organisation linked to the importance of innovation.

Naturally, owing to time constraints during the interviews, respondents only related examples they deemed most important, and perhaps, the most successful. However, as noted above, it was unclear how managers evidenced the effects and perhaps more importantly whether they had the capacity to understand how to evidence them. A rudimentary content analysis of each site's website reveals additional innovations which respondents could have included, such as special events or specific markets, i.e. weddings and conferences.

5.8. Future Role of Innovation

Asked about where innovations will be focused in five years' time, respondents referred to factors such as digital technology with one respondent commenting, *'time and technology have moved on dramatically and will continue to do so'.* Indeed, many managers commented on forms of digital technology that they had a particular interest in, for use within their sites to aid and enhance the visitor experience, such as:

'...*immersive interactive experiences, you know, augmented reality – there's huge potential in that area'* and *'how smart devices can help us to help our visitors at the museum'.*

[Manager B, Local Museum]

These comments are perhaps predictable because the concept and definition of innovation is perceived by managers at dark tourism sites and attractions to be closely linked to technology, in particular, digital technology. The majority of

managers frequently referred to the visitor as *'core to our business'*, which will become *'even more important in the future'*. Managers spoke about proactive behaviour using digital technology to *'assist with 'helping them do stuff themselves, it's about us going to where they are'*. These views emphasise the importance that managers place on a consumer-led experience. In particular, initiatives seen as inexpensive, enabling the visitor to have control over their experience, included media-based platforms and specific tools such as Pinterest and social mobile applications especially for continuing engagement with sites such as Facebook and Twitter (cf. Section 6.3.2.). A basic analysis of social media usage reveals that the majority of organisations utilised social media platforms. Interestingly, no managers mentioned the use or value of Instagram, an emerging platform for engagement for tourism-based activities (Fantani and Suyadnya 2015).

Other respondents discussed the tensions they felt existed surrounding technology and authenticity, a recurring theme throughout the research, as this manager outlines below:

> *…so innovation for me is a fine line of being true to what we have done in the past but finding innovative ways to present that without taking away from what it used to be.*
>
> [Manager W, Attraction]

Similarly, this manager also refers to issues of authenticity at a battle-site as she explains:

> *…the challenge is always about authenticity not looking like a Disney World.*
>
> [Manager E, Battle-site]

This is an interesting comment considering the notion of 'Disneyization', a concept popularised by Bryman (2004). This quote highlights the concern that theming should be appropriate for the site and appropriate to the audience.

Beyond the perceived technological future direction, contemporary ethical issues were raised. These issues included *'whether selfie sticks should be banned or not'* and issues over repatriation and restitution of objects. These managers felt, particularly those based within museum settings that all stakeholders should actively engage in contemporary concerns and debates. Specific sector concerns were also raised such as the role of future museums as *'continued mutual spaces'*

as well as additional concerns over museum funding cuts. These examples highlight the struggle to innovate or the 'innovation trap' (Manning 2008) associated with the pressure to innovate for organisations (Hjalager 2002; Sundbo et al 2007; Weiermair 2006).

Another major theme that managers discussed when contemplating future trends in innovation related to the theme of dark tourism, specifically at individual sites. One manager based at a war museum spoke of the '*finite market'* and the requirement for managers to invest in attracting new markets. Likewise, another manager based at a cemetery commented that paranormal activities are *'going to die out, [because] visitors will get fed up with dealing with it'*. However, no overall consensus was agreed upon over the targeting of this market interested in the paranormal, with three sites offering activities such as ghost hunting and paranormal events, notably at prisons and an historic castle.

As previously noted the theme of the site was seen as innovative, as an '*innovative story'.* Not telling the story was viewed as *'belittling the tragic circumstances in which they died'*. Consequently, theme-related challenges were outweighed by the advantages that dark tourism themes can offer. Indeed, the majority of managers, regardless of the specific theme of their site, felt their theme as an opportunity, since '*…it's what really hooks people, they love the privileged access to that information'.* This thread continues throughout the thesis and is discussed in detail in the following chapter related to marketing (Chapter Six).

5.9. Summary

Aligned with previous research (Hall and Williams 2008), innovation remains an elusive concept for respondents. Although predominantly viewed as referring to newness and change, wider conceptualisations associated with risk and creativity featured as core descriptors of innovation. Innovation was viewed as an essential, highly important factor to the success of an organisation featuring both a pro-active and output focused approach with the visitor at the heart of the innovation process.

Unsurprisingly, technology featured heavily within the narrative, deemed as a key determinant and the epitome of 'innovativeness', particularly when related to digital technology. Other macro determinants include the visitor pull, competition,

and the role of the state and legislation, particularly in relation to funding. Micro-level determinants were also reported by respondents with endogenous factors relating to specific organisational aims and objectives, entrepreneurship as well as management roles, plus the conservation and preservation of buildings and monuments. Many of the sites selected held significant historical value, with the maintenance of decaying structures exposed to the elements a critical concern for managers.

The majority of examples of innovation reported by respondents included product and process innovations primarily to aid and enhance visitor interpretation at their sites. This again highlights the visitor at the core of innovative behaviour at dark tourism sites and attractions. Product innovations dominated the narrative which included new products relating to retail, exhibitions, and events, and changes to existing products such as extending trading hours/seasons and internal spatial changes. Dark tourism was seen as an innovative product in itself, offering the opportunity for privileged access to the storytelling of tragic events, the absence of such stories could ultimately belittle death, disaster, and suffering. Process innovations related to both technological and non-technological innovations. Institutional, management, and organisational innovations featured much less often compared to product and process innovations, although deemed inter-related and equally important. As reported by a number of scholars documenting tourism innovations, the bulk of innovations were incremental rather than radical innovations. Interestingly, significant legislative requirements were found to be both help and hindrance to the sites sampled such as the Human Tissues Act 2004. Local government regulations building regulations also resulted in managers having to adopt other avenues as a result of these requirements, some of which resulted in substantial incremental process innovations. Likewise, those sites governed by legislation according to the historical value of their sites also reported innovations, demonstrating that macro-level determinants can trigger innovation at the endogenous level.

Barriers included structural and behavioural factors with considerable barriers including financial resources, physical resources, and capacity issues. Technology was viewed both as an enabler and a barrier, as was the role of the state. Behavioural factors were viewed as employee or management related, connected to attitudinal responses to innovation at varying levels. The enablers

and barriers of innovation can affect dark tourism innovations in differing ways. Dark tourism sites and attractions were actively innovative with a large number of examples given by respondents. Coupled with the number of examples cited was the emphasis given to the role of innovation within their sites with a number of sites reporting entrepreneurial activities. Measurement by management of innovative effectiveness involved analysing visitor feedback along with official statistics.

With people at the heart of dark tourism innovation including visitors and staff, collaboration was seen as vital for managers. Many managers quoted examples of co-innovation with a particular emphasis on what can be described as the relationship of scene-makers and scene-takers (Mattsson et al 2005) as inter-woven within the innovation process. External relationships were also deemed highly desirable particularly working within the wider communities with outreach initiatives.

Unsurprisingly, the future trends of innovation were associated with the continued advancement of digital technology. However, this question also raised the debate between the dichotomy of technology and authenticity viewed as mutually exclusive categories invoking fervid responses from managers.

A dominant theme throughout this chapter has been revealed as the nature and extent of 'innovativeness' of dark tourism sites and attractions. The findings identify that innovation is widely practiced and viewed as critical to the success of the organisation. Specifically, the visitor is placed at the heart of decisions related to the design and implementation of innovation(s). This is in stark contrast to assumptions that dark tourism sites and attractions may restrict practices due to perceived conflicts with sensitivities related to the site theme. Consequently, these findings highlight characteristics of sites, manifest in operations such as innovation, marketing, and interpretation, all of which bear the hallmarks of the experience economy, as purported by Pine and Gilmore (1999). This is perhaps not surprising, given that the sites sampled have economic and organisational goals to achieve. However, cemeteries do not appear to have the central characteristics of the experience economy, particularly in relation to the lack of interpretation at their sites, arguably due to having origins outside of touristic endeavours. This calls into question the validity of the typology of 'seven dark suppliers' (Stone 2006) as a worthy framework for investigation.

Moreover, a principle point for consideration based on the findings reported in this chapter, relates to the strong belief by respondents that the theme(s) associated with dark tourism sites and attractions are innovative by nature and a key aspect of business models. Indeed, some managers felt that the strength of the theme did not therefore require any additional adoption of innovation around this core product offering. The majority of managers spoke passionately about the narrative around their themes, triggering further opportunities for some managers to innovate around the unique theme of their sites. The dominance of the stories and narratives that represent the theme, as the subsequent chapters of this thesis will demonstrate, is a principle thread throughout the findings of the research. Dark tourism was seen as a continuing trend outweighing the challenges that may beset managers with a continued focus upon attracting and maintaining visitors. How managers attract and maintain their key audience is a key concern for marketers, therefore, the next chapter is devoted to the aspect of marketing.

CHAPTER SIX – DARK TOURISM MARKETING

**'Tell me the facts and I'll learn. Tell me the truth and I'll believe.
But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever'.**
Native American Proverb

6.1. Introduction

The previous chapter on innovation highlighted how the marketing of dark tourism sites and attractions can trigger innovation, in particular, by attracting new markets and offering new products (cf. Section 5.4). In addition, and equally as important, themes associated with dark tourism are perceived by managers as innovative, effectively the 'brand' of dark tourism. The unique themes associated with the sites sampled suggests ample opportunities for marketing endeavours to attract and retain visitors. However, these opportunities for marketing may be construed as risky undertakings by visitor attractions due to concerns over sensitivities which may affect visitors, organisational reputation and ultimately their brand. Certainly, retailing appears to be a contentious area in dark tourism (Brown 2013), particularly if the product is viewed to be distasteful or a blatant commodification with a lack of regard to the tragic events behind it. Indeed, as previously highlighted, a number of scholars have commented upon the 'kitschification' of dark tourism (Potts 2012; Sharpley and Stone 2009) (cf. Section 2.2.2). Marketing is a contested concept in many senses (Gallie 1956) with differing views on the scope and focus of the concept. However, for the purpose of this research, marketing is defined as '*a management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably'* (Chartered Institute of Marketing 2016).

As Chapter Three revealed, surprisingly little attention has been placed upon the examination of marketing activities and practices within the dark tourism literature (cf. Section 3.3). Indeed, very little is known about the relationship between marketing and dark tourism, specifically, types of marketing related activities undertaken and the challenges associated with the marketing and promotion of dark tourism sites and attractions. This chapter aims to address these significant gaps within the dark tourism literature, arguing that marketing and promotional

activities are widely undertaken practices specifically based around the core theme(s) associated with the sites as storytelling organisations instilling a key narrative for a wider audience. The majority of dark tourism organisations have a significant social media presence and engage with user-generated content within review platforms. This suggests a high degree of visitor interest and engagement with the sensitive subject matter associated with these organisations. In addition, marketing in dark tourism sites and attractions is a key driver, informing decision-making around interpretation and innovation, which is linked through storytelling to establish and maintain brand identity. Indeed, the majority of marketing activities are underpinned by ethically driven processes and organisational beliefs. Moreover, respondents believe that provocative and often sensitive material provides significant opportunities to (re)tell tragic stories that are meaningful and of significant historical importance.

Identifying and addressing ethical and moral concerns are core activities in the routine operations of dark tourism sites and attractions. This is in contrast to other tourism sites, where ethical and moral considerations operate in a peripheral manner until a period of crisis arises. Consequently, as the empirical findings in this chapter demonstrate, the practice of ethically driven processes at the heart of marketing identifies the concept of dark tourism as a distinct sector within the industry, distinguished amongst its counterparts. These findings contrast with Miles' (2014) argument that dark tourism is not an exclusive phenomenon distinguished from other tourism-related products and services supplied within the industry. These findings address objective three of the research (Figure 1.1).

This chapter is comprised of four sections to report findings of the data relating to the marketing of dark tourism sites and attractions and arranged thematically according to the themes as revealed from the data. These preliminary sections form a descriptive account outlining approaches taken, followed by profiles of key audiences such as the repeat visitation market sector. Findings are also included on strategies and activities documenting collaboration and enriching the experience – a pivotal concern reported amongst managers. In addition, the relationship between the media and dark tourism sites and attractions is explored, offering insight from a practitioner perspective into a contested relationship. The remaining sections explore key issues and challenges associated with marketing at dark tourism sites and attractions faced by all managers interviewed. Key

concluding considerations are discussed in-depth related to the findings, followed by a summary of the main points throughout the chapter.

6.2. Marketing Approach

Managers at dark tourism sites and attractions place the visitor at the heart of marketing activities. This is unsurprising, given that this is a widely-adopted marketing approach within the services industry (Baron et al 2010) where the future of many service industries and the shift towards the experience economy (Pine and Gilmore 1999) is seen as becoming more '*consumer-centric'* (Buhalis and Law 2008). Creating the bonds between the sites as suppliers, and visitors as consumers, was seen as vital by managers, indicative of an alignment with relationship marketing approaches. Although a contested concept (Harker 1999), relationship marketing places an emphasis on retaining the visitor, with an emphasis on the process, rather than outcomes of the relationship (Sheth and Parvatiyar 1995). In addition, creating strong links with consumers and extending these to other stakeholders, such as key employees, is indicative of a relationship marketing approach (Holloway 2004). The facets of relationship marketing are demonstrated by this manager as follows:

> *Central to our marketing approach is that all individuals should be valued –*
> *visitors and staff, and the importance of listening to their needs, not just as*
> *a short-term measures, is paramount.*

[Manager W, Attraction]

Notably, respondents revealed that this consumer-centric marketing approach is also affiliated with innovative activities reported (cf. Section 5.4). Customer-centrism is demonstrated in placing the visitor at the core of operations such as innovation (Chapter Five), interpretation (Chapter Seven) and marketing, the focus of this chapter. The approach taken towards marketing within dark tourism sites and attractions has been facilitated primarily with advancements in technology, allowing ease of communications as well as personalisation and sophisticated data collection techniques (Niininen et al 2007). By capitalising on these tools, relationships between suppliers and visitors can be enhanced, adding value, improving the dark tourism experience, whilst contributing to organisational and social goals.

Whether a dimension or philosophy, customer centred marketing approaches are not exclusive to dark tourism marketing. However, what is unique to marketing

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efforts within the dark tourism sites and attractions sampled, is a strong element of ethical decision-making based around the *content* of the message. These processes varied from internal departmental discussions, to a complex web of iterative stages from the inception of marketing ideas to implementation of fully integrated marketing campaigns. These processes are discussed in Section 6.3 of this chapter. This finding illustrates an additional facet to the consumer-centric approach that of content marketing, the idea that content, conceptualised as storytelling in dark tourism sites and attractions, is the key to attracting and retaining customers (Pulizzi 2012). As an additional commonality within dark tourism sites and attractions, telling important factual stories is seen as brand-building within dark tourism sites and attractions. This aspect is discussed further under key considerations in Section 6.5 of this chapter.

6.2.1. Knowledge of the Visitor Base

To create strong unions between sites and visitors, understanding the visitor base in terms of individual needs and behaviours, is regarded as vital by all managers interviewed, forming a crucial component of any marketing process (Seaton and Bennett 1996). Knowledge of the visitor base at sites is gathered by managers from market research consisting of specific data collection activities, often diverse and varying in intensity according to the resources informed by the ethos and structure of the organisation. Overall however, the majority of managers did not employ specific strategies and approaches to generate ideas and inspiration. Rather, these managers relied on more passive tools for visitor involvement, for example, through feedback instruments such as surveys. The following section details the level and methods of data collection on visitors employed at dark tourism sites and attractions.

6.2.2. Data Collection Methods

A wide range of diverse data collection methods are utilised at sites including those encompassing traditional and technological approaches. The frequency of administration of data collection tools varied by site and ranged from monthly to quarterly interviews, with the bulk of interviewing conducted during peak visitation periods (summer and school holiday periods). The majority of sites utilised mono-quantitative based tools, such as face-to-face surveys conducted upon exit, rather than qualitative methods such as interviews on site.

However, five sites used multiple methods combining qualitative and quantitative based approaches to glean a deeper insight into visitor behaviour and needs. A distinguishing pattern here was that four out of the five organisations were charity-based high profile attractions, alongside one government funded organisation. Although no information was provided by managers on the specific sources of funding for the charities that reported multiple methods of data collection, investigations of their websites reveal that all of these organisations have received, or are currently in receipt of, government funding and/or are part of a much wider enterprise. Interestingly, from this group, two sites also reported higher levels of innovative activity which may be associated with fewer restrictions on funding amongst other influencing factors.

Therefore, although no causality can be determined here with the research method employed, there is a relationship between organisations that are able to identify and respond to visitor needs more accurately through the use of data collection, and innovative practices. However, further empirical research is needed here to examine this relationship. Of those sites using multiple methods of data generation, annual visitor numbers were varied, however, suggesting that these investments do not necessarily guarantee higher visitor numbers. The range of data collection methods utilised at the sites sampled is shown on Table 6.1 below and examples separated into technological and non-technological data collection methods.

As illustrated in the table below, a variety of data collection tools are employed at dark tourism sites and attractions outside of more 'traditional' approaches, a finding supported by scholars such as Alam (2002), and Hjalager and Nordin (2011). Accordingly, a range of traditional methods such as non-technological methods were used as well as more sophisticated technological methods. Each respondent interviewed gave at least one example of a data collection method employed at their sites, although no exact proportion can be determined. Many of these methods reflect the development of technology in deploying these methods such as analysis of user generated content, a frequently cited activity, whether conducted systematically or superficially.

Table 6.1. Data Collection Methods Employed

Non-technological Methods	Source	Technological Methods	Source
People counters	Manager D, Prison	Touch-screen surveys/survey machines	Manager H, Prison
In-depth Interviews	Manager U, Slavery Museum	Feedback pods (Site atriums and/or site exits)	Manager O, Maritime Attraction
Face-to-face surveys	Manager O, Maritime Attraction	'Heat maps' of power and levels of interpretation (used for planning new galleries)	Manager R, National Museum
Observation studies	Manager R, National Museum	Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS)	Manager S, Historic Castle
Tracking via 'QuickBooks'	Manager A, Witchcraft Museum	Analysis of User generated content (UGC), TripAdvisor, blogs, forums	Manager B, Local Museum

Source: Author

Surprisingly, managers did not refer to any modes or methods of data collection, given the technological element(s) employed, as 'innovative'. This is despite older traditions such as comment cards or practices of marking sentiments by visitors to archive expression, such as condolence books viewed as rather outdated (Sather-Wagstaff 2011). Reasons for this view may be related to the perception of collecting visitor data, regarded by one manager as an '*obligation*' and '*cumbersome*' as well as another manager commenting:

> *…and if you just say, "what do you want?" people just sort of stab in the dark and guess incoherently erm, and what they want is, or what they say they want, tends not to be what they would actually come and see when, or if, you give it to them.*

[Manager C, Exhibition]

Only two sites reported that they did not employ any data generating techniques compared to the majority of managers who stated they conducted some form of

data collection on their visitors. The key factors associated with the lack of data collection practices related to difficulties in recording visitors particularly for free entry sites with multi-entrances, for example, cemeteries. Publicly funded sites, in particular, reported on the obligations to collect data to report back to funding bodies. In addition, publicly funded sites may also experience difficulties with organisational barriers that can impinge on design and implementation of feedback instruments as this manager explains below:

> *There is a mailing list but we don't control that which is a bit of a frustration… and it's quite difficult at the moment to get to some of the data… …um so I know what we should be able to do but just at the moment in our local authority setting there are a few challenges shall we say…it was much easier to design surveys and access data when we were not centralised.*

[Manager R, Historic Castle]

6.2.3. Profile of Key Audiences

Knowledge of the visitor base and key audiences in tourism organisations is vital in achieving effecting marketing strategies (Kotler et al 2015). When questioned on the key markets at their sites, the majority of managers frequently responded with sectors such as families, educational groups, special interest groups (theme dependant) and visitors either local, national, or international. Surprisingly, given the importance seemingly allocated to the repeat visitor market (Section 5.4.2), this audience did not regularly appear within the top four most frequently stated markets in terms of market share. Consequently, regardless of the level and intensity of data collection activities, all managers felt that they had a '*good understanding'* of the profile of the majority of their visitors attending their sites, which they evidenced from market research and observations conducted at sites (cf. Section 6.2.2). However, managers did not convey the same common belief when referring to repeat visitors, viewed as a '*more elusive market'* when compared to first-time visitors.

As Table 6.2 highlights, sites and attractions where international visitors were a key audience consisted of larger sites based in city centre locations attracting high volumes of visitors per annum such as London and Belfast.

Table 6.2. Profile of Key Audiences

Type of Organisation	Key Visitor Audiences per Market Share	Key Demographics
National Museum (1)	(1) National Visitors (2) International Visitors (3) Local Visitors	(1) Families (2) Education (3) Repeat Visitors
Local Museums (2)	(1) Local Visitors (2) National Visitors	(1) Families (2) Individuals (3) Special Interest (4) Education
Independent Museums (5)	(1) Local Visitors (2) National Visitors	(1) Families/Individuals (2) Education (3) Special Interest
Exhibition (1)	(1) Local Visitors (2) National Visitors	(1) Special Interest (2) Education (3) Families
Penal Institutions (2)	(1) Local Visitors (2) National Visitors	(1) Families (2) Education (3) Special Interest
Battle-site (1)	(1) National Visitors (2) Local Visitors (3) International Visitors	(1) Individuals (2) Families (3) Special Interest (4) Education
Historic Castles (3)	(1) Local Visitors (2) National Visitors (3) International Visitors	(1) Families (2) Couples (3) Special Interest (4) Education
Attractions (3)	(1) International Visitors (2) National Visitors (3) Local Visitors	(1) Families (2) Couples (3) Individuals (4) Education
Memorial (1)	(1) Local/ National Visitors (2) International Visitors	(1) Individuals (2) Special Interest
Cemeteries (2)	(1) Local Visitors and Residents	(1) Individuals (2) Education (3) Groups

Source: Author

The key audiences per site groupings (museums are split into national and local) are illustrated on Table 6.2 below. Managers were not able to apportion percentages of their key audiences of their visitor base, instead, providing the main segments listed in order of market share. National museums are defined as those funded directly by the government whereas local museums are those that reflect local history and are funded by local authorities. Independent museums are not directly funded by the state although may receive some financial support (Museums Association 2017).

As the table above demonstrates, unsurprisingly, local museums frequently targeted locals and local visitors in the form of families, couples, and groups. Conversely, the national museum centred upon a wider demographic to include national and international visitors including repeat visitors. Indeed, they were the only category to include repeat visitors within the top four key demographics. This may be due to the allocation of higher levels of financial and human resources. The key demographics highlight that the majority of sites interviewed regarded families and individuals as the most important markets to attract and retain. This is closely followed by educational groups, in particular the schools market, where the majority of sites and attractions provided an education programme, symbolic of the important partnership between schools and the tourism industry. A small number of respondents, however, reported on the increasing barriers to the education market in the form of *'more increased transport costs'* and '*difficulties when matching material with the school curriculum'*. These views were expressed by two local authority museums.

The diversity of audiences that visit dark tourism sites and attractions as reported by managers dispels the myth that sites associated with sensitive themes only attract special interest groups conceptualised as 'dark visitors', as suggested by a number of early scholarly work in dark tourism research (Seaton 1996). Conversely as suggested by later research by Sather-Wagstaff (2011), thanatourism is a flawed term for describing visitor motives and experiences. Rather, the acceptance, memorialisation, and contemplation of death and dying is the result that dark tourism activities engenders. Therefore, market segmentation across all key audiences was typically conducted, rather than a targeted approach to a niche element. Furthermore, when questioned on visitor motivation, managers reported a diverse range of motives including

entertainment, education, and personal connection, as well as many opportunistic motives, for example, *'it's weather dependant largely'* and similarly, *'it's a day out for the family if they are on holiday in the area'*. In her research at sites associated with 9/11, Sather-Wagstaff (2011) also comments upon the personalised, diverse, and highly complex ways in which visitors experience dark tourism sites. Moreover, the marketing activities undertaken by the majority of respondents represented the perception of visitors as highly participatory agents rather than mere passive spectators.

Most notably, two important aspects are revealed in the findings in line with the literature, that of emotion (Buda 2015; Best 2007; Biran et al 2011; Isaac and Cakmak 2013) and more recent musings on psychological approaches related to visitor motivation associated with contemplations of mortality (Stone 2011b, 2012; Johnston 2016). First, emotion, specifically the role of empathy, was frequently mentioned by managers as a motive for visiting sites regardless of the nature of the theme. Second, providing a '*safe place where people can contemplate what happened here,'* thereby enabling visitors to reflect on death from the 'safe distance' of a socially sanctioned space, is another familiar theme running through the dark tourism literature (Stone 2012). These findings indicate that practitioners' perceptions of dark tourism motivations are aligned with current empirical evidence reported in the dark tourism literature, therefore providing further credibility for motives for dark tourism. In order to fully understand motives and effectively target the markets identified by respondents, attention turns towards marketing strategies.

6.3. Marketing Strategies

A marketing strategy is a crucial road map for any organisation to attain marketing objectives. To establish marketing practices and related activities that were orientated towards visitor profiles, respondents were first asked whether they had a long-term plan against which operational decisions were taken regularly, in other words, a marketing strategy. In response, the vast majority of managers reported that they had a specific plan devoted to marketing and promoting their sites and emphasised the importance of having a strategy. As one manager warns, based at a Maritime Museum, to be devoid of any kind of marketing strategy is *'like hiding your light under a bushel if you don't have an effective marketing strategy that people who are interested could come in here and visit*

and explore'. Unfortunately, triangulation of these findings was not possible due to the inaccessibility of marketing plans and associated documentation due to respondent concerns regarding commercial sensitivity. This has been recorded as a limitation of the research (cf. Section 8.4).

Managers adopted a more 'common sense' approach to market segmentation rather than evidence-based, using similarities and commonality amongst certain visitor segments rather than sophisticated technically data-driven algorithms to sub-divide markets (Dolnicar 2013). This approach is a common technique undertaken based within marketing strategies aimed at identified market sectors to explore competitive advantage and seen as a *'more cost-effective way to develop customisation'* as this manager refers to below:

> *In terms of the straplines we use, and the tone of voice, it'll be very different for our family audience than it will be for a Women's Institute group, for example. So really thinking about what's important to those audiences, what it is we have on site that we can marry up their needs with elements of our product, to make it work in very simplistic marketing terms.*

> [Manager K, War Museum]

This highlights a common-sense approach in action, segmenting according to demographics. Strategic tools such as market segmentation also enable organisations to widen their offer as this manager explains with a large array of market segmentation practices targeted to a wide range of audiences. In the following example, segmentation is performed via special interest rather than via demographic, which may relate to funding received in order to pursue these lines of enquiry for marketing:

> *The element of programming that I've done, 'Game of Thrones' is very cult, so we've done that, we've had Lego which is a very family-oriented, we've cracked that. We then go into photography which can be very much interest-based as well as adult-based, yep, and then next year we're looking at having something along the lines of gaming, so that kind of thing, so graphics, it's to tie in really with the film tourism which is quite popular at the moment, we're looking at doing that. Now I would like to tie that with technology, so we've based them on cult, family, adult, technology, and then the year after that I would look to do something maybe cult again, so that I am trying to hit all those different demographics and have something for everyone, so the site is not just seen as, the reason isn't just to come and learn about the ship, there's much more to it than that.*

> [Manager O, Maritime Attraction]

This provides further support to the findings that although the central tenet of the theme is a key driver for consumption, marketing efforts are targeted to appeal to

a wide, diverse audience rather than a focus on a '*death-driven*' niche market solely attracted to sites associated with death (Seaton 1996).

Regardless of the type of site and the size and structure of organisations, all managers commented upon marketing and marketing related activities, in some form or other, at their sites and attractions. Only three managers stated that they did not have any official protocol for marketing of their sites. Of these managers, marketing and marketing related activities were still conducted outside of a comprehensive marketing strategy. One manager felt that the nature and theme of their site, a cemetery, was strong enough on its own to attract visitors and cited a human resource barrier for not implementing a current marketing strategy as he explains:

> *No marketing strategy for the site – we don't market it because it markets it itself. At the moment development is constrained by availability of volunteers.*

[Manager I, Cemetery]

Similarly, another manager referred to marketing activities related to certain products rather than an overall marketing approach in place at the small museum where he was based, commenting:

> *We don't have a specific marketing strategy but what we do is constantly update Facebook and LinkedIn which is another good one for us, and it is word of mouth… of course the other spin-off is that I get invited all over the place to do talks and each talk tends to generate two or three new ones [visitors] because the talks are interesting, so its generates more interest.*

[Manager P, War Museum]

As this illustrates, similar to data collection practices (cf. Section 6.2.2), many sites recognise the importance of incorporating user generated content (UGC) into their marketing strategies as highlighted by Gretzel (2006). In addition, this statement also stresses the value placed on word of mouth by managers at dark tourism sites and attractions, frequently stated as an effective communication model for marketing purposes (Holloway 2004) and linked to the interpretive experience (Chapter Seven) at sites, as illustrated by the following quote:

> *Part of our plan is to create a willingness to engage with visitors when they are here and give them the best experience that we can to make them go away and tell other people about it.*

[Manager F, Maritime Museum]

Surprisingly little distinction was made between word-of-mouth recommendation from first-time visitors and repeat visitors, often viewed specifically as a powerful source of recommendation (Alegre and Cladera; Lau and McKercher 2004; Opermann 2000).

The majority of managers who followed a marketing plan or strategy, largely adopted a methodical marketing process consisting of three stages: identifying the market(s), followed by determining the content of the message, prior to communicating the message using appropriate mediums (Beech and Chadwick 2006). The second content-related stage of this process was deemed overwhelmingly important, and certainly contentious for dark tourism marketers as many '*campaigns are steered by the subject matter'*. Rather than adopt a passive approach to determining the message(s), crucially for many managers, content was developed around specific stories, to provide the platform to offer opportunities for visitors to engage explicitly with sensitive topics connected to their sites. Many managers felt that the strength of theme was robust enough to attract key audiences, and in extreme cases, even requiring less emphasis on advertising and marketing activities, as this manager explains:

> *But it does suggest that our spending on leaflets is pointless perhaps as we've got this very strong cohort of supporters.*

[Manager A, Witchcraft Museum]

Interestingly, content was specifically devised for marketing and interpretive objectives to elicit emotions by generating powerful stories to engage visitors as this quote summarises:

> *The exhibition… was centred on the conflict… and the stories and images of woman that were raped and mutilated during this war. We wanted to provide shocking images to provoke a reaction in our visitors about this untold story of brutality and the consequences for these women and the community.*

[Manager U, Slavery Museum]

Again, this adds gravitas to the premise that dark tourism sites and attractions within this sample operate on activating emotions, experiences, and needs evoked by the theme of dark tourism, a central tenet to all operations. Innovation therefore, acts as a conduit to transmit important messages. Further examples of storytelling and attempts to activate emotional responses from visitors are also evident in marketing activities and practices as the following section demonstrates.

6.3.1. Marketing Activities

In order to provide memorable experiences, a range of varied marketing activities were undertaken by managers to satisfy customer needs as well as organisational goals. Conducting research on the visitor base is one of the primary roles of marketing (Sharpley 2004), consequently, marketing related activities varied according to the acknowledgement and identification of customer needs revealed from data collection endeavours (cf. Section 6.2.2).

The range and diversity of marketing activities is demonstrated below in Table 6.3. This table highlights traditional and more experiential related components of marketing activities at dark tourism sites and attractions. Marketing activities are illustrated on the table below according to the number and type of sites and attractions participating in these activities within the sample as reported by respondents.

Table 6.3. Examples of Marketing Activities Undertaken

Marketing Activities	Site(s)
Sales literature (fliers, posters)	Museums (6), Exhibition (1), Castles (3), Attractions (3)
Editorials	Castles (1), Museums (3)
Television and radio activity	Museums (3) Castle (1) Attraction (1)
Public Relations (PR)	Museums (5) Castle (1) Attractions (3)
Arts competitions	Museums (4)
Social media campaigns centred around powerful stories and events	Museums (8) Exhibition (1) Castles (3) Attractions (3)
Calls for donations for war related personal items to feature in museum	Museums (1)
Archaeological mini digs where locals allowed to keep artefacts they found	Castles (1)
Design competition of cemetery sculpture	Cemetery (1)
Pricing Promotions: Buy One Get One Free/Kids Go Free/Family Tickets	Museums (7), Attractions (3), Castle (1)
Mobile Applications – 'apps'	Museums (3)

Source: Author

As the table above demonstrates and as reported by managers, marketing and marketing activities were not limited endeavours, despite ethical and moral concerns reported in the media and in the literature (Dann 1994; MacCannell 1999; Lennon and Foley 2000; Pagliari 2004; Cole 2000). Indeed conversely, active marketing activity was performed at the vast majority of dark tourism sites and attractions. These activities consisted of the utilisation of well-established marketing endeavours, for example, leaflets and posters, together with more experiential approaches such as interactive archaeological digs with visitors. Overall, the majority of sites and attractions operated a combined approach with the exception of very small museums with limited resources. One exception to this was the sole employee at a prison in charge of a museum collection who did not *'have any resources at the moment to do half as much as I would like to'.* Instead, relying on personal communication to raise awareness of the museum as he adds:

> *…local schools and locals in the area…I gave them a little space and history talk about the jail's past, so that is available for anyone that wants it, I have attempted to do Hospice societies and again spoke about the jail and let them know that the museum exists for anyone who wants to visit it.*

[Manager J, Prison]

In addition, two of the cemeteries in the sample did not heavily invest in marketing techniques. However, one cemetery did run a design campaign as this manager highlights:

> *…the objective of which is not specifically for marketing necessarily, but to involve locals more in our mutual space. They can then see the beauty of the cemetery and hopefully will visit us.*

[Manager Q, Cemetery]

No specific groupings were identified through their marketing related activities; therefore no link can be made between typologies of sites and attractions with their reported marketing associated marketing practices. However, under-reporting of marketing activities was evident from the cemeteries within the sample, linked to their innovative behaviour as reported in Chapter Five.

Whilst exploring the nuances surrounding marketing related practices at dark tourism sites and attractions, an interesting juxtaposition was revealed. Managers

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who championed 'authenticity' as a preferred route to interpretation did not necessarily exclude technology for marketing and marketing purposes. On the contrary, digital platforms were chosen by the majority of managers as the preferred communicative channel to relay messages between suppliers and consumers (Smilansky 2009). In particular, social media platforms were heavily utilised to encourage various levels of engagement with visitors as this manager highlights:

> *Of course, now on Twitter we are trying much more to engage in a conversation where we are tweeting about the museum and events that will be going on and also we've got Facebook which encourages engagement as well on a different level.*

[Manager U, Slavery Museum]

The reliance on digital technology at dark tourism sites and attractions follows a similar pattern identified throughout the tourism sector and beyond; for example, the specific changes noted in museology where traditional curatorial approaches have been superseded by technological endeavours. According to McLean (2012), these digital endeavours manifest in the notion of service, have now become a critical dimension of museum operations. A major advantage of digital technologies is that they can also act as a vector to carry other types of innovations such as product innovations, for example, using social media platforms to raise awareness of a new event or retail offering. These examples are a reminder that classifications of innovations such as those put forward by Hjalager (2010) are not silos, rather they are inter-connected and have influence over one another.

6.3.2. Enriching the Experience

In addition to the central consumer-focus approach within the planning and execution of marketing activities, the notion of 'aftercare' outside the dark tourism experience was a re-occurring theme amongst respondents. All stages throughout the planning and delivery of marketing campaigns and the marketing of dark tourism sites and attractions stimulate innovation, as highlighted in Chapter Five. The final quote in the previous section epitomises the increasing attention placed on engaging visitors throughout the dark tourism experience. The post-visit experience is rarely commented upon in any great detail in tourism or wider studies with the exception of Sather-Wagstaff (2011). She highlights that physically being present is only one part of the experiential process which

continues post-visit. Indeed, in her research she explores how visual and material mementos such as photographs and souvenirs of the visit to the World Trade Center are deployed within the home and shared with family and friends. Therefore, these objects have a significance that extends beyond the site visit, a theme aligned with the power of objects as posited by Hill (2007) and expanded upon in Section 7.4.1. This was a sentiment profoundly felt by almost all managers interviewed, in particular, continuing the engagement *outside* of the experience as places are continuously made and remade through ongoing human practices of visitation and interpretation (Sather-Wagstaff 2011).

The majority of respondents sampled referred to '*aftercare*' in order to '*enrich the experience*' and similarly, to '*create a lingering experience*' without the requirement of physical visitor presence. Sather-Wagstaff (2011) comments upon how acts of memory making performed post-visit by visitors can make sites both salient and meaningful, both individually and collectively. These actions can further aid future potential visitors also, as participatory agents. Consequently, a large proportion of specific marketing endeavours were devoted to this aspect of the dark tourism experience, felt to be *especially* important to the repeat visitor market by enticing visitors to return. This finding supports the suggestion by Sather-Wagstaff (2011) that the performance of ongoing discourses relating to the experience serves to entice a repeat visit by maintaining memories. This is an interesting finding given the variability of activities devoted to repeat visitors throughout other stages of the marketing process. A number of tools were developed and employed by managers at dark tourism sites and attractions to expedite forms of continuing engagement, categorised as via digital technological aids and non-technological aids as shown in Table 6.4 below. Unsurprisingly, given the reliance on digital channels for the majority of marketing efforts as demonstrated in Table 6.4, the vast majority of respondents adopted social media platforms as the preferred channel to engaging visitors outside the dark tourism experience, as supported also by Sather-Wagstaff (2011) as this manager explains:

> *We have got a lot of followers on Facebook and Twitter and people follow our blog as well. So that's another way of finding out about…people are inspired by the visit so continue their engagement with the museum even though they're not physically here.*

[Manager R, National Museum]

Table 6.4. Examples of Tools and Techniques to Facilitate 'Aftercare'

Technological	Non-Technological
Social media platforms (e.g. blogs, Pinterest, Facebook, Twitter)	Personal engagement between supplier and customer (e.g. talks, events)
Mobile applications	Membership offers such as 'Friends' or members associated with the site
Online retailing	Annual passes to attraction or part of combined offer

Source: Author

Recent developments in technology have also enabled visitor physical presence to be an *option* at tourist sites. Those managers who championed digital technology viewed virtual experiences as a significant future trend within tourism-related marketing (cf. Section 5.8) as this manager reveals when discussing a future digital marketing strategy:

> *…we've got a real objective to think more widely, acknowledging the fact that not everyone can even come so we are trying to create an experience for people who are overseas and in parts of the UK who can't visit.*

[Manager W, Attraction]

The predominance of digital marketing, in particular, the application of social media platforms throughout all stages of marketing processes is certainly linked to the advantages of reaching a global network with relatively low costs (Jelfs et al 2016) when compared to traditional marketing conventions, for example media and print options.

However, technology is not always the preferred channel for communicating messages, particularly in respect of relating personal stories of tragic events where the message was felt to be at risk of 'dilution' (Crowther 2011). This highlights the place and role of innovation. For example, a small number of managers felt that digital technology '*hindered the human aspect of storytelling*' of people's lives and events instead opting for direct personal contact with visitors to offer a form of personalisation, as this manager based at a historical site outlines:

> *…and I will say, right, if any of you feel you want to ask any more about this*

*talk, or if there's anything about it that concerns you, what I would like you to do is, this is my email, write to me personally and I'll write back, and I always write back. If you want to read books, tell me particularly what type you're after and I'll give you some guidance. If you're distressed or disturbed about anything you've heard, like Nell Gwynne, the death of her, then we can talk about it. I'm there a hundred percent and I **always** [original emphasis] respond.*

[Manager G, Historic Castle]

Similarly, and as demonstrated in Table 5.4, another manager refers to the '*marketing activities undertaken at radio stations, press packs and the importance of representing the brand in person'.* This quote encapsulates a feeling amongst a small number of managers that traditional public relations activities with the media as well as the wider public as prospective visitors is still an effective component of the marketing and marketing mix and viewed as '*still relevant in today's digital landscape'.* These findings highlight the complexities of brand marketing and, contrary to research reporting, the proliferation of digital marketing amongst small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's) as exclusive endeavours (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick 2012).

6.3.3. Collaboration and Partnerships

As demonstrated in Chapter Five, managers view collaboration as vitally important both inside and outside their organisational boundaries with their internal stakeholders such as visitors and employees (particularly volunteers who may have been previous visitors themselves), and external stakeholders, to enhance innovation. Likewise, within marketing practices, external partnerships with suppliers, competitors, and the wider community were viewed as essential elements to aid marketing efforts and forms another facet of a relationship marketing approach. Just over half of the respondents interviewed commented upon co-marketing and joint marketing initiatives with external stakeholders as mutually beneficial, as this manager summarises below:

And a lot of my target marketing is to the accommodation providers, I see that as, they're just as big as our customers, they're the ones that pass on information to the guests and such like, so I think it's trying to get to everybody but also trying to build relationships with accommodation providers, just to kind of try and help each other to exist.

[Manager H, Prison]

Aside from co-partnering activities, recognised as a key feature of tourism management and planning (Bramwell and Lane 2000), managers also cited competitors as '*vital links in achieving organisational goals'.* A traditional view to

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suppliers offering similar product or service offerings may be one of a one-way relationship with little or no positive benefits, particularly where imitation is a frequent concern amongst tourism enterprises (Hall and Williams 2008). Conversely, managers that were interviewed who commented on similar businesses viewed the relationship between them as:

> '…two-way, close relationships, where we can look at the sector as a whole and help each other out'.

[Manager D, Prison]

This particular quote relates to a prison manager who stated that close ties had been purposefully formed with two other similar museums who regularly loaned exhibits and artefacts between them 'creating a unique bond between them all'. This manager emphasised that these shared resources were necessary to refresh collections and was seen of particular relevance for the prison sector who are remotely located and not receiving high foot-fall of visitors. In addition, this was viewed as particularly important, and in some respects essential, due to the small number of collections that are associated with criminal justice in the United Kingdom. This finding therefore highlights the activities performed of shared resources: in the form of knowledge, objects, ideas, plus co-operation and inter-dependency. These mechanisms are also part of the innovation process as reported by respondents (cf. Section 5.3) and a key characteristic of resource-based theory (Touboulic et al 2014). Naturally, external partnerships can also reduce substantial financial obligations when jointly involved in marketing events and in particular when creating and delivering technological marketing tools. However, respondents did not reveal the mechanisms by which these arrangements came to fruition.

One manager championed the joint design and production of a mobile application for use between their own site and associated umbrella organisation as 'it would have been so expensive to have had sole responsibility'. Additional, external relationships were commented upon by two managers currently utilising voucher schemes which they stated had resulted in attracting new markets, although it was stressed by one manager that:

> …it's not a great idea to become a regular user of these types of schemes as it cheapens the product.

[Manager G, Historic Castle]

Managers who did not partake in any partnership activities commented upon known financial and human resource barriers to collaboration (Fyall and Garrod 2005). These included the inefficient and ineffective exchange of information, goals, and resources, in line with the literature (Palmer and Bejou 1995). Whilst investigating these collaborative structures, it appears that co-branding is not a specific strategic alliance formulated at the dark tourism sites and attractions sampled. This may be due to the strength of the brand or theme, a perception frequency referred to by managers throughout the interviews; as one manager comments, *'we are simply a known brand - that's it'*. Additional barriers to strategic partnerships appeared to be the '*lack of access to opportunities',* which is also in line with Fyall and Garrod's findings (2005).

As the findings have illustrated so far in this chapter and Chapter Five (Innovation), internal and external relationships can highly influence innovation and marketing of dark tourism sites and attractions. When questioned on collaborative practices, the majority of respondents referred to external partnerships and alliances in their marketing endeavours with scarce reference to internal stakeholders. Although the effects are, as yet, unknown, respondents at sites within the sample stated an interest in identifying, instigating, and maintaining a range of collaborations. A relationship not yet explored in the dark tourism literature, but exerting a degree of influence is connected to how messages associated with the concept of dark tourism are conveyed outside the organisation by media effect (Beech & Chadwick 2006), the focus of the following section.

6.3.4. Storytelling

As reported in section 4.2, managers referred to the theme of dark tourism as innovative, identifying the subject matter associated with dark tourism organisations as the core of innovative activities. Similarly, with respect to marketing practices, the theme of storytelling was a major driver for marketing and marketing activities. Consequently, practices of innovation and marketing will influence interpretation of the narrative as part of the dark tourism experience. As Chapter Seven highlights, storytelling consists of a wide range of narratives. The findings also reveal that visitors do not simply consume narratives but also engage and help to construct stories (Sather-Wagstaff 2011). However, a distinction has to be made between a '*storied organisation'* (Miles 2017) where

the organisation tells the story about its own historical development, and a storytelling organisation that uses a narrative as the visitor value proposition. Overall, all the organisations interviewed commented on the centrality of a narrative associated with the experience as storytelling organisations (Pulizzi 2012; Langer and Thorup 2006; Denning 2000, 2005; Mittins et al 2011; Burmann and Zeplin 2005; Collinson and MacKenzie 1999 and Boje 2011). However, five sites commented specifically upon *'the back-story outlined for visitors',* where they innovated around the organisational story to act as a powerful attractor for visitors. These sites consisted of a battle-site, and two maritime museums, together with two prisons. In this following example, attention turns towards the story *behind* the battle-site to attract visitors:

> *…we need to put more about in terms of the story about the archaeologists, the metal detector specialists that were involved in the search for the battle, because that's what really hooks people…*

[Manager E, Battle-site]

These examples highlight the value attached to an organisational story, demonstrated by this manager's comment at a maritime museum, '*visitors love it – they get totally engrossed and can then make the links to why the key message is so important'.*

Although no direct questioning took place on 'storied organisations' as this was not a key research objective, the importance of these findings provides a future research consideration of how tourism-based organisations may transfer the 'backstage' of the story into the 'frontstage' visitor experience, to add an insight into organisational culture of a powerful theme such as that of Cadbury World (Rowlinson and Hassard 1993).

The narratives specific to the sites sampled were predominantly administered via social media to appeal to a wide range of potential visitors. Similarly, another manager talked about the story attracting the repeat visitor, and the ability to innovate around the story by providing different aspects of the theme that may appeal to different market segments:

…so I think in terms of that continuing engagement and people coming back to the site but also the after journey it can also be through that so you can think of stories around the workhouses and the individual stories associated with them which appeal to different people on a variety of levels.

[Manager T, Workhouse]

In a similar vein, this manager also emphasises the role that storytelling can play when attracting repeat visitors:

…the same family will book again and again and again to come to a whole round of storytelling activities or something like that that fits their requirements quite nicely.

[Manager K, Museum (War)]

This quote offers further evidence of the theme(s) at dark tourism sites and attractions as innovative, offering flexibility which can be refreshed and updated whilst appealing to diverse audiences.

In terms of transmitting the messages, although social media was a popular tool for transmitting the messages to attract visitors, other mediums were also cited as this manager details:

I think there are stories that can be done through a number of platforms such as talking to schools and going to youth groups or doing evening talks to incite some interest and give them a taste of what to expect.

[Manager S, Historic Castle]

Motives behind the use of stories for attracting visitors were diverse according to organisational objectives, but all shared a commonality about the lives of individuals in historic settings as this manager describes:

I think again it's the connection to the history, the role of the Beefeater is so iconic and the stories they tell, are usually rooted in mostly truth, but a lot of fun and it just helps people, instead of just seeing a building, instead of seeing something that's old, they get more history and more of a story behind it.

[Manager W, Attraction]

This quote above epitomises how by consuming and engaging with the narrative, the impact and history of the individual becomes known to those who have no prior knowledge of that individual or events associated with that role and can enable remembrance, reverence and reflection (Sather-Wagstaff 2011).

Although a significant finding, the tourism literature does not refer to tourism industries as storytelling organisations or 'storied organisations' (Miles 2017) in any depth generally, favouring subsets of the tourism sector such as cultural or heritage tourism to comment upon narratives (du Cros and McKercher 2016; Valtolina 2016). This may be due to disputes over whether tourism can be recognised as a sector or industry (Cooper et al 1998; Holloway 2006). Organisational studies can offer some insight into the mechanisms and motives for storytelling organisations (Boje 1991, 2008, 2011; Czarniawska 1997; Gabriel 2000; 2004). Although research in this field tends to explore how knowledge is exchanged within organisations rather than outside the organisation to external audiences, it is useful to explore commonalities. These include stories in organisations, which according to (Gabriel 2000:239) act 'as generating emotion in both narrator and audience, through a poetic elaboration of symbolic material'. This helps to position the power of the narrative as a management tool to create organisational identity where stories are powerful devices for managing meaning (Armstrong 1992; Denning 2000, 2005). The powerful narrative surrounding sites has also caught the attention of the media. The next section considers the role that the media plays within the sites sampled - key management issues reported by managers.

6.4. The Relationship between Dark Tourism Sites and Attractions and the Media

The phenomenon of dark tourism has attracted considerable media attention with frequent journalistic reports focusing mainly on ethical and moral concerns (Phillip 2014; Paris 2013). Indeed, the media as a key influence in dark tourism is suggested by a number of scholars (Dann 1998; Walter 2009). The media influence is perhaps not surprising given the juxtaposition of both 'dark' subject matter and 'tourism' (usually conceived as a light-hearted leisure pursuit), providing attention-grabbing headlines. However, the temptation to use the sensational aspects of a site associated with death, disaster, and suffering to create a media story comes at the cost of belittling the nuances of the story and its context. Little is known about this relationship in practice, specifically whether positive or negative effects are garnered from the relationship between the media and dark tourism sites and attractions. Although managers were not directly questioned about this relationship, a large majority of managers commented

upon the role of the media upon their organisations generating both positive and negative effects. The media had particular influence over the marketing of dark tourism sites and attractions, either via specific activities undertaken by marketers, or wider influences related to the concept of dark tourism, which again was felt could impact perceptions of their sites. Media impacts upon dark tourism are categorised into macro and micro factors and explored in the following sections henceforth.

6.4.1. Media Influences – Macro-Level Factors

Apart from two exceptions, the vast majority of managers vehemently disagreed with the term dark tourism as a suitable descriptor for their sites. Particular concern was vocalised with the term dark tourism being applied to their products due to the perceived negative trope of the word 'dark' and sinister undertones that the term represented. Managers grasped the concept of dark tourism to be primarily coupled to paranormal activities, as this manager expresses:

> *We don't do fright nights and we're not into scaring people – that's the horror crowd. We don't have people dressed up in silly costumes leaping about and going 'boo', that's not our style, we create interest, totally different.*

[Manager D, Prison]

Similarly, other managers named specific sites which they believed were more closely associated with dark tourism akin to the *'horror crowd'* and *'fun-scare'* or particular paranormal related activities such as ghost hunting and ghost walks. This statement above summarises a wide belief amongst managers of the ominous inference associated with dark tourism, which were felt by managers to be partly attributed to the media and interestingly for a small number of managers, to the *'branding of the term in academia'.* The majority of managers referred to *'unwanted and unwarranted media reports'* connected with the phenomenon, with associated negative commentary inherent in both style and content. The negative connotation associated with dark tourism, and in particular, sensitive themes, also impacted upon interpretation at dark tourism sites and attractions, discussed in Chapter Seven.

During the interview process, as strong views became apparent on this matter, managers were further probed towards more 'suitable' suggestions to describe their sites. Responses by managers included minor amendments to distinguish their key sector such as *'dark heritage'* and *'dark attraction'* and for other

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managers, the omittance of the word 'dark' altogether to a solely heritage or historically related product. The influence of the media in a macro sense was perceived to be a negative influence in respect of attempts to promote their sites. These findings therefore verify previous anxieties highlighted in the literature (Stone 2006; Nawjin and Fricke 2013) over uneasiness of the term dark tourism when applied in a practical setting with the media triggering additional negative responses.

6.4.2. Media Influences - Micro-Level Factors

Conversely, the media was viewed as a positive influence when applied in a practical setting relating to the marketing of specific sites. In some instances, media activity in the form of television and radio were specifically chosen as appropriate platforms. These managers stated that they utilised the media to fundamentally raise awareness of their organisation for marketing purposes. This in turn was felt may also help to dispel myths surrounding potential sensitive topics and themes associated with their sites. For example, one manager based in a witchcraft museum, appeared on a major afternoon UK talk show which had a dramatic effect as she explains:

> *…the numbers of people that came after [that appearance] was phenomenal, they were all asking questions saying 'I never knew that before about the number of women that were burned as so- called witches', it was quite incredible the effect it had.*

[Manager A, Witchcraft Museum]

The increasing fascination by the media into the phenomenon of dark tourism is exemplified by a number of comments reported by managers when discussing media impacts. A number of managers reported receiving regular media enquiries, such as this manager at a prison who reported numerous requests, in this case, attributed to the reputation of the prison as he explains:

> *Sometimes I can get three or four requests in a single month… reputation is probably why… It has a reputation as being a sort of like "hard" jail, and I can assure you that it's not! I mean prison isn't pleasant anyway, but the jail seems to live off a reputation that I think died out probably about 20 years ago.*

[Manager J, Prison]

These requests were received by mainly managers based within castles and prisons and were related to using the site as film back-drops or for documentary purposes. This attention was felt to be attached to the recent surge in

'documentaries and fly-on-the wall programmes about prison life' and other popular culture television programmes. Media coverage related to the First World War centenary (2014-2018) was also felt to be a key influencing factor in attracting new markets at war related sites as this manager explains, again related to a recent television programme:

> *But the programme did attract women because it's got the Georgian aspects to it…so, it, whereas the First World War…tends to be a much more male-dominated area, a lot of the Victorian stuff did attract more woman than usual.*

[Manager M, Memorial]

Media can reach different audience segments and can influence the type of visitor the site may subsequently attract, but this is outside of the control of site managers when their site and theme is portrayed by external bodies. Consequently, these findings highlight that the relationship with the media and the sites sampled is a contested one. The use of media channels for advertising and marketing purposes had reaped many benefits for some respondents. However, an overwhelming sense of mis-conception surrounding the nature of sites and a particular aversion to the term dark tourism as a descriptor for their organisations was imputed on negative and sensationalised media reporting. Consequently, these findings help to contextualise dark tourism and associated management concepts, such as innovation against 'cultural norms' in the 21st Century. For example, societal discussions around death, suffering and tragedy will impact on decision-making in management of dark tourism organisations.

6.5. Opportunities and Challenges of Marketing Sensitive Issues

A dominant theme throughout the narrative as reported within this chapter together with Chapter Five regarding innovation, is the perception of the over-riding power of the theme associated with sites. The findings suggested that the associated theme or 'brand' of the sites and attractions in the sample exerts a significant influence on both the approach to and practices of innovation and marketing, and as Chapter Seven illustrates, interpretation of sensitive material. Many of the verbatims highlighted within this chapter note the opportunities that stories and events can bring in enabling effective marketing messages relating to controversial stories and events that often epitomise dark tourism sites and attractions.

A central issue reported by all managers relates specifically to the perception and portrayal of themes associated with their sites. In particular, those which may affect current and prospective visitors both positively and negatively, a common concern amongst any service-based industry. Whilst many managers acknowledge the fact that the central tenet of the theme may be provocative, the theme or brand was seen as one of *the* main drivers in attracting visitors rather than a hindrance as this manager explains:

> *Yes our subject matter is potentially sensitive but that is what intrigues our visitors and we can't shy away from the fact that witchcraft is controversial and has the potential to be challenging - that is why we are here!*
>
> Manager A, Witchcraft Museum

This captures the significance given to sensitive and provocative themes by managers both as providing opportunities for innovation (cf. Section 5.4) and for marketing purposes. This is evidenced by the number of managers who stressed a principal organisational aim for '*important stories to be heard warts and all, as it's what happened – it's historical fact and vitally important to share*' rather than events to be erased from memory. Therefore, the prospect of re-telling and re-creating significant historical events or stories was viewed by the majority of managers as *the* key marketing opportunity. A primary role of the marketer at dark tourism sites and attractions therefore was seen by the majority of managers as taking care to avoid censoring of detail or '*diluting the message'* in '*providing a memorable powerful account'* thereby recognising the affective component of dark tourism encounters as this following statement encapsulates:

> *I think it's a really challenging subject to deal with and to deal with it well and that's part of what is exciting. If you were trying to deal with the history of gardening or something kind of tame it's sort of it's very, very easy to do and it doesn't really engage with human emotions and human experiences. Some of which are incredibly negative, hurtful and painful and unpleasant. But that's the reality of human beings and behaviour and I think that if we can sort of look at that and deal with that then I don't see why it can't be a challenge that can be overcome and also why it can't be seen as something that could intrigue rather than deter?*
>
> [Manager F, Maritime Museum]

These examples highlight not only the power of the story behind such tragic events, but the language involved at dark tourism organisations, specifically around authenticity where a number of discussions have taken place between tourism scholars (Dann 1996; Cohen and Cooper 1986; Wang 1999). The

findings illustrate that dark tourism is an experience that can elicit various emotions on many levels as supported in the literature (Austin 2002; Buda 2015; Best 2007; Biran et al 2011; Isaac and Cakmak 2013). Managers may opt to predict potential emotional affects prior to visitor engagement channelled via marketing messages or whilst the visitor is engaged in the dark tourism interpretative experience. Prior to visitor engagement the majority of managers felt that '*creating a balanced message*' in order for a '*positive outcome*' was crucial to minimise visitor alarm over potentially sensitive material. Therefore, this highlights the link between innovation and storytelling with the theme the principal locus for innovation.

In order to achieve an accurate and considered portrayal of detail, specifically when dealing with sensitive imagery, many managers spoke of discussions with internal and external stakeholders as pivotal to both prevent misrepresentation and to minimise any potential anxieties over sensitive issues as this example highlights:

> *…we're always very very careful when it comes to understanding sensitivities around subject matter so we spend a lot of time working with the curators and our exhibition team to understand where sensitivities might be and who we might be able to speak to, to understand that better so we work closely with community teams, sometimes specialist focus groups to understand certain aspects which may affect some communities more than others and we do formative evaluation and wider focus groups to understand how people perceive the subject matter before we start planning a marketing campaign and how much awareness they have and that sort of thing so that sometimes highlights sensitivities that we might not have been aware of so we do tread very carefully in that respect and coordinate our message very carefully so with the curatorial team and with our press office so that we're very clear and try to present as much information as possible so that our visitors can understand for themselves why the museum has chosen to display something or how something has been cared for and to understand the process behind that.*

[Manager R, National Museum]

Naturally, consultation with stakeholders will vary according to a variety of influencing factors, most notably, the nature of the organisation and type of material or theme for consideration of site inclusion. The example above highlights a particularly complex and lengthy consultation process, more examples of which are further discussed in Chapter Seven (Ethics and Morals of Dark Tourism). Overall, managers referred to the process of addressing sensitivities whether part of formal or informal procedures as *'part of our normal*

good practice' in identifying sensitivities, considering their impact and how to alleviate any concerns had by stakeholders.

In addition, aside from creating a balanced message, two managers spoke of *'changing perceptions'* around potential sensitivities with one site undergoing a process of re-branding the name of their site *'to soften the image…to make it less scary and more enchanting'.* Regular feedback from visitors in this respect was considered critical (cf. Section 6.2.2) in being able to identify concerns and act swiftly upon potentially negative perceptions and pre-conditions that the theme, or aspects thereof, may behold for some visitors. For the majority of managers interviewed this meant that they operate on finding *'creative solutions'*, considered both an integral and one of the most interesting aspects of marketing dark tourism sites and attractions, and indeed, viewed by a small minority of managers *'as an innovative way of marketing'.*

Consequently, as demonstrated, marketing a sensitive theme was viewed as the chance to provide important information about an historical event or story. However, as reported by some managers this could create a tension between goals to maintain an un-diluted balanced message, whilst providing a powerful memory-making experience as summarised by this manager below:

> *There's definitely a fine line between balancing sensitivities and then being unable to market something effectively without being accused of commodifying something that's got some sort of moral sensitivities around it.*
>
> [Manager N, War Museum]

Although mainstream opinion opted to portray uncensored viewing, two managers expressed concern over providing explicit theming as this example illustrates below:

> *It's certainly a challenge, we could quite easily go down the track in our marketing of going with the whole gruesome, off with their head type of thing but we are conscious that the experience doesn't quite match that, there's one, essentially there's one exhibition about torture and a few rooms where prisoners were kept, stories about them, while people have this image of the site being this place of torture and punishment and prisons that's not the experience that they have on site so we can't necessarily go down that track.*
>
> [Manager D, Prison]

Interestingly, a small number of managers expressed surprise at the lack of negative visitor feedback on potentially sensitive materials citing *'we could have*

actually gone a bit further' and *'we expected some negative response from a small proportion but we didn't get any at all!'*

These findings stress how the theming or 'branding' of dark tourism can offer opportunities not only for innovating, but also for marketing and interpretation purposes, using storytelling to evoke emotional affects within visitors. The challenge is seen not with the nature of the theme itself, but the portrayal and possible misrepresentation of the theme.

6.6. Summary

This chapter has highlighted the level and extent of marketing activities and approaches taken when performing marketing relating efforts at dark tourism sites and attractions, a little-known practice within the dark tourism literature. Clearly, the findings confirm that although viewed as controversial, marketing is seen as an essential element within dark tourism sites and attractions, and indeed, is actively pursued and undertaken. As the themes surrounding dark tourism carry some risk, concerns may be felt due to loss of reputation, potentially affecting the status of organisations. However, respondents, although acutely aware of these risks, strongly believed that the brand offered great opportunities to tell an important historical and often tragic story of human significance. Rather than be viewed as a challenge, respondents stated that marketing endeavours offered the opportunity to offer creative solutions, an innovation in itself.

Using storytelling to strengthen a brand is not a new phenomenon (Pulizzi 2012; Langer and Thorup 2006; Denning 2000, 2005, 2006; Mittins et al 2011; Burmann and Zeplin 2005; Collinson and MacKenzie (1999) and Boje 1991, 2008, 2011). These findings reveal that dark tourism sites and attractions in this sample, serve as powerful storytelling organisations where stories are polysemic, affective, and fluid (Boje 1995). Dark tourism sites and attractions use stories primarily in a dark tourism context to engage the attention of visitors resulting in a powerful effect on the reality of the experience. This also offers insight into the culture of dark tourism sites and attractions, highlighted in both this and the previous chapter as consumer-centric. However, as this chapter has noted, with the visitor as core, ethical and moral considerations are revealed as distinct facets of dark tourism as an operational concept. These facets distinguish dark tourism as an exclusive concept yet distinct from its industry counterparts. Examples have highlighted a

number of processes surrounding the content and context of storytelling where marketing related activities are carefully balanced to portray accurate, sensitive and often un-diluted accounts of tragedy and suffering.

In order to fulfil marketing endeavours, no specific marketing approach is undertaken although variants of relationship marketing and content marketing are revealed in the findings. Approaches, strategies and techniques are all dependent on resources available, and crucially, data collected on key audiences, the level and extent of which varied overall. Visitors at dark tourism sites and attractions are revealed from management perspectives as a diverse audience dispelling the notion of 'dark visitors' as a silo, prevailing within sites associated with death, disaster, and suffering. A strong narrative was also felt to attract repeat visitors, particularly where managers were able to innovate around the story, by refreshment of the theme; using aspects of the theme to target specific markets.

Respondents reported that their marketing-related communicative techniques were heavily reliant on digital technology and were certainly predominantly used throughout the marketing process, with some resistance from a small number of respondents. Digital technology also offered opportunities for enriching the experience post-visit, a pre-occupation for the majority of managers. However, digital platforms were not exclusively adopted to engage with the visitor post-visit, with a preference by some managers of personal communication and traditional forms of public relation activities to raise awareness and attract larger audiences. Respondents actively incorporated strategies to engage visitors outside of the experience to activate and enrich memories post-visit for visitors, alongside dispersing knowledge for new visitors, as supported by Sather-Wagstaff (2011).

Linked to collaborative ventures highlighted when innovating, partnerships and co-marketing were viewed as essential aids for marketing efforts. However, relationships with the media were perceived as a more contested association with a large proportion of respondents denouncing the media as the catalyst for misconceptions and misrepresentations. In contrast, some respondents had utilised the media for advertising efforts seen as providing an effective medium for generating awareness, given media attention on salient issues associated with many of the sites in the sample. Therefore, the concept of dark tourism manifest in populist culture was both a help and hindrance to marketing activities.

This chapter has outlined the close links between the operations of innovation and marketing with the story and the visitor core components of managerial practices. The final empirical chapter within the thesis considers how managers (re)present material for visitors, embodied as the dark tourism experience and the relationship between all dark tourism managerial practices.

CHAPTER SEVEN - DARK TOURISM INTERPRETATION

'The life of the dead is placed in the memory of the living'

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC)

7.1. Introduction

A key component of any touristic experience is interpretation, viewed as a vital experiential factor (White and Frew 2013) responsible for the navigation between place, items, history, and the related meaning(s) embodied within the tourist (Stone and Sharpley 2009). Interpretation for the purpose of this research is defined as a management practice that 'does not only describe historical facts, but creates an understanding or emotional response, thereby increasing appreciation and awareness' (Park 2014:85). The two previous chapters have highlighted a consumer-centric approach adopted by managers when considering innovation and marketing within dark tourism sites and attractions. Similarly, this chapter argues that the visitor experience is factored into all decision-making as well as a duty of care to the dead and suffering in order to provide a balanced and sensitive 'ethical interpretation' approach. Furthermore, it is argued that facets of marketing and innovation plus staff involvement are all used to mediate potential negative impacts and enrich the dark tourism experience. Indeed, as this chapter demonstrates, although ethical issues are viewed as challenging, these issues can also provide opportunities for innovative activity.

The representation and packaging of sensitive material for the contemporary visitor economy is, however, a contentious and emotive issue amidst concerns over commercialism and claims of 'commodification of the dead' (Stone 2011) particularly in respect of the information to be conveyed and the manner in which it is represented. Therefore, managers of dark tourism sites and attractions face an enormous challenge to adequately represent historical events associated with death, disaster, and suffering without objective misrepresentation, whilst providing an affective experience for visitors. These challenges raise critical ethical concerns which, although they are commented upon within the literature,

have not yet been addressed via empirical evidence. Similarly, as Chapter Three illustrates, limited evidence exists surrounding interpretive considerations at dark tourism sites and attractions outside of heritage studies. This chapter aims to fill these significant gaps by demonstrating that dark tourism sites and attractions utilise a wide array of interpretative modes and methods and demonstrate a high level of awareness of key ethical concerns and implications surrounding the display and representation of sensitive material. The findings demonstrated within this chapter specifically reveal the management issues associated with the representation of sensitive material to address research objective three (cf. Figure 1.1).

The majority of the findings discussed in this chapter are identified as key 'emotion-generating situations' (Dickson-Swift et al 2009: 65) as referred to in Chapter Four (cf. Section 4.7). Questioning around interpretive modalities and measures as well as ethical considerations proved highly emotive for both the researcher and respondents, typically upon recalling traumatic and sorrowful events. Consequently, this chapter also emphasises the emotional component of dark tourism experiences consisting of Uzzell's (1989) notion of 'hot interpretation', where dark tourism sites and attractions deliver messages by evoking emotional responses from visitors.

This chapter comprises of three main sections which are arranged thematically according to the themes gleaned from the data. First, the chapter proceeds with an overview of the design of interpretive approaches within the dark tourism sites and attractions sampled. Sub-sections identify and discuss key enablers within the design approach which include; site design techniques, visual and textual enablers, new media and technology, audio-visual options, interactive, and participatory activities, concluding with human storytelling engagers, the predominant choice of the majority of managers as facilitators to engage visitors with the experience.

The second section provides a snapshot of the primary debates and tensions as reported by managers when considering interpretation within their sites. Accordingly, the sub-sections outline discussions such as legislative changes that have influenced interpretation and technological transformation as a key catalyst in highlighting contestations around authenticity. The final sub-section is a key finding within the research, where dark tourism sites and attractions

demonstrate an approach of 'ethical interpretation' - a framework in which managers acknowledge and address ethical issues associated with the narration and display of sensitive material. This framework is illustrated by evidencing decision-making that occurs within these organisations using marketing and innovation, with staff as complimentary tools to mediate ethical issues. These findings are mainly descriptive, although key concluding considerations are discussed in-depth, followed by a summary of the main points throughout the chapter.

7.2. The Interpretive Design – Storytelling as Experiences

All managers interviewed emphasised the importance of storytelling, which was widely adopted throughout the sites sampled. As the findings of this research demonstrate, storytelling is recognised as a defining feature and central tenet of these organisations, linked to marketing efforts (cf. Section 6.3.4) and associated with innovative practices (cf. Section 5.4) to enhance the interpretive experience. All the sites had a strong storytelling theme, regardless of whether they are *actual* sites of tragedy or sites *associated* with tragedy. Sites housed a principal story and/or numerous stories based around a core theme associated with their establishment. A full list of themes associated with the sites sampled can be found in Chapter Three, Table 3.5. Sensitive content and its subsequent representation are both highly contested in the literature as well as wider media circles particularly when associated with dark tourism encounters, and is hotly debated within heritage studies (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998; Logan and Reeves 2008; Ashworth and Hartmann 2005).

These findings highlight the characteristics of dark tourism sites and attractions as storytelling organisations, where dark tourism sites and attractions tell stories as part of their interpretation of materials. However, storytelling organisations are represented in the literature primarily as those which tell stories about their own organisations (Mitroff and Kilmann 1975; Armstrong 1992; Wilkins 1983). Although the research did not aim to examine specific organisational identity for example, revealed through employee relations, these findings offer some reflection on how dark tourism organisations use stories to generate meaning for both visitors and within the organisation as highlighted in Chapter Six (cf. Section 6.3.4). These findings are supported by Sather-Wagstaff (2011: 20) who advocates that sites associated with dark tourism are not 'static', but spaces that

are continuously negotiated, constructed, and reconstructed into meaningful places'. The stories do provide the values of the company in many cases evidenced by stories of remembrance and commemoration which inform the strategy, particularly in marketing and interpretation. This demonstrates that many stories can constitute one corporate story, therefore adding some depth to the current literature around storytelling organisations and indeed 'storied organisations' (Miles 2017).

All managers interviewed acknowledged the sensitivity associated with their site content by recounting highly emotive narratives where all text was narrative-led, acknowledging any shifting political and societal tensions, using mainly individual perspectives to illustrate the lives, deaths, and events associated with the location and wider landscape to '*capture the human connection'*. However, it is unknown how visitors interpret the presentations as visitors were not interviewed as part of this research, which may not always mirror management intentions (Sather-Wagstaff 2011),

A wide range of narratives were present amongst sites, with instances featuring the 'famous dead' and/or relatively unknown individuals in attempts to provide a captivating human element of the experience for visitors to relate to. For example, the 'royal dead' unsurprisingly featured heavily at historical sites including castles and battlefields. Using the thought-provoking title of 'Two Kings – One Day', rather than simply recount a historic battle, a story was weaved using two central contrasting characters, as the manager explains to *'enliven the story and bring history to life'*.

Although the famous dead attract high numbers of visitors where they lived, died, or are buried (e.g. Elvis, Princess Diana, Oscar Wilde) (Alderman 2002; Sharpley and Stone 2009), the vast majority of managers favoured stories of relatively unknown individuals to again reveal insights into their specific lives rather than their ultimate fates. This may be due to interpretive objectives to direct attention away from more famous individuals whose personalities can absorb attention, rather than the times that they lived in. The following manager based at a museum dedicated to a maritime tragedy highlights the following narrative:

> *We're telling the personal stories of the men who were on board the ships, you learn about the crew, you see their possessions… you're seeing their personal possessions, seeing that they're real men that went to war when*

the ship sunk. So they had in their possessions, you know their nit combs, their shoes, their rosaries, their dice, their backgammon sets, their musical instruments, you know, because they were potentially going off to sea for two or three weeks, so I think that's what a lot of people think, it's actually about the person and the crew that were on board, not just about a war ship.

[Manager F, Maritime Museum]

Similarly, another manager recounted powerful stories of the men who fought and died using tanks *'guided by veterans' accounts to re-tell their stories and document how these inventions shaped history'*. Although the stories conveyed amongst managers were site-specific, as these quotes epitomise, the human factor was deemed fundamental to engage visitors with the majority of sites accentuating personalisation to *'connect on an individual level'* as '*this person actually existed'* and also to '*inspire people to return'* and crucially, as frequently cited by managers, '*to engender emotional responses in visitors'.* This raises interesting questions around personalising themes against wider trends in society and visitor demands for personalisation of narratives in an experience setting.

It is generally accepted in the literature that sites associated with dark tourism can provide effective staging grounds where effective interpretation can bring a site to life (Stone and Sharpley 2009; Walter 2009) and evoke strong emotional responses. Emerging research on dark tourism has highlighted an important role that emotion, specifically empathy, can play within these settings (Austin 2002; Buda 2015; Best 2007; Biran et al 2011; Isaac and Cakmak 2013). In this research, the majority of managers habitually referred to *'moving content'* and *'powerful stories which resonate with people'* when questioned regarding interpretive considerations, as this following manager summarises at a museum based around slavery:

I think because of what the museum is and what it represents everything in there is quite emotive, the text the language, what the visitors are coming to see can be quite emotional. The central immersive which is a sort of visual, audio-visual presentation gives visitors a sense of what the middle passage was like, for the Africans travelling from the west coast of Africa to the Americas and a sense of fear and degradation and the sense of horror that the enslaved Africans would have felt on that journey… so that can actually illicit quite emotional responses from visitors.

[Manager U, Slavery Museum]

This not only highlights the power of the content, but also acknowledges the centrality of the site theme throughout the organisation, manifest as emotive landscapes and therefore for many respondents representing innovativeness (cf.

Section 5.4). In addition, this quote exemplifies managers' perceptions of 'emotional content' typically evidenced through visitor responses retrospectively garnered from *'what they say on TripAdvisor'* and *'feedback from the comments book'*. Although emotional responses were not formally measured within data collection activities, they were clearly evident via visitor feedback and indeed, visible, as this manager illustrates at a World War I remembrance centre:

> *'I'm always talking to people visiting the museum and very often I've seen people crying in there, particularly saddened over the letters written by soldiers on the front line to their mothers for example'.*

> [Manager P, War Museum]

This obvious emotional expression reported above, however, appears to be an exception, which is somewhat surprising given the abundance of evocative content acknowledged by managers at their sites. The answer possibly lies in the same manager's swift retort to this event as he immediately jokingly adds:

> *Of course, we don't want to keep doing that [laughs]! But naturally, if we see someone distressed one of the guides will offer to take them out of the exhibition, give them a cup of tea and perhaps the chance to talk about if further if they want to.*
>
> [Manager P, War Museum]

Subsequently, when specifically probed on highly visible negative reactions, many managers were reluctant to comment as they were seen as *'not intended outcomes'* even though experiences for the majority of managers *'were designed to have an affective experience one way or another'.* This behaviour by respondents perhaps represents an element of social desirability, evident in the challenge of attempting to provoke an emotional response within visitors without causing distress. The pursuit of aiming to deliver 'emotion laden experiences' over purely cognitive experiences (Uzzell 1989) was widely practiced, mirroring Kang and Lee's (2013) findings, and acutely evident where themes were strongly linked to contemporary social and political campaigning issues. In these cases, two of which featured in the research, attempts are aimed to convert psychological responses into cognitive action, for example, empathy into activism, as this manager describes below:

> *We have an exhibition called Brutal Exposure… the photographs that we've got on display quite graphically show the violence that took part at the time and that has evoked a very strong reaction…The country is still suffering with the legacies from that history so it's still very relevant to today, so quite*

often people will comment if they can see that relevant to what's going on today, and also if you can make that link to people's lives and make it relevant to people it has a stronger message. We want the message to get out there to promote understanding and help to reduce the impact of slavery.

<div align="right">[Manager U, Slavery Museum]</div>

As these examples above illustrate and as argued by Tilden (1977), interpretation should not only provide information but *should* stimulate people into a form of action. This is also evident, although less explicit, in a number of sites across the sample who commented upon how '*sensitive content can be used to stimulate discussion*' on salient issues whether biological (topics centred on death or the body, particularly practiced at cemeteries and museums displaying human remains), or political topics (such as capital punishment or social issues, including poverty and enslavement). Delivering messages to evoke action and discussion is also deemed an effective catalyst for repeat visits, particularly discursive tools where '*people are brought together in a united space to confront difficult subjects'.* This sense of unity, captured by one manager, is believed *to 'enrich and extend the experience beyond the physical landscape into memory'*. The following manager based at a penal institution describes a mock execution used as an enabler to facilitate discussion on capital punishment:

> *We demonstrate the last guy hung in Cornwall in 1909, the last chap hung here in this jail and that is a very factual account of what happened. Tons and tons and tons of people stand and watch in silence him run through from the moment the guy walked out escorted from the front door to the moment the drop goes and the condemned descends into the pit. It is not gory, it is done as a total factual account, it doesn't frighten children but it engages everybody and the debate after usually is around should the death sentence be bought back, not people getting scared and frightened or unnerved by what they've seen.*

<div align="right">[Manager D, Prison]</div>

In addition, and as previously highlighted above, this quote demonstrates the perception of dark tourism from a practitioner's perspective as historical and factual rather than gruesome and voyeuristic. As highlighted in Chapter Six (cf. Section 6.4.1), practitioners consider the term dark tourism an exercise in scholarly branding misaligned as a death-centred metaphor. Likewise, this is evidenced by the lack of narration related to actual death and dying at the sites sampled. Rather, managers favoured stories of individuals to reveal insights into their specific *lives* rather than their ultimate fate even if that demise was traumatic

and violent. Furthermore, sites where death is present yet invisible, the two cemeteries included within the sample spoke of 'love – not death' as *'it's not about hatred or atrocities, it's about love and remembrance and every person that ends up in with a memorial in the cemetery is a record of love, esteem and affection'*. Where death did play a more visible role, such as with the dead body as an exhibit, a scientific and educational angle was taken to *'get people discussing serious questions about the body and death'* suggesting a vitality approach rather than a 'death centred approach'. The prominence given to life rather than death offers an insight into the phenomenon of dark tourism as a life-centred concept to align with notions of 'more to do with life and the living rather with the dead and dying' (Stone and Sharpley 2008: 17). This is an illuminating finding which resonates with the work of Varul (2011) who argues that death is the elimination of choice, and in a consumer orientated society visitors may not be accustomed to dealing with death and have little desire or regard for it. This may then provide one explanation for why dark tourism organisations do not emphasise death itself.

Characteristic of storytelling organisations however (Boje 1995), managers were keen to emphasise that the stories should not be articulated in silos with comments from managers including, *'the theme is central – the whole experience, not just the galleries'* and similarly, *'the engagement is through the story, from our exhibits through to our guided tours'.* Indeed, the majority of sites utilised an array of communicative mediums to convey stories, tailored to the range of audiences consuming dark tourism experiences. However, interestingly, a small number of dark tourism spaces were devoid of any interpretive tools or techniques, which is discussed later in Section 6.2.6.

In general, the majority of sites sampled adopted a multi-method approach to interpretation, integrating technical tools, for example highly sophisticated digital technologies, as well as more 'traditional' methods, for example panel displays of content. Ways of communicating key messages to activate, engage and enrich dark tourism stories comprised of multiple media; site design techniques, visual and textual enablers, new media and technology tools, audio visual activators, interactive and participatory activities, and most importantly, as reported by managers, human engagers. The interpretive categories identified via this research, follow similar suggestions highlighted by du Cros and McKercher

(2016) in their findings regarding cultural visitors, with two additional groupings of site design techniques and visual and textual enablers.

The wide range of communicative tools and techniques utilised to transmit messages and content embraced all dark tourism spaces including; exhibits and artefacts, galleries, events, and exhibitions, plus the wider landscape, both in real time, and virtual settings. These multiple voices perform the act of storytelling serving as the most relevant methodology to inform and communicate across diverse audiences such as those inherent in these findings. This multi-method approach is supported by recent research related to experience management (Wiltshier 2015) and discussed in turn as storytelling engagers (cf. Section 7.2.6).

The use of a multi-method interpretive approach also enables sites to alternate the experience required for visitors, designed to address the complex web of motivations recognised and clearly expressed by managers at their sites, although still not adequately understood by literature (cf. Section 2.2). This approach also occurs with marketing strategies where segmentation by demographic or by theme reveals specific markets to be targeted. Consequently, managers can then match the appropriate medium (media) to the needs of that audience.

Managers believed that the visitor experience should be a '*fully engaging experience*' therefore requiring the use of a wide range of sensory stimuli to generate memorable experiences. The commercial pressure to package these experiences regardless of motivations is affiliated with the concept of 'the experience economy' (Pine and Gilmore 1999). Therefore, the design and use of various media channels in dramatizing narratives as well as various theatrical elements of dark tourism encounters gives a sense of the experience economy in the majority of sites sampled. This sense is illustrated by the concerted efforts reported by managers in designing, presenting, interpreting, and most importantly identifying and addressing ethical issues at dark tourism sites and attractions where, through these aspects of management, visitors can experience a mixture of experiential elements with the aim of providing powerful affective experiences.

The findings highlight that interpretation and ethical issues were markedly different in cemetery settings. Storytelling in a cemetery setting was seen as very different by the two cemetery managers interviewed, when compared to other

purveyors of dark tourism experiences, due to differences between '*death, and death in atrocity - marked by unexpected deaths and the dark forces of the human nature'.* In these cases, managers spoke of a love for the dead, not an interest in death itself. Interpretation was minimal with a focus on the landscape. Furthermore, although both sites provided guided tours of the grounds of the cemetery, there was little sense of the experience economy associated with commercial aspects of touristic activity. However, this does not suggest that experiences within a cemetery setting are meaningless and devoid of significant emotional value. By contrast, respondents based at cemeteries reported high levels of engagement and emotional responses from visitors. These findings echo sentiments by Sather-Wagstaff (2011) who highlighted that visitors do not passively sightsee, rather they consume dark tourism experiences with depth and meaning, despite the presence of any formal interpretive measures.

7.2.1. Site Design Techniques

An interesting finding from questioning around interpretation was that related to wider design elements, in particular, the architectural design of internal and external dark tourism spaces and the choice of materials to reflect important stories associated with dark tourism sites and attractions. The literature on service design is well established in the wider service and operations literature (Goldstein et al 2002; Wilson et al 2012; Zomerdijk and Voss 2010) and much less established in the tourism literature with the exception of work on theoretical foundations for example, by Tussyadiah (2014). Over half of managers interviewed provided detailed commentary on materials selected for internal display purposes that were considered to enhance exhibits and artefacts, primarily through the use of glass and specific lighting, '*to illuminate essential exhibits connected to the story'* and referred to by one manager as *'gazing glass'.* The use of materials to augment theming (Gottdiener 1997) is also present within other dark tourism sites and attractions according to the literature, indeed, research reporting materials such as wood and stone to reflect landscapes is cited by Willard et al (2013) in their commentary on battlefields. Likewise, Sather-Wagstaff (2011) comments upon the symbolic meaning assigned by designers to the materials used in the built environment, such as highly polished stone, intended to symbolise reflection.

Internal spaces were also subject to consideration, particularly for auratic purposes, where creating an aura within these spaces requires the adoption of an experiential approach (Apostolakis 2003). According to Biran and Poira (2012), this type of approach entails a collaborative process between visitors and site attributes, a fundamental tenet throughout these findings. Many managers commented on '*creating the appropriate feel and atmosphere throughout the site*', highlighting its symbolic meaning. This was conducted through primarily sensory techniques, including lighting, soundscapes, temperature, and for some, costume guides (cf. Section 7.2.6). Practical considerations to aid auratic encounters were also stressed by these managers such as: capacity; appropriate visitor flows and navigation around the site; relevant signage. For other managers, less attention was placed on 'staging auratic spaces' and for three sites in particular, the purposeful absence of any interpretive measures as discussed in Section 6.2.7.

External factors relating to design featured importantly for three sites, two of which related to maritime disasters and were recently opened using high levels of technology and sophisticated design, as this one manager explains:

> *The building's design is intended to reflect the social history and the industrial legacy and is very architecturally renowned now. The angles, lines and curves reflect the ships bows and the façade is made of thousands of silver shards… the building stands at the same height as the ship itself.*

> [Manager O, Maritime Attraction]

The other maritime site within the sample similarly emphasised the importance of design as a feature for storytelling, however this manager also emphasised the importance of the design team who can inject passion into the design of interpretation as he describes below:

> *The whole museum was built from a design perspective, from a curatorial side of design, and by our own in-house team, so all the mounts that the artefacts are displayed on was made by our in-house team. So what you really see in it is their love of the collection and their knowledge of the collection that they had and that they've put into good use by the way they've done them out.*

> [Manager F, Maritime Museum]

As noted in Chapter Five (cf. Section 5.4), design elements are considered as innovative practices for these managers. Furthermore, design and architecture

were cited as potential motives for visitors, as the third manager reflects upon when referring to the nature of the architecture of his site, a penal institution:

> *You will get those that come here that are interested in the architecture and the design just because it's a pretty set of buildings or those that actually understand that it's an extremely clever and intelligent set of buildings based on the Roman hyper course system of ventilating and it was the second in the set of new super-prisons that were started with the building of Pentonville Prison in the 1840's and this one in the 1850's.*

[Manager D, Prison]

These findings suggest that design is an important factor within dark tourism sites and attractions, adding knowledge to the current literature in tourism (Willard et al 2013). Aspects of design are therefore used to assist with theming and strengthen the brand where design can be used to enhance the value of the experience. This aspect of design in dark tourism organisational bears similarities to 'design hotels', where atmosphere has been used as a tool for enhancing organisational performance (Heide et al 2007).

7.2.2. Visual and Textual Enablers

All managers referred to *'textual information and content written for panel display purposes' together* with the use of *'visuals to stimulate engagement'.* Examples of visual material most frequently displayed within the sites sampled included photographs and pictures of people and events all associated with death, suffering, and tragedy in one form or another, very often a form of material culture at dark tourism sites (Sather-Wagstaff 2011) Visual material was regularly used at the sites sampled as a central component of the interpretive experience to primarily fit the site narrative or, on occasion, to '*whet the appetite of visitors'* as this manager explains at an historic castle:

> *If you want to see anywhere inside, then you need to take the guided tour. There are a few information panels as you come in, just giving very brief details, but obviously we want people to take the tour, so we don't give too much information away at that stage.*

[Manager L, Historic Castle]

Although the predominance of labelling featured in museums as one might expect, all sites included elements of signage as expected within any tourism-based enterprise as well as the labelling of exhibits and artefacts, to aid the interpretive experience. Here, the emphasis was placed on making printed text '*inclusive'*, again stressing the importance of wide audience accessibility.

However, a number of managers referred to the debate over text labelling causing tension in museology circles:

> *There's a lot of debate going on about labels, particularly with artwork and you know what role should the label be playing and how much interpretation should there be? I think this professional criticism and debate is important though, it helps us to continuously interrogate what we are doing.*
>
> [Manager B, Local Museum]

Characteristic of a dark tourism encounter, labelling was seen as a vital element to not only convey information (du Cros and McKercher 2016), but as a mediator to minimise potential distress to visitors and to avoid misrepresentation of sensitive content by *'being careful about what we talk about and how we talk about it'*. This was evident in a large number of situations, particularly when related to printed visual assets. In these instances, labelling played a crucial part in providing textual 'warnings' about the material and often, offering steerage away from content for audiences deemed inappropriate for viewing, for example, children, as this manager at this museum describes:

> *We had an exhibition about Shunga which is Japanese prints, drawings, paintings from around 1600 to 1900, they're quite sexually explicit and for that exhibition we had, a sort of advisory statement, you know, saying that parental guidance is advised for visitors under the age of 16, that type of thing.*
>
> [Manager U, Slavery Museum]

However, opinions differed regarding what was deemed 'controversial' material. One manager at a prison comments on the power of the visual image, in this case, of child prisoners as he explains:

> *…usually the first thing that grabs people's attention is photographs of child prisoners from the 1870s…*

Strategies for discovery and exploration of dark tourism material displayed significant levels of ethical decision-making, all bound within a philosophy of storytelling as this manager continues:

> *Clearly there are sensitivities around those types of issues, and there are legal issues there as well. So, we were careful about how we addressed those issues in the exhibition and material was included, because we felt it's part of the genre and you have to be open, you can't present an overly sanitised version of it and say 'It's all like this.' Um, but then, other aspects of that were picked up in other, other formats, and there are bigger chapters in the book and the catalogues and so on discussing those issues.*
>
> [Manager R, National Museum]

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The example above demonstrates the management behavioural responses reported in the sample which confirms both the recognition of sensitive content as well as the commitment to providing an appropriate interpretive and affective response. Furthermore, respondents acknowledged that different types of interpretation construct different meanings for visitors. Therefore managers incorporate an array of formats of sensitive material to appeal to a diverse audience for them to weave their own interpretations of the narrative outside of formal cues. The interpretive design also includes specific marketing tactics and innovative practices towards an 'ethical interpretation' framework, a topic discussed subsequently in Section 6.5.

Frequent practices using visual and textual materials included the use of exhibitions, either permanent or temporary, or a combination of both, with frequently changing exhibitions seen as particularly appropriate for the repeat visitor marker to *'keep it fresh'.* Larger sites reported the design and implementation of a rolling programme of temporary exhibitions specifically synchronised with events at their sites. This finding highlights innovative activity around the narrative where management can 'innovate around the story' offering new perspectives and ideas, salient topics associated with the theme, as well as novel ways of narrating and communicating the story.

7.2.3. New Media and Technology

As highlighted in Chapter Five a large majority of process innovations centre on interpretive measures to augment the visitor experience in order to accurately portray sensitive content without sanitation. In particular, digital technology was a popular tool to guide the experience by *'deepening people's engagement'* during the visit and particularly, post-visit (cf. Section 6.3.2). One manager based at a major museum who championed the use of digital technological facilitators, describes the tools and techniques designed for use within a gallery dedicated to Egyptology:

> *We wanted the gallery to be interactive in the sense that you can see a lot of additional digital content based on our mobile website but also you can express your own thoughts based on Twitter and based on the blog…there are more interactive things in what we call the well cases around the centre of the space, so there's touch sensitive material, there are blow up enlarged replicas based on 3D scans of objects. -*

> [Manager B, Local Museum]

According to the small number of managers adopting more sophisticated tools, digital technology enabled narratives and content to be conveyed '*more visually, enabling more dynamic stories'.* Specifically, 'augmented reality', '3D scanning and printing' as well as 'virtual reality' were mentioned as *'the latest cutting edge technology'* to aid the interpretive experience. Projection of rich content plus powerful and moving audio-visuals were felt by these managers to enable the visitor to have an *'immersive'* or *'sensory'* experience, a term commonly associated with digital technologies (du Cros and McKercher (2015). The combined use of media such as computer generated imagery (CGI) and commentary was felt to add depth and enliven stories, as this manager describes below, referring to an exhibition entitled 'The Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum':

> *We used a cinema style projection and audio visuals to create the soundscape and animation to bring concepts to life, we shot some of the scenes on location as we wanted to remain faithful to the story…and humanise the content for visitors to connect with. Visitors commented on how thought provoking and powerful the story and the evaluation after the exhibition was extremely positive as a valuable experience.*

[Manager R, National Museum]

These examples highlight the move away from traditional approaches based upon conservational and educational goals, towards experience-orientated, interpretive provisions (Reino et al 2007) consistent with the 'New Museology,' (Ross 2004) and a key characteristic of the 'experience economy' (Pine and Gilmore 1999).

Digital technologies have gained significant prominence in recent years with a particular emphasis on mobile technologies (Hyun et al 2009), however only three sites at the time of data collection had developed software applications ('apps') to compliment the visitor experience, all based within a museum setting. One application was co-partnered to share resources with the objective of facilitating aftercare, whilst the other applications were designed primary for use in navigating galleries within two museums. The lack of software applications reported by managers is perhaps unsurprising given the substantial cost that can be incurred with the design and maintenance of these particular technologies in addition to the lack of current knowledge regarding their effectiveness.

A common issue cited in the literature for dark tourism providers concerns the management of both the visitor experience and *physical* aspects of buildings and sites, many of which may be aging and decaying (Partee Allar 2013). Half of the respondents interviewed stated concerns over attempts to balance conservation with visitation. According to managers who adopted digital technology, these tools can ease the pressure on capacity and space, particularly those which facilitate virtual encounters, a finding that is also supported by the literature (du Cros and McKercher 2016), as this manager explains:

> *…upstairs there's a run of four galleries from ancient Egypt and particularly the ones that focus on the funeral practices and mummification, again incredibly popular and not particularly pleasant visitor experience, at the busiest times, just because the galleries can't really cope with the number of people that are going through them… part of our challenge is to try and spread people out more evenly around the museum…of course, visitors can experience all our exhibits away from the site too via the app which can help offset physical impact on the galleries.*

[Manager B, Local Museum]

Web applications can also be designed as a guide for the entire experience (pre, post and prolonged) to support both real-time and virtual encounters. This type of web application is designed with a host of features as well as customary information and visitor interaction to include add-ons such as retailing options, locational aspects, and push notifications. As previously noted (cf. Section 5.4), retailing was a common product innovation within the sites sampled and an important link according to Wiltshier (2016) who documents similar ties in heritage tourism.

According to the managers who utilised these mobile technologies, additional advantages were seen as *'keeping the pace', 'building relationships'* and *'providing an enriched experience for visitors,'* but more importantly for the organisations using these technologies, '*as an essential data collection tool*.' Although viewed widely as a powerful tool for both consumers and suppliers (Hyan et al 2009), mobile technologies were not widely adopted by the majority of sites with reported barriers relating to lack of physical, human and financial resources to design and support the application. However, at the time of interviewing, many more managers stated they were considering investing by conducting research and had *'not yet invested'* into these technologies, which, from recent follow up, had then subsequently adopted as a technological companion to enhance experiences.

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The low adoption of digital based technologies overall, at the sites sampled, is somewhat surprising given the complex and highly technological-enhanced demand environment (Wiltshier 2016). This low adoption may be related to the nature of the diverse audiences received at dark tourism sites and attractions (cf. Section 6.2.3) with a mixture of technology-savvy visitors and those with limited technical experience or desire. Furthermore, keeping abreast of increasing technical advancements can be problematic requiring both human and economic investment. However, efforts were made by a small number of managers, to *'stay ahead of the technological game'* albeit practised on an ad-hoc basis rather than a proactive approach, by means of, for example, *'attending conferences'* and *'perusing specific journal material'.*

7.2.4. Audio-Visual Options

Outside of digital technologies, other more traditional technologies were commonly implemented within the sites sampled, including audio visual installations such as film and television footage to *'get a sense of the story unfolding with drama and narrative'.* To offer visitors to *'engage as much or as little as they like'*, audio guides featured as a popular tool within the sites as this manager below advocates at a penal institution:

> *It's really just to create a bit more atmosphere…the technology's so much more improved now, um, they're less bulky, so, we have a lot of stairs so it had to be hands-free, so a lot of audio guides were hand-held and really just wasn't really safe so we, because of the improvements in technology, the quality of them and the cost has come down now, we are now able to do that.*

[Manager H, Prison]

Although audio-guides are viewed as modest communication mediums, when compared to more sophisticated interpretive measures, these channels were regarded as providing an equally effective experience for visitors. This finding is aligned with Gibson's (2012:1) observation that 'once perfected, communication technologies rarely die out entirely; rather, they shrink to fit particular niches in the global info-structure'. Certainly, managers who championed audio-visual measures in the form of individual audio guides, commented on the ability to provide a personalised experience by allowing the visitor *'freedom to explore, at their own pace'* particularly when compared to fixed content - a finding also supported by du Cros and McKercher (2016). This type of guidance device was

also deemed an important aid in '*activating the story by tailoring the experience*', a finding supported by Willard et al (2013).

Regardless of whether the sites sampled were high adopters of sophisticated technologies, the majority of managers bore the '*pressure to become more digital',* coinciding with the pressure to innovate (Hjalager 2002; Sundbo et al 2007; Weiermair 2006) (cf. Section 5.8). These statements are predictable given the platforms innovation and technology occupy within tourism discourse. At this juncture, and when subsequently probed on these viewpoints, passionate discussions arose highlighting the tension between '*authenticity versus digitisation'* as the most appropriate channel for interpreting sensitive content. This debate is outlined and discussed shortly in Section 7.3.2.

7.2.5. Interactive and Participatory Activities

Significantly, the wide range of facilitators to convey stories consist overall of predominantly *interactive* tools, to enable and enhance the dark tourism experience. The exception to this was found at working cemeteries, where similarly, less innovative practices were reported (cf. Section 5.4). This is perhaps explained by the distinct function of cemeteries with origins away from any touristic purpose. However, given this exclusion, the predominance given to interactive activities at the majority of sites, signals a shift from passive to active participation within the realms of the dark tourism experience. Indeed, the word 'interactive' is embedded into tourism interpretive discourses (Hemmings et al 2001). Therefore, it is unsurprising to find this concept within the findings as the majority of sites in the sample operate within a touristic sphere.

The majority of interactives took place between customers and suppliers, heavily based on human engagement, for example, '*participating in weapons handling workshops with staff' and 'interaction with guides in costume'.* Indeed, five sites included costume guides as a fundamental tenet of the experience, discussed further in Section 7.2.6 below. Examples of interactivity frequently cited by managers also included specific activities geared towards certain audiences, for example, children, as this manger based at a battle-site describes:

> *We get the children to try on chain-mail and pull arrows to bring the history to life. They really enjoy it and the teachers and children have often commented afterwards how much they learnt by handling objects and being able to ask questions, it's such an informative and fun activity for them, plus*

the staff enjoy it too as each session is entirely different each time but still just as enthralling.

[Manager E, Battle-site]

As the above quote demonstrates, this 'hands-on approach' encourages discussion with groups of people as uniform groups or where collaboration can cut across unrelated groups. For example, this manager explains the advantages of interactivity with a focus on process rather than theme, as he explains:

…people can stand around and take part at the same time and interact, so it creates a sort of conversation, discussion, collaboration and, all those kind of things, generating between completely unrelated groups and across age ranges, because I mean to be honest, if you want to find out stuff, you've got Wikipedia on your smartphone…

[Manager C, Exhibition]

This cross-sector discussion is particularly germane for dark tourism encounters where the saliency of highly evocative topics can bring unrelated collectives together. This highlights an additional cognitive motive for the consumption of dark tourism by groups as well as any emotional purposes. As the example highlights above, interactives can facilitate debates connected with war and other emotive topics as previously demonstrated regarding criminal justice and death. As the examples above illustrate, these types of interactions between consumer and supplier featured as a popular interpretive method. These findings support Sather-Wagstaff's (2011) findings that audiences engaged in dark tourism experiences are highly interactive and participatory, both at sites with minimal interpretation and fully immersive experiences. However, most participatory activities of the kind described in this chapter require a human presence or supervision of one kind or another (du Cros and McKercher 2016), as the subsequent section below now demonstrates.

7.2.6. Human Storytelling Engagers

Although championed by a number of managers, technological enablers were viewed as taking a more *supplementary* role alongside non-technological facilitators, rather than as a standalone measure. This finding relates to the unequivocal value and power associated with face-to-face human interaction, where overwhelmingly, managers felt that the human element was indispensable for performing and facilitating dark tourism experiences for fellow humans as visitors. As one manager succinctly articulates, *'putting the human at the heart*

of the story'. Human engagers can be used to provide rich additional information, for example to add additional meaning to visual images to contextualise the story, as this manager explains at a prison:

> *…usually the first thing that grabs people's attention is photographs of child prisoners from the 1870s… and they usually see that and think, oh goodness, 10 years of age, 3 months for stealing rabbits, and then I point out that at 10 years of age here, was the only prison where a 10 year old child would have been in the cell on their own, the cell has integral segregation, would have been free from any kind of unsavoury predatory behaviour, would have had access to the chaplain, free medical care, and three meals a day. Of course, outside of the prison, no-one was getting that.*

[Manager J, Prison]

This demonstrates that an additional layer of interpretation can be added to the experience, rather than reliance on visual stimulus alone. Although human engagers are perhaps viewed by some as more 'traditional' interpretive measures (du Cros and McKercher 2016) these were not deemed any less effective. Rather, non-technological enablers were seen as providing a particularly enriching experience particularly through person-to-person interaction or 'live interaction' (Robertshaw 2006) to embody powerful stories.

Moreover, human interlocutors can assist with demonstration and discussion as well as communicating stories to provide a unique experience. Many interpretive experiences include the use of human engagers, often in the form of guides as both information providers and site interpreters (Poira et al 2006). These findings demonstrate that guides play a critical role in site interpretation primarily as 'narrators' by *'(re)telling trauma'* often using key characters that both the storyteller and listener can identify and resonate with, thereby creating a human connection to aid transmission of information. A secondary function consists of the concept of '*madrich',* an informal leader facilitating discussion to enable more interactive experiences, as previously illustrated (cf. Section 7.2.5, and aligned with Reisinger and Steiner 2006). Specifically, for dark tourism encounters, a notable mediatory sphere is also instilled in staff involved at interpretive levels, activated to direct visitors away and provide support from potentially negative encounters with the theme/story often manifest in highly visual and auditory materials, a discussion elaborated upon further, in Section 7.5.3.

The majority of sites where guiding took place overwhelmingly consisted of volunteers stationed not only as 'narrators', but *'involved in all aspects within the*

site', and consequently regarded as *'highly valued due to their passion and commitment'.* The importance placed upon volunteers permeated throughout a large majority of organisations across the whole spectrum of the sites sampled, prevailing over any minor concerns that they might be potential inhibitors to innovation (cf. Section 5.6). Indeed, for one organisation, volunteering was considered a principal component of the organisational philosophy, as this manager states, based within a former workhouse and criminal justice museum:

> *Our ethos is about volunteering even if we had lots of money to pay staff we wouldn't, because volunteering is at the heart of what we do and we believe that the volunteers add very much to the museum.*

> Manager T, Workhouse

The volunteer and guiding pool consisted of mostly locally based individuals who had some connection to the site either personally or through wider associations, enabling 'narrators' to transmit stories with *'sincere, genuine engagement'*, a crucial factor for managers and linked to perceptions of authenticity, a topic discussed further in the previous chapter. These highly personal linkages with the theme can help to embody stories often enriched with the guide's own personal experiences as this manager based at a war museum describes below:

> *I mean all our volunteers and guides, some of them might be ex-teachers, some of them might be ex-military, they may know somebody in the military, and so they all have individual experiences and stories that they tend to share, and that just, that personal interaction really enhances the visit, and we get a lot of feedback naming individual volunteers and how they've really made their day, you know, people go the extra mile really to make it work.*

> [Manager M, Memorial]

Although volunteers and guides are regarded as a providing an invaluable service, this does not suggest that wider employees had any less worth. On the contrary, as highlighted in previous chapters, managers regard human resources as performing an essential function when innovating (cf. Section 5.6.2.1) and when conducting marketing practices (cf. Section 6.3.1) and interpreting around dark tourism experiences. Notwithstanding official guiding roles, all employees were expected to participate in enriching the experience, for some this meant away from their own site, to have an alternative dark tourism encounter, as this manager based at a prison reveals:

> *…even our staff get to experience what it's like for the visitor, we had a staff visit to Barlinne Prison in Glasgow, you know is an old Victorian prison, its miles away, in terms of just to see what real prison life is, because the*

average cell isn't prison life today and we spent four hours there but it was interesting actually to see the range of emotion within the staff…this experience can help shape the experience for the visitors by instilling those emotions and that knowledge in our own staff.

[Manager H, Prison]

As this quote above exemplifies, significant value was placed upon support and training for all employees as 'memory makers' (Brandt 1994) with particular credence given to *'embedding the story in the staff for every visitor'*, a suggestion also championed by Wiltshier (2015). In addition, this quote highlights the aspect of emotion management as an element of emotional labour, a notion explored by Hochschild (2012).

The impact of being a memory maker for employees and how these aspects of emotional labour are revealed and addressed in organisations are factors that have not been yet developed in the tourism literature. Comprehensive training and support for employees was not provided by all management, however, due to financial or capacity restrictions, but nevertheless was regarded as the pinnacle of effective site management, again demonstrating the branding of dark tourism sites and attractions as storytelling organisations.

A frequent practice to embed the story in visitors, was conducted through people to people interaction or 'live interpretation', a concept steeped in heritage studies (Robertshaw 2006; Jackson and Kidd 2011). This approach included a strong emphasis on providing historical facts performed through characters, either professional or non-professional. As previously highlighted, a third of sites heavily invested in costume guides to embody the story connected to a variety of themes across the dark tourism spectrum (Stone 2006). Visitor feedback reported by managers included many comments naming these individuals as providing a *'memorable experience on many levels'*. This statement is inconsistent with research suggesting that visitors are not fully inspired with the role and level of information imparted by costume guides (Malcolm-Davies 2004). Performances included characters based upon famous historical figures as this manager depicts at a historic castle:

The Mary Queen of Scots is spectacular as well. So you're in candlelight, with the smell of incense in the air, and people are frightened to death!

[Manager G, Historic Castle]

In the example above, costume guides can also assist in amplifying the auratic presence through the sense, feel, smell, and sight of the past as highlighted both by the literature (Dalton 2015) and managers as outlined in site design techniques at the beginning of this chapter. The use of costume guides at historic sites is unsurprising given that a recent survey by the Attingham Trust (Kightly 2008), which has revealed that over 40 per cent of historic houses in the United Kingdom now employ costumed live interpreters. According to the findings in this research, the use of costume guides extends widely across the dark tourism sector to include a range of sites and attractions based upon varied themes rather than one distinct category.

Outside of specific costumed characterisations, two sites utilised guides in costume to represent the theme by the era of the tragedy, for example using Victorian attire, or clothing which symbolises the theme, for example through the use of prison uniforms. Alternatively, costume guides may be part of an official function as an 'authentic gesture' such as '*beefeaters taking the beefeater tour*' within the boundaries of an historic site associated with torture and execution. Professional actors were used only by one site linked to provide *'entertainment aspects'* of the experience for visitors.

7.2.7. Perceptions of Interpretation

Although live interpretation and storytelling, particularly in museology, has received mixed reviews (Malcolm-Davies 2003; Robertshaw 2006), the shift away from curatorial based interpretive design (McLean 2010) towards a people-to-people interpretation is evident from the manner in which interpretation is perceived and articulated by managers at the sites interviewed. Frequently cited words to describe interpretation by respondents included; '*people*', '*guides*', '*visitors*', '*interactive*', '*experience*', and '*stories*,' denoting a people-centred approach consistent with the operations of innovation and marketing at the sites sampled. A full tabular list of words can be found in Appendix XVII.

As well as the interactive pedagogy displayed within the interpretive realms of dark tourism, when questioned on the specific *design* of the dark tourism experience, a third of managers cut across the whole sector, used a variety of terms to describe the 'look and feel' of the interpretive experience, frequently referring to concepts associated with 'living history' (Robertshaw 2006). Common examples included; *'history in action,' 'walking where history happened,'* and

'living museum,' indicating a propensity towards more active than passive interpretation design measures using people as the primary vehicle to transmit narratives. These interpretive design perceptions held by managers based at dark tourism sites and attractions support the view of the concept of living history being widely applied within heritage settings. It has been argued that the 'living history continuum' has become 'meaningless' (Robertshaw 2006), however, managers commented favourably on the living history approach, with an emphasis on a human interactive element at the heart of all interpretive approaches, linked to *'spaces and places for the living to remember the dead'.*

Moreover, the emphasis on providing an interpretive approach that is highly organic and interactive, weaved around a strong narrative with a view to providing an emotional and moving experience, signals the performative and theatrical elements to dark tourism interpretation. Theatrical interpretation is a powerful form of communicating a story, where performances provide a particularly affective reality generated by their 'liveness' (Willis 2014). A substantive interpretive activity undertaken by all sites involving meta-narratives plus 'actors' and 'spectators' is the guided tour, which is often portrayed in explicitly theatrical character as highlighted by Holloway (1981). Guided tours associated with tragic and violent events are cited frequently throughout the literature as dark tourism pursuits (Bowman and Pezzullo 2009; Strange and Kempa 2003), for example, Jack the Ripper walking tours and popularist ghost tours, which constitute a considerable sector of dark tourism suppliers. These findings highlight the prominence of tours whether conducted 'in-house' or as distinct stagings and should arguably be added to the typology of 'seven dark suppliers' famed by Stone (2006).

Tourism and theatricality are no strangers, where many touristic practices are likened to drama and theatre (Edensor 2001). Theatricality in dark tourism can range from full scale immersion using a range of methods and techniques in activating the narrative to create dramatic performances, or, for a small number of sites in this research, be notable by a defining absence where affect is generated precisely by the lack of interpretation (and indeed an objectified 'other'). 'Othering' has occupied a central stronghold for some in the dark tourism literature (Seaton 2009) where a 'quest for The Other' has been postulated as a motivation for consumption of dark tourism (Stone 2010). In these instances,

predominantly at memorial sites, interpretations to navigate the memorial space are invisible, wholly dependent on the visitor's imagination and affective investment to render objects and experiences meaningful, remarked upon by Ubersfeld (1982) as 'opacity'. Many commentaries have remarked on absent-present themes centred on *actual* sites of trauma (Willis 2014; Dalton 2015). In contrast within this research, the one site imposing absent-present measures is located at *associated* sites of death, disaster, and suffering, related to warfare and dedicated to memorialisation and commemoration. Although a lack of interpretation is purposeful, storytelling still is a contributing factor as this manager explains:

> *Obviously we have limited interpretation on site, so what we do have is a memorial for various different groups and organisations. With that will be individual stories and significant symbolism in the development of that memorial, but it won't necessarily be subject to interpretation per se…remembrance is also a highly personal thing and very different for different people.*

[Manager M, Memorial]

Currently, no evidence exists to suggest that spaces *associated* with trauma generate less affective experiences, indeed these findings suggest that minimal interpretations are just as powerful and moving as fully interpreted sites (as supported by Dalton (2015); as this manager continues:

> *we've got the human connection element, because we are a living tribute as it were, this resonates so deeply within people who tell me often that they are so moved even when they have no connection to the people who are memorialised here.*

[Manager M, Memorial]

This section has highlighted that dark tourism organisations offer a highly participatory storytelling approach using theatrical elements to perform the narrative which is transmitted via a range of media tailored to dark tourism audiences. Although technological advances are seen as powerful supplementary tools that have affected the modus operandi of interpretation in many touristic enterprises, managers in this research believed that technological communicators are not a substitute for the human interpretive experience. For example, at an exhibition where the focus is on the dead body, this manager explains the effect that minimal interpretation can have, using the power of the theme as a mechanism for an affective experience, as he explains:

…it's about people after all, it's something everybody can really identify with it and it is done extraordinarily well and so, you know, there is a lot there to engage with and talk about and think about, and people are doing exactly that, it's profoundly moving…

[Manager C, Exhibition]

Moreover, as this section documents, an array of tools and techniques are utilised at dark tourism sites and attractions to meet the needs of a diverse audience crossing a large spectrum of complex motivations. Although the sites included in the sample cross a range of demographics and characteristics, each offering differing themes and encounters, they are all united in the generation of ethical issues, recognised and responded to by managers in this research. The following section describes the experience moving towards an 'ethical interpretation' framework by demonstrating the extent and level of ethical decision-making conducted at dark tourism sites and attractions and the roles which staff, marketing, and innovation play within this challenging context.

7.3. Dissonant Interpretation

Throughout the questioning around interpretation with managers at dark tourism sites and attractions, a number of tensions were revealed that had reportedly influenced interpretation at their sites. These comprised of governance influences namely, recent changes in legislation and in addition, through technological developments, viewed as a catalyst for the debate between authentic and digital types of interpretation. These debates are highlighted in the following two sections.

7.3.1. Legislative Changes Influencing Interpretation

When discussing specific interpretation issues within sites, over half of all managers referred to the Human Tissue Authority (HTA) and in particular, the subsequent establishment of the Human Tissue Act 2004. This legislation was made in order to 'regulate the removal, storage, use and disposal of human bodies, organs and tissue.' According to the legislation, any organisation involved in public display must be licensed by the HTA, unless the remains come from people who died more than 100 years ago. Of the four sites sampled which display the dead (cf. Table 4.5), only one site was directly governed by this legislation, specifically an exhibition featuring the dead bodies as cadavers. This manager outlined the compliance procedures followed by the organisation in respect of the legislation, referring *to 'each country having a differing political and*

social view on the display of the cadaver'. Although the three remaining sites did not require a licence, the legislation triggered discussions regarding *'consent' to display issues'*, with respondents reporting confusion generated over the list of materials considered 'relevant material' to be licensed under the Act for public consumption.

Interestingly, although directly applicable to only one aforementioned site, wider concerns were expressed both from the remainder who did display the dead, and most notably, even those that did not display any human remains. These anxieties centred on whether future legislation would be established that *would* impact interpretation at their sites, typically around *'consensual issues for photographic and visual elements which is a major part of all interpretation undertaken,'* although not currently legislated by the HTA. Therefore, although current practices were not reportedly affected, the legislation raised some discursive elements for *all* management to consider in their future interpretive approaches at dark tourism sites and attractions.

The display of human remains undoubtedly raised some powerful discussion between managers with particularly notable attitudinal and policy differences towards display of the dead in two sites both based on maritime disasters. One maritime site fostered a strict policy that the passengers and the crew that died on board vessel should not be on display for public consumption as he explains:

> *…we won't take anything off the ocean bed. The reason for that is we believe that it's a grave site, and to move anything would be to desecrate a grave, which is not something that we think we want to be involved in or we want to be attached to. So that is a decision that has been made and has been adopted by every single manager and every single staff member in the building that works for us, they understand why we're doing it, and it is very much a social responsibility. The story is only 100 years old, everyone knows, which means really it's only two generations ago, people in the city were actually working on Titanic, and so to bring these people, you know, to bring these people up to do this, to remind them of some of their lost loved ones, it's too close to the bone.*

[Manager O, Maritime Attraction]

As this statement demonstrates, this policy was strictly adhered to despite *'increasingly frequent requests from visitors to view the dead and their personal possessions'*. The justification given for this strict guideline was because it was out of respect for the dead and their relatives, some of which may have links to

the locale, hence in living memory. This signifies the important aspect of chronological distance as an influencing factor when considering interpretive approaches adding credence to the argument put forward by Lennon and Foley (2000). According to Stone (2006), spatial advantage is amplified due to the recentness of a traumatic event.

Conversely, a site based on a similar theme *did* display the remains of the crew at their museum, primarily for research purposes as *'they can tell us wonderful things and give us an insight into what life was life back then'.* This approach and attitude towards displaying the dead was equally passionate as the previous example, particularly when responding to questioning regarding whether the dead should be on display as he comments:

> *Um, but for us the human remains are important and form an integral part of the core collection, you know if you were to ignore the remains within the collection it would almost belittle the sorts of tragic circumstances that the men who died on board, you know, we had over 500 men that set sail on the ship and she was sailing, she sank very quickly and only 34 men survived, so huge loss of life, you know, these human remains make a massive contribution to the public, you know, for research.*

<div align="right">[Manager F, Maritime Museum]</div>

Importantly, both of these quotes highlight the differences between site ethos and ensuing visual culture for public consumption, a finding expanded upon in Section 7.4.1. Additionally, this quote features attributes of the notion of 'continuing bonds' (Klass and Walter 2001), a sentiment entrenched at the majority of sites, as these findings highlight, where the focus lies with continuing the bonds between the living and the dead.

7.3.2. Technological Changes Influencing Interpretation

Given the implementation of technical features as part of dark tourism experiences reported by managers, as well as the pressure to go digital (cf. Section 7.2.3), it is no surprise that advances in technology engenders debate on the most appropriate methods of interpretation. A frequently occurring concept throughout all discussions relating to interpretation featured 'authenticity', a well-known buzz-word in the dark tourism literature (Wight 2006; Miles 2002). However, it is unclear what this term means within a dark tourism environment, which may be a reference to sites and spaces of *actual* atrocity or reference to the methods of (re)presentation of material. What is clear is that the majority of managers at dark tourism sites and attractions paid specific attention to the notion

of the provision of an authentic experience. This is in line with fervid debates in the tourism literature about the nature of authenticity and a preoccupation of wider tourism practitioners. Indeed, the concept of authenticity generated wide and fervent debate and a number of perceptions were identified connected to the notion of authenticity. For example, a large majority of respondents felt the concept of providing an 'authentic' experience was primarily linked with human involvement within the encounter, a finding supported with the overall interpretive approach at the sites sampled and throughout this research as people-centred organisations. '*Authenticity was connected to descriptions denoting 'sensory experiences'* as this manager, based at a military themed museum describes below:

> *In the trench experience, visitors can see the drama unfolding, hear the ground shaking to appreciate what it was like to drive a tank, smell the stench and sense the tension and adrenalin by these sensory indicators.*

[Manager N, War Museum]

Managers based at sites where events actually occurred, rather than those associated with events, viewed authenticity as identifying with place, a finding supported by White and Frew (2013). Specifically, three managers referred to their buildings or landscapes, namely penal institutions, cemeteries, and castles with one manager referring to how their site (historic castle) and history is experienced in '*spaces of authenticity*' notably '*as things happened here',* suggesting that authenticity is related to the landscape associated with significant events.

Consequently, these findings emphasise how managers perceive the notion of authenticity when attempting to offer interpretation of events at their sites. The notion of authenticity was also captured in terms of providing a factual account of what happened in terms of the narrative, as one manager stated at a penal institution, '*true to the story, true to the building, no tricks or gimmicks'.* A similar sentiment was felt very strongly by cemetery managers where authenticity was felt to be related to the power of the body, with '*people wanting to be close to the dead, even though they can't see them they know that their remains are under the ground'.*

The reasons given for being 'true' to the dark tourism encounter were primarily attached to notions of perceived visitor expectations and responding to client need generated from feedback. Intriguingly, three managers commented on their

personal preference to interpretation approaches even if differing from perceived expectations, as this manager based at a small war museum summarises below:

> *I personally prefer a traditional approach, I mean I have to include some of the fancy stuff for the kids, so we've got some touch screens and interactive workshops for them but really I prefer to look and sense items, see them in the flesh, not on a screen but you have to move with the times don't you?*

[Manager P, War Museum]

However, this does not imply that highly technical elements should *not* be part of the dark tourism experience. Rather, managers emphasised that the tools and techniques used to transmit narratives should be implemented according to the audience, where digital technology, although seen as an adjunct medium when compared to human engagers, may be the more appropriate platform. This was illustrated by one manager's statement where the approach to interpretation should desirably be *'relevant to how they interact with information in other parts of their lives'*. Similarly, managers who championed the digital route in this respect often made reference to younger markets.

The overriding view reported by managers who commented on this tension between traditional and more modern ways of interpreting sensitive material, was that dark tourism interpretation requires achieving a balance between over-sanitising traumas and over-commercialisation at their sites. This can be achieved by adopting an 'ethical interpretation' approach using a number of processes and mediators to minimise concerns, whilst embodying the story to provide an engaging and powerful experience. The following section describes ethical considerations at dark tourism sites and attractions as well as ethical processes taken to alleviate potential concerns in order to achieve satisfactory outcomes for the organisation and stakeholders whilst operating under a duty of care and respect for the dead and suffering.

7.4. Ethical Interpretation

When managers were probed on interpretive issues particularly regarding the interpretation of sensitive issues, discussion immediately focused on ethical and moral issues. Managers took a proactive approach when considering perceived ethical issues rather than reactive measures based on visitor feedback, namely

complaints. The approach taken operated within an ethical interpretation framework, manifest in following a number of processes whilst implementing 'mediators' to aid operationalisation in providing an effective 'outcome'. This section details the approach used, the processes followed broken down into the stages of pre-visit, during the visit and post-visit. In particular, regardless of subject matter, all sites considered ethical and moral concerns very highly and crucially were not necessarily perceived as negative. Rather, ethical considerations were viewed as opportunities rather than challenges able to provide a positive outcome in many circumstances and critically, triggering innovative practices.

7.4.1. Ethical Considerations

Managers were eager to articulate the ethical concerns and considerations faced at dark tourism sites and attractions. The vast majority of respondents cited at least one example of perceived sensitivities perceived as either an ethical or moral moniker, or both. One manager referred to '*subjects, content, objects or materials that may cause concern or considered controversial to people*'. A selection of these issues are documented per type of site in Table 7.1 below. It is important to note that potential concerns, although primarily focused on visitor responses, were also applied to employees who may also respond negatively to sensitive materials. Negative responses may result from anxieties around both depictions of the dead and the circumstances leading to death that may invoke negative reactions for visitors.

Therefore, these decisions were widely discussed in terms of who they might affect and how, and equally as important, how to respond to concerns across the experience. As one manager points out when referring to responding to such concerns acknowledging the challenge of interpretation, *'you can't please everyone all of the time however - these types of debates can go on endlessly'.* This comment also highlights the challenge of how all material and elements for consumption can be interpreted in diverse ways depending on the array of subject positions of visitors, a concern also echoed by Sather-Wagstaff (2011).

The table below demonstrates that managers conducted a high level of ethical reflection, evidenced by the extent of examples reported as well as the high level of engagement generated on ethical issues upon probing. Specifically, ethically related processes were clearly outlined by the managers interviewed. Indeed,

managers spoke very passionately about these sensitive issues which crossed a number of ethical realms.

Table 7.1. Reported Examples of 'Sensitive Materials'

Example(s) of Sensitive Material	Type of site
Phallic objects	Witchcraft Museum
Mummies	Local Museum
Visual images of the dead	Battle-site
Human remains of crew	Maritime tragedy
Ghost hunts	Castle
Ethical behaviour of visitors	Cemetery
Display items (noose)	Penal Institution
Tour material (witches)	Castle
Virtual autopsy table	National Museum
Graphic content of stories	Slavery Museum

Source: Author

Although many ethical issues were generally site-specific, there were however a number of commonalties. The most frequently cited ethical considerations at the sites sampled included visual images of the dead, primarily in photographic respect, both in human and animal formats, for example the war horse exhibition based at a war museum where *'pictures of dead horses are very emotive for people'.* Visual material culture is very powerful, either as a formal collective by dark tourism sites and attractions, or performed by visitors as a form of site consumption in the ongoing performance and social construction of dark tourism sites (Sather-Wagstaff 2011).

Illustrations and photographs of the dead were regarded unsurprisingly as particularly sensitive material, for example where violent death or mass death has occurred. For example, at a battle-site, particular discussion centred on exhibiting the 'royal dead', specifically whether it was appropriate to display any photographic images of the skeleton of Richard III, a source of many controversies. Therefore, the tangible dead body and imagery of the dead body were both viewed as powerfully evocative, deemed '*distasteful'*, with the potential to cause distress and anxiety particularly amongst certain visitors, e.g. audiences such as children. Sather-Wagstaff (2011:163) similarly comments upon the absence of material deemed inappropriate for interpretation by taking into account intended and unintended responses from visitors. She cites the example

of the absence of images of dead bodies at Oklahoma City National Memorial, only images of those who survived or were injured or those taken well before their death, primarily due to legal status and 'cultural inappropriateness'. Conversely, she adds that displays of the dead were considered 'absolutely necessary' (2011:164) at the United States Holocaust Museum as evidence to those who work to deny the events of the Holocaust. (cf. Section 7.3.1).

Similarly, certain additional objects were regarded as controversial which might cause alarm or concern. As the table above illustrates, phallic objects and objects associated with execution such as nooses were cited as particularly evocative material. Opinion differed on interpretation of such objects highlighting the conflict behind such decisions, with one manager stating *'we wouldn't display it prominently but not deny it existed either'.* Conversely, another manager stated that displaying a coffin furnace enabled visitors to be:

> *…confronted with something they may have had misconceptions about, this is an opportunity to re-inform and educate to dispel myths around burial and facilitate discussions about death.*

> [Manager Q, Cemetery]

This example contradicts Varul's (2011) argument on death and consumerism, (cf. Section 7.2). Decisions were also taken over whether to display authentic items or replica items. For example, one manager at a penal institution commented on his decision to use a replica noose rather than a real noose, commenting on the responses detected from visitors where he observed some of them *'looking a bit funny about it'.* His reaction to these observations is interesting as he adds, *'I reassure them that it's only a replica as a film prop',* denoting the use of stimuli as a strategy of managing the museum. This response denotes a measured attitude away from authentic gestures as demonstrated by other managers by ensuring that sensitive objects and items are '*scripted adequately'* to tell the story. Although many sites commented on sensitive or 'raw' objects, museums frequently referred to objects where discussion and debate was generated in response to contemporary collections policies. This leads on to a discussion regarding the power of objects, and the extent to which objects carry traces of the past. This is demonstrated by Hill's (2007) work on the enchantment

of collections illustrated in the 'story of the amulet', where objects retain an aura of their past associations for present and future visitors.

Although heavily bound within the script, sensitive objects and images were viewed as lesser concerns relating to issues of representation and presentation of the past, when compared to the written and oral expression of the story narrated at sites. Half of all managers interviewed referred to the notion of '*sensitive content,*' a micro-level facet identified with the concept of dissonant heritage, a dominant concern within the literature (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). Misrepresentation may occur with dividing opinions on certain provocative topics such as mental health issues associated with veterans, a salient issue that is often stigmatised, as this manager outlines:

> *Some visitors may take issue over the memorial because of the abandonment of their regiment and their duty, others will be of a different opinion such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, therefore the memorial my split opinion so we have to be sensitive to all opinions.*

[Manager M, Memorial]

In these circumstances, managers emphasised the practices conducted to provide the '*upmost care taken to provide **factual** [original emphasis] accounts*', often associated with guided tours provided at the sites interviewed. Although the prospect of misrepresentation and marginalisation was a major concern expressed by managers, the majority of principal decision-making occurred in respect of the *purpose* of storytelling trauma. Consequently, frequent decision-making was reported around *why* the story should be told rather than '*the manner and material in which to portray an accurate account of traumatic events*'. Although the general consensus was to ultimately (re)present events for consumption, a commonly-voiced concern involved misrepresentation or exploitation of people involved in the stories, again aligned with the concept of dissonant heritage (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). As this following case exemplifies, based at a museum associated with slavery, a fundamental unease was based around secondary victimisation as she explains:

> *the Congolese people were exploited at the time, so we don't want to exploit them further, therefore we had to make a decision on how appropriate it was to display the photographs or whether to display them at all.*

[Manager U, Slavery Museum]

This quote above opens up a discussion on the effects of visual representation of people and events, both on visitors and the subjects portrayed in the visuals (in this case human beings). The role of visuals and representation has been closely examined by Campbell (2003; 2007) in his work on the 'visual economy'. The role of visuals in a dark tourism setting is interesting when exploring how, in the example above, decisions were made surrounding the representation of the Congolese people and whether this dispels or aligns with previous representations of these people.

Aligned with issues associated with the perception of dark tourism (cf. Section 6.4), a small proportion of managers were concerned with the provision of products across the sector associated with the paranormal, as the following manager summarises based at a cemetery:

> *Visitors have asked for ghost hunts, but we are not wishing to do anything like that because all the negative connotations, we want people to be engaged with the site, what a cemetery represents, and ghost hunting is definitely not one of those messages we want to send out.*

[Manager I, Cemetery]

However, one historic castle did embrace a 'dark history' concept as this manager explains:

> *I know dark history is very popular at the moment, but we were doing it years and years ago, because of the connection with the witches and the whole crime and punishment theme, we've been doing dark history tours for years at night, we do them by candlelight, in the winter when there are dark nights...it is very, very popular and we tend to sell out on that, and so we have quite a regular programme of that as well.*

[Manager L, Historic Castle]

Achieving the correct balance to remain 'true' to organisational ethos and its aims and objectives was a chief concern amongst managers, particularly where misconceptions, shaped by the media, have recently occurred (cf. Section 6.4.1). The quote above also signals the role for marketing activities in facilitating organisational identity by '*sending out the correct message',* an integral part of the interpretive approach, in particular when applying an ethical lens.

In stark contrast to the governing view of minimising potential distress to visitors from consumption of dark tourism encounters, was the concern over potential distress that may be *caused* by visitors associated with these activities. This view was explicitly expressed by the two cemetery managers within the sample of sites

interviewed. Interestingly, this is a behavioural issue which has surprisingly received much less attention in the literature, although is frequently commented upon within the mass media, with recent outrage at reported inappropriate behaviour at Auschwitz – 'selfie at Auschwitz' (Marcus 2014). Likewise, Sather-Wagstaff (2011) reports on the acts of graffiti undertaken by visitors at the World Trade Center despite the numerous signs formally forbidding such acts. Moreover, as previously highlighted, huge emphasis was placed on remembrance, and love of the dead rather than death, seen as a central part of life, distinguished from death in atrocity.

7.4.2. Ethical Interpretation Processes

Overwhelmingly, managers spoke of consultation as a key component within an ethical interpretation framework, a comparable finding to Sather-Wagstaff (2011) who reported on programme boards set up to discuss the most appropriate and effective way to present the events of 9/11.. Unsurprisingly, the consultation process was considerably more complex consisting of significant stakeholder engagement in conjunction with lengthy process periods when associated with the display of human remains. This complex and comprehensive inter-web of processes was reported for those sites both bound by legislation and those who were not. Examples of complex procedures for those not directly governed include a national museum that displays mummies who referred to in-house consultation as well as community and expert participation, the formulation of their own ethics policy, and '*following the principles of the human tissue act*' irrespective of governance. A similar comprehensive consultation process was reported by another manager at a maritime museum again outside the Human Tissue Act 2004 remit with remains over one hundred years old. In this case the manager reported that the organisation had formed a '*human remains advisory committee*' subsequently drawing up a policy statement with an active engagement of a wide range of stakeholders. This process also involved participation with local clergy and representatives of the Navy as well as expert advice, therefore demonstrating a wide consultation practice. At the one exhibition site governed directly by the Human Tissue Act 2004, the manager commented that all practices undertaken for the exhibition of the dead bodies (cadavers) satisfied the Human Tissue Act 2004 and was therefore ethically robust. He added that '*existing ethical procedures and protocols aided interpretation purposes'.* This is an important point, especially as no specific

legislation governing ethics in touristic spaces is currently in place, with the exception of the recently revised Code of Ethics for Museums. Although managers were not directly questioned on the preference towards a more formal and regulatory approach to interpretation, existing policies and legislation were viewed as aiding ethical decision-making. However, what is clear is that sites undertake rigorous processes to ensure ethical compliance, in particular those displaying human remains, whether governed by legislation or not. These managers stressed the importance of operating with *'a duty of care to the dead'* and *'ethics to the bodies',* demonstrating a high level of ethical safeguarding.

7.4.2.1. Ethical Processes Pre-Experience

As outlined in the section above, consultation played a predominant role pre-experience. When discussing potential ethical issues such as the examples illustrated in Table 6.1, consultation operated similar to a 'stage-gate' approach as suggested by Owen et al (2013) in his framework for 'responsible innovation'. This is a technique in which an initiative, for example, the decision to display material, is divided into stages. At each stage, the continuation of the decision-making process is decided by stakeholders (Owen et al 2013).

At the majority of the sites interviewed, this stage-gate approach was adopted at the initiation stage to debate ideas, the appropriateness of the initiative and the manner of interpretation and representation should the ideas be sanctioned. For example, one manager relayed the process of the design of an exhibition with a key element relating to visitor feedback and iteration loops as he explains:

> *When we develop exhibitions we do extensive formative evaluation with our visitors, there were prototypes built and tested with a sort of focus group and then put out on the floor and then tested with visitors and then modified at each iteration and then retested. So it's helped from knowledge and experience of the kind of things that work with visitors.*

> [Manager C, Exhibition]

Regardless of the subject matter, all managers conducted primary consultation with internal stakeholders. This process took place within and between management teams associated with the interpretive design, for example, curatorial, technical, and design staff. Cross-departmental consultation was also frequently cited by managers, including debate and discussion with marketing departments and research departments. In some cases, internal stakeholders may also include trustees and associated stakeholder groups. Second-level

consultation regularly included discussions with external stakeholders such as visitors and the wider community once primary discussions had initiated a desire to proceed with an interpretive response to an object or topic. In these circumstances, consultation is highly interactive with the use of focus groups cited by a large number of managers as the most appropriate method to discuss ethical interpretation. For two sites, both spaces of actual historical violence, data collection exercises were seen as providing a gauge of perception and acceptance of certain sensitivities, a form of 'implicit consultation' where *'consulting with our visitors beforehand can allow them to express the sort of things they expect to see and hear'.* Once primary and secondary discussion had been conducted, the tertiary level typically commonly consisted of expert opinion, cited as medical or legal professionals, technical specialists, historians and religious groups.

Naturally, the constituents included in all levels of consultation differed according to the structure of the organisation, the visitor audience and extent and type of stakeholder interest and participation. When probed on the rationale for consultation, a typical response garnered is summarised as a '*common sense approach'* and *'normal good practice'.* This is an interesting comment which assumes a common moral code when making ethical decisions. In addition, the processes outlined above demonstrate consultation exercises as a core activity, as this manager justifies below, referring to an exhibition with depictions of riots and violence:

> *Our projects are driven by consultation particularly with the community to provide content that's relevant, will engage the audience and making sure that the ideas we have or how to present an idea or subject matter is appropriate to visitors.*

[Manager H, Prison]

As this quote highlights, and as previous findings have demonstrated in Chapters Four and Five, all operations within site management, including approaches to interpretation, are of a proactive and highly participatory nature, with facets of co-production and co-creation positioned within a consumer-centric paradigm. All sites were bound by ethical concerns, followed a similar set of processes, and were highly articulate in their response and attitude towards ethical interpretation where the bulk of ethical decision-making was conducted at the design stage of interpretation.

7.4.2.2. Ethical Processes during the Experience

Ethical decision-making processes were also evident during the dark tourism experience. The majority of managers emphasised the *'importance of the role that staff play in making sure that visitors are not upset'*. Employees involved in the experience were highly visible and often '*trained to deal with any situation'* in order to identify and respond to any visitor concerns during the experience, consequently demonstrating a mediating role within the ethical interpretation framework. For another site, as well as navigating sensitivities in a physical respect, employees were in addition, given the jurisdiction to discuss rationale informing decisions to display sensitive material. This was in order to give the process 'authority' as this manager explains based at a museum associated with maritime tragedy:

> *Volunteers can steer people away from the human remains if they don't want to see them…if any visitor queries why they are there they can educate them by imparting the educational and medical knowledge for example that can be gained from the skeletons.*

7.4.2.3. Ethical Processes Post Experience

Similar to during the experience where visitor responses could be directed and responded to, feedback and evaluation also played a critical role within the ethical interpretation framework post experience. Data collection activities were also frequently mentioned as providing pivotal information during ethical decision-making processes. As well as gathering perceptions and expectations at preliminary consulting stages, these activities were also viewed as important in evaluating responses to sensitive topics and materials during and after implementation, in order for managers to *'reflect on what's worked and what hasn't worked, where learning from the visitor and listening to what they want is key to effective interpretation'.* Evaluation and re-evaluation were used as feedback loops to inform and re-inform subsequent adaptations to the interpretive experience. This stage was built into the framework rather than utilised as a purely reactive protocol, although managers were keen to stress that *'no eventuality can ever be forecast in terms of highly individual responses to the experience'.*

The majority of managers were keen to express the 'outcomes' of ethical interpretation which were perceived as positive with comments ranging from more casual remarks such as, *'we've had no complaints about it so far'* and *'if it would*

have caused offence people would let us know immediately' to more specific evaluation such as *'detailed feedback informed us that the exhibition was too dark, a bit scary for younger visitors'.* In one case where a decision was made to display a controversial, sexually explicit object as part of a Pompeii exhibition, visitor feedback obtained had helped to change perceptions about the object and that had '*helped to inform about Roman attitudes'*, seen by many respondents as '*illuminating, informative and educational.'*

7.5. Ethical Mediators

This section details the managerial perception of the mediators that enable the experience to be ethically navigated, specifically: organisational operations such as marketing activities; innovative activities with a special reference to process innovations; management and employee responses. The identification, response, and monitoring of ethical issues appears to be entrenched within the organisations interviewed, with managers demonstrating an ethical focus. Subsequently, this top-down approach to ethics enabled employees to be highly responsive to ethical issues, particularly on the ground when dealing with visitor responses within the experience. This section outlines these operational activities categorised as marketing mediation, innovation mediation, and human mediation.

7.5.1. Marketing Mediation

Operations at dark tourism sites and attractions play a key role in mediating sensitivities where marketing activities can offer information to allay fears and provide an insight into the encounter for visitors to digest as part of the decision-making process on whether to visit (Moutinho 1987). The most notable example of this was at the 'lighter' end of the dark tourism spectrum (Stone 2006) where visitors could take a 'test' via their website to see *'if you are brave enough to find out what we're all about'*, as the manager reports that the experience *'is not for everyone'.* In another case concerning the display of human remains, marketing was used to create a 'strap-line'. Marketing was considered a cornerstone activity, in order to provide information about the experience and crucially, what to expect of the experience. All sites that displayed human remains had prominent information about the purpose behind these decisions explicitly written either in policy documents freely available or within information circulated on websites.

Therefore, providing information, specifically via websites and social media, was deemed a positive step in highlighting awareness of the theme in order to mitigate any concerns prior to visitation. The provision of offering a high level of pre-visitation information was practised by the majority of managers predominantly through mediums such as official websites and user-generated content, with the exceptions being those stating financial and human resource limitations as barriers. Marketing activities to inform and position material were often undertaken to ensure the *'correct messages and images are being portrayed in a sensitive manner'* representing close liaison between organisational departments when communicating and representing sensitive matter. Although these types of marketing activities were often used to mediate interpretation of sensitive issues, the majority of managers were also keen to emphasise that '*ethical decisions are not made for marketing purposes, strictly display purposes only'*. Consequently, marketing was viewed as an essential medium of downloading information, thereby minimising any concerns as one manager succinctly cites *'to be forearmed is to be forewarned'.*

7.5.2. Innovation Mediation

Innovation plays a key role in not only enhancing and enriching the visitor experience, but can crucially also be used to mediate distress where creative solutions are required to present sensitive materials to a diverse audience in a balanced and effective manner. Over half of all managers interviewed provided an example of where innovation strategies has been used to mitigate against ethical concerns whilst enhancing the visitor experience. Three examples of different approaches are illustrated in Table 7.2 below according to the type of site.

Table 7.2. Examples of 'Ethical Innovations'

Ethical Innovation	Source
Sensitive materials placed behind 'doors' to offer choice of viewing	Manager R, National Museum
Physical positioning of graphic photographs in discreet areas	Manager U, Slavery Museum

Medical software to allow curators and specialists to explore data sets in the development of an autopsy table	Manager B, Local Museum

Source: Author

7.5.3. Human Mediation

As previously highlighted (cf. Section 7.2.6) employees and management play an essential role particularly during the experience, where guides can assist with queries and help to steer visitors away from potential negative responses by providing information and justification of decisions regarding the display of sensitive materials. A number of examples were provided by managers, including interventions when visitors become visibly affected by the experience; as highlighted previously in Section 7.4.2.2. In addition, answering questions and providing information on sensitive content and materials to reassure visitors and if necessary, steering visitors towards less contentious content and material.

7.6. Ethical Interpretation Framework

In order to demonstrate implementation of the ethical interpretation framework selected examples have been chosen from three sites interviewed, as shown in Table 7.3 below. The framework includes the ethical consideration or idea, via the processes undertaken through to operationalisation or implementation of interpretation – and as these cases demonstrate, how innovation can be effectively applied to achieve a desired outcome.

As the table highlights, innovation plays an essential part in the interpretation of sensitive items to inform display and crucially 'forcing choice' upon visitors whether to engage with specific materials or not. As the third example highlights, even when decisions have been made to go against explicit displays of sensitive items, a veiled layer of interpretation using innovatory techniques can be implemented to offer visitors a unique insight into sensitive materials.

Table 7.3. Ethical Interpretation Framework in Action – Three Examples

Ethical consideration	Process	Operationalisation	Outcome
Graphic photographs depicting	In-house and external consultation plus	Signage and advisory statements to warn explicit content placed	Potential distress avoided, specifically

violence and murder	expert advice. Extensive consultation with community groups.	throughout the experience. Photographs minimized in size to force choice and positioned in a circular space in the middle of the room so as to '*not easily stumble across them*'.	young audiences. Very popular exhibition receiving rave reviews and generating activism. Constant re-evaluation programme.
Display of furnace	In-house consultation and expert advice, advisory body formulated, in-depth research with the aim to educate and inform.	Furnace is positioned carefully in specially designed space to avoid confrontation when entering space. 'Warm-up' material to engage with the subject prior to display.	Visitor feedback reports summarized as '*intriguing, educational and enlightening*' in response to the display.
Display of personal possessions of the dead	Ethos and protocol of organisation to only display items prior to event and not the personal effects of the dead. Decision taken that objects should be left in situ.	Glass floor installed where visitors can take pictures of artefacts in situ, interactive on-board 'remote operating vehicle' to examine objects and artefacts.	Unknown as site only recently opened although has attracted large number of visitors.

Source: Author

In addition, when contrasted with Sipe's (2016) conceptual model of influential factors impacting on experience-based innovation (see Appendix IV), there are a number of similarities. First, the experience garnered by the visitor is of central importance to management, occupying a central position within the experience model. However, rather than three influence strategies of energize, connect and refresh (see Appendix IV). The author suggests that a fourth influence of 'ethics' needs to be added to reflect the level of decision-making regarding the representation of sensitive matter within the sites sampled.

7.7. Summary

Interpretation in dark tourism spaces is contested and challenging, where managers face a difficult battle to adequately represent factual events associated with death, disaster, and suffering without misrepresentation, whilst providing an affective experience for visitors. These challenges raise many ethical concerns,

highlighted in the literature (Dann 1998; MacCannell 1999; Lennon and Foley 2000) and often exacerbated by media preoccupation, for managers at dark tourism sites and attractions to identify, navigate, and surmount.

Given these wide concerns, one might assume that interpretation is minimally performed within dark tourism spaces. Indeed, these findings demonstrate that the focus on the person, in life or death, does not stifle or limit innovation. In addition, multiple voices via a wide range of tools and techniques are utilised by dark tourism sites and attractions to supplement and enhance the experience. This is predominantly performed through human facilitators to offer a highly participatory, interpretive approach as storytelling spaces, rather than a reliance on sophisticated technical media which dominate within the current communicative environment. By providing a range of interpretive measures, efforts are made to appeal to a diverse audience whilst acknowledging the challenges of shifting political ideologies, goals and contexts (Sather-Wagstaff 2011). Furthermore, storytelling trauma provides the opportunity to inspire discussion of evocative topics crossing unrelated groups in a sense of unity.

Dark tourism experiences reveal a theatrical element through live interpretation and staging of dynamic, organic, and interactive approaches. Narratives from managers were littered with stories, often powerful and emotional conveying personal stories of humans for human consumption. Interpretive approaches were designed and formulated to stage affective, deeply resonant emotional responses, often triggered by empathy and compassion in the hope of stimulating people into action, rather than purely cognitive experiences (Uzzell 1989). Hence, capturing the human element was pivotal for managers, provided in rich narratives, and for some sites, the display of the dead and their possessions, all with a common purpose to honour and remember primarily, their *lives* rather than their deaths. However, contrary to popular misconceptions propelled by the academic branding of the term 'dark tourism', the majority of interpretative encounters in dark tourism sites and attractions are far removed from the act of death itself with a strong belief in how death and the dead can affect the living, through acts of love, remembrance and respect. These findings suggest a re-awakening of conversations about death aligned with wider societal attitudes that in some respects, are keen to explore aspects of death and dying, to reveal more about the living, than the dead.

Commonalities identified with interpretation adopted at the majority of sites included site design techniques to enhance and reflect narratives, visual and textual enablers, new media and technology to create 'immersive' experiences, audio-visual options, highly interactive activities, and human storytelling engagers where guiding was seen as an essential provision by providing a unique experience. However, notable exceptions to the wide adoption of multiple interpretation methods were found at the two cemeteries within the sample, distinct from touristic origins where interpretative decisions were based upon the active status of the site. Here, separate layers of interpretation were identified, lacking in any interpretive measures within the landscape but housing small, interpretive features. Similarly, an absent-present theme was also identified with a site strictly associated with remembrance of the dead where interpretation was wholly dependent on visitor imagination, participation within and beyond the landscape, and affective investment, yet still producing a profound experience bound by powerful stories.

Debates were revealed where legislation had a significant influence on interpretative design and approach as well as technological changes which instigated tension between authentic and digital approaches. Notably sites of actual trauma were distinctly opposed to digital transformations within these '*spaces of authenticity'.* However, general consensus revealed that interpretative approaches should be implemented according to the audience, in particular digital approaches for younger markets. These interpretive markers were also identified for specific products, namely temporary exhibitions to attract repeat visitors and highly interactive workshops for children. These findings also highlighted that the majority of sites operated guided tours as part of the experience, and were therefore a frequent product offering at dark tourism sites and attractions, which arguably should form a category within the seven dark suppliers as part of the dark tourism spectrum (Stone 2006).

Key findings of the research relate to ethical interpretation where considerations of ethical concern were widely reported including visual images of death and violence, controversial objects, and in particular, sensitive content, a specific facet of theories related to dissonant heritage (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). In these circumstances, managers referred to the pivotal concern of providing factual accounts. Concern was also revealed for a small number of sites where

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paranormal products were provided across the sector, again highlighting practitioner perceptions of the concept. However, the majority of ethical dilemmas related to whether to display, with anxieties surrounding secondary victimisation and misrepresentation of factual events, rather than how to display with the use of tools and techniques. Ethical and moral decisions were bound within complex procedures notably for sites that displayed human remains, both where legislation was a governing body, and interestingly, also for those sites which were not directly influenced.

In light of these discussions, certain processes were identified, separated by the experiential process, namely pre-experience where most ethical decision-making occurred, during the experience where employees became key mediators and post experience, where evaluation and re-evaluation formed as feedback loops to re-ignite and re-inform the process. These processes took place within an ethical interpretation framework where the mediating operations of marketing and innovation were used to facilitate ethical activities. First by undertaking marketing activities to convey the correct message(s) associated experience, allaying any fears and providing information about what to expect. More importantly, the key facilitator of innovation was used in many cases to address ethical concerns by forcing visitor choice regarding display, thereby presenting opportunities rather than challenges. The findings reveal that managers tend to pursue innovation actively, rather than as part of existing management strategies.

Overall, these findings illuminate certain management practices which take place at dark tourism sites and attractions, a central aim of the research. Furthermore, the operations of innovation, marketing and interpretation are inter-related, providing numerous opportunities for innovation, which addresses a substantive objective within the research. The final chapter within the thesis concludes the research to provide a summary of the main points and draws upon the limitations of the research that can form future research agendas.

CHAPTER EIGHT – CONCLUSION

'There is no real ending. It's just the place where you stop the story.'

Frank Herbert

8.1. Introduction

This chapter concludes the thesis and is divided into five sections. It begins with a re-iteration of the aim and research objectives. Following this is a summary of how the findings within the research have addressed each research objective and how the research contributes to knowledge. These sections are then followed by a synopsis of each chapter, with the remaining sections devoted to the limitations of the research and concluding with suggested future avenues for scholarly enquiries.

The context for this research was the emergent and evocative area of dark tourism, a field of study associated with the travel to sites and attractions related to death, disaster, and suffering (Stone and Sharpley 2008). Dark tourism is an increasing, growing phenomenon, manifest in substantial visitor numbers at sites such as Auschwitz-Birkenhau and sites associated with 9/11 in the USA. However, although the area has attracted significant interest from scholars, little empirical evidence currently exists on the management of these sites, providing an ideal opportunity for empirical investigation.

Consequently, this research examined 23 sites and attractions associated with dark tourism across the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland to address three specific objectives associated with the management of dark tourism organisations. Specific attention was focused upon the relationship between the concept of innovation, and dark tourism, where very little academic research has currently been conducted. In addition, the relationship between innovation and repeat visitation was also examined, again identified as a significant gap within the literature. A qualitative approach was selected as the most appropriate perspective within which to explore different practices, experiences, and perceptions of management within the sites and attractions sampled. This approach allowed the researcher to make sense of each manager's experiences

in detail, resulting in a rich account of managerial insights and complexities when dealing with sensitive material at visitor sites and attractions.

8.2. Contribution to Knowledge

The anticipated contribution of this research was to fill significant gaps in the literature by providing a deeper insight into the provision and management of dark tourism encounters from a supply-side perspective. These gaps have been addressed, directed by the research aim and objectives of the study, by the discovery and interpretation of the empirical findings (Chapters Five to Seven) as specific, original contributions to knowledge. The empirical findings offer an in-depth insight into this complex phenomenon by the interpretations of respondents' reported practices, attitudes, and experiences as managers within the realms of dark tourism establishments, therefore adding theoretical substance to the developing body of research in this field. In addition, the findings provide vital information on the provision of innovation, marketing, and visitor interpretation, and issues surrounding these operations for practitioners working within the dark tourism sector and within the wider business community.

Specifically, the project aimed to investigate three objectives: first, how the concept of innovation is understood by managers at visitor sites associated with dark tourism; second, to examine how innovation is practised by managers at tourist sites associated with dark tourism; and finally, the identification of key management issues associated with the marketing and representation of sensitive material at dark tourism sites and attractions.

To re-iterate the aim of the research:

'To investigate the management of dark tourism visitor sites and attractions with special reference to innovation'.

To achieve this aim, this study set out three supporting objectives which are now examined (cf. Figure 1.1). Objective one explored how the concept of innovation is understood by managers. There was no consensus on the definition of innovation by respondents which was viewed as rather elusive. Respondents cited a wide range of multiple descriptors to label the concept, including 'risk', 'creativity,' and a 'pioneering' mentality. Therefore, respondents only had a vague conceptual understanding of the concept of innovation. This was also evidenced primarily by the majority of respondents responding with caution and hesitation in

their replies when asked to define the concept. However the predominant view held by respondents conceptualised the notion of innovation as referring to 'newness' and 'change', aligned with traditional scholarly definitions (Schumpeter 1939). These metaphors serve well to describe the concept as potential triggers for action, but do not reveal the complexities behind the nature of the concept as a multi-faceted social construct. These findings echo the literature (Hall and Williams 2008; Hjalager 2010; Weiermair 2006; Orfila-Sintes and Mattson 2009; Souto 2015), highlighting that the concept of innovation is complex, with differing interpretations within a tourism-based context.

Contrary to wavering and vague definitions of the notion of innovation, when questioned on the significance of innovation the respondents articulated that innovation was an essential factor to the effectiveness and development of an organisation, primarily in order to justify outcomes to funding bodies and stakeholders. One reason for this finding may be due to innovation being a 'magic concept' (Pollitt and Hupe 2011) as a seductive concept for practitioners. Naturally, there may also be an element of 'yeah-saying' (Harvey 2011), around the assumption that innovation *should* be important within any organisation. The reported importance of innovation was evidenced by the wide number and variety of examples of the role of innovation and the significance to the development of their sites provided by respondents.

Managers' perceptions of innovation within the sites sampled was constructed by gathering first-hand perspectives of the drivers and inhibitors of innovation alongside the aforementioned perceived significance of innovation. These drivers were categorised into macro and micro level determinants where digital technology was reported as a major influencing factor and the *'epitome of innovativeness',* as well as visitor demand, competition from other dark tourism suppliers, plus the role of the state, particularly in relation to funding. The identification of macro-level drivers aligns with the literature (Hall and Williams 2008; Hjalager 2010), suggesting that dark tourism sites and attractions operate as business organisations within the tourism sector. For example, a number of larger organisations who conducted guided tours with their sites used tacit knowledge, shared between departments which was then imparted to visitors. This demonstrates absorptive capacity, a key driver for innovation (Cooper 2006; Nieves and Haller 2014; Zahra and George 2002; Shaw and Williams 2009) as

highlighted in section 3.2.2. Micro-level drivers of innovation revealed important factors significantly related to the specific organisation such as concerns over conservation and preservation, a key issue for sites attempting to maintain decaying structures. Consequently, drivers of innovation consist of both push and pull factors, externally and internally as highlighted by a number of scholars (Hall and Williams 2008; Shaw and Williams 2002; Buhalis 2000; Hjalager 2010). Alongside the identification of drivers, the barriers to innovating primarily related to deficiencies in human and financial resources including lack of funding and lack of skilled staff, as noted by Hjalager 2002; Hall and Williams 2008; Najda-Janoszka and Kopera 2014).

Objective two explored how innovation was practiced by managers at dark tourism sites and attractions. Innovative activity was found to be proactive with widespread practices forming a dominance of product and process innovation, primarily around the interpretive experience. The emphasis on these types of innovations within tourism based environments is supported by a number of scholars (Weiermair 2006; Hjalager 1997, 2002; Novelli et al 2006; Scheidegger 2006). Managers provided a plethora of examples of innovation, contrary to some accusations of commodification and over-commercialisation (Sharpley and Stone 2009; Dann 1994; Cole 2000). Examples of the types of innovation reported by managers include attempts to attract new markets and new retail offerings. A small number of managerial innovations were also identified, revealed as changes in organisational culture which also emphasized how the injection of new staff could trigger further product or process innovations (see e.g. Hjalager 2010). This objective also examined the relationship between innovation and repeat visitation, an under-explored area within the literature. Respondents reported that innovation could act as a stimuli for repeat visits and implemented strategies to target this audience, frequently in the form of temporary exhibitions.

A key finding under this objective revealed that managers and other staff at dark tourism sites and attractions widely participate in ethical decision-making when considering and implementing innovations. Examples were provided where innovation had been considered through an ethical lens adopted in the form of presenting sensitive materials 'behind doors' to offer a choice of viewing for the visitor. To address concerns over sensitivities, managers attempted to mitigate potential concerns from stakeholders whilst providing an affective experience for

visitors. Ethical processes were identified as pre, during and post experience emphasizing the importance of consultation and feedback (Owen et al 2013) through a number of 'mediators' to facilitate the processes via marketing, innovation and human resources. The future role of innovation was viewed as focused and influenced by advancements in technology particularly in relation to the visitor experience, a key factor of the experience economy (Sipe 2016; Pine and Gilmore 1999).

The final objective identified key managerial issues associated with the marketing and representation of sensitive material. The findings revealed that both the marketing and interpretation of sensitive matter were viewed as opportunities to convey key, powerful messages to audiences. These messages were conveyed through the use of stories, often of individual lives rather than their deaths to connect the human element. Therefore, this suggests that dark tourism organisations are characteristic of storied organisations (Miles 2017) using powerful narratives to generate emotion (Austin 2002; Buda 2015) alongside elements of storytelling organisations which provides a 'back story' of the organisation to aid contextualisation of the narrative (Boje 1991, 2008, 2011); Gabriel 2004) Additionally, managers pay significant attention to site design to assist with creating the theme of their organisations, for example the design of a building using materials to reflect the story, such as using wood and stone to reflect landscapes (Willard et al 2013; Tussyadiah 2014; Fynes and Lally 2008).

8.3. Key Contributions

This section outlines the key contributions made by the findings in this research to the academic community and industry practitioners and consists of significant findings relating to dark tourism ethics, dark tourism organisations, and 'emotional methodologies'.

8.3.1 Dark Tourism Ethics

Research objective three (cf. Figure 1.1) aimed to identify and explore management issues around key operations at dark tourism sites and attractions. A significant finding derived from this objective identified ethical practices inherent in these key operations under investigation within the sample. Namely, practices of marketing and innovation at dark tourism organisations, with a particular emphasis on interpretive experiences for visitors. Interpretation is

contested and challenging within dark tourism organisations where concerns have been raised by a number of scholars (Dann 1998; MacCannell 1999; Lennon and Foley 2000). Consequently, managers reported attempts to navigate sensitivities whilst providing an affective, powerful experience for visitors. Considerations of ethical concerns were widely reported by managers, for example visual depictions of death and violence, objects deemed controversial, and in particular, sensitive content (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996). When questioned on interpretive issues, discussion immediately focused on ethical and moral issues.

8.3.1.1. Ethical Processes

The majority of ethical predicaments for managers related to decisions around *whether* to display rather than *what* to display, heightening anxieties over misrepresentation of factual events, potential visitor and employee distress alongside secondary victimisation. These ethical and moral decisions were bound within complex procedures, in particular, at those sites that display human remains. Within these ethical managerial procedures, certain illuminating processes were discovered, separated within the interpretive experience, pre, during, and post, demonstrating a commitment to an ethical stance within a commercial environment. For example, a stage-gate approach was adopted at the initiation stage to debate ideas, the appropriateness of the initiative, and the manner of interpretation. Managers also emphasized the importance of human resources during the experience, specifically, employees who were often highly visible and trained to deal with certain situations to minimize distress and to respond to visitor queries to give the process 'authority'. Feedback and evaluation were also viewed as critical post experience, specifically in order to attract repeat visitors and highlight any concerns arising from the interpretive experience.

8.3.1.2. Ethical Interpretive Framework

Most importantly, the findings revealed that a number of mediating factors were activated and encouraged to enable the interpretive experience to be ethically navigated. These included marketing activities, innovative activities specifically designed around process innovations and management/employee responses that demonstrate an ethical organisational ethos. This approach was manifest in the identification of an 'ethical interpretive framework' (cf. Table 7.3), evident in a number of processes, implementing mediating elements to reach an effective

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'outcome', denoting an emphasis on how to respond to such challenges. A key feature of the framework consists of consultation practices varying in complexity according to the nature of sensitive matter, and may include participation from religious leaders and/or experts such as historians.

Furthermore, derived from data collected under research question three, the findings revealed that marketing, innovation, and human resources can act as effective facilitators to achieve a satisfactory outcome, relating to organisational aims and objectives such as social or economic goals. In order to demonstrate these processes a conceptual model (Figure 8.1) has been formulated to show how inputs and barriers are negotiated via 'ethical' moderators to produce outputs within the innovation process as discussed in Section 7.5. For example marketing mediators can provide information to explain the theme/event to mitigate any concerns prior to visitation. Likewise, innovation mediation may use physical positioning of graphic photos in discrete locations. Inputs to the process are highlighted, derived from the findings (cf. Section 5.5) alongside the barriers to be addressed such as financial or technological (cf. Section 5.6). By using these ethical moderating factors, outcomes are achieved in the form of an increase in visitor numbers and/or satisfaction and economic goals.

Significantly, these findings offer a unique insight into managerial ethical practices within dark tourism organisations, previously unknown and poorly understood from a practitioner viewpoint within the literature. From a review of the literature in chapters two and three, significant gaps were identified relating to the lack of knowledge of specific management issues facing practitioners working dark tourism organisations. These gaps in empirical research formed the rationale in the construction of the aims and objectives of the research (cf. Section 1.2). Consequently, the identification of ethically driven operations within dark tourism organisations adds significant value to the dark tourism literature from a business and management perspective resulting from a key research objective (three). Indeed, this information reveals a top-down organisational approach focused on ethics unique to this sub-sector of visitor sites and attractions, worthy of further exploration and comparison with the wider tourism industry and other business sectors. As a salient topic in the current climate with demands from customers for commercial organisations to operate more 'ethically', these findings are a timely snap-shot of problem solving in a real-world environment.

Figure 8.1. Conceptual Model of Innovation Processes

Inputs	**Outputs**

Macro-level Drivers:

Technology

Competition

Visitor Demand

Role of the State

Innovation Systems

Entrepreneurship

Micro-level Drivers:

Organisational Factors
(e.g. size, structure,
activity, aims, ethos,
business model)

Absorptive Capacity

Barriers: Finance, legislation, behavioural factors, technology

Innovation Processes

Ethical Moderators: Human, technological, non-technological, marketing

Outcomes:

Increase in visitor numbers

Increase in visitor satisfaction

Social goals

Organisational goals

Economic goals

Affective experiences:
e.g. Empathy, Activism

Source: Author

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Furthermore, organisations are under increasing pressure to demonstrate an awareness and respond to ethics by embedding ethical codes into core strategies (Leadlay 2011).

Therefore, the findings offer practitioners in tourism and wider business enterprises an understanding of ethical procedures, practices, and processes for consideration within their organisations. As the findings reveal, managers were not directly asked their preference on a more formal or regulatory approach to interpretation, however, existing policies were viewed as aiding the ethical decision-making process. These viewpoints are valuable to other practitioners on how to deal with challenging management decisions, and provide a benchmark for consideration on organisational practices of the rigorous processes to ensure ethical compliance within commercial touristic and non-touristic enterprises.

8.3.2. Dark Tourism Organisations

Central to the findings of ethical practices at the core of dark tourism organisations is a further key contribution to the literature that dark tourism is a distinct sub-sector of the tourism industry. This is demonstrated by the focus on moral and ethical considerations and high levels of ethical decision-making behind operations at the sites and attractions within the sample. Although many of the findings such as innovative activity and marketing activity are akin to those found within many commercial enterprises, the ethical stance taken by these organisations is worthy of specific consideration. To date, little empirical evidence exists on ethical practices in tourism related businesses outside of interpretive issues (Ashworth 2004); such a paucity is also apparent in innovation research more generally and within the tourism industry, with the exception of Hjalager's (1997) research in sustainable tourism. This provides an opportunity to operationalise the conceptual model (Figure 8.1) in a variety of settings to identify similar practices and explore management issues within a wider business environment alongside other tourism related sectors such as the sustainable tourism and heritage sectors.

The value of the findings of the research from a practitioner perspective is also highly significant. In particular, how the research demonstrated a disparity between the term dark tourism from an academic view, versus a practitioner understanding of the concept. As a review of the literature demonstrates (cf.

Section 2.1.1), the term 'dark tourism' was coined and developed from an academic position rather than based upon practitioner conceptualisations from empirical evidence. However, this does not suggest that the phenomenon of dark tourism has no conceptual value from an academic sense. Rather, the central tenets associated with the concept can be easily conceptualised in terms of the characteristics of travel to places associated with death, disaster, and suffering. Furthermore, the steady increase of research connected to the key features of the phenomenon crosses many disciplines, adapting the language around the term to suit the subject field (cf. 2.1.1). For example, Holocaust Tourism (Ashworth 1996: Beech 2000) is focused upon memorial sites across Europe and undoubtedly identified as associated with death, disaster, and suffering.

The findings do reveal that the value of the term dark tourism from a practitioner perspective is unclear. The majority of the respondents had difficulties with this expression as a suitable descriptor for their sites. However, the unease around the term may be more related to issues of translation, rather than behind the practices related to the phenomenon. Indeed, this research revealed that the 'dark' within dark tourism organisations is not related to death per se but to life and love encompassed within an ethical framework. Further research is therefore recommended to uncover the value of the term 'dark tourism' for practitioners across a wider sample. In particular the role of death within these organisations and what is 'dark' about dark tourism organisations.

8.3.3. Emotional Methodologies

A further key contribution is the implication of research methodologies and methods in business and management research when dealing with sensitive issues. As discussed in Section 4.7, the researcher described the emotional impact of the research on both the researched and the researcher. As indicated, research does exists on the emotional components of research on the 'researched' in tourism studies, such as 'emotional labour' on visitors (Van Dijk et al 2009) or employees (Lv et al 2012). Likewise, humanities related disciplines (e.g. emotional geographies) explores the relationship between emotion and space/place. The emotional effect upon the researcher holds dominance at present in health research and death studies. Scarce attention has been paid to the emotional components of working with sensitive issues within business and management contexts. This is somewhat surprising given that many sensitive

issues exist within these settings which can be stressful and delicate such as political stigmatisation and inequality studies. The researcher's reflections therefore add to discussions in wider disciplines relating to experiences of researching trauma within a management related field. A number of suggestions are offered for consideration; the applicability of the most suitable method(s) when researching sensitive issues and the practical training and support for researchers working within these environments (cf. Section 4.7). In particular, consideration has been given towards critical reflexivity, supervision, and field notes (Evans et al 2017; Glass 2014) as potential applicable methods when dealing with sensitive issues. The scope and applicability of these methods alongside alternative methodologies for use in management research, is a key consideration. Although these reflections and experiences develop a platform for deliberation within the management literature, this also raises questions surrounding the lack of reporting of the impact of sensitive research within a business and management domain.

8.4. Limitations of the Research

The research is not without limitations and these are explored in this section, identified as four distinct sets of issues.

First, the respondents, all senior managers classed as 'elites' (cf. Section 4.5.2) based within dark tourism sites and attractions, commonly expressed the significance of innovation as well as reporting effective innovative practices and behaviours. While this may be a valid reflection of management experiences, these statements might also be attributed to an element of social desirability or 'yeah-saying' which can occur throughout the research process, particularly when interviewing elites (Harvey 2011). In these instances, as within all research projects, respondents may be concerned about self-presentation (Krumpal 2013), particularly with regard to perceptions and activities related to innovation at their sites and within their specific roles, which may be over reported. In addition, social desirability bias may manifest by under-reporting, a particular consideration specifically regarding ethical concerns and sensitive issues, both chief topic areas within the study. While this bias is acknowledged and reflected in the research design stage of the study (cf. Section 4.3), the interpretations and conclusions have been made strictly according to the responses articulated from managers.

Second, the study utilised telephone interviews as a data collection method, a well-established method offering benefits to both respondents and the researcher, especially when dealing with elites due to flexibility, and particularly when associated with sensitive topics. However, the limitations for this method are recognised and acknowledged. Naturally, disadvantages such as not being able to observe body language to see how managers respond physically to questions in the interview was a factor taken into account at the research design planning. As a result, the researcher cannot fully interpret managers' understandings of key concepts involved in the study and associated management practices from physical cues during the interviews. However, the extent and depth of information gathered and articulated by managers who were fully engaged in the interviews (and indeed the entire research process) has enabled in-depth interpretations to provide a rich account of management practices and challenges within dark tourism sites and attractions. Therefore, face-to-face interviews and/or observation methods are recommended as future research suggestions. A further methodological limitation is the lack of triangulation conducted with marketing plans and documentation due to lack of secondary data over issues of accessibility and commercial sensitivities. For example, an additional layer of interpretation could have been provided if marketing strategies were available to the researcher to add to reported marketing practices.

The third set of limitations relates to the sample and population associated with research. For instance, the sample did not include tourism-based organisations that do not handle sensitive matter as a control group, or international sites and attractions, as this would have changed the direction of this research. However, the inclusion of these groups is suggested as a recommendation for future cross-comparison research. Further, due to the concept of dark tourism still being developed within the literature, no accepted classification exists of sites and attractions categorised as dark tourism providers, with the exception of those defined under the 'Dark Tourism Spectrum' (Stone 2006). Therefore, careful considerations were made when selecting the sample as highlighted in Chapter Four, where selection was based broadly on Stone's (2006) categorisation as well as other considerations to mirror current dark tourism thematic classifications. Although the availability of existing frameworks for sampling purposes may be regarded as the 'gold standard' by scholars, these are not

always achievable or accessible in many cases. However, the findings demonstrate that in spite of the lack of a sampling frame, insightful characteristics of the sites sampled were identified, which extend and develop knowledge on the typologies of dark tourism sites and attractions.

In addition, it is further acknowledged that two of the sites are not well established, having only recently opened in the last two years and where practices relating to innovation may not yet be fully realised. At both of these sites, however, rich data was collected revealing extensive innovative practices and activities regardless of any perceived temporal factors. This research did not investigate any temporal factors, for example, the temporal nature of management interventions such as the 'life-cycle' of dark tourism innovation, marketing, or representation of sensitive material as part of the research objectives. However, temporal factors may have an important significance to management functions and is therefore suggested as a future research directive.

The final limitation related to the difficulty in operationalising the complex concepts associated with the research. These include the concepts of innovation alongside the concept of dark tourism where contrasting challenges were identified. As highlighted in the literature, innovation is an elusive concept with wide and diverse definitions, therefore deciding on the most appropriate definition to utilise in the study required careful consideration. Conversely, as dark tourism is a concept not fully understood by scholars, minimal definitions of the term were available for application in the study. Therefore, the concept was difficult to research with the lack of knowledge on key constructs in the supply-side perspective of dark tourism. However, a broader definition of dark tourism was utilised throughout the study to encompass the increasing range of sites and characteristics. The decision to use a comprehensive and contemporary definition of innovation was chosen whilst the academic concept is evolving.

8.5. Recommendations for Future Research

A number of future research directions have emerged from this research. The findings of this research are based on a supply-side perspective to reflect management perceptions and practices within sites associated with dark tourism. A primary recommendation is to explore the innovation processes as a mixed-methods design - a conceptual model is demonstrated below (Figure 3.4.). Using

the findings from this research in a dark tourism context, this model could be applied to other tourism-based organisations to examine the enablers and outputs associated with the process of innovation.

In addition, in order to explore these empirical findings further, it is important to explore a demand perspective on the perception and practices of innovation at the sites sampled. Specifically, it would be useful to establish whether consumers also perceived the finding that innovation may stimulate repeat visitation and further, the identification and effect of 'ethical innovations' at these sites. This has particular resonance as innovations are co-constructed between supplier and visitor. In addition, as the findings demonstrate, management practices on interpretation provide for highly affective experiences. Therefore, a consumer perspective would be insightful to ascertain the perspective of individual and collective visitor experiences. Furthermore, as the findings demonstrate core innovative activities based on the interpretation implemented and practiced at dark tourism sites and attractions, it would be useful to ascertain guides' attitudes particularly regarding the identification and addressing of ethical challenges associated with interpretation.

As highlighted in the previous section, a methodological limitation of the study was identified through the use of telephone interviews as the exclusive mode for soliciting views and comments from respondents. Therefore, methodologically it would be interesting to explore future research designs which may incorporate face-to-face interviewing and/or observation methods to produce an additional layer of interpretation; specifically, when addressing challenging topics such as ethics alongside the complex concept of innovation. This might include, interviewing wider stakeholders and/or being present during those discussions around ethical decision-making. This additional layer of interpretation may aid the further mitigation of situations where under-reporting and over-reporting of data may occur, also acknowledged as a limitation of this research.

Furthermore, the framework adopted in this research transferred into an international setting or with a different sample set could reveal similarities or differences in management practices. Furthermore, a key finding relating to the high level of ethical decision-making conducted at the sites sampled resulted in the argument that dark tourism organisations are a distinct subset within wider

tourism industries. However, to add support to that argument, future cross-comparison research would be useful to compare dark tourism organisations against other tourism-based organisations that do not handle sensitive matter as a control group.

The findings revealed that perceptions of innovation were linked in some cases to the job role of respondents, particularly those who were relatively new to their posts. Of significance were the efforts made to demonstrate enthusiasm in a new role through scanning for opportunities to innovate. Although this was revealed as a micro-level finding, it would be useful to examine wider career backgrounds of managers in response to this finding to establish whether this is a widespread phenomenon amongst dark tourism sites and attractions. This finding is not yet reflected in the literature; a closer examination of this relationship would reveal whether job roles and responsibilities, as well as career journeys, have a greater influence on innovative activities as well as enablers and inhibitors of innovation. Furthermore, investigations into types of job roles which stimulate innovative activities would be useful to uncover whether specific job roles are key drivers for innovation. This would reveal knowledge transfer within the sector and between different sectors, an important aspect for innovation (Tsai 2001). In addition, managers did not reveal the timings of innovations from ideation through to completion; this may identify the mechanisms behind innovation processes.

A key finding highlighted the disparity between academic and industry understandings of the concept of dark tourism and the role of the media in facilitating these perceptions. Although respondents referred to media reporting of the term, no empirical evidence currently exists as to the nature of this reporting within both worldwide press and UK press coverage. However, as the media appears to be a key factor in the formation of somewhat negative perceptions, it would be useful to obtain further information about the role and influence, particularly with respect to mass media and social media reporting. It is suggested therefore, that content analysis of media reports be conducted around the term dark tourism to identify and report expressions and words associated with terminology to further understandings around the perception of the concept, particularly when associated with industry perspectives.

Furthermore, as many of the sites sampled feature on user generated content platforms and forums, namely 'TripAdvisor,' it would be useful to investigate

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consumer perspectives of the term dark tourism and associated understandings of the concept. Although research has investigated demand perspectives on a number of levels, no evidence currently exists of in-depth understandings and perceptions of the concept under its current terminology. Specifically, it would be interesting to analyse content generated on forums and blog posts amongst a range of platforms to add to understandings of the concept from a consumer perspective, and further, to offer a comparison to media reporting of the phenomenon which is also poorly understood from an academic perspective. Notably, dark tourism research has drawn extensively on interview data. However, a recent study conducted by Johnston (2015) utilised innovative methodologies to examine experiences of Sarajevo by analysing travel blogs. It is suggested, therefore, that engagement with innovative methodologies may reveal societal perceptions of dark tourism which may have been hitherto concealed by using more 'traditional' methods of data collection.

A further suggested research study extends the finding within this research, where retail offerings formed a large proportion of innovative activity at dark tourism sites and attractions. Moreover, as these findings demonstrate, discussions around incorporating retail offerings at dark tourism sites and attractions acts as a catalyst for tensions surrounding commercialisation, noted in the literature particularly with respect to appropriate souvenirs (Sharpley and Stone (2009), and highlights a regular bone of contention within the media. Notwithstanding research by Brown (2013) and Sather-Wagstaff (2011) limited knowledge has been garnered in respect of the role and practices of retail over a wider sample frame. Therefore, these studies, together with these findings, offer an opportunity to develop and extend current research into this avenue of dark tourism research. It is suggested that a holistic view should be undertaken from both supply and demand perspectives; specifically, using a supply-side approach, the extent, range and type of retail offerings currently available within dark tourism sites and attractions. These findings may add to retail characteristics of dark tourism suppliers, a snapshot of which has been demonstrated within this research. Furthermore, when addressing a demand perspective, consumer behaviour in respect of retail products purchased at dark tourism sites and attractions may illuminate characteristics previously overlooked in the literature, where a concentration of research has delved into motives and experiences, rather than specific consumer behaviour characteristics.

As highlighted in Chapter Four, research methodology, the experience of researching sensitive issues lends itself to various opportunities currently missing for many researchers working within this field. First, a call for further supporting systems including information and advice such as those available for psychotherapists and other healthcare professionals both within subject fields and within the wider academic community. Ethical protocols could also offer specific information and support systems for researchers both per institution and in wider circles including major funding bodies. Further empirical research and reflections on emotional methodologies would also benefit in adding to current knowledge therefore enabling these emotional experiences to not be viewed as isolated and unnatural. Lucey (2016) argues for a development of methods of researching the 'emotional' or sometimes the 'affective' turn in the social sciences. Rather than deterring potential researchers to investigate sensitive issues, emotional methodologies offer additional opportunities for researchers to positively shape the lens through which interpretations arise (Kingdon 2005) offering depth and insight. Indeed, researching death from an academic stance as well as personal experiences has not only aided the healing process through reflections on death and loss, but has produced insightful interpretation and meaningful analysis of the powerful stories conveyed by managers within these charged spaces. Ultimately however, further research is required to examine the role of emotions and uncover the emotional dimension of researching sensitive issues, which is crucial to understanding and demystifying methodological impacts of this type of powerful research.

Finally, a central thread throughout the findings is the identification of dark tourism organisations as storytelling organisations. Consequently, this raises an interesting opportunity to discover how tourism-based organisations may transfer the 'backstage' of the organisational story into the 'frontstage' visitor experience, to add an insight into organisational cultures.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I – Heritage Force Field Model

Owners/Controllers - Goals, interests of institutions? - Goals/interests of financial backers? - Goals/interests of animators-researchers, creatives etc,? - Other groups/interests (e.g. governmental)?	**POWER AND TIME**	*Host Community* - Their relationship to heritage narrative and subject groups, and to owners/controllers? - Their participation in, and benefit from, heritage development? - Their acceptance of visitor numbers?
POWER AND TIME	**HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT**	**POWER AND TIME**
Subject Groups - Their benefit from narrative? - Degree of participation? (Whose story? Whose blame? Whose heroic narrative? Whose exclusions/silences?	**POWER AND TIME**	*Visitor Groups* - Their relationship to subject narratives? - Their relationship to and with subjects, owners/controllers. Host communities? - Their tastes – aesthetic, historical, etc.?

Source: Seaton (2001: 123)

Appendix II - Origins and Beginnings in Thanatourism

Typology of Thanatourism Origins/Beginnings	Issues and Management Tasks
Natural and man-made origins – natural disasters and human catastrophes	- No human group responsible for origins at sites as tourism attractions (flood, fire, major atrocity sites) - Visitor interest/demand triggered by historical record or modern news/publicity (Pompeii, Ground Zero after 9/11) - Reactive tourism management later required to control spontaneous tourism demand - May be ethical questions if commercial exploitation is introduced
Man-made origins – sites of functional change	- Sites or locations originate with non-tourism functions (e.g. as military installations, gaols, catacombs etc.) - Sites become functionally obsolete/defunct - Sites relaunched/represented as thanatourism sites - Tourism management required to effect changeover of function, possibly in consultation/collaboration with site's previous functionaries - Commercialism likely to be adopted to launch and maintain transformed site
Man-made beginnings 1 – created thanatourism attractions	- Entrepreneurial or corporate action initiates the beginnings/development of a site as thanatourism attraction (e.g. Madame Tussaurds, London Dungeon, Dracula Restaurant) - Target markets are typically mass tourists - Managers totally responsible for products, marketings, pricing, distribution - Commercialisation not a problem, since the sites have been developed as private sector enterprises
Man-made beginnings 2 – thanatourism as temporary thematisation strategy for cultural attractions and destination	- Site or attraction established as cultural/heritage attractions/destinations, often by public sector, local authorities or community groups - Initial/main audience likely to be elite/educated - Managerial desire to reach broader audiences or diversify appeals of institution or destination - Thanatourism adopted as temporary thematisation strategy - Products from heritage collections or destination attributes selected, sometimes in collaboration with other institutions and enterprises, to support thanatourism positioning for short periods (e.g. human skeleton exhibitions, guided cemetery tours and ghost walks in urban centres, Ned Kelly trails in and around Melbourne)

Source: Seaton (2009:95)

Appendix III – Categories of Innovation – Dark Tourism Exemplars

Type	Definition Hjalager (2010)	Dark Tourism Exemplars
Product innovations	Refers to changes directly observed by the customer and regarded as new; either in the sense of never seen before, or new to the particular enterprise or destination.	1. Retail products being offered within sites e.g. cemeteries. 2. Death as a 'resource' as well as all associated services, marketing, infrastructure to form a packaged 'product' of dark tourism.
Process innovations	Refers typically to backstage initiatives which aim at escalating efficiency, productivity and flow. Technological investments feature heavily within this category.	1. Online booking systems 2. Technological measures to aid and enhance interpretation e.g. augmented reality and inter-active experiences for visitors.
Management innovations	Deals with new ways of organising internal collaboration, directing and empowering staff, building careers and compensating work with pay and benefits.	1. Training staff/volunteers according to the sensitive context e.g. guided tours (sensitive narrative) and how to manage and minimise potential visitor (and employee) distress.
Marketing innovations	Marketing approaches which change the way that overall communication to, and with, customers is undertaken, and how relationships between the service provider and customer are built and withheld. Also includes co-production of brands.	1. Use of social media for marketing sites as well as more traditional forms of marketing. 2. 'Dark Marketing' (Brown et al 2012) or covert marketing 3. Co-production of brands e.g. dark tourism site and wider destination/area.
Institutional innovations	An institutional innovation is a new, embracing collaborative/organisational structure or legal framework that efficiently redirects or enhances the business in certain fields of tourism.	1. Introduction of the Human Tissue Act 2004 providing legislation to 'regulate the removal, storage, use and disposal of human bodies, organs and tissue.'

Source: Adapted from Hjalager (2010)

Appendix IV - Senior Manager Influence for Experience Innovation

Source: Sipe (2016:78)

Appendix V – Ethical Stages of the Research

Research Stage	Ethical Issues Identified	Action(s) Taken
Formulating and clarifying research topic	1) Sensitive nature of topic which may cause harm to respondents and researcher.	1) Risk assessment of topic 2) Consideration of how to achieve aims and objectives within perceived 'risk'. 3) Literature review to uncover any specific sensitive factors and previous similar research.
Research design and gaining access	1) Issues related to interviewing elites alongside concerns over commercial sensitivity. 2) Potential harm over sensitive topic which may be barrier to access and cause anxiety during interviews.	1) Choosing appropriate method(s) to gain access, minimise harm and engage with respondents using etiquette and 'netiquette' Reassuring respondents of confidentiality and anonymity. 2) Considerations of the interview schedule regarding wording, structure and execution of the interview.
Data Collection	1) Recalling emotions and discussing sensitive issues may leave respondents/researcher feeling anxious and/or emotionally overwhelmed.	1) Researcher to recognise and respond to any signs of emotional distress offering to terminate interview if necessary. Researcher to provide signposting to specific support services or additional information if required.
Analysing and reporting data	1) Concerns over confidentiality of sensitive commercial data. 2) Misrepresentation of data.	1) Reassurance by reiteration of this stage of the research process to alleviate any concerns over confidentiality and anonymity of the data. 2) Separate storage of data from transcripts. 1) Observance of informed consent and maintenance of confidentiality. 2) Maintenance of objectivity of the researcher.

Integrity and objectivity; respect; avoidance of harm; privacy; voluntary participation; right to withdraw; informed consent; confidentiality and anonymity; responsibility in analysing and reporting; data management compliance; safety

Source: Author (Adapted from Saunders et al 2012)

Appendix VI – Macro and Micro-level Determinants and Dark Tourism Exemplars

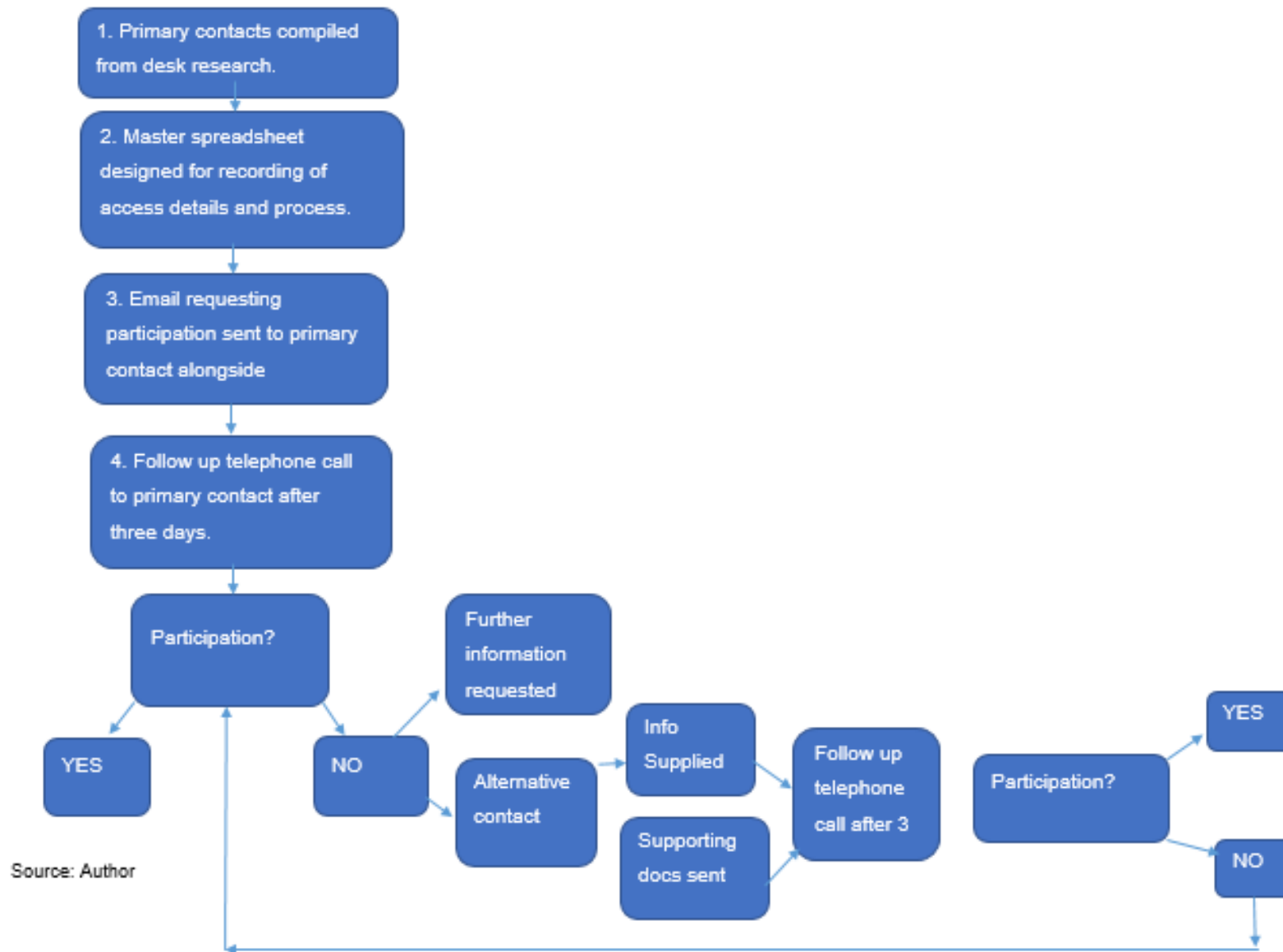| Micro-level Determinants	Dark Tourism Determinants
Strategic aims of organisation (Keltner et al 1999)	Will vary according to social and organisational goals i.e. Activism aims at campaigning museums or commemorative or remembrance objectives.
Size of organisation (Sundbo et al 2007). (Determined by the number of employees)	Size composition of sites highly diversified with no empirical evidence to suggest larger firms in dark tourism are highly innovative over their SME counterparts.
Type of activity/theme (Cano 2008)	Referring to the main activity of the organisation, variance will be seen between public, private and charity enterprises. Due to the wide variety of themes represented in dark tourism many may rely on the ability to introduce changes regularly with innovative performance differing according to main activity.
Organisational Structure (Sundbo et al 2007; Cano 2008).	Distinguishing between large individual firms to corporations where business units of corporations have less independence to innovate on their own as decision processes are more or less centralised e.g. local authority owned cemeteries.
Individual entrepreneurship (Hall and Williams (2008)	Unlike the hospitality industry, entrepreneurs in dark tourism sector are unlikely to be 'life-style entrepreneurs' (Hjalager 2010). Individual entrepreneurs more likely to be employees/volunteers within the organisation and may be a function within a distinct role e.g. Business Development Manager
Business Model (de Reuver, Bouwman and MacInnes (2007)	Refers to the need to innovate around the business model stimulated by social and technological forces such as the need to balance ethical concerns whilst adapting to cuts in funding. Larger firms may have more resources to invest in business model experimentations ((Doz & Kosonen, 2010).
Funding (Giudici and Paleari, 2000, Kaufmann and Tödtling, 2002 and Martínez-Román et al 2011)	Importance of internal and external funding to innovation. Critical to organisations and enterprises under Local Authority control who have seen budgets cut over recent years.
Co-operation and collaboration (Cano 2008)	Linked to knowledge acquisition whereby collaboration with actors inside and outside the organisation and dark tourism sector can enhance innovation.
Absorptive capacity (Thomas and Wood 2014; Shaw and Williams 2009).	The ability to acquire, assimilate and utilise external knowledge (absorptive capacity) for competitive advantage. This will be influenced by innovative performance and other organisational factors e.g. structure within organisations. Those that regularly produce and transfer knowledge usually have more absorptive capacity. Use of consumers in this process.

Source: Author

Macro-level Determinants	Dark Tourism Exemplars
Technology (Hjalager 2010; Hall and Williams 2008)	Classic external driver where the internet boom has created opportunities for organisations. Organisations may be reliant on bought-in technology rather than in-house. Has led to e-tourism (Weiermair 2006) and innovations in production processes, services and delivery mechanisms (Hjalager 2010). Advances in technology have resulted in an array of changes in the creation and interpretation of experiences at dark tourism sites and attractions e.g. 'Body Worlds' plastination of bodies, augmented reality, 3D printing and CT scanning of mummified bodies.
Demand-led Innovation (Hall and Williams 2008)	Significant market demand for dark tourism as demonstrated by high visitor numbers at sites associated with dark tourism. Particularly pertinent for sites associated with war during relevant commemorative periods such as the Great War (2014-2018) and other high profile historical events. Can be also affected by market changes and political factors. Importance of 'lead users' (Stamboulis and Skayannis 2003). Increased affluence in emerging markets as well as global production and consumption systems (Shaw and Williams 1994) will also influence innovations.
Media (Boyd et al 2013)	Media interest may help as a push factor for demand leading to innovative behaviour from sites. Conversely it may have a negative effect on demand for dark tourism sites and attractions equally prompting other innovative behaviour e.g. new markets, products.
Competition (Hall and Williams 2008)	Seen as a significant driving force generally as well as in tourism (Hall and Williams 2008). Globalisation and deregulation have further heightened competition. These market conditions enhance process innovation (networking, reservation etc.) as opposed to product innovation which can be easily imitated by rival competitors (Weiermair et al 2002). Tourism continues to experience intensified competition. Provision of distinct products (such as themes within dark tourism context) seen as successful within a competitive market.
Role of the State (Hall and Williams 2008) and legislation	Plays a significant role when applying for funds and also where the state take an interest in certain sites of national identity e.g. military museums, National Memorial Arboretum. Provides an environment which can encourage new innovations (public-private partnerships) or restrict innovations e.g. Human Tissue Act 2004 and spending cuts within the tourism sector. Some organisations may be driven to innovate due to initiatives laid down by the state (related to funding) e.g. to attract specific audiences
Innovation Systems (Hjalager 2010)	The importance of 'social glue' and 'co-opetition' (Decelle 2006; Nordin 2003). Human relations and inter-organisational structures considered particularly important. Has links with collaboration and co-operation such as those between government and partnership structures. Public sector is a key stakeholder and can be a co-driver of dark tourism innovations although many dark tourism organisations have arisen from private sector initiatives.

Source: Author

Appendix VII - Access – Sequential Stages

1. Primary contacts compiled from desk research.

2. Master spreadsheet designed for recording of access details and process.

3. Email requesting participation sent to primary contact alongside

4. Follow up telephone call to primary contact after three days.

Participation?

YES

NO

Further information requested

Alternative contact

Info Supplied

Supporting docs sent

Follow up telephone call after 3

Participation?

YES

NO

Source: Author

Appendix VIII - Consent Form

ID Number for study: _____

Management of Dark Tourism Sites and Attractions

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

(Please <u>initial</u> in box)

I confirm that I have considered the study information sheet
(Version 1, in-depth interviews, dated 11 June 2014) for the above
project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation in the in-depth interview is
entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time.

I agree for this interview to be recorded and understand
that my identity will be kept anonymous.

I agree to take part in the in-depth interview.

_____   _____   _____
Print name   Date   Signature
(Participant)

_____   _____   _____
Print name   Date   Signature
(Researcher)

1 copy for participant's records; 1 copy for researcher

Informed consent form – 11 June 2014

Source: Author

Appendix IX - Invitation to Participate – Email and Information Sheet

What will happen next?
If you would like to take part in an in-depth interview by telephone, please complete and return the enclosed Informed Consent form using the enclosed stamp addressed envelope or via email as soon as possible to dp315@exeter.ac.uk. A researcher will then contact you by telephone or email to identify a suitable date and time for your telephone interview. In the meantime, if you would like any further information, please use the contact details below.

Further information

If you would like more information before deciding, or have any queries concerning the study, please feel free to contact the researcher below:

Donna Poade
University of Exeter
Business School
Rennes Drive
Exeter, EX4 4PU

dp315@exeter.ac.uk
01392 725269

Thank you for considering taking part in an interview

Information Sheet v1 In-depth Interviews – 11 June 2014

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER | BUSINESS SCHOOL

E·S·R·C ECONOMIC & SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Exploring Management

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction
This research forms part of an important study funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and aims to investigate patterns of repeat visitation focusing on the role of innovation and the tourist experience. This form is intended to provide you with some basic information regarding the study and invite you to participate in an interview.

What is the purpose of the in-depth interview?
The in-depth interviews will explore the perceptions and practices of managers at their sites to identify issues and challenges. Specific attention is given to innovation and repeat visitors. Results from the interviews will help build a picture of how management functions operate within the organisation to provide vital information for both the tourism and academic community.

Why have I been chosen?
We would like to hear the views and experiences of a variety of managers from museums across the UK and your contact details have been selected due to the unique identity of the site.

Do I have to take part?
We would very much like to hear your views but participation in an interview is entirely voluntary – you do not have to take part if you do not wish to. If you do decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

Information Sheet v1 In-depth Interviews – 11 June 2014

What will happen if I agree to take part?
The researcher will organise a suitable date and time for the telephone interview to take place (via email). An Informed Consent form will have already been emailed to you together with this Information Sheet. At the start of the interview, you will be asked if you are happy for the interview to be audio-recorded and transcribed to facilitate the analysis. The interview will last about 30-40 minutes.

Who would have access to the information?
All information collected during the interview will be kept confidential, as will any information we hold about you as an individual (e.g. your contact details). The audio-recordings and transcripts of the interview will be anonymised and all participants will be assigned a study identification number. All data will be securely stored by the University of Exeter Business School.

What will happen to the study results?
The findings from this study will help academics and tourism managers to understand the role of innovation and visitor information within certain organisations.

What are the possible disadvantages & risks of taking part?
We do not foresee any risk to participants who take part in an interview.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
Taking part will provide individuals with the opportunity to inform and shape the future development of this aspect of the tourism industry.

Who is organising & funding the study?
The study is organised by a researcher, Donna Poade at the University of Exeter Business School as part of a PhD research study. The study is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

What if there is a problem?
If you have any reason to complain about any aspect of the study or the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact the University of Exeter Business School on business-school-reception@exeter.ac.uk.

Source: Author

Dear Sirs,

My name is Donna Poade and I am a researcher investigating management practices within organisations and would like to advise you of a forthcoming project commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) exploring the link between repeat visitation and innovation being conducted by the University of Exeter. I would like to ask your permission to participate in the research and if possible, provide information for research purposes. Below, I have outlined the aims and objectives and breakdown of the project and potential benefits of being involved in this research.

The aim of the project is to management perceptions and practices with a specific focus on repeat visitors and how the role of innovation may influence repeat visits. These results will benefit managers in assessing the role of innovation and help to identify visitor base to assist with management and marketing activities. The [insert site] has been chosen as a potential site due to its unique theme within the tourism sector.

The data collection stage involves:

>   Interviews with senior managers (via telephone) to gauge perspectives and practices of management within their site (July - Oct 2014).

I would like to ask your permission for [insert site] to assist in the project wherever possible and I have attached an information sheet for managers with a consent form if you, (or one of your colleagues) wish to take part in the management interviews.

I appreciate that this require your time and effort to provide access to the [insert site] but I feel that this is an important research project which will provide illuminating information both for academia and your organisation. Interim results can be provided together with a copy of the main report upon completion of the project which forms part of a PhD study.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or clarification of any aspects of the project.

Kind regards,
Donna Poade
PhD Researcher
Management Studies

University of Exeter
Business School
Rennes Drive
EXETER EX4 4PU

Source: Author

Appendix X - Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

Name:	
Study ID:	
Name of Site:	
Role:	
Date of Interview:	

Introduction

My name is Donna Poade from the University of Exeter Business School and I would like to ask you a few questions about the management of your site/attraction. The purpose of this interview is to gather information on the perceptions and practices of management as part of an ESRC funded research study.

(Researcher to refer to consent form and information sheet and check permission to record interview).

The interview will last approximately 30-40 minutes – are you happy to proceed with the interview?

NB. These questions are intended as a loose guide only - researcher to adapt and follow interesting avenues as they emerge. Question order for guidance – not strict accordance.

Background

- Can you tell me a little about your site/attraction? E.g. Number of employees/structure of site/attraction, number of visitors/percentage or proportion of repeat visitors. When are your busy times? Season and flow of visitors?
- What role/job title do you perform within the site/attraction and what are the major functions of this role?

Visitor Base:

- What are your visitor segments? Main demographics/characteristics
- Do you collect data on your visitors? Repeat visitors? How do you collect this data?
- Who are your repeat visitors and how important are they to your site/attraction?
- What factors do you think are important to keep attracting visitors?

Innovation:

- What is your definition of innovation (provide framework if necessary)
- How important is innovation for the site/attraction?

- Does the site/attraction participate in innovation? If so, please give examples.
- Does the site/attraction innovate with co-partners (such as visitors)?
- Do you think innovation is linked to repeat visitation? If so, why and how?
- What effects have been seen as a result of innovations?
- Are there any reasons for not innovating within the site/attraction?
- Where do you think innovations will be focused in 5 years' time at the site/attraction?

Marketing

- Does the site/attraction engage in marketing and/or marketing activities? If so, how?
- Does the site/attraction have a marketing strategy? If yes, please explain
- Does the site/attraction have a marketing approach? If yes, please explain
- Does marketing of sensitive issues present you with opportunities or challenges?

Interpretation

- How do visitors interpret the site/attraction?
- What tools and/or techniques are implemented for visitors to interpret the site/attraction?
- Does the representation of sensitive materials present you with opportunities or challenges?

Close and thank

Source: Author

Appendix XI - NVivo Components

Component	Description
Sources	**Internals**: primary source material transcribed from audio interviews, supporting documents, photographs, business characteristics spreadsheet
Nodes	**Free Nodes**: stand-alone codes which have no clear logical connection **Hierarchical Nodes:** Moving from general topics to more specific topics using parent and child nodes **Case Nodes:** Each interview created as case node with assigned attribute data
Memos	**Linked Memos**: assigned to each interview to provide overview of interview
'See Also Links'	**Links**: either to external internet sources or within the project
Queries	**Queries:** enabled the interrogation of data, finding patterns and pursuing ideas gathered in the interviews
Classifications	**Cases**: allowed the setting up of attributes **Relationship**: setting up relationship types

Source: Author

Appendix XII - NVivo Coding Information

Coding Frame - Interviews 15.4.15

Name	Description	Number Of Coding References	Hierarchical Name
Advertising	Modes and methods of advertising used within the site.	17	Nodes\\Advertising
Aftercare	Post experience or extending the visitor experience outside of the physical site experience	25	Nodes\\Aftercare
Attitudes towards data collection	Positive or negative attitudes regarding data collection	8	Nodes\\Data Collection\Attitudes towards data collection
Attracting repeat visitors	Factors relating to attracting repeat visitors	13	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Repeat Visitation\Attracting repeat visitors
Authenticity	Factors relating to authenticity	15	Nodes\\Authenticity
Barriers	Barriers regarding interpretation	9	Nodes\\Interpretation\Barriers
Barriers to innovation	Issues and challenges associated with innovation e.g. financial, infrastructure etc	100	Nodes\\Innovation\Barriers to innovation
Brand	Branding and re-branding	33	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Brand
Business Aspects	Aspects relating to the business	0	Nodes\\Business Aspects
Business Ethos	Can include connections to marketing, policy and procedure	21	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Business Ethos
Business model	References made to business model employed	15	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Business model
Changes to Marketing	Changes to marketing activities or strategy	4	Nodes\\Marketing\Changes to Marketing
Characteristics	Characteristics and profile of repeat visitors	9	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Repeat Visitation\Characteristics
Characteristics	Characteristics and profiles of visitors NOT repeat visitors	69	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Characteristics
Co-creation and co-production	Co-creating and co-production examples	33	Nodes\\Marketing\Co-creation and co-production
Comments relating to other sites	Comparisons and comments made in relation to other sites	13	Nodes\\Comments relating to other sites
Conflicts	Conflicts within the business	4	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Conflicts
Conflicts	Ethical conflicts	12	Nodes\\Ethics\Conflicts
Consultation	Consulting with others regarding ethical decision making	13	Nodes\\Ethics\Consultation
Co-partnerships	Co-partnerships with other businesses or organisations	14	Nodes\\Marketing\Co-partnerships
Customer care	Aspects related to customer care e.g. customer service and attitudes and practices of staff towards visitors	12	Nodes\\Customer care
DarkTourism Perceptions	Perceptions positive or negative regarding dark tourism	34	Nodes\\DarkTourism Perceptions
Data Collection	Colleting data on visitors	21	Nodes\\Data Collection
Death	Attitudes and perceptions surrounding death	13	Nodes\\Death
Debates	Debates relating to interpretation	34	Nodes\\Interpretation\Debates
Debates surrounding authenticity	Attitudes and perceptions regarding authenticity	4	Nodes\\Authenticity\Debates surrounding authenticity
Decision Making	Decision making within the site	12	Nodes\\Decision Making
Definitions of innovation	Definitions of innovation	46	Nodes\\Innovation\Definitions of innovation

Source: Author

Appendix XI – NVivo Coding Information

Name	Description	Number Of Coding References	Hierarchical Name
Effectiveness of advertising	Positive or negative response as a result of advertising.	6	Nodes\\Advertising\Effectiveness of advertising
Effectiveness of innovations	Innovation outcomes	38	Nodes\\Innovation\Effectiveness of innovations
Effectiveness of marketing	Effectiveness of marketing campaigns positive or negative	17	Nodes\\Marketing\Effectiveness of marketing
Emotions	Emotional responses from the experience	26	Nodes\\Visitor experience\Emotions
Emotions	Emotions associated with the site theme	21	Nodes\\Site Theme\Emotions
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship and innovation	4	Nodes\\Innovation\Entrepreneurship
Ethics	Factors related to ethics and examples of sensitive responsibility	58	Nodes\\Ethics
Examples	Examples of authenticity within the sites	10	Nodes\\Authenticity\Examples
Factors in attracting visitors	Associated factors in attracting visitors	23	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Factors in attracting visitors
Factors related to innovation	Factors related to innovation	10	Nodes\\Innovation\Factors related to innovation
Feedback from visitors	Feedback positive or negative from ethics	9	Nodes\\Ethics\Feedback from visitors
Funding	Funding streams and associated factors	11	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Funding
Future trends	Perception of future trends in innovation	16	Nodes\\Innovation\Future trends
Guides	Tours guides etc used for story telling and interpretation	37	Nodes\\Interpretation\Guides
Human Remains Display	Display of human remains	11	Nodes\\Interpretation\Human Remains Display
ICT	Technology and interpretation	16	Nodes\\Interpretation\ICT
Importance of advertising	Level of importance associated with advertising	1	Nodes\\Advertising\Importance of advertising
Importance of innovation	The perceived importance of innovation within the business	19	Nodes\\Innovation\Importance of innovation
Importance of Repeat Visitation	Perceived importance of repeat visitation to the business	7	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Repeat Visitation\Importance of Repeat Visitation
Innovation	Factors associated with innovation	1	Nodes\\Innovation
Interactiveness	Immersive experiences etc	47	Nodes\\Interpretation\Interactiveness
Interpretation	The interpretation and display of material and text related to the site	86	Nodes\\Interpretation
Issues	Issues and challenges relating to recording and collecting data on visitors	9	Nodes\\Data Collection\Issues
Job Responsibilities	Duties under current position	23	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Job Responsibilities
Links to RV	How extending the experience can link to RV	2	Nodes\\Aftercare \Links to RV
Marketing	Marketing of the site	2	Nodes\\Marketing
Marketing Activities	Specific marketing activities, mediums and methods	24	Nodes\\Marketing\Marketing Strategy\Marketing Activities
Marketing Challenges	Issues and challenges faced by marketing	17	Nodes\\Marketing\Marketing Challenges
Marketing of sensitive issues	Theme related marketing	22	Nodes\\Marketing\Marketing of sensitive issues
Marketing Opportunities	Opportunities for marketing NOT currently practiced	9	Nodes\\Marketing\Marketing Opportunities

Source: Author

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Appendix XI – NVivo Coding Information

Name	Description	Number Of Coding References	Hierarchical Name
Marketing Strategy	Strategies for marketing and attitudes towards strategies	8	Nodes\\Marketing\Marketing Strategy
Media	References and examples of practice with media and social media	18	Nodes\\Media
Memorable Quotes	Quotes of importance	17	Nodes\\Memorable Quotes
Methods of advertising	E.g. leaflets, media etc	5	Nodes\\Advertising\Methods of advertising
Methods of engagement	Methods used to extend the experience i.e. social media, technology or facilitating debate	13	Nodes\\Aftercare \Methods of engagement
Mixed	Positive and negative feedback	5	Nodes\\Visitor experience\Visitor Feedback\Mixed
Mixed Methods	A mix of quantitative and qualitative	5	Nodes\\Data Collection\Types of Data Collection on Visitors\Mixed Methods
Motivations	Motivations for repeat visitors	19	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Repeat Visitation\Motivations
Motivations	Motives for visiting NOT repeat visitors	77	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Motivations
Negative	Examples of negative feedback from visitors	10	Nodes\\Visitor experience\Visitor Feedback\Negative
Opportunities to innovate	examples of innovations that managers would like to adopt but NOT current practice	51	Nodes\\Innovation\Opportunities to innovate
Perceptions	General perceptions	23	Nodes\\Perceptions
Perceptions of innovations	Attitudes and perceptions regarding innovation	10	Nodes\\Innovation\Perceptions of innovations
Personalisation	Personal connection to the site	8	Nodes\\Site Theme\Personalisation
Popular aspects within site	Sites most frequently cited as popular by visitors	19	Nodes\\Visitor experience\Popular aspects within site
Positive	Examples of positive feedback from visitors	17	Nodes\\Visitor experience\Visitor Feedback\Positive
Practices of innovation	Examples of current or recent innovations, product, process, institutional etc	163	Nodes\\Innovation\Practices of innovation
Pricing	Pricing factors associated with the business	3	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Pricing
Profit	Profit of the business	6	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Profit
Qualitative	Includes interviews	3	Nodes\\Data Collection\Types of Data Collection on Visitors\Qualitative
Quantitative	Includes surveys	15	Nodes\\Data Collection\Types of Data Collection on Visitors\Quantitative
Reasons for marketing	Importance of marketing of the site	2	Nodes\\Marketing\Reasons for marketing
Relationship Marketing	Examples of relationship marketing	6	Nodes\\Marketing\Marketing Strategy\Marketing Activities\Relationship Marketing
Relationship with innovation	Management perceptions of how repeat visitation is linked to innovation	28	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Repeat Visitation\Relationship with innovation
Repeat Visitation	Factors associated with repeat visitation	48	Nodes\\Visitor Base\Repeat Visitation
Responding to visitor needs	Marketing in relation to responding to visitor needs and requirements	32	Nodes\\Marketing\Reasons for marketing\Responding to visitor needs
Seasonality	Seasonality factors associated with the site	6	Nodes\\Business Aspects\Seasonality

Source: Author

Appendix XIII - Double Coding Exercise

CODING COMPARISON QUERY 06.02.16

Coding comparison query was undertaken by AD – Researcher Peninsular Medical School, University of Exeter. No previous involvement in the research project.

AD coded interview scripts 008, 016 and 023 previously coded by DMP.

Percentage of agreement between the coders was very high: 98% of the agreement was over 90%.

All codes with agreement of less than 95% were checked to see if any discrepancies needed investigating.

Discrepancies were found to be mostly very negligible: for example, one coder might have included the Interviewer's question in the code as well as the relevant text in the reply and this would have led to a difference in the percentage.

On rare occasions there were codes that looked as if they might sometimes have been missed: such as the coding of text related to specific questions (repeat visitation figures). This was due to not all respondents reporting these figures. All documents were subsequently checked to be sure these codes had been used where appropriate.

The code 'marketing practices' was used by one coder (AD) more than the other (DMP) - interviews were then subsequently checked to ensure consistent use of the code.

The code 'examples of innovation' was used more by one coder (DMP) - interviews subsequently checked to ensure consistent use of this code.

Source: Author

Appendix XIV - Matrix of Words Used to Define 'Innovation'

ID	New	Different	Change	Other	ideas	Creativity	Pioneering	Risk	Responding to visitor needs	Examples	Technology	
002	1	1	1	Positive impact			I					
003	1											
004	1											
005				Don't stand still								
007	1	1										
008	1									I	I	
011				I will keep my eye on very carefully other things that are going on. Keep driving it.					I	I		
012											I	
013										I		
014					I							
016				"cant be rigid"		I				I		
017	1	1										
018				challenging the status quo", "experimenting",				I				
019	1											
020		1		"cover all bases e.g. product			I		I		I	
021	1									I		
022	1			"open to opportunity" "open philosophy"				I				
025	1			improve							I	
026	1							I		I		
027		1				I					I	
031					I						I	
032	1					I					I	
033	1	1		"activism"								
	13	6	0	9	3	4	2	3	3	8	10	

Source: Author

Appendix XV - Tabular List of Words to Describe Interpretation

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
people	6	68	1.65	centre	6	12	0.29	give	4	8	0.19
museum	6	44	1.07	feel	4	12	0.29	important	9	8	0.19
visitors	8	27	0.66	might	5	12	0.29	interact	8	8	0.19
display	7	26	0.63	within	6	12	0.29	probably	8	8	0.19
interpretation	14	26	0.63	yeah	4	12	0.29	round	5	8	0.19
really	6	25	0.61	away	4	11	0.27	space	5	8	0.19
want	4	25	0.61	everybody	9	11	0.27	start	5	8	0.19
know	4	23	0.56	personal	8	11	0.27	stories	7	8	0.19
look	4	23	0.56	prison	6	11	0.27	text	4	8	0.19
tour	4	22	0.54	right	5	11	0.27	visual	6	8	0.19
technology	10	21	0.51	sense	5	11	0.27	area	4	7	0.17
come	4	20	0.49	battle	6	10	0.24	back	4	7	0.17
different	9	20	0.49	example	7	10	0.24	balance	7	7	0.17
first	5	20	0.49	good	4	10	0.24	boards	6	7	0.17
experience	10	19	0.46	life	4	10	0.24	case	4	7	0.17
take	4	19	0.46	terms	5	10	0.24	find	4	7	0.17
looking	7	18	0.44	world	5	10	0.24	gallery	7	7	0.17
story	5	18	0.44	displays	8	9	0.22	guided	6	7	0.17
interactive	11	16	0.39	engage	6	9	0.22	guides	6	7	0.17
kind	4	16	0.39	film	4	9	0.22	level	5	7	0.17
part	4	16	0.39	going	5	9	0.22	make	4	7	0.17
thing	5	16	0.39	guide	5	9	0.22	obviously	9	7	0.17
time	4	16	0.39	little	6	9	0.22	opened	6	7	0.17
around	6	15	0.36	moment	6	9	0.22	physical	8	7	0.17
exhibition	10	15	0.36	photograph	11	9	0.22	shows	5	7	0.17
history	7	15	0.36	rather	6	9	0.22	site	4	7	0.17
information	11	14	0.34	show	4	9	0.22	tours	5	7	0.17
artefacts	9	13	0.32	used	4	9	0.22	type	4	7	0.17
audio	5	13	0.32	using	5	9	0.22	whole	5	7	0.17
done	4	13	0.32	walk	4	9	0.22	buildings	9	6	0.15
objects	7	13	0.32	ways	4	9	0.22	cases	5	6	0.15
stuff	5	13	0.32	building	8	8	0.19	cells	5	6	0.15
visitor	7	13	0.32	castle	6	8	0.19				
able	4	12	0.29	even	4	8	0.19				

Source: Author