

THE LINCOLN MAGNA CARTA: MARKETING A DOCUMENT THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

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ABSTRACT

From the field of Runnymede in 1215, to later English parliamentary struggles, across the seas to a fledgling American democracy, then onwards in time to all parts of the globe where it encourages human rights and helps shape legal systems, the Magna Carta has transformed the world. Now there are only four copies remaining of the original manuscript, one of which is owned by Lincoln Cathedral of the UK. This paper provides a critical account of the marketing of the Magna Carta to three target groups of the 21st century. These are the schools market, the general visitor market to Lincoln Castle, where the document is on display and the American market, which sees the Magna Carta when it is on tour. This paper identifies a number of marketing problems, arguing that a failure to implement an effective overall strategy has led to missed customer opportunities. This is a problem compounded by one of brand identity, where political, historical and religious discourses are allowed to converge onto the marketing of the Magna Carta in an undisciplined way, resulting in positioning difficulties. Finally, recommendations are made regarding the implementation of a more strategic approach to marketing the Great Charta.

KEYWORDS *Magna Carta - Case study - Marketing Strategy - Heritage - Lincoln*

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I'll tell of the Magna Charta

As were signed of the Baron's command... (Edgar)

INTRODUCTION: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MAGNA CARTA

It is clear that there is a growing interest in all aspects of heritage and the representation of history as something to be consumed (Misiura 2006; Fisher 2000; Babour and Turnbull 2002). An example of this is represented by the Magna Carta. This famous medieval document is regarded today by many commentators as representing the cornerstone of civil liberties around the globe (West 2008; Breay 2002). Its famous clause 39, that no one man shall be imprisoned without judgement of peers, or by the law of the land, is often quoted in contemporary debates about civil liberties, the conduct of politics and controversial issues like the antiterrorist laws (Bennett et al 2007). In recognition of the documents outstanding universal value the Magna Carta was awarded in July 2009 'Memory of the World' status by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. There are now only four copies remaining in the world of this remarkable document (Breary 2002), one of which is owned by Lincoln Cathedral and displayed in Lincoln Castle UK. Such significance means that organisations owning a copy recognize the need to make it accessible. Both Chronis (2005) and Goulding (1999) argue that marketing can play an important role in bringing history and particular aspects of the past to people, through appropriate targeting and positioning strategies. In relation to the Lincoln Magna Carta, this paper presents a critical account of how the latter is being undertaken in relation to three target groups; the general tourist, the schools sector and the American market. Recommendations are made regarding the need to adopt a more strategic approach to marketing, in order to benefit from the opportunities that are clearly available to such an important document.

Data for this case has been obtained from a variety of sources, including books, web sites, documents, and observation. The latter was of the Lincoln Castle exhibition of the Magna Carta, where a series of qualitative field notes were taken (Marshall and Rossman 1999). Additionally, a method based on phenomenology was used. Hackley (2003) points out that primarily, the phenomenological researcher has to generate written accounts of experience as their data. In line with this, the other element of primary research used involved the construction of a series of open ended questions which were then given in the form of a questionnaire, to an employee of Lincoln Cathedral closely associated with the Cathedral's Magna Carta marketing activity. The questionnaire was supplemented by a series of question and answer sessions, where some key issues from the questionnaire were developed. In accordance with Bradley (2007), the open ended questions were self completed by the respondent. This enabled relatively full answers to be compiled in a situation where the respondent was not encumbered by the constraints of a structured quantitative questionnaire. From the answers to the open questions and the subsequent discussions, a series of themes emerged which helped to form the basis of this paper.

BACKGROUND: THE LINCOLN MAGNA CARTA

So how did a very precious copy of The Magna Carta come to survive in Lincoln? The answer to this starts in the 13th century. After King John's fruitless attempts to recapture Normandy for the English in 1214, he returned to home in defeat and was immediately exposed to opposition from those who had suffered from his obdurate rule. Rebellious barons forced him in 1215 to sign the Magna Carta. This document contains 63 clauses, most attempting to curtail the power of the king. Copies of the original document were quickly made, and of these only a few now survive; one owned by Lincoln Cathedral, one by Salisbury Cathedral and two owned by the British library. As a physical object, the Magna Carta might not be seen as much to look at (Danziger and Gillingham 2003). Each of the

copies is on a modest looking vellum parchment. Copies are approximately A3 in size, covered now in faded Latin, but as the latter authors note, these nearly perfect, eight hundred year old documents are just as famous as any you would see in either a museum or a parliament anywhere in the world.

From the time of the accession of King John's son, Henry III, Magna Carta was reissued in varying forms throughout the years that followed and became a central part of English Law. Lincoln's copy of the Magna Carta lay undisturbed and unrecognised among the extensive Dean and Chapter archives until the early nineteenth century (Bennett et al 2007). In 1800, the government established the Record Commission to ensure the preservation of official archives. In 1848, members of the Archaeological Institute visited Lincoln and recorded that the Magna Carta had been framed and was hanging in the Chapter Clerk's office. In 1939, the British Government requested that Lincoln's Magna Carta be sent to the British Pavilion at the New York World's Fair due to concerns about the war in Europe. The document stayed in the United States for the duration of the conflict, being sent to the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Lincoln's Magna Carta returned to the Cathedral in 1947. Since then, with the exception of the tours it has been on, the Magna Carta has been on view in Lincoln Castle (Bennett et al 2007).

MARKETING MAGNA CARTA: ORGANISATION AND STRATEGY ISSUES

Whilst it is clear that the Cathedral undertakes some marketing activities in relation to the Magna Carta, these do not occur within the framework of a planned and deliberate strategy. Generally, what marketing that does take place is carried out on the basis of an often ad hoc response to events. In the words of the respondent from the Cathedral who supplied answers to the research questions posed, what marketing that does transpire, 'takes place on a wing and prayer'. Missing from marketing activity are the sorts of factors normally associated with

strategic thinking. These include a mission and a clear set of marketing goals, a situation analysis, clearly defined marketing research activity, product development, and the establishment of strategic performance criteria (Blythe 2009; Dibb and Simkin 1996). Whilst it is recognised that a prominent discourse which must occupy Cathedral management is a religious one, with income and work often the result of philanthropic ‘giving’, the absence of strategic thinking hampers activities that could produce a significant increase in revenue and market coverage for the document. A strategic analysis of other cathedrals, which in one sense might be seen as competitors, could be revealing. St Pauls in London, York and Durham Cathedrals, all have developed marketing activities, with the former of these displaying impressive results. To do more than merely survive, so as to prosper, Lincoln Cathedral must have a marketing strategy, as well as a religious one.

Whilst no systematic analysis of each of the various target markets for the Lincoln Magna Carta has taken place, three groups have evolved over time. At Lincoln Cathedral, one key market has been traditionally represented by schools, which historically have often sent pupils on visits. As a consequence of this centrality, the Cathedral has developed an educational department headed by a Chancellor. From this department, the Magna Carta’s marketing efforts have been carried out, to include touring the Magna Carta in America, and in conjunction with Lincoln Castle, exhibiting the document locally to the general tourist market. These represent the three markets currently served by the Magna Carta. Potentially, there exists considerable scope to expand the appeal of the Magna Carta to each of these and to increase the amount of income from them. In terms of marketing management, the Chancellor of the Cathedral is a residentiary Canon, largely without any formal business training or expertise, who has a very small team of full time and part time workers, assisted by a group of volunteers. Most employed staff, with the exception of one, lacks any business or marketing qualifications or extensive experience. This lack of professionalism needs

addressing if future marketing efforts are too be successful. Volunteers represent an addition to the work force. A key aspect of the Chancellor's role is to provide an integrated programme of educational outreach for schools, and also lead the Cathedral's work with visitors, both tourists and pilgrims. Clearly then, a problem here is that the particular expertise and focus of the Chancellor is theological, while at the same time, the role incumbent must take on board a marketing orientation and the implementation of a marketing strategy in relation to the Magna Carta.

THE LINCOLN MAGNA CARTA AS A HERITAGE BRAND

A key aspect of the Magna Carta's brand identity clearly relates to its symbolic character. In terms of schools, the general visitor and the American market, one aspect of its marketing is to have it positioned as possessing iconic significance, reflecting its wider perceived role both historically and contemporarily. This feature of the Magna Carta brand sees it as helping to forge a collective and individual identity for a modern society. A study involving the meanings that visitors attached to three central memorial sites in Washington D.C. (Goldman et. al. 2001) is illuminating in this respect. Interpretative based findings from the Goldman study noted that the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial prompted in respondents a desire to be engaged in a democratic civil society and the acceptance that the memorials represented ideals to try and strive for. At the Cathedral, the education department currently positions the Magna Carta not only as an interesting medieval artefact but also as a document that is symbolically representative of the issues facing the world and individual citizens. These issues include the pursuit of democracy, religious and human rights, freedom of speech, and the pursuit of justice. To these two positioning bases can be added a third, the result of exposure in the American

Market, where the Magna Carta is marketed so that it is primarily seen as an inspirer of the American political system.

As Misuira (2006) notes, particular symbolic ideas are created and embedded in various forms of heritage brands, but the problem here is that the Cathedrals policy is questionable in terms of assuming that all target groups can relate successfully to current positioning policy. Market research could help firstly in establishing what consumers find appealing about the Magna Carta and then around this appropriate marketing programs could be built. Additionally, issues relating to brand equity, covering such things as brand awareness, brand image and brand associations (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2002; Keller et al 2008) need to be monitored and evaluated. Another problem is that as well as having strong symbolic elements, the Magna Carta as a product has both physical and functional aspects attached to it which are being neglected. In terms of tangibility, little thought has been given to the availability of complementary goods and services that can be sold alongside the display of the Magna Carta. An example of the nature of the Cathedral's largely reactive marketing program relates to promotion. In the United Kingdom, the status of The Magna Carta as an object of national identity has been assisted by its inclusion on the ICONS website (see *ICONS: a portrait of England*, 2009). This is a site set up to promote a wide variety of national icons. The parent organisation of ICONS is Culture 24, (Culture 24, 2009). The roles of these organisations are to collect, interpret and promote culture to meet the demands of a wide-ranging audience. ICONS is in essence a virtual museum that uses the latest digital technology to interact with audiences. With over half a million visitors each month to these sites, they provide a useful supportive promotional tool for the Magna Carta, crossing a variety of market segments. Lincoln Cathedral played no part however in putting the Magna Carta up on the site and whilst serendipity has some role to play in marketing (Brown 2005; 2008), it is certainly not the basis for a longer term strategic approach.

THE MAGNA CARTA AND THE GENERAL TOURIST

The general tourist market for the Lincoln Magna Carta is probably the most wide ranging segment of the three targeted and can include visitors from abroad and home, including groups as well as individuals. These variables can of course cover significant differences in terms of age, income, and background, but various studies have shown that common factors exist between visitors in terms of visits to heritage attractions, for example nostalgia, authenticity and the desire for knowledge (Belk1997; Masberg and Silverman 1996; Goulding 1999; 2000). When it is not in the United States on tour, the Magna Carta is sited in Lincoln Castle, the latter owned and maintained by Lincolnshire County Council, where it can be viewed by the general tourist. The actual viewing of the Magna Carta itself is included as part of the entrance price to Lincoln Castle. It is possible to purchase a joint ticket from both the latter and also the Cathedral, which includes dual entrance. Prices are fixed in terms of making a contribution to costs, but little research has been conducted on consumer perceptions and the possibility of a more market based approach being adopted.

As part of some recent efforts to improve the marketing of Magna Carta, a refurbished exhibition has been put in place in the Castle grounds. In the 'First Charters of Liberty' exhibition, alongside the Magna Carta there is the also the Charta of the Forest on display. The latter document is important in its own right, being one of only two surviving copies, dating back to 1217. The Charta of the Forest dealt with the rights of the common people to be granted proper subsistence in the forests of the King (Linebaugh 2008). Currently, both these two documents are housed in the old prison of the castle, and do not in any way provide an ideal exhibition or visitors area. This is a small, relatively cramped and dingy building that the visitor can pass through quite quickly, with an adjacent basic café. In the first part of this exhibition, a few artefacts from the time of Magna Carta and the Charta of the Forest are present, along with some fairly simple and inexpensively constructed display boards of

information about the 13th century. There is some detail here about crime and punishment, feudalism and the life of the common people and the revolt which resulted in the signing of Magna Carta at Runnymede. Next is a basic interactive board game which encourages visitors, particularly children, to construct their own version of the hierarchical social order of the 13th century, and it is possible to also make a wax 'King's seal'.

The second part of the exhibition contains displays and features reflecting the desire to market that Magna Carta not just a historical document, but having relevance for people's lives today. One part of an interactive game for children asks them to identify from illustrations, detainees who are not being fairly treated at the Guantanamo Bay prison camp. There is a 'have your say' section, where visitors can post their own comments on things like the Stop and Search and Anti Terrorist Law. Additionally, information boards tell visitors that there are clauses of the Magna Carta that are embedded in UK law today. Other information panels discuss the relevance of the Magna Carta across the contemporary world. Additionally, produced by the Cathedral education department are two promotional leaflets that try to reinforce the marketing message that the Magna Carta is not only of historical interest, but has contemporary relevance. One is a question and answer based leaflet (Lincoln Cathedral 2008a), while the other (Lincoln Cathedral 2008b) juxtaposes a picture of the ancient document with statements about its bearing on current issues of democracy and freedom. The Magna Carta is being marketed here as both medieval artefact and a document for contemporary society, but neither objective is given sufficient resources in the small exhibition area and the visitor might well leave with a confused view. The actual centre piece and culmination of the exhibition is where the Lincoln Magna Carta is featured alongside the Charta of the Forest. Nowhere else in the world can these two inextricably linked and important historical documents be seen together (City of Lincoln Council 2009). The problem is that these documents are on view in a small cheaply decorated room with a

vague medieval theme that fails to capture the historical significance of both Chartas. Whilst visitors are coming face to face with authentic historical artefacts, a feature valued by many who spend time at heritage exhibitions (Goulding 2000), the unimaginative environment does not do justice to these rare documents. There is little further information available and there is no new digital technology anywhere in the exhibition that could enhance the visitor experience, apart from temperature monitored, vacuum sealed display cases for the documents.

Although there are small shops in both the Cathedral and the Castle, what is conspicuously lacking in these outlets is any attempt to sell a range of goods, apart from one book produced by the Cathedral that complements the Magna Carta. In this sense, a major revenue generating opportunity is being lost. It is unusual for customers not too expect to find products available that relate to the historical artefacts they have seen (Misiura 2006). At the time of viewing, even the Magna Carta book was not available in the exhibition area. Types of merchandise that could be sold include Magna Carta pens, jewellery, book markers, further books, ties and scarves, coasters, pictures and replicas of the document. On a positive point, in terms of promotion, the Cathedral website, (see www.lincolncathedral.com), does prominently feature the Magna Carta. Information about the Magna Carta features in two sections of the site 'Living and Learning' and 'Visits and Events' Not only is the history of the Magna Carta outlined, but its relationship to modern issues is covered, along with lists of further resources that can be pursued and studied. The site is colourful, easy to navigate, combining text and creative illustrations effectively. Additional interactivity is built into the web site where visitors are asked to send in their views on the Magna Carta via email. Importantly, the Lincoln Cathedral web site with its Magna Carta elements does well in terms of search engine optimisation. Wikipedia's article on the Magna Carta comes at the top of the organic listings on Google and a quick scroll down the page to 'copies' has a link to Lincoln

Cathedral, which clearly boosts visitor numbers to the site (Wikipedia 2010). The web site redesign although undoubtedly attractive, was developed however as a one off initiative and not in the context of an overall strategy.

THE SCHOOLS MARKET AND MAGNA CARTA

As Misiura (2006) has pointed out, a large number of heritage organisations in the United Kingdom claim the schools market and education as a major role for their sites. This is no less true of the Lincoln Magna Carta. Despite this, little consultation has occurred between those at the Cathedral responsible for marketing the Magna Carta and school groups, like students and teachers. With no marketing plan and no general pricing strategy framework to work within, prices have been arbitrarily fixed at £1.00 entrance for each child. This is for an organised schools visit of the Cathedral, with a tour guide, where a vellum copy of the Magna Carta is always kept for viewing. The count for 2009 from the education department shows that over six and a half thousand school children plus teachers had visited the Cathedral in that year. Again, as with the general tourist market, important revenue generating opportunities are being lost, because no Magna Carta goods are on sale in either the Cathedral or Castle shops. A range of relatively inexpensive goods could be targeted at children, for example traditional jigsaws of the Magna Carta, badges and broaches, notebooks and possibly replica figures from history. Market research could assist in the development of a Magna Carta product strategy here, through the engagement of children, parents and school authorities in a major research exercise. Similarly, a more inventive entrance pricing policy could be researched to find out what the market might bear and to consider differentiated pricing, according to type of visit and age groups. On a related point, it is possible for schools to book a tour of the Castle at the same time as the Cathedral visit, to include a viewing of the Magna Carta. If requested, talks can be put on about the document as well. Here, the potential exists for a special area to be set aside, that could include the use of the latest interactive

technology to stimulate school students. This technology could be used in conjunction with the talk as part of planned workshops.

To support schools, there has been a teaching manual created in collaboration with the National Union of Teachers and the National Education Association of America. Unfortunately, as far as the author's knowledge is concerned, this expensive and highly professional teaching aid, with its potential to raise the brand profile of the Magna Carta, has not been used in the UK. This workbook contains information and activities about the Magna Carta, with an emphasis on its relevance for life today (National Educational Association et al, 2008). Furthermore for schools, a marketing resource made available has been the creation of a package of branded materials. Without the benefit however of a central marketing strategy, its use has been very limited. On offer are a pop-up Magna Carta display screen, two promotional leaflets already described in the section above, plus an accompanying DVD and the Cathedral Magna Carta book. In addition, on the Lincoln Cathedral homepage a special web site has been set up for schools (Schools web site 2009). The site enables teachers to book tours online and it also has a teacher's resource area, a timeline, information on workshops for school students and a virtual tour of the Cathedral. Some good feedback was received on the site at its launch, but it has not been extensively promoted.

In 2008, another initiative was introduced, clearly aimed at the education market. In collaboration with the University of Lincoln and Lincolnshire County Council, the Cathedral's education department launched the inaugural Magna Carta Forum. The latter received sponsorship from local business and its primary focus was Lincoln sixth formers and twelfth graders from the United States. Magna Carta 2008; Exploring Democracy (see Events and Conferences 2008) brought to the University leading speakers from law, politics, business, the media and education, including Lord Falconer, Tony Benn and Liam Fox. A series of workshops, lectures and discussions took place on current thinking about

democracy, resulting in some positive publicity for the Magna Carta. This activity has only taken place the once, despite its evident success where local businesses acted as sponsors. In terms of revenue, key merchandising opportunities were missed; for example books and various types of e resources could have been sold to the large number of students and teachers in attendance. The fact that no plans exist to repeat the forum or to seriously address the issue of its evaluation, shows the ad hoc nature of the Magna Carta marketing activity.

Additionally, appealing not only to the schools market but to the general visitor is the annual Magna Carta Week. This is held in collaboration with Lincolnshire County Council to raise the profile of the document. Recent activities have seen a public lecture about Nicola de la Haye, who was appointed Sheriff of Lincoln by King John in 1216. As part of the week, there has in the past been a special exhibition in Lincoln Cathedral's Wren Library of medieval documents and a talk and tour of the Heraldry of St Ann's Chapel in the Cathedral. In the wider County, Magna Carta lectures have been delivered in venues which have strong historical associations with the document, such as Gainsborough Old Hall. This building originally offered a place to worship for the Mayflower Pilgrims who eventually set sail for New England in 1620. Magna Carta week has also seen a medieval hog roast event, reflecting the increased attention being paid to the relationship between food and drink and heritage (Misiura 2006). Outside of Magna Carta week, a Cathedral Magna Carta promotional stand has been in evidence at the annual Lincolnshire Agricultural Show (Wilson 2008), although it is unclear at whom this is targeted.

MAGNA CARTA IN AMERICA

When the first English settlers sailed for the New World at the beginning of the 17th century, they took a strong belief in the power of Magna Carta with them (Bennett et al 2007). As a result, the American market represents a key source of interest for the Magna Carta

(Linebaugh 2008). In addition, the American Constitution itself was based on principles deemed to come from Magna Carta, that the rights and liberties of the people should be protected by law against the encroachment of power delegated to their governments (Bennett et al 2007). A substantial sum of money is generated for the Cathedral through renting out the Magna Carta in America, an amount not significantly diminished by the costs of insurance and transport and in the case of the latest tour, armed guards to accompany its movement from Heathrow airport. Working for the Cathedral in America is a public relations company that has been asked to find institutions to take and display the Magna Carta. This finding of institutions is dependent on the contacts that the public relations company has and in particular, one person's connections and the places they think the Magna Carta should appear in. The result is that any positioning based on marketing the Magna Carta as a medieval historical artefact gets lost, being replaced by a concern with demonstrating the documents relevance to American society and politics.

In 2007, the first of the recent tours to America took place, where previously it had not been since 1987 (www.lincolncathedral). The following examples all indicate how each institution adopted the display of the Magna Carta to reflect their own individual whims, rather than that of a planned strategy directed by the Cathedral. The Lincoln Magna Carta initially appeared briefly at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia (NEA 2007), where over 10,000 people saw it in the space of a few days in July. It next moved to the Contemporary Art Centre of Virginia, as part of the four hundredth anniversary celebration of the founding of the first permanent English settlement in Jamestown (Magna Carta on Display in Virginia 2007). To promote the exhibition, entitled 'Magna Carta and Four Foundations of Freedom', four days of special events were organised including a special opening, with refreshments and the use of actors dressed as historical figures that mingled with visitors to promote discussion. A special preview dinner, with music and historical enactments, was also

available via ticket purchase, in addition to the normal exhibition entrance price. Besides being able to view the exhibition, visitors could take part in family activities and a range of educational programmes. Artists were asked to mount an additional exhibition, indicating how Magna Carta's theme of individual freedom could be visually expressed.

The next American tour took place from January to June 2009, where the Magna Carta was on display at the Ronald Regan Presidential Library in California. In the first seven weeks, the exhibition entitled 'Magna Carta; the Essence of Democracy', saw fifty six thousand visitors view the document (Lincolnshire Echo 2009). To coincide with the exhibition in late January a lecture was given by the Dean of Lincoln Cathedral entitled "To Have But Not to Hold – Possessing the Magna Carta" (2009). This lecture was posted on YouTube, thus putting part of the Magna Carta marketing strategy into the realms of social media. In September 2009, Magna Carta was again on the move in America, this time to the Fraunces Tavern Museum in New York, where it appeared until December 2009 (Fraunces Tavern Museum to Display 1215 Magna Carta 2009). Here, the exhibition was called 'Magna Carta and the Foundations of Freedom'. Explaining the purpose behind the exhibit, Museum president, Charles Lucas said that, "Fraunces Tavern Museum wanted to bring Magna Carta to New York because this document is at the root of the American Revolution-which is what our Museum is about." (Human Rights Exhibit at Fraunces Tavern Museum to Feature 1215 Magna Carta 2009). In support of these sentiments, a rare copy of the Declaration of Independence was included in the exhibition and also depicted were scenes from the revolutionary war against the British, the latter some say partly inspired by the Magna Carta (Linebaugh 2008). The exhibition web provided an opportunity for consumers to download an exhibition brochure and prospective visitors were boldly told to see 'at least once in your lifetime the Magna Carta, the document that changed the world'. In this particular case, the

Magna Carta is being inextricably linked by marketing efforts to American struggles for independence and not much else.

In terms of its tour of the American market, it can be argued that the Cathedral has clearly lost control of the brand. Local marketing efforts in America tie the Magna Carta primarily to the development of American politics, rather than to its historical appeal and inspirer of legal freedom around the globe. As indicated above, each institution is able to display the document as it chooses and to develop its own messages and materials around the document. The public relations company used in America to find takers for the Magna Carta display are highly selective, favouring organisations that reinforce the links between the Magna Carta and American political values that relate to independence and individual freedom. Interestingly, organisations like the William J Clinton Presidential Library and Museum were not offered the document, possibly because they might emphasise a perspective on the Magna Carta that perceives it as being concerned principally with promoting a form of justice that depends on the right of democratic control over common resources and movements to resist world poverty. (Linebaugh 2008). What the Cathedral could attempt to do to the Magna Carta brand is to standardise it more in terms of symbolism and the tangible benefits that accompany its display. For example, the Cathedral could put together a major brand package of resources containing a comprehensive range of integrated promotional materials with a clear message, accompanied by the type of complementary goods mentioned earlier. This package could be developed for use when the Magna Carta tours, in order to reflect a clear market position and to potentially increase its exposure to a wider range of organisations and consumers.

CONCLUSION: MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF MARKETING A DOCUMENT THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

In a recent YouGov poll commissioned by the British Library, Lewis (2008) indicates that if results of the research were extrapolated to the population as a whole, then 45% of people would not know what the Magna Carta is. Some respondents thought the term Magna Carta referred to a bottled Irish cider, obviously confusing it with a similar sounding brand. If the Magna Carta is indeed a document that has changed the world and there is a convincing argument to say it has (Whipps 2008; West 2008), then it is clear that much more could be done to market it effectively. Firstly, more needs to be done to increase the general awareness of what the Magna Carta is. In conjunction with the other three owners in the UK of the Magna Carta, it might be possible to embark on joint discussions and marketing programmes associated with the document. In terms of the Lincoln Magna Carta, whilst some satisfactory elements of marketing have been acknowledged, this case study has identified a number of problems. It is evident that there exists some potential for confusion regarding the positioning of the Magna Carta brand in the perception of its three markets. In undertaking positioning, the strategist is indicating to customers what the product means and how it differs from competitors in the market (Keller et. al. 2008). Currently, three approaches to positioning appear to have been adopted by the Cathedral, but there have been no studies undertaken with consumers to judge the success of this. Firstly, the Magna Carta is positioned as a medieval artefact, secondly as an iconic document of relevance to modern society and thirdly, in the case of America, as a symbol of political values. It is not at all clear that all consumers relate to all these positioning approaches and the nature of the Cathedral's idiosyncratic marketing activity. The consequences of this neglect are that there may be unknown and unfavourable images of the brand existing in customer minds, having an adverse impact on visitor numbers, perceptions and revenue generation. As has been noted to date, relatively little

market research has been completed, apart from a survey directed at the launch of the schools web site and a very small scale project on visitor perceptions of the Cathedral generally. Hard information is very sketchy on all these areas. Furthermore, one major area that has been ignored in terms of research and strategy is the impact of actual and potential competition. With Lincoln being a key UK attraction in terms of the heritage market, this latter task should be tackled as a matter of urgency.

In terms of market segmentation research, more data collection and analysis needs to be undertaken. For example, the schools market covers a wide range of age groups that potentially means marketing resources could be directed in more diverse ways. Younger children on a visit to the Castle exhibition might be engaged by the opportunity to meet and talk to a 'historical figure' associated with the Magna Carta, while older age groups could take part in role plays that replicate the signing of the document. Ideas could be put out to schools and it should be possible to engage in the co-creation (Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2000) of ideas via forums that are both on and off line. Equally, it is possible that a better profile of general tourists could be developed, with perhaps some special events put on for overseas visitors to the Magna Carta exhibition. A research project could also be initiated in the American market, to find out the requirements of consumers, with a view to establishing consistency in the messages and the medium. So, it seems reasonably clear that research activity needs to inform the marketing of the Magna Carta in a more developed and systematic fashion than is currently the case. A recent initiative is of relevance to this issue. In early 2009, the Heritage Lottery fund announced that a bid from Lincoln Castle, with support from the Cathedral, for 6.2 million pounds in funding had passed the initial application phase. If the final bid is accepted, then the Castle environs would be revamped to include a new purpose built exhibition centre to house the Magna Carta (see BBC News 2009). With the Magna Carta celebrating its 800th anniversary in 2015, the marketing benefits

of a permanent exhibition could be very significant indeed. Currently then, a major opportunity is being missed in terms of collecting visitor ideas on what the new exhibition centre should contain. The setting up of a dialogue with target groups of school visitors and general tourists to the Magna Carta could help to ensure that the new exhibition centre contains the types of features that customers require, be it merchandise for sale, special interactive features or the general type of ambiance and atmosphere that needs to be created. In the shorter term, market research could be actioned in order provide a range of ideas for improvements to the current exhibition, highlighted in an earlier section above.

There are important implications here in this case study not only for those marketing heritage and the Magna Carta, but for any company that needs to think about strategic revitalization. In considering issues needing attention and of relevance to the Magna Carta, like brand identity, positioning, market segmentation, and market research, it is clear that an important and necessary organising feature is the overall approach to strategy that is adopted. In the case of Lincoln Cathedral, no such strategy exists. This is not to suggest that employees go out and immediately adopt an off the shelf marketing plan with a view to implementing it, but they do think about how the present can be best managed and the future created. Strategy should provide a sense of direction, by understanding the environment and pursuing a desired end state, with an appropriate eye kept on resources and a concomitant monitoring of activities. To help provide a sense of renewal in terms of marketing the Magna Carta, it is suggested that the Cathedral could think about adopting the Schindehutte et. al. (2009) framework for identifying a new business model. This has six questions which bring together many of the problems identified in this paper. The questions posed should be answered by organisations in terms of rejuvenating or reinventing their marketing strategy, in relation to a product or service. Firstly, how is consumer value created and for whom? The Cathedral would need to think clearly about the markets it serves and what is being offered in terms of

the total product and the augmented product value that is the Magna Carta. This includes complementary goods and visitor experiences. Next, sources of competence inside the Cathedral have to be identified that are able to help with the new venture. Some of these might be networking and resource leveraging, to bring in funds for expansion of the offering. Fourthly, the question of competitive positioning should be tackled. The Cathedral urgently needs to ask if the Magna Carta can be positioned more selectively against the significant range of competitors in the market, or if some form of repositioning need occur. Component five of the model asks how money is made and the Cathedral needs to directly address the issue of revenue generation so as to develop a sound economic model revolving around discussions of volumes and margins, something badly neglected to date. Finally, the question of ambition has to be addressed. Potentially, there exists the opportunity to take the Magna Carta on tour to other countries besides America and to invest in the document generally, so that overall market coverage and revenue streams increase.

Finally, having a notion of the right objectives is a key issue here. Objectives provide focus and justification for action and hence should be embodied in strategy (Wilson and Gilligan 2005). A well thought through strategy would force the Cathedral's marketing authorities to think about the Magna Carta in a holistic fashion. A constant monitoring of the environment and market segments should occur, yielding sets of objectives relating to the Magna Carta brand identity, its positioning, its resource set and its value proposition. This need not occur in any linear fashion, but can be an organic process, where one action flows into another (Ardley 2009). Creativity and intuitive insight should not be ignored either, as it is an important part of strategy (Bilton and Cummings 2010). It might be the case that to act first on the basis of an innovative idea from an employee or customer will produce good results. A 'trial and error' approach might reveal for example, if a new complementary Magna Carta product is well received or not, in the Lincoln Castle shop or if an inventive logo for Magna

Carta works. But, to take a step back, to get to the stage of actually having an overall strategy might mean that an internal critical self- analysis on the part of those marketing the Lincoln Magna Carta is required. The question should be asked if there exists, in the first instance, the will to deliver something commercially viable. If the answer is no, or a hesitant, ambivalent yes, then work must begin to take place around establishing a strong strategic orientation. Or otherwise, without that, and its results, the marketing of the Lincoln Magna Carta in its present fashion is likely to continue to be both very challenging and very difficult indeed, from both a customer and a competitor perspective.

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