

International Cultural Marketing: A Concept Paper

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New Mexico has world-class cultural resources in traditional and contemporary art, music, dance, and more. New Mexico can do even more in international cultural marketing. The stakes are high.

Whether a city competes for a factory, a major convention, tourism dollars, or export markets for its own businesses, the ways in which it reaches abroad can mean the difference between success and failure. As the global marketplace becomes more cosmopolitan, cities must have access to world-class resources or they will lose out to their rivals both at home and abroad. Some of New Mexico's best-known cultural resources are its Indian communities. For the last 8 years I have been president of Bronitsky and Associates. Our firm, with its offices in Colorado and Italy, has assisted American Indians from Canada, the United States, and Mexico in developing international cultural markets. As someone who is originally from New Mexico I have been particularly aware of the excellent opportunities for international marketing of New Mexico's cultural resources.

State development and tourism officials and, of course, Indians themselves have long been aware of the international interest in their cultures through tourism and support for arts, crafts, and music, but until recently there has been little attempt to study the market in detail. Indian products are not specifically targeted in statistical studies; instead, they are grouped together under more general headings such as Jewelry. Foreign Trade Reports, Trade Information Centers, and other sources of export information rarely deal with handicrafts of any kind, and American embassies and consulates overseas often lack up-to-date information on art galleries dealing in handicrafts.

If anything, the situation is worse for non-Indian cultural resources. New Mexico's other cultural resources are considerably less well known; for example, its Hispanic heritage, cowboy culture, its world-famous fine arts and performing arts communities (especially the Santa Fe Opera and the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra with its world-class Music Director, Guillermo Figueroa). Support for many of these resources flourishes at the town and city level but efforts have only just begun to create marketing partnerships between cities and towns on the one hand, and state agencies on the other, or between cities and nearby cultural resources. In recent years the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Association of Counties

have all urged their members to think globally in developing their economic strategies and to share experiences. Orlando Mayor Glenda Hood helped establish the Metro Orlando International Affairs Commission to coordinate global activities of government and industry in central Florida. The work of TRADE in the Santa Fe area, and the Regional Development Corporation in Los Alamos, are notable examples of such coordination in New Mexico.

The potential for joint cultural marketing abounds in other areas of the state as well. Albuquerque has an international airport with few international flights; nearby Pueblo communities have built first-class gaming establishments and resorts, yet there have been no efforts to work together to market these resources internationally which would strengthen the airport, the resorts, and the casinos resulting in the creation of still more jobs. On a positive note, the Office of Cultural Affairs is already working with communities in New Mexico to help them prepare to market themselves on an Italian model through their Cultural Tourism collaboration with the Tourism and Economic Development Department.

State and local institutions, local businesses, and members of the arts community can further promote international cultural marketing of New Mexico's resources. New Mexico is a land of wonderful diversity, a diversity reflected in all the different kinds of traditional and contemporary New Mexico music – symphony and old-time fiddle music, Navajo skip-dance songs and Taos round dances, reggae and hip-hop, Western swing and blues, tipica and rancho, blues and gospel, klezmer, and so much more. Louisiana promotes itself as the birthplace of jazz and the home of cajun music and zydeco. Texas is well known for its distinctive musical heritage in blues, rock, and western swing. Yet there is no single place in New Mexico where listeners can experience New Mexico's cultural diversity, an experience that could promote music sales, bookings, and music festivals, all of which can benefit local tourism. Great potential exists for profitable coordination between state and local development agencies and arts agencies and institutions.

Cities generally rely on their state offices, U.S. embassies, and the more than 130 offices of the Commerce Department's U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service in approximately 70 countries to represent their economic interests abroad. However, Denver contributes \$50,000 per year to the Colorado Trade

Mission in London to help market the city. Mayor Wellington Webb credits the trade office for decisions by two British high-technology consulting firms to establish their U.S. headquarters in Denver. The recent establishment of non-stop flights by Lufthansa between Denver and Frankfurt, Germany, is expected to further increase international trade for businesses in Denver. Some cities take an even more direct approach. The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority maintains representative bureaus in Tokyo, Japan, Frankfurt, Germany, and in England's West Midlands region.

To compete in the increasingly intertwined world economy many American cities and towns are developing new ways of promoting themselves by going global with their cultural resources. New Mexico's cities and towns can follow their example and do more.

Notes

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